

Re-imagining the posthuman in counsellor education:  
Entanglements of matter and meaning in the performative enactments of  
counsellor-in-training identities.

---

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education in the University of  
Canterbury

By Shanee Joanne Barraclough

College of Education, Health and Human Development

University of Canterbury

2017

---

## Table of Contents

<b>Tables and figures</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>PART ONE – Beginnings</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Finding my way into this project.....	11
An ontological turn.....	15
The research context – counsellor education in Aotearoa New Zealand.....	17
Overview of this thesis.....	21
<b>Chapter One: The problem of the subject of counsellor education</b> .....	<b>27</b>
The humanistic individual of counsellor education.....	31
Theorisations of developmental processes.....	37
Developing a professional identity.....	40
Humanistic conceptualisations of identity – some considerations.....	42
Counselling moves to social constructionist and poststructural identities.....	46
Reflective practice in counselling.....	49
The posthuman subject.....	54
<b>Chapter Two: Methodology</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Collective Biography.....	57
Recruitment.....	62
Participants.....	64
Data Generation.....	65
Individual Interviews.....	65
Collective biography workshops.....	66
Data.....	68
Research Rigour/Trustworthiness.....	69
Researcher responsiveness.....	70
Methodological coherence.....	70
Appropriate sample.....	70
Reciprocity.....	71
Researcher reflexivity.....	71
Member checks.....	71
Ethics.....	72
<b>PART TWO – Onto-epistemological shifts</b> .....	<b>76</b>
<b>Chapter Three: Post-human ethico-onto-epistemology</b> .....	<b>77</b>
Beginning, un-doing and re-turning onto-epistemology.....	82
Toward a diffractive and affirmative knowing-in-being.....	89
What came before: a local entanglement.....	91
A re-turn to posthumanism.....	101
Agential-realism: a framework of post-human performativity or how material-discursive practices matter.....	106
Bohr’s physics and the objectivity of ‘phenomena’.....	108

Material-discursive practices matter – coming to an onto-epistemology.....	111
Material-discursive practices or the nature of an apparatus.....	115
Human subjects as part of an ongoing performance.....	118
Agency, accountability and ethics.....	120
Spacetime mattering.....	122
<b>Chapter Four: From methodological reflexivity to diffraction.....</b>	<b>125</b>
The promise of reflexivity.....	128
Bringing a more unsettled field into view.....	131
Reflexivity as recognition of self.....	133
Accounts that make the world alive.....	134
Attempting to make the discursive visible.....	136
Haraway’s diffraction.....	139
Diffracting diffraction, with Barad.....	142
Physical phenomenon – diffraction as concept.....	145
A diffractive interrupting.....	148
Diffraction’s feminist theorizing and ongoing responsibility.....	151
Diffraction in action.....	154
Researcher subjectivity – where/what/who am I?.....	157
<b>Chapter Five: Analytic devices – making, re-making, and un-making.....</b>	<b>162</b>
Analytic device.....	162
Poem.....	163
Pattern.....	166
(Re)(Con)figuration.....	170
<b>PART THREE – Data analysis – thinking with theory.....</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Chapter Six: Toward a decentring of the subject in data analysis.....</b>	<b>175</b>
Introduction.....	175
Entangled beginnings.....	176
Care, respect and an ethical response.....	180
Beyond human-centred linear narratives.....	182
Post-structural inclinations and re-thinking difference.....	187
Poststructural inclinations and a diffractive experiment.....	188
Embracing wonder in the production of what comes to matter.....	201
Limits of the interview.....	204
<b>Interlude One: Turning to the material-discursive: tears as an object of analysis.....</b>	<b>206</b>
Introduction.....	207
Why tears?.....	211
Conceptualisations of tears.....	214
<b>Chapter Seven: A diffractive analysis: the presence of tears in counselling encounters.....</b>	<b>220</b>
At the edge of tears – an embodied alterity.....	221
The material-discursive phenomena of counselling practice.....	225
‘I wouldn’t hold myself back’ – the material-discursive practice of professional tears.....	229
Power at work through the material-social forces in the production of tears.....	233
‘It’s a cultural thing’.....	235

Male tears as brave and strong.....	242
Collisions.....	246
Temporality and spatiality – ‘it just took me right back’.....	251
<b>Interlude Two: The hauntological nature of quantum entanglements.....</b>	<b>263</b>
Tears as a ghostly happening.....	263
The im/possibility of tears.....	264
Recognising my own body as a space of transit.....	265
The present-absence of tears – viscerally alive in body-minds.....	269
Simultaneity, indeterminacy, and aporetic moments.....	277
Hauntological multiplicity.....	281
<b>Chapter Eight: A diffractive analysis: the present-absence of tears in counselling encounters.....</b>	<b>284</b>
Mapping the invisible.....	284
The affective quality of ghostly tears.....	285
Neoliberalism and fear of falling apart.....	287
Neoliberalism’s paradox.....	288
Powerlessness, overwhelm, and survival under neoliberalism.....	293
Neoliberalism’s reconfiguring of time.....	300
The stark realities of life lived under neoliberalism.....	300
Neoliberalism and the High School context.....	303
Professionalism and the good and appropriate counsellor.....	306
Intra-acting responsibly from within and as part of the world.....	309
<b>Summary – the intra-active production of present/absent tears for counsellors-in-training.....</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>PART FOUR: Implications and conclusion.....</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Chapter Nine: Methodology as pedagogy: implications for counsellor education and counsellor educators.....</b>	<b>319</b>
Introduction.....	319
A reconfigured, posthumanist, educative subject – initial pedagogical considerations.....	321
Reconfiguring the (posthuman) educative subject of counsellor education.....	325
Collective biography as method – from poststructural to posthumanist conceptualisations.....	327
Collective biography as posthumanist pedagogy: emergent listening.....	329
Collective biography as posthumanist pedagogy: diffractive practice.....	336
From reflective to diffractive practice in counsellor education.....	344
Implications for counsellor educators.....	349
Conclusion and future directions.....	357
<b>References.....</b>	<b>359</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Information letter and consent form.....</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – Interview schedule.....</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>Appendix 3 – Notes on collective biography for research participants.....</b>	<b>386</b>
<b>Appendix 4 – Ethics approval.....</b>	<b>389</b>
<b>Appendix 5 – Whole tear poem (Bailey) from chapter eight.....</b>	<b>390</b>

## Tables and Figures

Table 1: No. of participants present in each collective biography workshop.....67

Figure 1: Diffraction – I see it everywhere.....143

Figure 2: Visual photographic-microscopic tears – Rose-Lynn Fisher (2017).....209

Figure 3: Tear as diffraction pattern.....317

## Acknowledgements

“It is not so much that I have written this (thesis), as that it has written me. Or rather, ‘we’ have ‘intra-actively’ written each other” (Barad, 2007, p. x).

I am especially grateful to numerous people who have been lively and productive forces in bringing this entangled, intra-active thesis into being. I am indebted to my two extraordinary academic supervisors, for their combined wisdom, knowledge and kindness in seeing me through from beginning to end. To Kathleen, who has been alongside me on every rocky path and detour of this journey, seeing and imagining the possibilities for this work, and me, when I could not, and relentless in her support of both. To Judi, who navigates her multiple relationships with me, as supervisor, mentor, and counselling colleague, with care and encouragement, and whose embodiment of the ‘solution focused’ tenets of openness, curiosity, and belief in the knowing of the other, has been pivotal in enabling me to realize my best hopes.

To Bridget, Pip and Myriam for the enduring nourishment of love and friendship, for the wisdom, acuity and intelligence that they bring to every conversation, many of which have intersected with and influenced this work over the previous five years.

To Neil, firstly for creating the opportunity, and for the sage mentoring, for coming out of retirement, but mostly for friendship and laughter.

To my colleagues and friends who have shown interest, support and belief in my capacity to get to the end of this, and especially to Sarah who also gifted me a room of my own when I needed it. Special thanks to my counselling colleagues, Lois and Judi, for their kindness and capability in easing the pressure to enable me to give my attention to this work, especially over the last year.

To my writing group, the wise, clever and kind women, with whom I have become a writer and an academic – Kathleen, Lois and Judy.

To my participants, for their generosity of time, spirit and selves. It’s a cliché, but without them, this project would not have emerged as it has. I am grateful for their depth of commitment to my research, but equally to their own ongoing learning, practice and the necessary work they all continue to do.

To the College of Education, Health and Human Development, UC for the opportunity and support to complete this thesis as part of my work.

To my family, Al, Hermione and William, who are the ground from which I am enabled to keep doing this work.

Finally, to other times and spaces, where the seeds of possibility for this first began. To my parents, for a home of words and books, library visits and ‘debates’, where my love of learning was nourished and my feminism began, in a home where I learned ‘girls can do anything’.

I dedicate this to the memory of my brother, Stephen Barraclough, who is present in so many of these pages.

## Abstract

Limited research is available which directly investigates the lived experience of counsellors-in-training, and how it shapes both what it means to become a counsellor, and counsellor education. Conceptualisations of this process and related counsellor education are mainly limited to psychological and humanistic models of professional development. As a counsellor educator on a Master of Counselling programme, espousing a social constructionist approach to counselling, I was interested to both study the lived experience of counsellors-in-training and explore the possibilities of theorizing this process beyond the limits of available conceptual frameworks for counsellor education.

This thesis performs ethico-onto-epistemological shifts in relation with the matter, time and space of this project, from primarily post-structural to posthumanist ways of conceptualising the research process and the (post)human subject, along with considering implications of reconfiguring the counsellor-in-training subject for counsellor education. With a focus on mapping and theorizing the experiences of a small, diverse group of counsellors-in-training, I draw on data generated over the period of one year, primarily through the post-structurally informed methodology of collective biography. A shift to a posthumanist analytic focus enabled a move beyond the discursive to a mapping of the multiple, entangled material, affective and discursive force relations enacting the agential possibilities for counsellors-in-training. Engaging in a diffractive, rather than reflexive, process of data analysis, which marks a decentring of the individual subject of inquiry, and instead requires an opening up to the intra-active flows, matter, and material-discursive practices, I document how *tears* came to matter, both as an object of analysis, and for counsellors-in-training, in relation to the multiple forces enacting them.

Counsellor-in-training (and counsellor-researcher) *tears*, as both present and ghostly, are conceptualised in Karen Barad's agential realist terms as material-discursive practices or *phenomena* (Barad, 2007). Data analysis entails a detailed mapping of tears as *phenomena*, which makes visible the multiple intra-active forces and encounters enacting them. Such analysis shows not just the complex and intra-active material-discursive forces at work in the materialisation of tears, but through tears, the forces at work then, also in the ongoing and iterative (re)(con)figuring of a counsellor-in-training as posthuman subject. In this way, a counsellor-in-training educative subject is re-imagined as an ethical, vital, moving embodiment of multiple affective-material-discursive relations, an enactment of "unfolding the self onto the world, while enfolding the world

within” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 26). Such a re-imagining of this posthuman, educative subject necessarily invites a reconceptualising of (counsellor) education and its pedagogical practices.

This thesis concludes with an initial consideration of the kinds of pedagogical practices and challenges such a post-human re-imagining might produce for counsellor education. In particular, I draw on the posthumanist concepts of emergent listening and diffraction to conceptualise the group process participants engaged in, and reconfigure the posthumanist pedagogical possibilities of a shift from reflective to diffractive practice in counsellor education. Requiring an openness to the not-yet known, diffractive practice as pedagogy invites counsellors-in-training beyond known, habitual, and normative reproductions of identity and practice. I suggest that a collective, diffractive process, where posthumanist notions of entanglement, dynamic relationality, and difference underpin embodied and creative practices of telling and listening, affords both generative and disruptive possibilities for emerging counsellor identities and practices, and for counsellor education.



# **PART ONE**

## **BEGINNINGS**

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis enacts a diffractive experiment in knowing-in-being. The materialization of the knowledge produced in the following pages has not come about solely through will and effort, although that has played an (intra-)active part. What has come to matter has been cut together-apart, in an entanglement of irreducible relations of responsibility, that extend across multiple times and spaces, enfolding ontologically inseparable, multiple, dynamic, material-discursive-affective forces (Barad, 2012).

This work performs an iterative, ethico-onto-epistemological engagement with posthumanism, and Barad's (2007) theoretical framework of agential-realism, in order to disrupt, dislodge and shift, dominant humanistic ways of knowing in relation to identity for counsellors-in-training. Through diffractively mapping entangled 'tear encounters', as emergent within the lived experience of a small group of counsellors-in-training, I argue for the reconceptualization of counsellor-in-training identity as a "phenomenal matter", a material-discursive practice, not an individual achievement (Barad, 2012, p. 32). Decentring humanism's self-contained individual, and reconfiguring counsellor-in-training identity in posthumanist terms, as an ongoing materialization of the world's iterative intra-activity, necessarily invites consideration of pedagogical implications for counsellor education. Engaging with the concept of a posthumanist pedagogy, and drawing on the methodology of collective biography taken up in this research, I imagine how counsellor education, and reflective practice, might be reconfigured to take account of a posthuman educative subject.

Before turning to attend to (the problem of) the current, dominant, humanist conceptualisations of the subject of counsellor education in the following chapter, I wish to situate the beginnings of this project. I do this, not with the intention of starting at the beginning, in a linear sense, but of attempting to make visible, and map, significant entangled forces intra-actively producing a way into, and co-constituting this thesis. In particular, I attend to my history as a counsellor/psychologist

migrating into an academic identity as a counsellor educator, and to the history of counsellor education in Aotearoa, New Zealand, the context of this research. Finally, in this introduction, I offer an outline, or map, to introduce the reader to the thesis chapters.

### **Finding my way into this project**

When I began this project of exploration into the lived experience<sup>1</sup> and identity formation of counsellors-in-training, I was in the midst of my own transitions in relation to professional identity. I came to conceptualise myself as being in a “a transitional space between the per(form)ing of old and new identities” (Barraclough, 2014, p, 363). I had recently been appointed to an academic position as a counsellor educator, having previously worked primarily as a psychologist, counsellor, and most recently, a clinical educator, for over fifteen years. I imagined the writing of my first academic paper in my new position as a “moment, among other moments”, which “might come to represent an arriving, a merging or an integration, which foreshadows a becoming” (p. 363). These imaginings spoke of “deeply felt and specifically liberal-humanist desires to be taken up” by others, and myself, as an appropriate and competent academic subject (Davies & Gannon, 2006a, p. 172).

I explored this experience, at the very beginning of my research, through the use of ‘poetries’ as a method of inquiry (Brogden, 2010; Richardson, 1994; Richardson, 2010; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). Such a method provided a way of exploring different aspects, dimensions, and relationships with, my research topic (Richardson, 1994). I was drawn to poetry for its capacity to engage with the multiplicity and complexity of our social worlds, without needing to reduce or categorize experience, rather, seeing the possibilities for it to “open the text to interpretation and destabilize the “coherent” narrative....” (Fitzpatrick, 2012, p. 9), and “to leave the meaning open” (Ellis, 2004,

---

<sup>1</sup> Lived experience is defined as “that which can be known through the five senses” (Richardson, 1997, p. 66), rather than any objective reality.

p. 203). The political power of poetry (Holman-Jones, 2005), “to challenge canonical social science discourse...to transform us personally, open up our research practices, as well as teach us about injustice, encouraging us to join in the struggle”, was central also to my desire to experiment with poetry’s possibilities (Ellis, 2004, p. 204), and continues to be throughout this thesis, in my use of poems. Apart from enabling me to use this exploration of my own lived experience of migrating identities to further think into the lived experience of my research participants, this use of poetics was significant for what their analysis highlighted (Barracough, 2014). I clearly recognised in my own words both the potency, and the myth, of the liberal-humanist subject. This became most evident to me in my analysis of the following poem (p. 370):

### **Doubt**

Today, the gap is wide  
I flick between your words,  
    associate professor,  
    on the page  
and the apps on my iPad,  
    ‘Dictionary’ and ‘Wikipedia’.

I am  
    lost  
    in  
    translation.

Excitement  
‘your abstract has been accepted’  
now tempered with  
    fear  
the abstract  
    was the best bit.

Models of perfection  
    are viewed  
    from a great distance.  
How can I  
    traverse  
this crossing

with only  
the clothes on my back,  
and my offspring  
in tow?

I recognised in my words those liberal-humanist desires to be taken up by others, and myself, as unique and individual (Davies & Gannon, 2006b). I noted my view of myself as a solitary, self-contained 'I', engaged, through effort and will, in traversing the (linear) distance toward 'models of perfection', which seemed eternally out of reach, even more so with mothering in tow. Such ideas of myself all spoke of humanism's individual subject, of that rational, autonomous, "solitary and heroic" (p. 176) subject, where becoming competent, forming my academic identity, could only be achieved through will, reason and hard work alone (and maybe some luck). However, through engaging with poststructural ideas in analysis of the poem (Monk, Winslade, Crocket & Epston, 1997; Davies & Gannon, 2006a), I recognised the illusion of the humanist subject, in its denial of the real and complex social and cultural contexts through which I was constituted, and in my dependence on the power of others to name me competent and appropriate (Barraclough, 2014).

Given that students entering postgraduate counselling programmes are often transitioning into study from a previous career and are often 'mature' students<sup>2</sup>, I surmised that the metaphor of 'transitional space', with the resulting doubt, confusion and uncertainty, may be equally applicable to their lived experience. In addition, I was interested in dispelling the illusion of the humanist subject, and instead working with counsellors-in-training to make visible, and thus revisable, the discourses through which they made meaning, and made themselves (Davies, Brown, Gannon,

---

<sup>2</sup> In this research (see chapter two) this is the case for seven of the eight participants, with an average age of 48 years. Examples from other studies of counsellors-in-training note average ages of participants as 40 (Nelson & Jackson, 2003), 32.7 (Auxier, Hughes & Kline (2003), and 34.1 (Maruniakova, Rihacek & Roubal, 2017). Folkes- Skinner, Elliot & Wheeler (2010) report on research with counsellor-in-training, "Margaret (not her real name) (who) was a 50-year-old woman with a professional business background of 15 years" (p. 85). Obviously, I have taken examples to show a trend, and have not seen, nor completed, a statistical analysis of this.

Honan, Laws, Mueller-Rockstroh & Petersen, 2004). As a counsellor educator, coming to understand and conceptualise this experience for the counsellors-in-training I was working with, and the implications for our collective practices of teaching and learning, was a strong impetus for me in undertaking this research.

In addition, in my therapeutic work as a psychologist and counsellor, I have been strongly influenced by, and committed to, understanding the experiences and possibilities for change with my clients in social constructionist and poststructural terms (e.g. Burr, 1995; 2015; Derrida, 1981; Foucault, 1979), working, and training, within the therapeutic frameworks of systemic, solution focused and narrative therapies (de Shazer, 1988; de Shazer, Kim Berg, Lipchik, Nunnally, Molnar, Gingerich & Weiner-Davis, 1986; Monk et al., 1997; White & Epston, 1990). As such, I understood clients' lived experiences as being co-constituted in the broader socio-political contexts of their lives and relationships, and mediated through language (White & Epston, 1990). I understood client change to be a collaborative, co-constructed, relational process. I drew on the premises of narrative and solution focused therapies in that while the narratives we construct around our lives, through the discourses available to us, have real effects on our lives, they "do not encompass the full richness of our lived experience" (Monk, 1997, p. 13). The co-creative practices of this orientation to counselling offers an invitation to clients to deconstruct and re-story alternative and preferred pasts, presents and futures, "unearthing dormant competencies, talents, abilities and resources" (p. 24).

Working within these frameworks, I developed a way of being - sometimes called a 'stance' - in relation to my clients, encompassing particular postmodern ways of understanding the therapeutic process (Monk, 1997). For example, I eschew the notion of universal truths about clients' experiences, being interested instead in local, historical, situated knowledges. This requires me to take a non-expert, not-knowing position, in relation to client ways of knowing, and maintain a strong commitment to practices of respectful curiosity, and tentative ways of knowing (Monk,

1997; Thomas, 2013). While a very brief outline, these statements offer some context to my philosophical orientation to understanding client lived experience and processes of change in counselling. Coming to teach on a counsellor education programme offering the solution focused model of therapy to its students was a clear theoretical fit for me. However, I soon recognized that, as an educator working with students, not clients, and in an educative rather than counselling process, I needed to reorient myself to the work I was engaged in. This led to a desire to understand the lived experience of counsellors-in-training, processes of teaching, learning and identity formation, in theoretical ways consistent with both my philosophical orientation and that of the model being taught on the programme – i.e. social constructionist. However, as I outline in chapter one, the lack of literature conceptualising the lived experience of counsellors-in-training from anything but a humanistic orientation, provided further significant impetus for embarking on this research.

Such literature did not engage with the relational, socio-political contexts co-constituting the counsellors'-in-training own identities, and bore no relation to social constructionist ideas of identity which we were espousing in the context of teaching/learning about solution focused counselling. This seemed contradictory to our underpinning philosophical aims, and a philosophical disconnect for our students. Hence, just as I drew on theoretical and philosophical understandings of the self, experience and processes of change in my work as a counsellor, I embarked on this research in order to be able to do the same for my new work as a counsellor educator in relation to counsellors-in-training.

### **An ontological turn**

As a thesis should, ultimately this project takes me far beyond the place I started and into territory I could not have imagined in setting out. In desiring to learn about the lived experiences of counsellors-in-training and offer better conceptualisations of this experience in relation to

migrating, and forming new, identities, I entered the theoretical realm of posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013, 2016; Barad, 2007). Moving beyond my known understandings of the discursive formation of the self and the socially constructed nature of knowing, this thesis engages with the ontological turn occurring across the social sciences (Lather, 2016). This turn, after the cultural turn, encompasses a bringing back of the materiality of the world, not in a Marxist sense but, in feminist terms, it is more in relation to the body and the natural world (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b; Lather, 2016). The linguistic and cultural turn has enabled complex and productive analyses of the “interconnections between power, knowledge, subjectivity and language” (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008a, p. 1), as taken up in counselling approaches such as narrative and solution focused therapies. However, this new onto-epistemology opens up fundamental questions about ontology, epistemology, ethics, politics, and the intra-active, rather than dualistic, relationship between matter and meaning, the material and the discursive (Barad, 2007).

In this thesis, engaging in particular with Karen Barad’s (2007) posthumanist framework of agential realism, I put such theory to work in order to interrupt, and reconfigure, “both radical constructivism and the notion of independently existing individuals” which currently frame theories of subjectivity and agency for both researchers, and counsellors-in-training (Lather, 2016, p. 2). This leads to an inevitable, posthumanist, rethinking also of counsellor education, with attention given also to bodily, material, and affective forces as (intra-)active in the educational and therapeutic encounters of counsellors-in-training. A posthumanist orientation invites counsellors-in-training to think beyond known, habitual, and normative reproductions of identity and practice. As Winslade says of therapeutic practice, and I suggest in relation to counsellor education, such practice “has to continually reinvent itself, and redescribe itself, in order to stay relevant and vital” (Winslade, 2009, p. 332). It/we must be equipped to respond to the ever changing conditions of life, and to seek out the most sophisticated analyses of what is happening in the entangled world of which we are a part. Before I proceed to outline the work that each of the chapters in this thesis



aims to do in relation to that which I have outlined above, I wish to situate this work in the counsellor education context in which it was undertaken.

### **The research context – counsellor education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

The following overview of the history of counsellor education in this country demonstrates a philosophical shift from original notions of counsellor training, to current conceptualisations of professional education, consistent with shifts in other fields, such as teacher education. What was previously “seen as *training* – a more limited vocational process of teaching skills – later became professional *education*, acknowledging the wide professional responsibilities of counsellors and signalling a philosophical shift” (Crocket, Flanagan, Winslade & Kotzé, 2011, p. 5). Such a shift requires attention beyond ‘skills’ to matters of curriculum and pedagogy, and to meeting the needs of both the “changing student group...and the changing circumstances...of life in New Zealand” (p. 5). In a field where the majority of literature still refers to students of these programmes as ‘counsellors-in-training’, it is clear that research attention to pedagogical matters of counsellor ‘education’ is still required. The following section outlines this history, before I return to consider my use of the term ‘counsellor-in-training’ throughout this research.

The development of counsellor education in New Zealand has been similar to the UK and the USA, with its origins mainly in vocational guidance in the 1930s. At this time, under a Labour government extending social welfare provisions and instituting policies promoting full employment, adequate incomes, accessible health provisions, housing opportunities and free education, a state-funded vocational guidance service was established in schools (Hermansson & Webb, 1993; Miller, 2014). By the 1960s, guidance and counselling in education began with the creation of guidance counsellor positions in secondary schools, with an emphasis on “remedial-adjustment functions dealing mainly with ‘problem’ students in the school” (Hermansson & Webb,

1993, p. 216). This was seen as a response to the perceived increase in social, educational, and behaviour challenges being exhibited by “troubled adolescents” (Miller, 2014, p. 104).

Those appointed to these vocational and guidance counsellor positions were recruited from amongst already experienced teachers, with responsibility for counselling training soon contracted to newly developed programmes with the Education departments/faculties of universities. In 1973, the first university-based training course began, and by the 1980s counsellor training programmes were in existence at five of the six universities across New Zealand. Selection of students was carried out, not by the “university trainers”, but by the “schools who appointed guidance counsellors in consultation with Department of Education Inspectors with responsibility for Guidance” (Crocket et al., p. 4). Programmes were originally postgraduate diplomas consisting of a year of academic study followed by a year of practicum work in the school, eventually moving to Masters programmes, initially in Education, latterly a Master of Counselling. Interestingly, Crocket et al. (2011) point out curriculum tensions from the outset with these homogeneous University programmes largely following US models of school counselling developed in response to their particular US context. That is, “at a time when the agenda in the US was to identify talent for universities – particularly in maths and science – in the context of the Cold War and the space race with the USSR” (p. 4). In contrast, in New Zealand, guidance counsellor positions were established in response to social needs, in particular to growing concerns about “juvenile delinquency and teenage pregnancy” (p. 4) and a governmental commitment to ensure social stability.

Through a similar time period, a second form of counsellor training, likened to “an apprentice style training” was also developing (p. 6). Marriage Guidance emerged in the post-World War II years, and similar to the UK, developed in response to the effects on families of the social conditions of the time. With funding and oversight from the Department of Justice, Marriage Guidance offered relationship education programmes and counselling for relationship difficulties, with volunteers

recruited from the community and offered in-house training. In a similar way, throughout the 1970s and 1980s other agencies developed counselling services through recruitment and in-house training, such as Lifeline, Youthline, and other social service agencies often connected to and sponsored by churches (Crocket et al., 2011; Miller, 2014).

The social policies of this period continued for almost fifty years until the early 1980s, providing for guidance and counselling primarily delivered through the large state institutions of education, health, justice and labour. For various reasons, including local and international economic factors, and the difficulty of sustaining the costs of the welfare state, challenges arose against a continuation with the same policies and ideology which had resulted in “large bureaucracies, centralized control, excessive state intervention, and overregulation” (Hermansson & Webb, 1993, p. 214). In a little over a decade, the Labour government of the 1980s, along with the National (Conservative) government that succeeded them, set about implementing policy that sought to dismantle the welfare state and reconstitute it with ‘the free market state’, neoliberal policies underpinned by free market monetary policies. This had the effect of removing or lessening state responsibility, along with deregulation and decentralization. Such ideological and policy changes were to have major impacts across society, not least for mental health, guidance and counselling, which continue to be seen and felt to this day, with underfunding of services for mental health, lack of available, and affordable, treatment and counselling options, and an “under-resourced, over-worked and stressed mental health workforce” (Elliot, 2017).

The effect of this loosening of ties between the (now) Ministry of Education and counsellor education programmes also had significant implications. Decentralisation saw schools and other social service agencies obtain the right to appoint their own counsellors, and a market sprung up for counsellors in private practice with access to various third party funding. The deregulation in education led also to the significant growth in the number of counsellor education programmes, in particular undergraduate ones across the tertiary sectors including private training organisations.

This proliferation continues to raise challenges around issues such as equivalence of qualifications, access to professional membership of the national counselling body, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC), programme accreditation, and tensions around cooperation and competition amongst programmes (Crocket et al., 2011).

Alongside these changes, has been the ongoing development of curricula in the postgraduate university programmes, the site of this research. This has entailed a shift away from the original imported US content focused curricula to more locally integrated approaches to counselling. For example, the University of Canterbury offered a New Zealand version of a micro-skills approach, later introducing the solution focused approach, which remains the current model taught in the, now, Master of Counselling programme (Crocket et al., 2011).

Tensions and challenges remain in the contemporary environment of counsellor education in New Zealand, not least in regard to the apparent control of curriculum and standards by a number of stakeholders, including professional organisations, government funding agencies and departments, employers, national qualification and curriculum administration bodies, the academic institutions, counsellor educators, and, of course, students. Counsellor education continues to be shaped by its history, these forces, and ongoing changing socio-political conditions. (Crocket et al., 2011). The research described in this thesis, conducted with students undertaking a Master of Counselling programme (at one of the five original universities offering counselling education) is thus situated in, and influenced by, this historical, and contemporary context.

At this point, I want to comment on the use of the term ‘counsellors-in-training’ throughout this thesis. I have adopted this term due to its common use within the literature to collectively describe a particular group of students, namely those embarking on counsellor education in a post-graduate programme, usually at Masters level. Given, particularly in New Zealand, the proliferation of training and education programmes now available, and the recognition of the variety of curricula,

philosophical, and aims of these programmes, my aim in using this term, is to situate this research within this one particular educative area. However, drawing on a “Derridean politics of metaphor” (Gale & Wyatt, 2007, p. 806), I propose putting the ~~counsellor-in-training~~ *sous rature*, or ‘under erasure’, in order to simultaneously recognise and question the term’s meaning and accepted use, and to think this subject differently, against the grain of the well-known, taken for granted subject of phenomenology and humanism (Davies, 2010), and against the notion of training in preference for that of education.

### **Overview of this thesis**

The main focus of this thesis, therefore, is to explore what might be produced in thinking beyond the limits of predominantly available humanist conceptualisations of the lived experience and developing identity of counsellors-in-training, through engaging theoretically, in particular, with posthumanism and Karen Barad’s framework of agential-realism. The resulting reconfiguring of this educative subject of counsellor education naturally invites a consideration, too, of implications for teaching and learning in counsellor education. The thesis is structured in four parts, enacting, in part, onto-epistemological shifts which occurred during the undertaking of the thesis. Part one, titled ‘beginnings’ includes this introduction, the following chapter considering the current research literature relevant to the experience of undertaking training to become a counsellor, and the subsequent initial methodology outlining the generation of data with participants.

In chapter one, I examine available research exploring the lived experience of counsellors-in-training and ways such experiences have been conceptualised. Consideration is given to how professional identity formation is understood, and limitations are identified in relation to the primarily humanistic conceptualisations of both the lived experience and professional identity formation for counsellors-in-training. Following this, I outline the methodological approach of collective biography used in this research and the particular iteration which evolved, including

participants, data generation and ethical issues. Collective biography was chosen at the time for its capacity to generate an exploration of both individual, and collective, memories and experiences of encounters of significance to the counsellor-in-training participants. Theoretically, it offered a way in which counsellor-in-training participants could flesh out moments of their lived experience in order to examine the discursive contexts through which their counsellor subjectivities were constituted, my initial aim. This second chapter outlines the aims, ethics, participants, and processes of these group workshops.

Part two, titled 'onto-epistemological shifts' marks a diffractive moment in this research encounter, a shift of knowing-in-being, which reconfigures the ethico-onto-epistemology of this research project. I start in chapter three, by giving an account of a turn toward a posthuman onto-epistemology, in particular drawing on Karen Barad's (2007) posthumanist performative framework of agential realism. This thinking comes to underpin the ongoing theorising of this research project in relation to methodology, researcher subjectivity and data analysis to understandings of the nature of knowledge itself and how we come to know in relation with and as part of, rather than about, the world. I outline Barad's account of how material-discursive practices come to matter, of the role of human *and* non-human forces, the material *and* discursive, natural *and* cultural factors, in rethinking notions of knowledge, identity, causality, agency and ethics. I do this in order to situate the remainder of this research project within such an onto-epistemology.

Given this radical shift, I return to methodology in chapter four, and in particular to a rethinking of notions and practices of reflexivity in attending to questions of legitimation of knowledge, and researcher positioning in relation to knowledge production. I proceed to lay out the challenges and tensions of methodological reflexivity, arguing for a shift from the optics of reflection/practice of reflexivity to one of diffraction (Haraway, 1992; Barad, 2007) in our research practices. Implicit in this, and which I explore, is a reconceptualising also of my researcher subjectivity, which, in a diffractive analysis, entails a transcorporeal, embodied, becoming-with in relation to, at least, the

data (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). In exploring this, my aim is to argue for the usefulness of a diffractive rather than reflexive methodology, as well to further situate this research in the broader onto-epistemological framework of post-humanism. Following on from this, in chapter five, I explore further methodological implications of aligning my research with posthumanism, and diffraction as concept and method. I do this in order to envisage other tools I can think with, in entering what feels like such unknown terrain, engaging with the potential of the *analytic device*. I draw on Suchman's (2012) definition of an analytic device as an inventive method, an analytic resource, through which things are made, and proceed to explore and explain three particular analytic devices – the *poem*, *pattern*, and *(re)(con)figuration* - and how these might be productive in this research project.

Part three marks a turn to data analysis as thinking with posthumanist theory. I begin with chapter six, where I explore and document my beginning engagements with data analysis, my return to the individual interviews and collective biography groups after significant engagement with posthumanist theory, with writing, thinking and reconfiguring methodological practices in light of such theory. I document my unpreparedness for what emerges in bringing theory into relation with the data, with my researcher subjectivity and with a re-turning to the voices and faces of my participants. I outline how I was challenged to let go of the post-structural subject and re-engage with matter, with what came to matter, in thinking instead with material-discursive practices in relation to subject formation for counsellors-in-training.

The remainder of part three of the thesis includes two main data analysis chapters – seven and eight, along with two interludes. An interlude is an “intervening or interruptive period, space or event” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/interlude>), when an “activity is different from what comes before or after it” (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/interlude>). I use the two interludes in a diffractive sense to signify an interruption to the focus of the data analysis chapters. I call these interludes a diffractive interrupting in order to disrupt the linear and

discrete nature of emerging knowledge which the text, at face value, performs. It is diffractive in the sense that the interludes are intra-active with the chapters, with each emerging as particular material configurations of their entangled intra-relating (Barad, 2007).

Interlude one marks a clear turn toward the material-discursive, an opening up to intra-active flows and currents, to material-discursive practices and diffractive patterns. What began to ‘glow’ (Maclure, 2010) in the researcher-data-participant-research entanglement was the materiality of participant tears. I use this interlude to explore what it means to think tears as an affective-material-discursive practice, as an embodied, entangled dynamic relationality (Barad, 2007, Wetherell, 2012), and to outline a brief exploration of historical and contemporary conceptualisations of tears, crying and weeping in the psychological and cultural studies literature, in order to situate my current conceptualisations. In chapter seven I begin a diffractive, experimental mapping of the presence of tears in counselling encounters as spoken about by participants in the collective biography groups. Such tear encounters are re-presented as poems, in order to further enact, or ‘cut together-apart’ (Barad, 2007) the contingent and entangled “processes of *patterning*” (Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 786) in the spacetime-mattering of tears. Moving between the words of my participants, re-presented in the poems, and, in particular, Barad’s agential realist, posthumanist framework, I explore tears as a mark of an embodied alterity, as intra-actively produced - enabled and constrained - by a multiplicity of forces, including human and non-human ones, and as enacting the ongoing (re)configuring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity.

Following on from this, I began to think also about the im/possibility of tears, tears as made intelligible through both presence and absence. I explore this turn toward an articulation of tears as a ghostly presence, a present-absence, an invisible yet potent force for counsellors-in-training, in the second interlude. I use this interlude to return to Barad (2010) in order to understand what might be produced in thinking with her descriptions of the hauntological nature of quantum entanglements. Following on from this, in chapter eight, having conceptualised ghostly tears as



those which are experienced as indeterminate or undecidable, yet which become determinate in their intra-active present-absence, I proceed to map the multiple forces enacting both of these notions of tears, as articulated by my participants in relation to their counselling encounters. Ultimately, through this mapping of tears as present and ghostly, I suggest that tears, far from being reduced to an emotional response, can best be described as enactments of ethical, social, material, affective, discursive and political relations.

Such analysis enabled me to bring forth not just the complex and intra-active material-discursive forces at work in the materialisation of tears, but through tears, the forces at work then, also, in the ongoing and iterative (re)(con)figuring of counsellor-in-training subjectivities. This analysis clearly worked to disrupt dominant conceptualisations of the autonomous, rational, individual educative subject of counsellor education. In part four, I turn to the pedagogical implications for counsellor education of this posthumanist reconceptualization of the educative, counsellor-in-training, subject. If the educative subject is not that autonomous individual, but is reconfigured as an ethical, vital, moving embodiment of multiple affective-material-discursive relations, then different conceptual tools and practices are required for education. In continuing to draw on the research with the participants in this study, I reconceptualise the processes they engaged in, through the collective biography groups, as diffractive practice, underpinned by posthumanist pedagogical theory-practice of, for example, emergent listening. Such a reconceptualization has implications, too, for counsellor educators and requires a reorientation to both the educative subject and the purpose of counsellor education, as well as to the theory-practice of teaching and learning. As I outline, this is a discombobulating experience, with its requirements to work against both the individual subject of humanism, and the dominant notion of learnification evident in the current socio-political climate, together co-constituting an outcome focused curriculum and similarly oriented pedagogical practice (Biesta, 2009). However, despite these and other challenges, I conclude, that, if we are to continue to task counsellor education with the aim of producing

graduates capable of participating in, ethically and responsibly, the reconfiguring of the “material-social relations of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 35) and of those in it, of being responsive to the possibilities that might help all, human and non-human, to flourish, then there is no question of not proceeding.

## CHAPTER ONE

### The problem of the subject of counsellor education

Recent commentary in the counselling and psychotherapy literature on the lived experience of counsellors-in-training continues to emphasize the need to learn more about the experiences and challenges counsellors encounter during their training years (Grafanaki, 2010b; Pierce, 2016). In addition, it is suggested that the theory and practice on training novice therapists is fairly outdated (Pascual-Leone, Rodriguez-Rubio & Metler, 2013) and that very little scholarly work has focused on conceptualising the learning and training environment in regard to counsellor preparation programmes (Lau & Ng, 2014). Folkes-Skinner, Elliot and Wheeler (2010) go so far as to claim that no studies exist that directly investigate the experience of trainee counsellors, and the ways in which training programmes help them to develop as practitioners, and more recently still, that no research was found investigating the changes experienced by individual trainees over the course of their education (Folkes-Skinner, 2016).

It is suggested that while researchers “struggle to grasp the complexities and processes involved in the development of new counsellors” (Grafanaki, 2010a, p. 81) many students in such training programmes continue to experience potentially negative impacts, such as a sense of incompetence, confusion, increased anxiety, stress and even burnout (Grafanaki, 2010b; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Folkes-Skinner et al., 2010; Truett, 2001; Kumary & Baker, 2008; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 2003b; Auxier, Hughes and Kline, 2003). Additionally, there is a body of research which has suggested that trained or experienced counsellors are no more effective than inexperienced clinicians, or those without training, and, as such, it is time for counsellor education to revise the common, outdated, practices related to the clinical training of counsellors (Whiston & Coker, 2000). Around the same time, researchers and counsellor educators criticized the field for “emphasizing technique and the training of skills over other important aspects of counsellor and

therapist development, such as relationship quality and the person of the counsellor or therapist” (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998, p. 76; Winslade, Monk & Drewery, 1997). This shift in thinking away from the primary emphasis in counsellor education as skills training becomes more relevant in light of the ongoing research into factors which influence client outcome – including extra-therapeutic variables (40%), hope, expectancy, and placebo effects (15%), specific therapy model and techniques (15%), and common factors (30%) (Lambert, 1986, 1992; Lambert & Barley, 2001; Leibert & Dunne-Bryant, 2015, Wampold, 2001). ‘Common factors’ refer to the elements that exist in all forms of psychotherapy, and are those factors most closely associated with therapist activity, or client-therapist relationship factors. There is a significant, growing body of evidence that it is this shared group of core factors, emphasizing the collaborative, relational work of therapist and client, which are most significant in contributing to positive client change (Hubble, Duncan, Miller & Wampold, 2010; Lambert & Barley, 2001; Wampold, 2010).

Such evidence goes against a still prevailing view that “to be an accomplished psychotherapist one must be well versed in evidence based treatments (EBT), or in those models that have been shown in randomised clinical trials (RCT) to be efficacious for different “disorders”” (Duncan, 2013, p. 4). In fact, Hubble et al. (2010) state the evidence is now indisputable – change resulting from psychotherapy derives from key factors that transcend all approaches. “The data are unequivocal: All treatment approaches have won, and all deserve prizes” (p. 33). What this means is that much of the variability of client outcome in counselling and therapy is actually attributable to the potency of the client, therapist and therapeutic alliance, rather than the choice of therapeutic approach. However, despite the numbers, percentages and large body of research attempting to quantify such a process, the common factors are not “invariant, proportionally fixed, or neatly additive”, rather they might be better described as “interdependent, fluid, and dynamic’ in a reciprocal, contextual, relation therapeutic process (p. 34).

Given the significance over the years of researching the efficacy of particular models of psychotherapy with clients, the associated focus in counsellor ‘training’ on learning the ‘skills’ of evidence based techniques, and the recent shift in focus toward the more potent role of the therapist and therapeutic alliance in therapy outcomes, it seems timely to revisit the counsellor education literature, particularly in relation to the developing counsellor or therapist. Indeed, Orlinksky et al. (2005), recognising that the study of psychotherapies has been favoured over the study of psychotherapists, suggest the resulting paucity of research is due in part to this implicit bias in thinking about therapy “basically as a set of methods, techniques, or procedures that are efficacious, in and of themselves”. That is, that therapists, “when properly trained, are more or less interchangeable” (p. 5). When we think of counselling and therapy as a professional-personal relationship, where multiple, fluid, and complex factors interact to influence the process and outcomes for therapists and clients, reconsidering the education and training of counsellors, beyond technique, becomes a valuable and essential area of research.

The following discussion and review of literature has thus been shaped by, and in response to, a number of questions centred on the individual who embarks on and proceeds with, education to become a counsellor. Who is the individual, or subject situated at the centre of counsellor education, the educative human subject? How does this individual, counsellor-in-training subject, become a counsellor? What are the processes, experiences, changes she/he/they go through in this educative experience and how does/might counsellor education respond to shaping these experiences, this process? In attempting to make sense of the literature, and in order to reflect the shifts emerging in this project, I have structured this chapter into three main sections. The first section is underpinned by current, and historical, taken for granted, dominant ways of understanding the individual at the centre of counsellor training. That is, this section reviews literature which explores the experience and development of the counsellor-in-training as that humanistic individual, emerging from a psychological discipline characterized by “ahistorical,

universalising, internal and depoliticising trends of explanation” (Hook, 2005, p. 28), also described as the individualised subject of phenomenology (Davies, 2010), “on whom we have based so much of our thinking about being” (p. 54). This is a counsellor-in-training whose being as a self-contained, “self-reflective, self-thematizing human subject” (Willig, Potter, Wickham, Kendall & Hook, 2005, p. 32) is taken for granted in that he/she/they are atheorized. This counsellor-in-training emerges from a predominantly American and humanistic counselling literature, underpinned by Rogerian person-centred counselling practices at the heart of training programmes (Rogers, 1957/2007; 1961). In this section, I explore the themes generated from this body of research on the experiences of counsellors-in-training, as well as conceptualisations of development, change and identity during this period of professional education. I discuss some implications for counsellor education emerging from this body of literature, before finally considering the limitations of humanistic conceptualisations of the individual. In general, all of the literature reviewed pertains to post-graduate education programmes in counselling, which are generally Masters programmes, consistent with the programme of the participants in this current research.

The second section follows the turn in counselling and counsellor education to postmodern, social constructionist and post-structural approaches, including Narrative and Solution-focused therapies (White & Epston, 1990; de Shazer, 1988; de Shazer et al., 1986). In this section I consider the literature discussing the conceptualisations of the counsellor-in-training subject, in particular their identity formation as relational, co-constructed, storied and as always situated in relations of power (Crocket, Kotzé & Flintoff, 2007), along with identified implications for counsellor education. At this point I consider the most significant, current pedagogical practice in place in counsellor education, that of reflective practice, which has come to be seen as necessary due to the multiple elements, complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in counselling practice.

In the final section I consider the shift emerging currently in the social sciences literature toward conceptualisation of the posthuman subject (Braidotti, 2006), of identity as more than internally subjective, and more than discursively produced and performed. What has been termed the “posthuman predicament” in a world of “fast-moving technological advances and also of contemporary political developments” in relation to economic globalization, the war on terror, and the earth’s changing ecosystem has significant implications for rethinking human subjectivity and ethical relations “worthy of the complexity of our times” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 13). Some in the field of counselling, in particular those engaging with the systemic and narrative traditions, have begun to incorporate the thinking from the writing of French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze (1994; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) into conceptualisations of therapeutic practice (Sermijn & Loots, 2015; Winslade, 2009). However, although recognising the exciting possibilities for such experimentation in relation to therapeutic work with clients in systemic therapies, Semijn & Loots (2015) note its application to be embryonic. As far as I am aware, there has been no application of posthumanist thinking to conceptualisations of the counsellor-in-training subject, or counsellor education pedagogy. Aligning with Winslade (2009), who suggests that “therapeutic practice has to continually reinvent itself, and redescribe itself, in order to stay relevant and vital”, that it must seek out the most sophisticated analyses of what is happening in the world in which we live and work” (p. 332) I propose the same for the field of counsellor education and the emerging counsellor-in-training subject.

### **The humanistic individual of counsellor education**

The majority of, albeit relatively limited (Pierce, 2016), research into the lived experiences of counsellors-in-training has been carried out with a humanistic understanding of the individual. Its aim has been to better understand the educational experience and process, recognising that training to be a counsellor is likely to be cognitively and emotionally demanding, complex and transformative (Folkes-Skinner, 2016, Furr & Carroll, 2003, Wagner & Hill, 2015). Various

theories have been put forward in an attempt to explain this, including the transition from lay helper to student to novice practitioner (Folkes-Skinner et al, 2010; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003), going through a process of “both intra-psychic and outward practical adaption” (Howard, Inman & Altman, 2006), the challenges of experiential learning, suggested to lead to disequilibrium and discomfort (Furr & Carroll, 2003), and the requirement to actively, and experientially, integrate personal and professional knowledge and selves in the development of a professional identity as a counsellor (Auxier et al., 2003; Wagner & Hill, 2015). Counsellors’ identities have been theorised to differ from identities formed in many other professions, due to their development of a ‘therapeutic self’, a “unique personal blend of the developed professional and personal selves” (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992, p. 507; Auxier et al., 2003). The following discussion explores this research in more detail, in order to understand some of the current thinking around the experience, processes and development of a counsellor identity during counsellor education.

The recent, and pertinent, research looking specifically at individuals’ experience has explored the existential experiences of counsellors-in-training (Pierce, 2016), how a trainee counsellor changes at the start of training (Folkes-Skinner, 2016; Folkes-Skinner et al., 2010), inner experience such as feelings and concerns (Hill, Sullivan, Knox & Schlosser, 2007), and more focused areas such as experience of impasse (De Stefano, D’Luso, Blake, Fitzpatrick, Drapeau, & Chamodraka, 2007), self-confidence (Bischoff, 1997; Bischoff & Barton, 2002), and stress and psychological distress of the counsellor-in-training (Kumary & Baker, 2008, Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003; Truell, 2001). Each of these pieces of research offers not only evidence of the lived experience during training, but reflections on the significance for the process of the developing counsellor-in-training and implications for education programmes to consider. I’ll briefly outline this limited research in order to begin to consider what we already know about the complexity of this experience, and why continued research is necessary.



One of the most recent papers in this area begins by affirming that “(l)ittle research exists about the lived experiences of counsellors-in-training during their practicum and internship experiences” (Pierce, 2016, p. 135). Drawing on an existential understanding of human beings, and their “inner nature” as being simultaneously unique to the individual and universal, Pierce uses a psychological, phenomenological approach to explore the existential experiences encountered by five counsellors-in-training during their practicum and/or internship experiences. A number of interesting themes emerged. Anxiety related to the transition from classroom based training and experience to working in a professional setting was present in a surprising way for participants. Pierce suggests this was connected to a recognition of their personal limitations in relation to the reality and magnitude of counselling work. Participants described emotional and mental exhaustion, connected with guilt arising in the face again of the responsibilities of professional counselling combined with a growing awareness of personal limitations. Also present were multiple moments of uncertainty in their professional abilities, and questioning of their own capabilities, related to fear of others’ perceptions. This fear resulted in a reluctance to address this experience with peers and supervisors. Worry, loneliness, and self-doubt were also noted as existential themes in the experiences of these participants. Of note were also the ways participants reported these challenging experiences were mediated, including through trusting relationships with faculty who could normalise their experience, and with peers who’s sharing of experience seemed to offer some relief from the anxiety. Theorised through an existential lens, Pierce suggests participants began the “personal work of awareness of the authentic self and acceptance of responsibility for their choices, particularly as they related to being genuine in the counselling session” (p. 148).

Work by Folkes, Skinner and colleagues (Folkes-Skinner, 2016; Folkes-Skinner et al., 2010), has focused on looking at individual trainee counsellors’ experience, with an emphasis on how a trainee changes, using a series of semi-structured interviews during the first three to six months of professional training. The authors note that findings were consistent with other group studies, that

is, “training to be a therapist is stressful and... inevitably involves significant shifts in identity, self-knowledge and confidence” (Folkes-Skinner et al., 2010, p. 89-90). In addition, Folkes-Skinner (2016) concludes that “professional counsellor training can provoke problematic emotional experiences and that their assimilation may lead to personal and professional growth” (p. 168). In this case, she advocates for the use of ‘personal development groups’ for trainees, over personal therapy, citing additional research which suggests such groups help trainees to increase self-awareness, emotional resourcefulness, and improve interpersonal skills, in relatively short time frames.

De Stefano et al. (2007) chose to explore trainees’ experiences of being stuck under the premise that understanding more about ‘challenging moments’ would yield further knowledge of the process of counsellor development. They suggest that trainees learn and develop higher level competencies from the experiences of such challenges. Eight students in their first practicum course took part in the research and were interviewed at two points in time, first after they had identified experiencing a difficult moment with a client, and then again after they had received supervision about it. Three themes related to each interview emerged from the results. Trainees’ experiences at an impasse were categorized as not knowing/not doing, experience of negative affect, and experience of failure. Feelings of incompetence, confusion, doubt and negative affect were typical trainee experiences. The researchers concluded that supervision was a helpful process for addressing such intense and complex issues as experienced by the trainees, who were simultaneously trying to attend to client issues whilst learning and using clinical skills.

Bischoff & Barton’s (2002) research with 39 marriage and family counselling trainees looking at trainees’ development of self-confidence follows on from a pilot study (Bischoff, 1997). During this pilot study, thirteen beginning therapists completed monthly logs describing their experiences during their first three months in clinical placement. Data analysis revealed the primary developmental task during this time is the development of therapist confidence. In the follow up

study (Bischoff & Barton, 2002), telephone interviews with participants were conducted at the end of their twelve month clinical practicum inquiring, retrospectively, about influences on their development of clinical self-confidence whilst they undertook the practicum. Based on the responses, the researcher developed a three-stage model of trainee confidence development over the period of their year-long practicum. This was characterised by movement from anxiety about performance and fear of being found to be a fraud by clients, to trusting their own perceptions, to a fragile stabilization of self-confidence. They suggest the development of clinical confidence is the key developmental task faced by beginning counsellors.

There seems to be an expectation and normalising of the experience of counselling students in training being a stressful one. It is suggested that this stress is not due to academic demands, but to the combined clinical demands of beginning work with clients. Although this idea has been discussed in the literature, there has been a lack of published research on the 'negative' or 'stressful' experiences of students, particularly as directly reported by students (Truell, 2001). Truell's impetus to researching this comes from reports in the literature suggesting that, as a profession, counsellors have not always been successful in managing the negative effects of the work on themselves, with indications suggesting alcohol and drug abuse and rates of suicide among counsellors are of concern.

Truell's (2001) research focused specifically on what he termed the negative effects of learning counselling. Using an in-depth, semi-structured, qualitative interviewing method with six Diploma in Counselling graduates from a UK university, he inquired into the effects of learning counselling on their relationships, their experiences of stress and any ways the training programme had supported them in mitigating against the effects of stress. He concluded that counselling trainees do report experiencing significant negative feelings during their training, related both to changing relationships and unrealistic self-expectations. Interestingly, he reports that participants often identified the most stressful part of learning counselling was related, other literature would suggest,

to integrating the personal and professional selves. Participants reported “struggling with acting out all the skills of a counsellor and not feeling the same way on the inside” and “not letting myself be free to be myself. I didn’t/don’t know how to be myself and be a counsellor” (p. 82).

Whilst noting that he purposefully focused on negative aspects of learning counselling, and as such, the results are not set against a wider context of the trainee’s experiences, Truell nevertheless concludes that training programmes could benefit their students by incorporating a component on ‘becoming a counsellor’. Focusing exclusively on how the trainee is developing as a counsellor both personally and professionally, he suggests, would not only benefit the trainees but would also potentially provide much needed opportunities for further research in this area.

Kumary & Baker (2008) questioned just how necessary the various stresses of counselling training are, by conducting a postal survey with 109 UK counselling psychology trainees. They found that students reported stressors fairly evenly across the categories of ‘academic’ ‘placement’ and ‘personal and professional development’. Whilst the nature of the study (postal questionnaire) did not allow for in depth data, the researchers concluded that the trainees’ reports of stress levels and associated distress levels were unacceptably high. These authors challenged the discourse of the inevitability of stress that surrounds such training programmes and invited readers to usefully consider their remaining question: “do training programmes expose trainees to unacceptable stress levels while simultaneously promoting high levels of vulnerability/openness to experience?” (p. 26). Other educators and researchers, recognising the potentially harmful effects of stress on counselling students with increased risks of burnout, have begun to highlight the importance of offering tools for self-care, such as introducing mindfulness training into counsellor education (e.g. Christopher & Maris, 2010; Schure, Christopher & Christopher, 2008; Christopher, Christopher, Dunnagan & Schure, 2006; Maris, 2009), alternative and complementary self-care strategies (Wolf, Thompson, Thompson & Smith-Adcock, 2014), and wellness practices aimed at facilitating emotional intelligence (Testa & Sangganjanavanich, 2016). Researchers have noted multiple

positive effects of introducing mindfulness practices for counsellors-in-training, not only on student personal wellbeing, but also in relation to their professional relationships with clients, other interpersonal relationships, and professional development in general. Mindfulness is suggested as an antidote to many of the stressors identified above, with the counsellors-in-training showing less reactivity and automaticity, more inner awareness, and being able to incorporate changes in practice more quickly and with less self- recrimination (Christopher & Maris, 2010).

### **Theorisations of developmental processes**

Connected to this research on counsellor-in-training experiences, and the particular challenges which have been identified, is work which offers conceptualisations of this process of development during this seemingly fraught period. Some of the most widely cited work is that of Thomas Skovholt and Michael Rønnestad (1992; 1992/1995), who began a qualitative research project in 1986, interviewing one hundred therapists/counsellors, ranging from those in graduate school to those with 25 years of post-training experience, in order to better understand the developmental path over the career lifespan of therapists and counsellors. These authors have continued this work (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; 2013; Skovholt 2012), including revising their original conceptualisations (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; 2013) along with many other collaborations focused on the development of psychotherapists in relation to, for example, master or expert therapists (Jennings & Skovholt, 1999; Jennings, Goh, Skovholt, Hanson & Banerjee-Stevens, 2003) and practitioner resilience (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016). Of particular interest here, however, is their conceptualisation of a ‘phase model’ (revised from their original ‘stage model’) of counsellor development, and formulation of themes describing central processes of counsellor/therapist development, especially in relation to the early stages/phases.

Initially developing an eight stage model of counsellor development over the lifespan, this was eventually, for reasons of parsimony and clarity, collapsed into a six stage, renamed ‘phase model’, of counsellor development through a reviewing of the original data (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). These phases are: the lay helper phase, the beginning student phase, the advanced student phase, the novice professional phase, the experienced professional phase, and the senior professional phase. Of particular interest here are the beginning student phase, which is said to be characterised by initial excitement, combined with insecurity, apprehension, anxiety, challenge, and lack of confidence, and the advanced student phase, characterised by feeling pressure to do things even more perfectly than before, being conservative, cautious and excessively thorough, maintaining an external focus still of looking to models, but moving gradually to an internal focus (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Updated, again, to the ‘novice student phase’ (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2013), this is defined as the period from the “beginning of a graduate training programme in one of the helping fields through the second year of training, which normally encompasses “the beginning practicum” or its equivalents” (p. 55). The advanced student phase is the last part of graduate training, where the student is working as a therapist or counsellor in a practicum setting or internship. Both of these phases are consistent with the counsellor education programme of the student-participants of the current research.

While echoing the emotional challenges of previous research facing counsellors-in-training, Rønnestad and Skovholt draw on various developmental theories to conceptualise this “universality of experience” (Skovholt, 2012, p. ix). For example, they find Lerner’s (1986) review of the theory of psychological development offers fundamental features of the concept of development consistent with the process of counsellor development. That is “(a) development always implies change of some sort, (b) the change is organised systematically, and (c) the change involves succession over time” (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2013, p. 11). In developing their stage/phase model of development, they cite a number of influences, in particular Erik Erikson’s (1959, 1968)

conception of psychosocial stages and identity development, each associated with particular developmental tasks and outcomes. This conception of identity development is a significant one for explaining the process of becoming a counsellor, described by Skovholt (2012) as the internal work of the “unfolding practitioner self” (p. 67). Various descriptions of this process include “internal subjective feeling and reality”, an “internal clarity about oneself”, this process of identity achievement, through “internal sculpting” is said to take time and to be the most important task for practitioners in education (p. 68). Skovholt likens this process to an adolescent play-acting in the adult world, where the student practitioner must try on versions of a new self, or parts of new identities, often imitating experts and external models of practice in the process of moving toward an internalised practitioner-self identity. Identity achievement is likened to shifting from an incomplete, fragile practitioner self to feeling and experiencing a solid sense of self. Skovholt (2012) suggests this process is more aptly described in cyclical terms, both going round and round and deepening at the same time, all the while sensing how others react, thinking and talking with others, and making adjustments as one moves toward an identity that “reflects me, who I am, and how I am in the world” (p. 68).

Whilst drawing on models of identity development (e.g. Erikson), Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) draw also on their empirical data to consider the particular challenges and tasks inherent in the development of a professional therapist self, particularly for those encountering the demands of early practice. These include the ambiguity and complexity of professional counselling work, the relational and affective demands of establishing a therapeutic alliance and regulating emotional boundaries, managing the demands of applying theory in practice, while relying on inadequate conceptual maps, and the unique task of “the merging of the personal and the professional.” (Skovholt, 2012, p. 75). This is all the while navigating between the multiple sources of influence, including theories/research, clients, professional elders

(professors/supervisors/mentors/therapists), peers/colleagues, one's own personal life, and the social/cultural environment (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2012).

### **Developing a professional identity**

The study of professional identity for the counselling profession has become the focus for numerous researchers, with counsellor education given a primary task of “providing programmes that allow students to find new ways of viewing the world, the profession, themselves and others” (Nelson & Jackson, 2003, p. 2), while at the same time recognising their role in the field's establishment of a clear, unified, collective, professional identity (Prosek & Hurt, 2014; Reiner, Dobmeier & Hernández, 2013). It has been suggested that there is a need for the development of a strong, and stable sense of professional identity in order to prevent confusion and negative consequences when counsellors enter the workforce (Nugent & Jones, 2009). A professional identity can provide a frame of reference, and contribute to a sense of professional belonging and uniqueness (Pistole & Roberts, 2002). Initially drawing on the leading work of Skovholt and Rønnestad, work in this area also recognises the limitation of their model with its focus on whole career development, rather than being specific to the period of counsellor education. As such, an emerging body of research has attempted to explore and theorise in more depth the process of identity formation for counsellors-in-training (Auxier et al., 2003; Fragkiadaki, Triliva, Balamoutsou & Prokopiou, 2013; Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2010; Healey & Hays, 2012; Moss, Gibson & Dollarhide, 2014).

The findings from these studies remain generally consistent with the work of Skovholt and Rønnestad. For example, Auxier et al. (2003), in undertaking two rounds of individual interviews and a focus group interview with eight Masters' degree students, using a grounded theory data analysis approach identified a recycling identity formation process. The authors suggest that students cycle through experiences of conceptual learning, experiential learning and external



evaluation to eventually assume a counsellor self identity. They identify this as a growth or developmental process, albeit a difficult one at times, during which time trainees struggle to define and clarify their interpersonal and counselling identity. Trainees are seen to reflect on their experiences (conceptual, experiential) and gain self-awareness and growth through this reflection. More recently, Gibson et al. (2010), also selecting grounded theory methodology, conducted seven focus group interviews with a total of 43 counselling trainees, across different stages in their programmes. The results yielded a “developmental grounded theory of the transformation of counsellor professional identity ... in which three developmental tasks exist that describe the work that must be accomplished to transform identity” (p. 27). They suggest these tasks define areas of development that constitute professional identity, including definition of counselling, responsibility for professional growth, and transformation to systemic identity integrated with the professional community. The transformational process itself is described as one of moving across time and experience, from external validation through course work, experience, and commitment, to internalised responsibility or self-validation. The authors suggest this is consistent with other literature where professional identity has been shown to move from a reliance on external teachings and validation to reflect an internal locus of evaluation (e.g. Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Auxier et al, 2003).

These findings are also consistent with those of Nelson and Jackson (2003) who conducted a qualitative study of professional identity development with Hispanic counselling trainees. In analysing data from semi-structured interviews, general themes emerged that the authors noted were consistent with the previous literature on professional identity development of students who were not members of ethnic minority groups. These included gaining knowledge, personal growth and experiential learning. Themes that they identified as mediated by cultural issues specific to Hispanic counselling students included the importance of relationships (family, professors, peers), a sense of achievement and accomplishment, personal, professional and economic costs and

perceptions of the counselling profession. All of these factors were seen to influence the development of a counsellor professional identity, relationships perhaps most so. Nelson and Jackson's (2003) study is the only one which has suggested that professional identity development may be affected by, or interact with, culture. It remains, however, situated within a developmental, essentialist model of identity development, as does it seem all of the literature reviewed thus far. Finally, one other study has considered that the concept of professional identity may be influenced by a variety of cultural roles, and has focused "specifically on the influence of societally defined gender roles on individuals' appraisals of their own professional identity" (Healey & Hays, 2012, p. 56). Conducting the research with counselling practitioners, educators, and trainees, the authors concluded that identifying as male or female in the counselling profession had a significant influence on professional identity development, with results indicating that men may feel more empowered in the field, be receiving better mentorship, support and encouragement.

### **Humanistic conceptualisations of identity – some considerations**

As I have indicated above, the body of research outlined thus far, on experience, development and identity is situated within a particular humanistic, psychological and phenomenological framework or ontology of the self, identity and human development. This purports a conceptualisation of identity as universal, as existing within an individual, as unified, stable, and self-contained, developed through internal or 'intrapsychic' processes, across time and experience. I wish to explore this a little further here, given the still strong hold such conceptualisations have in counsellor education and conceptualisation of the counsellor-in-training, despite that "(i)n the last 30 years, identity has become disconnected from this originary image" in the turning of researchers, in particular, to postmodern and poststructural conceptualisations of identity and experience (Wetherell, 2010, p. 22). While I will come to discuss these constructions of identity, in relation to the associated shifts in the counselling field, it is these early, humanistic, conceptualisations of identity I consider first.

As is noted above, Skovholt and Rønnestad's conceptualisations of trainee development draw on the work of identity theorist Erik Erikson, the most prominent identity theorist of the 1950s to 1970s (Wetherell, 2010). Many of his conceptualisations of identity can be seen reflected in the theorising of the developing identity of counsellors-in-training, as outlined above. For example, Erikson's ideas about identity as a struggle, a developmental achievement unfolding in stages, with particular tasks and dilemmas needing to be negotiated at different stages, as well as identity manifesting "as an authentic and stable self", "a sense of personal coherence" (Wetherell, 2010, p. 7). Such ideas are consistent also with the humanistic approaches to counselling (Rogers, 1957/2007), with the theorising of developmental processes of identity formation for clients who are considered to be "positive in nature...socialised, forward-moving, rational and realistic" (Rogers, 1961, p. 90). These humanistic, therapeutic processes are intended to enable each individual "to become a separate and distinct and unique person" through more fully living the "experiences of his total organism, rather than shutting them out of awareness" (p. 118). Similarly, in phenomenological thought, the singularly unique but universal, self-contained human individual (Davies, 2010) resides at the centre of much psychological thinking, and underpins accounts of experience, as outlined above for counsellors-in-training. Such individuals, under humanism's reach, whether being conceptualised in counselling, counsellor education or research, are primarily engaged in activities of developing personal awareness of experience, of "'recognising', 'understanding', 'processing' and 'coming to see' who one is in the world" (Wetherell, 2010, p. 14). Arising from Cartesian based modernist accounts of the self, dating back to Descartes' model of the thinking self, and the period of Enlightenment (or Age of Reason), the Western self, and identity, has come to be strongly associated with notions of rationality, independence, autonomy and self-knowledge (Alcoff, 2010; Wetherell, 2010). Such notions similarly underpin theorisations of counsellor-in-training identities as outlined above.

While such humanistic conceptualisations represented important philosophical shifts, particularly in the field of counselling in a turn away from Freud's deterministic view of human nature and behaviour as "determined by irrational forces, unconscious motivations, and biological and instinctual drives" (Corey, 2017), they have nevertheless come to be seen as limited in current thinking around identity. Indeed, Wetherell (2010) notes that "the main interest of Erikson's work outside of this area of psychology is now historical" (p. 7), with researchers also doubtful when it comes to universally defined and experienced stages and norms in identity development (Wetherell, 2010). Such universal stories or grand "metanarratives", "in which key aspects of the plot involve development, reasoning, cognition and so forth" (Walkerdine, 1993, p. 452) also began to be seen as purporting reductionist, essentialist, Eurocentric masculine accounts of the 'real' which left little room for any Other accounts, or only for accounts which understand difference in (subordinate) relation to dominant norms of development and identity. This is obvious in the accounts of experience, development and identity above, where difference (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity) is made invisible and "particular relations of power and oppression" inscribed inside the practices taken to be universal, are ignored (Walkerdine, 1993, p. 461). Such a recognition calls for accounts of identity and development which are historical, specific and local (Walkerdine, 1993). Indeed, in the turn to, for example, postmodernism and poststructuralism, attention in identity studies has engaged in a "shift from understanding what identity is to understanding how identity is discursively constructed" and performed (Wetherell, 2010). While I will talk more about this shift below, in relation to associated shifts in the field of counselling, and in further chapters, I firstly want to finish a consideration of the implications and limits of this self-contained individual at the centre of the above discussed identity forming practices.

Davies (2010) refers to this individual as 'phenomenology's subject of will', which, she says, "is both an idea *and* an accomplishment that we each labour over, attempting to make real an idealized image of ourselves – as rationale, as responsible – in relation to which we are always judged and

found wanting, and against which we judge others and find them wanting” (p. 55). Such judgment, and inevitable failure, “is based on the assumption that who we are is accomplished through our own choices – ‘who we are’ is a result of will” (p. 55), of individual agency. It is no wonder then, that in research underpinned by current, dominant conceptualisations of identity development in counsellor education, that self-doubt, stress, and anxiety constitute the most common descriptions of counsellor-in-training experience. In this scenario, the individual, striving to achieve an idealised, universalised, version of a counsellor-self, even while understanding “itself as original, a unique being” is conditioned to believe it does so through its own will, agency, and efforts. Davies says identity is all-important for this subject-of-will, who is positioned in relation with the already known, striving to become recognised and recognizable within the already determined and regulating forms of recognition, evident to counsellors-in-training within the clearly available models and revered figures of counselling. This has the effect of a double regulating force – both to be recognised as the competent counsellor, and as the competent, autonomous, rational, self-contained, educative subject. In both cases, these individual, autonomous identities, while seductive are illusory, in that “to become that autonomous agent, that one and no other, we must disavow our dependence on, and our vulnerability to, the other and to discourse. We thus create an illusion of the individual entity that pre-exists its interactions with others” (Davies et al., 2013, p. 683). Such paradoxical processes result in an intense focus on self (as unique), a striving for recognition, producing not only anxiety and self-doubt, but even narcissism and paranoia, along with a continual need to defend against individual failure to match up to ideal norms (Davies, 2010).

In summary, whilst the research and humanist conceptualisations explored above have been central in bringing attention to the complex personal-professional processes counsellors-in-training are engaged in, they hold significant limitations in light of contemporary theorisations of identity. Such limitations include, in particular what gets left out or made invisible when the “individualised

subject”, that “singular, self-contained human individual” (Davies, 2010, p. 54) is given fundamental status, when “’ahistorical’, universalizing, internal and depoliticizing trends of explanation” are prioritized (Hook, 2005, p. 28). Indeed, Skovholt & Rønnestad (1995) acknowledge, but do not address, in their initial, early attempt to construct an accurate and generalizable model of counsellor development that it is impossible to include all of the critical dimensions through which people differ, including, they say, age, experience level, gender, race, work setting, cognitive style, theoretical training, and family of origin. However, not only are these important multiple identities made invisible in the universal, so too are the dominant discourses through which individuals are subject to the conditions of possibility for their own being and becoming (Davies, 2010). With the counselling literature also just beginning to consider what it means to take up the call to reconfigure the nature of identity as intersections of “social locations and cultural factors (i.e., dis/ability, affectional orientation, ethnicity, race, gender identity and expression, spirituality and religion, residency in a country or educational program, and many other identities that are not mentioned and yet are important)” (Peters, 2017, p. 178), attention to conceptualisations of counsellor-in-training identity seems ever more urgent.

### **Counselling moves to social constructionist and poststructural identities**

However, these have not been the only explanations of identity for counsellors-in-training. It is important to note the significant exception to these dominant humanistic models in the form of the poststructural/social constructionist theorising of student storying of professional identity in counsellor education (Crocket & Kotzé, 2011; Winslade, 2002). This work draws on the narrative therapy tradition (White & Epston, 1990) and the authors draw on the work of Davies and colleagues (e.g. Davies, 2006; Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws & Watson, 2002) in attending to post-structural identities as socially and culturally produced. This in turn influences their co-construction of the curriculum and pedagogical practices through which they demonstrate attention to power relations, exploration of cultural narratives and commitments to social justice (Crocket &

Kotzé, 2011). With an emphasis on relational identity, and the learning communities (Wenger, 1999) they are a part of, students are encouraged to actively story their learning and ongoing professional identities (Crocket & Kotzé, 2011). Professional identity for counsellors-in-training can then be described as “dynamic, holistic, and continuously constructed through social interactions...rather than “defined by a list of attributes, or “achieved” in a finalistic sense” (Waters, Altus, & Wilkinson, 2013, p. 2).

Writing, for example, from Winslade (2002) and Crocket and Kotzé (2011) refers to the ‘storying of professional identity’ which is at the heart of their counsellor education programme in Waikato, New Zealand. They refer to practices which go “beyond the humanistic and structuralist understandings of personhood that tend to be taken for granted in the fields of counselling and counsellor education” (Crocket and Kotzé, 2011, p. 393). Their particular approach to counsellor education draws from the traditions of poststructuralist/social constructionist theory and narrative counselling practice in particular. Hence, the focus is on people’s lives as shaped by a range of cultural stories or discourses, such as “professionalism, individualism, competition, gender, consumerism, race, class, to name a few” (Crocket & Kotzé, 2011, p. 394). This discursive approach views the stories people tell about themselves as being shaped by discourses which prevail in all of the contexts in which they live, thus people are shaped by and also shape discourse. The storying of professional identity, which takes place throughout the counsellor education programme, occurs with attention to power relations and to stories of privilege, access, success and failure. Identity is viewed as being constructed within all these discourses, in relationship with others and with the experiences the programme offers.

In contrast to the essentialist notions perpetuating in the literature above, Winslade (2002) comments “we do not invite students to construct a self-contained notion of identity, one that is owned within the individual and independent of how they are experienced by those consulting them. Instead, we are interested in storying identities that are constantly formed in relationship” (p.

35). As such, all learning activities are designed to destabilise traditional constructions of people as individual learners, engaged primarily in internal processes in response to their environments. Instead, in social constructionist terms, students experience “doing knowledge and doing identity together” (p. 396). Thus, identity becomes relational, fluid (non-fixed) and multiple.

This notion of identity, and associated counsellor education practices are reflective of the linguistic and cultural turn which fostered complex analyses of the interconnections between power, knowledge, subjectivity, and language (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008a). Drawing on postmodernism, social constructionism and post-structuralism, the counselling theories of Narrative Therapy and Solution-focused therapy significantly shifted the possibilities within the counselling landscape from its previously dominant psychological and humanistic underpinnings. As Wetherell (2010) also recounts, this turn shifted the focus “from investigating experience to investigating how accounts of experience were constructed following more sophisticated analyses of the workings of language, self-description, and human meaning-making (p. 13).

Counselling programmes such as the one at Waikato University have embraced the discursive turn and what it means for how clients come to construct themselves and their lives, for how trainee counsellors come to construct their professional identities, and for how educators shape their teaching practices (Crocket et al., 2007). However, as can be seen in the research literature, humanistic, essentialist notions of professional identity prevail in counsellor education. Whilst counsellor educator-researchers such as Winslade (2002) and Crocket and Kotzé (2010) eloquently describe how they apply theories of post-structuralism to their teaching practices, and to students’ experience of storying professional identities, there appears to be no research examining such practices in action, or articulating this experience from the students’ perspectives. It was with this in mind that I initiated the current research with student-participants engaged in a counsellor education programme, learning a social constructionist model of counselling practice. I turn to this in the next chapter, outlining the aims and method at the beginning stages of this research. Prior to



this, I firstly wish to outline the emergence in counsellor education of the key pedagogical practice of reflective practice, situated within counsellor education programmes underpinned by a range of therapeutic approaches, from humanistic to social constructionist. Recognizing the complexity, ambiguity, and interaction of the personal and professional in developing ethical and effective counselling practices, and the personal-professional challenges in becoming effective practitioners, reflective practice has become key in the field of counsellor education.

### **Reflective practice in counselling**

I draw here on two main texts of reflective practice in counselling – Stedmon and Dallos's (2009b) edited book *Reflective Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy* and Bager-Charleson's (2010) book by the same name. Such reflective processes are aimed at allowing developing practitioners to be 'self-critical and ethical' (Dallos & Stedmon, 2009), to examine and assess their own experiences in order to become more aware of the processes, values, assumptions and theories informing their counselling practice, resulting in transformative learning (Bager-Charleson, 2010). Such processes inevitably involve stages of reflection which invite the practitioner to begin with a self-awareness through noticing something disconcerting, interesting or unexpected from their counselling practice, then proceeding to look back on it in order to explore in more detail. This meaning making may include intra-individual, relational, social, and cultural reflections (usually depending on the counselling orientation) and might be best described as "a successive process of analysing and reanalysing important episodes of activity, drawing on multiple levels of representation" (Dallos & Stedmon, 2009, p. 4).

Dallos and Stedmon distinguish between personal reflection in action, the spontaneous and immediate act of reflecting during the moments of counselling, and personal reflexivity – "the act of looking back over, or reflecting on, action". This is conceptualised as a "metatheorized processing of events retrospectively, where the original episode of reflection becomes the object

of further conscious scrutiny” (2009, p. 4). Self-awareness includes attention not only to behaviour or language, but awareness of bodily sensations, emotions, memories, experiences and cognitions evoked at the time of the reflection in the moment. Reflexivity, as a way of then looking back on such awareness, typically includes application of knowledge and theory to make sense of the recalled episode. Dallos and Stedman suggest reflexive practices of looking back should draw on multiple sources of knowledge, including particular counselling theory, social status in terms of gender, class and ethnicity, self-narratives of personal life experiences, personal agendas, motivations and perceptions of power and inequality. However, in addition to such knowledges, they also argue for practices of reflexivity including creative, artistic and playful elements in order to recognise the personhood of the counsellor at the he(art) of counselling, their preferences, values, likes and dislikes which contribute to “fresh insight and learning ‘outside the box’” (p. 5). Given the attention to sensory and bodily experiences as much as to verbal and cognitive processes in awareness and reflection, it is suggested that similar processes be explored during reflexivity, that is engaging other symbolic systems such as signs, images, or movement to reflect on the episode in question. Ultimately such reflexive practices have come to be seen as necessary due to the complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in counselling practice as a process guided not only by application of knowledge and competencies, but as “an ongoing fluid interactional process between the practitioner and clients” (p. 12).

