Local Place and its Co-Construction in the Global Network Society

Utilizing
Film and Communication Technologies for
Inclusive, Locally Grounded, Civic Cosmopolitan Projects,
in a New "Network Locality"

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Abstract

This thesis explores how locally-constructed agency, based on what we really care about, can be developed within and thence beyond localities. At issue is the need for new forms of connectedness and belonging in the globally-based network society.

Globally-based communications and media technologies create new networks and mobilities that stretch and fragment existing socio-economic, administrative and ecological systems and with this, older, local and national forms of sociality. Such social upheavals are apt to drive people into defensive and divisive "us" against "them" forms of belonging. Local communities are then called on almost daily to fix these problems, but scarcely exist as connected effective agents on their own account.

The thesis examines how official institutions (policy and academic) can help undo one-way global-local flows, by supporting new forms of local-local and local-through-to-global agency. A transdisciplinary methodology, developed in this thesis, performatively demonstrates productive, new local-academic-policy connections.

Research included a fully participatory process that blends theoretical concepts (social, aesthetic, literary and film), with film and interactive technologies. A microcosm or simulation of locality was created through DVD film and an interactive research website.

Through the shared use of screen interfaces, over one hundred co-detectives or co-researchers from hugely diverse backgrounds collaborated to search for, help reveal, and test out ways that local inhabitants could more effectively connect and co-create a filmed narrative of the kind of place that all would like to inhabit.

A "network locality" development narrative is here piloted as a counterpoint to the global network society. Based on inclusive co-construction of locally grounded technology – and aesthetic-based communities – new possibilities of belonging around engagement in locally grounded civic-cosmopolitan projects are demonstrated.

Acknowledgements

Christchurch November 2007

Introduction

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world … (Yeats, 1967)
>
> Only connect …
> Live in fragments no longer … (Forster, 1992)

"Only connect"

We all live somewhere, in some place, whether for longer or for shorter periods of time. We also all share a global commons: of water, air, foods, goods, services, possibilities, projects, conflicts and problems. We all have needs and aspirations and wish to see possibilities for fulfilling these aspirations for all, or if not for all, then at least for ourselves and our families and friends.

For my research I explore how to build up processes of connectivity in locality, for personal and community development, in the context of local, national and ultimately global interdependencies, or in what Manuel Castells refers to as "the global network society" (Castells, 1996), and Ulrich Beck, "the global risk society" (Beck, 1992).

A core practical question I raise in this thesis is what would a place which offered such possibilities look like? What would enable us to recognise such a place? And if we could do this, how could we then, in practice, develop this place around such recognition?

I see the question of shared and personal development in locality as important for all people; even the globally well-connected have to live somewhere and have needs that can at times be met more effectively and efficiently - socially, ecologically, economically - by local networks and organisations with local knowledge. These needs range from security and care to dealing with large scale problems which permeate national boundaries, such as the impacts of global warming, resource depletion, pandemics, economic turbulence, tensions and conflicts.

A significant point is that the consequences of decisions taken at national and global levels manifest themselves in local contexts, while national and global institutions, which many rely on to come to their aid, are for the most part fiscally and logistically chronically stretched.

In the meantime powerful, globally-based communication and information networks, including media and entertainment industries (Castells, 1996) along with increased 'mobilities,' the movement of capital, people, ideas, images, technologies and various other things (Urry, 2000), continue to place enormous cumulative pressures on local places and the people who live in them.

Ironically, as such globalizing pressures and general insecurity and breakdown increase, so do calls for community (Delanty, 2003a, p. 195). On most days one can hear some academic, politician, official, or non-governmental practitioner call upon local community to address problems and provide solutions where they themselves cannot. For instance, community is sought to help:

address proliferating social, environmental and economic problems, including civil defence preparedness for possible earthquakes, tsunamis, and for feared possible global pandemics
ensure positive relationships among community members, including care of aged, mentally ill and other vulnerable people
deal with issues around domestic violence, and child abuse, call authorities and generally assist where possible
be welcoming of immigrants and refugees
participate in democratic and consultative processes
participate in relationships or partnerships with the government and business
generate grassroots partnerships or alternative safety nets in relation to fallout from the global economy, such as big business restructuring.

Given the many conflicting pressures on localities, it is probably not too surprising that in his large scale research on civic life in the United States, Robert Putnam found that people in communities:

> tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours, regardless of the colour of their skin, to withdraw even from close friends, to expect the worst from their community and its leaders, to volunteer less, give less to charity and work on community projects less often, to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform more, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference, and to huddle unhappily in front of the television … (Putnam, 2007, pp. 150-151).

Putnam concludes that these many pressures "bring out the turtle in all of us" (Putnam, 2007). The problem, to extend Putnam's terms, is how to induce turtles away from their televisions to connect with one another in their localities and to find and to feel that they can contribute effectively to new forms of local development? Yes, there are many problems; however, as I seek to demonstrate, there are also many new opportunities (concepts, resources, tools) which, to use Martin Heidegger's terms (Heidegger, 1962), are currently "present at hand" or available, but which, for various reasons, are not yet recognised or *made* "ready to hand." My endeavour is to pilot some new practices and a research methodology to help create and sustain such recognition.

Transdisciplinary methodology

Although this doctoral thesis is in sociology, my research project could also be described as "trans-disciplinary" in that it draws from and relates to various other academic disciplines and policy approaches, as well as knowledge and expertise within the locality. First, it needs to be noted that my approach is a little different from others. For instance:

I draw heavily on personal practical involvement and experience in social movements, local politics and local community development, particularly local media and technology projects and relate these to social theory. I also draw on aspects of Maori and Pacific cultural practice, as well as theory, and incorporate these into my theoretical framework.

My framework is around possibilities, as expressed originally in the 'Promise of the Enlightenment,' i.e. around essentially democratic freedoms, based on 'communication,' or 'discursivity,' and I draw heavily on theorists who point to ways this promise can be retrieved. While I definitely want to be realistic about the many problems and obstacles involved, this thesis is not simply intended to be a litany of how awful things are and why nothing effective can be done and why it is better to stay in turtle shells and in front of televisions, or just hope the next United States president or New Zealand prime minister, or local mayor, could make all the difference. I know many have problems with the 'project of modernity' as it originally took shape; however for better or for worse this project remains with us, and I would rather we have some means to explore, together, how its promise can be retrieved – i.e. how we can all become more rather than less enlightened and so more effectively identify, reduce or manage problems, and identify and follow up on opportunities, making ourselves more likely to succeed than fail in our efforts.

Following some of my major social theorists – Gerard Delanty (1997; 1998;1998; 1999, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2003a, 2003b, 2006), Scott Lash (1994, 1999, 2002), Piet Strydom (Strydom, 1999, 2000, 2002) and Ellen Herda (Herda, 1999), I go into areas such as philosophy where I have very little direct background and expertise. For instance, my main methodological theorist, Ellen Herda, operationalises Paul Ricoeur's literary and philosophical concepts and methods (Ricoeur, 1976, 1986, 1990, 1991) into a social science methodology which I further develop by incorporating a co-construction of narrative that deploys film (Bennington & Gay, 2000) and Internet. Some may feel uncomfortable about what they might see as a smorgasbord approach. In my defence I have been a community practitioner who has found certain theorists and theories have relevance to my work in this area. As a result I see my role as something of a mediator or translator – including seeing potential in certain aspects of social theory and philosophy and trying to draw them together and make them more widely available, so they can in turn be made more ready to hand for diverse others with their own various areas of expertise.

I make connections between discourses that some people might find unusual. For instance, I connect Ricoeur's narrative theory with film theory and relate this to Delanty's social theory, which I then link to knowledge society policy and so on …

I also propose utilizing new communications technologies to make extensive new connections, such as local-through-to-global networking by people in New Zealand localities with other people of diverse cultures in their own local settings. I also wish to help enable people to identify contributions that they can make from within their localities to the global knowledge economy. I appreciate that any sort of linking of the social and the economic is not too common and can cause discomfort. However, I see such practices as enabling people in this country to become individually and collectively much more globally streetwise at both national and local levels. I am proposing enhanced local participation in the global knowledge economy as a more direct way of improving local incomes and socio-economic agency, and see such enhancement of local-through-to-global agency as beginning to provide some local agency, where otherwise more simply neo-liberal top-down, global-to-local flows of control (and out of control) will prevail.

Core elements: sociology and hermeneutic spiralling

In short, I find I have to work transgressively. The above said, I am writing as a sociologist at a time when there have been enormous pressures towards fragmentation in sociology and related fields (Austrin & Farnsworth, 2007) but it is not my intention here to make a case for the weakening of sociology as an academic discipline; quite the reverse. I see this thesis project as centrally entailing sociology's reflexivity about itself, for sociology is the one academic discipline that, in reflecting academically on its own activity, also reflects on the social overall, which is its academic object. In this respect I see sociology as uniting in its epistemic core the social in its academic social processes and the social world beyond academia at the same time. So I see that a sociology that understands itself is one that can play a key facilitating or co-ordinating role within academia and between academia and society in transdisciplinary projects such as I am

proposing (Bourdieu, 1990; Delanty, 1999; Gibbons, 1994; Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001; Lash, 1994; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001).

More specifically, my research project could be described as an endeavour to delineate some new roles for sociology in the co-creation of local place, and also in the co-creation of knowledge within and between locality, academia and policy. In this respect it could be described as a 'communication' project situated in a society which, as I shall be arguing, is itself constructed communicatively (Delanty, 1999; Eder, 1999; Habermas, 1988; Strydom, 2000).

Such a communicatively-based sociological project requires an academically transgressive methodology. For my methodology I deploy Ricoeur's "hermeneutic spiral" (Ricoeur, 1991) as an intellectual process that can move "communicatively" and "transgressively" across these three areas – locality, academia and policy. Put very simply, the hermeneutic spiral in this context refers to an on-going process of enquiry and discovery, that of ongoing practical interpretation and understanding which, when it meets obstructions, can first stand back or distance itself and reflect in order to seek, until it finds, interpretations or explanations that will enable the resumption of ongoing practical understanding and engagement. This spiralling is an ongoing process of moving between various particulars of experience and levels of generalization to develop new, more explanatory and relevant wholes that enable this resumption of understanding and engagement. In this respect, this thesis could be described as a performative project constantly developing hermeneutic spirals within and between locality, academia and policy.

However, it would be a mistake to see this transgressivity across the three domains as an absolute necessity in itself, however desirable and advantageous. Rather, my primary aim is to demonstrate how technologies can open up new spaces of freedom in localities for its inhabitants to create conditions that enhance their joint agency by contributing actively to the co-construction of their local places and, on occasion to reshaping the larger world of which they are part.

I see the primary challenge to be participation based on developing meaningful communication between diverse people and groups in the locality, so that the inhabitants are in a position to identify problems and opportunities and to develop creative and effective ways of responding to them. I see this enhanced capability as requiring a reflective local discursive or communicative environment where people of diverse talents and identities can come to see their differences not as a basis for distrust or conflict, but as a basis from which they can make distinctive and valued contributions.

There are many problems in achieving these levels of communication, and arguably the most difficult is being limited by past patterns of thought and practice rather than opening up, in terms used by Ricoeur, to new "ways of seeing," that enable new "ways of being" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 80) . As Richard Florida proposes, there is a need to pursue a collective vision of a better future for us all particularly as, in the current changing environment, "the old forms don't work, because they no longer fit the people we've become" (Florida, 2002, p. xii)

In summary, I see the need to re-conceptualise locality if the needs and aspirations of people in a more globally connected society are to be fulfilled. I very much appreciate having the academic freedom and the support of some people working in policy development who seek to develop different and new approaches. Of course no one has all the answers, but my hope is that this thesis will assist in opening up some new local knowledge horizons, thereby creating more possibilities for the development of localities all would like to inhabit.

Introduction to thesis chapters

Chapter 1: Research problem: fragmentation and polarization

The core problem I address here is social fragmentation that results in disconnection and loss of capacity for individual or collective agency. My specific concern is what I see as

growing narratives of division and fear as they are become manifested in local place. I see this problem escalating in New Zealand, as elsewhere, as our lives becoming inextricably integrated into an increasingly interdependent world.

I make two main arguments in relation to the management of such disorientation and insecurity. One is about the site(s) for the production, testing and application of knowledge - including policy. Much of the testing and application of knowledge needs to be situated, or reflexively worked through and stabilised and framed in real life, particularly local, situations. This is because the simplistic and direct, widespread or global applications of knowledge, especially rapidly changing knowledge, are more apt to create and proliferate largely unforeseen problems. My second main argument is for inclusive participation in such social contextualization or framing. This is not only for reasons to do with human autonomy or democratic ideals, but it is also pragmatic to create and work with a better understanding of the social terrain, and therefore to be in a position to see more relevant problems or obstacles as well as new possibilities.

Chapter 2: Social Movements recovering autonomy

I build my theoretical framework around the fact that knowledge is transgressive, not able to be contained in tidy academic disciplines or institutions. As stressed above, this has local implications. I illustrate this point with reference to New Zealand's nuclear-free campaign of the 1980s and 90s in which I was myself involved. The nuclear-free campaign came about ultimately, because a New Zealand-born and educated scientist Ernest Rutherford split the atom in a university laboratory in England in 1917. As all know, this technology did not stay confined in the theoretical realm of physics or the laboratory or the university.

I see the locally-based nuclear-free grass roots movement and subsequent policy developments, such as the emergence of New Zealand peace-brokering roles, as pointing to the value of processes for the inclusion of diverse, local 'knowledgeable actors' in helping to frame and develop issues. This discursive grass roots movement process can

be seen as producing more comprehensible, shared and relevant or socially robust institutions and policy.

In this chapter I also introduce the concept of the transdisciplinary project and propose that, as in a 'game,' this entails the development of rules. Such rules are needed in new transdisciplinary projects to clarify the kinds of contributions various parties can make, and how such work will be contextualised in society, around people and their needs, including - increasingly - with regard for ecology. I stress that with the inclusion of 'knowledgeable actors' it will be found that there is, to use Heidegger's expression, already much knowledge and skill which is "present at hand" (Heidegger, 1962) but which will only be revealed and made "ready to hand" if its presence is recognised in the context of discursive, inclusive problem-solving.

However, as Kenneth Boulding among many others has pointed out, "nothing fails like success" and the question arises, what happens to inclusive social framing processes after much of a social movement's work is done? My argument is that social movements come and go, but locality, the ground where we live, always remains.

Chapter 3: Reflexive "Network Locality" a new site for autonomy

In chapter three, I introduce the concept of the 'Network Locality' or participatory locally grounded civic cosmopolitan place. I draw on a case study of a locality in Christchurch and its experiments with ICTs in which I was also involved and which have been written up in various publications (Ashton, 2002, 2003; Ashton & Thorns, 2004, 2007).

Castells refers to a "globalizing network society" that subsumes resources everywhere in its logic. It is in this context that this thesis seeks to counterpose a distinctive response to globalization, that of a Network Locality that can position itself as a locally grounded, civic cosmopolitan community. This is seen here as a community that can network locally and globally to interact constructively, rather than react intransigently or become haplessly subsumed by top-down, globalist, information-age designs and trends. The

Network Locality is thus one in which inhabitants within localities can interact both with one another and with the wider world and its mobilities on the basis of its own diverse and creatively blended narratives. From these narratives, local inhabitants can in turn produce their own sense or vision of themselves and their possibilities in their locality and negotiate these in relation to environments beyond it.

Chapter 4: Network Locality development narrative

In chapter four, I introduce and extend the concept of inclusive narrative creation, drawing attention to the possibilities that come with media and communications technologies for the co-construction of a local development filmed narrative. I introduce *The Silent Connectors*, a one-act play, which has been adapted for film for research purposes.

My first and major point here is the readily apparent and shareable similarities between real life and filmed drama, which, as I suggest, can seem quite directly to mimic everyday experience and engage us both individually and together. I show how, in a fictional narrative, otherwise heterogeneous elements or fragments, such as exist in New Zealand, can be brought to 'communicate' together, or be configured together into an unfolding plot or fictional narrative framing which can in turn invite further, ongoing participation in the construction of shared narratives of new possibilities for real everyday life.

In everyday life, in the media and literature, narratives are constructed about people and place all the time, but the questions I raise is this chapter are who is constructing the narratives, and is it possible to develop more inclusive narrative construction processes? Again drawing on a case I was involved with, I propose that fictional narrative can empower disadvantaged groups, while in fact also bringing them into collaboration with members of other groups, in ways that deliberative, validity-claim based and other current formal processes of discursivity have not been able to achieve.

Chapter 5: Transdisciplinary, locally-grounded cosmopolitan methodology via locally created filmic texts and internet

In chapter five, I show how filmed narrative, which can be seen to mimic life in the locality, can assist sociology to relate to people in their localities in new and potentially very productive ways. I also outline a communication-based transdisciplinary approach for a new, locally grounded cosmopolitan methodology. The transdisciplinary process seeks to place people, living in their localities, with their needs and aspirations at the centre. The aim is to socially contextualise, test and stabilise knowledge in localities.

Chapter 6: Design for locally-based co-discovery

In chapter six, I describe the research design, which seeks to set up a 'safe' process where people from diverse backgrounds can participate in a developmental narrative, within the constraints of time and the need for rigorous social science processes.

A framework I wish to develop can be conceived of as a locality (local community)-academic-policy Tripod. While this Tripod is similar to some existing models linking, or connecting, non-government organizations, social science and social policy (Good & Rangiheuea, 2006), this particular Tripod has as its starting point, local community and its everyday life and relates from local community to academia and policy. Given, as Klaus Eder suggests, the tendency for local everyday, professional and theoretical knowledge/s to develop along separate or not very well connected trajectories or spheres (Eder, 1996), I see this communication model as one which seeks to support and develop an effective interplay of the various forms of knowledge.

Chapter 7: The research: unfolding narratives of local-global development

The focus in chapter seven is on the responses of participants. The main point here is that participants from very diverse socio-economic education and cultural/ethnic backgrounds and ages 12-85 years participated, but because classifications are not recorded alongside

the responses, it is not possible to tell from these responses the background of participants.

I argue that this non-classification of participants can result in important methodological advantages, particularly in providing a structure for freedom of perception and expression, in particular, authentic expression in the communicative co-construction of localities.

Drawing from participant responses, a second act is created. Those who seek a conventional analysis of the material provided for the second act at this point miss the very point of using narrative to function as the 'connector' amongst otherwise diverse concerns and disciplines.

Importantly narrative enables people in their localities to discover and explore what they might like to connect with, both locally and beyond, and to clarify what matters to them, what threatens and what can give meaning to their being in the world . It engages people in their everyday lives and their experience, their own knowledge and ways of expressing this and most importantly, their possibilities and their own sense of these. In an unfolding narrative, situations can be tested out and worked through, using the power of the imagination.

I conclude by pointing to how a new cosmopolitan-based transdisciplinary methodology, one that places locally-constructed agency at its heart, can help build new forms of connectedness and belonging and with these, the productive, local-local *and* local-through-to global agency necessary to creatively and much more effectively meet challenges of an interdependent world.

The New Zealand setting

This research is set in New Zealand. For any readers who may not know, New Zealand is a small country in the South West Pacific.

According to the latest (2006) census, it has a population of 4,027,947 people. Those of European ethnicity comprise 67.6 per cent of the population and the indigenous Maori 14.6 per cent. Asians make up 9.2 per cent, followed by Pacific Island peoples at 6.9 per cent. More than one-fifth of New Zealanders were born overseas, the most common birthplace being England (New Zealand Census, 2006).

New Zealand is officially a bi-cultural country. The indigenous Maori and the British crown signed an agreement around issues of partnership and sovereignty in 1840. Known as the Treaty of Waitangi, the significance of this treaty has come to be increasingly recognised both officially and publicly, especially since the 1970s. However, although officially recognised, there continue to be various tensions with respect to its implementation, for instance, as manifested in the enormous public support for the then leader of the opposition National Party, Don Brash (October 2003 to November 2006), when he gave speeches with respect to what he depicted as the favoured treatment of Maori (Brash, 2004, 2004, 2006).

New Zealand's immigrant base until the 1970s was predominantly British, and in fact the United Kingdom was commonly up to then described by many as 'the home country.' Additional labour for industry was sought in the neighbouring Pacific Islands during the 1950s to the early 1970s. While New Zealand's Pacific population was the third largest ethnic group, in the last 30 or so years migrants have also increasingly come from Asia which now provides the third largest group. Other immigrants come from Europe (particularly from Holland from the 1950s on), Africa, the Middle East, the United States and Europe.

New Zealand's socio-economic history includes world-leading prosperity and relative social harmony as a result of creative egalitarian socio-economic developments at turning points in the global economy, particularly around changes in technology in the past, notably in the 1890s and the 1930s (King, 2003). However, as with most countries in the world, New Zealand now faces huge socio-economic, ecological and cultural challenges

needing effective concepts and innovative methodologies. For instance, it struggles to compete successfully in the global market place, particularly for knowledge-economy skills and technology. Putting New Zealand's competitive challenge in perspective, as our Prime Minster Helen Clark indicates, China and India "each produce four million graduates a year [and] in total their annual graduate numbers are twice the size of [the New Zealand] population" (Clark, 2005). As will be further elaborated, New Zealand struggles to retain its own talent and to attract, relate to and retain international students (Jiang, 2005). Further, although Clark has stated a goal for New Zealand to be the first nation to be truly sustainable – across the four pillars of the economy, society, the environment, and nationhood (Clark, 2007a, p. 2), the growth in the use of carbon-based products, such as in motor vehicle use, continues to spiral.

Linking local place, public policy and academia in New Zealand

At a national policy level, Prime Minister Helen Clark increasingly finds herself situating national issues in the context of the globally interdependent world. For instance, in laying out the agenda of her government and issues for New Zealand at the Combined Trade Unions Conference in October 2005, soon after being re-elected for a third term in government, she stated:

This term will be about smart policy and strategies for growth, innovation, and productivity in the economy, and for quality and best practice in our social policy and services.
It will be about sustainable development and meeting the big challenges in energy and transport.
It will be about enhancing the reputation of our small country as an independent, principled, and engaged member of the international community.
It will be about the development of our national identity as a unique nation; as a tolerant and inclusive nation able to accommodate diverse peoples and beliefs and proud of its heritage; as a creative nation which celebrates those who express what's special about us

through music, dance, theatre, literature, film, and design; and as a nation which takes pride in all its successes across many fields.

Prime Minster Clark concluded:

The campaign for the next election has already started, and it can be won by beginning now to engage grass roots organisations and communities in debate about the kind of future we want for our country (Clark, 2005).

Helen Clark Prime Minster NZ (2005)

This thesis has as a major aim the development of a methodology which enables productive communication about the kind of future possibilities "we" want. I have been granted a Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Social Policy Evaluation and Research (SPEaR) Linkages Scholarship to support such an endeavour. Specifically, the MSD, in conjunction with other social sector agencies, has identified priority social policy knowledge needs, which include research related to "Social Connectedness" and "Social and cultural identities" which are explicitly addressed in this thesis (Ministry of Social Development, 2003).

Social Connectedness refers to:

> the constructive relationships that people have within families/whanau, iwi, schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, communities and other social groupings or institutions. Social networks, institutions, policies, norms and relationships that enable people to act together, create synergies and build partnerships (Ministry of Social Development, 2003).

It is also noted that:

> Different types of networks at the local, regional and organisational level can be important in contributing to positive social and economic outcomes.

Social and cultural identities refers to:

> commonality and variation in social norms, values and common beliefs within and between groups.

It is noted that:

> It is likely that diversity within New Zealand will continue to increase over time. It is important that we continue to develop our understanding of traditions and cultures and their impact within a multi-ethnic and diverse society operating within a bicultural constitutional and structural (treaty) framework.

Questions raised by MSD which I address include:

> How can we maximise opportunities for economic and social growth through diversity?
> How can we minimise the risks of inter-group tension and hostility?
> How is it best to promote diversity and innovation whilst maintaining social cohesion and national unity?

This thesis proposes ways to address these questions; however, as will become clear,

terms, such as diversity and knowledge and participation are broader and more

encompassing than is common in much current research and practice.

In the next chapter I outline the research problem, which I see as arising from

fragmenting and polarizing trends and related narratives, which can then result in failure

to note many new opportunities for personal and combined local, social/cultural, economic and ecological development.

Chapter 1: Research problem: Fragmentation and Polarization

> The world has become too complex for individuals … to have enough knowledge to tackle complex problems by themselves. A viable alternative is to create and sustain reflective communities, but … bringing people with different background knowledge and different value systems together [this] will not be an easy undertaking. But there is little choice: unless we meet these challenges, we will be unable to cope with the complexities and needs of the 21st century. (Fischer, 2005b, p. 42)

> One reason why we fail to learn is that we only talk to those who agree with us. The hawks talk only to hawks; the doves, only to doves; the radicals, only to radicals; the conservatives, only to conservatives; and so on. There may be good reasons for this, for it is certainly easier and often more pleasant to talk to those who agree with us than to those who do not. (Boulding, 1985, p. 213)

The speed and impacts of global social economic and technological change are stretching severely the capacities of existing social, cultural, political, economic, academic and natural environmental systems. Such social upheavals are tending to drive people into defensive and divisive "us" against "them" forms of belonging.

In the meantime, multiple screens beam multiple texts – one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many – into multiple hands on multiple issues with multiple enticements, related to a multiplicity of identities.

In these kinds of contexts, New Zealand Prime Minster Helen Clark is one of many who seem to wish to engage grass roots organisations and local communities in conversations about the kind of future we want for our country (Clark, 2005). However, if one could engage in a nation-wide conversation about such development, what would it look like, how could it be organised?

It is in this context that this thesis proposes building up connectivity for personal and local development in the context of the interdependent global environment, entailing

local-to-local, thence more effective local to national through to global, connection and development. My research is based in Christchurch, New Zealand within the context of wider research and theory. It aims to both research and to pilot a tool for locally-grounded cosmopolitan building processes.

Need for new forms of connectedness and belonging

This thesis is written from a personal concern about what I see as a growing politics of division and fear and its manifestation in narratives about development in local place.

This division is articulated in George Bush's more obvious "you are with us or against us" refrain in his declared "War on Terror" [1] as well as in the many less obvious ways we can be drawn into interacting at all social levels with those who are 'like ourselves' and are likely to agree with 'us' and discouraged from interacting with those 'others' who are unlike us.

This 'like with like' is reinforced at many levels: for example, at policy levels by a strong emphasis given to funded social programmes which promote 'bonding,' forms of social capital for 'othered groups.' For instance, in New Zealand this tends to include separate programmes for those *categorised* as Maori, Pacific and new settlers (mainly Asian, though increasingly also Muslim) and others groupings such as the economically poor, mentally ill and so on. It is also manifested in local community development of 'like with like,' for instance, it is rare to find those with business knowledge, and the economically disadvantaged communicating comfortably with each other in a local community setting, or policy that seeks to promote such connecting. And here at the University of Canterbury, it is manifested in the separate Maori, Pacific, and Asian departments and areas of study despite aspirations for interdisciplinarity, and these departments

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[1] Refer to http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html for copy of speech (20 September 2001)

functioning in adjacent academic silos rather than in mutual engagement and development.

- Published in Canta (University of Canterbury Students Association)

Although my general concern is about the 'like with like' phenomenon, my particular concern is about the lack of personal experience and contact most people, including from academia, have with those variously categorised as the under-class, the disadvantaged, the marginalised and those they perceive as subaltern, and the ease with which many can be lined up to speak about, or represent people who are categorised in this way. This practice can undermine, or become a substitute for these people to have their own voice or their own power to name and frame and ascribe to themselves their own identity constructed by their own narratives. It also concerns me that much current knowledge about "others" tends not to come from personal experience, but through media images and media-generated categories. Such naming and narrative framing then come, all too readily, to be accepted as reality.

For instance, many New Zealanders come to 'know' people from South Auckland with its large Maori and Pacific population, not through personal experience, but through negative media-constructed narrative framing about gangs, violence and drugs. Many come to 'know' Chinese through media depictions of Asian crime and human right abuses, not through personal contact. Further, Muslims, although they only make up a very small percentage of New Zealand's population, are widely depicted in a negative

light and linked to the so-called "war on terror." Many other groups such as youth, elderly, mentally unwell, unemployed, single parents, and gay people can become identified more from negative media depictions and related, selective narrative framing than personal experience. Social programmes for "local development" then come to be framed around these concerns.

The issue as I see it, is not with the media depictions per se, rather it is that of underlying social fragmentation, leading to divisions and polarisation between groups in our societies, or us against them forms of belonging.

I am not arguing for people to have to just come together and get along and that we have to "celebrate our diversity". After all, people tend to like to spend most of their time with their peer groups. However, I see the problem arising when, as currently in New Zealand and in many places in the world, there are growing divisions and misunderstandings and polarizations between various groupings, while at the same time, very few opportunities for connections or communication, or bridging between diverse groups and the wider society.

I see this lack of communication and experience of groups with each other as foreclosing of many learning opportunities, importantly, by failing to understand and anticipate many problems (social, cultural, economic and ecological) and also importantly, to appreciate the potentialities of such connecting.

In this sense, I see a major problem as a lack of 'recognition.' Many people have enormous potentially shareable and productive talents and knowledge which are currently not recognised. Echoing psychologist Abraham Maslow, I see this squashing or repressing of potential as being the cause of much socio-cultural pathology, continually generating so many of the "bad statistics" (Maslow, 1954) or what are being referred to as "wicked problems" - those which prove difficult and costly to try to solve (Walker, 2004).

With respect to the missed learning opportunities, a manifestation of this is in the new economy whereby at an official level New Zealand, like many nations in the global economy, sees itself as competing to be attractive to mobile immigrant talent and skills. However, in New Zealand there are already many immigrants with talents and skills New Zealand needs, but for the most part, these lie unrecognised and so untapped (Spoonley, 2004).

At an official level New Zealand is becoming increasingly recognised for its foreign policy role in the Asia Pacific region, particularly in assisting in areas of conflict or potential conflict (Clark, 2007a). It is feared that the heightened tensions of the Middle East are spilling over into the Asia Pacific region. There has been serious Muslim extremist violence in south of Thailand and the southern Philippines and incidents such as the 2002 Bali bombing. There has also been much mainly indigenous inter-group conflict in the Pacific for instance, in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Fiji, East Timor, and Tonga. New Zealand has taken a leading role in helping to address these conflicts and potential for conflicts.

I see it as significant that the New Zealand Government hosted the combined *Regional Interfaith Dialogue* and the *Alliance of Civilisations Symposium (May 2007)*. The *Alliance of Civilisations* is a global initiative, "aimed at overcoming fractures between societies and cultures" by building "bridges across the divides which have been created" (Clark, 2007b). This conference was attended by representatives from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam and New Zealand. In terms of bridging divides, it was also significant that guests were welcomed by Maori to Waitangi where, on 6 February 1840, representatives of Maori tribes and the British Crown agreed to sign a treaty, bringing the two races together in the founding of the modern New Zealand nation. In her opening address, Prime Minister Helen Clark stated:

> The representatives of Maori and of the British who gathered in Waitangi knew that if they were to live alongside each other in this country, they would need to respect each

other. The Treaty of Waitangi proclaimed our unity, and at the same time acknowledged our diversity … I hope that the spirit of Waitangi will assist your work over these three days on how the many faiths and cultures in our region can live in harmony (Clark, 2007b).

However, while there is, albeit at times reluctant, formal recognition given to the Treaty

- **Rights protests smother inter-faith dialogue promotion**

of Waitangi, the contribution of Maori, such as in making people feel welcome in order to more effectively "build bridges across divides" at gatherings such as this, is not generally recognised or valued in New Zealand. Instead, the major narrative framings of Maori in mainstream media are negative, often as a costly problem.[2] Further, although a plan of action to

reduce faith-based conflicts in the Pacific-Asia region was accepted by participants, the significance of this for the public was largely buried amidst the enormous amount of media attention focusing on human rights in the Philippines and protest against the Filipino president, and religious protests by those who wish New Zealand would recognise Christianity as its main religion.[3]

So, despite Maori being the indigenous people and the Maori 'welcome' being well known in New Zealand and beyond, despite 'bridging' forms of mediation and conflict

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[2] United Nations Special Rapporteur Rodolfo Stavenhagen visited New Zealand in 2005 to observe the human rights element of the Crown's relationship with Maori. In his report, Stavenhagen warned that the treatment of Maori people and issues was of special concern, and highlighted "a systematic negative description of Maori in media coverage, an issue that should be addressed through the anti-racism provisions of New Zealand's Human Rights Act." Refer to Stavenhagen, Rodolfo. 13 March 2006. "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people: Addendum: Mission to New Zealand". Geneva, Switzerland, United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

[3] FULL COVERAGE: Interfaith Dialogue Forum – Waitangi New Zealand 30 May 2007 http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0705/S00499.htm

resolving being a foreign policy perspective, and despite the very large number of people from Asia Pacific areas living in New Zealand, there is still very little understanding of the problems and the possibilities as they exist on the ground, and therefore there remains much potential for yet more ongoing conflict and misunderstanding.

Potential exists for tensions to be both ameliorated and further exacerbated with increasingly accessible interactive communications and information technologies. The question is not whether or not individuals and groups from all socio-cultural backgrounds will use the new technologies (Internet, email, web-based social networking media, mobile phones) to enhance their communication with each other; mostly, in New Zealand anyway, they already do.[4]

The question is rather the more serious one of whether such groups can also communicate together or continue to remain out of touch and irreconcilably in opposition to each other. It is in this context that "social cohesion" is repeatedly mentioned as a social policy objective. Social theorist Scott Lash warns of the "revenge of the repressed we" (Lash, 1994) when society continues to alienate groups of people and leave them this way. Lash was particularly referring to people who did not have access to the information and communication structures. However, the situation becomes all the more serious as alienated groups gain increasing access, enhancing their communication with each other, but not with 'non-alienated' groups.

In this vein, Castells describes how he was initially thrilled by the headline of El Tiempo: "'New uses of Internet in Colombia,'" saying "I care very much about Colombia, so I was eager to see any small sign of light at the end of its tunnel of violence." However, he became disconcerted and alarmed when, instead, he read how:

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[4] 69 percent used Internet, 80 percent a mobile phone (Statistics New Zealand 2007)

confronted with the flight from Bogotá of the upper middle class, barricaded in its suburban gated communities, extortionists and kidnappers had resorted to the Internet to distribute their threats by the hundreds through electronic mailing lists: then had proceeded to selective kidnapping to enforce their threats, so cashing in on their Internet-based mass-produced extortion business. In other words, some sectors of Colombian society were appropriating the Internet for their own purposes, their criminal practices, rooted in a context of social injustice, political corruption, drug economy, and civil war. (Castells, 2001, p. 6)

Castells goes on to describe how:

The elasticity of the Internet makes it particularly susceptible to intensifying the contradictory trends present in our world. Neither utopia nor dystopia, the Internet is the expression of ourselves – through a specific code of communication, which we must understand if we want to change our reality. (Castells, 2001, p. 6)

John Wardle, a practical, community-based philosopher with whom I worked in St

Albans, New Zealand, on inclusive-based information communication and technology

(ICT) projects in the locality said of ICTs:

They offer much opportunity to improve our wellbeing, to correct some of the imbalances and injustices of our society. But positive action is needed to direct and ensure this. Left without direction the new information age is already showing its potential to add to many of the already increasing society problems. (Wardle, 1997)

For many, this positive action seems unachievable. The world as they have known it

seems to be falling apart; it is full of risk, uncertainty and fear (Bauman, 2000, 2004;

Beck, 2006). The consequent temptation, as Zygmunt Bauman explains, is to go faster:

Individuals, fragile or not, need safety, crave safety, seek safety, and so then try, to the best of their ability, to maintain a high speed whatever they do. When running among fast runners, to slow down means to be left behind; when running on thin ice, slowing down also means the real threat of being drowned. Speed, therefore, climbs to the top of the list of survival values. (Bauman, 2000, p. 209)

Lash refers to those who say it is already much worse, already a "post-apocalypse

society" (Lash, 1999, p. 343) where the worst fears have already taken place. Much of the

concern about not being able to prevent the impact of global warming could be seen in

this vein. James Lovelock, famous for his "Gaia" hypothesis, has recently been reported as saying:

> If you want to get some idea of what much of the Earth might look like in 50 years' time then … get hold of a powerful telescope or log onto Nasa's Mars website. That arid, empty, lifeless landscape is … how most of Earth's equatorial lands will be looking by 2050. A few decades later and that same uninhabitable desert will have extended into Spain, Italy, Australia and much of the southern United States. We are on the edge of the greatest die-off humanity has ever seen … we will be lucky if 20% of us survive what is coming. We should be scared stiff. (cited in Leake, 2007)

My question is, if such high levels of conflict and tension already exist, then how much more conflict and tension will result when there is more manifest pressure on resources for survival itself. This problem is not new. For instance, in 1919 poet W.B. Yeats, wrote forebodingly of the post World War 1 situation:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. (Yeats, 1967 [1920])

However, in 1910, prior to the First World War, novelist E.M. Forster, aware of the fragmentation, wrote:

> Only connect… Live in fragments no longer. (Forster, 1992 [1910])

When E.M. Forster writes "Only connect," he refers to the need to unite at all levels, including the opposing elements within each person, and the need for more attention to be given to meaningful connections between people, including and especially from diverse socio-economic and cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Yeats' description, "things fall apart; the centre cannot hold" can be seen as pointing to some of the difficulties of connecting at a time of fragmentation and change.

At academic and policy levels there does seem to be recognition of the problem of disconnected and fragmented knowledge and the need to move beyond disciplinary and institutionally based 'silos' in order to more effectively connect. However, this form of

connection appears to be focused at the more abstract level of bureaucracy, as yet with little reference to building personal connections as Forster envisaged. For example, in launching the *New Zealand Settlement Strategy,* Immigration Minister David Cunliffe extends the "welcome mat" to migrants, saying "16 government agencies would make sure migrants were welcomed to their new communities" (*The Press*, 2007). The problem with this kind of approach is that it fails to connect, either with people in (the host established) communities and their feeling (often negative) about migrants, or to the wider societal communication, particularly as reflected (very often negatively) in the media.

While there is of course a need for New Zealand to relate globally, at a local level, John Urry says, I think quite rightly, that "Most people most of the time act iteratively in terms of local information, knowing almost nothing about the global connections or implications of what they are doing" (Urry, 2000, p. 197). In this context, Michael Burawoy asks a helpful question for research: "How can the study of everyday life grasp lofty processes that transcend national boundaries?" (Burawoy, 2000, p. 1).

Following on from Urry and Burawoy, and for that matter Immigration Minister David Cunliffe also, I think there is a need for new thinking, thinking that is more inclusive, less technocratic, simpler, and of the kind that incorporates understandings of local and global connections, connecting people and their hopes, fears and aspirations. An approach which I think shows more promise in this direction is transdisciplinarity.

Transgressive pathways to transdisciplinarity and the way forward

Transdisciplinarity is described as "a new form of learning and problem solving involving cooperation among different parts of society and academia in order to meet complex challenges of society." (Haberli, Gossenbacher-Mansuy, & Klein, 2001, p. 7)

It is participatory in that

> Ideally, everyone who has something to say about a particular problem and is willing to participate can play a role. Through mutual learning, the knowledge of all participants is enhanced, including local knowledge, scientific knowledge, and the knowledges of concerned industries, businesses, and non-governmental organizations. (Haberli, Gossenbacher-Mansuy, & Klein, 2001, p. 7)

Pointing to the direction in which I wish to head, well known exponents of this approach, Michael Gibbons and Helga Nowotny place people and their concerns at the centre of this transdisciplinary endeavour. They ask the important question, "What is the place of people in our knowledge?" (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 75). They also emphasise a form of locality, saying, "recent work in social studies has emphasised the importance of 'locality' in scientific practice and how research operates" (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 42).[5] In other words, there is recognition of the need for knowledge to be situated, or worked through and stabilised in real life situations, because a simplistic universal scientific solution and general application does not work by itself.

There is a well known Maori answer to the question, "what is most important in life?" and that is: "it is people, it is people, it is people." When a Maori kaumatua (elder) conclude their speeches with this saying, most people find themselves nodding their heads with agreement. Yes, we are people and we do matter, and as Michael Gibbons and Helga Nowotny (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 76) among many others affirm, it is now increasingly obvious that if knowledge is to be recognised and made socially robust, as needed, then all of us need to be included in this process and in the production and application of knowledge.

This thesis then is about people, and the local co-construction of place where they live, supported by the relevant co-production of knowledge. However, while I find various features of the transdisciplinary perspective advocated by Gibbons and Nowotny has much to offer, there is an important difference of emphasis. While Gibbons and Nowotny

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[5] It needs to be noted that for Nowotny *et al* 'locality' is where knowledge is created, i.e. it is not simply an abstract or geographically detached process. However, I am seeing 'locality' as primarily the place were people live.

do very importantly, in their words, "conceptualise people as active agents – people who have desires, wishes, political preferences…" (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 76), they do so from the perspective of academia and people become, in their words again, those "whom you can mobilise to build institutions and to enhance their capacities …". On the other hand, I see it as crucially important that people, as knowledgeable actors in their own right, can mobilise themselves. And although, with Delanty, I see a role for the university in the enhancement of democracy and therefore the conditions of participation for people (Delanty, 2001a), and in the mediation of knowledge, including local knowledge, I do not see how academics or the university can or should be in a position to continually "mobilise" people to "build institutions" and so enhance "their capacities."

So, although I am a student in sociology with a scholarship related to policy, this thesis does not come primarily from the perspective of the academic, the policy-maker or politician who wishes to enhance the capacity of local people and relate to local initiatives, rather it comes from the perspective first and foremost of people in their local place. That said, once the perspective of people in locality is taken as primary, much more significant roles for academia (research and teaching) in the overall development of policy, including that of relating to the knowledge society and economy is possible. To clarify, while this thesis introduces a research methodology and engages in research, its primary aim is to pilot or embody or exemplify, or provide a performative tool for local knowledge production, so that all three – locality, research and policy – develop much enhanced and mutually productive relationships with one another.

Of course, academics, policy makers and politicians also all live in localities and have various kinds of knowledge. These various levels of knowledge can and will be tapped into. However, I see it necessary to begin, by going underneath knowledge based on academic, expert and professional knowledge, to reach what Martin Heidegger refers to as authentic care, or authentic "dasein" based on "care" or self chosen and authentic ways of "being in the world," with its possibilities (Heidegger, 1962). It is from this vantage point, namely what we truly and deeply care about, based on our own possibilities, that I see it most useful to begin:

By getting to the point, first, where the best kinds of questions are able to be asked. After all, as the saying goes, "anyone can come up with answers; what takes real intelligence is to first come up with the right question. Then the right answers can be relatively easy to see."

To see the terrain more comprehensively, what is going on here, what are the various interrelationships in the locality, impinging on the locality and interacting with it, so as to more effectively contextualise knowledge production.

To define the problems more accurately, and identify opportunities and to be able to do this sooner rather than later.

To test out various scenarios, in inventive, imaginative ways, including experimenting with what new ICTs can offer.

To better integrate various perspectives and thereby produce more robust knowledge.

Introducing local-global transgressive projects

I write this from the perspective of someone who has found themselves habitually 'transgressing' currently recognised social and academic distinctions and boundaries and then having to bring things together in transdisciplinary contexts. I do it from the basic perspective of people and their possibilities. In order to begin to explore ways for people to build communication to meet needs and fulfil aspirations in the context of this globally interconnected world, I introduce three narrative studies which I consider go some way towards providing understanding about what has worked in the past, or enabled retrieval from the past, and what could provide a basis for new thinking, or innovation, to meet present and future needs.

In my first case study (1980s-1994) I discuss my experiences of the nuclear-free movement in New Zealand and the New Zealand Nuclear Free Peacemaking Association's proposals for New Zealand to build on its nuclear-free credentials by developing and institutionalizing diplomatic peace making, or peace brokering, or intermediary roles. This organization arose very much in a 'grassroots' context with a

very broad cross section of New Zealanders involved. My second study picks up on the promise of the new technologies for increased democratic participation and the enhancement of citizenship. This narrative draws from a case study of personal and inclusive local community building deploying new technologies in St Albans (1992-2002), a locality in Christchurch. My third narrative seeks to weave these together and introduces creative arts and film which become the basis of my research methodology. My main purpose for offering these illustrations is to retrieve, or re-examine what has worked in the past and therefore what can be built on to enable more inclusive new innovative learning for more hopeful possibilities for the future.

Lash (Lash, 1994, 1999) drawing on Hans-Georg Gadamer (Gadamer, 1975) refers to the need for retrieval of ground, and this includes tradition, memory and story. Ricoeur similarly refers to "the interplay of the innovation and sedimentation" (Ricoeur, 1990). In thinking about this interplay I find it helpful to consider the river where the reflection is clear, with the rich fertile sediment below. I see it as necessary to have some spaces for clarity and reflection, as when the river is clear and there are some spaces to enable the creative tapping into the rich and fertile sediment. I will say more about this aspect of sedimentation and innovation, however; it is important to note that this process is ongoing and in terms of this thesis, fully participatory.

Chapter 2: Social Movements Recovering Autonomy

… what can I hope for? (Lash, 1999, p. 211)

Transgressive context

As Gibbons and Nowotny state:

> …knowledge is transgressive. Nobody, in my awareness, has succeeded anywhere for very long in containing knowledge. It seeps through institutional structures like water through pores of a membrane. As with liquids in membranes, knowledge seeps in both directions, from science to society and from society to science. (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 68)

This transgressivity was most aptly illustrated in New Zealand's nuclear-free campaign of the 1980s and 90s. New Zealand born and educated scientist Ernest Rutherford received his education in physics at Canterbury University 1890-1895 and split the atom in a British laboratory in 1917. However, as history demonstrates, this knowledge seeped out of the laboratory and into the hands of those making war-machines to then become a threat to life itself. With the "Cold War" and civilisation in the balance, the university, largely locked into what Gibbons and Nowotny refer to as "Mode 1 knowledge" (from individual disciplines) was ill-equipped to address such implications. For instance in Mode 1, ethics was typically taught in a separate discipline from physics and within another historically evolved discipline, usually philosophy. The university could come to study social movements as they emerged, as did social theorists such as Manuel Castells, Klaus Eder, Sidney Tarrow and Alain Touraine (Castells, 1983; Eder, 1999; Tarrow, 1988, 1994, 1998; Touraine, 1981, 1988) along with research on international conflict resolution attempts, for instance, Kenneth Boulding, Johan Galtung and John Burton (Boulding, 1985; Burton, 1990; Burton & Dukes, 1990; Galtung, 1996). However, in the

university, it was typically much more difficult to transgress these disciplines than in the social movements themselves.

The New Zealand government introduced and passed the nation's nuclear-free legislation in 1987. It has subsequently engaged in various forms of nuclear-free diplomacy, most notably recently with respect to North Korea.

As will be clear from this case study, because scientific knowledge continually transgresses its scientific boundaries to impact on society, it has been essential for transgressive processes to address what have became very complex, socially contextualised issues. There is I think much to be learned from this example, including and especially the need for learning to address current climate change and ecological issues.

The following is a personal narrative which will also introduce theoretical concepts I plan to draw on for my research and methodology.

I was involved with New Zealand's nuclear-free campaign in the 1980s and various moves to promote a more independent peace-broking role in 1989-91. I also became involved in a coalition which was concerned about Iraqi people during the 1990-91 Iraq war and the ensuing blockade and implementation of sanctions. The nuclear-free peacemaking campaign had promoted peace-broking roles for New Zealand. In sociological terms which I wish to develop in this thesis, the overall aim of the campaign was to develop a 'symbolic package' that would provide an 'imaginary' which both incorporated public concerns about peace and was pragmatic and could thus be effectively implemented as a practical policy frame.

New Zealand Nuclear-free movement

The nuclear-free movement of the 1980s had been very much a grass-roots self-educative people's movement, beginning with groups, cities and local governments all over New

Zealand independently learning about nuclear issues and deciding to declare their area nuclear-free. People throughout the country organised groups to apply pressure on local bodies to officially declare their local areas nuclear-free. My first action was in support of our Playcentre in Manutuke in Gisborne becoming nuclear-free. Later, the then Prime Minster, David Lange, acknowledged the decisive effect of public pressure behind his introduction of the nuclear-free legislation in 1987. He wrote:

> In the early1980s there were more than three hundred recognised peace groups. One of their goals was to have local authorities declare their territory to be a nuclear-free zone. In this, they were largely successful. By the time of the 1984 general election, ninety-four local bodies had declared themselves nuclear-free, and more than half of the country's population lived in self-proclaimed nuclear-free zones. Sceptics found it easy to sneer at the essential impracticality of the zones, but their educative effect was great. (Lange, 1990, p. 149)

Ironically, when I was working for the New Zealand Nuclear-free Peacemaking Association (NZNFPA), I discovered that the failure of local government to declare their area nuclear-free was greeted, not with despair, but as a new opportunity for more publicity and therefore more learning about the issues. Recognition of such socially shared learning and its mechanism is theorised by Eder and I see this kind of "collective" learning as important for facilitating the public input into transdisciplinary projects. According to Eder, this learning is based around public communication, which he further theorises in the context of a wider concept of the evolution of social learning (Eder, 1996). In essence, such theorization entails the recognition and expansion of society's collective "cognitive capacity". Delanty refers to such developments as involving "epistemic" changes in the cognitive capacity of a society (Delanty, 1999).

In New Zealand, the enacting of the nuclear-free legislation has not been the end of the story. New Zealand's nuclear-free stance immediately put it at odds with the United States and Australia, and resulted in New Zealand's suspension from ANZUS, (the Australia, New Zealand and United States military alliance). While there was some initial euphoria and sense of pride about New Zealand taking an independent position, there was also a feeling of insecurity, especially as this nuclear-free stance was often framed

negatively as being "isolationist;" isolationist because New Zealand no longer had a powerful military ally, and isolationist because New Zealand was portrayed, by users of this frame, as no longer contributing as an actor in the international arena. It needs to be appreciated here that New Zealand in its comparatively short history has had a strong record of going to war to fight alongside those it saw as its protectors, for instance, with Britain in wars against South African Boers, Germans (twice), the Austro-Hungarian and Turkish Empires, Italy, Japan , and almost against Egypt. After World War II, and alongside the United States, New Zealanders fought in wars against the North Koreans, Chinese, Malaysian and Vietnamese guerrillas and, more recently, the Taliban movement in Afghanistan.

Inclusive participation of knowledgeable actors

A major success of the nuclear-free movement was its inclusion of people with diverse knowledge, skills and expertise. When I started working for a major nuclear-free resource centre for this movement, the NZNFPA in 1991 in Christchurch, where it was based, I was a single parent with three children and living on a welfare benefit. I had no formal educational qualifications. In spite of this, and along with everyone else who wanted to contribute to the nuclear-free campaign, I was made welcome and supported to make the contribution I wanted to make.

The first thing I wanted to do was to write a letter to the editor of the daily Christchurch newspaper, *The Press*. I had been reading other people's letters and wanted to respond but did not feel confident. I asked for and received help to write a letter and was initially very pleased to see my letter in print. However, this was short-lived, for someone wrote a letter attacking me, basically saying I was an idealistic dreamer. I initially felt very mortified to be so publicly and negatively put down, and would have given up then and there, but importantly I was given further support, by way of ideas, concepts, arguments, and encouragement to reply to this letter.

Framing: micro to meso to master frame and symbolic packages

This right to express views and engage in public discourse is a fundamental right, stemming from the Enlightenment promise of human autonomy, which underpins our democracy. This democratic process in effect amounts to what Piet Strydom, drawing on Jurgen Habermas, refers to as a "discursive regulation of power" (Strydom, 2000, p. 178). Social movements such as the nuclear-free movement engaged in this process by collectively organizing themselves and creating new, politically-based identities and discursive public frames that were to become, ultimately, policy frames. These people became new "collective actors belonging to civil society" (Strydom, 2000, p. 178). More specifically, people in social movements reflected widespread public sensations of angst at the prospect of global nuclear destruction, and having their country drawn into this through membership of a nuclear alliance. Two new alternative frames, those of nuclear-free and peacemaking policies, were proposed.

Expressing oneself, such as writing a letter to the editor or phoning a talk-back show is one thing; doing it in ways which are socially or publicly sharable is another. In his essay "Ideology, Utopia, and Politics" Ricoeur quotes Clifford Geertz depicting as very basic the process of "mediating and integrating human action at its public level" – and – action which "transforms sentiment into significance and makes it socially available" (Geertz cited in Ricoeur, 1991, p. 316). Strydom refers this process as moving from micro, or individual levels, to meso levels, or public levels (Strydom, 2000). Another way of thinking about this process is to say that in public discourse that produces modern society, socially agreed upon "frames" of understanding emerge. So when I was writing my letter to the editor it was in the context of emerging, wider, frame packaging. However, collective learning which interacts with and shapes institutional change is another step again. Delanty writes that modernity (or, if you like, the promise of the Enlightenment) refers to "an encounter between the cultural model of society – the way in which society reflects and cognitively interprets itself – and the institutional order of social, economic and political structures" (Delanty, 1999, p. 11). Some kinds and degrees of institutional order are essential, but my argument is that left to operate without

reflexive engagement, institutions easily become blind, constraining, self-serving and often counterproductive. In this way, reflection, interpretation and related social change are also essential.

It was through working with NZNFPA that I first became explicitly interested in questions of autonomy. Specifically, this was to do with how a small democratic nation such as New Zealand could have the freedom to develop its own policies and not have these determined by powerful nations or groupings or simply by tradition. By implication this form of autonomy also extended into public engagement with foreign policy. This public input was explicitly encouraged in July 1999, when the National government Foreign Minister, Don McKinnon, acknowledging that "In a small society, the pool of expertise on any given subject is necessarily limited," sought what he defined as "informed" public input (cited in Thompson, 2001, p. 5). Peace movements in New Zealand as elsewhere in the world were often focused on "resistance" or "oppositional" framing, protesting against something, for instance, being "anti-nuclear" or even "anti-America." In contrast, I found that the NZNFPA's core philosophy related to specific proposals around New Zealand engaging in peace-broking projects and related infrastructures so that this country's nuclear-free credentials and small non-threatening status could productively be turned to good account for all concerned, including mutually productive, if also transformative, relationships with erstwhile military allies.

I Have a Dream (1963) Martin Luther King jr

A classic illustration of the transgressive possibilities in such framing (symbolic package and imaginary) can be seen in Martin Luther King's "I have a dream," speech (1963). In his chapter on framing processes and discursivity, David Snow (Snow, 2004, pp. 400-401) shows how Martin Luther King weaves together "frames" in the form of the hitherto unrelated strands of Gandhism (including non-violent protest), Christianity and the United States constitution into a powerful new "rights" frame which, in its new form came to be a generally recognised and accepted "master frame." Or, in terms of symbolic packaging, there was a fusion of diverse, hitherto heterogeneous elements. In reading the

speech now it is difficult for many of us to appreciate that this was then a dream, or in terms of this thesis, a new imaginary. The speech begins thus:

I have a dream today.

> I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."
> I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.
> I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.
> I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

Although I had not been aware of the terms "framing" or "symbolic packaging" or "framing strategies" whereby the social movement could influence policy to adopt a new "master frame" for its overall foreign policy (Eder, 1996, 1999; Strydom, 2000, 2002), I now appreciate that this was the process we were engaged in.

Looking back, I can note that when I came into the NZNFPA organization in Christchurch in 1990, I found myself in a position to help engage in this process of frame packaging because the NZNFPA, originally as the Nuclear-free Zone Committee, had engaged in a high profile nation-wide campaign using publicity and lobbying to make New Zealand nuclear-free in the 1980s. I also found when I joined it that the NZNFPA had a very sophisticated practical understanding of the way New Zealand had effectively become a "communication society," engaging via television and radio and newspapers in public discourse. The NZNFPA deployed newly available communications and information technologies, in effect to develop more effectively as a hub, or clearing house for the flow of information and communication between the public, experts and political parties.

For instance, the magazine, *Nuclear-Free*, started in the early 1980s on a typewriter and by the early 1990s, deploying computer software, was distributed to a wide national and international readership of supporters and of those the NZFPA wished to influence, for example members of parliament and media organizations. Its office had a large database

of information, papers, and articles. In return, donations of money, time and information were received. Computer technology enabled personalised letters and faxes to be written to members of parliament, media releases sent out to politicians and to the media, and databases of addresses were established to enable up to date information and contact.

I had no previous experience of computers or writing, yet within a short time, I was being deployed helping to write computer software, articles in the *Nuclear-free* and issuing press releases under my own name for NZNFPA. One of my early articles praised New Zealand's very successful support for peacemaking diplomacy between the people of Bougainville and the Papua New Guinea government (Ashton, 1992, p. 12). Another was what I described as "the menace of politicians who made important foreign policy decisions but did not have peacemaking skills" (Ashton, 1992) pointing out that the public expect surgeons to be trained for skills in the operating theatre where lives are at stake, yet politicians, with vastly more potentially lethal power to make decisions about war and peace that can result in people living or dying, are deemed to require no particular skills relevant to this. We were pointing out that billions of dollars were being spent to equip the New Zealand military for war, but there was no budget at the time for resolving conflict peacefully. At the time New Zealand was spending 1.2 billion dollars for two new frigates. I also wrote an article on the safety of nuclear propulsion, when the then National government established a commission with a view to allowing nuclear-propelled ships into New Zealand and so water down the nuclear-free legislation (Ashton, 1993) and as a result of this article, was asked to contribute to other peace publications and to media debates.

With respect to the New Zealand peace-making role over Bougainville, the NZNFPA had previously created publicity and lobbied very strongly for such a role in Bougainville and other conflicts, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Although the then Foreign Minister Don McKinnon had initially resisted the concept of mediation, advocating instead military alignments, he came to change his mind on Bougainville. The conflict was serious. Around 12,000 people had been killed in the conflict. A senior cabinet minister in the Labour government told a NZNFPA member that New Zealand was asked

by the Australians to join them militarily in operations to fight the people in Bougainville. New Zealand apparently replied "no," and "not to be so silly."

New Zealand did help broker a peace agreement. The then Foreign Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Michael Somare, praised New Zealand's decision saying,

> this dialogue is one we have long wished and waited for so that mutual trust, goodwill and confidence can be re-established between the people of North Solomons (Bougainville) and the rest of Papua New Guinea (*The Press*, 13 July, 1990).

Ironically, McKinnon, Secretary General of the Commonwealth (1999-2008), which requires high levels of communication and mediation skills, is quite justifiably given major credit for his peace efforts in Bougainville. New Zealand increasingly sees its international foreign policy in terms of peace-making, and policy can now be much more comfortably framed in this direction.

Regarding the issue of nuclear propulsion, the government commissioned the report which I and others critiqued. We were told a copy of this report was on all US nuclear-propelled ships. The report was written by people with scientific backgrounds and it was couched in terms of scientific certainty, and the main message was that we, the public, need not fear US naval nuclear reactors. Safety was mentioned repeatedly, as was the term "rigour."

Without any scientific background and using NZNFPA resources, I was easily able to document major problems with respect to the safety, of US naval personnel and their reliability as this impacted on safety for instance:

> the very big problem of drug abuse among American service men
> evidence for the leaking of radioactive coolant in ports.

