

Thinking Without a Banister: Subjectivity as an Effect of Deactivating
Technologies of Judgment, Creating Agentic Possibilities

by

Patricia Anne Rasmussen
B.Sc. University of Alberta, 1974
M.Sc. University of Alberta, 1980

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Curriculum and Instruction

© Patricia Anne Rasmussen, 2004
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This dissertation may not be reproduced in whole or
in part, by photocopying or other means, without the permission of the
author.

Supervisor: Dr. Antoinette. Oberg

Abstract

Coming to voice, and listening to and interpreting women's lives has been central to the feminist reconstruction of the world (The Personal Narratives Group, 1989). Conceptualizing the lives of women (and men) without reproducing humanist essentialist notions of gendered identity has become a highly contested project (Meyers, 1997). On the one hand, those taking up identity politics assume that the political project of feminism requires the notion of the unitary, universal gendered subject "woman" (Fraser, 1989; Hartsock, 1990) even while acknowledging the category of woman is a product of masculinist binary thought (Cixous, 1991(1976); Irigaray, 1985). The contrary feminist position takes gender and identity as social constructions and the possibility of agency is insidiously foreclosed as construction is conceived of as fully determined or fully artificial and arbitrary. Prospects of social change become impossible (if not irrelevant).

As I advocate feminism and teach university undergraduate students, I ponder this quandary and consciously choose not to take up either of these epistemological positions. I search for ways of positioning between the postmodern metaphors of the unlimited perpetual dance and the "ontologically fixed stare of the Cartesian spectator" (Bordo, 1990, pp. 142-43) and seek other ways of knowing and constituting subjectivity. Butler (1990) hints at one possibility when she writes, "Construction is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency...The critical task for feminism is...to locate strategies of subversive repetition enabled by those constructions" (p. 147).

To undertake this study, I turn to my own self within the academy as the "scene of agency" and as the site of knowing and constituting subjectivity differently. Building on Foucault's (1988b) notion of the technology of the self I develop the notion of technologies of judgment as the vehicle through which discursive power relations play out. Writing autobiographically is the primary method of inquiry. Autobiographic

narratives from my teaching practices constitute the data. By detaching but not separating from the events and memories of these narratives, I am able to read the narratives and see the discursive effects that had formerly been invisible. Moreover, I am able to deactivate those discursive effects.

Reading discursively constitutes practices of “thinking without a banister” (Arendt, 1964, image 4) and an ethic of care for self as performances of “subversive repetition.” Thinking without a banister is a metaphor that I appropriate from Hannah Arendt, that calls for a “way of proceeding in which critical categories are not imposed on but inspired by one’s engagement with a phenomenon” (Disch, 1996b, p.144). An ethic of care for self demonstrates an act of freedom (Foucault, 1988a). This dissertation recounts these reconstructions, repositionings, and transformations of subjectivity that created the possibilities of agency, and of reconceiving learning and teaching for social change.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Acknowledgments.....	viii
Prelude.....	1
Introduction and Invitation.....	1
Part I: Coming To Topic And Method	4
Part II: Unearthing Fugitive Frames: Reading Innerlogues Discursively.....	5
Part III: Retracing the Research Process: Five Narratives of Researching Subjectivity	6
Part I: Coming to Topic and Method	8
Writing Autobiographically: A Method of Inquiry.....	10
Refusing The Split: Autobiography, Ethics And Research.....	17
Cultivating Perceptivity	23
Practice of Taking Responsibility for Self	26
Practice of Opening.....	27
Practice of opening to gestation.....	28
Practice of opening to difficulty and complicity.	29
Practice of opening to difference.	31
Articulating Topic: Power Relations, Subjectivity and Technologies of Judgment.....	33
Quitting to Finish: A Narrative Revealing Cultivated Perceptivity.....	39
Evolving Practices of “Thinking Without a Banister”	48
Self-Writing	50
Detecting Vestiges of Subjectivity	51

Generating Multiple Readings.....	52
Unearthing Fugitive Frames	53
Evoking Fragments	54
Reading Deconstructively and Transforming Thinking.....	55
Part II: Unearthing Fugitive Frames: Reading Innerlogues Discursively...57	
Closely Reading "Who Has It Worse?"	68
Event: "Who has it worse?"	68
Segment 1 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"	69
Reading Segment 1 of Innerlogue	70
Segment 2 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"	76
Reading Segment 2 of Innerlogue	78
Segment 3 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"	82
Reading Segment 3	86
Second Innerlogue: The Assignment	90
Reading "The Assignment"	101
Third Innerlogue: Rethinking Proposal	108
Rethinking Proposal	108
Reading "Rethinking Proposal"	114
Fourth Innerlogue: The Running Vest.....	122
Reading "The Running Vest"	130
Revealing Agentic Possibilities.....	136
Part III: Retracing The Research Process: Five Narratives Of Researching	
Subjectivity	140
Research in Five Movements	149
A Prelude.....	149

First Movement: Articulating A Research Process By Writing Autobiographically	154
Second Movement: Finding/Creating A Form By Carrying Forward An Interest.....	157
Third Movement: Coming To A Topic By Crafting Innerlogues And Writing Autobiographically.....	162
Fourth Movement: Seeing Subjectivity As An Effect Of Discursive Power Relations By Reading Innerlogues Discursively	165
Fifth Movement: Composing A Dissertation By Making Meaning Of The Research Process And Positioning The Work.....	168
Relations Of The Knower, Knowing, And The Known	170
Cultivating An Ethic Of Care For The Self	184
Tyranny Of The Inner Critic.....	184
New Governance Of Selves.....	187
All Things Are Interconnected	188
Internal Evaluation Criteria.....	190
Evolving Ethical Practices.....	192
A Tale Of Reflexive Interpretation: Unraveling The Paradox Of Separating In Relation	196
Principal Interpretations: Achieving Experience	198
Secondary Interpretations: New Reader Reads Differently.....	201
Tertiary Interpretation: In Jeopardy Of Severance.....	205
A Writer's Tale: Suddenly On The Other Side.....	211
In Closing: Opening To Conversations:	222
Facing Fears Of Ending	223

References229

Appendix A: Ethical Approval.....238

Acknowledgments

This dissertation and my understanding of subjectivity did not arise in a vacuum, but are effects of ongoing social relations. I use this space to formally thank some of the people who have enabled my exploration and transformation. First and foremost, I thank Dr. Antoinette Oberg, my supervisor, for her unwavering attention to and support of me as a person. I particularly appreciated her gracious presence and optimism, along with her embodied commitment to creativity. In addition, I thank members of my supervisory committee, Christine St. Peter, Laurie Rae Baxter, Mary Ellen Purkis and Pamela Moss, who bravely supported and fostered this narrative inquiry.

Secondly, I thank members of my doctoral study group, fondly referred to as “Refusing the split.” Heart-filled thanks to Sally Kimpson, Wendy Donawa, Enid Elliot, Heather Hermanson, and Joan Boyce for being present in the good times and the bad—as friends and as co-evolving academic scholars.

Thirdly, I thank my friends and family, both biological and chosen. In particular, I thank Gayle Ployer who stood by me through this adventure and spent many hours talking and making sense of life. It was through Gayle that I learned about story and storytelling.

And fourthly, I thank Grace Wong Snedden, from Student Counselling Services, for her hours of undivided attention and ongoing support. Life happens despite doctoral studies, and living amid these tensions, at times, was extremely challenging. Thanks to Grace, I was able to thrive.

Prelude

English sparrows, chickadees, juncos, and the occasional bushtit melodically welcome a new day. Garry oak are in full leaf. Spiders and moths knit together leaves forming nests among the branches. Dread of last year's forest fires and water rationing are on neighbours' lips. Provincial labour unrest may erupt into a general strike. Erosion of unions and job security do not surprise me; it is a predictable effect of Canada's signature to the Free Trade Agreement with the United States in 1989. Capitalism is restructuring around the globe. Governance at all levels is contested terrain. There is no escape, no transcendence.

Introduction and Invitation

I'm not mad, rather thoughtfully introspective. I attend to what I am in the midst of, what I think, and what what I think does. I say this to console myself and reassure readers. The dissertation you are reading is a product of many years of work. It is not the text I envisioned or expected to produce seven years ago. Nor am "I" what I thought I would become by the end of such an inquiry. It may seem clichéd but I've learned to accept change. Life is change. Change is perpetual despite my discursive efforts to create certainty, security, and safety.

Traditionally, dissertations are written to report findings of a particular inquiry and to demonstrate how the results contribute to a larger body of knowledge in a particular field of study. That is not the primary purpose of this dissertation. Instead, this dissertation constitutes a

feminist poststructural explication of subjectivity and agentic possibility. More specifically, the purpose of this dissertation is to evoke a response in readers.

I invite you, a reader, into a process of thinking about your own subjectivity. I encourage you to use my stories as a way into your own journeys of self. As you read this text, I invite you to pay attention to what you are in the midst of—your thoughts, feelings, desires, and fantasies. What arises as you read this text? How are you relating toward and with(in) yourself?

Subjectivity, or sense of self, is discursively produced and constrained by the range of subject-positions defined by the discourses in which any individual participates. Existing discourses determine what can be said, understood, and what it is possible to be—the very nature of subjectivity itself (Nussbaum, 1998, p. 167). Unlike the humanist subject, the subject of post-structuralism (Butler, 1997; Davies, 1992; Foucault, 1982; Sawicki, 1991) is constantly in process and only exists as process; it is constituted, revised and (re)presented through language. In post-structural discourse, the self is thought of, not as a noun but rather, as a verb. The post-structural subject is constantly moving and unfolding.

To investigate self as a process (subjectivity), I turned to my own self within the academy as the site of inquiry. Writing autobiographically was my primary method of inquiry. Autobiographic narratives from my

teaching practices, which I call innerlogues¹, constituted the data. Building on Foucault's (1988b) concept of the technology of the self, I developed the concept of technologies of judgment as the vehicle through which discursive power relations get played out. By detaching but not separating from the events and memories of these narratives, I was able to read the narratives and see the discursive effects that had formerly been invisible. Moreover, I was able to deactivate those discursive effects.

During my doctoral research I explored the process of subjection in which "I," a university instructor and graduate student, was subjected and, in that same process, became a speaking subject. As researcher, I sought ways in which to understand the constitutive forces of discourse and to use the power of discourse to move against and beyond the very forces that shape my subjectivity.

This dissertation is a "doubly interrogative" text that formally and systematically questions both method and topic simultaneously. It demonstrates to readers the challenges of undertaking an emergent design at the same time the inquiry is conducted. And it also textually produces and represents the process of coming to a topic (subjection) at the same time as subjectivity is unfolding. Emergent design and emerging as a subject are not one in the same; rather they demonstrate a strong congruence between method and topic. This dissertation strikes an epistemological paradox of knowing through not knowing, and implicitly

¹ "Innerlogue" is a term that I appropriated from Frey (1997).

asks, "How does one act knowing what one does?" (Visweswaran as cited in Lather, 1997).

This dissertation is a collection of essays that have been individually crafted, then cobbled together to instantiate subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations. To be congruent with the epistemological assumptions and feminist post-structural theoretical underpinning of this inquiry, I have composed essays/assays as a way of investigating subjectivity. Foucault's (1985) words support and further refine the meanings and wisdom of this strategy:

The 'essay'—which should be understood as the assay or test by which, in the game of truth, one undergoes changes, and not as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purpose of communication . . . an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought.
(p. 9)

This dissertation is a collection of essays/assays that are organized into three distinct but highly related parts: a beginning, middle, and an end. Each part is briefly introduced.

Part I: Coming To Topic And Method

The collection of six essays/assays in Part I of the dissertation introduces key terms used throughout the inquiry and emergent relationships among these terms. The essays constitute theoretical perspectives that in/form subjectivity, as well as show how these perspectives gradually emerged, unfolded, were refined by visiting with various theorists who had studied subjectivity and power. Collectively, the essays/assays that constitute Part I portrays the production and

emergence of the topic and method for this research inquiry. Writing autobiographically was the primary method of inquiry used throughout the inquiry and is both practiced and theorized through these essays. The effects of writing are rendered visible.

Part II: Unearthing Fugitive Frames: Reading Innerlogues Discursively

Part II of the dissertation is a collection of four narratives and four essays that have been contained in and produced by my everyday practice of writing autobiographically. The autobiographical narratives are presented in the form of innerlogues (inner dialogues of thinking) about particular events and situations that I have encountered within my everyday life within the academy. These innerlogues constitute the data for this inquiry. As researcher, I read these innerlogues discursively.² Four essays show how I discursively interpret each of the innerlogues and the meaning produced. The process, as well as the products, of these discursive readings become manifest.

Discursive reading (interpretations) both produces, and is produced by, subjectivity constituted by discursive power relations. Disciplinary technologies, particularly ways of judging oneself, are examined. These

² By writing that I read the innerlogues “discursively,” I am referring to a particular way of interpreting the texts; I pay attention to the language of the texts and interpret the words and phrases in terms of discursive acts, discursive structures, sets of discourses, and power exercised through discursive acts. I use the word “discursive” as an adjective to refer to the effects or results of reading discursively. I introduce more of my thinking about discourse and power in *Part II: Unearthing fugitive frames: Reading innerlogues discursively*. I also demonstrate the interpretations I make as I read in the essay entitled, *Closely Reading: Who has it worse?*

disciplinary technologies of judging oneself, or technologies of judgment, are also viewed as social constructions and, therefore mutable. Through these thinking essays, “interpretations” (or how and what I think) are shown to produce agentic possibilities. It is then possible to revisit, interpret and make meaning of Butler’s (1990) assertions concerning agency: “Construction is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency...The critical task for feminism is...to locate strategies of subversive repetition enabled by those constructions” (p. 147).

Part III: Retracing the Research Process: Five Narratives of Researching Subjectivity

Looking back on several years of doctoral studies, five researcher-selves retrace the research process and articulate how it unfolded. I/we could not describe this process, its meanings, or its effects in advance. The essays in part III substantiate as much about the research process as they do about subjectivity itself.

The dissertation contains many stories that constitute subjectivity as a process and as an effect of discursive power relations; I will introduce only a few. Most notably, the collection includes stories of transformation: moving from self-loathing to self-love; coming to terms with conflict and difference within myself; and revamping my form of self-governance—from the tyranny of the inner critic to participatory democracy of selves. Essays represent how agentic possibilities were discursively constituted, as was subjectivity as I shifted from one

paradigm to another. The text also demonstrates the cultivation of multiple levels of interpretation, as well as an ethic of care for the self.

Collectively these essays constitute the dissertation; a story of seeking passage (Martusewicz, 2001) through oppositionary thinking. It is a story about opening to not knowing, ambiguity, uncertainty and fear. The dissertation text constitutes new ways to think about and understand change. It provides insight into personal change and growth, and into learning as a transformative process. It holds promise for conversations about adult teaching-learning, curriculum design, social change, as well as a feminist subjectivity.

Part I: Coming to Topic and Method

This part of the dissertation includes six essays/assays that constitute the emergence of topic and method for this research inquiry. These essays constitute theoretical perspectives that in/form subjectivity and manifest how these perspectives emerge, unfold, and are refined by visiting with other theorists who have studied subjectivity and power. Readers are introduced to key terms and the relationships among these terms that are used in the remainder of this text.

The first essay entitled, *Writing autobiographically: A method of inquiry*, describes writing as a generative mode of inquiry and details what has emerged from and been produced by such writing.

The ethical concerns and practices involved in undertaking this work are explored in the second essay, *Refusing the split: Autobiography, ethics and research*. This essay demonstrates how these ethical practices have become an integral, productive, and informative part of this inquiry.

In the third essay, *Cultivating Perceptivity*, I tell of how the topic and method of the inquiry emerged through the evolving practice of perceptivity. Two ways of cultivating perceptivity are disclosed: practices of taking responsibility for self and practices of opening.

Articulating Topic: Power relations, subjectivity and technologies of judgment, the fourth essay, articulates how I work with and consciously choose how to relate to various texts (visiting) in order to create and vocalize my own authority (speak myself into existence) as a scholar and theorist who is engaging in various conversations about social change,

subjectivity, knowing self, and transformation. This essay shows how other authors have cast the topic of subjectivity and studied it and points to the importance and relevance of this inquiry for those conversations. This way of engaging with other people's texts and producing my own is a way of deconstructing binary oppositions of theory and practice. This essay also works to disrupt a private/public dualism by conceptualizing subjectivity as political.

Quitting to Finish, demonstrates how perceptivity was cultivated through practice. This narrative/essay foreshadows tensions that are later taken up during Part II and III of this dissertation. This essay makes visible discursive power relations, subjectivity, and technologies of judgment.

And the final essay in Part I entitled, *Evolving practices of thinking without a banister*, tells of six practices that have evolved through this inquiry. These practices are part of my repertoire of paying attention to power relations, subjectivity, and judgment. These six practices along with practices of cultivating perceptivity have produced, and been produced by, this inquiry. These six practices of thinking critically and deconstructively produce possibilities for new forms of subjectivity and agency. *Evolving practices of thinking without a banister* substantiates epistemological assumptions quite contrary to Cartesian approaches to creating knowledge.

Writing Autobiographically: A Method of Inquiry

This essay describes my practices of autobiographical writing³ and the associated reading and thinking that have produced shifts in my research topic. Although it did not start out that way, autobiographical writing has become a means of shifting and shaping my enduring interest in self-judgment. I explain how my current practice of autobiographical writing has affected the course of my life and my research.

³ My practice of writing autobiographically as a method of inquiry has been informed by much of what I have read. I list my major sources along with a brief note about each one as a resource for readers. Allison (1988) foregrounds the potency of storytelling and class; Anzaldua (1987) instantiates multiplicity, fluidity and difference; Bateson (1990) embodies the process of improvisation that goes into composing a life; Brookes (1992) exhibits the courage and fortitude involved in working autobiographically; Bruner (1995) stresses autobiography as process; Cixous (1993) provokes me to look deeply into my own writing process; Diller (1989) shows me ways of integrating and honouring contradictions within self; Goldberg (1990) inspired me to write and put aside the rules; Greene (1987) displays making sense through story; Grumet (1988) models theorizing through autobiography; Haug (1987) excites me to attend to my everyday life and see the social construction of knowledge; Heilbrun (1988) stresses the merit of writing any and all women's lives; Hirshfield (1997) feeds my soul and provokes reflexivity; Hodgins (2001) provides the basic considerations of narrative; hooks (1989) demonstrates the constitutive and healing act of writing; hooks (1999) reflects on her craft; Lewis (1993) helps make visible life within the academy; Miller (1990) planted the idea to form a group of Ph.D. students for my time in the program; Perreault (1995) wove a connection between process, writing, and transformation; Richardson (1994) tells transgressive tales of living in the academy; Rilke (1984) inspires me to make time—to write and think; Sher (2002) describes the creative process in terms that make sense to me; S. Smith & J. Watson (1992) politicize autobiography and moves it beyond therapy and catharsis; and Zwicky (1992) inspires me to work narratively.

Since the age of 13, I have written sporadically in a private journal to make sense of my world and figure out how simultaneously to fulfill my own desires and to win others' approval. Repeatedly unable to gain approval for who I was, I concluded that who I was, was inherently unacceptable. I subjected myself to self-judging declarations, such as, "You don't measure up," "You're simply not good enough," "You should know better! What is wrong with YOU?" "You're making a bloody fool of yourself and embarrassing the family," "If you change how you act, then they'll love you." Such self-judgments temporarily ended my inner strife. By opting for one pole of the dichotomy between my desires and others' desires, I temporarily dissipated the tension between them. I lived according to others' expectations, and the surface of my life was calm until the frustration of thwarted desires erupted through the smooth surface and the rolling began again: my desires or theirs. If mine weren't accepted, then they must be unacceptable. The cycle of negative self-judgments continued and was perpetuated by my writing.

However, in September of 1996 this vicious cycle began to change. In response to a discussion with my supervisor about my research interests, I began writing autobiographically every day for at least one hour regardless of mood or need. Within the first year of this practice, the rhythm of my life began to shift. The sudden and unexpected crashing of waves on a previously flat surface gave way to generally calmer, although still rolling, seas. Gradually, a gentle ebb and flow displaced the extreme ups and downs of the raging waves. As the extremes of my living lessened,

the texts produced by my autobiographical writing became richer and more complex in form as well as content.

The writing was composed of remembered events, responses to events, and multi-layered analyses. Remembering was a far-from-straightforward process. It entailed remembering, reconstructing, forgetting, and transforming events. Memories in/formed responses to events and practices of interpretation. These in turn influenced subsequent responses. Responses to events were neither unitary nor one-dimensional but involved combinations of physical, emotional, and cognitive responses that ranged in magnitude and intensity. Interpretations and analyses were embedded in every articulation of every event by virtue of the language used to describe the event. Recognition of patterns that emerged through analysis of previous events served to in/ form interpretations of subsequent events.

Through autobiographical writing, I gradually connected the events of my life and came to see them as part of larger cultural practices of subjectification. Locating the particulars of my life in general social patterns produced a pattern of coherence that replaced the earlier haphazard pattern of calm repeatedly shattered by unexpected eruptions.

Autobiographical writing as I have come to practice it during the last six years is a way of knowing, a method of discovery and analysis, and a creative act of engaging the world. As with any creative act, it proceeds without a road map. Few, if any, concepts, and no desired end result or goal have been used to shape the writing or what it produces.

Working this way in the midst of an academic culture that valorizes road maps and destinations has both required and produced courage and persistence to keep writing even though I did not know what I was doing, where I was headed, or how any of this text would relate to a dissertation. In short, I continually had to take risks by trusting the process.

Persisting in the process of autobiographical writing has changed both my life and my inquiry. Having been well trained in conventional positivistic approaches to research before beginning my current degree, I was accustomed to relinquishing my own ideas in favour of the ideas of experts. This pattern of relinquishing self occurred in many domains of my life. Through autobiographical writing, I began to pay attention to this pattern, and over a number of years, it was displaced by a sense of groundedness in my own understandings. While claiming my own ground was a dramatic victory over the tyrannical rule of the inner critic that had held me captive for most of my life, it was also an overthrow of socially and culturally induced patterns of self-governance. In other words, it was both a personal and a social act. And, as will become evident, it paved the way for the later emergence of my research topic.

To this point, I have described my autobiographical writing as a method of articulating and reflecting upon what I was in the midst of. Now I want to complicate this process by introducing the practice of reading the texts of my writing. This reading process, along with writing in response to reading, has produced new connections and re-visioning.

In my early attempts to read my own writing, I feared (re)experiencing the despair and suffering described in those texts. At the same time, I knew that to keep the writing moving, I needed a sense of what and how I had been writing. I devised various strategies for reentering my texts without getting caught there.

For instance, I set an alarm to limit the period of time for reading. I got trapped. Other times, I selected a question and read, searching for its answer. I ended frustrated and answerless. Still other times, I extracted journal entries bimonthly and read only those excerpts. I found I could not remember the contexts of the excerpts and it became impossible to understand or interpret the excerpts before me.

Despite this despairing, I persisted reading my own texts. I noticed a host of patterns in how I wrote and what I wrote about and in what reading produced. However, the most significant insight this process produced came from comparing it with my reading of other people's texts. I began to notice that I often felt overwhelmed and emotionally flat when I read other people's words. In exploring those feelings and unpacking what was at work, I discovered that I tended to abdicate my responsibility to self and abandon my sense of groundedness as I read. Eventually I realized that this move was a result of "either/or" thinking: either I relate to self *or* I relate to other. I also realized that the tendency toward "either/or" thinking is inculcated by the texts themselves: texts construct readers. These insights lay bare possibilities of resisting my habituated ways of reading other people's words. Suddenly, reader

response theory, discourse theory, and literary criticism made sense and appeared in my text without taking me off my own ground.

On the flip side of paying attention to how I relate to other people's texts, I began to pay attention in my autobiographical writing to the ways that I related to feedback from others who read my writing. Preparing to share my writing, I became troubled about what was in my stories and judged them to be poorly written. Writing about this tendency to devalue my writing brought me face to face with questions of openness. I wanted to be open to others' responses, yet I seemed unable to be. Some other desire seemed to displace my desire to be open. Eventually, through writing, a pattern emerged. I came to see that my opening to others' feedback was excessive and indiscriminate. In my efforts to be what I thought was "open," I violated the boundaries of my own integrity.

Through autobiographical writing, I have come to realize that openness is a complicated process dependent upon my sense of groundedness and boundedness. If I am not grounded in my own reality, then I cannot be open. This is paradoxical, for grounding in my own life involves withdrawing from others to attend to self; in other words, I need to withdraw before I can open.

Returning to my enduring interest in self-judgment, I looked back and reflected upon what I was writing about and how others read and responded to my texts. I discovered that I was circling attentively around and around self-judgment, power relations, and subjectivity. Through more autobiographical writing, expanding ground, and reading of my

own words, my enduring interest of “self- judgment” produced a topic. Reading and writing about Foucault’s (1977) work on subjectivity, ethics, and power; Butler’s (1990) *Gender Trouble*; and my own articulation of patterns in my life, I saw self-judgment as an evolving technology of discursive power relations that disciplines the self. At that moment, I articulated my research topic as follows: “subjectivity as an effect of power relations.” Through autobiographical writing, I articulated my interest in what I have come to call for research purposes “technologies of judgment.”⁴ Technologies of judgment are discursive practices through which the self is disciplined. Moreover, I have analyzed and even interrupted the effects of technologies of judgment in my life. By articulating my research topic in the site of my life, I have come to be able to speak and write about that topic with an authority that comes from being grounded in a respectful sense of my self and my relations with others.

⁴ Technologies of judgment is a term that I have coined specifically for this work. The term arose after multiple readings of Foucault (1988b) and Jack (1991) in conjunction with my own texts. The concept is further developed through this text.

*Refusing The Split: Autobiography, Ethics And Research*⁵

My doctoral work involves working autobiographically to explore/examine my feminist and critical teaching practices within the academy. Within the School of Social Work, I teach students to become critical thinkers and agents of social change. For my dissertation, I am working to move beyond essences, and uncover how my subjectivity is constituted and how I am implicated in systems of domination and oppression. I am particularly interested in how evaluation practices within the classroom and academy fix patterns of power relations, despite my attempts to transgress.

In thinking about autobiography, ethics, and research, myriad questions arise about how I care for my self(ves) in the processes of writing autobiographically.

Granted, in my research I consider others as they are portrayed by me in my stories, and I am concerned about our relationships and what working this way does to us, and to our ways of relating. That, however, is not the focus of this essay, instead I want to share some of my musing about ethical practices with/in self as I ask myself: how do I reduce the possibility of harming my self(ves)⁶ as I proceed with writing autobiographically?

⁵ This essay is based on a presentation made February 18, 2000 to other graduate students and professors at the Faculty of Education, University of Victoria. This presentation was one of five presentations made by members of my Ph.D. support group. We call our group "Refusing the Split."

⁶ Instead of persisting with this writing "self(ves)," I capitalize Self to remind readers that I conceive of a multiplicity and ever-evolving field of selves.

What I am about to write may seem like nothing more than a litany of questions, and from one perspective that is probably true. What I write also demonstrates one of the ways that I work autobiographically. In Patti Lather's terms (Lather, 1993, p. 51), a "situated methodology" emerges in that my practices arise from the specificities of my situation and could not have been prescribed ahead of time. Specifically, I pose questions to my Self and then work to stay open, providing time and space for the questions to work on and through me. I listen for multiple interpretations and responses.

I begin to muse. I hear with/in me an assertion/belief/adage that I "should" treat my Self as I would my best friend. (And yes, I am constantly aware, albeit to various degrees, of multiple selves, multiple agendas, multiple unfoldings and the dynamic interplays, fluidity and movement of all within.) Then I posit: What does this treating of Self as best friend involve, especially in terms of autobiography—honesty, respect, attention, patience, sensitivity, trust, empathy?

I push out, beyond, uncovering what else lies with/in my ethical practices with Self while working autobiographically.

I find humour in the difference and laugh. In traditional approaches to constructing knowledge, a researcher is not only to be neutral and outside of the research process, but there is no attention paid to the ethical care *of* and *for* the researcher her Self. As I draw this attention to ethical care *of/ for* Self—I hear a voice in my head: "how very self-absorbed!" I listen to my internal critic, both for what she is saying, and the effect of what says. She reminds me of the dominant discourse of

research, and she draws my attention deeper into what I am doing. I choose to transgress traditional research protocol and take this time and opportunity to focus on ethical attendance to and with Self.

How do I reduce the possibility of harm to Self in the process of writing autobiographically? What affects (effects) does writing have on me? In me?

Over my left shoulder, I hear a feminist assertion that coming to voice (and telling my story) is a good thing, a liberatory move—empowerment. Another voice asks, "Is it? Is it that straightforward? According to whom? From whose perspective? What assumptions are embedded in this assertion?"

I come back again to the question, "How do I relate to and with my Self to minimize harm?"

It seems crazy to consider "informed consent" with Self, but . . .

"Well of course I know what I am doing and agree!" another voice yells in my head.

And yet another says, "Whoa, hold it just a minute! There is more going on here than that!" What of the multiple "I"s? How do I take time, make space, and pay attention to each part of Self (or multiple selves)? What are my ethical considerations and practices with/in Self? How do I work amid this constellation of selves, each with differing agendas, interests, and desires?

What power relations are fostered and constituted by virtue of my inquiry process?

Working ethically is about accepting what is—paying attention to Self in here and now, and recognizing “now” within the context of life’s journey. I calm, I struggle to see “what is” going on rather than what I imagine should be, or what I want to be happening.

Ethical practice with Self also involves giving my Self time and space to work. It is about developing relationships within selves to trust that what comes onto the page is okay no matter what it is. It also means learning to accept that where I am is exactly where I need to be. In other words, I do not whip my Self into being or doing differently from what is. It is about paying attention to and learning to work with/in my own rhythm, which often involves slowing down, tuning-in, and recognizing my negative Self-judgments when they happen, letting them go, and being gentle with my Self.

“Trusting my process” is one of my biggest ethical challenges in working autobiographically. Trusting “my” process is about honouring my multiplicity of selves and in so doing find that I often transgress much of my own conditioning as student, worker, researcher, white woman⁷—moving through and beyond dominant positivistic and Euro-centric paradigms. Trusting my process is about living in the present and moving from now—not toward some prescribed or fixed end point, but

⁷ This list of subject positions is not exhaustive and simply flags the subject positions that I wrestle with/in and beyond throughout this text. In this text, I do not speak of particular identities and I also avoid using psychoanalytic theory. I believe that the concepts of “identity” and “identification” reinscribe a humanist subject. Subjectivity is the focus of this inquiry.

trusting that by virtue of my strong orientation to my research interest that I proceed as I need to. It is about working from the inside out.

How can I see what I am doing? How do I detach, ever so slightly, just enough to be able to "see"?

How do I reduce the possibility that in my reflective turns, as researcher, reflecting on my written text, I don't turn on/against Self or create a severance in Self—a split/ dissociation/ detachment that creates Othering of Self and a space for Self-attack and Self-hatred?

Ever so carefully I attend to my criteria and my assumptions; I pay attention to what I use as tools of reflection. My ethic of care for self involves honouring my selves who foster further life and growth.

Suddenly other questions emerge: What are my relationships to my stories once written (and once made public)? What must I attend to in the process of telling stories?

Moving beyond my writing to "telling" and imagining you reading my stories, what might constitute harm to Self? How might I expose my Self through story with no recourse once the story is told? Taboos persist in university—so many things are not talked about. What are the effects on/ for me, if I tell my stories? What of me is being heard, read, and critiqued? And by whom? How does disclosing alter/ change/ move Self?

So how do I, as researcher, pay attention to these affects/ effects and on what basis do I make choices and decisions about what to tell or not tell?

How do I select stories to share with others? What criteria do I use? How is it more than merely the fit between purpose, question and method? What are the ethical and political implications of my selections?

How are my selection processes constructed by assumptions of safety, habit, practices of care, and particular power relations? How do I call these into question without doing harm?

Do I tell of what happens in my classrooms? Do I tell about sexual energies, spiritual unfolding, failure, pain, and altered states of being? Do I dare tell you about how I transgress, for if I do, what does that do to how I might be able to work in the future? What does articulating my struggles in the academy do? How does a telling (re)construct, not only Self, but also relationships I live in and through? How does my telling alter me—my subjectivity? How can I anticipate, know in advance, what might be? How will/might telling make me vulnerable to attack by others? What can I do to protect my Self?

I hold these questions and let them work on and through me as I proceed with my inquiry.

Cultivating Perceptivity

By writing autobiographically for the past several years, I have been paying attention persistently to what I am in the midst of. Looking back over this writing from my current vantage point affords a “new” view of my practices of paying attention and what they produced and made possible. I have come to call my practices of paying attention “thinking without a banister” after a metaphor Lisa Disch (1996b) developed from Hannah Arendt. My practices are detailed in the essay entitled, *Evolving practices of thinking without a banister*. Using these practices, I have come to view subjectivity as an effect of power relations, specifically, as an effect of technologies of judgment. My insights into these topics are described in Part II. I call thinking without a banister (and the resulting refined sensitivities and insights) “cultivating perceptivity.” In this essay, I detail two habits of mind—taking responsibility for self, and opening—that compose cultivating perceptivity.

I appropriated the term “cultivating perceptivity” from Elliot Eisner’s (1998) discussion of “educational connoisseurship”(p. 239). However, instead of using “cultivating perceptivity” as Eisner does to refer to a set of prerequisite skills that qualitative researchers require before undertaking an inquiry, I use the term to refer to the evolving acuity of a way of looking and an attitude or state that gives looking particular qualities. The two words, “cultivating” and “perceptivity,” enabled me to see an order in the vast array of disparate, unstructured writings that I had generated during the first four years of my inquiry.

Cultivating perceptivity is not a fixed or specific technique learned and then methodically applied, but rather it is a practice that has evolved through my inquiry into subjectivity. This practice arose out of a strong orientation to my topic and committed pursuit of attentiveness. It is a practice of paying attention to self, particularly judgments of self and their effects. Perceptivity cannot be sought out and acquired, but must be developed and continuously refined through time by carefully attending to my relationship to what I am in the midst of—physically, emotionally, and socially. Perceptivity is never static nor complete but always partial, contextual, and ephemeral. It is effortful and requires conscious dedication of attention and energy.

