'Becoming: from capture to recovery'

     One: Capture

     Two: Lost objects

     Three: Whiteness

     [The films have been made to compliment chapters one to three.

     The intention, where possible, is that each film be 'read' alongside

     the relevant chapter.]

List of abbreviations

Jacques Derrida

TFS	*Taste for the Secret*
HTAS	'How To Avoid Speaking: Denials'

Luce Irigaray

DW	'Divine Women'
ML	*Marine Lover Of Friedrich Nietzsche*
TS	*This Sex Which Is Not One*

Otto Kernberg

TDD	*The Death Drive: A Contemporary View*

Marcia Langton

WIHI	*Well I Heard It On The Radio And I Saw It On The Television*

Moreton-Robinson, Aileen

WEIR	'Whiteness, Epistemology and Indigenous Representation'

Margaret Whitford

ICN	'Irigaray and the Culture of Narcissism'
PF	*Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine*

Introduction

> Becoming means to accomplish the plenitude of what we can be. This trajectory is, of course never achieved. Are we more perfect than we were in the past? It's not certain. (Irigaray 'Divine Women', 4)

Luce Irigaray's concept of 'becoming' does not provide an answer; it offers an aim. "To become it is necessary to have an essence or a genre (henceforth gendered) as a <u>horizon</u>" (DW 4). As a way of describing the possibility of a future ideal, becoming challenges the narcissism of dominant society and its hold over others. It relates as much to the creation of a feminine divine as it does with a reconfiguration of the symbolic order. And as a concept that connotes *what is yet to be*, becoming employs process: not one with a clear and easy path, but one that requires uncertainty.

Becoming reflects key ideas in my novel, 'The Broken Hold'. The relationship that the idea has with the psychoanalytical theory of narcissism has been of particular interest and I have applied my understanding of it to elements in the novel, as well as using the concept as a tool for thinking about my research overall. Broadly speaking 'The Broken Hold' attempts to illustrate the affect narcissism has on its main characters. It deals with the difficulty of mother-daughter relationships while addressing a wider struggle for identification in a society that privileges colonial ideals. The original title for the novel was 'Breathing Water'. As an overarching idea it represented something about the contradictions of being, similar to the way in which Freud's concepts of the life and death drives address a fundamental opposition. However, during the course of writing, I moved away from exploring an unresolvable state of conflict and became more interested in the idea of change and exchange, for and between individual characters, as well as within society. What started out as an exploration of narcissism, developed into a more focused concern about the possibility of recovering from narcissistic capture, or in other words, the possibility of becoming. In this exegesis I examine the development of these ideas, while illustrating the ways in which I applied them to writing 'The Broken Hold'.

From the beginning I was very interested in the relationship between research and creative writing. I started with ideas, particularly to do with the concept of narcissism that I believed would fuel the creative work. I had loose ideas about the characters that would

feature in the novel and where they would end up. I had also imagined several images that I thought would connect the theoretical and creative writing ideas together.

Fascinated from the outset with the effects that narcissism has on individuals and communities, I wanted to explore the way narcissists both capture and annihilate others. From early on I had the idea that the main character was somehow trapped inside narcissistic capture, existing in a kind of split reality between her inner and outer world. I was interested in what is at stake for the main character in this situation and what aspects of her self are sacrificed or hidden as a means for her survival. My plan was to further research the concept of narcissism so that I could utilise my understanding of it to create a world in the novel that was founded in rules of narcissistic engagement. These rules would apply to the behaviour of narcissistic characters as well as form the fundamental conflict for the main character. I associated quotations with the developing work, for example, one from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* and one from Clarice Lispector's *Agua Viva* (*The Stream of Life*). I wrote about them as a way of thinking about my research. The ideas that stemmed from that writing were influential. *Alice's Adventures* provided me with a model of how a narcissistic world can work in fiction and Lispector's description of the violet in *Agua Viva* inspired, among other things, the development of the main character. The ideas that surfaced from this research helped to develop the images I had already pictured and I decided to create a number of short experimental films as a way of visually representing my thinking.

It started well and I anticipated that the theoretical research would carry on alongside the creative work. As the manuscript developed my research grew to include maritime archaeology and maritime object conservation. These new areas of interest provided challenges, such as, the comprehension of conservation techniques and determining the correct site for the wreck of the *Violet*. However, those challenges did not hinder the creative work; they assisted it to progress. On the other hand, while my original focus on the theory of narcissism continued, I was forced to reconsider the way in which I incorporated it into my creative work. On the whole, I often needed to depart from an analytical way of thinking in order to focus on the manuscript. I had to let go of what I was learning in psychoanalytical theory so as not to get bogged down in the particulars, especially with regard to character. This realization did not come as a moment of inspiration. Instead it was something that I had to revisit numerous times over the course of the project, and it was brought to my attention through the comments of my supervisors

and mentor Judith Lukin-Amundsen. Partly because of a previously unexamined loyalty to the theory and partly due to the process of creative writing, there were times when I did not know what direction to take.

In his article 'Blind spots: what creative writing doesn't know,' Andrew Cowan discusses how the practice of creating a work of fiction embraces a certain amount of "non-knowing" (par. 42). He writes: "I think the truest thing I can say about my own experience of writing is that I don't know what I am doing. Writing is the activity where I feel most adrift, least competent, most uncertain, least aware. I stumble along. And of course I'm not the only one" (par. 42). He quotes Elizabeth Hardwick: "Things that are vague in the beginning have to be made concrete. Often, what you thought was the creative idea ahead of you vanishes or becomes something else" (par. 43). It is with this notion, that one's original idea changes, and that writing through a creative idea is transformative, that I have come to understand my research methodology and my process.

During my research I came across a concept that seemed to fit my process; Heidegger's '*holzwege*', translated as "off the beaten track" (Haynes and Young ix). Heidegger explains *holzwege* as pathways through the woods: "Each goes its separate way, though within the same forest. It often appears that one is identical to another. But it only appears so" (Heidegger n. pag.). He uses the term to refer to "a series of sojourns on the way undertaken to the one question about being" (qtd. in Groth 684). Further translation describes *holzwege* as pathways leading either "nowhere" or to a "clearing in the forest where timber is cut" (ix). In *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger,* Luce Irigaray describes Heidegger's clearing as a closed circle: "In what circle are we here, and truly with no way out?" (1). Irigaray asks Heidegger if the clearing disguises his fixed point of view. She suggests that air, an element Heidegger has forgotten to relate to being, is free of the clearing (20). For Irigaray, air opens the circle. It returns being to 'nature',[1] that which has been *removed* in order for the clearing (and a masculine form of being) to exist. Instead of cancelling each other out, these ideas provided me with a way of thinking about both my methodology and the content of my research. Heidegger's *holzwege* describes the process of writing this exegesis and the creative work, a kind of journey (or journeys) through

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[1] In *Philosophy in the Feminine*, Margaret Whitford explains that Irigaray uses 'nature' similarly to Rousseau, combining both "rational and imaginary elements" to imagine, in Rousseaus' case a society "fit for him to live in", and, in Irigaray's case, "a society fit for women to live in" (190). Irigaray's 'nature' utilizes the symbolic order's positioning of women in nature (as separate from the symbolic order), in order to transgress and therefore redefine both.

unfamiliar territory to a space in which things can become clear. Irigaray's 'opening' provides a way of seeing beyond the clearing, or the fixed position of narcissism. It is connected to Irigaray's concept of becoming and so relates to the overall concerns of the project.

Writing this exegesis, I faced similar challenges to the ones I experienced writing the novel. Overall they have had to do with finding a balance between theoretical research and creative work. Because the theory has been so important to my thinking I have used this exegesis to determine the extent to which it has shaped the novel. In some areas I discuss the relevance of theory in retrospect, in others I make connections about the ways it influenced me as I went along. I touch on some of the difficulties I had and I address some of the changes in direction that I made, and the reasons for making them. While there were many times during the creative writing when I did not think about theory, what became clear through this exegesis was how much the two areas ended up influencing each other. Together they have been crucial to the development of the project as a whole. What follows is a discussion of both elements, as a way of exploring the process of writing 'The Broken Hold'.

Three short experimental films work as an appendix to this exegesis (submitted on DVD). Each film explores different elements of my research as a way of representing the overlap between theory, research and the creative work. Essentially the films provide a visual response to the written material and they are simply titled via the exegesis chapter to which they relate.