There was also enormous evidence of much dangerous miscommunication, for example:

> a US warship threatening to shoot down an Australian airliner with more than 300 passengers aboard
> a US warship firing on a Turkish warship during war games killing the captain and 18 of its crew
> the US military losing a nuclear bomb in Spain …

The kind of argument made repeatedly by the NZNFPA people, as well as others, was that in the Cold War situation, a military accident and misreading of intentions could trigger a global nuclear exchange. In such a situation, New Zealand, if it remained a part of the nuclear war-making infrastructure, could well become itself a target. The ease with which countries like New Zealand could be caught up in a nuclear exchange, not of its own making, gave an added edge to the need for global peacemaking.

The major point I wish to emphasise here is the transgressivity of knowledge. Nuclear technology was no longer simply in the laboratory, or even self-contained on a ship, but in society, and judgements were needed about its presence in social or local settings. As Beck and Sznaider stress, science and technology are now global issues. They say with respect to nuclear energy and new systems of weaponry:

> There was a time when science was something which took place in a laboratory – a spatially and temporally limited form of the process of scientific investigation. This equation of science with laboratory experiment has been rendered obsolete, however, by nuclear energy and the new systems of weaponry. Suddenly, the whole earth has become a laboratory – the risks are now as it were mobile, fluid, flowing over and under national and other boundaries… Modern science tends more and more to treat the whole world as its laboratory, thus spreading risks across the globe. (Beck & Sznaider, 2006b, pp. 38-39)

Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons have noted how applications of knowledge have social implications and this is because science and society have both become transgressive. They contend that this "opens up the intriguing possibility not only that science can speak to society as it has done with such conspicuous success in the past two centuries but that society can answer back to science" (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 48).

After the Nuclear-Free Campaign: peace-broking and Iraq and Korea

My second illustration is to do with New Zealand's peace-broking role, in particular its position on Iraq. I became involved in a coalition which was concerned about Iraqi people during the 1990-91 Iraq war and ensuing blockade and implementation of sanctions. New Zealand was a member of the Security Council at the time and for a while chaired the UN sanctions committee. The nuclear-free peacemaking campaign had come to focus more on its peace-broking approach when the nuclear-free policy was accepted, and emphasised peace-broking roles for New Zealand. The overall aim was to develop what I would here call a symbolic package that would provide an imaginary which both incorporated public concerns about peace and was pragmatic, and would thus be more able to function as an effective, official, master policy frame.

As with the nuclear issue, Iraq was initially framed as a "security" issue which the mainly Western military alliance would address. However, as we now see, the flow on from the war in Iraq, especially as it becomes conflated into a wider "War on Terror" and Islamic and other fundamentalisms, impacts on almost every household in the world. Social theory attempts to understand and critique; for instance, it can study and advocate "human rights," but it cannot motivate people to be nicer to each other, and to refrain from intimidation and hostility.

However, it has to be said that peace movements have themselves struggled with this task, and I have to say that in my experience they also tend to have difficulty in practice in relating effectively to complex and changing situations, and in getting along with each other on the way.

For instance, as Castells documents, social movements often tend to focus around a single issue or media event in reactive protest, and often frame issues in terms of various forms of social and political critique (Castells, 2001, p. 141). However, they do not always show commensurate ability to mobilise around a constructive alternative imaginary with practical and effective steps to make this a reality.

Strydom points to the often unreflexive nature of social movements when he says:

> By singling out a social movement, for instance, and linking a normative standard to it, one not only identifies with the movement but also renders any critique of it impossible. What one effectively does in such a case is to engage in a partial or partisan mobilization in terms of an unreflexive epistemology of conviction. (Strydom, 2000, p. 90)

With respect to the military deployment first in Afghanistan, and then Iraq, the peace movement found it difficult to engage reflexively with the many issues raised. Angela McRobbie (2006), referring to Judith Butler (2004) makes a helpful observation in this regard. She points out that the important peace movement issues of "freedom" and "rights" for women in Afghanistan when it was under the rule of the Taliban has resulted in a too hasty general agreement by First World feminism to support of the United States invasion of Afghanistan. In seeking to frame the removal of the Taliban in terms of rights and freedoms for Afghani women, Butler argues that this had resulted in the unintended consequence of feminists being included in the wider militaristic framing of President Bush's "you are with us or against us," or "friend or foe of the USA," and of paving the way for the subsequent "shrinking of media space for dissent and debate" (McRobbie, 2006, p. 80).

The point McRobbie makes is not so much to do with the outcome of the decision to support the invasion, but with the speed and foreclosure of the decision to support the invasion, without sufficient open debate and reflection. There was a similar problem with respect to the second invasion of Iraq in 2003, with many in the peace movement having little sympathy with Saddam Hussein and much concern about "human rights" abuses under his administration.

Despite these factionalisms, in New Zealand there was still much concern about the invasions of Iraq. I joined a loose coalition of groups who came together with various concerns about the 89/90 United States invasion of Iraq. I was by this stage a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers) and was active in their peace work activities and

projects. My specific concern was the Iraqi people. I couldn't see how it was justifiable for innocent people to be bombed. I also feared the reaction, or payback, of killing people for no good reason. I did appreciate finding others who shared such concerns.

The Christchurch meetings of peace groups and concerned individuals were held at the Workers Education Association (WEA). There was at first a particularly large turnout of people, filling the room, all with concerns and ideas. Initially some stopped coming because of strong differences of opinion about how to approach the issue. Fortunately, someone with excellent facilitation skills was present who was able help ensure effective communication and pragmatic framing that all could agree on.

One outcome was the Gulf Peacemaking Petition which not only requested that no New Zealand forces be deployed for combat roles but also stressed the need for diplomatic liaison and humanitarian relief work. Also stressed was the fact that the New Zealand Nuclear-free Zone Act (1987) forbids New Zealand citizens to aid or abet "any person to … possess, or have control over any nuclear explosive device."

As with other NZNFPA work, I was involved with writing media releases and engaging with debate in the letters to editor column. I also joined with others to write to members of parliament. I am sure that it was in some part because of such efforts from all around the country that New Zealand did not engage in combat roles then and more latterly also with the post September 11 invasion of Iraq. Don McKinnon, Foreign Minster (90 – 99) stated as much in his reply to a question asking if he would send combatants to the Gulf war:

> No… New Zealand has been pushed a long way into the peace camp… we are not in a combat mindset at all. You would really have to turn New Zealand public opinion before you could make a combat commitment and have public support for it… and I venture to say that, whilst I might support a combat commitment, I would be very doubtful about taking New Zealand public opinion with us – at this stage…(cited in Ashton, 1996, p. 4)

New Zealand's popular nuclear-free policy and related public sensitivities about joining in combat roles with the United States military have now come to provide significant background to New Zealand policy framing.

Active citizenship model and what can be learned

While working for the nuclear-free organization, I didn't question our ability to make changes and to make a difference and that change could come from us, the public. Touraine refers to this ability for people in social movements to initiate changes to the socio-political culture as the "return of the subject" (Touraine, 1988).

In this social movement organisation and the public discursivity it had helped to create, I was supported to express myself verbally and practically in publicly shareable and influential ways. In Strydom's terms I was enabled to move from personal level, "micro framing" to join in a context where such micro frames were achieving some success through processes of discursive, public, meso-frame competition, from which they could become "master frames" for policy and public discussion (Strydom, 2000). Delanty cites Eyerman and Jamison (1991, p. 52) as describing a mediating role for social movements both in the transformation of everyday knowledge into professional knowledge and in providing new contexts for the reinterpretation of professional knowledge (Delanty, 1999, p. 67) and by implication, also potentially for policy. In this way the NZNFPA can be seen as taking on a mediating role between public and policy, helping to provide new framing for new ways of relating which came to be valued by the public and politicians alike.

I need first to say that while the NZNFPA obviously cannot claim all the credit for this largely accepted foreign policy direction, it has been the only organization which focused on publicity and lobbying through the 1980s and 1990s for New Zealand to make international mediation roles, and related infrastructures, the core of its foreign policy. It is fair to say that timing also played a role. In declaring itself nuclear-free, New Zealand was suspended from its traditional ANZUS alliance and this left a foreign policy gap that

politicians and bureaucrats alike needed to fill. This had been foreseen by some in the NZNFPA who saw peace-broking as a practical option that could be complementary to the nuclear-free policy. In the event also, the end of the Cold War opened up new opportunities for small countries such as New Zealand to send its military to participate in more international peace-keeping efforts, rather than military alliance exercises. It also opened up complexities – or if you like, environments conducive to transgressive policy development in terms of previous policy boundaries and roles. For instance, a New Zealand that wanted to maintain good relations and trade with all, did not wish to feel pushed to take sides in diplomatic disputes between the now much more economically powerful Asian countries, particularly China, and the United States.

So while New Zealand's independent nuclear-free credentials have for some time been considered a block to positive relations with the United States, even these are increasingly coming to be framed as an asset now that concern about nuclear escalation is on the world agenda, including by that of the United States, and more diplomatic 'communication' is being called for. For instance, the United States Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill referred to New Zealand's nuclear-free position as an asset when approaching New Zealand to assist with talks with North Korea (Eaton, 2006, p. A3). New Zealand's peacekeeping work in the Pacific, particularly in Bougainville and support of work in the Solomon Islands and East Timor problems, is now generally appreciated (Clark, 2007a). Interestingly, there is now an internal political consensus for New Zealand's nuclear-free stance and hardly anyone is thinking of framing New Zealand's unaligned foreign policy as isolationist any more. [6]

Eder, referring more specifically to environment movements, describes how, when public protest results in institutional and policy change, further new and diverse applications or

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[6] For reference to National Party leader John Key's unambiguous public endorsement of the nuclear free policy and independent foreign policy refer to: http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0804/S00230.htm
And TVNZ Agenda programme transcript, John Key questioned by interviewer Guyon Espiner, Monday, 14 April 2008, 10:57 am [Agenda screens Sunday morning on TVNZ] as accessed at http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0804/S00195.htm

symbolic packages become possible (Eder, 1996). In the case of a peace-brokering role, this resulted in institutional change and applications in diverse circumstances. For instance, the brokering role was initially taken up by neo-liberal trade and farming lobbies at the World Trade Organization, where, according to the then New Zealand Ambassador to the United States, John Woods, New Zealand's brokering was seen as having a positive influence on trade negotiations (Ashton, 1996, p. 5). The New Zealand military have also developed their own symbolic packaging as they have sought influence as an "honest broker" in Bougainville and more recently, East Timor peacekeeping operations. Other more recent initiatives include the hosting and support of the *Regional Interfaith Dialogue* and the *Alliance of Civilisations Symposium* (May 2007) (Clark, 2007b).

Of course people from various related departmental and institutional knowledge bases have engaged with this social movement-created knowledge, and most would agree that related New Zealand policy directions are all the more stable and robust after having first been worked through, contested and found broad acceptance in the public arena.

Making "it is people, it is people, it is people" a reality

In this thesis my aim is to seek recognition for the knowledge of people in their practical everyday life, and the productive relating of this to the knowledges of academia and policy makers. Gibbons describes this amalgam of various forms of knowledge as Mode 2 knowledge, in contrast to Mode 1 knowledge, which he says is pursued and validated primarily in academic and related research institutions that are essentially methodologically detached from every day society and its affairs (Gibbons, 1994). However, while in much practice, the relationship or partnership in Mode 2 knowledge to date has been between industry and the university, and some Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), I am interested in Mode 2 processes and projects that engage seriously with the perspectives of people in locality and then relating these also to academia and policy. My research project could be described as the co-creation of knowledge in the primary instance within locality, but thence also, very importantly in

communicative processes that move between actors involved in all three: locality, academia and policy. Two issues I address in this respect are: how to engage with everyday knowledge, or in Gibbons and Nowotny's terms, keeping people and their knowledge and aspirations at the heart of the research, and relating this to the academic and policy worlds. I see my experience of working on the nuclear-free related projects as suggesting particular spaces and processes which I take into the design of my research.

My first point is what I see as the need to have more spaces and processes that are commonly available where local people of all ages and backgrounds can interact in less determinate and less constrained ways than are widespread today, enabling some time to feel the way and explore. For instance, if the NZNFPA had simply advertised for someone to do computer work, writing, researching, and organizing, I would not have thought myself at all capable, even if training had been offered. If they had advertised for 'volunteers' then I would have been really put off. I did not want to volunteer my time for the sake of volunteering some time. I wanted to make a difference in the time that I did have and was drawn to the movement by the affinity I felt with the goals of the organisation and its projects; I was willing to assist, as needed. I see it as important that people can come to connect in projects that, for them, provide intrinsic satisfaction and are of intrinsic value. For this reason, the goals or purposes of such projects need to include structures or components that are in the first instance indeterminate and engaging rather than simply determinate and instrumental or moralistic.

I have since been involved in setting up other projects in the local community that valued intrinsic motivation and enabled and encouraged exploration and choice. While there is much made of difficulties in getting "volunteers" and "civic engagement," and involvement, particularly by young people, I have found people have much energy for things they care about and much to contribute if they are given the opportunity. This thesis project is in fact about the need to recognise, encourage and stimulate such forms of involvement.

As noted in a major research project on Active Citizenship which explored the nature of citizenship in six European countries:

> Active citizens usually learn their citizenship skills through trying to solve a problem or to fulfil a mission, rather than by setting out to "learn to be good citizens." Learning, and citizenship emerge as a consequence of this primary motivation. Learning therefore has to be embedded in those processes. (Holford, 2003)

In theoretical terms, Heidegger's basic category of *Sorge* (care) can be illuminating (Heidegger, 1962). "Care" as Heidegger uses it, can be self-chosen, "authentic" around the self's sense of its own possibilities, in contrast to the "inauthentic" care which looks to what "they" seem to expect. To point to where I plan to locate which form of care within the context of a local community, Lash shifts this antithetical contrast of I-authentic and They-inauthentic, to one of productive dialectical engagement with his participatory reflexive concept of "we" or community. This process entails an on-going participatory authentic interaction between a collation of "I" and their collective "we." The result is the creation of an authentic "we" in community that all are able to participate in and shape, rather than a consensus engineered by a few. In this community, people participate with their own reflexivity, but in a context that respects community with its structures and prerequisites for functioning to produce and reproduce common community ground. In this way community members can express, clarify and fulfil both their combined and their individual possibilities. This constitutes, as Lash describes it, a communal form of "we" out of which the individual can develop and grow (Lash, 1994, p. 164).

To see where my approach is similar to and differs from current public policy I refer to Prime Minster Helen Clark's 2007 "Speech to the Throne" (Clark, 2007a). Clark begins by saying:

> Two decades ago it was the threat of nuclear war destroying the world as we knew it which galvanised New Zealand to become nuclear-free and to work for a more peaceful world. Our nuclear-free policy and the values which inspired it have become central to our national identity and how we project ourselves to the world.

She then goes on to relate New Zealand's nuclear-free frame to the development of a new master frame, which is of a fully sustainable nation:

> I believe New Zealand can aim to be the first nation to be truly sustainable – across the four pillars of the economy, society, the environment, and nationhood. I believe we can aspire to be carbon neutral in our economy and way of life. I believe that in the years to come, the pride we take in our quest for sustainability and carbon neutrality will define our nation, just as our quest for a nuclear-free world has over the past twenty three years (Clark, 2007a, p. 2).

Clark then goes on to outline how her government proposes to address these sustainability issues. Most of the developments proposed are "top-down" and to be administered at a bureaucratic level. In this, the context is very different from the nuclear-free quest, which came from the grass-roots and was contextualised and tested out from the local level. Further, in a situation where the nuclear-armed superpower political confrontation left people everywhere feeling very threatened and insecure, projects like that of the NZNFPA project were able to help provide ordinary people with opportunities to express and address their ontological insecurity in what Beck describes, and people were experiencing, as the global risk society (Beck, 1992, 1994). Very importantly though, people were also able to give expression to their desires and hopes for peace, or in Ricoeur's terms, their more "utopic" possibilities (Ricoeur, 1986) in tangible, practical, innovative and creative ways. As far as I can see, the knowledge and policy framing of the current global warming situation has offered few opportunities for people to frame or express their fear, or together, to frame and work for some practical and innovative ways forward.

This I see as having major implications for a society which, if the ecological pioneer James Lovelock's statement, "we are on the edge of the greatest die-off humanity has ever seen …. We will be lucky if 20% of us survive what is coming. We should be scared stiff" (Leake, 2007) is even partially correct.

Lovelock is the scientist who, in the late 1960s, coined the term "Gaia" as a description of the interdependence of an ecologically threatened earth. It is this awareness of "interdependence" which is needed but is so often lost sight of. While there is now generally an acceptance of this interdependence and the need to work through complexities at a local level, currently, the local hardly exists in or of itself, and is scarcely acknowledged in relation to policy.

In drawing attention to Clark's top-down approach, I am in no way reproaching her leadership on this very important issue. Rather, I am suggested that this approach needs to be balanced by a more transdisciplinary approach which incorporates everyday knowledge, contextualised and tested out in the locality. As Michael Woolcock, theorist of social capital and economic development demonstrates, projects work best when there is a balance between the top-down and ground-up; neither works on its own (Woolcock, 1998). This balance is of course difficult to achieve especially when, as in my experience, the "ground up" or "grass-roots" or "community" has, as Castells says, often become an arm of government:

> NGOs? These are to my taste the most innovative, dynamic, and representative forms of aggregation of social interests. But I have a tendency to consider them "neo-governmental organizations," rather than non-government organizations, because in many instances they are directly or indirectly subsidised by governments, and ultimately represent a form of political decentralization rather than an alternative form of democracy. (Castells, 2001, p. 281)

There is therefore a need for new societal learning and engagement, or in terms of this thesis, learning about engaging people as knowledgeable actors in transdisciplinary projects. I find it useful to try and simplify and liken the skills and rules required for these new transdisciplinary projects as being like a new form of "game" or "play." When learning new games, most of us begin by feeling awkward at first, but then it feels increasingly natural as we become absorbed in the game itself.

The new transdisciplinarity game: Reflexive transdisciplinarity

The issue is how to define and refine the nature of the game? And what kind of contributions can the various parties make? Or, to bring in the words of Lash, "what can I [or each of us] hope for?" (Lash, 1999, p. 211)

In order to explore these questions I wish to illustrate it with an example from my first engagement in a social movement event, that of declaring our Playcentre nuclear-free. It was at Playcentre that I began to learn that it was not only the children who were "learning through play."

Learning through play and the New Zealand Playcentre

Like many women of my generation in New Zealand, when my children were little I was involved in Playcentre. Especially in rural areas in the North Island, participation included women and children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. It was the only place where parents (mainly women) could come together around a shared care for their pre-school children. In Manatuke, a very small rural town not far from Gisborne, this included everyone, from people who owned farms, vineyards and orchards, to those who were farm workers (I was the wife of a fencer at the time), and Maori, the indigenous people (who tended to live in and around the Manatuke township, with many having tribal connections to the area). We had in common the project of caring for children. Once a month we had business meetings, starting around 7.30pm – 8pm, after the children were in bed. We would rush through the business meetings and then we would talk into the late hours about more individual and shared personal concerns. From such talk came new projects: for instance we set up support systems for each other, organised social events, designed our own learning courses on issues to do with health, and even became involved in political issues, as has been discussed, officially declaring our Playcentre to be a "nuclear-free zone."

Of course, it could be argued, quite rightly, that although Maori were very much part of the Playcentre life, we were still operating within a white western dominant model of

needs and aspirations. I became very aware of this when our family then moved to a small place called Horohoro in Rotorua. In Horohoro, I had quite a different experience. We were the only non-Maori family in the area, and my children were the only non-Maori at the local school.   I had no idea what it would feel like to be a minority culture and in my own country. My husband, who was from Finland, was able to adjust easily. He was used to being a minority for he had previously lived in Australia, and there were many similarities between the Finnish and Maori languages and relationships to food (or "Kai" in Maori) and to the land. For instance, my husband was very comfortable fishing and hunting and gathering food, whereas I had been brought up vegetarian and had to make big adjustments. My children had no problems. It was just me who found it very difficult. In Horohoro the Maori had the power to name and frame. It was as if I was suddenly, to adopt Heidegger's term, "thrown" into a very different world, and was very "de-worlded" and needed to find ways to "en-world" again (Heidegger, 1962).

Fortunately, as in Gisborne, the Playcentre proved to be a way for me to make some steps towards bridging the worlds, or to introduce a term from Lash which I wish to develop in this thesis, the Playcentre became a shared "middle" or shared ground (Lash, 1999, pp. 219, 220) through which we could all find some "common ground" (Delanty, 2001b, 2006). When I arrived in Horohoro there was a Playcentre building, but there were no Playcentre sessions.[7] Although there wasn't exactly much encouragement to get the Playcentre going, when I took the initiative, a large number turned up for the first session. People were not trusting of me at first, but when I started to engage with the children, which fortunately, I was able to do with art, story, and song, the atmosphere changed, and although nothing was said, communication began to open up. It was never easy for me though; I didn't really fit in and knew I would never really belong. I was quite unhappy

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[7] I have discovered subsequently that the playcentre movement began in 1941 and there are strong links with Maori, including the establishment of some 200 Maori playcentres in the North Island 1960s, some of which stayed as Maori playcentres, and many of which became Kohanga Reo, effectively playcentres with an emphasis on Maori language, or language nests. There were strong links between playcentres and Kohanga Reo movements and the organisations were seen as cousins, sharing family and ideas between them (Stover, 2003:11).

and started smoking and drinking. I realise in retrospect how many Maori in New Zealand must feel "de-worlded" much of the time.

In terms then of transdisciplinary projects, or rules for the new game, in New Zealand Maori, Pacific and Asian people are often included in research; however, there is often not much thought given to this de-worlding experience or the new rules needed.

Relevant to this situation is Gadamer's theory of play and game (Gadamer, 1988). In Gadamer's game, certain kinds of rules and structure are needed to enable and to sustain such free play or interplay, but such rules or structures are warranted only insofar as they enable this play to take place. The interesting point about the Playcentre example was that its structure or rules enabled different kinds of games.

New transdisciplinary games

At Playcentre we were taught that children learned through play, and the main purpose of the training was to observe children play and observe the learning taking place. We would quite literally be asked to watch children at various ages and stages of development in individual and group play and write down what we observed and reflect on what children were learning.

This form of learning through play is gaining recognition. For instance, one of New Zealand's most eminent scientists, Professor Paul Callaghan, the Alan MacDiarmid Professor of Physical Sciences at Victoria University and Director of the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology, is often heard on national radio extolling the virtues of play for good science. He says he wants to re-introduce more free play in school. In a prestigious award to Paul Callaghan, the Minister of Research Science and Technology, Hon Steve Maharey stated:

> Paul had an ordinary New Zealand upbringing, and attributes his love of science and the
> natural world to the chance he had as a child to play outside, in the unrestrained way that

was the norm in the 1950s and 60s. We worry a lot about whether our education system can produce the top scientists we need - perhaps we should think more about inspiring our youngsters by allowing them to explore and fall in love with our unrivalled natural environment. (Maharey, 2005)

I would like to extend the point made by Callaghan and propose that much of what is effective learning for children can equally be applied to the adult world, specifically, the new transdisciplinary game. An observation from Playcentre which I wish to pick up on is the need for a safe place for ongoing learning which includes opportunities for three key elements: deconstruction and retrieval, creative imitation, and social relationships.

Deconstruction and retrieval

Children needed a safe environment whereby they could learn, including make mistakes, deconstruct (pulling things apart) and retrieve, (putting things together again).

I suggest adults require this environment also. There is a saying, "nothing fails like success" which is attributed to Boulding. He is quoted as saying:

> The moral of evolution is that nothing fails like success because successful adoption leads to the loss of adaptability ... This is why a purely technical evaluation can be disastrous. It trains people only in thinking of things that have been thought of and this will eventually lead to disaster.[8]

There is a need then for safe places where people can learn from failure as well as past success, or what some refer to as the need for ongoing reflexivity (Delanty, 1999; Lash, 1994).

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[8] I have not been able to source this quote, though there are many sources which do attribute this quote to Boulding. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_E._Boulding

Creative imitation

Much learning is imitative and succeeds best when people are freely able to creatively imitate, or improvise. This is the starting point also of Aristotle, who says that, through imitation we learn our earliest lessons (Aristotle, 1951, p. 15); that all people, "by their very nature feel the urge to know" (Aristotle, 1961, p. 51), and that "to learn gives the liveliest of pleasure" (Aristotle, 1951, p. 15). Aristotle also says in *Poetics* that imitation is aesthetically creative, in contrast to Plato for whom it was to be imitative of ideal forms (Aristotle, 1951, pp. 121-122, 126-127). Learning then is not pure imitation, because this is not possible. Learning has a creative aspect to it which comes from our capacity to interpret.

Learning is also largely social

At Playcentre we used to have the morning tea table situated so children could eat and observe others playing. When new children first attended the Playcentre they would often spend their first sessions mostly just eating their morning tea and observing the play. When they felt safe, they would gradually join in. Having friends and being included was important for one and all. I would argue that this is much the same in the adult world. Language of welcome and inclusion is often used but most people have their antennae out sensing whether and to what extent these words are authentic and testing this out.

At all levels of society - social, cultural, and economic - it is increasingly recognised that social relationships are crucial in effective knowledge creation (Granovetter, 1985). However, as Richard Florida notes with respect to place, most people live quasi-anonymous lives and –

> in virtually every aspect of life, weak ties have replaced the stronger bonds that once gave structure to society. Rather than live in one town for decades, most people now move about. (Florida, 2002, p. 7)

Yet, Florida does not suggest supporting pure individualism, quite the reverse. As Florida explains, there is a need to "build new forms of social cohesion" and to "pursue a

collective vision" that is enhancing of individual human creative potential (Florida, 2002, p. xii; Lash, 1994).

Florida sees it as important to create opportunities for harnessing the talents and thus benefiting from those with strong and weak ties in their local communities. Drawing on Jane Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961) Florida explains:

> As Jane Jacobs noted long ago, communities generate social stability by mixing more permanent residents with people who come and go. Those who stay for extended periods provide the continuity, while newcomers provide the diversity and interplay that generate the creative mix. In today's era - with more people moving more often - it is imperative for any community to attract talented people to begin with … But bringing people in is only the first step. Harnessing the talents of those who want to contribute to civic life, while they are there, is another. Although they may stay for only a few years, many have a lot to offer. If it takes several years for them to be accepted or connected, their potential may well be lost. Thus communities need to make it easier for people of all sorts to become involved. They essentially need to complement low barriers to entry with low barriers to effective participation. (Florida, 2002, p. 324)

From ethnocentric to cosmopolitan identity and citizenship

In this regard, an important aspect of Playcentre was the creation of a structured environment from which creativity, or free play – such as with water, blocks, imagination, could take place, and *all* could feel welcome. It was a structured environment, rather than structured time - an important distinction (Stover, 2003). Mason Durie, a Maori academic and policy advisor for Maori, notes a similar distinction with respect to Maori protocol on the marae, when he refers to the need for some orderliness, in order to "provide a matrix within which there is room for elaboration and creativity: and at the same time orderliness reduced opportunity for misinterpretation" (Mahuta, 1974 cited in Durie, 2003, p. 23).

Maori, Pacific and Asian people currently make up 30.7 percent of the population and it is expected that this proportion will continue to rise (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). It is also clear to many people that here, as elsewhere in the developed world, there is a focus of much hostility and tension on immigrants and, in the New Zealand case, there is also

much tension with respect to its indigenous Maori population. According to anthropologist Jan English-Lueck, a leader of San Jose State University's Silicon Valley Cultures Project, who carried out an ethnographic study in Christchurch New Zealand, "cultural and linguistic ties that bind New Zealand to white western nations such as Australia and the UK" contribute to this conflict and tension (English-Lueck, 2003, p. 8). In other words, we are from different traditions and different worlds.

There is much public criticism, explicit and implicit, about Maori, Pacific, and Asian but, to draw on the concerns of Herda, a theorist I draw on for my methodology, there is little recognition of the way in which "what and who are critiqued belong to different worlds" (Herda, 1999).

In the university and political worlds, stress is laid on the importance of the intellectual force of the arguments (Turner, 2006) and the objective rationality and logic of the "validity claims" (Habermas, 1988). In this form of communication, contact, including eye contact, is direct and critical forms of communication are privileged. Yet many Maori, Pacific and Asians eschew this more direct form of communication. In his article, *In Search of Meaning, Nuance and Metaphor in Social Policy*, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, currently Head of State of Samoa, and formerly New Zealand academic/policy advisor stresses the need for communication to be congruent with the different worlds and draw on the "strengths, understandings and meanings of their worlds" (Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003, p. 52). This can be problematic when our direct and critical forms of communication seem to be the only option.

Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi says with respect to Samoans:

> In social intercourse allusion is imperative. Frankness is crass because of its potential to offend. The availability of many meanings can help to save face. This is especially important in a culture where face is the essence of relations between the self and community, and family and community. (Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003, p. 52)

In a working paper to support the effective teaching of international students, Prasad *et al* also stress the predominance of more "indirect" forms of communication in Asian students (Prasad, Mannes, Ahmed, Kauri, & Griffiths, 2004).

Similarly, Durie stresses that "Maori generally shun directness, preferring a type of communication that alludes but does not necessarily focus on a detailed point" (Durie, 2003, p. 22). According to Durie, the logic of such communication is therefore not primarily to win arguments, or avoid the issue, but to win relationships, with its goal not even simply tolerance or recognition, but a mutual actual "enhancement of the other." Importantly, he says

> The balance lies between enjoying the benefits that can accrue from generosity without diminishing local advantage…Essentially the domains of authority and generosity are about the employment of authority in order to demonstrate benevolence (Durie, 2003)

Giddens describes how identity and tradition are related and claims that "threats to the integrity of traditions are very often, if by no means universally, experienced as threats to the integrity of the self" (Giddens, 1994, p. 80). He states,

> In general, traditions only persist in so far as they are made available to discursive justification and are prepared to enter into open dialogue not only with other traditions but with alternative models of doing things. (Giddens, 1994, p. 105)

Of course, cultures and traditions, including our own, are changing all the time. While the dominant discourse in New Zealand is expressed as the need for a New Zealand identity based on shared values and norms, the reality is that particular and fixed cultural values can no longer function as the main integrating force. With appropriate spaces and processes for discursivity and reflexivity, cultural values can become what Ann Swidler refers to as a "tool kit" (Swidler, 2001, pp. 104-106) for a pragmatic or useful adaptive and creative resource of beliefs, values, norms, symbols, arguments that can be called upon to address many and any situations. With its integrative function lost, culture has no alternative but to become what is communicatively or discursively constructed. The

effectiveness of this communication or of the "mediation" processes involved therefore becomes the main issue of concern.

For Delanty, the problem is that the current framing of culture (bi-culture and multiculture) based on "rights and responsibilities" needs to be expanded to encompass a wider notion of citizenship, based on "inclusion in the sphere of identity and belonging"(Delanty, 2001b, p. 8). The need is for projects to mediate, or find "common ground." Delanty says:

> [it] is an open process by which the social world is made intelligible; it should be seen as the expression of new ideas, opening spaces of discourse, identifying possibilities for translation and the construction of the social world (Delanty, 2006, p. 42).

Communication: social theorists, Maori and mutual agency enhancement

It is useful to note the process of communication and how this relates to major accounts of major theorists. The presence of New Zealand Maori (indigenous people) in the early efforts at reconciliation in Bougainville was important in assisting parties to feel comfortable with the mediation process and with one another. Effective communication or mediation efforts here were not initially based on contestation of validity claims as described by Habermas, or a need to justify tradition as described by Giddens, rather, communication was established and sustained through the bridging of hospitality and of mutual enhancement of the other, such as is described by Durie (Durie, 2003). In the Maori welcome, it is seen as important that the culture, history, tradition and place (mountains, rivers etc) of each is valued and time and space is given for the enhancement of each other in these wider contexts. People generally appreciate it when their culture and traditions are shown respect and are valued. Most feel very uncomfortable when they are called on to validate or justify their culture and tradition, and feel threatened when, as often happens with immigrants and non-mainstream indigenous people, they are expected to give up their culture and traditions in favour of integration into the mainstream.

New Zealand's agency as a peace-broker can also be seen to enhance the agency of others and a shared sense of belonging. For instance, Bougainvillians came to be in a position to act and interact in their relations with Papua New Guinea and beyond in ways which were enhancing of each other and of New Zealand and its reputation. Such enhancement of each other, also, at least potentially can enable and enhance agency at economic and other levels.

Projects of identity

At a personal level, I benefited in many ways from my involvement with the NZNFPA. For instance, about the same time (1991) the welfare benefits were cut and there were campaigns to be tough on beneficiaries, and public processes to work out how those of us on welfare could be made to be more "socially responsible." Christchurch sociologist Jane Higgins (Higgins, 1997) critiqued this process in similar terms to Ruth Lister and Nancy Fraser. All point to the "power of language and images to label and stigmatise marginalised social groups, with implications for how they are treated by officials, professionals, politicians and their fellow citizens" (Lister, 2004, p. 187). Nancy Fraser uses the terms:

> Non recognition (being rendered invisible via the authoritative representational, communicative, and interpretative practices of one's culture) [and] disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representations and/or in everyday life interactions). (Fraser, 1997, p. 187)

In this situation, I appreciated all the more the ways in which I was given respect and recognition for my contribution to NZNFPA issues, as have been numerous other people from all kinds of backgrounds.[9] In terms of Lash's starting point, I was situated as one of many human beings absorbed in the project.

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[9] Refer to http://www.nuclearfreenz.org.nz/larryprogress2.htm for reminiscences from others involved with NZNFPA

However, I increasingly experienced a discrepant situation whereby I was feeling publicly maligned for my "welfare beneficiary" identity while also being treated with increasing recognition and respect within the NZNFPA and beyond. This NZNFPA project identity recognition led to wider recognition, for instance, to my being asked to stand for local government, be involved in local ICT community development projects and encouraged to attend university. In Alberto Melucci's terms, such social movement activities "offered the possibility of [our]selves constructing [our] identities instead of remaining simply recipients of those assigned to [us] from the outside" (Melucci, 1996, p. 203).

Kevin Vanhoozer cites Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 69) in pointing to how projects can open up such possibilities. He says:

> In the same way that a project opens up possibilities in the world, it opens up new possibilities in myself and reveals me to myself as a possibility of acting. My power-to-be manifests itself in power-to-do. The 'possible' is thus an essential component in self understanding. (Vanhoozer, 1991, p. 48)

Castells usefully differentiates between what he calls legitimizing identity, introduced by the dominant institutions of society in civil society, resistance identity, produced by those actors who are excluded by the logic of domination, such as in communes, and project identity, produced by subjects in proactive movements aimed at transforming society as a whole (Castells, 1997, pp. 10-12), as for instance, in feminism and environmentalism. Specifically, project identity occurs

> when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure. (Castells, 1997, p. 8)

However, while I found opportunities opening up for further projects of a proactive nature, there were increasingly also constraints.

Social Movement Organizations and their constraints and freedoms

When I became involved with the NZNFPA it was amongst the more cutting edge and innovative of New Zealand social movement organizations. I found it to be very inclusive of diversity, non-hierarchical, and, as indicated, it had begun to adapt to the new opportunities with new technologies such as computer databases, fax and publishing software as these became available. However, as Boulding among many others have pointed out, "nothing fails like success" and the NZNFPA failed to sustain its ability to adapt as circumstances were rapidly changing.

For instance, when membership was high and people were quite literally 'beating a path to the NZNFPA door,' the combination of the Fordist, mass production publicity machine and the more flexible modes of production where I positioned myself co-existed reasonably well together. However, the world and even the local New Zealand political environment were moving on. The end of the Cold War in 1989 took the sense of urgency out of the nuclear threat globally and in New Zealand itself. With this, along with a political consensus in 1993 on the nuclear-free policy with Jim Bolger, the then National Party leader promising to retain the legislation, new priorities in policy framing, communication and of generating publicity and communication were needed.

A shift to prioritise the second part of the Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association's programme, the international peace-brokering policy frame, had been reflected in the change of the name of the organization from the "New Zealand Nuclear-Free Zone Committee" to the "New Zealand Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association," after the passing of the nuclear-free legislation in 1987. However, governments were also showing signs of moving forward with that frame. The Bougainville "Endeavour Accords" of 1989 in the latter days of the Labour government, and the strong if unanticipated backing by the succeeding National government for Bougainville peacemaking efforts culminated in the signing of a peace agreement at Lincoln University, Canterbury in 1998.

Nevertheless, in terms of the full development of a New Zealand brokering role there was still much that needed to be done to make this more than simply an ad hoc response to one crisis, as occurred with Bougainville. Those in the Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association who wanted to emphasise this shift also wanted to focus publicity and lobbying for an infrastructure of related international relations education and deployment of ICTs in the universities and possibly the schools, as well as professional training for foreign relations officials in mediation skills to underpin such a shift.

However, others in the association still wanted instead to prioritise the nuclear threat to the globe and vigilance against possible government moves to return to the ANZUS alliance. Strong and vocal opposition in the country to any New Zealand government support for the first Gulf War of 1990-91 also served briefly to reactivate more oppositional, protest styles of campaigning and framing.

The result was a split in the Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association and a departure of those of us who wanted to prioritise the new framing. Those left were unable to sustain the organization as an organization.

Also from the 1990s, the public interest and sense of urgency about the international situation and policy shifted more to a sense of internal threat, such as law and order and race relations, including 'special' Maori access to resources and issues around increased Pacific Island and Asian immigration.

Peace movements no longer have the connection with mass constituencies, and have now effectively become small organizations or committees, especially centring around some leaders from the earlier period, that utilise Internet technologies for a website, send information out on mailing lists and otherwise publicise their issues as the opportunity arises. As noted, international issues as seen from the perspective of New Zealand social movements do not gain the public and political attention that they once did.

From environmental framing to a discourse society

There can be some sociologically interesting developments when such social movements are more or less successful, or when, in the terminology of frame theorists like Eder or Strydom, their issue wins out as a contentious issue of social discourse – at the "meso-frames" level – to become a generally accepted "master frame;" when a social movement may find it has done much or all of its work. I see that as being largely the case with the nuclear-free zone movement in New Zealand. Agenda setting new brokering roles was subsequently left largely to the politicians and their officials, and circumstance.

Another major issue that has moved significantly from public contention towards master framing both in the wider world and New Zealand is that is of green politics. In Strydom and Eder's terms, this involves a shift from simple, social movement framing to diverse framing by various actors, and these actors will engage in public discourse and lobbying with their own distinctive "symbolic packaging" of green frames. This process contributes to what these theorists, along with Delanty, term a "discourse society" (Delanty, 1999; Eder, 1996; Strydom, 2000).

Strydom articulates the situation and some key problems in it, and is worth quoting at some length. He writes, "[d]uring the 1980s, environmental protest groups put the environment on the public agenda. In the meantime its opponents have also appropriated the issue," (Strydom, 2000, p. 165) which raises a question:

> What happens to environmentalism when it is exposed to public discourse? The answer is that an ecological discourse emerges which transforms environmentalism into a political ideology, thus competing with the ones inherited from the nineteenth century. It becomes a medium of political conflicts and public debate which changes the political culture of modern societies. (Strydom, 2000, p. 165)

Strydom suggests environmental movements then survive by

> transforming themselves into well organised public interest groups. Environmental groups become part of a system of ecological communication which makes

environmental problems a common currency in public debate. The public debate on environmentalism also changes the institutional infrastructure of modern society.

Strydom describes how

> competitors emerge in the market of producing and communicating 'green' images. Keeping a public image is bound to a discourse where interactive strategic moves of competing actors begin to define the discursive field. Environmentalism is emerging from and integrated into what I shall refer to as 'ecological communication.' This development transforms the environmental movement into 'cultural pressure groups' (Statham 1992) and forces industrial actors to present themselves as public interest groups. Public discourse is, therefore, a key to the understanding of the transformation of environmentalism into an ecological discourse that is open to the whole of society. (Strydom, 2000, p. 166)

Now study and analysis shifts from "the critique of ideology as a methodology to the methodology of discourse analysis" (Strydom, 2000, p. 166).

Such ecological discourse, like much other discourse, can be quite difficult to generate and take through to effective political decision-making. There are real problems for public input and control if such discourse is largely carried out between organizations that organise and do much research away from the public gaze. They occasionally make their appearances in the public media from time to time as issues arise, and decisions are often made at the end of frequently complex, drawn out political processes. Citizen groups can find their energies and resources sapped in endless consultation processes. Not surprisingly, many lose rather than enhance their ability to "have their dream" about the future they want for themselves and their families and friends, even for their own neighbourhood. How to have such dreams, and to make them practical and achievable, becomes problematic in the absence of some new, accessible and effective participatory mechanisms in the new discursive society.

Public discursivity and media

Although in some ways there are more opportunities for participation with the new forms of media (for instance, television – where citizens can send in video – talk-back radio,

web blogs, wikis and social networking sites), my argument is that the public as it stands, is one that is fragmented, too diffused and consequently makes the sustaining of a cohesive communication-based society very difficult.[10]

Craig Calhoun citing Habermas, says the puzzle is "how to reclaim the kind of communication that underpinned the notion of reasoned collective choice by informed citizenship…" (Calhoun, 2006, p. 16).

According to Castells, "We need to take on the challenge" (Castells, 2001), but who is this "we"? Castells says:

> In democracy, it used to be governments, acting on behalf of the public interest…. How can we trust with the lives of our children governments controlled by parties that usually operate in systemic corruption (illegal financing), entirely dependent on image politics, led by professional politicians only accountable at election time, managing insulated bureaucracies, technologically outdated, and generally out of touch with the real life of their citizens? And yet, what is the alternative? …
> Indeed, only if you and I, and all the others, are responsible for what we do, and feel responsible for what happens around us, can our society control and guide this unprecedented technological creativity … Until we rebuild, both from the bottom up and from the top down, our institutions of governance and democracy, we will not be able to stand up to the fundamental challenges we are facing. And if democratic, political institutions cannot do it, no one else will or can. So, either we enact political change (whatever that means, in its various forms) or you and I will have to take care of reconfiguring the networks of our world around the projects of our lives. (Castells, 2001, p. 282)

In this regard, Delanty says, "the challenge today is to see how this space [of public discourse] can be captured in order to enhance the project of human autonomy and democracy" (Delanty, 1999, p. 14). My argument is not to lose sight of "the public" or of "civil society" but that this public needs strengthening from below.

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[10] A detailed ethnographic study by the anthropologist Georgina Born shows that this fragmentation is something that the BBC in Britain, as a broadcaster with a brief to cater to the public, finds itself having to address (Born, 2004).

Following Habermas, James Bohman also stresses the salience of communication rather than governance, and rejects the idea of an 'international civil society' for a 'cosmopolitan public sphere.' Bohman argues:

> An emerging cosmopolitan public sphere renews and expands democracy in two ways: via the pluralist public spheres in each state, and through the informal networks of communication among the organizations and associations that constitute an international civil society'. (Bohman, 1997, p. 19)

However, in its practical dimension, this version of cosmopolitanism extends to a vision of a world community (Delanty, 2006; Szerszynski & Urry, 2006) and as such, tends easily to become detached from everyday life. In this way, the "cosmopolitan" can be seen to belong to a highly mobile, mainly Western elite (Delanty, 2000, p. 139) "seeing and experiencing the world from afar …" (Szerszynski & Urry, 2006). Similarly, Danilo Zolo is critical of what he sees as the particular Western take on 'cosmopolitanism:'

> [D]oes it go much beyond the optimistic expectation of affluent westerners to be able to feel and be universally recognised as citizens of the world – citizens of a welcoming, peaceful, ordered and democratic 'global village' – without for a moment in any way ceasing to be 'themselves' i.e. western citizens. The rhetoric of civil globalization and of a rising 'cosmopolitan citizenship' underestimates one of the most characteristic and most serious consequences of the way in which westernization is cultural homogenization without integration: namely the antagonism between the esteemed citizenships of the West and the countless masses belonging to regional and subcontinental areas without development and with a high rate of demographic growth. (Zolo, 1997, p. 137)

In the meantime, new forms of ethno-nationalism and fundamentalisms emerge from reactions against this cosmopolitan or globally-based order. Delanty argues that this results in a search for community which is, in his words:

> a reaction against the globalization in the first instance: that is, a reaction against the breakup of stable and social institutions and the continuity of the life-world. It is also a reaction against the progressive currents of the age, such as individualization and the crisis of the patriarchal family. (Delanty, 1999:167)

Is there a middle way – the cosmopolitan who thinks of the good of the world and the person who is situated in the world? Bruno Latour (2004) has also called for a form of cosmopolitanism

> that does not require us to leave our attachments at the door, one in which people are not asked to detach themselves from the particular – from their particular place, from their particular gods, from their particular cosmos – in order to attain cosmopolitan emancipation. [He adds] Perhaps we need to fashion such a form of 'cosmopolitics' if we are not all to be fated to become mere visitors in our own worlds. (Cited in Szerszynski & Urry, 2006, pp. 127-128)

So whereas my first set of narrative cases focused on a social movement which could be described as linking nation-state discourses and institutions directly to international activity and problem solving, my next narrative study focuses on processes for communicatively constructed, locally grounded cosmopolitan development. I see the latter as making a unique and arguably essential contribution to enable people in their localities to inform and expand wider public discursivity.

Social movements come and go, locality is always there

Delanty argues for "public-structured communication, which cannot be reduced to social movements" and drawing from Eder and Strydom states, "The public is not a social actor but a domain of discourse" (Delanty, 1999, pp. 67-68). The question then becomes, how can meaningful and effective inclusive participation become available to members of Habermas's communication, or Delanty's discourse society, especially in the era also of Castells' global network society?

The new social movements have made, and can still make, contributions from which there are crucial lessons to be learned. They have shown how citizens can make key contributions to the production of new public framing that enables significant issues to be understood and acted on. However, when the movements' specific issues are dealt with and the organizations fade, how can citizen participation be maintained?

The inevitable single issue focus of many such organizations also leaves other issues that they cannot themselves provide answers for, all the more so in the context of the wider discursive society mentioned above. The need also arises for the integration of issues, and this is something that cannot be readily accomplished on an ad hoc issue basis. Nor can this integration be left to the coordination of already over-stretched bureaucracies.

In this context, I wish to propose recognition and support for the potential of people in their localities to identify and develop projects that enable them to develop their ability both to frame and manage issues that otherwise overload other systems in society. Included here are decision-making processes that recognise locally grounded concepts and processes, including the mediation of these issues where outside agencies are of value or are needed. In the next chapter I introduce another narrative case-study, this time situated in locality.

Chapter 3: Reflexive Network Locality: as a new site for autonomy

> Globalised communications, cosmopolitan political projects and transnational mobilities have given new possibilities to community at precisely the same time that capitalism has undermined the traditional forms of belonging. But these new kinds of community - which in effect are reflexively organised social networks of individuated members - have not been able to substitute anything for place, other than the aspiration for belonging. Whether community can establish a connection with place, or remain as an imagined condition, will be an important topic for community research in the future. (Delanty, 2003a, p. 195)

> The most important task for us today is to nurture the release of the creative potential of our people. That can only be done at the local level, at the grassroots or flaxroots level where the people are. It cannot be done globally or nationally … (Himona, 2003, p. 7)

Locality in the global network society

In sociology, the concepts of 'networks' and 'mobilities' and 'flows' have to a large extent superseded that of 'local place' where we all live. Castells' thesis, that we now live in a global "network society" where social relations are being increasingly shaped by flows of information, which are becoming more intensively globalised as a result of the on-going impact of information technology, is generally well-accepted by social theorists. As Lash attests,

> The rise of the global information culture, of what Manuel Castells call The Network Society, for all the hype is increasingly much more a question of fact than value. It seems to be irreversible. It cannot be wished away no matter how great the longing for a much kinder age of mass trade unions, socialist parties, a formidable welfare state, full employment, comparative income and wealth equality, and the now seemingly gemutlich charms of print culture and the first media age. (Lash, 1999, p. 14)

However, while Lash is, I think, correct - the network society is a fact - it would be more precise to describe the period as one of transformation where elements of the old (for instance, there are still some trade unions and forms of welfare) and the new, now exist alongside each other. Recognizing and working with such ambiguities including, as

Castells describes it, a new social morphology is, I propose, a crucial new project for locality, research and policy.

In this chapter I introduce the concept of a "network locality" to relate to, or inter-relate within, Castells' network society. As in the previous chapter, I introduce this by way of reflective narrative and case study.

The case is of St Albans information communication and technology (ICT) and local media projects. These projects have been documented in more detail in my MA thesis which is accompanied by a CD of the St Albans website that was created, and has an appendix with articles from the community paper (Ashton, 2002). It is also described in other publications, including in an article for *City and Community* written with my supervisor David Thorns (Ashton, 2000, 2002, 2003; Ashton & Thorns, 2004, 2007). As with the nuclear-free movement example, I see the St Albans projects as pointing to the kind of communicative and discursive model which could be developed to meet needs and fulfil aspirations. However, as was the case with the nuclear-free organization, there was much that needed to be understood for these kinds of projects to be sustained and brought to reach their potential.

As I have already completed an MA thesis on the St Albans ICT projects (Ashton, 2002), my focus in this chapter is on a 'let's play it again' version of the project, one that, with the benefit of hindsight, can include some more refined concepts. For my MA thesis on St Albans I drew on Lash's theorization of the "reflexive community" (Lash, 1994, 1999) and the new possibilities of full participation in the information and communication structures. For the model I am developing in this thesis I continue with Lash; however, for my now expanded framework I also blend Strydom's frame theory (Strydom, 2000) with Ricoeur's narrative theory (Ricoeur, 1990) in the context of Castells' global network society (Castells, 2000b) and Delanty's discursive society (Delanty, 1999). Most importantly, I also seek to draw these into a methodological tripod wherein aspects of practical everyday knowledge, expert and professional and research

and theory can interrelate more effectively. As before in this thesis, I include a blend of autobiographic and biographic narrative and social theory.

From social movement to local community building

I arrived in Christchurch in the late 1980s with a husband and three children. I moved to the suburb of St Albans in 1989. I became involved in playcentre, the local primary school and in setting up after school programmes. For a short time I also had a pottery business. I worked from home in a workshop which was a converted garage in which I had my own wheel and kiln and made pottery which I sold in the markets. The pottery business worked well when my husband could assist, but it became too difficult when I became a single parent, on my own with three children. For a while I tried to work part time and sold pottery at the Plains Dollars and Barter Scheme (PLEBS) market (a form of green dollars system). It was there I met John Wardle. He had been one of the main people setting up PLEBs and was also involved in supporting and setting up community-based business schemes. He had been working with Arthritis New Zealand and on that basis, had his own computer, a photocopier, and was publishing the Arthritis society newsletter.

I soon found myself talking with John Wardle about 'local community' and 'local employment' and 'local business' and publishing a local community paper and later, as technologies were coming on stream, about developing locally based on-line projects.

At around the time we were in fact setting up the local community paper (1992) the nuclear-free team was also seeking John Wardle's expertise and publishing software to enhance its magazine, *Nuclear-free*. In this and many other ways, the social movement met and began to cross-fertilise with the local. At this time others were coming to John's place, ostensibly for the practical purpose of using the photocopier, but also to discuss local affairs. These discussions fed into the setting up of wider based community communication projects so that ultimately the whole locality could join in the conversation.

Most of us had in common: debilitating health problems, lack of wider family support structures, children, welfare and lower than average incomes, and social movement or activist backgrounds. It was a time of cuts to welfare and reasonably high unemployment, and many of us were also finding that we could not get the help we needed from governmental and commercial institutions and bureaucracies so we were motivated to set up local projects to meet these needs.

St Albans background

The population of St Albans in 1992 was 12,441 (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). It consisted of several shopping areas, primary schools, and parks, which tended to form micro areas within the suburb. St Albans had a lot of cheap, low quality rental accommodation due to a proposal in 1966 to put in a six-lane expressway and associated feeder roads through the middle of the suburb. Many residents were forced to leave their homes, and those who did stay could not make any plans, as they did not know when or if they would be forced to leave. The outcome was the large number of cheap rental properties that attracted poor students. The motorway designation was lifted in 1993.

St Albans people were left very divided by the lifting of the designation. There were still those who were for and those who were against the motorway. There was also a growing socio-economic and cultural divide, with many who were from the poorer part of the suburb (such as the large student and refugee populations) living to one side of the proposed motorway, whereas many in a higher socio-economic status lived on the other. The socio-economic and cultural divide also became a geographic one. Problems were exacerbated when both local and central government officials wished to formally divide St Albans into areas to fit in with their own administrative plans (Douglass, McLauchlan, & McRobie, 1999). Peter Taylor draws attention to the propensity of outside nations and organizations and administrators generally to draw new maps and plans of areas, often with little idea of the areas of local communities and already existing cultures, languages and affiliations (Taylor, 1999). Obtaining and sustaining inclusive participation in St

Albans at a time of such pressure was a major challenge. As Florida suggests, this requires organisational effort:

> … people bemoan trends like suburban sprawl and mindless urban renewal. But these are the products of well-organised groups - developers, contractors, building trade unions and politicians - eager to enrich themselves or to erect tangible monuments to their efforts. Countering such well-ensconced interests with their institutional power bases takes a lot more than firing off an angry letter to the editor or signing a petition. (Florida, 2002, p. 317)

We saw the need to set up effective communication between local people of diverse backgrounds and outside institutions and networks, or as John Wardle put it:

> We need to help create a community that will work together to identify its problems and find ways to improve itself, a community that recognises cultural diversity and individual difference as a wealth, not a problem, where open, honest communication is seen as a natural part of all growth, problem solving and healing (Wardle cited in Ashton, 2002).

Some of us were seeing the potential of new ICTs to support this development. Delanty, as quoted in the beginning of this chapter, also points to the possibilities of new communications and media technologies and cosmopolitan based projects for local communities, saying:

> Globalised communications, cosmopolitan political projects and transnational mobilities have given new possibilities to community at precisely the same time that capitalism has undermined the traditional forms of belonging. (Delanty, 2003a, p. 195)

And then he poses the question I address in this chapter:

> But these new kinds of community - which in effect are reflexively organised social networks of individuated members - have not been able to substitute anything for place, other than the aspiration for belonging. Whether community can establish a connection with place, or remain as an imagined condition, will be an important topic for community research in the future. (Delanty, 2003a, p. 195)

St Albans ICT & creative arts projects (1992-2002)

In 1992 St Albans people began experimenting with communications technologies to assist with communication and information sharing. Beginning with a locally, desktop published, free community paper, supported by local business, it has been going monthly to 5,000 St Albans households. This community paper has enabled local people to communicate with each other and develop a sense of living in a shared locality. Its only purpose was as a tool for *communication* for better community. Anyone could write or, if they could not, then they would be assisted to write, and the philosophy at least in its first phase was that if it related to community, it went in. Of course if it was contentious others would be given the right of reply.

Very importantly this has included, in effect, methods of retrieving 'local ground,' enabling established inhabitants and new people to express, share and blend their various pasts in a present, newly shared locality. Aspects of this retrieval included: retrieving a sense of a place that was determined by the people who lived there, not by outside organizations such as the city council and government; evolving a local civic culture, where residents had access to and were able to participate in decisions that would impact on the suburb before, not after, the decisions were made; and developing inclusive local practices, such as greeting one another. As one resident put it:

> You know – refugees who've lived in a camp – they expect to be able to talk to people. That's one of the things that the refugees say, you know they can live in their house and no one ever says hello to them. Of course, that's not what they've been used to. So it's very good to have gregarious people … who will greet them. And once you get used to greeting people then you do it, don't you. It becomes a habit. (Ashton, 2002, p. 78)

The paper proved to be a prime generator of local social capital (Putnam, 1995) and creative capital (Florida, 2002). Local groups created after publication began included: a choir, art, history, park, resident, youth, ethnic, and business, and successful community activities included annual community gala days, establishing a resident-run park, and saving a community hall from demolition. Through the community paper many local residents have offered and received personal help of many kinds from one another. For

example, a doorstep was covered with chisels following a magazine request for chisels
for young people to use at a carving school in the local park.

Locally grounded cosmopolitan communication projects

Communications technology projects in St Albans extended to encompass an electronic
bulletin board and then a community website. John Wardle pointed to the enormous
potential of this technology when he said:

> People can participate in the free flow of information. Communication can take the place
> of isolation and distrust. When people understand the feelings and needs of others, it can
> enhance their ability to enjoy the diversity and richness of all peoples whoever they are,
> whatever their culture, religion ethnic origin, gender and age. Modern communication
> can enable all people to understand and empathise with their fellow creatures. (Wardle
> cited in Ashton, 2002, p. 104)

John Gallagher, who had a background with the Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association,
had from the 1980s proposed regular, modem-based international communication to
enable people to build up relationships and understanding in sister city frameworks, and
in conversations with John Wardle the
two were soon discussing how to use
modems to communicate more
intensively within the locality. John
Wardle quickly picked up on this as a
tool for community development.

The face-to-face meets through the virtual.

St Albans Neighbourhood News, February 1996 pg. 1

He said,

> Everyone got really excited about
> the real benefit of talking over
> thousands of miles, but that isn't
> the real benefit. The real benefit
> is talking over the yard by people
> who are isolated in their own
> homes. (Wardle cited in Ashton,
> 2002, p. 93)

The philosophy of using ICTs as tools for open communication to enhance community connectedness was extended in 1995, with the introduction of an on-line community bulletin board. Again the community paper that reached everyone was pivotal. It was through reading about ICT projects in the paper that people with skills came to be involved.

The co-ordinator of the project described his initial interest as being in "how small countries like New Zealand could utilise ICTs to develop relative autonomy in the global information age."

He remarked:

> If you had a whole lot of people in St Albans helping each other get into the technology and into the information age then it would be easier to get a sense of the world… People could [go on to] do it better internationally because they did it better locally. (cited in Ashton, 2002, p. 95)

Local people, including newly arrived highly skilled migrants, volunteered many hours working on recycled computers. These were then passed on to people who could not afford them. Home and phone support was provided until people were confident about using the bulletin board. Through these forms of engagement, new migrants who helped out with much technical support also built new relationships with fellow project members and with residents which enabled them all the more easily to tap into local knowledge and support when and as they in turn needed it. For instance, a resident from Kazakhstan had primary school children who asked for homework help on the bulletin board and received a number of offers. The project co-coordinator noted:

> St Albans people were able to benefit from having functioning computers and he could help us to set the computers up, he could help us maintain the computers - both of these things were very important and he could do them - he could have time on his hands because the rest of the community hadn't appreciated him as much as we did. (cited in Ashton, 2002, p. 96)

Reflective community transgressivity: the St Albans website

An advertisement in the community paper to develop the website sought people with interests in such things as writing, art, photography, marketing, business, history and technology, and people from various cultural backgrounds were encouraged to participate. Around twenty people from very diverse backgrounds - ethnic, artistic, techno-phobic and technophile, employed and unemployed, professional and welfare beneficiaries - responded. A very professional looking website was designed that strongly featured community aesthetics. For instance, the theme "golden suburb" with a "kowhai" logo was on every page.

An example of how the website assisted with the recognition of diversities and the retrieval of local ground was when it carried reports of the progress and unveiling of a sculpture carved by a local artist for a local community park. News on the carving was updated every day and talked about, for instance in the local shopping centre. The opening event included people of diverse ages and backgrounds making diverse aesthetic contributions. For instance, Maori youth led with a karakia, Irish music was played and a local Chinese poet gifted a poem.