Bager-Charleson’s (2010) text is primarily aimed at student counsellors and psychotherapists, designed to offer an understanding of the concept of reflective practice as a means of supporting counsellors and psychotherapists in developing efficacious and ethical clinical practice. She seems to draw primarily on Schön’s thinking for her framing of reflective practice, similar to Dallos and Stedmon, offering reflection *in* and reflection *on* practice as key terms. Embodied in these and other reflective concepts are the notions of looking back on our practice in order to see what is reflected back – to examine underlying values and assumptions guiding practice. Often this looking back,

and looking then at what appears, has the aim of building on mistakes or challenges, transforming “negative experiences into valuable wisdom and knowledge” (p. 30). Bager-Charleson points out that “reflective practice involves more than just looking at ourselves in a mirror; it involves a form of ‘dialectical engagement’” (p. 30) which invites an ongoing and recursive engagement, that does not stop at what an initial reflection may reveal about an individual’s assumptions or values guiding their practice. In this way, dialectical reflective practice, involving “(t)he ability to ‘try on’ new perspectives and world views and critically reassess ourselves, our ideas, our values and assumptions is often referred to in terms of ‘reflexive awareness’” (p. 31). Thus, just as Dallos and Stedmon build on Schön’s (1983) original work proposing *The Reflective Practitioner*, Bager-Charleson also links reflective practice with notions of reflexivity and critical reflection, inviting reflections not just on personal and theoretical matters but also requiring social, cultural and political interests to be taken into account. While reflexive practices have the capacity to take us beyond uncritical reflection on action, it has to be noted that the significance of the body of work emerging from Schön and his colleagues cannot be downplayed in relation to its challenge to the professions (it has been especially influential in teaching and the health professions) to reconsider practice as more than rational, technical, instrumental applications of knowledge.

Both texts present reflective/reflexive practice across a range of counselling models from person-centred, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) to systemic and narrative therapy, noting all models clearly advocate reflective practice as an essential component of their approach (Stedmon & Dallos, 2009b). What changes, depending upon the therapeutic approach, are the aspects which practitioners might reflect upon. For example, while all models advocate reflection on the therapy and the skills for doing it, some will also include personal reflection on the therapist themselves, their own lives (pasts and/or presents), and the contexts, including socio-political aspects in which they work (Stedmon & Dallos, 2009b). In addition, reflective practices tend to be engaged with individually through reflective journal writing practices, through

reflections on video or audio tapes, and in supervisory relationships, which typically involve one practitioner and one supervisor. Sometimes this may be expanded to include peers or teams such as in systemic family therapy and narrative therapy training and practice through the use of reflecting teams. Much of this reflection follows Schön's reflection *on* action which requires reflection in a retrospective way, apart from systemic and solution-focused therapies which include 'live' supervision in an attempt to foster reflection *in* action, occurring more closely in time to the events of reflection.

Clearly reflective practice has developed as a key component across models in counselling and psychotherapy training and practice. Without the emphasis given to reflecting in and on practice, it might be assumed that one can become an effective counsellor through rational and technical application of a range of skills. Rather, the development and incorporation of reflective and reflexive practices in counselling and psychotherapy acknowledges the complex, ambiguous, relational, cultural and political nature of “‘doing’ therapy – the therapist becomes part of the process that she is trying to step back from and observe” (Dallos & Stedmon, 2009, p. 3). These practices have given us a way to make sense of encounters we have with clients, particularly when something surprising, unexpected or disruptive occurs or when we may have felt anxious or uncertain about what to say or do next. Not only can such practices offer support to practitioners during the challenges of new learning, but they are theorised as ways of developing practitioner competence, through transforming earlier experiences into “deeper levels of understanding” (p. 15). Introducing critical reflection and reflexive practices has also enabled reflection to go beyond the traditional personal, psychological nature of therapy, where intra-psychic processes are emphasized at the expense of social, cultural and political influences – both on individuals and the process and context of therapy itself. Such reflexive processes have enabled a taking into account power and the constitutive role of language and discourse in shaping client and counsellor experiences and the processes they engage in together. This may include reflecting on, for example,

discourses of gender, class, race, and other subject positions and categories which embed and embody taken for granted cultural assumptions. As Stedmon & Dallos (2009a) conclude, professional identities are intimately connected to the ways in which reflective practice is performed. The discursive practices through which practice is analysed play a powerful part in shaping and constraining “how we construct our own personal and professional identities” (Boston, 2009, p. 174).

Whilst it is clear that the tradition of reflective practice has become a rich and valuable one for the field of counselling and psychotherapy, conceptualisations of reflection and reflexivity pose their own challenges. This is something I explore more particularly in chapter four, in relation to the use of these concepts methodologically, before returning to a re-consideration of reflexive practice in counsellor education in chapter nine, when I consider pedagogical implications of the findings from this research. For now, I conclude this section by noting the limitations identified by Stedmon and Dallos in relation to the concept of reflective practice.

Dallos and Stedmon (2009) introduce the concept of reflective practice by connecting the term reflection to its Latin roots, “*re-* meaning ‘back’ and *flectre* meaning ‘to bend’” (p. 1), noting its first application in the context of light ‘bending back’ off reflective surfaces. Related to this, they draw on Greek mythology’s Narcissus, renowned for falling in love with his own reflection in the water, noting that reflection in this sense lends itself to “narcissistic navel gazing” and to merely reflecting back the limited views we each see (p. 1). They later caution against the danger of reflective practice becoming inward looking, if it only exists within the terms of the current therapeutic model being applied. Like Narcissus, they say, “there is a sense of entrapment whereby the therapist can only ‘see’ what has come to be defined as ‘seeable’”. This then becomes “a metaphor of infinite regression...illuminating only further reflections upon reflections of reflections.” (Stedmon & Dallos, 2009a, p. 191). As a way of attempting to overcome this limited vision, Stedmon and Dallos offer an integrated approach to reflective practice, suggesting reflective

practices in supervision draw on a range of different models, thus working at multiple levels of representation and analysis. As I note above, I revisit further challenges identified in remaining with reflection and reflexivity as metaphors and practices for interrogating our accounts of the world in later chapters.

### **The posthuman subject**

Finally, in this chapter I wish to introduce the turn to the notion of the posthuman subject (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2016). As will become clear in the following chapters, my initial research aims were to theorise the lived experience of counsellors-in-training from social constructionist and poststructural underpinnings, in order to explore the relational processes and discursive practices through which counsellor-in-training subjectivities are produced (Wetherell, 2010). It was with this in mind that I engaged in initial processes of data generation. However, this research project eventually became one committed to experimenting with posthumanism, onto-epistemologically, and in relation to the counsellor-in-training as posthuman subject. While the following chapters document, perform and experiment with this intra-active (Barad, 2007) production of knowledge, I wish to conclude this chapter with a brief introduction to identity in posthuman terms. Karen Barad, whose posthuman agential realist framework I draw on significantly in this project, says,

“Identity formation is a contingent and contested ongoing material process; “identities” are mutually constituted and (re)configured through one another in dynamic intra-relationship with the iterative (re)configuring of relations of power. (2007, p. 240-241).

Identity here is reflective of what has become known as the material turn, with thinkers attempting to move beyond discursive construction to accounts which give attention to how the material and the discursive, nature and culture, interact in the constitution of bodies, subjects and objects. (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b). This involves a rethinking of fundamental questions about ontology, epistemology, ethics and politics, which I turn to in the following chapters in Part two. In this

reconceptualising, identity is not an inherent characteristic of humans, rather it is conceptualised as an entanglement, an intra-active becoming in which “part” of the world becomes determinately bounded and propertied in its emergent intelligibility to another “part” of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 335). Identity in this sense is ongoing performance or materialization, an articulation of the world in its becoming, where the human, at the centre of theorisations of identity as outlined throughout this chapter, is decentred. However, as Davies notes (2014), “I anticipate that these two kinds of subject cannot actually be separated, and that they too depend on each other” (p. 34). That is, the self who has an identity, Davies’ (2010, 2014) ‘subject of will’ does not disappear in an illusory linear ontological movement to a posthuman subject, but rather might be conceptualised of an intra-active force always present in the ongoing production of the posthuman subject. The focus shifts however, to “intra-active encounters in which the new emerges, rather than the accomplishment of the illusory entity or self” (Davies et al., 2013, p. 684).

Braidotti (2016) states, “(w)e are experiencing at present an explosion of scholarship on nonhuman, inhuman and posthuman issues...(T)he posthuman predicament enforces the necessity to think again and to think harder about the status of human subjectivity and the ethical relations, norms and values that may be worthy of the complexity of our times” (p. 13). While poststructuralism enabled a rigorous calling into question of the humanistic ideals of reason, autonomy and universal categorical representation, posthumanism not only reconfigures the nature/culture binary with a return to the agency of the material world, but also invites us to rethink power, matter and meaning as intra-active, entangled, dynamic, co-constitutive networks of relations “that structure our “being human”” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 15). This entails rethinking posthuman subject formations.

According to Braidotti (2016), “human subjectivity in this complex field of forces has to be re-defined as an expanded relational self”. She describes this new ontology as “a re-grounding of subjects in the radical immanence of their embodied and embedded locations” (p. 22). This complex vision is of a subject produced “within a materialist process ontology that sustains an

open, relational, self-other entity... with special emphasis on the embedded and embodied, affective and relational structure of subjectivity” (p. 23). As Barad (2007) and Braidotti remind us, this is also an ethical posthuman becoming. Braidotti (2016) describes a posthuman ethical imagination in the form of “ontological relationality, which stresses an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others” (p. 25). This is Barad’s intra-action and responsibility, which rejects self-centred individualism and hierarchical dichotomies. In this way, a counsellor-in-training identity is an ethical, vital, moving embodiment of multiple affective-material-discursive relations, it is an enactment of “unfolding the self onto the world, while enfolding the world within” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 26).

The following thesis is an experiment in thinking this theory with the data generated with the counsellor-in-training participants, in order to reconceptualise understandings of identity and subject formation for counsellors-in-training and consider implications for the field of counsellor education. My focus on the field of counsellor education in this thesis, and my engagement with this posthuman turn, has led to a necessary rethinking, reconceptualising or reconfiguring the posthuman counsellor-in-training-subject formation. This is, of course, not a unitary, universal or fixed reconfiguring. Rather, the mapping, or critical cartography (Braidotti, 2016) which follows is also a situated, immanent, relational, intra-active and open-ended entanglement. My hope is that others will intra-act with the embodied and embedded knowledge produced here to continue to rethink, expand and reconfigure the ethical and just possibilities for (re)conceptualising the subject formation of the counsellor-in-training.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Methodology

In this chapter I outline the methodological approach of collective biography and the particular form it took in this research. Collective biography was chosen for its capacity to generate an exploration of both individual, and collective, memories and experiences of encounters of significance to the counsellor-in-training participants. With a research focus aligned with the feminist and, now earlier, poststructural theorising of collective biography (Davies & Gannon, 2006a; 2009; 2011), this methodology offered a way in which counsellor-in-training participants could flesh out moments of their lived experience in order to examine the discursive contexts through which their counsellor subjectivities were constituted. At the same time, it is theorised a transformative process occurs, in the telling. This chapter explores these aims of collective biography, including an overview of its initial poststructural theorising underpinning my methodology of data generation. I return to its evolution toward a more “Deleuzian/Baradian approach (Davies et al., 2013) in my final chapter on pedagogical implications arising from this research, when I consider methodology as pedagogy. Finally, in this chapter, I document the adapted use of this approach in my research, including participants, workshops, data, and ethics.

#### **Collective Biography**

Collective biography is an approach initially situated in the post-modern tradition of social sciences research. Its feminist, and initial, post-structural underpinnings aligned well with the original epistemological and theoretical focus of this research - to explore the subjective and discursive production of the possibilities for knowing and being for counsellors-in-training. I was interested to explore the possibilities and challenges for counsellors-in-training in coming to embody a counsellor identity, or subjectivity, and the implications this might have for counsellor education.

I saw that much of the research generated through the use of collective biography as a research method, had engaged with similar aims – that is, exploring “ways in which students and their teachers come into being in multiple ways in their encounters with each other” (Davies & Gannon, 2009, p. 5). An explanation from an early paper captured what it was I hoped this method would enable for my participants, and my research, to move beyond the dominant humanist conceptualisations of their lived experience and identity formation processes to instead consider processes of subjectification:

We set out as archaeologists of our own lives... We thus use our embodied selves as vehicles for observing the plays of power and knowledge in relation to the processes of...subjectification. In doing so, we do not assume ‘real’ or essential selves or that we have found the ‘true’ story in these tellings” (Davies et al., 2002, p. 293).

What was additionally appealing was the way in which the process itself made it possible to go beyond exploration of the individual, to research the collective processes of transformation which occur within and over the course of the workshops, through the actual writing, telling and listening that occurs. Davies and colleagues describe this work as transgressive, as a way of making visible, and therefore revisable, “the discourses through which we make meanings and selves” (Davies et al., 2004, p. 369). I was interested in a research method which invited both this visibility and revisability for counsellors-in-training, and which enabled a deconstruction of that humanistically oriented counsellor-in-training “as existing independent of various collectives, of discourse, of history, of time and place” (p. 369).

By using the collective biography workshops (outlined below) themselves as a site of data generation, I also envisaged this method as offering an alternative to the retrospective, and language based nature of interviews and journals relied upon as methods of data collection thus far in exploring the lived experience of counsellors-in-training. With this emphasis on generating data which could be described as messy, embodied, affective, relational and collective, it was my hope the collective biography method would enable a move beyond description to “help *produce* the

reality” I wished to understand (Law, 2004, p. 5). In the following sections I outline the history and process of collective biography as it informed these initial processes of data generation with my study participants.

Collective biography has its feminist roots in the memory work of German feminist and socialist Frigga Haug and her colleagues (Gannon, Walsh, Byers & Rajiva, 2012; Cornforth, White, Milligan & Claiborne, 2009) who used this method to research female socialisation and female sexualisation (Onyx & Small, 2001). Their method involved members of a group writing down their memories of past events focusing on a particular theme, for example, related to the female body. The resulting memory stories were then circulated, discussed and reassessed among members of the group eventually leading to a final account documenting the processes of production of the sexualised female body (Davies and Gannon, 2006). While this original use of collective memory work has subsequently been taken up at different times and its use developed across different disciplines, such as psychology, nursing, education (Davies and Gannon, 2006), management and marketing, its social constructionist, feminist underpinnings have remained (Onyx & Small, 2001).

For the purposes of my research, I was most interested in the strand of collective biography developed, from Haug’s original memory work, by Bronwyn Davies and colleagues (Davies & Gannon, 2006a; 2009; 2011). In particular I wished to embrace their purpose of fleshing out moments of lived experience in order to examine the contexts through which individuals are constituted and constitute themselves, and through which we then begin to see and experience mo(ve)ment (Davies, 2009), transformation or ‘becoming’ other than who we have been. Davies calls such mo(ve)ment ‘doubled action’ and suggests that “in dwelling in, and on, particular moments of being” (Davies, 2009, p:9) through collective story-telling, writing and re-writing, we open up new possibilities for seeing, being, and ultimately becoming, both individually and collectively. I was interested in the potential of this method for exploring both the experiences that

participants recalled (telling, writing, drawing or making), and of the possibilities for movement that would occur in the collective experiences of that fleshed-out telling.

Central to this method is a focus on remembered moments of experiences and encounters, which participants work with, through the shared work of telling, writing (drawing), listening, re-writing, to re-member the deeply felt sensory, embodied detail of those lived experiences. Through asking questions of each particular moment, such as “(h)ow did it smell, how did it feel on your skin, your face, your stomach, your back?” they aim to write and rewrite the experience until the “precise detailed moment (becomes) imaginable in a lived bodily sense” (Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws, & Watson, 2006, p. 173). Such processes aim to take us beyond the current linguistic descriptions of identity, beyond the Cartesian mind/body split which much learning is still predicated upon, to understanding and embracing a more holistic, and contextualised, embodied understanding of identity, as outlined above.

Drawing in particular on the bodies of work of Judith Butler and Michel Foucault (Davies et al., 2002; 2013), processes of working with memories and experiences enact post-structural assumptions of the nature of memory and of the construction of the self, made particularly clear in contrast to humanist ideas of an essential, enduring and stable self. This particular use of collective biography takes up this post-structural view that we are all “subjects-in-relation, subjects-in-process” (Davies, 2009 p. 8), and seeks to make visible the dominant discourses through which we are simultaneously constituted and constitute our selves. Power and vulnerability are central to the theorizing of Butler and Foucault, and Davies and colleagues draw on this in exploring the subject’s dependence on and vulnerability to “discourse and its utterance in the accomplishment of ourselves as recognisable” (Davies et al., 2013, p. 682). In the methodology of collective biography, it is through the detail of the telling that the constitutive work that is going on, and has gone on, is made visible, and the “(illusion of the) autonomous subject” is made possible. (Davies et al., 2006, p. 176). Almost paradoxically, it is through the exposing and examining of how multiple discourses

work on us at one particular moment, at an affective<sup>3</sup> level, that we then “open both ourselves and discourse to the possibility of change” (Davies and Gannon, 2006b, p. 5).

Memories, or stories of experiences, in this process, are not therefore viewed as truthful or fixed representations of experience itself, nor in humanistic terms as internal and personal (Wright, Lang, & Cornforth, 2011). Such stories we first tell about ourselves are viewed in this way as underpinned by the dominant humanistic notions of an autonomous individual self. In collective biography practices, these memories and the experiences they represent are not only exposed in their embodied detail to be discursive, but are also then re-made or lived again in the telling. This re-making occurs not only in the “mind/body of the one who remembers, but in the minds/bodies of the members of the collective biography group who are engaged in listening to each other’s memories” (Davies and Gannon, 2011, p: 130). In this way, in collective biography, what was initially viewed as an individual’s telling or ‘grand narrative’ of their own individual experience or encounter, is remade through a communal space into a collectively re-imagined and embodied knowledge of being, that then also opens up spaces and possibilities for becoming other in ways not previously possible. As Davies states, “in working collectively with memories, we live intimately within our own bodies, and our bodies take on the intimate knowledge of each other’s being” (Davies, 2009, p. 9).

Such collective biography processes are not presumed to occur simply with the coming together of a group of individuals. The story telling, the re-making of memories through technologies of telling, listening, writing (drawing) and re-writing, works to open up spaces for new becomings only when attention is given to the building of communal space. This occurs through each group member’s

---

<sup>3</sup> Affect here is described by Davies as being what is “felt before thought”, that which has a “visceral impact on the body” (Davies, 2009, p. 11), as opposed to emotion which is seen to be the categorising or labelling of that felt, sensory, affective experience. I return to this, and other, conceptualisations of affect in later chapters in relation to data analysis.

“willingness to listen and be open to others” (Davies, 2009, p. 11), and through a “particular kind of close attention to each other’s stories” (p. 8). Indeed, it is suggested that this ‘ruthless pursuit’ of the embodied detail of the memory is also possible when a “profound level of trust and mutual commitment has already been established among the workshop participants” (Davies, 2009, p. 12). It was with these ideas in mind, that this method was deemed to be particularly well suited to the research proposed with a cohort of counselling students, who had recently spent one year learning and working together, developing these very skills of listening with close attention and building trust and mutual commitment with one another.

## **Recruitment**

Collective biography studies reviewed range from as few as three (Wright et al., 2011) to four (Cornforth et al., 2009) up to a stated preference for six to seven participants (Davies & Gannon, 2006a). What is considered most important is the commitment of the participants, both to the process of collective biography and the chosen topic, and to “the long and complex haul of collective work” (Davies and Gannon, 2006b, p. 9). Fewer than four participants was not desirable for this study, both because of the desire to research a collective process and to generate sufficient data for a PhD study. More than eight participants was also not desirable due to the different group dynamics emerging which may inhibit a collective process, such as subgroups forming, or lack of time for all participants to take part.

I adopted a qualitative research process of purposive (deliberate and non-random) sampling as it allowed me to select participants on the basis of the feature or process I was interested in (Silverman, 2000). In this case the process to be studied was counsellors-in-training experiences of coming to embody a counsellor identity. Purposive sampling also requires that the parameters of the population to be studied are given critical consideration, including that the group, setting and/or individuals provide adequate access to the processes being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Given the particular group I was interested in researching this process with are students undertaking a counsellor education programme, this was where I aimed my recruitment.

More specifically, counsellors-in-training who had completed Part I of a Masters' counsellor education programme and who were embarking on Part II were invited to participate. At the time of recruitment, twelve students had completed Part I, one of those students was not continuing to Part II, and thus information was sent to a total of eleven students. It was not envisaged that all eleven students would wish to/be able to take part in the research. However, should more than eight have wished to take part, I aimed to recruit participants including a cross section of age, gender, ethnicity, and counselling placement. Interestingly, all eleven expressed an initial desire to take part.

As mentioned above, these students had recently completed one year of coming together to undertake two compulsory papers in the counselling programme. I was the lecturer for one of these papers which focused on group process, thus this particular cohort of students had built relationships with each other, and with me.

The other compulsory paper covered social constructionism in the context of counselling and the therapeutic model of solution focused therapy. It was through this paper that students began to undertake counselling work with clients and thus to particularly develop their skills of listening and close attention to the lived experience of their clients. It was in Part II of the programme that students work more intensely with clients, undertaking a more time intense practicum or internship, where up to 450 hours of counselling practice was required, of which 280 were face to face with clients. It is at this level of more time intensive engagement with clients that the literature identifies as a particularly important and challenging time for identity development for counsellors-in-training, another reason for recruiting from this group of students.

As I was able to not be engaged in directly teaching (and thus assessing) this particular cohort of students, as they (and we) had already formed mutually trustworthy relationships, and, as they were embarking on a year of more time intense client focused work (as opposed to theory/class based), this group of students were deemed the most suitable to approach for the purposes of this research. An initial email was sent to all eleven counsellors-in-training inviting them to take part in the research. A further email was sent to eight participants with attached information sheet and consent form (see appendix 1).

## **Participants**

Eight participants chose to take part in this research. However, while all participants took part in some of the groups, due to other commitments and sometimes unforeseen circumstances, not all participants were present for every group meeting. All participants were undertaking a counselling practicum in Part II, some full time, and some part-time. This meant all participants in this research were currently undertaking regular supervised counselling work with clients in a school or community counselling setting. They had all completed Part I of the programme which required them to complete a minimum of 65 hours of counselling experience, of which a minimum of 40 hours was face to face counselling.

Several participants have provided me with information about themselves to be included here, as well as choosing their own pseudonyms. Some participants were happy for their names to be used, but I have chosen to use pseudonyms throughout in order to protect their anonymity. Participants ranged in age from 22 years to 67 years, with an average age of 48 years. Seven of the eight participants were women, and one male. Five of the participants were Pākehā or of New Zealand European descent, one participant was New Zealand Māori, one was South East Asian Chinese, and one was of Pasifika descent. Seven participants had returned to tertiary education to study counselling, having had careers in education, including teaching and pastoral support in early



childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education settings. One participant was embarking on counselling education having just completed her undergraduate degree.

Participants expressed a range of reasons and hopes for taking part in the research, including “needing time spent talking and reflecting with my course colleagues”, “an opportunity for me to watch the formation and development of counsellor ‘persona’/identity”, “a chance to give back and contribute to further learning”, “a chance to explore where/how I would fit in the world of being a counsellor”, and “an opportunity to maintain close ties with many of my fellow counselling trainees”.

## **Data Generation**

### *Individual Interviews*

Participants were invited to take part in an initial individual interview with me, reflecting on their journey as a counsellor-in-training up to this point, including their ideas about what it means to be a counsellor, their process of deciding to become a counsellor, and their understandings and experiences of the process thus far (see appendix 2 for the semi-structured interview schedule). Interviews were conducted either at the University or at participants’ homes, depending on where was most convenient for them. They lasted between one to one and a half hours and were video or audio recorded. At the end of each interview participants were invited to depict their process of change up to that point through the use of drawing and/or metaphor. All participants completed this and proceeded to share their drawings with each other in the first meeting of the group. Given the large amount of data generated in this project, and the fine grained data analysis, I have not drawn on the interview data for the most part in the analysis. As such, I have chosen not to expand on the methodology of interviewing here.

### *Collective biography workshops*

Davies and Gannon, in particular, have been using and continuing to develop the practices of collective biography for close to two decades now (Davies & Dormer, 1997; Davies et al., 2002; Davies and Gannon, 2006, 2009, 2011; Gannon, Walsh, Byers & Rajiva, 2012; De Schauwer et al., 2017). It is not a fixed approach which stands still. The iteration of collective biography employed in this research, similarly, while drawing on the central practices of the approach as detailed below, evolved in relation to the participants, the approach and through participant feedback and practices of researcher reflexivity.

The particular practices intended to be employed in the data generation workshops were outlined and shared in a written document with participants prior to the beginning the workshops (see appendix 3). These are taken primarily from Davies and Gannon's (2006) outline in their book, *Doing Collective Biography* (pp. 9-15), and also influenced by their more recent writing at the time of developing the workshops for this research (Davies & Gannon, 2009, 2011). These practices were envisaged as providing a site within which the research questions could be best explored. While these are described in a linear, coherent way, this was often not the way the groups went, with much overlapping of the processes, and with not all workshops including all of the processes as outlined. A total of eight workshops took place, approximately monthly, for two to three hours at a time, over the period of one year, rather than within the usual three to seven day time periods of the workshops described by Davies and colleagues. This was in order to follow the experiences of the participants over the period of their practicum year, and to make the workshops manageable in the busy lives of those participating. This time period of meeting enabled the group to continue to build and maintain relationships and rapport. As noted above, not all eight participants were present at each group meeting. One participant was absent for five of these groups, including the final three, as although she had wanted to take part, other commitments meant she was ultimately unable to participate in more than three group meetings. Of the other seven participants, one

attended all eight groups, four attended seven groups, one attended six groups, and one attended five groups. The following table summarises numbers present for each group.

<b>Group</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Participants</b>	7	7	7	5	3	8	6	7

Table 1: No. of participants present in each collective biography workshop

The focus in the workshops was on descriptions of embodied experience rich in affect and sensory detail, avoiding and exposing clichés and explanations. Stories from the lived experience of the counsellors-in-training were explored in this way, through writing, telling, and individual and collective art-making. Questions were asked by all to expose further clichés or explanations as listeners were invited to attempt to imagine and embody the very memory they were hearing, with the aim of “coming as close as possible to the immediacy, intensity and intimacy of that embodied moment... (while also working) towards a sense of open borders, of porosity between subjects – of the subjects within the stories and also of the subjects who come together to form the research group” (Gannon et al., 2012, p. 4).

Throughout this process I determined to embody the (albeit challenging) role of workshop leader/facilitator. Those who have been a part of collective biography processes often comment on the importance of this role, for both research and process reasons. For example, Wright et al. (2011) comment that, “Sue’s role as leader was important, both with keeping us to clear research questions and to our chosen epistemological approaches” and that ““this deconstruction process can be a wrench and needs to be managed well in order to be safe” (p. 476). As I outline below, and in the further data analysis and implications chapters, enacting one identity as workshop facilitator was challenging. Being a part of this group regularly produced, in me, multiple memories, affect, cognitions, identities and continual questioning of who I was, and who I should be, in relation to

the group members. The depth of sharing among participants was personal and often emotive, and peer connection and support was evident. I continued to return to my role as facilitator, which involved listening, questioning, and loose structuring of the beginning of the sessions. I attempted to remain focused on eliciting their embodied memories and stories, which required a particular kind of listening presence in attempting to imagine and embody these shared memories. As a group we were able to attend also to the processes occurring, and members were clear on their desire and ability to take responsibility for their own emotional and personal safety, comfort, and needs in sharing and being part of the group. Group members remained committed to this and to the aims of the group, which enabled me to stay connected to my role as facilitator of a primarily research, (not therapeutic) process. At the same time, ongoing, careful consideration was given to the effects of my role as a participant-researcher. Where it seemed appropriate, I participated not just as a facilitator, but from a position as a counsellor, newly developing counsellor-educator, mother, and the many other identities present within the group. This was partly in order to decrease the perceived privilege and power, and otherness of the researcher, to encourage reciprocity and a richness and depth of sharing and experience. I return to some of these experiences in the final chapter, in discussing pedagogical implications arising from the use of collective biography in this way.

## **Data**

The data generated over this initial period of the research, thus included individual interview transcripts, video, and transcripts of, recordings of the workshops. Data from the videos included verbal content (transcribed), affect, silences, emotion, physical space, and other matter arising in the time and space of data analysis. The ways in which the data were eventually conceptualised are discussed in the next section, and in the remainder of this thesis, where I turn, onto-epistemologically to posthumanism as a framework underpinning this research.

Participants were invited to keep reflective journals for “drafting memory stories and for recording other thoughts and fragments of memory” (Davies & Gannon, 2011, p. 131) in relation to the particular memory/experience questions and topics of discussion. While four participants offered me these journals at the end of the workshops, I have not used this data. The majority of participants tended to use their journals for writing during the workshops, which was often shared at the time, rather than writing in between our meetings.

I also recorded researcher field notes over the period of the workshops. These included my experiences, observations, thoughts, affect, curiosities and reflections during and after workshops. I attempted to engage in a reflexive process with this writing, about the research, process and my role in it. This was in keeping with post-structural qualitative research, where effective field notes contain an awareness of how data are collected and recorded, and the role, perspective and position of the researcher in that process (Corwin & Clemens, 2012). However, as I outline in chapter four, I came to question the limits of reflexivity, ultimately turning to diffraction, as concept and method, (Barad, 2007) and as “a critical practice for recognizing our own “semiotic technologies” for making meanings” (Haraway, 1988, p. 570). As I will show, this entailed a shift from seeing myself as a reflective, reflexive, self-referential observer of the world towards someone who understands the world from within and as part of it whilst participating in its ongoing performance.

### **Research rigour/Trustworthiness**

Undertaking qualitative research in social sciences has typically required us to consider different notions of reliability and validity than we would normally consider in traditional positivist research paradigms. Even then, the criteria for how qualitative research should be judged and evaluated has been shifting over time. Lichtman (2006) suggests that “one of the most controversial areas surrounding qualitative research is how to evaluate what you read” (p. 189) and suggests that there are several schools of thought relating to this question. More recently, researchers in the social

sciences suggest we are in a period of post qualitative inquiry, or post inquiry (Lather, 2016; Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre, 2014), reflective in particular of the ontological turn away from conventional humanist research to, for example, new materialisms and posthumanism. Such work defies categorizing and defining, as it is based on an ontology of knowing “embedded in an immanence of doing” (Lather, 2016, p. 5). Again, while the chapters from this point on in my thesis respond to the ontological turn and post-qualitative inquiry, at this point I return to an outline of the practices informing my approach at the time of conducting the collective biography groups.

Drawing on epistemologies of feminism, social constructionism and post-structuralism provided a clear ground at the time from which to guide my research. I was guided by principles of feminist research, for example, seen to encompass the following characteristics: “addressing issues of power, emotions, notions of objectivity/subjectivity, researcher reflexivity, and power and authority in re/presentation” (Harrison, MacGibbon & Morton, 2001, p. 326). Similarly, social constructionism demanded attention to issues including trustworthiness, reflexivity, subjectivity and multiple perspectives (Lichtman, 2006). Taking such considerations into account I chose to foreground the following ways of *ensuring rigour throughout* my initial process of data collection during the interviews and collective biography groups.

*Researcher responsiveness:* Practicing openness, creativity, sensitivity, and flexibility in relation with the research and participants was deemed important (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers, 2002). I worked closely with my supervisors and participants to ensure adherence to these qualities.

*Methodological coherence:* (Morse et al., 2002): Ensuring congruence between the aims of the research components of the method was deemed important and adhered to in choosing the method of collective biography.

*Appropriate sample* (Morse et al. 2002): The sample needs to consist of participants who best represent or have knowledge on the research topic.

*Reciprocity:* In my commitment to feminist values of equality, transparency (Etherington, 2004) and relationship in research I attempted to prioritise notions and actions of reciprocity in my engagement with participants. Paying attention to the give and take of social interactions, developing rapport and empathy, incorporating the emotional aspects of the research relationship have all been identified as ways of not only ensuring good, rich and thick data, but also of working to respect feminist politics (Harrison et al., 2001). In this way, it was my intention to not only generate rich data and ensure trustworthiness of the data through relationships of reciprocity, but also to offer something potentially beneficial to my participants through their involvement in the research.

*Researcher reflexivity:* Engaging in reflexivity as a researcher means operating on multiple levels at any one time, questioning assumptions and always being open and curious about what might be influencing or informing my relationships with participants, with data and with my topic (Etherington, 2004). Incorporating processes of researcher reflexivity assumes a commitment to postmodern ideas which challenge the existence of a measurable reality that can known separate to subjectivity. Using reflexivity shows the relationship between the acquired knowledge and how it came to be, thus adding to the trustworthiness of the research. It was my aim to use writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson, 1994; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005), writing throughout the research process in order to continually inquire into my own experiences and assumptions as a researcher (self) in relation to my participants (other) and to make my positioning as transparent and explicit as possible (Speedy, 2005). While, this writing became a significant part of this research, diffraction, rather than reflexivity, comes to encompass my onto-epistemological assumptions guiding and explaining the use of my own writing in this thesis.

*Member checks:* I aimed to involve the participants as much as they, and I, were able in checking and constructing meaning around the data. I offered transcripts, reported on tentative analyses at times in the collective biography groups, and offered my writing/analysis to particular participants.

This became more difficult as time went on, after the groups ended. With a turn to a diffractive process of data analysis, which became, not about representing what was, but making knowledge anew, produced from a process of knowing in being, and thinking with theory, I attempted to keep participants informed about the processes and offer accounts of my diffractive analyses.

## **Ethics**

In addition to ensuring I performed traditional ethical procedures including gaining informed consent (see appendix 4 for ethical approval), the right to information concerning the purposes, processes, and outcomes of the study, the right to withdraw at any stage, and confidentiality (to protect the right to privacy and do no harm) (Etherington, 2007), there are a number of ethical issues I additionally considered in relation to carrying out this research. Foremost has been to consider the implications of my relationship with the student-participants. I had been a lecturer on the counselling programme for the year in which these students completed part I of the programme. This part is the most taught-course intensive part of the programme (as opposed to practice based) and I co-ordinated and taught one paper, co-taught another paper, and was a co-facilitator of the two day intensive workshop which all counselling students completed prior to beginning the counselling programme. This effectively meant I met with all of the students regularly over the course of the university year, and had responsibility for grading their work.

In part II, all students-participants were undertaking a practicum which requires completion of a certain number of counselling hours. This course was practice based and required a portfolio of work to be submitted at the end. This was the only remaining counselling paper for my participants, and it was arranged that my counsellor education colleague had full responsibility for this paper, as such I was able to have no role in the teaching or assessment for the year of the students' participation in my research.



Although the dual nature of my relationships with these students perhaps had the potential to complicate the research, I believe such a relationship actually contributed to, and potentially enhanced, the possibilities for undertaking this kind of research. The building of relationships with the participants over the previous year was almost necessary to being able to generate such rich data and experiences. Collective biography, in its methodology, requires participants to be in relationship, and together to create a space safe enough to reveal and (de)construct stories about their lives which may not have come to light previously, and which will certainly come to light in new and previously unknown, and often unexpected ways. This prior experience of relationship building, I believe, was necessary for the methodology of collective biography to be most effective, for the participants to continue to feel safe in the process, and for the possibilities of this research process to be realised.

In addition to ensuring I had no part in assessment, it was also my intention to be transparent about these processes and issues with all participants, to discuss and invite their considerations on these and any other potential areas of conflict or tension which may arise due to the dual relationships we experience. In doing this my intention was to hold to my own feminist ethics of care and equality, whilst also recognising the power and autonomy possessed by those participating in the study, that is, not assuming that because I have previously held power as their lecturer that this renders them devoid of any power. As Etherington (2007) suggests, by naming and acknowledging the participants' power — “as well as, and alongside, my own—we (were...) able to engage in more equal negotiations concerning (their) involvement in my study” (p. 602).

An additional ethical issue concerned the maintaining of the anonymity of the students in the presentation of this research. Grafanaki (1996) rightly asserts that the maintaining of “anonymity and the confidentiality of data is a critical issue in counselling research, because of the intimate nature of the material being gathered” (p. 333). Although this research is not specifically gathering information on clients engaged in the counselling process, the information is still of a personal or

intimate nature. Because I was also looking at a group of students from one year group, at a particular university which I, the researcher and author, work at, it was important to consider removing as many of these identifying details as possible. In a similar context, Grafanaki (1996) suggests that it can be difficult to preserve anonymity of research participants in a small university community when they are part of a case-study. She suggests that in such cases biographical and background information which might identify them must be altered.

For example, I do not include the year in which the research took place and I group together certain biographical information about the participants, rather than offering separate biographies. Interestingly some of the participants, when I asked them which information they would like included, and to choose a pseudonym, said they are happy for their real name to be used (which I have not done). Finally, in addition to these considerations I was also interested in developing and maintaining ethical practice as I engaged in this research with the research participants. Guillemin & Gilliam (2004) make the distinction between procedural ethics and 'ethics in practice' in conducting qualitative research (p. 262). This required an ongoing attention to the circulation of power in the groups, and to transparent communication about data and the ongoing research process, of which I attempted to keep participants informed.

Ultimately, in this research I asked participants to explore and engage with their own personal experiences of becoming counsellors, a process which the literature suggested was likely to be fraught with confusion, uncertainty, anxiety, self-doubt and stress. Using the process of collective biography meant that I asked participants to feel and describe these experiences, as close as possible to the actual embodied affect they experienced at the time. Whilst this could be described as difficult, painful or perhaps freeing, I remained ethically obligated to first and foremost ensure I did no harm. My practice as a psychologist and counsellor for over fifteen years, and my experience of working as an educator on the counselling programme enabled me to work ethically and safely with the participants. At the time, focusing on practices of reflexivity meant paying attention to the

experiences and interactions of the participants during the workshops, and to my role, my experiences and my interactions within the workshops. It is these interpersonal aspects of the research which Guillemin & Gilliam (2004) suggest are the “substrate of the ethical dimensions of research practice” (p. 275). Through engaging with sensitivity and empathy, as well as competency, the ethical notions of autonomy, dignity, and privacy of the research participants became a living experience, rather than simply words in a document.

## **PART TWO**

### **ONTO-EPISTEMOLOGICAL SHIFTS**

## CHAPTER THREE

### Posthuman feminist ethico-onto-epistemology

This point marks a diffractive moment in this research encounter, a shift of knowing-in-being, which reconfigures the ethico-onto-epistemology of this research project. In this chapter I give an account of (coming to) a posthuman onto-epistemology, in particular drawing on Karen Barad's (2007, 2010, 2012) posthumanist performative framework of agential realism. This thinking comes to underpin the ongoing theorising of this research project in relation to methodology, researcher subjectivity and data analysis to understandings of the nature of knowledge itself and how we come to know in relation with and as part of, rather than about, the world. Drawing also on post-qualitative inquiry (St. Pierre, 2014) particularly in the field of education and the work of Donna Haraway in feminist technoscience studies (1988, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2003, 2004), I outline the ontological turn (including my own) from humanism and post-structuralism to posthumanism. This entails a shift from the discursive/linguistic as ways of understanding the constitution of knowledge, the world and our selves within it. A shift to the inseparability of nature-culture, of the material-discursive, in producing iterative and entangled ways of knowing in being, of knowing produced as part of the ongoingness of the world. In this way, this chapter is also an attempt to perform a knowing-in-being, and a knowing, always, in-the-making. Thus, in it, I insert poems as markers of my own ways of knowing, and as entangled knowledges-in-the-making produced in relation with the multiplicity of forces constituting knowing. I do this in an attempt also to perform some of the messiness, multiplicity and non-linearity of coming to know, of the production of knowledge. I originally conceptualise my use of poems as "writing as a *method of inquiry*" (Richardson, 1994, italics in original), as a way of coming to know, albeit a partial, situated and local knowing (Barraclough, 2014). As I outline in chapter five, I come to re-conceptualise this process as a diffractive one, and the poem as a diffraction pattern.

I turn to Barad and her agential realist framework, outlining her account of how material-discursive practices come to matter, of the role of human *and* non-human forces, the material *and* discursive, natural *and* cultural factors, in rethinking notions of knowledge, identity, causality, agency and ethics. I do this in order to situate the remainder of this research project within such an onto-epistemology. That is, I turn to posthumanism as a framework underpinning this research project and its production of new knowledge, and thus guiding me methodologically, and innovatively in the counselling literature, in seeking answers to my research questions:

‘What are the lived experiences of counsellors-in-training in coming to embody a counsellor identity/subjectivity<sup>4</sup> during counsellor education?’

‘What are the pedagogical implications for counsellor education and counsellor educators of reconceptualising this process of identity formation?’

### Worlds-in-the-making

A girl speaks to me of her dislike  
of how she looks in photographs.

This makes me so sad,  
I do not know what to do,  
or what to say, to counter the years  
(hers, mine and those women all the way back

---

<sup>4</sup> I use both the poststructural terms subject and subjectivity as well as the term identity. As a grammatical term, ‘subject’ highlights the role of language in recruiting us into the particular ways we are able to give accounts of ourselves. It also allows an encapsulation of the notion of freedom or autonomy in that this is tied up with the local, social, cultural signifying practices of which the subject is subjected to. The term also allows for discontinuities and contradictions in that the subject can take up a number of shifting and inconsistent subject-positions. This is in contrast to typical humanistic understandings of identity which implies sameness, fixity and a self-contained, enduring sense of self (Belsey, 2002). I don’t use identity as a term in this humanist sense, but rather in a posthumanist sense, as outlined towards the end of chapter one. Researchers and writers use both terms, ‘subjectivity’ (e.g. Braidotti, 2016) and ‘identity’ (e.g. Barad, 2007) when referring to the formation of the posthuman subject. As will become clear, a posthuman subjectivity is an expanded, relational self in contrast to a poststructural subjectivity.

to the beginning of time)  
of nature-culture's effects on girls' and women's worth -  
embedded in a gaze.

A woman speaks to me of her overwhelm.

I have no suggestions  
for how to plan better, work smarter,  
prioritise more.

I lead her to the only truth I know,  
yes, she is working twice as hard, unable to say no,  
doing it all, to prove her worth,  
to those who are watching,  
to those who are judging,  
who have the final judgment,  
who have marked her as other,  
a woman of colour.

I refuse to name her not-enough-ness  
as hers alone,  
her sense of unworthiness  
as hers to fix. Instead,  
I despair with her  
at the end result,  
at the burden we place  
upon her,  
to remake the brokenness of this world  
on her own.

A counselling colleague speaks to me  
of a teenage girl who came to talk to her.  
She had a back-story of violence at home,  
not towards her, you understand, she only saw  
(and heard and lived and felt)  
her mum 'getting the bash' from her dad,

or rather her dad  
beating the crap  
out of her mum.

(Doesn't it matter how we say it, which way round we tell it?)

The question was how to respond,  
what could she say,  
where to begin,  
whose responsibility?  
It wasn't new, this story, it's as old as time, too.  
This girl, this mum,  
they've told it all before.

There's fire in me.  
To raze the ground.  
To cauterize, cremate and shape anew.  
Do we really keep hearing and telling and living  
the same stories over and over again?  
Then, over and over again we must sit up,  
stand up, shout until we are hoarse,  
'It's not ok it's not ok it's not ok.'

I think I understand a little  
of how bodies and meanings and lives  
are made, but I don't yet know  
how to engage in this at times, barely possible,  
but always necessary, practice  
of building our worlds anew.

(June 2015)

Philosophical and scientific questions of what is real or true, of what is the nature of things, of our social, physical, metaphysical, and material realities are ontological ones. How we go about ascertaining that knowledge or figuring out what is real or true are epistemological ones. The two are not unconnected, as will become clearer throughout this chapter. Up until this point, humanistic,



postmodern, social constructionist and poststructural theories of knowing have primarily informed understandings of the world and ourselves in it, in counselling and counsellor education. Counsellor-in-training lived experience and identity research, as outlined in chapter one, has been underpinned by positivist, phenomenological, and interpretivist methodological approaches. Such approaches can be described as representationalist, and as ontologically foundationalist, seeking to provide a comprehensive and accurate representation of a real world, which forms the basis of knowledge claims (Rosiek & Gleason, 2017). Postmodernism and social constructionism challenged the certainties of modernism, and realism, and invited instead views of knowledge claims as situated, partial, and embedded within cultural and historical stories, as well as bringing into greater focus the relationship between the storyteller, the listener and the knowledge claims (Etherington, 2004). Methodologies inspired by poststructuralism reject the idea that representations we make of the world of our research “can be guaranteed by an exclusive relationship to the reality” of the object of study (Rosiek & Gleason, 2017, p. 6). Indeed, an aim of social analysis underpinned by poststructuralism, with an emphasis on linguistic mediation, is to “generate a principled undecidability about our interpretations of the social” (p. 6). As is outlined in chapter one, research exploring the lived experience and identity formation of counsellors-in-training remains predominantly situated within positivist and interpretivist paradigms. This has an effect on the kind of knowledge claims subsequently able to be made, often in particular, generating ‘grand narratives’, failing to recognise the “irreducibly mediated nature of all truth claims” (p. 8), and failing to recognize how “conceptions of knowledge often serve to predetermine” the research ends we seek and achieve (p. 8). What kinds of knowledge might be produced, if we understood the world and our relation to it in different ways, and thus attempted different ways of engaging with it in producing knowledge about it? In effect, this is where I have come to, in relation to the research on counsellor-in training identities, but also in relation with my own onto-epistemologies, as seen in the above poem. Embodied in the poem is a desire for better ways of getting at how the

world is made, un-made and can be re-made, and how we might all participate in this process of worlds-in-the-making. The following is my attempt at coming to understand, and explain, how this might be achieved, and what might be produced differently, in relation to what has variously been termed the “onto-ethical” (Rosiek & Gleason, 2017) or ontological turn (Lather, 2016), the material turn (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b), post-qualitative inquiry (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013) and the ‘post-post’ (Braidotti, 2013). In what follows, I map my traversing of this turn, specifically in relation to posthumanism and Karen Barad’s (2007) ethico-onto-epistemology, in order to re-situate myself and this project.

### **Beginning, un-doing and re-turning onto-epistemology**

As will be evident by now, my interests have been oriented toward ontologies of being and becoming, toward feminist themes of change and transformation, in particular relation to identities, counselling and education (Hinton & van der Tuin, 2014). I am in agreement with Elizabeth Grosz when she speaks of feminist theory’s “necessity, in the future, of providing other ways of knowing, other ontologies and epistemologies that enable the subject’s relation to the world, to space and to time, to be conceptualized in different terms” (Grosz, 2002 in Hinton & van der Tuin, 2014, p. 2). This is not to dismiss all that has come before, rather it invites an ontological reconfiguring of causality and temporality as multidirectional and “an understanding of time as non-linear, intensive and inventive” (Coleman, 2014, p. 30), in order, possibly, to envision the past as enlivening the future in the present. Such ideas about ‘alternate’ ways of knowing introduce the onto-epistemological shift I speak about in this chapter, and ultimately put to work in this research.

I align myself here with St. Pierre (2014) and her questioning of the (im)possibility of attempting to do post-qualitative inquiry, an experimental kind of research inquiry which occurs once one has shifted the ontological beyond a conventional humanist qualitative methodology grounded in the tripartite empiricist division of reality (the world and lived experience), representation (knowledge)

and the knowing subjectivity of the author. St. Pierre writes of the disconnect evident in much research in education between methodology, epistemology and ontology, where authors claim a “post” ontology in their thinking (e.g. a poststructural ontology using Foucault) and yet go on to adopt a conventional humanist qualitative methodology (e.g. drawing on notions of a Cartesian subject and taken for granted understandings of data, interview, or fieldwork). For example, she says, “we found qualitative studies that claimed to use poststructural theories of the subject but then in the methodology section included descriptions and treatments of people as humanist individuals with unique “voices” waiting to be set free by emancipatory researchers” (p. 10). St. Pierre urges those thinking with the “posts” to unlearn or forget conventional qualitative methodology with its “grid of normalizing human concepts, many of which are positivist” (p. 10) and to instead begin with ontological and epistemological commitments or to “think with theory” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) and that in doing this, methodology will, and must, follow.

This is not a simple undoing, however, this working both within and against the normalizing and dominant discourse of humanism, of the knowing human subject producing knowledge of the world. It is risky and only ever experimental, with no template or guide to work from in thinking here, with a posthumanist ontology, which by its very nature means nothing ever stays the same. Throughout this work then it is my intention to work against the conventional qualitative research process and its humanist and positivist underpinnings, whilst recognising it is unlikely I will ever fully succeed in this endeavour. Wherever possible, in thinking with theory, I attempt to put that theory to work in this text, recognising Derrida’s (in St. Pierre) ontological position that “there is nothing outside of the text” explained by St. Pierre to mean that that “the text is always already of, with the world; it is never “just text.”” (St. Pierre, 2014, p. 11).

Thus, in thinking with posthumanist theory, my knowing or ontology of the world cannot be written as though I am separate from the world of which I write about, as though I am looking out on it in order to determine or describe the nature of it, as distinct from me and my descriptions of it. My

knowing comes from being in it, with it, and of it, from “a direct material engagement, a practice of intra-acting with the world as part of the world in its dynamic material reconfiguring” (Barad, 2007, p. 379). It is my aim therefore, in this part of the chapter, to attempt to “*return*” (Hughs & Lury, 2013, p. 787, italics in original), rather than reflect on, some of my own intra-active entanglements with onto-epistemology in order, not to “replay a string of moments” (Barad, 2007, p. ix) to demonstrate “a singular or unified progressive history” (Hughs & Lury, 2013, p.787), but to enliven and reconfigure the past and future in this intra-active writing present.

This is not, however, and never has been, an innocent re-turning. Whether we term it language, narrative, or the technology of writing, according to Haraway (1994) these all refer to forms of life and we “cannot afford neutrality about (their) constitution and sustenance” (p. 62). Every moment presents itself with questions of responsibility and accountability for the world’s ongoing reconfiguring (Barad, 2007) and the point, according to Haraway, is not just to read the webs of knowledge production, but to participate in the processes, “to make a difference - however modestly, however partially”, “in order to foster some forms of life and not others” (p. 62). Thus, my modest and partial re-telling below is always already entangled with lively feminist and social justice desires for participating in the material-semiotic practices of making worlds anew.

#### Ethico-onto-epistemological becoming

1981.

Springbok tour of New Zealand –

in my family sports and politics

figure large,

but not in any intended

knot of entanglement.

Invercargill, Southland,

*a strong rugby province*

where a barbed wire fence

curls itself around

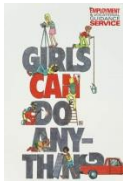
Rugby Park –  
my brother, aged thirteen  
throws eggs at the protestors,  
political, in his  
anti-sport-politics protest.

*1980s.*

Formative years – a blue voting  
middle class white roughcast  
house in suburbia.  
All the right zones  
for aspiration through education.

Self-made  
self-reliant  
self-determining  
self-contained.

I cycle to the Girls' High School  
on my blue ten-speed  
come rain or shine



becoming with  
girls-can-do-anything (a man can already do)

Latin chants

*non scholae sed vitae discimus –*

traces so deeply rooted

in my body –

*not-for-school-but-for-life-we-are-learning*

that I am sixteen again,

living out my anarchy

in absenteeism

and local pubs.

*Post 1989.*

Rats and mice, underfloor  
and in Skinner boxes.  
Lay down the poison,  
tap the lever,  
stimulus-response,  
brain-behaviour,  
salivating dogs.  
Psychology is in my psyche.  
Reducing  
Representing  
Reality  
Real  
Reason/able.  
I think, I sense, I perceive  
the coming of a crisis.

*1994.*

Social construction,  
deconstruction  
reconstruction.  
A shifting of allegiance,  
a loosening of ties,  
a change of heart.  
From Leith Walk to the Hocken building,  
degrees of freedom to  
degrees of uncertainty,  
I cannot see straight –  
distance is subjective  
time is relative  
culture counts and  
meaning matters  
in the space between  
you and I  
where we talk ourselves  
into and out of

being.

*Later.*

New horizons,  
different shores.  
Pain and privilege co-implicated  
as I walk up the prime-minister strewn  
staircase of 10 Downing St,  
an esteemed guest  
of the new liberalism –  
penetrating the patriarchy,  
the psyche,  
this past-present of a future  
in/determinable.  
Broken bones and broken hearts  
bruised and bloodied,  
battered and beaten  
I listen and listen,  
ache and break,  
in this first ever safe house  
I make my vows  
to de-pathologise,  
my feminist oath  
to fight right back,  
to smash the system,  
cracked and skewed,  
bloodied and broken.

*And now-before-and-after.*

This going back and coming forward,  
coming back and going forward.  
Re-turning.  
Re-telling.  
Re-configuring  
these cuts and performances,

made, unmade and re-made.

I am left undone,

a redoing,

moment by moment.

A spacetimemattering

of indeterminate beginnings

and endings,

a queer quantum writing

that makes time

and makes me

and makes known

its own becoming,

entirely and intimately

in its pen and paper,

finger and keyboard,

mind and matter,

now and then,

there and here,

intermingling,

entangling,

enlivening

practices of be(com)ing.

**(October, 2015)**

Writing this necessitates a beginning, and an end, although neither can necessarily be determined.

The end material product might suggest the existence of a separate, subjective 'I' whose mind is digesting, interpreting and describing objective, fixed, material for the production of the knowledge eventually appearing on this page, in a time-ordered fashion. One interpretation of this is that knowing or knowledge is mediated through the mind to produce a representation of an objective, external, and stable reality. Or, as Barad says, "the ontology of the world is a matter of discovery for the traditional realist" (1996, p. 162) and that part of the world which comes to be represented



is purported to be independent of all practices of representation. In this ontological view, there exists a gap, a separation, between a self-contained knower, an independent existing reality, and representations of that observable/knowable reality.

Ontological challenges have come in many forms against this positivist view of the world, and feminist critiques have been numerous<sup>5</sup>. It is my intention throughout this thesis to experiment in thinking/working/playing and becoming with a post-humanist onto-epistemology in an attempt to rethink, or reconfigure, human subjectivity in the context of being and becoming a counsellor-in-training. It is my hope that by going beyond the dominant humanist conceptualisations, and positivist and interpretivist methodologies, that something new will emerge in our thinking about the process of the formation of the counsellor-in-training subject.

### **Toward a diffractive and affirmative knowing-in-being**

In particular, as indicated, I am drawing on Karen Barad's (1996, 1998, 2003, 2007, 2010,) post-human, performative, theoretical framework of agential realism as outlined in depth in her book *'Meeting the Universe Halfway: quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning'* (2007). However, it must be noted that this 'drawing on' is always a diffractive<sup>6</sup> reading of agential-realism as described by Karen Barad, as influenced by Donna Haraway (1988, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2003) but also as taken up and thought with by others (e.g. van der Tuin, 2011a 2011b, 2014; Hinton, 2014; Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011).

Specifically here, I use the term diffractive to refer to a subjectivity and temporality at work in practices of knowing-in-being (van der Tuin, 2014), to an interference pattern (rather than a

---

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter four for more discussion of this in relation to the crisis of representation and some of the challenges and critiques.

<sup>6</sup> I offer a more detailed reading of a diffractive methodology in chapter four: from reflexivity to diffraction.

reflection on) which becomes known in my writing produced through entangled intra-active practices with readings on agential-realism. Thus, my writing here is not intended to “displace the same elsewhere” (Haraway, 1994, p. 63), rather it is a performative, dynamic materialization of material-discursive practices of knowing-in-being in relation with multiple other forces including the theoretical ideas I am discussing, my past knowings, and the material limits of producing knowing on the page.

I draw on the diffractive idea of working along affirmative rather than, primarily, critical lines. According to Haraway (1994) while critical vision has been central, and necessary, to critical theory in order to “unmask the established disorder that appears as transparently normal” (p. 62) it does not go far enough toward making a difference and affirming that the world can be otherwise. This affirmative notion is taken up by van der Tuin (2011a, 2014) who draws on Barad (2007) and Grosz (2005) in suggesting that “reading diffractively breaks through the academic habit of criticism and works along affirmative lines” (van der Tuin, 2011a, p. 22). I am using this notion here, of a diffractive and affirmative kind of reading, in considering the texts and theories I am reading which are informing my onto-epistemology as outlined here. That is, in outlining a post-humanist onto-epistemology it is not my intention to dismiss, and dissent from all texts and theories which have come before, in particular those which I have known (e.g. realism, positivism, social constructionism, post-colonialism, post-structuralism).

Instead, thinking along diffractive and affirmative lines offers a generative and dynamic reconfiguring of old and new, established and emerging, concepts and traditions, without being underpinned by an oppositional binarism. In this way, new onto-epistemologies, and the texts they intra-act with producing, are “always generated with the texts and projected futures of the past, and in the living present as always/already moving toward a future” (Van der Tuin, 2014, p. 235). I find Haraway’s (1994) metaphors of the ‘knot’ and ‘string figures’ equally helpful in thinking through

the articulation of an onto-epistemology, which seeks not to discount that which has come before, nor to imply that which is articulated is static, and closed to that which is already on its way.

In articulating her theory of feminist technoscience, Haraway proposes a refiguring or a knotting together into a string figure of three interknitted discourses named cultural studies; feminist, multicultural, antiracist science projects; and science studies. She notes however, that these discourses are not preconstituted, bounded scholarly practices which exist entirely outside of one another. Rather they can be seen as knots, place markers, “in a constitutively interactive, collaborative process of trying to make sense of (...) worlds we inhabit and that inhabit us” (Haraway, 1994, p. 66). Neither does she envision her knotted, string figures as finished and closed articulations of the world, rather her hope is that her readers will pick up the patterns, invent their own promising knots and figures, in an ongoing re-articulating of unfinished, less deadly, worlds.

Hence, my articulation here of an onto-epistemology, is a pattern or a string figure, diffracted through so many texts and made up of a number of more significant knots, of posthumanism, agential-realism, poststructuralism, new material feminisms, of a coming together into something which might resemble social-material-affective-discursive practices of knowing-in-being. The following, then, is an attempt to articulate these knots in a way which might begin to do justice to their complexity, performativity, and historicity and which invites the reader into their own diffractive reading as they intra-act with this text, and which opens up other ways of knowing in relation to the lived experience of counsellors-in-training.

### **What came before: a local entanglement**

Whilst I am particularly drawing on Haraway and Barad and their feminist, technoscientific theories which can be said to come under a post-humanist ontology<sup>7</sup>, here I am first attempting to

---

<sup>7</sup> Barad, for example, states that her agential realist framework provides a post-humanist performative account of technoscientific and other naturalcultural practices which also include non-and-other-than-humans. However her

outline some broader understandings of the term posthumanism as I have come to understand it and as I aim to use it in this project. Drawing particularly on posthumanism as it has been taken up in cultural studies and education, feminism and philosophy, I aim to sketch some of the key, broader ideas which come to underpin a posthuman onto-epistemology in this project. Necessarily entangled with this is a going back and going forward, moving between theories of realism, the linguistic turn to social constructionism and poststructuralism in order to come to the past-present-future of posthumanism.

As humans have become, and have been seen to be, entangled in complex and intricate relationships with more-and-other-than-human entities such as digital, cybernetic and medical technologies, other animals and species, the environment and the material world, the anthropocentric notion of the unitary human subject as the centre of all things has necessarily come to be reworked. This is not necessarily a new reworking, as Pepperell (2005) suggests, the posthuman era, the age of uncertainty, could be said to have been originated in the period leading up to World War I since this was the time of emerging quantum physics and cubism, a reworking of the representation of things and the order of time and space. Indeed, although not originally captured under the umbrella of posthumanism and preferring now the “awkward term” of companion species (Haraway, 2008b, p. 164), Donna Haraway’s technoscientific figures such as the cyborg (1991), OncoMouse (1997), companion species (2003, 2008) and naturecultures (2003) have all been working to unsettle, destabilize and even dismantle the defining and assumed boundaries between humans/animals and

---

use of the term “posthumanism” also “marks a refusal to take the distinction between human and non-human for granted, and to found analyses on this presumably fixed and inherent set of categories” (2007, p. 32). Whilst Haraway does not claim the term posthumanism, preferring instead companion species, her work and the figures she has used all the way back to her feminist, socialist Cyborg Manifesto of 1983, have always been about a rejection of rigid boundaries between the human and more-or-other-than-human in the interests of “an ethics and politics committed to the flourishing of significant otherness” (2003, p. 3).

technology, between animals/other species and humans, and between nature and culture, just as a theory of posthumanism does today.

As Haraway says, in offering us the example of the human body, in which human genomes can actually only be found in 10% of all the cells while the other 90% are filled with the genomes of bacteria, fungi and other species, “to be one is always to become with many” (2008b, p. 4). However, in posthumanism, and companion species, this notion goes beyond traditional ideas of co-habiting alongside one another. Haraway’s companion species is, she says, a “permanently undecidable category, a category-in-question that insists on the relation as the smallest unit of being and of analysis” (2008b, p. 165), which, in line with Barad’s concept of intra-action<sup>8</sup>, does not pre-determine the status of the species. Consistent with post-human notions which contest bodily boundaries, the locus of identity (Toffoletti, 2002) and the unitary status of the subject, Haraway’s (2008b) companion species’ trope tells us that “every species is a multi-species crowd” (p. 165).

This idea of indeterminate or unstable boundaries in a complex and entangled relationship between humans and more-and-other-than-human stands in stark contrast to the humanist ontology which has been culturally dominant since the Enlightenment, which places man and individuals at the centre of all things, as apart from the rest. As Barad (2007) states, representationalism, individualism, and humanism all labour together, their forces hard at work in anthropocentric Western culture, neo-liberal politics, and all of the places in between. As is stated above, such ontologies claim a knowable, observable, discoverable world, whether it be natural, cultural or social, out there, able to be represented in the knowledge making practices of individuals.

Posthumanism is not the first to challenge such claims. In my discipline areas of education and counselling, post-modernism, social constructionism and post-structuralism have achieved much

---

<sup>8</sup> “the *mutual constitution of entangled agencies*” (Barad, 2007, p. 33, italics in original). This will be further developed when outlining aspects of Barad’s agential realism.

distance from humanism, from its agentic, autonomous, rational and self-contained human subject-of-will (Fox and Alldred, 2013), from its structures of binaries, categories, hierarchies and other grids of regularity and normativity (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000) and from its particularly devastating effects for those who exist on the wrong side of the binaries (including, but not limited to “most white women, people of colour, the sick, and others with reduced powers of self-direction compared to the One True Copy of the Prime Mover” (Haraway, 1994, p. 65)). Theories of social constructivism and social constructionism<sup>9</sup> have insisted that we take a critical stance toward our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world, essentially those of positivism and empiricism. Social constructionism cautions us to be sceptical in our assumptions of the ‘true’ nature of reality, and instead invites us to consider the role and influence of social constructs and categories we use to describe or represent the world, as pertinent to actually constructing or making knowledge. That is, our knowledge of the world is limited or constructed by the means through which we describe it, rather than bearing a direct correspondence to an objective reality. In addition, the language, concepts and ways in which we understand the world are culturally and historically situated and are constructed through social processes, again rather than individual, objective observation (Burr, 1995). Such ideas form the basis for Solution-focused brief therapy which sees the possibilities for clients’ futures as being not determined by their pasts, nor limited by labels or categories, but rather as partly socially constructed through a particular use of language during the social process of therapy. These ideas have contributed to my ontology of the world and its becoming since I was first introduced to them in my counselling training in the early 1990s. However, as theories underpinning knowledge claims in research related to counsellor-in-training lived experience they seem to have enjoyed limited uptake.

---

<sup>9</sup> While these terms are sometimes used interchangeably (Burr, 1995), social constructionism is a term more readily associated with social psychology and is said to underpin post-modern approaches in counselling such as Solution-focused brief therapy, which is primarily where my understanding of this has developed.

In a similar way, theories of post-structuralism have offered significant challenges to humanist and realist ontologies of social life, human action, subjectivity and the nature of and possibilities for change and transformation. My own relationship with post-structuralism initially developed primarily through learning and engaging with practices of Narrative Therapy, and the writings of its co-founders, Michael White and David Epston (1990), who were influenced, among others, by the ideas of the mid-twentieth century French philosophers Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, two of the major figures associated with post-structuralism. As White states,

The pursuit of poststructuralist understandings of human action have taken me to studies of critical philosophy, to literary theory, to cultural anthropology, and to postmodern ethics. These studies are far removed from the orthodox psychologies and counselling/therapy theories which are informed by the structuralist discourses” (1997, p. ix).

White’s reference here to structuralist discourses refers to therapies which advance the theoretical ideas that universal, unitary structures exist which are determining of the subject, “that subjectivity is either internally generated or externally imposed” (Barad, 2007, p. 46). Such examples of these can be seen particularly in Freudian theories of psychoanalysis, with the structures of the id, ego, and superego, the unconscious, subconscious and unconscious and its deterministic theories of personality and pathology (Jones-Smith, 2016) or in modern psychology’s structures and categories of mental illness as evidenced in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition* (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). White’s locating of these as ‘discourses’ refers to the post-structuralist notion that these structures, or the distinctions such theories and categories make, are not necessarily given by the world or existent within the subject, but are instead (re)produced by the symbolizing or signifying systems we learn, that is, via language which is inclusive of images and symbols (Belsey, 2002). Of importance too is the notion that ‘discourse’ was not intended by Foucault, or taken up by White, to be the naming of another universal structure.

Rather, discursive practices always take local, historical forms, which is what Foucault sought to describe (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

Working as a narrative therapist has meant taking a critical view of what counts as legitimate knowledge in regard to practice and to the very culture of counselling and therapy. It has meant a questioning of many taken for granted ideas about the nature and cause of people's difficulties and of ways of working with them in the pursuit of more satisfying practices of living. For example, "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973 in White, 1997) of persons' lives and actions which are informed by their own interpretations or meaning making are privileged over "thin descriptions" which are descriptions and interpretations typically arrived at and imposed by others. Such thin descriptions are seen as contributing to the narrowing of available options for action, or agency, in people's lives (White, 1997). With a focus in therapy on language which invites a thickening of stories, partly through situating them in the multiple contexts of people's lives (such as relationship, family, social, historical) alternative stories of preferred practices of living become available, which are then also able to be thickened, witnessed and acknowledged.

Not only has narrative therapy drawn on poststructuralist ideas which challenge taken for granted, structuralist notions of subjectivity, and instead root the (im)possibilities for being and becoming in the signifying systems of language, White also follows poststructuralist philosopher Michel Foucault's writing, in particular, on the inseparability of practices of power and knowledge (White, 1997). While Foucault's mid twentieth century studies of madness, medicine, punishment, and sexuality had an objective of creating a history of the different modes by which human beings are made subjects (Foucault, 1982), his work also became focused on the power relations involved in



the control of what constitutes reason, knowledge and truth and the subject (Belsey, 2002)<sup>10</sup>. He says:

this form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognise and which others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power which makes individual subjects. (Foucault, 1982, p. 212).

That is, unlike previous versions of power, for Foucault power is not held and wielded by individuals or classes or institutions. Instead, it is seen as “dispersed and subject-less, as elements of broad ‘strategies’ but without individual authors” (Gaventa, 2003, p. 1) and as making or constituting subjects and knowledge through discourse. In order to understand what power relations are about, Foucault claimed that one needed to investigate not an internal rationality but the antagonism or opposition to that which we are interested in. That is, the struggle against or resistance to the forms of subjection, and the struggles against forms of domination and exploitation. In this sense, power is relational and, again, does not exist within individuals, classes or institutions, rather it is dispersed, ubiquitous and appears and circulates in every moment of social relations. Foucault (1982) saw the exercising of power as a way in which certain actions act on and modify the field of others’ possible actions, “it is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely (p. 220)... (it is) a permanent provocation” (p. 222).

Every relationship of power, which is rooted in systems of social networks, puts into operation differentiations (differences of status or privilege; economic, linguistic or cultural differences,

---

<sup>10</sup> Obviously a discussion of Foucault’s notion of power is necessarily complex and my aim here is rather to include the necessity of reference to systems and practices of power in narrative therapy, and in poststructuralism, in order to situate it within my own ontological understandings of the world, and of human action, not in order to give an in-depth and critical overview of it, although my hope is obviously to produce some useful understanding of how power works in Foucauldian terms.

differences in know-how and competence) which are at the same time its conditions and its results. Power in this sense both produces reality, knowledge, truth and subjects, and is produced by these very same things. It is inseparable and its movement and effects need to be taken into account in any analysis of the production of knowledge and of social relations. The discursive is one particular way in which power's movements and effects can be traced as "discourse is the vehicle through which knowledge and subjects are constituted" (Gaventa, 2003, p. 1). However, such strategies of power, although dominating, are as Foucault notes always existent in a relation of 'agonisms' and as such analyses must also always look for power in strategies of resistance<sup>11</sup>.

More recently my use and understanding of poststructuralism has come through academic, feminist, post-structural writing by authors such as Bronwyn Davies (Davies and Harre, 1990; Davies, 2000, 2010) and her writing with Susanne Gannon and others on the methodology of collective biography (see previous chapter), Laurel Richardson (1997) and Elizabeth A. St. Pierre (2000; 2014; Richardson & St-Pierre, 2005; St-Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Their writing has reinforced and developed, for me, an ontology in which language, subjectivity, social organisation and power are inextricably linked. "Understanding language as competing discourses – competing ways of giving meaning and of organising the world – makes language a site of exploration and struggle" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 961). How we are able to make sense of the world depends upon the historical, cultural, social discourses that are available to us at the time. That is, we are *partly*<sup>12</sup> discursively constituted. This will be important as I go on to discuss coming to a post-humanist ontology, particularly, Barad's agential-realist framework which outlines a posthumanist

---

<sup>11</sup> While I will not be engaging in a strictly Foucauldian analysis of power and discourse, Karen Barad's theory of agential realism has also drawn on Foucault and retains the discursive as a key part of her theory, albeit in quantum entanglement. Hence, it is important to outline here both as part of my genealogy and also of post-humanism's.

<sup>12</sup> I use *partly* throughout this discussion as a reflection of coming to the post-human framework of the intra-activity of the material-discursive, such that while the discursive is still essential to ontology, it is configured in a new and entangled way.

performative account of material-discursive practices. Such an account, while moving beyond the solely linguistic turn of poststructuralism to re-consider materiality as a force (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b), does not move away from it altogether. In this sense, and as will become apparent, keeping an account of the discursive, albeit as an intra-active force, remains vital.

A post-structurally informed ontology invites a consideration of the production of knowledge as a discursive practice, of subjects of research (authors and participants) as discursively constituted through and in language. As stated above, this implies “there is nothing outside of the text” (Derrida in St. Pierre, 2014, p. 11). In this way, knowledge produced is seen not as a representation of an observable truth, rather it is a discursive production, situated culturally, historically, linguistically, and, as such, can always be subjected to critique and deconstruction in order to make visible the discursive work that has gone into its constitution and the possibilities for its constituting of us. It was with this post-structural thinking that I began my research, in an attempt to do the, often difficult, work of shifting from, as Davies conceptualises it, “phenomenology’s subject-of-will” to “poststructuralism’s subject-of-thought” (2010, p. 54). While this has always been my orientation in my therapeutic work – to invite client’s to deconstruct and become curious about fixed views they (or others) may hold of their identities and in doing so to create space for alternative and less problem- or deficit-saturated possibilities for living to emerge – I was initially surprised to see the hold humanism (or phenomenology’s subject-of-will) had on me as I began to contemplate my own identities as a pre-cursor to engaging with my participants<sup>13</sup>. This made me alert to the very point that St. Pierre (2014) makes about the disconnect researchers often produce between espoused

---

<sup>13</sup> I have documented this beginning in a now published paper Barraclough (2014) titled ‘Migration of identity of a counsellor educator: using writing as a method of inquiry to explore the in-between spaces’.

ontological orientations of the “posts” (e.g. post-structuralism), and the ways they actually go about carrying out the research, as I have outlined above.

For me, the question then becomes, what does it mean to incorporate an orientation to my research as *partly* discursively produced, to ensure that I hold onto the poststructural ideas of subjects/participants/author not as singular, self-contained, autonomous subjects acting through our own choices (Davies, 2010) and giving personal, unique voice to experience, but as subjects whose agency and knowing is *partly* constituted through the discourses (e.g. of gender, age, culture, emotion, mental health) available at the time. This moves me toward epistemological and methodological questions as these necessarily intersect with ontology, towards thinking “of our research subjects differently, against the grain of phenomenology” (Davies, 2010). In this research this moved me toward the methodological practice of collective biography (e.g. Davies and Gannon, 2006;), which originally encompassed the poststructural aim of inviting participants to engage in practices of “reflexive awareness of the ways in which discursive practices shape selves, shape worlds, shape desire, with the aim of opening up “the possibility of re-shaping, re-writing, re-visioning desire” (Davies & Dormer, 1997, p. 62). Or, as Davies (2004) says, through making the constitutive practice of discourse visible, its effects become revisable.

In a similar way, as the producer of this text, situated within the limits and affordances of certain prescribed academic requirements, and within the limits and affordances of my own situated knowing, I am always attempting to make visible the *partly* discursive practices of my own knowing, through, for example, poems situated throughout the text. However, this entails a recognition, not that I have now shown the whole truth about my involvement in the production of this knowledge, rather that what is produced, or what can be known (of my own constitution and of that of the text produced), is never the end, or a final knowing. I discuss this further in chapter four, referring to the limits of reflexivity as an attempt to explain the (illusory) origins of

constitution, which has the ultimate aim in research of making visible the subjectivity of the researcher in order to show both a connection and a separation between researcher subjectivity and the knowledge produced. The underlying assumptions and limits posed by incorporating this practice of researcher reflexivity as envisioned in a social constructionist or poststructural ontology are laid out in chapter four and ontological challenges and limits of this view are discussed further below in coming to a post-humanist ontology. Thus, suffice to say for now, that in this text, while I retain a focus on the discursive, I shift to a diffractive, rather than reflexive, ontology, where the agency of the researcher moves from a backward looking focus on “tracings of the already-known” toward “making new mappings, onto-epistemological, ethical, mappings, in which something new might emerge” (Davies, 2014b, p. 734). This will be a new undertaking in research in the area of counsellor-in-training identity formation and subsequent pedagogical implications for counsellor education. As identified in chapter one, while there has been a body of literature engaging with practices of counselling underpinned by social constructionist and post-structural theories, such literature has reported on the ways they engage pedagogically with counsellors-in-training (e.g. Winslade, 2002), rather than engaging in the production of new knowledge/research with post-ontologies and epistemologies.

### **A re-turn to posthumanism**

Possibly, it would have been easier at this point to remain with what I have known and come to know (in being) over the previous twenty years through practice as a counsellor/psychologist with poststructural leanings and research encounters increasingly erring toward post-structural ontologies. However, through a series of material-discursive encounters with people, places and texts too numerous to name or recall, my knowing-in-being has been altered irreversibly. I come to this point in my ontology, here, on the page, and in this work as a whole, with a desire to experiment with a posthumanist ontology. For two reasons: (1) because I have come to see in theory

and practice the limits of a social constructionist and post-structural orientation to my work, both as a counsellor/counsellor educator and as a researcher, and (2) I am excited and intrigued by the possibilities a posthuman ontology may offer me in my research and in counsellor education practices for coming to know differently and in doing so producing knowledge which centres issues of responsibility and ethics in reconfiguring worlds. As Karen Barad (2007) says “each moment is alive with different possibilities for the world’s becoming and different reconfigurings of what may yet be possible” and “questions of responsibility and accountability present themselves with every possibility” (p. 182). What follows then, in addressing the two reasons stated above, is an ongoing reconfiguring of ontology, a coming to know the nature of world differently, in posthumanist terms, and in doing so a rethinking of the possibilities for what it might mean to produce this thesis, to be/come a counsellor and to consider the pedagogical implications as a counsellor educator.

I have started to outline above the beginnings of thinking with posthumanism in terms of a shift in focus from the primarily linguistic nature of social constructionism and poststructuralism in the constitution of subjectivity and production of knowledge, to firstly recognising the non-human or more-than-human<sup>14</sup> entangled forces also at play, outside of the anthropocentric imaginary (Asberg, Koobak & Johnson, 2011). What follows now, is an attempt to outline this move from social constructionism and poststructuralism, or from the linguistic turn to what is being called, by some, the “material turn”, overlapping also with the terms “new materialism”, and “material feminism” (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b), which I understand to be a particular feminist model or approach to develop out of the broader framework of posthumanism. Indeed, Karen Barad has been labelled a “material post-human feminist” (Herbrechter, 2013) and it is with these particular words, and ensuing meanings, in mind that I wish to proceed. However, I think it is also relevant to keep in

---

<sup>14</sup> such as digital, cybernetic and medical technologies, other animals and species, the environment and the material world.

mind that while it is my intention to provide a comprehensive understanding of posthuman new material feminist philosophy, in particular Karen Barad's agential realism framework, I am doing this in order that I am able to produce knowledge, and think with this particular theory with data generated with my research participants, not to outline an argument on the history of philosophical thought.