Chapter one
Capture: creating and transgressing worlds

The caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some
time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out
of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid, sleepy voice.
        'Who are you?' said the Caterpillar.
This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation.
Alice replied rather shyly, 'I – I hardly know, Sir, just at present
– at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but
I think I must have changed several times since then.'
        'What do you mean by that? said the Caterpillar sternly.
'Explain yourself!'
        'I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, Sir,' said Alice, 'because
I'm not myself, you see.'
        'I don't see,' said the Caterpillar.
        'I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly,' Alice replied very
politely, 'for I can't understand it myself to begin with; and
being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.'
   'It isn't,' said the Caterpillar.
        'Well perhaps you haven't found it so yet,' said Alice;
'but when you have to turn into a chrysalis – you will some
day, you know – and then after that into a butterfly, I should
think you'll feel it a little queer, won't you?'
        'Not a bit,' said the Caterpillar.
        'Well, perhaps your feelings may be different,' said Alice;
'all I know is, it would feel queer to me.'
        'You!' said the Caterpillar contemptuously. 'Who are you?'

(Carroll 51–52)
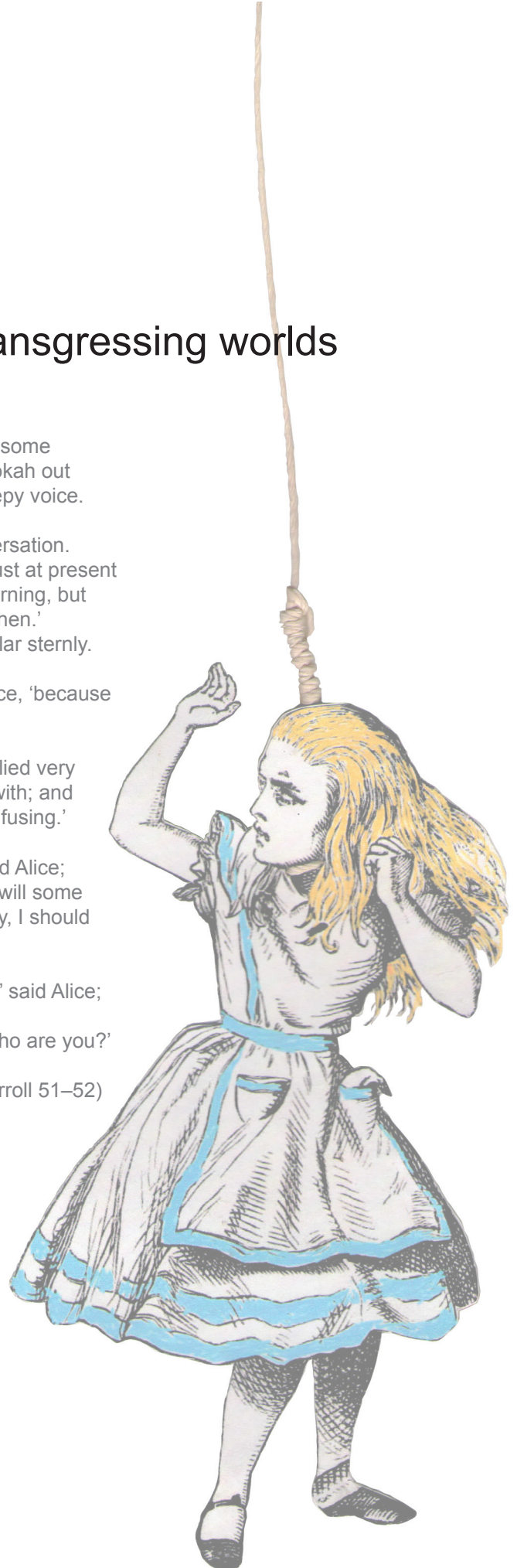
Chapter one

Capture: creating and transgressing worlds

'The Broken Hold' began with a number of images. My first attempt at writing anything at all in relation to the novel was a description of the most persistent picture that I had inside my head. It was a shot that began under the sea, as if I was looking through a camera that faced the seabed, focusing through several metres of water to a sandy floor rippled with moving light. I imagined that the camera would tilt slightly upwards so that what came into view was a large expanse of clear blue water. The camera would move, slowly at first, and then build momentum as it travelled under the surface of the sea. The horizon line would begin to compress as the camera approached the shallows and soon a pair of feet, legs, the fabric of a dress, the side of a body, would come into view. The camera would emerge from the water, pushed forward by the momentum of a small breaking wave, and it would stop at the face of a teenage girl pressed into the wet sand of the shore.

The image of this girl generated some obvious questions. Who is she, how did she get there, is she alive, will she survive? In retrospect the scene lends itself to crime or some type of thriller, but at the time I was not interested in writing in those genres. Instead I was thinking that the girl's predicament had come about through an act of carelessness, or cruelty on the part of someone close to her. I wanted to explore common ugliness in human behaviour and I wanted to find a way of representing that ugliness on a personal level (through the novel's characters) and on a cultural level (through the community that surrounds the characters as well as through the times in which they live).

The scene on the beach does not appear in 'The Broken Hold', but it became an important part of the novel's back-story. It depicts the main character, Katherine, washed up after a boating accident in which her father dies. Much of the writing about how the accident occurred was removed a third of the way through drafting the novel. However, one aspect of it is worth mentioning now, as it helps to frame my interest in the psychoanalytical concept of narcissism. I imagined Katherine's mother to be a dominant woman, who was as ruthless as she was charming. I thought of her as having great appeal to others, that in her younger years she was some kind of performer, and, at the same time, she generated significant damage in her personal life. This character developed into the matriarch Queenie. I imagined that on the day of the boating accident Queenie is made aware of an approaching storm. Instead of informing her family, before they set out on

their fishing trip, she withholds this information. She plans to teach, or more precisely, remind her husband that his true place is by her side (and not by the side of their daughter). The idea was that the scene would end badly for everyone and would set up an irreversible divide between mother and daughter. One of the problems I had in depicting Queenie as a three dimensional character had to do with her motivation, which I relied heavily on theoretical texts to develop. In *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*, Otto Kernberg describes the narcissist in the following ways.

> Their emotional life is shallow. They experience little empathy for the feelings of others, obtain very little enjoyment from life other than from the tributes they receive from others or from their own grandiose fantasies, and they feel restless and bored when external glitter wears off and no new sources feed their self regard. They envy others, tend to idealize some people from whom they expect narcissistic supplies and to depreciate and treat with contempt those from whom they do not expect anything... (227, 228)

In the first two drafts Queenie was the main narcissistic character. She was a central figure and her story occupied equal space on the page to that of Katherine and Alice. It was at this stage of the project that I worked with mentor Judith Lukin-Amundsen.[1] One of Judith's comments was that in comparison to Katherine and Alice, Queenie's character was clichéd. Because Queenie did not display a range of human qualities and emotions she came across as a less interesting and engaging character. Judith asked me a number of questions about Queenie's place in the narrative. On one occasion we tracked the development of her story in contrast to Katherine's. During this conversation it became clear that the ethical dilemma present in Queenie's narrative was taking over, or getting in the way of other aspects of the story that were developing in more interesting ways. Part of writing the third draft involved editing Queenie, as a main character, out of the story. Her influences on Katherine and Alice remained integral and so she became a character in relation to them, instead of one with her own separate trajectory. Although Queenie was pared back, the research I had done continued to be important to

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[1] Work with Judith took place over approximately three months from late 2009 to early 2010. It comprised three intensive, hour long, conversations that began by addressing problems in the second draft and concluded with an approach to writing the third draft.

other elements of the novel, such as the creation of Barton & Co. Transport and Shipping Lines and later, the development of Katherine's ex-husband, Gerard Sloan. Because of this I will track some of the ways in which this research was helpful.

Relatively early on, I discovered that a dominant and motivating trait in narcissists is the way in which they capture others in their-world view through 'colonization' and a form of 'object hunger'. These terms relate to Heinz Kohut's concept of the 'self-object', which describes how the narcissist experiences others as extensions of themselves (45-46). I came to understand the term narcissistic capture as a baseline description of the narcissist's relation to others. What struck me was the way the term, narcissistic capture, prioritizes the narcissist: only through the deduction that some-*thing* must be captured do we come to assume that the other is present. For the narcissist, the recognition of others does not come easily; some argue that it is often impossible. Despite this, the narcissist is always engaged with others and the engagement is defined by the narcissist's world-view.[2] This world-view can manifest on many levels: it can work privately to confine individuals in relationships; it can influence group dynamics; and it can operate in the public domain, governing whole communities. I wanted to be able to explore narcissistic capture in my novel in layers, so that it worked as an overarching world as well as something that personally affected the main characters, Katherine and Alice.

Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was one of my early resources and my investigation into how narcissistic capture works in Carroll's story, informed a great deal of how I developed 'The Broken Hold'. In my introduction to this exegesis I mentioned that one of the things that fascinated me about narcissism was the ability narcissists have to annihilate others. In Carroll's Wonderland the threat of annihilation is ever present. As a consequence of investigating Carroll's Queen of Hearts, I gained a greater understanding of how Wonderland operates and this provided me with a model world for my novel, whereby narcissistic rage works as an undercurrent to the story as a whole.

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[2] Much of my reading made it clear that the narcissistic subject is always engaged in relationships with objects, or, others. Whitford aligns Irigrays' thinking about the concept with Béla Grunberger's ideas. "In Grunberger's account, narcissism always has a dual orientation: it cannot exist in a pure state but only in conjunction (or antagonistic to) other psychic agencies" (ICN 29). Laplanche and Pontilus have a similar take, "if one is to accept the existence of an objectless state, then that would be incorrect to call this narcissism, as Narcissus from his point of view perceived an object with whom he fell in love" (qtd. in Segal and Bell 159).

It is commonly agreed that the narcissistic subject is full of rage. "A narcissist seems so confident, so attractive and charismatic, until something is triggered and they subject you to a fleeting, annihilating rage like no other…Empathy, that recognition of another's pain, is missing. In the end, the narcissist will only see that *you* have injured *them*" (Manne 34). Narcissistic rage is unleashed when the narcissist's world is threatened and the extent of that rage can lead to annihilation. I came to think of the characters in Wonderland as the Queen of Hearts' self-objects. All of the Wonderland characters can be seen to replicate her in some way, either through their aggression or their ability to evoke confusion, humiliation or fear in the protagonist. Because of this, Wonderland is a place of menace, which strangely, none of the Wonderland characters see as out of the ordinary. Alice knows something is amiss, but she spends most of her time trying to work out how to fit in. Often she does what is asked of her: she eats the cake, she drinks from the bottle, and she eats the mushroom, all of which result in dramatic and often violent transformation, or disfigurement, of her original self. While Alice wondered, "how she was ever going to get out again " (Carroll 14), she does not try to scramble back up the rabbit hole; she is "the dream-child moving through a land/Of wonders wild and new" (Carroll 4). However, when Alice misbehaves, when she tries to establish her autonomy in Wonderland and be recognized as an individual, she is met with the order "Off with her head!" (Carroll 93).

I was very interested in creating a world like this. I wanted the fundamental motivations of each character in my novel to be founded or formed in some way by a kind of social violence. Not one that always manifests in physical acts, but one that might also occur on a more psychological level. Arguably, Carroll's Queen of Hearts is a radical example, but what fascinated me about the violence that she and her colony display is that it is acceptable in the world in which it is expressed, and that it is both dangerous and captivating. In 'The Broken Hold' I wanted Katherine and Alice's relationships with others to be underpinned by threats of violence and I wanted both characters to be captivated by those threats in some way. I also wanted narcissistic capture to be expressed on a cultural level. As the story developed, the link between narcissism, violence, Barton & Co., and colonization became apparent.

While *Alice's Adventures* influenced the way I set up the world of 'The Broken Hold', it also helped me to think about how I might develop the different, or oppositional worlds within it. In *Alice's Adventures* there is the sunny riverbank and then there is the underground world of Wonderland. On the surface this provides a very basic contrast

between what is good and peaceful and what is bad and dangerous. But Carroll's division of worlds becomes more apparent in Wonderland itself, where Alice stands out as a stranger and many of the characters *appear* to live in a world of their own. In Wonderland things are fragmented. Fragmentation can be said to occur as a form of protection against narcissistic capture, whereby subjects unconsciously compartmentalise aspects of themselves as a defence against a total loss of who they are. In 'Discourses of Fragmentation' Lynne Layton uses the work of Kohut and Kernberg to explain that "The mechanism central to fragmentation is splitting, an early defence that operates to keep separate good and bad affects, good and bad self-representations, and good and bad objects" (212). As a result subjects are often engaged in a confusing struggle (much like the one Alice faces in Wonderland) to define themselves as a whole, integrated being. I wanted to explore these ideas in 'The Broken Hold' by creating a fragmented main character as well as by telling the story from more than one perspective. I wanted to create divisions between characters and their world-views, and to be able to write from inside the perspectives of characters affected by narcissism, as well as from the perspective of the main narcissistic character. One of the things that interested me about Carroll's story was that while he divides the worlds within it, all of them are essential to the overall tale. I would like to borrow Heidegger's term 'world' to expand on this and to explain how it further connects to the development of my novel.

For Heidegger a world is not formed by physical things or surroundings; rather it describes "a world of concern," likened to the way world is used in English "when we speak of 'the world of big business,' or, 'the world of sport'" (Rush 204). So while Wonderland is made up of specific things and events, the disappearing Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter's tea party, it is also constituted by a world of concern that precedes the things that operate within it. In other words, Wonderland is formed by, and functions according to a pre-existing world-view, which is defined by the Queen of Hearts. Everyone else is operating within her rule. This is a perfect analogy for narcissism because it describes the self-referential way in which the narcissist operates: at the centre, surrounded by self-objects. Heidegger's worlds of concern is relevant to 'The Broken Hold' not only because the concept reinforces how the world of narcissistic capture can work as a governing phenomenon, but also because it allows for more than one manifestation of narcissistic capture to take place at the same time. As well as this, the concept allows for other worlds, in which the concerns differ, to exist.

Heidegger's worlds of concern help me to frame the different worlds in 'The Broken Hold' and the process I took to develop them. In retrospect I think I can say that the overarching world of the novel is post-colonial Australia. From the beginning I was interested in addressing the impact of colonization, particularly because I imagined parts of Katherine's story to be set at Port Willunga on the South Australian coast, which is a shared site of trauma for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.[3] Once I worked out how to include shipwrecks in the novel it became even more important, so that the story of the Aboriginal woman's remains, found under the wreck of the *Violet*, explores how colonial narcissism manifests through the world of the shipping company, Barton & Co.

As an employee of the company, Katherine is required to behave in a certain way (even if that goes against her own world-view). Although she is captured by Barton & Co., the company exists outside of her. Barton & Co. works in contrast to Katherine's underwater world, which represents something closer to her inner identity. Katherine's attraction to shipwrecks and maritime objects keep her submerged, in a place where she can keep revisiting the loss of her father. Part of the difficulty I wanted Katherine to face was moving between the different realities submersion and surfacing would bring her. Overall, her story was the least known to me at the start of the project and it was through my research into maritime archaeology and maritime object conservation that the events in her world developed into the main narrative of the novel.

At odds with Katherine's internal struggle, I wanted her daughter to meet annihilation head on, in outward expressions of danger and anger. As a teenager, Alice's identity is less formed. As a way of making (non)sense of who she is I thought about her as being captured by another world altogether. This world is introduced to her through her older friend, Frankie, and is defined by a group of dangerous brothers. Between drafts my supervisors commented on how the repetition of Alice's abjection was overstated and over time I cut several thousand words in which the brothers featured. However, the narcissism that the brothers continued to represent in the story, remained akin to the kind of ignorance that comes from inhabiting a self-referential world.

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[3] Early on, I was drawn to two different names for Port Willunga. One was *The Tragic Shore*, the title given to an account of the 1888 wreck of the *Star of Greece* (the wreck occurred only metres from the Port Willunga shore). The other was in a website titled 'Courage and Disaster: an account of the wreck of the Star of Greece', which described the area as "the coast of sorrows" in relation to Kaurna people's Tjilbruke Dreaming (par. 1).

started off as two dimensional. His motivations were underdeveloped. In both cases I think this was a direct result of the way I interpreted the theory, opting to push the shallow and ruthless aspects of narcissism over any internal anguish. In the final draft I had to accept that a pathological narcissist was not going to be an achievable character in this story. I rewrote Gerard's sections to allow him more of a back-story, in order to make better sense of his personality. However, his appropriation of Katherine's world remained, for me, an integral part of the novel's outcome. While I changed the depiction of his inner identity, I decided to keep his actions similar, so that his world might mirror that of Barton & Co.

Because narcissistic capture constitutes the dominant worlds in 'The Broken Hold', it was important in the end that Katherine and Alice worked in conflict with them. Despite the fact that they are captivated by narcissism in different ways, either by Gerard, Barton & Co., or the dangerous brothers, they do share a relationship with each other. Their togetherness, on the whole a difficult one, is meant to represent another world in which the two characters struggle to function outside of capture.