The community, economy, and new knowledge all featured in this web project. For example, immigrants from places like Brazil and China drew on their backgrounds for potential export ideas and helpful connections. In this discursive environment, a Chinese participant described problems being experienced by international students and foretold how this would create bad publicity. She had also presented community-based ideas for preventing such problems. Her account was placed on the website at the time and viewed by her Chinese relatives, amongst others.

A local twelve-year-old boy suggested innovative website features to support local business because, as John Wardle had proposed, in this community it was thought to be economically and ecologically appropriate to support local businesses. People with business backgrounds assisted with marketing. On an interactive discussion board, people

sought and received various forms of help, and engaged in lively discussions on many topics. People reported on local events and contributed stories, songs, poems and pictures. Outsiders, including former residents and interested potential new residents from other parts of New Zealand and the world beyond, also engaged on the discussion board. All helped in effect to retrieve and to enrich a sense of community that was welcoming and inclusive.

There was no sense that one was not supposed to blend literary, culture, and economics into new 'symbolic packages,' or new local narrative framing.

Political recognition

The project got underway with a formal launch in the community resource centre hall. Speakers included the Mayor, a representative from the Deputy Prime Minster, a Green Party Member of Parliament, and a 12-year-old local web team member. Messages sent by highly-placed government ministers demonstrated positive support and some understanding of ICT-supported community development. The message read from the then deputy Prime Minister Hon Jim Anderton described benefits for both community and local business development:

> My congratulations to the St Albans Community Web Site Team for taking the initiative to set up such an innovative project for use by the local St Albans community. It is encouraging for me to see community groups developing skills for the new technology age and actively working to improve community and business networks which will be of tremendous benefit to the local community. (Anderton cited in Ashton, 2002, p. refer to CD of website)

Hon Steve Maharey, the then Minister of Social Development, sent a message directly to the web discussion board that strongly affirmed community development and both the local and global possibilities of the new ICTs:

> … Strong and inclusive communities are at the heart of our vision for New Zealand. It is great to see a New Zealand community leading the way in using the power of the global village to increase community pride and participation at home. I applaud the people of St

> Albans for not only building networks across the street, but across the world ….
> (Maharey cited in Ashton, 2002, p. CD of website)

Ongoing, participatory retrieval of moving ground

St Albans community leaders who had set up the ICT projects had always recognised the necessity for processes that helped to ensure that full participation could be active and ongoing. To develop and sustain interest, the community website was constantly updated with stories and interviews of interest to local people. However, these were not written by outside media representatives, but by local people who presented their locality as local people to other locals. Local people could and did then directly respond with their own accounts on the linked discussion board. The site was soon receiving around 2,000 hits per month. On the linked interactive discussion board all sorts of discussions took place.

One example of a report that stimulated discussion was about a visit of a local MP to meet with St Albans youth who were upset about new laws pertaining to driver licensing and their troubled relationship with the police. Most had not met a politician before. Subsequent comments included:

> He got a big tick for understanding that putting lots of authority on young people would not work - that it is more provocative … I'm glad that he seemed to understand what we said about the cops because otherwise we would have lost interest in talking to him. (St Albans youth refer to CD in Ashton, 2002)

The youth had their contributions written up into a submission and the legislation they were concerned about was subsequently changed in ways that take some account of the issues raised.

Significantly, numerous 'many-to-many' conversations could now take place on a new scale that would not otherwise have been physically or technically possible. In a later web story that also involved youth and the police, someone who signed themselves "policeman" put forth a police officer's point of view, describing vividly and in a way that would not be published elsewhere, how grim police work could get. The purpose of

continually combining web stories and reports with the discussion board was to bring the conversations from the community to the board and back again. This began to reflect the possibilities for comprehensive participation that are seen by Lash as crucial to the retrieval of community. Significantly with these new ICTs, numerous community conversations could be instigated and added to by anyone with access to a computer at any time of the day or night. Also significant was the fact that local information, including electronic versions of the community paper, could be accessed and any detail of these, along with all other information about the locality accessible through the website, could be retrieved with the use of the search engine. Such ICTs made possible a new scale of local information sharing and networking.

By comparison, even the community paper by itself had inherent limitations, consisting as it did of articles that were selected by one or two people to fit eight pages once a month. However, because many people still prefer to read their local paper, there were powerful and important synergies between the web projects and the community paper. The web projects were able to start off so well because of publicity about them in the paper that went to all households. At this stage, the 'many-to-many' possibilities of ICTs for diffuse community networking from 'anybody-to-anybody,' from 'anywhere-to-anywhere' in the community were, albeit briefly, able to be seen.

Retrieval of mobilities

In an age of "global mobilities" (Urry, 2000) and of "speed" (Virilio, 2000), a crucial variable for effective community development is the extent to which local ground can be retrieved (Lash, 1999). The use of shared stories, memories, and history, methods of retrieving ground, was at the heart of the St Albans community paper and website. An important point is while much of the content of the community paper and the website bulletin board was very important to the local people concerned, it was not material likely to be picked up and given effective or sustained treatment by larger media outlets. Further, if such items were reported, they would feature under headlines for a day or two

and soon, as is the way with yesterday's news, disappear. For the people and localities, the problems themselves do not disappear.

In St Albans, the community paper, online bulletin board and then the community website provided an ongoing structure based only on communication. In theory, anyone was able to participate; if they were not able to write or did not feel comfortable in writing then others were available to do this with or for them. There were ongoing projects to encourage and support such participation. The local community owned the communication (community paper and website), and as such the processes were driven by the needs of those involved. When we first asked advice about starting a community paper we were strongly advised to have a 'needs' analysis done to see if people needed or wanted a community paper. Local news was not considered 'newsworthy.'

In an editorial comment in 2005, Paul Thompson, editor of *The Press*, Christchurch's daily paper, stated,

> I killed off the regional page last year because I felt it had become of limited appeal. The stories … were often too local and lacked relevance for our wide and diverse readership. While a small story … might hit buttons for a small group… that yarn would be a yawn for the wider readership. (*The Press*, 2 September, 2005: A9)

Since then, the regional section has returned and it is increasingly recognised that local newspapers are understood to be very popular. Barry Clarke, the editor of the Christchurch's other major newspaper, *The Star* says:

> Community news is big business overseas, and the trend will hit here. Local news is what people want. In the US it has gone a step further where Citizen Journalism is the catchphrase. (Clarke, 2007)

Clarke then goes on to describe how local people contribute to the news:

> Small community newspapers and websites are using the man and the woman in the street to send in photos of events, fires, etc, and reports. It's as basic as you get, but technology – digital cameras, cellphone cameras and email now makes it quick and

> simple for any one to send in material for publication. In a way it is the printed version of reality TV, and like it or not reality TV is a ratings winner.

However, and this is the important point, the editors also construct the material, or to adopt Ricoeur's terminology, they configure the narrative plots, and decide how to interpret and tell stories: and the way the stories are told has more to do with selling newspapers and advertising (Lash, 2002, p. 146) than expressing the needs of local people and their place.

Local place – constructing our own narrative frames

In the global network society, or as Delanty and Lash also refer to it, the "second," reflexive modernity, the issue is whether participation in the new information and communication structures is to be confined mainly to global commercial and security interests and those who serve them, or whether this can be balanced by expanded, inclusive participation. As pointed out in the previous chapter, an important dimension of this struggle is the power to name and frame, or in the context of locality, the ability to construct its own narratives.

In New Zealand, Maori and Pacific stress the importance of narrative in the creation and maintenance of culture and the importance of accessing and telling their own stories (Himona, 2003, 2005; Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003). In an article in a New Zealand social policy journal, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi describes the place of story:

> A rough translation of "fagogo" is a fairy tale told by the elderly to the young by which the young are soothed to sleep at night. On the face of it, it seems simple. But it is not, because its value to the Samoan culture is deep. Because it is the process of weaning, or nurturing, or sharing stories, values, rituals, beliefs, practices and language. It helped to sustain and could still sustain a nation. (Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003, p. 59)

In his paper to a knowledge society conference in Tokyo (March, 2003) Ross Himona, a Maori ICT entrepreneur, practitioner and commentator also stresses the need and value of stories:

> The people want to see themselves in this new media, as they do in any other media. They want to read, or preferably listen to, stories about themselves. The people of my village, whether they live at home or like me, live out in the diaspora, want access to the stories of our village and our tribe. Those who live away from home want access to our whakapapa or remembered stories and genealogy, for that is the basis of Maori culture. They want news about Maori people everywhere... They want access to their own culture, and they want the medium to reflect themselves. (Himona, 2003)

Himona sees that new technologies enhance the ways Maori can both access and tell their own stories. It is tempting to see this wish for one's own stories as implying narrow and inward looking community; however, Himona notes that Maori, even those on low income, also want access to the global culture with its many stories, saying:

> The adoption of the Music CD, VCR and digital TV technologies by poor people in my country puts the lie to the concept of a digital divide in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Poor people adopted those quite expensive technologies regardless of their economic circumstances, and they adopted and paid for access to those technologies in order to gain access to entertainment … (Himona, 2003)

Sedimentation and innovation

The point Himona goes on to make, and the one I wish to make in this chapter, are new creative possibilities in drawing from tradition or, in Ricoeurean terms, tapping into what has been sedimented into tradition for retrieval, in an ongoing process that continually further enriches the "sedimentation" for yet more productive retrieval and innovation.

So to draw the idea of tradition and new technologies together I shall quote from a pamphlet by a Maori drama group, Taki Rua Productions. This describes their show, "The Untold Tales of Maui" about *Maui*, a major Maori mythological hero. A myth or story, as Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi points out, was important not only as entertainment but also because it embodied the beliefs of the people. For instance the story of Maui incorporates fundamental ideas about life and light, the origin of fire, of death, and of the land. The story, brought up to date in the Taki Rua production, goes:

> Young Tama is a troubled teen. His Nanny a simple but wise woman, is given the task of imparting to her wayward grandson, the sacred knowledge and lessons of her forefathers through the tales of Maui, our most revered ancestor.
>
> At first, young Tama has no interest in these ancient myths, but through his Nanny's incredible storytelling abilities, coupled with state of the art multi-media devices such as massive back-projections, puppetry and computer animated characters, the young fool is soon drawn in to the mysterious and fantastical world of Maui and his famous exploits. (Taki Rua Productions, 2004)

Importantly, in New Zealand Maori are increasingly gaining the public power to tell their own stories, to frame their own narratives, such as through Maori TV and Internet sites (Himona, 2005). However, while many people, Maori and non-Maori, see the need to retain at least some aspects of 'traditional' culture, it tends to be more difficult for people to see the value in the more purposeful creation of local narratives which draw from diverse traditions, as in the examples from the St Albans case.

As Himona indicates, it is no longer possible to reach people with stories at night or around the camp fire and expect this alone will influence the way people live in their localities. Himona and the Taki Rua production team understand the competition from the global media networks and that while people do want access to local stories, they must be told in ways which reach people; this means that account must be taken of 'aesthetics,' or people's tastes, for instance, what they like.

There is much critique of deployment of aesthetics, for instance in the television and celebrity culture (Bauman, 2000, 2004; Bourdieu, 1998), and in the growing cultural public sphere, where issues are publicly contested in aesthetic, emotional or affective terms (McGuigan, 2004). However, while much social theory and policy ignores or dismisses any positive potential in these new but now inevitable ways of communicating, Lash stresses the need to understand and appreciate of the role of aesthetics, especially in the generation of shared meanings of taste communities (Lash, 1994, 1999). Lash sees, following Nietzsche, the potential of the suppleness of the aesthetic to reach people, including its potential to open up critique. However, he does not see it as something that can, as aesthetic, simply be subordinated to manipulation (Lash, 1994, p. 136). In other

words, the temptation can be to contextualise aesthetics as manipulative, for instance in using a cute dog, to try and sell product or promote a particular view. However, as aesthetic, it can evince certain powers of independence. For instance, I can like the dog as the dog and still not necessarily like the advertising company. That is not to say that people cannot be manipulated with aesthetics, but my point is that people will be better able to counter such manipulative uses of aesthetics if they also learn to identify and generate their own aesthetic.

Lash has been criticised by Strydom for this attention to aesthetics, as he sees it, almost to the exclusion of the cognitive (Strydom, 1999). Whatever the force of his argument, Strydom himself incorporates the aesthetic into his own "socio-cognitive" framing. He describes the framing devices which actors draw on to construct frames as empirical, moral and aesthetic (Strydom, 2000, p. 63), or, echoing Kant's division of knowledge, empirical objectivity, moral responsibility and aesthetic judgment (ibid). Strydom here subsumes the three, objectifying moral and aesthetic under a more broad encompassing definition of "cognitive." Lash, on the other hand, was seeking to have the aesthetic acknowledged in his conversation with Giddens and Beck who had neglected it for overly narrowly dominant cognitive approaches (Lash, 1994).

So for Strydom, actors draw on framing devices to strive for and develop a definition of a problem, and in doing so define themselves in new ways in relation to society - as actors, and in relation to one another. However, and this is the point I wish to note, when this involves narratives in public communicative forms such as movies, television or much of the Internet, aesthetic framing is found to be essential to engage and hold audiences. Even the 'news' is presented with regard to aesthetics, including framing that is intended to reach and hold audiences and news readers being chosen for their personality and popularity with the audience.

For those in academia who have concerns about people being attracted on the basis of aesthetics, my argument is not to go along with this kind of 'dumbing down' but rather to

support methodological development which acknowledges and works with aesthetics, but not at the expense of intellectual rigour.

Shared aesthetic meaning & community

Lash refers to the communal being-in-the-world of cultural communities which are drawn together by aesthetics. These

> …cultural communities, the cultural 'we,' are collectivities of shared background practices, shared meanings, and shared routine activities involved in the achievement of meaning. (Lash, 1994, p. 147)

Significantly, they are drawn and held together, not simply by utilitarian and cognitive factors, but also by aesthetics. For Lash, drawing on Kant's third Critique, *The Critique of Judgment*, the aesthetic object is one that could not be treated in a purely predetermined or manipulative way, or as a means to a subject's ends. As aesthetic, it possesses its own intrinsic meaning; it is something that the subject does not simply act upon, but interacts with. This aesthetic object, as aesthetic, cannot be reduced simply to a means to a predetermined end, but is an end or finality in its own right (Lash, 1994, 1999).

Notably, the subject's interaction with the aesthetic object in effect mediates a change in the subject. So the aesthetic object functions as what Lash termed a "middle" (Lash, 1999) namely it mediates, in some way or degree, a change in the subject that the subject had not fully anticipated or intended. It thus helps to bring the subject to find something outside of itself into which it is drawn, and thereby to help 'ground' it (Lash, 1999, pp. 5, 9-10,14).

My point, following Lash, is that community, along with other middles such as its parks and the community paper and website, are not to be simply created and manipulated as a means to an end, but are to be retained and respected as settings or objects with their own intrinsic value; a middle through which the subject encounters other subjects, or objects,

as middles or grounds (Lash, 1999, pp. 5, 9-10,14). In this middle, subjects may come to engage in all sorts of agreed, determinate activities, including, for instance, buying and selling, as long as the point is not reached where community simply comes to be reduced to a means to everyone's individual, fixed purposes. At that point, community has been destroyed as community.

While Lash primarily refers to cultural communities that may or may not be locally based, I have come to consider it essential to bring the concept of cultural community, communicatively constructed, into the locality. This is the only way I can envisage for people to find or define processes and places whereby they can - working locally together - access the means and motivation they need to interact constructively with each other and the world beyond.

Local politics: the effective leader?

As previously noted, as a result of my social movement profile I was approached to stand as an elected representative for local government as a community board member in 1992. Initially I said no. I thought it would involve attending boring meetings about things like drainage and roads and the payment for meetings would not be sufficient to provide for the family. My "no" was ignored, my name went forward, the political machine did its thing and I was elected without having to do any campaigning or door-knocking. The community board and city council meetings turned out to be far from boring.

Initially I was happy to diligently read the bulky order paper and official reports distributed three to four days before meetings, and, at the official meetings, deliberate with fellow community board and city councillors about the issues placed before us. I accepted this process as the best way, especially given that local people had elected us to represent them when making these decisions. It was not until later that I realised it was all but impossible to deliver on promises. For instance our team was elected on the promise of an effective and creative resolution of transport issues to the north of the city.

We promised full consultation, but failed miserably. Instead the Council put forward three roading options for residents to choose between.

We were also unwittingly making some very bad decisions, which I came to see would impact on huge areas. For instance I was elected at the time of consultation on the multi-volume City Plan. Despite my best attempts to read and understand the plan and implications, I unknowing agreed to many decisions, the most serious of which was for changes in zoning which meant that much of Christchurch's very fertile food producing area was sold off for housing development, including gated communities. We did try to work constructively towards more effective development options. However, we found it was near impossible to successfully go against official recommendations and wider agendas.

I became disillusioned and looked to leaving politics as soon as I was able. Although part of me still loves politics and I have been asked several times since to stand again for election, I could not stand knowing that it is so difficult for politicians to be effective.

The above said, the deployment of ICTs did point to possibilities for more effective participatory local decision-making. For instance, the community paper was an excellent way for local politicians to let residents know what local government was planning in their area, in an easily readable form, so people could have the relevant information and, if they wished, respond. For example, when there were plans to demolish the local hall, it was written up in the local paper and people mobilised and managed to save the hall. It is significant that at no time was the proposal to demolish the hall picked up by other media sources.

However, more important than being the disseminator of information, the community paper became, for a short time, a tool for a more active, and pro-active involvement in local affairs. I think this pro-active factor is worth stressing, for so often the public is positioned at the receiving end of decisions and, if unhappy, with no option but to resist or protest. In my experience, it is very rare for a community to be in a position to

organise to ensure that its own concerns and issues are raised in the local government's order papers. Between 1993 and 1996, every order paper had at least five items that came from people in the locality. As someone who was both a participant in and an observer of the political system, I noted that people were more likely to be successful if they were able to put items on the agenda, whereas responding to agenda items put there by officials, such as by resisting and protesting, rarely proved successful.

Also essential to success was that individuals who presented on issues they were concerned about were seen as being connected to wider networks of people and media. This approach of course directly ties in with Strydom's description of the movement from personal level, "micro framing" to join in a context where such micro frames were socially shared through processes of discursive, public, meso-frame competition, from which they could become "master frames" for policy and public discussion (Strydom, 2000). In this way, and for a short time, this local "community network" was, in effect, upstaging the older, more conservative "old boys' network."

This connecting process involves collective learning processes in localities, similar to those of the social movement I have just described, with an emphasis on what Delanty refers to as active cultural and technological citizenship (Delanty, 2000). In other words:

> The power to name, create meaning, construct personal biographies and narratives by gaining control over the flow of information, goods and cultural processes … (Delanty, 2001b, p. 1)

St Albans community ICT updated

Despite its success, including commendation from high levels, it was difficult to gain understanding and support for the potential of newly emerging communications technologies for inclusive and creative forms of local development. It is now commonplace for major media outlets to combine the newspaper and radio with interactive on-line communication. However, in the early 90s this inclusive form of interaction was a new and innovative development.

It was even more difficult to gain interest in the idea that local people from diverse socio-cultural, ethnic, economic and generational backgrounds could network together around local community development, and that they could do this without formal training or credentials, supervision or control.

From Community network to managed centre

Initially, St Albans projects were set up and maintained from people's homes, drawing in and engaging people's more intrinsic forms of interest, and energy. For instance, people were drawn to involvement in the website because they were interested in aspects such as design, photography, or writing, and wanted to pursue these interests. These intrinsic interests easily led to an interest in local politics which manifested itself, not in attendance at a residents' group meeting, or voting, but in collaboration in development projects, such as in the local park. However, this form of engagement changed when local community activities, including the ICT and community paper, came to be coordinated through a manager and a committee at a centre. Computers were used for teaching and their use at the centre and for Internet, but not for any substantial community networking as was previously being developed. In terms of the social morphologies (or the changing shape or patterns of relationship) that Castells writes about, the community ICT development morphology moved from that of an electronic network being diffused throughout the community, and driven by enthusiasts, to one that was organization and computer-centred rather than community-networked (Castells, 2000a). Development became dependent on what could be done by people working in and from a building. With the consequent loss of broad community focus and energy, the possibilities ICTs offered for participatory, one-to-many and many-to-many networking out in the community were largely lost to view.

What the St Albans case points to is how when local suburbs turn to older, centralised and organizational morphologies, it is very difficult for their inhabitants to come together and have a sense of each other and what each can contribute.

Peggy Kelly, a very active community person who is behind many initiatives, especially around the Packe Street Park, reflects much of this current malaise in her letter to *The Press* editor (12 April, 07):

> Ahead lies a bleak winter of oppression, muddle and discontent – oppression from a tragically flawed City Plan; muddle in the council; discontent within a disaffected people.

She goes on to say, of the south-east area of St Albans,

> This part of Christchurch, blighted by the 30 years designation on Madras Street and so near to the city centre was ripe for thoughtful redevelopment. Its people, like eager children wholeheartedly gave of themselves to the council's consultation process – and for what?
> A decade later we watch aghast as trees are felled, rash of chicken-coops [a description of the buildings] emerge and car-configured asphalt spreads around us… The voice of the people falls on stony ground indeed.

Peggy's letter is one of many at the time published in *The Press* which reflects a general feeling about not being listened to. (Refer to *The Press*, 15 August, 07 for many other such examples).

The problem is not so much as Putnam suggests, that people "have less faith that they can actually make a difference," (Putnam, 2007, pp. 150-151); rather, it appears from my observation that many put faith in hoping an all-knowing wise leader will emerge who will know what to do.

Network locality to interact with the global network society

My argument is that such faith is misplaced. Rather, as Fischer suggests, "The world has become too complex for individuals [no matter how wise] to have enough knowledge to tackle complex problems by themselves" (Fischer, 2005a, p. 18). There is a need for more effective and inclusive forms of democratic engagement and this local engagement needs to be contextualised in wider, ultimately global interdependencies, particularly global networks. The problem with St Albans was that it has reverted to trying to work

with morphologies such as the old style face-to-face networks and hierarchical organization that had passed their effective 'use-by' date.

Castells describes an historic conflict between face-to-face networks and hierarchical organizations or institutions. He points out that historically networks have had an advantage and a disadvantage in relation to organizations:

> Networks had traditionally a major advantage and a major problem, in contrast to other configurations of social morphology, such as centralised hierarchies. On the one hand, they are the most flexible, and adaptable forms of organization, able to evolve with their environment and with the evolution of the nodes that compose the network. (Castells, 2000b, p. 14)

However, in practice they were usually outperformed by hierarchically organised institutions:

> On the other hand, they have considerable difficulty in co-ordinating functions, in focusing resources on specific goals, in managing the complexity of a given task beyond a certain size of the network. Thus, while they were the natural forms of social expression, they were generally outperformed as tools of instrumentality. For most of human history, and unlike biological evolution, networks were outperformed by organizations able to master resources around centrally defined goals, achieved through the implementation of tasks in rationalised, vertical chains of command and control. (Castells, 2000b, p. 14)

Now, with the convergence of new technologies, a new form of network is able to incorporate the advantages of both traditional networks and hierarchical organizations. Their advantage has been their flexible adaptability. In recent decades, with new ICTs, in the context of globalisation, a powerful new network morphology has taken shape that is able to absorb and control both organizations and networks:

> For the first time, the introduction of new information communication technologies allows networks to keep their flexibility and adaptability, thus asserting their evolutionary nature. At the same time, these technologies allow for co-ordination and management of complexity, in an interactive system which features feedback effects, and communication patterns from anywhere to everywhere within the networks. It follows an unprecedented combination of flexibility and task implementation, of co-ordinated

> decision making, and decentralised execution, which provide a superior social morphology for all human action. (Castells, 2000b, p. 14)

Castells' point is that with the ICTs, a new social morphology emerges: that of an ICT-mediated information network that can blend the traditional responsiveness of networks with the ability of centrally coordinated organizations to store, retrieve, and marshal institutional knowledge and resources and act in more focused and effective ways over space and time.

Castells sees these information networks as programmed by social actors who have managed to win a social struggle to "assign goals to the network." Once "the network is programmed, it imposes its logic to all its members (actors)" (Castells, 2000b:15). The major point noted in the accounts of new ICTs by theorists such as Lash and Castells is that these technologies can bring new possibilities to multinational and other large organizations networked in the "global space of flows." Castells sees two alternatives to the network as it currently operates:

> Actors will have to challenge the network from the outside and in fact destroy it by building an alternative network around alternative values. Or else, [by] building a defensive, non-network structure (a commune) which does not allow connections outside its own set of values. (Castells, 2000b, p. 15)

In other words, the current network can be "destroyed" by being replaced by an alternative one, or a "commune" may be able to exist in isolation from it.

A third alternative, based on utilizing ICTs to build up new patterns of interaction within the local and increasingly then between the local and the global, is not clearly canvassed. This is where I see a third option in Castells' terms as something of a "network locality" or "localised network community" (Ashton & Thorns, 2007).

In the St Albans projects, I argue, it is important to explore how people in local communities can deploy ICTs in locally intensive and diffused ways to coordinate and participate more comprehensively and effectively in and from their localities. Most

significantly, this approach can open up new channels and possibilities not just for reaction and resistance, but also for mutually desirable, constructive engagement between local people and outside actors or networks at wider metropolitan, national, and international levels.

Policy implications - new rules needed

While in theory and in policy local place, or 'community,' is left playing only minor roles, as Delanty (2003) says, the 'idea' of community does not go away, nor has it yet been replaced. In fact, as the globalizing pressures and general insecurity increases, so, seemingly, do calls for community and along with this, traditional forms of "belonging" which, as Delanty says, "capitalism has undermined" (Delanty, 2003a, p. 195). So, although local community as an actor hardly exists and, I suggest, is more likely to be undermined than to receive serious support, it continues to be called on by academics, government politicians and officials and NGO practitioners to address problems and provide solutions where they themselves cannot.

This very loose use of the term 'community' is not new. Back in 1933, Louis Wirth referred to the way the term community "has been used with an abandon reminiscent of poetic license" (Wirth, 1964, p. 61). More recently, Freie in his book titled *Counterfeit Community*, (Freie, 1998) describes the use of the term "community" to exploit people's longing for "traditional community" or, as described by Tonnies, the *Gemeinschaft* where people knew each other and establish shared meanings and practices. Tonnies contrasted this with the "*Gesellschaft*," which is the more abstract society, where people lead individual lives (Tonnies, 1955).

As Gibbons and Nowotny suggest, "knowledge is transgressive" and unable to be contained (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001, p. 68). This of course includes knowledge pertaining to local community. There are also those who appreciate the transgressivity of knowledge and as with theorists such as Callon and Latour, wish to understand how these new "hybrids" or "assemblages" are constituted and reworked (Callon, 1988; Latour,

1993). In policy terms, this can be seen as the need for "joined-up" or "whole of government" or "cross-sectoral" approaches which are seen as the most effective and efficient ways to respond to multiple, interrelated, "wicked," or difficult problems (Walker, 2004, p. 2). This idea is not new for it is generally thought that bringing different and often controversial points of view together to create a shared understanding among these stakeholders can lead to new insights, new ideas (Fischer, 2005a, 2005b).

However, on most days the media reports more problems which are often blamed on "poor interagency communication" and "increased pressure with stretched resources" and "heavy workloads" (Walker, 2004, p. 3). In St Albans as elsewhere, the recommendation is that agencies cooperate, but, as Megan Evans, who was at the time both the community constable and city councillor, commented about one such meeting:

> The people that turned up were from government agencies, city council, church groups, and youth workers, Papanui service centre, playgroup, preschools, intermediate schools, community groups, cultural groups and many others…. I must admit that with a large number of people you do get an overwhelming number of different opinions, which makes me wonder whether we are working for the better of the community or just to raise our own group's profile? (Evans, 2001)

In this connection, Walker, who has studied such processes in the New Zealand context, refers to a complex policy world crowded with so many players (Walker, 2004, p. 7). She quotes one such player, the State Services Commission, who identified signs of "coordination-meeting fatigue" [11] (Walker, 2004, p. 4).

While not an explicit agenda, the attempts to understand can also be motivated by those who wish to understand in order to better control or determine, especially when, as Beck contends, the more policy acts to understand and therefore get on top of problems, the more they also seem to create them. This is the theory of "unintended consequences"

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[11] State Services Commission (2001) *Report of the Advisory Group on the Review of the Centre*, State Services Commission, Wellington.

(Beck, 1992). For Lash this can also be seen as a consequence of the information age where increased speed of information flows, as in the global networks, results in an "incredible irrationality of information overloads, misinformation, disinformation and out-of-control information" (Lash, 2002, p. 2).

Jonathan Bach and David Stark point to other problems which, although referring particularly to NGOs, arguably apply also to inter-sectorial government organisations:

> As NGOs spread their accountability unevenly among constituents, board members, donors and the public they find themselves faced with a proliferation of performance criteria that catches them between the value systems of business (efficiency, solvency) and social mission (adherence to principles, ideological agenda…). In the best case they may exploit these contradictions, but the danger is real that actors who are accountable according to many principles become accountable to none. (Bach & Stark, 2004, p. 106)

The question is often raised, who is accountable and how can there be some accountability? While this question helpfully points to the problem of accountability, it can easily lead to anger and frustration and direct attention towards punitive solutions, rather than the needed problem-solving based on personal and shared needs and aspirations.

New framing, new dreams, new imaginaries

As Herda points out, a person has to have an idea of what they want, otherwise they cannot go beyond current conditions or situations (Herda, 1999). However, while a vision of what is desired is crucial, as Ricoeur (1986) points out, the desirable without reference to the way things are is fantasy which has its place in the imagination and in literature, but can become dangerous, even schizophrenic, if it is acted on without connecting with the way things are. On the other hand, simply to accept the ideological without connection to the utopic is to become locked into the way things are, without any concept or hope of anything different. So rather than seeing either the utopic or the ideological as pathological, Ricoeur considers that there are productive and unproductive versions of both, and the need is for an on-going engagement, or dialectic between the two. For

Ricoeur, a major literary form in which these contrasting or "heterogeneous elements" can be seen alongside one another and their possible relationships worked out in various situations, or perhaps a whole society, is the narrative, either historical or fictional.

One particular setting for narrative is a locality, and my methodology seeks to bring filmed, fictional narrative to bear on the utopic and the ideological, and their relationship to one another, in this kind of setting. Drawing again on Ricoeur, further possibilities of inclusive and creative narrative framing are explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Network Locality Development Narrative

> Know that many personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues - and in terms of the problems of history making. Know that the human meaning of public issues must be revealed by relating them to personal troubles - and to the problems of the individual life. (Mills, 1977, p. 226)
>
> A compelling story connects personal experience to public narratives, allowing society to "speak itself" through each individual. (Berger, 2005, p. 10)

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the creation of a network locality development narrative, which I go on to develop as a pilot for locally grounded cosmopolitan development processes and as a research methodology. Narratives about people and place are being generated all the time. The questions I raise are who does the narrating, who has the power to name and frame, why does this matter and if so, how can this be changed?

Coming from a sociological perspective, well-known sociologist C Wright Mills stressed "a sociological imagination" that emphasised social engagement and intervention, which firmly placed personal troubles in terms of wider public issues, and related these public issues back to problems or troubles (Mills, 1977, p. 226). In other words, his stress was on the need to link individual narratives with wider public narrative framing. Drawing on Ricoeur and Heidegger, I see the need to include "possibilities" as well as troubles (Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur, 1986).

In a very similar way, Delanty describes processes for the development of cultural and cosmopolitan citizenship as taking "place in communicative situations arising out of quite ordinary life experiences," and reflected "in the way in which individual life stories are connected with wider cultural discourses" (Delanty, 2001b).

Delanty makes two major points which I wish to further develop: first, the role of narrative in helping to construct or frame courses of action:

> One of the most important dimensions of citizenship concerns the language, cultural models, narratives, discourses that people use to make sense of their society, interpret their place in it, and construct courses of action. (Delanty, 2001b)

Second, unlike Mills' more individual-society approach, Delanty stresses that the approach he is advocating involves "collective learning" which ultimately becomes realised in social institutions (Delanty, 2001b).

This more active and constructivist narrative framing relates also to the earlier discussion of Strydom and Eder's description of public discourse producing socially agreed frames of understanding that move from micro, or individual levels, to meso levels, or public discursive levels and becoming an accepted master frame, assisted by the fact that such frames can be variously adapted or symbolically packaged (Eder, 1999; Strydom, 2000).

Underpinning these wider possibilities of narrative creation are new possibilities that arise with increasingly accessible technologies. I stress here Lash's approach which is for inclusive participation based on intersubjectively shared perception and understanding, or what he calls "radical hermeneutics," and narratives which relate, or help create shared ground (Lash, 1994, p. 165). As depicted in the earlier discussion, this process of "retrieval" is needed in the context of Castells' global ICT mediated network society (Castells, 1996), and increased mobilities of people, finance and objects (Urry, 2000) in the "age of speed" (Virilio, 2000), which can make finding 'ground' in the continually shifting terrain very difficult.

Delanty points to the need for new spaces of mediation, translation, or common ground or language, where collective experiences can be articulated including for the formation of new common or shared projects (Delanty, 2001b, 2003a, 2006).

So, to summarise, I draw from the following approaches:

Mills' sociological imagination, based on taking seriously individuals and their problems, and supporting means by which they can be effectively related to wider public issues

Delanty's social theory based on attempts to understand cultural, cosmopolitan citizenship, based on participation in collective learning processes and on the need for mediation processes to achieve common ground and common language

Strydom's and Eder's frame-based social theory, based on attempts to understand social movement success by framing packaging and contestation

Lash's approach which is a mixture of sociology, cultural studies and media studies, and his stress on the need to ground processes to ensure they relate to people and their needs in context of Castells' global network society, Urry's mobilities and Virilio's age of speed.

Ricoeur's fictional narrative or literary theory is then introduced to interrelate these elements more effectively in a practical and creative context (Ricoeur, 1991).

Specifically, these processes are brought together via a one-act play which has been adapted as a film for my research methodology. In this chapter I give an account of the background to this film and the context within which it was made. The main purpose is to seek to demonstrate how the literary genre can enable more freedoms and open up more possibilities for inclusivity in the creation of narratives.

While some sociologists may be tempted to recoil at the introduction of a literary dimension, Ronald Berger reminds us of sociology's roots:

> Sociology emerged as a field of scholarly inquiry out of a need to understand the social changes that accompanied the industrialization of society in the nineteenth century. It was born in an intellectual space between positivist science and literary representation, alternatively striving for analytical understanding and practical application, on the one hand, and the conveyance of meaning and empathy, on the other. [12] (Berger, 2005, p. 1)

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[12] Berger refers to Gubrium and Holstein 1997; Lepenies 1988; and Richardson 1998 as the source of this history.

A copy of *The Silent Connectors* film script can be found in Appendix 1 and on the village-connections website.[13] A DVD of *The Silent Connectors* film, as seen by the participants in the research, is enclosed in the appendix section as is a promotional trailer of the film. As in previous chapters, I weave personal experience and narrative in with the wider theoretical approach I am seeking to develop.

Narrative framing of a New Zealand "knowledge society"

When I first embarked on my doctoral research in 2002, my focus was on possibilities of people in local communities contributing to the creation of an innovative knowledge society policy. The basic problematic I had been addressing was that while there has been a political consensus about the need for the New Zealand economy to move from one based primarily on producing bulk primary products (i.e. diary, wool, meat and wood) to one based on the generation and application of knowledge, including knowledge about adding value to these products, there has been very little public discursivity about knowledge, its construction and applications, especially and including the context of wider global interdependencies.

The (still current at the time of writing) Labour-led coalition government did endeavour to publicise the need for such discursivity at the Knowledge Wave Conference (1-3 August 2001), and through the promotion of its Innovation Strategy (12 February 2002) around which much subsequent social and economic policy has been based. The Knowledge Wave Leadership Forum (February 2003) appeared to be the last concerted attempt to encourage public discursivity, for it was here that "community" as an actor was specifically invited to contribute.

The knowledge society project was a joint government-university one. In announcing it, Prime Minister Helen Clark described the new direction for New Zealand:

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[13] www.village-connections.com

> It is a chance to look with fresh eyes at the kind of society we want to create in a world where knowledge is replacing the old sources of wealth and power as the driving force in the world's most successful societies. (Reported by McLaughlin, 2001 in the Dominion newspaper)

With Dr John Hood, then the Vice-Chancellor of Auckland University, Prime Minster

Clark emphasised the participatory nature of the project, saying

> It seeks proposals to meet the social as much as the economic challenges posed by the knowledge wave. That is why we are determined to make this process as consensual and inclusive as possible. (Hood & Clark, 2001)

Global success needs local connecting

Specifically, I had been looking to frame my research in terms of new possibilities for the

co-creation of knowledge based on synergies between the discursive local knowledge

projects and national and international needs, such as was touched on in the previous

chapter.

There are many examples I could draw on by way of an illustration of such potential, but

I will reiterate just one example. Back in 2001, Qiyun, a St Albans resident from China

became involved in the St Albans web project and on the web discussion-board noted

disappointment by Chinese families in the education here (Refer to CD of website in

Ashton, 2002). Qiyun said, "I think probably because they haven't the result they want –

they expected … even if we go to school 2 years in China, it is better than 5 years in New

Zealand." She added

> The English language was the advantage we offered here, however, if you do not get much practice speaking English, then there's not a lot you can learn. Having a good homestay could make a big difference. Sometimes the school is okay, but the homestay is no good … often Chinese will not say anything if they are unhappy. They just tolerate it, but then don't come back.

Qiyun offered to develop a programme for homestay families in Christchurch to help

create more understanding and connection between cultures. She canvassed these issues

via the web board well before Chinese student numbers dropped drastically, from 53,340 fee-paying Chinese students making $1 billion a year down to 34,870 in June 2006 (Welham, 2007). Given that New Zealand has an enormous overseas debt, and that international students are among the top ten foreign exchange earners, and help pay for general education in New Zealand (Jiang, 2005, p. 228) this drop has been noticed and felt, and had obvious impact, particularly among education providers.

Chinese students in New Zealand came subsequently to be linked to kidnapping and other violent crimes, drug trafficking, and there have been serious questions raised about the quality of pastoral care for Chinese students while living in New Zealand (Welham, 2007).

While it needs to be noted that other factors such as New Zealand's exchange rate was a factor in the decline of student numbers, the point is that New Zealand was well placed to develop itself as an attractive place for international students.

I had been aware that New Zealand had benefited long term from earlier connections with students from Asia when New Zealand assisted Asian students though schemes such as the "Colombo Plan." This was when a more prosperous New Zealand of the 1950s and 1960s was in a position to help to develop its then poor Asian neighbours. However, as Prime Minister Helen Clark pointed this situation has shifted,

> China and India are not sleeping giants; they are emerging as mega economies … [and] Increasingly the Western world is competing with China and India not for low wage, low skill jobs, but for work based on high technology and skill. (Clark, 2005)

There has also been a constant stream of manufacturing jobs moving to China, resulting in many disaffected New Zealanders. Clark goes on to argue:

> So we have work to do, to define our place and our role in this challenging environment…We will succeed by mobilising the skills, ideas, talent, and passion of New Zealanders as a people. - And that means all New Zealanders - we cannot afford to leave any individual or community behind (Clark, 2005).

There are still students from Asia in New Zealand, but as is well-known at a local level, if not well researched and documented, many problems such as those raised by Qiyun remain. In the meantime, instead of learning from people such as Qiyun about ways we could find common ground, and so all benefit from engagement with each other, New Zealand now seeks fee-paying students from Saudi Arabia. As I will seek to illustrate, unless we develop a climate of learning, and so more effectively link knowledge and experience on the ground with wider issues and policy, it is very likely there will be further issues and more problems.

Coherent policy framing for New Zealand in the global network society

As previously noted, Jan English-Lueck, a Californian anthropologist who came to look at New Zealand, in particular Christchurch's self-proclaimed development as a "Silicon Valley of the South," noted how New Zealand's difficulties in making positive connections with Asians mitigated against such development. The problem she highlighted was that "cultural and linguistic ties" which "bind New Zealand to white Western nations [such as] Australia and the UK" make it difficult for many of us to relate to "others" who are different (English-Lueck, 2003, p. 8). Does this matter? English-Lueck concludes her study with some questions:

> Does [New Zealand] want to be an economic player, or does it want to preserve its "ends of the world" identity as a "better Britain?" Does it want to be "clean and green" or does it want to create a high-tech niche? Can it do both? (English-Lueck, 2003, p. 11)

In these questions, English-Lueck, I think, points to the kinds of questions we need to be asking and the kinds of issues I raise in my methodology.

First, does New Zealand need an income, or, as I would prefer to refer to it, a "livelihood," in the context of what Castells refers to as this particular western capitalist phase of production and consumption (Castells, 2000b)? While it may be tempting to pull up the drawbridge, as Beck *et al* attest:

> … under the conditions of an interdependent global world, a globality of risk and an advanced division of labour, every act of production and consumption and every act of everyday life links actors to millions of unseen others. (Beck & Sznaider, 2006b)

So there is really no choice, in that, as Castells points out, the networking logic embedded in the Internet ensures there can and will be connection with most people and most places. As Castells attests, "places (and people) can be as easily switched off as they can be switched on …" (Castells, 2001, p. 238). In the global flows there is a need for some two-way interaction, or, as Lash describes, to be positioned so as to be on the "creating end" as well as the "receiving end" of these flows (Lash, 1994).

Two illustrations of New Zealand's potential vulnerability in this regard are its sea ports, where New Zealand has to rely on shipping lines agreeing to make the journey to our various ports, not just to one or two as has been threatened, making Christchurch's own port and the livelihood of many New Zealanders vulnerable.[14] The other illustration is of the vulnerability of airports and air travel, where Auckland has needed to attract investment in order to ensure major airlines will land in Auckland and therefore that it stays in the network.

Second, does New Zealand want to be "clean and green"? Yes, most would agree. But what if being clean and green works against being a successful economic player? For instance, if switching to more intensive land-based industries such as increased dairy farming to benefit from price increases ends up putting at risk the future of New Zealand's waterways, as is feared?

Third, does New Zealand want to be a "better Britain"? Most people, particularly those of British descent, probably do want to retain their British or Western identity, especially when, it is apparently under threat, as in Huntington's well known "clash of civilizations"

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[14] Refer to discussion on Christchurch City Council's move to sell off the Lyttelton Port Company to Hutchison Port Holdings of Hong Kong http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/12/01.htm

thesis (Huntington, 1993, 1996) and George Bush's limited "you are with us or against us." Again, many are attached to forms of culture and identity they are familiar with and do not appreciate being expected to give up aspects of this, or take on other ways of living and thinking (Beck & Sznaider, 2006b; Szerszynski & Urry, 2006).

Locally-grounded cosmopolitan policy & methodology needed

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has identified priority social policy knowledge needs and my MSD Linkages scholarship was granted on the basis of my research relating to these needs.[15] The main points I wish to pick up come from the following statements: first,

> …as New Zealand focuses on increasingly becoming a knowledge-based society, there will be increasing emphasis on the ability to use new knowledge in creative and innovative ways to improve the well-being of the nation.

Second, the ways in which social connectedness or local networks can contribute to positive social and economic outcomes:

> Social connectedness refers to the constructive relationships that people have within families/whanau, iwi, schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, communities and other social groupings or institutions.
> Social networks, institutions, policies, norms and relationships that enable people to act together, create synergies and build partnerships.
> Different types of networks at the local, regional and organisational level can be important in contributing to positive social and economic outcomes.

My point, as has been stressed, is in the need for more of an understanding of the global-local knowledge production and relationships, and the need to balance this with more opportunities for producing, contextualizing and stabilising knowledge in the local terrain. However, the extent to which the policy of nation states can be developed to

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[15] Refer to MSD website for details http://www.msd.govt.nz/events/conferences/social-policy-03/background-information/theme-areas.html

mediate between the needs of people in local communities and global networks has, of late, been open to question. Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons state:

> In their own chosen terms, those of centralised, bureaucratic rationality, nation states have become dysfunctional - too large to relate to local communities that are also globally constituted and connected, and, because of new information technologies and global branding, no longer require mediation between the local and the global; and too small to cope with the emergence of world-economies and world-cultures. (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 18)

Of course, it is the state which formally and legally makes policy, and allocates taxpayers' resources accordingly, and in New Zealand the state is still quite interventionist. However, I see it as a mistake to minimise the impact of wider, particularly global connections. As Beck and Sznaider stress:

> There is simply no way of turning the clock back to a world of sovereign nation-states and national societies …Capital tears down all national boundaries and jumbles together the 'native' with the 'foreign.' (Beck & Sznaider, 2006b, p. 10)

However, following Beck and Sznaider, this is to see not the end of the nation state, rather its transformation. So, in order for the nation state to function in ways which support the needs of its people, the inter-relationships between the local terrain and global networks need to be better understood. So, for instance, while the MSD refers to knowledge needed for areas such as the changing nature of work and learning, not mentioned is the context in the global economy. I contend that this requires a 'whole of society' local and global learning.

A poem and a play: towards a new methodology

I see enormous potential for drawing on fictional filmed narrative creation as a cosmopolitan-based research and developmental tool and an aid to addressing these many complex issues. However, I wish to stress that I stumbled on this potential quite by accident. While the play was written on a university summer school course and forms the basis of the intervention analysed in this thesis, it was written independently of this

thesis. The play happened to incorporate elements of the thesis because I had written a thesis proposal, however, I was not able to obtain a doctoral scholarship and so not able to proceed with my thesis at the time. I happened to note an advertisement for a class on writing a one act play which was taken by the writer in residence at the University of Canterbury, Apirana Taylor, and decided to attend. I had written some short stories and poems and had been told that I had an ability to write dialogue, and a few people had encouraged me to think about writing drama.

I attended the class and wrote the one-act play and, as it happened, many of the issues I had been thinking about for this thesis came to be configured in my narrative plot. However, it is really important to note the play had its own narrative integrity; I really wasn't trying to persuade anyone or include any particular subject matter. It was only subsequently, when I was asked to explain the purpose of the play and role of the characters that I realised how much the narrative had been framed around the thesis themes.

A violent incident behind a poem & a play

The one-act play had previously begun its life as an experience in a poem. The main theme of both the poem and the play was one of "connections." I had been concerned that we were becoming a very disconnected or fragmented and very polarised society.

The event which triggered the story was the witnessing of an excessively heavy-handed arrest of a slightly built person by police officers. Others witnessed the same event. It would have been observed and understood, or to use Ricoeur's term, figured, and then it could have been configured by various witnesses into diverse narrative plots, depending on how people subsequently interpreted, constructed and narrated the event (Ricoeur, 1990). I expect that most people witnessing this event would have felt closure after they had narrated their versions – a 'bad person' who had been caught shoplifting and was going to suffer the consequences. I, on the other hand, was haunted by the event and could not forget it. I only managed to stand back, or again in Ricoeur's terms, distanciate

myself from it, after writing a poem I called 'Connecting at Last.' My writing actually required 'distanciations' as I processed unsettling, discomforting 'micro' level feelings and attitudes into the literary format of the poem. This gave me a perspective and a form in which to experience and resolve these uncomfortable sensations. Having experienced some understanding and catharsis, including an ability to share my concerns in the poem, I could move on to other things in my life.

I ended my poem indicating how I felt invidiously trapped into taking sides, or forming an alliance with the policeman - or symbolically, with those who are socially defined as 'good' against the 'evil' others. United States president, George Bush's well known, "You are with us or you are against us" refrain with respect to the invasion of Iraq reflects similar attempts at framing non-negotiable alternatives.

> The last policeman to leave,
> pleased, looks to me,
> searching to connect with my approval.
> Someone at last
> trying to connect with me.
> "Us" – his eyes say
> "Against them," his eyes insist.
> My privilege traps me -
> I feel forced to acknowledge a connection.

A Middle Eastern 'other,' the New Zealand media and court system

This experience figured large and unresolved with me because this was the second time I had witnessed the results of heavy-handed police violence. A few years previously (pre-September 11, 2001), I, along with a group that included some relatively eminent people, tried to provide support for Yusuf, an Egyptian Muslim and his New Zealand wife and their Egyptian children. Yusuf had been caught up in a series of police charges, starting with an accusation of driving while under the influence of alcohol and refusing to provide a blood sample. He had been willing to provide a blood sample at the hospital. He was badly beaten by the police. In the court we heard police in the witness stand describe in graphic detail the breaking of his ankle, the cracking of his ribs, the punching of his head

so that it hit the bars, and the use of a carotid artery hold that stopped the blood to the head. Aside from the defence lawyer, this level of violence was met with indifference. Despite clear evidence from the police that they had inflicted this violence and corroboration from the hospital in the form of records and x-rays, this person was himself found guilty of assaulting police officers, with no evidence that he did this, other than the word of these police officers.

Through this experience I came to realise that violence against particular groups, particularly those of darker skin such as Maori and Pacific people was endemic and that it was not easy to redress this in the current judicial and political system. I was feeling most alarmed at this seeming tacit acceptance of violence against particular races of people and felt real anxiety about its possible consequences. I was also appreciating the power of the narrative in the main media, in this case, of others as "the accused," and the difficulty in presenting and gaining acceptance for an alternative narrative.

I began supporting Yusuf and his family, believing it would be straightforward to work within the existing institutional structure. For instance, I expected the judicial system would be fair, that rational argument supported by strong evidence would win the day and that the media would report accurately and fairly. I also thought also when Yusuf's credentials were made public, it would make a difference to how he was seen and treated. For instance, Yusuf has Egyptian qualifications in law, commerce and accountancy. Prior to coming to New Zealand he was a practicing lawyer and successfully assisted a New Zealand policeman of reasonably high rank who got caught up in the Egyptian legal system while on a visit to Egypt.

Yusuf also worked in the area of trade, and from his own country had earlier assisted the New Zealand Dairy Board through the more difficult hurdles it faced such as tariff and other informal barriers, thus gaining and saving New Zealand farmers many thousands, perhaps over time some millions of dollars. Knowing the Egyptian market as he did, he also had marketing suggestions that could possibly have made us millions more, were they to have been taken seriously. Yusuf's New Zealand-born wife has likewise come to

be very well connected, working as the secretarial assistant to highly placed trade officials. New Zealand has recently set up negotiations on a trade agreement with the Gulf Co-operation Council, and has opened the new New Zealand embassy in Cairo (Clark, 2007a, p. 11), and so could quite possibly benefit from helpful connections, for expanding opportunities and avoiding pitfalls.

Formulating coherent and effective New Zealand policy for the global economy

By way of illustration, Egypt is seen as a hub to the Middle East and, as such, Yusuf travels quite frequently to the Gulf States on business. In recent developments in New Zealand, Dubai Aerospace Enterprise has made a bid for Auckland International Airport, New Zealand's main airport, to establish a secondary hub for Emirates airline (Louisson, 2007). It appears that the airport requires investment and to retain and enhance connections to global networks. Dubai and the Emirates have money to invest, but New Zealand does not have already established connections to determine whether or not this is positive or negative for New Zealand itself. Emirates also happen to be the major sponsor for New Zealand's bid to win the Americas Cup (2007).

- Team NZ or Team Emirates? (1)

As can be seen in the graphics, the message "Fly Emirates," not "come to New Zealand and appreciate our technological and yacht racing capabilities," was the main message the global audience received. The New Zealand brand itself seems to be submerged under those of the Emirates airline and Japanese Toyota, despite the New Zealand government putting a considerable amount of money into supporting the effort.

- Team NZ or Team Emirates? (2)

For an account of the process and impacts of this kind of global corporate branding refer to (Lash & Lury, 2007). I am not saying that New Zealand is not recognised for its skills; however, whether or not it sees it as necessary to work on further developing global connections, including in its own branding of itself, is an important question.

- **Team NZ or Team Emirates? (3)**

As mentioned, following the decline in East Asian international student numbers, New Zealand now seeks to entice Arab students. According to Tertiary Education Minister Michael Cullen, $2.4 million is going towards placing an "education counsellor" in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (Todd, 2007) to attract Arab students. However, if Yusuf's pre-September 11 experience is any indication of possible problems, it is difficult to imagine how Arab students could fare any better than Asian students post-September 11.

This case has really challenged me to think about how, in society, everyday judgements are continuously made about people, determining the worth or otherwise of their knowledge/s and with that, how they are to be treated. I came to realise that most people believe what they read and see in the media and there was not much I could do or say to make them think otherwise. My alternative narrative was different. It didn't fit the story-line people were used to hearing. I had no authority. The more I tried to present what I saw as the truth, the crazier I appeared, and the less I was able to effect change.

Poetry and creative distanciation

However, in the small act of creating the poem about the event I had witnessed, this feeling lifted. I felt able to achieve some freedom and autonomy by re-describing and re-shaping my experience in a narrative poem. Creating a text in this way enabled me to express the emotion in both cases of violence, and importantly, in the process to gain some distanciation from it. It also enabled me to shape this experience in a form that then allowed me, later, to safely revisit, or retrieve more clearly and meaningfully, the original experience.

In this poem I make use of the affordances of poetic licence primarily to express an intense emotional experience, not simply to describe some facts. In reality, my poem was triggered by my emotional reaction to witnessing a young man, whom I refer to as the "Tattooed Man," violently handled by the police. This particular man was not tattooed, nor was Yusuf. However, I had passed a tattooed man just before the violent arrest and would have greeted him as I would most people walking by, but it was clear he did not wish to acknowledge any kind of connection. This particular tattooed man in turn reminded me of another incident, this time with a tattooed man at the University of Canterbury. I had witnessed a Maori tattooed man (employed by security at the University) breaking up a fight amongst Asian students. I was struck by the fact that he had language and mediation skills, but there was no recognition of this as an amazing skill. Later I discovered he had learned his skills in the army. The Tattooed Man of my poem thus came from a composite fusion of situation and character traits.

I shared this poem with people at an "open stage" gathering, where people have an opportunity to perform on stage in a supportive and encouraging environment, and because people here seemed more responsive to my poem than to my accounts of court testimonies about this graphic violence, I began to look more closely at the potential of literary forms for communicating at deeper levels and to more effect. I realised that in the poetic text I was given a licence or freedom to look creatively at the world and its events and actions and from the perspective of wider concerns and knowledge, and then configure diverse elements, in ways that I could not otherwise do.

In the one-act play I subsequently wrote, I could of course configure many more heterogeneous or diverse elements including the elements of the poem, various discourses, dilemmas and so on.

After reading the first act of the play, Apirana Taylor, the course teacher, was very keen for me to write a second act and had clear ideas about what he thought should happen next - ideas which were different from mine. I realised then how little I knew about the

characters I had written about, particularly the main character of the Tattooed Man who ended up being taken away by the police. I have never been in that situation. Apriana, a Maori, understood. In fact on the day we had taken turns to read out our script and discuss aspects of our work, Apriana, walking to university, had been followed most of the way by a police car. The police just followed and watched. He had not done anything, except be a Maori walking to university.

Apirana appeared to identify with and be concerned about my main character and wanted issues I had raised resolved. I realised then that it is unfair to leave 'what happens next' up in the air. Film theorists Bennington and Gay refer to a "surrealist" interactive video game where the end is left suspended for the players to finish off as they choose. They explain that participants play the game expecting it to be "structured around a discoverable narrative that references the world" and take for granted that access to this meaning is possible, and "when it is impeded," they "express confusion and frustration" (Bennington & Gay, 2000, p. 19). When I suggested to Apirana that maybe the audience could help decide 'what would happen next' ... he thought it a good idea. This marked the beginning of my thesis methodology.

From drama to film

I had initially intended to adopt a "Play-back" format I was familiar with, whereby actors act the first act, and then literally play back scenarios put forward by the audience. I began by making contact with Howard McNaughton from the English Programme in the School of Culture, Literature and Society at the University of Canterbury, and he referred me to the tradition of what is called a "discussion" or "learning play" as pioneered by play writers like Ibsen, Brecht and Shaw. I approached the university drama group and had some interest in performing this work in "playback" form. However, in the event, it became too difficult to organise. I then decided to contact Helen Moran, someone I had worked with on community drama in a St Albans project. I had intended to see if she would be interested in performing the drama and having this filmed so people would know what I was talking about. However, in the event, she and her partner Martin

Howells read the script and said they thought it would work better as a film. So it became necessary to convert a one-act play that I had written for stage, to that of a film script for use as a research tool.

I then decided to proceed with the PhD and take on a student loan to pay for living costs and university fees. I applied for a Social Policy Research and Evaluation scholarship and was granted $5,000. I borrowed $8,000 from family and had the film made. I needed to do some additional filming and editing which cost $1,500. After piloting the film I found I needed some extra filming and film editing to be done before I could feel comfortable about inviting more diverse ethnic groups and people with business, particularly ICT, backgrounds, prior to proceeding with my full and final research phase.

A twenty-two minute, professionally filmed DVD/video I was happy with was completed and while the young people I had asked to read the text said they could engage with the written text, they all agreed it was much easier and much more enjoyable to watch the film. After the piloting of the film I received a full MSD scholarship, $20,000 per year for 2 years and $15,000 for the third year.

Synopsis: Once upon a time in a place called Sometown …

The following is a brief synopsis of the play, followed by a description of the function and role of the actors.

In the one-act play, *The Silent Connectors*, newly married students Clare and Dale come to Sometown for a few days holiday. They have chosen Sometown to visit because it is not far from the main city where they are at university, and it is has special memories for Clare whose family stayed in Sometown when she was a child. However, Clare, a student specializing in social development, is in for a big shock.

Her dreams of a nostalgic return are shattered when she finds the once prosperous town looking very much the worse for wear - business is obviously not good and many people are looking down and out and demoralised. Clare responds by trying to make connections with those going by. Her attempts are largely without success.

Dale, also a student and currently doing a management degree, tries to be positive and thinks of ways of attracting investment into Sometown.

Sometown (2) A shocking update

The Tattooed Man, a Maori in his early thirties, is seen in Sometown. He is quite obviously connecting with international Asian students, other young people and with the communications technologies, but, pointedly, not with Clare and Dale.
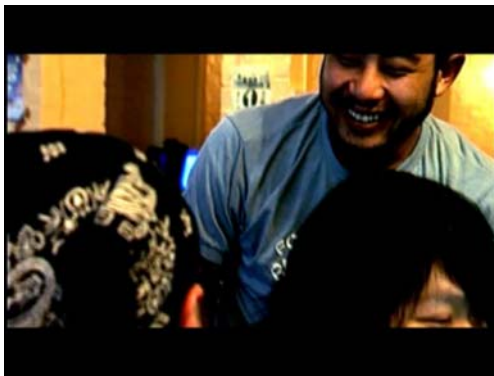
- Mysterious Tattooed Man connects with Asian students

Clare and Dale go for a coffee at a café called "Koff Inn," where they meet the proprietors, Marlena and Wilheim Koff. The Koffs have recently moved to Sometown and bought a café as an investment. Originally from Germany, the Koffs have been in New Zealand for around 30 years. Wilheim Koff had previously owned a sawmill employing around 50 staff. He wasn't able to compete against the large overseas-based firms. Obviously current business is not doing well either. Marlena Koff, his wife, is hospitable, making people welcome and her muffins are popular. Wilheim Koff had been watching the Tattooed Man, made presumptions about him, and as a result, takes action which could have enormous impacts on himself and his wife, Clare and Dale, many people in Sometown and Sometown itself.

The Tattooed Man is taken off by the police

Heterogeneous narrative frames configured

The script incorporates some current New Zealand narrative frames:

Students struggling with student loans, moving overseas, and a New Zealand policy that wants to attract them back to New Zealand, and/or better connect with these New Zealanders and their overseas networks.