Thus, while posthumanism recognises "a qualitative shift in our thinking about what exactly is the basic unit of common reference for our species, our polity and our relationship to the other inhabitants of this planet" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 2) and thus offers a serious challenge to the taken for granted status of the human, where the humanist assumption of the "figure of Man" naturally stands at the centre of all things, material feminisms offers a particular rethinking within this, of the body and other materialities, and how these intermingle with meaning (Asberg et al. 2011, Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b). Central to both (posthumanism and material feminisms) is a reworking of dualisms, but in particular, of the social constructionist assumptions which hold in place a binary opposition of the "categorical distinction between the given (nature) and the constructed (culture)" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 2). While the linguistic and discursive turns, with their focus on the role of language in the constitution of social reality, have been vastly productive, in particular for challenging universal, positivist, taken for granted ways of knowing and knowledges, and for feminism, with its focus on connections between language, power, subjectivity and knowledge in understanding gender and other "volatile markings" (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008a, p. 1) such as age, culture, class and sexuality, these "turns" have now been noted to also have limitations.

A discussion of these limitations comes both from the material feminist literature (e.g. Alaimo & Hekman, 2008b) and from the feminist science studies of Haraway and Barad. Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman, in *Material Feminisms* (2008a), summarise the bringing back of the materiality or corporeality of the body "as itself an active, sometimes recalcitrant, force" (p. 4) from what has

been a turn toward the body as entirely constructed within discourse, which partly marks the feminist turn toward materialism. This is in no way a turning away from the discursive, rather, it marks a time to foreground, along with discourse, the very material forces of bodies, such as pain, pleasure, corporeal lived experience, biology, disease and so on. In a similar way, just as social constructionism has led to the dichotomizing of the material and the discursive, at the expense of the material, so too has this occurred with the nature-culture and real-constructed binaries. Donna Haraway's work offers significant transformations on the category of nature, shifting it from an object to be reified, possessed and appropriated, an "essence to be saved or violated" (2008a, p. 158), and a seemingly stable and material reality, to a force, a lively partner, a technology which "mutates into its binary opposite, culture and vice versa, and in such a way as to displace the entire nature/culture (and sex/gender) dialectic with a new discursive field..." (p. 172).

Social constructionism, in its, some would say necessary, move to challenge realism and to show science and knowledge as socially constructed, has shifted the bulk of attention onto cultural factors (Barad, 1996). As Barad points out,

(t)o be fair, this is where the burden of proof has been placed: social constructivists have been responding to the challenge to demonstrate the falsity of the worldview that takes science as the mirror of nature. Nonetheless, as both the range and sophistication of constructivist arguments have grown, the charge that they embrace an equally extreme position – that science mirrors culture – has been levied against them with increasing vigour" (1996, p. 162).

This move to centre language, culture, the discursive, and social constructs in our research practices and our understandings of reality as therefore constructed and situated in the milieu of these very cultural, social, historical and discursive practices has necessarily meant a denying of observable, knowable, realities and truths. As a feminist science scholar, and an admitted social constructivist with realist tendencies, Karen Barad believed that this was not an acceptable place to rest. She says,



“there is a need to elaborate further upon the crafting of ontologies. We need to understand the technologies by which nature and culture interact ...I seek some way of trying to understand the nature of interplay of the material and the cultural in the crafting of an ontology (1996, p. 163-164).” Acknowledging that she is not the first to seek to articulate a position which rejects the extremes of the “objectivist, subjectivist, absolutist, and relativist stances” (p. 165), Barad identifies the theories of science generated by other feminist science scholars, including Haraway’s (1988) theory of situated knowledges (a key influence for Barad), who also reject both extremes of objectivism and epistemological relativism and the attempts of both to deny the embodiment of knowledge claims. As Haraway puts it, in clearly laying out the move from objectivity to relativism, or “from hostile science” to “multiple personality disorder”,

I, and others, started out wanting a strong tool for deconstructing the truth claims of hostile science by showing the radical historical specificity, and so contestability, of every layer of the onion of scientific and technological constructions, and we end up with a kind of epistemological electroshock therapy, which far from ushering us into the high stakes tables of the game of contesting public truths, lays us out on the table with self-induced multiple personality disorder” (1988, p. 578).

Haraway pursued her desire for a feminist version of objectivity, one which rejects both the disembodied ““view from nowhere”, the “God trick” of infinite passive vision, and the equally irresponsible relativist “view from everywhere”, posing embodied sight” through her theory of situated knowledges, or “view from somewhere” (Barad, 1996, p. 180). This view represents a feminist, rational objectivity which portrays a still embodied and partial, but also accountable and responsible positioning. “Science”, for Haraway, becomes about producing better, more responsible, accounts of the world, in a world which is understood as lively, active and generative. Her body of work has been key in influencing Barad’s work and those who use it, and in understanding the current move, or re-turn, to material feminisms being rapidly and prolifically taken up across discipline and research fields, and across the world (for thinking with Haraway see,

for example, Osgood & Giugni, 2015a, b; Osgood, Giugni & Bhopal, 2016; Asberg, Thiele & van der Tuin, 2015; Hughes & Lury, 2013)<sup>15</sup>.

Thus, I too, find my ontology on the move, unable to resist now the pull of the world and all of its materiality in experimenting with what it might mean to explore and produce a situated, ethical, responsible, better account of the world, and of a world which is lively, where bodies and materialities exert force and agency, yet not in ways which are separate from the semiotic/discursive. It is my aim to attempt this in my own material-discursive encounters with participants, with data, with theory in this research, and in my production of the text. This is not a return to materialism, but a re-turn of material-discursive practices, that in order to fully (or more partially) think through, and with, I now turn to Barad.

### **Agential-realism: a framework of post-human performativity or how material-discursive practices matter**

I show that an empirically accurate understanding of scientific practice, one that is consonant with the latest scientific research, strongly suggests a fundamental inseparability of epistemological, ontological, and ethical considerations. In particular, I propose “agential-realism” as an epistemological-ontological-ethical framework that provides an understanding of the role of human *and* nonhuman, material *and* discursive, and natural *and* cultural factors in scientific and other social-material practices, thereby moving such considerations beyond the well-worn debates that pit constructivism against realism, agency against structure, and idealism against materialism...(this) entails a rethinking of fundamental concepts that support such binary thinking, including the notions of matter,

---

<sup>15</sup> Osgood and colleagues are inspired by Donna Haraway’s work to think differently, with posthumanism and materiality, about the regulation and governance of gender in early childhood, about motherhoods, and about quality in early childhood education; Asberg et al. consider ontology in the overlaps and clashes of feminist materialist genealogies and object-oriented ontology, and centre Haraway’s seminal works in their consideration of “material-semiotic world-making practices” (p. 165); Hughes and Lury re-turn to Haraway and her concept of “situatedness” in proposing an “ecological epistemology”.

discourse, causality, agency, power, identity, embodiment, objectivity, space, and time (Barad, 2007, p. 25-26).

The fact that Barad draws on insights from some of the “best scientific and social theories, including quantum physics, science studies, the philosophy of physics, feminist theory, critical race theory, post-colonial theory, (post)-Marxist theory and post-structuralist theory” (2007, p. 25) in her feminist interrogation of notions of both identity and science (Barad, 1996), makes her ethico-onto-epistemological agential-realist framework necessarily complex and comprehensive, as well as increasingly generative amongst a wide range of disciplines, not least education (e.g. Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Ringrose & Rawlings, 2015; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). My aim here, therefore, is to attempt to produce an account of her framework through which I articulate my own knowing-in-being of her onto-epistemological framework, that can be seen both as productive for thinking the production of knowledge in this thesis as a post-humanist performative account, and for my theorising of the data, or thinking with theory in my data analysis.

Barad has situated her framework as a “post-humanist performative account”, citing that such a labelling could be seen as a potentially diffractive elaboration of Judith Butler’s (1993, 1997) notion of performativity, as words, concepts, nouns not as static descriptions or representations but as incessant and repeated actions, as “doing”, (e.g. gender) and Donna Haraway’s crucial insights which destabilize the boundaries between human/non-human, material/semiotic and nature/culture (Barad, 2003). Crucially, Barad’s elaboration of these insights involves a “post-humanist notion of performativity” (2003, p. 808) which offers an account of the *causal nature of the relationship* between discursive practices and material phenomena, between human and non-human forms of agency, as productive practices through which specific boundaries are enacted in an ongoing, dynamic (re)configuring of the world. This is a performativity which understands “thinking, observing and theorizing as practices of engagement with, and as part of, the world in which we have our being” (Barad, 2007, p. 133).

*Bohr's physics and the objectivity of 'phenomena'*

In developing this agential-realist ontology, Barad, a physicist herself, particularly draws on the philosophy-physics writings of physicist Niels Bohr, who won the Nobel Prize for his quantum model of the atom, and his epistemological framework which offers a radical challenge to “Cartesian epistemology and its representationalist triadic structure of words, knowers, and things” (Barad, 2003, p. 813). Having read much of Barad's, and of those using Barad's, work over the previous few years, I have come to appreciate the marrying of physics with philosophical and methodological thinking, although appreciate the leap this may require for the reader on first encounter. As Barad says, the “foundation issues in quantum physics...serve as a testing ground for long-standing philosophical quandaries, including some of those most central to metaphysicians, philosophers of science, and poststructuralists alike, such as the nature of identity, being, meaning, and causality” (2007, p. 248-249), all of which are central to the questions of counsellor-in-training identity of this thesis.

Bohr rejected the “atomistic” ontology which claims “things” as entities with determinate boundaries and properties, and subjects, objects, knowers and known as having pre-existing, inherent distinctions. However, while also rejecting the notion that language and measurement mediate access to an independently existing reality, he nevertheless developed an epistemology which held onto the possibility of the real, or of objective knowledge. It is this notion of ‘realism’ which Barad also holds onto in further developing Bohr's insights into her own onto-epistemological framework as an account of, among other things, the “conditions for objectivity... (and) the role of natural as well as cultural factors in scientific knowledge production...” (Barad, 1996, p. 168). It is my aim now to begin with an attempt at a summary of some key aspects of the Bohr's physics as interpreted by Barad, who has studied and drawn upon his work for more than two decades, as I think understanding this is key to the onto-epistemology of this thesis, and to

ultimately thinking my data with Barad's framework, which I go on to do in this thesis. As Barad says "it would be just as dishonest to attribute the full development of this framework (agential realism) to Bohr as it would be to deny that my thinking about Bohr's philosophy-physics is everywhere present in my formulation" (2007, p. 123).

I want to start with the physics, as this is the epistemology on which Barad draws, as a basis for the development of her onto-epistemology, or the inseparability of one from the other, and having some understanding of this, I think, aids in both understanding and using the new, and complex concepts her framework offers, such as intra-action. As a physicist, Barad has turned to quantum mechanics and the work, in particular of Niels Bohr, as stated above, who was a physicist of the same era as Einstein, and made significant contributions to the long historical debate of the wave/particle paradox and the nature of light and matter. What interests Barad are the implications of the findings and interpretations made by Bohr in relation to the philosophy of science, to the eternal questions we ask about both what is the nature of reality, and how can we go about finding this out. Indeed, ultimately Barad concludes that there are clear parallels between Bohr's methodology and feminist and other located-knowledge methodologies (Barad, 1996). Put simply, if that is possible, the wave/particle duality paradox became evident firstly as a feature of light and shortly after was also shown to be a feature of matter. The paradox was that light, and matter, appeared able, under different experimental conditions, to exhibit features of either particles or waves, which are in fact mutually exclusive concepts. One, significant, interpretation to this was, that there was no inherent, or essential, essence or reality to light or matter, but rather, the features they exhibited were in some way dependent upon the surrounding conditions with which they interacted. Particles are described as "localised objects that occupy a given location at each moment in time." Waves, on the other hand, mean that light would be described as consisting of "objects with extension in space, occupying more than one position at any moment of time, like ocean waves

that move along a stretch of beach: and furthermore, different waves can overlap...and occupy the same position at any moment of time, unlike particles” (Barad, 1996, p. 178).

It was clear that light and matter could not exhibit features of both waves and particles at once, these being mutually exclusive. While classical realists searched for some unifying explanation (which was not to come), Bohr adopted a new approach examining the circumstances under which these distinct features were produced, eventually leading to his theory of complementarity. As Barad interprets, for Bohr, “*concepts are defined by the circumstances required for their measurement. That is, theoretical concepts are not ideational in character; they are specific physical arrangements... measurement and description (the physical and the conceptual) entail each other (...in the sense of their mutual epistemological implication)*” (2007, p. 109, italics in original).

In this way, observations then, cannot claim to refer to objects of an independent reality and Bohr refers to this inseparability as ““*quantum wholeness*”, or *the lack of an inherent/Cartesian distinction between the “object” and the “agencies of observation”*”. Particular instances of this “single situation” interaction or “non-dualistic whole” are referred to by Bohr as a “*phenomenon*” (Barad, 1996, p. 170). Thus, unambiguous accounts of a phenomenon must include a description of all relevant features of the experimental arrangement - any meaning made, or theory developed, is inseparable from the physical arrangement in which the effects occurred. As a result, says Barad “method, measurement, description, interpretation, epistemology, and ontology are not separable considerations” (1996, p. 173).

What is real then becomes not some fixed notion of things existing prior to signification, nor of things as only constituted in language, but reality as composed of “things-in-phenomena” (Barad, 1996, p. 176). Such things consist of non-dualistic or inseparable measurement practices or physical arrangements of apparatus, agencies of observation, and “permanent marks...left on bodies”, or objects (Barad, 2007, p. 120). It is phenomena, not objects, which provide the

conditions of possibility for objectivity, for knowledge, and knowledge (ontology) only obtains its meaning in relation to the physical conditions of its possibility (epistemology). I don't think this new idea can be understated, as just as the differing physical apparatus in the scientific experiments did not *reveal* the underlying nature of light but rather interacted to produce the effect of light as either wave or a particle, so too is knowledge not revealed, but only exists in, inseparable, relation to that which produces it. These ideas underpin Barad's onto-epistemological framework of agential realism – there is an objective reality (realism), but the most basic unit of this is not things, rather it is phenomena (things in in-separable relation), and “*the nature of (this) observed phenomena changes with corresponding changes in apparatus*” (agential) (Barad, 2007, p. 106).

What this means for my work will hopefully become more apparent as I go on to think through and with my data and the issue of the production of identity in the area of counselling training, in relation to Barad's theory. At this point, my intention is to firstly situate my onto-epistemology for my thesis, and the production of knowledge in this agential-realist framework, such that knowledge which emerges here is seen as inseparable from my own agency of observation, from the methods used, the descriptions employed, and the interpretations made. Knowledge is situated within this entanglement that is phenomena. Thus, for now, having introduced these key ideas of Bohr's and Barad's, I now wish to move more particularly onto Barad's framework of agential-realism (or how material-discursive practices matter), in which she has incorporated further ideas, as I have previously said, from post-structuralism, feminist theory, critical race theory, post-colonial theory, and (post)-Marxist theory.

*Material-discursive practices matter – coming to an onto-epistemology*

**Material-discursive-(super)vision**

A fantail rests on the table  
part object, becoming child

its flight sweeps through me.

A piwakawaka  
becomes monarch,  
both vessels  
of dead living love.

Porous boundaries leaking  
In/animate flux,  
me-you-boys-who've- gone  
but will (not) leave  
marks on bodies that  
will not erase.

The above poem was written after a counselling-supervision encounter and during a period of intense reading of Barad's work. Looking back on it now, I already understand what I wrote in a different way. The experience which is written about is not abstract, is not solely constituted through language or in some internal experience, but is a material-discursive product of the inseparable entanglement of bodies, of coffee cups, images, meanings and experiences of fantails and monarchs, and of loss, as past and present, and physical and sensory and discursive.

It is not enough to leave this onto-epistemology there, however. We have brought the material (back) into a central relational position in the production of knowledge, as other posthumanist theories are seemingly also doing, (see, for example, Deleuze and Guatarri's (1987) notion of the assemblage or Latour's (2005) Actor Network Theory), however, as Barad identifies, Bohr's epistemological, proto-performative theory does not go far enough for her in his articulation of it. In particular, she identifies the lack of a clear articulation of the nature of 'apparatus' and his seeming reinsertion of the liberal humanist subject as experimenter standing outside observing the "resulting marks on bodies" (2007, p. 153). The fact is that this (Barad's) onto-epistemology is not about a collection of bounded subjects and objects, the material and discursive, natural and cultural,



assembling together to produce different effects, as observed by a separate knowing subject. This is about not taking separateness, or boundaries, or difference, as an inherent feature of the world, as fixed or given, nor simply as the end result of certain processes, but rather, about what differences might come to matter when inseparability and accountability are the onto-epistemological starting points.

Given the complexity and detail of this onto-epistemology (see, for example, Barad's (2007) 500 page book in which she outlines it), and the focus of this thesis, it is my hope to proceed with this explanation which might suffice for laying the foundations of this posthumanist performative ontology here, while also recognising that I will be returning to it in my thinking through the subjectivity of counsellors-in-training and what such a theory might offer both for them and for counsellor education. There are, therefore, three key developments which build on Bohr's beginnings, which I think are essential to address here in outlining further key components of Barad's onto-epistemology. These are (1) the nature of apparatuses as specific material-discursive practices which are more than laboratory instruments or social forces that produce differential effects; (2) human subjects as neither outside observers of apparatuses (e.g. social forces) nor "independent subjects that intervene in the workings of an apparatus, nor the products of social technologies that produce them" (Barad, 2007, p. 171) but as part of, and participating in, the entangled world-body space in its dynamic reconfiguring, and (3) agency, and an ethics of responsibility, not as either aligned with human intentionality *or* distributed over human and non-human forms, but as an enactment of a material-discursive practice, of specific materializations, not that we choose or determine, but which we participate in enacting. First, an overview of the nature of phenomena in Barad's agential realist framework is useful.

From Bohr, we know that phenomena are the ontological inseparability/entanglement of objects and apparatus, the boundaries and properties of which only become determinate (meaningful) through specific material interactions. That is, objects or concepts do not have fixed, inherent, pre-

existent meaning, but rather this meaning only becomes determinate through particular arrangements or enactments. In her theory of agential-realism, Barad says “phenomena do not merely mark the epistemological inseparability of “observer” and “observed”; rather, *phenomena are the ontological inseparability of agentially intra-acting “components”*” (Barad, 2003, p. 815). This new notion of *intra-action* among components is key to her framework and stands in contrast to the usual ‘interaction’, underscoring a profound conceptual shift. Interacting components, such as human and non-human forces, observers and observed, measuring devices and objects would suggest the interaction of independent, pre-existing, separate entities. Intra-action, on the other hand, delineates the ontological inseparability of these entities, the non-dualistic nature, with the emergence of their boundaries and properties only becoming determinate through the larger material arrangement (material practices). “Intra-actions enact *agential separability* – the local condition of *exteriority -within phenomena*” (Barad, 2003, p. 815). That is, without the ontological pre-existent exteriority between components (subjects and objects), the notion of intra-action provides the conditions for the possibility of objectivity, known by Barad as the making of “agential cuts”. The agential cut enacts a resolution (objectivity) of the otherwise indeterminate and intra-acting “*relata-within-phenomena*” (Barad, 2007, p. 140). An intra-action cuts ‘things’ together and apart. Moreover, this also entails a reworking of causality. Cause and effect only become determined through agential cuts, the agential cut enacts a causal structure in phenomena. These do not stand still, however, but are merely a part of the ongoing reconfiguring of the world.

I am helped to understand the complexity of this account by moving out from the finer details to a broader account of the implications for the ontological becoming of the world. Quantum theory, and hence agential realism, does not hold human concepts, human knowledge, and indeed humans as foundational elements. These “things”, or phenomena, are merely a part of the world’s ongoing, dynamic and intra-active becoming, emerging as specific configurations, articulations, in its differential becoming/mattering. “...Phenomena – whether lizards, electrons, or humans – only

exist as a result of, and as part of, the world's ongoing intra-activity, its dynamic and contingent differentiation into specific relationalities.” (Barad, 2007, p. 353). How this happens is important. While we, humans, do not determine, or will, or have pure agency (or cause) in the determining of the world, neither are we pure effect, simply receivers of, or spectators to, its unfolding, in and around us. According to agential realism, “through our advances, we participate in bringing forth the world in its specificity, including ourselves. We have to meet the universe halfway, to move toward what may come to be in ways that are accountable for our part in the world's differential becoming” (Barad, 2007, p. 353).

The implications of this are many, not least for accounts of objectivity – where the line between subject and object is not fixed, or pre-existent to particular practices of their engagement – and for our own accountability in the ongoing and entangled practices of the reconfiguring of the world, which is what I propose this thesis to be, and do. I return now to what I see as three key developments in Barad's framework which move her account beyond Bohr's, and which provide further understanding of phenomena and the nature of their intra-acting subjects, objects and apparatuses.

#### *Material-discursive practices or the nature of an apparatus*

Barad's theory encompasses a particular posthuman form of performativity, examining the practices through which differential boundaries are stabilized and destabilized, whether in the formation of knowledge, the materialisation of bodies (human and non-human) or the production of the subject, hence its usefulness for this thesis. As she says, “there is a host of material-discursive forces— including ones that get labelled “social,” “cultural,” “psychic,” “economic,” “natural,” “physical,” “biological,” “geopolitical,” and “geological”— that may be important to particular (entangled) processes of materialization” (2003, p. 810). These are the very apparatuses Bohr refers to in his experimentally informed epistemology, and which Barad expands upon to develop her

broad framework to account for the ongoing reconfiguring of all materializations. An understanding of apparatuses then, as material-discursive practices, refers to the practice or enactment through which boundaries are constituted, or agential cuts are made. They are not mere lab instruments or social forces which act in a performative way. Nor are they merely the material or physical or social device or force set in place to produce differential outcomes. They are not fixed or static arrangements operating in the world. I find it helpful, as Barad does, to start with the scientific practice and follow where she leads in coming to understand what then, apparatuses actually are, in an agential realist sense.

In thinking with Bohr we came to see that the nature of reality is not fixed but rather it is in part constituted by the very physical arrangement (or apparatus) through which we view it. That is, the conceptual-discursive emerges in relation to the physical apparatus. Barad points out that, even in science, “apparatuses are not preformed interchangeable objects that sit atop a shelf waiting to serve a particular purpose”, (2003, p. 816) rather, they themselves are phenomena, “constituted through particular practices that are perpetually open to rearrangements, rearticulations, and other reworkings” (p. 817). Furthermore, they are always in the process of intra-acting with other apparatuses, with time, and space, that result in the production of new phenomena: “boundaries do not sit still” (p. 817). However, what seems key to come back to, in this scientific complexity, is that, in Barad’s elaboration of Bohr’s work, “*apparatuses are the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering*; they enact what matters and what is excluded from mattering...(they) enact agential cuts” (Barad, 2007, p. 148). They are discursive/boundary-making practices – “specific material (re)configurings (of the world) through which “objects” and “subjects” are produced...(and) *through which the determination of boundaries, properties, and meanings is differentially enacted*” (p. 148, italics in original). They are the practices through which divisions are made.

Barad notes both concord and discord between Foucault's account of discursive practices and Bohr's account of apparatuses, and draws on Foucault in elaborating her own agential-realist framework. She notes that for Foucault, discursive practices are the "local socio-historical material conditions that enable and constrain disciplinary knowledge practices such as speaking, writing, thinking, calculating, measuring, filtering, and concentrating. (They) produce, rather than merely describe, the subjects and objects of knowledge practices" (Barad, 2007, p. 147). Apparatuses, as material conditions, in a similar way are productive of the phenomena produced. However, through Bohr, Barad notes a much more mutually intimate (ontologically inseparable / intra-active) relationship between concepts and materiality, matter and meaning, the material and the discursive, which also "calls into question the dualisms of object-subject, knower-known, nature-culture, and word-world" (p. 147). In this framework what was once identified as separate "things" is now inarticulable in the absence of the other.

Regardless of difference here, both accounts (Foucault and Barad) continue to reject the humanist notion of meaning as equating to utterances emerging from the consciousness of a unified subject, instead insisting on meaning as always emerging from (constrained by) a local, immanent field of (material) possibilities. Meaning (as discursive practices) here is not embedded within a word or a group of words, but is "an ongoing performance of the (material-discursive) world in its differential dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility" (p. 149). In this way, a genealogical accounting of the material-discursive practices through which certain boundaries or divisions are enacted, becomes possible, as is the aim in part of this research. That is, to perform, or show, as much as possible the multiple material-discursive forces through which the knowledge of this thesis is produced, recognising it as knowledge-in-the-making, a knowing-in-being, whereby the knowledge produced is inseparable from the apparatus of its production. I also explore the material-discursive practices and how they come to matter (in both senses of the word), in the ongoing shaping of counsellor-

in-training subjectivities, and ask what part the 'human subject' plays in all of this, if neither solely the cause nor the effect of such mattering.

*Human subjects as part of an ongoing performance*

Barad highlights an ambiguity in Bohr's articulation of the human knowing subject, one which seems to follow us through all social constructivist and postmodern knowledge accounts. That is, she notes that on the one hand Bohr's experimenter appears able to act as an outside observer to the effects of his experiment, choosing the apparatus and noting the results, like a liberal human knowing subject. However, Bohr also articulates a position which denies the Cartesian presupposition of an inherent boundary between observer and observed, knower and known. As Barad states "(h)uman concepts are clearly embodied (in physical arrangements) but human subjects seem to be frustratingly and ironically disembodied" (2007, p. 154). In part, she concedes, Bohr's focus was on laboratory measurements, rather than on the wider ontological implications of quantum theory, and in particular for notions of the human in the production of knowledge. It is this aspect which Barad reworks in her theory, in part continuing to draw on Bohr's initial epistemology. It is important to note here that while some objections have been made in relation to a "problem of 'scale' in considering Barad's insights from quantum physics, in relation to processes of subjectification that take place within everyday human and nonhuman life" (Juelskjaer, 2013, p. 755), Barad refutes this, through her posthumanist stance, as merely a result of the familiar classical mindset which privileges the position of man as apart from all others, as separateness as the condition for objectivity. Fittingly, her posthumanist stance asks: "should not the "human" be accounted for in terms of the theory and the specific intra-actions from which it emerges, rather than the other way around?" (2007, p. 323). As she aligns her theory with other physicists, such as Mermin, who suggest "(t)o restrict quantum mechanics to be exclusively about piddling laboratory operations is to betray the great enterprise. A serious formulation will not exclude the big world

outside the laboratory (1998, p. 756 cited in Barad, 2007, p. 323), so too, do those who believe the new thinking this translation makes possible to be worth the effort (e.g. Juelskjaer, 2013).

In this accounting for the human, Barad thus goes on to review many of the challenges to this individualistic conception of human bodies, and its presumption of pre-existent bodily boundaries, as a lead in to her own clarification of Bohr's seeming ambiguity in her own agential-realist framework. Indeed, she comes to the conclusion that the twentieth century has been witness to significant scientific, philosophical, anthropological and experimental contestations of this taken for granted view, and that it has become clear that the nature of bodily, and other material, boundaries is actually a "result of the repetition of (culturally and historically) specific bodily performance" (2007, p. 155). In her post-human performative account, human bodies then are constituted along with, and as part of, the world, rather than pre-existing in the world. In this way, she says, the body's materiality is an *entanglement*, in the quantum sense, which is always in the making. Bodies and subjects, just as with apparatuses, are not static, predetermined individuals exerting knowing or influence over the world. They do not 'hold' values or beliefs which they must attempt to make known in order to do their utmost to prevent these from influencing 'results'. This thinking, says Barad, continues to reify culture and nature and gender and science into different categories when, in fact, the social and the scientific are co-constituted, made together, as ongoing, open-ended, entangled, material-discursive practices. Humans, in this framework then, are dynamic too, they do not enter (scientific) practices as "fully formed, pre-existing subjects but as subjects intra-actively co-constituted through the material-discursive practices that they engage in" (Barad, 2007, p. 168).

My attempts throughout this work are to show, as much as possible, the ongoing and entangled co-constitution of my subjectivity (as one always in the making) through these material-discursive research practices rather than to attempt to lay out any pre-existing or static notion of who I am, of my values and beliefs, as I come to embark on this research. In a similar way, I attempt to map the

dynamic, open-ended and entangled co-constituting of the counsellor-in-training, recognising that any mapping (agential cuts) is necessarily entangled with my own researcher-in-the-making subjectivity and any apparatuses/material-discursive research practices I employ. All matter (bodies, words, documents, all materiality) in this sense is “a dynamic intra-active becoming that never sits still...(and) is generative not merely in the sense of bringing new things into the world but in the sense of bringing forth new worlds, of engaging in an ongoing reconfiguring of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 170). This last point brings me to my third of Barad’s key developments in her framework – that of ethics and accountability in this always and ongoing reconfiguring of the world.

#### *Agency, accountability and ethics*

When there is so much entangled in this dynamic reconfiguring of the world, the question of agency and accountability for how these new worlds get reconfigured arises. Humanist accounts of research findings speak of human bias, actions, choices, values, beliefs and so on, and of making these explicit so as to set their influence aside, through bracketing (e.g. Pierce, 2016). Inherent in such accounts is the notion of the bounded, pre-existing, separate, individual containing such properties which, when made explicit, are able to be removed from ‘biasing’ or exerting undue influence over the production of real accounts of knowledge. Accountability is produced through this process of accounting for inherent, fixed and self-contained values and beliefs. Poststructural accounts suggest that human bodies are subjected to discourse or are produced through discursive practices and agency/power is typically to be found in deconstruction. In research practices, accountability is often attended to through practices of methodological reflexivity, which I discuss in depth in the following chapter. In Barad’s account, however, agency, and thus accountability, is found within neither the human nor language/culture. That is, “the phenomena produced are not the consequence of human will or intentionality or the effects of the operations of Culture,



Language or Power” (2007, p. 171). Where then does this leave the role of human practices and what does this mean for ethical accountability in our knowledge-making research practices?

As has already been stated, humans are an intra-active part of the ongoing reconfiguring of the world, albeit we ourselves are also an ongoing reconfiguring; although we do not make it so, we do participate in what may come to be. Agency, in this agential realist account, is not something we (or indeed non-humans) have or do not have. How can it be when, by this account, there is no determinate separability of entities prior to their intra-action? Agency, and accountability, is not restricted to the realm of human action, though nor is it, in this post-humanist account, simply now dispersed across human and non-human forms. Agency is, “crucially” says Barad, “*a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment; not something that someone or something has... (It) is “doing” or “being” in its intra-activity...it is...iterative reconfigurings of topological manifolds of spacetime-matter relations – through the dynamics of intra-activity*” (2007, p. 178). What I think is perhaps even more crucial about this is what Barad says next. “*Agency is about changing possibilities of change entailed in reconfiguring material-discursive apparatuses of bodily production, including the boundary articulations and exclusions that are marked by those practices in the enactment of a causal structure*” (p. 178). The cuts that are made, the boundaries that are enacted, which are productive of phenomena, which matter, in ongoing knowledge production, are open to particular and changing possibilities at every moment and open up possibilities for change. It is in these differing possibilities that Barad says lies an ethical responsibility for the world’s becoming, “to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering” (2007, p. 178).

We, as researchers, participate in boundary making, in marking what gets excluded, in making marks on bodies and in enacting matter, we are an “agential part of the material becoming of the universe” (p. 178), or the material production of knowledge. Accountability and ethics then means “we” can no longer respond to the other as if “they” are inherently pre-existent and determinately

separate, and outside of the self. ““(T)hey” and “we” are co-constituted and entangled through the very cuts “we” help to enact” (p. 179). How such cuts come to be made, how such differences differ, is a matter of intra-activity, in which we participate in making the cuts, in cutting ““things” together and apart” (p. 179). Thankfully, such cuts are never enacted once and for all, that is, possibilities for change, and as such, responsibility and accountability, for the remaking of material-discursive boundaries, are always present and open.

At this point in my articulation of this ethico-onto-epistemology, this accounting for agency and ethics, and for the cuts that I will make, relate for me to my role in participating in the production of the knowledge-in-the-making in this thesis-phenomenon. I think, now, not of my participants as “other”, nor of myself as an individual humanist or even post-structural researcher-subject-I. Rather, I understand this research process as an intra-action, as ongoing material-discursive practices, where “I”, my “participants” and what comes to matter are iteratively reconfigured, made, produced in the ongoing and dynamic research-in-the-making. This process is one in which I participate, however, in making cuts, in marking bodies, and in bringing forth new worlds (knowledge-in-the-making). Accounting for my part in this becomes a diffractive, rather than a bracketing or reflexive, process, which I turn to in the following chapter.

### *Spacetime mattering*

A final configuring seems necessary at this point least I leave the reader under the illusion that iterative reconfiguring, or change, refers to a continuous, linear process occurring in or through time and space. This is not what Barad intends, nor what the evidence she reads from Bohr, suggests. This is another twist in her framework, which offers both challenge and possibilities for reworking what it means to produce knowledge and for how matter comes to matter. This is quantum entanglement and it is best understood by a brief and final return to Bohr’s philosophy-physics, namely, the “quantum eraser experiment” (Barad, 2007, p. 311).

The quantum eraser experiment asks the question, given the resulting pattern of wave/interference or particle is due to the *entanglement* of the object and the measuring device/apparatus, might it be possible to restore the interference pattern by “undoing” or “erasing” the which-path detection<sup>16</sup>. What this experiment once again confirmed was the ontological priority of phenomena over inherently separate “things”. What is even more interesting about the quantum eraser experiment is what it says about time, pasts, presents, and futures. From these experiments, Barad concludes that,

it’s not that the experimenter changes a past that had already been present, or that atoms fall in line with a new future simply by erasing information. The point is that the past was never simply there to begin with and the future is not simply what will unfold; the “past” and the “future” are iteratively reworked and enfolded through the iterative practices of spacetime-mattering...all are one *phenomenon*... Space and time are phenomenal, that is, they are intra-actively produced in the making of phenomena...” (2007, p. 315).

This is a difficult notion to make sense of, being contrary to traditional and dominant understandings of the linearity of time and our existence as individual entities in space. However, I think it has useful and important implications worth pursuing in the theorising of counsellor-in-training subjectivities-in-the-making and indeed for processes of counselling and change itself. “Becoming is not an unfolding in time” and the notion of discontinuity means that “changes do not follow in a continuous fashion from a prior state or origin, nor do they follow some teleological trajectory – there are no trajectories” (p. 181). Agency, in this “spacetime-mattering”, becomes a larger space of possibilities and entails possibilities for “discontinuous” changes in the “topology of the world’s becoming” (p. 182). Intra-actions continually reconfigure what is possible, and questions of accountability and responsibility present themselves with each moment of

---

<sup>16</sup> A full explanation of the physics of this seems beyond what is necessary for this purpose, however, I think it is useful to once again, situate Barad’s framework in the original experiments she draws on. As she says, there is no evidence to suggest that the laws of quantum mechanics apply only to the restricted domain of microscopic objects, that there are indeed even two separate laws of physics for the micro and macro domains.

reconfiguring. Seeing the production of knowledge here as a discontinuous one, regardless of the presentation of chapters in linear form, as a spacetime mattering, not as a continuous unfolding, invites the reader to engage with it in a similar way, with the expectation that further entanglements with readers, time and space will be productive in other ways, opening up still further possibilities for reconfiguring what is yet to come.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### From methodological reflexivity to diffraction

#### Post-modern nausea

Bamboozled by some claims  
of post-modernism, where doubt  
seeps in under every doorway.  
We take nothing for granted,  
no knowledge is truth,  
simplicity is mired in complexity,  
the complex oh so simple.

The residence of the I is many,  
in here, out there, in between,  
multiple selves, true self, false self,  
one world, no self.

Illusions, fantasies, defences.  
Us and them, I and thou, me and you,  
all one.

My seeing is partial  
My knowing is momentary  
My holding on is tenuous  
as each truth gradually, slowly  
succumbs to the next,  
merging like earth and water  
into mud.

Existentialism, spiritualism, economics.

Therapy, religion, materialism.

Poetry, literature, family.

Love, intellect, presence.  
The way is rocky, hazardous,  
the air is murky and grey,  
it is difficult to see beyond  
where I am, beyond this obsession  
with I, with its incessant demands for  
coherence, consistency, certainty,  
and freedom.

My stomach is nauseous  
from throwing up its contents  
I cannot digest  
this choosing, or not, of one.

*Where am I in this research? How do I fold in and out of this whole process? And how do I say something on this page that will tell a story, represent something about that when as I write the very words, it is all shifting and moving again? (Researcher journal)*

I think my problem and “our” problem is how to have simultaneously an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own “semiotic technologies” for making meanings, and a no nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a “real” world, one that can be partially shared and friendly to earth-wide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness.

(Haraway, 1988, p. 579)

In this chapter I return to methodology, agency and accountability in our research practices, in order to consider issues arising in relation to the shifting ontologies outlined in the previous chapter. As is illustrated in the poem above, I have grappled with questions of researcher positioning, accountability, and place in relation to emerging knowledge claims, to the point where everything I wrote began to feel too precarious to make any kind of claim. In chapter two, I note my plan to

engage with methodological practices of reflexivity, not for humanistic self-reflection and bracketing purposes, but as a constructivist approach enabling “an interrogation of the practices that constitute our accounts of the world” (Campbell, 2004, p. 163). However, onto-epistemological shifts to posthumanism have rendered this also no longer sufficient in understanding my role in the production of knowledge, and in practices of accountability.

As such, I begin this chapter by returning to the crisis of representation in the social sciences arising from the ontological challenges to modernism, objectivity, foundationalism and humanism posed by postmodern (Richardson, 1994) and social constructionist (Burr, 1995) worldviews and feminist critique (Haraway, 1988), in order to understand the development of methodological practices of reflexivity. I do this in order to understand, and lay out, the onto-epistemological challenges reflexivity sought to address, in order to determine, or not, its continued usefulness. In particular I explore the shift in view from an objective world exposed through observation and available for documentation and representation through recording, naming and categorization to one made through social processes and interactions. In this social constructionist view, what is ‘found’ in research is always contingent, situated and partial. I further explore how a particular feminist orientation (Haraway, 2004) to research as situated and contingent knowledge making practices challenges also the underlying patriarchal binary structures implicit in realist, objective ontologies and epistemologies. Given also the notion of the multiplicity of the post-modern subject, the question arose as to how to attend to the legitimation of knowledge in this post-positivist social science era (Lather, 1993). As I outline in this chapter, a substantial response to this challenge was the development of practices of methodological reflexivity, my own initial choice in this research project.

However, as I proceed to lay out in this chapter, methodological reflexivity is not without its own onto-epistemological challenges, with several researchers exposing the deep tensions in, and limits to, such practices of reflexivity (Davies et al. 2004; Pillow, 2003; MacBeth, 2001). Ultimately,

Barad (2007) concludes the geometric optics of reflection and associated practices of reflexivity actually take us no further than the traditional realist approaches we started with. This chapter concludes with a discussion of what it might mean to move from this optics of reflection/practice of reflexivity to one of diffraction (Haraway, 1992; Barad, 2007) in our research practices. Implicit in this, and which I explore, is a reconceptualising also of my researcher subjectivity, which, in a diffractive analysis, entails a transcorporeal, embodied, becoming-with in relation to, at least, the data (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). In exploring this, my aim is to argue for the usefulness of a diffractive rather than reflexive methodology, as well to further situate this research in the broader onto-epistemological framework of post-humanism.

### **The promise of reflexivity**

The phrase ‘crisis of representation’ has been used prolifically in the human sciences to refer specifically to the uncertainties and tensions arising from the epistemological undoing of the presumed correspondence between social reality, or lived experience, and the research representations made of it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Denzin, 2003). Arising during the mid-1980s (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), this crisis reflected the analogous challenges to modernism, objectivity, foundationalism, and humanism. That is, a significant troubling of the previously assumed certainty that there is an essential objective reality which, through rigorous research practices, we can come to describe, know, and ultimately claim as truth. Such ontological challenges to our beliefs about the nature of the world and our attempts to describe it, particularly in the social sciences, have appeared in the forms of social constructionism (Gergen, 1985; Burr, 1995) and post-modernism (Richardson, 1994). Whilst these terms themselves do not always have clear and consistent boundaries in use and definition, they are nevertheless essential to understanding the shifts in knowledge-making practices over the previous nearly half century. Assumptions underpinning each of these approaches are in opposition to the positivist notion that



the real nature of the world can be exposed through observation (Burr, 1995), documented through recording and represented through naming and categorization.

Instead, social constructionism and post-modernism invite us into a knowing of the world which is partial, situated and contingent. It is a world which is made through social processes and interactions (Burr, 1995), and, in which what is made (found) is contingent upon the apparatuses and processes used in its very knowledge-making. In this sense, knowledge claims can never equate to objective, universal truths, but always remain socially, culturally and historically constituted. A feminist orientation towards foundational and positivist worldviews incites further ethical and political considerations of these contingent knowledge-making practices. Donna Haraway, feminist science studies (FSS) scholar, suggests that it is not enough to “show radical historical contingency and modes of construction for everything”, that we have to go further than this and “insist on better accounts of the world” (Haraway, 1988, p. 579) in response to historical and ongoing practices of domination and oppression.

Feminist critique of realist, objective research challenges the underlying patriarchal structures implicit in such research, where the researchers’ “view from nowhere” (McCarthy, 1994 in Pillow, 2003, p. 178), also called the “God-trick” (Haraway, 1988, p. 581) creates nameless, locationless, invisible researcher positions which ultimately privilege and reproduce male, white, rational, disembodied ways of knowing and knowledges. Underpinning the practice of such objective forms of knowing lies the grand theory of humanism dating back to the Enlightenment period, also known as the Age of Reason, in which cultural and intellectual forces in Western Europe began to emphasize reason, analysis, and individualism (rather than God and religion) in the production of truth and knowledge (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000; Pillow, 2003).

One structure from this period which continues to underpin modern research practices, and which feminist critiques continue to trouble is the binary implicit in the theory of humanism. Such

binaries, or dualisms, include, but are not limited to: subject – object; self – other; mind – body, male – female, knower – known; rational – emotional, civilized – primitive; truth – illusion; total – partial (Haraway, 2004). This dualistic structure subversively, through the invisible researcher positioning and objective assumptions of the realist worldview, continues to privilege the first position in these binaries (self/man/knower/truth) as the dominating and colonising force. That is, the ‘object’, the ‘other’, the ‘body’, the ‘female’ all become marked, defined, dominated, oppressed through an invisible patriarchal structure. The effects of humanism’s binaries are far-reaching and, indeed, devastating to many of those on the wrong side of the binary who “have struggled to reclaim and rewrite untold histories, to subvert what counts as knowledge and truth, and to challenge those who claim the authority to speak for them” (St-Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p. 5). The consequences of the former way of seeing has had profound implications, for representations of truth and for the perpetuation of patriarchal, Eurocentric, and ultimately oppressive, to many, ideologies.

Given this crisis of representation, what develops also is a crisis of authority and of legitimacy. This led to questions about how our research practices can give better and ‘truer’ accounts of the world. If, as social constructionists claimed, all knowledge is constructed - socially, historically, and culturally; if, as feminist, postcolonial and critical theorists claimed, we need to take account of the position, power and authority of those speaking, then what are the conditions of the legitimation of knowledge in such a post-positivist social science (Lather, 1993)? If we recognise the complexity and multiplicity of the post-modern subject, then how can our research methods, methodologies, and writing and representing strategies attempt to encompass and reflect this complexity?

A substantive response to these questions has been the development of methodological practices of reflexivity. Indeed, Pillow (2003) notes that reflexivity is called upon in almost every qualitative research book or article, with qualitative researchers routinely using reflexivity to “better represent, legitimize, or call into question their data” (p. 176) and to make visible just how we do the political

work of representation. However, reflexivity, once suggested as the new canon in generating counter-practices of authority (Rajchman, 1985 in Lather, 1993) is not without its own challenges. The following section aims to discuss common practices and assumptions of methodological reflexivity as a response to the call of postmodernism to better account for the socially constructed, and multiple nature of truths, ultimately concluding with its consequent limits.

### **Bringing a more unsettled field into view**

Reflexivity refers to bi-directional or circular relationships between causes and effects. As a methodological practice in the social sciences, it can be understood as a bending or “turning back upon itself, for example, the turning back of an inquiry or a theory or a text onto its own formative possibilities” (Macbeth, 2001, p. 356). Or, as Woolgar (1988b) states, “the willingness to probe beyond the level of ‘straightforward’ interpretation” (p. 16). It requires us as researchers to move beyond personal reflection and interpretation and question the wider personal, social, historical and cultural contexts in order to understand how these impact on the ways we interpret the world (Etherington, 2004). Reflexivity invites scepticism towards taken for granted ways of knowing, critical reflection, and ultimately inquiry which brings not resolution but more of an unsettled field into view (MacBeth, 2001).

Thus, in contrast to the modernist construction of knowledge where a view from nowhere equates to a view from everywhere, reflexivity invites us to illustrate a view which is situated, contingent and partial. This has been taken up in research practice in several ways, generally through a turning back, or reflexive gaze, upon the self as researcher and/or the researcher’s practices of representation. In this way, reflexivity requires an acknowledgement of, and exploration into, the situated construction of any knowledge claims, in relation to both the subjectivity of the researcher and the representational practices being used. The theoretical orientation will influence the particular ways reflexivity may be performed. For example, from a constructivist view which

moves beyond modernist objectivity, but remains politically neutral (Campbell, 2004), to feminist, post-colonial, post-structural, queer and critical orientations which insist reflexivity must include a looking back on the gendered, classed, raced, cultural, aged, and other hegemonic discourses which constitute any knowledge making practices (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000; Macbeth, 2001; Campbell, 2004; Davies et al., 2004).

Whilst it is not my intention to document the multitude of ways reflexive methods<sup>17</sup> have proliferated in response to the crisis of representation, I do intend to outline broad approaches to reflexivity developed and used by qualitative researchers, in order to examine its underlying assumptions and ultimate limits in responding to the crisis in ways hoped for. Various researchers, in sociology, education, and social and feminist science studies of science have examined the issue and use of reflexivity as it intersects with debates around representation (Campbell, 2004; Davies et al., 2004; Lather, 1993; Latour, 1988; Macbeth, 2001; Pillow, 2003; Woolgar, 1988a). Terms and phrases including ‘uncomfortable reflexivity’ (Pillow, 2003); ‘ambivalent practices of reflexivity’ (Davies et al., 2004); meta- and infra-reflexivity (Latour, 1988); positional and textual reflexivity (MacBeth, 2001), and benign introspection (reflection) to radical constitutive reflexivity (Woolgar, 1988a) have all been attempts to both name what it is that reflexivity does and to move beyond its identified limits. Indeed, the concept of reflexivity has never been a simple solution to the crisis of representation, as evidenced by Woolgar in 1988b, who was then, already beginning to explore “the ways in which reflexivity has been variously ignored, evaded, diminished, pursued and celebrated” (p. 2).

---

<sup>17</sup> Although, in beginning this research I engaged in such reflexive practices in an attempt to overcome the limits of modernist research identified here. I attempted to begin to both situate myself in the research and make myself visible as researcher as well as disrupt stable representations of the real through the use of autoethnography and ‘poetries’ (see Barraclough, 2014).

## **Reflexivity as recognition of self**

What then have methodological practices of reflexivity been able to offer us, in our attempts to move beyond objective, disembodied knowledge-making practices towards recognising the contingencies of knowledge and towards a science which, in attending to the political, moves us to insist on better accounts of the world? In attempting to answer this, Pillow (2003) usefully moves us beyond the range of typologies of reflexivity (e.g. methodological, inter-textual) to instead consider common practices, or strategies, of reflexivity in qualitative research. One practice which has become prominent in qualitative research is “reflexivity as recognition of self/researcher know thyself” (p. 181). Similar to Macbeth’s (2001) positional reflexivity, the focus is on an expression of the subjectivity of the researcher, on “articulation of one’s analytically situated self” (p.38). As Pillow notes, while researchers have responded to this call to confession in a myriad of ways, all are attempting to give a reflexive account acknowledging that their selves interact with and influence the research process and, ultimately, the knowledge constructed. Such researchers use reflexivity as a tool often to situate themselves, their personal histories and ongoing reflexions in relation to the research process as a way of showing the constitutive relationship between the knowledge producer and the product, and thus to create more valid research claims.

There are, however, several tensions inherent in this practice. As well as considering these, my aim is to understand the onto-epistemological assumptions at play in these reflexive practices in order to also, eventually, consider alternatives. As Pillow (2003) points out, in contrast to a post-modern subject as multiple, complex, and proliferative, it seems that this kind of self-reflexivity can invoke the “Cartesian belief in a unified, essential self that is capable of being reflected on and is knowable” (p. 181). An awareness of a self as separate, rather than as also being produced by, and in relation to, the research processes, is also invoked, as is the idea that this self can be ‘captured’ and recorded. As Davies et al. (2004) note, the idea that one can both gaze at oneself and also be the object of the reflexive gaze is a “slippery object indeed” (p. 362). This attempt at representing

the reflexive self then becomes somehow a taken for granted knowledge, and no further inquiry into its production seems required. That is, researchers who engage in this kind of reflexivity seldom further trouble or question their own notions of knowing and, paradoxically, assume that by putting themselves into the text, they have adequately responded to the messiness of representation (Pillow, 2003). However, as Latour (1988) states “their arguments in feeding back on themselves nullify their own claims. They are in effect self-contradictory...” (p. 155).

However, meta-reflexivity, or inquiry into the production of our own reflections and reflexions, as a response to this aporia brings its own problems, not least of which, Haraway (1988) terms “self-induced multiple personality disorder” (p. 578). For one, it assumes a linear knowing and potentially an ultimate knowable foundational truth. For another, this assumes that each layer of reflexivity produces more knowing than the last. Latour (1988) suggests otherwise, that each layer is no more, or less, reflexive than the others, that they are all just equal stories, each standing side by side, each “bearing on *something else*” (p. 169, italics in original). Thus, while I agree with Pillow, that there remains an ongoing need for researchers to identify and account for their own positioning, particularly when those positions are ones of privilege, I also find myself in agreement that self-reflexivity as a counter practice to the crisis of representation may be little more than a “hall of mirrors” (Davies and Gannon, 2012, p. 369).

### **Accounts that make the world alive**

Latour’s (1988) response to meta-reflexivity, at the time, came in the form of infra-reflexivity. This was premised upon his view that no amount of methodology (“tedious... reflexive loops” (p. 173)) will bring a text closer to the distant thing it purports to represent. For that reason he suggested that, rather than piling layer upon layer of (needless) self-consciousness, we just have one layer – the story. This, he suggests, while it avoids the reductionism of meta-reflexivity, also does not mark a return to realism with a capital R. Instead, Latour writes about providing one-off explanations

using tailor-made causes, with *more details*, not less, in order to avoid generalities and to write stories which end up with local and provisional variations of scale. Thus, Latour's reflexivity becomes one of a multiplicity of genres and styles, of accounts that "make the world alive" (p. 173).

This would seem similar to Haraway's<sup>18</sup> desire, as quoted at the beginning of this chapter, for both a "radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects", and a "no nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a 'real' world" (1988, p. 579). With Haraway's desire for both real and situated knowledges, there is the possibility of moving beyond the one language of the invisible knower, and its oppressive repercussions, to construct partial, situated, local knowledges. Situated knowledges that are real and that also comprise an ethical and political impulse for real change by "offering richer, better accounts of a world, in order to live in it well" (p. 579). As Haraway terms it, this is a "feminist objectivity" (p. 581) where the issue may be more one of ethics and politics, than epistemology.

Before I continue down this path which is potentially taking me away from practices of methodological reflexivity, at least of the self at this stage, I want to return to consider the writings of Pillow and others as they trace other kinds of reflexivity offered as potential antidotes to the crisis of representation. Such reflexive practices can be encapsulated in the idea of coming to know and represent the other in our research. If we have given up on the previously assumed one to one correspondence between our textual practices of representation and the reality we are attempting to represent, how else can we demonstrate a post-modern and socially constructed knowing of the

---

<sup>18</sup> Haraway is clearly influenced by Latour and references him in her writing, stating at one point (Harway, 1988, notes) that "Latour is not otherwise a notable feminist theorist, but he might be made into one by readings as perverse as those he makes of the laboratory."

other? Reflexivity, in this sense, has come to be used to point to the limits of representation, whilst still maintaining a focus upon representation as desirable, necessary and somewhat possible.

A central theme of this kind of reflexivity is the disruption of realism and textual coherence and correspondence through the writing of instability in and through the text with the use of various devices or experiments in textual display (Macbeth, 2001; Woolgar, 1988a). This has come to be known as ‘textual reflexivity’ and has been especially taken up by feminist researchers who also wish to deconstruct the authority of the researcher in coming to know the other (Macbeth, 2001; Pillow, 2003). Such texts re-present data in multi-vocal forms, often letting the subjects speak for themselves, and use textual devices such as poetry, stories and plays to unsettle and redefine the modernist relationship between representation and reality (Barraclough, 2014; Richardson, 1994). However, in doing this, at least two paradoxical and troublesome effects are often realised.

First, introducing a textual layer of reflexivity acknowledges that research always occurs in the context of an unequal power relationship, yet, in writing reflexively, offers an account which assumes this has been addressed. As Pillow states, the very act of reflexivity may “perpetuate a colonial relationship while at the same time attempting to mask this power over the subject” (2003, p. 185). Second, reflexivity has come to be associated with validity and in many cases those using it have come to assume that a reflexive text equates to a more valid, or more truthful, representation of the voices of their subjects. Given reflexivity’s initial attempts to address the crisis of representation, it seems, after all, that it might well be potentially leading us right back to where we started – seeking the ‘truth’ in our representations.

### **Attempting to make the discursive visible**

I cannot complete a consideration of the crisis of representation and the promise (and limits) of practices of reflexivity without a turn to post-structuralism and its central theories over the last half century (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000) of the subject as one “inscribed in language” (Derrida as cited



in Davies, et al., 2004, p. 363). Engaging with post-structuralism's ideologies of the shifting and multiple self/subject as constituted in and through multiple discourses and practices invites a reflexivity which turns the gaze of the researcher upon "discourse—turning language back on itself to see the work it does in constituting the world" (Davies et al. 2004, p. 360). In line with ideas of reflexivity outlined above, post-structural practices of reflexivity have developed to make visible both the discursive production of the subjectivity of the researcher and well as the discursive nature of research practices in constituting knowledge production. Ultimately, this work has been ground breaking in producing "different structures of intelligibility that, in turn, produce different epistemologies, ontologies and methodologies" (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p. 2).

Post-structuralism's move toward situating the self, and research practices, as constituted in language and discourse has been significant in shifting the way we 'do' reflexivity.<sup>19</sup> Moving beyond the contradictions inherent in practices of reflexivity which ultimately lead us back to a humanist self that appears unified, knowable and fixed, post-structuralism potentially offered a way to engage with a shifting, contradictory view of the self in research, a self that is in fact a discursive process. Thus, rather than offering a meta-reflexivity, or potentially endless reflections on reflections, a reflexivity employed through the lens of post-structuralism enables "the subject to see itself in all its shifting, contradictory multiplicity and fragility... and also to see the ongoing and constitutive force of the multiple discourses and practices through which it takes up its existence" (Davies et al., 2004, p. 363). Viewing reflexivity through a post-structural theoretical lens means that not only are the subjectivities of researcher and researched viewed as discursive processes, but that the research practices and texts are also seen in this way. Thus, reflexivity

---

<sup>19</sup> As I have mentioned in previous chapters, I initially come to understand post-structuralism through practices of Narrative Therapy (Freedman & Combs, 1996; White and Epston, 1990), which draws on the work of Derrida and Foucault in considering the constitution of the subject in and through language and discourse, and in the possibility of rewriting subjectivity through practices of deconstruction. Theoretically and methodologically I have drawn on the work of Lather, Davies, St-Pierre and Pillow in order to further understand and use feminist post-structural thinking in a research context, as outlined here, and throughout this thesis.

becomes about turning the reflexive gaze back upon the discursive practices, the circulation of cultural meanings signified through language, in order, not to find origins or truths, but to trace the “the constitutive force of discourse in the lives of subjects” (Davies et al., 2002, p. 291).

Yet still, with all of its useful and necessary looking upon the discursive constitutive processes at play, a post-structural reflexivity seems to lead us in circles back again to humanist notions of a pre-discursive, real, unified, knowing subject who engages in the looking, who has a certain agency to look back and name the constitutive processes of the present, or past moments. So, as Davies et al. (2004), after Butler (1995 cited in Davies et al. 2004), ask “how then are we to conceptualise the doer behind the deed?” (p. 385). Through exploration of this very question Davies et al. were led to conclude that to engage in such reflexive practices necessarily entails occupying an “ambivalent position of competent agent and transgressive critic” (p. 385). That is, whilst acknowledging the limits of our knowledge in that we can “never float free of discourse” (p. 385) in our reflexivity and research practices, we must nevertheless find our way to write the stories that make visible the effects of discourse.

At this point we are left with the usefulness of a post-structurally informed reflexivity that has the ability to take us beyond realist and objective ways of knowing, to employ reflexive practices which allow us to show selves and research practices and texts as discursive processes, but we remain, as Davies et al. suggest, occupying a position of ambivalence, continuing to work both within and against the dominant language of humanism. It is perhaps not surprising then that researchers have sought to continue to interrogate such deep tensions in, and limits to, the practices of reflexivity (Davies et al. 2004; Pillow, 2003; MacBeth, 2001). Ultimately, this has led many, particularly feminist, researchers to abandon reflexivity altogether as a workable concept which adequately, and ethically, addresses onto-epistemological understandings of the world (e.g. Davies & Gannon, 2012; Davies, 2014b; Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Mazzei, 2014; Osgood et al., 2016). In addition to the challenges outlined above, reflexivity has come to be seen by these scholars as “(mis)leading” in

that it leads us “into searching for origins even when the conceptual work we are doing tells us there is no such thing as the original” (Davies and Gannon, 2012, p. 369-370). That is, through self- and/or constitutive reflexive practices we still seek to account for our representations of an, albeit socially constructed, reality. According to Barad (2007), this geometric optics of reflection actually takes us no further beyond the traditional realist approaches we started with.

The following section thus intends to further explore what it might mean to move from an optics of reflection to one of diffraction in our research practices. Barad’s objections to the widespread reliance on the optics of reflection and practices of reflexivity and her move to what she (after Haraway, 1992) terms a diffractive methodology are discussed. My aim in doing this is to argue for both the usefulness of a diffractive rather than reflexive methodology in this research, as well to situate this research in the broader onto-epistemological frameworks of new material feminism and post-humanism.

### **Haraway’s diffraction**

So, for me, the most interesting optical metaphor is not reflection and its variants in doctrines of representation. Critical theory is not finally about reflexivity, except as a means to defuse the bombs of the established disorder and its self-invisible subjects and categories. My favourite optical metaphor is diffraction--the noninnocent, complexly erotic practice of making a difference in the world, rather than displacing the same elsewhere (Haraway, 1994, p. 63).

Although I will be going on to discuss Barad’s uptake and development of the concept of diffraction I want to return to Donna Haraway as the originator of the use of this term in relation to research practices of reflexivity, and whose work I will also draw on in thinking diffractively. Haraway’s work, positioned with Feminist Science Studies (FSS), and much of her writing since the 1980s can be said to focus on questions of the ethics, politics and onto-epistemology of the production of knowledge, and ultimately worlds, often using post-human, techno-scientific tropes such as the

'cyborg' (1991), 'modest witness' (1997) and 'companion species' (2003, 2008b) to explore and exemplify her theories. As can be seen in her quote at the beginning of this chapter her commitment to what she calls "situated knowledges", drawing on notions of a feminist objectivity and critical reflexivity, has been long and reflects her desire to interrogate both the "apparatus of production" of knowledge and the question of "who flourishes and who does not, and how" (Haraway, 2008b, p. 157) in our knowledge- and world-making practices. It is through this ongoing work that Haraway ultimately attempted to move beyond the limits of a critical reflexivity and coined the concept of diffraction in order to further her project that we should seek to produce "knowledge potent for constructing worlds less organized by axes of domination" (Haraway, 1988, p. 585).

It may be Haraway's proclivity for the metaphorical, and in this case for the particular metaphor of a "much maligned sensory system in feminist discourse: vision" (Haraway, 1988, p. 585) that led her to the term diffraction. She says,

*(v)ision* is always a question of the power to see (p. 585)... How to see? Where to see from? What limits to vision? What to see for? Whom to see with? Who gets to have more than one point of view? Who gets blinded? Who wears blinders? Who interprets the visual field? What other sensory powers do we wish to cultivate besides vision?" (Haraway, 1988, p. 587).

Here, Haraway brings to the fore the idea, her belief, that the struggles over what counts as knowledge, or 'rational' accounts of the world, ultimately is a question of these struggles of the 'who' and 'how' of our seeing. Critical vision and critical reflexivity, she suggests, have been crucial to an unmasking of the 'god-trick' of patriarchal, colonising, and normative seeing and knowing, and to the move to more situated, partial and embodied (reflexive) practices of knowing. However, although important, Haraway seems to suggest that this move from seemingly objective to relativist accounts of the world does not go far enough. "It is full reflexivity's hesitance here and its repeated ending with itself" (Schneider, 2002, p. 469) that, although shifts accounts of the world

from one to multiple possible accounts, still leaves all knowledge claims as equal. Indeed, Haraway suggests that “relativism is the perfect mirror twin of totalization in the ideologies of objectivity; both deny the *stakes* in location, embodiment, and partial perspective” (1988, p. 584, my emphasis). It is here that Haraway eventually departs from the optics of reflexivity. Moving to a reworking of her model of situated knowledges (1988) she introduces the figure of diffraction (Haraway, 1992, 1994, 1997) to help imagine her yearning for a non-innocent, feminist, multicultural and anti-racist techno-science project. Diffraction, as a more useful metaphor than reflexivity, in her terms,

does not produce the same, displaced, as reflection and refraction do. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction. A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the effects of difference occur” (Haraway, 2004, p. 70).

The purpose of this, for Haraway, is not only then to “get at how worlds are made and unmade”, but “to participate in the processes, in order to foster some forms of life and not others” (1994, p. 62). Haraway talks about this as simply, modestly, having an ethico-political commitment to making a difference, having a desire or yearning to go beyond deconstruction and criticality toward a reconfiguring or re-worlding in the research stories that we tell, or to at least point the way to the making visible of something other than the same, that might make different, and particular, kinds of worlds and knowledges come alive, in a way that are power sensitive, not pluralistic.

However, to do so is not without challenge, or risk. Risk of assuming the position of rational, humanist knower in desiring to ‘make a difference’ with preconceived ideas of what that difference might look like. The challenge, and risk, I think, is well encapsulated by Schneider who, in hesitating at the potential evocation of closure and unity that imperatives such as ‘making a difference’ can induce, suggests “Passion, caring, commitment, and courage? Most certainly.

Doubt, modesty, partiality, endless self-other criticism and scrutiny? Without question” (2002, p. 474).

Further challenge from remaining with Haraway’s figure of diffraction lies in her seeming to stop short of fully developing a model of what those diffractive practices she alludes to might be (Campbell, 2004). Haraway’s diffractive ways of seeing patterns of interference as a way of making new and different meanings has, however, been taken up by Karen Barad (2003, 2007, 2014) in her theory of agential realism. It is this combination of, or diffraction of Haraway and Barad’s notions of diffraction, and diffracting of diffraction by others, which inform this research, and it is Barad’s theory in particular that I wish to take up and discuss here.

### **Diffracting diffraction, with Barad**

“Diffraction is not a singular event that happens in space and time; rather, it is a dynamism that is integral to spacetime-mattering. Diffractions are untimely. Time is out of joint; it is diffracted, broken apart in different directions, noncontemporaneous with itself. Each moment is an infinite multiplicity” (Barad, 2014, p. 169).

Writing this here, now, in this spacetime-mattering is not a singular event. Although my aim is to create a piece of writing which shows an understanding of diffraction and gives an outline of how this project will/does use this concept, the material limitations of this product inevitably restrict the documenting of the actual *past-present-future* entangled encountering that *has been-is-will be* diffraction’s diffractive interference and spacetime-mattering in my life-work. As such, I start this section diffractively, interfering with the usual linear flow of coherent writing, by inserting other matter, from other times and spaces. My desire is to map some of the effects of diffraction’s insistence on interference, on disruption, to my own knowing-in-being.



Figure 1: Diffraction – I see it everywhere.

Last day of the summer holiday, January, 2014; Paton's Rock, Golden Bay.

*Today, I am reading Iris van der Tuin (2014), on diffraction, post-humanist interpellation and new materialism as always/already informed by French bodily materialism. I'm reading/writing/thinking at home, interspersed with, diffracted through, baking raspberry and white chocolate muffins for my children's lunches, the smells now leaking into my body and senses as I read/think/write, listening to the sounds of Bizet echoing from a CD on the stereo and willing him to finish as his tempo is moving far too quickly for my much slower thinking.*

*The speed of the music infusing itself into me is instilling in me a panic that I cannot keep up, with the music, with my PhD, with my work, with my mothering, partnering, daughtering, with the resulting dispersion of myself into the multiplicities of being and becoming demanded by my choices.*

*A thesis to mark arrives in my in-box, an additional teaching to prepare just as I have finished three weeks of teaching and look toward some space for this reading/writing/thinking, teetering on the edge of the abyss, looking toward the unknown, always/already taking a plunge into thinking/doing/being in movement, I wonder what Iris's thinking can offer me?*

*I can never keep up, catch up, stay up. Choice-feminism, un/equality politics and neo-liberalism constitute me as the individual woman, who can try harder, work harder, give it more effort, choose to have it all – or not, who can become like Them-Man, and then not like me – woman. Or, or, or...?*

*Is that what I hope Iris can help me figure out, know-in-being? Know in the being of baking-writing-reading-listening-working, in the being of my body's panic-fear-overwhelm-desire, embodied, fleshy, corporeal knowing that comes through and of LIFE itself, immanent, not of GOD and gazing from a disembodied nameless, locationless, above. What 'I' come to say/think/write is not even 'me' but a mobile 'subject-shifting' knowing-in-being that comes from the material-discursive practices of the I that is baking-reading-listening, that is mother-lecturer-woman- and, and, and, that is fleshy, material, embodied, and, like the molecules of water, rippling from the stone that lands, that is actually, always/already in motion.*

*Interrupted, disturbed, in-through-out this material-discursive relationality, called into being, differing, disrupted, always already at the abyss. Beyond a taxonomy, a categorization, that might propel me to attempt to fit, and never fit, a certain naming of self. Instead, a calling into knowing-in-being through interruption into/from a past-present-future entanglement. An interruption to this entangled train of thought as I pause to pick up children from school, a diffractive interference leading me, calling me, into another abyss.*

**(Research journal, March 2015)**

Following Barad, at this point I return with her to the phenomenon of diffraction, both as trope and as a physical phenomenon, to explore the history of its philosophy-physics and the feminist theorizing Barad draws on, and the coming together of both. I do this in order to develop further clarity around what diffraction as a physical phenomenon actually is, in order to think differently with it, and to consider its profound offerings as an analytical tool, in particular as an alternative methodological practice to reflection and reflexivity. Following this, I consider how others have



deployed diffraction, as concept and method, in order that I might think with (diffract) Haraway, Barad and others, in being and becoming diffractive (rather than reflexive). That is, in order to consider what material-discursive practices diffraction as analytic practice might produce for the purposes of re-encountering (with) my data.

*Physical phenomenon – diffraction as concept*

I begin with a re-turning to the previous chapter and my outline of Barad's post-humanist performative framework of agential realism, and its underpinning physics. At the heart of this notion of diffraction here, are the diffraction experiments Barad refers to, which investigate the nature (or identity) of light and matter, showing that, depending on the apparatus used, both light and matter can be *either wave or particle*, two mutually exclusive identities. The apparatuses used in these two-slit experiments, are called "diffraction gratings" and are said to measure the effects of difference, a "diffraction pattern" (Barad, 2007, p. 73). Thus, already, we can see diffraction as both an apparatus of investigation (a methodological tool) and as a phenomena (object/pattern/entangled state) of investigation. In this way, "diffraction not only brings the reality of entanglements to light, it is itself an entangled phenomenon" (2007, p. 73). Barad points out here that, as entanglements (intra-actions/spacetime-matterings) are highly specific configurations, it can be 'hard work' tuning apparatuses to the particularities of the current entanglements under investigation. She notes the key question will be how to explore entanglements, and the differences they make, responsibly. Barad is referring to the physics of quantum entanglements here, to the diffraction patterns made by light and matter in their intra-activity with apparatuses. However, she is also using diffraction as a trope, in order to offer the reader help in exploring other entangled patterns of difference. I will explore how others have taken this diffraction trope, or metaphor, and used it, towards the end of this chapter. For now, a re-turn to the optics of diffraction.

A diffraction (interference) pattern, in a classical (non-quantum) sense, has to do with the way waves (sound, light, water) combine, under the right conditions, to bend and spread when they encounter an obstruction, such as ocean waves passing through a hole, or the ripple in a pond when a stone interferes with the stillness. The waves are said to be diffracted, and the stone or the hole acts as a diffraction apparatus. A pattern of the effects of difference or superposition, is produced in this intra-action of obstruction/interference and overlapping waves (Barad, 2007). Diffraction patterns can be observed everywhere, says Barad, from the surfer taking advantage of diffractive waves created by a rock to the rainbow effect of light observed on a compact disc; indeed “diffraction plays a role in nearly all optical phenomena” (Young & Freedman, 2004 in Barad, 2007, p. 80).

A diffractive method, in this sense, looks for the effects of difference: diffraction patterns produced through interference/obstruction/overlapping. In contrast, reflecting apparatuses, like mirrors, are defined by sameness. As Haraway suggests “reflexivity, like reflection, only displaces the same elsewhere, setting up worries about copy and original and the search for the authentic and really real...” (Haraway, 1997 in Barad, 2007, p. 71). Critical reflexivity’s attempts to take account of the researcher’s role in the constitution of knowledge, or to turn the mirror back on oneself, as this optical metaphor suggests we do, becomes a limiting metaphor in the presence of diffraction. Reflexivity, in the context of a social constructionist ontology, merely constitutes knowledge as a *reflection* of culture, rather than nature (Barad, 2007). Mirrors abound and reflections at a distance can be endless in a search for an imagined, more or less fixed, original. While categories of difference may be reflected upon in attempts to be reflexive, e.g. gender, race, class, diffraction moves difference beyond fixed categories and instead “is itself the process whereby a *difference is made and made to matter*” (Davies, 2014b, p. 734 italics in original).

Taking diffraction’s possibilities further, Barad goes on to outline a quantum understanding of diffraction, and the implications this onto-epistemology might have for methodology. While a

classical understanding of the wave like behaviour of a diffractive pattern is a useful contrasting metaphor, to reflexivity, for thinking methodologically (think bending, overlapping, interfering, interrupting, difference), a quantum understanding is able to take us beyond the classical notion of fixed identities, as we see when we return to Barad's agential-realist framework and her reading of Bohr. As she says,

while it is true that diffraction apparatuses measure the effects of difference, even more profoundly they highlight, exhibit, and make evident the entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of knowing. In fact, diffraction not only brings the reality of entanglements to light, it is itself an entangled phenomenon" (Barad, 2007, p. 73).

Barad is referring here to the wave-particle duality paradox, and in particular the quantum finding that particles or matter, under certain conditions (in certain entanglements) can produce diffraction or wave patterns, leading to the conclusion that matter's nature or identity is anything but fixed or determined. Hence, diffraction as methodology, as a material-discursive phenomenon itself, not only offers a tool to map the effects of entanglements but its use depends upon a quantum ontology of the intra-active, dynamic, changing nature of the phenomenon itself under investigation.

The researcher is wholly implicated in this, and shifts from a reflective, reflexive, self-referential observer of the world towards one who understands the world from within and as part of it whilst participating in its ongoing performance. This thus "entails a critical practice of engagement, not a distance-learning practice of reflecting from afar" (Barad, 2007, p. 90). In a diffractive onto-epistemology, we, as researchers, are not uncovering things as they are, or were, rather we are participating in, are intra-actively part of, knowledge-in-the-making, or the world in its ongoing (re)configuring. Thinking diffractively requires accountability and responsibility in the part we play in these knowledge/world-making entangled material-discursive practices. Barad comes back to Haraway's original notion of a diffractive methodology as a critical practice for making a

difference in the world, critical in the sense of our responsibility as researchers for “understanding which differences matter, how they matter, and for whom” (p. 90).

### *A diffractive interrupting*

I attempt and experiment throughout this research to embody this lively onto-epistemology and to disrupt the very notions it interrupts - of linear stories, researcher distance and writing up as representation. My aim is to learn about and use diffraction *not* as though it exists independently from the ‘me’ using it and the data encountering it and the time and space being reconfigured in the moments of its use. This aim, in fitting with the onto-epistemology of this thesis, is to show diffraction’s entanglement, its intra-activity, with this research-in-the-making, with my researcher-subjectivity-in-the-making, not as a linear process, but as an always lively and iterative process of “(re)configuring of patterns of differentiating-entangling” (Barad, 2014, p. 168).

Here, then, in this space of interruption, I introduce and re-turn (to) a major event which haunts this research, through its presence in bodies and land and living and every moment since September 4<sup>th</sup> 2010. Although I did not meet with my participants until after this time, they were all engaged in the counselling programme, and arrived, along with me, having all been impacted in some ways by living through the major earthquake sequence<sup>20</sup>, from which we continue to experience effects in Canterbury to this day. I introduce this here, as a way of diffracting diffraction, as a trope for thinking earthquakes as diffractive – “cutting together-apart (one move) in the (re)configuring of spacetime-mattering” (Barad, 2014, p. 168), and as producing diffraction patterns. I re-turn to the earthquakes “not by returning as in reflecting on or going back to a past that was, but re-turning as

---

<sup>20</sup> The 2010–2011 Canterbury earthquake sequence occurred within the upper crust of the South Island of New Zealand. As of 15 July 2011, the sequence had included three major shocks: the Mw **7.1** Darfield earthquake (**4 September 2010, 4.35am**) followed by an Mw **6.2** event on **22 February 2011, 12.51pm** and an Mw 6.0 event on 13 June 2011, along with a rich aftershock sequence of 27 shocks with Mw>5.0 (Sibson, Ghisetti, & Ristau, 2011). As at Feb 2014 there had been 11,000 associated earthquakes and aftershocks (Moon et al. 2014). 185 people were killed in the February 22<sup>nd</sup> earthquake.

in turning it over and over again – iteratively intra-acting, re-diffracting, diffracting anew, in the making of new temporalities (spacetime-matterings), new diffraction patterns” (p. 168).

“Canterbury will pause to reflect on a poignant milestone on Monday 22 February as it commemorates the fifth anniversary of the February 2011 earthquake... Mayor Lianne Dalziel says, "This is an important event for the Christchurch community to reflect on what happened the day of the earthquake but also look at how far we've come" (Rebuild Christchurch, 2016).

“This moment is dispersed/diffracted throughout the paper, and this moment, like all moments, is itself a diffracted condensation, a threading through of an infinity of moments-places-matterings, a superposition/entanglement, never closed, never finished” (Barad, 2014, p. 169)

### *Fault lines*

The world was reconfigured  
over and over again.  
The earth,  
a massive tornado sweeping  
through its insides,  
diffracted  
cut together-apart  
upended  
inside out  
downside up.  
4.35: 7.1 - 12.51: 6.3  
time and magnitude marks  
our bodies,  
it throws  
my children's bodies  
to the ground and  
shakes  
their nights as it rocked

and rolled  
childhood worlds  
interrupted,  
cut together-apart, between  
before and during,  
after and since, then  
and now. No

going back, only going  
on, made and re-made, with every  
loss and every terror and  
every broken glass and smashed  
plate that  
we swept away too soon  
to remove  
the evidence that was  
the reminder  
in the ongoing and  
relentless, unknowing  
of lives and  
worlds and flourishing and flailing,  
who got which  
made to matter in  
diffraction's queer and quantum  
cutting - of earth and  
water, land and loss and  
fault,  
deep layers of  
liquefaction and legal action,  
cracks and cracking and cracked -  
together-apart.