As I pay attention to what I am in the midst of, I attend to my perceptions, interpretations, and judgments, which together constitute perceptivity. My common entry point in paying attention is through my bodily response in a situation. I am especially perceptive about my bodily signals of the emotional loading of conceptual relations and how they play out in my life. By “emotional loading,” I mean that I have no thought (perception and interpretation) without an attendant emotion. Emotions are value loadings on thoughts. I may not recognize it consciously, but every thought has a valence. Every thought I pay attention to has a valence, that is, an emotion—a bodily response. Judgment is automatically present with perception and interpretation because emotion is the sign of the valuation of the thought. Judgment is ubiquitous—it is always present. Judging is not a separate act or something that happens to perceptions and interpretations; it is an integral part of perceptivity. As such, paying

attention to judgment is crucial to understanding subjectivity and power relations.

Through practices of perceptivity, experiences are achieved. I agree with Eisner (1998) that experience is “achieved” and “not an automatic consequence of maturation or merely a function of the number of times someone does something” (p. 234). Experience is constituted or achieved through practices of cultivating perceptivity. I can interpret only that which I perceive. Perception is never complete but rather, partial, contextual, and temporal. I recognize that I influence what I attend to and what and how I interpret what I perceive. I recognize that my ability to interpret and make meaning is bounded by my ability to perceive, as well as by the effects of discourse. Perceptivity is not a given but can be cultivated and refined through practice. By cultivating perceptivity, I have become able to perceive nuances of my subjectivity.

The nature and quality of any experience is contingent upon the discourses available to me. Although discursive practices will be discussed in Part II, for immediate purposes, *discourse* refers to “ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledge and the relations between them” (Weedon, 1987, p. 108). As a way of constituting knowledge, discourses constitute and regulate what can be perceived, interpreted, and judged (perceptivity), and thereby effect/affect the nature and quality of experience produced.

Cultivating perceptivity produces an attitude of tentativeness, and receptiveness (vulnerability). For me, this tentativeness has gradually

displaced earlier desires to be an authoritative knower. Tentativeness involves both knowing and not knowing—being engaged and aware, yet fully open to the unexpected. The poet, Jane Hirshfield (1997), referred to a similar receptivity when she wrote, “To meet the incidental with the same intense gaze we bring to the chosen object of one’s attention is a further gate to original thought” (p. 42).

By writing autobiographically and cultivating perceptivity, various practices emerged during this inquiry, some of which are described later in this essay. I do not assume a causal relationship but rather an emergent quality about each of these practices. They have all arisen from autobiographical writing and persistent attentiveness. One practice informs and influences another. I present these practices separately in the following discussion to demonstrate the array and depth of the practices but do not intend to suggest that this articulation demonstrates the limits or parameters of the possibilities that can be created when autobiographical writing is the method of inquiry.

Practice of Taking Responsibility for Self

By writing and reading, I have become increasingly aware of the ways I think. As I wrote, and read what I wrote, I uncovered various instances of “either/or” thinking. In much of my writing, I re-analyzed past personal relationships, making sense of what went wrong and why I felt the way I did. One common manifestation of this binary thinking took this form: either I attend to my self *or* I attend to the relationship with the other person. I wanted meaningful relationships, and I assumed that meaningful relationships required that I attend to the relationship and the

other person. This binary thinking was predicated on my expectation that my needs would be met through relating with another. This expectation served to reinscribe the primacy of the relationship with other and to privilege relation with other over the relationship with self, keeping the same binary thinking in action for years.

Uncovering this historical pattern of “either/or” thinking has enabled me to begin recognizing binary thinking as it happens. And more importantly, the act of recognizing “either/or” thinking produces a shower of other possible interpretations of what I am in the midst of. A spontaneous, emergent array of interpretations trouble and displace the previous oppositional energy field (polarity) of the “either /or” thinking.

From my current vantage point, my “either/or” thinking of the past has resulted in abdicating attention and responsibility for my self. But by learning to recognize binary thinking as it happens, multiple interpretations of any situation are generated. Then I can winnow through these possible configurations of attending to self and to relationship with other at the same time. This shower of possibilities not only troubles and displaces the fixed nature of “either/or” thinking, but it also opens possibilities of “agency” that were previously foreclosed by binary thinking.

Practice of Opening

Through autobiographical writing, I have come to realize that openness is a complicated process dependent upon my sense of groundedness and boundedness. Grounding in my own experience enables me to take responsibility for myself and have a sense of

boundedness of self that creates possibilities of openness. If I am not grounded in my own reality, then I cannot become open to relationships with others. This is paradoxical, for grounding in my own life involves withdrawing from others to attend to my self. In other words, I need to withdraw before I can possibly open to the affairs and conditions of this present life, the public realm of that “world that lies between people” (Arendt, 1968).

Practices of opening have taken various forms. I briefly introduce a few of my practices here.

Practice of opening to gestation.

Gestate means to conceive and gradually develop in the mind. Opening to gestation involves becoming grounded in my own reality and then opening to an idea and incubating it to development. Opening to gestation is a creative process and is readily halted and often destroyed when external deadlines and expectations are imposed on the incubation process. Gestation of the mind requires continued groundedness and practices of opening. An “open mind” is not a personality characteristic or attitude. It is not a fixed state of being. Open mind requires a continuous practice of opening. As practice dwindles, the mind closes and gestation is not possible.

Through autobiographical writing, I was able to become consciously aware of my thinking processes. I noticed how my mind calmed with regular writing practice. I paid attention to my reactions to silences. I noticed that I usually tried to fill silences with something. After attending to these reactions for some time, they too began to slow and

fade. More and more silences simply arose and passed away with no reactions. Periodically, a sense of spaciousness emerged as I let go of my assumptions that I control my (inquiry) process. For those fleeting times, I trusted in the creative process and opened to gestation.

Practice of opening to difficulty and complicity.

Having been trained as an educator, activist, and social service provider, I have the ability to identify quickly a problematic situation and marshal resources to solve it. I know how to find or fabricate resources in a wide array of situations. My master's thesis (1980) was entitled *Problem-Solving Resources of Dual Career Couples*. Problem solving has been my method of inquiry until this inquiry. During the past six years, I have not stopped problem solving nor taken an anti-problem-solving stance, but my relationship to problems and solving problems has been transformed.

During this inquiry, I have persistently attended to what I am in the midst of, be it emotional, physical, or social. I have developed a daily writing practice that has cultivated perceptivity and fostered various other practices, such as an ethic of care for the self (see Part III). Attending to what I was in the midst of required that I pay attention to what was happening. Autobiographical writing changed my sense of time or slowed down my sense of time. As time slowed, my formulation of problems slowed. A sense of spaciousness emerged, and my embodied imperative "to identify what was wrong and fix it" began to lessen. The imperative still emerged, but I was able to pay attention to it and watch it arise, intensify, and subside. My long-held practice of jumping to deal with the problem as if it were a crisis began to subside. I, the researcher me, was

fascinated. Attending to this slowed problem-solving response began a gradual opening to and an acceptance of a difficulty. My terminology changed slightly. I used "difficulty" to refer to a situation that seemed to be problematic to me but on which I did not suddenly impose a problem-solving framework and strategy. Instead, I simply watched attentively, learning about the situation and when and how I sensed difficulty.

As I cultivated this ability to open to and be with(in) difficulty, I noticed that my teaching practices began to change markedly. I began to call attention to the situation and to practices of attending. I called attention to the presumed intentionality of change that underpins problem solving. (At one level I have become critical of problem solving as formulaic, but I have only recently developed an appreciation for the insidious nature of problem solving.) I began to see how my course outlines and classroom plans were all based on a problem-solving framework, if not explicitly, then implicitly. I was thunderstruck! I was absolutely surprised. I had no idea that I embraced and then reinscribed problem solving in virtually everything I did. One day while writing, I remembered Minnie Bruce Pratt's chapter entitled, *Identity, skin, blood* (1988) and specifically her powerful narration of growing up in the American south and how she was "complicit" in the racial and social injustices of the area. When I taught a special issues course I used Pratt's chapter as a course reading; I conceptualized complicity as the ability to recognize within self both social positions of oppressor and oppressed. In looking back, I realize that I had not examined or altered my epistemological assumptions that underpinned my teaching practice. Only

recently have I come to appreciate the finer nuances of her identity grounded on her assumption of interconnectedness, which I now share. Assuming interconnectedness has created an openness to recognizing and attending to my complicity in relations of power. This openness to complicity in turn in/forms how I think about subjectivity. It has enabled me to see how my own subjectivity is an effect of power relations and possibilities for resistance.

Practice of opening to difference.

Early in my process of writing autobiographically, my inner critic became apparent in my text. With time and attention, other voices besides my inner critic slowly came onto the page. I referred to these voices as multiple selves because they had separate and divergent priorities, interests, knowledge, and methods. My multiple selves included but were not limited to “practical Pat,” who was always looking after details and trying to negotiate some less war-like state; the “angry rebel,” who wanted to annihilate the inner critic and overthrow the tyranny; the “good girl,” who sobbed in pain from cross words and twisted like a pretzel to please the critic; “the schemer,” who always plotted strategy and generated plans; and “the dreamer,” who imagined another day, another world, another way, a better place. These multiple selves were at first quite separate and distinct. My journals contain conversations and arguments among them, most notably around how to write the dissertation. Most of my multiple selves were deathly afraid of the inner critic and yet have never been able to contest its reign of terror. Through

writing, these multiple voices developed and were finally able to resist the inner critic. (See the innerlogue, *The Running Vest*.)

But something equally as important happened as a result of the writings of the multiple selves. I developed ways of opening to the diversity and difference among the multiple selves.

Historically, my inner battle had always been between the inner critic and the rest of me. But as I wrote and as these multiple voices came onto the page, their differences became apparent. The binary battle mentality no longer was appropriate. Instead, through many long and involved inner dialogues, we (the group of multiple selves and, in latter discussions, including an inner critic) negotiated ways of being with each other that recognized and honoured differences and being with(in) difference. We developed ways that did not homogenize or transcend difference and resisted fabricating and superimposing sameness. Much to my amazement, these issues of governance within my self mirrored issues of governance within and among social groups. I realized that through my autobiographical writing, I had been able to attend to these multiple voices and develop skills for negotiating peace. Now if only I can carry some of what I have learned to my outer world!

Articulating Topic: Power Relations, Subjectivity and Technologies of Judgment

As a university social work instructor, my primary commitment is to help students develop a critical consciousness about how they, as subjects, are constituted through relations of power, and how we, as social workers and citizens, can facilitate social justice and vitality, individually and collectively.

As students and instructors, we do not walk into a classroom as blank slates free to create and recreate our interactions and ourselves as we wish. My identity as “teacher” is in/formed by everything I have learned and lived. What is possible is constituted moment to moment within the institutional setting and by these histories, the students’ and mine. While there has long been recognition that there are institutional constraints on pedagogical practice, I think an adequate understanding of power relations within teaching must go much further than this to include analyses of subjectivity.

Various writers encouraged me on this path. Himani Bannerji (Bannerji, Carty, Dehli, Heald, & McKenna, 1991) wrote:

We need a social analysis that begins from *subjectivity*, which asserts dynamic, contradictory and unresolved dimensions of experience and consequently, does not reify itself into a fixed psychological category called *identity* which rigidifies an individual’s relationship with her social environment and history. (pp. 98-99)

Sherene Razack (1998) echoed Bannerji’s claim:

Attention to interlocking systems of domination requires that we move beyond essences and educational responses related to

mastering our knowledge of the subordinate groups, but not in order to claim that we are all just human beings. To move beyond essences, we have to do the work around how subjectivity is constituted and how systems of domination are reproduced. (p. 14)

Although I agree with Razack's call to investigate how subjectivity is constituted and that much pain and suffering is created through systems of domination, I am not willing to adopt the "juridico-discursive" model of power (Sawicki, 1991. p. 20) which underpins her assertions as the only, or most important, form of power.

As an alternative, I turn to Michel Foucault's (1980, p. 99) work where he convinces me to think of power outside the confines of state, law, or class, in other words, to study the *ascending* myriad power relations at the micro-level of society that make centralized, repressive forms of power possible.

In a very practical and poetic way, Gloria Anzaldua (1987) also urged me to rethink power and encouraged me to move beyond an oppositionary understanding of power relations.

It is not enough to stand on the opposite riverbank shouting questions, challenging patriarchal white conventions. A counterstance locks one into a duel of oppressor and oppressed; locked in mortal combat, like the cop and the criminal, both reduced to a common denominator of violence. The counterstance the dominant culture's views and beliefs, and for this, it is proudly defiant. All reaction is limited by, and dependent on, what it is reacting against.

Because the counterstance stems from a problem with authority—outer as well as inner—it's a step toward liberation from cultural domination. But it is not a way of life. At some point, on our way to new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two mortal combatants somehow healed. (p. 87)

As I read these words, I remember my own history of combat—of fighting against patriarchy, capitalism, anti-choice—of spending my life energies in oppositionary ways, maintaining a duel: “us” and “them” camps being constructed by virtue of the way that I, and others, conceptualize power as repressive—power resides in the state and one group is oppressed and one group dominates.

Now, nearly three decades since I began battling, my spirit feels battered and bruised. As an educator and activist, I have been advocating a feminist, structural analysis of social inequalities and an emancipatory agenda for individual and social change. I now see that both are predicated upon a humanist understanding of the autonomous, authentic self. The notion of a humanist, autonomous, authentic self perpetuates the binary opposition. As I assert an autonomous, authentic self then I also automatically assert a dependent, unauthentic self and reinscribe the binary I am trying to displace.

Reading Michel Foucault (1978) I began to (re)think power as productive (as well as repressive), ascending, fluid, ephemeral, and relational and to see my own complicity in relations of oppression and domination. My intellectual and emotional attachment to “us” and “them”

began to melt as the hegemonic conceptualization of power as unidirectional and fixed was called into question and displaced.

Reading Judith Butler (1997) and Bronwyn Davies (2000) further complicated my thinking about power and subjection, fostered my optimism for opening up possibilities for undermining the inevitability of particular oppressive forms of subjection, and suggested ways of resisting the constitutional power of discourse.

Butler (1997) stated that “the subject emerges both as the effect of a prior power and as the conditions of possibility for a radically conditioned form of agency” (pp. 14-15). Reading this, I immediately re-member, intellectually, kinesthetically, and emotionally, an array of academic and practice-based philosophical debates about free will versus determinism. I am tempted to side with one and then the other. Butler encouraged me to avoid getting mired in yet another debate of whether power is prior to the subject or is its instrumental effect. I calmed. She invited me to imagine both acts of power working simultaneously and reiteratively. I felt overwhelmed holding both. At first I felt compelled to move to one side or another, but gradually ambivalence washed around and over me and carried me in its flow.

After writing and reflecting upon my everyday experiences of power, I understood that a subject is not merely constituted through power relations, but that a subject also enacts power by what is taken up and reiterated in the subject’s “own” acting. Butler (1997) stated, “What is enacted by the subject is enabled but not finally constrained by the prior working of power. Agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled” (p.

15). In other words, agency is not reducible to the power that enabled it. I find this conceptualization of agency promising as one path for imagining possibilities of resisting constitutive discourses of power. These notions warrant further examination; however, for this paper, recognizing the generative possibilities of working with these concepts and theories to understand the constitution of my subjectivity is sufficient.

Drawing upon Butler's radical constructivism and concepts of power and agency, Bronwyn Davies (1990, 1991, 1992; Davies & Harre, 1990) made apparent the discursive practices of power and the possibilities for agency, resistance, and change. Davies (2000) stressed that

By making the constitutive forces of discourse visible and thus revisable, and by making visible the ways in which power shifts dramatically, depending on how subjects are positioned by and within the multiple and competing discourses they encounter, they (subjects) can begin to imagine how to reposition themselves, realign themselves, and use the power of discourse they have to disrupt those of its effects they seek to resist. (p. 180)

Butler and Davies helped me to clarify and position my inquiry. I conceived of my inquiry as one of exploring the process of subjection in which I am subjected and in that same process, becoming a speaking subject. I searched out ways in which to understand the constitutive forces of discourse and to use the power of discourse to move against and beyond the very forces that shape me.

Recalling Gloria Anzaldua's metaphor, I wanted to understand how my subjectivity is constituted without becoming mired in yet another

reification or counterstance. How do I dare leave the bank of the river and step into the water? How can I cease splitting mind/body and public/private, which are perpetuated by binary thinking? How do I do my analysis without reproducing relations of domination and, thereby, thrive within the institution? And how do I uncover new possibilities for resistance and change?

Quitting to Finish: A Narrative Revealing Cultivated Perceptivity

Juggling the insatiable demands of teaching undergraduate social work students while writing a narrative dissertation and mending a broken heart had become a way of life, or so I thought. Staring into the computer screen that sunny but cool May morning, I had no idea that my life was about to come undone.

For six years, I'd lived in a big, old, two-storey house on the Saanich Peninsula. In recent weeks, I'd moved to Victoria, to the main floor of a 1950s bungalow on a busy street in a working-class neighbourhood. I was living alone for the first time in 30 years—struggling to make sense of this new reality amid the pressures of work and graduate school.

Recent policy changes in Revenue Canada had deemed university sessional instructors to be “employees” of the university. I was no longer a private contractor and could not claim a portion of my office space, computer, printer, stationary, and other costs associated with teaching by distance against my income. The university was not able to cover the difference. My income was substantially reduced!

At this same time, class sizes increased and students pressed to complete the 2-year program in 18 months. To make financial ends meet, I needed to increase the amount of teaching I was doing to offset this arbitrary reduction in income. However, taking on more work would reduce the time I had available for my dissertation. I felt stuck.

To make matters worse, in early April, erratic hormone secretions temporarily impaired my eyesight and concentration. All my work came

to an abrupt halt. Grading papers for the winter classes was postponed while medical practitioners scurried about to remedy my situation. After nearly a month of adjusting medications and optical prescriptions, I returned to work—wary and anxious. I was scared that I couldn't juggle all my affairs and stay out of the hospital.

Final papers needed to be marked and grades needed to be calculated as soon as possible, if not sooner. I also needed to prepare for my summer teaching responsibilities. I felt compelled to update the 5-year-old distance package, which was sadly lacking. I didn't want these fourth year students to graduate without exposure to recent theoretical debates in human development.

Although, as a sessional, to rewrite the course pack was not my responsibility, I was responsible for preparing social workers for practice. Compiling new reading materials, revising the course outline for the summer course, and quickly completing the overdue grading crowded out any time for my dissertation. Juggling was frenetic and my anxiety intense.

Days after I finished the course outline with revised course readings and submitted my students' grades for the winter term, I sat in front of the computer writing, as I do most mornings. A surprising turn of events occurred.

Reviewing the past few months of juggling teaching, graduate school, and living alone, I uncovered a pattern in my juggling—a major disjuncture between teaching undergraduates and writing my

dissertation, as if I were living in two separate worlds. I saw no way to reconcile them. The separation was massive; integration of the two worlds was not the purpose of my doctoral work, nor an expectation of my faculty. All the while, I saw myself jumping back and forth—from the outward focus of structural social work grounded in critical neo-Marxist thought to the intense inward gaze of autobiographical writing in/formed by post-structural theory—but something more was happening.

I was not moving readily back and forth from teaching to graduate work. Jumping was the wrong metaphor! Re-entering my doctoral work after hours of teaching and interacting with students took hours and sometimes days. Making the move from one intellectual space or territory to another was time- and energy-consuming. This move required a certain amount of momentum to get underway and to have steerage. The repeated necessity to make the transition drained more and more energy that was not replenished. Summoning energy for the momentum required to make the move became increasingly difficult and at times impossible. Often I had no momentum; I was adrift—slowly recharging—which compromised even further my ability to focus and work deeply in any domain. Frustration mounted as time passed and inner demands on self to perform escalated.

I found that I was living a major contradiction. I was making a transition from one epistemological territory to another, day after day, week after week, and it was exhausting me physically, intellectually, and emotionally. With each transition, I needed to stop thinking a certain way and begin thinking another. More than translating thoughts into a

different language, this way involved thinking differently. With time, my investment in my doctoral studies deepened and making the transition became increasingly difficult and costly. The nature and depth of my engagement in both realms suffered.

As a sessional instructor who was being paid by the course and with no institutional mandate to change the social work curriculum, there was no entry point for me to introduce or incorporate what I was learning/living in graduate studies into my teaching. The chasm between the two realms widened. I started to resent having to make the move from one epistemological territory to another, especially to one that was predicated on separation and dualism.

Then I realized something: I wasn't only juggling teaching, graduate school, and my personal life, I was also juggling the transition. Moving from one world to another had become an additional time-consuming activity. I had not been aware of its emergence as a separate necessity until I wrote it. Previously, I had assumed that I was juggling three balls when, in fact, there were four. Keeping four balls in the air was exponentially more complicated and much more energy draining than juggling three.

As my writing constituted this fourth ball, a wave of compassion for my self and my sense of exhaustion washed through me. The constant, critical babble of my inner critic abated. In its place, a strong, clear, inner voice chanted, "You weren't an inept juggler or lazy. You were doing the best you could. Juggling all those balls is too much for anyone!"

As this chanting subsided, energy began to build, and I continued to write. I explored ways of juggling all four balls. I admitted to myself that I was unhappy with the quality of my engagement with teaching and with my dissertation. Some thing had to give, but what would it be? I knew I couldn't continue juggling all four balls, and yet I didn't see any other way. I kept writing; I wrote about and through the impasse.

I recalled similar situations from my past. On two previous occasions, once in 1979 and again in 1987, I withdrew from doctoral programs and redirected my energies to juggling only work and family. In both instances, I dedicated my energies to relating with others, and I did not attend to my self.

I also re-remembered my relationship with my self when I was a women's studies professor at a university in Alberta in the late '80s and early '90s. My academic position had a high public profile and my activities were often the topic of public criticism and debate. I worked 60 to 70 hours a week for the university, maintained a meaningful relationship with a partner, and had re-registered in the doctoral program I had abandoned in 1987. I had been working with a therapist to help me through the tough times. In the fall of 1991 with the aid of my therapist, I accepted that I was "burned out" or emotionally exhausted. I was completely overwhelmed, and something needed to be done to lessen the stressors I was dealing with. For the next couple of months, I contemplated my options amid growing fiscal restraints, and in May of

1992, I resigned from my tenure-track position, left the academy, and moved to Victoria.

That was third time I had left the academy. The first time I left was in 1981—after abandoning all hopes of completing a doctorate, I went to work for social services. I returned to the academy in 1985 to do graduate work in sociology but left again in 1987 to do research and operate a greenhouse. I returned to the university in 1989 to direct the Women's Program. Each time I left the academy, I left thinking that "I did not fit," "I couldn't put up with all the pressure," and "I had selected the wrong career." In 1992, I concluded that I was not meant for academia.

By May 2000 things had changed, or so I thought! In 1994 I returned to the university to make money, since no one in Victoria recognized my work history, my experience, or my skills. In 1996 I entered a Ph.D. program by special arrangement. Between 1996 and 2000, I cultivated ways of writing autobiographically and attending to what I was in the midst of. Through these practices, I had come to value relating with(in) myself and I had come to see how parts of my life were connected to other parts of my life. Parts of my life that I had interpreted previously as separate and divergent, now appeared highly interconnected.

Historically, I viewed my life as three relatively distinct realms: intellectual and theoretical endeavours, teaching and research practices, and personal friendships and family. I thought these realms may have informed one another, but I had no understanding of the possible nature

of such connections. Through autobiographical writing and reading, reoccurring patterns of discursive practices of judging self appeared in all three levels—sometimes simultaneously, sometimes sequentially. I came to see these discursive practices as interconnected. (These patterns and discursive practices manifest in *Part II: Constituting subjectivity as an effect of power relations.*)

Viewing these three realms of my life not as distinct and separate but rather as interconnected generated for me new meanings of the term *interconnectedness*. Thinking again about my complicated juggling act, I realized that juggling was predicated upon the assumption that teaching would in/form my research. In other words, I assumed that I needed to continue teaching in order to complete my dissertation and that I needed a dissertation in order to get a tenured position at the university. It seemed I couldn't do one without the other. But the major disjuncture between teaching and writing my dissertation that I had uncovered called this assumption of interconnectedness into question. If everything is interconnected, then how did I understand the disjuncture I was experiencing between teaching and graduate studies?

A contradiction became evident: on the one hand, I had come to see patterns of interconnectedness in all facets of my life; on the other hand, I had uncovered a major disjuncture between my teaching practice and my dissertation writing. At first I wasn't sure how to interpret this contradiction. Part of me wanted to solve the problem; other parts of me wanted to reject my notions of interconnectedness. Instead of those two

impulses, I decided to pay attention to what I was in the midst of and to write extensively.

More generally, in my doctoral writing I recognized my binary thinking and its effects in my everyday world. I also cultivated ways of disrupting and resisting my own binary thinking. Through autobiographical writing and reflection, I gradually acknowledged that by teaching, I reinscribed binary thinking—mine and my students’—by virtue of a curriculum based on structural understandings of power relations.

I sought counsel by re-reading *Circle Works: Transforming Eurocentric Consciousness* (Gravelines, 1998). Halfway through for a second time, I found myself laughing at my own white arrogance. When I first read the book in 1998, I thought that I knew what she meant by *consciousness*. I drew a parallel with what I had learned in women’s consciousness raising groups. And besides, I’d been teaching the merits of relationship and interconnectedness most of my adult life, especially in recent years as I worked to incorporate anti-oppressive theories into my courses. However, as I wrote about my reading of Graveline’s book this time, I discovered, much to my shock and amazement, that only now was I beginning to recognize the epistemological significance of interconnectedness. Assuming interconnectedness and wholeness underpins a way of knowing quite different from the Western scientific way of knowing. By writing autobiographically for an extended period of time followed by reading my own texts, I slowly began re/cognizing interconnectedness into my life. This emerging awareness of and

appreciation for interconnectedness along with my practice of writing autobiographically disrupted, displaced, and ultimately transformed my habituated (discursive) activation of an epistemology predicated on dualism.

The tension of recognizing interconnectedness in my own life while teaching and reinscribing separation and dualism created an ethical and philosophical dilemma for me. I did not make any hasty decisions. Instead, I sat with contradictions and wrote about them as they came up. I was open to all possibilities and explored many options that I had never dared consider before. For instance, I explored alternative sources of funding, such as family and friends, and the possibility of attending graduate school without working. I surprised myself with a decision to accept financial support and quit teaching until I was finished my dissertation. Those close to me were as surprised as I was.

This time, quitting teaching did not involve quitting the academy, and it also did not involve judging myself as a failure or as a misfit. Quitting also did not involve simplifying the juggling routine, but rather it involved a shift in my relationship to self. Rather than simply rechanneling energies into relationships with others at the cost of attending to self, for once in my life I made a decision to rechannel energies into attending to self, which allows me to be open and attend to others as well.

Evolving Practices of "Thinking Without a Banister"

Visiting⁸ various theorists, I have come across metaphors that help me think and write about how I am investigating subjectivity. One metaphor has been particularly generative in mapping this inquiry. I refer to the metaphor of "thinking without a banister," which Lisa Disch (1996a) drew to my attention in *Hannah Arendt and the Limits of Philosophy*. Arendt used "thinking without a banister" to refer to thinking without traditional concepts that are no longer adequate to the phenomena they purport to explain. Arendt, as quoted by Disch (1996b), called banisters

categories and formulas that are deeply ingrained in our mind but whose basis or experience has long been forgotten and whose plausibility resides in their intellectual consistency rather than in their adequacy to actual events. They are, in other words, abstractions that are imposed on events by force of habit To call for thinking without a banister, then is to call for a way of proceeding in which critical categories are not imposed on, but

⁸ "Visiting" imagination, one of two types of imagination Hannah Arendt (as cited in Disch, 1996) described, bridges the distance between the familiar and that which is strange and unfamiliar. Arendt argued that visiting is the activity of the imagination in judging, as distinct from thinking and deciding. Visiting means to travel to new locations, leaving behind what is familiar and resisting the temptation to make oneself at home where you are not (for instance, to become a tourist or an assimilationist to erase plurality and superimpose concepts that reinscribe sameness and unity). As a visitor, you think your own thoughts, but as though in the place of somebody else, permitting yourself to experience the disorientation that is necessary to understanding just how the world appears to someone else (Disch, 1996a, p. 159). I use *visiting* to refer to how I engage with various theorists' ideas, concepts, and theories.

inspired by one's engagement with phenomena. (Disch, 1996b, p. 144)

"Thinking without a banister" refuses the norm of Archimedean impartiality, which underpins Western, white, scientific, and modernist ways of knowing.

"Thinking without a banister" inspired me to think again about my inquiry process and subjectivity. While writing playfully⁹, a number of specific practices¹⁰ for "thinking without a banister" appeared on the page. I recognize that these practices have evolved as part of my repertoire of paying attention to power relations, judgment, and subjectivity. They are strategies for disrupting, troubling, and complicating traditional concepts. They are ways of not letting things stand still, not seeing things as finished or complete, and not taking things for granted. Each of these practices is continually evolving, and any understanding of them is subject to revision.

In the pages that follow, I introduce the qualities of paying attention associated with each practice and briefly refer to the interrelated nature of these practices that are constantly evolving and changing through use. For any given object of inquiry (i.e., text), some practices work concurrently and some work consecutively. I will employ these

⁹ "Writing playfully" is one of my approaches to creative writing in which I do a number of timed automatic writings in response to particular writing stems. One very generative stem was: "When I think without a banister, I . . ."

¹⁰ These practices are in no way servile to the metaphor but came to my attention through "play" with the metaphor.

practices as ways of reading out my life, simultaneously analyzing and producing subjectivity. More details about how I imagined proceeding with this inquiry and the dissertation are presented in the last section of this paper, "Sketching a Path," but first, a discussion of the practices of thinking without a banister: (a) self-writing, (b) detecting vestiges of subjectivity-in-process, (c) generating multiple readings, (d) unearthing fugitive frames, (e) evoking fragments, and (f) reading deconstructively and transforming thinking.

Self-Writing

Since the age of 13, I have written a private journal to make sense of my world. I have tended to write in times of crisis and despair; however, that has changed. In September of 1996 in response to a discussion with Antoinette Oberg (my supervisor) about my research interests, I began to journal every day for at least one hour regardless of mood or need (as discussed in the essay, *Writing Autobiographically*). Five years later, dozens of hardbound notebooks filled with narrative text line my shelves. I continue to write.

Every morning as I awake, I get a cup of coffee, prop up a couple of pillows and write for two hours. My right hand guides the pen; I let words tumble onto the page. I begin writing by retelling a dream or recapturing an event from the day before. Self-writing is not merely recounting events but rather is a creative process through which I make meaning of living. It is more than "coming to a voice" (Kamler, 2001) or claiming space, or constructing a way of knowing. Self-writing requires that I redirect attention from others to self. My practice of self-writing is

an ontological strategy for preserving a conscious sense of self and becoming a new self. Through self-writing, I differentiate my sense of self from that of others, and I differentiate within myself various selves (or parts of self). Self-writing practice forces me to cease attending to others and their various storied lives. Instead, I pay attention to my inner tensions and the power relations between selves.

The text produced through self-writing represents the journey of my soul. Contained in the writing and produced by the writing are memories of events, responses to events, and multi-layered analyses of events. Re-membering, reconstructing, forgetting, and transforming events produce memories, and these memories in/form responses to events and practices of interpretation/analysis. Responses to events are not unitary or one-dimensional but involve some combination of physical, emotional, and cognitive responses that range in magnitude and intensity. Analyses or interpretations of events are multi-layered. I believe that interpretation is embedded in every articulation of any event by virtue of the language used to describe an event, as well as manifest in the multiple interpretations of any event following a description. Recognition of patterns that became apparent through analyses of previous events serves to in/form interpretations of current events.

Detecting Vestiges of Subjectivity

There is no way to capture and represent all of my subjectivity; instead, sightings, glimpses or “vestiges” of subjectivity in process are rendered visible through written narrative. “Vestiges” refers to a visible trace, evidence, or sign of something that once existed but exists no more.

This word is selected to convey the way that I conceive of subjectivity—as constantly changing, moving, and in flux. Subjectivity-in-process requires that I attend to process and disrupt and trouble my tendencies to think of subjectivity as a fixed or stable entity, or as any entity at all. I call this practice “detecting” vestiges of subjectivity because my practice involves careful observation and scrutiny to detect vestiges of subjectivity within the daily texts I produce.

“Detecting vestiges of subjectivity” calls me to pay attention to complexity and acknowledge partiality of knowledge. There is always much more to subjectivity than that which I can capture in words. The act of writing fixes words on a page. Narrative vestiges, memories, responses, and analyses of events are traces of subjectivity; they are not subjectivity per se. The two are highly related but not one and the same.

Generating Multiple Readings

When I am reflecting upon an event, I intentionally generate more than one interpretation (reading) of what is happening. Generating multiple readings, or making multiple interpretations, is aided by my conscious awareness of multiple selves. Remembering that I am not one unitary self, but a field of disparate selves, I generate readings from the perspectives of these various selves. In addition, I call upon literature that is commonly labeled as nonconforming and transgressive (Allison, 1988; McWhorter, 1999; Pratt, 1995; Lorde, 1984) to conjure up ways of viewing a situation that may not be within the repertoire of any of my multiple selves or within the diverse array of interpretations that “I” use to make meaning of my everyday world.

Generating multiple readings is a strategy I employ to trouble dominant epistemological assumptions of one truth and one reality and to call attention to differences while troubling notions of unity and sameness. Doing multiple readings involves “letting” each reading remain different and unique. It is a practice that attends to, and does not erase, difference. It is not a practice of replacing an “old” truth with a “new” truth. It is one way of disrupting the hegemony of one interpretation and involves attending to diversity and collectivity. Recognizing that at any one time “I” embody a multitude of perspectives and that these positionings are not fixed complicates “letting”. Subject positions and positioning within any subject position change and their relationship with each other changes through time and space.

This practice is much more difficult than it may at first appear, for it requires a certain degree of detachment—enough psychic distance to allow other possible readings to come into being. Activation and engagement with dominant discourses can preclude detachment and thus preclude any generation of alternative readings.

Unearthing Fugitive Frames

Performing multiple readings and unearthing fugitive frames are related practices but they are not the same. Unearthing fugitive frames is a practice I employ with multiple readings. I scrutinize the language of each reading to unearth the discursive structures and rules (frames) that support and enclose a reading. I call these “fugitive” frames to describe the difficulty of perceiving these frames given their subterranean nature. They are usually buried deep within accumulated habits and unconscious

patterns. Part of my challenge is to remain aware of “my” framing strategies and make them evident to readers wherever possible and explore the effects of these framings.