Social and economic development, for instance, the impacts of new technologies and competition from international firms, as in the timber industry where overseas firms can largely dictate the price and methods of extraction. The general question is whether New Zealand is in a race to the bottom drawing more and more on extractive industries, or if it also considers thinking about and planning for new 'knowledge-based' products and services.

Socio-economic-cultural problems and tensions, addressing MSD questions, How can we maximise opportunities for economic and social growth through diversity? How can we minimise the risks of inter-group tension and hostility? How is it best to promote diversity and innovation whilst maintaining social cohesion and national unity? Does knowing about and understanding other cultures and perspectives enhance creativity, innovation and positive social outcomes?

The theme is one of connections and the main issue is one of "recognition" i.e. who is doing the narrating, who is recognised as having the power to create socially accepted narratives and which narratives are recognised. The aim was not to put forward or push a particular point of view, but to bring the various narratives together and configure them into a plot which unfolds.

In working to adapt *The Silent Connectors* drama script into a film script, I needed to be clearer about the functions and the roles of the actors. I had not really thought about this when writing the play. The following reflects background notes I wrote to give to Martin Howells who was going to help me adapt the script for film.

The function and the role of the actors

- Students Dale and Clare cycling to Sometown for their honeymoon

Dale and Clare are both university students. They represent academic "theoretical" knowledge framing. As the drama unfolds, it becomes clear they would like to fit in to Sometown and make their "knowledge" useful, but there is a need to learn how to better relate this to "practical" and "everyday" events and situations, and to the knowledge framing of local people in a local place that is being impacted on by wider, ultimately global forces. Dale and Clare also each represent different and "contested" academic knowledge framing.

Dale: a student (mid to late 20s) doing an MBA-type course has limited real world experience but is well-meaning and aspiring. He represents business/technology/global/knowledge/innovation/ frame construction, and is into positive thinking.

Clare: is a student (mid to late 20s) doing a social development course. Her interest is in community, social justice, and framing of feeling and policy for the poor. She is critical of much of the direction of contemporary social and economic policy framing.

Mrs Koff: (mid 50s, early 60s) owns a café with her husband. She represents the value of practical local knowledge framing, especially of the connections/relations that are often not noticed. People connect through her and through the café, which is hospitable and welcoming of diversity. Her style of relating to people, especially including listening where others do not, also introduces an aspect of the 'silent connecting' that is woven or configured into the plot.

- The Tattooed Man seen arriving at the Koff's cafe

Mr Koff: (mid 60s) represents those impacted on by solutions dominated by heavily impersonal, bureaucratic 'rational' framing, initially as a Jew growing up in Germany then, as an immigrant setting up a business in New Zealand, and coming under competitive pressure from the impacts of new large scale technologies. He is struggling to make a living and one gets the impression he will be a broken person if he does not succeed. His considerable sense of insecurity leads him to frame his perceptions of people whom he does not understand in terms of law and order, which gets him and others into deep water. Koff's misinterpretation in fact provides the main trigger for the action of the plot, and opens up, in Ricoeur's terminology, the major conflict or discordance that is to be resolved, in some way and measure, within concordance afforded by the literary genre of the drama (Ricoeur, 1990).

The Tattooed Man (thirties) was made to be Maori at the suggestion of some people (themselves Maori) who wanted him to be Maori. He can be framed as a walking "problem" in need of the "solution" which involves considerable help from the expertise in the "caring professions," or as "trouble" in need of "punishment."

However, in the unfolding of the plot, the Tattooed Man can also be seen as having much to contribute; he is well-connected, via language (he knows several Asian languages), has relationship and networking skills (developed while in the army), and is engaged in

conversations about technology development with "international students" – in other words he is engaging with others in projects in a wider changing world which, unbeknown to the residents of Sometown, are about to land in their midst in a big way. In this instance I have morphed together Yusuf and the Maori security officer I saw at university.

- **The mysterious silent Tattooed Man is seen again**

Other characters represent framing to do with the breaking down of institutions in the context of society coping with the speed of change. In the film this includes "down and outs" and young people wanting bus money.

The function of the police presence is to shake complacency and to bring in a sense of where

- **Young people cadging bus money**

things are heading given some prevalent trends, and get people to ask themselves, is this future we want?

Micro-macro framing in the unfolding plot

In fictional narrative the otherwise polarizing narratives of us and them, theoretical, professional, everyday, neo-liberal and social justice, the technological and the social, knowledgeable actors and excluded actors, diverse cultures and ethnocentricity and global and national cultures, ideology and utopia, recognition and non-recognition, can be configured together into an unfolding plot or fictional narrative framing.

My point, drawing from the discussion on social movement framing, is that fictional development narratives can enable more acceptable and considerably more comprehensive symbolic packages to be developed than otherwise would be possible.

The main trigger for the narrative action was the perceived character of the Tattooed Man who had connections with International students (mainly Asian) and local youth, but not with main characters. The four main characters (Dale and Clare, Wilhelm and Marlena Koff) attempt to frame, or interpret, find meaning and provide an explanation for events as they unfold (Strydom, 2000, p. 55). In terms of Ricoeur, this also reflects their own "possibilities," or hopes and fears (Ricoeur, 1981). When shared in the unfolding plot, these can become what Strydom refers to as "practical discourse at a societal level" (Strydom, 2000, p. 57) and what I wish to focus on at a local level.

In *The Silent Connectors* narrative the characters in Sometown try, in Strydom's words, to "make sense of their experience and to find or feel their way for a collective interpretation, to develop an explanation and to establish new orienting knowledge" (Strydom, 2000, p. 57). This corresponds to the emergence of a narrative theme. If there is recognition of the validity and value of diverse narrative framing, people from their diverse backgrounds can find it easier to themselves come together and identify and shape the kinds of contributions they all wish to make. Of course, making a film is only one part of the exercise; devising an inclusive process for the shaping of "what happens next," is the other.

The aesthetic power of emplotment

Given the problems I had in putting forward an alternative narrative about Yusuf, I thought I might have similar problems in getting people to accept the alternative narrative about the Tattooed Man, a New Zealand Maori who has much to offer with his ability to relate to Asians and the new technologies. However, although I did go to some trouble to ensure I could back up my plot line if I was challenged, I hadn't initially quite understood

the creative power in the narrative plot to, in the words of Ricoeur, reduce "the shock engendered by two incompatible ideas" (Ricoeur, 1976, p. 51). The otherwise incompatible ideas, Maori with Asians and new technologies, in narrative form, could create "the appearance of kinship where ordinary vision does not perceive any relationship" (ibid).

- **International students connecting with the Tattooed Man**

Ricoeur uses two devices for rendering compatible or connecting what are otherwise seen as discrepant or disconnected: the metaphor and emplotment for details refer to the preface, volume 1, (Ricoeur, 1990). The metaphor is an aesthetic device for the recreation of new semantic

pertinences out of what is otherwise semantically impertinent. Emplotment is a device for configuring the heterogeneous elements into a plot or story-line; or, in this thesis, connecting or interweaving competing frames – narrative framing.

So in *The Silent Connectors* play, the two otherwise incompatible ideas of "silent" and "connectors" could, by just placing them alongside each other, open up new understandings and representations. The Tattooed Man likewise can be seen as a metaphoric symbol of the negative socially labelling or framing, or, in the context of the unfolding plot, could be seen as suffering undeserved labelling. This can result in some feeling of emotion when we realise that the one who suffers this misfortune is someone like ourselves and this could be us. The purpose of *The Silent Connectors* metaphor was

ultimately to move towards more understanding, and therefore the unfolding of a new world we might all like to inhabit.

In order to feel confident about this narrative depiction of the Tattooed Man, I interviewed two people from multicultural backgrounds. Ross Himona is a Maori and ICT specialist who has a background in the army and has learnt Asian languages. Garry Lotte is Asian (Filipino) and relates well to Maori and has lately also become fully engaged in ICT related work.

Ross Himona currently lives and works in Australia and does much travelling, so we decided to do the interview on-line. I would ask questions and Ross would reply, normally in between flights at various international airports. Ross has had a background in the New Zealand army, and has been stationed in Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam, Singapore, and Fiji. He speaks Malay and Indonesian. He is prominent in IT development (particularly in Maori contexts) in New Zealand (Himona, 2005). Ross said quite a few Maori soldiers learnt to speak the Malay and Indonesian languages either on their own or by attending short language courses and that Maori found it very easy to learn these languages, helped by the linguistic and cultural similarities with their own language.

Ross has worked with Maori organizations and the government on ICT projects and in this capacity they were, at the time of the interview, scoping a very large technology project and dealing with technology companies in USA, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Israel, India, and Canada. When I asked Ross about the increased influence of Asia in the economy, and why we didn't better appreciate those with an understanding of Asian languages and cultures so New Zealand could better interrelate, Ross responded:

> Aye [often used by Maori to mean yes] that's been my thing for years, ever since I started living in SE Asia in 1965, and since I did language school in 1970. No-one's listened or been in any way interested of course, in all that time. My thing is that we really ought to get to know Indonesia and the Indonesians - 4th largest population in the world, largest Islamic nation, and real close by.

Ross agreed that in general Maori soldiers tended to get on a lot better with the Asians than Pakeha (mainly white, non-Maori New Zealanders). He says that many cultural practices in Asia are very like Maori practices. For example, he says

> in 1978 I went on a visit to North Sumatra to Lake Toba where the Batak people live. The rituals of encounter were remarkably similar to our own powhiri, so I felt right at home and they knew it too.

And finally, with respect to a general question I asked about tattoos, Ross responded:

> those stereotypes are potent, and that they get harassed by the police, and refused service by all manner of offended customer service people. Fundamental Christians are particularly bad. On the other hand they find that quite a few women of all races are very definitely intrigued and attracted to them. They do not seem to want for attractive company. You might find room for that in your script ((-;

Garry Lotte made a trailer of *The Silent Connectors* film with the aim of helping to attract young people to participate in my research. I interviewed Garry about making the trailer and in the process I asked if he thought the depiction of the Tattooed Man's relationship with Asians seemed realistic. He replied:

> Definitely, definitely… I think I can relate to Maoris easier and interact with them much more easily than if I wasn't Asian… well to me it was real life experiences.

In conclusion, the depiction of the Tattooed Man was intended to present people who have skills (cultural and technological) in locality which are currently for most part unrecognised, or to return to Heidegger's terminology, just "present at hand," which I argue need to be recognised so they can be made "ready to hand" (Heidegger, 1962). This requires inclusive processes of narrative construction so all can see more and therefore be mindful of both obstacles and new possibilities.

The world is a stage

To conclude, it is worth pointing out the similarities between the constructed and reflexive nature of society, and drama. As Melucci reminds us:

> Human societies not only have an ability to learn, but they also 'learn to learn' and experience themselves as 'constructed.' There is a connection, then, between the concepts of identity, learning, reflexivity and constructivism. (Melucci, 1996 cited in Delanty, 1999, p. 145).

Augusto Boal, contemporary Latin American drama theorist, and former politician, best known for his work, *The Theatre of the Oppressed*, points to the reflexive nature of theatre when he says:

> Theatre is born when the human being discovers that it can observe itself; when it discovers that, in this act of seeing, it can see itself – see itself in situ: see itself seeing. Observing itself, the human being perceives what it is, discovers what it is not and imagines what it could become. (Boal, 1995, p. 13)

For me, the idea that human societies can observe themselves and then construct their societies in different ways is very appealing, especially now when learning how to live with one another and with the environment takes on more urgency. However, more interesting for me, in terms of this thesis methodology, is the fact that societies themselves do not have to go ponderously through learning cycles, which can of course be very costly and damaging of society itself; they can deploy much more effective and efficient ways of observing themselves and testing out ways of going forward, learning from mistakes, and increasing the potentialities (Heidegger, 1962; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001; Ricoeur, 1991). As Dorothy Heathcote, well known for her use of drama in education, explains:

> Drama freezes a problem in time and you can examine the problem when people go through a process of change ... Dramatizing makes it possible to isolate an event or to compare one event with another, to look at events that have happened to other people in other places and times perhaps, or to look at one's own experience after the event, within the safety of knowing that just at this moment it is not really happening. We can,

> however, feel that it is happening because drama uses the same rules we find in life ... "Drama is a mirror of society." (Heathcote, 1991, pp. 90, 115, 192, 196)[16]

Shauna Butterwick and Jan Selman similarly describe a process of theatre making which involves:

> specific communities in identifying issues of concern, analyzing current conditions and causes of a situation, identifying potential points of change, and analyzing how change could happen and/or contribute to the actions implied. (Butterwick & Selman, 2000)

As I argue more fully below, drawing on Paul Ricoeur's narrative theory (Ricoeur, 1990), drama can usefully condense and helpfully configure complex factors into a plot and engage with issues, not on the basis of abstract theory, ideas, research and statistics, but in the context of people in their everyday lives and their experience, their own knowledge and ways of expressing this and most important, their possibilities and their own sense of these. In an unfolding dramatic play, situations can be tested out and worked through, using the power of the imagination. This can stimulate a continual engagement and development of recognition in dynamic situations to uncover and to keep uncovering common ground – balancing and re-balancing amidst continual changes. Further, people can experience situations in an unfolding dramatic narrative plot, get to know fictional characters and feel close to them, in ways it can be very difficult to do in our real, but commonly scattered and distracted everyday lives.

Of course, people are not so used to live theatre, but they are very used to being engaged by drama which has been filmed and seeing this on the large screens or video or DVD monitors. Now, with the pervasive and continually increasing use of new interactive technologies (Castells, 1996, p. 358), there are new possibilities for interaction (Bennington & Gay, 2000) and therefore new possibilities for engaging people. It is these new possibilities that I explore in this thesis. As Burawoy says:

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[16] I would like to acknowledge Katri Vappula for this reference to Heathcote's work:

http://www.leaparts.info/ver2/Resources/Resourcessection/Katri%20Vappula.pdf

> The very existence of a vast swath of public sociology, however, does suggest there is no shortage of publics if we but care to seek them out. But we do have a lot to learn about engaging them. We are still at a primitive stage in our project. We should not think of publics as fixed but in flux and that we can participate in their creation as well as their transformation. (Burawoy, 2005a, p. 265)

There can be argument, especially postmodern argument, as to whether or how much of the heterogenous elements can be meaningfully or usefully pulled together into a coherent plot in the current fragmented and changing world. For instance, David Boje referring to organisational narrative sees the need for an "antenarrative" or a "fragmented, non-linerar, inchoherent, collective, and unplotted" storytelling process (Boje, 2001, p. 4).

I do not want or need to pursue that kind of argument here, for, as I shall explain, my interest is in a different kind of inclusive local development text creation and the possibilities for any number or variations of community texts within, let alone across, communities. My prime concern here is how a locality can situate itself to produce community texts, and, with this capacity, to define and act developmentally in relation to their complex and changing environment in ways that they cannot currently do.

In the next chapter I seek to develop a methodology to achieve new levels of accessibly for knowledge/s generated in local community, academia and policy.

Chapter 5: Transdisciplinary, locally-grounded cosmopolitan methodology via locally created filmic texts and Internet

> Cosmopolitan-based methodology "is an open process by which the social world is made intelligible; it should be seen as the expression of new ideas, opening spaces of discourse, identifying possibilities for translation and the construction of the social world." (Delanty, 2006, p. 42)

> This transdisciplinary process asks "What is the place of people in our knowledge?" (Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001:75) and it notes "… recent work in social studies has emphasised the importance of 'locality' in scientific practice and how research operates." (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 42)

> The university it is argued can "play a major role in the knowledge society if they accept what might be called the principle of transgressivity, that is the university is not the exclusive site of expertise but a site of public discourses …Universities are transgressive cognitive zones where the contradictions of the knowledge society are most apparent, as such, the potential exists for universities to become important agents of the public sphere, initiating social change rather than just responding to it." (Delanty, 2001a, p. 81)

Transgressivity: here, there, everywhere

Whereas the focus of the previous three chapters was on people and their needs in local contexts along with possibilities for agency in the context of wider interdependencies, the focus of this chapter is on developing an appropriate methodology to support such local development.

When I started writing this thesis I thought of myself as bringing a transgressive approach into a university whose knowledge seemed still relatively contained in disciplines and studies. However, on reflection, I realise that for the main part I have found that what seemed at first to be rigid boundaries have been, in fact, quite porous. On reflection, further, I have found many people who, while they may appear to be conservative, working within strict parameters, actually work in quite innovative and creative ways

within the university system and also contribute effectively to ensuring high quality and socially robust knowledge. I have also found that while there are enormous pressures and problems with the university system, making it often a very stressful environment, there are, nonetheless, still spaces where people, both staff and students, can and do gravitate towards issues they care about. However, while in my experience people and their needs are still to the fore of much research and teaching, there is, I argue, a widening gap between research, policy and its local social contexts.

In this chapter I begin with an account of local terrain based on my own experience at the University of Canterbury, drawing on possibilities which I suggest exist in every university, which again using Heidegger's terminology are currently present at hand but need to be recognised and made ready to hand. I then introduce the transdisciplinary research model I deploy for my research. The basic framework, drawing very loosely from Nowotny, Gibbons and Scott (Gibbons, 1994; Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001) is as follows:

The focus is problem-solving amidst continually moving local social terrain. The purpose of the research is facilitating agency and change, as in democracy, not simply recording events.

The aim is the co-creation of knowledge within and between locality, academia and policy, or the blending of knowledges - everyday practical, expert and theoretical, for effective social contextualisation and application. The starting point is "all" are "knowledgeable actors" and there is a need is for "recognition" of this "potential."

The process is communication-based – within and between various worlds. While the stress is on meeting "individual" needs, this is seen as requiring interactive collective learning processes. Communication is problematised i.e. it is not expected that understanding and interpretation occur automatically without attention to the process. In this respect the process is "hermeneutic," based on checking out interpretation to reach

deeper understanding. The aim is to establish common ground, or a common language with which to communicate, and in this methodology, the creative arts (a one-act play made into film) and web technology are deployed to support this communication process and towards the development of new, shared projects and identities.

Because problem-solving around meeting needs and aspirations of people in localities is complex, it is not able to be addressed by one discipline, agency, or group. The transdisciplinary project is necessarily collaborative. Although, as I shall be arguing, sociology, because of its focus on social contexts is well placed to facilitate such academic-based projects, in order to address the many complexities, it also needs to draw from other disciplines, studies and competencies, especially and including from people in localities.

In order for research to be socially robust, the aim is for ongoing inclusive participation by all in the localities concerned, not just groups or NGOs. As described, the focus is on agency, and thus there is a need to support individuals to express their fears and their hopes and draw out and make ready to hand socially robust knowledge for policy and wider adoption.

As stressed, people in localities and their needs and aspirations are at the centre.

In the previous chapters I sought to depict a model of local development whereby local inhabitants could meet their needs and help fulfil their aspirations both amongst themselves as well as in the context of wider, ultimately global interdependencies. In this chapter, I seek to develop a research methodology for such development. I draw from Herda's narrative-based hermeneutic approach which Herda has applied mainly with respect to local development projects that are offered by outside aid programmes (Herda, 1999). I develop this methodology, extending Herda's use of Ricoeur's narrative theory and adding interactive technologies and film. In the context of this thesis, this is done to

support members of localities in an already modern society, as in New Zealand, to define and carry out their own local development narratives. This development process doubles as a research methodology for this doctorate and as a pilot model for ongoing local development research.

University life: a personal reflection

My introduction to university in 1991was memorable in that I attended a short course for adult beginners like me who had left high school without gaining sufficiently high marks to qualify for bursary, and left the course feeling university was not for me.

I had written an essay, but did not interpret the question in the way the lecturer expected. Other students had managed to answer the question 'correctly,' and do well in the essay, so I saw it as my problem. This not getting the 'right' interpretation was a familiar problem, for in a similar way, my children had often complained that I wasn't good at helping them to 'simply' answer their homework questions. My thought processes were often transgressive then as they are now. At the time this experience led me to suspect that I would not be suited to university, nor university to me. Family members and some friends supported me in this impression, particularly my father, who had a very low regard for university education and a high regard for self-education. When I did attend, some two years later, in 1993, my father refused to acknowledge me for some years, thinking university would change me, that I would think myself too superior. I include this because I see many from low income and Maori and Pacific families struggling with similar fears and this motivates me more than ever to work at helping to connect the everyday, as diverse people experience it, to the university.

Early encounters with transdisciplinary models

In the following year, January 1992, I was encouraged to attend the *Asia Pacific Peace Research* conference at the University of Canterbury. I was supported morally and financially to attend by local Quakers. This conference as I now reflect was very

significant for me in laying the basis for my current interest in transdisciplinary models of working. At this conference many aspects of the communicative tripod, local practical, professional bureaucratic and theoretical academic, were brought out for me. Social movement activists, non-governmental practitioners, foreign policy officials, politicians, ambassadors and peace-researchers (including academics from many different disciplines) discursively engaged with one another both in formal sessions and also very much outside of these sessions. There were some tensions and sensitivities, particularly to do with the nuclear-free status, both internally (within and between peace groups and academics) and externally, for instance, in relation to some overseas ambassadors (the French and Japanese as I recall). However, there were also some initiatives that to a large extent brought people together and significantly (as highlighted previously), this form of connecting included a Maori welcome and some very rewarding opportunities for socializing.

While attending the conference I initially felt I had made the right decision not to attend university and retain some freedom to contribute in other ways. I talked with John Burton, well known in the peace-research community and in some policy circles through his former position as Head of the Department of External Affairs in Australia, about my first university experience and he was sympathetic. He had come up against the limitations of academic study himself, when he had to deal with a real world prison riot and found the current theory on the matter lacking. I was interested in his work which was trying to develop relevant academic theory, driven by, contextualised and stabilised in real social situations.

However, while I thought at the time that Burton was in sympathy with my decision not to proceed with university, now, with the benefit of hindsight, I realise he was actually encouraging me to engage with and between the practical and theoretical worlds I was engaged in. At the time, I had been doing some training in 'mediation' or, as it was sometimes called, 'conflict resolution' skills, and Burton had been theorizing this process in the wider context. My training was through 'community mediation' and around the same time included 'youth mediation,' and subsequently, I did some training with a

international mediation practitioner and trainer Dudley Weeks (Weeks, 1994). The community mediation service was run on a voluntary basis, and was one of the many local examples which, to use the typology of Eder, was "inventive" in the "everyday," while also being developed by some "professionals" (Eder, 1996, p. 37). For instance, mediation was used by various lawyers as part of their practice, and various forms of mediation have been adopted within the legal framework, such as restorative justice, and Family Group Conferences, targeted mainly at youth offenders. Locally, the community-based mediation was not, at least to my mind, sufficiently theorised, or understood and recognised at a higher level of generality. John Burton and I were able to talk about this in relation to his work, and he gave me two of his recently published books (Burton, 1990; Burton & Dukes, 1990).

Although I didn't fully appreciate it at the time, I was quite influenced by Burton's thinking, for this helped me understand the importance of theory, or more generalised levels of understanding my practice in the local context and relating this in turn to theory, with each coming to inform the other. Delanty makes the point that the university is cosmopolitan; both locally situated and mediating or connecting about knowledge at a wider universal or general level (Delanty, 2001a). I was especially influenced by Burton's theorization of "Human Needs" which he made central. Although Burton is criticised for his more universalistic, abstracted approach to the commonality of needs, with insufficient theorization of culture and the intersubjective and interpretative aspect of needs (Vayrynen, 1998), I do not see a problem if communicative, or discursive processes about 'needs' are also made central to the practical mediation of needs and their fulfilment. In other words, that some needs, such as for food, water and shelter are, as Maslow so famously pointed out (Maslow, 1954) essential and basic to survival, but that the ways of meeting these needs are still open to variation and interpretation and this always takes place in embedded practical contexts. Delanty, among others, refers to "critical realism" which acknowledges real needs such as water, but that these needs are mediated also via socially constructed discourses (Delanty, 1997).

By way of example, in a more recent role as 'teaching assistant' for a class on issues to do with social exclusion, I have several times asked students to start by defining 'needs,' not for the excluded, but for themselves, their families and their friends. What do 'they need' in order to participate in New Zealand society? I asked them be specific: for instance, water is a need, so how much water, how long for a shower and so on. My argument is that when people start with understanding 'needs' in relation to themselves they can do a much better job of understanding and articulating the needs of others. If they decide, as my last class did, that 5 minutes hot water in a shower is a need for them, then they have to think twice when they hear that some families in New Zealand cannot afford to pay the water rates, and power bills to heat the water.

Connecting everyday, professional and theoretical knowledge/s

I did decide to begin university study in 1993 with the encouragement and support, including financial support, of Richard Thompson. I came to know Richard through Quakers and our work in the peace movement. Richard was a Reader in Psychology and Sociology at the University of Canterbury and in fact established sociology as a discipline. I had written some articles for a small publication, *The Peace Maker*, which Richard edited.

When I met Richard I was a single mother with three children on a welfare benefit and I was starting to struggle with health problems which came to be diagnosed by my doctor as adrenal exhaustion, manifesting itself as a type of "chronic fatigue" with very aching joints. Despite these chronic episodes, including periods where I could hardly move for days on end, I did manage periods of productive activity.

Richard offered to assist financially because I was, at the time, working a few jobs to try and supplement the welfare benefit. Richard also wrote a letter to recommend me for university study, so I wouldn't need to go to any preliminary courses. His recommendation was accepted.

Richard's stated reason for supporting me to attend university was that he thought I would benefit from university study and the university would in some degree benefit from the knowledge I could bring to it from the peace movement, local politics and local community. I cannot stress enough how important it was to have this on-going encouragement, interest and various forms of support.

Even before attending university, Richard encouraged me to try and write up my experiences and ideas into a form which could be published. For instance, after I was asked to present a paper on 'poverty' from the perspective of a community board member, Richard got in touch with the editor at the *Monthly Review*, and arranged to have it published (Ashton, 1995). As Ricoeur notes, an event comes and goes, but if it is inscribed in textual form then it can endure, be passed on more readily and become sharable by anyone who can read the text (Ricoeur, 1976, 1991). I came to see that for local knowledge to exist and be taken seriously, it too had to be produced in a publicly shareable text. Of course, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, there are now many more possibilities for inclusive text creation with interactive media technologies and other new forms of inscribing in text.

Socially robust knowledge for effective policy

I have been very fortunate at university to have been encouraged to follow my interests, and work reflexively between research and policy in relation to their social contexts. In sociology I did not have the experience Burawoy describes when he says:

> How often have I heard faculty advise their students to leave public sociology until after tenure – not realizing (or realizing all too well?) that public sociology is what keeps sociological passion alive. If they follow their advisor's advice, they may end up a contingent worker in which case there will be even less time for public sociology, or they may be lucky enough to find a tenure track job, in which case they have to worry about publishing articles in accredited journals or publishing books with recognised university presses. (Burawoy, 2005a, p. 15)

It took me a while to work out what area to specialise in at university. I was of course interested in the situation in Iraq, and was fortunate in having a very innovative teacher in political science who actively encouraged the interchange between research, policy and the social context, in particular, in support of New Zealand's policy of "even-handedness in the Middle East, particularly with respect to policy on Israel and Palestine" (Macintyre, 1987). [17]

One of the first students' projects around New Zealand and the Middle East policy involved writing papers that offered "advice to the minister." For this project, I focused on New Zealand and Iraq and interviewed Terrance O'Brien who had been New Zealand's representative at the United Nations at the time of New Zealand's chairmanship of the Security Council, when decisions were made about sanctions on Iraq. I wrote this up in the context of New Zealand's foreign policy. This report, along with other undergraduate publications is in the University of Canterbury library (Ashton, 1996). I understand that foreign affairs officials often ask to see these reports because they themselves cannot hope to be on top of the many issues that can come up. Policy officials also visited and spoke to the class, formally during lectures and informally afterwards for discussion. This form of interaction took place under "Chatham House" rules, whereby one can quote without attributing or attribute without quoting. An illustration given was Richard Thompson's letters to the Minister on behalf of the Quaker Peace and Service group regarding the New Zealand's policy with respect to Iraq. Richard did publish this correspondence, (Thompson, 2001) – which included also open

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[17] According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "The New Zealand Government has long maintained an even-handed and constructive approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and will continue to do so."
http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Foreign-Relations/Middle-East/0-arab-israel-conflict.php

Prime Minster Helen Clark re-stated this position in her Address to the London School of Economics in 2006. She said, "New Zealand can be seen as a relatively honest broker in this respect, with its even-handed policy on Israel and Palestine, and its non-participation in the war in Iraq."
http://www.beehive.govt.nz/node/27685

letters to ministers I had written, and this correspondence was thus made socially sharable, including for further research about the shaping of policy which, of course, can impact on all of us.

My engagement with Middle East issues resulted in my getting to know some people from the Middle East living in New Zealand and through this, gaining some appreciation of wider issues to do with whether or how we connect with each other. I developed this theme in the previous chapter.

I moved from political science to sociology when deciding I wanted to study local government, and at the time the political science department was not very interested in the local politics. As explained, I was a local government politician (1992-1995) but found in the university there was generally very little understanding, theoretical or everyday, of the realities of decision-making. Richard Thompson, who had been an independent city councillor, had made a very good start documenting events to do with city hall (Thompson, 1973, 1980, 1990). However, his research emphasis was on the decision making of politicians and influence of the planners, whereas I was particularly interested in how the local public could have influence on decision-making. From my time in local politics, I came to appreciate that if we had the three working together - the public, politicians and bureaucrats - then democratic goals could be achieved, and I was interested in explanatory and enabling theory.

This search took me into social movement, social capital, network, actor network and reflexive modern literatures. All provided very helpful tools for better understanding, and explaining some important aspects of existing state of affairs, but not, to my mind, a way of connecting social theory with everyday life, including its creative and inventive aspects, and connecting these everyday aspects of knowledge back into the wider society and theory and policy to the mutual benefit of all. Lash came close by providing a framework for theorising local 'community,' comprehensive participation, or what he calls a "radical hermeneutic" and new media technologies (Lash, 1994). Herda added, for me, a really helpful complementary methodology based also on community and

hermeneutics, or communication, particularly focusing on understanding and community, and on developing a participatory community research "text" (Herda, 1999).

Communication-based approach

For my current methodology, I draw heavily from the work of Herda (1999), who in turn operationalises Ricoeur's mimetic theory to develop a research methodology that she terms "hermeneutic dialogue," or "critical hermeneutics." As previously indicated, the study of hermeneutics is the study of interpretation or understanding; however, this study, normally of a text, typically focused on individual interpretations and understanding. Herda explicitly develops the hermeneutic process into a means of developing a shared participatory community text. I draw from this, but as will be described, I then take Herda's process, via Ricoeur, into film and interactive technologies, described by Bennington and Gay (Bennington & Gay, 2000).

As with Herda my focus is on communication, particularly on processes for developing a participatory community research "text." In Herda's words, "we need to acknowledge and understand that humans have the capacity to live in community and to address and solve problems together in organizations and social settings" (Herda, 1999, p. 1). However, as I have already indicated, there is a need for processes to begin with individuals and their needs and how they are seeing their own possibilities in the context of continually moving social terrain. Herda similarly says, "We can only experience others when we genuinely reflect upon who we are, what we do, and the implications of our actions" (Herda, 1999, p. 58). However, as Herda, citing Heidegger, points out:

> when one understands the most alien cultures and 'synthesises' them with one's own, this can lead to a person's becoming for the first time thoroughly and genuinely enlightened about [one]self. We know who we are and have the opportunity to know others when we think about ourselves in terms of the other. (Heidegger cited in Herda, 1999, p. 59).

Broadening rather than diminishing horizons

The term to 'broaden' or 'expand one's horizon' has popular currency, but it is not one that is generally associated with or built into formal research and consultation processes. Herda, drawing on Gadamer (Gadamer, 1988), makes the 'fusion' or coming together of personal or intellectual horizons a crucial aspect of her research methodology, based around hermeneutic dialogue. Herda quotes Gadamer as saying, "A person who has no horizon is a man who does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him" (cited in Herda, 1999, p. 63). Herda explains that:

> The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point … Contrariwise, to have a horizon means not to be limited to what is nearest, but to be able to see beyond it. (Herda, 1999, p. 63)

My argument, drawing on the concept of horizons, is *not* that individuals expand their horizons by seeing more, as in Dr Seuss's well known parable of *Yertle the Turtle*, where Yertle decides he wanted to climb higher so he could see more and so rule more. My proposal is rather to seek to broaden the original base of knowledge with the inclusive sharing and fusion of horizons of all 'knowledgeable actors,' in this case, all of the turtles in the pond, in helping define problems they have to address and help with on-going learning and adaptation.

The important point here is in the distinctions between 'seeing,' and 'seeing as.' Yertle is quite explicit about linking what he could see with what he saw as his own possibilities for being a powerful ruler. However, as was indicated in the story, when Yertle landed back in the muddy pond, and all he could see was the mud, we come to see that his horizon, what he saw, needed to be supplemented by the views of those who were at the bottom of the turtle stack. So while the tendency can be to focus on the horizons of the few accredited 'decision makers,' who, from their horizons, see possibilities, and like Yertle, come to see this as 'reality,' the perspective I am wishing to develop in this thesis is one of shared learning, where all contribute to what is seen and can thus benefit from the expanded shared horizons and wider notions of reality. As Gerhard Fischer, director

of the Center for Lifelong Learning and Design, at the University of Colorado at Boulder
points out:

> The world has become too complex for individuals … to have enough knowledge to
> tackle complex problems by themselves. (Fischer, 2005a, p. 18)

The way forward is for more inclusivity and Fischer suggests the creation and sustaining
of inclusive reflective communities. However, he notes:

> … bringing people with different background knowledge and different value systems
> together … will not be an easy undertaking. (ibid)

He notes, and I agree:

> But there is little choice: unless we meet these challenges, we will be unable to cope with
> the complexities and needs of the 21st century. (ibid)

Co-evolution of knowledge and society

Bringing people together is only the first step, but then how to seriously include people in
the creation of knowledge and do this in an on-going manner and in ways that connect,
aggregate and therefore deepen overall understanding requires attention. For this there is
a need for frameworks for ongoing 'communication' and 'connection' building. The issue
is, as Nowotny and Gibbons point out:

> Problems can no longer be 'solved' once and for all or even appear to be capable of
> 'solution' in this simplistic sense. Instead they form a non-linear sequence which leads to
> new potentialities, and so to uncertainties, into which they are embedded. Any solution,
> therefore, merely offers a temporary reprieve – which leads on inexorably to the next
> 'challenge.' Schumpeter recognised that this sequence was integral to the process of
> innovation, but the full significance of this insight is only now coming to be recognised.
> (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 48)

So what kind of methodology can move with these ongoing challenges, including picking
up on the innovative potential? Nowotny and Gibbons point in the direction I am

interested in embodying into my methodology. They include aspects of potentiality in knowledge innovation and development: first, potentiality can transcend "hitherto differentiated and specialised society systems and sub-systems – which, in its turn, increases the potentiality of science." Second, potentiality tends to take precedence over actuality, stimulating "perceptions of the future-as-extended-present." Third, potentiality is intensified when "synchronization occurs next to break-downs and de-synchronization" (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 48).

Thus potentiality in terms of this thesis, comes from 'possibilities,' not what is there now, but also even more relevant, what is now possible? This is of course basic to Heidegger's phenomenology of temporality (time at its most basic level relates to our being in the world, and our possibilities) (Heidegger, 1962) and more particularly Ricoeur, who draws from Heidegger to give this a "narrative dimension" – this person's possibilities and identity, as expressed in stories enhanced when configured in narrative (Ricoeur, 1986). For Ricoeur, hermeneutics is

> the explication of the being-in-the world displayed by the text. What is to be interpreted in the text is a proposed world which I could inhabit and in which I could project my own most possibilities. (Ricoeur cited in Herda, 1999, p. 75)

However, for Ricoeur, human time is not simply privately and personally experienced phenomenological time, rather, it is this time experienced also in publicly shared societal and historical times that are themselves rooted in cosmological time, such as the seasons. The sun-dial, calendar and clock are socially shared calibrations of this personal and social notion of time, but are not here seen as time, rather as representations or dimensions of time. It is in the conjunctions and disjunctions of these dimensions of time that events occur and possibilities are explored, about which stories can be told, recorded and developed. Before drawing out this dimension of 'narrative,' and its development in social theory and methodology, it is important to recognise the importance of situating knowledge in the 'local.' As Nowotny and Gibbons stipulate:

> 'local' knowledge-production systems must develop self-organizing capacities in order to link up with other sites of 'local' systems. If this does not happen knowledge cannot be stabilised. It is also in this way that reflexivity enters the social world, rather enhancing the potentiality of knowledge. (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, pp. 48-49)

So it is necessary to stabilise knowledge reflexively in locality, including, in the context of this thesis, the network locality, which can then in turn relate or link with greatly enhanced reflexivity to other forms of localities. In very simple terms, this all involves a broadening, rather than diminishing of horizons, by opening up reflexive participation in what is going on, what the realities are, and then, by way of testing out these possibilities, using 'imagination,' postulating possible new configurations, and then what new forms of stabilization will be needed. Of course this is an ongoing project for which, I wish to propose as a student in sociology, sociology as an academic site of the study of society is well placed to facilitate.

Narrativity, sociology and everyday knowledge

In some ways, the move in this thesis from social theory to incorporating a research methodology based on narrative should be simple to do and to justify academically in terms of social theory, including sociology. After all, social theory is meant to be about how people in society see and do things. So are narratives. Further, social theory continues to be depicted or critiqued in terms of a project of human autonomy, where humans express and act in terms of their autonomy and its development. Endeavours to understand and articulate this and the way in which obstacles might be addressed takes place in narrative.

Related to this, social theorists often express a wish to connect more effectively with everyday people in society and what actually happens in their lives (refer to the enormous and widespread support among sociologists for 'public sociology' e.g. (Burawoy, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and the continuing conversations and critiques, including a recent contribution in *New Zealand Sociology* journal (Austrin & Farnsworth, 2007) and *Sociological Theory*, an American journal of sociology (Holmwood, 2007).

Nevertheless, social theorists commonly strike difficulties and can feel out of their depth if they seek to move from theory to everyday practice, apart from perhaps limited and defined research forays done either for some academic purpose, or to fulfil some contract for a paying client, in what I heard described as "drive-by research."[18]

Of course there are highly regarded theories and theorists who have related social theory to everyday life. Notably these include Alfred Schutz and his adaptation of Husserl's "life-world" (Schutz, 1970) and others who have followed on in his wake such as Harold Garfinkel (Garfinkel, 1967) and his ethnomethodology as well as Pierre Bourdieu with his "habitus" (Bourdieu, 2002).

Some methodological possibilities and pitfalls

For various reasons, the theories of the everyday above have not taken as major paradigms for sustained and regular, cumulatively developing research by sociology. There have been various forms of 'community study' based loosely on what Ferdinand Tonnies, writing in 1887, referred to as the Gemeinschaft, the old and seemingly more "genuine" form of community, where there was a sense of belonging and a body of shared values. This was in contrast to the new Gesellschaft or more abstract society, where, according to Tonnies, relationships were more transitory, superficial and mechanical (Tonnies, 1955, p. 39). This community was a 'place' or 'territory' where people with common interests communicated with each other (Webber, 1964, p. 108). Helen and Robert Lynd's research on "Middletown" is a well-known example of a community study (Lynd & Lynd, 1929). However, as Webber points out, problems begin to arise when attempting to move between the everyday of the locality to more general theory. Webber therefore asks: "Why study communities when one can much more easily study small groups?" (Webber, 1964)

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[18] Referred to by visiting lecturer, Professor Julie Ellison (Christchurch Art Gallery, 21 August, 2007).

In more recent times, Burrawoy draws attention to the difficulty in the conceptualisation and study of the everyday, in the context of the global networks. His extended case-method, described in his book *Global Ethnography*, was an attempt to link the everyday and global. He asks the question, "How can the study of everyday life grasp lofty processes that transcend national boundaries?" (Burawoy, 2000, p. 1). However, as above, his methodology is applied to particular groups and organizations, rather than local community.

Delanty, in common with early theorists of community shares the definition of community as one being based on "communication" and that "community" and "communication" both share the Latin root "communis" which means "communication" (Delanty, 2003a; Webber, 1964; Wirth, 1964). Of course for most of human history communication in local community was not problematised because it just happened. Delanty also draws attention to the way "communication" just happens when he refers to the communicative aspect of virtual communities and on-line communities which, he says, though not "corresponding to 'real' communities are yet more 'real' in their ability to construct a discourse of community" (Delanty, 2003a, p. 188).

The soap-opera construction of locality, such as in *Coronation Street*, is an example of this communicative aspect of community. There is also 'reality TV' and online communities such as MyPlace, Bebo, YouTube and World 2, which could be described as communication communities. However, while I see these virtual communities as providing opportunities for experiencing some aspects of everyday life as it can be seen and felt, there are, I suggest also many pitfalls in simply taking up these as instruments for either social research or community development, or at least in doing so without a relevant and reasonably comprehensive theoretical base, especially one that is also shared amongst practitioners.

However, as noted above, sociologists, being involved as they are with forms of clarification, validations, and even creation of knowledge in society, are also uniquely positioned to be more reflexive about it and about their role and those of various others,

in creating, shaping and processing it. If knowledge, as I describe it, is now largely socially constructed, then sociology as self-reflexive about itself has the core mandate for studying society and then becoming reflexive about studying this knowledge and its development. Of course to do so, it will need to understand itself clearly and take practical steps to express, stabilise and make academically and socially robust this understanding. The challenge, as Burawoy suggested to the American and British sociological associations, is to ensure this work is mediated by an effective engagement with the publics in society (Burawoy, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). Or in terms of this thesis, how can we (sociologists and the publics) collaborate to broaden our horizons in order to see more? Burawoy asks sociologists:

> What does it mean to think of [groups in society] as a potential public? It surely does not mean we should treat them as empty vessels into which we pour our mature wine, nor blank slates upon which we inscribe our profound knowledge. Rather we must think of them as carriers of a rich lived experience that we elaborate into a deeper self-understanding of the historical and social contexts that have made them who they are. With the aid of our grand traditions of sociology, we turn their private troubles into public issues. We do this by engaging their lives not suspending them; starting from where they are, not from where we are. (Burawoy, 2005a, p. 266)

For my methodology this challenge entails an effective interplay of the various forms of knowledge: local inventive and experimental, professional, expert, bureaucratic and official, and theoretical. However, as Eder points out, relating or connecting various forms of knowledge in an increasingly complex and fast changing society is no easy task:

> Only in the ideal do inventive activities lead necessarily to theoretical knowledge. In reality, inventive abilities lead first of all to everyday knowledge and professional knowledge ... The more complex a society the more the forms of knowledge differentiate away from one another. Inventive activities on the levels of everyday knowledge, professional knowledge and theoretical knowledge become increasingly separated as the complexity of the society increases. (Eder, 1996, pp. 40-41)

Given this tendency for everyday, professional and theoretical knowledge to develop along separate trajectories or spheres, there is a need to develop valid and effective processes to interrelate them, as required.

Reflexivity, creativity and discursivity

I see it as essential to prioritise beginning, not from the transcendent heights of knowing educational or expert system knowledge categories, but rather, from the world as experienced, understood, shared and developed by people in their practical lives, including their forms of care and their ways of responding to global forces. This is so that, to use the caution from the Hippocratic oath, before proceeding 'first we do no harm' with our 'knowledgeable' interventions or engagements. Merleau-Ponty described the phenomenological approach thus:

> The attitude of the phenomenologist, therefore, is not the attitude of the technician, with a bag of tools and methods, anxious to repair a poorly operating machine. Nor is it the attitude of the social planner, who has at his control the methods for straightening out the problems of social existence. Rather it is an attitude of wonder, of quiet inquisitive respect as one attempts to meet the world, to open a dialogue, to put himself in a position where the world will disclose itself to him in all its mystery and complexity. (Merleau-Ponty, 1969, p. 12)

Reflexivity here starts with the pre-given world as understood, shared and developed by people in their practical lives. In the first instance, this approach sees knowledge as something that is intersubjectively generated, defined and shared by community members in the course of their everyday lives. A prominent theorist of this approach is Harold Garfinkel (Garfinkel, 1967) .

For Garfinkel, the social world is by its very nature disorderly, and social order is constructed in the minds of social actors in practical situations by selecting facts that seem to fit a pattern, and then by using this pattern as a framework, they interpret new facts as they arise. This use and development of patterns to classify knowledge constitutes everyday reflexivity about knowledge. Those who share a method for making sense, or reflexively constructing and reconstructing understandings, decisions or definitions so these come to appear as normal, natural, and 'real' are what Garfinkel calls 'members' (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 5). Garfinkel suggests this ability to create a shared,

taken-for-granted world is essential for people to be able to feel at home with one another. He insists that everyday knowledge should not be substantially revised or subject to substantial 'repair' by academic theories or theorists, or outside 'experts,' but that any such 'repair' should only be carried out, instead, by the discursive actors themselves in the course of their everyday discourses.

The approach advocated here recognises that it is not possible to separate the theory of the expert from everyday knowledge, and that the reflexivity of each is essential. Nonetheless, Garfinkel's priority is essential; locality must first have, and have respected, its own discursivity and reflexivity. The important point to note here is that local reflexivity involves collective, ongoing, deepening learning (Delanty, 2001b; Eder, 1999) and there need to be processes and time for this to take place, amongst local lifeworld inhabitants without unnecessary and potentially distorting pressure. As Lash cautions,

> when expert-systems and discourses chronically intervene, when they intervene preventively and pervasively, then the practices, shared meanings and community become increasingly marginalised, made progressively less possible. (Lash, 1994, p. 151)

In terms of this thesis which is about not only the safeguarding, but also the enhancement of personal – and locally situated – agency, it is also important that local discourse can be productive of creative, innovative, or inventive knowledge at the local level. This requires the building and nurturing of a "broadly creative environment, conducive to the formation and adoption of new ideas" (Florida, 2005, p. 165). This suggests the potential relevance of a methodology that relates the creative arts to community development.

Sociological development via literary detour

On the subject of creativity in the context of shared culture, there are some very useful common starting points and parallels between Delanty's more purely, general sociological theory and Ricoeur's theorization of the creation and reading of narrative. Helpfully, Delanty in fact utilises some sociological theorists who themselves bring some of Ricoeur's concepts and language into their accounts of society and social action and

change (Delanty, 1999, p. 62). These accounts include the "reading" of shared culture as social "text," which can be "interpreted" in various and changing ways because such text cannot be determinately and finally pinned down: it always has what Ricoeur calls "surplus meaning" beyond the interpretation of various social actors (Delanty, 1999, pp. 62-63). Herda goes on to operationalise Ricoeur's narrative theory so as to make it available to local communities for the construction of creative narratives of development (Herda, 1999).

Delanty notes how Durkheim himself came to take culture in an interpretive, and in effect a linguistic-discursive and creative direction (Delanty, 1999, p. 63). Delanty describes this in the context of a linguistic or discursive turn in modern social theory and philosophy, where culture is seen as both objective and, at same the time as open to interpretation. This linguistic turn "expressed a common belief in the objectivity of culture which can be read as a text consisting of symbolic structures … [that] can be read in different ways by social actors who have the power of cultural interpretation" (Delanty, 1999, p. 62).

Delanty refers to "the modern social actor" who can "interpret cultural models," and points to the relationship of this not only to social change, but also to knowledge and to creativity which, in their various forms, are very closely related to each other (Delanty, 1999, p. 62). This "capability to interpret" is precisely what enables the social actor to see itself as "both shaped by the prevailing cultural model and at the same time …[to be] enabled by virtue of his or her interpreting capacity to act in an autonomous manner" (Delanty, 1999, p. 11). This interpretive capacity is thus not only what gives this actor its capacity to see that it is acting within a prevailing cultural model, but also to see also how it could act in new, different ways, enabling it to act in accordance with an alternative "cultural model."

From creativity to the innovative knowledge society

This interpretive capacity thus becomes the basis of shared agency or autonomy, or capacity for free choice, or for "creativity of action" in a number of important senses of the word "creativity." This includes, for Delanty, not only "cultural creativity in the narrow sense of aesthetic expressivism," but also political creativity or creativity in "the reorganization of social institutions (Delanty, 1999, p. 64). This ability to create and reshape institutions is what enables the creative subject then to institutionalize and further its ability to increase both its knowledge and its creativity, for instance by developing relevant forms of learning society. This creative ability also, in an even more pervasive way, comes to entail "a relationship to knowledge" (Delanty, 1999, p. 11).

With knowledge dispersed and impacting throughout society, an important issue for agency is to be able to recognize and interpret such knowledge and to seek, knowingly, to act in accordance with this recognition and knowledge.

This awareness of varied interpretations opens up creative possibilities in culture, which can also open up and support possibilities for the enhancement of autonomy or agency in relation to structure. Delanty notes a creative dimension of human action in Jeffrey Alexander's neo-functionalist theorization of culture (Alexander, 1998). While Alexander sees action as exercised "through" culture and inherently related to it (Delanty, 1999, p. 62), importantly, "action is also autonomous in that it does not simply reproduce or internalise culture; it can also transform it" (Delanty, 1999, p. 62).

In Ricoeur's account of social action it can, as with Delanty above, be deciphered or "read" by social actors and it can thence be interpreted in new and changing ways. This enables creativity. Ricoeur also describes how "... symbolism confers an initial readability on action" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 58) and its symbols entail "a meaning incorporated into action and decipherable from it by other actors in the social interplay" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 57).

Ricoeur theorises narrative "text," especially fictional text, which I suggest opens up to continual and shareable creativity of interpretation that also enables or stimulates personal and social transformation.

Ricoeur describes the narrative text as presenting an "emplotted" narrative that classically has a structure of beginning, middle and end in which diverse, conflicting or heterogenous elements are configured together to be resolved according to rules of literary composition, including genre. With the act of reading, this text comes in effect to mediate between the initially lived-in, "practical field" from which the reader came to the text, and to which they will return after doing so. In the light of the reader's encounter with what unfolded and "revealed itself" in – to use Ricoeur's expressions the configured plot, the reader may find that the way they see and act subsequently has been refigured. This entails a "concrete process by which the textual configuration mediates between the prefiguration of the practical field and its refiguration through the reception of the work" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 53). From the perspective of the configured text as a mediation between the "prefiguration" of the practical field before, and the "refiguration" after it has been read, Ricoeur refers to this text as involving "creative mimesis," or "mimesis 2," situated between a prefigured everyday "mimesis 1" and a newly refigured everyday "mimesis 3." In terms of mimesis 1, 2 and 3, the issue becomes who draws on what mimesis 1 (prefiguration in the practical field) to construct or configure mimesis 2 (configuration of the text) and with what mimesis 3 (or refrigeration, or transformation) in mind.

A strong case can be made for sociology to take this literary theory and its possibilities very seriously. It is worth noting first that the kinds of social worlds that Delanty or Garfinkel seek to describe, and Ricoeur's practical field of mimesis 1 from which readers and writers first come, are very much the same. Then Ricoeur's narrative in effect takes readers off on an imaginative literary excursion, or detour. Even this literary world will, nonetheless, commonly have strong resemblances with the kind of world that sociology seeks to describe, only literature may also make additional devices available and suggest desirable experiences or possibilities that are not so accessible to sociology. After this

"detour" readers return to the social world and may perhaps see and do some things differently as a result of their imaginative sojourn.

Much more could be written about Ricoeur's literary theory here, but a most salient point is to do with the new ordering, the condensation and augmentation of meaning and understanding of life and experience and their possibilities that can be made more ready to hand with the configurations of mimesis 2, unconstrained by the frequently fragmented, and confused "practical field" of mimesis 1. In Ricoeur's terms, "new being as" is made possible with "new seeing as" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 80). Ricoeur reveals how literary metaphor and narrative mandate the exploration of new meaning. In the world of such literary textuality the shared, intersubjective referentiality of mimesis 1 is suspended to enable the imaginative explorations of mimesis 2 in what becomes, for Ricoeur, a "second order of referentiality". As Ricoeur writes with respect to the referentiality of the metaphorical process:

> What is abolished is the reference of ordinary discourse applied to the objects that respond to one of our interests, our first-order interest in manipulation and control. When this interest and the sphere of signification it commands are suspended, our profound belonging to the life-world is allowed to be and the ontological tie of our being to other beings and to being is allowed to be said by poetic discourse. What is thus allowed is what I am calling the second-order reference, which in reality is the primordial reference. (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 175)

In simple words, with literature comes a freedom to find and explore what people might like to connect with, what matters deeply to them, what threatens and what can give meaning to their being in the world.

As traced out by Bennington and Gay below, and in my chapters on the research for this thesis, filmic narrative can also be readily depicted in the same Ricourean terms.

Creative arts, media technologies and participatory methodology

Now with important new and accessible technologies for creating texts, including community texts such as film and the Internet, there are new possibilities for local community. These are important for as film theorist Vivian Sobchack (1994) says:

> We are all part of a moving-image culture and we live cinematic and electronic lives…, in the most profound, socially pervasive, and yet personal way, these objective encounters transform us as subjects. (Sobchack, 1994, p. 2)

We consume images on a daily basis, and the extent to which it is given to global networks to produce or we share in the production has, I suggest, profound implications for how we can have and fulfil aspirations. In the previous chapter I raised the question of 'aesthetics' and how local community can have its say in the production of its aesthetic values, daily practices and, in relation to this, of identity itself.

Film and its possibilities as a research methodology

There are similarities in the theories of narrative text and film that enable both to draw on the literary theories of Ricoeur. However, film theorists have additional issues to address because of the special medium, film, including digitised film and the flexibilities that digitization enable. What both film theorists and literary theorists may do in common is seek to give an account of how narrative authors and/or filmmakers can draw on the events, experiences and perception of the everyday world to relate or configure elements of them into some sort of written, filmic or other text. For instance, it could also be audiotape, or video game that is then to be read or viewed. In other words, distinct and related mimeses 1, 2, and 3 can be very relevant in literary and filmic as well as other digitised or other texts.

A picture says a thousand words …

An important aspect of film is that it can seem to quite directly mimic everyday experience and engage us, including simultaneously together as a group or audience. If a film is well made, we can soon find ourselves beguiled into believing that characters in it are just there in front of us, directly fronting or affronting us, or whatever else people may do when we interact with them in everyday life. In other words, film is apt to be more literally and directly engaging than is the print on a page that needs more concentrated attention for individuals to read, decode and reconstruct.

In the more theoretical terms, film theorists Tammy Bennington and Geri Gay explain:

> …film theories address the interplay of the visual, aural and kinetic, of the expressive and the perceptive, of the spectator's and filmmaker's embodied film experiences, they provide perspectives that differ significantly from those of the cognitively, verbally oriented literary, linguistic and semiotic theories that have dominated discourses on emergent multimedia technologies. They offer the richness of embodied perception, movement and emotional engagement. (Bennington & Gay, 2000, p. 1)

According to the film theorist Vivian Sobchack, who draws on Merleau-Ponty, this is to do with the "enworlded and embodied nature of human experience, perception and expression" (Bennington & Gay, 2000, p. 9).

Bennington and Gay explain how Sobchack turns to the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty to understand how the technological trio of camera, film and projector mediate embodied engagement in and with the world. According to Bennington and Gay Sobchack's objective is "to describe and account for the origin and locus of cinematic signification and significance in the experience of vision as an embodied and meaningful existential activity" (Bennington & Gay, 2000, p. 9).

For Sobchack, from the way the film takes in what the filmmaker points their camera at, then synthesises these perceptions and projects them to viewers, it becomes itself literally a perceiving and expressing body. It technologically mediates between the "enworlded"

and "embodied" perceptions and expressions of the filmmaker at one end and at the other, the perception and feelings of the viewer. To cite Sobchack again, while paraphrasing her in Ricourean mimetic terms,

> the film transcends the filmmaker to constitute and locate its own address, its own perceptual and expressive experience of being and becoming [This compares with Ricoeur's mimesis 2] As well, the film experience includes the perceptive and expressive viewer who must interpret and dignify the film as experience [comparable with Ricoeur's mimesis 1 pre-figuring, in the process of moving on to mimesis3]. The viewer does so through the very same structures and relations of perception and expression that informs the indirect representational address of the filmmaker and the direct presentational address of the film. (Sobchack cited in Bennington & Gay, 2000, p. 19).

This having been done, the film mediates inter-subjective threads of understanding from the filmmaker through to the film viewer(s), which they take back with them into the world of their experience (mimesis 3). The world, as referenced in the film, is one that all the viewers share, albeit that they may also interpret it in similar or diverse ways. Normally film viewing is a relatively individual and passing experience.

From filmic and other digitised texts to community research

However when, as in the case of the thesis research, there is a shared viewing of an aesthetic-based developmental film by groups of research participants and follow up process which includes shared discussion and participation in the follow-on creation of the second act and ongoing opportunities to comment, including on the Web discussion board, there can be considerable theoretical and practical implications.

Whether in an explicit research process such as I am presently engaged in, or just in the on-going life of a real-world locality, the use of film, and in my methodology, web technologies can enable the shift from more individual to more inter-subjective understanding, supporting the emergence and development of a lifeworld of shared meanings, with new communicative means at hand to help develop such meaning.

Relating local communities to university and to policy development

Used in this way, modern media and communications technologies can enable relatively easy expression by local people in the context of their everyday lives in their localities, while at the same time providing unique material for various university and policy institutions and people.

It is most important to stress, here, that I see such material as being a means primarily for meaningful interchange between local people, and then between them and outside agencies, be these agencies academic and/or policy and socio-political, decision-making institutions and personnel.

What is now possible with digitization

Finally a word on digitization: this not only enables affordable and accessible capture, processing and compression of text but also of sound and pictures all bundled together, and their transmission and sharing, especially through the Internet, with anyone anywhere.

It is worth noting the methodology I have developed illustrates what such digitization of information, media and communications technologies have made possible by way of new, accessible and flexible kinds of communication. A quick list includes the following:

Much more affordable and portable filmmaking cameras

Much more affordable and compact film editing, all doable by one person – also the filmmaker in this case – on a home computer

Much more portable film – on a disk or, if desired, on a videotape – for research groups at any convenient time and place; in future, this could also be readily made downloadable

Online participation and augmentation of research text possible at any time of day or night, in asynchronous, many-to-many and cumulative ways

Concerns shared and inscribed in publicly sharable text

To conclude, a major aim of this research model is to re-connect research methodologies with the life-world or 'everydayness' - the experiential locus of human society, as in localities - for the mutual enhancement and development of all. I suggest continual innovative impetus can be brought to this interaction with new meanings that are opened up by the concepts and methods of philosophers like Heidegger and Ricoeur. With these philosophical infusions, to adapt Wolin's words, both the everyday and methodological processes "might thereby become meaningful once again" (Wolin, 2001, p. 19), or, in terms of this thesis, at least open up opportunities for new levels and depths of meaningful understanding, interaction and social development.

In the next chapter I move from theory to practice and describe the design of *The Silent Connectors* research project: the use of mediating technologies (film, web) and processes to construct an inclusive participatory methodology and pilot for developing places all would like to inhabit.

Chapter 6: Design for co-discovery

> If the world of the text is not complemented by the life-world of the members of the research population, the research is incomplete. (Herda, 1999, p. 2)

The aim of the research was to explore how locally-constructed local agency, based on what we really care about, can be developed within and thence also beyond localities. Research was designed to model conditions for developing technologically augmented local and wider socio-economic participation, including active civic cosmopolitan citizenship, whereby people in local communities could come together to co-construct their local place and develop local through to global agency including – in the world beyond their locality.