**(February 2016)**

*Diffraction's feminist theorizing and ongoing responsibility*

Up to this point, much of my discussion of Karen Barad's agential realist framework and her development of diffraction as concept and method has been centred around understanding it in relation to its philosophy-physics. However, as Barad states, "(t)he yearning for justice, a yearning larger than any individual or set of individuals, is the driving force behind this work..." (2007, p. xi). As such, her framework is clearly not only a new onto-epistemological offering, but an ethical one as well, thought through (or diffracted) with "critical social theories", (including) feminist theory, critical race theory, queer theory, post-colonial theory, (post)-Marxist theory, and post-structuralist theory" (p. 26). Given our quantum understanding of diffraction, as both concept and method, diffraction's project, then, becomes about queering binaries, challenging notions of (fixed) identity, and rethinking how and what differences comes to matter, in order that we might responsibly and responsively engage in the ongoing work of the re-opening, unsettling and re-configuring "*of what might yet be, of what was, and what comes to be*" (Barad, 2010, p. 264, italics in original).

This becomes my project also, as thinking diffractively with my data invites me to ask what and how differences come to matter for counsellors-in-training, not in order to ascertain any final, grand and unified narrative, but rather in order to unsettle and reconfigure who and what (might) come(s) to matter in an ongoing iterative process of differentiating-entangling, of cutting things together and apart (in one move). This entails a simultaneous response-ability for what comes to matter and for what gets excluded, for recognising entanglements necessitate exclusions; cutting things together, necessitates cutting things apart. This matters, both for my encounters of entangling-differentiating with my data and for tracing the entangling-differentiating diffraction patterns within the data itself.

Barad (2014) illuminates this notion of identity as mattering, as being the indeterminate made intelligible again and again, not once and for all, as she diffracts diffraction with key moments of

feminist theorizing, in particular with the work of Donna Haraway, Trinh Minh-ha and Gloria Anzaldúa. What I take to be key to this theorizing, and of use for my work, is Haraway's (1992) reading of Trinh Minh-ha's notion of the "inappropriate/d other" and Barad's reading of Anzaldúa's notion of the "crossroads", both with diffraction. To be inappropriate/d, says Haraway, is "not to fit in the taxon, to be dislocated from the available maps specifying kinds of actors and kinds of narratives, not to be originally fixed by difference". Rather, "(t)o be an 'inappropriate/d other' means to be in critical, deconstructive relationality, in a diffracting rather than reflecting (ratio)nality – as the means of making potent connection that exceeds domination" (Haraway, 1992, p. 300). Tracing how difference is enacted, how it comes to matter, how it intra-acts, how it doesn't fit the available taxon, how the available taxon leads to dislocation, and starting with difference not as categorical, natural and fixed, all then become possibilities for thinking diffractively with data.

Barad highlights how Trinh's work (1988, in Barad, 2014) was about disrupting humanist notions of identity and difference which were defined through a colonizing logic, whereby identity takes the form of stabilising and maintaining the self through excluding (and dominating) what is Other or non-I, or on the other side of a binary, such as male-female; adult-child; white-black; mind-body; well-ill; able-disabled. Difference then is defined by clear categories with absolute boundaries, and, as we have seen, power and privilege have come to be afforded to those on the 'right' side of these binaries. The only options in this configuring of fixed identities, for those afforded less power, is, as Trinh says, to attempt to become equal to the other, whilst being "always condemned to remain its shadow" (Trinh T. Minh-ha in Barad, 2014, p. 170), given the investment in hegemony of those dominant. Thus, while difference itself continues to be constructed in such a binary way, there are few options for true change.

Inspired by Trinh's notion of disrupting the binary structure and actually figuring difference differently, Barad returned to the physics of diffraction. In another example of diffraction in action, she dissolves the idea of the previously thought rigid boundaries separating light and darkness by



returning to an experiment which showed patterns of light appearing “within the darkness within the light within...” (2014, p. 170), a pattern unable to be explained by what were the current known laws of reflection and refraction. Diffracting the physics then back through Anzaldua’s *Borderlands* (/1991/1999), a seminal feminist studies text, Barad continues to queer the binary and develop/diffract her reconfiguring of diffraction as differences-in-the-making. She does this through both the dark/light, and other, diffraction experiments and with Anzaldua’s queering of the darkness/light binary, of which she says darkness has come to be equated with absence, lack and “the negative, base and evil forces – the masculine order casting its dual shadow – and all these are identified with dark skinned people” (Anzaldua, in Barad, 2014 p. 171).

To me, this queering of what has been taken for granted as the physical, at least, truth of reality, is both intellectually challenging and exciting for the possibilities it offers for rethinking identity, and as such the possibilities for who and how we (individually and collectively) can be and become different, not to each other. Rather than working within the patriarchal defined binary structures of the status quo Barad, through diffracting diffraction, invites a complete reconfiguring of how the very differences we take for granted as natural or given, can actually be seen to be indeterminate, contingent, and instead as differences always in the making, differing within, with no fixed origins or destinations. Diffraction patterns in the two-slit diffraction experiment indeed reveal “that darkness is not a lack. Darkness can be produced by ‘adding new light’ to existing light – ‘to that which it has already received’. Darkness is not mere absence, but rather an abundance. Indeed, darkness is not light’s expelled other, for it haunts its own interior” (p. 171). Old boundaries are breaking, leaking, and indeed new research in diverse fields is beginning to queer binaries previously held up to be impassable (e.g. mind-body, see Giulia Enders (2015) work on the complexity of the ‘gut’, its brain, and as constitutive of the ‘self’ in ways previously thought to be the domain of the head/brain/mind).

Anzaldua speaks of being in the borderlands, being a crossroads, transcending or “tunnelling through” the apparent dual and multiple identities from within – not through erasing difference, but, as Barad says, through a “relation of *difference within*” (Barad, 2014, p. 175). Anzaldua, she says, “understood the material multiplicity of self, the way it is diffracted across spaces, times, realities, imaginaries” (p. 175). Being the crossroads, I read here as being indeterminate, and as difference coming to matter in the ongoing and iterative reconfiguring of diffraction/intra-action/differencing. Difference is not flattened out or erased in any unifying sense, rather its very material historicity and how it comes to matter, and as such, how it may come to matter differently is what comes to be at stake in this reworking. The crossroads, or indeterminacy, is not a static place of waiting to become. Rather, it is a “dynamic through which that which has been constitutively excluded re-turns” – that which has been made to matter, has become intelligible, is always infused with that which has been excluded, hence entangling, or cutting together, always necessitates differentiating, or cutting apart (i.e. diffraction’s wave-particle paradox – difference differing within). The self is thus not an “I” who exists on the outside looking in (or the inside looking out), but is rather an always ongoing un/doing and im/possibility, fixed in neither time nor space nor taxonomy.

### *Diffraction in action*

What does it mean then to think diffractively, to be diffractive rather than reflective or reflexive? Both Haraway and Barad tell us that diffraction entails responsibility and accountability for what comes to matter, for making a difference, in our knowledge making practices. However, rather than enacting a moral choice, diffraction’s responsibility entails an “iterative (re)opening up...through the iterative reworking of im/possibility...” (Barad, 2007, p. 183). Barad also tells us that meaning is material, it matters. As such it would seem most helpful in coming to think how I might put a diffractive methodology to work, to now move beyond attempts to *understand* diffraction’s as concept and instead explore diffraction as it has already been made to matter methodologically.

It seems apt to start with Barad, who has not only developed diffraction's possibilities, but who also puts it to work, in her work (2007, 2010, 2014). She highlights a diffractive methodology as a respectful attention to the fine, small detail of relations of difference in thinking insights from different theories, times, and places through one another. This is not in a usual positioning of one theory against another nor a simple adding of cumulative results, when more than one come together. Barad's approach is rather to "place the understandings that are generated from different (inter)disciplinary practices in conversation with one another" (2007, p. 93). In fitting with diffraction's outline above, this means "engaging aspects of each in dynamic relationality to the other, being attentive to the iterative production of boundaries, the material-discursive nature of boundary-drawing practices, the constitutive exclusions that are enacted, and questions of accountability and responsibility for the reconfigurings of which we are a part" (p. 93). She does this in the enactment of her agential-realist framework by readings insights from Bohr's philosophy-physics with several other theories as mentioned above. Barad also enacts diffraction as method in later work in which she continues to intra-act with quantum understandings of diffraction in order to make new diffraction patterns, to diffract anew in diffraction's ongoing reconfiguring (2010, 2014). In doing this Barad, usefully, creates Acts and Scenes, except this play cuts across time and space and makes them anew, enacting diffraction's, like the electron she invokes as host, dis/jointed movement, dis/orientation, and ghostly dis/continuity. Diffraction as methodology, she says, which I take up in this thesis, is "readings texts intra-actively through one another, enacting new patterns of engagement, attending to how exclusions matter" (Barad, 2010, p. 243). I am also drawn to her attempts to write, or perform, her papers (2010, 2014) "in a way that disrupts the conventions of historical narrative forms...tales of continuous accretion...sagas of progress from an earlier time period to a later one punctuated with discoveries that lead the way out of the swamp of ignorance and uncertainty to the bedrock of solid and certain knowledge" (2010, p. 244). Instead, she, as I attempt also, aims to provide the reader with a diffractive

experience of time, place and space's disjointedness, its dis/continuity and its entangled nature, disrupting linearity and smooth transitions with fixed beginnings and endings. This is a writing and a reading where past, present and future are iteratively threaded through one another, re-turned to and from, where moments do not stand still, but rather point toward "multiple pasts in the present and futures-yet-to-come" (Blackman, 2015, p. 187). I see the making of the work produced here on these pages, as a diffractive process, an entanglement of pasts and presents, enacted with the use of poems interfering with the text, disrupting its continuity, where the moments, encounters, and meanings produced are threaded through one another, not in a fixed way, but a dynamic, always pointing toward futures-yet-to-come, way. This diffractive process is eventually also enacted in the data analysis, as becomes evident in part three of the thesis.

Given the centrality of ethics and justice to diffraction's reconfiguring and its history with feminist theorizing, it is perhaps not surprising that it has been taken up methodologically in feminist academic work in order to unsettle and reconfigure categorical notions such as gender (Osgood & Giugni, 2015a), motherhood (Osgood et al., 2016), sexuality (Allen, 2015), desire (Mazzei, 2014), anger (Davies, 2014b), childhood (Taylor & Blaise, 2014), girls' ill-/well-being (Lenz Taguchi and Palmer 2013), researcher subjectivity (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, 2013a), loss (Allegranti & Wyatt, 2014), mathematical subjectivity (Palmer, 2011), and academic writing (Handforth & Taylor, 2016). In addition, a diffractive reading method has been usefully employed in feminist philosophical and sociological work furthering the exploration of matter, meta-physics, gender, responsibility and difference (Van der Tuin, 2011a, 2014; Hughes & Lury, 2013; Thiele, 2014; Sehgal, 2014). The following discussion highlights some of the ways diffraction as method has been, can be, and might yet be productive in my entangled encounters to come in this thesis.

## **Researcher subjectivity – where/what/who am I?**

In considering the work of Lenz Taguchi on researcher subjectivity, to begin with, I am re-turned to the place where I began (this chapter) to articulate my struggle to come to terms with the place and performance of the I/me in conducting research:

The residence of the *I* is many,  
in here, out there, in between,  
multiple selves, true self, false self,  
one world, no self.  
Illusions, fantasies, defenses.  
Us and them, I and thou, me and you,  
all one.  
...

it is difficult to see beyond  
where *I* am, beyond this obsession  
with *I*, with its incessant demands for  
coherence, consistency, certainty,  
and freedom.

Having come now to conceptualise my researcher subjectivity as intra-actively, iteratively always in the making, in the process of being reconfigured and produced in relation to and entangled with my data, participants and spaces, times and places of my research, whilst also intra-actively producing all of those things and ultimately the knowledge enacted in the writing of this thesis, I am curious also to think with Lenz Taguchi and others in order to diffract a researcher subjectivity further. Particularly, as at this point my conceptualising is an intra-active one produced through significant amounts of reading with Barad and others, not necessarily though an iterative process of working diffractively with data.

In contrast, Lenz Taguchi outlines how, it was only after rereading documentation produced in a collaborative research process diffractively with “Gilles Deleuze’s philosophy and the writings of

feminist post-constructionist theorists such as Karen Barad, Rosi Braidotti, Claire Colebrook, Myra Hird, Patti Lather and Elizabeth Grosz” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013a, p. 1103) that a knowing of the transformation of a researcher subjectivity began to correspond with her embodied involvement throughout the research. Thus, she uses diffraction here to “read” insights through one another in order to “produce a knowing of a kind that transgresses the mind/body binary” (p. 1103) to rethink researcher subjectivity as ultimately a “becoming “molecular-girl””, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s concept (p. 1103).

I see the conclusions Lenz Taguchi draws as aligning well with a diffractive notion of researcher subjectivity, which invoke a feminist challenge to the dominant image of the researcher as “an individual rational subject and mind, a mind that tries to understand the world through analysing data that are, so to speak, outside and separate from (her-)/him, and a mind which is understood to be separated from the body in the process of thinking” (2013a, p. 1104). Instead, she tells of how the group shifted their reading of the data from thinking with the dominant meaning of binaries as negative difference, toward Deleuze’s notion of difference as a positive, affirmative one, a continuum and a multiplicity, and as “in a constant state of becoming different in itself” (p. 1108), similar it seems to Barad’s theorising of difference differing within, as outlined above. The researchers came to experience themselves, not as the detached, thinking, external observers of the data, but rather as reading the data “from an imaginary embodiment: reinstalling ourselves as embodied affective beings in the event to relive the data in a totally different and unforeseen way” (p. 1108), which perhaps can also be configured as a reconfiguring, an intra-active re-turning, where the body of the researcher is wholly installed in the process of knowledge production. What this then does is to offer a shift beyond research as data representation, in that, through what Lenz Taguchi, after Deleuze, calls a “collective researching-body-assemblage, increasingly more and different articulations are reconfigured which “widen the realities of the data” (p. 1109). Being in this researching-collective-body, ‘I’ am used by thought, in a state of “inter-connectedness, and

companionship with other beings, matter and discourse” (p. 1109), comparable, it would seem, to the inseparability of the researcher from matter and discourse in Barad’s intra-active entanglements. ‘I’ am an inseparable participant in this entangled research process, and thus of the knowledge produced, not the rational, decision-making, separate, producer of research findings.

Indeed, Lenz Taguchi (2012), also theorises this process from Haraway and Barad’s notion of diffraction, suggesting a diffractive analysis entails a transcorporeal, embodied becoming-with the data, where the body is “a space of transit, a series of open-ended systems in interaction with the material-discursive ‘environment’” (p. 265). She draws on Merrell’s (2003 in Lenz Taguchi, 2012) concept of the “bodymind” (p. 267) in referring to this use of all of our bodily faculties and our imaginary in a diffractive analysis. Allegranti and Wyatt (2014) similarly speak of an “intracorporeal” process in the mattering of data. Others have similarly described this diffractive process as one where knowledge emerges in-between the researcher and data, at a crossroads “marked out in the very intersection between the data, theory, methodology and the researcher” (Palmer, 2011, p. 8). This inevitable installing of oneself in the entanglement of knowledge production means engaging with our own previous and ongoing experiences of the realities we are researching, with our sensory, affective responses and memories, our imaginaries and with our own omnipresent multiple subjectivities, such as gender, class, race (Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2013). It means recognising we are not acting only as intentional, rational knowers, but instead must become open to being “stirred and affected” by our (inseparable) relations with all manner of more-than-human others...” (Taylor & Blaise, 2014, p. 386).

Such engagement has no presumption of fixity of those subjectivities and memories and affects, rather they are viewed as shifting, differing in response to, at least, the data, the theory, the writing and the method. The aim is not to reflect upon in order to separate them out, rather to recognise the very inseparability of our bodymind in the dynamic process of knowledge production and use this to see where and what and how different knowledge emerges. This brings us to the equally

important consideration then of the how and what and why of what might be different in such a diffractive research process.

Such a process requires attention to fine detail and hard work, in order to make matter intelligible in new ways and to imagine, disturb and intervene in order that other possible realities can be made to matter (Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Palmer, 2011). This production of knowledge thinks beyond traditional, habitual and reflexive research processes of coding and thematic analyses with its imperatives to produce coherent and recognisable narratives. Osgood et al. (2015a, 2016), for example, enact diffractive analyses in order that they might figure both gender (2015a) and motherhood (2016) differently, to move beyond reflecting back the already known themes and discourses, and instead “move the debate on” in different, active and generative directions, to go “beyond what we thought we knew” (p. 6). Mazzei (2014) similarly invites us to work the limits and limitations of our existing research practices and to instead engage in a diffractive, thinking data with theory, where analysis becomes “rhizomatic” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) rather than reductive, hierarchical and linear. In this way I return, with Haraway (2004), to diffraction’s beginnings, to engage in diffractive research practices which are “a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection and reproduction” (p. 70) in thinking with the entangled material-discursive practices of counsellors-in-training. Also with Haraway, with a noninnocent, ethical and political impulse, I intend to diffractively map who and what may come to matter differently when hidden and naturalised assumptions of fixed and distinctive categories and identities are called into question and figured differently, through this inevitably entangled work of enacting boundary-making agential cuts in the production of knowing in being, that is a diffractive analysis. This is a knowing, and a production of knowledge, where subjects and objects cannot be defined in advance of the research encounter; “it is an emergent process, in which subjects and objects become different in the encounters through which they emerge and go on emerging differently...through what Barad calls the world and its possibilities of becoming” (Davies, 2014b, p. 741). It is with this



renewed aim, to participate in, and experiment with, a diffractive research process, in re-encountering my data, in installing my bodymind in relation with theory and data, in order to see what this entangled research process might produce in coming to know about the lived experience, and subject formation, of counsellors-in-training. It turns out this was not an easy process, unsurprisingly. The following chapter outlines further theory I enlisted in order to help me re-turn to the data to perform this diffractive data analysis. Following this, in part three, I offer an account of the data analysis processes, and the resulting 'knowing-in-being' which emerged.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Analytic Devices – making, re-making and un-making

Having outlined significant, and challenging, shifts in onto-epistemology and associated methodological practices, in this chapter I explore further methodological implications of aligning my research with posthumanism, and diffraction as concept and method. I do this in order to envisage other tools I can think with, in entering what feels like such unknown terrain<sup>21</sup>. Drawing on the work of those already thinking and researching with posthumanist ontologies, I find the notion of the *analytic device* useful for mapping and describing the performative methods I will draw on in data analysis. I use Suchman's (2012) definition of an analytic device as an inventive method, an analytic resource, through which things are made. This clearly aligns with Barad's notions of apparatus and diffraction, as oriented towards an articulation of dynamic and intra-active processes, with the aim of opening up to the multiple possibilities, rather than "converging toward singular truths" (Boehner, Gaver & Bouchner, 2012, p. 185). I proceed to explore and explain three particular analytic devices here – the *poem*, *pattern*, and *(re)(con)figuration* - and how these might be productive in this research project, in particular, how they might enable an articulation of the processes and practices, and subject formation, of counsellors-in-training.

#### **Analytic device**

In order to think, diffractively, with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) I am drawing on the practice of the analytic device as an inventive method "through which things are made, and a resource for their analysis and un/re-making" (Suchman, 2012, p. 49). Lury and Wakeford (2012) trace the

---

<sup>21</sup> Although I have chosen to place this chapter in the onto-epistemological section in the linear layout of the thesis, it was only after attempts at data analysis (documented in the following chapter (six)), and the particular challenges and knowing that produced, that I re-turned to this particular theory in order to explore more useful tools to think with. This chapter is the outcome of that reading and thinking, and what I took with me back into a diffractive analysis, resulting in the data analysis chapters subsequent to chapter six.

history of the notion of device in social and cultural analyses back to “Foucault’s notion of *dispositif* or apparatus” (p. 8), as a system of relations with a strategic, or organising, function. They go on to note how this feeds into recent understandings of the performativity of methods in the enactment of the social, for example, in Barad’s (2007) notion of the apparatus, and Haraway’s (1997) notion of materialised refiguration. While such devices offer a means to draw attention to the “semiotic-material relational-doing-thingness of methods” (p. 10), it is important to recognise the uncertain “grasp” of such a device, which does not aim to “fix” such relations in place, but rather opens up to ambivalence, ambiguity, and uncertainty as productive states for exploration. Such inventive devices or methods are thus oriented toward articulating processes, performing situated, and dynamic, relations, and to always making a difference - designed “not to capture what is so much as to inspire what might be” (Boehner et al., 2012, p. 185). I aim to use them here, as Boehner et al, articulate, to “open up possibilities, rather than converging toward singular truths” (p. 185). Devices themselves are not fixed processes, able to be inserted into data in replicable ways. They too, are material-discursive practices, which are intra-actively transformed with each use and articulation of the happening of the social world. The following outlines the analytic devices I draw on in articulating the happening of tears for counsellors in training.

### *Poem*

I have used the poem up to this point as a ‘method of inquiry’ (Richardson, 1994), to think with, throughout this project. In a reconfiguring, I now think of the poem as an analytic device, as a structure which ‘cuts things together-apart’ to produce a diffractive pattern. Just as diffraction is a “mapping of interference” (Haraway, 2004, p. 70) so too, the poem, offers a structure to map a myriad of interferences, of human and non-human encounters and non-linear figurations of time and space. Poems, like Osgood and Giugni’s (2015a, 2015b, Osgood et al., 2016) Odes and PhArts, are offered as “valid knowledges generated as non-representational figurations that capture the intensities, fragments, impressions, politics and affects” (2015a, p. 355) of entangled, intra-active,

multi-sensibilities. While Osgood and Giugni similarly present Odes as a “materialization of posthumanist logic to reconfigure and offer diffractive readings” (p. 355) they do so *not* with the intention of decoding them. In contrast, while my intention is also to offer poems as valid knowledges, it is to use them additionally as an analytic tool, with which to map and think, in relation to my encounters with the data and theory, and in asking ‘how and what comes to matter for counsellors-in. training?’

I draw here, too, on Barad’s, in elaborating on Bohr, agential realist understanding of an apparatus, in thinking about what it is, my use of the poem might do. Apparatuses, as with the poem, are not merely a collection or assemblage of human and non-human devices and forces. Rather, says Barad, they “are specific material reconfigurings of the world that do not merely emerge in time but iteratively reconfigure spacetime as part the ongoing dynamism of becoming” (2007, p. 142). As a material arrangement, an apparatus, and a poem, is productive of giving meaning to certain concepts (hence the poem as apparatus can also be called a material-discursive practice). Concepts, then, can be seen as being materially embodied within the confines of the poem (which then become embodied in a subsequent entanglement with the reader/time/space mattering of the read poem).

Thinking back to the ontology of agential realism makes this clearer. The poem enacts the phenomena, through cutting together mutually intra-acting components, potentially enacted as lines in the poem. These components are not individually pre-existent, but rather only become determinate, intelligible or able to be differentially articulated through their causal intra-activity in the production of the phenomena.

Apparatuses, and poems, also produce differences which matter. The poem, as an analytic and performative device is a boundary-making practice, formative of matter and meaning, that matters. In this way, the poem is not a static and fixed representation of things in the world, but an ongoing reconfiguring of the world. The poem, like an apparatus, enacts what matters, as well as what is

excluded from mattering, that is, through its structure, certain things are cut-together, apart, from others. I think these notions of ‘mattering’ and ‘reconfiguring’ align well with certain feminist and activist poets, whose poetic work is political, and whose work has worked to make the invisible visible, and change the landscape of possibilities for those marginalised and oppressed within the capitalist patriarchal systems. Writing in the *New Yorker* on the work of Adrienne Rich, for example, Claudia Rankine (2016) comments, “(w)ith Rich came the formulation of an alternate poetic tradition that distrusted and questioned paternalistic, heteronormative, and hierarchical notions of what it meant to have a voice, especially for female writers”. Poetry, in this sense, becomes not just literary or romantic or clever, but aims for a far wider, and more life determining, reach. This is particularly evident, too, in the infamous words of Audre Lorde:

For women, then, poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams towards survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is the way we give name to the nameless so it can be thought. The farthest horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives” (Lorde, 1984, p. 37).

Poetry, in these forms, is most definitely a material-discursive practice, reconfiguring the world in all senses for the writers, for the world of poetry and for all of those who have had the privilege and pleasure of reading such work. New boundaries are enacted through the force of poetry, “not merely in the sense of bringing new things into the world but in the sense of bringing forth new worlds” (Barad, 2007, p. 170). This is true also in the sense that a poem intra-acts with the reader to produce an affective force. Poet, David Whyte, in speaking about poetry, suggests that “poetry...is not *about* a subject, not *about* a quality, or an experience, it is the experience itself” (Whyte, 2012). Such personal and evocative texts have come to be seen as potentially powerful, political, and meaningful in qualitative research, with the capacity to “move writers and readers, subjects and objects, tellers and listeners into this space of dialogue, debate and change” (Holman-

Jones, 2005, p. 764). In staying with a relational ontology, “affect refers to the force of intensive relationality - intensities that are felt but are not personal; visceral but not confined to an individuated body” (Whatmore, 2006, p. 604). In this sense, the force of poetry to move, to affect, is a dynamic relational one, an intra-action between, at least, words and bodies. Such a theorising reflects the new materialist, post-qualitative “shift of concern from what things mean to what they do”, “a shift from an onus on *meaning* to an onus on *affect*” (Whatmore, 2006, p. 604). Thus, the poem as an analytic device is intended to doubly work to reconfigure what things do rather than express what things mean, as well as to advance performative understandings of knowledge-making practices for counsellors in training which may go on to affect others.

### *Pattern*

I initially draw on Barad’s concept of the diffractive pattern as an analytic device to think with, as outlined in the previous chapter. This thinking invites a quantum understanding of the nature of reality and offers a tool for analysis which invokes an attention to the specificity and a detailed mapping of the “entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 73). In the mapping of a diffractive pattern, we attend to how, within the phenomena of interest, its components are cut together-apart to form a diffractive pattern, a local causal structure. Such components are not pre-existing, bounded entities coming together to form the pattern, rather “the cut makes a connection” (Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 794) in an ongoing, indeterminable and open field. Such cuts (together-apart) are “never once and for all, but continual and continuing” (p. 794).

I want to consider what else might be gained by building on this relational, dynamic and material-semiotic concept of pattern as an analytic device for thinking with the data, by drawing on the writing of others who are similarly using such notions of pattern to think with (Hughes & Lury, 2013; Jeffries, 2012; Stenner, 2012). Hughes and Lury suggest that we regularly seek patterns in

data as part of analytic practices. They outline an approach, however, which seeks to identify “processes of *patterning*” (p. 786), reflecting complex, quantum and ecological thinking, out of which emerges situated knowledge. They return to Haraway’s (1988) work in highlighting the concept of situatedness, drawing on, and bringing to the fore again, her ideas on the generative significance of dynamic relations of multiplicity, of the making of connections as well as divisions in the patterns of movement we are studying. They draw on Haraway and Barad’s ideas of diffraction in exploring the analytic potential of pattern for generating alternative ways of thinking, particularly in relation to difference. I find this especially useful and wish to focus on the articulation of this in relation to using the concept and device of a (diffraction) pattern to map not “where differences appear, but rather...where the effects of difference appear” (Haraway, 1992, p. 300), and to focus not on “differences in any absolute sense, but... (on) the entangled nature of differences that matter’ (Barad, 2007, p. 36).

If I am using the concept of pattern, in particular a diffractive pattern, to think with, or as an analytic device, then what exactly am I mapping, when it comes to differences that matter? Barad says, that according to “classical Newtonian physics, everything is one or the other: particle or wave, this or that, here or there” (2014, p. 174). Quantum physics, and diffraction, trouble this onto-epistemology and queer this binary type, or duality, of difference. Barad refers to differences such as subject and object, wave and particle, position and momentum, binaries which, in classical physics were viewed as absolute separations, with matter able to assume the identity of only one or the other in time and space. Barad suggests however, that all differences are contingent, not fixed or given, and are indeterminate prior to specific intra-actions that enact cuts. She says, “that which is determinate (e.g. intelligible) is materially haunted by – infused with – that which is constitutively excluded (remains indeterminate, e.g., unintelligible)” (2014, p. 178). Binary differences, in this way, exist as a relation of difference within. Inside/outside, subject/object, self/other, light/dark, for example, are not fixed identities or positions which exclude the presence

of the other, it is simply that when one is made to matter, when it appears, it is as an entangled effect, not a fixed essence or identity. Barad troubles the very ontology of identity and the boundaries of the categorisations used to mark our identities. Thus, mapping in a diffractive sense is never about identifying the essence of fixed identities, rather it is always about mapping the contingent, entangled nature of the particular differences and how they come to matter, in the ongoing performance of identity. It is my hope that this contingent, entangled nature of identities will become evident in the following chapters, particularly in relation to my mapping of the identity of ‘tears’, as constituting ongoing counsellor-in-training identities.

Re-turning then to Hughes and Lury, and others, additional insights can be gained from drawing on pattern in this way as an analytic device to think with. Hughes and Lury pursue the idea of an ecological (rather than social) epistemology underpinned by ideas aligned with Barad’s, in that any entity is seen to exist “multiply in ways that may not be initially apparent, for entities” entangled and dependent existences mean that none is fully defined by its entanglement in any one particular assemblage” (Bell, 2012, p. 113 in Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 791). Such an epistemology is always process oriented, constructive (rather than deconstructive or destructive), and non-essentialist. Attention to pattern is suggested as a way of locating situatedness within the ever-moving processes of becoming. They suggest pattern in this sense can be located with the moments of difference between gathering/grasping together and dispersal/letting go, similar I think to Barad’s notion of the agential cut - a simultaneous dis/connection in which a pattern is made. Pattern, they say, also draws attention to both “repetition and difference, to entanglement and to partial relations between figure and ground, entity and environment” (p. 792).

Stenner (2012) similarly writes of the device of pattern and its use to social scientists in that it offers an improved way of conceiving of “an immanent universe in process of becoming” (p. 145). Pattern, as device, presupposes the concept of distinguishable “*modes of togetherness*”, or a “multiplicity of elements gathered into a unity” (p. 136), which are not simply reducible to



individual elements. Contrast, Stenner suggests, is a key concept in pattern, which requires a recognition of processes not just of gathering, but of the difference created between the gathering together and the dispersal. He uses the example of starlings swooping in unison and dispersing into tiny elements, and stresses the cumulative iteration required for such patterning to occur, which is also always changing. Bringing it back to social science, Stenner asserts that subjectivity is characterized by '*patterning*' (p. 143), which he seems to suggest, after Bergson, is a process of selectivity, of identifying and enhancing "contrast effects, 'cutting out' or 'parsing' simplified patterns of image from the undivided flux that Bergson called the 'fluid continuity of the real'" (p. 143).

The affordances of pattern as a concept, what this can entail and how it can become an inventive device in thinking through the happening of the social have become clearer to me through expanding here on Barad's diffractive pattern. In particular, through ideas of situatedness and patterning "not as a position or identity, but as emergent in the diverse processes of differentiation" (Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 795), which involve processes of gathering and dispersal, contrast, repetition and difference, and mutually transformative relations. But pattern is also more than the sum of its processes. Jeffries (2012) describes pattern as physical evidence of abstract knowledge, or material evidence of the oscillations of the world. Through the materiality afforded by pattern: conceptual, emotional, textured, we are given space to examine the way these surfaces, or figures, of patterning make the invisible, visible. As Barad says, this is not easy work and requires a fine attention to detail, to the coalescing and converging, and to the dispersing and letting go, of connecting threads and forces intra-actively reconfiguring what comes to matter.

I turn now finally to (re)(con)figuration, as concepts to further think with in increasingly nuanced ways. I draw here on Lucy Suchman (2012) and her use of configuration as a device and also Donna Haraway (1997) and her use of the figure. I don't see this process as a deepening of thinking around pattern as device, rather it is as a diffractive or intra-active practice, of reading insights gained from

thinking with the details of each device through one another, where each disturbs, interferes with, and ultimately affirms and strengthens dynamic links between them to produce a patterning device to think the happening of subjectivity for the counsellor in training with.

### *(Re)(Con)figuration*

I am increasingly interested in how things in the social world are configured in particular ways and in how they can be reconfigured, in how certain patterns are made, in contrast to a multiplicity which could be, might still be or could have been. Barad offers a way of examining both the material and the discursive in exploring what comes to matter, and how, and reminds us that we are always part of the world in its ongoing reconfiguring, (which I will come to here as well). Suchman suggests configuration as a methodological tool has two broad uses. First, similarly to how I have outlined patterning above, it “alerts us to attend to the histories and encounters through which things are figured into meaningful existence, fixing them through reiteration but also always engaged” (2012, p. 50) in a process of coming to be, and is equally explanatory for objects and subjects. In drawing on Barad, she suggests configuration places emphasis on both the discursive and the material and how they come together. In this way, configuration as a device works in reverse to enact a way of analysing or delineating both composition and bounds (cuts) of, what she calls an object, and what I refer to above as a pattern. This requires attention not only to the components (present and absent) comprising the object, but to how these come to be figured together, which necessarily requires attention to both power and affect in the figuring or patterning of social processes and their effects.

The second part of the work configuration can do, according to Suchman, and which builds on how I have discussed pattern so far, is to draw analytic attention not just to the composition or practices enacting the object (pattern / figure), but to the significance of that object, the work that it can, and does do and the cultural imaginaries it materialises. Figuration considered in this way, has a double force, both constituting certain effects (objects, patterns, figures) through material-semiotic

practices which become naturalised over time, and generative cultural circulation of those resulting figures and associated significances, which also act to render their constitutive practices invisible. Figuration acts to hold the pattern, and its constitutive material-semiotic practices together in order that it, the figure, moves forth in various ways. Configuration as an analytic device comes to form part of a toolkit for thinking about the constitutive and generative, reiterative and (potentially) transformative material-semiotic conjoining. Ultimately this enables an opening up of the (congealed and invisible) relations held in place and the labours that sustain them, for them to be reenacted differently, or reconfigured, and for this multiplicity to also be made intelligible. Through this articulation, a reanimating and a re-imagining of these figures that populate socio-material imaginaries and practices can occur (Suchman, 2012).

Ultimately, at this point, I am particularly interested in these processes in relation to reimagining the figure of the counsellor in training as she is currently articulated, typically as a novice, as an autonomous, humanist subject on a linear journey towards expertise. I am interested in opening up to and examining the diffractive patterns, material-semiotic practices and forces, labour and relations which are in fact constituting this figure and in doing so, reconfiguring her. As Barad says of diffraction's project, our aim is "engage in the ongoing work of the re-opening, unsettling and re-configuring *"of what might yet be, of what was, and what comes to be"* (2010, p. 264).

Before I end this section in a re-turn to the place of my agency in relation to these analytic devices, I want to re-turn to Haraway and her project of figuration, especially as her work is a constitutive thread of much of the current work, such as Suchman's and Barad's, around (re)(con)figuring. Haraway has stated she is "consumed by the project of materialized refiguration" (Haraway, 2004, p. 223), primarily in her field of technoscience, but more broadly in working to reconfigure humanity's modernist, generic, universal figure which has the "face of man", and is endowed with traits of "coherence and masterful subjectivity,...rationality and clarity", as well as being the

“bearers of rights, the holders of property...with access to language and the power to represent...” (Haraway, 2004, p. 42). Through the politics of her work, she has claimed the use of the figure to name, story and enact new figures, of speech and of possibility for a non-generic humanity. Her figures (e.g. cyborg, ‘modest\_witness’, oncomouse, companion species) - their forms, contexts and articulations - can be read to hold subjectivities such as those articulated above, subjects which are “shifting and multiple organised across variable axes of difference” always in the making (p. 54), constituted through historical material-semiotic practices, and never settled. A figure, she says, “collects up the people; a figure embodies shared meanings in stories that inhabit their audiences” (Haraway, 2004, p. 223). I use this idea here to think about the figure of the counsellor-in-training, and the shared meanings which have been gathered up, to this point, and continue to inhabit those who are training. I am in search of another figure, along the lines of Haraway and Barad’s figurations which tell different stories of the subject, that are partial, situated, relational and always in the making.

In building on pattern and configuration as devices to think and work with, I finally draw also on Haraway’s string figure and process of string figuring, to “propose and enact patterns for participants to inhabit” (Haraway, 2016, p. 10). String figures are traced back to the string figure games and their diverse cultural histories of independent inventions of threads tied together and made by hands and brains, in the “relays of patterning” (p. 13). She likens this process of string figuring then to patterning, where what comes to matter is constituted in intra- and inter-action, where string figures are thinking and making practices, pedagogical practices and world-making performances. String figures tell, pattern and enact sympoietic (“complex, dynamic, responsive, situated, historical” (p. 58)) and semiotic material stories through their threads, knottings, connections and patterns, and become a figure for ongoingness, continually made, un-made and re-made, always in a process of becoming-with.

In relation to thinking with my data in (re)(con)figuring the processes and practices of the counsellor-in-training, I am drawing then, primarily on the analytic devices of (diffractive) patterning, (re)(con)figuring, and string figuring, as outlined above. However, I am also reminded of the importance of re-conceptualising the ‘I’ who is drawing on these in a data analysis process, who is a diffractive rather than reflexive I, who is also always in the making and continually becoming-with in the entangled process of data-analysis (see my writing on researcher subjectivity in the previous chapter). Finally, I am re-turned to the question of ethics and responsibility which underpin both Haraway and Barad’s projects. (Re)(con)figuring, making cuts, patterning and string figuring are never innocent or neutral projects. I take on the advice offered by Vicki Bell to “cut well”, to guide me in embarking on this endeavour:

Given the potentially infinite number of relevant elements in an intra-acting materially-enacted world, the inexhaustible plethora of “entangled genealogies” (Barad, 2007), the event of a new conception, fact or correlation has to be one that, by definition, makes a demonstrable difference. The limit is precisely indifference. In other words, the advice to one who wishes to tell an entangled genealogy is not so much to represent accurately as it is to ‘cut well’, which is to say provocatively or perhaps ‘generatively’, inviting the concern of others” (2012, p. 117).

# **PART THREE**

## **DATA ANALYSIS – THINKING WITH THEORY**

## CHAPTER SIX

### Toward a decentring of the subject in data analysis

#### **Introduction**

This chapter documents empirical beginnings of data analysis and subsequent thinking with theory in this project. It outlines an initial attempt at data analysis which caused me to pause and question what I was actually doing in beginning this empirical process. Having spent significant amounts of time both generating data and reading-writing post-humanist theory up to this point in this project, I was unprepared for what would happen when I brought these two things (and my researcher subjectivity) together into the process of data analysis. This diffractive process generated significant knowing-in-being/doing for me which I wanted to capture and expand upon in order to take that knowledge back into ongoing data analysis, in what can be described as an iterative, intra-active, reconfiguring process of data analysis.

The following then is a discussion of significant knowing produced in this reconfiguring process. I begin, at what I thought was the beginning, with data from my first interview. I proceed to document the multiple directions ‘thought’ was propelled in as a result of diffracting data with theory with researcher subjectivity (and likely multiple other forces, too). With each consideration produced, I then attempt to plug that back into thought about further analysis, in order to continue the iterative process of data analysis and reconfiguring in the production of new knowledge. Specifically, along with documenting the intra-active processes enacted, this chapter proceeds to outline the following main considerations:

(1) the limits of a linear text for enacting thought’s multiplicity, hence the introduction of ‘split texts’ as a diffractive experiment;

(2) the challenge of enacting respect and care for the words/voices/bodies/traces of my participants while recognising there is no ‘accurate representing’ – coming to an ethical response;

(3) recognition of a submission to positioning researcher and participant as intentional meaning-making—subjects – moving instead toward mutually constitutive processes of matter making itself intelligible;

(4) the strength of my own post-structural inclinations to think the subject in relation to discourse, resistance and agency in the world – a diffractive experiment ensues where the past touches the present and data meets theory in order to enliven anew post-structural and posthuman thinking with subjectivity;

(5) Focusing anew on what comes to matter for counsellors-in-training – de-centring the human subject and inviting ‘wonder’ into entangled intra-actions; and

(6) the limits of the interview – re-turning to the ‘good and appropriate’ data of collective biography groups in order to ‘do more with less data’.

### **Entangled beginnings**

In coming specifically to the process of data analysis, I began by listening to, and reading through my first individual interview after months of reading-writing post-humanist theory, looking particularly to engage in a diffractive analysis, different to any kinds of analysis I had previously encountered. This interview was one of the eight where I inquired into the participant’s tracing of her psycho-social history of becoming a counsellor, into thinking back on the places and spaces and affects of first encountering the im/possibilities of becoming a counsellor, and of co-constructing, in conversation with me, her ideas and experiences of being and becoming a counsellor, having experienced her first year in the counselling programme.

As can be seen from the questions devised for this semi-structured interview (appendix 2), my thinking at the time was primarily influenced by social constructionist and post-structural ideas. That is, I was interested to co-construct narratives which articulated the participants’ ideas about their own social processes/practices of becoming a counsellor, which included dominant discourses



around what it is to be a counsellor, and explore how they negotiated and navigated through those discourses, and were both positioned and able to position themselves in relation to them (Davies, 1991; Davies and Harre, 1990). In effect, I was interested in processes of subjectification from a discursive underpinning, particularly as a contrast to the humanist thinking dominant in theorising the lived experiences of counsellors in training. However, in re-turning to the first of these interviews, with a, seemingly, changed onto-epistemological understanding of subjectivity as dynamic, intra-active, material-discursive practices, I was interested, and challenged, to now think differently, diffractively, with this data.

In this way, prior to installing my bodymind in/with/through the interview data, I began to think about exactly what I might be doing differently in this intended “data analysis *after* coding” (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014, emphasis in original), that has become analysis as instead “thinking with theory” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). I have read, written and lived diffraction and post-humanist performative theory for months, maybe even years now, and it has worked its way into my bodymind in particular ways, yet, and, I found myself apprehensive about my capacities to theorise or “think with theory” with my data. Faced with what felt equally daunting and exciting I found myself thrust back into humanist expectations of my ‘self’ as the rational knower, tasked with uncovering and representing the truth that exists in the data, or at least an intelligent interpretation of it. Faced with this recognition I was reminded of earlier reading-writing with St. Pierre (2014) on the disconnect evident in much research in education where authors claim a ‘post’ ontology yet go on to enact a humanist qualitative methodology. Rather than reacting with a Cartesian sense of failure, I became curious about my (material-discursive) difficulty in enacting this shift in onto-epistemology and open to where this curiosity might lead me. I was buoyed, too, to recognise my own ontological becoming enacted in my very curiosity and openness to the material-discursive entanglements that are producing my researcher subjectivity, in this iterative and dynamic process of knowledge production.

I found myself re-turned toward my own earlier writing, enacting Katie King’s (n.d.) idea of pastpresents, “how the past and the present continually converge, collapse and co-invent each other”, as I sensed my enacting the tensions of working both within and against the normalizing and dominant discourse of humanism, of the knowing human subject producing knowledge of the world. This re-turn, or collapse of the pastpresent, reminded me, as I have written earlier, that this is not a simple undoing. It is risky and

only ever experimental, with no template or guide to work from in thinking here, with a post-humanist ontology, which by its very nature means nothing ever stays the same. Having been opened up, for a brief moment, from the normalising discourse of humanism and its dominant research practices which incite me to start at the beginning, as if there were origins rather than just the “always already becoming in entanglement” (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013, p. 630), I became curious to follow these material-discursive openings produced through and with my becoming-researcher subjectivity, with the ideas of pastpresents and intra-activity, back into the data.

However, *at the same time*, and before re-turning to the researcher-data-research entanglement, I experienced a frustration at the limits of this linear mode of telling, here, as I felt myself desiring to move in multiple directions at once with the data, sensing the multiplicity of thought in its intra-active production, and yet being constrained to write and act as if one thought, and act, is linearly produced, one after another, rather than multiple, all at once.

Hence, my diffractive experiment in this chapter with text, split between text as usual, and text boxes, fonts, and text alignments in this analysis, in order to perform a ‘material-discursive mapping’ of the data-researcher-research entanglement, which can perhaps go some way to articulating the intra-active, and non-linear, inseparability of this lively research process. I attempt to map this through (1) the ‘main’ text which outlines the data analysis process and analysis which result from thinking the data with theory;

(2) text boxes with text which offer occasional mappings of my entangled researcher subjectivity as it is both produced in, and productive of, this entanglement; and

(3) text boxes with text of ‘poems’ produced from the data.

Lenz Taguchi talks about this in relation to her own collaborative analyses of data as a multiplicity of analyses that “seemed to grow wildly like weeds or grass” where “all kinds of matter, including human discourse...are involved in processes of making themselves intelligible to each other in events of knowledge-production (Barad, 2007, p. 185)” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013b, p. 712). To me this

signifies both the challenge, and the importance, of attempting to articulate here the dynamic entanglement of ‘all kinds of matter’ that is the dynamic practice of knowledge production. For without this, we are likely returned to that dominating, and debilitating, sense of the inherent separability of knower and known, and the humanist logic of the rational, autonomous individual acting upon the world, rather than intra-acting as a part of it in its ongoing iterative reconfiguring. Hence, it is my hope that the insertion of ‘text boxes’ does some of this work, of enacting a diffractive pattern, where each interfere with, overlap, run through and leap about each other, where differences emerge within and where, ultimately, knowing materialises differently in between the material-discursive practice of split texts (Mol, 2002). Also, in line with Mol (2002) who uses the split text in her writing, I would add that my text is not glued to the page where it happens to be printed and the parallel texts may be read out of time and space with each other, thus producing iterative reconfigurings of the diffractive patterns which may emerge for the reader(s).

I am also reminded at this point of Barad’s agential cuts, where the cuts that are made, or enacted, necessitate also, exclusions. The linearity of many parts of the text, that is, the performative enactment of ‘thought’ as that intra-active process of knowledge production, means that even though one idea is described, or performed, at a time, it is always ‘cut-apart’ from multiple others in this ongoing and entangled process. In this way too, there is no single root of origin or essence to be found and described, only a starting in the middle “to look for what emerges in the connections among these different fields and flows” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013b, p. 714), or for what is made intelligible. Thus, my becoming researcher subjectivity, which I also attempt to map here as part of this phenomena of knowledge production, is not the essence of ‘me’ or ‘my’ experience/thought/knowing, but a decentred subjectivity, where thought comes into being through a “deep loading interconnectedness and companionship” with, at least, but not only, the data, multiple other writers and researchers and texts, and with the “material discursive places and spaces where this research was enacted” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013b, p. 715). Whilst the multiplicity of these

entanglements is not easy to map within the current limits of text based products, I nevertheless think it is essential to attempt, in order that more and more iterations will build on, or diffract through, each other, so that the material-discursive practices of subjectification and knowing can become intelligible in ways that reconfigure what it is to be/come and know. Thus, reading from such a perspective invites, too, not simply a paying attention to the multiplicity of what is present, enacted on the page, but also a recognition of what might have been excluded, but not non-existent, a looking for the ghostly traces or absences which are also always a part of what comes to matter, on the page.

### **Care, respect and an ethical response**

This re-turning to the 'data', seeing the faces and hearing the voices of my participants, and thinking with theory has concurrently produced in me a multiplicity of affect/thought in relation to my participants. I struggle with the idea of continuing to refer to their generosity in participating as 'data' which seems to remove all sense of the very lively lived-felt-transformative experience we all participated in. To somehow reduce this to words on a page feels like, a disservice, at least. Not only did I interview and facilitate collective biography groups with each of them, but I worked with them as students, over a period of at least two years, and in the period where I was just beginning as a lecturer and they were so very generous to me, in that student-lecturer relationship also. The question arises, how do I enact respect and care in what feels like an appropriation of particularly vulnerable aspects of their lives, that they have entrusted me with, and how do I do that in relation with a post-humanist onto-epistemology, which has come to be important to my theoretical analysis, subsequent to my time with these participants/students? At this point in time, having excluded the possibility of inviting them to take part in analysis with me perhaps through further collective biography groups, and having maintained email contact with them inviting them to remain engaged in any way they wish, I return to thinking with theory. I am prompted to ask 'how am I conceptualising the data - the voices and faces and bodies of those about whom I am writing?' It seems important to gain some sense of this, lest I slip into notions of representationalism, believing that what I come to tell here needs to be, (as if that were even possible let alone desirable), an accurate representation of what took place in the time and space of the interviews and collective biography groups. This seduction of representationalism leads me to another question, 'does respecting and caring for my participants equate to ensuring I accurately represent their voices/words/experiences?' In recognising the emergence of this question, I am reminded yet again of the challenges and difficult work which is required to disrupt such habitual and sedimented ways of thinking in qualitative inquiry "in order for new and

different researcher practices and subjectivities to emerge” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013b, p. 715). Re-turning (to) these emerging questions, I ask instead, how can I respect and care for the words/voices/bodies/traces of those participants from that time and space while recognising there is no ‘accurate representing’ only an iterative, dynamic and intra-active reconfiguring?

I am reminded first of all, that this is an ethical reconfiguring, too, an intertwining of ethics, knowing and being, in that each intra-action matters. Care and respect then come to be about, not accuracy, but responsibility. As Barad reminds us, “intra-acting responsibly as part of the world means taking account of the entangled phenomena that are intrinsic to the world’s vitality and being responsive to the possibilities that might help us to flourish” (2007, p. 396). In such entangled materialisations, of new configurations, new subjectivities, she says, “even the smallest cuts matter” (p. 384). How can I enact responsibility then, with my data, with the moments, told and lived, with my participants and the traces of their entangled selves they have left in trust with me?

I am impelled to think first of what I will not do. I won’t privilege my knowing over theirs, turning them into an object to be gazed upon from afar. In fact, I will discard the binary of the pre-existing subject and object from this outset. Instead, I will be open to our ongoing intra-activity, to the material traces of them, of me, of us, of our material-discursive encounters from those times, places, and spaces diffractively reconfiguring themselves as I encounter those traces in the present, knowing that each encounter, by the time it is present, marks a moment which is already past.

I won’t look to reduce, code and categorize experience as constituted through language. I will look instead to tell of entangled moments of difference differing, to move beyond the material-discursive practice of binaries which seek to categorize, limit, reduce and fix, and ultimately both privilege and oppress. I will not look to ask ‘what does the data mean?’, assuming I can interpret the meaning hidden in words, that I can tell it like it was, is and can be, as if the data represent “humanist individuals with unique “voices” waiting to be set free by emancipatory researchers” (St. Pierre,

2014, p. 10). I will resist the humanist pull of speaking of a rational, self-contained, autonomous subject where agency and knowing emanate from within a stable and fixed subject (Mazzei, 2013; 2016). Rather, I seek to open up (to) the entangled practices of how things came to be, and might yet be different, to see voice as an entangled, and ongoing material-discursive practice. I will look to ask instead ‘what can the data do?’ in order that entangled material-discursive practices of analysis may be generative and seek to make anew the possibilities for flourishing. In these ways, to begin with at least, I seek an ethical, respectful and responsible re-turn, in this time and space, with the already entangled material traces of voices and bodies of my data.

### **Beyond human-centred linear narratives**

For some (likely linear) reason, I chose to start at the beginning with my data analysis and re-turn to the initial interviews I conducted with the participants prior to collective biography groups. Given the ontological shift which has occurred for me, it is perhaps no surprise that I faced challenges in returning to now think this data with an agential realist framework. In thinking with Lenz Taguchi I see my inclination toward a centring of myself as researcher telling the human-centred linear narrative of these participants and their individual journeys toward becoming a counsellor. Engaging with the first interview, I resist such a humanist telling and start to recognise some of the tensions created for my participant through her narrative of the discourses around what it is to be a counsellor in contrast to how she narrates her own subjectivity. I can immediately imagine writing resistance and alternative stories to disrupt and counter the normative discourse of what it is to be a counsellor. And I see that this thinking is clearly how I framed my questions and what guided me in asking the questions I did.

*i didn't see myself as a counsellor because  
i didn't think I fitted the stereotypical view  
of what you think a counsellor looks like.  
In my mind i wanted to be a psychologist  
i started doing some planning to do that  
sort of had a few meetings  
i just thought this all seems very clinical and  
i don't think it's me.*

i don't know whether part of that was sort of  
the perceived stigma out there  
you know, that psychologists are more qualified  
and get paid a lot more.

*i didn't see myself as a counsellor because  
i didn't think I fitted the stereotypical view  
of what you think a counsellor looks like.*

They're all quite old, quite old fashioned, quite serious  
just never really think, counsellors were positive and can be fun  
i always thought i didn't want to spend my life  
listening to negative stories all the time  
i saw it as a hard job  
i thought you had to be a certain personality,  
serious, older, mature  
sit there with your pad and pencil  
and quite disconnected  
just this temporary person who  
was quite disconnected from you really.

i guess it must be from my experiences  
of my counsellor at school  
which were terrible, he was terrible.  
he was definitely the type of counsellor  
I would not want to be,  
tell me what to do, didn't listen,  
disagreed with everything i said,  
told the principal everything i said,  
and clearly he didn't believe me.  
But i went and saw a counsellor again  
so i guess there must have been something  
that was telling me  
that not all counselling experiences

were going to be like that.

*i didn't see myself as a counsellor because  
i didn't think I fitted the stereotypical view  
of what you think a counsellor looks like.*

i thought my personality wouldn't fit  
with being a counsellor  
because i am quite, i guess, enthusiastic and positive  
i kind of thought maybe that wouldn't work  
it would be too in your face and  
people wouldn't like that but  
it doesn't seem to be that way, you know.

*i didn't see myself as a counsellor because  
i didn't think I fitted the stereotypical view  
of what you think a counsellor looks like.*

A counsellor's meant to be like,  
really likes other people and  
likes being around other people.  
i like being around other people  
but at the same time  
i need my own time and that's really important to me.  
So that i grappled with for a while.  
i was like, well how can i be a counsellor who's there,  
who spends a lot of time with other people  
and you're there for other people  
but yet be this personality type that doesn't want to?

*i didn't see myself as a counsellor because  
i didn't think I fitted the stereotypical view  
of what you think a counsellor looks like.*

During that training process of being in a class  
it was really great to see such a range of people  
and actually thinking, you know,



there's no set way that i have to be  
that says i can be a counsellor.  
Look at the huge variety of people in the room  
young, old, different cultures, genders.  
That helped, because i thought, well,  
there isn't that set way  
that you have to be.

**(Maia)**

Now, I wonder, how can I think differently with this data? Beyond linear, autonomous tellings, and even beyond vulnerability to the discursive. Toward the material-discursive. Beyond agency in resistance to dominant subject positions. Toward agency as an entangled, emergent, material-discursive be(com)ing. Where do I start? How do I become ‘thought’? Lenz Taguchi (2013b) offers inspiration for this process in investigating how our practices of thinking produce different researcher subjectivities and ultimately different knowledge. Through illustrations of collaborative practices of data analysis drawing on a “life-span narration” interview with a young Iranian woman (p. 710), Lenz Taguchi notes how easy it was in the initial phases of data analysis to want to “describe how Fataneh, as a body-subject, makes meaning of her lifeworld in the various places described in the interview” (p. 711). Lenz Taguchi speaks of Fatenah’s understanding of herself in a linear fashion, “first as a refugee and then as an immigrant girl, a relatively assimilated Swedish teenager, before “becoming Persian” again” (p. 713). In my initial readings of my interview data I saw how easily I understood Maia in a similar linear fashion, first as a young person experiencing counselling herself, then as a teacher coming to see herself as interested in and enjoying “helping” young people, before embarking on becoming a counsellor herself. I could re-present the narratives of how Maia, as body-subject, had made meaning of her life experiences which led her to the present place she now finds herself to be – training to become a counsellor.

Similarly to Lenz Taguchi, who notes that such analysis also leads to exploration of “a lifeworld of resistance practices” such as Fataneh as “one who resists oppressive teachers, bullying Swedish kids, and demanding parents” (p. 711), I noted my inclination to look for discursive tensions Maia has been subjected to and how she has negotiated (resisted) these in order to constitute her own counsellor subjectivity. I find myself effortlessly drawn to this kind of post-structural theorising. I think I can easily see how the binaries, categories and normativities of what and how it is to be, the right and proper kind of woman, or counsellor, to fit the taxon, are both reproductive of these very taxonomies and productive of disaffection for those who do not fit. Then, there are individual stories of resistance that I can tell, of finding a way to counter the dominant ideas of counsellor as, for example, ‘serious, older, mature’ with the possibility of an effective counsellor actually being ‘young, energetic, enthusiastic, and positive’.

Going through this process and thinking with Lenz Taguchi (2013b) and others has led me to a different (entangled) knowing than that I may have had if I had simply begun to attempt to immediately think my data more intentionally, perhaps, with new materialism and Barad’s agential realism. Thinking this initial interview data in this way has, in particular, highlighted three things for me. First, continuing to ‘do’ data analysis in this way, even perhaps adding in the ‘material’ to also consider the ‘meaning of matter’ continues to position me, the researcher, as a separate, conscious, intentional meaning-making researcher-subject pre-existing any relations with the world (data). As Lenz Taguchi states, the “fundamental condition for this thinking still takes the human subject as a starting point” and “renders matter itself passive in the relation and the human subject as the only agent of knowledge-production, intention, and transformation” (2013b, p. 711). Thus, the challenge remains, in thinking with new materialisms and an agential realist framework, to do data analysis in a way which shifts from human meaning-making to instead enacting the mutually constitutive process of researcher and data and theory “making themselves intelligible to each

other” in their ongoing intra-active relations (Barad, 2007, p. 185). I attend to this challenge in my next iteration of data analysis, in the following chapters.

### **Post-structural inclinations and re-thinking difference**

Second, and related to the point above, is my recognition not only of my inclination to position myself as an intentional meaning making researcher-subject, but also to position my participants in the same way. In desiring to hold onto the discursive in data analysis I almost effortlessly positioned Maia as a pre-existent subject vulnerable to, and left to negotiate, the imposition of norms. Whilst this recognition and deconstruction of power and discourse has been essential to the project of feminism, it is clearly not my intention in this research to produce knowledge which further highlights the ways in which counselling students are subject to and negotiate discourse in the process of becoming counsellors. Engaging with this interview data at this point highlighted for me the very different project I have chosen to undertake in order to produce a different kind of knowledge. Central to this recognition at this point is an understanding of difference. Staying with the post-structural philosophy of difference and its focus on norms and normativity as dominant systems of meaning we, as humans, are subject to, means that difference, and identity, is always conceptualised in relation to such systems. While this has been essential to challenge the dominating structures and systems of meaning of majority groups, this also equates to identity as always articulated in relation to dominant/majority groups, categories, and norms and often leaves resistance as the only means of enacting any other forms of life. Difference, in this sense, is said to be “negative”, understood as “marks of alterity in terms of identity or as a necessary othering of an unknowable Other” (Lenz Taguchi, 2013b, p. 712).

In new materialisms thinking, however, including the work of Braidotti, Deleuze, (cited in Lenz Taguchi, 2013b) and Barad (2007), difference comes to be understood as a practice, a dynamic articulation of ongoing intra-activity, an ongoing flow of affirmative relations, an eternal

differentiating that is constitutive of the world and its intra-active becoming. In this sense differentiating as performative, as movement, flow and always becoming in relation cannot be about othering or separating or static difference as marks of identity resulting in binaries and hierarchies and endless failures.

I am reminded therefore of this project's aims, with its onto-epistemological focus on a post-humanist agential-realist framework, that hopes to think counsellor subjectivity from a different starting point, other than the human subject as subject to discourse. While I have outlined this in previous chapters, this difference (in relation to difference) has come into a stark kind of focus at this point in relation to the entangled process of data analysis. (Perhaps indicative of the exact diffractive process of a transcorporeal, embodied becoming-with the data I refer to previously, where Lenz Taguchi describes the body as a "a space of transit, a series of open-ended systems in interaction with the material-discursive 'environment'"? (2012, p. 265)). I am reminded that an agential-realist framework, a diffractive methodology, is attentive not to individual subjects and objects, but to phenomena or material-discursive boundary making practices that produce "objects" and "subjects" and other differences in an ongoing relationality, flow, intra-activity. Such an analysis of entangled practices must be attentive to the intra-action of multiple apparatuses. Thus, in returning to my data, I aim to once again, let go of the post-structural subject and her multiple identities, and instead attempt to begin thinking data with the concept of material-discursive practices. As I speak about later, enacting the concept of 'wonder' (Maclure, 2013) aids in this analytic process.

### **Poststructural inclinations and a diffractive experiment**

In this (re-)realisation of agential realism's focus, and my shift, from the post-structural subject, I am challenged to (re)think what thinking material-discursive practices with this data might produce, or, in other words, re-imagine what I thought I was doing and what I might actually be doing in this project. In what seems a diffractive moment, where the past touches the present in a

lively entanglement, I sense how focused on the ‘subject’ I have been, forever, on producing myself as an ‘acceptable’ subject, latterly on seeing myself as being produced in discourse and coming to produce myself as an, at times, ‘resistant’ subject. I have thought about my multiple identities and those of my participants and how we continually negotiate and labour to escape and eclipse the conditions of our existence. Rather than letting the intensity of this past remain a haunting, an absent-presence in relation to this project it seems fitting, with diffraction’s imperative to meet each moment and be attentive to the multiple apparatuses of our entangled practices, that I articulate some of these traces in this project. In doing this here, I re-turn (to) space-time moments from the beginning and middle of this project, or as Barad says, to “space-time coordinates” in a “Reiteration/ Reconfiguration/ Returning for the first time, again” in order to diffract, entangle, cut together/apart and enliven anew (Barad, 2010, p. 243) the practices of data analysis/thinking with theory in this project. In doing this, I am particularly interested to think with both the post-structural subject of my past-present theorising and the material-discursive practices of Barad’s theorising, in order that I do not come to enact a binary of either/or in further analyses, which I am at risk of doing when I state above my coming to the aim of ‘letting go’ of the post-structural subject and her multiple identities.

*Space-time co-ordinate 1:* I began this project posing the research question: ‘What does it mean for students undertaking a counsellor education programme to embody a counsellor identity?’ likely wondering about the processes/challenges/tensions by which the self-in-relation negotiates and labours to integrate/embody/perform yet more identities. Through an autoethnographic beginning to this project (Barraclough, 2014) I interrogated my own experience of ‘migrating identities’ through the use of ‘poetries’ – writing as inquiry into my experience (Brogden, 2010). In response to my poetic writing inquiries, I then produced questions and curiosities in relation to thinking about the lived experience of my participants in an attempt to situate my method and influence my

generation of data. This method followed autoethnography's aim of situating the personal in relation to the social and cultural, in a kind of continual recycling, and here I used it in an attempt, as Fine (1994) says, at working the hyphen between self and other, to 'probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants' (p. 72). The following text box presents my questions/curiosities generated at this time. The original poetries can be read in the paper (Barraclough, 2014):

How do counsellors-in-training tell stories of their process of transformation? Are they, too, solitary, autonomous subjects viewing models of perfection from great distances?

What other subjectivities will they have 'in tow'?

What competing discourses will they be struggling within/against and how will they be positioning themselves within these?

Where are the sites of tension and struggle?

Who do counsellors-in-training experience as producing their counsellor identities? Who do they experience as having power to name their competence?

What processes or structures (e.g. assessment) do counsellors-in-training experience as holding power to determine their competency and their identities?

How do counsellors-in-training position themselves in relation to the above? How do they position themselves as a participant in the conversations that produce the narrative of their lives?

(Barraclough, 2014)

My analysis at this point drew on my therapeutic practice and the theory of narrative therapy (White & Epston, 1990; Monk, Winslade, Crocket, & Epston, 1997), the turn to narrative identities in the research literature (Smith & Sparks, 2008) and collective biography as influenced by post-structural ideas (Davies & Gannon, 2006a). As such I conceptualised of myself and my participants as subjects existing within multiple and competing discourses, who, through processes of deconstruction, of making the effects of discourse (re)visible, would become able to negotiate and

position themselves differently, to take up agentic positions, to become participants in the conversations the social and cultural world was having about who and how they could be/come.

*Space-time coordinate 2:* Through my reading for this thesis I continued to pursue this notion of the post-structural subject, inspired and influenced by the writing of Bronwyn Davies in particular, along with reading Barad, Haraway and Deleuze and so beginning to rethink ideas of the subject, self, agency and the material/cultural divide. This second space-time coordinate relays a written response (in the text box below) I made after reading Davies' (2000) chapter titled 'Eclipsing the Constitutive Power of Discourse' in '*Working the ruins: Feminist Poststructural Theory and Methods in Education*'. In this chapter, she speaks of the possibilities of moving against, and beyond, the very discursive forces which shape us, using fiction to explore "particular instances of what it might mean for the writing/reading subject to "eclipse the conditions of its own emergence"" (Butler, 1997, p. 14 in Davies, 2000, p. 180). While acknowledging that some post-structural writers deny that such eclipse, or agency, is possible due to the constitutive nature and power of discourse (e.g. Jones, 1997), Davies instead draws on the power feminists have found in poststructural theorizing to make the effects of discourse (re)visible in order to disrupt, resist and reimagine where and how to position themselves. Thus, I found myself trying, yet again, to understand if/how it might be possible for the subject to eclipse the (oppressive) conditions and categorizations within which she is constituted.

**in excess**

a desiring body  
plagued  
by external signs  
and significations  
for how and what  
it should do-be-say

capable, competent, unique  
nurturing, nourishing, giving  
productive, reproductive  
capable of producing  
and reproducing  
more exceptional creatures

an ever-present desire  
to eclipse it all  
to break free  
defy the boundaries, categorizations,  
that attempt to fix, lodge,  
define  
but, that enable her  
to do-be what instead?

become undefined?  
unmoored from:  
*normal, successful, useful, meaningful*  
words that tell her  
how to live  
a good life?  
a slight easing arrives in her body  
being-becoming 'undefined'  
indefinable

but be careful  
not to substitute one category  
for another  
not to give up those descriptions  
only to search out  
alternate ones



stay here  
linger a while  
in the indeterminable  
unnameable, indefinable.  
unmarked

in a place  
without inscription  
on the body  
marking out how one, or other  
should be, behave

a place  
that she defines  
where she exists  
unnamed, expansive  
moving, mobile  
unmoored  
unencumbered  
unrestricted

she speaks  
from a body's desires, without  
being marked  
as different  
not fitting the taxon  
not good enough  
not correct

because not fitting  
is always in relation to Other,  
an Other who is always better.  
now, there is no hierarchy  
difference is the 'norm'

in these, always, multiple  
moving, subject positions

good enough is nowhere  
all there is here.

the beauty of here, and there  
that resists any kind of categorization  
of fixed naming  
of fixed positioning  
of fixity.

Instead, there is a fluidity  
an always-in-relation  
a situated in-between-ness  
of past-present-futures.  
full of possibility and potentialities  
for redeployment  
for eclipsing the structures, histories, and stories  
which attempt to fix her  
in place.

fixed, stuck, frozen,  
limited, restricted, reduced,  
does a naming always limit?  
(or, can there be power in it, too?)  
or only in resisting the power  
of the Other to name?

to be unnamed, outside of  
discourse, beyond -  
is that possible?  
to instead see, look  
for escape, lines of flight,  
places of eclipse?

in naming the discourse  
losing the clichés  
speaking from the body  
embodied writing, instead  
a transformative escape into  
that indefinable space  
if only for a moment?

no longer fixed, fixable.  
an embodied fluidity  
a body without organs

no longer  
stuck  
literally and figuratively.  
no longer  
defined, pathologised and fixed.  
instead, categories are loosened  
marks are erased  
ropes are untied.

she becomes  
mobile  
leaking, in excess.  
they can no longer name her  
reduce her or  
mark her as being  
one thing  
and not another

she is always in excess  
of their naming  
what is less can be more and

what is more can be less.

she is always

in excess.

(June 2015)

I have remained so firmly persuaded by the possibilities that exist as a post-structural subject for resistance, change and agency that I recognise my reluctance to easily let go of this feminist subject. This recognition here, from firstly re-turning to the data and then in thinking through the previous two space-time coordinates leads me to re-turn to the literature and do as Jackson and Mazzei (2012) suggest, use theory to think with data in order to open up to the production of new knowledge. What I am particularly interested in at this juncture is how theory might help me to think through what I am experiencing as a tension between (my) post-structural tendencies to want to start (and end) with the subject-in-discourse and post-humanism's desire to afford new possibilities for thinking subjectivity, particularly in relation to displacing categorical distinctions such as the nature-culture/material-discursive boundaries (Toffoletti, 2002; Braidotti, 2013). In order to do this, I now draw on three empirical articles (Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011; Juelskjaer, 2013; Søndergaard, 2016) whose authors are particularly interested in relating Barad's agential realism to post-structural feminist thinking (drawing on Judith Butler's work especially but also Davies, Wetherell and others), in order to consider "where all of this may take feminist agential realist work on subjectivities" (Juelskjaer, 2013, p. 755). Despite, or because of, my significant engagement with these theories (post-structural and agential realism) I agree with Søndergaard (2016) when she says "(t)he philosophical character of Barad's and Butler's work does, however, necessitate further specifications to inspire methodology *vis-à-vis* qualitative material" (p. 1), further stating that neither work explains how to *do* qualitative research including how to produce strategies for analysing qualitative material. In addition, Højgaard & Søndergaard (2011) claim that that while Barad's work offers detailed empirical examples of technical apparatuses, it is lacking

in its development of material-discursive processes of subjectification and power. It is therefore useful to turn to those who have taken considerable steps to apply post-structural and agential realist theorising to empirical analyses in developing further understanding of discursive and material forces in the processes of subjectification, and of the productive potential of agential realism for rethinking subjectivity.

Recognising the multiplicity of forces operating in empirical fields, including technological, material and discursive, these authors became interested in new materialist theories to help navigate such complexities becoming apparent in empirical work. In particular, they used both post-structural and agential realist thinking to theorise (1) subjectivity in relation to bullying and the case of twelve year old Marian (Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011), (2) the constitution of ‘new’ gendered subjectivities in the case of 13-year-old students experiencing ‘new beginnings’ as they changed to a new school (Juelskjaer, 2013), and (3) the distribution of violence and aggression in the everyday lives of two children, Thomas and William, aged 9 and 11 years (Søndergaard, 2016). They were interested to not lose sight of how “normativities of sociocultural categories work on, in and through human beings” (Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011, p. 340) or of the forces and kinds of power at work in constituting subjectivities, however, they wanted to extend their thinking toward matter, materialities, technologies and spatiality and temporality as further co-constituting forces in these processes. For this reason, I was particularly interested to see what their work in thinking the empirical with these aims, can offer my project with its similar desires, especially at this point of recognition of my bias toward the subject and the discursive. Several points emerge which are of interest to me.

First, in an analysis which focuses on agential realism, the individual as occupying the central subject position shifts to occupying one of (potentially) many subject positions. In the case of Marian, the focus becomes not on her as an individual experiencing bullying, but of the enactment of bullying as an intra-active process of multiple forces, in which Marian inhabits one of the subject

(or object) positions. Subjectivity here, then, becomes another intra-acting force, along with discourse, matter, technology, and so on. This enables an analysis far more sensitive to multiple elements contributing to the apparatus (material-discursive practices) of the production of, in this case, bullying (Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011).

Second, Højgaard & Søndergaard (2011) suggest that co-thinking poststructural and new materialist theory invites a scrutiny of not only the “detailed specifications of the boundaries, “properties,” and categories of the material forces involved in the enactments of the empirical phenomena in focus”, such as cell phones, websites, spaces, architecture and so on. In addition, they suggest consideration of “human entities and forces of enactments”, such as “desires, emotions, suffering, pleasure, etc., but (add that) such specifications should never be finally determined” (p. 349-350). The authors use the example here of the forces of a cell-phone and a particular desire intra-acting to produce an enactment of the phenomena (Barad, 2007) of peer bullying. Such a phenomena, or material-discursive practice, can then be analysed for its further enactments, circulations and transformations in the data. Ultimately, what this allows us to map and think differently are the multiple entities or forces (human and non-human) and how these intra-act in the production of phenomena, and how these very phenomena can go on to also be enacting forces themselves, all of this offering the possibility of more complex and finely tuned analyses. Given the potentially endless forces this brings into focus, it is interesting to note that Højgaard & Søndergaard conclude by emphasizing that the “choice” of entities and “choice” of phenomena a researcher selects and foregrounds in analysis will depend on the “researcher, on the research ambitions, and ultimately on how the phenomenon in focus is demarcated and defined” (2011, p. 351). This is similar in some ways to Bell (2012) who suggests we must “cut well...inviting the concern of others” (p. 117), whose words I take with me back into further data analysis.

Third, Juelskjaer (2013) highlights the shift from how, in thinking with post-structuralism, bodies might take up different positions *in* the world, to how bodies are made along with the world, and as part *of* the world, in thinking with Barad's agential realism. I am reminded here of my initial research question's focus on 'embodiment' of counsellor identity, and on the processes by which my participants might come to take up this new identity, or way of being, *in* the world. A shift to agential realism highlights 'embodiment' now as a material-discursive practice, an ongoing and provisional enactment of "agential cuts that constitute material configurations of bodies and boundaries" (p. 756).

Juelskjaer's reading of Barad expands on this notion of being *of* the world by pointing to the importance of time and space in the making of these agential cuts, of how bodies and subjectivities are not made "new", but are a dis/continuity, a cutting together-apart in an ongoing reconfiguring of time and space and matter. She illustrates this with a case study of Mary, "an ethnic white girl" who had moved from a multicultural school landscape to an almost all-white new school landscape (p. 759). Instead of a social constructionist/ poststructural analysis where "the student 'sits' in a time-space 1 (the interview context, a here and now) and tells about a time-space 2 (producing a past school life through a narrative of the ways she behaved, the friends she had, etc.), and thereby produces a present school life, a time-space 3 (manifesting the new beginning, the other place, positioning herself within that discourse)" along with a "time-space 4, in which the researcher conducts the analysis, while gathering the narratives of 'past school life' and 'present school life' from different parts of the interview" (p. 760), Juelskjaer is interested in what is produced by thinking differently, of viewing the interview "tellings as enactments rather than descriptions" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 127 in Juelskjaer, 2013, p. 760). A troubling of the spatial-temporal ordering, a disrupting of a linear narrative situated in time and space, argues Juelskjaer, enables her to conceive of "multiple space-times as co-present and co-producing 'Mary-the-white-girl'" (p. 760) which ultimately leads to a thickening of subjectivities. For example, she speaks of how

Mary's past school life was not in a "simple sense 'over'; it did not simply 'live' as a discourse of the past" (p. 761), but intra-acted with the present in complex ways to produce an ongoing reconfiguring of spacetime-matter-subjectivity. In this way, linear notions of change and movement are disrupted, and "working with spacetime-matter involves setting time and space in analytical motion" (p. 765). Ultimately, Juelskjaer suggests, the question is not about what is new, but becomes instead about how subjectivities/students, and spacetime-matter, are done and undone in complex ways.

Finally, what strikes me analytically from Søndergaard's (2016) study on violence and aggression in the lives of children is her emphasis on putting aside causal and uni-directional relationships, shifting focus from individuals at the centre of violence, and instead opening up to the flows and currents of violence and aggression as they intra-act with and through the everyday lives of children. She uses an analytical metaphor of pouring "phosphorous dye into the processes entangled by violence and aggression that flow in the actions, fantasies, games, dreams, relationships, emotions and reflections" of the boys' everyday lives (p. 6). In doing this, she says,

(w)e would see currents, branches, veins—some would be thick and sturdy, others fibrous, all entangling with other kinds of processes, other currents of phenomena, which would dilute or disperse the phosphorescent dye along the way into new tones and nuances (p. 6)

However, in thinking with both Barad and Butler, she brings us back to subjectivity, noting the very real effects violence, as intra-active phenomena, has in relation to child and youth subjectivity, being clear to point out that, while the flowing currents of aggression are enacting children's and teenagers' subjectivities, it is "without a unidirectional, given, or causal arc" (p. 9).

In re-turning to my data, in thinking with the empirical-theoretical work of these authors, I am challenged to shift focus from individuals to the *enacting of intra-active processes* (material-discursive practices) which both enact the subjectivities of counsellors-in-training and are enacted by them, in a complex and ongoing reconfiguring. I am inclined to see my participants' subjectivity



as one of multiple intra-acting forces and so become sensitive to the potentiality of multiple elements at play in the production of material-discursive practices, including material and human entities and forces, such as desire and emotion. I am curious to think, with Juelskjaer, beyond the post-structural subject as being situated in the world and enabled/constrained to take up new positions, toward my participants as being *of* the world, not as bounded bodies, but where embodiment is an ongoing and provisional reconfiguring of time and space and matter, and where they are continually done and undone in complex ways. Finally, in thinking further with Søndergaard, I am interested in broadening and opening up to what comes to matter in the everyday lives of counsellors-in-training, in pouring phosphorous dye into the processes entangled with a becoming-counsellor subjectivity, looking for the currents, branches and veins that flow through, and with, their everyday lives.

### **Embracing wonder in the production of what comes to matter**

What comes to matter for counsellors-in-training? How (not why) do these things come to matter and what do we do with what comes to matter? As I came to read the transcripts and re-watch and re-listen to the participants in the groups, along with continuing to read theory, I was inspired by writing from Hohti (2016a, 2016b) who draws on an emerging body of new materialist and post-humanist child research. She advocates “an understanding of research with children as ‘lively entanglements’ in which special attention should be given to things that matter to children” (p. 180). Matter, of course, in these contexts (hers and mine) is taken to assume a new materialist meaning. It refers to phenomena which are mutually constituted as material and discursive, as an entanglement of matter and meaning. Or, as Barad tells us, “phenomena are the *ontological* inseparability of agentially intra-acting components” (2007, p. 33).