As I unearth fugitive frames, I begin to get insights into discursive power relations and, specifically, technologies of judgment. “Technologies of judgment” are a particular form of technologies of self, in which one judges self. Foucault (1988b) terms technologies of self “the means through which humans effect a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conducts and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality” (p. 18). For this inquiry, I am particularly interested in understanding how subjectivity is an effect of technologies of judgment, and unearthing fugitive frames is an important practice to render visible technologies of judgment.

Evoking Fragments

“Evoking fragments” of memories refers to my practice of detaching slightly from an event I wish to understand and attending to my memories associated with the event. By attending to memories, contexts, and histories, my relationship or engagement with the event can be recognized and understood. Evoking fragments of memory involves summoning, or calling forth, that which I know (re-membering) about the context and history of the event. It also involves calling to mind various disparate observations and interpretations I have made that are loosely associated with this or similar events (re-constructing). Evoking fragments of memory may also involve generating new stories of the event by

altering the context from previous narratives in order to unearth deeply forgotten memories.

My practice of evoking fragments involves writing a number of short narratives of my memories regarding a particular event. These short narratives serve to historicize and contextualize the event. These narratives in/form not only an understanding of this event, but also the multiple readings of the event. Often these narratives serve to disrupt and complicate previous interpretations of the event. Performing multiple readings and evoking fragments may create a historically complex understanding of the current event.

I use the word “fragments” intentionally to highlight how fragments, bits and pieces of my memories don’t necessarily fit together neatly like a puzzle but may rather overlay or lie side by side leaving big gaps, with parts sticking out. “Fragments” reminds me to be suspicious of narratives of events that fit together smoothly and seamlessly.

Reading Deconstructively and Transforming Thinking

This practice involves paying attention to the implications and historical sedimentation of the language I use. Principally, I practice suspicion of all categories, polarities, dualisms, and binary opposites. The practice of reading deconstructively is a political activity that exposes discursive power relations. It prompts me to pay attention to the effects of the language that I use and to become aware of the times when I allow something to become fixed and polarized in how I construct it and how I represent it on the page.

For instance, when I find a binary opposition in a text, I deconstruct the boundaries between the oppositions to demonstrate that the value and order implied by the opposition are not rigid. I deconstruct the old system by showing how its binary pairs and the rules for their combination contradict its own logic. I work to show how each term, rather than being a polar opposite of its paired term, is actually part of the other. Then the oppositionary energy that kept them apart collapses and the idea of the binary opposites loses meaning or is put into "play."¹¹

After deconstructing a binary pair, "I" recognize that I am not in the same place as I was before. Reading deconstructively is transformative and constructive. Through the practice, I become aware of my intellectual and emotional attachment to particular language and the facade of order that it constructs. I recognize how I am implicated in perpetuating dualist thinking and its exclusionary effects. With awareness, the facade begins to crumble. From that point onward, I think differently when that binary surfaces again. I refuse the split, and I hasten to summon a spectrum of possibilities rather than the black or white polarity.

¹¹ I use the word "play" to summon Derrida's sense of play. Derrida (1986) insisted that all structures have some sort of centre. I think that oppositionary energy is a centre, and once a binary opposition is deconstructed, that centre ceases to hold the structure in place. Play becomes possible as the centre gives way.

Part II: Unearthing Fugitive Frames: Reading Innerlogues Discursively

The experience of individuals is far from homogeneous. What an event means to an individual depends on the ways of interpreting the world, on the discourses available to her at any particular moment. (Weedon, 1987, p. 79)

This second part of the dissertation presents four “innerlogues” and a discursive reading of each one. Each innerlogue contains vestiges of subjectivity-in-process that have been contained in and produced by my everyday practice of writing autobiographically. Discursive readings are physically interspersed among the innerlogues for ease of reference and reading. The discursive readings instantiate the discursive constitution of subjectivity and agentic possibilities created by/through writing and thinking.

Innerlogues are composed as inner dialogues (thinking) about particular events and situations that I have encountered within everyday life at the academy and are presented in narrative form. Innerlogues contain the “data” of this inquiry in the form of memories, responses, and multilayered analysis of events.

Four innerlogues have been written for inclusion in this dissertation. In two of these innerlogues, I am positioned as an instructor within the university whereas in the other two innerlogues, I am positioned as a graduate student. Innerlogues are narratives that begin with a feeling (a call to attention! an awakening!) or invocation to pay attention and include some description of the context, time and place of an

event. The text of each innerlogue constitutes my spiraling and unfolding thinking processes, various discursive practices, multiple selves, form(s) of subjectivity, and opportunities for agency. Effects of the practices of thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity also arise.

There are numerous ways to undertake a discourse analysis or discursive reading (Kamler, Comber, & Cooke, 1997). I practice discourse analysis to read texts of personal experience (innerlogues) discursively rather than as expressions of my "true inner self" (Kamler, 2001, p. 112). The method of discourse analysis used here has emerged and evolved through various re-readings and re-writings of these innerlogues and of the analysis. This method has been tailor-made by/for this project and it has not been imported from some other body of research practices. This approach to discourse analysis is informed by feminist, poststructural thinking.

A common understanding of language is that it is transparent and has no force of its own, that it is simply a tool with which to describe the "real" world. However, such an understanding of the relation between the individual, language and society is itself produced through discourse. In other words, I think a certain way because I talk about it that way. Linguists, sociologists, psychologists, and educators, who draw from poststructural theory in their understandings of language, are seriously undermining this common view of language. A newly emerging poststructural view of language is that in learning to speak we are learning to engage the discursive practices that are available to us within our social world.

Discursive practices are “the ways we each speak ourselves and each other into existence through our everyday talk” (Davies, 1994, p. 1). There are many ways to speak ourselves into existence. Each person gains access to what it means to be a person within each of the discourses available to them and in practising these discourses becomes the kind of speaker who is implicated in and made sense of through such practices.

As I write autobiographically, I speak myself into existence by enacting various discursive practices. These discursive practices are not ahistorical or original, but rather are embedded within, drawn from, and serve to enliven/activate a set of discourses, albeit fragmented, ambiguous, contradictory and ideological. Each discourse has its own rules and regulations and constitutes a technology of judgment. Discursive practices activate the constitution of various technologies of judgment and this discourse analysis makes visible the operations of discourse that constitute subjectivity. Conceptualizing discourse as constitutive contradicts assumptions that a teacher is an autonomous agent. Discourse theory suggests that as a teacher, my subjectivity is shaped by the very discourses that are available to me and how I use them (Weedon, 1987; Foucault, 1980, 1981).

Discourse, in this context, refers to a set of statements which have some institutionalized force, which means that they have a profound influence in the way that individuals act and think (Mills, 1997). “We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourses can be both instruments and effects of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing

strategy" (Foucault, 1978, 101). It is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together (Foucault, 1978, p. 100) and the link can never be guaranteed. "The discourse that makes the link also undermines it, precisely because power and knowledge are different" (Sawicki, 1988, p. 178).

Discourses compete with each other by accounting for and explaining meaning and in so doing one set of discourses may subsume another set of discourses. Within each set of discourses there are embedded rules for operation and through the activation of a discourse those rules and regulations come into play constructing particular norms, desires, disciplinary technologies, and subject positions.

Foucault (1988b) focused on two types of technologies: (1) "technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectifying of the subject"; and (2) "technologies of self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conducts and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality" (Foucault, 1988b, p. 18). In the discourse analyses that follow, I demonstrate that technologies of power and technologies of self do not operate independently, but rather that technologies of self are a particular type (site) of technologies of power.

Technologies of self operate to discipline the body. To explicate the disciplinary mechanisms of technologies of self I draw upon a definition

provided by Jana Sawicki (1991) in her study of new reproductive technologies and how mothers are disciplined.

Disciplinary technologies are not primarily repressive mechanisms. In other words, they do not operate primarily through violence against or seizure of [women's] bodies or bodily processes, but rather by producing new objects and subjects of knowledge, by inciting and channeling desires, generating and focusing individual and group energies, and establishing bodily norms and techniques for observing, monitoring, and controlling bodily movements, processes and capacities. Disciplinary technologies control the body through techniques that simultaneously render it more useful, more powerful and more docile. (p. 84)

I am studying subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations, specifically as an effect of technologies of self. I am particularly interested in one technology of self—the discursive, disciplinary practices of judging one's self, or what I call "technologies of judgement." These technologies of judgement are activated by a variety of discursive practices and are constituted by a set of discourses. Like all discursive constructions, technologies of judgment are mutable. This mutability creates conditions for other agentic possibilities. My assumption is that by rendering visible the disciplinary powers that are commonly invisible, these relations of power will be disrupted (at least momentarily), and an effect of this alteration will be the creation of agentic possibilities, including the possibilities of new subject positionings that would have otherwise not become visible, and thus possible.

An example may help clarify what I am endeavouring to articulate. My everyday life is constituted by / within a number of discourses; for the purposes of this example I will begin by focussing on one set of discourses: problem-solving discourses. Within this set of discourses the future matters much more than the present, and the present serves the future; the orientation to time is the future. Attention is focused on how the present will produce the desired future. Activation of this set of discourses produces an idealized self to be realized in order to attain the desired end (namely, in this case, solution of the problem, whatever it is). Within this particular set of problem-solving discourses I am concerned about getting my dissertation completed, graduating, and having a doctoral degree. Emotionally and intellectually, if not spiritually and physically, a future idealized self and the desire for realizing this end are constituted by the activation of this set of discourses (and serve to constitute a technology of judgment). By taking up the subject position of problem solver provided by this set of discourses, I adopt a way of relating to this desire as a goal (desire becomes reified), and as energies are channeled repeatedly towards that future desired self (state of self), all facets of my present self (given my current perceptivity) are measured in terms of their effective contribution to the achievement of this desired future self.

My present self is not producing the dissertation text fast enough to meet a particular deadline that has been negotiated with my supervisor. I tell my self that this is because I am being lazy and slow (self-judgment).

My immediate goal is not the completion of the dissertation, but rather the realization of the idealized/desired future self who will complete the dissertation. In order to attain this desired future self, my present self projects into the future and imagines a desired future self. This act of imaging a desired future self activates problem-solving discourses and therein constructs criteria for the idealized self which are then used to assess/judge the body, soul, thoughts and way of being of the present self. I relate to my self as an object of these operations. The result of judging the present self against the criteria generated regarding the future self is that the present self is objectified and construed as deficient. The future self is always future; it is never achieved. Thus, even once the degree is conferred, another desire takes its place and the present self continues to be viewed as deficient and not quite good enough (Jack, 1991). The present self never quite meets all the criteria of the desired future self.

To rectify the situation, I restrict my social activities, and (re)schedule my self to be at my desk two additional hours per day. This takes place within tension. This tension arises from and manifests as opposing sets of discourses. In a second set of discourses which focus on personal health and well being, taking up the subject position of a health conscious adult, I would value exercise and social activities as sources of self-nourishment. These opposing sets of discourses compete for my energy. Therefore, the solution of dedicating more time to dissertation work (generated from within the problem-solving discourses) contradicts the desires and goals of this second set of discourses. A competition

unfolds. On one hand I am drawn to wanting the degree and yet, at the same time I am drawn to prioritizing my health and avoiding the health consequences associated with working to deadlines.

I will not unravel this example any further for it has served the purpose of introducing how I undertake a discursive reading of the innerlogues.

In the discourse analysis that follows, I scrutinize the language of four innerlogues to unearth the discursive structures and rules (frames) that support and enclose each narrative. These innerlogues are my thinking about events that happened in my life. I use the term “fugitive frames” to describe the difficulty of perceiving and apprehending these discursive structures and frames given their subterranean nature. My purpose is to instantiate the discourses themselves as practices that obey certain rules, how the discourses constitute technologies of judgment and produce new objects and subjects of knowledge as well as new sites of agentic possibility.

The analysis begins by examining the discursive practices exhibited in each of the innerlogues. According to Brodkey (as cited in Kamler, 2001, p. 112), “we read and write (and speak) texts, not discourses.” To speak is to assume a subject position within a discourse and to become subjected to the power and regulation of that discourse (Weedon, 1987. p. ?). By analyzing these discursive practices, it becomes possible to see the ways in which power relations, various subject positions, disciplinary technologies

of judgment, and the life histories and desires of a subject are made “real” through the discourses that are activated in each innerlogue.

To understand “discourse” as it is used here readers can look at what I, as researcher, say about discourse and also at what I, as researcher analyzing innerlogues, actually do, or what practical uses of the word “discourse” I make. These two ways of knowing, theory and practice—one abstract and the other concrete—can also be understood as the signifier/signified—inseparable parts of the same.

In our Canadian educational systems, abstract and concrete are commonly understood as binary opposites rather than as inseparable elements of the same thing. Abstraction is often treated separately from the concrete and used as a tool with which to analyze and describe the concrete. Abstraction is commonly valorized as the purer form of knowing (a hierarchical relation) while the concrete is viewed as merely a means, instrument, or path to the valued abstraction. Abstraction is also associated with masculine and ‘hard’ (phallic) sciences. The capacity to think abstractly is experienced as empowering because it has “cultural capital, but it can also do violence to the capacity to know the detail of one’s own lived experience” (Davies, 1994. p. 6). For the purposes of this inquiry, I assume that abstract and concrete are inseparable parts of a whole. Therefore, as a subtext of this analysis I “refuse the arbitrary splitting” (Bickford, 1996, p. 123) of abstract and concrete. Refusing this split renders visible multiplicity, complexity, contradiction, discontinuities, and difference thereby enabling this investigation of the constitution of subjectivity as an effect of power relations. Through this investigation, the

practices of repetition/discursive practices that constitute subjectivity become visible, as do the immanent possibilities of contesting them (agency).

In order to exhibit this method of reading discursively and at the same time constitute a product of this interpretation, a detailed and systematic reading of one of the innerlogues is presented below. This detailed interpretation is referred to as a “close” reading and constitutes how I work to unearth fugitive frames and substantiate subjectivity as constituted by discursive power relations. Discursive power relations and disciplinary technologies, including ways of judging one self, are viewed as constructions and therefore mutable scenes of agency and resistance. One of the innerlogues, *Who has it worse?* was arbitrarily selected from the collection of four innerlogues for this close reading.

To present the discursive reading of each innerlogue, I, as researcher, use the narrative technique of referring to those parts of my Self, as depicted in the innerlogues, in the third person¹² as “Pat” or “she” (Hodgins, 2001, pp. 89-190). Strategically, this technique differentiates and distinguishes¹³ my researcher self from other selves and forms of

¹² The third person technique used in this textual production and representation of my interpretations of the innerlogues has troubled me ontologically, but I couldn’t find another way to create the distance to look at what “I” was in the midst of in terms of discourse and power. I countered this difficulty by maintaining my allegiance to the practices and conceptualization of “separate but in relation.”

¹³ Please note that I write, “differentiates and distinguishes” my researcher self from other selves. In this discursive act I am not reinscribing positivistic epistemological and ontological assumptions, although it may appear that way at first. To the contrary,

interpretation that appear within the texts of the innerlogues as part of Pat's thinking practices.

Following the close reading of *Who has it worse?* three other innerlogues are discursively interpreted in turn, but those presentations of readings will not include all the details of a close reading to avoid undue repetition. Instead, the presentation of the readings of the latter three innerlogues highlights the recurring patterns across innerlogues and makes apparent the nuances of subjectivity and agentic possibilities unique to each innerlogue.

this narrative strategy maintains the paradoxical relations of "separating in relation." Read more about this paradox in *Part III: Retracing the research process*. See *A tale of reflexive interpretation: Unravelling the paradox of separating in relation*.

Closely Reading "Who Has It Worse?"

The text of the innerlogue *Who has it worse?* is interspersed with the discursive interpretations of the text. For analyses purposes, this innerlogue is divided into three segments with each paragraph numbered. Each segment is interpreted to instantiate the constitution of subjectivity and agentic possibilities. The text of the innerlogue is italicized to help distinguish it from the discursive reading. Each segment of the innerlogue is read closely. Readers will see the ways used to scrutinize the innerlogue and unearth fugitive frames.

Event: "Who has it worse?"

"Well my aunt has it worse. She is an aboriginal lesbian living with chronic pain and fatigue. She has never been able to work and lives on a meagre disability pension," Cheryl roared at the top of her lungs.

Michelle sarcastically spat back, "Oh come on . . . you can't compare two people's lives like that. Just because the woman I am talking about is a white heterosexual and only has polio doesn't mean that she is necessarily less oppressed than your aunt is! Give me a break. Life doesn't work like that."

"My aunt's life sucks! Look at my aunt, she experiences homophobia, ablism as well as racism, whereas the lady you're talkin' about has an aide waiting on her hand and foot because she is confined to her bed with a respirator."

Looking around the room and addressing everyone present, Cheryl asked, "As social workers, aren't we supposed to identify the social structures that oppress our clients in their everyday lives? Doesn't that tell us how oppressed they are?"

"Yeah . . . right . . . but adding up oppressions doesn't feel like the right way to go about it," Michelle said in a flat, controlled voice.

Through tears, Cheryl mumbled, "Maybe not . . . but a white, disabled woman does not have it nearly as bad as my aunt. I don't care what anybody says."

Segment 1 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"

1.1 The class had been completing a group exercise when loud voices erupted. Standing alongside my desk, witnessing these two fourth-year undergraduate social work students yelling at each other, my left hand crept across my mouth. Warm lava started boiling where my ribs join my sternum. Every cell was on alert. My chest tightened. Then a huge tidal wave of responsibility crashed and engulfed me. Swallowing hard, I struggled to negotiate the institutional imperative to act and the vortex of fears, both past and present, of other people's anger and rage.

1.2 Frantically, I told myself that as instructor, I must calm the class and restore order. But how was I going to do that? What needed to be done?

1.3 Given our previous classes together, I was not the least bit confident that these two students could resolve this argument constructively. I must intervene, but how would I intervene in a pedagogically meaningful way? How could I quickly reinterpret/reframe this event as a teaching-learning opportunity? How would I stave off acting out of my fear of screaming voices, anger, and rage? How could I convert this emotionally volatile situation into a teachable moment?

1.4 I should have been able to do this; my colleagues and I often referred to teachable moments and how they emerge, so why was I having such trouble in this situation? What was going on with me? Why didn't I act? Time was passing quickly and the opportunity was slipping away; I had to act immediately. What

would another person have done in this situation? What would others say about the way that I handled this situation?

1.5 I simply wanted to run and hide. I couldn't do this. I couldn't face this fight. I didn't know what to do. It was a complicated mess. All I wanted to do was run to safety and avoid this mess. And yet to run or ignore this, or somehow gloss over this event would be to completely abdicate any and all responsibility for the curriculum we had constructed collectively, as well as my institutional responsibility as instructor.

Reading Segment 1 of Innerlogue

This first segment of the innerlogue renders visible two sets of discourses, each providing a distinct interpretation of the situation. One set of discourses interprets the classroom situation as an institutional difficulty or disruption that requires immediate instructor intervention to regain order and control. This discourse provides the subject position of instructor as institutional authority with the mandate to maintain control by intervening quickly and effectively. Not only the meaning of the situation is discursively determined, but also the expectations of the subject¹⁴ are spelled out and the desired end to the difficulty is prescribed. Energies of the subject are channeled to addressing the question of how to regain control of the students and the classroom. Learning is conceptualized as an orderly activity.

A second set of discourses appears in this text that interprets the situation in the classroom as one of interpersonal conflict and possible

violence. The subject position of teacher who is aware of feelings, her own and others, and who attends to process is constructed. Learning is conceptualized as an emotional and relational process, in this event gone awry.

No sooner does this second subject position discursively arise than it is engulfed and subsumed by the institutional discourse. In paragraph 1.2 Pat (teacher subject) identifies with the institutional instructor position and takes on the corresponding technology of judgment. She judges herself by applying the institutional expectations of intervening and taking control.

Noticing the ways in which time is regarded within each of these sets of discourses exposes more of the interactions between these discourses. Within the institutional discourses, time is a scarce and precious commodity, whereas in the second set of discourses time is required to express and experience feelings. These sets of discourses compete to construct the meaning of the event and to recruit the individual to take up the corresponding subject position. Scarcity of time and the ensuing sense of urgency that is constructed within the institutional discourses serve to constitute the institutional technology of judgment. But the technology of judgment at work in this innerlogue exceeds the limits of the institutional discourse. The Pat that momentarily took up the teacher subject position with(in) the discourse of feeling by attending to feelings judged herself with(in) the activated institutional

¹⁴ I use singular "subject" because that is the focus of this inquiry, but expectations for all

technology of judgment as not appropriate. Through this judging the institutional discourses subsume the discourse of feeling. Pat's attention to feelings is displaced and the institutional discursive press to intervene and regain control and order is foregrounded.

Pat assumes that she has the ability to make change in the world, that she has an opportunity to choose between creating a teachable moment versus be caught up in the vortex of feelings. Pat sees her options as an "either/or" proposition. She represses feelings despite her earlier stated intention of negotiating between the two. Within the two latter questions (1.3) Pat asks of her self, she points to her own emotional volatility as well as that of the students, and names emotional volatility as problematic and needing to be remedied.

In paragraph 1.3 there is an additional modification to the institutional instructor subject position. Not only is there an expectation for the resolution of this student conflict to be swift and to effect reinstatement of control, but also the means of controlling the situation has now had parameters set around it—they must be "pedagogically meaningful". Pat takes up the subject position of institutional instructor by asking questions that further elaborate the expectations of pedagogical meaningfulness (1.4). In doing so she takes up a problem-solving position that occludes the discourses of feeling.

This additional expectation regarding the means by which the desired classroom control is to be achieved exposes an evolving

subjects and interactions are constructed with and by discursive activities.

constitution of a technology of judgment. In other words, a technology of judgment is not constituted and then fixed but rather changes and evolves within a set of discourses.

In paragraph 1.4, the utterance of “should” reifies the desire to convert this situation into a teachable moment and further modifies the institutional technology of judgment by the addition of expectations and criteria for judging self. Pat interprets that she is having trouble in this situation and starts problem solving by assuming the problem is with(in) her self and how she engages in the situation. Impatience with self is produced by negative judgments of self (an enactment of a technology of judgment) and is further fueled by re-uttering the concern with the limited time available for action. (Time is first introduced with the utterance of “quickly” in 1.3, and then in repeated in 1.4).

Uttering “should” also evokes cultural prescriptions¹⁵ Pat evokes memories and fantasies about what Other¹⁶ people would do in this situation. She is searching for a way to proceed. Pat alters the orientation to time by adopting a future orientation. She assumes that Others (in some future time) will judge how she acts to resolve this present situation. She searches to anticipate these imagined folks’ assessment of her actions

¹⁵ Institutional discourses are so pervasive in western social relations that they are often referred to as cultural, and assumed to be unitary and monolithic. I very cautiously use this term because of the effect it has on my thinking. Using such a banister is dangerous for it may render power relations invisible which of course would undermine this investigation.

¹⁶ I capitalize Other to trouble the reading and to remind readers that these Others are evoked by Pat and are not actually involved in this investigation.

in this situation. Pat has not yet decided how to proceed; instead she projects psychologically and temporally to anticipate assessments of her actions by external Others. In effect her evocation produces relations of self-surveillance.

In paragraph 1.5 Pat wants to run and hide but she is caught. Strategies of flight, avoidance, and denial of feelings are prescribed by the institutional discourse as appropriate responses to the conflict. However, Pat takes up the subject position of teacher within a discourse of feeling. A corresponding desire to maintain emotional as well as intellectual relationships between her and students is constituted. Discourses of feeling constitute their own, unique technologies of judgment that cultivate a self that strives to meet that constituted desire. Technologies of judgment constituted by discourses of feeling contradict the institutionally constituted technologies of judgment. Pat is caught by contradictory and conflicting judgments of self and is pulled by opposing sets of evaluation criteria, desires, idealized selves, and interpretations of the event; the pull arises from the opposition between discourses of the institutional and feeling.

This innerlogue text produces, and is the product of, a struggle between the discourses of feeling and those of institutional imperative. Pat's utterance of wanting to run and hide indicates she takes up a subject position provided by the discourses of feeling. However, in the next statement in 1.5, "*And yet to run or ignore this, or somehow gloss over this event would be to completely abdicate any and all responsibility for the curriculum . . .*," the institutional discourses and the constitutive

disciplinary technology are reactivated. This reactivation suppresses the discourse of feeling. The future orientation assumed in this utterance repeats the disciplinary technique of projecting an imagined self forward in time and looking back on the current situation from this future vantage point. The self is disciplined to comply with the expectations embedded in the statement. The disciplinary potency of this technique depends upon Pat actively taking up the subject position of institutional instructor who is deemed fully responsible while at the same time refusing the subject position that is deemed not responsible.

Taking up this particular subject position does not happen in isolation but rather is very much influenced and informed by Pat's previous and possibly habituated ways of be(com)ing with(in) discourse. Thus, when looking across many innerlogues, it is possible to see how technologies of judgment are crafted and modified to play on particular proclivities and habituated ways of being in order to maximize the likelihood of engagement by a living body.

Pat displays a number of techniques of judgment in these utterances. The evocation of Other and construction of Other as evaluator and judge are two techniques which Pat uses to coerce herself to take action and intervene, thus solving her problem of not acting and subsequently regaining control of the classroom. In addition, the technique of projecting to a future place in time and looking back on the present situation from that future vantage point is a way of generating and assessing alternative ways of proceeding by virtue of their possible

effects. Together these techniques produce a subject separated from the event and the feeling self.

Detachment, in this context, does not mean the discontinuance of Pat relating to the situation but rather refers to a particular way (practice) of relating. Detaching is about creating distance from the immediacy of a situation where there is no place to stop and think. Detaching means that Pat slightly withdraws, thus making the present less urgent and the familiar strange, but she stops short of disengaging to the point in which she no longer wonders what the situation means. Detaching means stepping back slightly, not stepping away, but stepping back from the exclusive pull of self-interest. Detaching disrupts the familiarity of the present inclining Pat to stop and think about things that she would have otherwise let pass unnoticed.

Segment 2 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"

2.1 *Oh no! I realized what was happening. I was constructing a binary: either I take all of the responsibility for remedying this situation or I completely abdicate responsibility. "Either/or" thinking was at work, and I'd caught it—caught it in action. But could I turn it around? Could I open it up, unpack it, deconstruct it—here on the spot?*

2.2 *Just as I recognized this binary thinking, space for unpacking and expanding my thinking was created. What lies in the gray zones between these two extremes of responsibility?*

2.3 *I recalled a thought exercise my therapist taught me: slow down, take a deep breath, see the two extremes and imagine gradients of possibilities in between the two extremes. Recreate the binary as a continuum. Think through*

each possibility on the continuum; imagine various gradients of responsibility, both others and mine. With each of these possible scenarios, pay attention to the expectations of self and other and how I feel. In the midst of undertaking this thought exercise, I told myself that I was not 100% responsible to remedy this situation, and yet neither could I walk away.

2.4 *A voice repeated the institutional imperative, "But Pat, you are the teacher; you must act." Tension rose.*

2.5 *Talking back to this voice: "Yeah, I am more responsible than any individual student because of my institutional positioning as instructor, but at the same time I refuse to accept 100% of the responsibility for taking control and directing this situation. To do so would be claiming that I am all-powerful, and the reality is that I am not. An entire range of gradients of responsibility lies between the two extremes."*

2.6 *As I thought (accepted/imagined) that I was not fully responsible for fixing this situation, the high expectations of self as all powerful-teacher began to decrease.*

2.7 *I revisited the classroom situation with reduced expectations of myself and began to ponder: What have I done to contribute to the conditions that have produced this clash between students? I can change only myself, so then what have I done that has contributed? I began to replay how I taught concepts of power and oppression, talking about intersecting relations of power and wondering how we have ended up asking who has it worse? How did we get to this place of assessing who was more oppressed?*

2.8 *Oops! I was assuming that this clash between students was bad, or undesirable, and should not be encouraged, needed to be rectified. Were these*

assumptions valid? Was this situation inherently bad and wrong? If so, from whose perspective and why?

2.9 *Maybe there were other meaningful ways of interpreting what was going on. Let me think . . . maybe this loud emotional outburst was merely a current manifestation of a historical animosity between these two students. They were just playing it out in this venue. Or perhaps the students were working deeply with the content and integrating the concepts and ideas into their own lives (curriculum of living), and in the process, this disjunction arose. Or alternatively, this clash between students may have been produced by the institutional collision of emotions and rationality. Within the university, despite feminist and other efforts to incorporate emotions, ultimately rationality is valorized.*

2.10 *As I generated these alternative interpretations, it became apparent to me that the way I was interpreting this situation — primarily/firstly as an imperative to act as instructor — was only one of many possible ways of construing what was happening. I was reminded humbly of the partiality of my thinking and limitations of interpretation. Whatever I think, and do because of what I think, is limited by my thinking and is not necessarily the only or best way to engage in any situation.*

2.11 *Oops. I was jumping all over the place, and I needed to act. There was no time to waste. I had to take action. I didn't know which voice to listen to. I had to do something quickly or else this class would turn into a nightmare for everyone.*

Reading Segment 2 of Innerlogue

In this segment of the innerlogue, Pat explores the binary of “all or none” responsibility for resolving the conflict in the classroom, rather

than the binary of rationality and feelings that predominated in the previous segment of the innerlogue. She begins speaking from the detached position that was produced by the end of segment 1 and which I refer to as the “detached intellectual.” Pat’s writing practices have been transformative. Through writing autobiographically (the genesis of this innerlogue) to make sense of the event, Pat detaches from the event and feelings about the event.

As a detached intellectual, Pat is enabled to identify and intervene in her own “either/or” thinking. The strategy employed to accomplish this intervention is a re-membered thinking exercise that is used to disrupt and displace the binary. As the binary of “all or none” responsibility is disrupted; a more complicated conceptualization of responsibility is generated and a multitude of potential subject position(ing)s become possible. Transformed, Pat sees the institutional imperative to intervene as merely *one* interpretation and response to the classroom situation—one of many. The salience of the institutional discourse, its technology of judgment, and the corresponding imperative to act are reframed in the process.

As discursive reader, I contemplate the significance of this shift. Lisa Disch’s (1996a) words resonate through me, “it is not generality but the multiplication of particularity that accounts for the possibility of critical understanding” (p. 160). Particularity multiplies as Pat rethinks responsibility. Her relationship with(in) institutional discourses alters. Possibilities of critical thinking are created. Pat talks back, enacting one possibility.

In segment 1, Pat evokes Others and uses external evaluation criteria. In the thought exercise in segment 2 of the innerlogue, Pat alters her frame of reference from external evaluation criteria to internal evaluation criteria. In paragraph 2.5, this shift is most visible. Pat talks back and refuses 100% responsibility for the situation. In this act of refusing the split of “either/or” thinking, Pat detaches from external evaluation criteria associated with either side of the binary. Pat sees herself and her responsibility differently—from a new point of reference. By detaching from the event, reframing the salience of the institutional discourse, and altering the frame of reference for evaluation, Pat sees differently.

In paragraph 2.4 there is a resurgence of the institutional discourse, and with(in) it the reactivation of the institutional technology of judgment and a particular embodied experience of tension. But this time (in paragraph 2.5), Pat talks back to the inner critic of the institutional technology of judgment. Talking back is a way of refusing to take up the institutional instructor subject position in the same way she had earlier. Talking back deactivates the institutional discourses’ technologies of judgment. As Pat talks back, the embodied pressures of high expectations of self, associated with the institutional technology of judgment, begin to subside.

Seeing differently enables Pat to “position herself differently” (Davies, 1994, p. 26). When Pat takes up the subject position of institutional instructor, in segment 1 of the innerlogue, she sees the world from the vantage point of that position in terms of particular images,

metaphors, story lines and concepts which were made relevant within that particular set of discourses (normativity). Within those, Pat crafts particular stories to make sense of her life. Each story or iteration is a slightly different telling from the previous telling. Each iteration produce a slightly different “positioning” within the subject position provided by the set of discourses. Positioning refers to the ongoing process through which Pat (re)locates herself within a subject position by way of discursive practices that she subscribes to that constitute her as an observably and subjectively coherent participant in a story line.

The “event” as presented above is part of the innerlogue and is one story or interpretation of the event. By looking at what subject position Pat takes up and then at the stories she tells we can see how she is positioning herself within a subject position (Davies & Harre, 1990). Distinguishing between subject positions and *positioning* within a subject position is generative in terms of understanding how subjectivity is constituted because it produces and makes visible possibilities of movement within any subject position.

Returning to the text of the innerlogue (paragraph 2.7), there we see that Pat evokes fragments of memories and asks herself questions about how she contributed to the conditions leading to the conflict between the students and how the class ended up assessing who is more oppressed. Pat does not take 100% responsibility for what happened, nor does she abdicate all responsibility. She explores her complicity. Within this segment Pat (re)tells the event through various stories. At this point in the innerlogue, Pat’s positioning (detached and reframed) enables her

to brainstorm other possible interpretations for the conflict between the two students. Generating possible ways to interpret the situation produces, and is a product of, an opening to multiplicity and diversity. The attitude or spirit of this generation is light, spacious, and playful; Pat does not attach to any particular means of interpretation. Pat posited the question, "What is going on?" This is a question that Pat previously did not/could not ask. Instead, the questions posed previously focused on how to intervene, and more specifically, how to intervene in a pedagogically effective manner. The situation was defined as a problem that needed to be solved. The problem was taken-for-granted, and left unexamined. This new positioning enables Pat to ask this question, "What is going on?" This question is not embedded in any particular discourse and opens to a host of possible interpretations of what happened.

The final paragraph of the innerlogue segment again indicates another resurgence of the institutional discourse. This points to the unstable and tenuous nature of any "new" positioning and also highlights the repetitive nature of the constitution of subjectivity.

Segment 3 of Innerlogue: "Who has it worse?"

3.1 Two students were expressing strong emotional responses and arguing about which person was the more oppressed. The rest of the students sat idly by witnessing this screaming match. Cheryl argued for the addition of oppressions, whereas Michele disagreed that the lived experience of oppression can be reduced to such quantification.