In keeping with the philosophy developed in this thesis, while critique – in particular issues of power – must be taken into account, the focus is not on why "things are so awful" and why "nothing can be done," rather it is exploring how effective social action can be informed by new collectively constructed imaginaries.

The major design focus was communication, requiring processes to ensure inclusive participation of a diverse range of knowledgeable actors with multiple skills and talents. The connecting was effected through screen interfaces (filmed narrative and interactive web) in the context of a facilitated process.

More than ever, given the trend towards trans- or inter-disciplinary projects, my contention, along with Nowotny et al, is that effective communication is crucial (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001).

The aim of this chapter is to draw attention to the communication process not normally seen, bringing the backstage and the messy bits into the front stage.

Given the transgressive nature of the thesis, a major challenge was to represent *The Silent Connectors* findings in a social science methodological framework that social scientists could recognise. To this end, I decided:

- to ensure, as far as practical, that the general pattern of demographic features of the New Zealand population was reflected in the research
- to hold research sessions in diverse localities, at the university, and at a local and/or central government policy institution, thereby modelling the transdisciplinary process while ensuring there was consistency in the setting up of research spaces within the different venues and in the material presented, and the facilitation of the processes
- to ensure the diverse groups were given the same questions using the same process so that if we wanted to repeat this research, there could be some basis for comparison of results
- to show that the participants in the research were able to respond as they genuinely wished. Part of this validation would involve posting the results on the website where anyone could see what has been reported and confirm, disagree, or otherwise comment

Further it was important to note the research was not primarily a positivist exercise, which meant I was not using it to try and "scientifically" prove one thing or another. Its main immediate purpose, as stated, was one of co-discovery.

Initial research sessions were planned around the idea of sessions in and with the town (or local community), in and with the gown (or the local universities - Canterbury and Lincoln) and with policy officials (local and central government). However, we met resistance to the town-gown model, with some of the younger participants not even knowing what we were talking about when referring to "gown" – and, despite much planning and interest from some in policy arenas, in the event, we did not manage to actually organise a session with representatives from the policy sector.

Transdisciplinary players and new rules and practices

A major tool for this research is the construction of a film which seeks to simulate, or provide a microcosm of local community. The film's depiction of a community in disarray is intended to provide a common point of focus, enabling the research participants to build a shared understanding of the issues at stake, providing a shared platform for the creative re-cognition and re-combination of the community's resources, (notably 'connectors') so as to be in a better position to co-construct the community's possible futures. The film is a hybridisation of realism and aesthetic imagination, with a realistic depiction of locality in the context of wider pressures, while also aiming to be entertaining and aesthetically engage and satisfy.

The Silent Connectors research: broadening local horizons

A simple way of describing the overall purpose of this research design is the detective-like element in the research, of individual and shared discovery and uncovering, or revealing connections which are there all the time, or to use Martin Heidegger's expression, "present at hand" but which can usefully be made "ready to hand" (Heidegger, 1962) or available for use. Heidegger describes this as an "alethic" process, meaning unconcealment, unfolding or revealing or discovery of what is initially hidden from view. In Gadamerian terms, the horizons of understanding and perception expand, and where this is a socially shared process, diverse people's horizons merge or fuse together enabling all involved to collectively see more (Gadamer, 1975).

Research, particularly that of a transdisciplinary performative nature, of course involves much more than inviting people to be detectives and uncover the connections. If they are to truly engage with the experience, or, in this case, the work of co-discovery, then conditions, as have been discussed in previous chapters, need to be just right: above all, participants need to feel welcome and able to express themselves honestly and freely.

Mediating social science and literary narrative

The move to bring art and social science together is not new. In his presentation to the Asian Regional Pre-Conference World Summit on the Information Society in Tokyo 13th – 15th January 2003, New Zealand and Maori representative Ross Himona stated:

> So the proper people to be developing content for and with the people are poets and storytellers, visual artists, and increasingly as bandwidth broadens, filmmakers. Whether you are a politician or a bureaucrat, a business person or an academic, you should be paying creative writers and artists to produce your content… We should bring the artists from the margins into the mainstream. (Himona, 2003)

However, it would, I think, be a mistake to think that artists and researchers can miraculously come together to produce a film which fulfils the needs of research and the need of artists to entertain and engage their audiences.

The 'developmental film' I am proposing is a new model, a new hybrid mixture of old and new, of traditional filmmaking and a new adaptation of this using new user-friendly digital technology to academic methodology and community development. It is essential to appreciate that the nature of this new form of interacting requires new developmental concepts and protocols. By way of illustration, I give two examples from the making of *The Silent Connectors* film where the development I was wanting and the aesthetic that Martin Howells (the film producer) required for the film to meet his standards came in tension with each other.

My first example is of the portrayal of the main character, known simply as the Tattooed Man. Like many in society, the Tattooed Man in the film does not have a voice or a name. He is not asked for his interpretation or explanation. There are narratives about him, and for him, but as in society, he is not allowed to have his own voice. As in much of the real world, the characters in the film freely provide *their* interpretations about his behaviour and appearance, ascribing meanings and providing explanations. As in society, in the research itself, this kind of process was similarly not understood or commented on

because it has become such a natural state of affairs. Such is the case that the only person to directly query the Tattooed Man's silence throughout was the person responsible for adapting the one-act play into a film script, Martin Howells. Howells tried several times giving the Tattooed Man lines; after all, characters need lines, don't they? [19]

The Tattooed Man appears seven times in the film. On three of these occasions he is walking by, and appears to rebuff Clare's attempts to make friendly contact. He is also seen connecting well with international students who are working on a computer, and he is last seen being dragged out of the café by two policemen and pushed into a police car. Howells found my portrayal of the Tattooed Man's character difficult to understand and, from his point of view it "didn't ring true."

Howells had a background in theatre and television and was therefore very aware of what audiences would accept. I had no such background, but wanted to incorporate this silence somehow and Howells, albeit somewhat reluctantly, agreed.

Another illustration from the making of the film was in the depiction of the Tattooed Man and the international students, whom I had attempted to portray from my understanding of their current situation, with 'present at hand,' not yet recognised possibilities such as talents, skills and connections, which good detective work would easily uncover. However, in the actual filming, the Tattooed Man came across as too exclusively associated with social problems and drugs and the international students, with whom he was connecting, were similarly associated with drugs and violence. There were not enough clues to indicate more could be discovered. As I write this there is a growing concern about the level of violence targeted at Asians in Christchurch and then and since I have in no way wanted to be associated with any anti-Asian feeling.[20] At the time Howells had thought the re-filming and editing I wanted were on the "pedantic" side.

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[19] I should say here that Joanna Goven who was my initial supervisor did note the silence of the Tattooed Man and the also not generally noted silence of the international (mainly Asian) students.

[20] Most recently Simon Barnett, a well-known radio personality witnessed and spoke out about what he referred to as a "racial attack" in the street (Christchurch Star, July 4, 2007:A3).

Fortunately, his professional and personal partner, Helen Moran, who was also assisting with the filming, and who happens to have a degree in sociology, understood something of where I was coming from. She also had an appreciation of the fact I had to, in her words, "sell it" to people such as in policy and academia. Moran also acted as director for the extra filming that was to follow, and all, including Howells, were pleased with the result.

The point I wish to make here is twofold: first, making a developmental film which is a blending of sociology and the arts, or presenting and enabling the opening and discovering of possibilities, requires many balances and this requires communication in the production processes. My second point is that in order to become proficient players in this new transdisciplinary game, there is a need for people who can bridge or translate or mediate between the worlds, and a need for related protocols and training to then be developed.

Production value on a low budget

As stressed earlier, in the transdisciplinary project, people come together around a problem-solving task, not by virtue of the disciplinary background, but for their specific competencies related to the project in hand. However, knowing what and who will be required and the competencies available is not necessarily straightforward. For instance, Howells happened to be able to make a film for around $13,000 (including the re-filming), which was very good value. Fortunately, Howells had many other competencies required, as he said:

> … normally you'd have to spend a lot more money to actually get your original idea translated into film ... you'd have to find a video maker, but you wouldn't find someone who had the dramatic experience, or would have the writing or the editing experience, so that's why I think the marriage is kind of working in terms of what you're wanting and the achievability of it.

Howells was also able to improvise and draw on community support. For instance, some of the play was set in a mall and apparently it can become very complex and costly to

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film where there are lots of people, so he managed to get some mall owners to agree to their filming on a morning when no one was around. In the original script I had three police officers and Howells managed to get two real police to arrive in their car and take the Tattooed Man off. Howells said of this aspect:

> I call it production value… when you see a police car you think this must be quite an expensive video because they've actually got a real car in it…

Howells also managed to get some of the professional artistic community to play the parts of the down-and-outs. He mentioned that one of the down-and-outs is actually quite a well known New Zealand actor.

Connecting with diverse audiences and publics

My aim was to involve people from diverse backgrounds in the research process. I thought the most difficult people to attract would be young people who could often be seen as not engaged with mainstream activities, i.e. with no formal educational qualifications or conventional employment but who could have, in my mind, many "ready to hand" skills and talents not yet commonly recognised. I saw Garry and his partner, Millie (not her real name) who both supported this project, in this category.

At the time of this research both Millie and Garry were seen as "disadvantaged" and needing the attention of multiple social agencies. I had come to know Millie quite well when she had been served with a child protection order. She became very distraught and frightened that the authorities would take her child from her. It eventually became clear that she was the victim of a malicious complaint of which there was no substance, but it was a very stressful time. Millie is one of the many Maori who have left high school without qualifications, yet I recall her coming to my university office and going over the formal letters I had written on her behalf to organizations such as the Child Youth and Family and some related agencies and very efficiently editing them on the computer to ensure their accuracy and clarity.

When I told Millie about the film I was adapting for research, she was happy to watch and give feedback. When I told her I thought about getting a trailer made to encourage other young people to participate in my research, she offered the services of her partner Garry who had a computer, had completed a film-making course and composed and made films which incorporated his own music.

I interviewed Garry about his process of making the trailer and found there was much I didn't know about making a trailer and engaging young people. With respect to social theory engaging with "our publics," Burawoy asks what I think is an important question:

> How can we preserve social theory in our public sociology, how can we develop social theory in collaboration with our publics, take advantage of what they can see and we can't? (Burawoy, 2005a, p. 423)

Given that Burawoy and others recognise that so much public engagement and interaction now takes place through the media, it is I think timely for social theory practitioners and professionals to collaborate with people such as Garry, who have expertise in relevant communications and media technologies and have a unique and indispensable understanding of the moving social terrain.

Engaging the public to find out what we don't already know

I asked Garry about making a trailer, thinking it would be about five minutes, but then, in the course of conversation I came down to thinking, okay, three minutes – and I remember not understanding Garry's reluctance. I asked him about it and he said:

> Yeah, usually trailers now are like um 30 seconds… it's actually best not to put too much into the plot. Not to say too much about the film so people are intrigued by it and want to go see the whole thing. And yeah so 3 minutes is technically too long.

Garry wanted to, in his words, "put the best parts into the movie to get people intrigued so they will want to come and watch it." I had no idea what "the best parts" were or that one could say and show so much in 30 seconds.

Garry composed some original music for the trailer and when I asked how he thought the film could have been improved he said:

> So in that film if there was a little bit more music, it would have given it much more of a 3D dimension. You know some of *The Silent Connectors* desperately needed some - just some background music.

By 3D he meant atmosphere. He also very tactfully pointed out the music background music dated me.

> It also shows the soundtrack of a film shows you how old the film is you know… Like you see films now and like when they play some really old music you think oh man that's an old film. So when you maybe include music that's very up-to-date, it gives it more of a newer feeling, so people of the younger generation can connect to it easier.

Garry also talked about the importance of the narration:

> Well, for a trailer you always need a narrator. It just makes things easier, so I actually did a bit of research - I had a look at some trailers. I sourced out the best ones and the impact the narrator made and after that what I did was I thought I'm going to have to write something to kind of talk about the film …. So I wrote out the background of the film and I wrote out what I thought the plot was trying to say, but yet I wanted to leave it open at the end so people still wanted to come and see it - … so then they'd be asking themselves, 'jes what's going to happen, I'd better go and watch the rest of the film.' So I got my flat mate Sharkie, cos he's got that American accent to give it that international flavour and we recorded him on my computer and I cut it up - I actually cut the sound and pieced the film to go with the sound, which is a much easier process than cutting the film and then trying to add the sound in.

It transpired that while Sharkie was from Malaysia, he had learnt to speak with an American accent by watching American television programmes.

New Zealand recognition and non-recognition of creativity in the global network society

The trailer was shown to a variety of groups I wanted to interest in participating in the pilot phase of the research, as well as to a group of policy officials whom I wanted to

interest in funding the thesis research. The trailer did seem to engage the respective audiences, and attracted a few participants, both for the pilot phase and for the subsequent formal research, as well as helping to gain support for a scholarship to help fund this research.

Unfortunately I had problems converting the trailer, made on a video, to a digitised form, so it was not included in the DVD which accompanies this thesis.

Since making this trailer – thanks to new technologies and new forms of connecting, Garry and Millie have since gone on to develop a very successful home-based international Internet-based business. This business is currently spawning new Internet-based business which is involving yet more people in their diverse networks.

This research is about building up such multiple connections – including these largely silent connectors – who live in localities, but who are, for the most part, unrecognised. Sadly Sharkie (the narrator) was deported back to Malaysia and his potential and contribution were not recognised, as he was seen by officials to be lacking in the skills needed for New Zealand's (new knowledge-based) economy.

Piloting *The Silent Connectors* film and what was learned

After making the film the first step was to do some pilot research to see if people from diverse backgrounds would engage with the film and research process as hoped.

I piloted three sessions by showing the film, with facilitated follow-up sessions, to three small groups (one of three, one of seven and one of four participants) in what, following Nancy Fraser, I term the "pre-discursive" phase of research (Fraser, 1995). This is "pre-discursive" in that it seeks specifically to provide opportunities for various kinds of people who are commonly not involved, or would not be comfortable if they did become involved, to have a voice, be heard and have an influence. Participants included youth, middle-aged, elderly, rural, army, urban, Maori, Pakeha, high and low levels of education

and income. However, because I was interested in piloting whether people from diverse backgrounds could participate together, included in one of the groups was a millionaire property developer. I appreciate that Fraser would not have seen this kind of person as in need of support to have a voice; however, my argument is that we need inclusive processes, therefore needing to include people with business backgrounds. My observation is that attempt to 'include' groups often results in many feeling 'excluded.' Further, as mentioned in earlier chapters, I see a need to move from the current 'bonding' (like with like) cul-de-sacs into some opportunities for mixing people from diverse backgrounds. In addition, the Principal Analyst for Social Policy Evaluation and Research (SPEaR), observed an informal showing and participated in subsequent discussion.

Participants included various groups of friends and some of their family members who were willing to watch the DVD/Video and give feedback. I knew about half of the participants. The film was shown at two household localities.

Participant engagement

My aims were to see if participants would engage with the film and be willing to engage with issues raised. It should be noted that the piloting was carried out soon after the film was made, before additional filming and editing. In this version of *The Silent Connectors* film, I had felt that the Asians and the Tattooed Man could be seen as being portrayed in a negative way. I had wanted to ensure there were opportunities for people to move beyond negative stereotypes. For instance, I wanted to have the Tattooed Man more clearly interacting with Asian students about a high-tech deal and so point to the fact that the Tattooed man could be the kind of person who could facilitate a new knowledge economy project working in with the Asians that could benefit Sometown if local people were open to seeing such possibilities.

Questions asked

The three groups were shown the film and the questions I asked were:

1)   What aspects or characters in the video did you identify with, or think were realistic, and what if any did you think not realistic?

2)   If there was no intervention, what do you think would happen to the characters (the Tattooed Man, the café owners, Marlena and Wilhelm Koff, the students, Clare and Dale) and Sometown?

3)   If you could be in charge of what happened in Sometown, and were given the necessary resources, what do you think would need to happen to enable the situation for all in Sometown to improve?

4)   Who do you think were *The Silent Connectors* and why?

5)   Is there anything else you would like to say?

Summaries of responses

The following is a summary. I did not tape the sessions because I wanted the sessions to feel relaxed and informal. However, I was clear in saying to participants that I wanted to pilot the research and get honest feedback from them about how the sessions went and how they could be improved. I also said I would take post-research session notes. As well as responses to the questions there was much discussion.

In the first small group, one of the participants who had a rural background had trouble initially with the first question which was about identifying with the characters. He thought that he did not know people like those in the video. When asked if he thought there was anything that did not ring true, he replied that the police would not be like that: "I see police often at the Strip [a 'strip' of adjacent bars in Christchurch] and places like that and I've never seen anyone arrested like that." However, he later reflected, "At the Bog [an Irish pub] I've seen a bloke with tattoos removed for no reason – he wasn't even given a chance." He also then recalled a news report where a Maori was employed to read power meters but he wasn't able to continue in the job because people were always

phoning the police presuming "he was up to no good," and the police were getting sick of this happening.

Later the participant said that he had seen small towns just like Sometown, and that he'd been involved in the timber industry and couldn't understand what was happening, saying a contractor had told him "he was only getting a dollar a tree which was hardly worth it."

When asked how they thought the story would proceed, he thought things would get worse and that there wasn't much hope for small towns. He didn't think that the students would come back to Sometown.

When asked what would be a happy ending, and if he could influence this in any way and what would happen next, he couldn't think of a positive outcome and thought the only solution was to leave.

With respect to possible Asian involvement, he changed the subject to that of European immigration saying, "I meet Germans and Irish people who want to come here. They want to fit in, but they can't get in. It's made too difficult for them. I think it should be easier for them to get in – they really want to live here." As indicated this comment was made prior to re-filming which included positive depiction of the international students, many of whom were Asian.

Another participant in this group particularly identified with the Koffs as being like Germans she had known when she was growing up. She was a bit overwhelmed by some talk of economics and technology saying she "didn't understand enough" and "preferred not to give an opinion."

This response caused me to think carefully about questions in the next round of research sessions because my intention was to have people open up about "possibilities," not make them feel they were in any way inadequate because they did not understand.

The question, what would be a happy ending, and if you could influence this in any way, what would happen, was difficult for most people.

In the second group, one person thought that there would need to be some big investment and some new ways of connecting locally. She said she had seen a television programme about fire-fighters who had, together, made a film and that they had benefited a lot from working together. She thought maybe that it was something more people across the age range could do.

People also had trouble with the question, why do you think the DVD/video was called *The Silent Connectors*? The only participant to really think this one through said vaguely she thought I had some psychological idea – something to do with Mr Koff.

Again, I realised that this question only made people feel as if they were being tested and needed to get the 'right' answer.

When I asked if there was anything else anyone would like to raise one of the participants wanted to know what I was doing this for. He then suggested I give out the questions at the beginning so people have them in mind while they are watching the video.

Another identified with the students because her son was at university. She expressed concern about the difficulties of managing on student loans, and how they would have really felt the loss of their bikes.

One participant was at first a bit reluctant to speak, but then he said that he had been in the army. He then told a story about someone he knew who had been followed by the police – every night. He said that one night they followed her without lights and she made a formal complaint. This led to other people talking about problems they had or situations they had heard about with the police.

Another said that she had left New Zealand because she had thought it was a police state. She also said the laws on mental health were bad and that people could be put away without checks and balances. She said she liked the video and "identified with all of it."

The piloting demonstrated participants from diverse backgrounds could watch the film, care what happened next, and engage with some of the questions. I was especially encouraged that the participant who had been in the army had apparently been very reluctant to come because, I was later told, he didn't much hold with "university types." Several times he said to me that he wanted to find out "what was going to happen next" in the video story. He was very pleased when I said that I would follow up with the second act - worked out by participants during the process of research, and to be published on-line.

New fusions of horizons

I have long had a concern about society's power to classify, and so ascribe an identity, thus narrowing down opportunities for people communicatively or narratively to construct their own identities and interact socially and productively. For my research I was aware that prior or imposed socio-cultural-economic-education-age-gender classifications and categorizations or "prejudgments" (Gadamer, 1975) commonly limit and distort what people hear and say, and also limit how they see their world, or the nature of their "horizons," so I was interested in noting any categorization participants themselves might adopt. In the pilot research, I noted that participants themselves quite naturally reflexively classified and re-classified themselves in the course of their dialogue, in terms of their own knowledge, experiences, backgrounds and feelings. For example, two of the participants described themselves as "young people" who had gone overseas and then returned to Christchurch. They both noted that while away they had got into the way of developing new friends and connections, but peers they met back here often found it more difficult to do this. They were also insightful about the difficulties "young people" had in making relationships outside their immediate peer group. Another participant described herself as a "Maori" who had once joined up with a "Black Power"

gang. She said when she lived with them she had to learn their [specific sub-cultural] language and ways, which were very different.

One of the young people reflected that she had come from a very privileged background, saying she had been "spoilt rotten" and described how she learned a lot when once she suddenly found herself to be the only non-Maori in a Maori area. She said it was very difficult and people wouldn't talk to her at first. She said that she was initially scared and had her own negative preconceptions of Maori. She gave as an example her initial fear of very "rough looking Maori" who went to the local pub, but how she came to realise "they were 'as soft as' when you got to know them."

The participant who had described herself as Maori was able to reflect on and articulate very clearly the need to be aware of communication issues, and for people not to presume too much. Using the Black Power gang as an example, she said she realised that communication and understanding was NOT simply a cultural problem, but also a social one. In other words, because she was Maori, she could not be presumed to understand all other Maori, such as those in gangs and on the street - that this understanding, including of extensive non-verbal cues and learning to communicate, required specific conscious efforts.

The research group of seven participants usefully indicated how the content of a DVD/video could enable participants to engage in processes of co-discovery, and therefore see more, expand understandings and so widen horizons. To illustrate this development in terms of the group communication, one person not present whom I did not know was referred to. It appears that this person had become very "uncommunicative." Initially it was stated that this lack of communication was quite simply how this person was. However, as a result of a reflexive discussion, mediated by reference to *The Silent Connectors* video, the notion of "communication" and "relationships" with respect to this person was problematised and difficulties that young people in particular had when moving to another geographic area were discussed. Participants shared, from their own perspectives, or horizons and as a result, there was a

merging of horizons as new shared understanding developed. Participants, without any guidance from this researcher, reflexively concluded this person probably did not communicate because "he was from up North" and found it safer to be uncommunicative than try and make new connections, and possibly risk facing rejection. It was decided that the young non-Maori participant, who had lived in a Maori area and knew what it was like to move to another area and find it very lonely, would take the initiative to check this out, and be supported by others in the group. This new understanding thus opened the way for new group behaviour in relation to that young person, and possibly subsequently to others.

The piloting was helpful in that it demonstrated what was possible, and some pitfalls to avoid. The main pitfall was asking questions which resulted in participants feeling they were being 'tested' for the right answers, which of course goes against the idea of co-discovery, and the endeavour to keep 'seeing' more to enable more understanding. As Nowotny *et al* remind us, "problems can no longer be 'solved' once and for all or even appear to be capable of 'solution' in this simplistic sense" (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001, p. 48).

Full scholarship leading to research planning, design and facilitation

I was at this stage very fortunate to be granted a social development linkages scholarship[21] to help with research and living expenses. In keeping with the transdisciplinary nature of the research, where collaboration is based on competencies, my first move was to contact Margreet Stronks and see if she would be interested in assisting with the planning, design, and facilitation of the research. Stronks has been very effective in initiating and facilitating innovative projects which have become very successful. An example of this was the original New Zealand *Out of School Care and*

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[21] The SPEaR Linkages funding programme provides scholarships and grants for research and evaluation projects to build New Zealand's social policy knowledge base and improve research and evaluation capability.

Details: http://www.spear.govt.nz/funding/linkages/index.html

Recreation (OSCAR) programme, and support network, which began in St Albans in 1993 which is now implemented nation wide. Stronks was given a Queens' Service Award for this work.

Inclusive participation: research that makes the invisible visible

Stronks lives in Holland much of the time, and so research sessions needed to be planned during the times she would be in Christchurch, New Zealand.

I emailed Stronks who replied that she was interested but wanted more detail. I rushed off this following email which I think captured my thinking at the time:

> Basically the skills I require are a mixture of facilitation/supervision. You saw the [original] film (there has been a small amount of further editing/re-filming since) - invited audiences of diverse backgrounds, probably not more than 9 people at a time, to see the film and come up with their own Act 2s - what would happen next, based on their own knowledge/experience/background etc.
> The groups include people that are inclusive of Maori/Pacific/business/rural/local govt/etc etc. For me it is important that this process is done really well - ie people feel heard, no one goes away upset, and housekeeping such as tape recording, consent forms etc is kept as unobtrusive as possible, hospitality is good ie comfortable environment, food etc, on-going evaluation of process etc.
> I know you have very good skills and high standards and you would be fun to work with. A major learning I took from my St Albans experience was the skills/talents work behind the scenes that went unnoticed. For my PhD I want to make sure the work such as the facilitation process is visible. I am interested in processes of inclusive participation of diversity - sounds cliché I know, but I want to do it and make visible the thinking that needs to take place for it to go well.
> Let me know what you think - We can think work out payment - I would prefer to work out a contract for ? numbers of sessions - would need to know if you were interested about how many you could do and time commitments etc. I am thinking most sessions will not be more than 2 hours - roughly half hour for film, half to one hour for discussion and food/drink etc. For busy people, one hour combined with lunch/tea might be all we can get. We would need to schedule time for planning/debriefing etc. Again, I don't think it will require much - but would like to have flexibility brought into it because it's the on-going learning thing I would be interested in reflecting on in my write-up …

My main point was that I wanted to design an "inclusive" and "interactive" process and to make the thinking behind this design, or the backstage, visible. This email reflected my thinking before planning the sessions.

The actual planning of the research process took place over a period of around two weeks when Stronks was in New Zealand. We spent much time coming up with what we considered to be the 'right,' or the 'best' questions. In this process Stronks asked me lots of questions, including what did I want to know, or need to know, what was the theoretical underpinning? As with the making of the film, this process took much time and much attention to detail. Drawing on my research notes the following is a description of this backstage process.

Creating safe reflective research spaces

The pilot research demonstrated that people of diverse backgrounds could watch the film and engage with follow up questions. The challenge was to design the research questions and process to ensure that participants initially felt safe and motivated to give individual responses that were as authentic or honest as possible and then feel encouraged to join in the shared process of co-discovery which followed. We began by drawing up a list of questions and asked ourselves what would make us feel safe and what conditions we would need to give authentic responses. For this process we drew on a mixture of everyday practical, professional and theoretical knowledge/s.

For instance, Stronks and I drew on shared practical knowledge from our work in local community. We had both been involved in the development of Packe Street Park in St Albans, (as in the accompanying picture) and many initiatives to ensure diverse inhabitants (refugees, youth, children, business, plants, animals, trees) felt welcome at the Park (Ashton, 2002, p. 78). For both of us then, the welcome, the greeting, the hospitality (including food and drink) were important.

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- **Local gathering and celebration at Packe Street Park**

As mentioned earlier, Maori have much to teach us about hospitality, the use of space, a sense of orderliness in order for there to be spaces conducive to discursivity, creativity, inventiveness and so on (Durie, 2003) and importantly, reducing possibilities for misunderstanding. In Packe Street Park we were also amongst those who wanted to

ensure there were 'wild places' for the local children to play, in order to experience in play both "creation" and "destruction."

We both had a theoretical and practical understanding of the importance of "play." Stronks introduced me to Johan Huizinga (1872-1945) whom she

- **Children gravitate to the wild spot at Packe St Park**

had studied at university in Holland. Huizinga's theorization of play and its importance as

an element of culture and society (Huizinga, 1980) was taken seriously by us as applying to children and adults alike. Huizinga was also an important source for Gadamer's theorization of play (Gadamer, 1975). Stronks also had a theoretical and practical sense of how space could be created and utilised. For Stronks, this included theorization of play and processes of coaching and facilitation.

Another important aspect to the research design was emulating conditions suitable for "interactive" learning. Stronks drew my attention to Albert Mehrabian's work on the importance of verbal and nonverbal messages. Mehrabian's findings known as the 7%-38%-55% Rule, or the "3 Vs," representing Verbal, Vocal and Visual which are the three elements which come together which are indicative of our liking for the person who puts forward the message: communication through words account for 7 percent, tone of voice accounts for 38 percent, and body language accounts for 55 percent of the liking (Mehrabian, 1971). In this way, Stronks suggests we could be expressing 93 percent of our feelings in a non-verbal way, hence the *Silent* in *The Silent Connectors* film and the importance of factoring in the non-verbal into the learning model we wished to emulate. In this way we were quite deliberate in including diverse forms of learning: visual, aural, kinaesthetic, and written. So for instance, these various forms were deployed with watching the film, writing responses, verbally engaging, physically moving, kinaesthetically working around large sheets of paper, writing and/or drawing with felt pens and crayons and socializing over food.

I decided to promise anonymity and to this end it was agreed that Stronks, as an outside facilitator, would facilitate the research sessions, while I, as the researcher, stayed in the background as much as possible. It was also decided that another researcher, and specialist in SPSS (a research data base software) Faye Hawtin, would be employed to transcribe participants' responses, and enter demographic data (I needed to have some means of demonstrating people from diverse backgrounds did participate) directly into a SPSS data base.

Designing the interactive Village-connections website

Because of my previous experience with an interactive community website in St Albans, I had very clear ideas about having an easy-to-use and aesthetically pleasing interactive website designed. My aim was for a website which was:

Easy to use – for people to access material to do with the research, for instance, *The Silent Connectors* script, and research data and feedback

Easy for me to upload material

Easy for me to create a welcoming and hospitable environment

Easy on the eye, in other words, an aesthetically pleasing design

Most important: easy for participants to express themselves, whether by discussion, interaction, or accessing and sending material

Logo: branding

I initially approached Kate Hindin of New Media Design to design a logo for the website and for *The Silent Connectors* research project. I met Kate through a fellow student. I had been aware of the importance of "design" and "branding" from my work in St Albans, where we developed the idea of "The Golden Suburb" with the golden kowhai flower as the emblem. Lash refers to a predominance of trademarks and brands and logos, in this the "information age" (Lash, 2002; Lash & Lury, 2007). For *The Silent Connectors* research I wanted a design which would symbolically contain within it the essence, or the meaning of the research. I came up with the domain name village-connections.com with the idea of "connections" within the village which are of course here, local and global, virtual and real. I also wanted to portray a kind of freedom and creativity and playfulness in the connections and I think Hindin captured this in this village-connections logo:

Village-connections.com

I then employed Hindin and her colleague Galen King to design the website and was very happy with the end result. It did take an enormous amount of time and attention to detail

and although we all worked very hard on getting it working well, regrettably, there were some technical problems at the time of the research which imposed some limits on participant involvement. So although I was happy with the website design, it was not able to fulfil all of its potential.

I could write a huge amount of detail about this process because I have kept all my notes; however, there is much to cover in this thesis, so instead I include the following message from Dave Ciccoricco who informally assisted in the website editing/layout, by way of an illustration of some of the thinking behind the website design.

> Looks good, but might want to add more *white space* especially / at least between pgraphs and subheads. 2. the other thing wld be better to discuss in person, but concerns your reference to the "phd thesis." want to make sure we definitely refer to the thing itself, as opposed to something more generic ("my research") – so as not to encourage what might be called the 'guinea pig' reaction, which can potentially discourage people from engaging in an initiative such as this one. In short, we want people to *want* to speak up, and without feeling like they are being targeted/coerced for a some sort of study, which of course they are, but that's not the only motivation - this is after all a web that aims (reflexively) at building the sort of community it describes/theorises. There's a range of issues here, and this is by no means a big deal, but all I'm saying is there may be a better way to finesse it.

The point of this excerpt on the choosing the right language on the website is to stress the huge amount of background work to ensure that people, in Ciccoricco's terms, "want" to engage, and that the website reflects the "sort of community it describes/theorises."

As I have tried to stress, in the transdisciplinary project, it is easy to refer quickly to "communication," however, communication takes time, and, as was the case with Stronks and Hindin, who were paid by the hour, "time is money." I had not appreciated the time that could be needed to get this website working to its optimal capacity so that all who wanted to could easily continue communication via the interactive web technology.

Introducing *The Silent Connectors* research process

Over 100 people took part in this research. There were three phases:

Piloting: 25 people from very diverse backgrounds participated in the piloting phase. Of these:

14 saw the first version of the film and participated in some facilitated discussion, some of which was described above

5 people from the 'creative' sector were interviewed in depth and their interviews were transcribed (Martin Howells, Helen Moran, Garry and Millie, and Ross Himona) and some of their comments have been included and all interviews informed the research process

6 people initially read *The Silent Connectors* text and gave feedback and again, this was very helpful in deciding to proceed to use it as a research methodology

Stage one: in the formal research process 80 participants watched *The Silent Connectors* film and then participated in a facilitated research process.

Stage two: of these, 20 participants out of the original 80 participated in a follow-up research session. These groups, one at the university and one in the community were self-selected. We had hoped to have the more in-depth stage two sessions soon after the stage one (February/March 2005) with as many as possible attending both sessions, however, due to circumstances beyond our control, there was a time delay and we were not able to organize the follow up sessions until August 2005.

I invited various people and groups both from the university (Canterbury and Lincoln) and from local community to participate in my research. People were either asked personally or sent an invitation sheet accompanied by an information sheet. I generally asked people myself, or asked people I knew to invite others.

The main points on the invitation were:

You (and/or your group) are warmly invited to participate in a research project, *The Silent Connectors*.

A number of research sessions are being organised between 23rd of February and 3rd of March 2005. These will be just over one hour long. There will be refreshments afterwards.

Involvement includes watching a DVD of a one-act drama, created especially for this research, followed by a facilitated discussion.

There will be further opportunities to express your views on the research website discussion board at www.village-connections.com.

After the above research sessions, we also intend to have a second, more in-depth session.

Material from both sessions will then be drawn on to create a script for a second act which will be filmed.[22]

The participants

In all, eighty people participated in the research. There were nine groups which varied in size from four to fourteen people in the first phase of the research, and two groups, one of seven and the other of fourteen in the second phase. Participants were from diverse backgrounds. Research took place at the University of Canterbury (both students and lecturers) and in the local community.

The following is a summary of the demographic statistics of those who participated in the formal facilitated research.

Gender: 36 were male and 44 were female.

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[22] Due to the time taken to write up the thesis research, film of the second act has now become a post-thesis project.

Income: the largest block, 17 were under $10,000 a year, 19 were between $15,000 and $25,000, 6 between $81,000 and $100,000 and the rest spread fairly evenly between. It should be noted that 10 participants responded with the words "no comment." I had made it clear this was an option and that participants need not answer any questions they were uncomfortable about answering.

Income per year
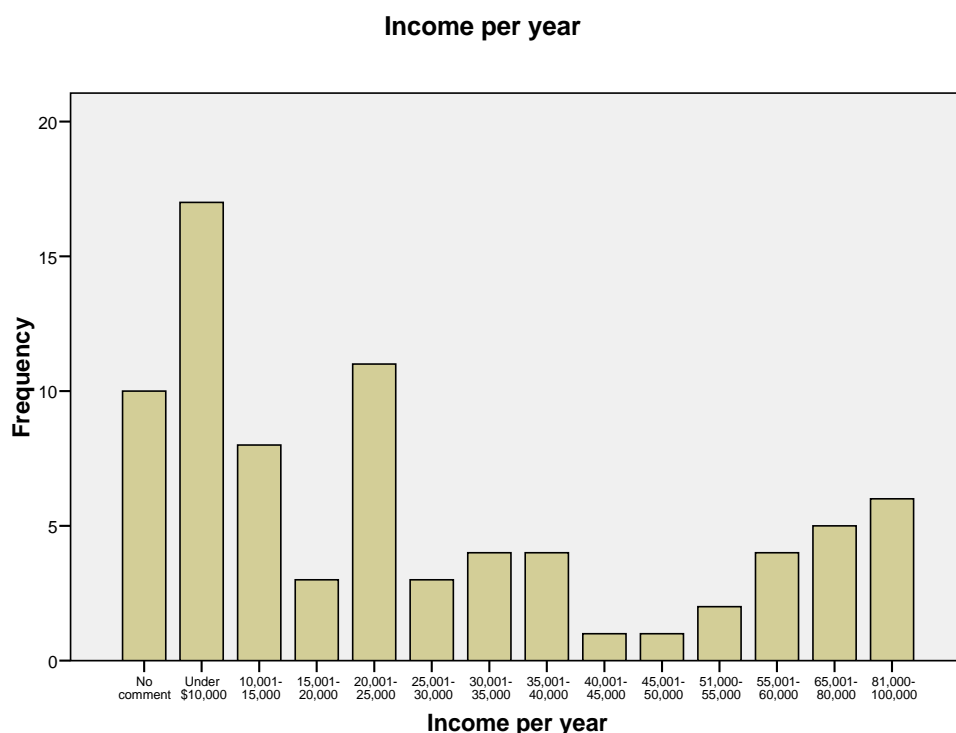
Occupation: 22 described themselves as students, 17 as working at the university. Other occupations included 9 who described themselves as director/business/managers, 2 as parent, retired, social work, computer technician, artist/entertainer, counsellor, and sales. Other occupations represented included, lawyer, nurse, marketing, landscaper, hospitality, gardening …

Educational qualifications: 8 participants had no high school qualification, while 59 had a tertiary qualification. Of those with tertiary qualifications, 11 had doctoral degrees, 10 a masters degree and 10 a BA.

Age: the age range was widespread, covering from over 81 to under 20 years. The largest number of participants, 42, was in the 41-60 age range; while 10 were over 61 and 19 were under 30, with 5 under 20 years old.

age
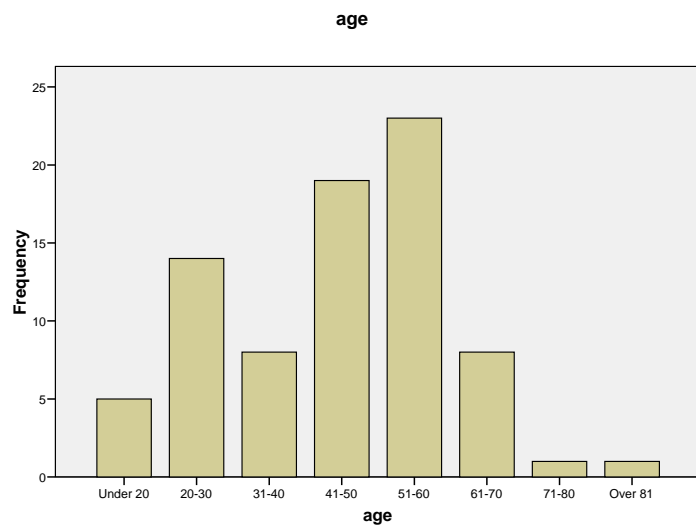
Ethnic groups: When asked to describe which ethnic group/s people belonged to, 45 described themselves as New Zealand European/Pakeha, 6 as NZ Maori, 2 as Pacifica. Of those who described themselves as European, 4 described themselves as British, 2 Irish, 1 Dutch, and 1 Danish/German, Bulgarian American. Of those who ticked 'other groups,' 4 described themselves as Middle Eastern, 4 American, 3 Japanese, 2 African and 1 Canadian.

Parents: 49 were parents and 30 were not.

Research sessions

The venues ranged from large lecture halls and staff rooms at the university to large community halls and households in the local community. As already stated, the aim was to carry out the same process with diverse groups in diverse locations. In each location

was a reception area, an area for watching the film, an area we call 'Sometown" where much of the interaction took place, and a refreshment area where the research concluded.

The Silent Connectors film ran for 22 minutes and research sessions for just over one hour. Every effort was made to fit research sessions around the busy schedules of many participants.

When participants arrived at the research sessions, they were welcomed into the 'reception area' where they were given a clipboard with an information sheet, consent form, statistical form, questionnaire and pen and shown to their seats. In the following section I provide a summary of this process, but for further detail, please refer to the appendix and archival section of the village-connections website.[23]

The research process

Research participants were invited to watch the film and take part in a facilitated process. They were promised anonymity and verbally and in writing participants were told:

> We would very much like people to feel able to honestly express their views. At all times, anonymity of individual participants and the audiences will be safeguarded and participants have the right to withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information provided. The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete anonymity of data gathered in this investigation.

Participants were also invited to give feedback and evaluation, both to ourselves, in person at the session, and/or anonymously in writing at the session. Participants were also encouraged to post responses at any time on the village-connection website, (anonymously if they preferred) or phone or write. While they were asked to fill out their consent form, and the statistical sheet, participants were assured information would be used for statistical purposes only, in order to verify, if necessary, that research with a diverse range of people had been carried out, as stated.

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[23] www.village-connections.com

After filling out the statistic and consent forms I introduced the research session, the facilitator, Margreet Stronks and the observer, John Gallagher. Participants were told that John would be observing the session and that they were welcome to talk with him about his observation, see what he had written down, and of course, give their own observation and feedback

Local co-created film: mediating technologies, spaces and processes

In the planning for the research Stronks and I developed what we referred to as *The Silent Connectors* Road Show. The purpose was to design a tight structure that would enable as much freedom as possible for full participation in the processes of co-discovery we were seeking to develop.

As has been previously explained, my tools include: *The Silent Connectors* film, an interactive-based website village-connections.com and a mediating process built on Ricoeur's hermeneutic-phenomenological approach, incorporating Bennington and Gay's film theory, which in turn draws on Meleau Ponty's embodied phenomenology (Bennington & Gay, 2000).

I conclude with a summary of how Bennington and Gay's approach interrelates with my research design. Bennington and Gay describe film, (in this thesis, *The Silent Connectors*), as expressing experiences and events as initially perceived by the writers, and also by the actors and filmmakers. A film is also made within certain constraints such as of budgets, and available time and skills.

The film, like our own bodies, can be described analogously as having and expressing perceptions. It is thus a network of technologies from the perceiving "eye" or lens of the camera, to the expressive "I" of the screen and sound systems. This network of electronic technologies is one that, in a sense, perceives and expresses in its own right. This

technologically mediated system of perception and expression is nonetheless one that is shaped and constrained by the technologies and film processes themselves.

In terms of both Ricoeur and Bennington and Gay who adopt Ricoeur's framework, the audience, or in my case, participants, watch it as inhabitants of a practical world from which they bring already prefigured meanings, mimesis 1. In other words, they have perceptions and judgements embedded in their cultural symbolic and linguistic resources and backgrounds. They also commonly have distracted minds, especially in modern life which is often complex and fast moving.

The horizon of the film mimesis 2 meets and merges with the mimesis 1 of the audiences. The signs, rules and norms related to how to produce a film and how to watch it are already established. In other words, there is a shared assumption that the world that is intended in the film making processes connects with the world that is here perceived by the filmmaker. When an audience has their attention fully engaged, their everyday distraction is transcended and redirected to share this concretely inhabited, mutually lived virtual space of the imaginatively constructed plot all can share and recognise and discuss. There are, nonetheless, potentially, multiple ways of being and knowing expressed in this filmed life-world and, as has been indicated, much surplus meaning is made available for interpretative and creative processes such as might be uncovered or revealed in shared discussions and research processes that can tap into and build on this creative mimesis 2.

When there is disruption to the flow of perception and events, as when, in the case of *The Silent Connectors*, the film is left incomplete, this can create a discomfort and stimulate or provoke more active responses, based on a yet-to-be-fulfilled wish to uncover, or detect the plot.

The major aim of the research design was thus to extend or to use Ricoeur's terms, "distend" this "reflective space" of discovery … (Ricoeur, 1976). In my terminology

here, the participant detectives ask, what is happening? What is going to happen? How do we know?

The advantage this shared viewing of this narrative is that it provides a space for participants to reflect and to explore together aspects of a common world and thereby be in a position to co-construct its possible futures, to refigure their everyday life mimesis 1 figurations via the mimesis 2 of the filmed narrative, and everyday life that has new possibilities – mimesis 3.

My setting is a generic local place "Sometown," which serves as a microcosm or simulation of a local place. The aim was for the film depiction to approximate real community settings and so enable the extension of this kind of methodology in local communities to be envisaged.

In theoretical terms, the core purpose was to create a place around what Ricoeur refers to as "human time" or narrative time, which is "meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal experience" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 3) which relate particularly to human possibilities.

This process is designed to be inclusive, with all not only being heard, but also able to influence the creation of the text. In this respect we – the researcher and participants – are co-researchers, co-investigators in the process of co-discovery. The above said, it has to be added that there is an inevitability that in the final script there will be a selection by the researcher and scriptwriter and some may still feel their contribution has been "excluded," or the script may have been configured in ways which do not match all of the contributions. However, if this is the case then the excluded themselves, or people who note the exclusion, can register this, either directly on the website or by contacting the researcher, and/or re-configure a separate script that includes what is excluded.

In real world local development projects, there would be scope also for various people or groups not only to register differences but to produce their own script and film.

The second act, in opening up "possibilities," is about projects that generate projects around network locality social development. The co-created literary emplotted text is about practical projects.

In the next chapter I describe the research process as it unfolds, the questions, a summary of the participants' responses, evaluation, observation and the process of creating the second act.

Chapter 7: Illustrating the co-construction of network locality developmental narratives

> It's all a question of story. We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not learned the new story. Our traditional story of the universe sustained us for a long period of time. It shaped our emotional attitudes, provided us with life purposes, and energised action. It consecrated suffering and integrated knowledge. We awoke in the morning and knew where we were. We could answer the questions of our children. We could identify crime, punish transgressors. Everything was taken care of because the story was there. It did not necessarily make people good, nor did it take away the pains and stupidities of life or make for unfailing warmth in human association. It did provide a context in which life could function in a meaningful manner. (Thomas Berry 1989 cited in Grassie, 1994)

> Dare to create! (Wall, 2003)

William Grassie quotes from Berry saying, "We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story … to provide a context in which life could function in a meaningful manner" (Thomas Berry 1989 cited in Grassie, 1994). Grassie is here referring to the really big comprehensive, cosmically and historically encompassing stories or myths and, drawing on Ricoeur, he seeks to find ways current narratives can be re-configured to take account of all inhabitants, including and especially the much neglected non-human ones.

For most of human existence we have had stories to live by. There is, as Berger notes, a perceived need for the revival of storytelling. Perhaps, suggests Berger

> this revival reflects a culture that is ill at ease, that lacks compelling myths to bind us all together. Perhaps it has something to do with our sense of rootlessness, of separation from extended family. Perhaps it's the secularization of the world or the vacuousness of television. Perhaps it's a form of nostalgia, a way to resurrect something we never really had. (Berger, 2005, pp. 8-9)

The big stories in the West have tended to refer to those of modernity and progress, or what theorists such as Beck, Giddens, Delanty and Lash refer to as the "first modernity" (Beck, 1994; Delanty, 1999; Giddens, 1994; Lash, 1994, 1999).

The subsequent post-modern challenge, particularly about those excluded from the big stories, or meta narratives has resulted in continually contested, fragmented and fragmenting stories and with these an accentuation of fragmenting situations.

In practice, the questions pertaining to the creation of a socially shared credible and compelling narrative is well expressed by Berger: "who can lay claim to speak the truth?" (Berger, 2005, p. 6). Or, "why doesn't our or my narrative have just as much right to truth as yours? Or, just who has the right to tell our or my story?"

However, by itself, postmodern challenge in the form of suspicion and critique can become very frustrating, and discouraging of attempts at finding solutions. Alversson describes this overly critical inclination:

> [a] sceptical approach to everything, parasitically waiting for something to be said and then tearing the claims into pieces (deconstruction) or showing the danger in saying anything about the world (the power-knowledge connection). (Alvesson, 2002, p. 175)

So, while Grassie makes the case for comprehensive new narratives to meet today's needs, he does not point to practical and inclusive ways which take account of a post-modern detour that takes a full account of critique, to create the new inclusive stories that Grassie wants to be available to live by.

It is to address this fragmentation or individualism that the concepts of this thesis and its research methodology have been developed. These look especially to the social theory of Lash, Delanty, Eder and Strydom (Delanty, 1999; Eder, 1999; Lash, 1994; Strydom, 2000), the literary and social theory of Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 1990), the technologically informed network society of Castells and Lash (Castells, 2000b, 2001; Lash, 1994, 1999,

2002), the film theory of Sobchack (1994) and the technologically informed Ricoeurian narrative film theory of Bennington and Gay (Bennington & Gay, 2000).

As drawn together in this thesis, these theorist and some of their concepts point to the affordances for participatory (individual and combined) new agency-enhancing narrative creation that was not feasible until the arrival of user-friendly and accessible communications technologies from the 1990s.

Narrative theory and its incorporation into locality development theory and practice

The Silent Connectors film is a research tool - a blending of my sociological project and Howell's narrative contribution, or social theory and aesthetics and through this text, it seeks to mediate desirable change in the everyday world.

The question is how can the shared world of text, which potentially can suspend people's attention away from their everyday lives to focus on the shared world of the text, help understand and address the central problem of this thesis, that of desired social change in the context of social disconnections, fragmentations, and polarization.

The theoretical challenge has been to recognise and draw together relevant concepts and the practical challenge, has been to exemplify, or in the case of this thesis, to illustrate a narrative-based research methodology based on a process of inclusive developmental narrative creation that can be of practical use to localities. The following research in Christchurch, New Zealand, 2005, seeks to do just that.

In this chapter I describe *The Silent Connectors* research, the questions (phase one and two), a very brief summary of participants' responses (a more detailed account is in Appendix 3 and on the research website), the evaluation and feedback and the process of constructing the second act.

In constructing this act, I seek to explore the affordances of literary narrative emplotment (for drawing concordance out of discordance) to help clarify and resolve sociological problems of (inclusive) social construction and development in the face of continual, intensifying fragmentation and polarization. The research process seeks also to clarify some new and subtle Network Locality concepts, protocols and practices that are considered necessary for the effective deployment of digital technologies in local development, given the context of Castells' increasingly ubiquitous global Network Society.

The research question

In the context of fragmented global networking the questions guiding research were:

What is required so that people in local communities from diverse social, cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds can communicate comfortably and effectively with one another, and with members of relevant academic, policy and decision-making institutions, about the formation, research, implementation and evaluation of social and economic policies relevant to them and to their localities?

The research sought to then follow up on this question by:

- Identifying and exploring how a university, or other relevant educational institution, drawing on relevant concepts, knowledges and networking capabilities, could assist with such communication

- Exploring some possibilities of drawing innovatively on the creative arts, and new media (in this case a specially created film on video and DVD and an interactive website) to support and enhance such communication

Questions after watching The Silent Connectors film …

Participants watched *The Silent Connectors* DVD/video. After watching the film, participants were asked to answer the following questions in the questionnaire. They had ten minutes. For those with English as a second language or those who had problems writing English, they were invited write in their own language, and/or have help in English. As I will later explain, some participants did take up the option of responding in their own language.

The questions with some responses of research participants which indicate research themes follow.[24]

1. In one word, what is your first reaction to this play?

> 10 interesting 5 recognition 4 thought- provoking…

2. Were there things that annoyed you? If so, what?

> 65 participants had something that annoyed them.
>
> This included: Narrow minded male actors, Why did Clare marry such a right-winger, Demotivation of young people to do something really good, Judging people by their skin without knowing them, Some actors overstressed their lines…

3. Did this play seem realistic to you, or not. Why?

> 39 of participants thought it realistic, 19 thought it sort of realistic, and 20 thought it not realistic.

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[24] For more detailed responses please refer to Appendix 3 or the archival section on the village-connections website.

Examples on what was thought to be realistic: Attitudes and opinions often heard in our society, I know people like all of the characters, same as my home town…
Not so realistic: Issues real but dialogue less convincing, issues real but acting not real, stilted, cop arrest unlikely without evidence…

4. Did you identify with any of the characters? If so, who?

54 participants identified with at least one character: 15 with Marlena, 10 with Clare, 8 with the Tattooed Man, and 3% with Dale and Wilhelm. Others identified with a combination of characters with 3 saying they identified with all characters.

5. Do you think that students Dale and Clare have anything to offer to the development of Sometown? If so, what? If not, why not?

50 participants thought that Dale and Clare had something to offer, while 6 thought they didn't. Other participants responded with a more qualified, maybe.

Clare's insights into social process linked with Dale's business knowledge …Lot of energy and enthusiasm but naive and inexperienced …

6. What sort of things do you think could happen next?

Marlena will stay in background assisting Wilhelm to organise community meeting to look at what people want for Sometown. He personally approaches the different groups. They get a clash with locals, with Maori, with Asians, with the artist in residence (community arts scheme). They all have their own agendas and well meaning goals. It is not until a retired businesswoman enters Sometown…

Tattooed man confronts Wilhelm. Dale and Clare move permanently to Sometown. Tattooed man suffers "injustice" in jail. Tattooed man returns to cafe crazed and upset, confronts Wilhelm. A community meeting is staged for ideas of how to improve Sometown….

7. Hope and Despair: how was your ending

This exercise began with participants being asked to indicate how hopeful or despairing your Act 2 is. Is it 'happy ever after' or a tragedy? Participants were asked to indicate on the graph – H hopeful and D despair

H -………..……….………..……….………..………..………..……….-D

(There were 10 marked spaces on the sheet and on the floor, as is reflected in the graph line above)

They were then asked to meet with others who were similarly hopeful or despairing and list why they were hopeful or despairing, and then swap places, to see from the other point of view.

> Illustrations of hopeful:
> Cos the 1st Act had a positive direction - they all seemed to be working it out.
> They were basically caring people, some who had personal experiences of abuse. They were aware of intolerances….
>
> Illustrations of despair:
> Dale and Claire get beaten up by riff-raff causing them to leave and NEVER RETURN
> Koffs go broke
> Try to organize a meeting that doesn't happen due to apathy…

8. Final question. In one word, or phrase, what is your first reaction to this play now?

7 thought-provoking, 5 more positive, 4 interesting…

Evaluation and feedback

Evaluation was crucially important to this research and there was an endeavour to build in a rigorous evaluation process throughout the whole of the research process and long after research sessions.

The questions for *The Silent Connectors* research evaluation included:

1. How can we ensure people and their needs and aspirations are at the centre of the research process throughout?
2. How do we ensure full participation in the power to name and frame, including what counts as evidence?
3. How do we ensure co-learning is ongoing, including learning from mistakes?

The observation and evaluation sheets note that generally speaking, participants engaged with the film and the follow-up facilitated processes. However, not all participants were happy and the process had its challenges, and in the spirit of this research it was important we learned from these experiences and built this into improved research sessions.

Comparatively few participants took time to give written feedback at the end of sessions, largely I think because at the close of the session people were often either fully engaged with conversation or needing to leave for their next commitment. There were a few exceptions: for instance, I personally asked a young Maori participant if he would mind giving feedback, which I could put in writing. I knew he had been cajoled into participating in the research and he said verbally that he had very much liked the experience. I thought I might get from him some ideas on how I could encourage others to attend. He said quite simply:

> I liked being asked and to be thought I had something of value to offer and to be asked without strings attached. It was good you weren't trying to sell me anything or get me to join anything like GreenPeace.

Another comment came from a student we asked to stay to assist with the evaluation of the first session. She said, "Well carried out, nothing faulty - close to perfect - 10 out of 10."

There was one session at the university which did not go very well. After the session three participants posted the following messages:

> You guys need to be a lot clearer about your objectives. Let the audience know what they need to do in order to understand and answer the questions to their best ability. I also think you need answers for the 'was it a film or sociological theory/example?'
> Could have been more specific regarding the positive/negative projection i.e. re - plot or message. So that all responses are level field.
> Very innovative research process, but perhaps over-structured. Didn't allow for responses that are outside the square.

In the post-session evaluations we (the facilitator, observer and I, the researcher) looked at what went well, what could have been improved and how we would implement these improvements in the next session. In this particular session I realised I had not been clear in my introduction and this led to some confusion about the research process and my role in it. For instance, I had not been clear that any response or no response was fine. One of the participants had not been sure if questions such as "what annoyed you" and "what was real" were to be answered in sociological terms, or in artistic or literary terms. Further, because of the odd numbers and the fact this participant did not want to be on or near any of the others on the "hope +despair" line I made myself available to partner this person. I offered to do this in good faith and was very comfortable about writing down all the comments so they would be faithfully recorded. However, by making myself available as a partner, I had inadvertently given the message to the participant and from some others in the group that I wanted to separate this participant from the group and not enable free expression, hence the comment that we "Didn't allow for responses that are outside the square."

Another problem which did not help matters was that I had arranged for the audio visual people to set up the technology at the beginning of the session, but the person arrived, put

on the DVD and then rushed to the next job. The DVD was set on fast forward and high volume. We managed to stop the fast-forward, but this meant the film began part way through. We were not able to adjust the volume so the DVD remained at higher volume than was comfortable throughout. I do think this impacted on the way this group engaged with the film and follow-on process. The following are some reflections on the learning:

Mediating Film and web technologies

In spite of always planning ahead and checking beforehand that we had the correct technology and it would work well, we were surprised to have problems so often with technologies. Given the case I make for easy portability of the DVD, this was problematic. When the technical quality of the film was good, for instance, when the sound was clear and not too loud and the picture was good, the film was seen to hold people's attention and the whole room saw it clearly. We were often very disappointed with technicians who would promise to come but were not on time, did not get it properly started, or to find they only had video facilities when we had asked for DVD (we did have video but the DVD was a much better quality). On one occasion we had a power cut which was difficult and time-consuming. Conversely, on the odd occasion when we did have good technical support, this was much appreciated.[25]

As previously noted, it was also disappointing not to have had more time and resources to ensure the website was working smoothly so people who wanted could continue conversations. From what I have heard, many did try without success. However, much work went into designing the research website and it has worked well as a site for people to visit, read about the research and send material, and there was some very worthwhile interaction, comments and feedback.

Numbers attending research sessions

As I look through my research diary I note how very stressful I found it to be organizing research sessions, for, to borrow the cliché, it often felt like herding cats. It was really

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[25] Special thanks to such as Dave, Julian and Gill for their most valued assistance

difficult trying to get the times and venues to suit enough people. I would often spend hours setting up a session only to find at the last minute it did not work, or only a few would turn up. Interestingly, once the sessions started then the size of the group did not seem to matter. The numbers in a group ranged from 6 to 14.

Research venues

Stronks designed what she called the road-show plan, consisting of four areas which were the same within each location: reception where people were welcomed, DVD/video showing, where people watched the film, 'Sometown' where people engaged in group "hopeful and despairing" work, and refreshments, where people socialised and enjoyed food and drink. In this way we could quite literally set up at any location, and so replicate the research process. The locations varied from university lecture theatres to community centres to a large garage and smallish home. While we did not originally intend to include a private home this session was, according to our evaluation, "pleasant, productive, small group (6 participants), cosy household, and a good indication of how it can run" (in such a venue).

Inclusive of Diversity

The aim was to be very inclusive of diversity and this was somewhat of a challenge. I think it was helpful to have the three research session roles with flexibility for some interchange between roles. For instance, although John Gallagher was officially 'the observer' it was important he could step out of this role into a more active support role and I take over the observation if it were thought appropriate. In one instance, John was able to help ensure the youngest participant, a boy of twelve, was not put off by material that was "clearly above his head." The boy very much enjoyed participating and contributed willingly as a result. John was also able to assist with Japanese students because he had some basic knowledge of Japanese language. I took over his observation role in this particular session. On the other hand, when I noted a young female participant was struggling expressing herself in writing, I was able to quietly assist and she seemed to be much more comfortable with the process after this intervention. I also partnered a Samoan participant and that seemed to work well. In the very last session, I was able to

drive the oldest participant, who was well into her eighties, home at the end of the session. This participant was clearly getting tired and it was helpful to know that I could leave for a short time. We did encourage participants to use their own language; several Japanese and one Middle Eastern participant took up this option, and this was later translated into English.