Re-turning to this theory, along with attempting a more overt shift away from my previous post-structural attempts to theorise the subject, caused me to re-turn to the data with a desire to see what

came to matter for counsellors-in-training in the groups. I attempted to de-centre the human subject and instead invite “wonder” (MacLure, 2013) into my entangled intra-action with the videos, transcribed and spoken words, and participant-bodies of my research. Interestingly, MacLure (2013) claims wonder as material, as being of both mind and body and suggests wonder, using Barad’s terms, is itself an entanglement or intra-action. It is hard to pin wonder down, to define it in order to ‘use it’, according to MacLure, it is relational and it cannot be clear “where it originates and to whom it belongs” (p. 229). She describes it as a “liminal condition, suspended in a threshold between knowing and unknowing, that prevents wonder from being wholly contained or recuperated as knowledge, and thus affords an opening onto the new” (p. 228). Given diffraction’s methodological aims to figure differently and to make matter intelligible in new ways in order that other possible realities can be made to matter, inviting wonder into the research entanglement seems apt.

Following MacLure’s interest in the productive capacity for wonder in the entangled relation of data and researcher, and its apparent possibilities for further decentring me as the humanist-subject-researcher, I thus decided to follow the phenomena of wonder back into the data. In engaging with this beginning of an idea of enacting wonder in the entanglement, I centred her affective descriptions of wonder as “movements of desire and intensity that connect bodies—human and nonhuman, animate or inanimate” (p. 229) and as a “potentiality (that) can be felt on occasions where something...seems to reach out from the inert corpus (corpse) of the data, to grasp us” (p. 229). Such an orientation to data analysis perhaps requires a letting go of old practices of industrious, mechanical and cognitive searches for meaning within inert data and instead requires a greater attunement to and reliance on the senses, which, ironically perhaps, invokes a capacity for further thought. Recognising that I have previously written about this sense attunement and

body-mind engagement in relation to the diffractive methodological process<sup>22</sup> and that such an engagement seemed to at first elude me, it seems useful to follow MacLure and others further at this point, in order to map a more detailed view of what an affective, sensory, body-mind data-researcher entanglement might involve in relation to a diffractive methodology.

MacLure clearly begins with proposing an attention to desire, intensity and the embodied felt sense of something reaching up from the data to grab hold of us. In previous work she has referred to this as a kind of encounter where the data begins to ‘glow’ (MacLure, 2010, 2013). She suggested, for example, that a fieldnote fragment or a video image would start to glimmer, “gathering our attention” (2010, p. 282). She notes, too, that we can perhaps recognise the glow because “things start to slow down and speed up at this point” (p. 282). Time and attention can feel like it slows down as we attend to this one glowing spot in the data, while at the same time, connection can speed up and ‘fire’ off in multiple directions at once. For example, MacLure says “we begin to recall other incidents and details in the project classrooms, our own childhood experiences, films or artwork that we have seen, articles that we have read” (p. 282). Such an emergence does not result from our intentional or conscious control as a researcher, although I would suggest desire to attune to wonder forms part of the entanglement. This parallels with Barad’s concept of agency not as “aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity” (2007, p. 177), but rather as an enactment. In this way, my agency to perform a data analysis, or to find data that ‘glow’ is not an individual attribute that I possess and can impose on the data, but rather the emergence of data that glows, or of wonder, is an intra-active reconfiguring of spacetime-matter relations, an enactment of inseparable data-researcher-space-time-material-discursive boundary making practices.

---

<sup>22</sup> For example, I speak earlier of “engaging with our own previous and ongoing experiences of the realities we are researching, with our sensory, affective responses and memories, our imaginaries and with our own omnipresent multiple subjectivities, such as gender, class, race” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2013).

At this point, in thinking about a re-turn to the group data, I have become clearer on my interest in what came to matter (and how) for this group of counsellors-in-training, in inviting wonder into the research encounter/entanglement and attuning to the emergence of ‘data that glow’, and in thinking the data diffractively with theory – that is, theory and data mutually constituting each other in order to produce something new (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Or, as Mazzei says, in a way that “spreads thought in unpredictable patterns producing different knowledge” (2014, p. 742). It seems almost impossible to name all of the possibilities which may be part of this dynamic iterative intra-active reconfiguring, which is research, where time and space and matter are “produced and reconfigured in the materialization of phenomena and the (re)making of material-discursive boundaries and their constitutive exclusions” (Barad, 2007, p. 179). Indeed, St. Pierre & Jackson state, “there is no recipe for this kind of analysis – for thinking with theory – because one has to first read and study theory carefully and then put it to work in a particular project” (2014, p. 717). Additionally, they describe this kind of “post-coding analysis” as “non-technique and non-method that is always in a process of becoming” (p. 717), that is always emergent and experimental and as such unable to be neatly secured and pinned down to a linear set of methodic steps.

While it is comforting to find clarity in the opaque nature of such analysis it also seems useful to have found further clarity in re-turning to engage in this new, post-qualitative, diffractive process of thinking with theory. The following chapters tell these emergent, experimental stories of such engagement, of what is produced through data-researcher-wonder-theory-space-time-material-discursive-affective entangled knowledges in the making.

### **Limits of the interview**

I propose a final consideration before this re-turn to the data. Having come to this point in rethinking with theory these initial attempts to do data analysis, I have also come to question the merits of my very starting point of the interview as an apparatus of knowledge production for the

kinds of posthumanist knowledge I wish to engage with. Having moved through this chapter with more clarity of what it might mean to decentre the human subject, I am struck by Mazzei and Jackson's (2011) statement that interview methods in qualitative inquiry "oblige researchers to "center" the Subject" (p. 3). As Juelskjaer (2013) points out above, the interview invites a linear narrative of events, but it also results in the portrayal of a coherent narrative that is seen to represent the truth about an individual's experience, even if this truth is seen to be co-constructed. At the centre of this is usually, as was the case with my interviews, the human subject of the interview. Acknowledging this, and continuing on with this interview data, for this project, results then in a perpetual working "within and against a project that is failed from the start" (Mazzei and Jackson, 2011, p. 4).

While Mazzei and Jackson go on to suggest that, just because we recognize the limits of interview as method this does not mean we should give up on it, their point caused me to consider further, 'what counts as data'? St. Pierre and Jackson (2014) in writing about post-qualitative data analysis after coding, suggest that too often we ignore the quality of data when it comes to analysis and assume all data we have collected "are equal and worthy of analysis" (p. 715). They argue instead for an approach which uses theory to determine first, what counts as data, and second, what counts as good or appropriate data? Then, "we can do more with less data" (P. Lather, personal communication, 1993, in St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014, p. 716) focusing instead on the difficult and complex work of analysis.

Following this argument and returning to the theory with a consideration of diffraction's reliance on the researcher's ability to make matter intelligible in new ways beyond subject-centred recognition, reflexive interpretations of discursive perspectives and positionings (Lenz Taguchi, 2012), I return to the 'good and appropriate' data of the collective biography groups, rather than continuing to work within and against the apparatus of the interview. The following chapters perform this re-turn and ongoing intra-actions of the research encounter.

## INTERLUDE ONE

### Turning to the material-discursive: tears as an object of analysis

#### **Tears**

Tears  
The crystal rags  
Viscous tatters  
Of a worn-through soul

Moans  
Deep swan song  
Blue farewell  
Of a dying dream.

#### **Maya Angelou**

In this interlude, I outline how, in opening up to intra-active flows and currents, to material-discursive practices and diffractive patterns, what began to ‘glow’ in this researcher-data-participant-research entanglement was the materiality of participant tears. I begin this interlude by exploring what it means to think tears as an affective-material-discursive practice, as an embodied, entangled dynamic relationality (Barad, 2007, Wetherell, 2012), in contrast to tears as an emotional expression produced by a bounded individual. I outline the worthiness of tears as an object of study, given their presence in counselling spaces and absence in counselling literature, but mainly my analytic intention is to make visible the congealed and invisible histories, practices, labours and relations constituting the production of tears for counsellors-in-training. I turn to a brief exploration of historical and contemporary conceptualisations of tears, crying and weeping in the psychological and cultural studies literature in order to situate my turn to a material-discursive analytic engagement with tears in the following chapters (Blume-Marcovici, Stolberg & Khademi, 2015; Lutz, 1999; Vingerhoets, 2013).

## Introduction

Drawing on the ideas discussed in the previous chapter, I returned to the group data with a renewed post-humanist orientation to look beyond the post-structural subject. I returned to the voices, sounds, and bodies of my participants, in order to invoke MacLure's (2013) notion of wonder, around what came to matter during the hours we met together in that room over the period of several months. I was interested to summon Søndergaard's (2016) metaphor of phosphorous dye in order to put aside individuals at the centre of inquiry and instead open up to the intra-active flows and currents, to material-discursive practices, diffractive patterns and to ongoing and provisional reconfigurings of time and space and matter. It was in this way that I now hoped to come to a different understanding of how such practices are constitutive of the ongoing reconfiguring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity. In doing this, what started to glow for me, and immediately became evident as a material-discursive practice, a natural-cultural phenomena, were 'tears'. Interestingly, MacLure (2013) states that the glow of data appears around singular points, "– 'bottlenecks, knots and foyers' (Deleuze, 2004, p. 63 in MacLure, 2013, p. 662), that, she says, involve a loss of mastery over language (and ultimately, over ourselves), which certainly seems to apply here, as will become evident in the following mapping of how tears came to matter in this group. I start this interlude, with a poem from Maya Angelou, which to me speaks of the work I hope my analysis will do over the coming pages, a cutting together-apart of the material-discursive forces of tears, as phenomena. I place it here to mark that shift, to matter, force, and the liveliness of data that glows.

As I have emphasised, in an agential-realist framework what comes to matter is not a matter of capturing (coding) and portraying an independently existing reality. Data analysis itself, or researcher practices, as Lenz Taguchi says, "can never be fixed, but must be invented again and again" (2013b, p. 715). This certainly seems the case here, in thinking with new materialisms, and

agential realism in particular, as I also recall Søndergaard's (2016) words that Barad's work does not produce any clear analytic strategies. As expressed in the previous chapter, returning to the theory and to the work of those who have already engaged in similar struggles to 'think differently with data' was helpful for me in making a shift from centring the post-structural subject toward being attentive instead to matter, to material-discursive practices. As a result, my attention was drawn toward tears as an object/subject of analysis, and to the forces and encounters which produce them and the ways in which they flow and move and constitute the subjectivities of my participants.

I immediately conceptualised tears as a material-discursive practice, or *phenomena* (Barad, 2007) seeing the materialisation of tears as inseparable from, intra-active with the discursive conditions which mutually constitute them, that is, tears not as "entities with inherent boundaries and properties but phenomena that acquire specific boundaries and properties through the open-ended dynamics of intra-activity" (Barad, 2007, p. 172). In this sense, the discursive practices and the materiality of the tears do not "stand in a relationship of externality to each other"... neither "are ontologically or epistemological prior" and "neither is articulated or articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated" (Barad, 2007, p. 152). The more I read about tears, the more apparent this dynamic entanglement of matter and meaning became, particularly in the literature on the physiology of tears. For example, three different kinds of tears are recognised by physiologists and ophthalmologists, which not only have different functions but also different chemical, hormonal and protein compositions – referred to as basal, reflex, and psychic tears. "Basal tears are the continuous tears that lubricate our eyeballs. Reflex or irritant tears are produced when we chop onions, for instance, or get poked in the eye. Psychic or emotional tears are those caused by, and communicating, specific emotional states" (Lutz, 1999, p. 67). In a fascinating photographic study by photographer Rose-Lynn Fisher, to be shared in a book called *The Topography of Tears* (Fisher, 2017), Fisher has explored the physical terrain of more than one hundred tears emitted during a range of emotional states and physical reactions by using an optical



microscope with an attached digital camera. There are many factors, she states in the *New Yorker* (2014), “that determine the look of each tear image, including the viscosity of the tear, the chemistry of the weeper, the settings of the microscope, and the way I process the images afterwards.” Comprising a wide range of her own and others’ tears, “from elation to onions, as well as sorrow, frustration, rejection, resolution, laughing, yawning, birth and rebirth”, she suggests it’s as if each tear carries a microcosm of human experience. Some of the images are presented below, some of these first appearing in my Facebook feed, after which I then managed to trace their origin to the author, who subsequently gave permission for me to use her images here.



Figure 2. Visual photographic-microscopic tears – Rose-Lynn Fisher (2017)

In noticing both the very different material composition, and visual photographic-microscopic image, of tears, depending on the forces of their entanglement, including the apparatus of measurement, tears as intra-active phenomena becomes evident. Having come to this view, I then re-turned to the data in order to explore more of the material and the discursive mutually implicated in the articulation of tears for my participants.

In thinking diffractively with Barad’s agential realist theory, the finding of tears as a repetitive diffractive pattern or phenomena (or material-discursive practice) emerged both in the talk of, and

in the material presence of, tears in the groups. However, in listening to the talk it became apparent that there were diverse and situated patterning processes at work in the enactment of tears. Paying attention to these offered the opportunity to bring forth the complex and multiple material-semiotic forces at work, not just in the materialisation of tears, but through tears, in the (re)(con)figuration of counsellor-in-training subjectivities.

Thinking in this way, tears are construed here not as an object or thing with inherent boundaries, but rather as an entangled dynamic relationality, where the boundaries of intra-acting agents or forces are reconfigured to produce the real, material, situated effect of tears. This analysis aims not to understand the essence or singular meaning of tears as produced by a bounded individual. Rather, thinking tears as an entangled affective-material-discursive phenomena invites an analytic focus on the boundary making practices, or forces, that intra-act in producing the ever increasing multiplicity of tears. Drawing on Whatmore (2006), and staying with a relational ontology, tears can be seen to be a “force of intensive relationality”, an intensity that is felt but is not personal, and that is visceral but is “not confined to an individuated body” (p. 604). Such a view of the affective nature in particular of tears, also seems to align well with - rather than psychological views of basic emotions which attempt to abstract an entity from the social and cultural milieu in which it is situated - Wetherell’s theorising of the affective-discursive (Wetherell, 2012). She argues that “human affect is inextricably linked with meaning-making and with the semiotic (broadly defined) and the discursive. It is futile to try to pull them apart. An affective practice like a dancing plague recruits material objects, institutions, pasts and anticipated futures” (p. 20). This seems to align with Barad’s notion of intra-activity, and the inseparability of mutually entangled forces, including space, time, matter and discourse. What Wetherell’s work brings to this discussion in particular, is a focus on the *affective* nature of such an entanglement, or practice as she calls it (similar again to Barad’s material-discursive practice). As she says, “it is the participation of the emoting body that makes an assemblage (cf. entanglement) an example of affect rather than an example of some other

kind of social practice” (Wetherell, 2012, p. 159). Just as Whatmore alludes to above, I agree with Wetherell when she places the emphasis on the particularity of the embodiment of affect, of locating it “not in the ether, or in endless and mysterious circulations, but in actual bodies” (p. 159). Thus, tears in this sense, as an affective intensity, although inseparably entangled and mutually constituted with other matter, bodies, times and spaces, are nevertheless located in and on a body, are embodied.

Such a theoretical orientation requires a detailed focus on the intra-active forces at work in the materialisation of tears as an affective phenomenon, and thus provides an opportunity to challenge many taken for granted binary norms associated with the emotional, failing (to cope), humanist, autonomous individual subject. Indeed, one of diffraction’s tasks is to disrupt the patriarchal system of binaries which, as has been discussed, seeks to create false categories leading to the oppression of those on the ‘wrong side’ of these (e.g. rational-emotional, mind-body), and the normalisation of those marked as belonging to the dominant categories. Those existing within such hegemonic categories “read themselves as simply human in the way anyone can and should be” whereas those within a subordinate category are “marked and in need of remediation in order to become like those who are deemed to be more capable” or appropriate (De Schauwer, Van de Putte, Blockmans & Davies, 2016, p. 2). New materialist work, as Hughes and Lury (2013) state, drawing on the words of Suchman (2012), “inspires us to look anew at what has ‘become naturalised over time’ and how things can be ‘figured together differently’” (p. 791). It is my hope that this analysis of tears as a dynamic material-discursive relationality rather than, say, a personal failing, will go some way toward this.

### **Why tears?**

I have suggested above that coming to ‘see’ tears in the data has been a process of re-turning to theory and of paying attention to data that “glows” (Maclure, 2010). In a diffractive analysis, Lenz Taguchi claims this process is “an embodied engagement with the materiality of research data: a

becoming-with the data as researcher” (2012, p. 265). It is not that the phenomenon of tears lay inertly waiting in the data to be found and studied as an object of analysis. It is not that there are a finite number of analytic objects requiring unearthing in the data. Rather, tears emerged through my “body as a space of transit, a series of open-ended systems in interaction with the material-discursive ‘environment’...” through “transcorporeal engagements with data” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p. 265), through the intra-activity of, at least, my multiple (dynamic) subjectivities as counsellor, woman, mother, researcher (...) with the material-discursive phenomena that we have labelled ‘data’.

There are likely a multitude of intra-active forces which have led me here, to notice, investigate, and map entangled genealogies (Barad, 2007) of counsellor-in-training tears, from personal childhood (and adult) experiences of tears as involuntary and excessive, undesirable and unavoidable, to witnessing the pain-filled tears of clients and students, friends and family, who shamefully apologise and wipe away this evidence of a natural-cultural physiological process. The researcher-I is influenced also by the voluminous literature on the negative emotions seemingly produced through the process of training to become a counsellor, and the often resulting solution to find better ways of coping (e.g. Folkes-Skinner et al. 2010; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Truett, 2001). The plentiful presence of tears as a site of intense affect in the data seemed to offer a way of exploring this further, but from a theoretically different perspective than the previously dominant humanist lens. My desire also to challenge, upend and reconfigure normative practices and assumptions that needlessly contribute to increased oppression and pain most likely contributed to the glow of tears as a site of further investigation. Desiring to make a “demonstrable difference” (Bell, 2012), and taking up the agential-realist’s “responsibility for the world’s becoming”, “to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering” (Barad, 2003, p. 827) is no doubt another force in the production of tears through this boundary making analytic practice. Taken together, the possibility emerges for a mapping of the affective-material-discursive

phenomena of tears, and for making visible the congealed and invisible practices, histories and relations constituting the production, and effects, of tears. It is hoped, that through such a mapping, tears of counsellors-in-training, and the labours that produce them, may begin to be made intelligible (figured) differently, multiply, and ultimately reanimated and reimagined for the formation of the counsellor-in-training subject (Suchman, 2012).

Tears seem worthy as an object of further study given their presence in the counselling room, albeit that it is those belonging to clients which have typically been the ones counsellors must learn to respond to. While several books have explored this subject of tears, from scientific (Frey, 1985; Trimble, 2012), psychological (Vingerhoets, 2013) and cultural (Lutz, 1999) vantage points, in attempts to understand causes, meanings, effects and displays of such a “mysterious and complex” (Vingerhoets, 2013) phenomenon, there appears to have been little focus on such a prevailing material presence in the counselling literature. Such literature becomes even sparser when the focus is narrowed to counsellor tears. Jeffrey Kottler, a renowned author and teacher in the field of counselling, in his book *‘The language of tears’* (1996), explored tears as a form of communication, discussing their therapeutic benefits and limitations, and their paradoxical nature as mirrors of both pain and rapture. However, while Kottler’s work added to current psychological, social and cultural understandings and contributed knowledge for counsellors in understanding the phenomenon of tears, its focus was much broader than counselling itself. In addition, Lutz (1999) suggests, that despite research studies finding that tears occur with great regularity in helping relationships (e.g. doctor-patient; nurse-patient, therapist-client), there are a lack of courses which address this in any degree programmes. Whilst the medical profession has undertaken significant research into the crying behaviours of medical care providers, Blume-Marcovici, Stolberg & Khademi (2013) note, in referring to the dearth of such a therapeutic literature, “(i)t is striking that, as a profession that so explicitly values emotions and interpersonal interaction, psychologists have attended less to the topic of tears than medical professionals” (p. 225).

More recently, therapist tears have been explored by Blume-Marcovici and colleagues (Blume-Marcovici et al., 2013, 2015; Blume-Marcovici, Stolberg, Khademi & Giromini, 2015) who conducted an empirical investigation with six hundred and eighty-four U.S. psychologists and trainees of therapist crying in therapy. They noted that “the subject of therapist’s crying in therapy (TCIT) has been virtually ignored in the literature, with only one qualitative dissertation and three case studies devoted to the topic” (Blume-Marcovici et al., 2013, p. 224). With 72% of their sample respondents reporting having cried in therapy, this lack of research is not due to the absence of such a phenomenon. The focus of this psychological research was to explore “the therapeutic situations in which TCIT may be most likely to occur (i.e., client demographics, when in treatment TCIT happens, session content), therapists’ experiences of their own tears (i.e., emotions felt, comfort/discomfort with tears, regret), and how clinicians work with their own tears in session (i.e., regarding therapeutic rapport, discussing TCIT with clients)” (Blume-Marcovici et al., 2015, p. 401). While an exceptionally welcome addition to the field, my aim in undertaking an analysis of the (talk of) tears of counsellors-in-training is slightly different, as outlined above and throughout this project. That is, in pursuing an agential-realist analysis of counsellor-in-training tears I aim to open up (to) alternative possibilities and different knowledges in a way that recognises complexity in the mutually entangling and transforming processes which produce and enact tears. It is hoped that producing such knowledge will go on to effect counsellor education and in turn the possibilities for the subjectivity formation of counsellors-in-training.

### **Conceptualisations of tears**

Hopes for a reconfiguring of tears begs the question, why is this necessary or even desirable? Without going in depth into a cultural history of the phenomenon of tears (which is done so well by Tom Lutz (1999) in his book *‘Crying: a natural and cultural history’* and by Ad Vingerhoets (2013), although from a more psychological perspective, in his book, *‘Why only humans weep’*, it

is nevertheless useful at this point to outline common views and current conceptualisation of tears and their effects. These will also be discussed further as and when they emerge in the data.

The documented presence of tears in human culture can be found as far back in history as the fourteenth century B.C. in northwestern Syria. These findings offer a rich beginning to thinking about the diverse meanings tears do have, and have had, the power to embody and signify. Found on Canaanite clay tablets, a narrative poem tells the story of the death of Ba'al, an earth god worshipped by several ancient Middle Eastern cultures, and of how his sister, the goddess Anat, responds to the news of his death. The accepted scholarly translation of this particular part of the poem is that Anat "continued sating herself with weeping, to drink tears like wine." (Lutz, 1999, p. 33) Seemingly a recognisable grief induced response – weeping at the loss of her brother - the scholar who produced this translation argued that this story was actually related to a springtime tribal ritual moving through communal weeping and wailing to hysterical and raucous laughing over the course of several days. Interestingly, in this ritual, "frantic crying and raucous laughter are not opposed emotional displays but part of a continuum" (Lutz, 1999, p. 34), which viewed such emotional expression as a source of fundamental pleasure and social cohesion.

Further explorations of historical texts, particularly Greek sources, make even clearer this nourishing, sustaining and pleasurable association with tears and crying, often in the form of transformative rituals. Lutz refers to *The Iliad*, where Homer talks of "desire for lamentation" and "taking satisfaction in lament" (cited in Lutz, 1999, p. 34). Ultimately, through his reading of such texts, Lutz concludes that weeping was so pleasurable, it was seen to "make one "shiver" with delight" (p. 35). This association of tears with pleasure was evident at least up to as recently as the mid twentieth century. For example, when psychologists began studying the psychophysiology of tears, William James wrote in his '*Principles of Psychology*' (1890 cited in Lutz, 1999), pleasure was possible during the actual weeping part of what was called the 'dry sorrow-weeping' cycle. Later physiological psychologists, including Silvan Tomkins, continued to make suggestive

arguments about tears and pleasure, however, as Lutz (1999) concludes, the pleasure of tears remains inexplicably unexplored, and I would suggest, lost within the current cultural imaginary.

More contemporary associations with the expression of adult tears include “powerlessness/helplessness, the loss (or threat of the loss) of an important relationship, and, at the opposite end of the spectrum, exceptional performances and the forging of new bonds” (Vingerhoets 2013, p. 261). Vingerhoets and Bylsma (2016) add, that “in addition, perceived empathy, altruism, and a basic sense of justice, essential building blocks of human society, are major reasons for tearfulness in adults” (p. 214). However, Lutz suggests a perhaps more complex and contradictory understanding of tears. He says, “(i)t is often ...mixed emotions or competing desires – fear mixed with desire, hope mixed with despair –that can trigger the release of tears. (Lutz, 1999, p. 22). Regardless whether they be described as tears of happiness, joy, or pride or of mourning, frustration or despair, such an expression is generally viewed as an outward sign of an individual’s emotional interiority or of holding a particularly individual, personal meaning or experience.

In a counselling relationship, a humanistic counsellor will likely be interested in the feelings the tears signify for their tearful client, a social constructionist or post-structural counsellor may be more interested in the language of the tears, and the stories and meaning they might signify for their client. Interpretations of counsellor tears will also vary depending on the theoretical orientation, for example, from the tears of genuineness and empathy of a humanistic counsellor to those of perceived projection of “unprocessed or unexpressed emotion by the client” by a psychodynamically oriented therapist (Blume-Marcovici et al., 2015, p. 418). Interestingly, in their research Blume-Marcovici et al. (2013) found that cognitive behavioural therapists reported crying during therapy significantly less often than dynamically oriented therapists, even though the groups reported crying at similar rates in daily life. They suggested that perhaps this therapy’s focus on emotion and emotional expression resulted in the presence of more “crying-inducing” material.



Despite there being only a small handful of researchers (Vingerhoets & Bylsma, 2016) who have contributed to current knowledge around the phenomenon of adult tears and crying, both in general, and more specifically in the counselling room, findings demonstrate the complex and potentially promising personal, social and cultural knowledges such investigations offer. Indeed, Vingerhoets & Bylsma (2016) suggest, from a psychological perspective, that “crying may be a window to obtain a better insight into important developmental processes like empathy and morality, as well as clinical conditions, including depression...”, whilst maintaining the view that a multidisciplinary approach is needed to “adequately study its meaning and impact on the individual and society” (p. 215).

Such a multi-disciplinary approach includes the influence of social and cultural practices and contexts on the presence, absence, and flow of tears. For example, it is apparent that throughout history, in relation to the ways the shedding of tears, crying and weeping have changed over time, as well as in anthropological studies across cultures, particularly in relation to accepted and expected public displays of tears. Culture dictates crying styles as well as when and how they should and can be expressed (Vingerhoets, 2013). Despite the lack of research on the topic of crying itself, several scholars have suggested that the process of civilization has been responsible for the increased restraints on the public displays of emotion, including crying (Vingerhoets, 2013). Indeed, Neoliberalism, with its “emphasis on the making of particular kinds of selves” in contemporary society, creates the conditions to increase the likelihood of tears for subjects “always on the boundaries of failure” (McAvoy, 2015, p. 26), while at the same time precluding the expression of such emotion, lest it affirm the very failure the individual subject strives to avoid. Attention to such a material-discursive production and materialisation of tears clearly forms part of an agential realist analysis of the tears of counsellors-in-training. Returning to Haraway’s notion of the binary certainly places the tears, as an emotional expression, clearly on the wrong side of the rational-emotional dualism. Tears are messy, an uncontained leaky bodily fluid, perhaps even

unpredictable, incoherent, and irrational – material evidence of an emotional self, all of which sit as a poor relation to the hegemonic rational, self-contained, coherent, knowing man. Such affective practices stand in stark contrast also to the power of the contemporary neoliberal discourse that prioritises and constitutes individuals as autonomous, rational, self-maximising, economically productive subjects (Davies & Bansel, 2007; McAvoy, 2015; Mountz et al., 2015). Pursuing such binaries, tears could equally be construed as female, private or domestic (not public), personal (not professional), hysterical (not rational) and so on. These discursive notions and their effects must also be mapped with the data. This attention to the fine detail of social-cultural forces offers a more detailed analysis of the practices and performances of a life lived and how they all entangle, and manifest in, with, through and on bodies, sometimes as tears.

Whilst not exhaustive, the above discussion has offered a context and rationale for an engagement with counsellor-in-training tears as a material-discursive object of analysis. Study of tears in counselling, and more particularly with counsellors-in-training, is limited, but potentially valuable in adding knowledge to an under-theorised area and under-researched topic. At this point, I re-turn to the data and further transcorporeal engagements with it in order to see what might be produced through the enactment of tears as diffractive patterns, in order to examine how they may be figured differently, and how this then opens up the possibilities for a reconfiguring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity. In performing this analysis, a number of tear diffractive patterns emerged, which are mapped through the analytic device of the poem. The pattern-poems enacted in the following chapters draw from the participants' talk of tears in the group sessions, in relation to the materialisation of tears, in their eyes and on their faces, while performing their roles on placements as counsellors in counselling sessions. In fitting with an agential realist ontology, these patterns are not seen to be exhaustive or representative, rather, in the time and space of the lives and groups of these participants and with myself as researcher, now, they are what have come to matter. While all of the words are those spoken by the participants (which may also include me), some words

may have been removed in order to enhance flow in the poems – often these were words such as ‘you know’, but no removal of words was seen to alter the meaning or content of participants’ spoken words.

Mapping the tear-poems enacted an initial stage of data analysis, with the next stage being a continued thinking with both theory and the poems in order to further enact the contingent and entangled “processes of *patterning*” (Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 786) in the spacetime-mattering of tears. In such a diffractive approach, I am reminded that this process is one of experimental encounter, where “the researcher does not know in advance what onto-epistemological knowledge will emerge from the experimental mix of *concepts, emotions, bodies, images, and affects*” (Davies, 2014b, p. 734, emphasis added), and that the researcher body acts as a “space of transit” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p. 265) for transcorporeal engagements with data, theory and other multiple elements of the research encounter, too infinite to be listed. It is this experimental process which I turn to in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### A diffractive analysis: the presence of tears in counselling encounters

This chapter performs a diffractive, experimental mapping of the presence of tears in counselling encounters as spoken about by participants in the collective biography groups. Tear encounters are re-presented as poems, in order to further enact, or ‘cut together-apart’ (Barad, 2007) the contingent and entangled “processes of *patterning*” (Hughes & Lury, 2013, p. 786) in the spacetime-mattering of tears. I begin this chapter with a poem of my own enacting the materiality of tears in one of my counselling encounters, not to privilege my own knowing, but to diffractively, and transparently, bring the knowing of my body into relation with those of my participants, in order to intra-actively think with, and think anew. While it is not possible within the parameters of this project to document the multiple forces enacting thought, it is my intent through this initial poem to highlight the entangled process of data analysis. What follows in this chapter is conceptualised as ‘thinking with theory’ (Mazzei & Jackson, 2011). Moving between the words of my participants, re-presented in the poems, and, in particular, Barad’s agential realist, posthumanist framework, I explore tears as a mark of an embodied alterity, as intra-actively produced - enabled and constrained - by a multiplicity of forces, including human and non-human ones. Through such attention to the process of mapping the tear poems, a number of forces are made visible and further explored in this chapter, including gender, culture, age, counselling theory, practice and ethics, and other subjectivities, times and spaces. At the same time consideration is given not just to making such intra-active forces visible, but also, in thinking with Barad’s agential realism, to re-thinking notions of causality, time, ethics and agency in the ongoing configuring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity.

**At the edge of tears –**

**an embodied alterity**

Porous

A fantail rests on the table  
part object,  
becoming child –  
its flight sweeps through me.

A piwakawaka becomes monarch –  
both vessels of dead living love.

Porous boundaries leaking,  
in/animate flux

of me-you-boys-who've-gone  
but will (not) leave  
marks on bodies  
that will not erase.

(Shanee, Poem 1)

I sit here now with this blank page in front of me and the words of 'Porous' to the left of the screen, a poem I wrote while in the midst of reading and absorbing new materialism and its possibilities, and in the midst of everyday life. The moment, because it really was only a moment, this poem refers to, occurred at the end of a counselling supervision session, where I was in the role of supervisor with a counsellor-client whom I had been working with for about two years. Although, already it's clear that, as Barad says "(n)ot even a moment exists on its own". Rather, "(t)his" and "that", "here" and "now", she says, "come alive with each meeting" and "(t)he world and its possibilities for becoming are remade in each moment" (2007, p. 396). This moment was an entanglement, of bodies, objects, affects, words, spaces, pasts, presents and futures yet to come. It was not a coming together of two individual, pre-existing entities acting with thought, choice and intent on and with

each other, although they were certainly a part of it. As Barad says “there are no individual agents” and “there are no singular causes” (p. 394). This poem depicts a moment of the emergence of tears, mine, although they were not the only tears present. These were not glassy or watery eyes, but tears rolling down my cheeks, perhaps the first time I had experienced this in a counselling session, despite the years I have spent sitting with people telling me the most agonizing and painful stories. I say ‘mine’, but whose tears were they if there is “no discrete ‘I’ that precedes its actions”, if it’s only our (intra)actions that come to matter (p. 394).

“I”, my supervisor subjectivity, am decentred, and tears become the subject being constituted, before becoming object and enacting my own subjectivity again – this marks a dynamism, a co-constitution of subjects along with objects which requires a letting go of the liberal humanist conception of the subject (Barad, 2007). It is not “I” that is in charge of the tears’ emergence, rather it is the intra-active ‘they’ who constitute my own formation, as part of the world. Tears as both subject and object, indeterminable, except for the cuts, and connections, which are made to matter.

While the tears marked, and were located on, my body, I see their emergence now, their presence and their flow, their intensity, as a mark of an embodied alterity, of “having-the-other-in-one’s-skin” - both human and “other than human” others (Barad, 2007, p. 392). The ‘others’ intra-actively co-constitute the tears, mutually transforming in the process, that is, nothing stays the same in the dynamic becoming of the world. The fantail, that sits on the table in the counselling space, an image on a coffee cup, takes flight in the body of my client as it intra-actively enacts the loss of her child - not as mind-based memory, but as enlivened “marked historialit(y) ingrained in the body’s becoming” (p. 393). Time is reconfigured, the past is alive within the present, as fantail becomes monarch butterfly, which, in its flight, holds the absent-presence of the loss of my brother. “Time is out of joint. Dispersed. Diffracted” (Barad, 2010,

p. 244). It's been four years, and yet, when I see the date, it's in these very days that were the last days we sat and held his dying body. It is like time collapses, or perhaps it is that the "past, present, and future were never "in a relation of linear unfolding, but threaded through one another in a nonlinear enfolding of spacetime mattering" (p. 244). There is no doubt more to this entangling, more threads which come together while others disperse to enact this diffractive pattern, this felt intensity of sadness, loss and love, hers and mine, now and then, here and there, locating itself in fantails and monarchs and coming to rest in the emergence of tears, at the edge of my skin.

In order to seek more, and to make the invisible visible, I return to theory. Quantum physics and diffraction undo the onto-epistemology of the binary. I become curious about what might be seen to be fixed within this entanglement, and more curious still about its haunting – the absent-presence of that which is excluded. I am reminded of why I was compelled to write this poem, not because of the tears themselves – they were familiar, but because of their intra-active emergence with the professional (yet personal) space of the counselling room and the resulting discomfort, unease, and professional uncertainty this entanglement produced. Another layer is added in this dynamic, intra-active process as I recognise the tears themselves now intra-acting with that space, with my counsellor subjectivity, to produce this affective experience of discomfort, of ambivalence. In this ambivalence, I recognise the conflict which has emerged between the binary of the professional counselling space and the personal-relational moment of tears. Set up as a binary, my counsellor subjectivity cannot comfortably contain both. This is not a new challenge for the field of counselling, as outlined in chapter one, and as Nissen-Lie et al. (2017) reiterate:

It may be difficult to compare the work of psychotherapy with other professions because of its specific requirement that, to be of help to clients, the therapists must succeed in integrating their professional capacities and expertise with their personal attributes in a way that almost blurs the distinction between them (p. 49).

Produced intra-actively in this encounter, the phenomena of tears, as personal-relational, emotional, uncontained and unpredictable, were haunted by the present-absence of a non-crying, un-emotional (yet genuine and empathetic), technically competent, professional self. The establishment and hegemonic effects of this binary relation, no doubt with its origins in the histories of men's professional paid work and public lives and women's domestic unpaid labour and personal/private lives, has emerged here as significant. I am curious to think further with this finding, with the data, and with theory, in an effort to produce/diffract new knowledges beyond my body's own knowing.

Were these mutually exclusive subjectivities – the personal, emotional, crying self and the professional counsellor, and, or, in thinking with quantum physics does such a dualism, a difference, even exist at all? Does enacting the professional counselling self necessarily mean the personal, messy, emotional self can only ever be a haunting? Or, as Nissen-Lie et al. (2017) allude to, is this a false dichotomy to begin with, and only ever an always already blurring of one into the other? After all, as Barad says, when she talks of a quantum rethinking of the relationality between the scientific and the social, “what often appears as sharp entities...with sharp edges does not actually entail a relation of absolute exteriority at all. Like the diffraction patterns illuminating the indefinite nature of boundaries – displaying shadows in “light” regions and bright spots in “dark regions”, the relation (*of the personal-professional*) is a relation of “exteriority within”” (2007, p. 93). In order to further consider questions such as these and others which will surely emerge, I re-turn to the data and the emergence of tears with other times and spaces and bodies, to explore the multiplicity of the articulation of tears, and the entangled genealogies which co-constitute them. I consider how such articulations act to then co-constitute a (professional?) counsellor subjectivity and ultimately, in the final chapter, what such theorisations may produce for re-thinking pedagogies of counsellor education.



I turn now to the participant poems. These emerged from the talk within the groups. As such, the poems, as diffractive patterns, are intra-actively co-constituted by a multiplicity of forces including, but not limited to, the participant subjectivities, the material-discursive space of the room we shared, the time of the day we met and the timing within participants' training, my researcher-, educator-, counsellor-, etc., subjectivities. They are therefore not presented as 'personal, individual' accounts, rather as an always embodied alterity (Barad, 2007), here with the aim of further mapping the emergence and movement of tears.

### **The material-discursive phenomena of counselling practice**

The poems presented in this chapter all speak of the enactment of tears in response, at least, to clients within counselling sessions. With the poems all situated in the counselling space I am interested to re-turn to Barad's notion of the (material-) discursive in order to first think further and/or differently around how the material-discursive force of the counselling room might work intra-actively in the production of counsellor tears. Having seen the emergence of the professional/personal binary I am interested to further explore how counselling as a material-discursive practice acts as a force in relation to the production of tears. Barad (2007) draws on Foucault and Butler in her performative account of the discursive, both in the performative nature of discursive practices and in the rejection of discourse as a synonym for language, speech acts or conversations. "Discourse is not what is said; it is what *constrains* and *enables* what can be said. Discursive practices define what counts as meaningful statements" (Barad, 2007, p. 146, my emphasis). This is not meaning as a human-based notion, rather, in agential realism, "meaning is an ongoing performance of the world in its differential intelligibility" (p. 335), that is, discursive practices are material reconfigurings of the world through which boundaries are differentially enacted. For Foucault, Barad suggests, discursive practices are the "local socio-material conditions that enable and constrain disciplinary knowledge practices" (p. 147), and in this way, such practices produce, rather than merely describe, what is possible

for the subjects and objects of particular knowledge practices. Counselling, considered in these terms, becomes an ongoing reconfiguring through which various boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted. It is a material-discursive practice which both enables and constrains, includes and excludes, particular kinds of doings, actions and conversations. (As we shall see though, this is only one, albeit a significant one, of the multiple forces operating at any one time in the moments depicted in the poems, and thus in constituting a counsellor-in-training subjectivity).

Barad, drawing on Bohr's notion of the apparatus and quantum physics, proposes a diffractive reworking of Butler's and Foucault's discursive practices which she claims do not sufficiently account for the agentic role of matter and its relation to the discursive, nor for the intra-active and dynamic nature of the always changing world of possibilities. Hence, as outlined above - material-discursive practices. Thus, the intra-active force of the counselling space as a material-discursive practice becomes a "boundary making practice"; it provides the "*material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering*" (Barad, 2007, p. 148, original italics). The counselling room, as a material-discursive practice, is a reconfiguring through which subjects and objects are produced – counsellors, clients, tears, problems and so on. Possibilities for being and becoming, are enabled, constrained, and reconfigured in relation with the intra-active force of such a material-discursive space.

There is no simple description of such practices which might be seen to constitute the material-discursive phenomena of counselling. As Cornforth (2006) notes, therapy is still an emerging profession with counselling praxis the interface of many contradictions and oppositions. Counselling, she says "brings together the social and the individual, the analytic and the experiential, the conscious and the unconscious, the quantitative and the qualitative. It both supports and challenges. It exists amongst many theories and many cultures. The management of these tensions is not easily done and contradictions and confusions abound" (p. 4).

Furthermore, she suggests there is seldom agreement on the form and function of counselling/psychotherapy, which draws on multiple theoretical traditions including psychoanalysis, psychology, philosophy, cultural studies and the arts (Cornforth, 2006, p. 6). Others seem to almost embrace what may seem contradictory and complex in the process of counselling, suggesting therapy is by its own nature necessarily a “fluid, dynamic process, one involving a complex and nuanced series of interchanges” and that attempting to reduce it to “truncated and prescriptive” treatments may strip it of the very interpersonal processes critical to its success (Miller, Hubble, Chow & Seidel, 2013, p. 89).

In mapping the forces or practices constituting the subjectivity of a counsellor in training, and in particular here in mapping the emergence of tears, it is imperative that the knowledge domain of counselling itself, despite its complexity and confusion, be considered as a productive and intra-active force, enabling and constraining the practices of the counsellor-in-training. The counselling programme in which the participants are a part of draws on a knowledge domain underpinned by a counselling code of ethics (NZAC, 2002), and a social constructionist approach to counselling (Burr, 1995; Visser, 2013) emphasising also the importance of the counselling relationship (Lambert & Barley, 2001). Perhaps at its simplest, this statement from the NZAC Code of Ethics (2016) summarises the aims of the counselling process these participants have been exposed to:

Counselling involves the formation of professional relationships based on ethical values and principles. Counsellors seek to assist clients to increase their understanding of themselves and their relationships with others, to develop more resourceful ways of living, and to bring about change in their lives. Counselling includes relationships formed with individuals, couples, families, groups, communities and organisations (p. 3).

In enacting such practices, the counsellors-in-training as participants here, are therefore *enabled* to engage, in the private space of a counselling room, in a conversation with (usually)

one other (a client) - a talking therapy - premised on the formation of a professional relationship and aimed at enabling change to occur for the client who sits opposite, through the process of both the relationship and the chosen therapeutic techniques. Practices involved in enacting such a professional relationship might be expected to include counsellor displays of empathic understanding, “the degree to which the therapist is successful in communicating personal comprehension of the client's experience; positive regard, the extent to which the therapist communicates non-evaluative caring and respect; and congruence, the extent to which the therapist is non-defensive, real, and not "phony.”” (Lambert & Barley, 2001, p. 358).

With such practices (albeit complex and contested) in mind, I turn to the poems in order to further explore how the material-discursive force of ‘professional counselling’ is enacted, is intra-active, and how this and other forces intra-act in the production of tears, and therefore in an emerging counsellor subjectivity.

## **‘I wouldn’t hold myself back’ – the material-discursive practice of professional tears**

I feel like sometimes  
when I’m about to have some tears  
in my eyes  
I just tell my client –

*‘I think I’m going to cry now’.*

I grab a tissue,  
dab my eyes  
in front of them.

I have no hesitation in doing that,  
because to me, that’s –  
*‘I’m really listening to you’.*  
*‘I’m really resonating*

*with what you’re feeling’*  
so I don’t,  
I wouldn’t,  
hold myself back.

(Hannah, Poem two)

Hannah’s words in poem two depict the emergence of tears as felt in the body before they appear, suggesting that in some instances, there is a bodily material-discursive force which can act to allow or suppress them. Hannah says *‘when I’m about to have some tears in my eyes’*. She continues with this, saying *‘I just tell my client - / ‘I think I’m going to cry now’*’. This seems to align strongly with the person-centred practice of therapist genuineness and congruence, described above as facilitative of a professional counselling relationship. Congruence, as originally defined by the originator of person-centred therapy, Carl Rogers (2007), “means that within the relationship (the therapist) is freely and deeply himself, with his

actual experience accurately represented by his awareness of himself. It is the opposite of presenting a façade” (p. 242). Thus, tears are enabled within the context of the counselling relationship, here due to their resonance with counselling practices of genuineness and congruence and not presenting a façade, i.e. holding back emotion which is strongly present. Additionally, in this instance, the tears emerge in intra-action with a discursive counselling practice which aligns tears with a deep listening and resonance with the feelings of the client. Such tears again seem to be consonant with a strong relational emphasis in counselling practice, aligning with another of Rogers’ core conditions for therapy, empathy. Rogers writes that empathy, for a therapist, is about a sensing of “the client’s private world as if it were your own, but without ever losing the “as if” quality... To sense the client’s anger, fear, or confusion as if it were your own, yet without your own anger, fear, or confusion getting bound up in it” (2007, p. 243). However, he suggests that what is required of the therapist is not only a sensing, a feeling of resonance, but that the therapist communicates this empathy to the client. He says, “(w)hen the client’s world is this clear to the therapist, and he moves about in it freely, then he can both communicate his understanding of what is clearly known to the client” (p. 243). Hannah’s lack of hesitation in grabbing a tissue and dabbing her eyes, suggests just such a moving about in it freely.

Hannah’s practice of tears might be said to be constituted, in part, by person-centred or relational discursive counselling practices, in a way which facilitates and encourages tears. Hannah says *‘I wouldn’t hold myself back’*. Tears, in this sense, enact a professional counselling material-discursive practice, a professional counsellor subjectivity, embodying a primary force of professional counselling - to listen, be genuine and communicate empathy. Although Hannah describes the tears as signifying a resonance with what the client is feeling, suggesting the tears hold something of her own experience meeting that of the client’s, primacy appears to be given to the tears as a professional, rather than personal enactment. That is, she

is moved more in relation to what the client is saying, rather than overcome by the enlivening of something of her own body's historicity. Such a pattern of tears as described here, despite her words '*I wouldn't hold myself back*', appear somewhat controlled, less messy, more minimal in their expression – she is able to tell her client the tears are coming, and '*dab*' at her eyes with the tissue – they are not sufficient tears to require 'mopping up'. While still being genuine, such a pattern of tears maybe more easily embodies a professional (self-controlled) discursive practice. This, despite perhaps being always haunted by the personal, or existing in a relation of 'exteriority within', as evident in the word 'resonating', meaning to have the quality or effect of making you think of/feel a similar experience.

Thinking further of the enabling/constraining conditions of counsellor tears in the counselling space, I am compelled to think beyond the discursive practices available within the counselling field, to think of counselling as a material-discursive practice itself which also exists alongside other helping professions, and has its own material, socio-cultural history and practices. Counselling in New Zealand is described on the NZAC website as “the process of helping and supporting a person to resolve personal, social, or psychological challenges and difficulties”. A counsellor, described as “professional and well-trained” helps clients “to see things more clearly, possibly from a different view-point, and supports clients to focus on feelings, experiences or behaviour that will facilitate positive change”. Counselling is not, among other things, “getting emotionally involved with the client” or “looking at a client's problems from your own perspective, based on your own value system”. In this way, counselling invites a focus on a client's personal challenges and difficulties and legitimates a space of support to focus on feelings, on the emotional world of clients, in contrast to the vast array of work, family, and public spheres where rationality is most often prized over emotion. Emotion in this sense is invited, in a rare event, into the space of counselling.

However, clear parameters are laid down – the counsellor, in inviting the client to enter into their own emotional world (whether in relation to difficulties or to facilitate positive change), is *not* to become emotionally involved with the client or to consider the client’s problems from their own perspective or value system. Such material-discursive practices constituting the discipline of counselling can be seen then as a force acting to both enable and constrain the flow of counsellor tears. This can be seen more clearly if we are to return to Barad’s notion of intra-action, and even to Rogers’ empathy. It seems inevitable that, at some point, counsellors will ‘feel’ in relation to the feelings of their clients, and that this may emerge as a tearful display. I say inevitable given counselling’s invitation and legitimation of emotion, a counsellor’s imperative toward empathic sensing of the client’s world, and Barad’s notion of inseparability, of embodied alterity, of “having-the-other-in-one’s-skin” (Barad, 2007, p. 392). While all of these conditions act to enable and perhaps legitimate the possibility of counsellor ‘tears’, there are disciplining conditions which act to constrain, evident in NZAC’s clear directive that a counsellor does not become emotionally involved, or enter into their own perspectives and values. Hannah appears to exemplify this ‘personal-professional’ balance, of empathic sensing and personal constraint in her display of restrained tears.

Such tears, as material-discursive practice, can be said to constitute her counsellor subjectivity, not in a fixed sense, but rather as an ongoing reconfiguring. Tears too, are reconfigured, as is emotion, as are the material-discursive practices of counselling, all intra-actively produced through one another in this ongoing, dynamic, intra-active “reworking of the nature of production of the very technologies of production themselves” (Barad, 2007, p. 240). Further mapping will continue to open up the numerous possibilities, or technologies of production, intra-acting in producing such affective performances. After all, despite the material-discursive practices which might be read to constitute counselling practice, there are, in addition perhaps infinite, affective, social, discursive and material processes which combine and carve out “who



we pay attention to, whose affect we are open to, and whose experience becomes our experience” (Wetherell, 2012, p. 150). Or, as Barad says “intra-actions iteratively reconfigure what is possible and what is impossible – possibilities do not sit still” (2007, p. 235).

### **Power at work through material-social forces in the production of tears**

In continuing to consider tears in an agential-realist sense, as a dynamic and shifting entanglement of relations, rather than simply as a ‘thing’, further consideration must be given to the incorporation of material-social factors, which Barad suggests includes, but is not limited to, “gender, race, sexuality, religion, and nationality, as well as class” (2007, p. 224). Central to such work, she says, is a new materialist understanding of power and its effects on the production of bodies and subjectivities. Barad suggests that the politics of identity has been demarcated by a geometrical conception of power, which, through performative discourse positions (Ringrose & Rawlings, 2015), flattens out and makes static that which is in effect dynamic. Such a geometric perspective sees power as working through social categories, such as gender, by defining binary norms which “designate, for instance, who is an intelligible boy or girl” (Ringrose & Rawlings, 2015, p. 8). Drawing on Butler, Ringrose and Rawlings (2015) describe gender not as a pre-existent biologically determined element, but as enacted or performed as “socially and culturally informed expressions (stylised acts) which are produced and reproduced to “constitute the fiction of a coherent stable identity and give the illusion of a fixed set of gender norms” (p. 6). Power is not an external force that acts on a subject but rather works as a force through the production of these dominant norms which define what it is to perform an acceptable, or failing, subjectivity, e.g. gender. Agential realism, while drawing on such performativity theories, goes beyond their exclusive focus on the human/social realm. As articulated throughout this project, this is done through the notions of material-discursive practices and intra-action. Power as a force works through material-discursive relations through the processes of intra-activity, where causes and effects are not pre-determined but are always

contingent, are intra-actively produced, reworked, and always hold the possibilities to be remade. It is this dynamic through which structures or categories are seen to be iteratively and intra-actively (re)produced and (re)configured which reworks “rigidified social formations of power” which foreclose agency and produce subjects as discursively determined (Barad, 2007, p. 240).

With this in mind, along with the words of the participants, I am interested to think how the categories of gender, culture and age intra-act and mutually co-constitute tears. Not as fixed identities or separate categories, but as themselves material-discursive practices which are intra-active and mutually transforming in every intra-action – as always, intra-actively, in-the-making (Barad, 2007). While I further map the entangled and intra-active relationship between tears and culture in poem four, poem three, below, introduces culture into the tear entanglement, with the words of Kai.

*'It's a cultural thing'*

It's a cultural thing as well,  
because with us  
it's okay.

It's more like you say to that person –  
'I'm hearing you',  
'I can relate  
to what you're saying'

so in a situation like that  
I would cry, I mean,  
I'd be in tears

(Kai, Poem three)

In talking of the emergence of tears in the counselling encounter, Kai, of Pacific Island ethnicity, says '*it's a cultural thing*'. Tears are entangled with, inseparable from, culture in counselling encounters. I am curious, as I was returned to Poem two, to Hannah's words, who identifies herself as South-East Asian Chinese, how this ethnicity intra-acts in the production of tears in the counselling encounter for her, how is it mutually transforming with the other forces, of professionalism, of tears? I wonder too, then, how

my 'whiteness', and my Western, Pākehā subjectivity, intra-act with the others forces I outline above, to generate my tears and my discomfort at their production in the counselling encounter, and ultimately, how these all intra-act to effect the counselling relationship and client subjectivity.

I use the term 'whiteness' here as a "White racial identity" in order to make visible that which is said to achieve its "oppressive power through invisibility" (Sue, 2015, p. 149). That is, in order to challenge the common assumption that "that the study of race focuses only on "people of colour"", Rodriguez and Villaverde (2000), contend that ""marking" Whiteness--illuminating veiled cultural assumptions of Whiteness as the norm--is an important step toward social justice" in education (Abstract online). In fitting with an agential-realist view, whiteness is conceived of not as a "stable object of study, nor a stagnant identity", but as a "performative social interrelation", "a fluid set of knowledges and practices...with important consequences"

(McDonald, 2005 in McDonald, 2009, p. 9). As such, it becomes more useful not to describe what whiteness is, but rather what it does and how it works, particularly in relation to its dominance, normativity, and privilege in social, psychic, cultural, and economic terms for those bodies racially marked as white (McDonald, 2009). Thus, I am challenged to not think of culture, when it arises in my data, as only relevant to “people of colour” (Rodriguez, 2000), but to instead look to make visible and examine the force of whiteness, and how its normativity and privilege also intra-act with other forces to produce particular effects. Considered in this way, I become curious as to how the privilege of my whiteness might intra-act with the perceived privilege of the ‘expert’ counsellor subjectivity, and with the rationality of professionalism to centre or privilege a counsellor’s tears, despite their ‘irrationality’. None of these forces exist separately, but rather intra-actively come to exist and act in mutually constitutive ways to enact tears, as an object and as a force. I wonder, how might these material-discursive forces intra-act in a counselling encounter, to effect a client subjectivity given, particularly, the presence and movement of power through such an entanglement (e.g. potential client vulnerability and perceived counsellor expertise)?

These are complicated, but important questions for the field of counselling, given both its relative newness as a profession and its potential for abuses of power in what can be a very private encounter. Whilst this analysis cannot do the work of exploring the effects upon clients, it can do the work of attempting to map and examine relevant forces and their potential effects for counsellors-in-training, including in their counselling encounters, in order to then consider pedagogical and ultimately client, implications. Tears, already, have become more than simply a mark on a face. In thinking with Barad, it becomes obvious, how, “in this relational ontology there is a strange topology, a world inside each point, each bit, each tiny moment” (Barad, 2016, 35:18), a world inside tears. I wish to re-turn to the poems in order to continue to explore this world, the exteriority within tears, understanding them as Barad does, to be a “dense seed

filled with other times and spaces” (2016, 34:38), in order to also think further about the multiple forces intra-acting within the world of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity.

In poem three, above, Kai speaks of the tears as embodying, similar to Hannah in poem two, a practice of empathy, of ‘*hearing*’ and relating to the client’s words. However, she describes this as a ‘*cultural thing*’, whereas above I have suggested Hannah’s tears enacting a force of empathy as professionalism. Kai goes on to suggest in poem four, below, that, in a counselling setting with a Pacific counsellor and client, if she sits *without* tears - being *professional*, her client ‘*will not think I relate to her*’. I present the poem as a whole first over the following two pages, and then use excerpts to think with the theory in the main body of the text.

(i)

I'll have a problem  
trying to control  
my tears.

I know it depends  
on the client I have  
in front of me. My client –

it was really one of those  
hard cases where  
it was so emotional.

I think I was so caught up  
with the emotions  
and I think there was a shift

of me putting on a different hat –  
I look at the girl,  
more like my daughter.

I'm trying to process  
what she's talking about, but  
at the same time,

trying to figure out my emotions here,  
what to do  
and trying to control, because

I know, by theory  
you're not supposed to,  
I'm aware of, the culture –

this is a non-Pacific  
so it's not okay to have tears.  
I was so uncomfortable,

(ii)

she was directly facing me –  
I'm looking around for a tissue  
and just pretending, you know,

but I do have tears,  
just to hide the tears,  
and I'm looking for tissues.

But if this is a setting –  
a counsellor setting  
with the Pacific, it's okay.

she's not a Pacific person but,  
if this is a setting with a Pacific person  
and I sit like this –

trying to be professional,  
that person opposite me  
will not think I relate to her.

It happened that the girl –  
I found out that she's Māori,  
and I said to (my supervisor), "she's Māori

and I think she was okay"  
because I get some sort of good rapport  
with the girl, so when she sees me  
it's okay.

and she was relaxing –  
it was a moment where she was emotional  
and I was as well  
it was okay.

(iii)

And I think we have to go –  
you know it depends on your client,  
your relationship with your clients

and this is what I thought.

I kind of reflect on these things  
about tears, emotions, because,  
I think for us it's different.

(Kai, Poem four)

Turning to Sara Ahmed's (2014) work on the cultural politics of emotion helps me to think/feel my way further through this. She states that emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, and drawing on Spinoza (1959, in Ahmed, 2014), says that emotions shape what bodies can do. This orients her toward asking what emotions do, rather than what emotions are. Tears, in this sense, as an overt display of emotion, are a force, they enable bodies to *do* something, to act in certain ways, and not in others. These are not innate or characteristic forces though, rather they are material-discursive ones. Ahmed highlights how she does not think about emotionality as a characteristic of bodies, rather the more interesting and useful focus for her becomes about the processes "whereby 'being emotional' comes to be seen as a characteristic of some bodies and not others, in the first place" (2014, p. 4). Primarily, and historically, emotion has come to be associated with women, "who are represented as 'closer' to nature, ruled by appetite, and less able to transcend the body through thought, will and judgement" (p. 3). Associated with this, Ahmed says, is emotion as behind and beneath reason, as 'less than', in an evolutionary sense, due to its association with pre-history and primitive times. Such primitive times, and thus emotion, also comes to be associated with being "less white" (p. 3). This evolutionary

(including of the brain, e.g. from the reptilian to the limbic to the neocortex) story of linear progress, which tells of the triumph of reason over emotion and of the development of the rational ability to control one's emotions, relegates emotion, women and people of colour to a subordinated (backward) position. What it also does is to create norms which associate and legitimate emotion with being female and non-white, albeit in a subordinate position to being male, white and rational. Plugging this thinking back into the poem, culture – Pacific/Māori and non-Pacific - becomes a material-discursive force, intra-active in the production tears. Tears are not a natural characteristic of some bodies and not others, rather they embody political histories which continue to exert a force shaping how (and whose) bodies come to matter.

In returning to the poems, we can see whilst the tears in both the words of Hannah and Kai appear to embody a practice of listening, hearing and relating, this is not the whole story. The forces of culture and professionalism, of client and counsellor subjectivities, intra-act in different ways, to enact different tear diffractive patterns and differing, thus, counsellor-in-training subjectivities. This becomes apparent in Poem four, where Kai says '*it depends / on the client I have / in front of me*', '*I'm aware of, the culture - / this is a non-Pacific / so it's not okay to have tears*'. In contrast to the '*okay-ness*' of her tears in poem three, produced between counsellor and client both of Pacific Island ethnicity, and which then enact listening/hearing/relating, she talks of being '*so uncomfortable*', '*looking around for a tissue*' and '*just pretending*' not to have tears, when the emergence of her tears intra-acts with a non-Pacific client. In this instance of her tears, they also intra-act with '*theory*', with the gaze of her white, academic supervisor, and with '*trying to be professional*' - all of which she reads as cautioning against crying, and with her mother subjectivity – '*I look at the girl, / more like my daughter*', to produce tears which require '*control*' and hiding. Tears which become personal (triggered by her mother subjectivity) and non-professional (against theoretical, academic, and cultural (white, Western) conventions). At this point, her counsellor subjectivity becomes



conflicted, she experiences these tears as performing an unacceptable counsellor subjectivity and seeks to *'control'* and *'hide'* them. And then things change again. The tears move in a different direction. Kai finds out her client is Māori, she recognises the rapport she already has with this client, that *'she was relaxing'*, and the tears become *'okay'* - *'a moment where she was emotional / and I was as well / it was okay'*. Suddenly her counsellor subjectivity, as enacted through tears, becomes acceptable again, desirable even, when performed intra-actively with a Māori client, and with the flow of rapport.

Tears are not cultural in the sense that their production and effects are dependent upon the ethnicity of the client *or* the counsellor. Rather culture, as a material-discursive force, intra-acts with both counsellor and client subjectivity, in a relational sense, and with the multitude of other forces, to produce both the tears and the effects of them, on counsellor, client and counselling itself. It is only through such a mapping that we can begin to see the multiple, intra-active forces co-constituting something, tears, which on the surface, can appear as a universally marked, individual phenomenon to be read in particular and limit-ed/ing ways. In this case, tears are enacted in relation to discursive practices constituting emotion as characteristic of some bodies and not others. The mapping of tears in this poem depicts the dynamic and intra-active processes through which tears are enabled and constrained, are made intelligible, in relation, at least to the dynamic forces of culture and the counselling context. It is impossible to speak of and understand the performativity of tears, except as in relation to the multiple forces co-constituting their emergence. Reading tears in this way, enables a richer, more nuanced understanding of the happening of tears, of their complexity and inseparable relationality.

*Male tears as brave and strong*

Poem five, and the words of Basil, pattern masculinity as a force in relation to the enactment of tears. This isn't to say gender has not been present until now. Gender, and culture, may only arise in the narrative when they are enacted in relation to their non-dominance. The presence of no-gender and no-culture, or their absent-presence suggests taken for granted assumptions, and leads to an invisibility of such forces at work. This is evident above when I talk about whiteness as an obscured invisibility enacting discursive practices of privilege and power, and how a focus on culture inevitability equates to focus on other-than-white. In a similar way, the invisibility (made visible through the presence here of masculinity) of femininity as a material-discursive practice in the co-constitution of tears also becomes a relevant force. Again, these are not essentialized categories of what it is to be male or female, rather a contextual, situated mapping enables us to consider how emotion functions as a gendering construct (Shields, 2013), and in turn how (dynamic) material-discursive practices of gender co-constitute the emergence of tears. This is a move away from questions of gender differences to issues of gender and power in the performance of emotion/tears and of what comes to matter, for whom and how. Such a move invites consideration, not of essential difference, but of when and how emotion (tears) are made legitimate, in this instance through the intra-activity of material-discursive practices of heteronormative gender, counselling, culture, age and so on.

As I state above, drawing on Ahmed's (2014) work on the cultural politics of emotion, emotion has a long history of a 'natural' connection with women, "who are represented as 'closer' to nature, ruled by appetite, and less able to transcend the body through thought, will and judgement" (p. 3). Female emotion - to be emotional - is likened to having one's judgement affected, being reactive rather than active, and dependent rather than autonomous (Ahmed, 2014). Such "feminine" emotion has been described as a "by-product of female reproductive physiology and evolutionary need to be attractive to males" with little useful effect beyond this

(Shields, 2013, p. 425). In this same body of work examining late 19<sup>th</sup> century British and American Scientific writing, “masculine” emotion, by comparison, was described as “a passionate force evident in the drive to achieve, to create, and to dominate” (Shields, 2013, p. 425). Thus, it is not simply that women have been constructed as emotional and men as rational, with higher status, power and value given to rationality, but even where masculine expressions of emotion are evident, these have achieved alternative legitimacy by being accorded values consistent with heteronormative masculinities – drive, achievement, and domination. Shields (2013) labels the ongoing work of disrupting essentialism and situating and contextualising the relation between gender and emotion a process of examining “fault lines”. Fault lines, she says, reveal gender-emotion enactments not to be natural expressions, but rather “ideologies embedded in social-structural systems” (p. 430). Through this, as well as an intersectional (and intra-actional) approach to social identities, not only can emotion become detached from gender, but the very notion of gender as a fixed binary difference is also called into question.

For now, I return to the current context of counselling in order to further map gender as a force in the co-constitution of tears. First, looking back to the poems above, we see tears produced through female bodies. Gender here was an invisible force, unremarkable in relation to the context of tears and counselling. But how did it work? As I have identified, tears as an emotional phenomena are constituted as a normative practice of femininity, and as such their presence within the counselling room, a place also constituted by emotional (feminine) practices, is accorded legitimacy in relation to female bodies. Indeed, such practices likely reinforce the essentialized and naturalised version of female emotionality. The effects of counsellor tears for clients will be influenced by a multitude of other forces beyond this, however.

As a male counsellor  
I see quite a few guys who –  
well young men, who  
                  are on the verge  
of tears  
or are in tears, because  
their dad’s died  
                  or something.  
I cry along with them.  
I try and tell them that  
it’s brave and strong,  
                  actually  
to express your emotions,  
and healthy.  
  
(Basil, Poem five)

Turning to Basil’s words in poem five, the relation between tears/emotion and masculinity is brought to the foreground. Tears here intra-act with male bodies. Basil says, in working with young male clients ‘*I cry along with them*’. Here, the phenomena of his counsellor tears is intra-actively produced with a male subjectivity, with male client and counsellor subjectivities, with the discursive-materiality of young-male-client tears, with the affective-material-discursive space of the counselling room and its privileging of emotional lives. Multiple forces intra-act to enable and legitimate the flow of tears, while Basil’s tears can also be read as a fault line – an “opportunity to disrupt essentialism (that) comes from pointing out the contrast between the widespread belief that “real” men are inexpressive and the coexisting numerous everyday life examples of “real” men expressing many different types and intensities of emotion” (Shields, 2013, p. 430). Basil’s tears are enacted partly in a counter-cultural way, seemingly in resistance to the normativity of male tears as weakness. Male counsellor tears are enacted as brave and

strong, as a healthy emotional material-discursive practice, cut together-apart from female tears as an emotionally weak, vulnerable, and unhealthy/unwell (neurotic) material-discursive practice. Male emotion/tears in this context, are made acceptable, legitimated, through normalised male discourses of 'brave' and 'strong', embodied within a body marked as male. Tears and brave-strong-male mutually transform each other and come to inhabit one another and, in turn, inhabit and enliven the becoming-counsellor and -client. What seems to remain cut-apart, a haunting, still, is tears as vulnerable, male as vulnerable, yet somehow still made acceptable. Tears, it seems, still enact a weak/strong binary equated with the female/male binary and to be made acceptable, so as not to be constituted as a failure, male tears must be constituted by discursive practices of male strength.

These tear patterns outlined thus far also reinforce their inseparability from the relationality of counsellor-client – they embody both subjectivities and do not make sense as belonging only to a personal, individual body. That is, they embody the relationality of male counsellor-male client, or Pacific Island counsellor-Pacific Island client, in that they would emerge differently and produce different effects, given different intra-acting genders, cultures and multiple other forces. It is only through this kind of mapping that we can begin to perceive the ways in which such forces, often invisible, move and flow and entangle in their intra-actions to produce lived experience for counsellors-in-training. That we can see lived experience not as that of a self-contained, autonomous individual but that rather, “individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating”, not “once and for all” but iteratively, dynamically, in an ongoing reconfiguration (Barad, 2007, p. ix). Thinking in this way for counsellors-in-training raises questions of what we do and how we respond to the new kinds of knowledge this produces. It is becoming clear that tears are multiple, there is no right, or wrong, or, as Barad (2007) says,

(t)here are no solutions; there is only the ongoing practice of being open and alive to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly ( p. x).

Neither is justice something to be achieved once and for all, rather it entails continual “acknowledgement, recognition and loving attention” (p. x). It is my intention to return to such response-ability, for now, I re-turn to mapping the diffractive tear patterns.

### **Collisions**

In the next poem (six), Kelly’s words make visible numerous further and complex material-discursive forces at work in the counselling room, in the lives of counsellors in training, and here, in this particular enactment of tears. Once again, I present the poem as a whole, before engaging with mapping the intra-active forces producing Kelly’s lived experience of tears.

(i)

I was aware of my own,  
very aware, of my own needs and vulnerability  
that day that that happened –

that whole overwhelmed,  
hit a brick wall  
just so over it,

just want to fix it,  
want to almost leave the room,  
just walk off the premises, almost.

That was more reflective  
of how things were for me  
on that day –

like that fixing, making it better,  
you know, wanting to cocoon people,  
wrap them up, give them a cuddle.

Yeah, make the pain go away.  
I think it crept up on me very unsuspectingly –

kind of these double whammy situations  
of one client and then directly followed  
by a crisis

of two other girls coming in who'd had a friend  
who'd cut themselves quite badly in the toilet  
and they were overwhelmed

and so I think more, more, more, you know,  
these are teenagers.

I just want to make it better.  
and ultimately I like the fact  
that I have those feelings.

(ii)

I appreciate that, that sensitivity  
and having spent a day today  
at a suicide workshop,

and that feeling of deep empathy  
and being able to share pain  
and being able to share tears

but knowing that it's that genuine empathy  
that isn't transferred on my pain.  
My tears, not because I'm wanting to fix it,

it's my tears  
because I'm feeling your pain, yep.

When I think of our own world view  
our own values and beliefs  
and how they need to be sitting

so richly side by side,  
keeping very much in touch  
but not impose those

but never lose sight of what they are  
and, it was a real collision for me  
you know (*voice breaks*).

And yet I know that collision came  
when there was a hell of a lot going on  
for me, you know in my mother role.

And I won't take that away,  
but just knowing,  
that's my frailty, but it's my gift,  
I like to think of it like that.

(Kelly, poem six)

Reading this poem over and over again, I am struck by the multiplicity of forces, as Kelly says, coming together in *'collision'*. I am reading *'collision'* to be the moment when tears emerge for her with a client - *'being able to share tears'* and *'it's my tears / because I'm feeling your pain, yep.'* Although writing, both in the poem and here in my analysis, invites a linear telling of such a collision, a story of causes and effects, the sense the poem produces is of a much more entangled, dynamic, and potentially dis-orient-ed/ing process. Process descriptions such as *'it crept up on me very unsuspectingly'*, *'double whammy situations'*, *'more, more, more'*, *'it was a real collision for me'* and *'a hell of a lot going on'* speak to what Kathleen Stewart (2007) calls 'ordinary affects', which she says "work not through "meanings" per se, but rather in the way they pick up density and texture as they move through bodies, dreams, dramas and social worldings of all kinds" (p. 3). Kelly's words, too, speak of a shifting, swerving, lively process always in motion, such that collisions are perhaps, unavoidable. These are everyday flows and forces "with capacities to affect and be affected" (p. 2) which shift and slide, disperse and collide, becoming significant in the "intensities they build and in what thoughts and feelings they make possible" (p. 3), such as the emergence of tears.

Such a way of perceiving the world, as a continual motion of entangled relations and emergences, defies traditional conceptualisations of causality, and thus of agency, accountability and responsibility as well. Returning to Barad, I am reminded agential realism does not figure causal relations as "specific relations between isolated objects" where one separate entity modifies, leaves it mark on, or is the cause of the effect on another. It is rather, that, in the emergence of the phenomena of tears, causal relations entail specifications that enact an agential cut. Cause and effect, in this sense, "emerge though intra-actions" (2007, p. 176). Particular forces are cut apart, coalesce together, collide, becoming determinable only in the enactment, here, of Kelly's tears. As Barad says "bodies differentially materialize (e.g. tears) as particular patterns of the world as a result of the specific cuts and reconfigurings that



are enacted” (p. 176). Thus, it is not that Kelly’s needs, vulnerabilities, overwhelm, multiple clients, clients’ self-harming, deep empathy, mother subjectivity all acted within a counselling space as pre-existent separate entities to cause the effect of her tears, but rather that such propertied entities are made intelligible only in their causal intra-active relations in the enactment of tears. These material-discursive forces, and others, were cut together-apart, in a dynamic and ever-changing topology, in the emergence of Kelly’s tears.

Agency, in this reconfigured relational causality, becomes a matter of intra-action, rather than a human attribute. “*Agency is “doing” or being” in its intra-activity*” (Barad, 2007, p. 178). Kelly’s ‘doing’ or ‘being’ of tears, cannot be read simply as a personal capacity or wilful expressiveness (or constraint). Such thinking elicits personal agentic notions which equate tears with, for example, failed self-control or purposeful manipulation, which render invisible the multiple material-discursive forces intra-actively enacting them in any one moment. Agency in an intra-active sense, released from humanist notions of intentionality, can only ever be dynamic and relational, with the self’s capacity to act always inseparable from the larger material arrangements of which we are a part, and which are embodied in, for example, the emergence of tears. Such a conceptualisation of agency as a matter of intra-acting, rather than something someone has, or a result of individual will, inevitably raises questions of accountability and responsibility, given also intra-action’s non-deterministic (albeit constraining) quality present by way of its iterative reconfiguring. In relation to the emergence of tears in the counselling room, what accountability does Kelly have? What responsibility can she enact in relation to her clients given the multitude of lively forces intra-actively colliding in the emergence of her tears?

Barad (2007) refers to this, in different places, as a post-humanist ethics of knowing, of worlding, of mattering, in ways in which, I think, has significance for the ethics of counselling and for educating counsellors. Barad contends that, although we humans do not make the world

on our own, as a result of humanistic qualities such as intentionality and will, we do “participate in bringing forth the world in its specificity, including ourselves” (2007, p. 353). This is what she means by ‘meeting the universe halfway’, in the title of her book. We move toward, participate in, engage with – always in a state of relationality – what comes to matter with accountability and responsibility (“the ability to respond to the other” (p. 392)) for our part in the world’s differential becoming. Differentiating, in an agential realism framework, is not about separating, being other than, but rather is about making connections and commitments.

Reading Kelly’s words in this poem again and again, I am drawn to several lines which I think embody this kind of ethics. Kelly speaks about all of the intra-active forces enacted in the emergence of her tears, but states ‘*it’s my tears / because I’m feeling your pain, yep*’. Her pain as inseparable from their pain. It was in that moment in which tears emerged, depicting Barad’s notion of matter as being “always already open to, or rather entangled with, the ‘Other’” (Barad, 2007, p. 393). This is a subtle, but important, distinction from a humanist ethics of intention or choice or morals, from one human responding to a different other. It is an ethics which arises from the very onto-epistemology of the intra-activity of the agential realist framework which rejects the metaphysics of individualism, the foundation of traditional ethical approaches. Barad says “(w)e are always already responsible to the others with whom or which we are entangled, not through conscious intent but through the various ontological entanglements that materiality entails...(e)thics is not about right response to a radically exterior/ized other...” (p. 393). Rather, it is about responding to the lively relationalities of becoming, as Kelly’s tears did, of which we are always, already a part.

The emergence of sharing tears, as ‘*sharing pain*’, stands in stark contrast to what Kelly notices, at first, is being produced, in relation to the multitude of forces intra-acting in these moments – her desire to ‘fix it’, to ultimately ‘make the pain go away’. She speaks of ‘*making it better / you know, wanting to cocoon people, / wrap them up, give them a cuddle*’ and for herself, a

*desire 'to almost leave the room'*. These desires are not enacted in practice, rather they are intra-active with the multiple other forces and desires and ethics, which ultimately produce the emergence of the phenomena of tears, rather than, say, an attempt to exert power over, or take action to enact an expert 'fixing'. This is reflective of Barad's assertion that "accountability and responsibility must be thought of in terms of what matters and what is excluded from mattering" (p. 394). What came to matter – tears - was a sharing, a being with, a feeling with, which embodied self and other, and an ethics so clearly described by K as '*our own world view / our own values and beliefs / and how they need to be sitting / so richly side by side, / keeping very much in touch / but not impose those*'.

Meeting each moment, as this poem depicts, and being alive to all of its possibilities, is an ethical call to intra-act responsibly, to be responsive to the possibilities for flourishing for all. For Kelly, this collision becomes just that. Alive to all of the possibilities, embodying her needs and vulnerabilities as 'frailty', the dense seed of tears finally becomes, also, a 'gift'. That is not to say that they remain so. As Stewart (2007) reminds us, ordinary affects are always in motion, in circulation. What happens in the next moment, for the client, for Kelly, is another possibility, in the ongoingness of the world's vitality, which will hold the seed of the tears and will continue to morph, and swerve and cut together-apart in relation to the ongoing, intra-activity of their subjectivities.