In the process of working out the plot for 'The Broken Hold' I realized that freedom from narcissistic capture is far from pain free. It involves transgressing the narcissist's world-view. *Alice's Adventures* provides an illuminating example of this. At the end of the story, when Alice exclaims, "You're nothing but a pack of cards!" (141) she annihilates the Queen of Hearts and takes her place as the main narcissistic character. At that moment she is returned to the sunny riverbank; the other more perfect world: "the simple and loving heart of childhood" (Carroll 144). In 'The Broken Hold' I wanted Alice Sloan to mature beyond that, to recover enough from narcissistic capture so that she would be in a position to navigate her own future and not return to a time of innocence. However, I discovered that during 'The Broken Hold' there are times when Alice's character does wish for that.

According to Marina Warner, a desire to return to a time of innocence is the underlying meaning of Hieronymus Bosch's 'Garden of Earthly Delights': "[t]he scheme of the *Garden* required that the artist imagine a time out of time, in a nowhere place out of the known, familiar world: an adynaton, or impossibility" (71). Warner's observations relate to 'The Broken Hold' and *Alice's Adventures* in a similar way. In 'The Broken Hold' Alice and Frankie step out of their 'everyday': they head to the botanic gardens to get stoned by the river and watch the grass grow. In a following scene Alice is in the backseat of the brothers' car, also affected by drugs. With the windows down she experiences the

passing bushland as pure and fresh; something that interconnects her with the men in the car. On another occasion she is sitting out the back of the brothers' house where she misrecognizes the overgrown, neglected garden as a thing of beauty. There are two 'gardens' in *Alice's Adventures*. Arguably, the first is the riverbank and the second is Wonderland itself. "Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole: she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she longed to get out of that dark hall, and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains…" (14). Perhaps the first glimpse of Wonderland reminded Carroll's Alice of her perfect childhood garden. Or perhaps, as Freud might suggest, the garden (in both stories) represents primary narcissism, which simply put, relates to the stage of a child's development in which they *are* the centre of the world, free from responsibility and oblivious to the needs of others (Freud 89).

This was not the sort of outcome I wanted to replicate in 'The Broken Hold'. I wanted to create an ambivalent conclusion, whereby the difficult experiences that the characters go through would not be extinguished by a dreamlike brightness, but work alongside something more like hope. I think this idea ended up relating most profoundly to the relationship between Katherine and Alice. When researching Irigaray's ideas about narcissism I discovered that her version of a "place out of the known, familiar world" is similar to what I think Katherine and Alice ultimately seek (Warner 71). What Irigaray shares with Warner's observation is that the place out of the known is differentiated from the masculine culture of western Christian tradition. Warner interprets Bosch's painting as depicting "a very familiar Christian message: a lesson in the perils consequent on the creation of woman" (73). She describes the desire for innocence under the surface of Bosch's painting as "prelapsarian": a time before the fall of man (73). But for Irigaray, it is a place beyond (or beside) the image of God/man, a place where the image of woman is not something perilous or virtuous, but is recognized for its own divinity.

In 'Divine Women' Irigaray describes becoming as a form of growth. According to Irigaray this requires creating a 'genre', a 'horizon' akin to the infinite that the image of God provides, one that allows a view into the distance, and therefore inspiration and space for becoming. For Irigaray this genre comes from nature – something that already exists, but has been both hidden and forgotten, and that is the divine place of the mother (DW). According to Whitford, Irigaray's work investigates ways of representing the unsymbolized relationship of mother-daughter in the symbolic order (PIF 77). While 'The

Broken Hold' did not begin as an exploration of mother-daughter relationships, through the development of Katherine and Alice's characters, I became concerned with the difficulties that becoming brings in general terms for mothers and daughters. I began to explore the struggle mother and daughter have to be represented in the symbolic order, as well as the struggle daughters have to separate themselves from the mother, whilst remaining infinitely connected to her.

Irigaray suggests that "we" (daughters) must not hate the mother for submitting to the definition that comes from "entering into the submission of the father-husband" (DW 11). This is of particular relevance in 'The Broken Hold' as it relates to how I finally represented Alice's reaction to her mother and Gerard's reunion. In one conversation with Judith, she commented on how teenagers have a strange ability to see clearly in some situations and not in others. It was suggested that Alice might be able to interpret what is going on with Gerard, even if she can't manage in other areas of her life. For Alice, the way her mother slips back into Gerard's world is a disappointment. But instead of providing her with positive action, the insight causes her to replicate her mother's fall. Her attraction to the world of dangerous men is exacerbated. While she believes that she is acting in contrast to her mother, she is in fact re-enacting submission to the world defined by Irigaray's father-husband.

The conclusion of 'The Broken Hold' involves both Katherine and Alice transgressing the narcissism of the father-husband world-view. For Irigaray the father-husband is synonymous with the symbolic order and one of the ways she challenges this construct is through the creation of a feminine language, which reflects ideas about flow (Haas 152). By using the sea as metaphor, Irigaray describes a feminine imaginary that is "fluid and resists identification" (Haas 154). However, Irigaray does not argue for a world that is formed via 'us' women and 'them' men. In *Marine Lover* she writes:

In me everything is already flowing, and you flow along too if you can only stop minding such unaccustomed motion, and its song. Learn to swim, as once you danced on dry land, for the thaw is much nearer at hand than you think. And what ice could resist your sun? (37)

Whitford explains that "The problem of narcissism is by no means an exclusively masculine one, since Irigaray is…talking about an entire culture in which the maternal

imago is deficient or split" (ICN 33). Irigaray's writing then, creates a pathway through which we might navigate a more fluid space, somewhere beyond the narcissistic permanence of the image of God and the symbolic order, to enable the creation of a co-existing feminine/masculine symbolic. "For life never stays still. And if life doesn't flourish, it fades. Either you discover more and more new sources of life, or you walk toward the grave. Becoming always remains unstable" (ML 41). In retrospect I can see Irigaray's idea of becoming as an analogy for the way in which Katherine and her daughter destabilize the confines of narcissistic capture. Their attempts to come into their own beings, technically speaking what ended up driving their character journeys, is a result of looking beyond the realms of narcissism.

Near the end of the novel Alice witnesses her mother's death. For Irigaray, western culture flourishes via matricide (PIF 33, 34) and so I have come to think that in 'The Broken Hold', Katherine's death might represent the struggle inherent in becoming, or worse, the impossibility of difference in a symbolic that denies flow. However, it is also worth noting that when Katherine dies, Alice's anger towards her dissolves and she recognizes her mother's 'oceanic nature'. In contrast to what Katherine's death is meant to represent, Alice's epiphany might suggest a recognition of the feminine symbolic. Through the process of researching Irigaray I have come to understand how relevant her metaphorical use of the ocean is when thinking about 'The Broken Hold'. While influenced by the narcissistic world of Carroll's *Wonderland*, 'The Broken Hold' also uses the sea, and the world of shipwrecks, as a way of exploring how Katherine's character resists identification. The development of Katherine's inner world, and the areas of research that influenced this, are the subjects of the following chapter.

Chapter two
Lost objects: violets, the shipwreck and the sea
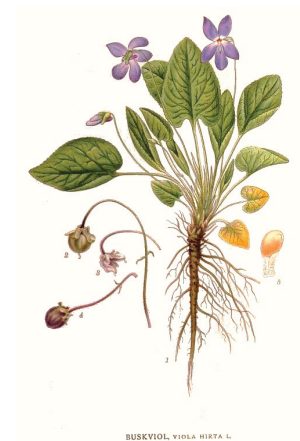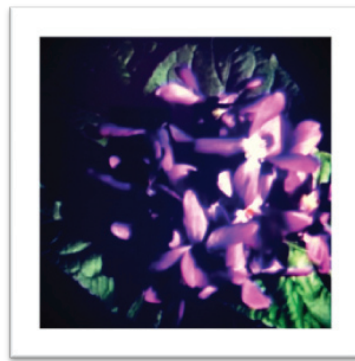
Clarice thinks of a Sunday. And there is a Sunday there. She thinks: and there is
a night; and an apple; and an apple in the night; and a hand thinks toward the apple.
On the way, clarice-thought thinks of a flower. And this thought gleans itself, and
there is a chrysanthemum, such as we had never looked at before. And we have
an improvised lesson about flowers; with our whole body we learn that we no longer
know anything about most flowers except their names as photographed flowers.