3.2 *Had I taught the concepts of power and oppression in a way that reinscribed power as an entity, despite my intentions to the contrary? What had I done to foster this anger and outrage? How had the concepts and interpretive schema provided by a structural approach to social work produced this strong conflict?*

3.3 *Once again, issues of responsibility arose, but this time from a slightly different angle. This time the reflective questions I was asking myself lured me into blaming myself for causing this situation. "Either/or" thinking constructed me as 100% responsible for what happened or not responsible at all. Add this binary to the previous binary of 100% responsibility to remedy the situation, and together, the extreme responsibilities and co-constructed expectations of self geometrically expanded, as does the severity of negative self-judgment.*

3.4 *Again, I consciously paid attention to my breathing and thought to reconstruct this second binary as a continuum to render visible the spaces in between. I returned to the thought exercise and imagined two continua intersecting at right angles. The first continuum represented the degrees of responsibility for contributing to the conditions that produced the emotional eruption, and the second continuum represented degrees of responsibility for remedying the situation. Suddenly the combinations and permutations (possibilities) were endless. I felt overwhelmed by the vast array of possibilities and, at the same time, consoled that it was unlikely that I was 100% responsible for both causing and remedying this situation. Possibilities for (re)interpretation abounded and rendered visible spaces of negotiation.*

3.5 *Both Cheryl and Michelle sought to know "Who has it worse?" In asking that question, power was assumed to be a finite commodity that each person*

possesses to varying degrees. Individuals possess power depending upon their social positions: race, sex, gender, ability, class, religion. These social positions are conceived in binary terms, with one pole of the binary having power and the other having none. For instance, within the binary of male/female, males are assumed to have the power and females are assumed to be powerless. Within this structural social work perspective, power is thought to flow from a centralized source from top to bottom, such as the economy and the state. And power is assumed to be primarily repressive in its exercise. Being oppressed, therefore, refers to the social relations of having little or no power. Within this perspective, adding up oppressions makes sense. The woman who was triply oppressed in the situation Cheryl and Michelle argued about is assumed to have three times less power than a person who was singly oppressed. However, there are some difficulties with this way of thinking.

3.6 *Having power is predicated on the assumption that the amount of power/powerlessness is a constant across each type of oppression (that is, for female, disabled, lesbian) as well as constant for all individuals in a variety of situations. Calling these assumptions into question disrupted this conceptualization of power. Michelle vocalized her discomfort with these assumptions in her final comments.*

3.7 *Maybe this was too simple or too reductionist to conclude that this emotional outburst was produced by a particular epistemology. How had I jumped to this conclusion anyway? What else was going on? What else should I attend to?*

3.8 *Who has it worse: Who cares? Why is it a competition? Why must there be a hierarchy of the oppressed? I immediately thought of discourses of scarcity in*

which a few social groups fight or compete for dwindling resources. In order to make decisions about who gets the limited resources, the question becomes “which person is more deserving.” Does this represent the “new” professional discretion of the social worker in the 21st century—who is worse off? How did we get to quantify suffering? In this classroom I saw the hierarchy of power reinscribed while the epistemology (and ontology) that underpins it remained unmodified.

3.9 *Even though I defined power relations and oppression in post-structural terms within this class, I did not alter the epistemology or ontology, and consequently, the same binary and hierarchical thinking was (re)produced.*

3.10 *So how would I teach a different epistemology? How would I embody and integrate an epistemology other than the dominant one, and then how would I actually teach it to students? How would this affect how and what I taught?*

3.11 *Emotionality and rationality offer a challenge. How would I create and maintain spaces for both at the same time? How would I avoid punishing students for their intensity or for emoting? The institutional imperative to act is fueled continually by the judgment that yelling is not okay in the classroom and that two people monopolizing the air space also is not appropriate. Pedagogical principles resounded in my being. Pat take charge, you must take control. Don’t be a wimpy instructor and abdicate your responsibility.*

3.12 *Fears of being seen as racist surfaced in me. I feared intervening for how it would be interpreted by students, colleagues, and others. The classroom is not a closed space. A competition was set in place by virtue of the question, “Who has it worse?” and I needed to sidestep this competition and not reinscribe it by virtue of my response. Strategically, reframing the question was one way to go.*

Doing so would call attention to the question and what the question assumed, what produced it, and what was the effect of asking as well as answering it. Together as a class, as a collective of people, we could share the responsibility to reflect on the situation, explore the conditions that contributed to it, unpack the question, and see where that took us.

Reading Segment 3

By the end of segment 2, Pat was positioning herself within the subject position of institutional instructor in new ways as a result of detaching and reframing. The stories she told to make sense of her life were different from those that she had told before detaching and reframing. In segment 3, Pat begins by (re)summarizing the event in the classroom, this time mentioning the students sitting quietly listening to the debate. By interrogating the effects of her teaching practices, Pat explores her own complicity in contributing to the eruption of this event.

Continuing in a detached and reframed positioning, Pat acknowledges the pull of taking full responsibility (desire for control) but does not reoccupy her previous (normative) position of institutional instructor. This (re)positioning avoids re-engaging the technologies of judgment constituted discursively by taking up the subject position of institutional instructor as she did originally in this innerlogue. Instead, she evokes memories of her previous experience of (re)thinking the responsibility associated with the resolution of the conflict between students. This evocation reinscribes her detachment from the event and the feelings, and given her reframing and repositioning Pat is able to

intellectually analyze from a place of situated impartiality¹⁷ what she is in the midst of and deconstruct binaries.

Imagining a continuum of responsibility anticipates and prevents the oppositionary energies, tensions and pressures created and reproduced with(in) either/or thinking. Pat sees an array of gradients of responsibility and takes on partial responsibility. She positions herself as complicit, implicated in the event but not totally responsible. By evoking this fragment of memory, Pat resists taking up one side of the binary or the other; instead she is aware of more than two subject positions. By not immediately taking up either of the subject positions provided by binary thinking, the constitution and activation of the respective technologies of judgment are forestalled and yet these possibilities persist until Pat (re)positions herself in the subject position by attending to her breathing and generating a continuum of responsibility for causation.

Pat persists in interrogating her teaching practices until paragraph 3.7 when she detaches from her analysis of her teaching practices and opens to the question of “What else is going on?” In this opening, Pat articulates the classroom situation in new terms—emotionality and rationality (3.11). We see the re-emergence of the discourses of feelings. Pat refuses the split of emotions versus rationality by acknowledging the institutional imperative and its corresponding technology of judgment.

In the final paragraph of this innerlogue, one more repositioning happens. Pat repositions herself by acknowledging emotions—fear of

¹⁷ “Situating impartiality” is a term that I borrow from Lisa Disch (1996a, p. 161)

being seen and judged by others as racist—that are not appropriate within the school of social work. Feelings are acknowledged and therefore not completely suppressed as before.

Pat applies to her teaching practices precisely what she had just experienced in this event; detaching, reframing, repositioning. Pat focuses on the question, “Who has it worse?” Pat characterizes this question as problematic (detaching) and posits that reframing the question is a strategic response to use as the class reconvenes after the short break. Extending beyond this innerlogue, we might expect that Pat would integrate earlier discussions from this innerlogue by addressing shared responsibility and join with students to generate various interpretations and meanings of this event. In doing so, Pat would attend to the process of inquiry, not a desired end result for the discussion. So the classroom situation—women screaming—is not interpreted as problematic; instead the language and the question of “Who has it worse?” is foregrounded, and it becomes the object of inquiry.

Discursively reading this innerlogue constitutes a transformation of self partially enabled by deactivating technologies of judgment. Detaching and reframing allowed Pat to intellectually interrogate the effects of technologies of judgment and take up the instructor position in a resonant and self-respectful way such that responsibility criteria were transformed from external to internal referents. Transformations in terms of the content (epistemology) and process (feelings) are also exhibited.

whereas Donna Haraway (1988) introduces the notion of “critical positioning” (p. 586).

Analyzing discourses that structure Pat's, as well as the students', experience creates possibilities for agency. In other words, this discursive reading makes the constitution of subjectivity visible and the articulation of agency possible.

A close reading of *Who has it worse?* was produced by, and produced, my practices of discursive reading. The innerlogue was examined in three segments and interspersed among the reading commentary. The three remaining innerlogues are presented in a slightly different fashion. Each innerlogue is presenting as a narrative, followed by a summary of the results of my discursive readings. To distinguish the narratives from the corresponding readings, narratives are italicized.

Second Innerlogue: The Assignment

Glancing through the dust-covered pane, the last rays of sunshine dissolved into shadows—too much coffee and not enough exercise; a rickety old steno chair supported my rounded frame against the front edge of a dark brown metal desk. Twenty-seven ten-page essays lay strewn across the brown laminate surface; grading sheets remained neatly piled, untouched.

Twenty-seven student papers and not one of those students had written anything close to what I expected in response to the assignment—not one! How in this world was I going to reconcile these papers with the objectives for the assignment and assign grades? Oh! I felt sick. Never before in my academic career had I experienced such a complete disjunction between student papers and the expectation for an assignment.

These third- and fourth-year social work students should have been exposed to various theories of power and social justice by now. What was going on? What had I done wrong?

Not one of those papers troubled or called into question the fixed binary categories of the oppressor and oppressed. Each student methodically located themselves in terms of race, class, ability, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age, but with little or no attention to context or socio-historical relations. Periodically, a word or turn of phrase suggested that a living human being may be involved, but a moving story did not surface; instead, the texts listed and categorized identities. Fluctuations or variations of these social locations were not mentioned, nor imagined; instead, students constructed identities as fixed and non-negotiable. Those identities, such as white and able-bodied, were categorized

as oppressive and associated with testimonies of guilt and shame. Those identities labeled oppressed were described as powerless and meek.

I had been teaching off and on at a university since 1978 and sessionally in this particular program since 1994. Recently, teaching staff, both faculty and sessional, had been incorporating more and more content about power relations into the curriculum to enact congruence with our mission statement.

For this particular course, I had incorporated some Foucauldian and feminist post-structural ideas about power relations, which I had been studying in graduate school. I thought that my lectures, the assignments, and the readings would enable students to move beyond listing their respective identities (which is called for in many other courses). I expected students to begin exploring interconnectedness and complicitness in relations of power and to understand power as relating, rather than as an entity, as producing both positive and negative effects. I wanted them to start moving beyond the discursive practices of reinscribing "us" and "them" binaries. But NONE of these papers moved in this direction at all.

If I marked each paper according to my original expectations, not one paper would get a passing grade. Could I live with failing every person in the course on this assignment? How would that affect how we relate with each other? What effect would failing everyone have on the emotional and intellectual tenor of the class and on the energy for learning? How would it affect final grades for the course?

Considering my institutional obligations as sessional instructor, I was expected to mark these papers against the prescribed grading criteria that I had constructed prior to course commencement and that was included in the course outline.

With considerable trepidation, I might have been able to carry off this action, but the more I imagined doing so, the more I anticipated the (possible) negative effects of failing everyone on this first assignment. Based on my own experience and what I had learned from colleagues, I expected that many students would react by dropping the course. Many of these students would feel betrayed and hurt, others confused and angry. Some students might run to the director and contest the failing grades, which might induce a scathing critique of my teaching skills and result in many time-consuming (and pointless) meetings. Some students would remain in the course holding resentment and bitterness toward me while withdrawing from or resisting any authentic engagement with the course content or me. Some would grudgingly accept the grade and respond by chiding themselves and summoning resources to do better. Most would be affected negatively by receiving a failing grade.

As teacher, I consciously related with each student in a variety of ways to facilitate their learning process. Creating an interpersonal relationship with each student was and is the medium through which I teach. Therefore in this situation, for those students who might remain in the course, the trust that had been cultivated with each student as well as with the class/student body would be drastically eroded.

As a teacher, I am complicit in the social production of grades—there is no escape. Student grades were being closely scrutinized in recent years because some graduate and law faculties claimed that undergraduate grades were inflated and were not to be trusted as a reliable measure/indicator for admission. I did not want to contribute to this perceived inflationary spiral, and yet at the same time, cynical parts of me questioned the meaning and utility of grades in any context. Teaching and grading seemed at cross-purposes.

I was stuck! Institutional practices within the university obliged me to mark and grade using the prescribed assessment criteria in order to produce socially valid indicators of student performance; meanwhile, I was worried about the debilitating effect this action would have on learning and growth. If I applied the assessment criteria, all the students would fail the assignment and the trust relations I had cultivated with each student would be severed, which, in effect, would diminish any possibilities for the intended learning that the final grades were to indicate.

So what should I do? Could I actually do anything other than what the institution required of me?

Could I drop the assessment criteria altogether and assess these papers in some other way?

What could be done?

Should I get everyone to redo the assignment with new criteria and, basically, start over again?

My heart was racing a hundred miles a minute. What options were there? Were there any options? How would I figure out what to do? I felt dizzy, sick to my stomach.

Okay . . . okay . . . BREATHE Pat . . .

(Deep sigh) Slow it down—back up a little bit—how could I see what I was doing? What was I in the midst of, and how was I thinking about it?

Okay . . . so here I was, a sessional instructor confronted by a major discrepancy between grading expectations and what students actually produced in their papers. Now . . . one way of thinking about this was to see the institutional imperative as “the” directive and grade the papers according to the aforementioned criteria—end of story.

Ha! Not so easy.

A small difficulty. I couldn't live with myself if I did that! I saw the situation as much more complicated than dutifully enacting what was expected of me by the academy. There was the lived reality of this particular group of students (people), my relationship with each of them and the class, and their relationships with each other, in this place and time—the social process of learning and teaching—that was what we (including me), collectively, were in the midst of. . . . ?? . . . at least supposedly, to some extent that is what we were doing, plus myriad other processes simultaneously, but teaching and learning mattered to me.

Hey, I knew what to do. I would abandon my criteria and just grade the papers as essays. But as I thought that, a lump grew in my throat. I couldn't swallow properly. I couldn't do it. Abandoning my grading criteria felt wrong, and yet moments ago, it had seemed like the thing to do, since everyone missed the intention of the assignment and responded in a similar manner. Cripes! What

made abandoning the criteria feel wrong? What would abandoning the grading criteria do?

Abandoning the criteria was the polar opposite of the institutional imperative to apply the grading criteria regardless of the situation. Again, I caught myself doing "either-or" thinking. What grey areas lay between these two extremes?

I didn't know.

Surely there was something, but what??

As I read and reread the student papers, I noticed the strong similarities between the responses to the assignment. I began to call the assignment objectives and my expectations into question. The way I had designed the assignment must have been impossible to do, or students were not adequately prepared to rethink power or to digest the significance of the required readings.

I looked more closely at several papers. What had they actually done in their texts? I saw that most people had conceptualized power and identity as things or entities and not as relations.

In questioning the expectations for the assignment, I recalled what I had been thinking as I prepared this course. I had expected that students would be mostly 4th year and would have had considerable exposure to ways of (re)thinking power and would have some practical experience to draw upon. I had expected that these students already would have written several papers socially locating themselves in terms of various axes of power. I had thought that by teaching students relational notions of power and having them read several articles that employed relational notions of power, students would begin to shift,

trouble, disrupt the taken-for-granted notions of power as entity. But the papers students submitted demonstrated no such movement.

Maybe the students had not worked hard enough, had not applied themselves to this assignment? After all, they were taking other courses that competed for their attention and energies. Maybe they had left this paper to the last minute, not allocating adequate time for the process of the inquiry I envisioned.

But all of the students—all twenty-seven—responded in a similar way and all missed the grading criteria. Sure I'd had students miss the intention of an assignment before and get lost in their own work, but never the entire class. So I had trouble convincing myself that I could blame the students or conclude that this disjunction was simply the result of laziness or lack of attention.

And so I began to question my contribution as an instructor and curriculum writer. This was the first time that I had offered this course. Maybe I had screwed up. Maybe I was way off base with my expectations—or maybe the assignment was poorly articulated. Maybe the readings did not make evident the relational nature of power as I had intended. Perhaps my means of interpretation had been much different from that of the students? How had they read the material and what sense had they made of my presentations and group exercises?

Perhaps I had been overzealous—after all I'd been reading and studying Foucault and post-structural theory for a few years. It certainly had taken me time and effort to develop understanding and appreciation of the different ways of thinking power.

Yikes! Maybe I had been expecting students to be able to make a shift in thinking that took much longer than I had realized. And maybe, because they were so deeply embedded in a structural discourse in the rest of their social work courses, this one thirteen-week course was not enough to trouble or disrupt that dominant way of thinking and languaging power.

Hmm—How were discursive power relations at work with(in) me as I sat there trying to reconcile these papers and the grading criteria? The press of “normal practice” weighed on me to proceed in the prescribed manner.

Recalling how I had approached the curriculum development for this course and, specifically, the crafting of this assignment, I remembered assuming that students would be able to undertake and employ a fluid understanding of themselves (subjectivity). I had assumed that by engaging in the course materials that I set forth, students would readily make the move from structural analysis to post-structural analysis.

Now in retrospect, I began to uncover some of the flaws in those assumptions. As I drew parallels between those student papers and my own experiences of learning about power relations and subjectivity, I began to recognize the significance of the grounding practice of autobiographical writing, the evolving sense of self, and the increasingly particular awareness of one’s own thinking practices. For these students, a fluid understanding of themselves in the world presupposes a sense of groundedness in their own lives’ stories and experiences; these undergraduate students had not had an opportunity to develop their own sense of groundedness in this class or within this undergraduate program.

I couldn't believe what I had done! I couldn't believe that I had not honoured the time and effort I'd been spending writing and rethinking power and subjectification. My thinking was compartmentalized; a wall separated my emergent methodology for my doctoral inquiry and the way in which I taught students about post-structural and Foucauldian theory.

Reconceptualizing power and subjectivity is not simple or straightforward. Shifting and seeing power differently involves much more than merely adding a new conceptualization of power or exchanging one concept for another. Students could not imagine their lives intertwined with relations of power if they adopted the cultural habit of assuming that there was a place of neutrality, or some Archimedean point from which to watch the world. To see themselves as interconnected and related with(in) all that happens required an epistemological leap/shift. From a post-structural perspective, there is no escape, there is no outside, and you are in the muck. I had skipped merrily over this wee point.

Conceiving power and identity as things or entities is an effect of the "normal" discursive practices. Rethinking power as relational involves a paradigmatic shift. It involves reconstituting epistemological and ontological underpinnings. No wonder that students had not written the papers I expected.

Hee-hee! Just add gender and stir—I'd been a strong opponent of this kind of thinking in terms of incorporating gender, race, class, and sexual orientation into the university curriculum. And yet I caught myself making similar assumptions in terms of rethinking power. Just add a new concept of power to the kit box and off you go to become an effective professional. Well not

really . . . but in effect, the way that I had approached teaching power as relational and expected to create a shift in students' work was exactly that naive and vacuous. Bloody hell!

Whoa! Until that moment I had had no appreciation for the magnitude or complexity of what I was trying to accomplish in my doctoral work or, for that matter, in this course. I knew that I was experiencing all kinds of angst and upset, but I had no idea that thinking and learning were so complicated. Until this insight, I always had considered critical thinking as a rather easy undertaking if one applied oneself.

Returning to the difficulty of marking the student papers, I once again situated my thinking. I had the institutional mandate and authority to teach this group of students about the topics and curriculum as described in the course outline. Given the manner in which students had completed this first assignment, how could I alter the course to meet the course objectives within our time frame? Did the later/other assignments provide an opportunity for/require students to display success in these criteria? What were the course criteria, and how might these course criteria be accomplished with the way things were happening? How might I modify the remainder of the course to do so?

Oh the joyous effects of self-reflection.

The voice of the inner critic emerged: "Pat the stupid teacher—going off half cocked." "She shouldn't be allowed in the classroom!" "What the hell does she

think she is doing? The students cannot be held accountable for her attempt at integrating new material into the curriculum.”

In designing and implementing that course, I conceived of “power as relational” as a concept and, as such, reified it. The effect of thinking of power as relational as a reified concept served to reinscribe power as an entity and therefore, interchangeable with other concepts of power. With this analysis in mind, it was no longer a surprise that the students created papers that reenacted structural notions of power despite my efforts of talking about flux and fluidity.

So in effect, I saw that I, myself, had not moved out of the structural interpretations of power as relation. Basically I was doing a structural reading of Foucault’s work and yet assuming that I had made some breakthrough—some significant change—when in effect, I acted to incorporate information but did not trouble the epistemological and ontological assumptions that underpin structural social work.

Ouch! That interpretation hurts a wee tad. Not a pretty picture, awakening to the cold reality that I was not as skilled a teacher as I’d liked to imagine. I did not know what I was doing!

I concluded from this experience that in order to teach relations of power, I would need to unpack the assumptions that underpin structural social work and gradually move toward rethinking power. What needed to be in place before anyone or I could make this shift in perspective?? Cultivating perceptivity was part of this. Groundedness was another part. Analytical skills, reflection practices, time and place to do this work, supportive colleagues, new language,

exposure to the discourse in text and practice, and maybe enough unhappiness with structural thinking to need more.

Reading "The Assignment"

In *The Assignment*, Pat's energies are directed by the normative practices embedded and continually reinscribed by school and university policies to accept papers and apply the grading criteria indicated in the course outline. Pat has a course outline, with the assignment and grading criteria clearly spelled out for all students to see, but when she sees the 27 student papers that do not meet her expectations or grading criteria, she stops dead in her tracks. As the innerlogue narrative unfolds, Pat's energies are divided between her institutional requirement to grade and her institutional requirement to facilitate learning. The ways to attend to these seemingly disparate obligations, responsibilities, and desires seem at cross-purposes.

Two sets of discourses—institutional discourses and caring teacher discourses—are activated and compete for Pat's energies in this innerlogue. Each set of discourses provides Pat with a subject position. The first discourse provides the subject position of evaluator/grader focusing on the equitable, thorough, and proper application of the grading criteria. The second discourse constitutes the subject position of teacher as facilitator who attends to creating conditions that foster and sustain learning. Two competing technologies of judgment are produced. It is evident that all this judging takes place in a historical

context—informed by previous experiences with technologies of judgment and the self(ves) produced by them.

As I analyze this innerlogue, it becomes obvious to me that these two sets of discourses epitomized the two models of social organization that Franklin (1999, p. 20) wrote about: the model of production and the model of growth. The model of production in this instance is manifest in the structuring of university education and the production of grades. The growth model is analogous to the second discourse Pat calls into play¹⁸: her attention and concerns about the conditions that foster and nurture learning and education.

In the model of production, institutional discourses assume a future and instrumental orientation for teaching by focusing attention on the production of grades and by inciting desires to produce grades for the university effectively. The technology of judgment that is constituted as Pat activates this set of discourses through her practices of writing/speaking, is one in which a good teacher is constructed as one who grades assignments according to university norms and practices, and thereby produces reliable grades (effectively and efficiently)—and ultimately, qualified graduands.

Pat's inner critic enacts this technology. The techniques of judgment that are at work include the notion of institutional duty and responsibility, including the surveillance of grades, the contractual nature of a course

¹⁸ Pat's discursive practices of writing and speaking activate, or "call into play," certain discourses that she has available to her. Discursive practices are agentic as well as subjugating moves.

outline, and the pressure of time. Pat's practices of grading are assessed against these production standards, but these standards are not marked as constructed due to habituated repetition; rather they are normative.

In the normal practice of grading students' papers at the university, an instructor marks and grades course assignments by applying grading criteria that have been articulated specifically in the course outline, well in advance of the course offering. The course outline is construed as a contract with each student individually and with the student body collectively for that particular course. From this institutional perspective, the particular assignment referred to in this innerlogue is relevant and important only to the extent that it contributes to the creation of a grade and graduate. The instructor also is instrumental to these ends. Teaching is viewed as a means to these institutional ends, and learning is not a central concern but rather an assumed by-product. Universities are organized and operate on a production model.

The second discourse, a model of growth or caring teacher discourse, constitutes its own technology of judgment. The discursive practices that summon these growth discourses centre attention and energies on the desire to facilitate student learning. These discourses centralize the relationship possibilities between instructor and students and the implications for learning and teaching. Given Pat's history and past experiences, in taking up this subject position, she believes that a good teacher is one who relates well with students and encourages their intellectual growth and expansion. Pat aspires to become this type of good teacher. This technology of judgment disciplines Pat to become a

nurturing teacher committed to facilitating critical thinking and learning. Techniques of judgment include evoking fragments of memories of relating with students when the trust relation has been severed. By generating and anticipating the multiple effects of carrying out the institutional imperative to grade, Pat exposes the normative structures of the university to be contrary to the ideal of supportive learning and teaching.

As a facilitating teacher, Pat attends to students' growth and learning and pays less attention to producing grades. But when the technologies of judgment constituted by the institutional discourses are imposed (by the inner critic) upon Pat the facilitator, she is assessed as a poor teacher who doesn't grade properly—gives too many A's, doesn't reproduce a bell curve, gives her students too many extensions, and doesn't get her grades in on time. In practice, it seems that Pat negotiates ways to meet the production standards of grades while viewing teaching as a growth model. Relating with students to enable learning was the goal of this set of discourses that appears much less concrete and not as readily quantifiable and measurable as do grades.

In this innerlogue, a conflict of desires as well as a conflict of whom and what Pat is accountable to and for arises. Pat is frequently institutionally compelled (via self-judgment) to comply with(in) the subject position of grader. Yet she periodically takes up the subject position of facilitator by drawing attention to relationships with students and to the conditions necessary for learning. During the talk of inflated and unreliable grades, Pat's activation of an instrumental discourse

attempts to subsume the learning discourse by disrupting the attention to learning. Pat was caught and struggled to see any possible ways out. This “Catch-22” position, in which two opposing subject positions are produced and provided for Pat to subscribe to, seems to leave her with a choice of one or the other.

However, as with the innerlogue, *Who Has it Worse?* we see that through writing the innerlogue, Pat detaches from the event and the feelings associated with it. In “The Assignment,” two practices produce detachment. The first is writing autobiographically about the event. In that writing, Pat reviews her original expectations of the students and the assignment, which creates some detachment from the event. The second practice that produces detachment is evoking fragments. By evoking fragments of memories that ground her in her own historical relationships with students, she is able to create some distance from, and yet at the same time acknowledge that she cannot escape, the institutional obligation of grading.

The questions Pat posed for herself mark these moves. In the beginning of the innerlogue, Pat attempts to reconcile the difference between her expectations for assignments and the actual papers before her. As she detaches, her questioning shifts from this very embedded query to “What can I do?” which demonstrates detachment and what detaching produces. Then she moves to brainstorming various ways to interpret what has happened. Through the process of recognizing various interpretations, Pat comes to see the situation in radically new ways.

By looking back and retelling stories of the event of the assignment repeatedly, Pat cultivates an appreciation for the range and breadth of her institutional obligation and discretion, as well as her responsibility to students. By deconstructing binary thinking, calling assumptions into question, and maintaining detachment by writing autobiographically, Pat becomes able to reframe her understanding of the event.

In "The Assignment" this collapse of the compartment wall between Pat's experiences of learning post-structural and feminist notions of power relations and her experiences of teaching enable the knowledge and experience of each compartment to flood the other, and in that intermingling, rich new understandings and insights are formed. Pat's frame of reference is significantly transformed—her own experiences as a learner in/ forms her interpretation of her teaching practices and student responses. With the disruption of compartmentalized thinking, new positioning becomes possible.

It also becomes possible for Pat to unpack intellectually some of the pedagogical assumptions she has made in designing the course assignments and grading criteria and to interrogate critically her teaching practices. In this new positioning produced by reframing and various reiterations of her stories, technologies of judgment are deactivated, enabling the various parts of Pat to relate to one another and thereby share and integrate experiences—not to produce one unitary Pat but rather to have parts of Pat and the corresponding experiences inform and enrich one another. Pat is transformed, as are her teaching practices and content. She shifts from focusing on the assignment to viewing the course

as a whole and the assignment as part of that whole. This altered perspective creates agentic possibilities.

Third Innerlogue: Rethinking Proposal

The innerlogue presented below embodies a complex array of relations between discursive power and subjectivity that are at work while writing a research proposal. I draw your attention to the seemingly benign task of compiling a "proposal" for three reasons: (1) to display the central dynamics of my relationship to self-judgment, (2) to make apparent the emerging epistemology for this inquiry, and (3) to point to the interrelatedness of the topic and method within this study.

Rethinking Proposal

When I began this inquiry formally in the fall of 1996, I asked, "How does what I do in the classroom reproduce relations of domination?" I paid attention to the effects of evaluating students' papers. I was interested to find out if practices of evaluation reinscribe the status quo and reproduce relations of domination, despite feminist and critical pedagogy.

Since that September of 1996, many shifts and disruptions have taken place in how I conceptualize my research interest and inquiry. Currently in 2001, I see the university as the site of my inquiry, and my primary focus is to explicate subjectivity as an effect of power relations. Specifically, I want to understand how "my" subjectivity is constituted within the academy (as instructor and graduate student), with particular attention to the disciplinary effects of self-judgment. In other words, I want to understand how disciplinary technologies of self, namely processes of self-judgment, work and what subjectivities are produced, as well as to identify possibilities for resistance and change.

For the past three months I have been (re)writing a “proposal” about my doctoral research. As part of this process, I crafted a snazzy title and a detailed table of contents with topics to be included in each chapter. Enthusiasm filled my body as the possibility of finishing this degree flickered before me.

In April 2001 I met with Antoinette, showed her my work, and shared my growing desire to complete my dissertation before January 2002. I told her of my dream to celebrate by tramping and kayaking in New Zealand. The best months for tramping are February and March. Filled with optimism and energy, I plotted how I could complete my dissertation and defend it before February 2002. Working backwards in time, I created a work-plan for completing draft chapters and integrating feedback for a finished dissertation.

But more than excitement took root during this process. While reading a printed copy of the title page and table of contents and assigning completion dates to draft chapters, my relationship to these texts shifted. What had been ethereal and visionary suddenly congealed into a desired end result. I attributed value and importance to this text. I attached meaning and significance to this template for the dissertation. I pushed aside my everyday needs, feelings, and thoughts and donned an instrumental attitude and relationship to the text.

When May 2001 came and went and I had not completed chapter 1 or met with the committee as I had originally proposed, I began to judge myself as not applying my energies to the project adequately. An internal sense of conflict, failure, and unease emerged. I swallowed hard and denied the inner turmoil.

I tinkered with the draft proposal and created new forms of it, but each resulting new draft did not meet the expectations that I generated. The more I crafted the proposal, the more complicated and sophisticated the expectations and

criteria I created to evaluate my work. I realized that no matter how many hours or how diligently I worked, the proposal was not good enough. Further negative self-judgment percolated and abruptly halted my writing of the proposal.

In response, I started to problem solve “the problem must be my use of language, particularly my inability to write in academic ways.” I undertook to change my writing style, voice, and attitude toward and in the text. I received feedback about pieces I had written. Reviewers encouraged me to write the way I speak, not to be so formal, and to pay attention to the voices within the text and their effects. But I couldn’t do what was recommended. My words and ideas became tangled like a fine serpentine chain. I felt overwhelmed and sick to my stomach. My inner critic demeaned every possible solution and drained my enthusiasm and inspiration.

I started avoiding the proposal, reasoning that I needed to understand narrative inquiry more fully therefore that I needed to read and research what other people thought. Interlibrary loan books arrived, pulling me away from revising the proposal.

In reading “Narrative Inquiry” by Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000), I thought I had found a way to articulate my inquiry process, but parts of their model troubled me. I talked with a peer about my thoughts and concerns, and she agreed with my burgeoning critique. The comfort of finding a framework rapidly dissolved.

My first reaction was to reject “Narrative Inquiry” in its entirety. After further examination of the text and critical self-reflection, wherein I caught myself thinking in oppositionary terms of all or none, I resisted rejecting the text and recognized value for my inquiry in particular parts of the text.

Instead of revising the proposal, I got caught up in acts of reading, writing, and self-reflection—trying to understand what was going on, what was blocking my writing. When I related to my dissertation text as a goal and began to identify work that needed to be done to accomplish this goal, I interpreted my acts of autobiographical writing and not revising the proposal as abdicating the plan and the goal. I judged myself as being lazy, not practising self-discipline, not competent, not good enough to do the work. I felt defeated, depressed, emotionally flat, unable to proceed, tired.

I wrote autobiographically. I began to question my own inquiry process in terms of time and efficiency. I began to dismiss and erase the merits of an emergent design, for I had no previous experience with it and could not recall anyone who had. I was attracted to the promise of graduation and travel. I was tempted to conclude that the situation was intractable: that I can follow my emergent processes only so far and that inevitably I must acquiesce to a goal-driven approach to completing this dissertation and force myself to do the work. I saw others who had started their doctoral studies in education long after I did finishing. I feared that time was running out. Filled with a sense of competition and panic, I felt I needed to move forward. I could not waste any more time. And yet a small voice deep inside kept repeating, "Surely, there are other ways to display what I know and how I know it. Perhaps narrative is one of those ways."

I began to (re)tell myself that narrative is simply another way of knowing—not necessarily any better or worse than a rational, logical way of knowing, but simply different—and renders different things knowable. Narrative inquiry is one way to investigate some of what is rendered illegitimate, suspect, and untrustworthy by dominant, instrumental, and rational ways of knowing.

Through many layers of self-reflection, I came to realize that I habitually assume that “what is vital and important to be known” is that which an instrumental, rational way of knowing makes knowable. In recent years I have questioned and dismantled that assumption intellectually several times over, and yet it resurfaces.

Relating once again to the dissertation texts but this time relating to them as one possible form that the dissertation might take, I attended to my needs and feelings and the complications of everyday life. I interpreted my frenzy of writing autobiographically as part of my inquiry process, as a subversive way to attend to myself despite my tyrannical whip-cracking critic, and as part of my way of investigating subjectivity as an effect of power relations. As a peaceful alertness nourished my spirit, I stopped questioning my adequacy, and my attention was freed to craft this essay. I discovered that different interpretations and judgments of self depend upon the relationship I have with my dissertation text and myself.

By writing the narrative above, I detached slightly from the story line of the event described in this innerlogue. This altered spacial relationship allowed me to re-cognize some of the effects of assuming that a “proposal” is required for doctoral research.

When I thought “proposal,” I imag(in)ed a predetermined end product. I “knew” what an academic proposal looks like and the corresponding standards and expectations. Through the act of writing a proposal, I assumed a relational position outside and separate from my text, topic, and that which I was seeking to know, and my attention was future-oriented. My practices of knowing were logical, abstracted, and detached. By locating the inquiry in a field of study (if not

a canon), and by articulating and justifying the methods of the inquiry to achieve the desired end result, I revealed a number of Cartesian epistemological assumptions¹⁹. Within this approach to inquiry, power relations that constitute my subjectivity were reified and often rendered invisible, and my interpretative strategies were narrowly restricted.

In other words, I found that the normalized(ing) discursive practices of writing a proposal activated a highly ritualized, scientific problem-solving approach to constructing knowledge and forms of subjectivity. These same discursive practices construct and justify the means of an inquiry, and in turn, the means (re)constructs the desire of the knower and the desired end result.