### **Temporality and spatiality – 'it just took me right back'**

Leaving (but not leaving behind) Kelly, I turn now to poem seven. I am immediately, in a diffractive moment, struck by the almost simultaneous co-presence, in this researcher body as a space of transit, of both Barad's words that "(s)patiality and temporality must also be accounted for in terms of the dynamics of intra-activity (2007 p. 180) and Basil's words on temporality and spatiality in this poem. Speaking of a moment in a session with a client, Basil

says, and repeats, *'it just took me right back. / It just took me back, right back / to that same sort of place, and feelings'*. He articulates "multiple temporalities working in the same moment as echoes or presences of other spaces" (Juelskaer, 2013 p. 758), and while he says this 'key word' - *'abandonment' 'just took me 'boom' straight back, / it was so curious'*, he is also clear that *'I was still there with her / in the counselling room', 'I could be alongside her completely'*. In two places, and times, at once? The whole poem follows, and is presented as a diffractive experiment with time and space. It is a long poem. By laying out the parts of the whole poem over five pages, with my text laid out alongside each of the parts, I invite the reader to experiment with reading the multiple and split texts in different times and spaces.

(i)

Working with a client –  
a client in white hot rage  
at her mother,

because she was not allowed  
to be angry as a child.

All those feelings

and vulnerabilities and fears stirred me up,  
and increased my understanding of her world.

I didn't reflect to her

what had happened to me  
but it just took me right back.

It just took me back, right back

to that same sort of place, and feelings  
of abandonment, and the same stuff  
around not being allowed to be angry.

Well I said to her I can, I can, I know it's –  
no I didn't say I know exactly how  
you're feeling – I think I said something like

'I know what you've been through', sort of  
thing, 'I've been through a similar experience  
but I can't know exactly –

you know, how painful or difficult it was  
for you', but just let her know  
that I had been in a similar situation.

It was very difficult, it's difficult here now.  
It was difficult and she saw that  
and I was happy that she saw that actually.

So far, I have talked of tears as moments of emergence where the gender, cultural, affective and daily politics, ethics and subjectivities of the lives of counsellors-in-training are reconfigured. Tears are not mere emotional reactions to the world, but embody, and act as, personal-social-cultural-material-ethical-political forces of the world (Gorska, 2016). To stop here, though, would not be enough for Barad. Agential realism, she says, is not just about posing a different set of dynamics and conditions for explaining the nature of and possibilities for change – “it introduces an altogether different understanding of dynamics” (2007, p. 179). Necessary to this changed – and changing – dynamics of causality and agency are matters of time and space. Tears, for example, cannot be said to emerge, as a material-discursive enactment, at a point along a “continuous transformation in or through time”, nor take place “in a container called space” (p. 179). Rather, tears, as a diffractive pattern, are an iterative intra-active becoming of

(ii)

It's about being real for me  
in the counselling session –  
it took me back to that sort of vulnerability

and those emotions  
and that sadness  
and that desolation and abandonment stuff,

all over again.

It was pretty horrible.  
her rage at her mother –

just at that stage,  
just took me 'boom' straight back,  
it was so curious.

Straight back to that feeling.  
Being kicked out, being abandoned,  
the abandonment, I think,

was the word that got me,  
I'm pretty sure it was –  
that was the key word

that sort of took me back,  
it made sense to me.

So I think for me at that stage,

it was about being with her in the moment  
and where she was at in her journey,  
and she's reflected

that's probably the most useful thing for her  
at the moment –  
that I'm going at her pace on this

spacetime mattering (Barad, 2010). In this quantum reconfiguration, everything that has been taken for granted under Newtonian physics is disrupted, and such a radical departure from time as continuous, place as the container and matter as discrete is a disconcerting, yet compelling, one. As Loewen-Walker (2014) suggests, drawing on Barad and Deleuze, perhaps one of the radical potentials of new materialism is primarily a philosophy of time. It's this potential I am interested to explore further, in the context of this poem and its evidence of spacetime mattering, and also ultimately for the philosophy and pedagogy of change. Such a philosophy is inherent in both counsellor education and counselling itself, and typically remains underpinned by those somewhat invisible Newtonian forces and neoliberal discourses of agentic forward movement and progress, and the existence of a present defined by remedying pasts and/or anticipating superior futures

(iii)

difficult rocky journey  
and not trying to sort of spin  
any grand solutions at the moment.

So I think it was just about being real  
and about being with her  
and having some resonance with what she  
was going through, that deeply affected me.  
I think it sort of gave me  
an increased understanding

about what she was going through.  
Yes, I mean, I was still there with her  
in the counselling room

and had a much better handle on it  
and a much better perspective on it now  
so that I knew I could identify

where it'd come from  
and what it was associated with –  
was useful actually, so it didn't take me  
back

and consume me or anything like that.  
It was just, it was just really interesting  
to almost be an observer seeing me

go back to that place as well,  
but I had good control over it, if you like  
it was useful.

It's interesting it still affects me  
it's very interesting.  
But yeah it was okay

(Lowen-Walker, 2014). While, as Lowen-Walker says, such discourses are not entirely problematic, in that hope, imagining the new, and holding possibilities “for worlds, bodies and practices beyond what we can imagine in the present” (p. 53) characterize feminist possibilities for transforming injustices, current conceptualisations of time in counsellor education tend to reply on linearity and continuity (cf. Goldberg et al., 2016, who ask “do psychotherapists improve with time and experience - which they suggest has been a much studied topic of interest since the origins of psychotherapy research).

In an agential realist framework, what comes to matter, what becomes intelligible, is instead made of, formed from and cuts-together apart, different times and spaces, which are simultaneously mutually transformed. Past, present and future are not in a relation of a continuous, linear mutating and unfolding, but are iteratively

(iv)

because I could be alongside her completely, in her distress really. Yeah it is okay –

it's part of life as I know it so it's not, hasn't overtaken me or consumed me. It's part of who I am.

(I have of course completely forgiven her because we all, we all do what best we can at the time

we don't have the benefit of hindsight). But it doesn't make the memory go away or any less sharp.

And it can still, it can still come up and I need to be, I am aware of it of course.

It was more that I could completely empathise with where she was at, completely understand

what was driving some of her, the stuff that was going on for her at the moment,

I could completely understand that sort of abandonment stuff, and quite a lot of the issues that she was dealing with

Because they've been part of me as well. I really value it actually. I think it's been quite powerful for me –

threaded through one another in a non-linear, dis/continuous enfolding (Barad, 2010). Other times and spaces are “alive in the thick now of the present”. This is an aliveness which exists “not merely as subjective personal experience or even only as social reality, but ontologically and materially” (Barad, 2016, 34:44). Basil's words point toward this aliveness. He describes it as being taken back, by a word of a client – abandonment - in a moment, into a past, which became enlivened in the present.

He says '*back to that sort of vulnerability / and those emotions / and that sadness / and that desolation and abandonment stuff / all over again*'. This is not a subjective remembering, rather it is a past as a real and present material force, intra-actively reconfigured with another present, and with multiple other affective-material-discursive forces, including those of words ('*abandonment*'), counsellor, adult, child and client subjectivities, a counselling room, an ethics of compassion, kindness



(v)

sort of a number of the issues  
that the clients come with  
that I can identify with quite closely

which in some ways is comfortable,  
sort of familiar  
as familiar to them

as they are to me,  
except that I've got a better handle  
on them now.

I believe it has resulted  
in me having deep compassion  
and kindness and empathy

and understanding and acute awareness  
of family of origin issues  
for so many clients.

(Basil, Poem seven)

and empathy, and so on. The way Basil speaks of the occurrence of this moment in the counselling room, can be read as an intra-active one, an entanglement which pulls together a multitude of forces, as noted above, of times, spaces and subjectivities. It might be easy to initially read this experience as one in which he was catapulted into the past, overcome with his own experience and resulting emotion, signalling a need for further 'personal work'. And, indeed, this experience may have generated that decision, among others, for Basil. However, to simplify the analysis of this moment in Basil's becoming counsellor subjectivity to 'one' thing would be reductive, in the sense of both the multitude of actual co-present, embodied forces as well as then in the possibilities generated from mapping such a multiplicity. What else, then, can be seen in a mapping drawing from Basil's words in this poem? How are time, space and matter reconfigured, threaded through one another, in this '*difficult*' moment, shared between counsellor and client?

Barad tells us that “the past is never left behind, never finished once and for all...rather the past and the future are enfolded participants in matter’s iterative becoming” (2007, p. 181). There is more than one past present, though, in the moment of Basil’s retelling. Basil speaks of also having a *‘much better handle on it / and a much better perspective on it’* which meant, he says, that the intrusion of the past, and its affect in particular, didn’t *‘consume’* him in that present moment. Co-present was an adult subjectivity which had worked with this past to the point where Basil says *‘it’s part of life as I know it.../ it’s part of who I am’*. In relation to his experience of abandonment as a child, he says, as an adult *‘I have of course completely forgiven her / because we all, we all / do what best we can at the time’*. The co-presence of this adult subjectivity acted as *‘an observer’*, he says, witnessing the re-turn *‘that place’*, but also meant he *‘had good control over it’*, over what the re-turn generated, affectively, in his body. This adult subjectivity was able to *‘identify / where it’d come from / and what it was associated with’*, the ‘it’ being the co-presence, the unanticipated emergence of, *‘those emotions...that sadness...and that desolation and abandonment stuff’*.

Basil notes *‘it’s interesting it still affects me / it’s very interesting’*, and earlier, he notes after saying it *‘took me ‘boom’ straight back’*, that *‘it was so curious’*. Upon mapping this moment for himself, here, he notes his own curiosity, interest, and surprise, that this past was so affectively, materially present for him in this moment, especially, perhaps, given the time and attention he has given to working with these affective memories over the course of his life. At the same time he recognizes that this doesn’t seem to *‘make the memory go away / or any less sharp’* with the implication, as a counsellor, that *‘it can still come up’* and he needs to be aware of this possibility.

This mapping, and thinking the mapping with Barad’s agential realism, troubles the dominant (counselling) discourse of identity and experience being shaped and transformed progressively, over time, and seems to speak to Basil’s curiosity at the sudden co-presence of a past he perhaps

thought he had left behind, or at least, worked through and transformed. Such a view is consistent with traditional humanist notions of an essentialist, linear identity. Counselling, as with neoliberalism, is underpinned by “constructions of time as a linear and cumulative movement forward” resulting in a fixation on “human agency as the sole means by which we can bring about the anticipated future” (Lowen-Walker, 2014, p. 52). Such conceptualisations rely on time as chronological with its familiar notions of before and after bound together through iterative causes and effects rolling ever onward into unknown but potentially hoped for, agentic futures. With this view, it would indeed be surprising to be thrust back, or to find oneself co-present with, the material affects of a past time and space, seemingly left behind.

At the same time, Basil seems to recognise the co-existence, the inevitable coming together of both pasts – that the memory doesn’t go away, or become ‘any less sharp’, even with the work of forgiveness. These multiple pasts intra-acting with the present – with the counsellor – client intra-action - nevertheless do not portray a fixity to these forces. That is, the presence of this lively and enlivening past of ‘*sadness, desolation, and abandonment stuff*’ does not necessarily signify a stuck, fixed, troublesome identity which requires further transformational work in order that it does not interfere with the work of counselling. This force of the past is intra-active with multiple other forces in the production of tears, and of Basil’s counsellor subjectivity. The work this force does, or what it produces for Basil’s subjectivity and/or in the counselling relationship is relational. In Baradian terms, it is an inseparable part of the entangled phenomena emergent with this time and space. Nothing stands separately constituted and positioned - practices of knowing and being are always entangled. Connections are always reconfigured and boundaries never stand still, including pasts, presents and futures. “Scenes never rest but are reconfigured within and are dispersed across and threaded through one another. Multiple entanglements, differences cutting through and re-splicing one another (Barad, 2010, p. 245). This past, of sadness, desolation and abandonment, is only existent as

an inseparable part of the phenomena of tears, then enacting (intra-active with) Basil's subjectivity in the counselling room, in this moment. It is a past intra-active with another past, of an adult subjectivity signified by understanding and forgiveness, and a counsellor subjectivity holding a desire to be helpful to the client. These multiple forces are also intra-active with, inseparable from, co-emergent with, the words and experience of the client. As Basil says, it was '*being with her / and having some resonance with what she / was going through, that deeply affected me*'. What this intra-action produces, in the tears, in the response to the client, cannot be determined through consideration of one of these forces alone. It is only in a detailed mapping of the diffractive pattern, that the tears, the counsellor response, become intelligible.

Pasts, in this sense, do not sit still, inertly waiting for attention. Nor can they be wiped away. They are hauntings in a thick temporality of a lively present (Lowen-Walker, 2014) with an always already possibility of a material ontological co-presence in the ongoing iterative reconfiguring of worlds. The co-presence of Basil's pasts, viewed in this way, give rise to a troubling, not only of linear notions of time and emotional/psychological progress, but in turn of binary notions of a troubled/untroubled therapist. Maree Adams (2014), concludes from her PhD research exploring the personal lives of forty therapists, that "I am now convinced that this wonderful term 'bracketing' is simply an illusion, a comforting idea that bears no relation to reality. We *cannot* leave our experiences outside the room. Even if not at the foreground of our minds, our tensions and pleasures, the rumbling envies and unresolved issues of archaic experience are always with us" (p. 2). In this way, she confronts the binary by suggesting the existence of the untroubled therapist is a myth, that none of us is ever completely untroubled, and that what is important is how we manage and respond to the presence of our struggles, particularly in the therapeutic context. Extending this notion, I think, beyond an ongoing 'managing' of personal struggles, Lowen-Walker, in writing about feminist politics, suggests

that we embrace this thick temporality, “recognizing its ability to deepen our accountabilities to those pasts and their possible futures.” Such a focus, she says, “becomes a necessary form of ethical engagement with the world...from the position of being always already entangled in a vital materiality” (2014, p. 56).

Similarly, drawing on Barad, I am reminded that such accountability and responsibility are an inseparable part of what comes to matter. Responsibility for what comes to matter is not just about recognising and managing the ‘personal’ intruding into the professional. It is about an attention to the fine detail of entanglements. It is about responding to the inseparability of the past, present and future, of the personal and the professional, of troubled and resourced subjectivities, and to what comes to matter through their multiple, ongoing, and iterative reconfiguring. This is what Basil speaks of when he says *‘but yeah it was okay / because I could be alongside her / completely, in her distress really’*. He reiterates *‘yeah it is okay’*. In that moment, where a moment from his childhood past was reconfigured with the present, and with his more resourced adult subjectivity and his becoming-counsellor self, what was produced for him was not an overwhelm of intrusive affect from the past, but rather tears which enacted a *‘deep compassion / and kindness and empathy / and understanding’*. For Basil, this is an ethical engagement, which holds an accountability and responsibility to the pasts which are present – his and his client’s, and to a future yet to come. Only in the cutting-together-apart of these multiple times, spaces, subjectivities, and affects was this response of deep compassion made possible.

Through attention to the process of mapping the tear poems, a number of forces entangled in the production of tears, have been made visible and explored in this chapter, including gender, culture, counselling theory, practice and ethics, and other subjectivities, times and spaces. At the same time consideration has been given not just to making such intra-active forces visible, but also, in thinking with Barad’s agential realism, to re-thinking notions of causality, time,

ethics and agency in the ongoing configuring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity. I continue to explore this material-discursive enactment of tears in the following interlude and in chapter eight, through attention to tears as a present-absence, or a haunting.

## INTERLUDE TWO

### The hauntological nature of quantum entanglements: ghostly tears and aporias

#### **Tears as a ghostly happening**

Lisa Blackman (2015), in her book chapter titled '*The Haunted Life of Data*', suggests that in recent years the politics of life, and thus of data, opens up questions about what counts as data. She writes initially in the context of our engagement across multiple (social) media platforms, where our transactions leave traces, becoming lively in ways that may be difficult to see, and thus analyse, but nevertheless have real, dynamic and ongoing lives and effects. She draws on the work of Karen Barad to conduct her own 'hauntological' inquiry, tracking ghostly traces and the ghostly entanglements that make such traces visible. Hers is a political project with the aim of reanimating us to the question of what gets erased from particular practices of remembering and forgetting. Turning to my project which, in the previous chapter, has focused on entanglements producing the happening, or presence, of tears for counsellors-in-training, I have become interested here in tears also as a ghostly happening.

The aim of this interlude and following chapter is to map such ghostly presences and entanglements in the data, to animate toward tears as a lively present-absence, in order to speak of something which lingers in the shadows (Wyatt, Tamas & Bondi, 2016) as an invisible yet potent force (Tonkin, 2012) in counselling relationships and in the subject formation of counsellors-in-training. Particular ghostly tear entanglements are mapped below in order to make visible the intra-active forces shaping the phenomena of tears as a lurking present-absence, or absent-presence (Wyatt, Tamas & Bondi, 2016). Regardless of phrase, it is tears as ghostly matter, as "not-quite-known or not-here-now" (Tamas, 2016, p. 40), yet as enacting "a real presence (that) demands its due, your attention" (Gordon, 2008) that I turn to now.

I use this interlude to return to Barad (2010) in order to understand what might be produced in thinking with her descriptions of the hauntological nature of quantum entanglements. Such a recognition that every concept is haunted by its mutually constituted excluded other, led me to data that glowed (MacLure, 2010) beyond the mere presence of tears. I start this interlude with a diffractive engagement with my own mind-body knowing by re-turning to a memory produced, in one of the group sessions, of the present-absence of tears for me in a prior counselling encounter. I use this to think into the entanglement of tears manifest as absent in their (visible) materiality, yet as potently present in minds and bodies. Re-turning then to the data, re-presented in a poem, I am impelled to explore what it means to understand, and map, the materiality of tears as phenomena, as a material-discursive practice, when they are invisible, ghostly and ineffable. As I follow this line of questioning, I come to see such tears enacting a strongly felt simultaneity of being both okay and not okay in a counselling encounter. I explore how this simultaneity might be understood, and what it might produce, by thinking with what Barad labels the “indeterminacy principle” (Barad, 2007; 2010), and with Derrida’s notion of the aporia (Derrida, 1990; Edgoose, 2001), before proceeding to map the multiple forces intra-actively enacting these ghostly tears in chapter eight.

### **The im/possibility of tears**

I re-turn to Barad and her quantum theory of agential realism to think with. It was in thinking with discursive practices in an agential realist sense that I came to think about the im/possibility of tears, as both the presence and the absence of tears. The mattering of tears, as discursive practices, are conceptualised as ongoing agential causal intra-actions of the world, through which “part of the world becomes determinately bounded and propertied in its emergent intelligibility to another part of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 149). The world articulates itself or becomes intelligible through tears. The conditions of possibility are such that tears come to matter; these same conditions are also the *impossibility* for that which is determined to be mutually exclusive – the absence of tears. Focusing on the materiality of tears as phenomena, as inseparable from their apparatuses of production, not as



individual subjective human experience, invites a reconceptualization of traditional notions of entities typically constructed as being mutually exclusive to each other, as having sharp edges and relations of absolute exteriority. For Barad, this is the “*hauntological nature of quantum entanglements*” (2010, p. 245, italics in original), where entities, such as tears, do not entail a relation of absolute exteriority at all. Rather, the relation of the presence and absence of tears is one of “exteriority within” (2010, p. 93), where each is haunted by the existence of the other. This means that the very nature of tears always exists “with/in and as part of the phenomenon that includes the cut and what it excludes, and therefore, that what is excluded is never really other, not in an absolute sense” (2007, p. 159). Such a recognition that every concept is haunted by its mutually constituted excluded other, led me to data that glowed (MacLure, 2010; 2013) beyond the mere presence of tears (Barad, 2010). In order to further understand and speak of the intelligibility of tears, it seemed I must also explore the conditions of possibility for the present-absence, or absent-presence, of tears. As Barad says, “the contingent determination of the meaning of any concept (tears) necessarily entails constitutive exclusions. Every concept is haunted by its mutually constituted excluded other” (2010, p. 253).

### **Recognizing my own body as a space of transit**

I start this exploration with a re-turn to diffractive method in order to bring other times, spaces, subjectivities and knowing into visible relation with the words of my participants, to recognise my own body as the space of transit (Lenz Taguchi, 2012), for the knowing which will emerge here, in this time and space, on this paper. As with the previous chapter, I do this through beginning with a poem (eight) that depicts a spacetime-mattering of the absent-presence of tears for me, as a counsellor, in relation to the counselling encounter. This lively memory was present with me, and my counsellor subjectivity came into sharp focus, during the group session in which Maia’s words emerged, as re-constructed below in poem nine. In this, Maia speaks of the fears she has held of crying and not being able to ‘*handle it*’ when an experience, too close to one of her own traumatic experiences, arose in the therapy room. I add here, with my poem, notes from my researcher diary at the time, in order to bring into view the

multiple times and spaces which diffract and cut together-apart to produce the new knowing emerging here.

### Ghostly matters

A haunting, a ghost,  
typically they appear unexpectedly,  
out of the blue  
in the dead of night  
in the stillness of solitude  
to scare, to fright,  
to make afraid, they  
cut together-apart  
then and now,  
this and that  
here and there,  
a ghostly presence  
a bodily absence, yet  
here he is  
and it's not even dusk.

No floating white images,  
No candlesticks alight on their own  
or gusts of wind  
to suddenly extinguish  
those burning flames.  
Instead, he makes his appearance  
in the (w)hole of my chest,  
his presence fills the cavity  
and seeps into the room  
he hovers over me,  
and us, and our talking together  
making it hard  
to breathe  
to listen  
to say  
to hear  
anything  
but the slow burn  
of my saturated heart.

No moisture forms  
in places I anticipated,  
as I think of you  
and I think of me  
and gradually he slips away  
and with him those absent tears,  
until it's just us again  
sitting together on the floor  
cross legged amongst the dolls  
and the brightly coloured pens,  
bringing ghosts to life,  
laying ghosts to rest.

(Poem eight, Shanee, November 2016)

Listening to Maia, I was vividly thrust into my own experience today, of soon after my brother died when I was wanting, and feeling ready, to offer counselling again to children and families affected by the earthquakes. I felt I could be useful and I had a strong desire to do something. I had made food during the worst of it for those doing the labour, yet now I knew there were so many suffering. I wondered if I was far enough beyond my own suffering, my own loss, to not breakdown in the sessions when I heard their loss, their pain. I wondered, actually I think that was my biggest fear – my grief was still unpredictable, still is, and I was fearful that it would pop up, that I would have no control, because that was what I had learnt about it. Just because I had many good, possibly even normal days, did not mean a day would not arrive which was like he had only just departed this life, where the loss was raw and the wound was open and I had no control of where or how that would take me. I thought that wouldn't be of much use for my clients. And I remember then, the decision I made, to take no clients who had suffered a human loss in the earthquakes, who were coming to counselling because a family member had died. I would help children with worries, fears, anxiety as a result of the earthquakes. I still remember my first clients, two young sisters, and their mother telling me their story, a big part of it not to do with the earthquakes, but that their uncle had died recently. Immediately, unexpectedly, I was thrust into my children's experience that their uncle, too, had died recently. But I didn't break down, didn't cry. I just noticed where I went, what I thought, and what I felt, and the compassion I could bring, the understanding I could offer to another family who had experienced a tragic loss. So, I connected with Maia in the group and her telling, and with the fear of it, of this breaking down, this loss of control, being overtaken by something beyond any rational sensibility. Even though, or maybe because, I hadn't 'lost it' I became more open to the possibilities of sitting with my own loss at the same time as others' and of what that might contribute, rather than take away, to them and to me.

*(Researcher diary)*

I use this writing to begin to think into the entanglement of tears manifest as absent in their physical form, yet as potently present in minds and bodies. Tonkin (2012) writes about such haunting in the context of fantasy children and potential maternal subjectivities for women who are circumstantially childless. Like her, I find Avery Gordon's (2008, p. 17) description of that which appears absent as a "seething presence" to be a compelling phrase for the apparent absence of tears. I note my use of words here in my researcher diary, such as '*fearful, breakdown, unpredictable, no control, being overtaken*', in relation to the potential emergence of tears in a counselling relationship and how such ideas were present with me in my decision-making and eventual work with clients. Having written about the

multiple social and cultural forces enacting the presence of tears in the previous chapter I am now drawn to Gordon's words when she speaks of haunting as being "one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life" (2008, p. xvi). What are the systems of power which both equate tears with falling apart, breaking down, and losing control and which instil such a fear of this happening into our bodies? I am curious about Gordon's further ideas of how, through such hauntings, "we are notified that what's been concealed is very much alive and present, interfering precisely with those always incomplete forms of containment and repression ceaselessly directed toward us" (2008, p. xvi). I follow this thread and consider such forces, of systems of power which necessitate concealment, containment and repression of particular states, in particular neoliberalism, in greater depth in relation to the words of my participants below. I am curious, too, when she states that hauntings interfere with these potentially incomplete systems of power. I thus seek to think further about the multiple and mutually transforming intra-active forces at work, beyond poststructural notions of materiality solely as an effect or consequence of the discursive. How might such hauntings be productive? What might be making itself known, demanding attention, not just in the sense of other times and spaces, but in the sense here of tears themselves as undesirable, problematic and requiring concealment? Such a haunting, suggests Gordon, is frightening in that it "registers the harm inflicted or the loss sustained by a social violence done in the past or the present" (2008, p. xvi). What harm or loss or social violence has been enacted here to produce tears as a fearful and haunting presence? I am guided by these provocations in mapping the forces enacting the present-absence of tears in the following chapter.

In the previous chapter I have written about the presence of tears as entangled with ethics and discursive practices of counselling, among other forces, which co-constitute the emergence of tears as an ethical, and potentially therapeutic practice in the context of counselling. Had I left that discussion at that point, I believe I would have offered only a partial and limited picture of the social, ethical and political possibilities of tears for counsellors-in-training, and forces intra-actively producing their subjectivities. This is not to imply these chapters will complete the puzzle, rather it will continue to enlarge and

reconfigure the enactment of tears, through their present-absence. For, perhaps, “haunting is one of the most important places where meaning— comprehension— and force intersect” (Avery, 2008, p. 194).

Here then, in thinking with my writing (poem and researcher diary extract) above, I wonder at the forces co-constituting tears as a fearful haunting, tears as potentially destructive, at worst, to the therapeutic process or, at least, as embarrassing, unhelpful and undesirable. Only by mapping and opening up to the forces and practices co-constituting these kinds of tears, along with those we have already explored, are counsellors-in-training able to navigate their way around agency, to intra-act, responsibly and with accountability, “in and as part of the world’s becoming” (2007, p. 175), in and as part of the therapeutic encounter. Tears become neither good nor bad, to be welcomed nor feared. Tears are an entanglement and counsellors-in-training can only intra-act responsibly in relation to the multiple material-discursive practices enacting them.

### **The present-absence of tears – viscerally alive in body-minds**

Turning toward Derrida in theorizing an absent-presence also brought me into contact with the work of Lisa Mazzei (2007), and her inspiring theorising and deconstruction of silence as a “haunting presence...that spectre that rattles around in the dark, underneath, in between, in front of our acts of discourse to subvert, conflict, and at times to make it clear to us our intentions and possibly our actions” (p. xi). Thinking similarly, unshed tears as a spectre have been relegated to the dark places, the unseen and underneath, the in between of pasts and futures, and yet, their potency to subvert, conflict and bring other hauntings to light cannot be underestimated. Tears, in their present-absence, are also silent data, unseen and unheard, yet viscerally alive and meaning-full in the body-minds of participants. St. Pierre (2009), also in thinking with Derrida, proposes such an analytic intent – to turn to silence - as the “overturning of the hegemony of presence” in qualitative research, a provocation I take up and hope to do justice to, here (p. 231), as I re-turn to the data. I start with Maia and her words which depict an

entanglement haunted by numerous present-absences<sup>23</sup>. I do present the poems as longer depictions of the entanglements than I have in the previous chapter, in part because of the longer stories and in part, through a desire to examine the detail of how haunting might assert itself. I present Maia's here in whole first, before drawing on a particular aspect of it to think with, in this interlude, before returning to further map her words in the following chapter. This is another experiment, and again I offer the poem situated here, as a diffractive interrupting to my text, as intra-active with the space and time of the reader, of the whole thesis, and multiple other forces in the generation of thought, of new knowing.

Last week I had my first experience  
of a story, that was like my story  
like really, really close to it.

She didn't just dive straight in and say  
'Oh, he was trying to kill himself'.  
She was sort of working around it.

I was just thinking  
'oh my god  
she's about to tell me'.

I was thinking this man  
was trying to kill himself  
and I just remember thinking

'oh god, I hope she doesn't say that',  
I really didn't want her to say that.  
I was thinking back to this room -

---

<sup>23</sup> Many intimate details which were included in Maia's original speaking have been omitted from this final poem in order to protect the confidentiality of Maia, her client, and of others implicated in the telling of the particularities of their experiences. Omitting these details was determined not to detract from the data, given the focus on the haunting of tears, rather than on the particular stories and histories of clients and counsellors.

we talked about would I be okay  
when a really close experience  
comes up?

I did think about that  
and I was like 'I think I'll be okay'  
'I think I'm going to be okay'.

I'm pretty sure that's what she's going to say  
but she hasn't said it yet  
so I was kind of preparing myself for it

and thinking  
I didn't want to cry (*laughs*)  
I know it's okay to cry, but yeah

I just oh I wanted to know  
that I could handle it  
that I'd be okay with it, I guess.

That I can be more present  
for the student  
than caught up in my own world

which I know I spent a long time doing.  
*And so it turned out that he was okay?*<sup>24</sup>  
Yep. But the whole time

---

<sup>24</sup> Italicized text within the poem refers to the words of other group members, apart from Maia.

that's all I wanted to know.

I carry it with me all the time.

Keep it down.

I think it was more just

hearing that story

it was just hearing the detail.

but I'm better hearing it

from someone else

rather than when I hear it

in my own head

it's really raw

it's still raw

even though it's 15 years

or something

but hearing it from someone else

I can separate me from them.

*it's familiar but it's not your story*

Yes. Yes and I think

it sounds bad

but I was pleased I could do that.

*have some distance from it?*

Yeah. I was okay.

There was definite relief,

there was relief firstly



that I was holding it together  
and there was relief that he lived  
So that was two reliefs.

I have students who've come in  
who have had friends or dad  
who had committed suicide.

But I didn't hear the story  
of how it happened.  
I think it was just that whole

(detail)  
and because that's you know  
essentially what I had to do.

*It is very, very close.*  
So that's the difference.  
*The exactitude.* Yep, yeah.

It brought, you know, that picture  
back into my head.  
It feels good that I know

I can be okay for somebody else  
and I can be there  
for somebody else.

I can still keep my wits about me  
and think clearly  
and be present for them

then if I need to do something for myself  
later on then I can.

*What if you hadn't though?*

*Holding it all together -*

*is that what is most important?*

I think for me personally it is.

*Because that's what counsellors do?*

No, because that's what I do -

because that's who I am, I guess.

I'm strong and I can hold it together

I don't think I would let myself

really lose it.

I have had other stories

with students

where there's been tears in my eyes

and you know that's all good

but I don't think it would have been,

I don't know. *(laughs)*

I thought I'd be at least welling up

and it wasn't, it was just totally,

this is someone else's story

and yes it's really similar to mine

but it's okay I think, yeah.

*It's a professional approach perhaps?*

If anything it just distracted me a little  
but not enough that I wasn't still there.  
I guess I'm okay with it in my personal life.

I can deal with it there.  
But I don't want it to be part of  
my professional life, because it's affected

my bloody life so much already  
this is one part of my life  
that I don't want it to.

(Maia, poem nine)

I sense so much in this poem which speaks of multiple presences for counsellors-in-training in those moments and minutes of encounter. Focusing particularly on tears, Maia's words, '*I didn't want to cry*', and her subsequent elucidation of the presence of this desire to be able to '*handle it*', to be '*okay*' and '*holding it together*' as manifest through the absence of tears, initially all start to point to the potency of this haunting. While there are multiple other time-spaces present for Maia in this encounter, the thread of resisting the appearance of tears appears to be strong, and it is this which I wish to bring to life here, in an attempt to animate towards that which is typically erased. Again re-turning to Barad's agential-realism I wish to consider such tears, in their present-absence as a material-discursive practice. In the previous chapter, tears as a material presence on the faces of the counsellors-in-training, seemed to easily lend themselves to a material-discursive analysis. However, what is the materiality I am speaking of here when it appears as invisible, ghostly, and ineffable? Can I speak of this absent-presence as emotion, as affect, as I did in relation to the presence of tears on and in the bodies of participants, or is this something different? Barad tells us that "making sense is after all a material matter, especially if materiality isn't the closed and limited set Newton, or even Marx, had imagined, and meaning isn't taken to be merely a matter of language..." (2010, p. 268). The materiality of present-absent tears then,

is to be found in the inseparability of the material-discursive. A reconceptualization, as Barad offers of materiality, sees phenomena as the objective referent, where ““material” is always already material-discursive – *that is what it means to matter*” (Barad, 2007, p. 153). Thus, seeing present-absent tears as phenomena, as a material-discursive practice, as an agential intra-action, requires a redrawing of boundaries and a recognition that the ongoing reconfiguring (mattering/meaning) of tears as present-absent can only be made intelligible through a mapping of intra-active forces co-constituting particular materializations. Tears in this chapter, in their present-absence, rather than being in binary opposition to tears as present, in the previous chapter, rather can be seen to be a process of “differentiatings - that cut together/apart – that is the hauntological nature of quantum entanglements” (Barad, 2010, p. 245). It is this process of differentiating-entangling, of “connectivity through the traces of variously entangled threads and of the (re)workings of mutual constitution” (p. 245) which must be mapped.

I am struck by these words, *‘I didn’t want to cry (laughs) / I know it’s okay to cry, but yeah / I just oh I wanted to know / that I could handle it / that I’d be okay with it’*. I am trying, at this point, to make sense of the particular pattern enacted here, of initially how this present-absence of tears might at first appear. Here, there is a desire to *‘not cry’* which is co-present along with a sense that crying can be an okay thing to have happen for a counsellor in a counselling context, that it is, at least, not an ethically or therapeutically harmful practice. Along with this, is also an expression that not crying equates to *‘handling it’* and being okay. Again, inviting the opposite in order to make more sense, this suggests that tears, in this instance, would have meant not being okay and not handling the particular *‘it’* referred to here – even through it is *‘okay’* to cry.

This seems resonant of Mazzei’s suggestion noted above of the spectre (of tears) and its potency to subvert and conflict. Tears, in their present-absence, are simultaneously okay and not okay, and it is this presence of *simultaneity*, which makes their absence so keenly felt. Here, as I believe it was for me in my experience described above, there is an added potency to this presence though, constituted by a history of tears and of not being okay in relation to previous highly affective events, in both cases though

the loss (and associated grief) of brothers, albeit in different ways. That is, this is not a general sense of knowing it is okay (possible) to cry, and just not wanting to (impossible). Rather, tears as a haunting here, are also produced by, and made potent (more impossible), by other hauntings, of loss and consequential breakdown of the functioning subject. It is such histories of being overcome by tears, of not holding it together, that I would suggest are an additional lively force in the presence-absence of tears as simultaneously okay and not okay, possible and impossible.

### **Simultaneity, indeterminacy and aporetic moments**

I would like to inquire further into this simultaneity before proceeding to further map these, and other, forces (e)merging here in the co-constitution of the absent-presence of those ghostly tears. In order to do this I draw on Bohr's interpretation of the complementary problem, which Barad labels the "indeterminacy principle" (Barad, 2007, p. 295; 2010) and Derrida's notion of the aporia, in particular the "*aporia of undecidability*" and the "*aporia of urgency*" (Edgoose<sup>25</sup>, 2001, p. 129). Barad's thinking in her 2010 paper, on quantum entanglements and hauntological relations, is a diffraction of, among other times, spaces and matter, both of these notions and the work of both Bohr and Derrida (1994 in Barad, 2010). My diffracting here, now, includes both this 2010 paper, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Barad, 2007) as well as educational texts using Derrida's aporia and the concept of aporetic moments (Biesta & Egea-Kuehne, 2001; Edgoose, 2001; Janzen, 2013, Wang, 2005).

Starting with Barad, I return to the physics to understand what is at stake in determining the identity and im/possibility of things. A significant underpinning of Barad's agential realist theory comes from Bohr's interpretations of quantum mechanics, and then her diffractive readings of these with other theory. One important piece of evidence she examines relates to the competing accounts of Bohr and Heisenberg in relation to the reciprocal nature of the relationship between complementary notions such as a wave and

---

<sup>25</sup> Edgoose draws on Derrida's three aporias as outlined in his 1990 paper "Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority". Derrida writes of the aporia of suspension, of undecidability and of urgency in relation to conceptualising the distinction and tension between the law (universal) and justice (particular). I draw particularly on Edgoose's thinking with Derrida here, as his aim is to use Derrida's aporias to think through issues of ethics and justice in education.

particle. For Heisenberg, she says, the explanation for the wave-particle duality is the uncertainty principle. That is, “measurements entails disturbances that pose a limit on what we can know” (Barad, 2007, p. 294). In this case, the electron is said to have an inherent, or pre-existing identity, but any attempt to measure this adds a disturbance which limits what and how we can know of its original state, thus its identity can only ever be uncertain. In contrast, Bohr argues for a different interpretation, the issue of identity is not an epistemic one, but rather should be “understood in terms of the limits of semantic and ontic determinacy” (Barad, 2007, p. 294-5).

The line between physics and metaphysics is undecidable/indeterminate. Heisenberg understands measurements as disturbances that place a limit on knowability – that is, measurements entail epistemic uncertainties. Whereas, for Bohr, measurement is about the conditions for possibility of semantic and ontic determination – that is, indeterminacy. (Barad, 2010, p. 258).

Barad continues, drawing on physics to argue there is empirical evidence for Bohr’s performative understanding of identity – that identity is not inherent, and pre-existent, rather it is performed differently given the conditions and circumstances of its intra-action. Thus, indeterminacy, rather than uncertainty, premise what is to (be)come. I want to briefly re-turn this idea with the matter of ghostly tears, before expanding on it with Derrida and his aporias. In Maia’s, and my, talk of ghostly tears, there seems to exist this state of uncertainty, a not knowing of what will come to pass, a relation of im/possibility, of tears as both acceptable and possible and unacceptable and hence impossible. There is a trying to decide, to make known, to determine which should come to pass, to make known the identity of tears before being faced with the conditions which will determine them. As Maia says *‘I was kind of preparing myself.../and thinking I didn’t want to cry / I know it’s okay to cry’*. The identity of ghostly tears are, as Barad says, “undecidable/indeterminate” because it is only in intra-action, that identity is performed. Not knowing, is in reality, a state of indeterminacy. However, what this means, rather than give up in defeat, is that we look to the conditions, to phenomena rather than things, in order

to make sense of what was and of what might yet come to be. It is with this in mind that I turn to Derrida's aporias.

While Bohr argued for and called the wave-particle duality paradox one of indeterminacy, Barad, in diffracting Bohr and Derrida, speaks of both undecidability/indeterminacy. Edgoose (2001) writes of Derrida's aporia of undecidability as the second aporia of justice. Justice is at the heart of Barad's agential realist framework. The notion of aporia itself comes from the Greek, indicating the "state of impasse, non passage, or logical contradiction that can never be permanently resolved, a state of constant dilemma with no general or final solution". It is the "possibility of the impossible" (Wang, 2005, p. 45). An aporia comes to be experienced when "contradictory imperatives and opposite gestures from both sides are fully awakened and thereby bring pressure for an answer". The aporia continues as an advent of the event, as long as the "experience of crossing the border...remains to come" (p. 46). While Derrida wrote on the theme of aporia in different texts and contexts (Wang, 2005), he was clear that there is no responsibility (Wang, 2005), no political decision (Derrida, 2001) and no justice (Edgoose, 2001) without going through an aporia. "Without conflicting demands, without "the ghost of the undecidable," there is no call for a responsible decision that carries the burden of answering to a paradoxical situation" (Wang, 2005, p. 48). Two paradoxical directions are seen at the same time, both are possible, yet one creates the impossibility of the other. Taken together, this paradox creates an aporia of undecidability.

I find this notion of aporia helpful in building on Barad's principle of indeterminacy/undecidability to think with the ghostly present-absence of tears. In order for tears to exist as an absent-presence, as a haunting, they necessarily take on a paradox of being both present and absent, both possible and impossible, both okay and not okay. In this way, they become undecidable and unknowable, and exist as an aporia, in a state of impasse. Such an aporia is present, for both myself and Maia, as long as the experience of "crossing the border", to tears or no tears in the counselling room, remains to come (Wang, 2005). Edgoose suggests the aporia of undecidability alone would bring procrastination. I would add

avoidance. Derrida (1990) adds anxiety. Both Maia and I were keen to avoid any potential situations in the counselling room so close to our own experiences of loss, that would inevitably, albeit temporarily and without closure, resolve the aporia of undecidability. What ultimately makes the aporia decidable is the aporia of urgency, where “one *must* decide” (Edgoose, 2001, p. 129). Derrida (1990) calls this instant of decision a madness. It is an “acting in the night of non-knowledge and non-rule” even if “time and prudence, the patience of knowledge and the mastery of conditions were hypothetically unlimited” (p. 967). This is no calculable deciding. This is a hesitation, a loss of fluency (Edgoose, 2001), a rupture, a stutter, a dis/continuity (Barad, 2010). It is an aporetic relation between the universal (norms) and the particularity of the moment, which comes for us both, ultimately and unsurprisingly, in the counselling encounter, a place of “horizon”, that is “both the opening and the limit” defining “a period of waiting” (Derrida, 1990, p. 967).

Janzen (2013) speaks of undecidable moments in relation to the teaching subject, when she is faced with an irreconcilable yet urgent decision. She speaks of how it is, in such a moment, that the subject’s responsibility to the other, to itself and to the curriculum come to the fore. Interestingly, Janzen draws on one teacher’s encounter with a crying child and the aporetic moment this created for her teaching subjectivity – “a momentary disruption that occurred for the subject, an instant in which the normative discourses could no longer carry the lesson” (p. 384). Janzen goes on to describe this moment as being one in which the subject is “unprepared for the rupture...when the stability of identity is unhinged by the face of the crying child” (p. 384). Thus an aporia of undecidability is created, where the normativities or universals which have successfully constituted ‘teaching as normal’ so far, fail to provide for the particulars of the present moment. Importantly, as Janzen highlights, an aporetic moment is not simply about making a decision within the tension of two oscillating possibilities, in her case, of deciding between carrying on with a teaching lesson and tending to a crying child. Rather, for Derrida (1990), the three aporias (rules, undecidability, urgency) together constitute the conditions of possibility for justice and for transformation.



There is no justice, for Derrida, “without this experience, however impossible it may be, of the aporia” (1990, p. 947). If one simply applies the rules, conforms with duty, acts within norms, there is no aporia. There is only “programmable application or unfolding of a calculable process” (p. 963). It is when one is faced with both universality and singularity, with “the other or myself *as* other, in a unique situation” (p. 949) and when one cannot simply enact the rules or norms, that aporia arises and gives way to the im/possibility of justice. Thus, in the case of Maia, the possibility for justice and the responsibility which regulates it, is enacted in the counselling encounter, in the meeting of the counselling and grieving rules and norms with the singularity of the other, the client. And yet, justice always remains “*avenir*”, to come (Derrida, 1990, p. 969), “to the degree that some event is possible (that) exceeds calculation, rules, programs, anticipations and so forth” (p. 971). Which is to say, in the hesitation, the stutter, the moment before a decision is made, exists the incalculable and the responsibility/possibility for justice, but once the decision is made, it slips back into a “discontinuity of undecidability with brush strokes of continuity”. The “paralysis of indecision” which gave rise to the transformation of the becoming subject, becomes quickly hidden in the narrative of continuity and calculability (Edgoose, 2001, p. 129).

### **Hauntological multiplicity**

At this point, while finding Derrida’s notion of the aporia extremely useful with which to conceptualise these instances of indeterminacy/undecidability (of the phenomenon of ghostly tears), I wish to re-turn to thinking with Barad through her ideas of dis/continuity, of rupturing and reconfiguring these moments of encounter, of the previously indeterminate and undecidable. Given the focus in this thesis on thinking with agential realism, and given Barad’s drawing on and diffracting with Derrida, among others, it would seem to be a step backward, or sideways, to only think with the notion of aporia at this point. Thus I am further interested in how Barad conceptualises what she terms “*indeterminacy – hauntological multiplicity*” (2010, p. 263, italics in original) and how this might build on where thinking with the notion of aporia gets us to in relation to the absent-presence of tears for counsellors-in-training.

Key to this movement from the aporia of undecidability to Barad's notion of indeterminacy and hauntological multiplicity, I think, is the shift she makes through diffracting quantum physics - to conceptualising entanglements not as the "intertwining of separate entities, but rather irreducible relations of responsibility" (p. 265). She says:

Entanglements are not a name for the interconnectedness of all being as one, but rather specific material relations of the ongoing differentiating of the world. Entanglements are relations of obligation – being bound to the other – enfolded traces of othering. Othering, the constitution of an 'Other', entails an indebtedness to the 'Other', who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the 'self' – a diffraction/dispersion of identity. 'Otherness' is an entangled relation of difference (*différance*) (Barad, 2010, p. 265).

Thinking in this way, firstly, enables a shift from interacting individuals toward intra-active phenomena – entanglements, and hence the undecidability attributed to individuals becomes rather an indeterminability of, in this case, tears. Barad's theorising also seems to enable thinking beyond the incommensurable space of universal law, rules, and norms with the particular, to also include time, space and matter in the entanglements. Thus, in the encounter where the norms of tears meet the particularity of the Other in the counselling encounter, and thus the aporia of undecidability becomes the aporia of urgency, tears become intelligible as phenomena, constituted by mutually transforming norms, rules, relations of responsibility, multiple subjectivities of self and other, time, space and matter. The performative identity of tears is reconfigured in a dis/continuity, that is, for Maia as a continuity of their absence and a discontinuity of their presence. In the previous chapter, we see the reconfiguring of tears in the opposite sense, a continuity of presence and a discontinuity of absence. An ongoing reconfiguring is always what is at stake with no final knowing or norm or rule able to be articulated.

As Edgoose states, in the context of education, "no one path or ethical calculus will give (her) the guidance that (she) would need to stay comprehensible to (her)self and to all others" (2001, p. 131). As in counselling, where, similarly to education, "moments of hesitation riddle our... experiences" (p. 131),

it seems essential that we can be attentive to these aporetic moments and to their im/possibilities and dis/continuities. In this way, through also recognising that “the constitution of an ‘Other’, entails an indebtedness to the ‘Other’, who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the ‘self’” (Barad, 2010, p. 265) counselling, and becoming a counsellor, then becomes not about rational calculations to be performed and decisions to be made. Rather, they are each an ongoing and “iterative (re)opening up to, an enabling of responsiveness...through the iterative reworking of im/possibility, an ongoing rupturing, a cross-cutting of topological reconfiguring of the space of responsi-bility” (p. 265). Having come to think ghostly tears as indeterminate/undecidable, as aporetic, and as a dis/continuity through this interlude, I now re-turn to the data, to think further with Maia’s, and others’, words in order to map the multiple intra-active forces productive of these potent, ghostly, aporetic, present-absent tears.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### A diffractive analysis: the present-absence of tears in counselling encounters

Continuing to draw on poems as diffractive analytic devices, I engage in a mapping of these present-absent tears which requires attention to things less easily visible or tangible, but which nevertheless have real and ongoing lives and effects. I start this chapter with an inquiry into the particular affective quality of ghostly tears, noting their visceral, strongly felt presence to be a key force in their enactment. Fear emerges as having a prominent presence - fear of failure, of failing to hold oneself together, of falling apart. I engage in further inquiry with this notion of fear, not as an emotional response, but rather as an affective-material-discursive practice, drawing on both Barad (2007) and Wetherell (2015) to think with and through fear in the enactment of ghostly tears. Such inquiries produce an extensive exploration of the project of neoliberalism, its construing of individuals as rational, calculating creatures, its market driven desires for profit and productivity, and its resulting far-reaching material-discursive effects in relation to the production of tears for counsellors-in-training. I proceed also to explore the force of professionalism in the intra-active production of ghostly tears. Finally, in this chapter, I revisit Barad's framework through which we are reminded of the integral role of ethics, as "relations of obligation – being bound to the other" (2010, p. 265) and consider how this consideration of obligation to the client intra-acts with the aforementioned forces to ultimately produce an im/possibility of tears which remain absent.

#### **Mapping the invisible**

As I noted above, the present-absence of tears for Maia seems to begin with an aporia, with the undecidability/indeterminacy of what identity tears will assume, of how they might come to matter in the particularity of a 'really close experience' arising in the counselling context. Maia had wondered about this for quite some time, as noted to her comment '*I was thinking back to this room – / we talked about would I be okay / when a really close experience / comes up?*' However, it was only in the moment of encounter in a counselling relationship, with a client beginning to describe a situation remarkably

similar to one of Maia's own traumatic experiences, that she experiences the aporia of urgency. In this moment, she recounts her thoughts as she begins to hear the story from her client, of being '*pretty sure that's what she's going to say*' and of '*kind of preparing myself for it*'. She tells us she was thinking, '*I didn't want to cry*' even though '*I know it's okay to cry*'. In that moment, she knew there was the im/possibility of her tears, and, as is often the case with tears, what would emerge was undecidable and indeterminate. Maia was required to endure the not knowing of what was to come – in relation to both her client's story and her own affective response. As the encounter progresses, tears remain a ghostly presence, a continuity in their absence, becoming determinate in their intra-active present-absence. Maia says '*I thought I'd be at least welling up / and it wasn't, it was just totally, / this is someone else's story*'.

At this point, I become curious about two aspects, in particular, of this encounter: both the intra-active experience of the undecidability/indeterminacy of tears and the intra-active becoming determinate of tears, here as an ongoing present-absence. I start here with exploring ghostly tears as an intra-active, entangled aporia, rather than a separate, individual subject simply facing a dilemma of not knowing what is to come. For example, what are the forces that contribute to ghostly tears as an aporia, that make their undecidability, their ghostly presence, so keenly felt? Such a tracing is inevitably challenging in that ghostly presences are generally invisible and erased in the natural order of things, in histories of what comes to matter. Constructed narratives created after events, after aporias, typically speak of presence rather than absence, of what happened rather than what didn't. Thus, mapping intra-active ghostly entanglements requires attention to things less easily visible, tangible, but which nevertheless have real and ongoing lives and effects (Blackman, 2015).

### **The affective quality of ghostly tears**

Such thinking, for me, first of all invites questions of the affective quality of ghostly tears. What is it that renders the indeterminacy of ghostly tears as such a visceral, strongly felt presence and what are the more nuanced features of this affect? Thinking intra-actively requires an attention to both the

discursive and the material, to time and space, in theorising such affective ghostly tears. Drawing on Wetherell's affective-discursive practices again, calls for an alertness to the biographical, too, not in a psychoanalytical framing of the "individualistic and universalistic conceptualizations of drives, defence mechanisms and the unconscious" (2015, p. 84) but in relational ontologies which recognise the personal-social-material entanglements.

*'oh my god / she's about to tell me /.../ Oh god I hope she doesn't say that /.../I think I'll be okay / I think I'm going to be okay'.*

*'I wanted to know / that I could handle it / that I'd be okay with it'.*

*'I was okay. / There was definite relief, / there was relief firstly / that I was holding it together'.*

These words expressed by Maia gesture toward a particular affective quality of her embodiment of ghostly tears, to the present-absence of tears as exerting a lively presence both prior to and particularly strongly at this moment in the counselling encounter. Maia's use of the phrases 'oh my god' and 'oh god' in conjunction with 'she's about to...' and 'I hope she doesn't...' suggest the presence of fear of what might be to come, fear of not being 'okay', not 'handling it' and not 'holding it together', as all to be made true should tears emerge and enact their presence with her in this counselling encounter. What is it that produces ghostly, aporetic tears as, in part, embodying an affective quality of fear? What other forces are intra-active here to produce the affective-material-discursive practice of fear? In this case, fear of her counsellor (and perhaps personal) subjectivity coming apart, not holding together, perhaps disintegrating, under the public gaze of another. How is it that the emergence of tears, in some ways a natural (and cultural) bodily response to a variety of confronting and painful situations, has become indicative of a person's failure to contain their self, failure to hold together, of failure in multiple ways, and that such a failure is indeed something to be feared?

## **Neoliberalism and fear of falling apart**

A turn to the constitutive role of the discursive is necessary and useful here, in order to attend to and recognise “the uptake of ideology through the subjectified body”, the way normative requirements for the self, and particularly self-control, intra-act to produce affects of fear and (re)produce subjectivities and social relations (McAvoy, 2015, p. 31). McAvoy (2015) draws on the Foucauldian argument of the constitutive nature of regimes of knowledges and practices, as discussed in the previous chapter, to suggest that contemporary subjects of Western democracies are primarily dominated by the practices of neoliberal individualism and the constructs and practices of the psy disciplines. Both of these seem pertinent here in thinking through Maia’s desire to enact a contained, held-together subjectivity. I thus turn to the project of neoliberalism to map its potential power as co-constitutive of the affective force of ghostly tears.

Under the social and political order of neoliberalism, emerging over the last thirty to forty years in New Zealand (and across the Western world), “both government and society have taken up, as their primary concern, their relationship with the economy” in contrast with previous concerns which also encompassed broader collective, social and societal welfare and well-being (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 249). A significant result of the entrepreneurial and market driven underpinning of neoliberal policies, technologies and ideology over this period of time has been a shaping of “docile subjects who are tightly governed and who, at the same time, define themselves as free” (Davies & Bansel, p. 249). Subjects are produced as free to be able to effect the successes of their own individual lives through rational decision making practices. Equivalently, those who are less productive, less successful economic entrepreneurs are accorded failure on the basis of their own individual, poor decisions and choices. Schools and universities are argued to play significant roles in producing such highly individualised, responsabilized citizens (Davies & Bansel, 2007) and, indeed, Davies (1996 in Davies and Bansel, 2007) claims it was in schools and the public service that such forms of governmentality were first installed. For those coming into counselling training aged in their thirties, as Maia is, this suggests a life lived within only such neoliberal regimes of power.

Values activated by the neoliberal project are not simply a continuation of those associated with former liberal values, such as self-reliance, autonomy, and independence – all seen as the “necessary conditions for self-respect, self-esteem, self-worth and self-advancement” (Davies and Bansel, 2007, p. 252). Rather, there is more emphasis placed on individual rationality, on calculated choices and acts which place emphasis on the capitalisation of existence at the expense of any forms of collective responsibility for those more vulnerable and marginalized. Brown (2003) similarly argues that neoliberalism construes individuals as “rational, calculating creatures” where moral autonomy, or decision-making, is defined by one’s capacity to enact “self-care” – meaning, here, the ability to provide for one’s own needs and service one’s own ambitions (p. 5). In this way, Brown says, moral responsibility is equated with rational action. Clearly such values are at odds with the presence of emotion, of tears, in a public, professional context, albeit a counselling one. A professional counselling subjectivity is, in part, constituted by the citizen who has been subject to neoliberal norms, to powerful discourses of rationality as moral autonomy, and rationality, rather than emotionality, as self-care. Seeing such discursive practices as lively intra-active forces in the shaping of tears, and of counsellor subjectivities, it becomes obvious that public displays of emotion would have no place in the workplace, and would rather compromise a normative rational, successful, productive professional subjectivity. In this way, tears become a thing of fear, to be avoided in places requiring moral decision making. The power of these neoliberal discursive practices lies in their invisible yet pervasive ability to at once shape beliefs of individual freedom while at the same time restricting access to particular ways of being and becoming, e.g. particular affects such as tears. Thus, Maia’s fear of not holding the self together, and thus failing at being neoliberalism’s desired rational subject, contrasts with her sense of herself as being free to express herself in an emotional way, creating this dilemma or aporia.

### **Neoliberalism’s paradox**

Given neoliberalism’s pervasive, invasive and yet often invisible encroachment across multiple spaces in the lives of individuals, it seems useful at this stage, to turn to the next poem in order to examine



more of its workings in the lived experience of counsellors-in-training, through the emergence of ghostly tears<sup>26</sup>. What becomes further evident is, in part, its trickiness, its paradoxical shaping of the individual as free to desire and create a successful (failing) life yet simultaneously defining and restricting what is desirable, available and doable. Ultimately, when individuals (inevitably) fail at what becomes an impossible task, neoliberalism once again insists that failure be situated within their own free, autonomous, now failing subjectivity. This becomes evident in examining the words of Bailey. As this is another long poem, at this point for ease of readability and desire to clearly stay with the potent influences of this neoliberal project on counsellor tears and subjectivities, I present her words here in parts extracted from the whole poem (see appendix 5 for the poem presented as a whole). I start here with her words which resonate with those of Maia, as Bailey talks about her instinct in this particular counselling encounter, '*not to cry*', that crying might have suggested to her client that she '*couldn't handle her story*', and that she was being '*unprofessional*'. Bailey experiences a similar tension to Maia, saying that at the same time, '*but then it's not unprofessional / it's a very confusing place*'. Bailey was the youngest member of the group, at 22 years of age.

I was literally just listening to her story  
the whole way through  
and I think that probably helped me

not to cry.

I just had that gut instinct  
don't cry in front of the client, don't.

*Why is that?*<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> I will return to Maia's poem after this discussion to continue to map the intra-active forces at work in shaping the present-absence of tears, and her counsellor subjectivity.

<sup>27</sup> Asked by another group member.

I think I'd be worried that they'd think -  
that I couldn't handle their story

that they might have upset me.  
maybe I feel unprofessional  
but then it's not unprofessional -

it's a very confusing place.

(Bailey, poem 10)

Bailey's sense of the possibility of her own tears, tears as a ghostly presence, arose in the context of the counselling session, in relation, in part, to listening to the detail of the story she was hearing from her client. Bailey talked of how the focus on listening helped her *not* to cry, suggesting this practice as a useful means to her preferred end of *not* crying. She considered this to be important in order that the client didn't see the tears as signifying a counsellor who, overcome with their own emotion, would not be able to also '*handle*' or respond to, or meet the needs of the client sitting in front of them. Counsellor tears here become an emotional thing, a falling apart, a not coping, which are construed as then signifying the absence of a (neoliberally desirable) rationality, the absence of any other kind of subjectivity which may be of assistance to the client. This is a double whammy – not only are tears undesirable due to their emotionality, they are also undesirable because the binary means emotionality excludes the possibility of rationality, or any other reasonable response. What actually seems more likely to get in the way of responding as one would wish to a client, is the tension created by the required resistance toward the emergence of tears, a resistance constituted in part through discursive practices of neoliberalism. McAvoy (2015) succinctly captures this very process in her discussion of neoliberalism's effects, especially in her identification of anxiety-ridden subjects as being always on the boundaries of failure, tears being one example of such an imagined failure. She says,

...the realisation of the idealised neoliberal self, with a self-made body and a self responsible for shaping one's own affective experiences, can only ever be a partial, unfinished accomplishment. Neoliberalism, with its emphasis on the making of particular kinds of selves, and its acquisition and imposition of psy knowledges, creates the conditions for precarious, anxiety-ridden subjects understanding themselves as always on the boundaries of failure and ultimately responsible for providing their own solutions to, or repairs to that failure (p. 26).

McAvoy's subsequent affective-discursive approach to analysis of particular emotionality generated in the data of one interview, taken from research on success and failure amongst women in midlife, identifies a similar finding and thinking in relation to ghostly tears. McAvoy describes her research participant gesturing toward her face as tears begun to emerge, and says she was *warning* that she was "going to get emotional" (p. 29). This need to warn suggests the materiality of tears, and tears as an emotion "might *need* to be warned against; if it is a warning, it implies that emotion (as materially evident) is understood as a breach in the normal routine" (p. 29, italics in original). I would suggest this is not an uncommon experience in many facets of life - it is not restricted to formal interviews or counselling rooms. I frequently encounter people who warn about tears to come, apologise for the emergence of their tears, and seek to mop up the physical signs of them as quickly as possible<sup>28</sup>. Indeed, a recent beginning counsellor education class saw evidence of all of these. An allowing of tears takes practice, courage and resistance to neoliberal forms of subjection. What this speaks to, and what must be attended to in our thinking through of the intra-activity of tears and subjectivities, is the actual invoking of an ideal (neoliberal) subject and the ongoing marking of selves as "failing (painfully) against it" (McAvoy, p. 30).

---

<sup>28</sup> The materiality of tissues is another interesting phenomena to map in relation to tears and bodies. While I do not have room here for an analysis which can do justice to tracing the multiple forces enacted in mapping 'tissues' I think it is nevertheless useful to identify their part in co-constituting tears as a disruption to the performance of the ideal neoliberal subject. Tissues can perhaps be imagined to perform the role of mopping up, getting rid of and cleaning away the messiness of tears. Tissues may communicate the undesirability of such messiness, and the necessity of containing and wiping them away as soon as they appear. Tissues in a counselling space may embody the contradictory meaning of tears as expected but also as requiring containment. It is also interesting to note how bodies intra-act with tissues and tears, and how an immediate offering of tissues on the appearance of tears can indicate, be seen to embody again, neoliberal forces acting to invoke ideal rational contained subjects.

This is not to encourage or state that the presence of tears for counsellors-in-training should conversely *always* be welcomed, as a defiance to, or overcoming of, neoliberalism. It is to say, however, that when it appears that neoliberal discourses are restricting *the range of available responses* we might consider in relation to our clients, and when they are a potent force acting to co-constitute a dilemma, or tension, (that we may not even initially be aware of) we ought to take them, and their effects, into consideration in our reflective/reflexive/diffractive practices<sup>29</sup>. Given neoliberalism's power to work in such a way "that it seems natural and makes us blind to its effects" making such forces (re)visible seems ever more urgent (Davies, Brown, Gannon, Honan & Somerville, 2005, p. 345). This is perhaps especially so in the field of counselling, where I would suggest neoliberalism's effects have been under explored, and also given counselling's history with the 'Psy' traditions, which have been interpreted as "inherently individualising, psychologising, and de-politicising", generating potentially similar subjective effects as at least liberalism, if not neoliberalism (Bondi, 2005, p. 497). However, I also pay heed to Davies et al. (2005) who caution against the misleading binary of positioning one discourse as bad and oppressive against another that is good and liberating, and to Bondi (2005) who reminds us of the many who argue for psychotherapeutic practices that contain politically subversive possibilities. Both of these considerations lead us back to Barad's theory of agential realism and to the intra-active nature of identity, to the multiple forces co-constituting subjectivity at any one time, and hence the importance of detailed mapping in order to make visible not just the discursive in a fixed and one dimensional sense, but the dynamic intra-activity of the material-discursive. It is my intention to return to the influence of professionalism, but for now I wish to continue with neoliberalism's particular appearances within Bailey's words, ghostly tears and counsellor subjectivity.

---

<sup>29</sup> I will discuss these in the next chapter.

## **Powerlessness, overwhelm, and survival under neoliberalism**

The following extract from Bailey's poem tells us more about how she experienced, and what constituted, this sense of 'almost' wanting to cry. For her, these ghostly tears embodied an empathic and compassionate response to the multiple and especially difficult challenges of her client's home life. This can be seen in many of Bailey's words, including, '*I just felt so sad for her*', '*It really hit me then /...how it was making her feel. I think that really / wrenched at me a bit*', and '*I just felt so, so much compassion / for her, that I was drawn in so much/.../I was thinking I can totally understand / why you feel that – 100%*'. Of particular interest here however, Bailey's ghostly tears can also be seen to embody her own sense of being '*a little bit powerless*' to '*fix people's problems*' in combination with a seemingly endless unmet need and overwhelm produced by days in a school counselling office that '*are so flat out*'. The following extracts (from the whole poem) speak more about this in Bailey's words:

I had quite a tight chest.  
I felt like I almost wanted  
to cry a couple of times, like

the things she was telling me...  
I just felt so sad for her.  
Yeah it was strange.

I haven't quite experienced  
that in the room before  
with any clients.

I almost wanted to cry  
because I thought how on earth  
did she deal with this,

...

It was like shock  
of hearing everything  
she was saying, and it was also

what can I do -  
because my days are so flat out,  
seeing between five and eight

or nine kids a day?  
I know that I have to slow down  
and it's not like the school's

telling me to do it.  
It's like I've got this thing in me  
where I keep thinking I need to

because they're all lining up  
outside my door,  
I need to be there for them, and

I need to give them the space  
and time. I've got this kind of  
overwhelming want to fix things

or try and make things better.  
So I was really conscious about that  
in the room at that moment -

'you're not going to be able to fix this'.  
I think that really highlighted it for me -  
you can't fix people's problems

and what I can do is so limited  
in the scheme of their big life.  
So I felt a little bit powerless.  
(Bailey, poem 10)

I suggest there at least three ways in which neoliberalism is operating in this counselling encounter to intra-actively produce the nearness of tears for her counsellor subjectivity. Neoliberalism's ideology is recognisable as being alive in her body ('it's like I've got this thing in me') in the powerlessness that results from her overwhelming sense of individual responsibility for the job of 'fixing' the problems of the students she works with, while at the same time knowing she cannot effect the 'fixes' she might wish to see. It is recognisable in the flat out days of seeing between five and eight or nine kids in a day, in the increasing demands to be more productive in less time, and in the inevitable individual responsibility she feels to meet (or fail to meet) those demands due to the invisibility of neoliberalism's grip on our workplaces and our lives (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Mountz et al., 2015). It is recognisable in the increasing and particular demands placed on her as a school counsellor from working with students faced with the effects of living, and surviving, in the challenges of today's world, including especially those of neoliberalism (Wasson, 2014). These effects can all be said to be potentially heightened firstly though neoliberalism's wide reaching influence into the context and curriculum of High Schools (as early targets of neoliberal ideology (Davies & Bansel, 2007)), and secondly, by operating through the discipline of counselling, which, as a psychotherapy, can be included as a technology of subjectivity seen to "most fully epitomise the logic of neoliberal subjectivity." Through their focus on "individual liberty" "psychotherapeutic discourses therefore constitute influential vehicles through which neoliberal governance is dispersed and achieved" (Bondi, 2005, p. 500, drawing on the work of Nikolas Rose, 1990, one of the most widely cited Foucauldian writers on governmentality and who explores in particular detail the role of the 'psy' disciplines in dispersing it). It is the intra-active co-constitution of these neoliberal forces in enacting ghostly tears in Bailey's counsellor subjectivity that I now turn to explore in more detail.

As I state above, Bailey's words - *'it's like I've got this thing in me'* seem to speak directly to what McAvoy (2015) describes as "the uptake of ideology through the subjectified body..., the reproductions of macro ideologies in local, relational, intersubjective interaction" (p. 31). But, what is this *'thing'* and how is its force enacted in Bailey's subjectified body? Bailey suggests that it produces a number of compulsions, including a *'need to be there'* for the students lining up outside her door, *'seeing between five and eight / or nine kids a day'*, combined with an *'overwhelming want to fix things / or try and make them better'*. She locates this thing, this need, this force, as situated inside of her, absolving the school in which she is situated from any responsibility due to what she sees as the absence of any explicit direction from them. *'It's not like the school's / telling me to do it'*, she says. Thus, the only resolution for managing such overwhelm, inevitably comes also to be situated within the realm of her own individual action - *'I know that I have to slow down'*. Failing to manage, failing to slow down, failing to meet the overwhelming need, in what is actually an unmanageable environment, and what are *'unfixable'* - by one individual - social, economic and cultural problems, results in Bailey's sense of individual powerlessness, in knowing *'you're not going to be able to fix this'*.

While such uptakes of neoliberal ideology have been widely discussed in relation to education contexts (e.g. Davies & Bansel, 2007; Davies & Saltmarsh, 2007; Mountz et al. 2015; Watkins, 2007), there appears to have been much less consideration of neoliberal forces in the changing contexts of counselling and counsellor subjectivity in particular. However, drawing on literature from both disciplines, especially given Bailey's placement within a school counselling context, is useful in attempting to understand neoliberalism as a force in the production of this simultaneous overwhelm and powerlessness enacted in her ghostly tears, and ultimately her counsellor subjectivity. Mountz et al. (2015) discuss such effects in relation to the "neoliberal university" environment with its requirements for "high productivity in compressed time frames" (p. 1236). They state, in what can be recognised also in Bailey's words:



...our concern is not the difficulty juggling the standard academic triad of research, teaching, and service...Rather, our concern involves the ever-increasing demands of academic life: the acceleration of time in which we are expected to do more and more...We find that these often overwhelming demands exact an isolating psychic and physical toll that is neither reasonable nor sustainable” (p. 1237).

Such an acceleration of time works in concert with a shift from “*content to counting*”, underpinned by guiding principles of “efficiency, productivity and excellence” (p. 1241). Such foci can be seen in Bailey’s words when she speaks of already feeling that she is working at a ‘*flat out*’ pace, by the high ‘*numbers*’ of students she sees, and in her need to be more productive by getting through the students lining up outside her door. In typical neoliberal style, we see the shift in her language to metric based self-evaluations of success, where such “counting culture leads to intense, insidious forms of (...) shaming, subject-making, and self-surveillance” (p. 1243). Bailey becomes trapped in this vicious, individualising, and pervasive, yet hidden, ideology which will continue to subject her to more demands than time will allow for, and yet will constitute her as entirely responsible for meeting these ever increasing, presenting needs, and finally as a failure for inevitably being unable to do so. Scarily and worryingly, as Mountz et al. refer to in relation to the neoliberal university, the effects of such regimes are written on the body. For those in their article, such effects include sleep deprivation, neglected physical well-being, substance abuse, illness, and disappearing altogether from workplaces<sup>30</sup>. Andrew & Krupa (2012) discuss this in a similar way in writing on the politics of self-care for counsellors and psychotherapists. They consider the intense pressures therapists are under in contemporary workplaces including funding cuts, mandating short-term counselling, accountability measures, evidence-based practice expectations, and general expectations to do more with fewer resources in less time (Osborn, 2004), and how these pressures interact with other professional and corporate forces and with self-care’s

---

<sup>30</sup> In a subsequent group session Bailey discussed such effects on her and her health in more detail and ultimately, with support, left this context. Without the collective input from the group in reconfiguring Bailey’s experiences, it is possible she may have continued to pathologise herself and embody this self-responsibility for overcoming the much larger problem of neoliberalism.

implied individual focus and responsibility to produce a generation of professionals stretched, stressed and on the edge of burnout. Significantly, and in order to resist neoliberalism's insidious hold, Andrew and Krupa (2012) say:

In order to maintain a degree of sanity and to protect ourselves from the dangerous illusion of self-blame, we need to wrestle with the social construction of our predicament. Continuing to embrace the madness that we can each find our own healthy path through economic rationalism only serves to strengthen a system that is harming us. Instead, we need to work together (p. 46).

For Mountz et al. (2015) as well, resistance to the grip of neoliberalism comes in the form of collective action. However, theirs is also a particular response to the challenges of accelerated time in the "fast-paced, metric-oriented neoliberal university" in the form of a call to "slow down and claim time for slow scholarship" (p. 1236) in ways which "foreground collaborative, collective, communal ways forward" (p. 1237). For them, slow scholarship embodies more than an opportunity to challenge neoliberalism's metrics and efficiencies and take more time for themselves and their work. It is tied also to understandings of labour and class and gender, and expresses an attention to foregrounding and transforming "the interpersonal and collective conditions that underpin knowledge production" (p. 1254).

Given Bailey's comment, '*I know I need to slow down*', it seemed apt to introduce above the response of Mountz et al. to neoliberalism's effects in the university, of slow scholarship. Enacted in Bailey's ghostly tears, along with overwhelm and powerlessness, also seems to be a knowing, a desire, a need to do this work differently. Bailey's sense is that one part of this is slowing down. She doesn't identify what slowing down might look like although given her talk of numbers one could assume fewer clients in a day might be somewhere she would start. This seems a simple thing, yet I have already shown above neoliberalism's potency and liveliness in compelling individuals to speed up and do more in this "stupefying modern obsession with productivity" (Mountz et al., 2015, p. 1246). This, when combined with a number of other working conditions, acts as a strong counter to any one individual's desire to slow down. For example, Andrew and Krupa (2012) speaking from the Australian counselling context

(not dissimilar to New Zealand), state “(t)here is no union for our profession. No ideal client ratios, no ideal working day, no great attention paid to our occupational health and safety...Our member organisations function in large part to protect the public from harm from us, with little time devoted to protecting us from public, corporate or self harm” (p. 44).

Indeed, while New Zealand’s membership organisation, NZAC’s objectives as listed on their website (<http://www.nzac.org.nz/objectives.cfm>), include “Promote satisfactory conditions of employment for counsellors” this is one of eleven objectives which also include “Assist clients to obtain services adequate to their needs”. Much of the site appears to be aimed at assisting clients in making informed choices about counselling including the processes for raising concerns or making complaints, although there is a secure member’s only area. Given the potential dual aims of the organisation, to both assist and protect potential clients and to promote working conditions for counsellors, it is difficult to not see this as a potential conflict of interest, compromising what limited attention might be given to promoting collective working conditions for counsellors. Indeed, there is a great disparity amongst counsellors working in schools, community agencies and private businesses and practices in relation to expectations for face to face hours of counselling per day, with seven face to face hours not an uncommon expectation. As Osborn (2004) comments, “(i)n today’s cost-conscious environment, mental health practitioners are challenged to do more with less... In addition, accrediting bodies and funding sources are demanding increased accountability and productivity (i.e., positive client outcomes) across practice settings (e.g., schools)” (p. 320). It is no wonder then, Bailey’s desire to slow down is present, albeit in the face of ever increasing demands to speed up, and with a seeming lack of any obvious, explicit, collective action toward doing things any other way. Bailey’s ghostly tears, and emerging counsellor subjectivity, cannot be seen as separate from the realities of a market driven regime of neoliberalism and its effects on individuals, working conditions, institutions, and the very fabric of societies which are governed by such policies.

### **Neoliberalism's reconfiguring of time**

Thinking with Barad's concept of spacetimemattering, it becomes clear how time is reconfigured in this material-discursive practice, although not in a disrupting of the linearity of past-present-future, as outlined in the previous chapter. Rather, the reconfiguring of time becomes an essential component of the way neoliberalism comes to matter in the production of ghostly tears, and counsellor bodies in the making. Neoliberalism's insistence on individual productivity, on outcomes, on metrics and on constituting the economic and the social as binary opposites, "with the economic in the ascendant and the social representing all that good economics is not" (Davies and Bansel, 2007, p. 252) is a strong force enacting a shift in the configuration of time. Time intra-acting with neoliberalism is felt differently in bodies. It speeds up and the effects of this have (are having) potentially dangerous effects for the counselling profession – both for counsellors and clients. Bailey speaks of needing to give the long line of clients wanting to see her '*space and time*'. But where does this time come from when in the same moments she needs to slow down, move more slowly through time? Time is reconfigured as being scarce in a school counselling office with potentially endless and increasing need, situated in an institution and a society permeated by values of productivity measured in metrics – the more clients you are able to see the more productive you are being. And yet, productivity requires measurable outcomes - as Bailey says a requirement '*to fix things*'. Time is reconfigured as a scarce resource and at the same time as extremely valuable. Every minute counts *and* must be made to count. Neoliberal time, as an intra-active force here, is potent, and its effects in producing subjects on the edge of tears, on the edge of failure, are apparent. The possibilities for 'slowing down', for reconfiguring time beyond neoliberal time, would appear to be both challenging and necessary.

### **The stark realities of life lived under neoliberalism**

Finally, in this section I want to consider neoliberalism's potential effects on the lives and experiences of student-clients Bailey is working with and, in turn, the intra-active effects in relation to ghostly tears, and her becoming counsellor subjectivity. In doing this, I return to her words:

I almost wanted to cry  
because I thought how on earth  
did she deal with this,

how is she even at school today,  
how does she cope,  
how does she get through it?

It was kind of like unease.  
It was almost like -  
'what's she going to say next?' -

'it can't get any worse than this'  
and everything was actually  
getting worse.

(Bailey, poem 10)

Osborn, writing in the U.S. back in 2004, claimed that, at a time when resources for mental health services appear scarce, the complexity and severity of client needs have increased. In New Zealand, in recent times, evidence suggests both of these points to be equally true. A 2017 report written by Marianne Elliot of New Zealand not-for-profit organisation, Action Station (an organisation designed to take collective action in New Zealand on issues that matter to its members), titled *The People's Mental Health Review* collected over 500 stories from individuals, or family members of individuals, using or trying to access mental health services and working in mental health services. Key themes in the report highlighted difficulty accessing appropriate and timely mental health services, lack of appropriate treatment options, and an under resourced, over-worked and stressed mental health workforce, with mental health and wellbeing in New Zealand undermined by social and economic stressors that operate outside of the mental health system. Results from the Youth2000 surveys (Clark

et al., 2013a; Clark et al., 2013b), a series of cross-sectional, self-administered, comprehensive health and well-being surveys conducted with representative samples of secondary school students throughout New Zealand in 2001, 2007 and 2012 give some indication of the changing mental health needs and contexts of young people. The most recent research (Clark et al., 2013a, b) comparing the findings, highlights some improvements for students since 2001, including in aspects of their school life and reductions in health-compromising behaviours. However, results show areas of health and well-being where students report no change. These include students reporting significant depressive symptoms. Certain areas are also reported to have significantly worsened over time, including parents worrying about having enough money for food and lack of access to a family doctor. In addition, in the 2012 survey, deliberate self-harm among students was described as “fairly common” (p. 22) with 29% of female students and 18% of males students reporting they had deliberately harmed themselves in the previous 12 months. Alongside this, 21% of female students and 10% of male students had seriously thought about suicide, with 6% of female students and 2% of male students reporting they had made a suicide attempt in the same period (Clark et al., 2013a). As Dr Peter Watson, instigator of the Youth2000 survey, states in the foreword to this report, “(w)orryingly, New Zealand continues to have high numbers of young people who are emotionally distressed...” (p. 3). For Bailey, it wasn’t that she was reacting to the surprise or uncommonness of the distress of young people. As she said:

I’ve had a few clients come in  
and talk about some pretty heavy things  
like self-harm and suicide attempts.