(Cixous 71–72)

Chapter two

Lost objects: violets, the shipwreck and the sea

The most obvious connection that violets have with 'The Broken Hold' is the name I gave to the shipwreck that features in the story. Choosing to call the wreck the *Violet* was a result of the research I did in relation to Katherine's character development and, during drafts, her character and ideas around the wreck became inextricably linked. Just as *Alice's Adventures* helped shape the creative work, so too did quotations from Clarice Lispector and Diane Ackerman. Both write about the nature of violets. What Lispector suggests, for example, that the violet "hides in order to discover its own secret" (46), became integral to developing Katherine's inner world. Further thinking about the nature of violets influenced how I developed the relationship between Katherine's character and her profession in maritime object conservation, especially with regard to ideas about loss and longing. In this chapter I reflect on those connections. I also discuss the creation of the *Violet* and what its wreck and recovery came to symbolize.

Lispector writes:

> The violet is introverted and its introspection is of the deepest sort. They say it hides because it is modest. That's not it. It hides to be able to find its own secret. Its almost-not-perfume is muffled glory. It demands that people seek it out. It never shouts out its perfume. The violet says frivolous things that cannot be said. (46)

In *Coming to Writing* Hélène Cixous describes an approach to reading Lispector as an invitation, a "calling", and a lesson of "letting come, [of] receiving" (61). Cixous writes of "Claricewege", a Clarice-voice that leads us, makes ways (61). Cixous is borrowing from Heidegger's *holzwege* to describe the way in which Lispector leads us to (re)learn about reading and writing through her disclosure of the often forgotten nature of 'things' (Conley xii). If we follow a kind of research pathway around the violet, we can see that Lispector provides a way of seeing the world from the violet's perspective. This sounds as if I am anthropomorphising the flower, but I didn't ever think of it in those terms. I was borrowing from Lispector in order to imagine the violet metaphorically.

Initially, I connected the secretive nature of the flower to the development of Katherine's inner world. I was interested in the idea that a character constrained by narcissistic capture, and therefore stripped of her uniqueness by the narcissist, maintains her being by hiding it on the inside. Unlike the narcissist, who turns away from the external world (in order to relate to the self), others turn inward as a way of maintaining self. During the first few drafts Katherine's mother, Queenie, was the main narcissistic character. Throughout drafts, the development of Queenie's character continued to affect how I imagined Katherine. Queenie was the psychological explanation for Katherine's attraction to other narcissistic characters and the reason she withdrew inward for self-protection. One of the things I discovered about narcissists is their capacity to colonize others and to experience the colonized other as if they are part of themselves. Heinz Kohut describes the other in this scenario as the narcissist's 'self-object'. While the prospect of a self-object having subjectivity is not a matter of contemplation for the narcissist, as by narcissistic definition it cannot exist, it is reasonable to assume that beneath the surface of the self-object, there is an internal world.

I used this idea as a way to think about Katherine's character in connection with the violet. Like the introversion Lispector describes, Katherine's inner world would be submerged. And like the contradiction inherent in Lispector's description, in which the violet hides to find its secret while seeking recognition, I had the idea that Katherine would exist in a split between her inner (submerged) world and the outside world. In addition I wanted there to be a connection and a contradiction between her psychological submersion and her professional abilities. In other words, I wanted her to be hidden in a way that related to her profession and, at the same time, I imagined that her job provided her with some recognition in the outside world. From early on I thought about her submersion in relation to the sea. I decided that she would be involved in a boating accident in her childhood in which her father dies and that this experience would affect her profoundly. She would grow up with a preoccupation for the sea that extended into her working life. At first I investigated maritime biology as a possible profession; I was interested in using Katherine's research into microscopic organisms as a way of representing her interiority. I tracked down articles about soft rot in submerged wooden artefacts and I began to associate her work with maritime archaeology. I thought I could utilise research from in-situ conservation of ships to represent something about the stalling of decay, as if Katherine's character was suspended in time. I'm not sure the exact moment that the idea

of her being a maritime object conservator came to me, but it was at least twelve months into the project. What felt right from then, was the possibility that Katherine would be involved in a kind of endless search for, and conservation of, lost objects from the sea.

My research into fragmentation provided another helpful way of thinking about Katherine's split between her inner and outer worlds. Because fragmentation occurs as a result of "[r]epeated narcissistic and abusive modes of interaction" (Layton 213) the outside world would relate to Katherine's mother (narcissism and the bad object) and submersion would relate to Katherine's father (the good object). Her work could then provide her with an unconscious way to revisit the loss of her father in an attempt to hold on to something of their past. The violet provided me with another metaphor that connected Katherine's relationship with her father to her profession.

In *A Natural History Of The Senses* Diane Ackerman explains that violets "contain ionone, which short circuits our sense of smell. The flower continues to exude fragrance, but we lose the ability to smell it. Wait a minute or two, and its smell will blare again. Then it will fade again, and so on" (9). What I came to understand from Ackerman is that losing the scent of the violet creates in us a certain kind of longing: a desire for something that can never be experienced again in the same original way.

Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical model of the subject is formed fundamentally via loss. He writes "that the object that is longed for comes into existence as an object only when it is lost to the infant" (Sarup 68). Lacan believes that desire for the lost-object is inherent in the formation of the subject's identity. In other words, the lost-object constitutes that which is missing in the subject and desire is generated in the unconscious wish for its return. Other objects are used as replacements. Madan Sarup gives this example; early on one toy after another may be given to a child as a demonstration of the mother's love and her need to gratify the child, but these substitutes never really satisfy (67, 68). Lacan developed the term *object-petit-a* to describe these replacements. The *object-petit-a* is a stand-in for the original, a symbolization of the lost-object (69). It is the "little machine that unleashes desire" (69). In his later work Lacan replaced 'desire' with the term '*jouissance*', a painful yet pleasurable form of desire (10). *Jouissance* operates beyond nostalgia, that is, pleasure found in the reminiscence of what is past. *Jouissance*, "like death, represents something whose limits cannot be overcome" (100).

Ackerman recounts an historical anecdote in which violets become the *object-petit-a*. According to Ackerman, violets symbolized the love between Napoleon and Josephine

and after Josephine's death Napoleon planted violets at her grave. "Just before his exile on St. Helena, he made a pilgrimage to it, picked some of the violets and entombed them in a locket, which he wore around his neck; they stayed there until the end of his life" (9). It is possible to see Napoleon's desire for the *object-petit-a* as a need to keep the lost-object permanent, beyond the limits of death.[1] What Lacan shows us, through *jouissance*, is that the permanency of all objects is impossible and therefore the desire for them is reoccurring and unobtainable.

By applying Lacan's ideas to Ackerman's anecdote, I was able to further associate Katherine's character development with loss and longing. It gave me a theoretical background to positioning her emotional world in a kind of time warp as well as providing me with a way to explain her character's pull towards her profession. Working in the area of maritime object conservation meant that Katherine would be in close contact with an almost inexhaustible supply of substitute lost-objects. It would mean that she could be engaged in a repetitive cycle of return, that way maintaining her *jouissance*. To put it another way, she would be under no threat to relinquish her desire for the return of her father and her emotional world could continue to be submerged. However, if the story proceeded in such a way, nothing new would happen.

In my early drafts I was interested in the annihilating consequences of narcissism, which meant that my characters were denied a personal trajectory. During the writing I came to think about how as a reader I want a moment of insight or hope, and I began to want to write about that as well. I came to think about how loss might evoke more than *jouissance*, that in the space formed from what is lost, something other than desire might be created. Instead of keeping Katherine suspended in time, I wanted there to be an avenue through which she might be able to transform. The means for this was not clear straight away, but evolved through my research in maritime archaeology and maritime object conservation so that the novel's plot began to revolve around the recovery of the fictional shipwreck, which I eventually called the *Violet*.