Within a problem-solving approach to constructing knowledge lies an imperative for a logico-scientific mode of reasoning. According to psychologist Jerome Bruner (1986), there are two modes of human cognition; logico-scientific reasoning is one mode, and narrative reasoning is the other mode. Narrative reasoning understands the whole by the integration of its parts, whereas the logico-scientific mode demonstrates empiricist reasoning, the type of reasoning that "proves" statements, and explanations are abstracted from spatial and temporal contexts. The two modes are irreducible to each other, and each provides a distinctive way of ordering experience and constructing reality.

¹⁹ See the introduction of Jaggar and Bordo's, (1989, p. 3) book that summarizes crucial Cartesian epistemological assumptions. These include metaphysical realism, objectivism, epistemological individualism, rationalism and empiricism, universalism, and foundationalism. For the purposes of this paper, I refer to this cluster of epistemological assumptions as a "positivistic epistemology."

As I think “proposal,” an incongruence between a logico-scientific mode of reasoning and an understanding of subjectivity arises. I know from my practices of writing and critical self-reflection that a “positivistic epistemology”²⁰ stifles my creativity and vitality as a knower. Adopting a problem-solving approach, with a logico-scientific mode of reasoning, is not a process I wanted to undertake for this inquiry, and yet I felt obliged to. I began to ponder: “What is ‘actually’ required of me by the university?” “What are the limits that I work within?”

Reading “Rethinking Proposal”

In this innerlogue, similar to those discussed previously, we see the three moves—detaching, reframing and repositioning repeated; however by reading *Rethinking Proposal* several nuances of subjectivity are produced.

Pat is positioned as a university graduate student and writes about her experiences of attempting to compile a research proposal regarding the work she is undertaking. She finds herself discursively caught between the institutional expectation for a research proposal and what she is able to create to represent her emerging design. She is caught and troubled by the technologies of judgment that arise as she activates this set of discourses (scientific positivism) about graduate research. After writing autobiographically and reading her own texts, Pat’s frame of reference is radically altered. She sees that the normal (commonly practiced) format for a doctoral proposal is merely one way to propose

²⁰ See the footnote above.

research, and not the only way. Detaching enables her to develop a critique of this standard format and common practice. Writing this critique produces further detachment that results in a reframing of Pat's evaluation criteria for a proposal about her research.

Rather than uncritically adopting the evaluation criteria embedded in the standard proposal format, Pat questions the applicability of these criteria for her way of working. Not satisfied that these commonly applied evaluation criteria are congruent with the epistemological and ontological assumptions that underpin her work, she generates her own evaluation criteria tailored to her inquiry. By detaching and reframing, Pat begins to think without the imposition of activated technologies of judgment, which have previously impaired/greatly limited her ability to see alternative positioning within the subject position.

Similar to revelations made in reading other innerlogues, Pat's subjectivity is transformed in and through detaching, reframing, and repositioning during this innerlogue. At first amid a discursive struggle, Pat takes up the normative doctoral student subject position that constitutes a technology of judgment. Pat begins to judge herself against the criteria generated by this technology of judgment. She judges herself as incompetent and deficient. By writing about the event and about ways of making sense of this event a detached subject/self was produced. By detaching, a transformed self is able to see the prescribed proposal format as *one* way of proposing research, and by no means the only way.

This new way of viewing the prescribed proposal format or reframing creates a crack²¹—spaciousness in thinking. Pat begins to question and detach from the one way of doing a proposal, which results in rethinking her purpose, the form, and the assumptions of a research proposal. This reframing of the situation produces for Pat the possibilities of multiple approaches to proposing research. Pat's thinking and engagement with the prescriptive proposal format, as well as the institutional requirement of articulating to the committee her plans for doctoral research, are irreversibly transformed. In this disruption and change possibilities for multiple positionings within this subject position of graduate student become visible. Pat takes up a positioning in which she thinks without the effects of the activated technologies of judgment that have plagued her previously. Thinking without technologies of judgment enables Pat to create a meaningful submission about her research process and design to submit to her committee.

Not only does this innerlogue demonstrate subjectivity being transformed but Pat's practices of relating with her self are also transformed. By the end of the innerlogue Pat relates to herself gently with respect, attention and compassion, unlike the coercive relations evident at the beginning of the narrative.

In addition to these transformations of subjectivity, two other aspects of the discursive power relations are constituted through this

²¹ Leonard Cohen' lyrics apply here: "There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." Leonard Cohen, (1998) *More Best of Leonard Cohen*. Song: Anthem. Sony Music.

innerlogue. Reified desire and its effects on the constitution of technologies of judgment, and normative structuring embedded within the common practices of proposal format are exposed. I'll discuss each in turn.

Although this narrative tells how Pat eventually detaches, reframes and repositions herself within the subject position of graduate student, this innerlogue also provides a glimpse of the constitutive significance of technologies of judgment for desire. *Rethinking Proposal* substantiates the seemingly automatic and invisible ways that desire is discursively constructed and becomes reified by repeatedly imagining the realization of that desire at some future point in time.

A technology of judgment is activated as Pat takes up the subject position of graduate student and adopts a future orientation, projecting her desires into that future. This activation of the technology of judgment is strengthened as Pat takes up the desire to complete the degree by a certain date. Expectations of self are generated by projecting into the future, then looking back from that future desired time and place, and by planning backwards from the future to the present. A schedule of dates for dissertation completion is generated along with expectations that the inner critic uses as evaluation criteria on Pat.

This technology of judgment is not consciously constructed by Pat but by repetitive discursive practices of imagining the desired self and life after the completion of the degree. Imagining and planning for this desired end incites Pat's energies. As the desired end is discursively

(re)articulated, energies are further incited and channeled towards the activities and techniques to modify the self and attain the desired end.

Through multiple reiterations of this desired end and by taking up a problem-solving strategy for achieving it, the desire is reified. This reification (produced by reiterations and problem solving) reinscribes the technology of judgment that disciplines the self and centres the problem on the self, thereby deflecting any possibilities of seeing the problem as part of a larger structure. The desire to complete the degree becomes the concrete and material object of the technology of judgment and the problem to be solved.

Despite these channeled energies and a sense of being energized, Pat begins missing deadlines and not completing work according to the planned timeline (that she herself has actually created). In response, Pat's inner critic judges her present self as not meeting the expectations of self that were generated through the planning process.

By writing the innerlogue and looking back on the situation, Pat is able to gradually detach from the situation. By writing, Pat detaches but she detaches from more than the situation. She also detaches from the desire. Writing autobiographically loosens and reduces Pat's attachment to the desire. And detaching from the situation as well as the desire ultimately results in deactivating the technology of judgment.

By virtue of the multiple reiterations and amount of energy Pat directed towards wanting the degree to be complete, she reified the desire which reinscribed the constitution and activation of the technology of

judgment. Reification is a “sedimented” (Butler, 1993) effect of Pat’s multiple reiterations.

I use the word sedimented intentionally to trouble and render more complex my theorization of reification of desire. Judith Butler (1993) states,

It is not simply a matter of construing performativity as a repetition of acts, as if “acts” remain intact and self-identical as they are repeated in time and where “time” is understood as external to the ‘acts’ themselves. On the contrary, an act is itself a repetition, a sedimentation, and congealment of the past which is precisely foreclosed in its act-like status. In this sense an “act” is always a provisional failure of memory. (p. 244, footnote #7)

Following Butler, I refer to a reification of desire as a sedimented effect of multiple reiterations.

These reiterations are discursive acts that are constructed and as such are mutable. This reading of this innerlogue unearths the self’s way of relating to a desire as one possible site of resistance and agency prior to the constitution of a technology of judgment. Given the knowledge that reification of desire enables and reinscribes the constitution of technologies of judgment, in the future Pat may pay attention to the ways in which she relates with and to desire, thereby becoming able to make some choices about what she writes or speaks, thus exercising agentic possibilities.

Moving from the discussion of reification of desire, I turn now to the normative structuring embedded in university practices that this

innerlogue substantiates, and its effects on subjectivity. There is a commonly practiced format²² for doctoral research proposals that frames and organizes the researcher's discursive practices and serves the university in a normative manner. This prescriptive format is a product of particular historical epistemological, ontological and methodological assumptions. As a program requirement for doctoral research, the common proposal format activates and reinscribes scientific positivist discourses and the epistemological, ontological and methodological assumptions go unnoticed and unexamined. The normative proposal format spells out what information is to be included and how it is to be presented. It provides particular subject positions for the researcher and those being researched. It acts to construct a researcher's discursive practices by framing and organizing the way a researcher speaks themselves and others into existence within the research proposal/practice. Within this prescriptive format, researchers assume the Archimedean point outside the object of knowing in order to know, and then the knower is separate from what is known. The language of the text constitutes this distance that embodies this particular epistemology and ontology.

²² Drawn from a number of graduate research texts, the standard proposal format basically instantiates the scientific method: research topic, review of the literature, conceptual framework, research question and hypotheses, operational definitions, research design, population and sample, data collection, data analysis, limitations, administration.

As Pat calls the commonly accepted format for developing a proposal into question she also calls into question the normative structuring of the academy, and in so doing draws attention to the taken-for-granted form of subjectivity of the normal graduate researcher.

Fourth Innerlogue: The Running Vest

(A loud voice) "Who wants to read about my subjectivity anyway?"

Moments earlier I had received an e-mail from a friend, who is also completing her dissertation, announcing that she is working harder than ever, buoyed by her recent publication in the second-most-prestigious molecular science journal in the world.

Work harder? How can I possibly work harder? What would that look like?

Shit! In the cosmic forces of things, how is what I am doing worthwhile? How do I possibly measure up? My work is so self-absorbed, self-centred, and may not be worth diddly to anybody anyway.

The top of my diaphragm quivers as I hold my breath. My shoulders tighten and rise. Headache and neck pain reverberate as the soft tissue around my jaw turns to gristle.

Today I struggle to re-enter my text to edit and reconstruct it. In recent days I have given my "inner critic" free reign on my text—the very critic that I have been struggling to overthrow for the past several years. Omigod! I let her loose and she is killing the text and me. She deadens my work; she convinces me that my work is bad, wrong, meaningless. No one will want to read it. It has no value. None! This is what I told my Ph.D. buddies on Friday. And I have been chastising myself ever since.

And yet as I sit here staring at the screen, I understand what lies within this reluctance to proceed. It is not a reluctance to write. I have no trouble putting ideas on a page. The reluctance is about the critic—the editor within—the one who harshly criticizes anything and everything I do and write.

I, those parts of me that have written these words, live in terror of the critic. She is what I/we, collectively, have been trying to topple, dethrone, subvert, unseat because of the devastating effects of her criticism. And yet as it comes time to start editing the text of the dissertation, it seems imperative to stand aside and give her free reign to edit and create a finished product.

No can do! I/we can't let that happen!! After all this time and effort I/we can't suddenly let her go at it. There must be some other way.

Last week when I went to edit the story about evaluating students in practicum, she (the inner critic) superimposed a framework on the story that rearranged and killed it (me/us).

Something has got to give here! Changes need to be negotiated. A tyrannical inner critic is not okay. The critic of old cannot be allowed to govern and rule again. Editing requires something else — not the cut and burn process. Editing needs to be rethought.

But how?

Not sure?!

But definitely not the critic of old — the perfectionist from planet Absolute.

No way! (a chorus of voices in unison)

There is no way that I/we ever will be able to meet those standards — but then does that mean that we are wanting to do shoddy work?

I don't think so . . . but maybe?

No, that is the rub. That is the very hook that gets us every time. Quality . . . as defined by perfectionist (read unrealistically high and unattainable) standards. So we have a problem here. What standards of excellence do we (those

of us not including the inner critic) want to set and how will we ensure that these standards are attainable?

This is a set-up! Yeah!! For once in my life I/we want to win and feel good about what we do . . . and feel good about me/us! Yeah, this is about self worth and value, and this is about judgment.

It feels like my existence is on the line here.

This “inner critic” has got to stop! This abuse of self by perfectionist standards and harsh self-criticism has stopped me (us), deadened me, cut me off from so much of life and the process of being alive and living—thriving. Yeah, thriving—and thrive is what I/we want to do.

I don’t know an alternative way of editing. All I know is that the tyranny of the inner critic must not be reinstated! She must be stopped! Quality needs to be rethought and made attainable.

So then, what is attainable?

Not sure. Maybe I/we’ll have to make it up or find it out as we go along.

Some call that working from the inside out.

I/we want to produce a high-quality dissertation that is readable by many, accessible to graduate and undergraduate students, useful for my colleagues and students, and most of all, meaningful for members of my committee and my dear friends.

On the weekend, I went to the local store, bought fabric and notions, came home, made a pattern, cut out the fabric for a vest, and began to sew. On Sunday morning after yoga, I continued sewing and working ‘til 8:30 p.m. I had wanted to finish the vest for my Monday morning run with a friend, but I couldn’t quite

do it. With darkness and poor lighting, black fabric and thread danced before my eyes and I was forced to stop. I finished the vest the following evening.

On Tuesday I wrote to a friend,

Making the vest feels like a breakthrough. For the past 11 years I have experienced a block in creativity. I have started many projects, only to stall out and stop midway. Not this time. Something shifted. I witnessed the harsh tones of the perfectionist inner critic as usual, but this time she was overtaken by other voices claiming a right to experiment and make mistakes. It was an emotional rollercoaster of a weekend, but the vest got finished Monday night.

The “breakthrough” came about by actually carrying through and completing the project. I did what Nanna had taught me when I was a little girl—copy off other garments and make a pattern. I did it and I finished it. Yahoo!

The vest is all about doing, about acting in the world, and what can be more political than acting? My work, this work of the dissertation, is very political and has everything to do with the tyranny of self-judgment—that technology of discipline that governs many people in the early 21st century. To resist the critic within and not be stopped and deadened by that critic is liberating and an act of creativity and freedom.

Until the words of this last paragraph appeared on the screen, I had no idea that my inner critic’s editing was connected to the feverish sewing marathon on the weekend. But I see a connection now. I had partitioned off the sewing event from the Ph.D. work. I had compartmentalized my life in a way that rendered invisible to my self what I was doing and how the parts connect and mutually inform one another.

My head is about to explode from the congestion of a dreadful head cold.

Now is it a wonder? A Sufi friend used to say that illness is merely a transition, the body's way of transiting from one place to another. In the past 14 months I have been sicker than I've been since the early '80s. Given this wisdom, I am in transition again. Where to this time?

I am going in circles and not really writing the way I was above. Connections are not coming at me the same way as they were before, but maybe they will if I persist and keep writing.

I unexpectedly realized a connection between the personal pain of questioning the merit of my dissertation and the project of sewing a running vest. The connection dawned during the process of retyping the e-mail message to my friend after my computer crashed. Retyping the message required that I recall what I had written only moments earlier. But this time, as I described what happened during the weekend, I referred to the completion of the vest as a "breakthrough." As I (re)read this word, attempting to ensure clarity for the friend, "breakthrough" took on more meaning than I had originally intended. Suddenly, connections between the sewing project, dissertation, creativity, and judgment came into view.

In an effort to make sense of what happened, I've puzzled over these events. Recalling and thinking again altered and disrupted my perceptivity of the "what" that I was in the midst of, and through that alteration, new connections were formed.

In revisiting and (re)writing this experience, I recognize a materiality to these connections. I remember that by evening, after a full day of sewing, I felt a

gentleness wash over me. I could not explain or understand it. The next morning I was eager to get sewing again, and I worked with few breaks. I was focused, almost possessed. At the time, I thought I was using sewing as a diversionary strategy to avoid the raw, stabbing pain of self-worthlessness and the tyranny of the inner critic. Now, looking back, I think that by shifting my efforts away from my dissertation to sewing a running vest, I was not escaping the inner critic at all. Instead, I was confronting the inner critic on a different terrain—a well-traveled terrain—historically, a terrain in which the despot had systematically quashed creativity. And it was on this terrain that I/we (an alliance of dissenting voices) talked back to the inner critic, enabling the sewing to continue to completion.

Why did I turn to sewing? I don't really know. There are dozens of projects in my drawers and cupboards—unfinished. What made me think that this time would be any different from the past failed attempts?

I don't know, I did not really think about it. I simply got an image of what I wanted to make and went and got the material—no hassles. The woman in the store helped me calculate the amount of fabric and select suitable needles. And away I went. At home I went to my trunk and found my tracing paper. I came across several unfinished projects and my stomach tightened, but I was not deterred. I closed the trunk quickly before getting caught up in memories and longings. I went to the kitchen and traced around a second-hand vest that I had bought a couple of weeks ago. I made some changes to ensure that it was long enough. I struggled to figure out how to make the ventilation. I had not purchased enough fabric to do it in one piece, and so I had to improvise. And that is when I

heard the voice of my fine-furniture instructor: "Do the best with what you have. Nothing is perfect. An artist is one who works with what she has and makes the best of it."

In fingering the fabric and thinking of my fine-furniture classes, I remembered Nanna and how she made dresses from very limited fabric. She knew that the pattern was not on the straight grain of the fabric, but she could not afford the extra yardage. She improvised and made do with what she had. She always looked great! She made some of our clothes too. I cherished the pants she made for me even though kids at school made fun of me.

Remembering Nanna took me to another place—a place I had thought about earlier but feared to visit: memories of being teased in school, of being different, always different—red hair, freckles, glasses, homemade clothes, no "store bought" anything.

It was 1958, post WWII, and the social pressure was on folks to consume. My family had made do for generations and were proud of their handiwork. But at school all these products and skills were scrutinized and judged as inferior—not good enough.

Small wonder I have trouble finishing any crafts and art work.

It was as if I lived two lives. On the farm, handiwork was highly prized. In the farming community, I was praised for my skills as a seamstress, and I won awards at the annual fairs. At school, I lived amid people my own age who mocked and ridiculed anything (clothes, food, entertainment) that was not packaged and produced by some American company.

The year was 1968, and there was a dispute between teachers, parents, and students about jeans: "Should girls be allowed to wear fly-front jeans to

school?" Later, after many nasty exchanges, parents and teachers relented. Girls were allowed to wear fly-front jeans to school, but the strife did not stop there. Within weeks a "new" pecking order emerged among the students. Jeans had to be Lees, not Levi's, but Lees, and most certainly not Marshall Wells work trousers.

By Grade 11 I had assimilated. I desired "the things" like the rest of the students, and I wanted to be accepted. The products of my sewing were never quite good enough, never exactly like the custom-made clothes.

And yet for special events, I usually made my own clothes. Even with my full-time job at the restaurant, I could not justify to myself spending the money stores wanted for a graduation outfit. Besides, I wanted a long tunic with pants! My yellow jersey tunic and pants still hang in my closet as a reminder of those times.

Sewing. Yes my first two degrees are in Home Economics. I started out in general sciences with aspirations of veterinarian medicine, but socializing and drinking distracted me from my original goals and I decided to fall back on something I knew how to do—sew! Ironically, as a family studies major I was not required to learn how to sew. I learned how to make fabric, burn it, clean it, and present it, but not create garments. The school offered a clothing and textiles major with courses about tailoring and flat pattern design. In reviewing the course outlines, the curriculum appeared to be material I already knew. I wanted to take the advanced courses. Home Economics administration wouldn't let me register for the senior courses unless I passed a written examination to demonstrate my knowledge/competence at the introductory level. I assumed that

it would be a breeze—after all I'd been sewing since I was 5. A passing grade was 75%.

I don't remember my exact score, somewhere in the low 70s. I couldn't believe I failed. Then pride got in my way and rather than (re)do the introductory course and then go on to the senior clothing construction courses, I decided to forego sewing courses at university. Meanwhile, I made most of my clothes and crafted some tailored garments for faculty and staff to pay for my food and books.

And so it is with considerable surprise that amid this recent bout of self-doubt I undertook a sewing project. Tears pool as I remember these events, these stories of my life. And I recall the trophy I won at the county fair for the best garment in show and image it sitting in some store or basement window . . . somewhere²³.

Reading "The Running Vest"

This innerlogue begins with Pat comparing her dissertation to that of a friend in the natural sciences. The act of comparison activates a set of discourses (scientific positivism) that valorize the natural sciences over the social sciences. In these discourses, Pat takes up the subject position of social science scholar and assumes the desire to be held in high esteem by peers not only within her field but also more importantly within the

²³ After reading this innerlogue, a friend asked me: "Do you think that it might be significant that you chose to sew a running vest and that this process led you to reflect on a number of occasions when you ran away? This time you did not run away in your new vest!" I smile with delight and warmth of being heard.

natural sciences. This set of discourses constitutes a technology of judgment based on the desire to complete a dissertation that would be highly valued by others. Energies are channeled toward finishing the dissertation research and producing a socially valuable document. Pat's current practices are viewed as instrumental to that desired end and judged harshly against the expectations and criteria generated by the discourses of scientific positivism. Pat's attachment to the desire for recognition and success reifies the desire, which reinscribe the technologies of judgment. The Self disciplines the Self for not measuring up to these scientific (normative) standards of excellence. The perceived gap or distance between the desired state of being and the present state of being produces feelings of doubt and sadness about the merits of her dissertation research, her abilities, and self.

In the midst of this doubt, Pat continually writes autobiographically, writing about what she is in the midst of, what is happening. Through writing Pat detaches from the event and from the desire provided by the subject position of social science scholar as viewed by natural science scholars. Detaching creates a spaciousness in which Pat becomes able to see some of the ways that self-judgment (technologies of judgment) work on her body and soul, and its effects.

Parts of Pat's self or selves are explicitly constituted in this innerlogue. Through the continued practice of self-writing, her subjugated selves (those selves other than the inner critic) come onto the page and voice frustration and anger about years of suffering caused by perpetual negative self-judgments inflicted by her tyrannical inner critic. In the

naming of this pain and suffering experienced by parts of self(ves), detaching is re/produced/reinscribed creating (relational and discursive) space and an opportunity to question the supremacy of the inner critic.

The emergence of this tyrannical regime of the inner critic exposes and renders visible Pat's historical governance of self(ves) (Foucault, 1988a, 1988b). The inner critic has long maintained control and authority over the other parts of Pat's self (selves) by repeatedly constituting this technology of judgment that reinscribes the (normative and dominant) discourses used to make meaning of the event and evaluate the self.

By reflecting and writing autobiographically, Pat detaches and becomes able to see the effects of the harsh self-judging critic as well as hear the dissenting voices of the subjugated selves. Pat is caught in the conflict; however, in that act of recognizing herself being caught, Pat detaches further and begins to reframe her evaluation criteria. Pat explicitly reclaims evaluation criteria that work in her favour, on her terms rather than importing and imposing criteria from the natural sciences. She rethinks quality.

Here Pat shifts the terrain of the discursive conflict from that of the troubles with her dissertation to that of her experience of sewing a running vest. In reframing and transforming her relationship to evaluation criteria regarding the dissertation, it later becomes apparent to Pat that the technologies of judgment constituted between the inner critic and Pat's other selves regarding the dissertation are repeated/reiterated in her efforts of sewing a running vest.

By moving the discursive conflict to a different terrain and by attending carefully to her inner dialogue while she is preparing and sewing the running vest, Pat is (en)abled to talk back to the inner critic (technology of judgment). Talking back is a discursive practice that counters the negative criticism of the inner critic. Talking back to the inner critic is produced by writing and staying with(in) the process of facing the technologies of judgment and the inner critic as the judgments are being made. Paying attention and being present to and with the inner critic's judgments enables Pat to respond in the moment as the criticisms are articulated. Practices of evoking fragments of memories of Others to (re)constitute inner evaluation criteria produces this emergent strategy of talking back. Pat evokes memories of Others and remembers how these people from her past have counseled her to generate her own evaluation criteria from where she is. "Nothing is perfect and you do the best you can with what you have" helped Pat stay with(in) the process of creating. Evoking fragments of memories transforms the evaluation criteria from being externally located in relation to Pat's self to internal to her self. Talking back is not planned in advance but rather emerges in response to one criticism at a time.

Historically, for Pat the inner critic has become a tyrant. From a researcher's perspective, I do not think that technologies of judgment are inherently tyrannical. In this innerlogue and others, inner critics are harsh and negative, but technologies of judgment may be constituted that discipline a Self by using quite different techniques. Determining how Pat has come to have such harsh, negative self-judging inner critics is not the

focus of this inquiry, but the tyrannical regime is constructed as a product of years of Pat's engagements with(in) various set of discourses, technologies of judgment, and her responses to disciplining by Others. Pat's harsh inner critic is the *technique* of judgment and not the inherent or necessary character of an inner critic.

Talking back is present-time oriented and responds to the disciplining criticisms of the inner critic as they emerge. As such this present-time orientation disrupts the relating (attaching) to the desire and thus the constitution of the technology of judgment. Talking back is both produced by and produces Pat's repositioning. The discursive act of talking back reinscribes detaching and reframing from the event and feelings about the event, and deactivates the technologies of judgment that are constituted by the set of discourses as Pat takes up that particular subject position(ing). Talking back results in dislodging/ disrupting the debilitating judgments of the inner critic and fosters the emergence of another desire, the desire to thrive.

Telling a friend about her recent breakthrough in creativity further alters Pat's own understanding of what she is in the midst of, for it exceeds her own original intentions of disclosure. Sewing the vest is suddenly seen as analogous to working on the dissertation. Partitions between the two realms of Pat's life dissolve. Talking back to the inner critic on the terrain of the dissertation is implied to become possible as the dissertation is reinterpreted (reframed) as a creative undertaking rather than a product to be produced. Pat's way of viewing the dissertation, as well as the way of relating to the dissertation, is transformed through this

process of talking back. Through this innerlogue the historical regime of self-governance by the tyrannical inner critic is deactivated, which produces a transformation of Pat's Self as well as transformation of the relations within and among selves.

By writing autobiographically, the inner critic and the dynamics of the conflict are produced and also become visible and apparent to Pat as she looks back. This visibility, the ability to see²⁴ what she is in the midst of, disrupts/dislodges the historical hold of the inner critic. Detaching and reframing enables Pat to see the relations between selves and the governance of selves. She is also enabled to see how she has been motivated to act in the world. Of significance in this innerlogue, as with the other innerlogues, is the effect of the persistent and daily practice of writing. Pat does not simply write one side of the conflict, she writes many sides and then in looking back on her text the conflict becomes visible, which enables continued detachment and creates the possibility of critical understanding.

²⁴ To "see" both constitutes and is an effect of reflexive interpretative practice. It is not that Pat is "revealing" some reality that existed prior to this event; rather that through her practices the possibility of seeing what she was in the midst of was produced.

Revealing²⁵ Agentic Possibilities

Discursively reading the innerlogues has constituted subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations. It has also constituted discourses themselves (those discourses as practices obeying certain rules), how they constituted technologies of judgment, and how new objects and subjects of knowledge, as well as new sites and possibilities of resistance were produced. The innerlogues were discursively read not as signifiers that produced the real (signified) Pat but rather as discursive practices from Pat's life writing with its multiple and layered unfoldings. The innerlogues and the readings show the weight and power of language as it is lived by an embodied being, and demonstrate the force of desire, the potential dangers of dominating discourses, and possibilities of agency. What is fascinating about this discursive reading is not only how Pat was subjected to the discourses, but also how Pat took up the subject positions provided by the discourses. Through practices of cultivating perceptivity and thinking without a banister,²⁶ Pat gradually detached, reframed, and repositioned her Self and the technologies of judgment were deactivated.

In more specific theoretical terms, I articulate this reiterative process of subjection as it appears in the innerlogues. As evidenced by the

²⁵ The word "revealing" is not intended to contradict the ontology of emergence that has been produced through this inquiry. Instead, I use the word revealing to refer to my intention as a writer to make visible for readers what has been constituted through this inquiry process that I refer to as agentic possibilities.

²⁶ See *Part I: Coming to Topic and Method*, particularly the essays entitled "Cultivating perceptivity" and "Evolving practices of thinking without a banister" for detailed discussions of these practices.

reading of the innerlogues, power is (*en*)acted on the subject in at least two ways. "The subject is itself a site of this ambivalence in which the subject emerged both as the *effect* of a prior power and as the *condition of possibility* for a radically conditioned form of agency" (Butler, 1997, p. 14-15). Construction is neither the subject nor its act, but a "process of reiteration by which 'subjects' and 'acts' come to appear at all. There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability" (Butler, 1993, p. 9). A reiterated acting that is power made the subject possible, and power is what was taken up and reiterated in the subject's own acting. Pat was constituted as a subject through conflicting discourses and she eclipsed the "conditions of her own emergence" (Davies, 2000, p. 195); she eclipsed power with power.

Discursively interpreting the innerlogues has constituted power as both external to the subject (acting on the subject) and power as constitutive of the subject (acted by the subject). This reiterated ambivalence of the subject is the scene of agency. This way of thinking power avoids the binary opposition of free will versus determination that underpins many feminist and critical debates about the construction of a postmodern subject. Through this reading of the innerlogues, I have come to agree with Butler (Butler, 1990) when she states that "construction²⁷ is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible" (p. 147).

²⁷ Construction in this context is not the same as constructivism and nor does construction reinscribe determinism.

In reading the innerlogues, three major shifts in the process of reiteration (constitution of subject) were produced. A transformed Self emerged with each shift: a detached self, a reframed self, and a repositioned self. A repositioned Self was able to think and deconstruct binaries without activated technologies of judgment. Detaching from a particular event by writing autobiographically and reflecting on the text produced a detached self/subject. Detaching produced an altered positioning that enabled the subject to see (speak/write) the event differently. As the subject saw the event differently, the recognition that there is more than one way of seeing (multiplicity of interpretation) the situation became part of the detached subject's awareness (producing a reframing). Detaching and reframing disrupted the "hold" or relations with(in) the dominant discourse and created the possibility of (re)positioning within a subject position.

Enabled to see more than one way to interpret a situation, the detached self/subject is able then to reframe (look again, see differently, then reflect, redescribe, reinterpret, retell) the situation. While reframing, the detached subject calls the previously taken-for-granted evaluation criteria into question. As evidenced by each of the four innerlogues, the importation and imposition of external evaluation criteria was displaced by the generation of internal evaluation criteria (situated criteria) particularly created by and for the subject in a particular time and space (context).

Within the innerlogues the subject was not merely produced as an effect of the conflict of discourses, but the subject that was produced was

able to reposition Self within that particular subject position. The possibility of repositioning within a particular subject position was produced through the reiterative processes that produced (and were produced by) detaching and reframing. Through this process, technologies of judgment that were constituted by the subject's discursive practices were deactivated. Thinking without an activated technology of judgment enabled the subject to think critically about the situation and make informed choices to act in a particular ways.

By reading the innerlogues discursively, constitution of the subject as a scene of agency has been rendered visible. The three major shifts in the reiterative process mark the subject's (re)emergence as the condition of possibility for a radically conditioned form of agency. Viewing the construction of the subject as the necessary scene of agency, the tacit constraints of the process of reiteration (histories, time, space, language, discourses, discursive practices, etc. that produce this culturally intelligible agency) become generative political structures(ing) and not naturalized foundations. Since the reiterative process of constituting the subject is activated/enlivened through discursive practices, and discursive practices are learned and mutable, then the reiterative process of constituting the subject is mutable. By explicating the particular discursive constitution of a subject, possibilities for agency are made visible. But these possibilities for agency are particular to the time and space of an event, and are not transferable to other times and events.

Part III: Retracing The Research Process: Five Narratives Of Researching Subjectivity

Looking back on the past seven years of doctoral studies, I can retrace my research process and articulate how it unfolded²⁸. I could not describe this process, its meanings, or its effects in advance. This research process has been unpredictable, emergent, and creative not unlike the creative process²⁹ that artists, craftspeople, and poets undertake in producing their art. However, the purpose of this part of the dissertation is not to characterize research as a creative endeavour, although that may be a welcome side effect, but rather, to retrace the process of my research journey and display³⁰ its emergent design and effects. In pragmatic terms, I wish to address the questions “what happened?” and “what does that mean?”

²⁸ This articulation points to the epistemology that emerged and unfolded through this research process. For a full discussion see Caputo (1987) and Wittgenstein (1958).

²⁹ I call attention to the term “creative process” for creativity is not procedural but rather inherently unpredictable in its way of proceeding as well as its outcome. Process refers to perpetual movement and change that is not driven or controlled by a subject.

³⁰ Throughout the creation of this dissertation text I have experienced strain and tension regarding language. I struggle to choose words that are consistent within the epistemological and ontological assumptions associated with particular subjectivities, but many times I come up wanting. Words such as display, reveal, show, demonstrate frequent my page. By using them the transformation that I claim writing produced is contradicted. I puzzle over this conundrum. At first I think that is problematic; then I reflect upon how I am interpreting the situation. I begin to rethink: contradictions abound in subjectivity, so it is not necessary to interpret these contradictions as a problem to be solved in this text, but rather leave these contradictions for readers to encounter.

Looking back is a recursive practice of thinking through and interpreting what happened. Remembering by telling stories of what happened is an interpretative process. I reread³¹ my research journals and the texts that I have written about researching subjectivity. Remembering events of the past seven years, I attend to those memories that most readily surface. The objects of my attention as I looked back were memories of what happened. Again I looked back, and this time I paid attention to the stories that I tell myself, and the ways I tell them. These practices of looking back I term reflexivity or reflexive interpretation³². I expect to continue looking back and re-interpreting what happened during this inquiry for years to come. What appears in this text is a product of my reflexive interpretations to this point in time. The ways that I interpret and make meaning of this inquiry will continue to unfold.

However, before proceeding, I want to insert one caveat. In retracing my research process, I am not endeavouring to offer a prescriptive antidote for the confusion, ambivalence, and fear that often

³¹ I am referring not only to a particular date and place, February 20 - 28, 2004, but I am also referring to my current subjectivity that has been produced by this inquiry. The "I" (researcher/subject) that undertook this inquiry in 1996 is not the same "I" that is writing this dissertation.

³² I realize that in the literature, the word reflection and reflexivity are often used interchangeably. I prefer to distinguish between the terms. I see reflection as looking back on what happened and reflexivity as a doubling act of reflecting, so that the second act of reflecting attends to discursive plays of thinking.

arises when researchers consider a creative/emergent approach to research. I retrace the unfolding of this research process as a contribution to ongoing conversations about ways of knowing (epistemologies) and strategies of decolonizing subjugated knowing(ers). My purpose is share with readers what my process was like and what it produced in the way of knowledge about researching subjectivity.

Discursive power relations continue to surprise me. I began writing and retracing the emergent research process of investigating subjectivity by recounting the events of the investigation as I remembered them. Then I read the text I'd just written adding bits I'd forgotten. Gradually a lengthy essay appeared. I put this text aside to get some distance from it. When I returned, much to my disappointment, it read like a travelogue. I got bored. I couldn't imagine what readers might think.