Rather, she says:

It’s hard to describe it.  
It seemed like her story -  
one massive thing after another.

I just thought  
how can you keep going  
with all these waves

knocking you over?

She describes her client's story as '*one massive thing after another*'. Her client eventually says toward the end of the session '*I don't feel like I want to be / in this world anymore*'. Both descriptions are consistent with the reports above describing the realities facing a significant number of young people. The very real material, embodied and increasingly worsening personal, familial, and cultural experiences young people are faced with must be seen as an intra-active force in the production of ghostly tears, in the overwhelm and powerlessness experienced in the face of students' increasing and worsening stress and distress as a result of the complex and vulnerable contexts in which they are living. Such painful lived experiences for our young people can in part be seen to be the constitutive effects of neoliberalism's market led philosophy with its "desire for profit over the needs of community", its production of a "Darwinian nightmare world of all against all 'survival of the fittest' (Springer, 2016, p. 288), and the reconstitution of the Welfare State "as an economically and socially costly obstacle to the economic performance" of "society" (Davies and Bansel, 2007, p. 249). Yet again, I suggest the intra-active nature of Bailey's ghostly tears, of her counsellor subjectivity in-the-making are inseparable from the material-discursive force of neoliberalism.

### **Neoliberalism and the High School Context**

The space of the High School in which Bailey is practising also becomes an intra-active force. Much has been written on neoliberalism's influence in education. Indeed, Davies and Bansel (2007), writing in a special issue on Neoliberalism and Education for the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, claim that neoliberalism has been installed in schools in New Zealand and Australia in a remarkably concerted fashion. Both schools and universities have, they say, "arguably been

reconfigured to produce the highly individualised, responsabilized, subjects” constituted as economic entrepreneurs across all aspects of their lives (p. 248). In the context of schools this encompasses, at least, teaching, counselling and learning subjects. Bailey, interestingly, refers to the school only in the sense of its absence in giving her any directive to be more productive. She says ‘*it’s not like the school’s /telling me to do it*’. As I state above, this is neoliberalism’s canny trick - a “diffuse and largely invisible installation” of technologies producing “docile subjects who are tightly governed and who, at the same time, define themselves as free” (p. 249). The question arises then, as to how the school, as a material-discursive space, intra-acts to shape the possibilities for Bailey of how and who she can be(come) as a counsellor in-the-making, particularly in relation to its seeming innocuous presence in her talk of ghostly tears and counselling encounters.

Such invisibility is of course not unusual when it comes to neoliberal technologies; as Davies and Bansel (2007) state, it takes a great deal of analytic work to open up and make visible the constitutive forces of neoliberalism. Thus, whilst Bailey’s words as data don’t necessarily speak to the wider material-discursive forces operating for her, and for counsellors in general, in High School contexts, recent writing on this is useful for thinking about how neoliberal forces work through schools to shape both her and her client’s subjectivities in the counselling encounter.

Wasson (2014) writes a particularly compelling, and seemingly unique, analysis of the key competencies in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) as a conduit of neoliberal humanist ontology both into young people’s lives and into their descriptions of themselves in the counselling room. She writes this partly in response to an article in a recent issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling* (Hughes, Burke, Graham, Crocket & Kotzé, 2013) which made the case for counselling work with students as contributing directly to the core mission of schools as expressed in the key competencies and values of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). Hughes and colleagues concluded that these competencies were the core business of schools, with school guidance counsellors playing an integral part in contributing to their realization. Such a vision



places the onus on counselling work in schools to “help students practice, develop and grow in the use of the key competencies” (Hughes et al., 2013, p. 6), in order that they will fulfil the mission of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) to become “confident, connected, and successful 21<sup>st</sup> Century global citizens” (Wasson, 2014, p. 34).

Wasson theorizes that actually, because of the implicit and ideal, autonomous and free, “humanist-neoliberal citizen-subject” embodied in the key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, “young people’s futile yet compulsory attempts to achieve the impossible produce their consequent, inevitable subjective/embodied experiences of failure” (2014, p. 45). She suggests students’ experience of neoliberal failure and self-blame is compounded by the toxic culture created by the implementation of neoliberal educational policies “obsessed with criteria of success” and equating individual academic achievement with “neoliberal hopes, dreams, and fears for “liveable lives”” (p. 45). If the counselling room is perpetuated as a space for furthering such “impossible yet compulsory expectations and requirements” (p. 46), espoused by and through educational policies and documents, while the real effects themselves remain invisible, such policies are likely to have at least similar debilitating effects on those attempting to realise their vision. That is, debilitating effects on teachers and counsellors, as much as on the students themselves. Thus, Bailey’s ‘*overwhelming want to fix things / or try to make things better*’, (which is antithetical to the non-expert stance of the Solution-focused approach underpinning her training) and her resulting ‘powerlessness’ in the face of the actual complex, interconnected and interdependent problems of young people can be seen to be an effect of the embodied liveliness of such neoliberal educational regimes permeating the aims and goals of High School counselling spaces.

At this point, having spent a significant amount of time thinking with neoliberalism’s constitutive, and real, debilitating effects in reconfiguring time, space, and matter, I wish to return to the words of Davies et al. (2005) and Bondi (2005), who caution us against the good-bad binary in relation to the discursive. Instead, in thinking with Barad, I am interested to continue to explore the intra-active mutually

transformative nature of the material-discursive. Whilst making visible the powerful work of neoliberal regimes is essential, in order to make them revisable, and in order to fully map the complexity of intra-active forces, there is more at work here in the production of ghostly tears for both Bailey and Maia, and thus in the enacting of their counsellor subjectivities. In this final section of this chapter I turn to explore the intra-action with the professional counsellor, and finally return to Barad's framework though which we are reminded of the integral role of ethics, of "responsi-bility", and of entanglements as "relations of obligation – being bound to the other" (2010, p. 265)

### **Professionalism and the good and appropriate counsellor**

I have spoken about ghostly tears as embodying the neoliberal subject's desire to not be deemed a failure. Also present here is the professional counselling subject and her desire not to be deemed inappropriate. As Davies (2006) states, in writing about the processes of subjectification in education, "(s)tudents work very hard to embody themselves as appropriate and appropriated subjects, and losing their footing - being seen to be incompetent or inappropriate - can be very painful" (p. 433). However, this is not an easy process. Already there are multiple other forces – times, spaces, matters, affects – in intra-action in enacting the present-absence of tears. Here, in Bailey's words, we are presented with the way professionalism also acts as a confusing force in enacting her subjectivity:

I think I'd be worried that they'd think

that I couldn't handle their story

that they might have upset me.

maybe I feel unprofessional

but then it's not unprofessional -

it's a very confusing place.

Whilst I have talked about the personal-professional binary, and professional discourses of counselling in the previous chapter in relation to tears, here I am interested in thinking through professionalism and its power in shaping “the thing they see that they must become” for counsellors-in-training as it has arisen here in the data (Davies, 2006, p. 433). For Bailey, the absent-presence of her own tears holds the possibility of her client feeling that she cannot ‘handle’ her story or thinking that she had upset Bailey – both very real possibilities challenging the ethical imperative for counsellors to consider counselling a “professional relationship” designed to “assist clients” and certainly to “avoid doing harm in all of their professional work” (NZAC Code of Ethics, 2016). This concerns Bailey, that a tearful response on her part may cause harm to the counselling relationship. And yet, the ghostly tears also hold an aporetic indeterminacy/undecidability with the possibility that maybe tears are not ‘unprofessional’, or that maybe they could be both. In this space of undecidability, Bailey’s subjectivity can be seen to be, in part, co-constituted by (material-discursive) practices of professionalism. I suggest that this tension enacted at the micro-level of ghostly tears for Bailey can be seen to embody tensions being enacted at the larger macro level with regard to “the evolving nature of the professional identities of counsellors” (Rogers, 2012, p.192) and organisational challenges and “attempts to professionalize counselling” (Miller, 2014, p 100) in New Zealand<sup>31</sup>.

Miller has written extensively on the history of counselling and the processes of professionalization of counselling in New Zealand (2001; 2004; 2011, 2014). In reading her work in particular, it is clear that the counsellor-in-the-making subjectivity is inseparable from the wider professional debates which are informing the ways counsellors are expected to be practicing and ways in which such practice might be regulated. Miller (2012, 2014) usefully draws on sociological literature to focus on the different ways in which the ideology of professionalism manifests for New Zealand counsellors, in particular distinguishing between occupational and organisational professionalism and the views and tensions

---

<sup>31</sup> Whilst I discuss the particular local context I recognise that processes of the professionalization of counselling and counsellors are not unique to New Zealand, with debates about professionalization and statutory regulation common to other countries, such as the UK (see, for example, Bondi, 2004; Bondi, 2005).

represented by these two discourses. This is particularly evident in debates about the issue of statutory registration within the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, resulting in “divisiveness among the membership and confusion about the best direction to take (Miller, 2012, p. 187). Such challenges appear to lie in the potential effects of new and evolving forms of regulation. Miller (2014) highlights how, on the one hand increasing professionalism through a registration agenda promotes protection of clients from non-registered practitioners, a stronger occupational identity, and the knowledge that all members are trustworthy and competent to practice counselling in an ethical manner. On the other hand, the restrictive standards and measurements such a process inevitably requires likely means marginalizing and excluding particular, potentially local, ways of practicing. Rodgers (2012), in discussing the challenges inherent in practices of statutory regulation suggests that such struggles lie in the attempt to “squeeze a diverse set of adaptive practices into a ‘one size fits all’ prescription of counselling and guidance theories and practice” (p. 192). Professional bodies which adopt such ‘top-down’ prescriptions of identity, enculturate members into practices consistent with “modernist notions of a single, static, homogeneous and unified epistemology” (p. 192). Rodgers suggests that drawing on a more post-modern, and hence locally responsive, construction of identity would engender “freer, more creative and dynamic processes of forming identities”, leading to diversity rather than enforced congruence (p. 192).

Given then this notion of professional status, and membership of a profession, as a “technology for governing” practitioners and recruiting them into particular modes of action (Bondi, 2005, p. 501), I suggest that the conflict being played out at this macro professional level is evident at the micro level of Bailey’s practice. In a broad, macro, professional sense, guided by the Code of Ethics (NZAC, 2016) and likely her counsellor education, Bailey can be seen to submit to the disciplinary forces which warn against counsellor tears. Counsellor tears, under this ‘single, static, homogeneous epistemology’, of professionalism, hold the potential for damaging the counselling relationship due to their focus on the counsellor’s, rather than the client’s emotional experience and, as stated above, can be seen to work against the general underpinnings of the tenets of the Code of Ethics.

However, at the local, micro level, Bailey is compelled to be responsive to a multiplicity of other forces, in a dynamic process. Hence, the professional tension enacted in her ghostly tears, and in her counsellor subjectivity, could be said to be one embodying such macro-micro, universal–local, professional–pragmatic, binary tensions being played out in the ideological tensions of professionalism currently at work in the New Zealand counselling context. The challenge for the accomplishment of mastery, or of oneself as an appropriate subject, according to Davies, involves “both an imaginative capacity to form themselves out of the not-yet-known, and a set of culturally sanctioned signifiers of the thing they see that they must become” (2006, p. 433). As Barad reminds us with the notion of intra-action, these are never separate requirements. As we can see from mapping the present-absent tears of Bailey and Maia, the material-discursive practices of the ‘not-yet-known’ and of culturally sanctioned signifiers’ are intra-actively alive and potent in the moments of counselling encounters.

### **Intra-acting responsibly from within and as part of the world**

With a significant focus in this chapter on the action of discursive forces of neoliberalism and professionalism on the becoming counsellor, it could be easy to slip into the binary of individual freedom/will of liberal humanism versus determinism’s subjects who are “passively and inevitably shaped according to one set of discursive practices within moral order” (Davies, 2006, p. 426). That is, we could be left wondering about the subject’s possibilities for agency and autonomy, or in this case, Bailey or Maia’s movement through the undecidability/indeterminacy of the aporia of ghostly tears. Returning to Barad, however, invites a move beyond the binary into intra-action and subsequently invites different questions, about who and what comes to matter, and about how we come to understand our part in the dynamic and iterative processes of spacetime-mattering (Davies, 2014b). How can we “be open and alive to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly?” (Barad, 2007, p. x). As Barad says, there is only intra-acting responsibly from within and as part of the world in its becoming, and such responsible intra-action means taking account of the entanglements of which we

are always a part and being responsive to their possibilities. I have mapped many of the intra-active forces co-constituting the emergence of ghostly tears for Bailey and Maia and finally here, I explore how they are both responsive to such possibilities. This is an agential-realist sense, where there is “no discrete “I” that precedes its actions”, “no “I” separate from the intra-active becoming of the world” but rather where “(c)ausality is an entangled affair” (Barad, 2007, p. 394). That is, speaking of what comes to matter for Bailey and Maia in the enactment of ghostly tears, and thus in their becoming counsellor subjectivities, of what becomes intelligible, can only be seen to be in intra-active relation to all that has been mapped thus far, and more.

Being responsive to the possibilities for what comes to matter is an ethical call. As I discussed in the previous chapter on the presence of tears, such an ethicality is not a “commitment that a subject chooses but rather an incarnate relation that precedes the intentionality of consciousness” and which encompasses “having-the-other-in-one’s-skin” where the other is non-human and human (Barad, 2007, p. 392). What ultimately comes to matter in relation with all of the human and non-human forces mapped, and in relation with the client sitting across from them, is tears that remain absent. For Bailey, the possibilities for her client to become negatively impacted by her counsellor tears intra-acts with all of the other forces so that the only ethical response she can make in this moment is to not cry. For Maia, the desire to keep her wits about her, to think clearly, to be present for the client she is with, to not have what has been so consuming in her personal life overtake her professional life, intra-acts with the other forces mapped here so that the only ethical response becomes, also, not to cry.

These are clearly not rational *or* emotional, individual *or* deterministic actions, but rather intra-active, responsive and ethical agential-realist (intra-)actions for counsellors-in-the-making. What is cut together-apart here are potent, complex, and far reaching forces, including neoliberalism and professionalism, which produce and enact ghostly tears. These are forces which are therefore present in the counselling encounters, and are constituting counsellor-in-training subjectivities, through their intra-active mattering in entanglements of absent tears. The production of the materiality of tears, present or

absent, cannot be described as just one individual's emotional response, rather they might be better described to be responsive, intra-active enactments of ethical, social, material, affective, discursive and political relations.

## SUMMARY –

### **The intra-active production of present/absent tears for counsellors-in-training**

A central aim of this project has been to explore what might be produced in thinking beyond the limits of predominantly available humanist conceptualisations of the lived experience and developing identity of counsellors-in-training, as outlined in chapter one. Whilst drawing attention to the particular personal and professional challenges and processes counsellors-in-training are subjected to, this body of literature holds significant limitations in light of contemporary theorisations of identity. Instead of identity as belonging to that rational, self-contained, individual, I have explored identity formation as a contingent, ongoing, material-discursive, intra-active reconfiguring, through the mapping of counsellor-in-training tears (present and ghostly).

In the previous data analysis chapters I have been able to think with, in particular, Barad's agential realist framework in order to produce knowledge differently and thus produce different knowledge in relation to the ongoing reconfiguring of a counsellor-in-training subjectivity. As I highlighted in chapter six, this intra-active research process began with initial challenges for me to recognise my own post-structural and social constructionist biases in thinking with the data and attempting to 'do' data analysis. This chapter outlined a useful and interesting process which enabled me to begin a diffractive research process with data and theory (and my researcher subjectivity) which generated different knowing-in-being in relation to working with the data. By drawing on, in particular, three empirical articles (Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011; Juelskjaer, 2013; Søndergaard, 2016) with a focus on relating Barad's agential realism and post-structural feminist thinking to processes of subjectification, I was able to generate new, post-humanist, ways back into the data.

Drawing also on the new materialist and post-humanist research of Hohti (2016) and Maclure's (2010, 2013) concept of wonder, I returned to the data with a significantly different set of premises. In particular, I was challenged to decentre the human subject and shift focus from individuals to the



*enacting of intra-active processes* (material-discursive practices), which both enact the subjectivities of counsellors-in-training and are enacted by them, in a complex and iterative reconfiguring. With a desire to also enact wonder's intensity and embodied felt sense of 'data that glow' (Maclure, 2010, 2013), I re-turned to the collective biography group data ready to embark on a process I conceptualised as data-researcher-wonder-theory-space-time-material-discursive-affective entangled knowledges in the making.

The subsequent data analysis chapters explore and document this process and the resulting entangled knowledges. What came to matter in surprising and multiple ways were counsellor-in-training tears, conceptualised, in Barad's agential realist terms, as material-discursive practices or *phenomena* (Barad, 2007). Exploring counsellor-in-training tears as an object/subject led to an extensive analysis of the multiple forces and encounters enacting these particular tears. Such analysis enabled me to bring forth not just the complex and intra-active material-discursive forces at work in the materialisation of tears, but through tears, the forces at work then, also, in the ongoing and iterative (re)(con)figuring of counsellor-in-training subjectivities. This detailed mapping of the presence and the present-absence of tears has both opened up a multiplicity of otherwise invisible material, relational, social and cultural forces intra-acting to produce tears, as well as enabled a detailed charting of the agential-realist processes by which tears are produced and counsellor-in-training subjectivities are enacted.

In staying with the diffractive aims and practices of this work, where matter and meaning are mutually co-constituted and where "knowing is a material practice of engagement as part of the world in its differential becoming" (Barad, 2007, p. 89) I offer the following poem and word art as tear diffraction patterns. Such patterns perform, rather than represent, intra-active knowledge summarising the phenomena of tears as they have become intelligible through the dynamic, diffractive practices of data analysis detailed throughout the previous chapters. Following these summaries of the multiple, complex, intra-active forces and processes enacting tears (present and ghostly), I proceed in the

following, and final, chapter to consider the implications of this reconfiguration for the educative subject of counsellor education, for counsellor education, and for counsellor educators.

### **Tear reconfigured**

I am translucent entanglement  
formed of multiple histories  
and futures-yet-to-come  
colliding in the eye of a storm.

I am surprise, intensity, flow,  
abject outcast made to matter  
in the dark, the secret, the private,  
the under-ground space of a profession.

I am nature-culture, matter and meaning  
you and her, an inseparable we  
made of genuineness and empathy,  
of the other - in, on and under one skin.

I am losing control, irrational, non-white  
neurotic female vulnerability.

I am man to man, turned inside-out,  
brave and strong and good.

I am ethics - listening, hearing, relating.

I am ordinary fragments, cut together-apart,  
unanticipated, world in seed, taking root  
in the fertile earth, at the edges of our skin.

I am non-chronos, a point of time,  
sadness, desolation, abandonment,  
inseparably spliced through, entangled with  
forgiveness, hope, compassion.

I am piwakawaka and monarch, a re-turn  
to place of beginning that marks  
the present. I am embodied alterity  
made visible. I refuse to rest.

~~~~~

I am ghostly matter made real,  
a potent presence of  
a figure marked by its absence.  
I nevertheless, demand your attention.

I am im/possibility, energetic entanglement.  
I inhabit the subterranean, a rhizome -  
thick with loss, pain, powerlessness and fear  
of breaking down, apart, of becoming, uncontained.

I am handling it, I am okay, I am relief.  
I am you, me, them and us,  
a gazed upon, subjectified body, formed  
of ideologies, normativities, and imagined ideals.

I am a rational calculating creature,  
full of feeling, desire, and illicit love.

I am undesirable, uninvited, bordering on failure.

I am paradox.

I am large and small, ideology and subjectivity,  
an intra-active montage threatening to leak, seep  
and leach beyond my borders  
into foreign terrains.

I am time accelerated, a compulsion  
to speed up and slow down,  
a simultaneity of overwhelm and powerlessness  
to independently do either.

I am counselling space, High School space  
professional space and always the space between,  
a conduit of networks, of appropriated subjects  
making materializations of the not-yet-known.

~~~~~

This is not all. This does not end.

Porous and responsive, an iterative ethics,  
one tear dissolving into ocean, reconfigured  
and reconfiguring an unending of im/possibilities.



Figure 3: Tear as diffraction pattern.

## **PART FOUR**

# **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER NINE

### Methodology as pedagogy: implications for counsellor education and counsellor educators

I think of these groups  
as we've all got the same camera,  
all of us, that we're given  
and that we're all taking different photos  
and I think of when we come here  
we share those photos.

All those photos are of the same thing  
but from a different angle,  
and from a different time of the day  
and different season.

So what do I get from it?  
I get that sense of a shared experience  
Yeah I get satisfaction, kind of...  
I don't know what it is.  
What do I get from sharing these?  
I don't know,  
I'll have to come back to you on that.  
(Claudia)

#### **Introduction**

Early on in the meeting of the groups there was discussion about what participating in the groups *did* for the group members. Group members knew they liked coming along, both because they wished to contribute to the research, but also because meeting, talking, and listening with their peers was somehow enjoyable and satisfying, even (especially) when there was a sharing of pain and struggle. As is expressed by Claudia above, it was something which was difficult to put into words. In attempting to articulate what the group process did for her, and how it worked in enabling the shifts she knew she

experienced in, and from, the group, Claudia struggled to find any reasonable or satisfactory explanations, beyond a ‘*satisfaction*’ from ‘*a sense of shared experience*’. Repeating the question ‘*what do I get..?*’ and repeating ‘*I don’t know*’, Claudia eventually gave up her search for an adequate explanation, saying ‘*I’ll have to come back to you on that*’. I, too, was intrigued as to what was happening for, and with, these counsellors-in-training through their participation in the groups? What kind of group or research or pedagogical process (or all three) was enabling these experiences and changes to occur? In this chapter I turn to these questions by re-turning to the methodology of collective biography, to diffraction as a (material-discursive) practice, and to the data generated with the participants, which articulates our sense of some of the happenings produced in these groups. I then re-consider the possibilities of reflective practice in counselling (as outlined in chapter one) and propose we re-think this instead as diffractive practice. Finally I turn to consider implications for counsellor educators. This chapter marks a turn toward pedagogical matters (Snaza, Sonu, Truman, & Zaliwska, 2016) and the ethico-onto-epistemological implications for counsellor education of experimenting with a post-humanist reconfiguring of the counsellor-in-training subject. That is, if the educative subject of counsellor education is configured as a posthuman, intra-active becoming, where becoming is a “non-linear enfolding” of nature and culture, matter and meaning, space and time, all “threaded through one another”, how might counsellor education, and counsellor educators (need to) respond (Barad, 2010, p. 244)?

In many ways, this is a return to where I started, with questions about the relationship between identity and education, between being and becoming, and between individual and relational processes of change. Teaching on a counsellor education programme which espouses a social constructionist model of change in the counselling relationship, I was initially confronted by the lack of research and literature articulating similar processes for the developing - not in an internal, linear unfolding sense – counsellor-in-training. Indeed, as outlined in chapter one, the predominant theories in the counselling literature advocate stage/phase models of identity development (e.g. Dollahide et al. 2013; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Skovholt, 2012) underpinned by uncritical humanistic notions of identity as



psychological, linear, individual, universal and altogether non-discursive. Such developmental, psychological theories necessitate judgements of progress as normal or lacking in accordance with the dominant and universal standards and expectations (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Even when there has been a turn to constructivist learning theory involving a consideration of the cultural contexts, through which counsellors-in-training learn and emerge, there remains taken for granted assumptions of the separability of material and discursive realities, of individuals and of internal processes of identity formation. With the counselling literature also just beginning to consider what it means to take up the call to reconfigure the nature of identity for clients as intersections of “social locations and cultural factors (i.e., dis/ability, affectional orientation, ethnicity, race, gender identity and expression, spirituality and religion, residency in a country or educational program, and many other identities that are not mentioned and yet are important)” (Peters, 2017, p. 178), there seems further impetus to start with the reconceptualization of counsellors-in-training own identities and processes of formation. To not do so perpetuates a theoretical and practical disconnect for counsellors-in-training who are working with understandings of identity beyond the universal, self-contained notions perpetuated under humanism, at least in relation to their clients<sup>32</sup>. A posthumanist pedagogy, which ultimately further develops this reconceptualization, “works with and makes use of – rather than working against – differences, diversities and increased complexities of learning and knowing” (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 9).

### **A reconfigured, posthumanist, educative subject – initial pedagogical considerations**

The previous data analysis chapters (and interludes) in this thesis have experimented with mapping a counsellor-in-training subjectivity as an intra-action of mutually constituted, entangled agencies (Davies et al., 2013). As outlined in chapter three (ethico-onto-epistemology) this goes beyond humanist

---

<sup>32</sup> Of course, inviting counsellors-in-training into a posthumanist reconceptualisation of their own lived experience in becoming counsellors, ultimately raises the question of a posthumanist approach to counselling, beyond the scope of this thesis, but certainly an important implication and area for further work.

and social constructionist conceptualisations to break down nature/culture binaries and reimagine identity instead as a relational, dynamic and iterative process of spacetime mattering, of enfolding and embodying nature and culture, matter and meaning, space and time. Thinking identity and agency as intra-active processes, in agential realist terms, has implications also for rethinking the educative subject of counsellor education, processes of teaching and learning, and indeed, demands attention to theoretical and expanded understandings of curriculum and pedagogy. As Snaza et al. (2016) state in one of the few contemporary texts experimenting with curriculum and pedagogical matters and new materialisms/post-humanism, “new materialisms demand not merely a move “beyond” the human but charges curriculum studies with particular ethical, aesthetic and political tasks...” (pxviii). “Accounting for more-than-human agencies means that we have to begin to consider how non-human actors directly participate in educational encounters” (p. xx). New materialism and posthumanism compel us to consider the “inter-connectedness between bodies, matter, space, theory, rational thinking and the bodily senses: and practicing teaching and learning in ways that go beyond the theory/practice divide” (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 3).

Such thinking challenges the general trend in education toward “learnification”, so-called, and problematized, by Gert Biesta (2009) due to its individualistic definition of learning, and the ‘learner’, and its disconnection from education’s broader purposes. A new materialist onto-epistemology requires a dramatic shift in how we conceive of the ends and aims of education (Snaza et al., 2016). In a neoliberal era increasingly, and reductively, focused on individual outcomes, measurement, and universal standards (Biesta, 2009; Lenz Taguchi, 2010), both the complexities of, and the possibilities for, teaching and learning, are greatly reduced. This, combined with the neoliberalism of universities, as sites of counsellor education, that have “arguably been reconfigured to produce highly individualised, responsabilized” and entrepreneurial subjects (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 248) becomes especially problematic for education if it looks to respond to the reality of an increasingly complex, unequal and diverse world (Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

In effect, this can be seen too, in humanistic accounts of counsellor development where the language and phases of the models suggest the privileging of individual, predetermined, universalistic ideas, in relation to, for example, identity achievement, professional selves, and master and senior professional therapists (Jennings & Skovholt, 1999; Orlinsky, 1999; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Skovholt, 2012). Humanistically oriented counsellor education in this sense would be seen to work backwards with such ends in mind, focused on developing the skills and knowledge of the student novice counsellor as ‘learner’ (Biesta, 2009), developing in cognitive maturity, toward predetermined, individual ends. This is evident even in constructivist counsellor education texts where learners are first situated within Rønnestad and Skovholt’s (2003) phases of counsellor development so that counsellor educators can “match their work to counsellors’ evolving learning needs”, as predetermined by the stages (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 49). In contrast, Snaza et al (2016) suggest a “new materialist pedagogy is open ended, processual, and attentive to the aleatory nature of encounter” (p. xxii). It is challenging to imagine what such a pedagogy might look like, in relation to the demands of teaching a core set of skills and domain of knowledge, in requiring safe and ethical practice from practitioners, and with a focus on developing specific practitioner competencies. Educational questions need to be asked though, not just about the competencies or outcomes we are looking to produce in individual practitioners, but about what counsellor education is for. What are its aims and purposes? Biesta, who reminds us to ask these questions of education, suggests that sometimes those educational strategies not necessarily deemed ‘effective’, in times of evidence based practice, “can be more desirable than those that effectively proceed toward a pre-specified end...because they provide opportunities for students to explore their own ways of thinking, doing and being” (2009, p. 36). When we recognize the diverse ways of knowing, being, and learning, and the complexity and multiplicity of factors impacting on how and what we can come to know, we can see that teaching and learning needs to be thought about in other ways (Lenz Taguchi, 2010), beyond individualism, universalism, and pre-determined outcomes.

The notion of the posthuman is proposed as a response to “growing public awareness of fast-moving technological advances and also of contemporary political developments linked to the limitations of economic globalization” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 13), requiring us to “think harder about the status of human subjectivity”, given the complexity of our times. Such rapid shifts have direct impacts on counselling, clients, the complexity of the problems they bring and the processes which must be engaged in to engender more hopeful futures. Counsellor education must keep pace with and do justice to the rapidly changing world and its effects on human subjectivity. Today’s teens, for example, labelled iGen by researcher and author, Jean Twenge, as the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone, are reported to be experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness (Twenge, 2017). However, Twenge notes the cultural and economic changes they have experienced have also impacted in a myriad of other ways, including socializing and behaving in completely new ways, and changed attitudes to religion, sexuality and politics. Perhaps now, more than ever, human subjectivity cannot be separated from the rapid political, technological, and cultural shifting landscapes. Counsellor education needs to offer adequate conceptualisations of this posthuman subject, and adequate conceptual tools and maps, to equip counsellors-in-training to attend to both their own and their clients’ intra-active processes of ongoing subjectification in an increasingly complex and changing world.

It is my intention, in what follows, to begin to imagine what new materialist/post-humanist thinking might have to offer in working with these challenges in counsellor education. Before I turn to this I want to briefly follow on from the data analysis summary of counsellor-in-training tears in the previous chapter in order to summarise this post-humanist counsellor-in-training subject. Once we come to see the self as “emergent multiplicities” (Davies, 2014a, p. 9), as “the inseparability of meaning, matter and ethics” (p. 10), it becomes impossible not to rethink also matters of pedagogical encounter.

## **Reconfiguring the (posthuman) educative subject of counsellor education**

Drawing on new materialisms and post-humanism in general, and Barad's framework of agential realism in particular, I am arguing for a reconceptualization of a posthuman subject of counsellor education. As outlined in chapter one, current, predominant literature which offers students, and educators, frameworks within which to theorise their lived experience, and education practices, draw primarily on humanistic, developmental, psychological stage/phase models and conceptualise the educative subject in universalistic, humanist terms (Skovholt, 2012; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2013). Limitations have been outlined in chapter one and include, in particular what gets left out or made invisible when the "individualised subject", that "singular, self-contained human individual" (Davies, 2010, p. 54) is given fundamental status. I have noted the significant exception to these dominant humanistic models in the form of the post-structural/social constructionist theorising of student storying of professional identity in counsellor education (Crocket & Kotzé, 2011; Winslade, 2002), and the attention to post-structural identities as socially and culturally produced. This in turn influences a co-construction of the curriculum and pedagogical practices through which attention is given to power relations, exploration of cultural narratives and commitments to social justice (Crocket & Kotzé, 2011).

Drawing on postmodernism, social constructionism and post-structuralism, the counselling theories of Narrative Therapy and Solution-focused therapy significantly shifted the possibilities within the counselling landscape from its previously dominant psychological and humanistic underpinnings. Now, however, there is another turn afoot. Whilst this thesis originally set out to explore counsellor identity and education from a post-structural, discursive theoretical orientation, it was impossible to ignore the emergence of exciting post-humanist and new materialist thinking taking place across academic fields within the humanities. As Braidotti (2016) states, "(w)e are experiencing at present an explosion of scholarship on nonhuman, inhuman and posthuman issues... (T)he posthuman predicament enforces the necessity to think again and to think harder about the status of human subjectivity and the ethical relations, norms and values that may be worthy of the complexity of our times" (p.13). This entails rethinking posthuman subject formations.

My focus on the field of counsellor education in this thesis, and my engagement with this posthuman turn, has led to a necessary rethinking, reconceptualising or reconfiguring the posthuman counsellor-in-training-subject formation. This thesis argues for a posthuman, performative account of a counsellor-in-training educative subject, through drawing primarily on Barad's (2007) agential realist framework. This goes far beyond humanist and positivist notions of 'technical rationality' where the counsellor-in-training is reduced to the level of a technician trained to impart a set of skills and procedures (Schön, 1987; Thompson & Pascal, 2012), and beyond too, the counsellor-in-training subject as socially and culturally constituted and thus positioned to co-construct and re-story evolving identities. I have examined the posthuman, emerging counsellor-in-training subject through the matter(ing) of tears. Tears as a material-discursive practice, themselves a relational, mutually co-constituted, entanglement of forces of matter and meaning, nature and culture, are articulated as in turn co-constituting the emerging counsellor-in-training's performative identity<sup>33</sup>. Tears enact the subject. Mapping the multiple, intra-active material-discursive forces enacting tears begins to make visible the same forces through which an entangled, counsellor-in-training, posthuman subject is enacted. Such forces are visibly depicted in figure 3, in the previous chapter summary. In this way, a counsellor-in-training identity, in a posthuman sense, is inseparable from, and mutually transformative of, matter and meaning, such as tears, professionalism, ethics, values, neoliberalism, counselling theories, clients, multiple other identities, time, space, objects, and multiple other material-discursive practices including gender, ethnicity, emotion, age and culture.

"Human subjectivity in this complex field of forces has to be re-defined as an expanded relational self", according to Braidotti (2016), who describes this new ontology as "a re-grounding of subjects in the radical immanence of their embodied and embedded locations" (p. 22). This complex vision is of a subject produced "within a materialist process ontology that sustains an open, relational, self-other

---

<sup>33</sup> Identity is used here in a Baradian, agential-realist sense.

entity...with special emphasis on the embedded and embodied, affective and relational structure of subjectivity” (p. 23). As Barad (2007) and Braidotti remind us, this is also an ethical posthuman becoming. Braidotti (2016) describes a posthuman ethical imagination in the form of “ontological relationality, which stresses an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others” (p. 25). This is Barad’s intra-action and responsibility, which rejects self-centred individualism and hierarchical dichotomies. In this way, a counsellor-in-training subjectivity is an ethical, vital, moving embodiment of multiple affective-material-discursive relations, it is an enactment of “unfolding the self onto the world, while enfolding the world within” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 26).

This is a radical shifting of the ontology of self which ultimately calls for a commensurate shift in practices, i.e. counsellor education, committed to the making of particular kinds of selves, i.e. counsellors. Opening up what is yet possible for who and how counsellors-in-training can become brings significant implications not only for thinking the lived experience of counsellors-in-training, but also for the counselling encounters they are engaged in. With this in mind, I turn now to imagine a posthuman pedagogy in light of the particular experience of the participants with-in the time and space of this research. Specifically, I consider how the collective biography research groups, if underpinned by Barad’s posthumanist theoretical concepts, might become “pedagogical inspiration” (Kuby & Christ, 2017, p. 1) for rethinking counsellor education practices, in particular *reflective practice*, when such practices are aimed at students be(com)ing counsellors “through knowing/being/doing in a material world of humans and nonhumans intra-acting” (p. 2). I turn first to the collective biography groups, reconceptualised with posthumanist underpinnings, with a focus on emergent listening and diffraction as pedagogical practices, before moving to re-consider the significant role of reflective practice currently in counsellor education by proposing a posthuman shift to diffractive practice.

### **Collective Biography as method – from post-structural to posthumanist conceptualisations**

As outlined in chapter two, Davies, Gannon and colleagues began using and developing collective biography as a research methodology around the turn of the century (Davies et al., 1997; 2001; 2002;

Davies & Gannon, 2006a). These earlier iterations of the method drew primarily on feminist post-structural theory and the work of Butler and Foucault for conceptual inspiration (Davies & Gannon, 2012). Collaborative practices generated in the collective biography workshops were aimed at mapping the traces of power and knowledge in embodied memories (Davies et al., 2002), and exploring the ways in which discursive practices “shape selves, shape worlds, shape desire” in order to open “up the possibility of re-shaping, re-writing, re-visioning desire” (Davies et al., 1997, p. 62). It was with these conceptualisations in mind that I drew on the methodology of collective biography for this project, as a method to engage my participants in an exploration of the discursive production and (re)positioning of their counsellor-in-training selves<sup>34</sup>.

More recently, however, Davies and Gannon and others using collective biography have turned more explicitly to the work of Deleuze and Barad in a “radical move away from subjection as the key to understanding how we come to be what we are” toward a focus on processes of ongoing emergence, becoming and differentiation (Davies et al., 2013, p. 681; Davies & Gannon, 2012; de Schauwer et al., 2016, 2017; Gannon et al., 2012; Zabrodska, Linnell, Laws, & Davies, 2011). I draw on this more recent writing, along with some of the new writing emerging on new materialism and pedagogy (Davies, 2014a; Hickey-Moody, Palmer & Sayers, 2016; Hinton & Treusch, 2015; Kuby & Christ, 2017; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Snaza et al., 2016), to theorise what happened in the groups and, more particularly, to imagine the “disruptive and generative potential” of diffractive pedagogical practices (Hickey-Moody et al., 2016, p. 213). With Barad’s ethico-onto-epistemology, with her agential realist framework, at the centre of this, I particularly draw on the concept-practices of emergent listening (Davies, 2014a) and diffraction – both recently used to articulate the methodology of collective biography. I use these concept-practices to think with the data from the groups, to re-imagine what such practices might produce for counsellor education and for the dynamic, intra-active teaching-learning processes of counsellors-in-training.

---

<sup>34</sup> This is outlined in detail in chapter two – methodology.



## Collective biography as posthumanist pedagogy: emergent listening

She is listening so keenly  
and she is actually there  
and that is the key ingredient  
that was very important.  
It's so professional,  
it's so non-judgemental.

The talking,  
listening that's a biggie,  
the questioning,  
the sense in meaning making.

I guess for the first time in my life  
I felt within this group  
that I was truly cared about  
and was being listened to  
and that it was genuine,  
that there was genuine care  
that I felt in the group  
which I've not ever felt before  
and I think that might be about the history  
and about that feeling of trust and safety.  
(multiple participant voices)

The words in the above poem, spoken by participants in the groups, about the groups, refer to listening as a key, if not *the* key, practice in facilitating the process for individuals, and the group. The significance of listening is, of course, not new in the field of counselling. Though, given the words spoken above, it seems something new did occur for these participants, in the group context, in relation to being listened to. One participant says, '*for the first time in my life / I felt within this group / that I was truly cared about / and was being listened to*'. Another says '*she is listening so keenly / and she is actually there / and that is the key ingredient*'. The participants speak of the kind of listening they

experienced as occurring in relation with, or co-constituted with, or inseparable from, *non-judgement*, *genuineness*, *professionalism*, *questioning*, *genuine care*, *trust*, and *safety*. Such listening, which I conceptualise as a material-discursive practice, is both co-emergent with, as well as productive of, these concepts/experiences (care, genuineness and so on) for the participants. I want to distinguish my use of these concepts from how they are most commonly understood within humanistic counselling and listening practices, such as Rogerian notions of care, genuineness, and acceptance (non-judgement) (Rogers, 2007), and the associated humanistic pedagogical practices, such as person-centred education, drawing also on Rogers notions of empathy, warmth and genuineness (Cornelius-White, Hoey, Cornelius-White, Motschnig-Pitrik, & Figl, 2003; Rogers, 1969). I wish to highlight this as a clear distinction from humanism's unfolding self, or individual, to be clear that I am not imagining such practices of listening to be aimed at facilitating "constructive personality change" (Rogers, 2007, p. 240) or "broad-actualisation of individuals" (Cornelius-White et al., 2003, p. 1). I wish also to distinguish such practices, theoretically, from the discursive teaching practices shaped by a commitment to an 'ethic of care', enacted through speaking and acting in relation with the power relations of the everyday and with systems of knowledge (Crocket et al., 2007). Instead, listening, care, genuineness, trust, and so on, are conceptualised here, not as human-based capacities of self-contained individuals, or as only discursive practices, but as material-discursive entanglements, as relational, dynamic, intra-active articulations of the ongoing performance of the world, or group, in which we all participate. (Barad, 2007).

This changes, among other things, the question from one of how I might go about 'enacting' or 'doing' listening or care or trust, to instead asking how listening, or care, is enacted, or made, and how I am an intra-active participant in its enactment. Kuby and Christ (2017), for example, in deploying Barad's posthumanist theoretical concepts as pedagogical inspiration for an introductory qualitative research course, ask questions about trust. They write "(h)ow does trust fit into spacetime mattering? How does spacetime mattering fit into trust? Is trust space? Is trust matter? Trust matters; trust does matter. Trust takes (and makes) time. Trust makes (and takes) space" (p. 10). Trust, and listening, become

pedagogical concepts and practices which are made and remade with-in the intra-active time and space of encounters, with/between/among students and teachers, past/present/futures and in relation with multiple other material-discursive practices.

Conceptualised in this way, listening as a material-discursive practice also embodies an alternative concept of selves and their possibilities. It is this practice, one of emergent listening (Davies, 2014a), which I want to explore further here and put forward as a posthumanist pedagogical practice, as necessary, if counsellor education, is to take up the implications of a posthumanist reconceptualization of identity. I draw here on Davies (2014) work in particular with the concept of emergent listening in early childhood pedagogical encounters, and as put to work in more recent posthumanist conceptualisations of collective biography methodology (e.g. Davies et al., 2017).

Emergent listening, as a material-discursive practice, embodies a concept of selves as emergent, not in a humanistic, linear unfolding sense, but as an ongoing, entangled, dynamic, intra-active and iterative becoming. “Intra-action recognises that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action” (Barad, 2007, p. 33). Selves, counsellor-in-training subjects, emerge in and with the moments of encounter, as outlined through tears as constitutive of counsellor-in-training selves in the counselling encounters of the previous chapters. However, they also emerge and are continually reconfigured in the space afforded by pedagogical encounters, such as the pedagogical encounters within the space of the groups. This emergence, a “*mutually constitutive act of becoming*” in a “Deleuzian/Baradian framing”, affords a recognition as a (counsellor) subject, and it is through this “ongoing entanglement of mutual agencies (that) life/art/being (identity) is generated in each present moment (Davies et al., 2013, p. 682). Within post-structural and posthumanist frameworks, such pedagogical opportunities are necessary for the possibilities they can offer of disrupting, dislodging and expanding habitual ways of being, particularly those which create “a liberatory movement against normative, constitutive forces of discourse” (Davies & Gannon, 2012, p. 359). Posthuman, Baradian/Deleuzian frameworks, however, offer a different emphasis on such a process from the likes

of poststructural (e.g. Butlerian) frameworks. Davies and colleagues (2013) identify that a Baradian focus is on the “encounters through which we may become different – a diffractive unfolding or differentiation” rather than an emphasis on the vulnerability of individual subjects to “the citational chains through which they are recognized and made recognizable” (p. 683). It is in relation to Baradian conceptualisation of selves as emergent that I expand on the practice, and necessity, of emergent listening in a posthuman pedagogy.

Davies writes initially about open listening (2011) which transforms into emergent listening (2014), where she draws particularly on the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education and Bergson’s (1998) notion of creative evolution. It is this practice of emergent listening which is taken up in collective biography as methodology (e.g. Davies et al., 2017) and which I suggest is necessary to the pedagogical encounters oriented to posthumanist pedagogical practices for counsellors-in-training. In order to examine the practice of listening in more detail, and consider how it might look pedagogically, I return to collective biography as method, and as initially laid out for the counsellor-in-training participants in this research.

Collective biography as method works with individual and collaborative speaking, writing, and listening to memory stories on a particular topic. Through close attention to sensory, affective and embodied detail, through listening to and questioning each other, the group works together to set aside long explanations and clichéd repetitions (Gannon et al., 2012; Zabrodska et al., 2011). The initial material given to participants in the groups of this project (see appendix 3) invited a focus on this kind of listening:

“Each participant listens carefully to the others’ memory stories. They question the storyteller when, as listener, they find they cannot imagine what happened. They listen in order to allow the memory, in its embodied, affective detail, to become imaginable, to be virtually real in their minds and bodies” (appendix 3)

This kind of listening, is not a humanistic one of reflecting an individual's thoughts or feelings, as if they belong only to an individual, where such reflecting is aimed at increasing self-awareness and facilitating personal knowledge and growth. As evident above, this is listening to memories, or stories, or, I would now add, entanglements, in order to flesh out, to make visible, the co-constitutive detail - affective, material and discursive. It is an embodied, and relational listening, which invites an attention not only to the words of the teller, but to the space where the words land, and meet the minds and bodies of the listeners.

"The participants listen openly and with care...when they can't enter the other's story at any point, they make a note of where the words did not open up a space that they could imagine, and the written story is discussed in light of these blank spots. In this flow of talk the listeners offer insights from their own take-up of the story as it resonates in their bodies, asking '*is this how it was?*' Sometimes the listeners tell some of their own memories as a way of opening up a different entry point to the moment that they cannot find a way into" (appendix 3)

"Through listening and questioning each other on the remembered, embodied, affective detail, each story becomes imaginable with/in the minds/bodies of everyone..." (appendix 3)

This is the kind of listening group members were invited to participate in. In collective biography as a posthumanist methodology, this is done, not in order to make re-visible the cultural storylines through which subjects are constituted, but rather individuals are de-centred and new possibilities are opened up for meaning and matter to intra-act such that what comes to matter is always emergent. This is an embodied, intra-active listening, where listening takes places in minds and bodies, includes listening to the other and the self, and attending to all manner of matter which is emergent through the listening and telling encounters of group members.

As Davies and Gannon (2012) explain, "(i)n Barad's terms, the collective biography workshops can be said to explore the entanglements of matter and meaning through which we are co-implicated in the generation and evolution of knowing and being" (p. 362). Central to these encounters then, where the

self, among other matters, is made and remade in intra-action, is this concept and practice of emergent listening. Listening, in these workshops, in the groups which generated data for this project, and I argue in posthumanist pedagogical practices, is central to the processes which facilitate emergent, intra-active, intra-corporeal becomings. Emergent listening becomes a tool, or a force, which enables thinking differently and opening up what it is yet possible to become (De Schauwer et al., 2016). Davies (2014) contrasts dominant ways of thinking about listening, as listening “in order to fit what we hear into what we already know” with emergent listening which “means opening up to the ongoing possibility of coming to see life, and one’s relation to it, in new and surprising ways” (p. 21).

Such listening, she says, requires opening yourself to others, a predisposition toward change, and a letting go of the status quo in order to transgress boundaries, to be transgressive. This is not an easy listening, and not a Rogerian, humanistic listening encompassing reflection and empathy aimed at personal, individual growth or “constructive personality change” (Rogers, 2007, p. 240). In fact, it could be said that emergent listening exists in tension with this kind of listening if its (humanistic listening’s) aim is to name, classify, and consolidate a coherent sense of identity. Emergent listening is demanding and requires active curiosity about what is not apparent, known or believed; it is always being open to being affected by the other in an openness to the not-yet-known, where the subject is conceptualised as an intra-active becoming, rather than as having a “hearable, recognisable identity” (Davies, 2014a, p. 34). In this way emergent listening is an inevitable struggle, situated within the tension of “the predictable patterns of life-as-usual...out of which difference might emerge” (p. 32).

As I suggest above, emergent listening within the groups in this project, and pedagogically, can be theorised as a material-discursive practice, a relational, intra-active and intra-corporeal force, not situated in individual minds but in relational, collective entanglements. This kind of listening correlates with a listening to and for the intensities of forces working on and through us, forces which are themselves emergent, intra-active and productive of the making of ongoing difference (Davies, et al. 2016). This is in contrast to a reflective listening which listens to/for the self-as-identity and looks to

“document categories of *difference into which we can each be sorted*” (Davies et al., 2016, p. 4, italics in original). This kind of listening typically finds subjects as wanting, as at risk of falling short of, yet nevertheless striving toward, the (unattainable) ideals of identity categories. Listening in this sense gets stuck at focusing on what is already known, already imagined, with will, intentionality and repetition seen as the tools with which to move selves toward these predetermined ends. Emergent listening as receptiveness to the not-yet-known and to the possibilities this opens up necessarily “requires constant work against the seductions of the lines of descent that require no effort, that confirm who one is and how the world works..., against the normative force of language, and everyday practice. It is a continuous struggle” (Davies, 2014a, p. 36). This is essential to the understanding of emergent listening lest it be portrayed as some easy, utopian form of practice. Such a practice of listening, not to affirm what is already known, but listening for what is known *and* for what might be different, for an openness to the not-yet-known, as multiple forces, human and non-human, intra-act, has the potential to be incredibly pedagogically productive in a discipline which requires a constant openness to encountering the not-yet-known.

Finally in this section, I think again with Barad in further conceptualising emergent listening as a posthumanist, performative, material-discursive, pedagogical practice. Listening can be likened to Barad’s notion of “meeting each moment, being alive to the possibilities of becoming” (2007, p. 396), in mutually transformative ways. Evident in the participants’ descriptions of, and necessary to, this kind of meeting, as outlined above, is a sense of genuine care, of being listened to, and of trust and safety. Whilst such terms invite their own material-discursive cartography, I see these practices of emergent listening as reflective of what Barad (2007) describes as justice. Justice, she says, “entails acknowledgment, recognition, and loving attention” (p. x). Such practices of listening are about using “our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly” (Barad, 2007, p. x). I draw here, too, on Haraway (2016) and her term, ‘response-ability’, to mean cultivating a capacity to respond, to “stay... with the trouble, in order to nurture wellbeing...” in our intra-active practices of “worlding” (p. 76). She speaks of such response-ability in the contexts

of our ordinary stories, and our ordinary becoming “involved in each other’s lives” which are not tales of heroes but “tales of the ongoing” (p. 76). It is this way of being responsive in and to the ordinary and everyday stories of living, in and to the intra-active, collective making of new worlds, which breathes life into the possibilities of living more justly, of flourishing and wellbeing for all, that is embodied in the practice of emergent listening. Basil’s words below exemplify this as he speaks about listening to, and being affected by, others’ stories in the groups.

I think it’s being part of something greater,  
being affected by the stories of others  
and their subjective view of reality.  
Their memories intersected with some of mine,  
increased cross connections  
with shared experience.  
We’re all on this journey of change  
and made stronger at the broken places.

**(Basil)**

He connects this ‘being affected’ to ‘being part of something greater’, and to being ‘made stronger at the broken places’ through this collective process of ‘increased cross connections’, similar to Haraway’s notion of cultivating a capacity to respond by becoming involved in each other’s lives. It is through this emergent listening amongst collective bodies that intersections occur, cross connections are increased, and new possibilities are shaped. In the next section I expand on this, exploring how these collective processes of telling (e.g. writing, speaking, making), listening, and being open to the not-yet known, can be conceptualised as diffractive practices.

### **Collective biography as posthumanist pedagogy: diffractive practice**

Actually having a group of people  
has been an amazing process for me  
to get my head around everything.  
it feels kind of more co-constructed -  
it’s like I’m taking in bits



from everywhere  
and it's kind of making  
a new experience for me.  
(Bailey)

Above I have spoken about the necessity of listening, as a process involving a radical openness to selves which are co-emergent with unknown, and potentially infinite, possibilities. Whilst not necessarily always an easy undertaking, this is a foundation required from a posthumanist, diffractive practice. Bailey, in talking about her experience in the groups, describes what can happen when this kind of emergent listening is present: *'it's like I'm taking in bits / from everywhere / and it's kind of making / a new experience for me'*. Without knowing it, Bailey's words epitomise the possibilities of a diffractive pedagogical practice, where diffraction is understood as a material-discursive practice (Barad, 2007). The making of Bailey's *'new experience'*, or knowing which emerges, is an embodied, enfolded, dynamic, intra-active, articulation of *'bits from everywhere'*, where *'bits'* are the matter, meaning, times, spaces and bodies co-present in the group, and cut-together-apart to produce ongoing, new, configurations of knowing-in-being.

Building on earlier theorising, collective biography has been conceptualised as a diffractive methodology (Davies et al., 2016; De Schauwer, 2017; Zabrodzka et al, 2011), as an intra-active process where subjects explore the entanglements of matter and meaning (Davies & Gannon, 2012). As I have articulated in the previous data analysis chapters, collective biography as method enabled the generation of data on the matter and meaning co-constituting the lived experience of counsellors-in-training. In a diffractive pedagogical process, this exploration, through writing, telling and/or making, listening, imagining and responding, in relation with the entangled, material-discursive forces intra-actively co-constituting their lived experience, remains the focus. However, what is interesting in thinking this process as a diffractive pedagogical process, is how it is productive for the participants themselves. In a collective, diffractive pedagogical process, an intra-active, diffractive process occurs whereby "subjects, singly and collectively, come into being" (Davies et al., 2016, p. 4). This occurs in a

diffractive encounter with the time and space of the group, with each other's memories, with each other's embodied presence, with other people, times and spaces involved in the stories, and so on (De Schauwer et al., 2016, p. 6).

This process, as methodological or pedagogical, is productive of an “entangled phenomenon of collective, embodied, biographical becoming” with-in the spacetime-mattering of the group/workshop (De Schauwer et., 2017, p. 278). This can be understood in this project, through the collective enacting of ‘tear’ stories and memories, as a multiplicity of entangled forces continually reconfigured in each intra-active telling and listening, producing a diffractive, *reconfiguring* at the same time, of the ‘tear’ possibilities for each counsellor-in-training present. The words and stories of one are diffracted with the responses of another, as listening invites particular questions, smiles and nods of encouragement occur, tears of recognition appear, and what continues to emerge becomes true in the moments of the encounter. Tears as an ever expanding multiplicity of entangled material-discursive forces, are embodied, singly and collectively, through the iterative, collective, diffractive group processes. The tearful possibilities for what and how they come to matter for a counsellor-in-training subject are reconfigured. Such possibilities will of course continue to be reconfigured in ongoing encounters. Why does this matter? I return to the participants’ words in explaining their experience of the groups, in order to both expand on this concept of diffractive practice as well as address what diffractive pedagogical practice might be productive of in counsellor education.

Although as a group we did not work directly with these concepts, many of the comments made by group members seem to describe their experiences of being in the group as diffractive, as Bailey’s comment above, and below, suggest.

I kind of felt I was stuck in this loop.  
just over and over again,  
so coming to the group was a way  
for me to unknot that loop, I guess  
and I could understand it better.

I can understand from  
so many different perspectives  
and go away, like I'd be driving home  
and I'd be like, 'Yip, that makes sense now.  
'Now I get it'. And then  
I'd go home and have a think about it  
and maybe draw something  
and come to a different understanding.  
I wouldn't have had that  
if I didn't have the group.  
I feel I could have been stuck  
in a lot of loops that didn't shift  
without everyone else's contribution.

**(Bailey)**

Bailey's description of being stuck in loops that didn't shift is consistent with ideas of the habitual and normative (Mazzei, 2014), the taken-for-granted habits of thought and action (Lenz Taguchi, 2010), and stereotypical reproductions of identity (Hickey-Moody et al., 2016) which posthumanist pedagogies aim to challenge, disrupt, and re-make in unpredictable and productive ways. Bailey describes this process of first of all unknitting the loop, then understanding it from '*so many different perspectives*' from intra-action with the group members, and through further spacetime-matterings – driving home and drawing – coming to different understandings again. Such a description is exemplary of an iterative process of knowing-in-being (Barad, 2007).

Bailey speaks further about this process, about what she terms a 'shift' for her which was produced through the intra-active process of the group members talking about tears in their counselling encounters:

The point around like crying  
in response to what a client's saying -  
it hasn't come up for me at all,  
I just hadn't thought of it.

Hearing how other people deal with that  
I feel a lot more comfortable now  
if I do get to that point again  
I feel a lot more comfortable  
actually showing a client  
that's how it's affected me  
and that their story really resonates with me  
and that it actually might be helpful  
for them to see that.

So that's kind of shifted me  
into that place  
so it's quite interesting for me  
that this is where I have done the processing for it.  
Actually having a group of people  
has been an amazing process for me  
to get my head around everything.

**(Bailey)**

The focus here is on the matter of tears – *'the point around crying'* - and through a diffractive process where tears become multiple in the possibilities for their mattering, tears are similarly reconfigured for Bailey, as counsellor in a future yet to come. Bailey's habitual response in a counselling encounter at this stage was one of no tears, which embodied a taken for granted assumption of this being the 'right' practice as a counsellor. Talking and listening with a group of other counsellors-in-training, whose focus was not on 'getting it right', but on exploring and mapping the diverse material-discursive enactments of tears, opened up the possibilities for Bailey in relation to tears, and in relation with the diverse material-discursive forces enacting them, in previously unknown and unthought-of ways. "Collecting an increasingly vaster body of experience" in this way, makes it easier and more likely for counsellors-in-training to "make use of and do justice to the differences and multiplicities among" clients, their

stories, matter and environments that are ingoing intra-action with each other in counselling encounters (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 50).

Not only was Bailey able to collect a vaster body of experience through the diffractive group process, but through the embodied mapping of her own experience, in relation with the time, space, and bodies of the group, her own knowing-in-being shifted. In the poem below, she speaks about seeing ‘that there is a lot more that’s been going on’ for her in relation to her experiences described in the previous chapter of ghostly tears. Her words describe this diffractive, relational process of “seeing the lines of force at play” through which new possibilities for being are opened up (De Schauwer et al., p. 4). She says, speaking about what came after the group for her:

...getting into this trap  
I mean there’s part of me  
that has contributed to it,  
but I’m not just seeing it as  
me and my fault  
me and self-doubt.  
I can see that there is a lot more  
that’s been going on.

I actually, from that point forward,  
I started putting myself first,  
which I haven’t been doing...  
I’ve been looking after myself.  
Now that I was able to deal with that  
in the group, I feel like I can say to myself,  
‘It’s ok, you can look after yourself now’.

**(Bailey)**

A diffractive process, in this sense, is productive of an ongoing process of transformation, for each member of the group. This is not a linear process of transformation, rather a counsellor-in-training becomes anew in intra-actions and inter-connections, unknown possibilities are opened up in the

iterative, diffractive process of the spacetime-mattering of the group, and beyond. Bailey speaks of the shift which occurred for her in relation to 'self-doubt' and 'self-blame' through the opening up of and mapping of these concepts/practices within the group process. Bailey's self-doubt and self-blame emerged as the product of the binary, created by neoliberalism's ideology, of personal success/failure. Such a binary makes invisible the other forces enacting the possibilities for one to succeed or fail, and thus produces individuals who, when they experience failure to be as productive as is required, inevitably turn to self-blame and self-doubt. A diffractive process breaks apart binaries and provides space to for group members to dislodge themselves from fixed categories. In the process of mapping the multiple forces enacting success or failure, both success and failure, as fixed categories, became different and space was opened up for different agential possibilities for Bailey – to put herself first.

As I have stated previously, in thinking of diffraction's methodological aims, I now think of here in relation to a diffractive pedagogy - diffraction's project, then, becomes about queering binaries, challenging notions of (fixed) identity, and rethinking how and what differences comes to matter. This is in order that we might responsibly and responsively engage in the ongoing work of the re-opening, unsettling and re-configuring "*of what might yet be, of what was, and what comes to be*" (Barad, 2010, p264).

If diffraction is about "making a difference in the world, about taking responsibility for the fact that our practices matter, (and that) the world is materialized differently through different practices" (Barad, 2007, p. 89), then participating in such group processes as outlined here appears a useful (diffractive) way to take Barad's argument seriously. Through diffracting sameness and difference, through an 'absorption' of the multiplicity of practices, such as tears, participants emerge with more expansive 'knowing in being' about how the world is materialized differently through different practices, and so the possibilities for making a difference in the world are opened up. This process of 'being affected by' the stories of others, seemed to start with this sense of shared, common experience of becoming a counsellor being seen as the key to the power of the group. This sense of seeing yourself reflected in

the stories of others. However, what became evident as being significant to the ongoing practices of becoming-counsellor was actually difference. Barad speaks about her approach as being one of placing “the understandings that are generated from different (inter)disciplinary practices in conversation with one another”. Her method is

to engage aspects of each in *dynamic* relationality to the other, being attentive to the iterative production of boundaries...and questions of accountability and responsibility for the reconfigurings of which we are a part. That is, the diffractive methodology that I use in thinking insights from different disciplines (and interdisciplinary approaches) through one another is attentive to the relational ontology that is at the core of agential realism. (Barad, 2007, p. 93)

This is how I conceptualise what happened for participants within the groups as they generated understandings, participated in entangled, dynamic relationality and questions of accountability and responsibility, through their practices of writing, talking, listening and sharing difference with-in the spacetime-mattering of the group. This ongoing *differentiation*, of concepts, practices and selves, emerged from the cutting together-apart of their different material-discursive insights, practice, and theory, and their embodied, nature-culture differences of, at least, gender, age, race, ethnicity, which are themselves not fixed categories but ongoing material-discursive practices. Kelly speaks of this in the last poem below, in relation to difference for her and remarks too, how it is not always an easy process, highlighting the necessity of the presence also of the emergent listening practices outlined above.

You know how we talked about  
this is a common thing  
but it's actually the differences  
that heightens that appreciation,  
when I think about you  
when you say that you like...  
I just think gosh that's, that's cool  
that you're like that.  
I mean I'm not like that.

So you know I find some of that  
sort of quite hard  
but it's great listening to that,  
it's not about you've got to be one  
or the other.

(Kelly)

Conceptualising this group process and experience as a diffractive pedagogy, underpinned by practices of emergent listening, has significant possibilities for counsellor education, in responding to the diverse and complex needs and identities of both counsellors-in-training and of those individuals, groups and systems they will encounter within their practice. I continue to explore these possibilities in the next section where I turn toward the already established processes of reflective practice in counsellor education, in order to rethink this in light of the reconceptualizing work this thesis has engaged in.

### **From reflective to diffractive practice in counsellor education**

In this section I want to continue with Barad's notion of thinking insights diffractively in order to consider what might be produced in thinking insights from reflective practice together with diffraction as it is outlined above as a pedagogical process. In this way I hope not to discount the value and long history of reflection in education generally (e.g. Dewey, 1998; Schön, 1983, 1987), and reflective practice in counselling in particular, nor to suggest we create a reflective-diffractive binary as somehow a linear and fixed representation of how we might understand our engagement with the world. I draw here on van der Tuin (2011) who argues that

the diffractive method allows us to affirm links between seemingly opposite schools of thought, thus breaking through a politics of negation. At the same time, it allows us to affirm and strengthen links between schools of thought or scholars that only apparently work toward the same goals. Diffraction, then, is the strategy with which new concepts or traditions, new philosophies, can be engendered (p. 27).



It is my hope that new concepts or traditions for reflecting on/diffracting with counselling practice might be generated through diffracting insights from both schools of thought. It is my intention here to offer a beginning to such possibilities by thinking through the implications generated from this research. In particular, I will draw on, or think through insights generated from, methodological shifts from reflexivity to diffraction (as outlined in chapter four), insights generated above from exploring the group process in this project as diffractive, and current literature on reflective practice in counselling and counsellor education. Having already outlined the first two above, I re-turn briefly to reflective practice as a pedagogical practice in counselling, as outlined in chapter one, in order to further consider its conceptual limitations and affordances for re-thinking its potential as diffractive practice in counsellor education.

In chapter one, I drew on two main texts of reflective practice in counselling – Stedmon and Dallos' (2009b) book *Reflective Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy* and Bager-Charleson's (2010) book by the same name, to outline the current practice in counsellor education. I recounted the aims of such practices to develop practitioners' abilities to be "self-critical and ethical" (Dallos & Stedmon, 2009), to examine and assess their own experiences in order to become more aware of the processes, values, assumptions and theories informing their counselling practice, with the intention of transforming learning and practice (Bager-Charleson, 2010). In addition, professional identities are intimately connected to the ways in which reflective practice is performed (Stedmon & Dallos, 2009a).

As I note in chapter one, it is clear that the tradition of reflective practice has become a rich and valuable one for the field of counselling and psychotherapy, however it is not without its limitations. Already identified by Stedmon & Dallos (2009a), are its limits in terms of vision, whereby 'reflection' illuminates only that which has come to be defined as 'seeable', resulting in a "metaphor of infinite regression" (p. 191). I now want to re-turn to these notions of *reflection* and *reflexivity*. I re-turn the reader to chapter four in order to consider both the theoretical limitations of our concepts of reflection and reflexivity and to engender support for the alternative concept of diffractive practice. I will

summarise those insights from chapter four in relation to methodological practices in order to re-consider how they are equally relevant in matters here of reflective practice. As I note in that chapter, Haraway (1988) was led to the term diffraction through attention to the limiting vision offered by even critical reflexivity. As she says, and as I quote in chapter four,

*Vision* is always a question of the power to see (p. 585)... How to see? Where to see from? What limits to vision? What to see for? Whom to see with? Who gets to have more than one point of view? Who gets blinded? Who wears blinders? Who interprets the visual field? What other sensory powers do we wish to cultivate besides vision? (Haraway, 1988, p. 587).

Applying this now to reflexive practice in counselling and psychotherapy, and to Stedmon and Dallos' identification of a similar paradox inherent in a vision which just reflects back the image of the see-er, I am led to seek better visual and sensory systems for the ongoing work of attending to and transforming our counselling practices, and counsellor subjectivities. As Barad has outlined, diffraction, even in a classical sense, lends itself to thinking beyond the optics of reflection to waves which bend, overlap, interfere with, interrupt, and produce different patterns to the original (Barad, 2007). A quantum understanding of diffraction, as has been applied throughout the thesis would offer a wholly different onto-epistemological underpinning for the ways students engaged with thinking about their practice. They would not be 'reflecting on' what was, rather they would be intra-actively participating in the ongoing and entangled practice of making the world anew, with accountability and responsibility for their part in mapping what came/comes to matter, how and for whom. The aim of reflective practices in counselling, to prompt an iterative and recursive process of further discovery as a way of "nurturing our development as therapists and sustaining our practice-based learning" (Dallos & Stedmon, 2009, p. 1) would take on a different aim as diffractive practice. Rather, perhaps we could say diffractive practice invites counselling practitioners to responsibly and responsively engage in the ongoing work of the re-opening, unsettling and re-configuring "*of what might yet be, of what was, and what comes to be*" (Barad, 2010, p. 264, italics in original).

In addition to identifying the limits of reflection as a way of seeing, thinking through the limits of reflexivity also brings us full circle to the question of who is doing the looking. As I outline in chapter four this question has led researchers to identify deep tensions and ambivalence within methodological practices of reflexivity (Davies et al. 2004; Pillow, 2003; MacBeth, 2001). In a similar way, we can ask who is the 'I' that looks back on encounters in their counselling practice, in an attempt to reflexively examine the theory, context, constructed self, cultural and political influences impacting on the events which took place in the past, in order to change one's behaviour in the future? As Davies et al. (2004) identify, we are left again with a pre-discursive, real, unified, knowing subject, who engages in the looking, leaving us again in a place of ambivalence, working both within and against the dominant language of humanism which reflexive practices attempt to overcome. Methodologically, recognising these inherent tensions has led many to abandon reflexivity altogether (Davies & Gannon, 2012; Davies, 2014a; Lenz Taguchi, 2012, Mazzei, 2014) and leads me to agree in proposing diffraction, as "a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection or reproduction" as a more useful concept and practice in counsellor education (Haraway, 2004, p. 70). I see it as a productive way of both returning to address some of counselling's original aims and of responding to contemporary understandings of the intersectional, intra-active and contingent nature of identities. In relation to counselling's original aims I refer to its initial development as a social intervention at the individual level concerned with the promotion of values of social justice (Cornforth, 2006). Despite these aims, counselling has gone on to endure criticism as a mechanism for maintaining the status quo (Cornforth, 2006). Diffraction, in Haraway's words, offers a way to not only "get at how worlds are made and unmade" but "to participate in the processes, in order to foster some forms of life and not others (1994, p. 62). This is an ethico-political commitment to making a difference, to interfering with and reconfiguring possibilities for who and what comes to matter.

In proposing diffractive practice as a rethinking of reflective practice in counsellor education I draw also on the group process as outlined earlier in this chapter. Much of the writing on reflective practice proposes reflection as an individual process. That is, an individual reflecting on their experience may do so in relation with a supervisor, or through a writing or creative exercise. Others may offer questions or comments, with the intended aim of encouraging further analysis of the individual's own experience. Diffraction however, decentres the notion of the individual. Instead, the posthuman subject can be seen as an intra-active entanglement, co-constituted, at least, by the time, space and matter enacting the moments of reflection/diffraction. The counsellor is always in-the-making in the very moments of reflection/diffraction – not just as a result of the new knowledge/learning which comes to light through the process. The counsellor-in-training's body can be seen as a “space of transit, a series of open-ended systems in interaction with the material-discursive ‘environment’” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p. 265), just as my researcher body was. It makes sense then to expand the possibilities for intra-action during this process, to introduce multiple and diverse interferences in order to diffract new knowing, particularly if one agrees with counselling's, and Barad's, ethico-political calls for justice. It was through intra-action in the groups with other bodies, with other stories, genders, cultures, ages, times, spaces and matter that new knowing emerged, that tears, concepts and practices, and counsellor-in-training subjects were reconfigured. This moves the possibilities for reflective practice far beyond an individual's reflection on a wider range of models or theories in order to expand their vision. Diffractive practice goes beyond reflecting on theory and culture as fixed categories to diffracting with multiple space-time-matters in the production of bodies, knowledges and practices always in the making. As Davies says of the diffractive research encounter, I suggest becomes true pedagogically for diffractive practice in counsellor education:

“it is an emergent process, in which subjects and objects become different in the encounters through which they emerge and go on emerging differently...through what Barad calls the world and its possibilities of becoming” (Davies, 2014b, p. 741).

## **Implications for counsellor educators**

Having considered the pedagogical possibilities of re-imagining reflective practice as diffractive practice in counsellor education, and the implications in relation to the always evolving counsellor-in-training, I am aware that such a rethinking inevitably has implications for reconceptualising what it means to be an educator in a posthuman educational landscape. Just as I have reconceptualised the individual counsellor-in-training subject, emerging in intra-active, entangled relations, so too I must reconfigure the counsellor educator. I re-turn to Barad, who says,

(t)o be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating (2007, p. ix).

In order to consider what this means for (me as) a counsellor educator - to be emergent within these same entangled intra-actions - I re-turn again to the methodology of the collective biography groups, drawing on my research journal from that time to think with current literature theorising the posthuman educator subject. In doing this, I notice a shift already which has taken place over the course of this project. I 'see' the world in entanglements and intra-actions now, as ongoing intra-active flows, rather than separate, static, individuals and objects shaping and being shaped by each other. I have become more interested in the shape and contour of what is emerging, rather than what is pre-existing, both in relation to my own identities and that of my students. I sense my educator self to be more decentred, a part of an intra-active becoming in relation with the time, space, matter and bodies of students in the room. Being less self-contained brings challenges and possibilities for educators, particularly in relation with the neoliberal, outcome focused climates of education. I aim to outline an initial consideration of some of these here, while noting the huge potential for further research in this area.

I am prompted to begin with a consideration of the nonhuman in the intra-active entanglement of the 'classroom', the space where teaching and learning typically occurs, as I am struck by the consideration I gave this aspect at the beginning of my research. Having already worked with these students (my participants), as a lecturer, for at least a year, I wanted to disrupt the lecturer-student relationship as I embarked on a research relationship. Due to particular constraints, the room we ended up using for the groups was the same space we had previously used for much of the teaching-learning over the previous year. Already attuned to the potential for space and environments to shape encounters, I was anxious about the negative impacts using this teaching-learning space might have on my hopes for co-constructing new relationships within the research encounters. Reflecting on the first research group, I wrote,

'I tried to make it less formal. I took food – crackers, hummus, chocolate and encouraged them to bring food. I took a cushion, a scarf to lay over the table in an attempt to change the ambience. I sat us in a different place, a different corner, away from where I had mainly taught them last year, in a different part of the room, away from the whiteboard, near the windows. It didn't feel like enough and I didn't really know what difference it would make...did make. I asked them and they (mostly) said it felt fine... I was surprised to hear most of them say being here was actually good, they felt safe and comfortable, because of the work we did together last year.'

(Research journal)

In thinking now, with new materialisms and posthuman pedagogy, I can see a shift in my thinking about the non-human objects and spaces of our teaching-learning environments. Robbins (2016) captures this when she says "rather than viewing the nonhuman objects in our classroom as a backdrop against which teaching and learning occur, it may be helpful to consider the ways in which objects are part of the intra-actions that shape the classrooms entanglement" (p. 156). While I clearly considered the significance of these objects and the room as shaping the experience of the students, I also saw them as separate from the individuals in the room, and as having a more generalised, backdrop, effect. Robbins suggests, as educators, we pay more attention to the agency and ability of non-living objects and physical spaces to reconfigure entanglements, rather than to shape individual experience. In this way, the objects and

classroom space are intra-active forces acting in relation with student-participants' pasts and presents, my lecturer-researcher pasts and presents, co-producing the agential possibilities for who and what comes to matter in an ongoing way.

Pedagogically, this requires an ongoing attention to the entangled flows of intra-action as selves - educators and learners - emerge continually. Such a process is never complete. Interestingly, Robbins (2016) points out, in tracing the intra-active agency of a sweater in her classroom, the role of the teacher does not have to be occupied by one individual. While she acknowledges that within a classroom she was the only one who could hold this role at the institutional level (i.e. assigning grades), she suggests that the teacher role is "produced through a distribution of power that occurs within entangled intra-actions", rather than being owned by one individual (p. 159). Such a view has implications for both students and educators who must remain open, and able to be responsive, to the always shifting and emerging nature of roles, responsibilities and power in entangled, material-discursive, intra-actions. This poses a challenge to those - both students and educators - who align more strongly with particular hierarchical views of an educator as possessing a fixed identity, and acting as an authoritative knower, imparting and offering wisdom and knowledge. For counsellor educators, who often come into this teaching identity with a history (and current practice) as a counsellor, this experience combined with the common desire of students to 'gain access to' this wisdom and experience, can work against the more fluid, emergent, shifting nature of students and educators collaboratively occupying multiple roles in intra-active teaching-learning entanglements.

This grappling with the shifting nature of roles was something I noticed, and wrote about, early on in the meeting of the group, as I tried to make sense of my role within the group.

'A's discussion connected with me. I felt from her description what it was like to be young, trying to be the professional, being judged. It took me back to when I started, at the same age, and then brought me full circle to this beginning again, as an academic. I felt a connection to each story, to each picture, and could see myself in all of them. It's a strange place to be and I wonder how it would feel being in a different physical space. I don't feel like the lecturer now but I still feel in a position of responsibility, wanting to ensure this is a useful experience for them all... I am in awe at the depth of sharing and the power of the stories, and am aware of the quieter ones,

who haven't had a chance to share, or who are choosing not to. I am aware of my desire to make it ok for everyone, yet I can't. I notice a calming over the three hours, as I relax my grip on responsibility and trust others to get what they need for themselves. I am moved by K's story, her expression of feeling of being in the struggle. I am aware of wanting to let her know that, of wondering what is appropriate, of questioning my role as researcher, lecturer, counsellor, supervisor and simply as a woman connecting with another woman's experience'.

**(Research journal)**

Of course, it makes sense to me now, to notice what inevitably emerges for me through the entangled intra-relating with the group, and in that space. I see the intra-active emergence, in relation with the other bodies and multiple space-time-matters of the group, of multiple, contingent, identities for me - of woman, teacher, supervisor, beginning counsellor, beginning academic, mother, and so on. Pedagogically, it becomes a process of mutual engagement and transformation where none of us can be reduced to any one thing, such as learner or educator. What this also means, and what I observe in my notes, is the always unpredictable nature of what is yet to come. Lenz Taguchi suggests that, for these reasons, "we have to view ourselves in a constant and mutual state of responsibility for what happens in the multiple intra-actions emerging in the learning event, as we affect and are being affected by everything else". She says that "(t)he flow of events thus becomes a collective responsibility...(where) (r)esponsibility is thus built into the immanent relationship between all matter and organisms" (2010, p. 176). This shift towards a collective responsibility took place in the groups, as I relinquished control, and also voiced this concern with group members thus making explicit this personal-collective responsibility for teaching-learning-becoming through the intra-active group process. Robbins (2016) notices a similar desire to control and to organise in her role as a teacher, however notes too, that as power in her classroom shifted, her role became to be present within the intra-actions, rather than to continually manage them.