Time constraints

The stage one session was just over one hour. Initially people did not have enough time for writing their second acts and I was really concerned that this would be a loss for the research. It took a few sessions to get the right balance. In our overall evaluation we concluded that, "Time constraints are not necessarily bad if people leave feeling good and wanting to say more."

Refreshments

There was very good feedback on food. Stronks arranged the food, managed to budget frugally and yet produce the right food for the right occasion. People tended to stay on and enjoy food.

Introducing second phase of research

Many participants indicated in the first session that they were left feeling a little unfinished and would like to participate in the second stage. The one hour time slot for the first stage suited in the logistical sense, but it did not leave much time for exploration and reflection. I was also interested in having more of a sense of the spoken conversation: in the first stage we had relied heavily on the written record. For this stage we used tape recorders and set up the space as if all were seated at tables in the Koff's café, where the film concluded.

Twenty people participated in the second stage of the research. We had intended to have one session; however, it was difficult to organise a venue and time to suit enough people so we had one group of six at a location at university for a group which included students and staff and another group of fourteen in the locality. Both groups were made up from

those who had attended the first stage of the research process and both groups included a spread of age, culture, background etc. As before, participants were promised anonymity. Participants were told their conversations would be taped; however, their anonymity would be protected. Tapes were transcribed by Faye Hawtin, an independent social science researcher who did not attend the research sessions.

Stage Two questions

Stage Two questions with a very short summary of participants' responses follows:[26]

1. Recalling place and special connections

Think of a place where you have lived - it can be where you are now, where you have felt some sort of feeling of comfort, security, belonging or connectedness to the place and its people. On this sheet of paper note/draw or in any way indicate what makes this place a place you want or wanted it to be. Responses included:

> The "Bank Walk" is where we as children went every (well, almost every) afternoon with our mothers – 4-6 families joined together for these "walks"…
> Corner dairies where shopkeeper chats is a nice feel good community indicator. People interacting in public places, kids playing soccer in a park and including 'strangers'…

2. What makes each of us afraid?

With these memories we will watch the DVD again, imagining that we also live in Sometown, and we live alongside the characters. And at the end we find ourselves in the cafeteria… After watching the DVD…Remember you are living in Sometown with

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[26] For a more detailed account of participants' responses please refer to the appendix or the archive section of the research website www.village-connectons.com

family and friends. Write on an A4, what you most fear might happen to us, individually, and to family and friends. What is it that makes each of us afraid? Be specific. Please give examples of things you have experienced or witnessed that you think could happen to you in Sometown.

> I have been discriminated against due to my looks – long hair. Also my keenness on discussing politics (national and international) seems to create anxiety, trepidation and even fear in many people – I think many people feel safe and secure in their world-views and do not wish to hear the views of a conflict theorist like myself…
> Fear of being framed for crime I know nothing about or because of my colour or nationality…
> I think that the other thing that I feel sometimes is very conscious of being white in a situation where there are people of other races and wondering how I'm perceived, whether I'm privileged or arrogant of these things and that I can be afraid in a subconscious way…
> Property being destroyed/tagged making property prices go down so that I can't buy a house elsewhere because if I sold my house in Sometown I'd hardly get anything for it (if anyone wanted to even buy it) so I'd be TRAPPED…

3. What are our fears related to?

We now find ourselves in the cafe; the Koffs and Dale and Clare have gone off to the police station. Tables with glasses, carafes with drink, muffins heated, candles, tablecloths, and recording equipment. Come together, around the tables.

When we look at our fears, which people and elements of Sometown are they related to? (the following is from transcripts of taped conversation).

> For me it was fear of the unknown - the changes in store for the town, things like what businesses and what would take their place if anything at all…
> I'm never afraid of people I meet on the street but how people look at me and what people are really going to say when they see its me because it's a problem when they always look at me first…
> You're afraid that the kind of vandalism that you see evidence of around town is going to be directed against you…

4. What is in Sometown to give a feeling of security and value?

There was obviously a group of people living there and it had been a thriving town too in the past...
What gives me comfort is people that can listen…

5. What are the opportunities for economic advancement?

I guess the language school does in a way open up the possibility of Asian advancement or something...
We just don't know what could develop from the situation supposing they do manage to get better communication, how could that transform into economic advancement...
So we have got a population of students who do have a certain amount of disposable income and that's an opportunity.

6. What groups and networks and links are operating?

There's the loyalty amongst people who have lived there for several generations…
Certainly there are business networks in the town and maybe it's about getting them together…
There'd be a few well-intentioned individuals trying to network you into something…

7. Reflect on the silent connections you perceive are operating

Connection between the tattooed man and his army past and his army friend in Singapore…
Silent prejudices unite people in their concerns and Community "watch" – spying out of window, keeping tabs on community…
Tattoos – Jewish, Maori…

8. Questions or statements for the people in Sometown

> To the Tattooed Man: Why did you ignore the students when they tried to talk to you?
> … Why were you rude to Clare?
> To Clare: Why did you marry Dale?
> To Marlena: How do you de-stress?
> To Mr Koff: Why do you yield to your wife? …
> To all: Why did no one know his [the Tattooed Man's] name?

Sitting with the question, to open up new questions and see new connections

Participants asked the Tattooed Man, "Why did you ignore the students when they tried to talk to you?" "Why were you rude to Clare?" … and the answer came - from one of the participants:

> I understand why you did not want to talk with Clare. You must get sick of that. Maybe she wanted drugs. I often get asked for drugs. I get sick of it.

Translated into literary script for Act 2 this led to the explanation that (here Rick is the Tattooed Man talking with Mrs. Koff)

> **Rick:** O.K. Mrs. Koff, I was wrong, but do you know how many nice, white, young, middle class people think that because I'm a Maori with tattoos and a leather jacket I'm also into drugs?
>
> (**Mrs. Koff** thinks about it - pause.)

I am reminded of the many misunderstandings and costly and frightening consequences that occur because so few people think to ask questions, to check out, to problematise communication and not just presume understanding.

No one asked another question I would have asked which was, why do the Tattooed Man and the Asian students have no voice? The Tattooed Man and Asian students obviously connect with each other, but it is silent connecting, at least silent to much in mainstream society which itself remains disconnected from their conversations.

It was the ease with which many speak about, or on behalf of people who are categorised as non-mainstream that led to this research. I have been concerned that most perception of "others" tends to come not from personal experience, but to be shaped by media images and, far from being encouraged to make direct personal connections with those who are from backgrounds different from our own, the reverse is the case. Policies to encourage multiculturalism, in New Zealand's case also biculturalism, can accentuate a fear of diversity, as it has in the United States (Putnam, 2007).

Mr Koff had presumed the Tattooed Man and Asians students were connecting over the sale and supply of drugs, and this was quite possible. In New Zealand as elsewhere, diverse groups are coming together, not on the basis of culture, but around projects - it can be for the distribution and sale of drugs,[27] or it can be around more socially constructive forms of interaction. Some projects are of benefit to us all and our locality and others are a threat.

The problem is, because we do not connect, there is often no way of knowing the difference and the results are often misunderstanding and social fragmentation and polarisation as illustrated in *The Silent Connectors*.

Social development research expressed in developmental narrative

80 'knowledgeable actors' provided very rich material – or sentiment which was significant to contribute to socially-shared symbolic packaging or narrative framing, for the construction of not just one act, but potentially of several acts. However, it was just one act I was able to produce for this thesis.[28] After completing the research I contacted Martin Howells who had agreed to assist in the writing of the second act. Keeping in mind the criticism of the first act which was that it was too wordy, Howells sent the

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[27] Refer to The Press, NZ gangs linked to Asian drug cartels, October 23, 2007 A:5 for illustration.

[28] For a copy of the draft for Act 2 please refer to the appendix.

following email, which I think lays out neatly the two main issues to consider when crafting a developmental script:

> We both agree that the next "story" needs to be even more economically written. From my point of view this means having a good story that can be told with as little exposition as possible. This directly impacts on the perceived quality of the actors (particularly when there is limited rehearsal time) and the credibility of the story.
>
> However, I am also aware that you need to convey key elements in order to satisfy your academic and sociological criteria. Basically I need to know what key points (or arguments) you want to make or present in the film.
>
> There are any number of potential storylines that could be developed, but any one of them would need a dramatic, or tragic, or comic (etc) series of events to make the finished product satisfactory from an audience point of view.
>
> Perhaps you could give me some idea about what creative line you would like the story to take. i.e. What would you like to see happen next? … How do we want to leave the audience? Hope this of some use.

I responded to Howells' email by doing a draft of a 'second act,' incorporating many of the responses. Based on this, Howells then wrote a synopsis of the second act and later, after some discussion, the draft of the second act itself. While my emphasis was on how to incorporate research participants responses into a local development (or locally ground cosmopolitan) narrative in ways which enhanced agency, Howells' was on ensuring the second act was "a good story … satisfactory from an audience point of view." As I shall seek to demonstrate, Ricoeur's theory of narrativity mediates this creative tension between everyday world, here the responses of participants and the shared world of the text (*The Silent Connectors*) leading to new possibilities for local agency and shared imaginaries.

The first and major point is the way in which participants are able to influence the creation of community narrative in the research process, illustrating the potential of what can also happen in real-world network locality development. This is because narrative provides genres that afford a space for the interplay in the course of a plot of what Ricoeur refers to as "discordances and concordances" (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 31), or in more

sociological terms of this thesis, fragmentations and connections. Unlike in real life, where conflict can be debilitating, in a literary narrative form conflict can be energising in that it drives the plot and keeps people interested in seeing how the conflict is to be resolved.

In a narrative emplotment, the interplay of conflict and harmonization is depicted and worked out within, and between, several levels of setting or time frame in a compressed or condensed literary frame. This understanding to time is crucial when reflecting on the possibilities and constraints on local development in the context of wider independencies. These levels of time include personal, interpersonal, local, wider societal and global, historical, contemporary, and cosmological time frames. For instance, the conflicts Mr Koff was wrestling with could be seen as consisting of the still present, historical, dangerous and traumatic time with the arrest of his Jewish mother by Nazis near the end of World War 2. He was also wrestling with the current prevailing global network time, which is differently dangerous and traumatic as the entrance of large multinational firms, with their large-scale globally-based technological and information-networks, made it impossible for his local sawmilling business to compete. Current fast-changing times have helped to produce general economic dislocation and disconnection causing Mr Koff much insecurity, anxiety and fear.

However, while the condensation of various times is hugely important to better understand conditions needed for local forms of development, the true importance of narrative time for Ricoeur, is when the narrative enables human beings to situate and orientate themselves in these various contexts or frames in terms of their own temporality, of their own deeper concerns and possibilities (Ricoeur, 1990, p. 52). In other words, development processes, far from being out there, as something we 'should' or 'ought' to be concerned about, are about time that is to be based on *Sorge*, or care. What is to be created and interpreted in the text is a proposed world which I could inhabit and in which I could project my "own most possibilities" (Ricoeur, 1990). Importantly, Lash also theorises communal forms of care (Lash, 1994) and in Sometown this means the care of its inhabitants, and, of course, because the inhabitants are themselves more

widely connected to other parts of New Zealand and the world, then this form of care can be seen as ultimately related to that of the planet itself.

The second point to note from Ricoeur is how narrative drama (including here film) can be seen to provide its readers or audiences with a mediatory bridge between the world (mimesis 1) as they had experienced it before their encounter with the work (mimesis 2), and what they might be able to make of this world afterwards (mimesis 3).

Network locality practices and protocols

Technologically-mediated Network Locality narrative is able to take postmodern critique seriously by bringing social fragments together rather than by multiplying and accentuating them. Narrative can afford ways of doing this as a literary genre that can progressively work to build up concordance out of fragmentations or discordances. The issue, then, is to have processes and protocols in social research methodology and thence also in practical locality development that ensure inclusivity. I draw on Lash (1994) to argue for a "radical hermeneutic" of full participation. Lash's point is this is now much more practicable if there is access to information and communication structures, and participants are on the creating, rather than simply the receiving end.

I begin with the assumption there is a need for protocols and practices for a fully participatory process and an aim of the research has been to illustrate or test these protocols.

Expressing sentiment and making it socially shareable

Fundamental to participation in this research is agency at the outset, or in Heidegger's terms, an authentic expression of ideas and feelings, whereby participants can express their own sense of "being in the world" based on their own "sorge" or authentic forms of "care" (Heidegger, 1962). It also sought to elicit a shared sense of the pre-figured world, or mimesis 1, including less processed impressions of the social terrain as seen and

experienced by participants, which later can be seen again in relation to the emergent, configured world, the textually expressed world of Ricoeur's mimesis 2, which opens up new seeing and new being for mimesis 3.

The question for agency around care in the first instance is can I be authentic? Can I be honest? This foundational work is important, for it is laying the ground for processes which can enable the transformation of what Mills refers to as people's personal or private feelings and problems into public issues (Mills, 1977). It is also laying the context for what Geertz described as the process of transforming sentiment into significance and making it socially available (Geertz cited in Ricoeur, 1991, p. 316), and what Strydom describes as movement from personal level, "micro- framing" to a context where such micro-frames are achieving some success through processes of meso-frame competition, from which they could emerge as commonly shared "master frames" (Strydom, 2000) or, in the context of *The Silent Connectors* exercise, frame packaging that shapes the second act.

This framing of issues is not one of frame competition or contestation at the outset; rather, the 'sentiment' expressed by participants is given space to express itself and became socially shared in a narrative framing.

As with the illustration of the framing of the nuclear free campaign in New Zealand, before finding practical ways of shared social action for New Zealand to became "nuclear free," there is first a need to be able to express fear of nuclear war, or of becoming a nuclear target and share these concerns. In the narrative context of the tragedy, Aristotle refers to the need to configure material aesthetically, emotionally and intellectually in order to achieve a deeper shared catharsis (Aristotle, 1951). The main point here being that it is often difficult for people to move beyond unexpressed fears and concerns, or sentiments, so it is important they can be expressed at an early stage of the research process.

In terms of this process, two aspects of the methodology were important: one that participants were able to respond immediately, individually and anonymously and two, this *anonymous* response could be seen on the website, alongside other participants' responses. Having protocols to ensure participants could, as far as was possible, respond authentically, was thought to be conducive to a reflective process whereby participants could move on from fears and irritations to begin – together, to uncover, or discover ways to move forward.

Uncovering and sharing diverse interpretations

The film's depiction of a locality in disarray was intended to be seen as simulating local community or a microcosm of a New Zealand town and providing a common point of focus, enabling the research participants to build a shared understanding of the issues at stake. However, it was important to explore how real the relationship between the film and the everyday was for participants and also not just presume all were seeing the same thing, because they happened to be viewing the same film.

From Network Locality text to Network Locality development

As Gadamer points out, individuals, by their very nature, have a limited horizon of knowledges and perceptions (Gadamer, 1988). In the research responses it was clear that there was a multiplicity of understanding and perception. For instance, some saw Clare as bossy, Dale as a right winger, the police as unfairly portrayed and men as not thinking before they speak. As the writer of the play this was not at all what I sought to depict.

Ricoeur refers to the "surplus meaning," in text, by which he means that the text is open to diverse and new interpretations. There can be no simple, final or closed authoritative rendering of the text, or for that matter, for meanings in everyday life. Delanty points out the creative potential of this when this interpretive capacity is a shared reflexive activity (Delanty, 1999, pp. 62-63). Local inhabitants not only come to see and understand themselves, but very importantly, this reflexivity also enables them to see how they could also act in new, different ways.

Integrative narrative symbolic packaging in everyday language

The Silent Connectors narrative drew on many narratives or forms of frame packaging, local, global, social, cultural, and economic and so on, and configured them together into a plot line. Although some participants had reservations about some aspects of the film, particularly with respect to the artistic representation, they tended nonetheless to accept the fictional symbolic packaging of the overall project, local development possibilities in the context of wider interdependencies.

As stated, knowledge is transgressive (not limited to disciplines). Most people in localities know this instinctively and easily move between and within social-cultural, economic and ecological issues and concerns. This research supports a process to enable interconnections to be a natural aspect of local development. In considering what a conversation about possible New Zealand futures might look like, it can be helpful to have a methodology which brings together these many elements so as to provide a common focus which can be socially shared.

The problem is that current concepts and practices deployed by local community, academia and policy tend to keep social/cultural/economic/ecological/local/global locked into separate silos (groups, agencies, departments and institutions) from which they have considerable difficulty in extricating themselves when they try to connect with one another so they can develop appropriate and effective research questions and policy.

Academia can help if it can connect

To overcome the above silos academia and policy are trying to turn to multi- or transdisciplinary teams and projects. However, this raises the question not only of how departments, institutions and agencies can connect internally and with one another, but even more importantly, how they can connect also with society. This thesis suggests an

excellent entrée to understand and engage with our increasingly fragmented amorphous society would be to support and work with Network Localities.

A major aspect of the research was engagement of academia with local community (Network Locality) via a transdisciplinary methodology. In the filmed narrative students Clare and Dale represented academically-based social and economic development. Research was carried out at Canterbury University and at local community locations. Though seldom explicitly referring to "the university," participants tended to see university learned ideas, thinking and skills significant to Sometown's development. This is perhaps not surprising given the high number of participants with tertiary qualifications. However, many participants also added that 'everyday' experience was also needed.

A significant number of participants noted and appreciated the energy and ideas and optimism coming from the students. They were also seen as contributing communication and connecting skills. In terms of the transdisciplinary model which I seek to develop, entailing a collaborative approach, including within academia as well as between academia and local community, students were seen as able to contribute productively

However, there was also a concern that students were not part of the local community and contributing from afar would not work. This response supports my argument that for the transdisciplinary projects in local community to work effectively for local people, there is a need for ongoing connection with local publics in ways which support the development of their agency. For this, there is a need for connecting and communicative practices and protocols to be developed and clarified with local publics.

In summary, the overwhelming response was yes, the students did have knowledge, vision, energy and skills to contribute, but that their academic and theoretical knowledge needed to relate to local practical knowledge.

Global and local issues expressible in narrative form

Participants were asked about what economic opportunities they saw, both local and international. While social theorists often refer to the 'economy' and possibly see the need for the social/cultural economic and ecological connection, this research process is designed to model how social science could facilitate such triple bottom line connecting (socio-cultural, economic and ecological) local through to national and global, to help re-balance otherwise global-to-local networks and flows.

Research material pointed to globalisation, particularly problems with corporatism, developers and so on. However, participants' responses also raised possibilities of local-local through to global connections, in what could be represented in narrative terms as unfolding, forward and backward movements of fortune and misfortune, discordances and concordances, unbalancing and re-balancing. In development in the Network Locality this process could be seen as safe ways for local inhabitants to contextualise, explore and test out knowledge safely and productively in local contexts.

From indeterminate conversations to inventive solutions

Communication-based projects aimed at bringing people together, particularly involving the arts, were very strongly suggested in the research.

The Koff's café was also referred to many times as a place for people to meet. Again, the idea of mediating spaces and places or third spaces has been referred to in this thesis, and the café was an integral middle space.

The research structure was set up to support conditions for participants to "play" with ideas and concepts, including, but not exclusively, bringing in critique. The responses from participants strongly moved towards concordance, or harmony, with a sense of solutions ready to hand.

Visionary and practical

The affordances of Ricoeur's depiction of narrative, with human care, "what we might hope for" enabled movement towards new possibilities or opportunities.

However, very important was the dialectical relationship between hopeful and despairing perspectives. As Ricoeur describes, this dialectic is not didactic, rather it is an ongoing and evolving process, a spiral rather than a circle (Ricoeur, 1986, p. 60).

Synopsis, contextualised in the theory, referring to the research

In order to further contextualise the theory with the research participants' contributions, I conclude with a synopsis of the two acts of the drama in the context of the social theory of modernity as described by Lash and Delanty (Delanty, 1999; Lash, 1994). I then seek to interweave the theory and research material.

This thesis has been about an abiding project of public or citizen participation, autonomy or agency that was articulated and launched with the Enlightenment but suffered significant curtailment, especially with the over-institutionalisation of the first modernity. The relationship between agency and institutions is problematised. It can be seen that the original promise of participation has been constrained and was recovered in some measure with the beginnings of a reflexive, second phase of modernity. This phase was marked by the rise of new social movements. However, as has been discussed, social movements have lost much of their ability to facilitate change, partly as a result of success in having their concerns expressed and contested in social discourse to become widely accepted and implemented master frames (Eder, 1999; Strydom, 2000). Further public discursive and policy framing has been considerably superseded in the risk society (Beck, 1992), by communitarian framing and that of security-focused media, politicians and new forms of nongovernmental groups (Touraine, 1995).

My own shift was from that of a nation-wide, NGO-framed, peace-issue involvement to that of communications project-centred, local community development. Even if social

movements can come and go with the success as much as the failure of their issues, people still need to be able to create frames about what happens in their local areas. What has become an issue is whether new communications, technologies and media serve to diminish local communication, or are able to be adapted to build this communication, becoming also a tool for local discourse and development (Delanty, 2003a).

The trends and impacts of new communications technologies and media are brought out in *The Silent Connectors*. In Act 1, but for one outsider, Rick Himona (a.k.a. the Tattooed Man), few in Sometown have thought constructively about their situation and about projects to help address it. Rick has brought a sense of the world, as experienced in Asian countries, and possibilities of communications technologies to the area. Rick mixes well with the International (mainly Asian) language students who have come to study in the area, but is viewed with suspicion by café owner Mr Koff.

Mr Koff has also had considerable experience of the world beyond Sometown, but much of this has been dangerous and traumatic. Mr Koff is suspicious of new and unfamiliar people including the "local riff-raff" who were increasingly visible with socio-economic conditions in Sometown on the wane. The climate of fear sees Mr Koff himself feeling threatened, calling the police in to arrest Rick and sending the young students, Clare and Dale, off out of his café and from the town.

Sometown had been a flourishing place when one of the main characters, Clare was a child. Clare is now a student studying social development. She returns to this childhood haunt with her new, management studies student husband, Dale. Those childhood days were before social, economic and cultural pressures were mounting and threatening to implode. While there were some developmental projects being discussed by a few people, there was little local discourse about development or about fora for this, let alone sophisticated knowledge of the global context from which arose many of the challenges and problems, as well as perhaps some interesting new opportunities.

Policy for new and changing situations

It is in this context that questions raised by Prime Minster Clark about the need "to engage grass roots organisations and communities in debate about the kind of future we want for our country" (Clark, 2005) can be engaged with. It is also the context for the questions raised by the Ministry of Social Development:-

> How can we maximise opportunities for economic and social growth through diversity?
> How can we minimise the risks of inter-group tension and hostility?
> How is it best to promote diversity and innovation whilst maintaining social cohesion and national unity?

Certainly the opening up of the global economy has been experienced by many as somewhat disorienting, and this is reflected in the socio-economic and cultural divisions as depicted in the down-and-out appearance of some of Sometown and several of the local characters in the film. Ad hoc policy and cultural responses reflected in the film, then as now, frequently include barely tolerating many new immigrants or temporary students, seeing their value as cash cows and human capital, rather than as interesting new people with whom to develop friendly and potentially mutually productive relationships. Such relationships could include, for example, innovative collaborative projects for new forms of connections in order to better negotiate with the global networked economy, as was illustrated in the Network Locality chapter. This approach is what the Tattooed Man of the first act is revealed in the second act to be nurturing, as suggested by a number of the research participants.

Act 2: new discursivity and new local framing

It is in this context of social fragmentation and projects of recovery that the discordances and attempted concordances of the drama are played out. In the first act, the former prevail markedly over the latter as the inhabitants seem prone to suspect the worst of one another and of visitors. Tension escalates into intensifying patterns of social rejection and hostility that seems be culminating in the running out of town of Clare and Dale and in the violent arrest of the Tattooed Man.

It is after seeing this sequence on film that the research participants are asked to give their analysis of what has been happening, and how they think the people of Sometown might develop their locality in ways that conform more to their own most individual and shared possibilities, what they most deeply care about – what they fear, what they hope. This research input can be expected to take the second act rather more in the direction of concordance in contrast to the reversals of fortune for all concerned in the first act. However, this is not to pretend that, in not much over one hour of facilitated work, Sometown can come up with fully credible development directions that will take them through the complex new socio-economic situation, and surmount numerous obstacles. The exercise is of course to be seen rather as suggestive and indicative of what could be done in a more extended, real-world process.

However, the considerable advantages of this shared process are important to note. For instance, various kinds of forward movements and reversals can be played out as new possibilities are heuristically explored such as would not be so readily possible in scattered, everyday life, or even in organised community group or political meetings, especially in a comparable, short period of concentrated time. An added major strength comes from the blending of the developmental narrative creation with the use of technology, a DVD, film and Internet-based discussion board. With this digital interface, small group discussions can be carried out in all sorts of possible locations, from homes to halls and educational institutions; and with the Internet, cumulative locality-wide input becomes possible at any time of night or day. All inhabitants potentially can share in the discourse about their individual and shared utopic hopes. Worst-case scenarios or various failure paths can also be usefully traced out in a shared context where creative and innovative options are also explored. More effective, more widely understood and mutually accepted and pragmatic pathways can also then be identified and mapped out.

Again, drawing on suggestions from participants, the main events of the second act include the attempt, unnecessary as it turns out, of the protagonist Mr Koff of Koff Inn to retrieve the arrested Tattooed Man from an unjustified arrest. A new source of dramatic action ensues with the daubing of his café, and other ethnic businesses in his block, with

racist graffiti. Meanwhile a retired millionairess, Ann Taite has taken it on herself to get some community communication and development underway with a local stage production of *The Pied Piper*. Two main protagonists of the film, including Mr Koff and the Tattooed Man (no longer "silent,") are press-ganged by the energetic Ms Taite into the production. Rick turns out to have a strong background in international relations as an ex-army person who has had several postings overseas, can speak a number of languages and is completing a doctorate in sociology. Related to this, he is covertly trialling some of his local-international developmental ideas in a project in Sometown.

The action of the second act comes to a climax in a television program, "Sometown this Week," which is intended to be about the racist graffiti. Participants in this are Mr Koff, the local police superintendent, and a long-time, elected councillor who is also behind a project to set up a casino in Sometown. Things come to a head when Mr Koff, having got some research done by Rick, accuses the councillor of being behind the graffiti in order to get the business owners on the block to sell up to make way for the casino. *The Pied Piper* cast is watching the program -

Mr. Koff takes a deep breath and walks on stage.

We hear the audience cheer as **Mr. Koff** belts out his first line:

Mr. Koff: People of Sometown….. Ooops, sorry, Hamlin!

Huge roar from audience.

The End.

The act ends with an ecstatic cheering cast looking forward to a - maybe - successful production. Sometown will live happily ever after. Perhaps.

Sentiment shared and inscribed in publicly sharable text

In the research session a question asked of Mr Koff was "Why do you yield to your wife?"

This question was similar to another sent to the researcher by email after a session. The participant said:

> A big thing that came out of the DVD for me was that the men were rash and the women seem to be right, the elderly woman especially. Is this a popular concept, men not thinking before they speak? There was no question where I could answer this.

There was no question for him to relate to in the research; however, in keeping with the inclusive nature of the Network Locality development narrative, this participant's 'sentiment' strongly influenced a turn in the direction of the plot.

I should say that this direction was picked up by Howells, a male. I probably wouldn't have given it such emphasis. I say this because there will always be multiple ways to tell a tale – and there will be selectivity, however this process is open and there are opportunities for participants to say if they feel their responses have not been taken seriously and there are always opportunities for more stories by more people.

From the participant's perspective, Mrs Koff "seems to be right" and Mr Koff is "rash" and "doesn't think before speaking" and appears to "yield to his wife." In the Silent Connectors text:

> Mrs Koff: My husband thinks if you ignore a problem it goes away.

> Mr. Koff: (To the sergeant) I don't think enough, that's the trouble, my wife usually does all my thinking for me.

Later, the tension builds as Mr. Koff is being given a hard time when being interviewed for a television programme.

Cast 1:　　　　　They're not giving him a chance.

Cast 2:　　　　　They're treating him like an idiot.

Cast 3:　　　　　… A foreigner!

Insert: Mr. Koff looking downcast and out of his depth.

Mrs Koff:　　　　　Poor Wilhelm.

Then, at last, towards the end of the programme, concordance or a satisfactory ending for Mr Koff,

Suddenly, **Mr. Koff** interrupts with unexpected vehemence.

Mr. Koff:　　　　　Too bloody right you have?

A moment of stunned silence.

Nathan:　　　　　Hold on there, Mr Koff.

Mr. Koff:　　　　　I've held on ever since I sat in this seat. Now it's
my turn.

Mr Koff uses his time to good effect.

The cameras then move from Mr Koff to the home audience.

Insert: The Cast & Mrs Koff wide-eyed and open-mouthed.

Sc 13c   The Koff's Living Room (Cont'd)

The cast jump up and cheer except **Mrs. Koff** - in shock,

Slowly a smile grows.

Mrs Koff: *(To herself)* That's my Wilhelm.

In this way, a participant's sentiment was made significant and inscribed in a socially shared text, in the research, a narrative text built up via the Internet and film. It should be noted that most of the participants' expressions of sentiment were able to be incorporated into the narrative and given more of less emphasis.

My argument is that in the research process and Network Locality narrative, participant's expression of otherwise privately felt sentiment thought by them to be significant, is a first step in achieving practical social agency.

A vocal statement is of itself simply a fleeting event. However, it's import or meaning can become influential in wider contexts of time and space if it is inscribed in certain kinds of socially shared text, including here, narrative text shared via the Internet and film. Fictional narrative provides many affordances for fluid and flexible condensation of the diverse responses of the numerous participants.

Balances, literary and social, disturbed and restored in ongoing emplotment

In the world of the literary text there is creative tension about whether and how conflict will be resolved. There is a need for an end point from which the story can be perceived as forming a whole. The end need not be 'happy ever after' but it does need to be in some way, emotionally and aesthetically satisfying.

As has already been stated, in most cases the research process involved just over one hour of participants' time, so the time spent for creative reflection in the shared world of the research project, away from the everyday, could only hope to provide an indication of how an extended process of configuration could lead to all seeing more possibilities for local development.

In real life, or in a simulated exercise over a longer period, more acts would be produced to allow a picture of the related development process to unfold that would point to clearer developmental directions and activities (mimesis 3), including some tangible planning and action that could be effected in the lifeworld. Then there would be scope for more drama that also incorporated evaluation and opening up of further horizons of development.

For this literary text, as, to a large extent in everyday life, there is a practical and emotional need to see how concordances can be drawn out of discordances, how balances that come to be disturbed can be then restored. In the joint quest for concordance to overcome discordances, co-discoverers in *The Silent Connectors* research could find themselves seeking out and uncovering new possibilities of connection that will enable them to overcome discordances and reach some concordance or harmony. Of course, in the extended mimesis 2, the process of uncovering is apt to throw up more obstacles or discordances to be overcome.

For instance, if I were a participant I would be using the affordances of the Internet technologies as well as café and other conversations to register with the local public my strong sentiment that Mrs Koff must not be allowed to remain demoralised and subordinate when it comes to Act 3. Others might then come back at me with other perspectives. So perhaps by Acts 4 or 5 concordance in the form of some kind considered, sensitive understanding and mutual accommodation might be achieved between local yin and yang, the ways male and female see and relate to one another. In thus raising their joint levels of emotional intelligence the local inhabitants are also equipping themselves to engage all the more effectively together in a wide range of

human interactions and pursuits, including practical civic, recreational, economic and other developmental projects.

What can be conveyed in this illustration is of a local learning society that spends at least some of its time glued to *its own* screens rather than ones that beam or stream in from the outside, in ways that augment, sometimes passionate, face-to-face discussion about themselves, about their individual and their shared possibilities and destiny. A locality that is reflexive about itself in this way can position itself to more effectively relate to change by being innovative and creative and achieve the kinds of balances it wants and needs.

Being engaged with a story, albeit one with a developmental focus is one thing, but the question remains, how does this contribute to academic research and with this, robust social policy? There is a dictum: "there is nothing as practical as a good theory," and the relationship of theory and narrative and local development is discussed in the final concluding chapter.

Conclusion

> The campaign for the next election has already started, and it can be won by beginning now to engage grass roots organisations and communities in debate about the kind of future we want for our country (Clark, 2005)

> Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon.
> Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted,
> And human love will be seen at its height.
> Live in fragments no longer.
> Only connect ... (Forster, 1992)

> In the past, technology was seen as undermining community, but today in the age of 'soft' technologies, community has been given new possibilities for its expression (Delanty, 2003a, p. 167).

Connecting local everyday knowledge with theoretical and policy knowledges

I would like to propose that an important challenge for social theory, one that I have focused on in this thesis, is to clarify effective processes of engagement with local publics; in particular I see this as establishing processes of dialectical engagement and mutual learning between local everyday, theoretical, and policy knowledge frameworks. The overall aim of this form of engagement is for local publics to be in a position to construct their own agency, and construct this in ways that enable them to interact effectively both within their locality and beyond it, to meet individual and shared needs and aspirations, in ways which they deem to be desirable and practical.

We all live somewhere and as diverse, fragmenting pressures on localities and their inhabitants continue to grow, so do calls for local community to act and respond in relation to various social problems (Delanty, 2003a). Yet, as with Delanty's observation in Europe, Castells' in the United States and my own in New Zealand, local publics in local places scarcely exist, with meaningful or effective agency, except perhaps when they come together under much pressure for short periods, reactively and over some

single troubling issue (Castells, 1996).[29] The challenge to local community presented by global networks (Castells, 1996), large movements of capital and people and things (Urry, 2000), and of images, information and disinformation (Lash, 2002) and global risk such as impacts of conflict, pandemics and pressure on resources and climate (Beck, 1994), cannot be underestimated.

At issue is the problem of 'connection' in a fragmenting, polarising, and yet, as is increasingly realised, at the same time, an also interdependent world. The impacts of decisions made at national and global levels continue to distract, divert and fragment much of the locality that is then also expected to come together in order to respond as called on.

In the meantime scientific and technological innovation continues apace, and the need for practical contexts continually forces knowledge to transgress disciplinary, institutional and geographic boundaries. Yet at the same time it is becoming essential, more than ever in a world increasingly shaped by 'knowledge,' that this knowledge can be safely and productively contextualised by being explored and tested out where people live; in their local contexts (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001).

At wider, let alone local levels, commercial interests are not always noted as able to be relied on for their sensitivity and caution; while official institutions and bureaucracies become overloaded and difficult to adequately resource, as they come to be expected to manage increasingly complex and changing social environments. Then at the local level, the community or residents' groups, or protest groups, which represent the most tangible form of local agency, are typically unable to engage widely beyond themselves with most local people and their knowledges. Thus there is a need for new, local everyday innovation to be able to keep pace with scientific and technological innovation and its application. Otherwise there may be little to stop relatively differentiated theoretical,

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[29] Rural Maori are much more connected with each other than most groups in New Zealand; however, they too have to find new ways to face many new challenges.

professional and everyday knowledges continually adding to fragmentation and lists of new problems to be dealt with, thus adding to new levels of risk (Beck, 1992, 1994, 2006). However, in the meantime, and for the most part, knowledges move along their relatively separate trajectories, out of synch and out of communication with one another (Eder, 1999).

It is a major contention of this thesis that new safe and productive knowledges and praxis about the management and application of knowledges are needed in the newly emerging innovative knowledge society. It is also contended that more than ever in this context, new agency is required for local publics to construct themselves and to help appraise and apply new knowledge developments.

It is in the context of disempowering fragmentation that theorists considered in this thesis are drawn on. In diverse, but also complementary ways, these theorists point towards new possibilities for the co-construction of local publics and their agency in their immediate environment, as well as in relation to wider, ultimately global environments.

Relation to current policy issues and sociological methodological debates

Two main issues relate to current methodological debates and have relevance also for policy: first, the need to reach and engage publics, particularly including those who are in some way disadvantaged. Second, there is a need to contextualise theory and policy in the context of the wider, globally interdependent world. The question which must be raised in relation to social policy in its many fields of operation is: will its developers come to be primarily an agent of the global networks, or will social policy instead help mediate the local and national and global? If it is to mediate, then how does it connect with the local and national publics, if they are, in reality as individuals, already for the most part, strongly connected via global networks for their patterns of work, consumption, entertainment (aesthetics) and media use?

For sociology, the question of connecting with publics is not new. Mills purposely sought to connect individuals with personal problems and troubles with wider civic culture and policy for the betterment of all, and this connection, or "sociological imagination" has been an abiding theme in sociology (Mills, 1977). More recently, in 2004, Burawoy's presidential address to the American Sociological Association drew on this theme of connectivity, calling for a public sociology to connect with multiple publics. His appeal sparked huge endorsements from sociologists everywhere (Burawoy, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and much continued debate on the subject of public sociology to this day, including in New Zealand (Austrin & Farnsworth, 2007).

Public sociology and new forms of sociology-public connection

The problem is that while most sociologists seem to agree, at least at a general level, on the need for re-connecting or engaging with publics, much discussion then becomes mired in theoretical debate. In the meantime the actual topic which inspires many sociologists, actually connecting with publics, easily becomes lost. Despite continued focus on public sociology in journals and websites, there appears to have been very little attention given to knowledge about *how* to connect with publics, especially in ways that are supportive of these publics' own *agency*, including in constructing themselves as *collective* actors.

While Burawoy refers in general to the "public," it quickly becomes clear he is in fact referring to particular disadvantaged or "subaltern" publics, those already considered to be without agency. The issue addressed in this thesis becomes, how to construct a methodology that connects with disadvantaged groups in ways which *enhance*, not just document and so further *inscribe*, their lack of agency and of belonging in the wider society.

Research in this thesis has sought to include diverse local publics, including those who may be described as "subaltern," not on the essentialised basis of identity, but primarily on recognition of everyone as 'knowledgeable actors.' Thesis research here indicates that

when projects are developed on the basis of such inclusive collaboration, more questions can be opened up and discourses take place, which in turn facilitates the interrelation or interconnection of different kinds of knowledge in the overall construction of new individual and shared possibilities and related identities.

Knowledge is here created in the context of application and its value is based on its use for the task at hand – not its disciplinary origins or status. While participants in the thesis research were asked to give their statistical details, this was in order to formally record that people from diverse backgrounds took part in the research. Details were not taken to link their status or formal credentials in order to track their specific inputs into the research and narrative creation.

Participants, unencumbered by perceptions and expectations about what they may or may not have to offer, were afforded a research space in which they were able to explore together aspects of their common world and to co-construct its possible futures. All contributed to the broadening of local knowledge horizons, where all could see more – both relevant problems and new opportunities. From a new shared horizon, participants were able to construct comprehensive accounts of the local terrain – what is going on, what do we see, and at the same time collectively learning how to move between this new understanding and hopeful or utopic futures.

The cosmopolitan turn and its need for a methodology

In his book *Global Ethnography* (Burawoy, 2000, p. 343), Burawoy is attentive to both global and local simultaneously, and seeks to, in his words, "compose the global from below." Nevertheless, in his address on public sociology, he does not seem to address the many complex issues which arise from global and local interconnections. These complexities are however raised in a debate on sociology and cosmopolitanism which appears to run parallel to public sociology. Beck is among those who are most prominent in wishing to take sociology into the cosmopolitan direction (Beck & Sznaider, 2006a, 2006b). Beck argues that much current sociological methodology is based too narrowly

on the nation state and nationalism, and needs to take much more account of the wider global environment. He calls for an innovative methodology which he says has to be a transdisciplinary project (Beck & Sznaider, 2006b). However, the kind of methodology he seems to envisage, while in many ways recognizing many complexities, does not really address how to deal with these complexities, especially in ways that enhance public agency.

The question of agency, personal and shared at local levels in the context of the wider interdependent world has been an abiding theme in this thesis and a theorist who provides a framework for addressing issues raised by both Burawoy and Beck is Delanty. Delanty is also major theorist of cosmopolitanism, and within this framework he theorises public agency in the context of historical, societal, national, global, cosmological and community settings (Delanty, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003a, 2006).

Delanty's civic-cosmopolitan framework

Delanty constructs much of his theory around what he calls "civic cosmopolitanism" (Delanty, 2000). Here the words civic cosmopolitan can be seen as representing the "cosmos" or universal levels, the "polis" or aspects of communal belonging and the "civic," the discursive citizenship that shapes political decision making. At the universal levels of the "cosmos," the civic aspects can easily be lost, or become difficult to construct and maintain. Nonetheless, it is to help establish such an order at the wider level that Delanty looks to the local as a way of helping to humanise or counterbalance a world order shaped otherwise by top-down, neo-liberal globalization. Delanty's concept, like Bohman's, which he refers to, entails interactions between or across various local areas (Bohman, 1996, 1997; Delanty, 2000, 2002, 2006). Delanty's social theory also relates agency to institutions and institutional development mandated in the context of the historical democratic project of the Enlightenment. Delanty sees the democratic project as now also needing support by social science and a university, as itself a cosmopolitan knowledge producing institution.

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Now that knowledge is more clearly understood to be transgressive and university and society distinctions becoming increasingly blurred, Delanty notes how processes with transdisciplinary-based partnerships include university and industry and science, so why not also publics? (Delanty, 1998; Delanty, 2001a, 2003b). This thesis further asks, why not local publics? The university can be seen in a unique position, on one hand, able to continually draw in knowledge from any sources, and on the other, as a site where there can be engagement with more local knowledge and networks around knowledge development needs. Academia can thus become, in Delanty's terms, and in terms of this thesis, a productive "space of translation" between diverse forms and sources of theoretical and practical knowledge and sites of knowledge (Delanty, 2006, p. 43). There is no other site whose specific task is the collection, study, combining, testing out and mediation or brokering of all kinds of "knowledges." In particular, in terms of this thesis, the university is the only place that can encompass and make connections between the general or universal and the particular, for instance, its particular application and contextualisation.

Delanty's social theory is developed in the European context and in the context of global networks, mobilities and risk (Delanty, 1998; Delanty, 1999, 2000). His main problematic is to do with social fragmentation manifesting itself in ethno-nationalism, xenophobia and culture wars. He sees these as taking over the sense of identity, participating and belonging that had been provided by nationalism before globalisation and the European Union took over many of the state's powers and ability to provide (national) identity. Delanty now sees shared discursive socio-economic participation, as a key challenge to the dominant traditional European national culture. So rather than culture or ethnicity being the main issue, Delanty sees the underlying problematic as to do with the issue of new, wider participatory forms of shared belonging. He thus calls for new "active citizenship" with learning and discourses based on belonging.

While New Zealand's situation is similar to that of Europe, ethnicity remains a very meaningful category for Maori who have claims and rights (including historical, legal and constitutional) that need to be acknowledged. However, there is no question that

Maori are themselves also differentiated like other ethnic groups, in terms of age cohorts, and lifestyles shaped by consumption. As such, they can often feel strongly drawn towards activities, interests, values and aspirations of their equivalent age and/or gender group rather than simply relating to those of other Maori, including of their iwi or tribal affiliation.

The major point raised in this thesis is how to move from essentialised cultures or identities, to a reflexive discursivity that enables the expression and a joint recognition of new bases for shared development. The important point in such 'active citizenship' projects, is cultural and other affiliations can and will remain, but with this new discursivity, all come to have the power to name and frame their own narratives and create forms of identity as needed and wanted.

While Delanty draws together many theorists, this thesis follows in more detail theorists such as Eder and Strydom with their focus on mechanisms for public agency. For instance, Eder and Strydom point to the need for understanding discursive processes of framing issues through from personal feeling and expression to wider public and official acceptance (Eder, 1996, 1999; Strydom, 2000, 2002). This thesis also draws on Joas' theory of creativity which Delanty takes into Eder's theory of social learning (Eder, 1999; Joas, 1996).

Joas' theory of creativity is important. He sees the need for what he calls "primary" creativity which is more purely imaginative or fanciful and "secondary" creativity which is technical or practical, and "integrated" creativity which is a synthesis of on-going primary and secondary creativity generation. While Delanty seeks to take such creative learning more deeply into social structure and practice with Eder's theory of social learning and uses it to formulate his theory of active citizenship, his concepts relate to social, not economic or socio-economic development, of which he makes little or no mention. Nor, for that matter, does he explore the creative application of information technology to social development.

For an account of economic creativity and development in the context of new communications technology I have therefore turned to another theorist of creativity, Richard Florida (Florida, 2002). Florida refers to the rising "creative class," - the people who are creative in the new knowledge economy, in areas such as research, art, science, technological development and application, the media and management. He also stresses the need to draw on a cosmopolitan pool of such creatives, and the importance of having places that can attract them and reflect their tastes and support their work. He sees the need to create conditions which enhance possibilities for creativity (Florida, 2002, 2005).

What is stressed in this thesis is that such development will not work unless people are in the first instance able to meet and interact first in self-chosen, spontaneous and less determinate contexts. A theorist who has enabled me to theorize this is Scott Lash, with his theories of globalization, aesthetics, taste communities, and "radical" or what would now be called "inclusive" community participation (Lash, 1994, 1999).

Lash's everyday and aesthetics and communication structures

At a theoretical level, Lash's main contribution to this thesis framework is in interweaving cultural theory and philosophy with sociology, so each can learn from the other (Lash, 1999, p. 1). For instance, Lash introduces aesthetics in the context of information and communication structures into the production of meaning and belonging in everyday life. In attempting to understand conditions for local agency, it has been seen as crucial to understand what attracts and engages people, and what produces meaning for them. Aesthetics is generally not included in sociology or local development, except possibly by way of critique, for instance, critique of the success of aesthetics in creating a seemingly all-consuming, consumer culture. Lash usefully helps us to understand how aesthetics, such as in taste-based communities, supports the creation of meaning. While these forms of aesthetic-based community are often detached from where people live, importantly Lash opens up ways to theorise how it can be possible for communication and interchange to take place between the diverse communities of taste that exist within the locality, and therefore can also be deployed to attract and engage people in meaningful participation in local, discursively created, aesthetic-based localities. The

issue, as Lash in effect stresses, is one of full and inclusive participation in the creation and production of aesthetics.

Lash's other important contribution to this thesis is his introduction of the phenomenological-hermeneutics of philosophers Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur, which in this thesis enables the grounding of theory in shared everyday experience, and of a methodology based around a particular form of agency. Agency can potentially be based around all sorts of possibilities, however, in this thesis methodology, it is based around what Heidegger refers to as authentic *Sorge* (German for care), or authentic-based care based on one's own-most, self-chosen, and therefore, authentic possibilities. The different ways of theorizing care are important to note. Lash adapts this form of care to community contexts by bringing to bear on them participatory, communal forms of care, or what he refers to as communal-being-in-the-world. For Heidegger the communal care in the form of the "they" is conformist and thus also inauthentic. Lash, however, depicts a participatory, non-engineered communal form of "we;" and importantly, this form of community can be seen as authentic, in that it based on inclusive participation where all can participate together on the basis of authentic choice.

The aim of the thesis research was to devise and support this kind of choice at both individual and shared levels, including opportunities for participants to say so when they did not feel they could do this. Cases in the thesis described projects based on care; the Playcentre, a parent-run movement, based on learning through play and collaboration of parents and children around this form of learning; the peace-movement, in particular the Nuclear-Free Peacemaking Association, with its concern about the dangers of nuclear war and need for peace-brokering to ensure common security; and local community-based communications and technology projects, again, based on collaboration around projects where local people became involved on the basis of their intrinsic interests and forms of care. However, when referring to local community, 'care' seems to have become synonymous with institutional care, for example, putting children in childcare or after school care, and putting elderly people in forms of elder care. In New Zealand, such

forms of care are increasingly shaped around profit or public-private partnerships, for instance in the growth of overseas-owned childcare and eldercare institutions. Government institutions then attempt to mediate, for instance to ensure regulatory and safety environments to make certain the for-profit care is up to sufficient standards of public care.

However, communal forms of care, such as Lash describes, are still called on because, as important as institutional forms of care can be, most people in society would not themselves wish to be put into a position where they were too reliant on just institutional forms of care. Further, it is known that institutional or expert-based care, no matter how well resourced, cannot by itself make up for 'simple' human-based care and belonging. Yet, as Lash attests, expert systems, or more purely institutional forms of care are increasingly permeating local community (Lash, 1994), and in the first instance, many people now look to institutions to provide the care for others. In the meantime, as Beck amongst others caution, global networks increasingly manage to bypass national regulations and institutions which can, in turn, find it is increasingly difficult to mediate or enforce standards of care across the board at all times in the interest of the public.

When knowledge which is transgressive permeates boundaries with often complex consequences, the temptation is for more technological and bureaucratic responses and procedures and rules and as a result, many organisations become hidebound, not sure what rule to apply and how best to respond.

In order to theorise a new process of making judgements in a changing environment, Lash refers to Gadamer's theorisation of play or game (Gadamer, 1988). It is here that Lash, adapting Kant's principles, says reflective judgement, similar to the process of needing to identify or feel for which rule to apply in a problematical situation that arises in a game, is required. Of course this analogical or reflective application of judgement occurs much of the time in everyday and professional life, but it is not given explicit acknowledgment in theorization about discursive publics, and development, and for that matter, in organisations and institutions.

Lash, in theorising about the information society, refers to a "disinformed information society" with "more or less as out-of-control bytes of information" (Lash, 2002, p. 2). In this context there is a need for creative and innovative analogical reflective solutions, such as are not commonly found in bureaucratic institutions, or in traditional responses from residents groups, such as voting and submissions. This is where the production of socially robust knowledge is needed. As Nowotny et al suggest, this must be framed and defined and worked through in the public sphere (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001).

At a time of rapid change and moving ground, Lash stresses the need for processes or "middles" which *ground*, for instance, through the sharing of story, memory or tradition, of a life lived (Lash, 1999). Other theorists refer to third spaces and good spaces where inhabitants have the opportunity to make connections with others (Oldenburg, 1989).

Lash (1994; Lash, 1999) refers to story and narrative as something which can help retrieve ground and he touches on some aspects of Ricoeur's narrative theorisation (Ricoeur, 1990, 1991), but he does not develop the possibilities reflective judgement in the development and application of narrative as does Ricoeur. For Ricoeur, Kantian reflective judgement is applied in the linking of diverse heterogeneous elements and episodes in a plot that is, in literary and aesthetic terms, linked reflectively (Ricoeur, 1990, 1991). Ricoeur points to the application of such reflexive judgement in the literary text to social theory and then it is Herda (1999), a social scientist, who develops a methodology around the application of this for real world development projects, many elements of which I have adapted for this thesis methodology.

In summary, Delanty and Lash provide innovative social and philosophical theoretical contextualization and point clearly towards social contextualization. However they do not provide a developed theorization of the everyday as it is experienced and as it can be changed by members of society. It is Herda who, utilizing especially Ricoeur, introduces a social science methodology that opens the way for this to be done. In her book, *Research Conversations and Narrative: A Critical Hermeneutic Orientation in*

Participatory Inquiry (Herda, 1999) she applies her innovative methodology to specific projects of community development. She works with villagers on the creation of shared community text with respect to development projects that are offered by outside aid programmes. What I seek to do in this thesis, is to extend this methodology, so that members of localities in an already modern society such as New Zealand, can define and carry out their own local development narratives, including with the use of Internet and film.

Developmental shared text in public discursivity and hermeneutic-based narrative methodology – Ricoeur and Herda

The role of shared text in the development of public discursivity is crucially important. Verbal discourse about actions and events comes and goes and can also stay for a time in individual or shared memory of those who are present, or others, when they are told about these things. However, sustained democratic discursivity needs to be based around the in-depth sharing of public text/s which enables shared, adequate understanding of situations and what action or legislation might be required. Very significantly, publicly shareable text can now also be discussed and added to in immediate, continuous, cumulative and participatory shared text creation with radio, television, as well as new interactive digital technologies such as are available on the Internet. Text that uses aesthetic packaging can reach and motivate social groups and whole societies at deeper levels.

A current problem, as politicians and social marketers who wish to reach publics with their messages discover, is that the multiple, diffused nature of digital technologies results in *many texts* reaching and being interactively shared amongst *many individuals* and groups, so even those in the same household do not necessarily share the same text (Born, 2006). However, the point remains that for agency to be effective, especially in complex situations, there is a need for a significant measure of public sharing of texts, significant including participation in its initial and continuous creation.

Given that sharing of text is all the more problematic at national levels in the diffuse and fragmenting current situations, it is all the more relevant and important to identify and support new ways of coming together. For instance, as has been illustrated in this thesis, there are now new possibilities for sharing a text in a technologically equipped, small-scale locality, especially one that is well able to communicate with other localities and wider regions beyond. This 'network locality' can be seen as helping implement Delanty's civic cosmopolitanism and university role. For instance, it is now possible for a social scientific based network in the university to facilitate or mediate wider communication between and beyond network localities by itself drawing on technologically mediated communication networks.

Configuring (shared) research text: Herda and thesis methodologies

Including or configuring particular elements to represent particular viewpoints occurs all the time in public discourse and the question, again in terms of local agency, is who participates in the configuring of texts and who is even aware of this configuring, or framing process. A major focus of the thesis methodology, drawing from Herda, is the attention given to the quality of participation in this process of configuring, particularly in reflexively and discursively extending this configuring process to thicken participatory opportunities.

Herda stresses the importance of the communication process and problematises this in her hermeneutic-based methodology. In the thesis research the problematic nature of communication is brought out when participants see the same film, but as the responses clearly show, they see it from different horizons of understanding and interpretations. The film represented a shared text, but also one that was open to multiple readings, even by the same person. For instance, the research team members (the researcher, facilitator, and observer), who watched the film many times, discovered to their surprise that there always seemed more to see that hadn't been seen that way before.

In Herda's methodology it is thus seen as important to check out understanding and not presume the researcher knows, or that understanding has automatically occurred. Herda usefully refers to Gadamer who points out that it is not possible to be unbiased, or have no prejudgements, so it is best to acknowledge prejudgements explicitly and realise how all have limited horizons from which to see (cited in Herda, 1999). More positively, an explicit sharing of such presuppositions can be seen to open up new shareable issues and possibilities. This thesis methodology adopts Herda's emphasis on encouraging reflexivity about what is seen, and how, and why, and also on inclusivity in the process by putting horizons alongside others so they can be merged or fused, enabling all to see more. Herda's methodology is devised in a context of participants coming from different cultures and her concern is that there is much criticism of one culture by another, without an appreciation of the very different worlds and horizons of understanding.

Another concern addressed in this thesis, more subtle, but arguably just as potentially damaging, is that in everyday practices, there is an often relatively unconscious selection of what is seen and not seen, selected in and out, recalled or forgotten. A major aim therefore of the thesis methodology was to develop a rigorous process to ensure, as far as possible, a truly inclusive process, so that if this selectivity does occur, this can be noted and can be stated freely and publicly. This process was not designed to be one of blame, but rather, of pleasure at uncovering and discovering more, in order to see more.

In Herda's methodology, the researcher has reflexively-based conversations with each participant with each being clear about prejudgements which are put on the table. Conversations between the researcher and individual participants are recorded and transcribed, then returned for comment, and then later still, configured together into a community text for further comment by the group. In contrast, in this methodology the film somewhat replaced the reflexive researcher and an outside facilitator was employed to facilitate the research sessions. That said, when participants were initially invited to participate in the research process, the researcher was reflexive about the purpose and nature of the research. However, in this thesis methodology, participants related much more to one another than through a single researcher and in this way, built up their

discourse together, in groups, with opportunities to continue discourse again on the research Internet discussion board. The research questions were carefully designed to bring out, in an open-ended way, the individual participants' attitudes and suppositions or prejudgements, including their positive and negative assessments of the film itself. For instance a question raised was: were there things that annoyed you, if so what?

Ricoeur, Bennington and Gay and this thesis

Another difference between Herda's methodology and that of this thesis is that whereas Herda draws on Ricoeur's general theory of narrative (Ricoeur, 1981, 1990) to relate text to social action and uses language of emplotment, she does not create a fictional narrative plot of interacting characters, such as is theorised by Ricoeur. In this thesis methodology research begins, as in Ricoeur, with a fictional text, not, as in Herda, with a proposed project about which a participatory text is developed so action can more effectively be carried out. Another point is that as far as I can ascertain, neither Ricoeur nor Herda develops narrative theory to incorporate new digital technologies, in particular film. What this thesis adds is a methodological package that incorporates a literary concept of narrative from Ricoeur, linking this to film and the Internet for on-going, self-sustained and aesthetically engaging input.

An account of film and interactive video technology theory by Bennington and Gay was found to be particularly helpful (Bennington & Gay, 2000). Bennington and Gay incorporate Ricoeur's mimetic theory into film theory, and also into their theorization of digital technology interactivity. However, theirs was a different kind of research project, focusing more simply on video gaming, and involving just a small number of research participants. The research project of this thesis involved about a hundred people and its methodology was constructed, of course, for interaction by whole local communities in their local, everyday lifeworld settings to decide on for their development.

In Ricoeur's literary plot, there is a plot structure, with a beginning, middle and an end. In the film shown to participants, there is only one act and the ending is left in suspension –

we do not know what will happen next. Participants watch the film, participate in some facilitated exercises which engage with the film, and then co-configure the second act, what they think will happen next. Bennington and Gay draw much out of the interactive game having no closure and stimulating participants, who are clearly very uncomfortable with no ending, to make sense of the plot, leading them to try then to discover some hidden meaning. Participants clearly prefer closure and an important aspect of the research was to stimulate creative thinking and discussion about what was going on, what would happen next, why, and so on, before the desired closure.

In summary, my thesis situates Ricoeur's narrative development in Delanty's very wide-ranging framework of social theory about public agency, but as also noted, Delanty does not describe a research methodology that would enable his social theory to be applied in practice. It is Herda who provides the basic mechanism for doing this, and this thesis can be seen as elaborating somewhat on Herda's contribution, to bring Delanty's theory to real world implementation. Herda's use of Ricoeur and Gadamer was pivotal to my being able to bring the theorization of Delanty and Lash to where it could be applied. Herda makes a useful contribution to social science methodology by configuring diverse local inputs into a coherent developmental text. However, for purposes of ongoing development in the locality, rather than for the kinds of one-off projects Herda theorises, Ricoeur's more fully developed forms of literary or fictional narrative were found to be essential.

Literary and social theory combined to support public agency

Delanty, drawing from Habermas, Strydom, and Eder sees reality knowledge and society as largely socially or discursively constructed (Eder, 1996, 1999; Habermas, 1988; Strydom, 2000, 2002). Drawing on Eder, Strydom in particular notes how collective actors are seen to use framing devices made up of symbolic packages that can be communicated through narratives. An ability to control the use of frames is the basic mechanism that constitutes effective public discourse. However, Delanty, again following Eder and Strydom, theorises discourse in terms of frames that can be communicated and

linked to wider public discourse in frame *competition* between collective actors in society.

This form of communication follows the standard Western and academic more Habermasian approach of focusing primarily on abstract and logical arguments and emphasising the contestation of validity claims.