Since European arrival it has been estimated that eighty percent of ships known to have been wrecked along Australia's coast remain lost (Rodrigues). In South Australia

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[1] Violets have otherwise been associated with love and death. In *Hamlet* the flower is especially relevant to Ophelia. D.C. Allen describes this connection as a "floral kinship" pointing out that three times during the course of the tragedy "the girl and the flower meet in metaphor" (64). In 'She dwelt among the untrodden ways' Wordsworth uses the image of the violet to express the narrator's loss of a woman who has died. The narrator describes Lucy as "A violet by a mossy stone/Half-hidden from the eye!" (qtd. in Slakey 631).

only two hundred shipwrecks, out of approximately eight hundred, have been located (Shipwrecks, par. 3) and this absence of 'graves' opens up space for the imagination. Maritime records show that a ship called the *Violet* departed from Southampton on the thirteenth of April 1856 transporting passengers to Port Adelaide, Australia (The Shipslist, par. 10). Instead of pursuing what became of this ship (except to note that it does not appear in the online 'Australian Encyclopedia of Shipwrecks') I decided, in the space of not knowing, to imagine *what if*? What if the *Violet*, like a number of other immigration ships during the early to mid 1800s, was refitted into a hulking ship and used to transport supplies, wheat and wool from the Murray River industry, between Goolwa and Port Adelaide? What if a drunk captained this ship, a corrupt man who might be transporting stolen goods and who might also believe it his right to take anything else he pleases? What if, as historical records show whalers and sealers did, the captain took an Aboriginal woman from the mainland for himself and when the ship sinks, due to his negligence, the Aboriginal woman goes down with it? While investigating all of these *ifs* the plot began to take shape.[2]

A significant part of 'The Broken Hold's' narrative deals with what becomes of the Aboriginal woman's remains. For example, part of Katherine's journey explores the role her profession plays in maintaining Australia's frequent refusal to comprehend the cultural significance of Aboriginal beliefs. The research behind this aspect of the novel, and my portrayal of non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal characters, will be addressed in the following

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[2] Another important element in the consideration of *what if*, was *how* and *where*, especially in regard to the location of the wreck. For a shipwreck to survive it needs to be surrounded by specific anaerobic conditions in order to slow down the rate of its degradation. In suitable environments a wreck may last hundreds of years, for example the *Batavia* in Western Australia and the *Vasa* in Sweden. There were several elements I had to take into consideration when developing the wreck site for 'The Broken Hold'. It needed to be set within a place that was prone to unexpected and inclement weather, while also being adequately sheltered to allow the ship to sink to the bottom without breaking up entirely. The area also needed to be dynamic enough so that tidal movements would force sand to fill up and cover the wreck in a relatively short period of time. This site needed to be at a distance from the surface of the sea and the shore so a recovery was feasible within the time frame of the novel. It was also important to situate the wreck in a remote place, to ensure against possible witnesses. By the mid 1850s there were already many 'settled' European communities on the coast between Port Adelaide and Goolwa and the areas that were not, for example, between Encounter Bay and Cape Jervis, would not have provided the right conditions for the ship to be preserved. It took a considerable amount of time to find a plausible site. It was not until I was writing the third draft that I was able to have a conversation with Scoresby Shepherd, from the South Australian Research Development Institute. Instead of trying to give me information about existing wrecks Scoresby helped to imagine a possibility. I explained how I wanted the *Violet* to survive and why. We discussed optimal conditions and Scoresby suggested Antechamber Bay, on the east coast of Kangaroo Island. Most generously, Scoresby made himself available to read the section in the novel that describes the wreck and its recovery to make sure it was authentic.

chapter. For now, it is important to return to violets to illustrate how I further developed the ideas that stemmed from Lispector and Ackerman in relation to my process.

Naming the wreck the *Violet* signified a substitute object for Katherine's 'lost' father, her *object-petit-a*. Discovering that a ship called the *Violet* existed was a fitting coincidence. It gave me a perfect way to embody these ideas. However, as a symbol of return, the wreck itself cannot be the means for Katherine's transformation. What motivates her to surface is the secret buried underneath the *Violet*. Recovering the Aboriginal woman's remains and the weaving is what forces Katherine to engage differently with the outside world. If, as Lispector suggests, the violet's introspection is secretive and at the same time it seeks recognition, what happens when the secret is forced beyond the limits of the flower, or in the case of 'The Broken Hold', the secret buried under the *Violet* surfaces? An investigation of Derrida's version of 'the secret' helps me to answer this.

Derrida asks what it is to keep silent and questions whether or not it is in fact possible to keep a secret. For Derrida "a secret must and must not allow itself to be divulged" (HTAS 25). Leonard Lawlor explains that the secret for Derrida is a form of negation of negation: it is not secret as such because the subject tells it to herself: to truly possess the secret 'I' must tell myself what the secret is. Lawlor suggests that by creating a representation of the secret in order to possess it again, the subject, 'I', am telling it to 'myself' as if 'I' am someone else. The secret, then, is something that is shared (par. 16).

Lispector's violet is secret in ways that hide and seek. Ackerman's violet gives its secret, its scent, with one breath and takes it away with the next. In contrast to this, the act of recovering the *Violet* forces its secret to be shared. I think sharing the secret works in several ways in the novel in relation to plot. I have come to understand this retrospectively and so will describe it now as a known entity, referring to the discovery of the Aboriginal woman's remains and the weaving as 'the secret'.

I decided that Katherine would be part of a recovery team that works for Barton & Co., a British shipping company that represents colonial ideals. As part of Barton & Co.'s employment contracts each member of the team has to sign a confidentiality agreement, a kind of shared secret in itself. As the discoverer of the secret, Katherine shares her find with her work colleagues. While she struggles with the ethics of what to do with the secret her colleagues go on unimpeded by the dilemma she faces. They appear happy to keep the secret (amongst themselves). Unbeknownst to Katherine, aspects of the secret are shared

amongst other characters, some working within the recovery job and some from the outside. The way in which the secret circulates drives the plot (and in keeping with Derrida, its circulation is shared with the reader). Answers to the questions, where did the Aboriginal woman come from, and where should her remains end up, are what occupy Katherine's journey. The demands of Barton & Co. work in opposition to Katherine and what the company represents provides significant dramatic conflict. When Katherine acts against the nature of her contract, transgressing the boundaries of Barton and Co.'s sovereignty, she is punished for her actions. It is possible to also interpret the secret as the unutterable agreement between the narcissist and the self-object, in which the self-object renounces individuation. In order for the relationship to work well, that is, without conflict, the self-object must not challenge this contract.

Otto Kernebrg, among others, believes that narcissism is motivated by the death drive. Kernberg explains that "[t]he unconscious functions of [narcissistic] self destructiveness are not simply to destroy the self, but very essentially to destroy significant others as well. Be it out of guilt, revenge, envy, or triumph" (TDD). Hate and envy drive the narcissist to perform acts of annihilation, which include killing off 'mis-behaving' self-objects (see chapter one).[3] It became important to me that I create enough conflict in the novel so that when Katherine finally attempts to assert herself in the external world (of narcissistic capture) she is annihilated for not acting as a proper self-object should. I can see how this might suggest there is little hope of recovering from such a force. However, the death drive has its opposite and I thought that Katherine's death could also be seen as the impetus for her daughter, Alice, to transform.

In 'The Looking Glass, from the Other Side' Irigaray uses the colour violet to describe the possibility of being in two worlds at once.[4] "Alice's eyes are blue. And red" (*This Sex* 9). The colours are for times when Alice is "behind the screen of representation" (TS 9) when she is in the house or the garden, when she is in a place away from the outside

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[3] According to Kernberg, Freud's concept of the death drive "is eminently relevant in clinical practice" (TDD) and he gives examples of how narcissistic patients' aggression is played out over and again through 'repetition compulsion' that in short serves to return the subject to their original trauma. In Kleinian terms, "The struggle between the life and death instincts is seen as a continuous conflict in development and it is represented psychologically by the struggle between love and gratitude, on the one hand, and hate and envy on the other" (Segal and Bell 167).

[4] In 'The Looking Glass, from the Other Side', Irigaray writes about Carroll's Alice in reference to the character Alice in the film, *The Surveyors* (1972).

world, where she can maintain her identity. But redness reflects the colours of Autumn, a time to be seized as it is still not "congealed", it is not yet "dead" (TS 9).

> No doubt this is the moment Alice ought to seize. Now is the time for her to come on stage herself. With her violet, violated eyes. Blue *and red*. Eyes that recognize the right side, the wrong side, and the other side: the blur of deformation; the black or white of a loss of identity. (TS 10)

I suggest that Irigaray is describing a moment in which, via the blurring of blue and red, by *making* violet, Alice can become herself both inside and out, and, at the same time. Violet may well be the colour of Irigaray's concept of becoming, which Margaret Whitford describes as "being in the feminine" (PIF 47). While this idea refers to the way in which women can become via a reconfiguration of the symbolic order, it also refers to a way of thinking about a transformation of western culture, one that moves beyond the narcissistic repetition of historical acts (32). Becoming is an important idea behind the novel because it relates not only to Alice Sloan's character, but also to the return of the Aboriginal remains. This event breaks away from the colonial restrictions of Australian cultural narcissism and Alice is a central character in the exchange. In relation to 'The Broken Hold', I can now see that the colour violet might be a metaphor for Alice's transformation as well as for the possibility of cultural change.