Somewhat deflated but still committed to the importance of explicating the research process, I poured over the lengthy text. I noticed multiple ways of interpreting the research process embedded in the text but no explicit references to them were made. I reasoned that one way to enliven and move this essay would be to make these various interpretations distinct and explicit. And so I did. I discovered five different voices discussing the research process: the writer, the epistemologist, the ethicist, the hermeneuticist, and the research practitioner. The practitioner's story was more fully developed than the stories of the others.

The practitioner conceptualized the research process in five movements, each movement arising from the previous movement and demarcated by a turning point, or disjuncture. Five voices each employing five movements of research process came into my imagination—a 5 by 5 story-grid materialized. This arrangement of representing the emergent research process was appealing for it seemed innovative and creative, as well as systematic and complete. Excitement bubbled through me as I assembled a new text from previous versions. The possibility of a radio play danced in my head, but the complexity of the dialogue intimidated me. Instead, I imagined a seminar presentation with five guest speakers.

One version after another of the five voices in the first movement came off the printer. With each revision, I re-sculpted the stories to fit the first movement. But something was wrong. My excitement gradually turned to disillusionment. Each version of the five stories of the first movement was more lack luster than the version before it. What was happening?

I struggled to make sense. I decided to map out the stories that needed to be told by each of the five voices for the remaining four movements. Perhaps then I would be re-energized and be able to complete the essay. I created a table and jotted notes about stories associated with each voice for each movement. All boxes got filled. My tiny scribbles were hard to decipher. As I glanced at the sheet of paper, I realized that I needed to compose twenty-five different stories. It had taken me months, if not years, to compose the stories already included in the dissertation. Twenty-five would take me forever.

Abruptly, I was caught between two ways of proceeding. Either I could write the stories in each voice for each movement of the research process, or I could write five individual narratives of the research process. The relative simplicity of the second option drew my favour, and yet I feared that choosing that option might not adequately explicate the research process.

I sought help. I asked my Ph.D. buddies for advice. Colleagues asked me questions to clarify my purpose so that I could then decide accordingly. I worried. Did the 5 by 5 story-grid foreground the research process at the expense of the complexity and diversity of the five perspectives? Did I want to foreground the research process or the subjectivities of researcher? Could I do both simultaneously? What was my purpose?

I puzzled. I wrote about it. I realized that I was caught in “either/or” thinking. I wrote hoping that my relationship with these two options would shift and other possibilities would be created. Nothing moved. I was paddling in circles and getting nowhere—caught in a current, going round and round.

Given what I had learned about this way of working, I knew that when I was caught in a spiraling current the only way out was to go through it. In this context, going through it involved paying attention to being caught in “either/or” thinking.

It took more than a week before I could see what was going on. One morning I awoke obsessively replaying this conundrum in my head.

I was compelled to write—not in my daily journal but my research journal. I wrote:

Research in five movements is simply only one narrative that interprets and depicts the research process. It is not the only one! The 5 by 5 story-grid approach to representing the research process is not working. The “five movement narrative” has subsumed and pigeonholed the other four narratives. The movement narrative has become the grand narrative of the research process by framing the stories of the other four perspectives. This produced a fixed power relation or relation of domination.

This relation did not come about by itself. How I took up the movement narrative and the way I discursively engaged with and related to the movement narrative (writing and rewriting) produced this subsumptive move. Despite my years of cultivating perceptivity of discursive power relations, I was unaware of this power play...until now.
(Research Journal, February 1, 2004)

While plotting the stories into the story grid, I remember becoming frustrated because the story of the practitioner seemed elusive. Now I see that by rewriting and revising the essay, the story of researching subjectivity in five movements became the overarching frame for viewing the research process. The five-movements of the research process was no longer viewed as one interpretation of the research process, but rather, taken as a given. As such, this frame organized and categorically subsumed the other four voices. These four voices (perspectives) were rendered subservient to the five-movement narrative. This emergent relationship between the narratives can be interpreted as a

universalizing³³ move. The five-movement narrative became a grand narrative organizing the other four narratives (and narrators). This universalizing move came about as a result of how I took up and related to (via writing and rewriting) the narrative of research in five movements.

The stories of the other four voices (researcher selves) were shaped to fit within the categories created by the five-movement framework. In retrospect, I see that by taking up the five-movements as a frame for conceptualizing the research process, the other four voices/perspectives were subsumed and thereby forced to have a similar form, shape and rhythm. This discursive power play surprised me, but I was able to see what was happening and make some conscious choices in how to proceed with retracing the research process.

Enough about the stories leading up to retracing the research process, now let's proceed. I ask you, the reader, to come with me. Imagine yourself entering a large conference room on the main floor of a

³³ By "universalizing move" I am alluding to the making of grand narratives and the difficulties of such narratives. By revealing this universalizing move among narratives, I am pointing to discursive power relations and the effects. I am reminded of Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism* which discusses the Western representation of the "Orient" (what is today referred to as the Middle East) and shows how those practices of representation consolidated certain ways of seeing and thinking which in turn contributed to the functioning of colonial power. I make connections between my experience of writing the stories of researching subjectivity and this postcolonial theory about power relations. By seeing discursive power relations at work in my efforts to account for the research process of this inquiry, I am enabled to make choices from the

classically furnished 1912 house. An oblong oak table straddles the room. Surrounding it are twelve leather-cushioned chairs with arms. Five people are sitting in chairs on the side of the table adjacent to the doorway. The person in the middle of the group of five warmly extends a hand in greeting, and invites you to take a seat. The panel presentation is about to begin. You quickly turn and find a seat. Others enter the room behind you and quickly fill the remaining chairs. The person who greeted you begins.

(Person in the middle speaks):

“Welcome to this panel presentation entitled, *Narrative Inquiry: Retracing the research process*. The five of us (the speaker points to the two people on either side of herself) will be presenting our experiences and interpretations of a narrative inquiry research process we have recently completed. Our intention is not to expound upon the findings and implications of what was investigated, but rather as panel members we will focus on the research process—what happened and what meanings are made of it.

Let me introduce our panel members. First on my immediate right is **Epistemologist**. She will present her paper entitled, *Relations of the knower, knowing, and the known*.

Second, sitting beside Epistemology, is our **Ethicist**. Researchers are obliged to be concerned about ethics, but the ethical care of the Self is seldom, if ever, foregrounded. In this inquiry, the site was the Self of the

possibilities created by the process. At the same time I see interconnections with

researcher. The Ethicist will recount and interpret the practices of ethically caring for the Self that emerged throughout this inquiry. Her paper is entitled, *Cultivating an ethic of care for the self*.

Now turning to my far left is the **Hermeneuticist** who will tell about reflective and interpretive practices that were cultivated throughout the project. Her paper is entitled, *A tale of reflexive interpretation: Unravelling the paradox of separating in relation*.

And finally, here beside me is the **Writer**. The Writer will recount her reflections and insights in her paper entitled, *A writer's tale: Suddenly on the other side*.

I am the **Research Practitioner** and will begin our panel presentation with my paper entitled, *Research in five movements*. Each presenter will take her turn reading her paper. Following the five papers, we will open the floor to discussion and questions. Please jot down your questions as they come to you on the sheets of paper you find on the table in front of you. Questions will be addressed after the presentation.

Research in Five Movements

A Prelude

I have struggled to write this essay. I have written several drafts and each draft builds from and surpasses the previous one. “Writing to find out” is an exciting and generative approach to writing but when and where does it end? How do I end it? Producing an essay narratively is challenging. I review my overall purpose of this dissertation: to investigate how subjectivity is an effect of discursive power relations. I wonder how best to craft an essay that does justice to all the insights and connections that have been created through writing, and at the same time fit within the limits of my purpose and form.

Nachmanovitch’s (1990) words echo in my head, “Everything in nature arises from the power of free play sloshing against the power of limits” (p. 33). Writing to find out is generative free play and the form of essay constitutes the power of limits.

My first draft of retracing the research process identified and discussed three phases to the research: (1) coming to topic; (2) describing, interpreting and assessing autobiographical texts—unearthing fugitive frames; and (3) writing to represent the research (and) process. In rereading my first draft, I experienced a tightening in my chest; something was wrong.

Much like the previous research projects I had undertaken, I assumed that the analysis and discussion of my data (my autobiographical

texts) would lay naked the findings and merits of this research. However, as I reread my first draft of retracing the research process, I began to question the honest integrity of conceiving of the research process in three phases. Great amounts of time and activity were not accounted for. Conceiving of the research process in three phases glossed over many lived realities. I wanted to dig deeper and get more particular.

What had I been doing?

I'd been working, but what had I actually been doing? I wrestled with these questions trying to account for blocks of time. Health difficulties had compromised my attention and concentration for periods of time, but that did not account for all the time.

In the second draft of retracing the research process, I realized that much of my unaccounted time had been spent reflecting on and evoking memories of the research process. In the previous draft, I had written about the research process, but I wanted to write from inside the process to give readers a glimpse of the complex inquiry process. At the same time, I was making meaning of what had happened for my self. By writing what happened I achieved experience and then interpreted in various ways what those experiences meant to me in terms of subjectivity and researching subjectivity.

By continuing to write, I detached slightly from the experiences of doing the research and the interpretations I made. Detaching altered my frame of reference and enabled me to relate to memories, experiences and texts of the research process in new and different ways. I revisited my purpose of retracing the research process and unearthed a desire to

explicate the research process. I posed new questions of the process and called into question what I meant by “phase.”

As I winnowed through my experiences, memories, thoughts and assumptions, I found that my use of “phase” was arbitrary and ambiguous. If I was going to use the word, it needed more substance to it. I worried that I had thoughtlessly borrowed the term from developmental theory and scientific method. As I wrote and thought about “phase,” I remembered events of the past few years and noticed the ways that I thought in terms of periods of time. What made these different phases? My response surprised me.

As soon as I asked this question there was an answer. These were phases because they were separated by turning points. But what are turning points?

In thinking back through the research process, I recall many insights, but these were not what I meant by turning points. Turning points were more significant—pivotal—and manifested in the production of a particular text composed by a re-constituted researcher (subject).

For instance, the first turning point in the research process was marked by the articulation of the research process in the essay entitled, *Evolving practices of thinking without a banister*. “I” had been reconstituted as researcher through the practices of thinking without a banister and enabled to compose the essay that demonstrated to my committee members (readers) my process of inquiry. At the same time, writing the essay produced a new Self who was positioned differently than the previous constituted researcher who struggled with not knowing. This

newly constituted researcher continued to struggle with opening to not knowing but also knew more about researching subjectivity emergently than the she who had searched previously.

Looking back now, I see that the discursive practices embedded in the essay about thinking without a banister constitutes how I took up research in a particular way. How I responded was pivotal (a turning point) in that I had options, and I made choices—some more conscious than others—but I made a series of choices. And those choices influenced the quality and direction of the research activities thereafter (which I call a phase). My options were products of my interpretations and the choice lay in the means of interpretation, but “I” did not understand the significance of this until much later in the research process.

Turning points were major shifts or disjunctures in the way that I perceived what I was in the midst of. They involved not only seeing and relating differently to the research process and to my self, but they also involved an abrupt conscious awareness of those differences. The repetitive and persistent practices of cultivating perceptivity and thinking without a banister produced successively “new” subjects that were detaching, reframing and repositioning³⁴. The combination of multiple repetitions of this inquiry process ultimately produced turning points.

In the third draft, the research process was conceptualized as five phases marked by turning points. Each phase produced and ended with a turning point. Each phase emerged from and was produced by the phase

and turning point that preceded it. A turning point was the genesis of a new phase. In other words, a turning point was the point at which something new was created. It was a transformational process. That which emerged from the turning point was unlike that which preceded the turning point. Phases and turning points could not be predicted and were not known prior to their emergence. For this presentation, one phase and its subsequent turning point are grouped together to constitute a movement. The research process is retraced in five movements and they include:

First Movement: Articulating a research process by writing autobiographically

Second Movement: Finding/creating a form by carrying forward an interest

Third Movement: Coming to topic by crafting innerlogues and writing autobiographically

Fourth Movement: Seeing subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations by rearticulating topic and reading innerlogues discursively.

Fifth Movement: Composing a dissertation by making meaning of the research process and positioning the work.

³⁴ Detaching, reframing and repositioning were the three recurrent processes produced and revealed by discursively reading the innerlogues. See Part II for further details.

*First Movement: Articulating A Research Process By Writing
Autobiographically*

EDCI 691: *Interpretative Inquiry* with Dr. Antoinette Oberg in the fall of 1996 was my first-ever academic invitation to pay attention to what I was in the midst of and to develop a daily writing practice. Natalie Goldberg's (1990) rules of writing (pp. 1-5) were presented as a way to begin. Gradually, over the next few months I cultivated a daily writing practice. Learning to write autobiographically, rather than merely journal in times of despair as I had done since adolescence was challenging at first but soon became a daily practice of living³⁵.

Writing my way to a research topic (Richardson, 1994) was an unconventional approach to research. I had not been introduced to this method previously. The novelty intrigued me. I came to this new approach with an intellectual awareness of and history of engagement with a feminist critique of scientific rationalism.³⁶ In teaching and doing research, I had struggled in vain to find ways of creating knowledge without reinscribing the scientific method. Undertaking writing as a method of inquiry held promise; however, this emergent approach to research was completely contrary to my years of research training and practice of planning, implementing and evaluating social programs. I reasoned that I had returned to graduate school to learn, and so I took up the invitation to write my way to a topic.

³⁵ See the essay entitled *Writing autobiographically: A method of inquiry*.

³⁶ I was introduced to this critique in 1982 while reading Maggie Benston's article in *Feminism in Canada*.

I wrote and wrote and wrote. A year passed and no research topic emerged. I got frustrated and wrote about my frustration. By writing down my frustration and angst, new revelations about what I was in the midst of appeared. I continued to write. Before long a major theme appeared in my stories: a tyrannical inner critic. Story after story involved gut-wrenching negative self-judgment—judging my Self not worthy, not good enough.

About six months into the Ph.D. program, my supervisor invited me to begin articulating the process of my inquiry. At first I was stymied, I did not know what my process of inquiry was. I continued to write autobiographically and began ever so cautiously to read what I had written. Reading my own texts drew me back into the stories. I struggled to read and not get drawn in. After many attempts during the next three years, I was finally able to read and look across my stories.

Graduate coursework was an opportunity to engage with new bodies of literature and try on various ways of thinking about reality. In the first three years of this inquiry, I did not fully appreciate how taking up a variety of discourses would ultimately inform my inquiry/subjectivity by broadening my repertoire of interpretation. At the time, I hunted for ways to make sense of my teaching practices and the relational disruptions that I had encountered with my students after evaluating their first assignment. I read literature through the lens of my interests in power relations, oppression, and evaluation. The tyrannical inner critic, who had become so patently obvious in my autobiographical

texts, also provided a seemingly critical lens through which to assess what I read.

Looking back as researcher, I see that the practice of writing autobiographically produced a transformed subjectivity/subject in which the despotic reign of the inner critic was finally overthrown. As the subject, I was enabled to relate to my stories and memories in new ways. Patterns appeared.

Cultivating Perceptivity and Evolving Practices of Thinking without a Banister were two essays produced shortly after the demise of the tyrannical ruler. They constituted the patterns that appeared as I looked back across my stories and they described my inquiry process. The production of those essays was a turning point and marked the end of the first movement of the research process. Writing autobiographically for an extended period of time broke the strong hold of the inner critic and produced detachment that enabled me to read my stories from a different frame of reference. Prior to detaching and reframing, I had not been able to see my own process of inquiry. Detaching and reframing enabled me³⁷ to look back on the stories that I had written and see patterns in the process of writing those stories. As I became increasingly fluent about my process of inquiry, I nevertheless remained unable to precisely and concisely articulate a socially significant topic.

³⁷ Please note that my subjectivity, or sense of self, was altered by virtue of the writing and the detaching too.

Second Movement: Finding/Creating A Form By Carrying Forward An Interest

The articulation of my process of inquiry marked the onset of the second phase of the research process. Be(com)ing able to see the evolving practices of thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity produced, and were produced by, a transformed subject. The "I" that composed those two essays was not the same "I" who wrote autobiographically prior to the articulation of the inquiry process. My subjectivity was altered/transformed. Detaching from the events and stories of my life enabled me to see the stories from a new vantage point or frame of reference and patterns appeared.

I was both the researcher and the subject of the research; therefore, as researcher, my subjectivity³⁸ was also transformed through writing as a method of inquiry. I witnessed subjectivity-in-process and saw and participated in change unfolding. As I wrote autobiographically, text was produced. The practice of writing and what was written produced new subjectivities and new texts. Writing as a method of inquiry constituted subjectivity-in-process and produced new subjectivities.

Transformation of my research subjectivity did not mean that I suddenly stopped writing as a method of inquiry. To the contrary, my daily writing practice was complicated, not dislodged, by this transformation of subjectivities. Writing and reading my texts informed one another in new ways as my practices expanded and deepened. I, as subject of research, continued to write autobiographically about the

events of my everyday life but from a slightly different vantage point (frame and positioning) than prior to the turning point. My practice of reading my texts took on a new dimension. I wrote about experiences of seeing patterns that resulted in the articulation of the process of my inquiry, and I wrote about the practice of looking back and paying attention to other patterns as they appeared. Amid this increased complexity, I felt more compelled to write than ever.

I, as researcher, struggled with paying attention to emerging patterns. I, as subject of research, had habituated a relationship with(in) writing autobiographically. Writing autobiographically for an extended period of years plus the practice of looking back on the stories produced a subject who saw an additional "level of interpretation." This new level of interpretation enabled me (researcher) to see emerging patterns and make sense of the vast amount of text that I had generated. But as subject of research, I did not live at the level of patterns, or so I thought. I (the new subject) could see patterns but I needed to create ways of perceiving (and writing) both events and patterns of events simultaneously. Going back and forth between levels of interpretation was difficult and strange. My habits of paying attention to one level of interpretation kept catching me. I resented change. Writing autobiographically had become comfortable and familiar. With the emergence of this new level of interpretation, that familiarity was rendered strange.

³⁸ Here I am pointing to a plurality of subjectivities. There is a researcher subjectivity

My supervisor encouraged me to present my research practices at a couple of conferences. I took up the invitation. In each presentation, I displayed the product of my practice of writing autobiographically by sharing some of my stories. I did not say much about my evolving practices of thinking without a banister, nor the complications to my practice of writing that arose since the articulation of the inquiry process. In all honesty, at the time I don't think that I could make much sense of the complications. The nature of patterns was still very novel to me.

Weeks after presenting some of my work at these conferences, I began analyzing and assessing the presentations I'd made. The stories included were very personal. I remembered feeling vulnerable and at times tongue-tied and vague and worried whether the stories were intelligible to members of the audience. I had extracted stories from my journals for inclusion in the presentations. At the time this seemed like an effective and appropriate strategy, but in looking back some weeks later, I realized that those stories had been written with no reader or listener in mind.

Writing for myself and writing as a method of inquiry were very different engagements with(in) writing than writing for a reader. Suddenly the perils of composing a dissertation became apparent to me. My stories were important, but I didn't know what part of the dissertation they would constitute. Intuitively, I knew that the stories needed to be sculpted and crafted for readers. I needed a way of presenting the stories.

as well as subject of research subjectivity. I am both but they are not identical.

I needed a form—a way of shaping and presenting my stories to display subjectivity-in-process to readers.

While searching for a form, my supervisor encouraged me to select a few stories to present to my committee as a way of displaying my work. I balked. I had at least 45 major stories. How did I go about selecting only a few? What criteria would I use to make selections? What was my purpose anyway? Questions of what to include, why, and how, consumed my attention for several weeks.

I selected the most commonly recurring stories of my teaching practice and my life as a graduate student. I paid attention to the flow of energy produced in my body as I read my stories aloud. I began working with nine stories but this number quickly dwindled to four. Four stories stood out from the others and resonated (rang true) through me as I read them aloud. Despite my rational intentions to work with all nine, I trusted my intuition (resonance) and selected those four stories that spoke to me, and worked to sculpt and craft them.

The “form of innerlogue” emerged from my trial and error approaches of writing and rewriting these four stories for readers. Innerlogues are composed as inner dialogues (thinking) about particular events and situations that I encountered within everyday life within the academy. Innerlogues are presented in narrative form.

Finding a form was another turning point in the research process. It was not, however, a quick fix. Learning how to write innerlogues created a steep learning curve and was extremely challenging. The writing that I had historically done prior to this inquiry was government-ese:

banal, passive voice, articulations of this topic or that. My days of language arts and literature were many decades in the past, and memory failed me. Interestingly as I worked with my stories to create innerlogues, a litany of sculpting/shaping considerations washed through me. Which stories do I include in the innerlogues? Why? How can I show rather than tell? How do I tell stories to meet my purposes? What are my purposes? What does the reader already know? What are my assumptions about the responsibilities of the reader and the writer?

Through the search for a form and then in the work of sculpting and crafting innerlogues for readers, I (researcher) learned many things: about the power of story; about narrative and narrative inquiry; about what I don't know about writing for readers; and about the litany of considerations and choices involved in sculpting story and text.

The research process is not as lock step as this linear presentation suggests. I was not finished crafting innerlogues before the topic emerged. Once the topic arose, the innerlogues were seen from a new frame of reference and became data. The significance of the innerlogues within the research process suddenly was reinterpreted.

Third Movement: Coming To A Topic By Crafting Innerlogues And Writing Autobiographically

Intuitively, I knew that the topic of my inquiry was in my texts, but I could not winnow out a socially significant topic from the plethora of words. I explicated what I meant by subjectivity, power and judgment—the three main concepts that had emerged through my writing and reading. I reflected and wrote about what I was doing and how I was doing it, and I re-read some of my writing of the preceding weeks, months, and years. The production of each new text affected my understanding of the three terms, what I was in the midst of, and my sense of self. As I continued to write, rewrite, and re-read, a distance between my researcher self and the events and patterns of events grew. This growing distance enabled me to see new relationships and patterns across my writings about these three concepts that had emerged from my stories as patterns. I call these patterns of patterns. I began to recognize the nuances of my own interests, to identify things I did not know, and to pay attention to ways in which I related to myself, the stories of my life, and my practices of writing.

As I persisted with my practices of writing, a cluster of questions arose from my autobiographical texts. These questions manifested a poststructural theoretical perspective of the relations between subjectivity, power and judgment. The questions included: How is subjectivity (discursively) constituted as an effect of power relations? How is subjectivity an effect of technologies of judgment? How can the effects of

technologies of judgment be altered?³⁹ A topic of social relevance emerged. I was interested⁴⁰ in the process of subjectification.

Writing autobiographically and staying with the process had produced a socially significant topic, not to mention a transformed subject. As the recognition of the topic slowly registered within each cell, I noticed a shift in my general regard and attitude towards the inquiry. I could see what I was in the midst of from a new perspective. Dare I say a research perspective? The congruence between my topic and my situated lived experiences strongly resonated. At first, I was overcome by a sense of achievement and satisfaction in coming to a topic. Then emotion gave way to a deeply embodied spaciousness and sense of interconnectedness with all beings. I experienced compassion for my Self as an important part of a much larger, interconnected world.

Many times during this third movement of the research process, I caught my self reading a new book, re-reading articles in my collection, or searching the internet to find inspiration for, if not answers to, my query about subjectification. In retrospect, I interpret these acts as a form of resistance. I was resisting the creative and emergent process of not knowing where I was going or what I was doing (be it emergent research or life). Giving my Self the benefit of the doubt, perhaps I was taking time

³⁹ Holding these questions has constituted the major focus, direction and purpose for this inquiry.

⁴⁰ Interested - comes from the Latin "inter esse" which means, "to be in the midst of." An interest is deep-seated and persistent; something that I feel passionate about.

out to rest from the intensity and demands of this inquiry and regrouping my energies to finish. Of course, I was also trying to see into the future and make sense of where I was headed.

Once I caught my self, awoke, and recognized that I was avoiding my situation, my resistance morphed into acceptance of the resistance. Recognition cum acceptance dislodged the oppositionary energy and in its place openness to not knowing arose. From this new place, I consciously chose to pay attention to what was happening. Cultivating perceptivity by developing ways of bringing my Self back to awareness of the present was a major challenge during this movement of the inquiry.

After catching myself resisting and waking up time and time again, I looked back and could see a pattern in these repetitious practices. The old adage, “trusting the process,”⁴¹ filled with new meaning. I did not need to channel, control, or manipulate the process, but rather I was learning to pay attention and follow—learning to trust. I could see that I was in the midst of a creative process: living and subjectivity. The congruency between the topic and the method of this inquiry resonated strongly in that moment of seeing the pattern of creativity. Through repetitious practices of thinking without a banister (including writing autobiographically), cultivating perceptivity, and reawakening awareness to the process, a research topic was produced and emerged.

⁴¹ A book that I found in one of these resisting interludes was Shaun McNiff's, (1998) *Trust the process: An artist's guide to letting go*. I recommend it as a useful discussion of creativity.

*Fourth Movement: Seeing Subjectivity As An Effect Of Discursive Power
Relations By Reading Innerlogues Discursively*

Coming to the topic was a culmination of all that came before it and marked a major turning point in the research process. In the weeks following the emergence of my topic, I found myself re-visioning the essay entitled, *Articulating topic*. I took the essay apart and wrote new text into and around the existing print. I, as researcher, was writing to re-articulate the topic of my inquiry, both for my self, as well as for readers. I reread (reinterpreted) articles and books on the topic that I read months and years earlier (in this case I don't think I was resisting the creative process). I also reread my own texts about subjectivity, power, and technologies of judgment. *Rearticulating topic* was an essay produced at that time, and one that is not⁴² included in this dissertation. It examined the ways other authors have cast and studied the topic of subjectification, and explored the merits of this present inquiry. In effect, the essay (re)positioned this inquiry in terms of the particular literature reviewed.

Coming to the topic signified a turning point in my subjectivity as a researcher. By detaching from the innerlogues, looking back at the research process from this new frame of reference, and repositioning within the subject position of researcher, new patterns and connections appeared. Interpreting these patterns created the possibility of articulating my research design.

⁴² It is not included because it contributed little to my topic and purpose.

Stated succinctly the research design, as I understood it at that time entailed the following. My topic was subjectification and specifically I wanted to examine how subjectivity was discursively constituted. This statement embodied the topic and a feminist poststructural theoretical perspective. The site of investigating subjectification was my Self in a university setting. My autobiographical texts permitted examination of subjectification. Data included memories of events, response to events, analyses of events, and were presented in the form of innerlogues. Innerlogues constituted the “data” for this inquiry.

My way of working (method) included thinking without a banister which entailed cultivating perceptivity through the six practices of self-writing, detecting vestiges of subjectivity, generating multiple readings, unearthing fugitive frames, evoking fragments, and reading deconstructively and transforming thinking. Crafting the innerlogues both produced, and was produced by, a researcher-subject. That researcher-subject was transformed through the process of crafting. The newly constituted researcher-subject saw the data from a new vantage point and created a way to interpret the data. As researcher, I was embedded in the research process and yet detaching from the data, and I was also subject to and subject of power relations within the creative/research process.

During earlier phases of the research process, I had read what some people were saying about discourse (Butler, 1993; Davies, 1994; Foucault, 1982; Mills, 1997), but as the topic came into consciousness this literature gained new relevance and significance. For instance, I revisited

Sawicki's (1996), Butler's(1994), and Weedon's (1987) ideas and used them to (re)think discursive power relations. Unfortunately, they did not offer any methods for discursively reading autobiographical texts. So I set about to tailor-make a method to suit my situation and particular purposes.

By trusting the creative process, practices of cultivating perceptivity, and thinking without a banister, I wrote to describe, interpret and assess the innerlogues. A method of discursive reading evolved by doing as I endeavoured to make meaning of the innerlogues and see subjectivity and power at play. After a couple of months of writing, reading, and rewriting, a discursive interpretation of the innerlogues was produced. By devising a method of discursively reading the innerlogues, subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations and agentic possibilities became visible. The method of interpretation was not a linear process but rather the product of my writing practices. Revisions could have continued endlessly, but once the interpretations resonated as true, I considered the work finished. I sought input from my supervisor and one member of my Ph.D. group. Their feedback was helpful and I incorporated many of their suggestions. This work appears as the essay entitled, *Unearthing fugitive frames: Discursively reading*.

Crafting an essay to display what the reading produced constituted another disruption and turning point in the research process through which the subject was once again transformed. By detaching from seeing subjectivity as an effect of discursive power relations and the associated agentic possibilities, my view of what I was in the midst of was reframed.

I was suddenly inundated with questions about how to assemble the dissertation and display the results of the discursive reading in relation to my topic of subjectification. The discursive act of asking and taking up these questions repositioned my subjectivity within the subject position of researcher. I was confronted with the possibilities of crafting/composing a dissertation.

Fifth Movement: Composing A Dissertation By Making Meaning Of The Research Process And Positioning The Work

I was “writing my dissertation,” or so I had been telling my friends, colleagues, and my self for months, if not years. After discursively reading the innerlogues, my relationship with the dissertation changed. I had assumed that the dissertation was merely a formal written account of the research process and findings. Suddenly that assumption was called into question. This research project was anything but a straightforward, traditional, scientific investigation of subjectification. This study was a narrative inquiry with an emergent design. What does a dissertation look like for a narrative inquiry? What is my purpose of writing the dissertation? Who am I writing it for? No sooner had I written the questions than I wrote a response: A dissertation is a text for readers and it needs to be carefully crafted. I remembered my experience of searching for a form for my autobiographical texts. The form of innerlogue was forged. Similar considerations arose about composing a dissertation: What form? What shape? What voice(s)? What is my purpose? How can I craft

a dissertation that adequately represents this narrative inquiry of subjectification?

I wrote to make sense of what I was in the midst of.

By reflecting on my autobiographical writing, I came to see patterns of tension and possible conflict. One tension stood out: I wanted to compose a dissertation that investigated subjectivity-in-process as an effect of power relations. At the same time, I wanted to produce a dissertation in such a way (relations within self) that I did not reactivate the tyranny of the inner critic (technologies of judgment). This challenge of composing the dissertation was one of attending and relating to Self and Other simultaneously and yet not generating a desire and then reifying that desire and killing the creative process.

Relations Of The Knower, Knowing, And The Known

As I look back on this inquiry of subjectivity and contemplate writing an essay, a blizzard of questions arises: What knowing subjects were constituted during and through this inquiry process? How were knowers constituted? How did knowing subjects come to know? What did they come to know? How do I (who ever is writing this essay) come to know how to respond to these questions? What value is there to this inquiry? Would I suggest that someone else undertake a similar research project?

The relations of knower, knowing, and known constituted by this inquiry support Bruner's (1986) premise that narrative is a fundamental structure of human meaning-making. I practice cultivating perceptivity and thinking without a banister while I write an essay that explores the epistemological relations of the knower, knowing and the known.

One thing I have learned by looking back on my inquiry process is that I am not in control, no matter what illusions of grandeur I may conjure up. I am not in charge of the emergent research process. Depending on how I interpret and engage with/in researching, particular agentic possibilities are created; but I do not have free will, and yet neither is my destiny predetermined. My engagement with/in writing this essay parallels my relationship with living and with researching. For instance, when I set an agenda and adhere closely to it by ensuring that the essay

addresses exactly what I plan, I assume free will. Inevitably, I experience failure and frustration. The act of generating an agenda does not produce subjectivity; rather the manner in which I take up and relate with/to an agenda affects subjectivity and agentic possibilities. But I am getting ahead of my self.

As I wrote the epistemological questions listed above, other questions sprang to mind: How do I relate to these questions? Do I choose to answer the questions? Do I choose to address the questions with no intention of answering them? What choices lie between? Aren't these questions passé? Haven't I decided to address questions and not answer them? Isn't that part of adopting a poststructural perspective? Why is this series of questions cropping up again now?

Questions were not all that began to spin in my head. Practices of writing and retracing the research process, and dreams of the future activated my imagination. I imagined a finished essay answering all the epistemological questions regarding this inquiry. Adrenaline kicked in; I felt panic-stricken. The future-oriented thinker (planner) was madly generating a long list of expectations. In the same instant, parts of me cowered in fear. Other parts scoured the recesses of my memory banks for stories and knowledge that would sufficiently answer the questions and meet, if not surpass, all the expectations.

Also within seconds of the emergence of the future-oriented thinker was the emergence of resisters and rebels. I could hear their

voices: “No bloody way—we can’t and won’t answer all those questions. Forget it!”

All this activity and I had only just settled into my chair in front of the computer. A litany of questions, thoughts of planning, and resisting voices—they all felt familiar. What was going on? I’ve found myself in the midst of these difficulties most times when I sit to write for a reader.

Writing for my Self is a different process. I write and work things through for my Self by my Self, but I do not pay attention to what my text might do to/for a reader.

Where does recognizing these difficulties leave me, take me, put me? Should I take up these difficulties? Is this a generative place to begin an essay? How are these difficulties related to the topic of this essay? How do I know? How can I make this assessment in advance?

Beginning again.

Do I want to take up the difficulty of writing this essay as the subject of this essay? Is it a feasible way of proceeding? How can I know? Does taking it up by-pass, avoid, or circumvent the epistemic questions that I actually want to explore?

I am not sure it does. Paying attention to what I am in the midst of has been a major practice throughout this inquiry. Why should I abandon or put aside that practice now?

The irony of my situation becomes apparent to me. The difficulty that I experienced when I sat down to write this essay was the same difficulty I’ve been grappling with for the duration of this inquiry. To

remain present and congruent with how I have been researching subjectivity, I want to pay attention and open to the mysteries of not knowing⁴³.

Prior to this inquiry, I had undertaken various research projects in community and government settings. Each project had a clear statement of the problem, a review of pertinent literature, and a systematic plan for gathering and analyzing data with detailed time lines. As researcher, I was in control (or so I thought).

As I learned to write autobiographically in the fall of 1996, I did not *feel* like a researcher. I did not know what I was doing or where I was going. I did not know my research topic, nor did I know how writing autobiographically related to research or would ever amount to a dissertation. I felt completely out of my element. I was panic-stricken, and yet curious and continued to write autobiographically about that panic, the fears of being lost, groundless, and not knowing. I searched for books and articles that would shed light on the answer to my quandary, but I found nothing that told me what to do or how to do it.