The communication approach advocated here is one that is more in keeping with New Zealand Maori, Asian and Pacific peoples' ways, which often take a more indirect route and recognise the relevance of personal sensitivities and social practices (Durie, 2003; Prasad, Mannes, Ahmed, Kauri, & Griffiths, 2004; Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003). Following Herda's (1999) hermeneutic narrative-based approach, communication here is based on a mutual reflexive engagement about understanding and interpretation of horizons or frames as a basis of narrative creation.

The narrative-based methodology deployed in this thesis seeks to show how literary framing can point to less divisive frame competition. The point here is that discursivity is now very often framed in divisive ways, for instance, as in the current United States president's well known proclamation to the whole world, "you are with us or against us," in support of the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Bush's narrative framing here is of the good West versus bad Islam. Good is to triumph. We in the West are to get in behind the Western interests which are deemed to be good. This narrative framing can be seen to stimulate conflict and further narratives of war, weapons and controlling, or many would say "stealing," resources.

There are many other ways various kinds of people are expected to line up against those others whom they imagine have competing frames and world views. This lining up in competition can of course become a basis of 'belonging,' in that 'we' line up together against 'them.' However, after taking up strong positions against the other, it then becomes much more difficult to mediate between such positioning, in the way that

Delanty indicates is needed to find common ground on which to discuss, decide and act together.

In the research methodology Eder's, Strydom's, and Delanty's frames can be viewed in similar terms to Gadamer's horizons. However, the starting point in this thesis is not contestation about which frame or horizon is correct or superior, but rather a clarification about what we are seeing, what do we truly care about, what are the shared and desired possibilities, the realistic possibilities for ourselves and families and friends, locality, country and world? My research methodology is much more about setting up this sort of discourse than it is about setting up an interminable debating society.

Of course, there can and will be differences to settle, but it is proposed that this can be more productively settled in contexts and with styles of communication, especially narrative construction, where there is a background of mutual understanding and acceptance and an underlying sense of common purpose and possibility.

It is worth noting that fictional narrative enables the recognition of conflict, in fact it can enhance its aesthetic depth and engagement by depicting and relating numerous conflicts. Conflict is necessary in fiction because the aesthetic challenge of achieving literary concordance becomes all the greater given the number of often keenly felt discordances to be expressed and somehow resolved – the more satisfying the better, whether tragedy or happy ever after.

Realpolitik could say this approach was overly naive were it not for the success, illustrated in the case of New Zealand's mediation role, with the noted input of Maori and their forms of hospitality in the mediation of Bougainville conflict with Papua New Guinea, where over 10,000 had been killed. New Zealand has been acclaimed for its contribution to regional relations then and since, including by the United States which, under the presidency of George Bush, is known for its *Realpolitik*, not for misty eyed naivety (Eaton, 2006).

Changing times, careful framing and making personal and local time

Another problem for collective actors wishing to engage around frame competition is that battle lines are no longer as clear-cut. As McRobbie points out, much feminist movement concern about the Taliban's attitude towards women in Afghanistan led to the movement's also being drawn into supporting George Bush's invasion of Afghanistan. In a similar vein, the New Zealand peace movement – which generally argues for peaceful intercultural and interfaith relations and the need to have processes to engage in dialogue – found itself protesting alongside fundamentalist Christians, appearing to be against a conference in New Zealand on intercultural and interfaith dialogue. The peace movement was actually protesting against the attendance at this conference of the Philippines leader, for human rights abuses in her country, and this protest effectively directed the media away from coverage of this conference and its issues of dialogue. The Philippines faces huge ethnic and religious tensions, however, the 'human rights' framing won out over the mediation and dialogue framing.

In this thesis I explore how, with the fictional narrative as theorised by Ricoeur, framing such as that of rights can still be included, but not as an abstract stand-alone concept, separated from other frames, in particular not separate from effective expressions of care, or of new overall possibilities.

The main argument of this thesis, following Ricoeur, is that fiction affords a freedom for the development of agency in ways that cannot so easily be accessed in any other way. It can do this partly because it is possible to suspend in a sustained and disciplined way the everyday, yet at the same time tap into and evoke the vivid and more profound qualities of lived experience. Importantly, these literary-based methods can generate empathy and make it more difficult to marginalise others (Berger, 2005, p. 9). For Ricoeur, narrative affords a space for the uncovering of human life's deepest concerns and possibilities, and very importantly it can do this in the contexts of interpersonal, local, wider societal, global, historical contemporary, and cosmological times (Ricoeur, 1990). The construction then in terms of this thesis of shared local time, the time for local inhabitants and their needs and aspirations, contrasts with the more determinate or imposed global

time, or as it is referred to, "real time" or global "network time." The global network time typically leaves very little time for people to even pause and get a sense of their real needs and aspirations. There is of course also a need to incorporate cosmological time, such as that of a stressed natural environment, which is coming to be seen as yet more determinate and indeed disruptive of the global network time. And there is the less noticed but important historical time which, though often ignored, is apt to intrude at unexpected times. In the film it was found that Mr Koff was still somewhat traumatised by an event many years ago in Nazi Germany when he was a young child. The point is that much insecurity and fear from past events continues to play out in social and political relations today, often with little understanding from whence this fear and insecurity has arisen.

Fictional text is thus suited to make personal and shared care paramount and to enable diverse times to interrelate with and contribute to human and local scale times. Ironically, fictional text, because it not bound by the shared referentiality of the everyday in the same way as a news report or history, can often better depict the everyday world. It can do this because the fictional narrative condenses and integrates into one whole and complete story many multiple and scattered events.

People are also used to seeing their world represented via screens and these screens normally reach and engage and distract and take away from locality. The question raised in the thesis is whether these same screens can be used to attract people back to engage in their locality.

Lash (writing in the early 90s) referred to what he called "the revenge of the repressed we" (Lash, 1994), when groups were excluded from participation in the information and communication structures, and therefore at the receiving, not creating end of narrative constructions. The problem since has become not so much access to communications technologies, for as Himona points out, with respect to New Zealand Maori, many groups such as disadvantaged Maori have access to technologies such as mobile phones, satellite television and Internet (Himona, 2003).

As digital media becomes more accessible, increasingly groups come together to form their own communities and networks around their own identities. For instance, in New Zealand, non-mainstream groupings, Maori, Chinese, Indian, Samoan and Tongan communities have their own print media, and Maori and Chinese also have their own television programmes. Now most people in New Zealand are immersed in a textual (now mainly visual and interactive) environment, and to an extent many groups can now create their own narratives amongst themselves. The difficulty therefore has become not access, but making connections within and between non-mainstream groups and also between them and the mainstream (Born, 2004), or in Lash's terms between different taste communities.

Network locality, a Civic Cosmopolitan project

The move in this thesis from discourse based in the wider society to one that is first concentrated in locality is deliberate. At a theoretical level, Delanty describes and supports a civic cosmopolitan model, rooted in local community, and Bohman describes a similar civically-grounded model, based on local discursivity that comes to inform global discursivity. Both see a need for local-local *and* local-global discursive practices. The case of the New Zealand Nuclear Free Peacemaking Association's work on nuclear-free and peacemaking issues, as described in this thesis, pointed to how local agency could contribute substantially to this new form of local through to national and global agency. However, social movement collective agency and frame packaging is now more difficult. As already discussed, one of the main reasons is the difficultly of coming together around a shared text, now that the technologically largely globally networked media has become so diffused and dispersed.

Castells is seen by theorists such as Delanty and Lash as accurately describing the world as a globally-based network society (Castells, 1996, 2000b, 2001). This is a society of continual intrusions, via global networks of digital technologies, via what can be usefully described as multiple screens (interfacing via televisions, mobile phones, Internet) with

multiple enticements and multiple issues on which to focus concern and try to respond. All of these technologically-mediated intrusions make shared discourse about possibilities for shared agency around a shared text much more problematic.

Given the problems of local publics coming together around any form of shared agency, and problems if local publics, such as ethno-nationalists do come together around their particular forms of agency, for instance, to form coalitions against others, such as migrants, it is perhaps not surprising that theorists are tentative when it comes to explicitly theorising how a locality might develop its own agency. Castells himself does not see local community existing or surviving, except perhaps as a defensive reaction or haven against the impacts of global networks, particularly against the break-up of what have hitherto seemed stable social institutions (Castells, 1997, p. 164). However, he does see the need for movement from what he calls resistance identities, those who come together against many impacts of global networks, to the development of "project identities," subjects who work towards making globalisation more amenable, in terms of this thesis, to agency based on local forms of care and new possibilities.

Interestingly, it is Castells who, in providing an explanation of how global technologically-based networks can be so much more powerful and flexible than organisations, also in effect points to how inhabitants in localities, could, by deploying the same technologies and logics as those of the network society, position themselves to come together around new development projects that produce new forms of identity construction.

Castells makes an important distinction between the organisation and network morphologies before, and after, recent informational and communications technological advances. Networks were generally face-to-face and, while flexible and adaptable, were not able to collate and store information and plan action widely over space and time as powerful organisations. However, with information and communication-based technologies, networks can now hybridise the power of the organisation and the flexibility of the network. It is possibly not surprising that the implications and

applications of this development are only now starting to be realised. For instance, the United States and Israel, with their powerful military organisations, struggle to suppress the now technologically augmented networks of al-Qaeda and Hezbollah.

Castells of course concentrates on global, not local networks. However, the point to note is, as Urry (2000), Nowotny et al (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001) among many others attest, that the global is already intermeshed in the local. So as the St Albans case in this thesis indicated, an inclusive network locality, one which connects locally with face-to-face networking augmented by on-line connecting, can be in a much better position to connect locally and from this connection, innovative projects can be developed. Localities benefit from local connections that may also have helpful local knowledge and/or international backgrounds, experience, knowledge and linkages.

If local processes for text creation are inclusive, then the local-local *and* local-global discursive practices, which cosmopolitan theorists such as Delanty and Bohman describe, make the construction of civic cosmopolitan projects in the network locality theoretically and practically possible.

Research on the deployment of communications based technology in locality (1992-2002) was carried out for my MA thesis (Ashton, 2002) and subsequent publications (Ashton, 2003; Ashton & Thorns, 2004, 2007). The case study of St Albans experiments with technology and media (1992-2002) has also been described and updated in this thesis research. In practical terms this case showed that the issue is not so much the need for a technological and local media interface to support such connecting, for, as the St Albans illustration shows, the website, technological support and local community paper still exist. The question raised in this thesis is why local inhabitants no longer use these interfaces to articulate and carry out developmental projects as they were doing from 1992 to 2002.

The major point is that communication projects set up for local community development 1992-2002 represented what could be described, in Castells' terms, *project* rather than

resistance identities. Communication-based projects were set up to articulate and support other, connecting developmental projects. However, since 2002, much community activity has been more centrally organised from a building owned by local government and run by a committee of local residents, or an organization, rather than by a local network diffused throughout the community. The reversion to a centralised organizational format rather than the on-going development of a network locality has left St Albans with less ability to formulate and come together around projects. Resistance identities arise around burning single issues, but they provide little occasion for social interaction or contact apart from these single issues. In the meantime, if support by those administering the building for resistance projects becomes too strong and overt, groups face losing patronage.

However, it would be a mistake for development to focus just on the need for practical *projects,* because, by themselves, they can be seen as too utilitarian. Lash's theorisation of communities of taste or aesthetics based communities is helpful here in understanding what reaches people, and what gives people freedom to explore, to choose and to create meaning. In the St Albans illustration and in all the cases referred to in this thesis, participation was based on care, what people really cared about, and participation was sustained by ongoing intrinsic interest, and what gave meaning. Participation was also social and about connecting. Learning was collective, not from a teacher in a class, but from each other. Cases in this thesis demonstrate how when there are possibilities for inclusion in projects based on interest or taste, in the words of Wardle, a local practitioner-philosopher, diversity comes to be seen as a wealth, not a problem.

Mediation technologies and a question of connection

The methodology deployed in this thesis is transdisciplinary, based on the assumption that no one discipline is fully adequate to provide the best means of researching the problem at hand, and that no single person has all the relevant skills. Emphasised in this thesis is the contribution of many people with skills and much attention to detail, for instance, in making the film and trailers, setting up the research website, planning and

facilitating the research process, transcribing transcripts and recordings and inputting into a SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) data base for easy accessibility, all to ensure as far as possible that the contribution of participants, in effect co-researchers, was given full attention and value.

Nowotny, Gibbons and Scott describe the transdisciplinary process as one which seeks to place people and their needs and aspirations at the centre. These authors describe and advocate forms of transdisciplinary research where knowledge is socially contextualised, tested and stabilised in localities (Gibbons, 1994; Gibbons & Nowotny, 2001; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001). It should be noted that although Nowotny *et al* do stress local contextualisation in a general way, they do not theorise local as specifically *in a local place where people live* as this thesis seeks to do.

Thesis application and technological mediations

While the major aim of this thesis has been to develop theory, it has been crucially important that this theory relates in the context of application. The theme running through the thesis is of connection and communication, at all levels, and the thesis itself has sought to model, or performatively embody, the communicative process it seeks to develop. In theoretical terms the communication process could be described as a phenomenological-hermeneutic project, and in more popular terms, it could be described as resembling the approach of a detective narrative.

The detective process of discovery, or uncovering possibilities, is one which has parallels with what Heidegger terms an "alethic" process, whereby what is currently "present at hand," there, but not yet recognised, comes to be recognised, disclosed or uncovered to reveal new possibilities and so make them "ready to hand," or available for use (Heidegger, 1962). Ricoeur describes as a hermeneutic spiral an alethic process in which the existing conditions and understanding are brought into ongoing, dialectical engagement with hopes, working to make the individual and shared, utopic possibilities that are present at hand, ready to hand and available, in ways that are also pragmatic.

In this thesis the spiralling process of enhanced understanding begins with the everyday which comes to inform theory and policy, and the spiral then continues back, thus enriched, to inform the everyday. The cases described begin to create such a spiral as they move from Playcentre, to peace-movement to local community, and to a court case. These cases conclude with a chapter that seeks to interweave many of the diverse issues raised in the thesis into a fictional narrative-dramatic-filmic text. This text, which has been filmed, a one-act drama called *The Silent Connectors* set in a place called Sometown, becomes, in effect, a virtual or simulated depiction of a local community. This drama then comes to provide, through various technological mediations and amplifications, the research material. This is created by an essentially ideological/utopic, pragmatic, discursive research process around the filmed dramatic narrative.

With the film on DVD linked to an interactive website the methodology becomes a heavily technologically mediated one that enables participants to share in the co-creation of a new community development narrative. The process is an open one where the script, research process, questions, and responses are there for all who have access to the Internet to see, and available for anyone to comment, anonymously if they wish. In this thesis research, through the shared use of various screen interfaces, over one hundred co-detectives and co-researchers from hugely diverse backgrounds were able to collaborate to search for, and to help reveal, ways that local inhabitants could more effectively connect and create narratives for the development of a place that all concerned would like to inhabit.

In conclusion, the global knowledge society is presently producing enormous change, but not the commensurate ability to contextualise it in ways that are safe, sustainable and productive as they could and should be. The rates and impacts of global social economic and technological change are stretching severely the capacities of existing social, political, economic, academic and natural environmental systems. The set of tools presently available to support local publics to safely and productively manage or

contextualise innovation, in either its intended or in its unintended consequences, is far from adequate to this task.

Prime Minister Helen Clark indicated there was a need to engage communities in debate about the kind of future we want (Clark, 2005). She was referring to New Zealand, but as I consider most would agree, there is also a need now for wider level engagements with local communities everywhere about the future possibilities all want. This thesis research project has sought to depict and performatively demonstrate how local communities can have inclusive and mutually productive conversations about the futures they want amidst the unprecedentedly complex and changing environments that now constitute their everyday lives.

End.

Appendix 1: Acknowledgement of the thesis collaborative transdisciplinary, community-academic network

Many thanks to the following for the much appreciated support:

John Gallagher: John assisted in the research design, observed research sessions and was one of the session evaluators. John has an interest in philosophy and literary theory and has helped me to clarify some of the more difficult concepts so I could link and translate them for use in a recognizable sociological methodology. John's background includes extensive work in both local community and international relations.

Margreet Stronks: Margreet assisted me with the design of the research, particularly with the participatory component and with planning and evaluation. She also facilitated the research sessions. She has a professional background in this area, including considerable organisational skills and a meticulous sense of detail. She was very helpful in assisting me to integrate very important aspects of the theory with the practicalities of public engagement.

Helen Moran: Helen acts the part of the popular Marlena Koff in *The Silent Connectors* film. She also helped out in directing the film when some extra filming was required. Helen has a degree in sociology and has been able to provide an excellent 'bridge' for communication between sociology and the arts.

Martin Howells: Martin Howells not only adapted my script for film and helped edit it, but he also directed and acted in it, playing the part of Wilhelm Koff. In addition, he volunteered much of his time in creating a promotional DVD. Martin has been able to keep costs down by taking on so many of the tasks himself - writing, directing, acting, editing, tapping into the goodwill and support of the local and artistic community, all the while remaining creative and versatile under tight time constraints. I wanted to produce a

film which could present complex ideas in an engaging way and act as a suitable research tool. However else the film is evaluated, it has succeeded in engaging many viewers of all kinds of backgrounds in often compelling ways and, in turn, has provided a wealth of research material. With this material Martin has also written the second act as a film script ready to be filmed.

Gary Lotte: Gary used his computer to make a trailer of *The Silent Connectors* that would interest young people without academic backgrounds in participating in the research. He included his own original, contemporary style music.

Faye Hawtin: Faye, who has a MA in sociology, assisted me to set up a database for inputting research data and analyzing material (SPSS). It has been important that the research has a quantitative basis to it.

Kate Hindin: Kate designed a logo for the village-connections research website, to capture, in a simple form, my somewhat complex thesis research. She then also designed the village-connections interactive research website.

Galen King: Galen is a technical specialist, who lives in Golden Bay, which is on the top-west coast of the South Island of New Zealand. He was engaged by Kate to host the website and address the technical issues.

Dave Ciccoricco: Dave is an editor and writer and has been teaching at the University of Canterbury. Dave has been of enormous assistance with his editing advice for the web.

Apriana Taylor: Apirana was the 2003 Writer in Residence at the University of Canterbury, and taught the class on writing a one-act play. I wrote the first draft of *The Silent Connectors* at this course, and Apirana's engagement with the material and encouragement to write a second act led me to think of adapting the one-act play as a tool for participatory research, i.e. involving others in deciding what would happen next.

Ross Himona: Ross is the founder, the kaumatua (elder), and a life member of Te Whanau Ipurangi (The New Zealand Maori Internet Society) and a member of the Aotearoa Maori Internet Organisation. He also has a background in the New Zealand army and in Asia. In *The Silent Connectors* play my main character, the Tattooed Man, is Maori and has a background in the army and relates comfortably with Asians and with new technologies. I interviewed Ross to gain more understanding of my character. Ross has also contributed to my thinking about the theorisation of creativity in the context of locally grounded ICT projects and policy environments.

Academics, staff and students: The interest/encouragement/help from other academics, staff and students at the university has made all the difference. Thank you:

The Sociology and Anthropology department, in particular Rosemary Du Plessis, Arnold Parr, Alison Loveridge, Antoine Monti (technical assistant)

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Finally, a special thanks to Michelle and Lindy and Yusuf, whose very serious predicaments stirred me into action: a poem, a play, a film and this thesis.

Towards the latter stage of thesis writing I began to refer to my thesis folder as "Maruia," a Maori place name, which translated means "sheltered like a deep valley in the hills." I stayed at Maruia Springs a few times in the course of writing this thesis. The mountains were solid and reassuring, the hot pools relaxing, the hosts were welcoming and there was a very nice blend of the local (for instance, the barman who had been there for 30 years) and the global (e.g. Japanese owners, and workers and some very interesting visitors from diverse places overseas). The local and global included mixtures of low and high income people and the natural and built landscaped and architectural environment.

At Maruia is a Taiko Bashi, a Japanese traditional wooden bridge, which is seen as connecting the different worlds such as "earth to heaven or past to future." The inscription by the bridge says "The bridge was introduced from China via Korea to Japan more than 15 centuries ago. Maruia Springs has a unique atmosphere which combines European and Asian cultures we hope this bridge will connect both worlds for better understanding."
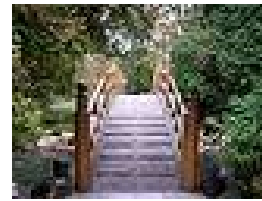
Example of a Taiko Bashi bridge

I feel very fortunate to live in a country where many are working to ensure such connections.

Maruia: a place to relax and meet other worlds.

This thesis is about the importance of place, all kinds of places, and it is about also about connections within, from and to place, especially recognising its *Silent Connectors*, which is the title of the research and the film.

Appendix 2: The Silent Connectors Video Script

Original play: Hazel Ashton

Video adaptation: Martin Howells

Sc 1   Ext: Hill road   Day

Establishing long shot: CLARE and **DALE**, university students in their late 20s, biking up and down a hill. **Clare** is trailing.

V/O Dale / Clare: *(Singing)* Oh I do like to be beside the seaside, Oh I do like to be beside the sea….

Dale: How much farther?

Clare: Last hill.

Dale: A hill too far, eh?

Clare: It's not the hill, it's this saddle.

Dale: *(Singing)* La, la, la-la-la-la-la, la, la, la-la-la-la-la, beside the seaside, beside the sea.

Cut to:

Sc 2   Ext: Hill overlooking town   Day

Dale & Clare come to a halt. They get off their bikes.

Clare: Oooh! I'm so sore. This saddle! (*walking very stiffly).* How come you look so comfortable?

Dale: Cos I'm very particular about what I put between my legs.

Clare: Glad to hear it!

Dale: It's all to do with the coefficient of friction.

Clare: You don't say.

Dale: i.e: Kinetic energy, heat and subsequent physiological reaction.

Clare: i.e. A sore bum.

Dale: Exactly. Basically your saddle isn't quite conforming to your VERY ample and gorgeous…. *(thinks about it – subtly indicating a nice round shape)*

Clare: Watch it!

Dale: In my humble opinion you need something harder.

Clare: *(Eyes to heaven)* Perhaps you need a cold shower!

Dale: *(Impishly)* Well, we are on our honeymoon.

Clare: We're also on a public road – and I need a nice hot bath.

Dale: Together?

Clare: (*Ignoring him)* I can smell the sea.

Dale: You're changing the subject.

Clare: Of course I'm changing the subject. . . . Look, that's Sometown over there. Haven't been there since I was a kid. *(She pushes off down the hill.)* Last one down gets the tap end.

Dale: Tap end? *(Realising the offer)* Oh, the bath! *(Races after her – singing a la "Queen".)* " Bicycle, bicycle…. Fat bottomed girls you make the rockin' world go round.

Cut to:

Sc 3   Ext: Crossroads   Day

 Dale & Clare approach. There is no obvious signpost.

Dale: Left, right, or straight on?

Clare: I'm not sure.

They stop & dismount. Clare gets out a map.

Clare: You'll love Sometown.

Dale: If we find it?

Clare: It was such a great place for holidays when I was a kid - the beach, the shops, the people …

Dale: Great idea getting these bikes. Can't get much flashier than this. Worth spending a bit more on them, eh?

Clare: Skimped a bit on the saddle padding if you ask me.

Dale: How far have we gone today? (*Answers himself*) Let's see. (*Clare is not really listening*). We left at 9.15am and it's just after 11am now – another ten minutes and we should be there. That's nearly … (*starting to do the maths in his head*).

Clare: What percentage of our student loan is that per kilometre?

Dale: *(Starting to work it out)* Um … Let's see. Seven hundred dollars times two for the bikes plus a couple of hundred bucks on top of that for helmets and top of the line bike locks that's . . .

Clare: Don't worry about it. The fact is our loans are maxed out.

Dale takes a sip of water.

Dale: We didn't have to buy the bikes, you know. It was a democratic decision.

Clare: We didn't have to get married?

Dale: Touché.

Clare: We could always get a divorce.

Dale: For richer for poorer, remember?

They laugh. They Kiss.

Clare: (*crossly*) Dale don't let me think about money troubles today?

Dale: Right! We're on holiday.

Clare: No money troubles. No work. No loans, no worries.

Dale: Just sun, fun and sex.

They go to kiss again but are interrupted by a **Tattooed Man** walking past. **Clare** smiles but the **man** clearly doesn't want eye contact. **Clare** feels uncomfortable**.**

Dale: Hey! We'll be fine. Come on, let's go.

They mount their bikes and start to ride off.

Cut to:

Sc 4   Ext: Tracking shot – Road   Day

Continued from **Sc. 3**

Tracking shot.

Clare & Dale cycling.

Dale: There's such a positive atmosphere in this part of the country. I can feel it.

Clare: Yeah, Sometown was always such a positive place. Family holidays, a batch by the sea. I remember getting my first new dress in Sometown. And there was always something on for kids - puppet shows, rides, you name it. I can't wait for you to see it. Come on, race ya!

As they ride off we hear them singing "Oh I do like to be beside the seaside".

Audio Cross fade to recording of song and, as we f**ade to black** the music grinds to a halt.

Cut to:

Sc 5   Ext: Shopping mall   Day

C.U of Clare & Dale.

We pull back to reveal them surrounded by dowdy-looking shops, many closed and boarded up. Graffiti on walls. Fish and chip paper blowing along the path.

A Derelict (or 2) shuffling in the background.

Tacky "musak" playing in the distance.

Insert: a shot of **The Tattooed Man** and **Asian Students** around a computer with the world "Singapore" being typed. The rapport between them is very close. Concludes with a friendly handshake.

Dale: This is it?

Clare: *(Absolute shock and disbelief.)* I can't believe it. This is terrible.

Dale: In the short term maybe, but it's just a phase. Only last week there was a visit here from the Local Economic Development Unit and they were really positive.

Clare: (*sarcastically*) You mean the "walking tall" and "movin on up" people – don't say you're taken in by that P.R. bullshit. Anyone and everyone is walking tall, sure – to the airport and onto the aeroplane – then they do their movin on up overseas where they're appreciated, not like here.

Dale: God, you know how to put a dampener on things.

Clare: You're confusing purely academic critical thought with negativity.

Dale: I forgot – You've been honing your bullshit detector at uni.

Clare: It's too easy to dismiss critical thought as being negative.

The Tattooed man walks by. **Clare** makes a real attempt to connect

Clare: There's that guy again. . . . Hi!

The Man turns away.

Other people shuffle by not looking at Clare and Dale.

Dale: I thought you said this place was . . .

Clare: (*quietly and sadly*) Yes I know what I said. . . . I had no idea . . . . Mum and Dad stopped coming when I left school. . . . I expected it would be just the same. . . . Donkeys . . . Donuts . . .

Dale: Deadbeats. . . .

Cut Away to **kids** skateboarding – non-communicative. Perhaps another lowly figure smoking, alone, reflecting low esteem.

Clare: It's so sad.

Dale: Hey, don't be a soft touch. I know you, you'd give away our last cent if you thought they were deserving.

Clare: (*a bit panicky*) Dale, I'm worried about the bikes.

Dale: They're locked in a public bike stand.

Clare: They're the <u>only</u> bikes in a <u>very</u> public bike stand. I'm going back.

Clare runs off leaving Dale somewhat exasperated.

Dale: *(Shouting after her)* That's what locks are for. They cost a fortune!

He runs after her.

Cut to:

Sc 6   Ext: Street   Day

Dale & Clare walking their bikes. **Clare** is still sore.

Clare: Do you think there's a pharmacy around here anywhere. I want to get something for my saddle rash.

Two teenage girls are loitering by a bus stop. **Clare & Dale** walk past. **Clare** stops to look in a shop window. **Dale** hasn't noticed and continues walking.

The girls take their opportunity and approach **Clare.**

Dale turns just in time to see **Clare** giving the girls money from her purse. **The girls** run off.

Clare walks up to Dale.

Dale: Don't tell me, the old bus-money scam?

Clare: (Glancing back – the girls have disappeared.) Charity is not a crime.

Dale: Conning people is.

Clare: Trusting people is not a crime either – if more people trusted there would be less crime, not more.

Dale: Sure!

Dale & Clare notice the tattooed man approaching.

Clare: I'll prove it.

Before **Dale** can say anything **Clare** walks up to the **tattooed man**.

Clare: Excuse me do you know if there's a pharmacy around here?

The **man** shakes his head and walks off.

Clare: What is it with everyone? Is it something I'm doing? Why doesn't anyone want to connect? The only people who have tried communicating are those kids – and that cost me five bucks. Do you think it's cos we're too privileged?

Dale: First you bloody well moan about the loan and how worried you are about not managing and now you're troubled about being privileged.

Clare: Well we are privileged. Having a university education makes us more privileged. And these bikes might as well be B.M.W.'s as far as these people are concerned. Maybe that's why they don't want to talk to us.

Dale: For crying out loud, they're bikes. They're an investment. It means we can get about . . .

Clare: And look good while we do it!

Dale: It's all part and parcel of getting on in the world. This place could sure do with some positive input.

INSERT

Cut away to: Rear view of **Mr. Koff** parting curtains and looking at Clare **& Dale** & **The Tattooed Man** in the distance.

Cut Back to:

 Dale: *(Grandiosely)* I could get this place humming with some strategic investment… For instance. . .

Clare: *(Interrupting)* There's a café up ahead and it looks open. Let's have a coffee.

Dale: Hey, I was about to unveil my five year plan for the economic regeneration of Sometown: "Sunshine City of the South."

Clare: Tell me on a full stomach.

Dale looks disappointed.

The mall music bursts into" New York New York"

Insert: Dale securing bikes to rubbish bins.

Cut to:

Sc 7   Int: Café
Dale & Clare enter and sit at a table.

Clare: So much for "Sunshine City". Yuk! Those rubbish bins stank.

Dale: For Christ's sake, do you want those bikes to be safe or not? I told you those locks are top of the line. Anyone wants the bikes they'll have to take the bins as well.

Mrs Koff (Café owner) comes out to attend to **Dale** & **Clare**. She has a pleasant quiet manner.

Mrs Koff: What can I get you?

Clare: We'd like a couple of lattés please.

Dale: And two muffins.

Mr Koff comes out of the café to clear an adjacent table.

Mrs Koff: No muffins I'm afraid. We normally have lovely homemade ones, but being a public holiday – well, we didn't think there'd be a demand. I do have some in the oven but they'll be awhile yet.

Dale: I would have thought there would have been more demand – being a holiday.

Mrs Koff: Yes, so did we when we bought the place.

Dale: How long have you been here?

Mrs Koff: In this country thirty years. In Sometown just over a year.

Dale: And if you don't mind my asking, why here?

Mrs Koff: Attractive investment opportunity .

Mr Koff: *(In background)* Huh, that's a laugh.

Mrs Koff: That's enough of that dear. Come and meet these nice young people.

Mr Koff comes over.

Mrs Koff: This is my husband Wilheim.

Mr Koff: How do you do?

Dale: Hi. This is my wife Clare, I'm Dale.

Mrs Koff: I'm Marlene. And you mustn't mind Wilheim. Business could be a little better that's all.

Mr Koff: Mrs. Koff is a master at understatement.

Clare: It's very sad seeing Sometown like this. When I was little our family always used to come here for Summer holidays.

Dale: (*excited*) Believe me Mr Koff, this is a great time to invest in a place like Sometown. Ok it's run down now but when a place looks like it's on it's last legs that's the time to invest. This place has potential. It's just a matter of time.

Mr Koff: (*slightly ominous tone*) Keep your fancy ideas young man. Time is the most precious commodity of all. The mortgage still has to be paid you know.

Clare looks anxiously at **Dale** and tries to kick him under the table.

Dale: (*Oblivious and even more enthusiastic)* I'm doing a business course at university – mainly theory of course, but I've looked at some really interesting case studies of overseas regional development and . . .

Clare: *(Interrupting)* I don't think Mr. Koff is interested in theory, Dale. Perhaps we should change the subject.

Mr Koff: A good idea young lady. Tell me, what were you talking to that tattooed man about?

Mrs Koff: Wilheim! That is none of your business.

Dale: Oh, that's all right. Clare needed some . . .

Clare: (Stopping him going into details.) Dale

Dale: *(Realising)* Um . . . Medication for her . . .

Clare: Headache . . . Um, drugs, for my um . . . headache.

Mr Koff looks suspiciously at them.

Dale: Anyway, as we were saying, it's really interesting. I've just started looking at some case studies of development up North. The government's got it right. Some strategic intervention to encourage international investment and then bingo – the rest more or less manages itself.

Mr. Koff: I'm afraid I have very little faith in governments.

Mrs Koff: Believe me we know what governments can do.

Mrs. Koff leaves. **Dale** has obviously touched a raw nerve.

Clare: *(Chastising)* Dale!

Mr Koff: We lost many friends because of a Government.

Dale: *(Finally realising)* Oh, I'm sorry.

Mr Koff: So you think the policy is working and the regions are doing well do you?

Dale: There's still more work to do of course. But we couldn't keep going the way it was.

Mr Koff: (*deliberately*, *slightly ominously*) Before coming here we lived up north.

Dale: (*sudden realisation*) Well, you must have seen how things have been (*slightly hesitant*) getting better there – they couldn't stay the same, not even if you wanted them to. It's all about efficiency.

Mr Koff: Better for who? Better for big investors yes. Yes, you could say better for some.

Dale: But the government has invested so much – to help the regions.

Mr Koff: (*sharply*) To help big investors you mean. What good is a new highway if all it does is make it easier for large overseas companies to cart away our logs?

Dale: But those companies do provide employment, Mr. Koff.

Mr Koff: Yes, there's some short term contracts. But what happens after? What happens when the logs have gone? You have efficiency all right – they efficiently clean out our resources and efficiently leave us with bloody little else.

Clare: (*Trying to change the subject*) Were you cleaned out Mr Koff?

Mr Koff: I owned a sawmill – like Dale says, it was all about efficiency. I was told we were not efficient enough. I couldn't afford the latest technology and I couldn't compete - had to lay off 50 good, hard working men. (*Sadly*) You can say what you like about greater efficiency, but at least we looked out for each other then. We were a community.

Clare: (*wistfully*) You're right, Mr. Koff.

Mr Koff: Please, call me Wilheim.

Clearly, **Mr Koff** has warmed to **Clare**. **Dale** feels a little isolated.

Clare: Well Wilheim, you're right. We used to be more connected in this country. There was more "social" capital not just dollars and cents. It was about trust and relationships,

Dale: Clare's just done this "touchy feely" social development paper at Uni, you know the sort of thing.

Mr Koff obviously doesn't!

Clare: Business models these days are so damned individualistic – everyone out for themselves, making the most they can out of everyone else, efficiently focussing on some purely financial end.

Dale: That's not true, Clare. Much of the stuff I'm studying now focuses on the need for "trust communities" and building "trust networks" where people trust each other as a basis for developing business.

Mr Koff: You know what that means young man. Big outfits trusting each other to do the little man over.

Mrs Koff: Don't start, Wilheim.

Dale: It's about different people from different countries working in together – the "knowledge industries" where people who haven't known each other before can work effectively together.

Mr Koff: Like the Asian language school down the road. Can you believe it. No holiday makers now but we've got a language school. Making a lot of money I expect.

Dale: Sure, there's been a demand.

Mr Koff: A demand for what, more computer games – designer drugs!

Mrs Koff: They like my muffins.

Clare, Dale & Mrs. Koff laugh, but the atmosphere does not improve with the arrival of t**he tattooed man.**   They all watch him go into the café.

Mrs Koff: Excuse me.

She goes to leave. **Mr. Koff** stops her.

Mr Koff: I'll go.

Mrs Koff: It's all right, Wilheim.

She leaves.

Mr Koff: Bloody drug peddlers. You young people today.

Clare: I beg your pardon?

Mr Koff: You didn't have a headache did you?

Clare: *(Resenting the implication)* Well no, as a matter of fact I didn't.

Mr Koff: I knew it. I saw you through the window.

Dale: Hey, now just a minute. You don't know he's pushing drugs?

At that moment a **police car** pulls up hard and **three policemen** jump out and run into the café. A moment later they drag out the **tattooed** and bundle him quickly into the car. The car screeches backward and hits the rubbish bins.

The sound of a crash and metal. The car drives off.

Dale & Clare observe the event with horror.

 Dale jumps up and makes a futile run after the car.

Dale: Stop! Those were our bikes you bastards. They were an investment. I'm going to report you!

Clare: (*very quietly*) Who to …?

Mr Koff: I think you should go now.

Clare: Go, they've just crunched our bikes.

Mr Koff: (in a more decisive tone) Headache, eh?

Dale: What are you getting at?

Mr Koff: Business might be bad but customers like you we can do without.

Clare: You've got this horribly wrong.

Mr Koff: You didn't have a headache did you? Tell me the truth.

Clare: Well . . . No, but . . .

Mr Koff: I knew it. *(To Dale)* You and your big ideas. That's the trouble with you University types. Too many ideas and too much money.

Dale: For your information we're broke.

Mr Koff: Well you shouldn't go spending your money on drugs then should you?

Dale reacts violently and uncharacteristically.

Clare: Come on Dale. Leave it alone. It's not worth it.

Clare & Dale go to pick up their bikes when **Mrs. Koff** comes out of the café.

Mrs Koff: Wait!

Mr Koff: Stay out of this Marlene!

Mrs Koff: *(To Dale & Clare)* Please, come inside. *(With friendly smile) . . .* The muffins are ready.

C.U. Mr. Koff angry.

C.U. Dale & Clare uncertain. They look to Mrs. Koff.

End on **Mrs. Koff** smiling.

Cut to:

Sc 8   Int: Café   Late Afternoon.

Subdued lighting.

Mrs Koff: I'm sorry Mr Koff overreacted. If he had stopped and thought for a moment.

Mr. Koff arrives at the table with a bottle of wine and some glasses.

Mr Koff: I thought we might have some wine, after all no-one is driving anywhere tonight are they?

Dale: Not on our bikes we're not.

Clare: Good medication for saddle rash, eh Mr. Koff.

Mr Koff: I must apologise. You see, when I saw the police behaving like that, well . . .

Mrs Koff: When Wilheim was a child the Gestapo took away his mother. He never saw her again . . .

Clare: I'm sorry.

Mr Koff: It was a long time ago, but when I see the police behave like that it could have been yesterday.

Clare smiles gently and touches his hand.

Dale: But why did the police grab him like that?

Mr. Koff: Drugs of course.

Clare: What drugs?

Mr Koff: He's been seen all over this town. Talking to young people on street corners. Hanging around those Asian students. He was talking to you wasn't he?

Clare: Um . . . Not exactly.

Mr Koff: How the hell can we survive when it's not only the bloody multi-nationals doing you, but the bottom of the heap riff-raff poisoning the town as well!

Dale: You have a point there. Bricks and mortar are one thing but . . . encouraging potential investors when you've got . . .

Clare: Oh, shut up Dale. I suppose you'd herd them into ghettos. (***Clare** realises she has stepped on Jewish sensitivities at a time when **Mr Koff** is already feeling upset*). . . . . I'm so sorry, I didn't mean…

Mrs Koff: (*matter of factly*) Clare has a good point. (*Looking challengingly at Mr Koff and Dale*). What <u>would</u> you do with the "riff raff?"

Uncomfortable pause.

Mrs Koff: Well, Wilheim? . . . Dale?

Dale: I don't know. But it shouldn't be like this. We should be improving the education system - . If people were properly educated then they would have better things to do with their lives than peddle drugs (*looks appealingly to Mr Koff*).

Mr Koff: Yes … (*still thinking about the ghettos*) We can't let it happen here. We have to do something. *(Enthusiastically)* I shall write to our M.P. We need training courses. Get those fat cat companies to invest in work schemes, make those people contribute. (*Standing up, and saying, determinedly)* We're not going to have ghettos here. We're not going to have them.

Suddenly, **Mrs Koff** stands up crossly.

Mrs Koff: Mr Koff, such arrogance.

Mr Koff: I thought you'd be pleased – me wanting to help this criminal – I can hardly believe it myself - me wanting help these people. What on earth's the matter with that? What's wrong with wanting people to get some real skills? I don't understand, what's arrogant about that?

Mrs Koff: The arrogance is that you really don't know about anything that's happened, but you so righteously think you do.

Mr Koff: But he looked . . .

Mrs Koff: He looked! . . . He looked! I can hardly believe I'm hearing this from a man who knows what it was like in Nazi Germany.

Clare: But what about the police?

Dale: Someone must have called them.

Pause

Mr Koff: I did.

Stunned silence.

Mrs Koff: Wilheim, How could you.

Mr Koff: We don't want his sort around here.

Mrs Koff: You have simply looked at a person and decided he is peddling drugs. First you have him arrested and then you want to give him skills you – arrogantly - presume to be relevant. How would you like someone to saddle you with courses in some set of skills they thought you should have?

Dale: You must admit he looks a bit – a bit – different, and he doesn't seem to be doing anything useful.

Clare: I don't believe you.

Dale: It's just a fact.

Mrs Koff: So, because he looks different and you know nothing about him, he must therefore be into drugs and have no skills?

Mr Koff: I was just trying to protect my business, my family, my town.

Mrs Koff: Protect? Just like the Gestapo were protecting the interests of the state?

Mr Koff: *(Pause – with sadness)* Marlene, you know I wouldn't want that.

Mrs Koff: *(Softening)* I know . . . I know.

Clare: (*hesitatingly – softly*) I think the trouble is that people just don't talk to each other. What this town needs are opportunities for people to start meeting one another, and other people – to connect – to communicate much more widely. I don't think you can do much before that. I mean, how else do people get to know who's about, who's friendly and helpful, what people can do, what they want to do?

Dale: (*interested*) What kind of opportunities?

Mrs Koff: *Sarcastically – looking at Mr. Koff)* Neighbourhood Watch Schemes?

Mr. Koff looks shamefaced.

Clare: No, I mean – well things that are fun where all kinds of people can and want to come together. I did some research on an area where local people developed their own media – did plays, wrote stories and songs about their area – and the amazing thing was all the untapped talent which no one even suspected was there - just blossomed …

Dale: So you think – I just want to get this right – that we get people who have a drug problem – and turn them into actors and poets just like that.

Clare: It's not about turning anybody into anything. It's not about drugs. It's about talking together – making connections.

Dale: I interviewed this guy once. He said "we live in cities surrounded by strangers we cannot afford to trust because we don't know their background and what pressures they are under."

Clare: That's exactly what I'm saying.

Mrs Koff: It's a sad state of affairs when someone is in need and someone is offering but the two cannot find each other.

Clare: That's my point. It happens all the time now. I mean university is a place where you think people would have all these wonderful intellectual discussions, and people would really know and look out for each other, but you know it hardly happens. Students are individuals - busy – in their closed off rooms, in front of computers, chasing their individual grades.

Dale: You're right. You know, this is the first really meaningful conversation I've had in a group of people for … for … it must be years. Well, apart from the odd faculty barbecue.

Clare: Sure, the same kind of white, mainly male elite, putting the world to rights over burnt sausages - exchanging the same shared clichés and formulas.

Mr Koff: A kind of economic master race?

Clare: No, I'm not quite saying that.

Dale: Glad to hear it.

Clare: What about you Mrs. Koff, what do you think?

Mrs Koff: You know I see a lot of different kinds of people in this café. Different people see things differently, and everyone has an opinion.

Mr Koff: *(Still feeling guilty)* And when they're wrong, innocent people get locked up, or sent to concentration camps.

Mrs Koff: Wilheim saw a drug problem. Dale saw a lack of relevant skills. Clare saw lack of motivation and opportunity.

Dale: Were we wrong?

Mrs Koff: Don't you see, that's what we keep getting from the media and others too caught up in their own little world to see the whole. We see a piece of the picture and we make up the rest. *(Pause)* What I saw was a young man with tattoos. But what you imagined became the truth. And you, Wilheim. You never thought to check whether or not what you were seeing was fact or fiction. You do not for instance know about any drugs in this situation, or you Clare, about the skills that young man already has..

Dale: He was arrested – that's a fact.

Mrs Koff: Thanks to Mr. Koff and his fantasies.

Dale: (*defensively*) But Mrs Koff, I agree, perception is a large part, of course it is, but police must have something to go on. This is a democracy, not a police state. There has to be more to what has happened than police perceptions….

Clare: They were bit heavy.

Mrs Koff: (*firmly*) Do you think the police would have used the same level of violence on a nice middle-class white man in a suit. No, they did it because, as you say, they saw him as "the bottom of the heap - riff raff."

Clare: We should have done something.

Mrs Koff: What you don't know – any of you, is that when I went in to serve the "customer" I remembered him.

Mr Koff: Not easy to forget is he?

Mrs Koff: No! I recognised him, the person – not the problem.

Clare: What do you mean?

Mrs Koff: Not long ago I saw a group of Asians students fighting. There were knives and everything. I don't know what it was about, but before I could think about calling the police, along came our tattooed friend and sorted everyone out – just by talking to them.

Mr Koff: *(With contempt)* Dealing to them you mean?

Mrs Koff: *(Angrily)* Wilheim! Sometimes I think you have as much sense as one of my fruitcakes!

Mr Koff: Marlena …

Mrs Koff: He was talking to them in their own language. He has an army background you see.

Dale: How do you know?

Mrs Koff: When I went to serve him he was talking on his cell-phone – to an army pal in Singapore. That's where he learnt to speak more than one Asian language. Not like Mr. Koff. – he's still struggling with English!

Mr Koff: All right, Marlene, I get the picture.

Mrs Koff: No, I don't think you do. The students really value him. You see he knows what it feels like to be an outsider. And he's about the <u>only</u> outsider who actually takes an interest in them.

Dale: Now that's the kind of guy that could really help to influence Asian investment in the area.

Mr Koff: *(Despondently)* Next thing we'll be waking up any time soon to find ourselves in the middle of some big high-tech, international developments.

Dale: But, who knows, he could be the saviour of Sometown.

Clare: I'll drink to that.

Clare raises her glass.

Dale: A toast.

Mrs Koff: Alright, but first I'm ringing the police station.

Mr Koff: What for?

Mrs Koff: To make sure our tattooed friend is O.K of course.

Mr Koff: *(Sternly)* No, Marlene you will not. *(Mrs. Koff is shocked - Pause)* I will.

They all laugh. **Mr. Koff** picks up the phone and dials – they all wait.)

Mr Koff: *(Nervously)* Oh, yes, um . . . hello . . . um, I was just wondering. . . the arrest you made at Koff's Café earlier today . . . Well, I was wondering what . . . I'm sorry . . . Oh, am I a friend or relative *(**Mr. Koff** looks nervously at the others – they **all** nod "Tell him yes"). (**Mr. Koff** - with feigned confidence)* Um .. . Yes, I am a friend of his . . . a very old and trusted friend. . . . His name? *(Pause – **Mr. Koff** freezes. He looks anxiously at the others) . . .* **I'll just hand you over to my wife**… (*he makes to give **Mrs Koff** the phone)*

FREEZE FRAME

THE END.

Appendix 3: Summary of research data

1. In one word, what is your first reaction to this play?

Responses in order of frequency were:

10 Interesting, 4 Recognition, 5 Thought provoking 3 Good, 2 OK, 2 Realistic, 2 Challenging, 2 Good presentation, Anticipation, Unsure, Quite good, Great, Disappointing, Assumptions, Clever, Effective, Amazing, Topical, Cheap, Eclectic, Entertaining, Straight forward, Funny, Longwinded, Different, Professional, Conflicting, Embarrassed, Contrived, Awkward, Delight, Frustrated, Intriguing, Hmmm, Fair, Lengthy, Intrigued, Dislike, Interested, Impressive, Familiar, Cheesy, Frustrating, Optimistic, Unrealistic, Brilliant, Bewildered, Education system, Understanding, Impressed, Bemused, Happy, True to life, Attempting, Preachy, Stereotypes.

2. Were there things that annoyed you? If so, what?

65 of the participants had something that annoyed them. Responses to what annoyed participants included judgements about acting, writing, production values, and the play itself:

Judgements about the acting included:

A degree of overacting
Some actors overstressed their lines
Dale's woodenness of delivery; annoyance went as ideas unfolded
Poor acting in parts, clichés in script

Judgements about the writing included:

Police image was portrayed unfairly
Seemed rather didactic
Some over enthusiasm
Reaction from Clare not realistic

Judgements about production values included:

The music (loud, dramatic) announcing the police
Amateur production & acting mildly off-putting at 1st
Some camera shots unsteady
Circus music

Judgements about the nature of the play itself included:

> Narrow minded male actors
> Judging people by their skin without knowing them
> The guy who was arrested. Sad when man didn't answer Clare.
> The bikes & their loan

And about the characters

> Why did Clare marry such a right-winger?
> Idealism of Clare, reactive judgements of males
> Clare too bossy but good at connecting people
> Assumptions about Tattooed Man. Clare's controlling & both students arrogant

3. Did this play seem realistic to you, or not? Why?

39 said it was real, 20 not real, 19 sort of realistic and 2 no opinion.

Examples of why the play was realistic were:

> Attitudes and opinions often heard in our society
> I know people like all the characters
> Same as my home town
> Could relate on number of levels
> Main points realistic & motivated
> Lack of communication causes many problems in Japan
> Revisiting childhood home realistic
> That is how we feel all the time

Examples of why it was not thought to be realistic included:

> Issues real but dialogue less convincing
> Issues real but acting not real
> Stilted cop arrest unlikely without evidence
> Contrived, unreal that people change attitudes so easily
> Mall scene unreal standing around, anyone addicts
> Too much action/meaningful talk in short time frame
> Long speeches not normal but necessary for play

4. Did you identify with any of the characters? If so, who?

 54 participants identified with at least one character: 15 with Marlena, 10 with Clare, 8 with the Tattooed Man, and many identifying with a combination of characters with 3 saying they identified with all characters.

5. Do the students have anything to offer?

50 participants thought that the students, Dale and Clare, had something to offer, while 6 thought they didn't. Other participants responded with a more qualified "maybe." Though seldom explicitly related to the university, university learned ideas, thinking and skills were seen as significant to Sometown's development. Dale's academic economic knowledge and Clare's academic social development knowledge were mentioned, mostly favourably. This is perhaps not surprising given the high number of participants with tertiary qualifications. However, many also added that 'everyday' experience was also needed, and some were quite negative even if experience was gained, for they saw community ownership as essential.

The students were young and their energy and ideas were seen as giving them some potential leadership qualities by a significant number of participants:

> Enthusiasm, vision, explore contrasting ideas, argue ideas, move beyond differences
> Enthusiasm, energy might bring people together, but need more people skills
> Young & inexperienced but have new ideas that bring optimism & hope
> Youthful, optimistic, and fresh to the area otherwise nothing special
> Young, enthusiastic, a fresh approach
> Contribute in terms of their perspectives, fresh eyes, enthusiasm

They were also seen as contributing communication and connecting skills.

> Educate, create positive atmosphere, and improve communication skills
> Ability to seek economic opportunities, desire to communicate & connect people
> They can offer their willingness to communicate, be a good example by taking initiative
> Good ideas about getting groups together to get things done. Supporting each other & trusting

In terms of the transdisciplinary model which I seek to develop, entailing a collaborative approach, including within academia as well as between academia and local community, students were seen as contributing productively, for instance:

> Dialogue between them offers two perspectives [social and economic] looking at the problem that may lead to middle ground thinking
> Ability to connect with Koffs & youth, willingness to build community, education

> Will probably get disillusioned unless they work in teams with more experienced people, something to offer but purely theoretical approach can be dangerous
> If they promote activities which connect people would start new ideas & initiatives
> They have education, energy & desire for community social work

However, there was a strong concern expressed that students lacked practical experience:

> Lot of energy & enthusiasm but naive & inexperienced
> Too theory- driven, not practical
> They'll go back to where they came from & forget it all
> They are students with no life experience, see world in terms of theories they've learnt at uni
> Dale too idealistic, has energy/ideas but lacks experience, more street-wise than Clare
> Dale's ideas of investment need to be balanced with community involvement/investment

There was also a concern that students were not part of the local community and contributing from afar would not work:

> Difficult when they don't live in the community
> It needs to come from the town
> They don't live there, not part of the community
> No stake in the place at the moment

7. Hope and Despair: how was your ending?

There were nine groups and of them 17 chose hopeful, or happy – ever – after scenarios and 5 despairing or tragic scenarios. Though difficult to quantify in exact terms, those who began expressing themselves as hopeful tended to be less specific about why they were hopeful, and those who began by expressing themselves as despairing tended to be more specific.

The following are some of the less specific illustrations from those who expressed themselves as hopeful. They said they were:

> Wanting to be hopeful
> Natural position for both of us - slightly more hopeful than despairing
> HOPE
> Optimistic
> Positive
> Relentless optimist

Glass half full
Optimist
Miracles happen
Optimistic and good mood today
Anything possible if we keep doing
I made a happy ending
It is possible
I believe in happy endings
MORE THAN HOPEFUL

The following had some more specificity

Identified with positive character (aware of her vulnerability) i.e. in our own experience, jumping in where angels fear to tread …
Need to believe in resolution or I'd feel despairing of humans and their opportunities to turn situations around for the better. I need to believe that we may one day all be caring of all in our communities
Town has potential
Faith in people's ability to change things
Possibilities in Sometown
Because I believe the tough guy is innocent. There are a lot of people in this world who assume wrongly of others and the ending of part 2 could be that it is never beneficial to assume

These are much more specific about why they are hopeful:

Confident in community's ability to overcome difficulties
People who want change have access to tools for change i.e. educated also have energy
Exposure ensures learning growth
From chaos comes creativity
Always possible to work things out but it takes time and commitment
This world is not meant to be perfect
With communication people can work things out
Given the choice most people would rather they get along
Individuals combine their different resources as a basis for economic development and social justice
Resources: knowledge, practical skills, connections, trust, economic means, physical and mental energy
All things are possible when people co-operate

For the most part, the five groups who expressed the view that *The Silent Connectors* play would move towards tragedy, or despair, were more specific about why.

Think best of people, but more realistic if a drug dealer
Let down by him, but doesn't mean you have to give up on everyone
Despair about changing police attitudes in a hurry
Clare only able to see change 1:1 basis
Dale is too young
Difficulty of identifying "community," so many have gone. Only new industry seems to be ESOL courses and then need outside understanding
More despairing because I think they will go through a hard time before it gets easier
Innocent go to jail
Lots of hard work and trials before anything changes
Contrived to work people up
Ideas tiresome
What we see all the time in newspapers
Object to idea of what you wear is who you are e.g. Muslims veils, Jews skullcaps. People wear things to show status, uniforms, and tattoos giving social message about selves. People have got to go on. If disagree slippery slope to being Nazi. Popular way of stopping criticism. Nazis groups of people - ideology - implications if tattoos = nazi - thug. Simplistic makes me mad

However, when those who chose hopeful as their first choice then needed to express why they might be despairing they were, for the main part, much more specific. The following are some illustrations of this:

Feel disempowered
Feel greatly saddened at the state of humankind in a kind of pit difficult to extricate oneself from
Feel disillusioned about human's capacity to change
Feel angry/frustrated/miserable
Feel future wasn't bright or promising
Feel mired down
Feel that the council/organizations weren't committed to facilitating people connecting.

Town is so polarised
Wilful individual in the police that gets in the way and makes for a bad situation
Human nature doesn't change
Mr Koff commits suicide
Police beat tattooed man to death
Political and investor forces are intentionally working behind the scenes to make the town fail

Communication difficulties (not enough people know what's going on)
Developers don't care

People not listening
Ineffective local authorities
No one knows the history
Good things get squashed
Too much account given to those who have the money
In the end, some hope, but not strong enough to effect change
Café owner and boy were right about Maori man all along
The people of the town like it the way it is
Someone could die (maybe Dale!!!)
We find out Clare's preggie and it's really sad with no money. She's stuck with the student loans.

Show that… consequences are REAL
Regret is Real
Never ASSUME! Or else
To show people what happens to those who assume and are judgmental towards others. I'd say a heart attack would be more likely. Suffered by Mr Koff of course. He was the one who contacted the authorities.

Greed always wins
Political manipulation
Agenda of powerful usually overcomes agenda of less powerful
Conservative red necks have loud voices in small towns
People don't like changes
Takes a lot to overcome mistrust

Human nature is designed for conflict
Real solutions are never simple
Often people will not go the little extra step
People are individuals
Success only comes from individual striving
Everyone defends their own situation
If they are comfortable, they are not as open to others' rights

No real change outside green politics
Sustainability almost impossible with/given present economic models.

No easy resolution at end of act 1
Still a big distance between groups
Social realism more effective catalyst
Separation between groups institutionalised - rigid

Artistic integrity is going for "D"
Plot of second drama/act negative = wake up call for society
Because of possible reality with neo-liberal society e.g. National gets in and then falls into difficulties

Too many people at university

Dale and Claire get beaten up by riff-raff causing them to leave and NEVER RETURN
Koffs go broke
Try to organise a meeting that doesn't happen due to apathy
Bad aliens
Climate change causes the town to vanish under the sea - sea level rises.

Police not taking the blame for the bikes
Giving the tattoo man a beating
Mr Koff being held under investigations for having "connections" with the tattoo man
The café was genuinely peddling drugs (because of economics)
Couple divorce

Because I think there is no solution to the problem that I can see
White people think they are superior

People may have lack of willingness to change
Action against tattooed guy could have made him bitter, shut him down, made him mistrustful
Looking at it from town's people's perspective
They are happy this way
Despair has been progressive, worn down gradually
Maybe he really is a drug dealer
To add - easy fix solutions to problems without information or communicating with community
Despair: re not finding what community consider as solutions

Final comment

As the session comes to a close participants were asked, in one word, or phrase, what is your first reaction to this play now?

8% Thought provoking, 5% More positive, 4% Interesting, Middleclass, Trigger for ongoing discussion, Too much emphasis on students, Better to overemphasise to highlight issues, Good at drawing discussion, Clever, Disappointed, More optimistic, Compressed, Intrigued, Balanced, Potential in everyone, Recognition, Impractical, Neutral, Invitational, Inspirational, Interesting but disturbing, Useful, Staged but interesting, Simplistic, One dimensional characters, Funny, Happy, Not believable, Everyone should have wide vision, communicate among international people & neighbours, A bit sceptical about positive outcomes, Contrived, Longwinded, Straightforward, Stimulating, Impressed, Movie has usable function, Raises issues of

community potential, Potential for creative outcomes, Something to build on, Gets harder before its easier, More thoughtful. Engaging, Complex, Always difficult to change motivations, Doubtful, Didactic but entertaining, Cheesy, Valuable, Disorienting, Idealistic, Reflect, Enlightening, Challenging, Imaginary, Reality. Possibilities, Unrealistic

1. Recalling place and special connections

Participants were asked think of a place where you have lived - it can be where you are now - where you have felt some sort of feeling of comfort, security, belonging or connectedness to the place and its people. On this sheet of paper note/draw or in any way indicate what makes this place a place you want or wanted to be.

When I think of where I live I have two things that stand out. First is a warm feeling about the people I know who live around me. This is literally because each of the houses that border mine have people I have come to know. The thing is that we all look out for each other. The retired neighbours behind me are home all day and keep an eye on my back yard and dogs. The house on the other side has a young family and on the other are some women who have been flatting for 6 years in their house. Whenever any of us is away for any length of time we take care of each other's houses.

I'm from a University campus in South East Asia. I'm away from home and I met different people from a similar background and in search of a similar self-fulfilment. Because we share a common desire to be with loved ones, but couldn't because of distance and other unavailability factors, we formed a bond which we cherished and loved, even though we are from different parts of the world.