Considering that narcissism is what confines Katherine, the nature of the violet represents the way in which she transgresses this world-view. Through her death she is ultimately defined by capture. However, I used the wreck of the *Violet* to provide a symbolic ladder between her submersion and the external world. Lispector writes that the violet "says frivolous things that cannot be said" (46). Instead of meaning "carefree and not serious" ("frivolous" def.2), I take Lispector's use of frivolous to mean that what the violet has to say "has no purpose or value" ("frivolous" def.1) within the world to which it speaks. But when the world is opened in some way, for example through the recovery of the wreck, then other things may be revealed and created in that space. My initial research was into the ways that violets represent *jouissance*, a kind of endless repetition of the losses of the past. However, further investigation of the meanings behind Clarice Lispector's quotation enabled me to develop Katherine's character and consequently move

the novel's focus from the idea of narcissistic return to a story that looks towards the future, or the horizon.

Chapter three
Whiteness: depicting the invisible

the archaeologist is digging up, not things, but people…

(Muckelroy 240)
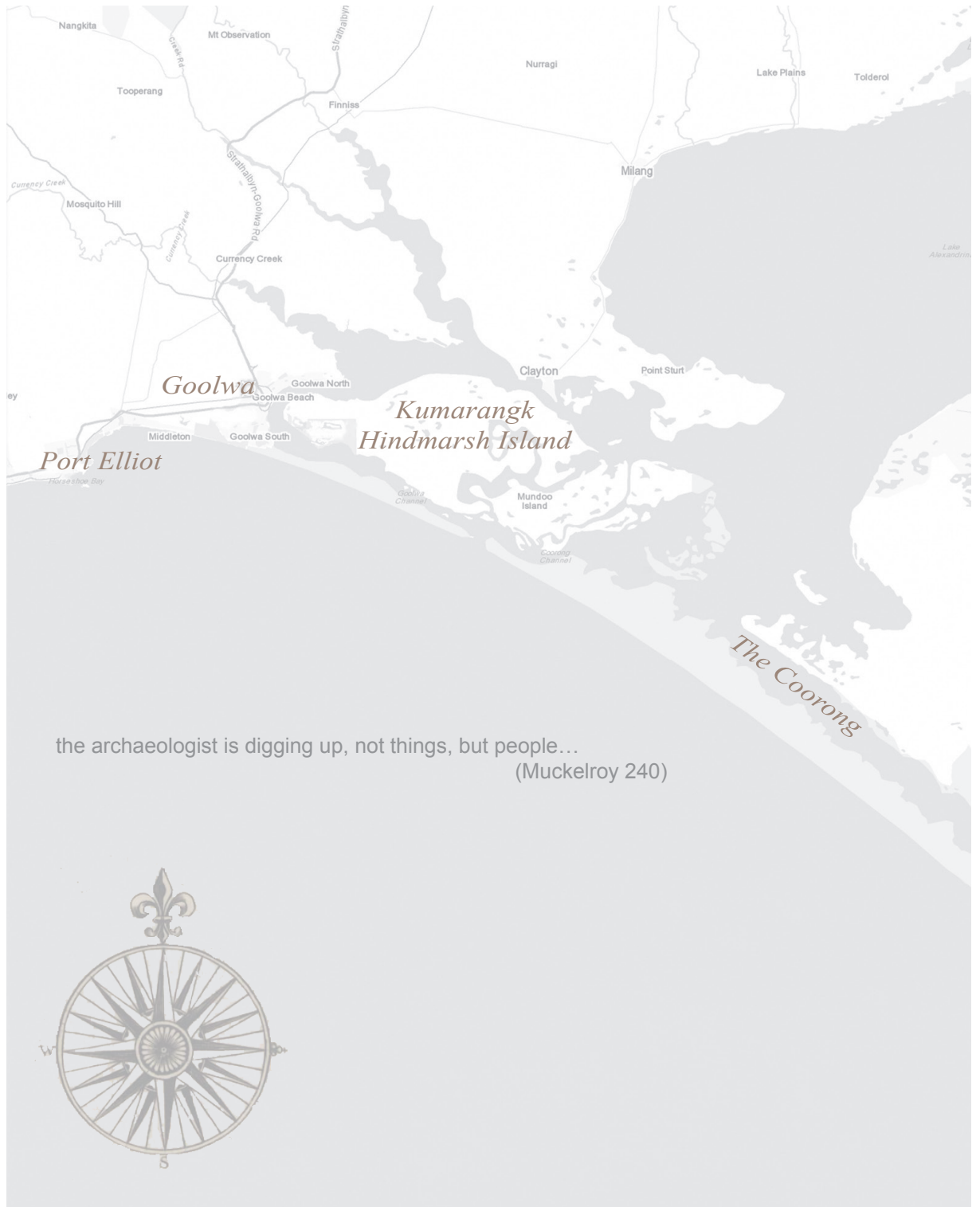
Chapter three

Whiteness: depicting the invisible

As a work of fiction, 'The Broken Hold' explores the impact of narcissistic capture through the relationships of its characters, while commenting, via the plot, on how narcissistic capture operates in a broader social context, especially within Australia. The first two chapters of this exegesis have explored the world(s) of the novel and its two main characters. This chapter explores the novel's most significant story strand, which begins when Katherine discovers the remains of an Aboriginal woman buried under the wreck of the *Violet*. This fictional event is set within the context of what became known as the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair, the real and relatively recent battle over the validity of Ngarrindjeri women's spiritual beliefs in relation to the island. While the fictional story takes precedence in the novel, the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair sits underneath as a symbol of 'whiteness'. In this chapter I use Critical Whiteness Studies to illustrate the relationship between narcissism and colonization and, in doing so, I discuss my intention to depict whiteness as a 'visible' element in the novel. I look at the connection between the fictional event in 'The Broken Hold' and the real event of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair. In addition, I explore why and how I incorporated the use of real documents, such as the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act (1984)*. I also address my consultative process and explain why I chose to write 'The Broken Hold' from non-Aboriginal characters' points of view.

Since its beginnings in the 1990s, as a critical response to the 'Hansonite' concern over border control (Brewster, Jensen, Russo 1), "[a] second wave of whiteness studies is now taking place, with scholars engaging in a deeper discussion of its premises and about the relationality of its [theoretical] borders" (4). Especially relevant to the continuing conversation is the work of Aileen Moreton-Robinson. In 2004 Moreton-Robinson connected the process of colonisation to the theory of 'whiteness', asserting that "[w]hiteness establishes the limits of what can be known about the other through itself, disappearing beyond or behind the limits of this knowledge it creates in the other's name" (75). Objectifying difference is something colonization, and therefore whiteness, shares with narcissism. For narcissism, objectification is achieved by transforming subjects into self-objects and for colonization it occurs by defining difference via racial categorization or 'othering'. Moreton-Robinson describes how, through the process of othering,

whiteness, as a way of knowing, gets away without deconstructing itself. She writes:

> Representations of the Indigenous 'other' have circulated in white Anglo discourse since the 1700s. The most infamous was that given by Cook, who stated that the Indigenous people of Australia had no form of land tenure because they were uncivilised, which meant the land belonged to no one and was available for possession under the doctrine of *terra nullius*. This representation of the Indigenous other as the nomad justified dispossession. Since then we have been represented in many ways, which include treacherous, lazy, drunken, childish, cunning, dirty, ignoble, noble, primitive, backward, unscrupulous, untrustworthy and savage. These apparently uncomplicated representations mask not only the complexity of Indigeneity but also their role as a set of differences that work to assist the constitution of whiteness as an epistemological a priori that informs one's ontology. As a categorical object, race is deemed to belong to the other. This has resulted in many theories about race being blind to whiteness. (76)

Moreton-Robinson traces how whiteness embodies the concept of the universal human, which defines 'other', through a process of racial categorization, as somewhere between what is human and what is animal. As a priori to this system of 'knowing', whiteness remains hidden, beyond theorisation and critique, while Aboriginality as the study of race is "deemed a valid discursive practice" (81,82).

In *Beyond White Guilt*, Sarah Maddison argues that denial, or blindness to white guilt, about the treatment of Aboriginal people (past and present) is responsible for the way in which contemporary Australian culture upholds the colonial version of our identity. Fiona McAllan describes the origins of this identity making in relation to the possession of land.

> The nation's communities have historically been organised within homogenising forces in which each successive government's projection of a shared national vision of 'Australianness' retains its colonially derived foundation. The assumption of Crown ownership of this country initiated this process of possession that positions individuals as participants in the property-based economy that began at 'settlement'. (36)

McAllan quotes Moreton-Robinson who "argues that 'possessive logic works ideologically to naturalise the nation as a white possession" (35, 36).