Now looking back, I laugh at my self for madly seeking a formula—a road map—and at the same time I remember with compassion that self who burned with frustration and mourned the loss

⁴³ Dowrick (1991, p. 179) cautions about “knowing other.” She invites me to approach others in a state of not knowing; for when you know someone, you have already shut your eyes to that person’s constant processes of change. I take from her words the idea of “learning more by knowing less.”

of identity of researcher. Looking back, I realize that writing autobiographically produced a transformed subject (self) with the courage to open to and embrace not knowing. By writing autobiographically, I gradually detached from the fear and vulnerability of not knowing and was enabled to open to not knowing and trust the process⁴⁴. Courage was produced through writing the stories of my life. As I wrote the stories of my life, I gradually became grounded in my own experience, for writing produced experience. Grounded in my own life stories, I became able to risk opening to the unknown.

During those early days of this inquiry process, I was quite scared and confused. Instead of interpreting those feelings as a natural response to learning (which I might do now), I personalized the feelings. I thought that those feelings and my difficulties of not knowing were an indication that something was wrong with me. I reasoned that I was not smart enough to be working at a graduate level. I contemplating withdrawing. Classmates who were a couple years ahead of me in their programs urged me to give it a bit more time.

By “not knowing” I mean that I do not know, or in any way assume to know, in advance what a finished essay will look like. Letting go of any attachments (detaching) to fixed images of a finished essay enables an attitude of not knowing to arise. By recognizing how I relate to the agenda and expectations of writing an essay, I detach. By detaching,

⁴⁴ “Trust the process” is a phrase I use to refer to my practices of opening to not knowing

both my relations with an imagined final essay and my relations to the process of writing the essay are framed from a slightly different perspective. Detaching enables me to see other possible ways of relating (reframing) with/to my imagination, images, and writing process. Detaching and reframing create possibilities, and I am enabled to make choices as to how to proceed.

I feel like I am going in circles. How do I slow down and make sense of what I am writing/thinking. I pay attention to my body.

A weight is on my right shoulder. I recognize it as the weight of expectations that I "must" produce dissertation-level writing to explicate epistemology. The weight is very difficult to hold, but I slowly reach for the weight; lift it from my shoulder and place it in a box alongside my desk. I close the box. After I've written this essay, I'll come back for the weight if I need help editing the work.

I wonder what compels me to ask epistemological questions? What constitutes such questions? What discourses are being activated? What does generating questions do? Are some questions more dangerous to address than others? Am I generating questions of epistemology because I fear that I must defend my work? How is narrative inquiry vulnerable to attack and ridicule, and by whom? A ring of truth resonates through me.

and trusting that a creative process of living is unfolding, and I am in it.

It is commonly said that in order to achieve a doctoral degree, the doctoral candidate must “defend” the dissertation by way of an oral examination. In the innerlogue entitled, “*Rethinking Proposal*,” I displayed how the university embodies an epistemology of technological rationality that flows from the ideology of positivism. The institutionalization of this particular epistemology is generally invisible to graduate students and professors alike, and generally goes unexamined. Justification and legitimization are common discursive and social practices in response to the need to defend. These practices are believed to ensure rigor.

By writing (thinking) that I must “defend my dissertation,” I activate this dominant discourse of scientific positivism and its corresponding technologies of judgment. Thoughts and plans of justifying and legitimating my work and concerns about how to best demonstrate that my text contributes to the existing canon of knowledge arise⁴⁵. Justifying what I have done and how I have done it became a problem to

⁴⁵ The assumption that the purpose of research is to contribute to the canon caught my attention. I realized that I had not adequately explored “the” purpose of research. I had contemplated the purpose of my inquiry, but not the dissertation and how these were part of research. I had conflated these things, but they are not the same.

In the spring of 2004, I revised my dissertation abstract by positioning my work in relation to feminists theorizing subjectivity. A pattern emerged. By positioning my dissertation within the realm of feminists theorizing subjectivity, I subscribed to the purpose of the dissertation as contributing to the canon. Was that really my purpose for my dissertation? After some thought, I realized it was not. The primary purpose of my dissertation was to evoke a response in the reader. I wanted to invite readers into the

be solved. These epistemological assumptions undergirding the dissertation have gone unexamined and invisible until now.

Justifying my actions (if not my utter existence) to others has been a recurring theme throughout my life. As I think back over the events of my past, a wave of exhaustion engulfs me. I am very tired of justifying what I am and what I am doing.

I attend to my self and explore this tiredness. Memories of similar feelings of exhaustion surfaced⁴⁶. I remember working in women's organizations and social services agencies. Annually, we were required to justify our activities (ergo our right to exist) to one funding body or another. As I look back on those experiences of justifying our work, I relive the absolute exhaustion and sense of defeat produced by weeks and months of writing reports and making presentations to justify our work. At the same time I remember struggling to maintain the work we were diligently trying to do, but couldn't.

I see a pattern.

The process of justification disrupted and derailed the very work we were striving to do. Justifying our activities disrupted our way of proceeding and derailed our ability to achieve the purposes we were funded to meet. By looking back and evoking memories in conjunction

process of thinking about their own subjectivities. I encouraged readers to use my stories as a way into their own journeys of self.

⁴⁶ This memory work is an example of evoking fragments that is one of six practices of thinking without a banister.

with my interpretations of the current situation, a pattern emerged. Having to justify *again* triggered rage. I looked deeply into my rage and found fear. I feared getting derailed or pulled off my ground and my way of proceeding by having to defend and justify my dissertation.

I can now see how this disruption and derailing works, and the effects. Justifying my work to others entailed using externally imposed evaluation criteria (those set by the funders). In using these criteria, I (re)activated the dominant discourse of scientific positivism⁴⁷. The feminist discourses I had been operating within were disrupted, derailed, and deactivated as I took up the funder's criteria to justify our existence and activities. These justification and evaluation requirements and practices discursively regulated the organizations I was a part of. I have renewed appreciation for Dorothy Smith's (1987) institutional ethnography.

In the paragraphs above, I draw attention to a common practice within the academy: talk of "defending" the dissertation/research. I explain how I recognized and related to that discursive practice through practices of looking back and evoking memories. Through writing, I became aware that taking up the discursive practice of "defending" does not *necessarily* involve assuming an oppositionary stance. Other

⁴⁷ See the essays about *Unearthing Fugitive Frames: Reading Discursively* for further discussion of these discursive processes.

possibilities were created⁴⁸ by paying attention and employing the practices of thinking without a banister.

What were the possibilities of responding to the discursive utterance of defending my dissertation? Opposing justification is one response. Another response is to pay attention to what is going on and to open to not knowing. By paying attention (by writing autobiographically) I detached from the event and the emotions of the event. Detaching enabled me to see my self perceiving, interpreting, and assessing⁴⁹ the discursive utterances about defending the dissertation. I see my self remembering, reflecting across memories and a pattern emerged. Evoking memories complicated and reframed my situation and my relationship to it. Reframing enabled thinking without a banister and meaning-making of what was happening.

Cultivating perceptivity and thinking without a banister have transformed my subjectivity and my sense of self as a knower. The process of knowing and what can be known have also been repetitively transformed through and by this inquiry.

⁴⁸ If I had written, "By paying attention and thinking, I created possibilities" I would have been assuming free will. That is not the case. And so I adopted a passive voice, "were created," and yet that representation is not fully accurate either. It does not capture the iterative process at play. By pointing to this ongoing difficulty with language and writing, I draw your attention to text as representation. I am not always successful in finding ways of describing the dynamic nature of the process.

⁴⁹ This process manifests a practice of cultivating perceptivity.

Cultivating perceptivity refers to the complexity and particularity of the practice of paying attention. The scope and depth of perceptivity increases with practice and reflection on that practice. Perceptivity is cultivated by refining my abilities to perceive, interpret, and assess what is happening, as well as my abilities to perceive, interpret, and assess my self thinking.

When I started this research process, I prided myself as being fairly astute and intelligent. I identified as a knower. I had been teaching research methods for many years. I had carried out various research projects myself. I had come back to school to add to my knowledge. Now several years later, I tell my self that by coming back to school I have been reconstituted. What I know about my self, the process of subjectivity, and teaching has changed drastically as a result of this inquiry. In addition, my understanding of learning, researching, and inquiry has been transformed.

How do I know what is going on? This is a complicated and yet relevant question. I use this question to recap the relations of the knower, knowing and known that have been discussed in this essay.

How do *I* know what is going on?

How do I know *what is going on*?

How do I know what is going on?

Within other essays in this dissertation⁵⁰ I have instantiated specific practices of paying attention and thinking that I have cultivated throughout this inquiry. Through these practices of cultivating perceptivity and thinking without a banister,⁵¹ “I know what I am in the midst of.” This is a rather bold declaration that deserves further discussion.

The “I” in this sentence refers to a new subject that was produced by the practices of paying attention and thinking. This new subject is a knowing subject, as was the previous subject, but the new subject has learned something that the past subject did not know and has been changed by this knowing.

Each knowing subject’s knowledge is “situated.”⁵² In other words, what the past subject knew, and what the new subject knows are not identical. Both knowing subjects achieved a rich array of life experiences, as well as experience with(in) the process of inquiring/ knowing. But these experiences and the relationships to experiences are not identical for these two knowing subjects.

In other words, what each of these subjects knew, and how they each knew was not identical. What each knew was unique in terms of

⁵⁰ See essays in this dissertation entitled, *Cultivating perceptivity*, and *Evolving practices of thinking without a banister*.

⁵¹ The six practices of thinking without a banister include: (a) self-writing, (b) detecting vestiges of subjectivity-in-process, (c) generating multiple readings, (d) unearthing fugitive frames, (e) evoking fragments, and (f) reading deconstructively and transforming thinking.

⁵² “Situated” is a term I appropriated from Haraway (1988).

positioning—time, place (context) and experience. The new subject sees differently than the past subject. The new subject sees events and makes meaning of events from a different context and thus experience. The past knowing subject enacted an inquiry process at a particular place in time. That inquiry process involved a number of practices of paying attention and thinking. The past subject's practices of inquiry produced a new knowing subject, new knowledge, and new practices of inquiry. Both the past subject and the new subject were enabled to know, but as a result of slightly different inquiry processes. Each repetition of the inquiry process (a knowing process) was slightly different than previous repetitions of the inquiry process. Therefore, what these two subjects came to know was different.

I don't want to articulate these interrelationships between knowing, knower, and the known without also highlighting one important part of knowing. I know by virtue of my body. I sense energy moving through me, not from some external source entering me, but rather energy arising in and through me. I do not know exactly from where this energy arises. It vibrates back and forth through me. This energy is constantly moving spherically, and periodically it aligns and forms a long shaft of energy that moves through me, just in front of my spine from head to foot. This sensation I refer to as resonance. I interpret resonance as an indicator of (my) ring of truth—truth about what I am in the midst of—resonance of heart and head.

Being present and paying attention creates the possibility of resonance. I cannot be worrying about what comes next or regretting what has happened. Opening to not knowing and to the creative process of finding out (inquiry/ research) is also necessary. Thinking without a banister is produced by and produces resonance. A knower knows knowing in that context with a ring of truth.

Cultivating An Ethic Of Care For The Self

Looking back on this inquiry, I see how the nature of my relations within self(ves) has been transformed from a tyrannical dictatorship of the inner critic to a participatory democracy. I write this essay to explicate these transformations, the ethical practices, ethical subjects, and agentic possibilities that have emerged and evolved during this inquiry.

In my research practices prior to this inquiry, I focused on ensuring that no human subject suffered harm as a result of their participation in the research project, and that all identities were safeguarded. If these minimum standards were met, then the research and the researcher were deemed to be ethical. In this inquiry, autobiographical texts, written as part of my teaching practices, constituted the data. All references to people other than myself in autobiographical texts have been modified to ensure individual anonymity. But the ethical considerations of this inquiry did not end there. This inquiry has taken ethics to an entirely different level of practice. The cultivation of an ethic of care for self has constituted a major activity throughout this inquiry. My ethic of care for self has become a practice of freedom in the Foucauldian (1988a) sense. In the text that follows, I demonstrate what I mean.

Tyranny Of The Inner Critic

After writing autobiographically for a couple of years (1996-1998), I saw for the first time in my life the breadth and magnitude of the harsh self-criticisms of my inner critic and their effects. By re-reading Dana Jack's

(1991) *Silencing the self*, in which she discussed moral themes and inner dialogues of women's depression, I began seeing my inner critic in new ways. For each woman Jack interviewed, she found that the narration of depression was in at least two voices (two parts of self): first-person accounts and third person accounts. The first-person accounts were spoken from experience, such as I want, I feel, I know, I see. She termed these accounts of the authentic self. Third person accounts were spoken in a moralistic, objective, and judgmental tone that relentlessly condemned the authentic self. She called this third person self the "Over-Eye" (pp. 94-95). The Over-Eye was much like my inner critic. Each Over-Eye carried a "decidedly patriarchal flavour, both in its collective viewpoint of what is 'good' and 'right' for a woman and in its willingness to condemn her feelings when they depart from expected 'shoulds'" (p. 94). From Jack's text I borrowed the idea of attending to both voices within my texts. I soon saw how I judged my self and re-acted, and the effects of those reactions. By continuing to write autobiographically, patterns of judging my self evolved. In re-reading my texts, I saw my self repetitively shifting between the terms of the dominant culture and my own feelings, desires, and observations. The inner critic, or the Over-Eye, ruled the other part(s) of me. By continuing to write, a variety of voices besides those of the inner critic and the authentic self emerged in the text. Voices varied depending upon the topic under consideration and situation, but an ever-changing plurality of voices was produced. Two opposing camps persisted—the inner critic against all other voices (patterns across time).

Appropriating Foucault's (1988b) notion of the "governance of self" (p. 19) enabled me to make sense of this opposition. My governance of self could be described as a tyranny of the inner critic. On TV and in newspapers, I saw despotic regimes being overthrown in far off lands.⁵³ I felt a sudden alliance with the repressed peoples in those countries—their terror and hopelessness. Amid my hopelessness, I continued to write. Opposition between my two camps grew as the second camp grew in number and volatility, but the inner critic regime persisted.

It persisted, that is until the revolutionary overthrow.⁵⁴ It was a brutal and ugly discursive struggle between the two camps on the terrain of self. A glimpse of discursive conflict between the despotic inner critic and the gang of others is evident in, *The Running Vest*, one of the innerlogues included in this dissertation. The talking back of the gang of selves in effect deactivated the inner critic and the seemingly fixed power relation of the dominant discourse. Discursive acts of talking back were both produced by and produced a gang of new subjectivities/selves.

⁵³ Most notably, the United States of America has been at war with terrorism since Sept 11, 2001. Their invasion of Iraq was supposedly a rescue of the Iraqi people from a despotic tyrant.

⁵⁴ I consciously use the word "revolution" as a way of acknowledging for/to my self, as well as for the reader, those parts of my self that have historically embraced Marxist-informed dreams of a better world. Ironically, the revolution I refer to within this essay is within the relations of selves, and is therefore more analogous to what Gloria Steinem (1992) discusses in *Revolution from within*. However, I contend that the two are highly related.

New Governance Of Selves

The overthrow of the inner critic was not conclusive. Limited skirmishes continued to erupt but they were not of the same magnitude as before the discursive conflict. In the months that followed, the selves responsible for overthrowing the harsh inner critic had long and extensive discussions (written autobiographically, of course), during which time was taken to ensure every self named their respective realities. Differences and disagreements were recognized and honoured by all. Many differences remained. The intent was not to reduce or erase differences to sameness, but rather to attend to, honour, and hold differences as a source of strength and wisdom (Baldwin, 1998). Gradually a new form of inner governance emerged: a participatory democracy. No one self was in charge; all selves participated in governance of the Self.⁵⁵

Reconstituting Self-governance as participatory democracy produced a variety of effects. One effect was evident in the new ways that I related to deadlines and timelines. Operating as a participatory democracy of selves, I no longer embraced a deadline as a reified desire and then moved heaven and earth to meet that desired result regardless of the cost to my body, my psyche, my Self. Long-standing practices of instrumentality (technological rationality) gave way to paying attention to the means and the ends of any undertaking, and creating some energetic and relational balance between the two. I did not escape from socially constructed limits of time and the expectations of productivity, but rather

⁵⁵ I capitalize Self to indicate the field of selves.

the ways that I perceived, interpreted, and related to deadlines changed, as did how I related within my self.

When I heard the word "deadline" the muscles in my chest tightened slightly and an inner dialogue began. I would catch myself re-engaging with deadlines in old, habitual ways, taking them up as absolutes. Tight muscles relaxed and an air of lightness came forth. I did not scold and condemn myself as I had in the past, instead I recognized and accepted this revelation. Through the act of catching myself, I detached from the project and immediacy of the event, and was enabled to see (reframing) more than one way of relating to the deadline and within my Self. Aware of multiple ways of relating to a deadline, I was able to make a conscious choice about how to relate (positioning) to a deadline for a project. The tyranny of "shoulds," "musts," and "ought tos" of previous years gave way to possibilities, choice, and acts of freedom. My commitment to and curiosity about staying with this emergent research process strengthened.

All Things Are Interconnected

Dismantling the long-standing tyranny of the inner critic displaced the hostility and violence of the opposition. Through time, peace, respect and compassion for and among self(ves) emerged. Writing and reading during the demise of this tyranny produced a major insight into a life-long pattern: I realized that I have habitually abdicated responsibility for my self for the sake of creating and maintaining relationships with others.

For more than forty years I had embraced the assumption that interpersonal relationships of an intimate kind were the chief, if not only, source of human happiness (Storr, 1988, p. ix). After a few years of writing autobiographically, that assumption began to unravel. I began to see and experience the merits of solitude and meditation. By paying attention to myself, rather than solely to those around me, I befriended my self(ves) and learned to enjoy my own company. At that time, I did not foresee the breadth or depth of the effects of writing autobiographically, but I was aware that my writing practice produced a growing sense of calm—a sensation that I had seldom experienced previously.

In May 1992 when I resigned from my tenure-track academic position at the University of Alberta, I was “burned out”—emotionally and physically exhausted. New meanings of burn out form as I look back now. I did not know how to balance the pressures of academia and the costs to my being. Every cell of my body knew that I was not able to thrive with such high levels of stress. My health, well being, and quality of life became very important to me. Through this inquiry, I have begun to think of living as an art form.

One voice chants an often-repeated May West phrase: “living well is the best revenge.” I am not attempting to exact revenge, but I am trying to avoid succumbing to the perils of normativity and the reign of technologies of judgment. Valuing health and quality of life carries with it certain implications for how I take up, relate to, and engage with

deadlines and work, as well as fun and play—in other words, engage in the world.

As I re-read my journals, the abdication of responsibility for self was played out in every part of my life, not just loving relations but in teaching and everyday relations. Awakening to such synchronicity changed how I saw my self and my world: all things were interconnected and in relation. Partitions between academia and other parts of my life melted away. This doctoral inquiry took on new meaning and breadth. I was no longer researching self-judgment and power relations; I was researching my self. All “parts” of my self were in relation with other parts. What happened in one part of my life affected what happened in the other parts of my life, and vice versa. The enormity of the project overwhelmed me and I wrote about it and through it. How could I possibly investigate my self? There must be partitions and boundaries.

The topic of subjectification emerged and a narrative logic to my research design was born. Viewing my self as the site of investigating subjectivity liberated me from the overwhelming responsibility of investigating my entire being. Awakening to synchronicity allowed me to see that the hundreds and hundreds of pages of autobiographical text about all facets of my life were necessary and productive in this process of inquiry but were not going to be included in the dissertation. Working issues through in one part of my life informed other parts of my life.

Internal Evaluation Criteria

Cultivating internal evaluation criteria became possible with the overthrow of the inner critic. The overthrow and demise of the tyrannical

inner critic produced a transformed subject (subjectivity). By discursively reading the innerlogues, transformation produced a subject re-orienting from external evaluation criteria to internal evaluation criteria.⁵⁶

The inner critic was discursively constituted by a dominant scientific rational discourse, as were the corresponding, embedded, external evaluation criteria. With the demise of the totalitarian regime of the inner critic and the rise of the discursive acts of talking back, there was a brief transitional period wherein the subject had no evaluation criteria or basis for assessment. Through writing autobiographically and reading my own texts and that of others (detaching and reframing), inner evaluation criteria emerged.

I began this inquiry ruled by an inner critic. Now, seven years later, through the practices of thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity, I am enabled to discriminate and discern based on my own internal evaluation criteria. *The Proposal* and *The Running Vest*, two of the innerlogues included in this dissertation, demonstrate the ways that the evaluation criteria for this inquiry shifted from external to internal evaluation criteria. Criteria imported and imposed by virtue of normative activity at the university were displaced by evaluation criteria generated by my self(ves) with(in) and for my particular context. The shift from

⁵⁶ I acknowledge that in traditional psychology this shift may be conceptualized as an alteration to the locus of control and the advancement of self esteem. I am purposefully avoiding that discursive engagement because it undermines my interest in subjectivity and discursive power relations. Discussions of locus of control and self-esteem are predicated on humanist theorizations of an autonomous self.

external evaluation criteria to internal evaluation criteria evident in the texts constituted a shift within my subjectivity.

Evolving Ethical Practices

Upon entering this doctoral program, I was heart sick and grieving the demise of a long-term relationship, the disruption of an academic career, and the loss of identities that I had known in Alberta. Slowly I began rebuilding friendships and community. During this inquiry various ways of caring for my self emerged that have in/formed this inquiry. As discussed above, the ways of relating within self have changed quite drastically. Caring for my self was not limited to relations within self; caring for self also involved the inclusion and engagement of others and I briefly introduce some of these relations below.

About the time that I articulated my inquiry process, I moved my home and belongings from a quaint rural setting by the sea to an urban working-class neighbourhood in the local city. Throughout this time I met with my supervisor every two weeks to discuss my work. This practice of meeting marked time and helped created a rhythm of working. Writing autobiographically carried my interest forward, but meetings with my supervisor marked time and rendered material my inquiry and my movement. Being treated with respect and dignity, without competition and paternalism/maternalism so common in the academy, encouraged me to stay with my inquiry and pay attention to what I was in the midst of.

In January 2000 I was living alone for the first time in my adult life. Friends encouraged me to branch out and get involved. I started a daily

meditation practice and a yoga practice. These practices provided me with structure to get to know myself in the solitude of my own company. In August of 2000 I quit teaching to focus solely on my dissertation. Since then, I have worked at home alone, but in a web of relations and community of support.

Shortly after moving to the urban centre, I started seeing a counselor at Student Services to help with my anxieties and fears of living alone. I had worked with various therapists and counselors before about assorted issues, but this time it was different. I was different, and so was the counselor. We quickly developed a strong relationship and I have continued to see her every couple weeks for the past four years. Seeing this counselor has become an ethical practice of caring for my self throughout this inquiry. Doctoral work is an isolating undertaking for most people and when you are investigating subjectivity with your self as the site of the inquiry, it can be very lonely and isolating. My counselor understood me and understood my work and has helped support me through times of doubt and complication.

In addition, five doctoral students and my self formed a support group that meets every Friday for two hours to discuss our work in the context of our lives. In retrospect I realize that together, my supervisor, my counselor, and my support group form a web of relations and community of support that has made this inquiry possible.

In the past couple of years various health problems have arisen which have compromised my ability to concentrate and think. Following some turmoil and contemplation in each instance, I interpreted the

difficulty as part of my inquiry and not as an obstacle or barrier. These interpretations were discursive acts that did not abandon or abdicate my way of working on this inquiry and relating with/in self. Staying with the process of creativity, thinking without a banister, and being gentle and loving with/to my Self has at times been very challenging, but my web of relations and my cultivated practices have held me in the process.

“Paying attention to what I am in the midst of” has in effect produced a transformed ethic of care for the self. Prior to this inquiry, I generally did not attend to what I was in the midst of unless it helped me relate to another. This tale makes visible and draws attention to ethical practices within the field of Self that were produced by this inquiry. By focusing on everyday practices of relating with(in)/to self, rather than ideologies and values, the discursive constitution and mutability of an ethic of care for the self emerged. My practices of relating with(in) and to self(ves) transformed as a result of the repetitive practices of thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity. With each successive “new” form of subjectivity that was produced came a transformed ethic of care for the self. Each successive subject knew more of herself than did the subject before her, and knew differently. Increasing knowledge of self, particularly knowledge of how I think, learn, interpret, and make meaning, as well as knowing how to attend to how I am relating to an idea, feeling, or event resulted in the demise of tyrannical inner critic and the emergence of a new form of Self-governance—participatory democracy. Knowledge and power continuously in/form one another.

Learning how my subjectivity was discursively constituted created agentic possibilities enabling me to choose discursive practices. This practice of freedom is contingent on my ability to continue to detach, reframe and reposition. There is no fixed place or social relation that is freedom. Discursive literacy both produced, and was produced by, the ethic of care for self as a practice of freedom.

*A Tale Of Reflexive Interpretation: Unraveling The Paradox Of Separating In Relation*⁵⁷

During my comprehensive exams in December, 1999 I stated in one of my papers that in my doctoral research I wanted to theorize but remain close to experience, and not get lost in abstraction. I pointed to works by Gloria Anzaldua (1987), bell hooks (1989), Audre Lorde (1984), and Minnie Bruce Pratt (1988) as exemplars of theorizing close to experience, that is to say, staying in relation and being grounded in lived experience, not severing the ties between lived experience and theory. Now several years later, I reflect on my own inquiry. I had forgotten about that specific commitment to theorize and remain close to experience. This lost memory resurfaced out of the ether as I began to write in preparation for this essay. I cannot recall exactly what I meant by theorizing close to experience, but I think it had to do with staying in relation and being grounded in lived experience, not severing the ties between lived experience and theory. At that time I did not have a strategy for attaining this desire. All I knew was that I was deeply moved by reading these women's narratives and I admired how they worked in the site of their own lives. Through time this commitment to theorizing without losing the ties to experience has morphed into a paradox at play

⁵⁷ In writing this essay, I assumed that readers had read much of the dissertation prior to reading this particular essay. I did not redefine concepts that emerged elsewhere in the text but rather, referred readers back to relevant sections of the dissertation that discussed the concepts.

within my work. I have referred to this paradox as “separating in relation” as it emerged during the discursive reading of the innerlogues. It has surfaced at various points throughout this research process, but I have not explicitly unraveled it, until now.

This inquiry of subjectification has involved the repetitious practice of looking back and interpreting what I saw—a practice I call reflexive interpretation⁵⁸. Retracing the research process was a practice as well as an effect of reflexive interpretation that produced (and was produced by) subjectivity and agentic possibilities. In looking back on my research process, I attend to acts of reflection and interpretation as a site to explore the paradox of separating in relation.

I look back on my research process and see three distinct, but interrelated, levels of interpretation produced through acts of reflection. By “levels” of interpretation⁵⁹ I am referring to the relative distance between interpretations produced through acts of reflection and the initial interpretation of the event. For ease of reference, I will refer to these three levels of interpretation as principal, secondary and tertiary interpretations. Each level of interpretation has produced, and is produced by, practices of reflexive interpretation involved in this inquiry. Through this explication

⁵⁸ “Reflexive interpretation” . . . I appropriate this concept from Alversson and Skoldberg (2000).

⁵⁹ Alversson and Skoldberg (2000) describe various “levels of interpretation” by positioning certain theories at various levels of interpretation. For my purposes, I borrowed the turn of phrase “levels of interpretation” and described my process.

of the levels of interpretation the paradoxical tension of separating in relation is unraveled.

Principal Interpretations: Achieving Experience

The act of looking back and writing autobiographically about what I was in the midst of constituted the principal level of interpretation in this inquiry. Reflecting, paying attention to what I was in the midst of, and interpreting what I saw achieved experience.⁶⁰ More than one story of what happened at any point in time emerged as I cultivated the practice of writing autobiographically. Multiple viewpoints (later to be conceptualized as selves and positionings) came into being as new stories of the event appeared in my texts. During this inquiry I have written hundreds of stories of my life. These practices have greatly enriched my sense of self. I no longer think of myself in terms of a story. The relationship between and among my stories is constantly in flux.

As I articulate what I mean by principal reflection, I remember times when I and a small group of women would gather around a table of food and tell each other about our lives. We gradually formalized those gatherings and called them consciousness-raising groups. I was always amazed at the rich differences and similarities of our stories. Through continued practice, we celebrated the process of telling our stories, as well as the knowledge that we produced through the stories we told. It was through these acts of looking back and telling each other what happened that we forged strong bonds through which we were moved to act in

concert⁶¹ to make our communities better places to live. I am not romanticizing. Our relations were not all perfect and rosy as much literature will attest, but it was a time of reflection and story telling.

I recount this memory of consciousness-raising groups for a couple of reasons. First is to give readers a sense of my life-long commitment to practices of reflection and making meaning. Second, I tell this story to foreground practices of reflection with little or no attention to how we were collectively and individually thinking and making sense of our stories. In hindsight, I see that reflexivity was present, but in a very restricted manner. I was aware of telling what happened in a way that lent to (fit within) analyzing our stories from a very particular socialist-feminist perspective. At the time I did not call into question this interpretative schema for it was highly prized within the social circles I inhabited. It wasn't until years later amid reading my autobiographical texts that I began to see differences between practices of reflection and reflexivity.

The act of looking back on what happened is an act of reflection. Within this research process, I reflected on what happened from several different positionings within any subject position. The object of attention of reflecting was in the past, not present; some objects of attention were

⁶⁰ See the essay entitled, *Cultivating Perceptivity*, for a discussion of achieving experience.

⁶¹ "Acting in concert" is a phrase I borrowed from Hannah Arendt (1958) after I read *Human Condition* during my undergraduate studies in 1973.

constituted in the very near past⁶². For instance, writing these five narratives of the research process involved looking back on what happened during the research process and interpreting through telling what I saw. All five narrators, the epistemologist, researcher, ethicist, hermeneuticist, and writer, took up various positionings through time within the subject position of researcher.

Acts of reflection and reflexivity involved remembering what happened and narrating⁶³ what was remembered. Not all that is remembered is narrated. Remembering and narrating are both situationally constituted by the discourses available to a subject, the positioning from which that subject evokes memories, and the purpose and audience of the story.

Each narrator tells a different tale of what happened based upon a particular positioning, what that particular narrator attends to, and what that narrator sees at that point in time. Multiple tales of what happened were produced. One tale of what happened during the research process was not any more truthful or accurate than the other tales—simply different. Multiple truths (interpretations) of what happened co-exist⁶⁴.

⁶² Reflection-in-practice (Schon, 1983) is an example of reflecting on the very near past. As demonstrated in the innerlogue, *Who has it worse?* reflection and interpretation can be practiced in the moment of the event.

⁶³ I use the word “narrating” to refer to an additional level of interpretation from “telling.” Narrating refers to the process of creating meaning by consciously sequencing events.

⁶⁴ See Van Maanen (1988) for a rich display of multiple interpretations.

Truth in this context is more akin to the Greek meaning of truth, “aletheia,” than the Roman word *verita*, which emphasizes a clear distinction between true and false. The Greek “aletheia” indicates both “unconcealment and concealment—hence the slippery nature of truth” (Kim, 2003, p. 210).

“Reflexivity” refers to a cultivated practice of reflecting on more than an event. Reflexivity refers to my recursive practices of looking back on an event (primary interpretation), plus looking back at my interpretations of patterns of that event (secondary interpretation), as well as looking back at the patterns of patterns (tertiary interpretation). Reflexivity is a cultivated practice of attending to not only what happened, but also to how I thought and related to the event and the interpretations that I made about what happened. The practice of reflexivity combines all three levels of interpretation.

Secondary Interpretations: New Reader Reads Differently

Secondary interpretation emerged after many attempts and many repetitious readings of my autobiographical texts. At first, I resisted reading my own texts.⁶⁵ Each time I read a text I had written, I got caught and trapped in habituated emotions and memories of the story—forced to re-live the event. I dreaded the drama, angst and pain, but my supervisor and my graduate student buddies strongly encouraged me to work with

⁶⁵ The irony of this resistance resonates through me. I was a reluctant reader until Grade four when I finally figured out how to proceed. My experience of getting trapped in my own autobiographically text helps make sense of my reluctance to read fiction to this day.

my stories. Working with my stories required that I read what I wrote. After many failed attempts and much frustration, I was finally able to read my texts without getting caught in the story. At the time I reasoned that I was getting so familiar with my stories that their effects on me were acquiescing. However, in hindsight I make a different interpretation.

Now I think that by reading my texts numerous times, the way that I read and related to my texts changed. Writing autobiographically produced detachment from the events of my life, but the way that I initially read my texts reinscribed my active engagement with the events and eroded the detachment produced by writing. In other words, the way I read reactivated (reconstituted) technologies of judgment as external evaluation criteria were reproduced. I went full circle and found myself in a similar place to where I began.⁶⁶ At that time, I did not recognize the effects of a manner of reading. I thought reading was reading. In retrospect, I see the folly of my ways and have come to see that reading can take many different forms.

Through the press of working with my texts, I was required to read and reread my texts. Eventually this rereading produced a different way of reading—the act of reading and the reader were changed and a new reader was (en)able(d) to do a different reading of the text.⁶⁷ The new reader was less attached (detaching) to the events and was able

⁶⁶ This insight into reading helped me make sense of my journalling prior to 1996 in which I seldom felt I actually moved, but rather went round and round. Now I understand perhaps what was happening.

⁶⁷ This is a form of narrative analysis.

(constituted) to see the texts from a new perspective (reframing).

Narrative organization, patterns across stories, and patterns across experiences became apparent as I read and reread my autobiographical texts. For instance, seeing the magnitude of the inner critic within my life was one of the major creations of level two interpretation as the patterns of inner governance became so apparent through reading my texts.

(Patterns and their emergence are more fully discussed in some of the other narratives.)

Secondary interpretation involved looking at the stories produced by looking back on what happened (level one interpretation). Writing produced detachment. The objects of attention in level two interpretation were the patterns across stories told about what happened. Secondary interpretation produced awareness that stories didn't capture all that happened. There was slippage. Stories were partial but there was also choice. I could choose what stories to tell, how and to whom to tell them with some degree of awareness of the possible effects of those decisions on the constitution of my subjectivity. Patterns, such as the governance of self, became visible through the practice of reading and rereading the stories of my life.

Through these interpretations of and about reading, I realized the extent to which I have been well trained to read (interpret) the world and myself within particular ideologies and theoretical frameworks. For years I had strongly embraced (identified within) certain ideologies and frameworks, specifically feminism and critical social theory. As a result of reading and rereading my work, I increasingly felt estranged and

distanced from those habituated practices of reading. Those frameworks and ideologies were not of me. I had not tailor-made a relation to these bodies of thought through my own inquiry process; rather I had imported and adopted them as givens. This importation of external ideologies and frameworks limited how I read texts and took up ideas. There was a right way and wrong way, and many ways I did not see at all. Dislodging the seemingly intractable discursive stranglehold of those regimes of truth has not been an easy process.