The "Bank Walk" is where we as children went every (well, almost every) afternoon with our mothers – 4-6 families joined together for these "walks". The older children were dropped off at their play places – the youngest went all the way with their mums – it was a place where anything could happen!

Subtle things, a quiet forest walk. Corner dairies where shopkeeper chats is a nice feel-good community indicator. People interacting in public places, kids playing soccer in a park and including 'strangers'.

Great facilities, being within cycling distance of almost everything I need (especially work), being close enough for purposeful walking (going somewhere within the neighbourhood, perhaps walking to a friend's or work, or dairy, or the library, or the fish 'n chip shop). Knowing people, but mostly the close proximity to places I have a reason to go to. Being known/recognised after a while, my daughter having the same experience. Being "in the know" with events happening. Being given the opportunity to help/participate not necessarily for money. Not being surrounded with things/people who

"scare" me. Knowing when the rubbish gets collected, milkman comes, bus timetable, etc. etc.

Home – the huge plum tree so we gave away cases of plums each year: our big tree house meant our friends wanted to play; neighbours – Dad made a door through the fence so we could go over to play without having to go around the road, adventures exploring the creek together, became childhood friends and Mum and Dad became friends with their parents, I baby-sat for one family, the nice old man next door with his garden full of fish ponds, but the kids in the cul-de-sac were poor and had dogs so we didn't play with them.

After the Silent Connectors film – Remember you are living in Sometown with family and friends. Write on an A4, what you most fear might happen to us, individually, and to family and friends. What is it that makes each of us afraid? Be specific. Please give examples of things you have experienced or witnessed that you think could happen to you in Sometown.

2. What makes each of us afraid?

I have been discriminated against due to my looks – long hair. Also my keenness on discussing politics (national and international) seems to create anxiety, trepidation and even fear in many people – I think many people feel safe and secure in their world-views and do not wish to hear the views of a conflict theorist like myself – they also seem to fear an in-depth knowledge of history.

Fear relates to fast traffic on our road that has lots of cyclists and elderly pedestrians and children. Fear relates to possible strangers being on the property at night - unexplained noises.

Fear of being framed for crime I know nothing about or because of my colour or nationality.

Strange people who are not like us. Personal safety from people who appear in some way threatening. Loss of jobs, security and income could also lead to anxiety.

Loss of own jobs and house value falls – can't move out – loss of saving – family and friends leaving – disrupts relationships and breaks connections with people/place.

Violence between the inhabitants of Sometown i.e. 'the Asians' and unfair justice system i.e. police acting on inaccurate information.

Corporate takeover – A new Disneyland or mega mall. A socially/culturally inappropriate economic investment. The loss of historical and romantic associations of the place (further loss) Specifically I would be afraid of a lack of input in my community and a lack of accountability of public services i.e. police etc.

Property being destroyed/tagged making property prices go down so that I can't buy a house elsewhere because if I sold my house in Sometown I'd hardly get anything for it (if anyone wanted to even buy it) so I'd be TRAPPED. My daughter growing up and having friends like the young people there and developing an attitude which removes her chances of being employed, or taking drugs.

That real estate will increase in value to the point where none of us can afford to live here. That local business will be usurped by larger ones and that jobs will be lost. That employment will stratify to haves and have-nots. Options are decreased. Separation and animosity result. With conditions degrading crime will increase, hopelessness will increase the need for funds to set things right while the ability to raise those funds will decrease. That local government and eventually national ones will fight for the trickle down crumbs from investors, lowering environmental and labour standards while granting tax concessions in their competition for the illusion of economic development solving the problems.

Feeling uncomfortable in an unfamiliar situation 'outnumbered' by other ethnicities - Change in overall atmosphere. Impression of people not caring about themselves, their environment, each other. Increased levels of stress all round as people struggle to cope with various changes and especially when people feel threatened by them. Reduced tolerance and acceptance of difference.

Being humiliated because of my age/sex. Afraid after dark i.e. possible violence to my home/me, distance from medical care.

Police state. Right-wing government, Immigration overload. Main fear is that government will think that the only way to solve social and economic (small scale) problems will be to revise and create laws until it becomes too difficult to live without breaking any. Police brutality. Essentially my fears don't stem from the population or economic failure but from the people who are in power being blinded by that power and making stupid decisions that affect everybody in an adverse manner.

Unpredictable violence, Hostility from particular groups, Random hostility, Vandalism of the remnants of what was beautiful, Violation of 'good manners,' Theft, Imposition of different behaviour – littering, swearing - More people letting the community down by not participating in community events, not 'doing' their gardens, not greeting neighbours, Unsupervised children/youth, Lack of accountability, No community 'norms' any more.

Vandalism – having my home or things damaged or stolen, Violence – attacked by strangers (if alone at night). Rejection – having my friendly overtures rejected by others, being treated as second-class because I am not a Kiwi – in some ways, especially afraid that my children will not find friends.

Losing employment and the associated elements that often go with losing one's job – stagnating of potential, financial struggles, being forced to move away from family and

friends, the feeling of insecurity both emotional and financial, the other friends are forced to seek opportunities elsewhere. The loss of feeling that one is in control of one's own destiny. Pressures on personal relationships.

There won't be enough work so we'll have to move away and the kids will have to leave their friends, Children will get in with the wrong crowd and end up in trouble or not doing well in school, Property values will fall. Crime will increase so it won't be safe for our kids, the Police will become more judgemental and more businesses will move away.

Becoming victims of crime with assault, burglary, theft, rape. Drug pushers supplying young children with drugs. Further decline of already decaying town centre (with businesses closing down moving away etc) increasing the sense of dereliction and further reducing community amenities (no banks, post offices etc) making it harder for low income people/those without cars to access services etc. Attracting down-and-outs to sterile town centre. No legitimate attractions for young people/families. Further sense of alienation and isolation as community disintegrates further – police no-go area

Victimisation of minorities who are seen as problem rather than economic forces

I guess I have nameless fears of people with different ethnic backgrounds, even though I've travelled etc– might superficial acceptance cover hostility that might break out under provocation? Might I and my family be targeted because of our relative privilege/ethnicity etc? I would also fear polarisation of the community through events taking place elsewhere, and reprisals for e.g. dobbing someone in for crime.

Specifically I would be afraid of a lack of input in my community and a lack of accountability of public services i.e. police etc.

That local governments and eventually national ones, will fight for the trickle down crumbs from investors, lowering environmental and labour standards while granting tax concessions in their competition for the illusion of economic development solving the problems.

3. What are our fears related to?

The following are from transcripts of conversation from the tables

From café table 1

The fear of people that didn't look like you, the Asian people, German mafia, Maori character, people who were different. I think there is sense sometimes there is a fear of people they don't know particularly if it's a small town and these people have moved in which was the impression wasn't it, it was nature of the place, people don't like that. For me it was fear of the unknown - the changes in store for the town, things like what businesses and what would take their place if anything at all. Who's going to come on board?

All the For Sale signs, there was a feeling of desolation. If you'd been somebody who had lived there you would have thought your place is changing, going downhill even. I don't know about fear but you would certainly feel depressed, fear of the future, for your future there, future for your family – that sort of reaction. You would want to get out. Can I get out? Am I trapped? The only ones that were honest were the ones that were newest.

My fear is because of my colour, they make a lot of judgements. The way they see me differently. It doesn't really matter whether I dress well or not but as long as this colour is there they make a lot of judgement.

Really!

I always have that especially if I'm travelling, the notion that mainly I'm Asian and it's where I'm coming from.

Really?

I don't know, it's just that.

Are you sure?

Yeah. I wouldn't say it was general but it is most people. I'm never afraid of people I meet on the street but how people look at me and what people are really going to say when they see it's me because it's a problem when they always look at me first.

Discrimination?

Well, I don't know but I feel it's always there with me and until I get used to the system and the way people see me I won't be part of society. When I see the tattooed man what caught me was the moral courage. On many occasions when I walk from my office to the department here I have seen people cross over the street because they see me coming.

I've travelled quite a lot and I've lived with people of different backgrounds and I've always thought of myself as broad-minded accepting everyone. I realised as I tried to put myself into that scene I could relate to the fear that the Koff's felt, about people who are unknown. I thought about a time when we lived next-door to people who came from another part of the world – there was some damage to a car outside our property and my son thought that he saw one of their children doing the damage and I went round to see them and to try to talk about it in a kind of open way but they completely denied anything to do with it but soon after my car was broken into and I figured that this was some kind of punishment having dared to suggest -. So on account of my suspicion and however much in my head I might think I don't have stereotypes about other races, when something like this happens it can immediately bring that very stereotype into my own consciousness. I think that the other thing that I feel sometimes is very conscious of

being white in a situation where there are people of other races and wondering how I'm perceived, whether I'm privileged or arrogant or these things and that I can be afraid in a subconscious way.

From café table 2

I'm afraid of the unemployment and there are groups of kids, day and night, have to fill their time in.

I share that fear. Why is it that these groups of kids exist, what are their options? I wonder if they're doing in communities – that have managed to make our communities so unable to sustain themselves and the people who live in them. I think that it does come down to lack of planning and to allow the free market to have its way which I don't think is helping our culture, in general or specifically in Sometown.

It seems to be when I look around Sometown I see a bit of the vandalism, I see a lot of places closed down, economic hardship and a lot of people having left. Those are all frightening things. You're afraid that there's not a place to be, that everybody's going to up and leave. There just isn't enough to sustain a community. You're afraid that the kind of vandalism that you see evidence of around town is going to be directed against you.

It's the energy that creates the vandalism that – the unchannelled energy that comes out in vandalism and violence on occasions. Predictable hostility. Unsupervised children, abuse and nobody accountable for the actions of these unsupervised people.

And the lack of commitment. You look around and you see all these places that have been closed down – places where people have just given up and left. Not committed to making things work. There's this sort of environment of just giving up.

So has Sometown gone too far? Is it salvageable? People left be able to develop it again?

From café table 3

That's getting back to one of the other things I wrote down about my fears has to do with rejection of me. I've only been in New Zealand 2 years and one of my biggest fears is that I will be rejected, I am seen as an outsider, that I am seen as a second-class citizen because I'm not a real Kiwi and even more than for myself but for my children, that they will be rejected that they will be unable to make friends at school.

When I hear you say those things about that that immediately bring up all those fears for myself. I'm on the receiving of that also, I'm different, I don't fit in with whatever.

Those of us that are different, not real Kiwis find there are certain topics I would draw back and not give too big an opinion on because I still see myself in some respects as a guest. In other aspects of living here I can possibly see different things that a person born here can't because we don't have the whole family to haul us back.

I can understand what they are saying because sometimes I feel I am a guest in this country and there are certain issues that I feel that I am not at liberty to debate too strongly with somebody like you because you have been here for generations. I don't mean you particularly but other New Zealanders because there have been instances when I come across a New Zealander who feels very strongly about the Treaty settlement for example. I have a particular view and that person, I sense has got a different view and I withdraw. That makes many of us outsiders. How does it make a New Zealander feel?

Yes, I can see why you would be cautious. But I think that most people, who are white and speak English, even with an accent, are more acceptable according to Winston Peters.

From café table 4

I said I would be worried about my 10-year old daughter and she might grow up having friends like the young people there with an attitude which removes her chances of being employed and I would also be nervous about my property being destroyed, or tagged, or vandalised which would make the property prices go down. That I wouldn't be able to sell my property if there was anybody that wanted to buy it or I wouldn't get enough for it so I wouldn't be able to buy anywhere else and I would be trapped.

My fears are mainly related to a situation where I'm walking down the street and I'm hassled. The tattooed man looking hassled for looking different from the town. The situation where the Police have the power to pull over any young person they see fit and search them, have their name, address and any information they want. That's the main fear for me because it's just an invasion of privacy. I don't do anything wrong, I look a little different and possibly act a little different from what may be considered. I don't do anything illegal. I don't hurt anybody so there's no reason why I should be hassled. I would hate to be in a situation where the Police have the right to do that.

One of my fears is because I'm old and because I'm female and I've been humiliated and vulnerable to violence. Being on my own, old and female.

What I can't understand is that a lot of young people are out there doing things that aren't right so on the one hand I don't want to be hassled but if that hassling stops x amount of people hurting an older person, or robbing a store, it is worth it.

Age isn't a protection from fear. When you're young you can still be afraid.

My fears are mainly administrative, an increase in rates for instance and I wouldn't be able to cope with the size of my income but of course I'm a different generation. Those are the fears that older people have probably.

4. What is in Sometown to give a feeling of security and value?

Participants were asked, if we now look at Sometown and its people, places, possibilities, processes again, what is here already to give us a feeling of security and value?

From café table 1

There was obviously a group of people living there and it had been a thriving town too in the past. How much would the café be a place where people would go to, was it welcoming, was it a drop-in centre that you could go to find people – it seemed a little difficult to see that? The woman talked about people coming in and their different ways of eating and talking.

The infrastructure was there. Yes, it used to work all right. Presumably they were accessible to people. To find something else takes time. There would be a worry about corporate glossy rubbish coming in. They would want something innovative, unique. Something that was well developed apparently was the language school. But then some people were not so keen on it but they were quite keen on the business aspect.

What gives me comfort is people that can listen. I feel more at ease when I can talk to people, I feel more relaxed if we can share certain things. So I think that when I communicate with people and that way I can communicate some of the problems. I believe most people wear masks and once you start stripping some of those masks off you get to know the other person.

From café table 2

I would say the woman who sold the tea, she tended to take things easy, she was able to communicate with everybody. She would be able to gain some insight into the life of the tattooed man, the young couple and her own husband, and be able to make a judgement that would solve the problem. The woman who owned the coffee shop was able to give more information than the other group.

From café table 3

Well, there's the school.

Is there a school?

The language school. It's connecting with the anonymous man in the Army. There must be some way of connecting with that school if he can connect.

That's a very different specialist and it's private and it caters for the Orientals. (Long pause)

Maybe Sometown's Christchurch and despite the perception it's actually quite safe for us. I didn't meet anything of physical danger, observations that would make me scared or concerned. So I think it's a reasonably safe place. Quite diverse, it's become more so but there can be some negative things to it. There seems to be some good strong stalwarts among the people who managed to stay in there right through the rough times. So in a funny sort of way its reasonably safe, diverse and quite stable.

From café table 4

> There's the local church but the congregation's aging so it's only catering for a certain age-group, people who have lived there a long time. It provides support for people when they're sick.

> You can get that support from a group of friends. Essentially, that's what a church is as well, it's a group of like-minded people.

> What I like is the fore-thought that had gone into the previous generation, the public spaces – they're not so well maintained now but they're still there.
> In the playground the swings have been vandalised. I don't think there's any equipment there that worked.

> But it's a hard call for the Council to continuously repair things that have been continuously damaged. Those that aren't vandalised stay in good nick.

5. What are the opportunities for economic advancement?

Participants were then asked: what opportunities for our economic advancement can we

spot, local and international?

From café table 1

> Revival of crafts have become much more popular and furniture. Ethnic crafts as cottage industry locally and internationally. Muffin factory for jobs for the kids (laugh).

> The local community has got to get something going with the aid of the local Council. There were a lot of young people about. Training incentives, apprenticeships. There has to be a partnership with the locals to get involved.

> One thing I have learned about most Asian friends I have is they are afraid to feel naïve or they feel more intimidated partly because of the language problem. At first I feel they are a bit unrespectful. When I got to know them a bit more, I realise its not a matter of being unrespectful, it's a matter of they are not really sure of what to say to you so that you won't be offended. They try not to offend you. But when you open up with them and say well it doesn't matter, I'm foreigner like you, I don't really care how you put your language and it ends up we communicate, we talk and then we get to understand there is something good about each of us. Communication sometimes, it doesn't matter how we frame it, just the ability to open up and that we want to learn something from each other.

> That's important isn't it because some people don't want to learn or change. Normally because they're hurt or -.

> Why, do you think there are some people don't want to change?

Oh, I met them, luckily not in my circles but some people think their racist or bigoted views are good.

Any human can change. It depends on their circumstances.

From café table 2

I guess the language school does in a way open up the possibility of Asian advancement or something. I guess it's such a -. We just don't know what could develop from the situation supposing they do manage to get better communication, how could that transform into economic advancement? (Ums – yeahs)

There has to be a trust between those who are buying and those who are selling and those involved in economic activities and if that trust doesn't exist it would be difficult to have any kind of communication. So I feel that for any kind of economic advancement there has to be that kind of trust.

You must build trust by communication and you would be able to benefit from each other.

I also think people need to learn to not be afraid.

From café table 3

I don't think I know enough about Sometown to answer that question at all.

It's by the sea.

By the sea is about all I know.

Somewhere in the South Island.

It used to have a tourist trade but it seems to have lost that. You'd go there in the summertime.

Unless the coastline has altered, and we'll presume it hasn't, it would still be something that could be built on I think. You could still come there and I think that is certainly something that could happen again.

And yet that is something that the Koffs were looking for. Having a café and looking for people who were coming for holidays. It's not working very well for them.
You could work with the language school to increase their cultural offering so that there could be a cultural festival centred round the language school during the summer over a period of several weekends high-lighting music, dance, arts, handicrafts from parts of the world their students represent. At the same time work with local landowners, motels, people etc, the Chamber of Commerce to promote this into the local metropolitan areas to attract tourists from those areas.

For that matter, the language school itself presents an economic opportunity. Let's face it, to go to school in this country, if you are not a permanent resident, is very expensive. You have to have a lot of money and you won't even get permits to study in this country unless you can prove that you are bringing a lot of money in. So we have got a population of students who do have a certain amount of disposable income and that's an opportunity. And the language school has to see a profit in it. Students are young people, students are looking for opportunities to get together, to have fun, to be amused. That's an economic opportunity.

These are different students with a different background.

That's right. Which means you need to have a knowledge about that cultural background if you're going to create attractions that are going to appeal to them but I don't think that's an impossible thing.

From café table 4

You would need to do a skills assessment of the students in the language school, skills they may be able to share with local students and with local employers thereby broadening their language opportunities and skills with the local community to make them more valuable and more connected with that community. Potentially, immigration would be a possibility for some of those students which would certainly be attractive to a lot of the people who are coming from Asia to our language school. This is a sales point for that language school.

Of course the reality is they are only here because their parents sent them, so there is no incentive really to learn - very little incentive for them to learn.

We can increase their incentives.

Methven [30] turned themselves round with summer schools because they had plenty of accommodation. Something Sometown seemed to have was plenty of accommodation.

The foreign language industry would still be growing and I know there are some concerns of parents from the Asian countries that their kids are hanging out and getting into trouble. Perhaps we could attract more of that business from bigger cities and perhaps that means that certainly more Asian restaurants in the town and that might create more tourism.

6. What groups and networks and links are operating?

Participants were asked: What groups and networks and links are operating in

Sometown?

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[30] A small town in the South Island of New Zealand

From café table 1

> Home-stay networks, Koffs café, employment, churches. It was a strain.

> Shops could be seen as an attraction because they were shut. (laugh) There'd be a few well-intentioned individuals trying to network you into something (laugh). Maybe that's what we're looking for (laugh).

From café table 2

> Police (Ha, Ha, Ha!)

> Heaps of business people I would presume. Business associations.

> They made it appear that most of the businesses were defunct.

> There must be somebody, land agents or – (laugh)

> We don't know if there was a public school. We can assume there is something. That's certainly one place to start linking. There's also the WINZ [Work and Income, or social welfare] office and if things are as bad as they're talking about we can link through there (laugh).

> When the kids were on their bicycles looking down to this place it seemed to be quite a big place so there must be old churches and schools and things.

From café table 3

> It seemed like Brighton [a seaside suburb in Christchurch] actually. The 1970s when New Brighton was very busy.

> It's cos they had Saturday trading and a niche market.

> There would be holiday houses so you could attract those people back, not necessarily to live there, but to contribute.

From café table 4

> That area seems to be very attractive to people of all cultures. Not necessarily going to make prosperity in the town except to give the young people something to do.

> There might be a way in which structures, existing structures where the young people would be able to tell us what to do – sports teams or something like that. It doesn't appear to be many strong ways to communicating to portions of the community. I think, out of that the potential is – well if they could tell us what they want maybe there could be some bottom-up type of leadership. Young people express what they want and go ahead and do it.

But is that really the problem? Is the town going down-hill because the kids are going bad or because of economic forces outside of our control? Is that what we have to get right? Certainly there are business networks in the town and maybe it's about getting them together.

7. Reflect on the silent connections you perceive are operating

From café table 1

No verbal, Physical (tattoo man) – people are not of his posture – self-assured so he has no need to talk to enlist anybody – he is comfortable confident in his own space.
He had served in the military and had also experienced past discrimination. Academics came from similar worlds. Husband and wife also shared similar life histories

Connection between the café owner's wife and the Asian students.

Connection between the café owner's wife and the tattooed man and his previous actions in breaking up a fight among the Asian students.

Connection between the tattooed man and his army past and his army friend in Singapore.

From café table 2

Connection between the behaviour of the police and the background of the German café owner.

Link between the tattooed man and the Asian students.

Link between the café owners and the 2 young visitors who appeared worthwhile having in their café and talking to before the husband judged their motives for needing the pharmacy.

Positive – caring attitudes still are present

Desire to do something to turn the current situation in Sometown around

Image of the town by boarded up shops etc gives an impression negative of the town.

Negative – prejudice towards newcomers, stereotypes, could be seen as positive by celebrating cultural diversity – local festivals etc

From café table 3

Silent prejudices unite people in their concerns and …

Community "watch" – spying out of window, keeping tabs on community.

Links between: Koffs and customers, townspeople and each other (those who have lived there a while), language school students and who they are living with, unemployed and case workers, Internet and townspeople (youth)

Silent links: language school, Koffs inn, dairies, employers/places of employment, shared history of growing up together, local schools, churches, police, WINZ, local radio? local print media?

Connection of the past – shared experience and memories, commonality of human experience – oppressive and discriminatory, people connections not evident in movie

Tattoos – Jewish, Maori

Shared facilities – libraries, schools, churches, memories of events shared

Skate-boarding kids, Koffs to each other – German, Mr Koff and police

Language connection between tattooed man and Asian students

From café table 4

Established neighbours, people who have shared traumatic/fun experiences
Tattooed people – piercing etc, being outsiders in a new situation, trouble with the law.
Two people in a cell will be buddies (theoretically).

Skate-boarding kids, Mr and Mrs Koff, Mrs Koff's relationship with her customers, Mr Koff and police, Police and "riff raff," Tattooed man and Asian students,' Koffs' and outside world ie visitors (our newlyweds)

Connections within students at language school – shared classes, Shared history/experience, Connections with places gone to regularly – stores, the café – people you see regularly, friendship connections, language connections, neighbourhoods, similar experience as newcomers or as old-timers, shared adversity
Parents – children/youths, business – customers/wider community, local government, central government, Police, Schools – youth/children, church – community, cultural connections

Customers at Koffs café, People who remember what it was like, homestay relationships between Asian students and the families they stay with, Relationships of community/social welfare workers to the unemployed.

Established residents – sense of belonging/shared history, parents of children at school and plunket, camaraderie of those on the street – drug users, unemployed, down and outs

Mr Koff and Nazi Germany – connecting with childhood fear when police arrived.

Mrs Koff with tattooed man – knowing his connection with Asian students. Tattooed man's experience as foreigner linking with Asian students

Police being heavy-handed with tattooed man and with students' bikes

8. Questions or statements for the people in Sometown

Participants were asked: Do you have any questions for characters in Sometown or

anything you want to say to them?

Questions to the Tattooed Man

Why did you ignore the students when they tried to talk to you?
Why were you rude to Clare?
Why did you come to Sometown?
What is your vision for Sometown?
Why did you get tattoos in the first place?
Who are you living with?
What is your situation with parents, other Maori, and do you have wife or children? Do you come from Sometown?
Is there a marae here?
I understand why you did not want to talk with Clare. You must get sick of that. Maybe she wanted drugs. I often get asked for drugs. I get sick of it.

Questions to The police

Why were you so heavy handed when you took that fellow away?
What are you going to do about the bikes?
Do you wear your uniform with pride?
Are you doing something about the bikes?
Why were you so quick to arrest the Tattooed man?

Questions to Clare

Why did you marry Dale?

What did you see in him?
Why did your parents move?

Questions to Dale

Does anything you have seen make you think about/change your economic theories?

Question to Mrs Koff

How do you de-stress?

Question to Mr Koff

What happened to the Tattooed Man?
Why do you yield to your wife?

Question to Mr and Mrs Koff

How many people live in Sometown?
Who advised you to open a business in Sometown?
Why a café after you've been in the timber industry?

Statement to Dale, Clare, Marlena and Wilhelm

Go to the cop shop and check up on the tattooed man

Questions to the international students

Where are you staying?
What are your intentions to Sometown?
What is your involvement?

Questions to all

Why did no one know his name?

Appendix 4: The Silent Connectors - Part 2 (Draft)

Sc 1(a)   Ext: Town Street   Day

Mr Koff walks briskly down the street. He smiles at passers-by and doffs his trilby hat occasionally – receiving a variety of reactions.

Suddenly he looks ahead. We see his expression change. His smile falls.

Cut Away: Establishing shot – Police Station.

Close up of **Mr Koff.**

Cut to:

Insert (1)   Ext : Flashback   Day

A woman being forcibly taken into a large grey building by 2 Nazi soldiers.

Cut to:

Sc 1(b) Ext: Town Street (cont'd)   Day

Mr. Koff gathers himself, takes a deep breath and nervously walks up the steps and into the police station.

Cut to:

Sc 2.   Int: Police Station   Day

The **Desk Sergeant** is doing some paperwork.

Mr. Koff enters and looks about nervously.

The **Desk Sergeant** notices him.

Desk Sergeant: Can I help you, Sir!

Mr Koff is startled.

Mr. Koff: Oh! ... Um …Yes, I've come to enquire about a man you arrested outside my café yesterday … The "Koff Inn" … That's with a "K" as in Koff … K-O-F-F … and "Inn", double N. as in …

Desk Sergeant: Yes, I know the place, sir … Your wife makes a mean muffin as I recall.

Mr. Koff: Oh yes, very good … An old Bavarian recipe.

Desk Sergeant: On the West Coast is that sir?

Mr. Koff: I'm sorry?

Desk Sergeant: Just my little joke, now how can I help?

Mr. Koff: Well, I was wondering what happened to the man?

Desk Sergeant: He's not a friend of yours then?

Mr. Koff: Um, no. I'm afraid it was probably my fault he got into trouble in the first place. I think I may have jumped to conclusions.

Desk Sergeant: Better be safe than sorry, sir. No harm done.

Mr. Koff: So you didn't hold him for anything?

Desk Sergeant: Just wanted to talk to him, that's all.

Mr. Koff: I hope I never get an invitation like that one…

Desk Sergeant: Sir?

Mr. Koff: A frightening thing: being handcuffed and bundled into a police car like that.

Desk Sergeant: A lot of the people we see in here think of it more as a free taxi service.

Mr. Koff: And what about the man? Is he still here?

Desk Sergeant: I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to tell you that, sir.

Mr. Koff: But I want to know that he's all right?

Mr Koff's attention is drawn to the sound of voices as an office door opens.

Sc 2(b)   Int: Police Station   Day

An internal office door opens and our **Tattooed Man** comes out, smiling. As he closes the door he sees Mr. Koff and his smile vanishes. He averts his eyes as he hurries past the front desk and exits to the street.

Mr. Koff: Wait…. Please wait, I want to talk to you!

Mr. Koff hurries out.

Cut to:

 Sc 3(a)   Ext: Police Station   Day

Mr. Koff hurries through the main doors into the street. He looks for the tattooed man and just sees him disappear around a corner.

Mr. Koff runs to the corner,

Cut to:

3(b)   Ext: Town Street   Day

Mr. Koff races into view and looks anxiously about. **The Tattooed Man** is nowhere to be seen.

Mr. Koff mutters a German oath under his breath and walks despondently away.

Cut to:

Sc 4   Ext: Approach to Café   Day

Mr Koff walks thoughtfully toward his café. He stops suddenly as he looks up. <u>Insert:</u> <u>Ext. cafe</u>. Large graffiti is plastered over the window. "Foreigners get out".

Mr. Koff looks horrified and runs to the café.

Cut to:

Sc 5   Int: Café   Day

Mrs. Koff holds a hanky to her face and is staring at the graffiti as **Mr. Koff** runs in and embraces her.

Mr. Koff: Marlene!

Mrs. Koff gathers herself.

Mrs Koff: Who would do such a thing?

Mr. Koff: This is all my fault.

Mrs Koff: No, Wilhelm, you've done nothing wrong.

Mr. Koff: I always have to interfere. Always have to shove my nose where it doesn't belong.

Mrs Koff: Nonsense! You're a good man Wilhelm Koff. We must ring the police.

Mr. Koff: The police! Oh no, no more police thank you very much. We'll just keep our heads down and our mouths shut for awhile.

Mrs Koff: Wilhelm, I can't believe I'm hearing this.

Mr. Koff: Well you <u>are</u> hearing it, and for once you'll take my advice…..
(softening) I don't want to over react … It's probably some kids…

Mrs Koff: Wilhelm …

Mr. Koff: Enough! … After thirty years we're still really are outsiders aren't we.
(Softening) Just let things rest for awhile….. I'll get something to clean it off.

He leaves **Mrs. Koff** looking anxious and upset.

Cut to:

Sc 6   Ext: Café   Day

Mr. Koff is busily cleaning the graffiti off the window. He is having difficulty. He
suddenly hears a voice behind him.

Mr. Patel: *(OOV)* Hard to get off isn't it?

Mr. Koff turns to discover **Mr. Patel** standing behind him.

Mr. Koff: Oh. Yes! …

Mr. Patel: My name is Imram, Imram Patel. I own the dairy on the next block.

(They shake hands.)

Mr. Koff: I'm Wilhelm, Wilhelm Koff … You know Imram, I've lived in this
country for thirty years. It makes no sense.

Imram: Such things are not dependent on sense … I thought you might like to try this. *(He holds out a spray bottle of detergent.)* Apparently it's very good. And kills 99% of all household germs.

Mr. Koff: *(He takes it.)* It's the 1% of germs that did this I'd like to kill … How much do I owe you?

Mr. Patel: Oh, please, a little gift.

Mr. Koff: Would you like to come in for a cup of coffee?

Mr. Patel: Another time … Soon. I've left my son in charge of the shop, I'd better get back. I just wanted to … you know … help in some way.

Mr. Koff: Thank you. It's very much appreciated.

(**Mr. Patel** leaves **Mr. Koff** looking thoughtful and touched for a moment before he returns to the job at hand.)

A moment later we become aware of a shadowy reflection in the glass. Suddenly **Mr. Koff** becomes aware of another presence and, startled, turns quickly to discover the **police sergeant** (from the police station)**.**

The officer is smiling and has a sympathetic manner.

Sergeant: As if you didn't have enough to do.

Mr. Koff: **Y**ou frightened the life out of me.

Sergeant: I'm sorry Mr. Koff, one of our patrol cars saw your window, and as we'd met earlier I thought I'd pop in just to make sure you were all right.

Mr. Koff: *(Warily)* Yes we're fine, thank you.

Sergeant: I'm surprised you didn't report the incident yourself.

Mrs Koff appears carrying a bucket of water.

Mrs Koff: My husband thinks if you ignore a problem it goes away.

Mr. Koff: *(To the sergeant)* I don't think enough, that's the trouble, my wife usually does all my thinking for me.

Mrs Koff resists the temptation to respond.

 Sergeant: Do you have any idea who may have done this?

Mr. Koff: You tell me … I call you because I see a suspicious man in the area. You bundle him into a police car and the next thing that happens is this. It doesn't take an Einstein to work out the common factor.

Sergeant: All I can tell you is that we're keeping an eye on things. There has been an increase in illegal drug-related activity in the area …

Mr. Koff: What did I tell you!

Sergeant: But we're monitoring the situation very closely. The important thing is that decent citizens like you talk to us.

Mr. Koff: I did! … And look what happened!

Sergeant: Well … I'm sure you'll both do the right thing if anything else happens.

Mrs Koff: *(With a gentle smile)* I'm sure we will.

Sergeant: Gudday, sir.

Mr. Koff: *(Petulantly)* Good day

The sergeant leaves.

Mr. Koff: *(Under his breath)* … Or perhaps I should say Guten Morgen.

Mrs Koff: Es gibt ein muffin und ein Tasse Tee auf dem Tisch. (**N.B. sub**
title: *There's a muffin and a cup of tea on the table.)*

Mr. Koff: *Was?* N.B. sub title: What?*)*

Mrs Koff: Sie hörten! (N.B. sub title: *You heard!)*

Mrs. Koff exits leaving **Mr. Koff** a little put out.

Cut to:

Sc 7(a) Int   Kitchen/dining room   Day

Mr. Koff is sitting at a table reading a newspaper with the TV on in the background.
He is eating a muffin and sipping tea.

Mrs. Koff is doing some washing up.

Suddenly we hear the local **TV news anchorman.**

VO TV Anchor: Racism raised its ugly head in Sometown earlier today with the
daubing of graffiti on a local café window. Mark Hamilton takes up the story.

Mr Koff almost chokes on his muffin as he turns sharply and watches the TV open mouthed.

Throughout the interview Mr Koff occasionally interjects.

Cut to:

Sc 7(b) Insert -   Ext: The Koff Inn   Day

TV Reporter: I'm outside the "Koff Inn" here in Sometown where "Foreigners get out" was daubed across the café window. Earlier today I asked passers-by for their reactions.

INSERT: VOX Pops *To be decided.*

Cut back to:

TV Reporter: And here with me is Marlene Koff who, with her husband, opened the café just over a year ago. I believe you and your husband are both German by birth.

Mrs Koff: Yes, that right. But we came to New Zealand more than thirty years ago. We have lived more of our lives here than the country of our birth. This is our home.

TV Reporter: So you have no idea why this should happen?

Mrs Koff: None at all.

TV Reporter: *(To camera)* A thoughtless prank or a sign of some deeper unrest in our community.

Mr. Koff angrily switches the TV off.

Mr. Koff: Marlene! Why didn't you tell me?

Mrs Koff: What? And have you putting up barricades.

Mr. Koff: The less attention we draw to ourselves the better.

Mrs Koff: I should draw the curtains and pretend I'm not at home. No, Wilhelm we have to make sure this doesn't happen again. Not just for our sakes but for others, for the community. This has to stop.

Mr. Koff: *(Calming down)* You're right of course. "Lassen sie die bastard sie nicht unten erhalten, nach rechts?" (**N.B. sub title: Don't let the bastards get you down, right?)**

Mrs Koff: That's right.

Mr. Koff: I tell you what, though. You look good on television … You should have your own cooking programme.

They both laugh.

Suddenly there is a knock on the door.

Mr. Koff: Now what.

Somewhat hesitantly **Mr Koff** opens the door. **Helen** a young New Zealander of Chinese descent stands smiling at them.

Helen:　　　Hello, my name is Helen, Helen Lee. I was hoping you might put this poster up in your window.

Mr. Koff takes the poster and reads: The Pied Piper: actors, technicians and helpers of all kinds wanted for this special community project. Please contact Ann Taite on 578634 for further details.

Mrs Koff:　　　Ann Taite, isn't she …

Helen: Taite Fashions, yes. Annie has … (*correcting herself)* Mrs. Taite's retired now, but she's as energetic as ever, she really cares about this community you know. So here we are!

Mr. Koff:　　　Well, we'd be pleased to put your poster up.

Mrs Koff:　　　We'll do more than that. We'd like to help.

Mr. Koff:　　　*(To Marlene)* We'd what!

Mrs Koff:　　My husband was just saying how much he wanted to get more involved with the local community. Didn't you, Wilhelm?

Mrs Koff:　　　I did?

Helen:　　　That's great. Annie's directing the show and we're having a get together next Wednesday, 8pm at St. Mark's Hall just around the corner.

Mr. Koff:　　*(Firmly)* Marlene I'm afraid I'll have to put my foot down again. I'm far too busy to get involved with something like this.

End on C.U. of **Mrs Koff** with a knowing look on her face.

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Cut To:

Sc 8   Int: Hall   Night

We pull back from a close-up of **Mr. Koff** (NB: Matching previous scene,) to reveal **Mr Koff** holding a mug of tea and looking very uncomfortable amid twenty or so other people. **Mrs. Koff** is much more relaxed and chats away merrily.

Ann Taite, a well kept 60 something woman comes up to them.

Annie: Thank you for coming.

Mrs Koff: Our pleasure Mrs. Tate.

Annie: Oh, please, Annie.

Mrs. Koff: Well, Annie, It's very exciting … Isn't it, Wilhelm?

Mr. Koff: What? … Oh, yes, very!

Annie: Well, it's about time we all did something to help create a sense of community instead of just talking about it. Between you and me I trained as an actor when I was young, but fortunately, nobody was stupid enough to employ me so I became a millionaire instead. This is my revenge!

Mr. Koff: Well, as they say, you're revenge is our gain.

Annie: I'm sorry some of the cast couldn't make it tonight, but I see from your forms that you would like to help build the set, Mr. Koff. And Mrs. Koff …

Mrs Koff: Please, Marlene.

Annie: Marlene, you would like to help with the wardrobe and catering.

Mrs Koff: Whatever's best.

Annie: I also see that you've done a bit of acting, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: Please, call me Wilhelm … And it was along time ago … And in German … And I wasn't very good.

Mrs Koff: Nonsense, Wilhelm. You were wonderful. That's when I first fancied you.

Mr. Koff: Marlene, please.

Mrs Koff: He was quite a star you know, Annie.

Mr. Koff: I was the back end of a horse!

Mrs Koff: But such footwork, such grace … a regular Fred Astair. And the next year you were an ugly sister.

Mr. Koff: *(To Annie)* And she fell in <u>love</u> with me…. Strange woman!

Annie: The thing is, Wilhelm, you don't have anyone to play The Mayor, *The Pied Piper* is a German story after all.

Mr. Koff: You mean … Oh no … no, no … I couldn't possibly …

Mrs Koff: Nonsense, Wilhelm. The Mayor's just a grumpy old man with middle-aged spread. You could do it standing on your head.

Annie: We're having a read-through next Sunday. Just come along and have a go …

Mr. Koff: *(Aside to Marlene)* Marlene, get me out of this.

Mrs Koff: *(To Annie - enthusiastically)* Perhaps I could bring some muffins.

Annie: That would be great!

End on the two women looking delighted at themselves, and **Mr. Koff** resigned to his fate.

Cut to:

Sc 9 Int: Hall Evening

Annie sits at the head of a trestle with other **cast members** in attendance. They all chatter away warmly

The main door opens and **Mr Koff** enters. He looks stressed.

Helen: Ah, Wilhelm, come and sit down, you're not the last.

Mr. Koff: I'm sorry I'm late - I had some unexpected cleaning up to do … Well, dog shit actually.

Actor 1: There ought to be a law against it.

Actor 2: There is.

Mr. Koff: No, not on the pavement, on the café door. A large stinking, brown Swastika.

Annie: That's terrible.

Other horrified reactions from the cast.

Actor 3:   *(Aside to the actor next to him.)* It was probably a German Shepherd.

Annie: Have you any idea who would do this?

Mr. Koff: Yes, I have a pretty good idea.

The door behind **Mr Koff** opens and in walks **The Tattooed Man. Helen** smiles broadly.

Annie: Ah, the mysterious stranger. Wilhelm, I'd like you to meet our Pied Piper.

Mr. Koff turns to see **The Tattooed Man** for the first time … His jaw drops.

Helen: Wilhelm, this is Rick Himona our leading man.

Rick: Hallo, bin ich Rick, ich mich freue, sie zu treffen. (**sub title:** *Hello, I'm Rick, I'm pleased to meet you.)*

Mr. Koff is speechless.

Rick: I hear you got the Annie Taite treatment as well.

Mr. Koff: Treatment?

Rick: I only came here to pick up my little nephew – 3rd rat from the left – next thing I know I'd been promoted to chief rat catcher.

Annie: Don't take any notice of him Wilhelm, he's a bloody good actor and he's got the voice of an angel – makes you sick!

Out on **Mr. Koff** looking decidedly shellshocked.

Cut to:

Sc 10   Int: The Koff's Bedroom   Night

Mrs Koff is in bed reading with specs on. **Mr. Koff** enters slowly, devoid of any energy.

Mrs Koff: Wilhelm, where have you been, it's late.

Mr. Koff: I've been for a drink.

Mrs Koff: That's not like you, Wilhelm.

Mr. Koff: Oh, don't "Wilhelm" me. A bottle of Speights won't ruin me.

Mrs Koff: Perhaps you should have had a Lewenbrau ….

Mr. Koff is about to react.

Mrs Koff: Only joking, only joking! … So, how did it go?

Mr. Koff: (Wandering off into the bathroom) I got the part.

Mrs Koff: That's wonderful. You should be very happy.

Mr. Koff: (*V.O. from the bathroom)* They thought my German accent was very convincing.

SFX: a loo flushing.

Mrs Koff: By the way, I've been thinking. After everything that's happened today … something isn't right … perhaps I was wrong about that tattooed man.

Mr. Koff from bathroom.

Mr. Koff: Perhaps he's a drug baron.

Mrs. Koff: Wilhelm, we must ring the police tomorrow.

Suddenly **Mr. Koff** sticks his head around the bathroom door with a mischievous smile on his face.

Mr. Koff: Yes dear, anything you say, dear, after the morning rush … Oh, by the way. Some of the cast are coming here for breakfast tomorrow.

Mrs Koff: Oh, that's nice.

Mr. Koff: And, I've got a little surprise for you.

Mrs Koff: A surprise?

Mr. Koff sticks his head around the bathroom door again. He has a sink waste plug in one eye serving as a monocle.

Mr. Koff: *(Acting)* "A mysterious stranger with a magical pipe. Nonsense, he's nothing but a tramp, a foreigner … Throw him out."

Mr Koff disappears into the bathroom with a flourish.

End on **Mrs. Koff** looking very bemused.

Cut to:

Sc 11   Int: The Café   Day

The Café is quiet after the breakfast rush. At one table several **members of the cast** are talking to **Mr. Koff.**

Cast 1:   I think it's horrible.

Cast 2:   It's probably just some kids.

Helen: That doesn't make it right.

Cast 3:   I can't believe this has happened when you've lived here for so long.

Mr. Koff: In New Zealand, yes. But we've only been in Sometown for the last 10 months. Sometimes I think we'd be better off at the South Pole.

Helen: The trouble is we don't talk to each other. That's what *The Pied Piper* is all about. Bringing people together to have fun and work together wherever we come from.

Cast 1:   It makes me sad. We've all had our share of - what's the word - prejudice? But this is violence. If this happened to me I would go home.

Mr. Koff: And if this goes on we won't be here much longer I can tell you.

Helen: Oh no! Wilhelm, you mustn't talk like that.

Mr. Koff: You sound like my wife.

They all laugh.

Helen: My parents came from Singapore. Whenever I visit there I feel that people's hearts are getting further apart, and I see people going through their daily lives, making money, selling things, without any real feeling of life. When you get used to that, real connection with others becomes very difficult.

Mr. Koff: Sounds like Sometown.

Cast 1:   How can things ever hope to work out without communication – real communication?

Cast 2:   So few people commit themselves to making things work.

Helen: You can't blame people for feeling trapped here with loss of jobs and falling property prices.

Mr. Koff: Don't forget the vandalism and violence.

Cast 1:   Don't forget us, either.

Helen: What do you mean?

Cast 1:   The language school brings employment and money into the area but it also brings us: Foreigners – and we look different.

Mr. Koff: I don't - and look what happened to me – and I've been here for nearly thirty years.

Helen: *(Strong Kiwi accent)* Fair go, mate, so have I!

Mr. Koff: Hm! … Point taken.

Insert:

Mrs. Koff is seeing a couple of customers out. As she closes the door she picks up a letter. She opens it and reads. She is thoughtful, concerned.

Return to: Sc.11 cont'd

The cast table are continuing their banter.

Mrs. Koff comes into frame. She touches her husband's arm to draw his attention.

Mrs Koff: *(Quietly)* Wilhelm, I think you ought to read this.

She hands her husband the letter.

Mr. Koff: *(Reading)* "Dear Sir, we approached you some months back with an offer to purchase your property known as The Koff Inn. We are now prepared to increase our original offer of $200,000 offer by $20,000. We will contact you in the near future to discuss our proposal further. Yours sincerely, Michael Rotwell for "Upmark Properties."

(To Marlene)… You think they have something to do with all this?

Mrs Koff: Nothing would surprise me.

Mr. Koff: I think you could be wrong there.

(**Mrs. Koff** looks bemused.)

Mr. Koff: Marlene … I'd like you to meet The Pied Piper.

Mrs. Koff turns to discover The Tattooed Man – (Rick Himona) standing behind her.

B.C.U. of **Mrs. Koff.**

Rick: Pleased to meet you, Mrs. Koff.

For once **Mrs. Koff** is speechless.

Mr. Koff: *(With a certain relish)* Come, let's sit down. I feel like a muffin. What about you, Rick?

Rick: Just a latte please.

Mr. Koff: And how about you, Marlene?

Mrs. Koff: *(Pointedly)* A rolling pin.

Mr. Koff: A rolling…. *(Realising the implication – patting his head)* Oh, I see…. I'll get you a nice cup of tea.

Mr. Koff leaves.

Rick: *(Indicating a free table.)* Shall we sit down?

Mrs Koff: Why not.

They sit at an empty table.

Sc 11b   Int: Café (cont'd)   Day

Mrs. Koff & Rick sit opposite each other.

Mrs Koff: So, you're the Pied Piper. There's a certain irony in that, don't you think.

Rick: I'm not planning on piping anybody into Cyberspace if that's what you mean? Or to Singapore if that's what you mean.

Mrs. Koff: Cyberspace? Singapore?

Rick: I'm looking into the feasibility of setting up an Internet project and linking with people Singapore.

Mrs Koff: *(Coolly)* Ah! We're guinea pigs.

Rick: No, if anything, I am.

Mrs Koff: What do you mean?

Rick: My main project is as a local mediator. I picked up a few languages and got an appreciation of different cultures when I was in the army and – well, I've been challenged to put my ideas into practice, and write it up for a Ph.D.

Mrs Koff: So you think you can make a difference here?

Rick: It takes a lot to overcome mistrust, but with better communication we can all work things out.

Mrs Koff: You're a fine one to talk about communication. You think by ignoring young people in the street …

Rick: Ah, those two with the bikes?

Mrs. Koff: Those two, <u>nice</u> young people, yes.

Rick: O.K. Mrs. Koff, I was wrong, but do you know how many nice, white, young, middle class people think that because I'm a Maori with tattoos and a leather jacket I'm also into drugs?

(**Mrs. Koff** thinks about it - pause.)

Mrs. Koff: *(With a smile)* You scared the life out of my husband you know.

Rick: And you?

Mrs Koff: Things are rarely what they seem? … Like your arrest … Only hope your acting improves before the play opens.

Rick: The police had information that I was being watched.

Mrs Koff: I wonder by whom. (Casting a look at her husband)

Mr. Koff smiles and waves back.

Rick: No, by somebody far more dangerous. Unfortunately, I don't think my "arrest" fooled anybody.

Mrs Koff: So, you're working for the police.

Rick: No, I'm working "with" them and with other agencies – the Economic Development unit, but mainly I'm trying to set up some connections between people here and with the international students.

Mrs Koff: If you only had magic pipe, eh.

Rick: *(Getting a tin whistle out of his pocket.)* Ah, but I do … Now, all I have to do is to learn how to play it.

A burst of laughter from the other table.

Cut to:

Sc 11 c   Int: Café (cont'd)   Day

Mr. Koff: Never work with animals or children isn't that what they say?

More laughter.

The telephone rings.

Mr. Koff answers it (the cast in background.)

Mr. Koff: Hello, the "Koff Inn" can I help you. *(Listening)* … *(Unsure)* ... Well, I don't know, I've never done anything like that before…. Who else will be there? … Really! … I'll have to talk it over with my … *(Suddenly realising what he's saying)* No, on second thoughts I don't have to talk it over with my … I'll get back to you … Yes, I've got a pen … June McAllister, 624 8769 … I'll let you know soon. I'll ring you back. Thank you, goodbye.

Mr. Koff puts the phone down thoughtfully. **The cast** are all looking at him, intrigued.

Mr. Koff: That was that local TV programme, you know, "This Week in Sometown". They want me to be on it.

The Cast: *(Ad libs)* Wow … That's great … Great publicity … Maybe we could do something from the show … *(etc, etc.)*

Mr. Koff: *(Interrupting)* No, it's not about the show. It's about what happened at the Café. They want me to take part in a discussion … That Mayor, you know, George Whitby's going to be there and everything.

Helen: That's fantastic. A Mayor of Sometown meets the Mayor of Hamlin. What could be better?

Mr. Koff looks at all the hopeful, smiling and silently pleading faces of the cast.

Mr. Koff manages a weak smile back.

Cut to:

Sc 11d   Int: Café (Table 2)   Cont'd   Day

Mrs. Koff & Rick are in relaxed conversation when **Mr. Koff** arrives.

Mr. Koff: Not interrupting I hope.

Mrs Koff: As long as you don't have any more surprises for me.

Mr. Koff: It's funny you should say that.

Mrs. Koff looks very wary.

Mr. Koff: *(To Rick)* Rick, I need your help … A little research.

End on **Mrs. Koff** looking even more puzzled.

Cut to:

Sc 12 a Int: TV Studio   Day/Night

Mr. Koff is having his make-up applied and is looking very uncomfortable about it.

He is taken into the main studio by **The Floor Manager** and is quickly introduced to the shows host, **Nathan Wilde,** and also to **George Whitby** (The Mayor of Sometown.) and **Paul Berwick** (Commissioner of Police.)

Nathan: Ah, Mr. Koff, come and join us. This is George Whitby our beloved Mayor (the old scoundrel) and Police Commissioner Paul Berwick.

Mr. Koff nervously shakes hand.

Nathan: Now don't worry about a thing, Mr. Koff, George and Paul will do most of the talking …

Mr. Koff: I see.

Nathan: I'll just ask you for the odd comment about what happened to your shop …

Mr. Koff: Café … It's a café … The Koff Inn … K-O-.F-F- as in Koff, and …

Floor Manager: One minute, Nathan.

Nathan: Thanks Alison….. Ok Mr. Koff you just sit here and relax.

Mr Koff takes his seat and nervously adjusts his tie.

We see **The Floor Manager** count down in studio sign language and cue **Nathan.**

Nathan: Good evening and welcome to "This Week in Sometown". With me tonight I'm joined by Police Commissioner Paul Berwick, and not just one but two …

Cut to:

Sc 13 a   Int: The Koff's living room Evening

The cast & Mrs Koff are gathered around the TV set.

Cut to:

Sc 12b Int: TV Studio (Cont'd)

Insert and/or VO from TV studio:

Nathan: … Our very own George Whitby and the greedy and thoroughly disreputable Mayor of Hamlin, Mr Wilhelm Kaff.

The cast & Mrs Koff cheer enthusiastically.

Mr. Koff: *(Nervously)* Koff, actually. K,-O,- double "F." Koff.

Nathan: My apologies, Mr. Koff … *(To Camera)* Mr. Koff is a local shop owner …

Mr. Koff: (Interrupting) … Café (pronounced "Caf")

Nathan: *(Getting a bit annoyed)....* I'm sorry. Mr. Kaf is a local Koff owner.

Insert: Cut Away - The Cast cheering.

Mayor: You've got a live one there, Nathan.

Nathan: You'd better look out for your job, George. Mr. Koff is getting to terms with being a Mayor in a local production of that well-known children's story *The Pied Piper of Hamlin*. Isn't that right, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: Oh, it's not just for children, you see, one of the interesting things about many so called "children's stories" is that …

Nathan: I'll have to stop you there, Mr. Koff … I'll put you in touch with our marketing department after the show.

Canned Laughter.

Nathan: What we're really here to talk about is the fact that earlier this week, Mr Koff's café (I think I got it right this time) …

Mayor: Well done, Nathan.

More canned laughter.

Nathan: Mr. Koff's café was the target of some very unpleasant attention.
"Foreigners get out" scrawled in large letters across the shop window one day, and a large Swastika daubed in, well - let's just say something unpleasant - Hardly a reassuring advertisement for Sometown, Commissioner?

Commissioner: A very unpleasant incident indeed, but I think it's very important not to over react. I think the media has a great responsibility in this area. We don't know who did this, it could be local kids; on the other hand it could be someone with a personal vendetta against Mr. or Mrs. Koff.

Mr. Koff: *(Jumping in)* Oh, I don't that's likely. You see …

Mayor: The fact is, Mr Koff and his wife live in one of areas of Sometown in desperate need of re-development.

Mr. Koff: *(Hesitantly – trying to get a word in)* No, no, I don't think that's the problem….

Nathan: Commissioner, what do you think?

Commissioner: Whatever the underlying cause, the police function is quite clear. A crime is a crime however small, and we all have a responsibility to respect each other's rights.

Mayor: *(Interrupting)* This isn't just about respecting individual rights, this is about respect for this town. This is about the need for urban renewal. This is about the development of Sometown and the creation of something we can all be proud of.

Mr. Koff: *(Trying to interrupt) …* If I could just say something. A friend of mine's bicycle was run over by a police car the other day.

Nathan: I think I've heard this one.

Mr. Koff: No … no, it's not a joke.

Commissioner: If Mr. Koff's friend makes a complaint I can assure him it will be dealt with in the appropriate manner.

Nathan: But not here, Mr. Koff. Let's stick to the point.

Mr. Koff looses his nerve and looks embarrassed.

Mayor: As I was saying**,** this town's council needs to give all our public servants the support they need to carry out their functions for the good of the community, but that must go hand in hand with new investment and the re-development of Sometown.

Mr. Koff: Please, if I could just …

Mayor: In a changing society like ours there's bound to be some intolerance against some sectors of society …

Cut To:

Sc 13b Int: Living Room (Cont'd)   Evening

Cast 1:   They're not giving him a chance.

Cast 2:   They're treating him like an idiot.

Cast 3:   … A foreigner!

Mrs Koff: He's lived longer in New Zealand than that Wilde person has been on the planet.

Helen: You think Nathan Wilde's on the planet.

Rick: Come on, Wilhelm, say something.

Insert: Mr. Koff looking downcast and out of his depth.

Mrs Koff: Poor Wilhelm.

Cut to:

Sc 12c Int: TV Studio (Cont')

Mayor: I'm proud to say that in nine years I've been a Mayor I've lobbied pretty effectively to see that major initiatives have been undertaken to re-develop some of the most commercially rundown areas of Sometown.

Suddenly, **Mr. Koff** interupts with unexpected vehemence.

Mr. Koff: Too bloody right you have?

A moment of stunned silence.

Nathan: Hold on there, Mr Koff.

Mr. Koff: I've held on ever since I sat in this seat. Now it's my turn.

Insert: The Cast & Mrs Koff wide-eyed and open-mouthed.

Mr. Koff: What I've been listening to smells the same as that crap left on my door. It's about re-development all right, as Mayor Whitby knows only too well. But it's also about people. Perhaps you should remind yourself of that once in awhile. It's about the community we all live in.

Mayor: With all due respect, Mr. Koff, I've spent the best part of my life serving this community in one way or other.

Mr. Koff: You know about serving certain parts of the community, that's for sure.

Nathan: Mr. Koff we're not here to score political points….

Mr. Koff: No! Then let me make a personal one. After all, that's what we <u>are</u> here for isn't it? To discuss what happened to me – a New Zealander – a citizen of Sometown.

Nathan: We only have three minutes left, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: Plenty of time! And if everybody in Sometown got three minutes we'd all learn a hell of a lot I'm sure.

Nathan: Your point, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: A few things have happened lately that have taught me that things aren't always the way they seem. You see when I first saw what happened to my window I was afraid. It made me feel better to blame it on some easy target. A Maori man with tattoos, Japanese students, organised crime, and the police frightened me most of all. But thanks to the new friends I've met in *The Pied Piper* I've begun to see things a lot clearer.

Mr Koff picks up his briefcase and starts ferreting around. The others look at each other, embarrassed.

Nathan: Mr. Koff …

Mr. Koff: (Interrupting, still ferreting about.) How long have I got?

Nathan looks at **the floor manager** who indicates 2 minutes.

Nathan: Two minutes, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: Ah, here it is. *(Produces the letter from Upmark Properties.)* The other day my wife and I received a letter from "Upmark Properties" raising a previous offer to buy our Café.

Mayor: Can we get back to the point.

Mr. Koff: Ah, but this is the point. A little research turned up the fact that Mayor Whitby here is a director of Upmark Properties.

Mayor: There's no secret in that.

Mr. Koff: No secret either – if you turn over the right stones – *(Taking out an area map of Sometown)* that Upmark Properties is seeking to develop the block on which my café stands … as a Casino.

Mayor: I'd just like to point out here that Upmark Properties is subject to the same planning permission and Land Resource Acts as anyone else.

Nathan: I really fail to see what point you're trying to make, Mr. Koff. You said yourself: we're here to talk about a racial attack on your premises.

Mr. Koff: *(Holding up the map)* Well, you see, this is where my café is, and here, around the corner is a flower shop owned by a Korean man and his wife … And here we have a Chinese Restaurant owned by a nice couple, they've just had a baby.

Nathan: One minute, Mr. Koff.

Mr. Koff: Amazing what you find out if you just walk around your neighbourhood and talk to people … You, see the restaurant and the flower shop were both daubed with racial graffiti on the same day that my café was.

Mayor: I hope you're not suggesting …

Mr. Koff: I'm not suggesting anything, I'm merely pointing out some facts. And here are a couple more. The Language School – is less than 50 metres from my café – with more than 100 foreign students. It has had no such intimidation. Neither did my Indian neighbour on the same block who runs a dairy. It would seem that bigotry in Sometown is very selective.

Nathan: Well, George, Mr. Koff certainly packed some punch into his three minutes. One final comment.

Mayor: Only to say that Mr. Koff will be hearing from my lawyers in the morning.

Nathan: Commissioner?

Commissioner: Mr. Koff has clearly made some serious allegations. I'm sure we haven't heard the last of this.

Nathan: Thirty seconds left Mr. Koff … One last word from you.

Mr. Koff: Oh yes! … I nearly forgot. (Ferreting around in his briefcase again and pulling out a poster for The Pied Piper)

(*In best TV sales tradition*) *The Pied Piper* a treat for all the family. Don't miss it.

Cut to:

Sc 13c   The Koff's Living Room (Cont'd)

The cast jump up and cheer except **Mrs. Koff** - in shock,

Slowly a smile grows.

Mrs Koff: *(To herself)* That's my Wilhelm.

Cut to

Sc 14   Int: Hall (Backstage)   Night.

Opening night of "The Pied Piper." Overture music in background. **Helen** comes up to **Mr. Koff.**

Helen: It's a full house. And guess who's just arrived … The mayor, gold chain and all.

Mr. Koff: The mayor… I thought I was the mayor!

Rick shakes **Mr. Koff's** hand. **Mr. Koff** very nervous**. Mrs. Koff** kisses him and smiles

Mrs. Koff: Brechen sie ein bein. (Sub title: Break a leg.)

Mr. Koff takes a deep breath and walks on stage.

We hear the audience cheer as **Mr. Koff** belts out his first line:

Mr. Koff: (*O.O.V)* People of Sometown … Ooops, sorry, Hamlin!

S.F.X. Huge roar from audience.

Mrs. Koff, Helen & other cast members hug each other.

Still Frame.

The End.

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