Connected to this letting go of responsibility, for me, was a desire also not to let go of all of my knowing, to become somehow passive in the contributions I could make to the becoming-learning of the group, and yet a confusion of how to do both of these – know and not-know at the same time.

‘I find myself more comfortable as a counsellor-supervisor/facilitator – trying to share some of my feelings/thoughts more openly than I would perhaps in my lecturing role. But I realise too, that my experience feels different now, beyond theirs. I have recollections of traversing their path, but I am no longer in it. I wonder how to both bring myself into the group, whether I should, and act to hold the process at the same time. It feels hard to take up space, when the time is limited already. I want to prioritise the space for their words, and I am especially mindful of the unsaid, of making space for all of their voices. I want to challenge too, as an educator, to offer and invite considerations beyond these humanistic conceptualisations of their experiences’.

**(Research journal)**

In an intra-active pedagogy, underpinned by an ethico-onto-epistemology of knowing-in-being, Lenz Taguchi clearly argues that as teachers, our focus “should not be with what we think is the right or correct thing to do in relation to...norms or truths” and that we should not be “exclusively fixated with learning-goals and outcomes” (2010, p. 177). My temptation was to offer my experience/truth to the group when I (thought I) had traversed a similar path, in order perhaps to enlighten them though the sense I had already made. I, at times, wanted to challenge, and disrupt, the knowing-in-being which was emerging, but without colonizing their knowing with my own. I also didn’t want to pre-determine what knowing could and would emerge, and to open up to other ways of knowing at the same time. This seems a tenuous line to hold, and yet is what is necessary if we are committed to the possibilities of a posthumanist pedagogy. Lenz Taguchi suggests, within such a pedagogy, we should make ourselves aware of what is happening, in a material-discursive sense, in the events of the present, while looking for “what might be possible, what emerges, and what can become” (2010, p. 177). This suggests embodying an orientation toward not-knowing what is to come, or what knowing will emerge, whilst immersing oneself in the immanence of the present. Whilst Lenz Taguchi talks about teaching children, her ideas are nevertheless equally relevant in alternate teaching contexts. She suggests, “we should learn to look for how the material is productive of what children (counsellors-in-training) do and say, and

how the intra-activities between the material conditions and the actions of the children (counsellors-in-training) alter their understandings and strategies”. Thus, as an educator enacting a posthumanist pedagogy, I become curious about meaning and matter in the entangled events being described, as well as about the different understandings, knowledge, and constructs emerging through the diffractive process at work.

Such a process is neither easy nor fast. It requires a collective, detailed attention to the affective, material, social, discursive, and political in relation with memories, moments, and events, and in relation with the diffraction patterns emerging in the time and space of the flow of the learning event. Speeding toward predetermined outcomes by focusing only on what is lacking, by judging performance against already existent, narrow criteria, works against an onto-epistemology of immanence, where we (human and non-human) are all in a state of inter-dependence and interconnection with each other as performative agents (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Accepting such an ontology, means accepting unpredictability as an educator in this continuous flow of intra-active forces and intensities, and being open to both the habitual and the creative and inventive possibilities and potentialities of change, knowing, and becoming.

Seeing oneself as an inherent part of this diffractive process, as participating in it, rather than merely observing, evaluating, and facilitating, also necessitates certain kinds of pedagogical work. This is work which is attentive to the bodily, affective, and intimate forces as lively, active, participatory agents, both with-in the moments and memories described by students, as well as those occurring with-in the learning encounters (Mulcahy, 2012). In a relational onto-epistemology, the affective, bodily and intimate aren't seen to exist within any one person, but to emerge relationally. In this sense, often unpredictable, feelings which pass through our (students and educators) bodies should be regarded with curiosity as to their production and productive potential. Yet in a neoliberal context where rationality is prized, combined with an educational context with a traditional emphasis on the cognitive realm, attentiveness to the affective often stirs up intense vulnerability, for students and educators alike (Kelly, 2015).

Clearly, there are challenges in adopting diffractive, onto-epistemological pedagogical practices in the current neoliberal climate of education. Such practices require resistance to neoliberalism's, often invisible, demands. They require an emphasis on making time and slowing down, and an educative orientation to affective, bodily matter as relational and productive in pedagogical encounters. I have highlighted the effects of neoliberalism on shaping the present-absent tears of Bailey in chapter eight, in particular in producing the embodied sense of needing to be more productive in less time, in relation to never ending, and ever-increasing demands. Similarly, "the neoliberal university requires high productivity in compressed time frames" (Mountz et al. 2015, p. 1236). For educators, working within such pressures has produced a range of isolating and debilitating embodied effects, which are "felt more by some bodies than others, tracking broader power structures within and outside of the academy" (p. 1245). Taking up the practices I have outlined here, becomes doubly difficult for bodies already under intense pressure, and yet therefore even more important, as ways of disrupting and generating alternate, more responsive, just practices in counselling, and counsellor education.

Challenges arise too, for educators, not just in working against neoliberalism's grasp on institutions, bodies and minds, but in conveying and enacting onto-epistemological shifts in the purposes of counsellor education. Traditional ideas of training counsellors see the training of, more or less interchangeable, individuals in an efficacious set of methods, techniques, or procedures (Orlinksky et al., 2005). Such training models are underpinned by "instrumental or teacher-centred approaches" where learners are encouraged to "*represent* the pre-existing world... As a learner you reproduce these representing language constructs from books, lecturer or other learning materials" (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 44, italics in original). Other, more recent, constructivist approaches to counsellor education recognise the active role of the learner in this process and suggest that learning is thought of a process whereby the learner progresses from lower to high degrees of cognitive complexity and abstraction. This is similar to the stage models of counsellor development outlined in chapter one. These perspectives of learning are "built on an idea of reproduction of knowledge constructs and skills" (p. 45), in relation here to approaches to counselling, and learning takes place about the world, and

knowledge, inside the individual learner's mind/intellect as an inner, or social process. Biesta describes this rise in the language of 'learning' and individual 'learners', as "learnification" (2010, p. 18). While such a shift has had some benefits, Biesta highlights the individualistic nature of learnification as problematic, given the relationality which actually underpins education. In addition, he highlights the limited possibilities a focus on 'learning' and 'learners' offers for incorporating education's broader aims and purposes, beyond training for a profession or qualification. Typically the end result of such constructivist, developmental approaches to learning includes a reduction of differences and complexities, with a focus on developing mastery of skills in order to reproduce already existing models and knowledge, in order to then assimilate, or be socialised into, existent professional systems (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). The problem is, such systems appear to work against education's ultimate aims of inclusion and justice, and of educating practitioners capable of working with the actual realities of complexity, diversity, ongoing change, and the always not-yet-known.

Enacting the onto-epistemological turn in counsellor education, requires counsellor educators, and students, to work against this current dominant notion of 'learnification', and even the still used language of 'training', whereby students and curriculum focus on the language of mastery and reproduction of available skills and knowledges, and where individuals desire the knowledge and skills necessary to reproduce themselves and propel them into their chosen professions. Counsellor education, as opposed to training, has been charged with offering "relevant, progressive and future-oriented instruction" (Brotherton, 1996, p. 84), with contributing to the "generation of new knowledges – in response to changing socio-political conditions and new populations of students" (Crocket et al., 2011, p. 134), and with educating graduates as "skeptics...practitioners who can question their own foundations for knowing" (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 12). A posthumanist pedagogy offers the potential to meet these still relevant challenges, to enact teaching-learning practices capable of producing counsellors worthy of responding to the technological, environmental, political and social conditions of a world they, and their clients, are intra-active participants in.

I am alert once more to the need to warn against this as a linear move, as a leaving behind of other practices and ways of knowing. Such an onto-epistemological shift invites educators and students, to begin by, and proceed with, unpacking the theories and tools they are thinking with. It requires a recognition of the breaking down of binaries, recognising the inseparability of, for instance, theory and practice, of teacher-learner, and of knowing emerging from intra-active being. In slowly introducing similar onto-epistemological changes into an early childhood teacher education programme, Lenz Taguchi recounts that this work is not about replacing new methods with old ones, but rather “opening up toolboxes we carry, which are already filled with theoretical and methodological tools, to be able to look inside of them, temporarily un-pack them, investigate the tools inside, de-code them, re-code them and invent new ones” (2010, p. 22). In this continuous process of un-packing and re-packing, experimenting and re-inventing, something new emerges, and the inseparability and interdependence of theory and practice come to life. This is the hard and discombobulating work which educators and learners engage in together in a posthumanist pedagogy. In counsellor education, the already established importance of reflective practice in counsellor education lends itself as a site for beginning to reconfigure such practices, educators and learners, in a posthumanist, ethico-onto-epistemological direction, where ethics, knowing and being are inseparable.

### **Conclusion and future directions**

I have used this chapter to think through the implications for counsellor education, and educators, of rethinking the educative subject in a posthumanist sense. If the counsellor-in-training subject at the centre of education continually emerges through intra-active practices of knowing-in-being, then it matters how we conceptualise and configure those practices. If the educative subject is not a self-contained, individual learner, working to understand and master pre-determined skills and knowledge, but rather a posthuman subject enfolding and embodying a shifting entanglement of relations – human and non-human, then pedagogical practice requires attention to these human and non-human matters. I have outlined how a posthumanist pedagogical practice in counsellor education can draw on the

concept-practices of emergent listening and diffraction, as counsellors-in-training collectively work, with educators, not to reflect on the world, but to share and listen, unpack and remake, experiment and re-invent, tools, practices, and identities. This is practice as always inseparable from theory, identities as material-discursive, made of matter and meaning, and as always relational, dynamic, and emergent. Such processes must necessarily work against and with already established rational and individualistic material-discursive practices constituting institutions and pedagogy, including those of neoliberalism, training and learnification.

This ethico-onto-epistemological work is potentially hard, slow and discombobulating for educators and learners alike. It demands commitment, presence and sustained practices of care and attention. However, if we are to continue to task counsellor education with the aim of producing graduates capable of participating in, ethically and responsibly, the reconfiguring of the “material-social relations of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 35) and of those in it, of being responsive to the possibilities that might help all, human and non-human, to flourish, then there is no question of not proceeding. Barad tells us “(t)he world and its possibilities for becoming are remade with each moment” (2007, p. 396). Each (pedagogical) moment matters, and there are no individual agents of change. What comes to matter, and what is excluded, for counsellors-in-training, for counsellor educators, and for counsellor education is an entangled affair. Recognising this demands an active turning away from the dominant individualistic, “reductive and simplifying and limiting forces in education” (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 178). To instead turn toward an ethico-onto-epistemology of “immanence and potentiality” (p. 177) takes us beyond current educative divides such as theory/practice, body/mind, and rational/emotional into experimental and emergent spaces. It is by placing our attention on the entangled events we are a part of, in processes of collaborative, collective, diffractive experimentation, that inventive potentialities and transformative capacities to act open up. Just as my knowing-in-being has emerged through participation in this project, so too, I know it will continue to emerge, and new and inventive possibilities will come to matter, as I attempt to enact the knowing produced on these pages in my ongoing intra-active practices as a counsellor educator.

## REFERENCES

- Adams, M. (2014). *The myth of the untroubled therapist: private life, professional practice*. London: Routledge.
- Ahmed, S. (2014). *The cultural politics of emotion*. New York: Routledge.
- Alaimo, S., & Hekman, S. (2008a). Introduction: Emerging Models of Materiality in Feminist Theory. In S. Alaimo & S. Hekman (Eds.), *Material Feminisms*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Alaimo, S., & Hekman, S. (Eds.). (2008b). *Material Feminisms*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Alcoff, L. M. (2010). Post-Positivist Accounts of Identity. In M. Wetherell & C. T. Mohanty (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Identities*. London: Sage.
- Allegranti, B., & Wyatt, J. (2014). Witnessing Loss. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(4), 533–543.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413513743>
- Allen, L. (2015). The power of things! A “new” ontology of sexuality at school. *Sexualities*, 18(8), 941–958. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1363460714550920>
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders : DSM-5*. Washington DC: American Psychiatric Association.
- Andrew, S., & Krupa, Z. (2012). The Politics of self-care. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 19(1), 42–47.  
<http://doi.org/10.1002/9781118321607.ch28>
- Anzaldúa, G. (1999). *Borderlands = La frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Åsberg, C., Koobak, R., & Johnson, E. (2011). Beyond the humanist imagination. *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 19(4), 218–230.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/08038740.2011.625042>
- Åsberg, C., Thiele, K., & Van der Tuin, I. (2015). Speculative Before the Turn: Reintroducing Feminist Materialist Performativity. *Cultural Studies Review*, 21(2), 145.  
<http://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v21i2.4324>
- Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B. (2003). Identity development in counselors-in-training. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 43(1), 25–39.
- Bager-Charleson, S. (2010). *Reflective Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.
- Barad, K. (1996). Meeting the universe halfway: realism and social constructivism without contradiction. In L. H. Nelson & J. Nelson (Eds.), *Feminism, Science, and the Philosophy of Science* (pp. 161–194). Great Britain: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Barad, K. (1998). Getting Real. Technoscientific Practices and the Materialization of Reality. *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 10(2), 87–128.

- Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist performativity: toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs*, 28(3), 801–831.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2010). Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance : Dis / continuities , SpaceTime Enfoldings , and Justice-to-Come, 2, 240–268.  
<http://doi.org/10.3366/E1754850010000813>
- Barad, K. (2012). Nature’s Queer Performativity. *Kvinder, Køn Og Forskning/ Women, Gender and Research*, 1–2, 25–53. <http://doi.org/10.1353/qui.2011.0002>
- Barad, K. (2014). Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart. *Parallax*, 20(August), 168–187.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927623>
- Barad, K. (2016). Karen Barad: Troubling Time/s, Undoing the Future. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBnOJioYNHU>
- Barraclough, S. J. (2014). Migration of identity of a counsellor educator: using writing as a method of inquiry to explore the in-between spaces. *Reflective Practice*, 15(April), 363–377.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2014.900013>
- Bell, V. (2012). Declining Performativity: Butler, Whitehead and Ecologies of Concern. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 29(2), 107–123. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276412438413>
- Belsey, C. (2002). *Poststructuralism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Biesta, G. (2009). Good education in an age of measurement: On the need to reconnect with the question of purpose in education. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 33–46. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9064-9>
- Biesta, G. J. J. (2010). *Good education in an age of measurement: ethics, politics, democracy*. Colorado, USA: Paradigm.
- Bischoff, R. J. (1997). Themes in therapist development during the first three months of clinical experience. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 19(4), 563–580. <http://doi.org/Doi10.1023/A:1026139206638>
- Bischoff, R. J., & Barton, M. (2002). The pathway toward clinical self confidence. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 30(3), 231–242. <http://doi.org/10.1080/019261802753577557>
- Blackman, L. (2015). The Haunted Life of Data Introduction: A Case for Small Data. In G. Elmer, G. Langloise, & J. Redden (Eds.), *Compromised Data: From Social Media to Big Data* (pp. 185–209). London: The Bloomsbury Press.
- Blume-Marcovici, A. C., Stolberg, R. A., & Khademi, M. (2013). Do Therapists Cry in Therapy ? The Role of Experience and Other Factors in Therapists ’ Tears. *Psychotherapy*, 50(2), 224–234.  
<http://doi.org/10.1037/a0031384>
- Blume-Marcovici, A. C., Stolberg, R. A., & Khademi, M. (2015). Examining our tears: Therapists’ accounts of crying in therapy. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 69(4), 399–421.



- Blume-Marcovici, A. C., Stolberg, R. A., Khademi, M., & Giromini, L. (2015). When Therapists Cry: Implications for Supervision and Training. *The Clinical Supervisor, 34*(2), 164–183. <http://doi.org/10.1080/07325223.2015.1048556>
- Boehner, K., Gaver, W., & Boucher, A. (2012). Probes. In C. Lury & N. Wakeford (Eds.), *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Bondi, L. (2004). 10th Anniversary Address. For a feminist geography of ambivalence. *Gender, Place and Culture, 11*(1), 3–16. <http://doi.org/10.1080/0966369042000188521>
- Bondi, L. (2005). Working the spaces of neoliberal subjectivity: Psychotherapeutic technologies, professionalisation and counselling. *Antipode, 37*(3), 497–514. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.0066-4812.2005.00508.x>
- Boston, P. (2009). Narrative therapy and reflexive practice. In J. Stedmon & R. Dallos (Eds.), *Reflective practice in counselling and psychotherapy*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2016). Posthuman Critical Theory. In D. Paranjape & B. M.R. (Eds.), *Critical Posthumanism and Planetary Futures* (pp. 13–33). India: Springer. <http://doi.org/10.1007/978-81-322-3637-5>
- Brogden, L. M. (2010). Identities (Academic + Private) = Subjectivities<sup>(desire)</sup>: Re:collecting Art-I/f/acts. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(5), 368–377. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410364354>
- Brotherton, S. (1996). *Counselor education for the twenty-first century*. Westport, Conn: Bergin & Garvey.
- Brown, W. (2003). Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy. *Theory and Event, 7*(1).
- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routledge.
- Burr, V. (2015). *Social constructionism*. Hove, East Sussex: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex."* New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1997). *Excitable speech: a politics of the performative*. New York: Routledge.
- Campbell, K. (2004). The Promise of Feminist Reflexivities: Developing Donna Haraway's Project for Feminist Science Studies. *Hypatia, 19*(1), 162–182. <http://doi.org/10.1353/hyp.2004.0003>
- Christopher, J. C., Christopher, S. E., Dunnagan, T., & Schure, M. (2006). Teaching Self-Care Through Mindfulness Practices: The Application of Yoga, Meditation, and Qigong to Counselor Training. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 46*(4), 494–509. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022167806290215>
- Christopher, J. C., & Maris, J. A. (2010). Integrating mindfulness as self-care into counselling and psychotherapy training. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 10*(2), 114–125. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733141003750285>
- Clark, T. C., Fleming, T., Bullen, P., Denny, S., Crengle, S., Dyson, B., ... Utter, J. (2013). *Youth '12 Overview: The health and wellbeing of New Zealand secondary school students in 2012*. Auckland, New Zealand: The University of Aucklan.

- Clark, T., Fleming, T., Bullen, P., Crengle, S., Denny, S., Dyson, B., ... Lewycka, S. (2013). Health and well-being of secondary school students in New Zealand : Trends between 2001 , 2007 and 2012. *Journal of Pediatrics and Child Health*, 49, 925–934. <http://doi.org/10.1111/jpc.12427>
- Coleman, R. (2014). Inventive Feminist Theory: Representation, Materiality and Intensive Time. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 25(1), 27–45. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2014.901098>
- Corey, G. (2017). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy*. Boston, US: Cengage.
- Cornelius-White, J., Hoey, A., Cornelius-White, C., Motschnig-Pitrik, R., & Figl, K. (2003). Person-Centered Education: A Meta-Analysis of Care in Progress. *Journal of Border Educational Research*, 3(1), 1–4.
- Cornforth, S. (2006). *Controversies in counselling: Re-thinking therapy's ethical base (unpublished doctoral thesis)*. Victoria University of Wellington.
- Cornforth, S., White, J., Milligan, A., & Claiborne, L. B. (2009). The personal is still political: Collective biographical memory work and feminist practice. *Women's Studies Journal*, 23(2), 68–76.
- Corwin, Z. B., & Clemens, R. . (2012). Analysing fieldnotes: a practical guide. In *Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Crocket, K. (2004). From narrative practice in counselling to narrative practice in research: a professional identity story. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, (2), 1–5.
- Crocket, K., Flanagan, P., Winslade, J., & Kotzé, E. (2011). Considering Counsellor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand Part 1: Looking Back in Order to Look Forward. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, Special Is*, 2–21.
- Crocket, K., & Kotzé, E. (2011). Narrative/Post-Modern Perspectives on Counselor Education. In G. McAuliffe & K. Eriksen (Eds.), *Handbook of Counselor Preparation: Constructivist, Developmental, and Experiential Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Crocket, K., Kotzé, E., & Flintoff, V. (2007). Reflections on shaping the ethics of our teaching practices. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 26(3), 29–42. <http://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2007.26.3.29>
- Dallos, R., & Stedmon, J. (2009). Flying over the swampy lowlands: reflective and reflexive practice. In J. Stedmon & R. Dallos (Eds.), *Reflective practice in counselling and psychotherapy*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Davies, B. (1991). THE CONCEPT OF AGENCY: A Feminist Poststructuralist Analysis. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, 30(Dec), 42–53. <http://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2011.0050>
- Davies, B. (2000). Eclipsing the Constitutive Power of Discourse: The Writing of Janette Turner Hospital. In E. A. St.Pierre & W. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: feminist poststructural theory and methods in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Davies, B. (2006). Subjectification: the relevance of Butler's analysis for education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(4), 425–438. <http://doi.org/10.1080/01425690600802907>

- Davies, B. (2009). Introduction. In B. Davies & S. Gannon (Eds.), *Pedagogical encounters*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Davies, B. (2010). The implications for qualitative research methodology of the struggle between the individualised subject of phenomenology and the emergent multiplicities of the poststructuralist subject: the problem of agency. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, 1, 54–68. Retrieved from <https://journals.hioa.no/index.php/rerm/article/view/171>
- Davies, B. (2011). Open Listening: Creative Evolution in Early Childhood Settings: OMEP XXVI World Conference, August 11-13, 2010, Gothenburg, Sweden. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 43(2), 119–132. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-011-0030-1>
- Davies, B. (2014a). *Listening to children: being and becoming*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Davies, B. (2014b). Reading Anger in Early Childhood Intra-Actions: A Diffractive Analysis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(6), 734–741. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530256>
- Davies, B., & Bansel, P. (2007). Neoliberalism and education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(3), 247–259. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518390701281751>
- Davies, B., Browne, J., Gannon, S., Honan, E., Laws, C., Mueller-Rockstroh, B., & Petersen, E. B. (2004). The Ambivalent Practices of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(3), 360–389. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800403257638>
- Davies, B., Browne, J., Gannon, S., Honan, E., & Somerville, M. (2005). Embodied women at work in neoliberal times and places. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 12(4), 343–362. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2005.00277.x>
- Davies, B., De Schauwer, E., Claes, L., De Munck, K., Van De Putte, I., & Verstichele, M. (2013). Recognition and difference: a collective biography. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 680–691. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788757>
- Davies, B., & Dormer, S. (1997). Ruptures in the skin of silence: A collective biography. *Hecate – a Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Journal*, 23(1), 62–79.
- Davies, B., Flemmen, A. B., Gannon, S., Laws, C., & Watson, B. (2002). Working on the Ground. A Collective Biography of Feminine Subjectivities: Mapping the Traces of Power and Knowledge. *Social Semiotics*, 12(3), 291–313. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10350330216375>
- Davies, B., Flemmen, A. B., Gannon, S., Laws, C., & Watson, B. (2006). Constituting “the feminist subject” in post-structuralist discourse. In B. Davies & S. Gannon (Eds.), *Doing collective biography: investigating the production of subjectivity*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (Eds.). (2006a). *Doing Collective Biography: Investigating the production of subjectivity* (1st ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2006b). The practices of collective biography. In B. Davies & S. Gannon (Eds.), *Doing collective biography: investigating the production of subjectivity*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.

- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Pedagogical encounters*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2011). Collective Biography as Pedagogical Practice: Being and Becoming in Relation to Place. In M. Somerville, B. Davies, K. Power, S. Gannon, & P. DeCarteret (Eds.), *Place, Pedagogy, Change*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2012). Collective Biography and the Entangled Enlivening of Being. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 5(4), 357–376.  
<http://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2012.5.4.357>
- Davies, B., & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), 43–63.
- Davies, B., & Saltmarsh, S. (2007). Gender economies: Literacy and the gendered production of neo-liberal subjectivities. *Gender and Education*, 19(1), 1–20.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/09540250601087710>
- De Schauwer, E., Van de Putte, I., Blockmans, I. G. E., & Davies, B. (2016). The intra-active production of normativity and difference. *Gender and Education*, 0(0), 1–16.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1259463>
- De Schauwer, E., Van de Putte, I., Van Goidsenhoven, L., Blockmans, I., Vandecasteele, M., & Davies, B. (2017). Animating Disability Differently. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 23(4), 276–286.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800416684871>
- De Shazer, S. (1988). *Clues; Investigating Solutions in Brief Therapy*. New York: W.W Norton.
- De Shazer, S., Berg, I. K., Lipchick, E., Nunnally, E., Molnar, A., Gingerich, W., & Weiner-Davis, M. (1986). Brief Therapy - Focused Solution Development. *Family Process*, (25), 207–221.
- De Stefano, J., D’Iuso, N., Blake, E., Fitzpatrick, M., Drapeau, M., & Chamodraka, M. (2007). Trainees’ experiences of impasses in counselling and the impact of group supervision on their resolution: A pilot study. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 7(1), 42–47.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/14733140601140378>
- Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and repetition (P. Patton, Trans.)*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (B. Massumi, Trans.)*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Derrida, J. (1981). *Positions (A. Bass, trans)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, J. (1990). Force Of Law: The “Mystical Foundation Of Authority.” *Cardozo Law Review*, 11, 920–1045.
- Derrida, J. (2001). “Talking liberties” - Jacques Derrida’s interview with Alan Montefiore. In G. Biesta & D. Egéa-Kuehne (Eds.), *Derrida & education*. London: Routledge.
- Dewey, J. (1998). *How we think: a restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston, US: Houghton Mifflin.

- Dreyfus, H., & Rabinow, P. (1982). *Michel Foucault: beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Duncan, B. (2013). The heart and soul of change: Getting better at what we do. *The Iowa Psychologist, Summer*, 4–5.
- Edgoose, J. (2001). Just decide! Derrida and the ethical aporias of education. In G. Biesta & D. Egéa-Kuehne (Eds.), *Derrida & education*. London: Routledge.
- Elliot, M. (2017). *People's Mental Health Report*. Wellington: Action Station.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Enders, G. (2015). *Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Under-rated Organ (trans. David Shaw)*. Vancouver, Canada: Greystone Books.
- Erikson, E. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity, youth and crisis*. New York: W.W Norton.
- Etherington, K. (2004). Research methods : reflexivities – roots , meanings , dilemmas. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research: Linking Research with Practice*, 4(2), 46–47. <http://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14733140412331383963>
- Etherington, K. (2007). Ethical Research in Reflexive Relationships. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 599–616. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800407301175>
- Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In Y. Lincoln & N. Denzin (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Fisher, R.-L. (2017). *The topography of tears*. New York: Bellevue Literary Press.
- Fitzpatrick, K. (2012). “That’s How the Light Gets In.” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 12(1), 8–14. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1532708611430479>
- Folkes-Skinner, J. A. (2016). The assimilation of problematic experiences during full-time counsellor training: The case of Mandy. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 16(3), 161–170. <http://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12079>
- Folkes-Skinner, J., Elliott, R., & Wheeler, S. (2010). “A baptism of fire” : A qualitative investigation of a trainee counsellor’s experience at the start of training. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 10(2), 83–92. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733141003750509>
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison (M. Sheridan trans)*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1982). Afterword. In *Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Fox, N. J., & Alldred, P. (2013). The sexuality-assemblage: Desire, affect, anti-humanism. *Sociological Review*, 61(4), 769–789. <http://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12075>

- Fragkiadaki, E., Triliva, S., Balamoutsou, S., & Prokopiou, A. (2013). The path towards a professional identity: An IPA study of Greek family therapy trainees. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 13*(4), 290–299. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733145.2013.768287>
- Freedman, J., & Combs, G. (1996). *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities*. New York: W.W Norton.
- Frey, W. (1985). *Crying: The Mystery of Tears*. Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press.
- Furr, S. R., & Carroll, J. J. (2003). Critical incidents in student counselor development. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 81*(4), 483–489. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2003.tb00275.x>
- Gale, K., & Wyatt, J. (2007). Writing the incalculable: a second interactive inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*(6), 787–807. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800407304464>
- Gannon, S., Walsh, S., Byers, M., & Rajiva, M. (2012). Deterritorializing collective biography. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, (December)*, 1–15. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2012.737044>
- Gaventa, J. (2003). Power after Lukes: An Overview of Theories of Power since Lukes and their Application to Development. *Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, (August)*.
- Gergen, K. J. (1985). The Social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist, 40*(3), 266–275.
- Gibson, D. M., Dollarhide, C. T., & Moss, J. M. (2010). Professional Identity Development : A Grounded Theory of Transformational Tasks of New Counselors. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 50*(September), 21–39.
- Goldberg, S. B., Babins-Wagner, R., Rousmaniere, T., Berzins, S., Hoyt, W. T., Whipple, J. L., ... Wampold, B. E. (2016). Creating a climate for therapist improvement: A case study of an agency focused on outcomes and deliberate practice. *Psychotherapy, 53*(3), 367–375. <http://doi.org/10.1037/pst0000060>
- Gordon, A. (2008). *Ghostly matters: haunting and the sociological imagination*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Górska, M. (2016). *Breathing Matters: Feminist intersectional politics of vulnerability*. Linköping: TEMA – Department of Thematic Studies.
- Grafanaki, S. (1996). How research can change the researcher: The need for sensitivity, flexibility and ethical boundaries in conducting qualitative research in counselling/psychotherapy. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 24*(3), 329–338. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03069889608253017>
- Grafanaki, S. (2010a). “Counsellors in the making”: Research on counselling training and formative experiences of trainee counsellors. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 10*(2), 81–82. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733141003751655>
- Grafanaki, S. (2010b). “Counsellors in training”: Journeys of professional transformation. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 10*(3), 152. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733145.2010.507003>
- Grosz, E. (2005). *Time travels: Feminism, nature, power*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.

- Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, Reflexivity, and “Ethically Important Moments” in Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(2), 261–280. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800403262360>
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575–599. <http://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs, and women: the reinvention of nature*. New York: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (1992). The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. Treichler (Eds.), *Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (1994). A Game of Cat’s Cradle: Science Studies, Feminist Theory, Cultural Studies. *Configurations*, 2(1), 59–71.
- Haraway, D. (1997). *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan©\_Meets\_Oncomouse™*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (2003). *The companion species manifesto: dogs, people, and significant otherness*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm.
- Haraway, D. (2004). *The Haraway Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (2008a). Otherworldly Conversations, Terran Topics, Local Terms. In *Material Feminisms*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Haraway, D. (2008b). *When species meet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the trouble: making kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Harrison, J., MacGibbon, L., & Morton, M. (2001). Regimes of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research: The Rigors of Reciprocity. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(3), 323–345. <http://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700305>
- Healey, A. C., & Hays, D. G. (2012). A Discriminant Analysis of Gender and Counselor Professional Identity Development. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 90(1), 55–62. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1556-6676.2012.00008.x>
- Herbrechter, S. (2013). The Roar on the Other Side of Silence... or, What’s Left of the Humanities? *Culture Machine*, April, 1–13. Retrieved from <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewFile/495/516>
- Hermansson, G. L., & Webb, S. B. (1993). Guidance and counselling in New Zealand: Weathering a decade of transformation. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 16(3), 213–227. <http://doi.org/10.1007/BF01407847>
- Hickey-Moody, A., Palmer, H., & Sayers, E. (2016). Diffractive pedagogies: dancing across new materialist imaginaries. *Gender and Education*, 28(2), 213–229. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1140723>
- Hill, C. E., Sullivan, C., Knox, S., & Schlosser, L. Z. (2007). Becoming psychotherapists: Experiences of novice trainees in a beginning graduate class. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 44(4), 434–449. <http://doi.org/10.1037/0033-3204.44.4.434>

- Hinton, P. (2014). "Situated Knowledges" and New Materialism(s): Rethinking a Politics of Location. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 25(1), 99–113. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2014.901104>
- Hinton, P., & Treusch, P. (Eds.). (2015). *Teaching With Feminist Materialisms*. Utrecht: ATGENDER.
- Hinton, P., & van der Tuin, I. (2014). Preface. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 25(1), 1–8. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2014.903781>
- Hohti, R. (2016a). Children writing ethnography: children's perspectives and nomadic thinking in researching school classrooms. *Ethnography and Education*, 11(1), 74–90. <http://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2015.1040428>
- Hohti, R. (2016b). Now - and Now - and Now: Time, Space and the Material Entanglements of the Classroom. *Children and Society*, 30(3), 180–191. <http://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12135>
- Højgaard, L., & Søndergaard, D. M. (2011). Theorizing the complexities of discursive and material subjectivity : Agential realism and poststructural analyses. *Theory and Psychology*, 21(3), 338–354. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0959354309359965>
- Holman Jones, S. (2005). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In Y. Lincoln & N. Denzin (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hook, D. (2005). Genealogy, discourse, "effective history": Foucault and the work of critique. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2(1), 3–31. <http://doi.org/10.1191/1478088705qp025oa>
- Howard, E. E., Inman, A. G., & Altman, A. N. (2006). Innovative Methods: Critical incidents among novice counselor trainees. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 46(Dec), 88–102.
- Hubble, M. A., Duncan, B. L., Miller, S. D., & Wampold, B. E. (2010). Introduction. In B. Duncan, S. Miller, B. Wampold, & M. Hubble (Eds.), *The Heart and Soul of Change, Second Edition: Delivering what works in therapy* (2nd ed.). Washington DC: APA Press.
- Hughes, C., Burke, A., Graham, J., Crocket, K., & Kotzé, E. (2013). School Counsellors and the Key Competencies. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*, 33(1), 2–15.
- Hughes, C., & Lury, C. (2013). Re-turning feminist methodologies: from a social to an ecological epistemology. *Gender and Education*, 25(6), 786–799. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2013.829910>
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data Across Multiple Perspectives*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Janzen, M. D. (2013). The aporia of undecidability and the responsibility of teacher. *Teaching Education*, 24(4), 381–394. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2012.716035>
- Jeffries, J. (2012). Pattern, patterning. In C. Lury & N. Wakeford (Eds.), *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. London: Routledge.
- Jennings, L., Goh, M., Skovholt, T. M., Hanson, M., & Banerjee-Stevens, D. (2003). Multiple Factors in the Development of the Expert Counselor and Therapist. *Journal of Career Development*, 30(1), 59–72. <http://doi.org/10.1177/089484530303000104>



- Jennings, L., & Skovholt, T. M. (1999). The cognitive, emotional, and relational characteristics of master therapists. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46*(1), 3–11. <http://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.46.1.3>
- Jones-Smith, E. (2016). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: an integrative approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jones, A. (1997). Teaching Post-structuralist Feminist Theory in Education: Student resistances. *Gender and Education, 9*(3), 261–269. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540259721240>
- Juelskjær, M. (2013). Gendered subjectivities of spacetime matter. *Gender & Education, 25*(6), 754–768. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2013.831812>
- King, K. (n.d.). Pastpresents: Playing cat's cradle with Donna Haraway. Retrieved from <http://playingcatscradle.blogspot.co.nz/>
- Kottler, J. A. (1996). *The Language of Tears*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Kuby, C. R., & Christ, R. C. (2017). Productive Aporias and Inten(t/s)ionalities of Paradigming. *Qualitative Inquiry, 1*–12. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800416684870>
- Kumary, A., & Baker, M. (2008). Stresses reported by UK trainee counselling psychologists. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 21*(1), 19–28. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09515070801895626>
- Lambert, M. J. (1986). Implications of psychotherapy outcome research for eclectic psychotherapy. In J. Norcross (Ed.), *Handbook of Eclectic Psychotherapy* (pp. 436–462). New York: Bruner/Mazel.
- Lambert, M. J. (1992). Implications of psychotherapy outcome research for psychotherapy. In J. Norcross & M. Goldfried (Eds.), *Handbook of psychotherapy integration*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lambert, M. J., & Barley, D. E. (2001). Research summary on the therapeutic relationship and psychotherapy outcome. *Psychotherapy, 38*(4), 357–361. <http://doi.org/10.1037//0033-3204.38.4.357>
- Lather, P. (1993). FERTILE OBSESSION : Validity After Poststructuralism. *The Sociological Quarterly, 34*(4), 673–693. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1993.tb00112.x>
- Lather, P. (2016). Top Ten+ List. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies, 16*(2), 125–131. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616634734>
- Lather, P., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2013). Post-qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 26*(6), 629–633. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788752>
- Latour, B. (1988). The politics of explanation: an alternative. In S. Woolgar (Ed.), *Knowledge and reflexivity: new frontiers in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Sage.
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social: an introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lau, J., & Ng, K. M. (2014). Conceptualizing the Counseling Training Environment Using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 36*(4), 423–439. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-014-9220-5>

- Law, J. (2004). *After method: mess in social science research*. Oxon: Routledge.  
<http://doi.org/10.4324/9780203481141>
- Leibert, T. W., & Dunne-Bryant, A. (2015). Do common factors account for counseling outcome? *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 93(2), 225–235. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2015.00198.x>
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2010). *Going Beyond the Theory/Practice Divide in Early Childhood Education: Introducing an Intra-Active Pedagogy*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2012). A diffractive and Deleuzian approach to analysing interview data. *Feminist Theory*, 13(3), 265–281. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1464700112456001>
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2013a). “Becoming molecular girl”: transforming subjectivities in collaborative doctoral research studies as micro-politics in the academy. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(April 2014), 1101–1116. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.816886>
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2013b). Images of thinking in feminist materialisms: ontological divergences and the production of researcher subjectivities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 706–716. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788759>
- Lenz Taguchi, H., & Palmer, A. (2013). A more “livable” school? A diffractive analysis of the performative enactments of girls’ ill-/well-being with(in) school environments. *Gender & Education*, 25(6), 671–687. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2013.829909>
- Lerner, Richard, M. (1986). *Concepts and theories of human development*. New York: Random House.
- Lichtman, M. (2006). *Qualitative research in education: a users’ guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y., & Denzin, N. K. (Eds.). (2003). *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Loewen Walker, R. (2014). The Living Present as a Materialist Feminist Temporality. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 25(1), 46–61. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2014.901107>
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider: essays and speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press.
- Lury, C., & Wakeford, N. (2012). Introduction: a perpetual inventory. In C. Lury & N. Wakeford (Eds.), *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Lutz, T. (1999). *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears*. New York: W.W Norton.
- Macbeth, D. (2001). On “Reflexivity” in Qualitative Research: Two Readings, and a Third. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(1), 35–68. <http://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700103>
- MacLure, M. (2010). The offence of theory. *Journal of Education Policy*, 25(2), 277–286. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02680930903462316>
- MacLure, M. (2013). The Wonder of Data. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 228–232. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1532708613487863>

- Maris, J. A. (2009). The Impact of a Mind/Body Medicine Class on Counselor Training: A Personal Journey. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 49*(2), 229–235. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022167809331859>
- Maruniakova, L., Rihacek, T., & Roubal, J. (2017). How beginning counselors learn: The interaction of personal and professional experiences in counselors with an experiential orientation. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 30*(1), 48–66. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2016.1148013>
- Mazzei, L. A. (2007). *Inhabited silence in qualitative research: putting poststructural theory to work*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Mazzei, L. A. (2013). A voice without organs: Interviewing in posthumanist research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 26*(6), 732–740. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788761>
- Mazzei, L. A. (2014). Beyond an Easy Sense: A Diffractive Analysis. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*, 742–746. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530257>
- Mazzei, L. A. (2016). Voice Without a Subject. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies, 16*(2), 151–161. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616636893>
- Mazzei, L. A., & Jackson, A. Y. (2011). Plugging one text into another: thinking with theory in Qualitative research. In *Paper presented at the Summer Institute in Qualitative Research: Manchester Metropolitan University*. Manchester, UK.
- McAuliffe, G. J. (2011). Constructing Counselor Education. In G. McAuliffe & K. Eriksen (Eds.), *Handbook of Counselor Preparation: Constructivist, Developmental, and Experiential Approaches*. London: Sage.
- McAvoy, J. (2015). From Ideology to Feeling: Discourse, Emotion, and an Analytic Synthesis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 12*(1), 22–33. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2014.958357>
- McDonald, M. G. (2009). Dialogues on Whiteness, Leisure and (Anti)Racism. *Journal of Leisure Research, 41*(1), 5–21. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=36587567&site=ehost-live>
- Miller, J. H. (2001). *Professional faces: Professionalisation as strategy in New Zealand counselling 1974-1998 (unpublished doctoral thesis)*. University of Canterbury, Christchurch.
- Miller, J. H. (2004). Third-party funding and counselling in New Zealand: Implications for counselling services and professional autonomy. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 26*(3), 285–299.
- Miller, J. H. (2011). More than a Decade of Considerable Change An Interpretation of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors Newsletters. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling, 31*(1), 1–15.
- Miller, J. H. (2012). Counselling and guidance initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 40*(3), 187–190. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2012.683665>

- Miller, J. H. (2014). Professionalism interrupted? Professionalism's challenges to local knowledge in New Zealand counselling. *Current Sociology*, 62(1), 100–113. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0011392113513396>
- Miller, S. D., Hubble, M. A., Chow, D. L., & Seidel, J. A. (2013). The outcome of psychotherapy: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. *Psychotherapy*, 50(1), 88–97. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0031097>
- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media Ltd.
- Mol, A. (2002). *The body multiple: ontology in medical practice*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Monk, G. (1997). How narrative therapy works. In G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket, & D. Epston (Eds.), *Narrative therapy in practice: the archaeology of hope*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Monk, G., Winslade, J., Crocket, K., & Epston, D. (Eds.). (1997). *Narrative Therapy in Practice: The Archaeology of Hope*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Moon, L., Dizhur, D., Senaldi, I., Derakhshan, H., Griffith, M., Magenes, G., & Ingham, J. (2014). The demise of the URM building stock in Christchurch during the 2010-2011 Canterbury earthquake sequence. *Earthquake Spectra*, 30(1), 253–276. <http://doi.org/10.1193/022113EQS044M>
- Morse, J., Barret, M., & Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal Qualitative Methods*, 1(2).
- Moss, J. M., Gibson, D. M., & Dollarhide, C. T. (2014). Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 92(1), 3–12. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00124.x>
- Mountz, A., Walton-Roberts, M. W., Bonds, A., Mansfield, B., Loyd, J., Basu, R., ... Curran, W. (2015). For Slow Scholarship : A Feminist Politics of Resistance through Collective Action in the. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 14(4), 1–24.
- Mulcahy, D. (2012). Affective Assemblages: Body Matters in the Pedagogic Practices of Contemporary School Classrooms. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 20(1), 9–27. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2012.649413>
- Nelson, K. W., & Jackson, S. A. (2003). Professional Counselor Identity Development: A Qualitative Study of Hispanic Student Interns. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 43(September), 2–14.
- Nelson, M. L., & Neufeldt, S. A. (1998). The Pedagogy of Counseling: A Critical Examination. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 38(December), 70–88.
- New Zealand Association of Counsellors. (2016). *Code of Ethics: A Framework for Ethical Practice*. New Zealand.
- Nissen-Lie, H. A., Rønnestad, M. H., Høglend, P. A., Havik, O. E., Solbakken, O. A., Stiles, T. C., & Monsen, J. T. (2017). Love Yourself as a Person, Doubt Yourself as a Therapist? *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 24(1), 48–60. <http://doi.org/10.1002/cpp.1977>

- Nugent, F. A., & Jones, K. D. (2009). *Introduction to the profession of counseling*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Onyx, J., & Small, J. (2001). Memory-Work: The Method. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 773–786. <http://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700608>
- Orlinsky, D. E., Rønnestad, M. H., Gerin, P., Davis, J. D., Ambühl, H., Davis, M. L., ... Schröder, T. A. (2005). The Development of Psychotherapists. In D. Orlinsky & M. Rønnestad (Eds.), *How psychotherapists develop: A study of therapeutic work and professional growth*. (pp. 3–13). Washington DC: APA Press. <http://doi.org/10.1037/11157-001>
- Osborn, C. J. (2004). Seven salutary suggestions for counselor stamina. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 82(3), 319–328. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2004.tb00317.x>
- Osgood, J., & Giugni, M. (2015a). Putting posthumanist theory to work to reconfigure gender in early childhood: When theory becomes method becomes art. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 5(3), 346–360. <http://doi.org/10.1177/2043610615597160>
- Osgood, J., & Giugni, M. (2015b). Reconfiguring Quality: matter, bodies and becomings in early childhood education. In G. Cannella (Ed.), *Quality in Early Childhood*. London: Palgrave.
- Osgood, J., Giugni, M., & Bhopal, K. (2016). Reconfiguring motherhoods: transmogrifying the maternal entanglements of feminist academics. In A. S. Scott, K. A. and Henwood (Ed.), *Women Education Scholars and Their Children's Schooling*. London: Routledge.
- Palmer, A. (2011). “How many sums can I do”? Performative strategies and diffractive thinking as methodological tools for rethinking mathematical subjectivity. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, 2(1), 3–18.
- Pascual-Leone, A., Rodriguez-Rubio, B., & Metler, S. (2013). What else are psychotherapy trainees learning? A qualitative model of students' personal experiences based on two populations. *Psychotherapy Research*, 23(5), 578–591. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2013.807379>
- Pepperell, R. (2005). The Posthuman Manifesto. *Kritikos*, 2.
- Peters, H. C. (2017). Multicultural Complexity: an Intersectional Lens for Clinical Supervision. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 39(2), 176–187. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-017-9290-2>
- Pierce, L. M. (2016). Overwhelmed With the Burden of Being Myself: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Existential Experiences of Counselors-in-Training. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 55(2), 136–150. <http://doi.org/10.1002/johc.12030>
- Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(April 2014), 175–196. <http://doi.org/10.1080/0951839032000060635>
- Pistole, M. C., & Roberts, A. (2002). Mental Health Counseling: Toward resolving identity confusions. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 24(1), 1–19.

- Prosek, E. A., & Hurt, K. M. (2014). Measuring professional identity development among counselor trainees. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 53*(4), 284–293. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2014.00063.x>
- Rankine, C. (2016). Adrienne Rich's Poetic Transformations. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/adrienne-richs-poetic-transformations>
- RebuildChristchurch. (2016). Five years on - Christchurch remembers. Retrieved from <http://www.rebuildchristchurch.co.nz/blog/2016/2/five-years-on-christchurch-remembers>
- Reiner, S. M., Dobmeier, R. A., & Hernández, T. J. (2013). Perceived impact of professional counselor identity: An exploratory study. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 91*(2), 174–183. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2013.00084.x>
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of inquiry. In Y. Lincoln & N. Denzin (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of play: constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Richardson, L. (2010). Hospice 101. *Qualitative Inquiry, 17*(2), 158–165. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410392340>
- Richardson, L., & St.Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In Y. Lincoln & N. Denzin (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ringrose, J., & Rawlings, V. (2015). Posthuman performativity, gender and “school bullying”: Exploring the material-discursive intra-actions of skirts, hair, sluts, and poofs. *Confero: Essays on Education, Philosophy and Politics, 3*(2), 80–119. <http://doi.org/10.3384/confero.2001-4562.150626>
- Robbins, K. (2016). A Matter of Power. In N. Snaza, D. Sonu, E. Truman, Sarah, & Z. Zaliwska (Eds.), *Pedagogical Matters: New Materialisms and Curriculum Studies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Rodgers, N. (2012). Shifting landscapes of counselling identities in Aotearoa New Zealand. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 40*(3), 191–204. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2012.678287>
- Rodriguez, N. M., & Villaverde, L. E. (2000). *Dismantling white privilege: pedagogy, politics, and whiteness*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Rogers, C. R. (1961). *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. London: Constable.
- Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to learn: a view of what education might become*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill.
- Rogers, C. R. (2007). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change (reprint from *Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1957, 21* (2)). *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 44*(3), 240–248. <http://doi.org/10.1037/0033-3204.44.3.240>

- Rønnestad, M. H., & Skovholt, T. M. (2003). The journey of the counselor and therapist: Research finding and perspective on professional development. *Journal of Career Development, 30*(1), 5–44. <http://doi.org/10.1023/A:1025173508081>
- Rønnestad, M. H., & Skovholt, T. M. (2013). *The Developing Practitioner: Growth and Stagnation of Therapists and Counselors*. New York: Routledge.
- Rosiek, C. J., & Gleason, T. (2017). Philosophy in Research on Teacher Education: An Onto-ethical Turn. In J. Clandinin & H. Jukka (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (pp. 29–48). London: Sage.
- Schneider, J. (2002). Reflexive/Diffractive Ethnography. *Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies, 2*(4), 460–482.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner: toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Schure, M. B., Christopher, J., & Christopher, S. (2008). Mind-Body Medicine and the Art of Self-Care: Teaching Mindfulness to Counseling Students Through Yoga, Meditation, and Qigong. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 86*(1), 47–56. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2008.tb00625.x>
- Sehgal, M. (2014). Diffractive Propositions: Reading Alfred North Whitehead with Donna Haraway and Karen Barad. *Parallax, 20*(3), 188–201. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927625>
- Sermijn, J., & Loots, G. (2015). The Cocreation of Crazy Patchworks: Becoming Rhizomatic in Systemic Therapy. *Family Process, 54*(3), 533–544. <http://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12119>
- Shields, S. A. (2013). Gender and Emotion: What We Think We Know, What We Need to Know, and Why It Matters. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 37*(4), 423–435. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0361684313502312>
- Sibson, R., Ghisetti, F., & Ristau, J. (2011). Stress Control of an Evolving Strike-Slip Fault System during the 2010-2011 Canterbury, New Zealand, Earthquake Sequence. *Seismological Research Letters, 82*(6), 824–832. <http://doi.org/10.1785/gssrl.82.6.824>
- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research: A practical handbook*. London: Sage.
- Skovholt, T. M. (2012). *Becoming a Therapist: On the Path to Mastery*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (1992). Themes in Therapist and Counselor Development. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 70*(4), 505–515. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1992.tb01646.x>
- Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (1995). *The evolving professional self: Stages and themes in therapist and counselor development*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

- Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (2003). Struggles of the Novice Counselor and Therapist. *Journal of Career Development, 30*(1), 45–58. <http://doi.org/10.1023/A:1025125624919>
- Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (2012). Path Toward Mastery: Phases and Themes of Development. In T. M. Skovholt (Ed.), *Becoming a therapist: on the path to mastery*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Skovholt, T. M., & Trotter-Mathison, M. (2016). *The Resilient Practitioner: Burnout and compassion fatigue prevention and self-care strategies for the helping professions. Educational Leadership* (3rd ed., Vol. 15). London: Routledge.
- Slide Show: The Topography of Tears. (2014). Retrieved from [https://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/slide-show-the-topography-of-tears#slide\\_ss\\_0](https://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/slide-show-the-topography-of-tears#slide_ss_0)
- Smith, B., & Sparkes, A. (2008). Contrasting perspectives on narrating selves and identities: an invitation to dialogue. *Qualitative Research*.
- Snaza, N., Sonu, D., Truman, S., & Zaliwska, Z. (2016). Introduction: Re-attuning to the materiality of education. In N. Snaza, D. Sonu, S. Truman, & Z. Zaliwska (Eds.), *Pedaogical matters: new materialisms and curriculum studies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Søndergaard, D. M. (2016). New Materialist Analyses of Virtual Gaming , Distributed Violence , and Relational Aggression. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 1–11. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616636146>
- Speedy, J. (2005). *Writing as Inquiry* : some ideas, practices, opportunities and constraints. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 5*(1), 63–64. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14733140512331343930>
- Springer, S. (2016). Fuck neoliberalism. *Acme, 15*(2), 285–292. <http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2000). Poststructural feminism in education: An overview. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(5), 477–515.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2014). A Brief and Personal History of Post Qualitative Reseach: Toward “Post Inquiry.” *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 30*(2), 2–20.
- St. Pierre, E. A., & Jackson, A. Y. (2014). Qualitative Data Analysis After Coding. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*(6), 715–719. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414532435>
- St. Pierre, E. A., & Pillow, W. (Eds.). (2000). *Working the ruins: feminist poststructural theory and methods in education*. New York: Routledge.
- St.Pierre, E. A. (2009). Decentering voice in qualitative inquiry. In *Voice in Qualitative Inquiry: Challenging conventional, interpretive, and critical conceptions in qualitative research*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Stedmon, J., & Dallos, R. (2009a). Reflections on reflections. In J. Stedmon & R. Dallos (Eds.), *Reflective practice in counselling and psychotherapy*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.



- Stedmon, J., & Dallos, R. (Eds.). (2009b). *Reflective practice in psychotherapy and counselling*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Stenner, P. (2012). Pattern. In C. Lury & N. Wakeford (Eds.), *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. London: Routledge.
- Stewart, K. (2007). *Ordinary affects*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.
- Suchman, L. (2012). Configuration. In C. Lury & N. Wakeford (Eds.), *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Sue, D. W. (2015). *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Tamas, S. (2016). Ghost stories. *Emotion , Space and Society*, 19, 40–44.  
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2015.10.003>
- Taylor, A., & Blaise, M. (2014). Queer worlding childhood. *Discourse : Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 35(3), 377–392.
- Taylor, C. A., & Ivinson, G. (2013). Material feminisms: new directions for education. *Gender and Education*, 25(6), 665–670. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2013.834617>
- Testa, D., & Sangganjanavanich, V. F. (2016). Contribution of Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence to Burnout Among Counseling Interns, 55(June), 95–108.  
<http://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12035>
- Thiele, K. (2014). Ethos of Diffraction: New Paradigms for a (Post)humanist Ethics. *Parallax*, 20(3), 202–216. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927627>
- Thomas, F. (2013). *Solution-Focused Supervision: A Resource-Oriented Approach to Developing Clinical Expertise*. New York: Springer.
- Thompson, N., & Pascal, J. (2012). Developing critically reflective practice. *Reflective Practice*, 13(2), 311–325. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2012.657795>
- Toffoletti, K. (2002). *Transformations: Feminism and the Posthuman*. (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Monash University, Australia.
- Tonkin, L. (2012). Haunted by a “Present Absence.” *Studies in the Maternal*, 4(1), 1–17.
- Trimble, M. (2012). *Why Humans Like to Cry: Tragedy, Evolution, and the Brain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Truell, R. (2001). The stresses of learning counselling : Six recent graduates comment on their personal experience of learning counselling and what can be done to reduce associated harm. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 14(1), 67–89.
- Twenge, J. (2017). *iGen: Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood*. New York: Atria Books.
- van der Tuin, I. (2011a). “A different starting point, a different metaphysics”: Reading Bergson and Barad diffractively. *Hypatia*, 26(1), 22–42. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01114.x>

- van der Tuin, I. (2011b). "New feminist materialisms." *Women's Studies International Forum*, 34(4), 271–277. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2011.04.002>
- van der Tuin, I. (2014). Diffraction as a Methodology for Feminist Onto-Epistemology: On Encountering Chantal Chawaf and Posthuman Interpellation. *Parallax*, 20(March 2015), 231–244. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927631>
- Vingerhoets, A. J. J. M. (2013). *Why Only Humans Weep: Unravelling the Mysteries of Tears*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vingerhoets, A. J. J. M., & Bylsma, L. M. (2016). The Riddle of Human Emotional Crying: A Challenge for Emotion Researchers. *Emotion Review*, 8(3), 207–217. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1754073915586226>
- Visser, C. F. (2013). The Origin of the Solution-Focused Approach. *International Journal of Solution-Focused Practices*, 1(1), 10–17. <http://doi.org/10.14335/ijfsp.v1i1.10>
- Wagner, H. H., & Hill, N. R. (2015). Becoming Counselors Through Growth and Learning: The Entry Transition Process. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 54(3), 189–202. <http://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12013>
- Walkerdine, V. (1993). Beyond Developmentalism? *Theory & Psychology*, 3(4), 451–469. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0959354393034004>
- Wampold, B. (2001). *The great psychotherapy debate: Models, methods and findings*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Wampold, B. E. (2010). The research evidence for the common factors models: A historically situated perspective. In B. Duncan, S. Miller, B. Wampold, & M. Hubble (Eds.), *The heart and soul of change: Delivering what works in therapy (2nd ed.)*. (pp. 49–81). Washington DC: APA Press. <http://doi.org/10.1037/12075-002>
- Wang, H. (2005). Aporias, responsibility, and the im/possibility of teaching multicultural education. *Educational Theory*, 55(1), 45–59.
- Wasson, K. (2014). Key competencies or key incompetencies ? A case for rethinking their effects for young people and for our work as school guidance counsellors. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*, 34(2), 32–59.
- Waters, K. R., Altus, D. E., & Wilkinson, N. I. (2013). Promoting Student Professional Identity, Challenging Our Own: Narrative Practices in Internship Seminars. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 32(3), 1–12. <http://doi.org/10.1521/jsyt.2013.32.3.1>
- Watkins, M. (2007). Thwarting desire: Discursive constraint and pedagogic practice. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(3), 301–318. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09518390701281900>
- Wenger, E. (1999). *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wetherell, M. (2010). The field of identity studies. In M. Wetherell & C. T. Mohanty (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Identities*. London: Sage.

- Wetherell, M. (2012). *Affect and emotion: a new social science understanding*. London: Sage.
- Wetherell, M. (2015). Tears, Bubbles and Disappointment — New Approaches for the Analysis of Affective-Discursive Practices: A Commentary on “Researching the Psychosocial.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12(1), 83–90. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2014.958399>
- Whatmore, S. (2006). Materialist returns: practising cultural geography in and for a more-than-human world. *Cultural Geographies*, 13(4), 600–609. <http://doi.org/10.1191/1474474006cgj377oa>
- Whiston, S. C., & Coker, J. K. (2000). Reconstructing clinical training: Implications from research. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 39(4), 228–253. <http://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2000.tb01235.x>
- White, M. (1997). *Narratives of therapists' lives*. Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Centre Publications.
- White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W.W Norton.
- Whyte, D. (2012). Preserving the soul. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO0OjtThqyI>
- Willig, C., Potter, J., Wickham, G., Kendall, G., & Hook, D. (2011). Commentaries on Hook, “Genealogy, discourse, ‘Effective History’: Foucault and the work of critique.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2(1), 32–46. <http://doi.org/10.1191/1478088705qp026cm>
- Winslade, J. (2002). Storying professional identity: from an interview with John Winslade. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 4, 33–38. Retrieved from <http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au/storying-professional-identity.html>
- Winslade, J. (2009). Tracing lines of flight: implications of the work of Gilles Deleuze for narrative practice. *Family Process*, 48(3), 332–46. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2009.01286.x>
- Winslade, J., Monk, G., & Drewery, W. (1997). Sharpening the critical edge: a social constructionist approach to counsellor education. In T. Sexton & B. Griffin (Eds.), *Constructivist thinking in counseling practice. research and training* (pp. 228–245). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Wolf, C. P., Thompson, I. A., Thompson, E. S., & Smith-Adcock, S. (2014). Refresh Your Mind, Rejuvenate Your Body, Renew Your Spirit: A Pilot Wellness Program for Counselor Education. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 70(1), 57–75. <http://doi.org/10.1353/jip.2014.0001>
- Woolgar, S. (Ed.). (1988a). *Knowledge and reflexivity: new frontiers in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Sage.
- Woolgar, S. (1988b). Reflexivity is the ethnographer of the text. In S. Woolgar (Ed.), *Knowledge and reflexivity: new frontiers in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Sage.
- Wright, J., Lang, S. K. W., & Cornforth, S. (2011). Fractured Connections: Migration and Holistic Models of Counselling. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 39(5), 471–486. <http://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2011.621521>
- Wyatt, J., Tamas, S., & Bondi, L. (2016). Traces : An introduction to the special issue. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 19, 37–39. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2016.02.005>

Zabrodska, K., Linnell, S., Laws, C., & Davies, B. (2011). Bullying as Intra-active Process in Neoliberal Universities. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(8), 709–719.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411420668>

## **APPENDIX 1: Information letter and consent form:**

Telephone: 364 2987 ext 3839

Email: [shanee.barraclough@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:shanee.barraclough@canterbury.ac.nz)



25 March ■■■

### **Towards Embodiment of a Counsellor Identity: Possibilities and Challenges for Trainee Counsellors**

#### **Information Sheet for Participants**

I am a PhD student and a lecturer in Counsellor Education at the College of Education, University of Canterbury. I have worked as a psychologist and a counsellor for many years, and this work, combined more recently with my roles in Counsellor Education, has led to my research interest in counsellor identities. I am particularly interested in the lived experiences of trainee counsellors in relation to developing professional identities, both the challenges and the possibilities encountered in their journey of becoming counsellors.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. If you agree to take part you will be asked to do the following:

- Take part in an initial interview with me, reflecting on your trainee counsellor journey up to this point. This will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour. This will be audio or video recorded.
- Take part in a collective biography group (see below for a brief summary of this process) which will meet on a regular basis for up to one year. The group will comprise between four and eight trainee counsellors undertaking their Counselling Practicum at Canterbury University. The group will aim to meet for two to three hours every six weeks, however exact timings will be determined by the group. The group will thus aim to meet on a minimum of eight occasions over twelve months. This group will be facilitated by me, and will be videoed.
- Keep a journal in between the group meetings, recording any critical incidents (see below for a definition).
- Take part in a final interview with me, at the end of the collective biography group process. This will include your reflection on your involvement in the collective biography process. This will take approximately one hour.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I will do my best to remove any information relating to you, providing this is practically achievable.

It has been important to consider any ethical implications due to the dual relationships I, as a lecturer and a PhD student, may have with you as a student in the Counsellor Education Programme and as a participant in my PhD study. In consultation with Associate Professor Judi Miller, we have ensured

that I will have no part in your assessment, during, or subsequent to, your participation in this research.

Associate Professor Miller is also a co-supervisor for this research. In order to address her dual role as your assessor/my supervisor, we have decided that her supervision will be at 30% (with Dr Kathleen Quinlivan as the primary supervisor at 70%). This 30% will **not** involve direct access/viewing of any data collected. Her role will focus on the proposal, methodology and write-up.

I will take particular care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. I will also take care to ensure your anonymity in presentations and publications of the findings. However, full individual anonymity cannot be guaranteed because those participating in the group will be known to one another. In order to minimize this risk, participants will be asked to maintain group confidentiality, and to not disclose any identifying details of participants in publications and presentations of the findings.

Video recordings will be viewed, transcribed and analysed by me, and group excerpts may be brought back to the group for viewing. It may be necessary for my supervisor, Dr Quinlivan, to view some video recordings for supervision purposes. All of the data will be securely stored in password protected facilities and locked storage at the University of Canterbury for 5 years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

The results of this research may be used to provide new understandings for trainee counsellors, and potentially others on similar professional journeys, about navigating the development of new professional identities. Ultimately the results may be used to inform Counsellor Education Programmes. The results will also be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in journals. All participants will receive a report on the study.

If you have any questions about the study at any stage please contact me (details above). This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the study you may contact either my primary supervisor, Dr Kathleen Quinlivan ([Kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:Kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz)) or the Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch ([human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)).

If you agree to participate in this study please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the envelope provided by 17 April [REDACTED].

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

Shanee Barraclough

Researcher

### **Collective Biography:**

Collective biography is a research practice, involving the coming together of a small group of participants interested in sharing and examining individual and collective experiences around a particular theme or topic. Central to this method is a focus on remembered moments of experiences and encounters, which participants work with, through the shared work of telling, writing (drawing), listening, and re-writing. In doing this work the aim is to re-member the deeply felt sensory, embodied detail of those lived experiences. Through collectively asking questions of each particular moment, participants aim to write and rewrite the experience until the 'precise detailed moment (becomes) imaginable in a lived bodily sense' (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p173).

### **Critical Incidents:**

Critical incidents have been deemed important in the development of counsellors-in-training in so far as they influence the personal and professional development of counsellors. Critical incidents are described as 'events that are catalysts for change' (Furr & Carroll, 2003, p484) and '**significant learning moments, turning points, or moments of realization**' identified as making a significant contribution to professional growth (Howard, Inman, & Altman, 2006, p88).

### **References:**

- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2006). *Doing collective biography*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Furr, S. R., & Carroll, J. J. (2003). Critical Incidents in Student Counselor Development. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 81*(4), 483-489. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2003.tb00275.x
- Howard, E. E., Inman, A. G., & Altman, A. N. (2006). Critical Incidents Among Novice Counselor Trainees. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 46*(2), 88-102. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6978.2006.tb00015.x

Telephone: 364 2987 ext 3839

Email: [shanee.barracclough@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:shanee.barracclough@canterbury.ac.nz)

4 March 20██



## **Towards Embodiment of a Counsellor Identity: Possibilities and Challenges for Trainee Counsellors**

### **Consent Form for Participants**

I have been given a full explanation of this project and have been given an opportunity to ask questions.

I understand what will be required of me if I agree to take part in this project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher, and her primary supervisor, and that any published or reported results will not identify me.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities at the University of Canterbury and will be destroyed after 5 years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of the study. I have provided my email details below for that.

I understand that if I require further information, I can contact the researcher, Shanee Barracclough. If I have any concerns or complaints I can contact either Dr Kathleen Quinlivan, primary supervisor of the research (Kathleen.quinlivan@canterbury.ac.nz) or the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee.

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address:

Please return this completed consent form to Shanee Barracclough by April 17<sup>th</sup>██.



## **APPENDIX 2: Interview schedule**

### **Interview**

#### **1. What it means to be a counsellor**

What are your ideas/images of what it means to be a counsellor?

What does a counsellor look like? What qualities do they possess? How do they behave?

How do you fit/not fit with these ideas?

What does it mean for you to be a counsellor? What is happening when you know you are 'being a counsellor'? How do/will you know when are being a counsellor?

What kind of counsellor are you/will you be?

#### **2. Deciding to become a counsellor**

Why did you decide to become a counsellor?

How does that fit with other aspects of yourself that are important to you?

#### **3. The process of becoming a counsellor**

How do you understand the process of becoming a counsellor?

- theoretically, cognitively, affectively

What were your expectations around what the process would be like?

What has the process been like? Smooth, simple, straightforward?

- uncomfortable, destabilizing, moments of discomfort?

What have your affective experiences been like, in this process?

What factors have impacted on your experience?

What has challenged you, constrained you?

What has opened up possibilities for becoming (a counsellor)?

How would you describe the process of change, of becoming a counsellor, for you over the last year?

Draw? Metaphor? Words?

How would you describe where you are now in this process? Draw? Metaphor? Words?

What are your thoughts/ideas about your continuing process of becoming a counsellor, over the next year, and beyond? Draw, metaphor? Words?

What else do you think is important about what it is to become a counsellor? (picture?)

(Begin the group with sharing the drawing/words/metaphor from above – something personal for each that connects to this idea of becoming a counsellor)

## **APPENDIX 3: Notes on collective biography for research participants**

### **MEMORY WORK/COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHY GROUP – EXPERIENCES OF BECOMING COUNSELLOR**

#### **From individual identity to ‘everyone and anyone’s stories’**

Collective biography is a research strategy...working at the bodily level of knowledge and affect, and of moving beyond individualised versions of a person, toward persons-in-relation, persons-in-process...

Memory work is intimately bound up with the uncovering of the processes of the construction of self.

Within the workshops, through developing the skills of listening and attending to the minute bodily details of being, it becomes possible for each story to become a collective story.

“It is a sense of empathy, a closeness that creates bonds, that enables each group member to recognize the other and to recognize him/herself in the other”.<sup>35</sup>

The purpose of telling our individual stories is not to reveal individual identities but to gain insight into the ways in which life, in all its multiplicity is generated and lived. The stories are in this sense everyone’s stories, and anyone’s ‘stories so far’.

#### **Writing/telling/re-writing the remembered moment**

The written stories focus on one pivotal moment. The memories are written without clichés and explanations, and without the moralistic judgements or commentaries that intrude on the pure intensity of the remembered moment...focusing on finding the words to evoke the remembered moment of being, searching... for the details that will bring the memory most vividly to life.

When the stories are long and complex we find a key moment to focus on, and write only about that moment. The focus on the moment and the body helps us also to resist the effects of narrative structures that are inclined towards linearity, causality and closure. As a rule of thumb, the memory should take place in one or two minutes. If the explanation seems crucial to comprehending the moment, we write them as separate to the memory<sup>36</sup>.

Writing provides a discipline to the memory group work; talking is far more likely to invite self-presentation – it is difficult not to get caught up in interpretation and justification. Writing encourages description, and discourages interpretation<sup>37</sup>.

In the writing and reading, in the discussion about... each storyteller works to express the very ‘this-ness’...of the remembered moment – an immersion in the present moment, in time and in place, that often eludes us in the process of normative expectations, of habitual thoughts and practices, and of submissions to the dominant, often clichéd codes that make up the existing order (dominant discourses).

#### **The Listening**

The relationship between the participants and the written texts, and memories evoked in the workshop space, is developed through a particular kind of close attention to each other’s stories. Through listening and

---

<sup>35</sup> Ceppi and Zini, 1998, in Pedagogical encounters, p11

<sup>36</sup> Doing collective biography, p10

<sup>37</sup> Emotion and Gender p48

questioning each other on the remembered, embodied, affective detail, each story becomes imaginable with/in the minds/bodies of everyone...

Participating in collective biography extends the capacity for listening and develops a new understanding and practice of relationality... Such listening begins with *'the capacity to abandon yourself to the conviction that our being is just a small part of a broader knowledge; listening is a metaphor for listening to others, sensitivity to listen and be listened to, with all your senses...behind each act of listening there is desire, emotion, and openness to differences, to different values and different points of view...Learning how to listen is a difficult undertaking; you have to open yourself to others...competent listening creates a deep opening and predisposition toward change'*<sup>38</sup>

Each participant listens carefully to the others' memory stories. They question the storyteller when, as listener, they find they cannot imagine what happened. They listen in order to allow the memory, in its embodied, affective detail, to become imaginable, to be virtually real in their minds and bodies<sup>39</sup>.

The participants listen openly and with care...when they can't enter the other's story at any point, they make a note of where the words did not open up a space that they could imagine, and the written story is discussed in light of these blank spots. In this flow of talk the listeners offer insights from their own take-up of the story as it resonates in their bodies, asking *'is this how it was?'* Sometimes the listeners tell some of their own memories as a way of opening up a different entry point to the moment that they cannot find a way into<sup>40</sup>

## **Journals**

Reflective journals are used for drafting memory stories and for recording other thoughts of the collaborative discussions about each other's memories and thoughts about what occurred during and in response to the workshops. *'The close work of writing and rewriting, the struggle to find the language to evoke the memory, and the sensibility of each moment of being, can be traced through the multiple drafts and fragments of text in the journals'*<sup>4</sup>

## **It's important to know...**

*'This remembering is difficult, provocative, challenging, funny, sad, and pleasurable, evoking laughter and tears and a lot of intense questioning about what actually happened: how did it feel, how did it look, what were the embodied details of this remembered event?'*<sup>5</sup>

*'This ruthless pursuit can only work where a profound level of trust and mutual commitment has already been established among the workshop participants'*<sup>41</sup>.

## **How and what?**<sup>42</sup>

1. Write a memory of a particular episode, action, event, moment, encounter (about 1-2 min episode)
2. Write it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person (take a 'bird's eye view' – describe what you see)

---

<sup>38</sup> Rinaldi, 2006, in Pedagogical encounters p10

<sup>39</sup> Place, pedagogy, change, p 130-131

<sup>40</sup> Place, pedagogy, change p131

<sup>41</sup> Doing collective biography, p12

<sup>42</sup> Emotion and Gender p43-54

3. Write in as much detail as possible – key image, sound, taste, smell, touch, even ‘inconsequential’ detail
4. Write without interpretation, explanation, meaning making, justification
5. Share your story

Everyone (see listening above) - identify clichés, generalisations, contradictions, cultural imperatives, metaphor...what is not written.

Engage in analysis – uncover the common sense, the common understandings contained in them. It is important not to individualise, e.g. not why did she do this, but what does this say about ‘counsellors in training’ and what they might experience and why?

One aim is to uncover social meanings embodied in the actions described, and to uncover the processes whereby the meanings – both then and now - are arrived at. The taken for granted of everyday life is uncovered. Generate and reflect on multiple meanings possible

What does this episode mean to us? (The person who wrote it and then others)

Why did we recall this one?

What does it tell us about the social construction of counsellor identities?

6. Rewrite your story in your journal

## References

- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2006). *Doing collective biography*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (Eds). (2009). *Pedagogical encounters* (Vol. 33). New York: Peter Lang Pub Inc.
- Davies, B. & Gannon, S. (2011). Collective biography as pedagogical practice: being and becoming in relation to place. In M. Somerville., B. Davies., K. Power., S. Gannon., & P. de Carteret. *Place Pedagogy Change*. Rotterdam: Sense Pub.
- Crawford, J., Kippax, S., Onyx, J., Gault, U. & Small, J. (1992). *Emotion and Gender: Constructing Meaning from Memory*. London: Sage.

## APPENDIX 4 – Ethics Approval

UNIVERSITY OF  
CANTERBURY  
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha  
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

### HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

Secretary, Lynda Griffioen  
Email: [human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)

Ref: 2013/10/ERHEC

21 March 2019~~13~~

Shanee Barraclough  
School of Health Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Shanee

Thank you for providing the revised documents in support of your application to the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. I am very pleased to inform you that your research proposal "Towards embodiment of a counsellor identity: possibilities and challenges for trainee counsellors" has been granted ethical approval.

Please note that this approval is subject to the incorporation of the amendments you have provided in your email of 21 March 2013.

Should circumstances relevant to this current application change you are required to reapply for ethical approval.

If you have any questions regarding this approval, please let me know.

We wish you well for your research.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Surtees  
*Chair*  
*Educational Research Human Ethics Committee*

*"Please note that Ethical Approval and/or Clearance relates only to the ethical elements of the relationship between the researcher, research participants and other stakeholders. The granting of approval or clearance by the Ethical Clearance Committee should not be interpreted as comment on the methodology, legality, value or any other matters relating to this research."*

## **APPENDIX 5 – Whole tear poem (Bailey) from chapter eight**

I had quite a tight chest.  
I felt like I almost wanted  
to cry a couple of times, like

the things she was telling me...  
I just felt so sad for her.  
Yeah it was strange.

I haven't quite experienced  
that in the room before  
with any clients.

I almost wanted to cry  
because I thought how on earth  
did she deal with this,

how is she even at school today,  
how does she cope,  
how does she get through it?

It was kind of like unease.  
It was almost like -  
'what's she going to say next?' -

'it can't get any worse than this'  
and everything was actually  
getting worse.

I felt like my stomach was up here.  
I didn't feel really relaxed

in the room. I felt, you know, tense.

It's hard to describe it.

It seemed like her story -  
one massive thing after another.

I just thought  
how can you keep going  
with all these waves

knocking you over?  
I thought it was absolutely amazing  
she just gets out of bed every morning.

this girl,  
she's not even sixteen yet  
she has been shipped around  
all over the place  
her whole entire life.

I've had a few clients come in  
and talk about some pretty heavy things  
like self-harm and suicide attempts

and things, but this one really, really  
struck me for some reason,  
more so than any other client has.

*Was she crying?*

No she wasn't,  
just talking about it,

very matter-of-factly.

It was like shock  
of hearing everything  
she was saying, and it was also

what can I do -  
because my days are so flat out,  
seeing between five and eight

or nine kids a day?  
I know that I have to slow down  
and it's not like the school's

telling me to do it.  
It's like I've got this thing in me  
where I keep thinking I need to

because they're all lining up  
outside my door,  
I need to be there for them, and

I need to give them the space  
and time. I've got this kind of  
overwhelming want to fix things

or try and make things better.  
So I was really conscious about that  
in the room at that moment -

'you're not going to be able to fix this'.  
I think that really highlighted it for me -



you can't fix people's problems

and what I can do is so limited

in the scheme of their big life.

So I felt a little bit powerless

and then towards the end of our session

she started saying things like

I don't really want to be a part of

this world any more

but I have to keep going

and I want to keep going.

It really hit me then

when she started talking a bit more

about the emotions

and how it was making her feel.

I think that really

wrenched at me a bit.

I just felt so, so much compassion

for her, that I was drawn in so much,

when she said -

'I don't feel like I want to be

in this world any more' -

I was thinking I can totally understand

why you feel that - 100%,

which I haven't experienced so much

with clients before this.

I think I got too deep into it.

It was like a switch going off -  
don't cry.

I did feel a switch kind of go  
but it was only for a few seconds  
and I managed to switch it off pretty fast.

I was literally just listening to her story  
the whole way through  
and I think that probably helped me

not to cry.

I just had that gut instinct  
don't cry in front of the client, don't.

Why is that?

I think I'd be worried that they'd think -  
that I couldn't handle their story

that they might have upset me.  
maybe I feel unprofessional  
but then it's not unprofessional -

it's a very confusing place.

I think with me  
why it struck me so much

it really got at my core values  
of how people should be parents

and how I would be a parent

I started having all these feelings  
it made me really think about  
wanting to be, like, a foster parent

and if that girl came along to me  
I would be her foster mum  
I had all of these things coming up for me

which was quite surprising  
because I'm so young.  
And I think it really tugged at some real

core values and beliefs that I hold  
and I was so angry  
that someone had done this to her.