Before going any further, I need to clarify that I am not saying that I was not a “critical thinker.” I was self-reflective and able to formulate critiques of theory and action, but in hindsight I see that thinking critically had translated largely into being critical of self and others within a particular prescriptive frame. I came to this interpretation as I read Jennifer Gore’s (1993) discussion of feminist and critical discourses as “regimes of truth.” By “regime of truth” she meant the “connection between power and knowledge which is produced by, and produces, a specific *art of government*. It is an art of government that relies on technologies of self which are actualized and resisted/get acted out through the body” (p. 55). The evaluation criteria embedded in those discourses I had long embraced—unexamined—as my own, and their corresponding technologies of judgment were activated through my discursive acts of writing and speaking my world within the language of feminist and critical social theory. I judged my self and others according to these activated technologies of judgment. I was a self-disciplining subject,

albeit blind to the discursive power relations I was part of and reproducing.

Reading Gore (1993) opened my eyes to Foucault's work and the utility of his theorizations of power relations for making sense of patterns across my stories. It was reading her work that helped me coin the concept "technologies of judgment." Through reading Gore (1993) and Foucault (1978) the stories I was not telling, and not supposed to tell, gradually emerged into my collection of autobiographical texts. At the same time synchronicity, or seeing similar patterns across all facets (stories) of my life became apparent. I discovered that sometimes it is easier to work through a difficulty in one realm of my life rather than another. Working out a difficulty in one realm informs other parts of my life. Synchronicity was particularly evident in the innerlogue entitled, *The Running Vest*.

Tertiary Interpretation: In Jeopardy Of Severance

Two levels of interpretation have been introduced to this point in this essay. The first level of interpretation involves looking back on what happened and telling a story of what happened. The second level of interpretation involves looking back at the stories that were told of what happened, seeing patterns across/ among those stories, and telling stories of the patterns that arose. A third level of interpretation involves looking back across these stories of patterns, seeing patterns among those stories of patterns, and telling a story of patterns arising from stories of patterns. This degree of differentiation may seem ridiculously complicated but as I

cite some examples and discuss tertiary interpretation, this differentiation will become visible, useful, and recognizable.

Examples of tertiary interpretation abound in this dissertation. The production of a research topic, research design, articulation of inquiry process and methods, discursive analysis of innerlogues, and parts of these five narratives about the research process are all examples of tertiary interpretation. This dissertation is primarily written from and within tertiary interpretation.

Innerlogues originated in autobiographical text written within the principal interpretation. Crafting the innerlogues for inclusion in this dissertation stressed and complicated that principal engagement. It involved secondary level of interpretation. Doing a discursive reading of the innerlogues produced recurring patterns across all four innerlogues of subjectivity-in-process: detaching, reframing, and repositioning. This discursive reading was a tertiary interpretation of what happened. Moving through these three levels of interpretation happened repeatedly during the research process. Turning points,⁶⁸ as described in the researcher tale, were produced by repetitious practices of thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity. Turning points were marked by the production of tertiary interpretation. This is not to suggest that tertiary interpretation in itself is transformative, but rather that production of a third level of interpretation through this research process was transformative.

By looking at the language that I used to tell stories, describe patterns across stories of experience, and to describe patterns of patterns, I see that I took up a poststructural perspective. Tertiary interpretation is not inherently a poststructural reading. I could have looked at the stories, patterns, and patterns of patterns in other ways. For instance, I could have attended to the emergence of contradictions and conflicts, that may have manifest a form of dialectic materialism or critical analysis.

Tertiary interpretation, or stories of patterns arising from stories of patterns, is the level of interpretation valorized within the academy. Within this inquiry, tertiary interpretation was a product of the research process and was not the point of departure or predominant mode of interpretation throughout the inquiry. Tertiary interpretation was produced by, and was an effect of, repetitive practices at the principle and secondary levels of interpretation.⁶⁹ One level of interpretation arose from the level before it through acts of looking back and telling what was in view. A strong interrelationship between the levels of interpretation emerged. Tertiary interpretation was produced only periodically, as evidenced by the researcher narrative of the turning points.

Writing autobiographically is not generally deemed to be academic or scholarly. It is often criticized for being about therapy, catharsis and

⁶⁸ Please refer to the essay entitled, *Research in five movements*, for a discussion of turning points.

⁶⁹ I realize that the process of reflexive interpretation is yet another regime of truth. There is no escape, but I can be aware of what I am in the midst of and therefore aware of its limitations.

self-knowledge. This dissertation accomplishes a major transformation of self/subjectivities and renders the process in sophisticated theoretical ways. It is important to note that this dissertation is a product of writing autobiographically coupled with five other practices of thinking without a banister. This constituted nature of tertiary interpretation calls into question practices of valuing one level of interpretation at the exclusion of others.

These insights into my process of reflexive interpretation remind me of feminist debates about objectivity. In particular, I recall Donna Haraway (1988) concept of "critical positionality," that she argues is objectivity. I creatively appropriate her term for my purposes. By "critical positioning" I am not suggesting for a moment that there is some predetermined, fixed position or a particular geographic space that one must achieve before one is deemed (by some external referent or social collectivity) as critically positioned and able to carry out research. I think that becoming critically positioned is achieved and is a situated knowing within a particular context and inquiry. It refers to the positioning enabled and produced by detaching and reframing that enables thinking in which the technologies of judgment have been deactivated. In this way, I could argue that tertiary interpretation is a form of critical positioning and objectivity.

Maintaining separation within relations between levels of interpretation presented a challenge throughout this inquiry. Within the

academy, graduate studies and teaching happened largely within the tertiary level of interpretation. Awareness of narrative knowing was limited and knowledge production was prescribed and regulated by the scientific method. Meaning was made in terms of canonical positioning and relevance. My stories of patterns arising from stories of patterns (tertiary interpretation) could easily become abstract and disembodied, and relations with secondary and principal interpretations were often in jeopardy of being severed. Much time and effort was spent backing up and beginning again.

In retrospect, I understand that Dorothy Smith (1990) and Hannah Arendt (1964) each warned of the effects of severing these ties. Now I can relate experientially to the difficulty they speak of. Dorothy Smith (1990, pp. 40-43 and pp. 53-57) talks of the ideological practice of sociology wherein reasoning is confined to concepts divorced from their ground in the everyday world (p. 41). She calls for the exploration of the ground of a concept in the actual ordering of what living people do. Hannah Arendt (1964) warns against the use of "categories and formulas that are deeply ingrained in our mind but whose basis of experience has long been forgotten and whose plausibility resides in their intellectual consistency rather than in their adequacy to actual events" (image 4).

Upon reflection, I realize that much of the work I was busy doing during the research process enabled me to remain in relation and separate/detach. My practices of "thinking without a banister" were produced by and produced critical categories that were not imposed on but inspired by my research process and living within the academy. The

commitment that I declared during my comprehensive exams has been met. Within this dissertation, I (have been constituted to) theorize and remain in relation to experience. I do not get lost in abstraction or transcendence.

A Writer's Tale: Suddenly On The Other Side

After crafting four narratives of the research process, I began composing the final narrative in this series—a writer's tale. I cast my attentions back and focused on memories of writing. My fingers began to dance across the keys; words appeared on the screen. Page after page the words kept coming. Two days came and went. On the third day, twenty minutes into my writing, something happened. I found my self on the other side.

In this writer's tale of the research process, I will not recount adventures of learning to write autobiographically or finding forms; nor will I explicate my writing practices of crafting innerlogues. Practices of writing have been practiced and discussed within most essays contained in this dissertation. I will not rail on about the challenges of trusting the process, opening to not knowing, or maintaining movement in uncharted territory virtually alone. I have alluded to these difficulties of working; suffice it to say, this research process has been, for the most part, challenging and difficult, and it has also been exceedingly stimulating, exciting, and transformative. Looking back, I do not regret undertaking this research process and marvel at what it has produced.

If that is what I am not going to do, what is it that I will do? My attention is drawn to aesthetic considerations that in/formed this dissertation. This dissertation was not produced over night or written in the final chaotic rush of a research process by a particular subject from

one subject position. Rather this dissertation is a cobbled-together collection of texts produced during and by the research process. I use the word “cobbled” to call into (discursive) play an image of an artisan doing what she can with what she has to work with.

To cobble is “to mend or patch coarsely; to repair or make; to make or put together roughly or harshly” (Webster’s dictionary). To mend is to make whole or sound something broken, torn or injured. To patch is to temporarily fix a hole or break with new material.

Referring to the dissertation as a mended or patched collection of texts is a way of reminding my self and readers that subjectivity is a process and not an entity, and that these essays constitute traces of subjectivity-in-process, but are not subjectivity per se. To say that these essays were mended is not to imply that they were broken or injured; rather they began as autobiographical texts and then were revised and edited for the purposes of public viewing—in that sense mended. Cobbling together a collection of essays is analogous to assembling and sewing together patches to produce a quilt. Patches were produced individually through time with no predetermined plan or design for the whole. Each essay in this dissertation was produced on its own in a particular time and context. Essays were assembled, arranged, and sewn together to collectively form this dissertation. Subjectivity is constituted within these texts, in the assemblage and arrangement of these texts, as well as in what lies in between and around the essays.

Writing has been central to this entire research endeavour and cannot be viewed without considering its situatedness in the contexts of

particular moments, places, agendas, discourses, or ideas. For this research narrative, I want to revisit considerations made while cobbling together this collection of texts/essays that constitute this dissertation. I won't bore readers (or my self) by methodically revisiting every consideration but instead attend to the major aesthetic considerations⁷⁰ that in/formed the construction of this dissertation. These considerations are not presented in a chronological order, but appear in the order in which they arose as I looked back on and interpreted the process of cobbling together texts.

In conversation with my committee members in 2001, we decided that the exact shape of my dissertation would be emergent and that it may generally include three parts: a beginning, middle and an end. In retrospect, I see now how this decision created the possibility of a narrative dissertation. These three parts served throughout the latter half of the research process as a skeleton upon which I clustered and grouped texts as they were crafted. The cobbling of texts to this narrative frame marked movement through my research process. Essays in Part I of this dissertation were composed prior to the essays presented in Parts II and Part III. This array of essays included in this dissertation constitutes subjectivity unfolding through time. This three-part frame was useful throughout the research process, but as I neared a final document some

⁷⁰ Writing aesthetic considerations that have gone into this dissertation is an indirect way of revealing similar aesthetic considerations of style of my subjectivity, my way of constituting self.

thing more was needed. I needed something that would hold (stitch) the dissertation together.

With that thought questions erupted: What story holds this collection of essays together? Is there one? two? three? What are the effects of telling only one story? Does telling one story undermine multiplicity of selves? What possible stories can be told to hold this collection of essays together? What stories are most congruent with my topic and method?

Telling more than one story overwhelms me. What story do I want to tell? How do I want to tell it? What are the effects of what I tell and how I tell it? What are the effects for me, my subjectivity, for this project of investigating subjectivity? For the reader? And for the dissertation?

Do I want an overarching (dominating and embracing) story?

Doesn't the dissertation "need" one?

Is there already an overarching story that I tell my self as a way of holding this work together, but which has not yet made it onto the page?

I fear an overarching story will subsume the all other stories and become a grand narrative. A grand narrative would undermine my topic and method. I do not wish to reinscribe some sense of oneness or unity within this work, for that would contradict what I have come to know as subjectivity.

I recall when I decided to write five narratives of the research process, I imagined the narratives intertwined as if in conversation with

one another, but as I implemented this plan a difficulty arose.⁷¹ The research practitioner's narrative, *Research in five movements*, subsumed and reorganized the other narratives. The other narrators (parts of researcher self) rebelled and stopped writing their respective narratives. A caucus of selves became necessary. As a result of caucus meetings, the strategy of interlacing narratives was abandoned in favour of composing five separate, but interrelated, narratives about the research process. *Research in five movements* was re-written as a stand-alone narrative. It no longer acted as an overarching narrative that determined and organized the shape and rhythm of the other four narratives. Remembering this experience, I fear a similar relation between essays may be activated and created as I write a story to hold the dissertation together.

What am I in the midst of? Stepping back slightly, I look at what I have written and call my assumptions into question. What makes me think that the essays must "hold together"? What is that about? Cobbling together essays to form a dissertation involved deciding how and what I wanted to display to readers about subjectivity. Does a story that holds the dissertation together necessarily subsume all other stories in the essays? What makes me think that there is only one way a story that holds together the dissertation can relate to all those other stories within the essays of the dissertation? How might I rethink (re-imagine) how this story relates to those stories throughout the essays?

⁷¹ See the essay entitled, *A prelude to Research in five movements*.

A creative non-fiction workshop with Christina Baldwin comes to mind; I recall a metaphor. She talked about balancing heart and mind. The heart, like water, is difficult to hold without a container. The mind, like a cup, holds water enabling me to take water to my lips and drink. Extending this metaphor, I might write a story that serves as a container that holds and contains a diverse array of stories (essays). Such a container-story could create a whole (dissertation) by holding the essays together in a particular configuration.

Imagining this additional story as container, rather than subsumer, produces another bubble of questions: What are the purposes of this dissertation? What are my assumptions about readers? About the writer? About reading? About text? What is actually possible for a novice writer (my self) to accomplish in terms of such a purpose(s)?

When I began imagining a dissertation, I thought that it would report the research findings of the inquiry, but the taken-for-granted purpose of representation and my relation to the text were soon called into question and transformed through this way of working.

As I philosophically migrated from positivism to interpretation—one reading of my transformations—the purpose of my dissertation metamorphosed from representation to evoking readers' engagement in restorying their own lives. By constituting subjectivity-in-process narratively, the dissertation text invites readers to consciously enter into them selves and their relations within self. The dissertation

“works at multiple meanings, a doubly coded text that is both accessible and fosters brooding” (Lather as cited by Ely (1997), pg. 159). As a doubly coded text, my dissertation constitutes subjectivity and agency discursively, and at the same time, invites readers to enter their own explorations of Self.

Language is slippery and my essays probably tell more than I planned to tell, both about my self, about subjectivity, and about working narratively. Words carry baggage and have multiple and shifting meanings within context as they are placed beside and near other words. As the producer of text, I am not seeking to evoke one particular emotion or response, but rather I strive to shape the text to in/form a full spectrum of reader responses and to invite awareness among readers of their own individual responses.

As the final “s” in the word “responses” appeared on the screen, a strong wave of emotion engulfed me—I sobbed...a deep, full body sob—and tears streamed down my cheeks. My fingers kept moving across the keys.

For months I’ve felt scared, but this emotion was different. Until now I had felt caught, trapped, unable to finish this dissertation—all the while a small voice kept saying, “Pat, you must finish.” Through time I became convinced that I must finish for my own sanity, my own ability to keep moving in the world. I reasoned that I have become dependent upon this dissertation, on this process of writing and thinking; dependent to the extent that perhaps I was avoiding the world.

As those words appeared on the screen, I saw my self identifying a problem. Every cell ached; tears continued to stream down my face. Despite the tears, or maybe because of the tears, I saw what was happening. I chose not to interpret my situation as a problem. I did not want to activate a problem-solving spree; instead I attended to my self and what I was in the midst of. I had no idea that I had so much emotion bottled up about finishing this dissertation, but I obviously I did. I've wanted to finish this project on a high note, hold my head up high, and look people in the eye.

I heard my self muttering, "I'm finished."

I heard what I said—that's it! I'm finished—finished the inquiry. I've been scared of finishing, not knowing how or when. Suddenly I'm scared and finished.

Was I asleep? What happened? How did I get on this other side of the end? How did I get transported to this new place?

So there I was—overcome by emotion with tears streaming down my face—and transformed. The inquiry was finished. I was on the other side of the end, looking back. My relationship to the text and the project were irreversibly altered. I'm not done crafting the dissertation, but I was finished the narrative inquiry process. There is a difference. In terms of my narrative engagement and positioning with(in) the dissertation text and inquiry process, I was repositioned and transformed. I stood on the other side of the end, still in relation, but in a different relation. What had changed?

Why did I not end it (or why did it not end) a year or two earlier? My supervisor and committee had certainly encouraged me to bring it to a close before now. Somehow I just wasn't ready to be done. I kept going, but I don't understand why or how.

On the surface of it, I could say that I "had to quit" because I ran out of money, and that is true. However, I actually ran out of money over a year before this ending happened and somehow cobbled together funds to survive. I never felt finished despite the practical realities of running out of money. In recent years, friends would ask "how's it going?" and lately they tiptoe around daring not to ask, for what can I tell them—I'm almost done. And yet now, somehow the end has happened and I'm on the other side.

Until recently, I thought that I "should be" done, but I knew that I wasn't done. I did not feel finished. Before I went to New Zealand in December 2002, I pulled together a rough draft of my dissertation and presented it to my committee. In doing so, I felt more done than I have felt since, until now. Upon returning home, I re-entered my discursive reading of the innerlogues and decided to revise my interpretations of the texts substantially. Looking back, I see that re-reading the innerlogues (in effect) took me/returned me in/to my text—into my stories, into the heart of my work. Doing so reinscribed an earlier relationship within self and the research process. By paying attention to my discursive practices, I noticed that I was writing "must finish" and "should finish." I realized that a technology of judgment had been re-activated. Once again, I wrote what

I was in the midst of. Ultimately that writing produced an end to the inquiry, but I did not know that in advance. The end of this inquiry was not created by a deadline set by some outside body or situation; rather it was produced by my writing practices.

Researching subjectivity has been paradoxical, and ending feels arbitrary and yet not without ground. I did not plan to write the five narratives to produce an ending to the inquiry process. Nor did I plan the order in which the five narratives were written. They appear in the dissertation in the order in which they were written. I let the interest and energy of one narrative arise from the one before it. The writer's narrative happened to come last.

Looking back and writing about what happened from five different positionings within the subject position of researcher has been produced by, and has produced, detaching, reframing and repositioning of subjectivity. Thinking without a banister and cultivating perceptivity resulted in deactivating technologies of judgment and enabled the end of the inquiry process. Writing the five narratives of the research process produced an end to this inquiry process, but I did not know that going into the project of crafting five narratives. I only know that now by looking back and interpreting what happened. This ending and this thinking about ending have convinced me of how complex the whole subject of writing research is. It also foregrounds how difficult it is to bring to words the multiple, often serendipitous, and ever changing experiences that constitute researching. This writer's tale of these

complexities and difficulties constituted a (new) self who suddenly found her self on the other side.⁷²

⁷² These five narratives are not even (not equally authoritative) in tone and language, but this unevenness need be defined as a problem. I see this unevenness as a textual production and representation that displays unevenness in my subjectivity-in-process.

All five narratives are important because they are the product of, and produced, various subjectivities. It makes some sense that the researcher tale is stronger than the others. Within the overall process of this inquiry, research practitioner subjectivities have been evolving through time since the beginning. The other four have emerged through the process of the inquiry and have been evolving, but at a much slower rate and with less space and valorization. The hermeneuticist, the epistemologist, the writer, and ethicist are all relatively new and less-evolved subjectivities than the research practitioner.

In Closing: Opening To Conversations:

Facing Fears Of Ending

From my previous analyses and articulation of my way of working in this investigation of subjectivity, I have come to know that a shift has already happened by the time I come to see what I have done. Once I see a pattern I am already in a new place and I relate differently to what I have been doing only seconds previously—not that there is a complete severance with the past, but rather a disjunction in seeing (perceptivity)—and suddenly I see a pattern of clinging, of not letting go and how I create my own suffering as a consequence of clinging. This “new” seeing that I write of here and which has emerged through writing marks a difference—a slightly altered relationship to my process of clinging to avoid endings. I will never again be able to cling to avoid an ending and not know that is what I am doing, at least not to the same extent of not knowing that I’ve practiced in the past. The interpretation that this pattern of clinging stems from fear of separation produced by a particular way of taking up endings is hereafter with(in) me. I am altered; there is no going back.

Letting go involves a dis-connecting and an awakening (opening and acceptance) to a sense of separateness and aloneness. Each small ending reminds me that everything eventually ends—in death. Feelings of separateness are intolerable because they foster an awareness of my own mortality, my death. In clinging I generate an imaginary continuing connection with the other person (thing) that serves as a defense against the unbearable fear of separateness and awareness of death.

Thriving—living in the moment, staying with the process—challenges this primary fantasy of connection and arouses an acute awareness of mortality. It is in this place of acute awareness and fear that I write this piece—tears stream down my T-shirt onto the rubber pad in front of my keyboard. Ending is part of the process of life and of writing this dissertation and so I am paying attention to ending.

The struggle against the ending of a meaningful interpersonal relationship is not unlike my current challenge of staying with the process of finishing this dissertation. I find myself clinging and not wanting to finish—and yet at the same time very much in a process of ending. I have some choices.

While on my trip to New Zealand in January 2003 I met a university professor of education psychology. When I told him that I was nearing the end of my dissertation but had decided to vacation to rest up before the final push, he told me that finishing is the most difficult part of the process.

I laughed at him. In that moment I could not imagine that the process could get any more difficult. As I sit in front of this computer several months after that discussion, his words resound through my being. As I recall my verbal and physical response to his comment, I am struck by the pattern of my denial regarding endings. Not only do I cling to avoid ending, I deny that endings warrant my careful attention and work. And yet as I write these words and see this pattern, my tearful

sobbing about the end of my dissertation serves to unravel my dismissive response.

Facing fear of finishing or fear of ending is about facing fear of death. At the very end of my session this week with my counsellor, I was saying that I am very anxious about finishing my dissertation. I told her that I felt like I am on one planet and when I finish my degree I will need to return to another planet. I don't want to go. All I see and hear about that other planet involves people in distress and agony from the pressures of unemployment, underemployment, and the crazy making of completely unrealistic expectations and workloads for those who are employed. "More with less" was the credo of the 80s; "doing more with even less" described the 90s; and "do without" is the mantra of the new century.

I don't fear my actual physical death, at least not in this moment, but I do fear my intellectual, emotional and spiritual demise as a direct consequence of leaving this space and this way of living. Being able to work solely on this dissertation for these past three years has been an absolute privilege, one that few people ever get to experience, and one that I don't want to give up or have come to an end. But ending it is. (Yes, I am fighting the process.) End it must.

I cling—I hang on for all I am worth. It takes many forms—procrastinating, revising beyond revising, generating even more new text, problematising the text that exists to keep revisions going for another year or two. These are not admissions that any administrator of a

university wants to hear, but because I am striving to understand subjectivity and how to thrive in the academy, I feel behooved to name these realities that don't commonly get included in the methodological articulations of a doctoral thesis.

I am not admitting some kind of fraudulent undertaking. I have honestly struggled to finish as quickly as possible. But I am rendering visible one of the major difficulty in this type of work—staying with the process. By this I am including the difficulties of being in and working through the fears and anxieties of finishing, of ending, of no longer being a doctoral student.

I was first admitted to a doctoral program in Lubbock, Texas in 1979. Although I have not been in doctoral studies continually since that time, (now there is a scary thought), I have however thought of myself as a doctoral student—a scholar in the making. It is now 2004, some 25 years since I began this journey of scholarship. My practices of identifying have surely habituated during this time. Much of my identity has revolved around being a graduate student. Like a snake, it is time to shed this skin and move on.

Ending and beginning. Uncertainty, ambivalence, insecurity and fear bubble through my being. Never before have I been so anxious. I try not to admit it aloud for I fear doing so will render me completely unable to proceed. And yet I feel compelled to name this part of my reality and I feel called to enter this space of fear—to face it, to speak it, to embrace this transition to another space in time.

But this is not simply a transition; this is an end. An end to 25 years of thinking and being in a particular subject position. I struggle with binary thinking again. "Either/or" thoughts emerge: either I am a graduate student learning and growing or I am employed and rushed off my feet, burning out from all the pressure with no time to reflect and think. All the practices that I have discussed in this dissertation are practices of thriving with(in) the academy. I dread ending this dissertation and doctoral studies for I fear that these practices of thriving, which have been so carefully cultivated, will suddenly stop, and everything that has been created and that I have come to know, will cease to be. This fear is huge and heavy—and yet this dissertation must end.

Just as with the rest of this process of working emergently and deeply, staying with the process is required to move forward. By looking back I realize that in recent months, if not years, I have been avoiding, in one form or other, the end of this dissertation and this doctoral study. Fears permeate every cell of my body and until now I haven't acknowledged my fear of separation and aloneness. With this acknowledgment my level (tide) of anxiety recedes. I open, at least briefly, to these questions: How might I build a bridge so that I can return to this coveted and privileged community of scholars and way of working, way of thriving? How can "I" finish and not end? Am I once again merely clinging, avoiding the inevitable end and sense of separation? Can I take this ending up differently than I have in the past? What other possibilities can I create for my self? How might I embrace ending with excitement

and celebration and be present in and through it, and not get trapped in an imaginary world of continuing but actually finishing but not being present to finishing? How can my relationship with the dissertation and my identity as graduate student die with dignity? How can I face my fears of dying and yet stay with the process?

References

- Allison, D. (1988). *Trash*. New York: Firebrand.
- Alvesson, M., & Skoldberg, K. (2000). *Reflexive methodology: New vista for qualitative research*. London and Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.
- Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt, H. (1964). *Personal responsibility under dictatorship*, MSS Box 76, 27, from <memory.loc.gov/ammem/arendhtml/essayc8.html>
- Arendt, H. (1968). *Men in Dark Times*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Baldwin, C. (1998). *Calling the circle: The first and future culture*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Bannerji, H., Carty, L., Dehli, K., Heald, S., & McKenna, K. (1991). *Unsettling relations: The university as a site of feminist struggles*. Toronto, ON: Women's Press.
- Bateson, M. C. (1990). *Composing a life*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Benston, M. (1982). Feminism and the critique of scientific method. In A. Miles & G. Finn (Eds.), *Feminism in Canada: From pressure to politics* (pp. 47-66). Montreal: Black Rose Books
- Bickford, S. (1996). *The Dissonance of democracy: Listening, conflict, and citizenship*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Bordo, S. (1990). Feminism, postmodernism, and gender-scepticism. In L. J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (pp.133-156). New York and London: Routledge.

- Brookes, A. L. (1992). *Feminist pedagogy: An autobiographical approach*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1995). The autobiographical process. *Current Sociology*, 43(2/3), 161-177.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex"*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1994). For a careful reading. In S. Benhabib, N. Fraser and C. West (Ed.), *Feminist contentions: A philosophical exchange* (pp. 127-144). New York and London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1997). *The psychic life of power: Theories in subjection*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Caputo, J. D. (1987). *Radical hermeneutics: Repetition, deconstruction, and the hermeneutic project*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Cixous, H. (1991(1976)). The laugh of the medusa. In S. Lash (Ed.), *Post-structuralism and post-modern sociology*. Hants, England and Vermont: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Cixous, H. (1993). *Three steps on the ladder of writing*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers
- Davies, B. (1990). Agency as a form of discursive practice. A classroom scene observed. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 11(3), 341-361.

- Davies, B. (1991). The concept of agency: A feminist poststructural analysis. *Social Analysis: Special issue on postmodern critical theorizing*, 30, 42-53.
- Davies, B. (1992). Women's subjectivity and feminist stories. In C. Ellis & M. G. Flaherty (Eds.), *Investigating subjectivity* (pp. 53-76). Newbury Park, London and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Davies, B. (1994). *Poststructural theory and classroom practice*. Geelong, Victoria Australia: Deakin University.
- Davies, B. (2000). Eclipsing the constitutive power of discourse: The writing of Janette Turner Hospital. In E. A. St. Pierre & W. S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 179-198). New York and London: Routledge.
- Davies, B., & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), 43-63.
- Derrida, J. (1986). Structure, sign and play in the discourse of the human sciences. In H. Adams & L. Searle (Eds.), *Critical theory since 1965* (pp. 83-94). Tallahassee, FA: Florida State University Press
- Diller, A. (1989). *The Writing Life*. New York: Quality Paperback Book Club.
- Disch, L. J. (1996a). *Hannah Arendt and the limits of philosophy*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Disch, L. J. (1996b). Training the imagination to go visiting. In *Hannah Arendt and the limits of philosophy* (paperback edition with new preface ed., pp. pp. 141-171). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Dowrick, S. (1991). *Intimacy and solitude*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Ely, M., Vinz, R., Downing, M., & Ansul, M. (1997). *On writing qualitative research: Living by words*. London and Washington: The Falmer Press.

- Eisner, E. W. (1998). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey and Columbus, Ohio: Merrill.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality: Volume I: An introduction* (R. Hurley, Trans. Vintage Book edition 1990, English translation 1978 by Random House Inc. ed.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977 Michel Foucault*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1981). *The order of discourse*. Boston, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4), 777-795.
- Foucault, M. (1983). On the genealogy of ethics. In H. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow (Eds.), *Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics* (pp. 229-252). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Foucault, M. (1985). *The use of pleasure. Volume 2 of the History of Sexuality* (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1986). *The care of the self: The history of sexuality Volume 3* (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1988a). The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom: An interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984 (J. D. Gauthier, Trans.). In J. Bernauer & D. Rasmussen (Eds.), *The final Foucault* (pp. 1-20). London and Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Foucault, M. (1988b). Technologies of the self. In L. H. Martin, H. Gutman & P. H. Hutton (Eds.), *Technologies of the self: A seminar with Michel Foucault* (pp. 16-49). Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Franklin, U. M. (1999). *The real world of technology* (Revised ed.). Toronto, ON: House of Anansi Press.

- Fraser, N. (1989). *Unruly practices: Power, discourse, and gender in contemporary social theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Frey, Connie. (1997). *Improvisation : ? motions for living texts*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.
- Goldberg, N. (1990). *Wild mind: Living the writer's life*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Gore, J. (1993). *The struggle for pedagogies: Critical and feminist discourses as regimes of truth*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Gravelines, F. J. (1998). *Circleworks: Transforming eurocentric consciousness*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Greene, M. (1987). Sense-making through story: An autobiographical inquiry. *Teaching Education*, 1(2), 9-14.
- Group, Personal Narratives. (1989). *Interpreting women's lives: Feminist theory and personal narratives*. Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press.
- Grumet, M. R. (1988). *Bitter milk: Women and teaching*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575-599.
- Hartsock, N. (1990). Foucault on power: A theory for women? In L. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism*. New York: Routledge.
- Haug, F. (1987). *Female sexualization: A collective work of memory*. London: Verso.
- Heilbrun, C. G. (1988). *Writing a woman's life*. New York: Ballantine Books.

- Hirshfield, J. (1997). *Nine gates: Entering the mind of poetry*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.
- Hodgins, J. (2001). *A passion for narrative: A guide for writing fiction*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Steward Ltd.
- hooks, b. (1989). *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black*. Toronto, ON: Between the Lines.
- hooks, b. (1999). *Remembered rapture: The writer at work*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc.
- Irigaray, L. (1985). *This sex which is not one* (C. Burke, Trans.). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Jack, D. C. (1991). *Silencing the self: Women and depression*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Jaggar, A. M., & Bordo, S. R. (Eds.). (1989). *Gender/body/knowledge*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press.
- Kamler, B. (2001). *Relocating the personal: A critical writing pedagogy*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Kamler, B., Comber, B., & Cooke, J. (1997). Text as body, body as text. *Discourse*, 18(3), 369-388.
- Kim, E.J. (2003). *Student teacher subjectivity and curriculum*. Paper presented at the 2003 Complexity Science and Education Research Conference, October 16-18, 2003. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Available: <www.complexityandeducation.ca>
- Lather, P. (1993). Fertile Obsession. In A. Gitlin (Ed.), *Power and method: Political activism and educational research* (pp. 36-60). New York and London: Routledge.
- Lather, P. (1997). Drawing the line at angels: Working the ruins of feminist ethnography. In E. A. St. Pierre & W. S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 284-311). New York and London: Routledge.

- Lewis, M. G. (1993). *Without a word: Teaching beyond women's silence*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider: Essays & speeches by Audre Lorde*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press.
- Martusewicz, R. A. (2001). *Seeking passage: Post-structuralism, pedagogy, ethics* (paperback ed.). New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- McNiff, S. (1998). *Trust the process: An artist's guide to letting go*. Boston and London: Shambala Publications, Inc.
- McWhorter, L. (1999). *Bodies & pleasure: Foucault and the politics of sexual normalization*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Meyers, D. T. (Ed.). (1997). *Feminists rethink the self*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Miller, J. L. (1990). *Creating spaces and finding voices: Teachers collaborating for empowerment*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*. New York: Routledge.
- Nachmanovitch, S. (1990). *Free play: Improvisation in life and art*. Los Angeles, CA: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc.
- Nussbaum, F. A. (1998). The politics of subjectivity and the ideology of genre. In S. Smith & J. Watson (Eds.), *Women, autobiography, theory: A reader* (pp. 160-167). Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Perreault, J. (1995). *Writing selves: Contemporary feminist Autography*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pratt, M. B. (1988). Identity: Blood, skin, heart. In E. Bulkin, M. B. Pratt & B. Smith (Eds.), *Yours in struggle: Three Feminist perspectives on anti-semitism and racism* (pp. 9-63). Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books.

- Pratt, M. B. (1995). *S/he*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books.
- Razack, S. (1998). *Looking white people in the eye: Gender, race, and culture in courtrooms and classrooms*. Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press.
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, (pp. 516-529). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rilke, P. M. (1984). *Letters to a young poet* (S. Mitchell, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Sawicki, J. (1988). Identity politics and sexual freedom: Foucault and feminism. In I. Diamond & L. Quinby (Eds.), *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on resistance* (pp. 177-192). Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Sawicki, J. (1991). *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, power and the body*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Sawicki, J. (1996). Feminism, Foucault, and "Subjects" of power and freedom. In S. Hekman (Ed.), *Feminist interpretations of Michel Foucault*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sher, G. (2002). *The intuitive writer: Listening to your own voice*. New York, London, Toronto: Penquin Putnam Inc.
- Smith, D. E. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Smith, D. E. (1990). *The conceptual practices of power: A feminist sociology of knowledge*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Smith, S., & Watson, J. (Eds.). (1992). *De/Colonizing the subject: The politics of gender in women's autobiography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Steinem, G. (1992). *Revolution from within: A book of self-esteem*. Boston, Toronto and London: Little, Brown and Company.
- Storr, A. (1988). *The school of genius*. London: Andre Deutsch Limited.
- Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructural theory*. New York and Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Zwicky, J. (1992). *Lyric philosophy*. Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press.