Moreton-Robinson, McAllan and Maddison all describe a way of governing that works akin to narcissism. For example, whiteness and narcissism operate in the world as if they are the centre. Both are self-referential without being self-examined. They are 'blind': incapable of recognizing other as separate and equal. Instead they objectify others, as something that is a useful/consumable possession, something that can be assimilated, or something that threatens and is therefore discarded, or annihilated. In terms of whiteness, annihilation comes by defining other as less than human, or unhuman. While othering sets whiteness apart from Aboriginality, it is not a tool with which to understand difference, but to put and keep colonial (and self) objects in their place. In this chapter I use the term whiteness to refer to a colonial form of narcissistic capture. This is because whiteness helps to explain a number of choices I made while writing the novel. For example, whiteness informs the connections between the fictional and real events in the novel, especially with regard to the inclusion of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair. It relates to the development of Barton (and the issues that stem from his decision to keep the remains) and it is equally relevant to my portrayal of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal characters.

In *Well, I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television* Marcia Langton writes that "the particulars of Australian and Aboriginal history and culture are stuff of cultural production and of the way we create signs for seeing each other" (36). Langton asserts the need for intersubjectivity in this process, noting that "Aboriginality arises from the subjective experience of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who engage in any intercultural dialogue, whether in actual lived experience or through a mediated experience such as a white person watching a program about Aboriginal people on television or reading a book" (79). Langton describes the process of 'identity' production in Australia with specific reference to the way in which meaning is created through intertextuality. Langton explains that Aboriginality "is a field of intersubjectivity in that it is remade [via cultural production] over and over again in a process of dialogue, of imagination, of representation and interpretation" (32, 33). It is not only the way in which individual works, such as films and novels, speak to us of how we see each other, but the way in which these texts incorporate elements of one another, and how viewers of these texts bring with them their understandings of representations depicted in other works. If we expand this idea to include the construct of whiteness we can see how whiteness may shift

and change depending on the context it is depicted in and what readings those contexts illuminate. In part, the intention of 'The Broken Hold' and of this exegesis, is to contribute to the process of cultural production in ways that resonate with Marcia Langton's views on intersubjectivity. Rather than focusing on how I have depicted 'other' as the 'valid discursive practice', I want to explore my attempt in the novel to represent the impact of whiteness, by making whiteness visible.

In 'The Broken Hold', the Aboriginal woman's remains are brought up with the wreck and Barton, the director of the British shipping company that funds the expedition, decides to keep them. Despite the fact that at the time of the ship's recovery the repatriation of Aboriginal remains from the United Kingdom to Aboriginal peoples is underway, Barton plans to include the remains in an exhibition in the foyer of his new London headquarters, as a nod to frontier times. Barton embodies a similar kind of narcissism discussed in chapter one in relation to the Queen of Hearts in *Alice's Adventures*. In Wonderland, the Queen of Hearts colonises subjects by transforming them into self-objects. Under this narcissistic world-view, self-objects either remain useful and desirable or become threatening and are annihilated. However, unlike the Queen of Hearts, Barton does not physically appear in the story. He is only ever referred to by other characters. In this way, I thought about Barton's character in relation to "the voice of God" narration that occurred in traditional documentary film making, in which the male narrator was an invisible source of authority (Nichols 17). Like the voice of God in film, which has often been critiqued for its colonial position, Barton represents a disembodied, yet powerful, colonial rule. His belief, that the Aboriginal woman's remains are his, reflects older colonial practices of possession. Through the use of real documents from the Australian Parliament, Barton's character is able to mirror the Crown's original assumptions of ownership.

In my novel, the developers of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge represent a similar version of invisible whiteness, especially in regard to Australia's property-based economy. The bridge is physically depicted in 'The Broken Hold', but like Barton the developers are only referred to: they remain out of frame, as it were. However, their presence is felt. Similar to the concept of 'post-colonial haunting' the developers' invisibility (along with

Barton's) symbolizes the reoccurring (dis)possession of Aboriginal land and culture under the auspices of Australian law.[1]

In real life, the developers proposed the building of a bridge across the waters between Goolwa and Hindmarsh Island, to enable expansion of their Hindmarsh Island Marina (1994). Ngarrindjeri women called for the banning of the bridge under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act (1984)*, because the proposed site was of significance to their beliefs. This began a long legal battle that included a Royal Commission (1995) into the validity of the Ngarrindjeri women's claims. The Royal Commission found the women to be fabricators. The Matthews Inquiry (1995) was a response to this finding and Dr Doreen Kartinyeri chose me for the job of filming the proponent women's evidence, some of which would be restricted.[2] The Matthews Inquiry was deemed to have no legal standing. However, "details in the *Mathews Report* discredit[ed] the Stevens Royal Commission conclusions" (Owen, par. 5). Several years after working on the Matthews Inquiry, Dr Kartinyeri approached me about making a documentary to tell the proponent women's side of the story. This was particularly important for Dr Kartinyeri because at that time the media, and therefore the general public, were mainly of the opinion that the women had fabricated their relationship to the island. In the research and scriptwriting stages I worked very closely with Dr Kartinyeri and Sandra Saunders, Director of the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement in South Australia (1989-1997). In 2000 we received funding to make the documentary *Kumarangk – 5214* for the SBS Independent's series, *Postcards*. Our film was titled after the Ngarrindjeri name for Hindmarsh Island and the postcode of the Goolwa area in which the island is situated. During the filming I also worked with several other female elders and numerous female members of the Ngarrindjeri community. In the documentary women spoke of their connection to Kumarangk, of the stories that had been passed onto them from their elders, and of the importance of not covering the waters between the island and

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[1] Post-colonial haunting can refer to the hidden ways in which colonialism plays out in contemporary society, especially in one such as Australia that, for the most part, sees itself as having transitioned away from its colonial past.

[2] Dr Doreen Kartinyeri was the primary author of what came to be known as the 'secret envelopes', which contained restricted information about Ngarrindjeri women's business in relation to Hindmarsh Island. As Margaret Simmons explains in *The Meeting of the Waters* the contents of these envelopes were sent with the [Cheryl] Saunders Report to Sean McLaughlin, Robert Tickner's ministerial advisor. However, they were accidently delivered to the office of Ian McLachlan, the Shadow Minister for the Environment, who tabled the information in parliament in 1995 (275-278).

the mainland with a permanent structure. They also spoke of the history of the bridge proposal, the painful consequences of women's business being tabled in parliament and the findings of the Royal Commission. In 2000 the developers sought compensation for financial losses as a result of the Federal Minster for Aboriginal Affair's ban on the building of the bridge (1994). However, in 2001 Justice von Doussa found against the developers. His findings state:

> The evidence received by the Court on this topic is significantly different to that which was before the Royal Commission. Upon the evidence before this Court I am not satisfied that the restricted women's knowledge was fabricated or that it was not part of genuine Aboriginal tradition. (von Doussa, par. 12)

By the time von Doussa's judgment was passed, the bridge had already been built. During the making of *Kumarangk – 5214* we filmed on the Goolwa wharf, the ferry and Hindmarsh Island itself. During that time the bridge was well underway and on the occasions that Dr Kartinyeri was present she avoided looking at the structure. Instead she looked away, out over the waters. She did this to 'give the bridge her back', and I believe it was also a way for her to ease the pain that its construction was causing her. The work I did with Dr Kartinyeri has had lasting effects. Traversing the years between, it has influenced the development of 'The Broken Hold'.

However, writing the novel did not start with the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair in mind. There were a number of factors that motivated me to include the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair in the novel and I discuss them here in chronological order. Early in the process of writing the story I was conscious of finding ways to depict the impact of colonisation with particular reference to the coast, as the sea was in the forefront of developing the main character. During the early stages I spoke with Sandra Saunders and Dr Deane Fergie about white writers representing Aboriginal people and experience in fiction. While they spoke about the risks, they agreed on the importance of telling stories about black and white Australia by black and white Australians.

In 2009, while writing the first draft, I went on a research trip to the Western Australian Museum - Maritime (WAMM). I had specifically gone there to spend time in the WAMM's Materials Conservation Department to research maritime object conservation for the development of the main character. The days I spent with the object

conservation team not only gave me an overview of the way in which a team works on the recovery and conservation of wrecks and objects, it also enabled me to discuss the philosophy of maritime archaeology. I had a conversation with Alex Kilpa that became very influential in the development of the novel's plot. Alex was working as a member of the conservation team, as well as being engaged in a Masters in Materials Conservation at Melbourne University. Alex explained that there are few Aboriginal people working in an industry that 'looks after' many objects of Aboriginal cultural significance. To his knowledge, no Aboriginal person had been employed in Materials Conservation. We also spoke in more general terms about the practice of conservation. We discussed the possible problems that the profession of object conservation might have with Aboriginal cultural objects. As a conservation practitioner, Alex felt that on the whole, priority had been given in his profession to the tangible aspects of an object (its treatment) and not necessarily to the aspects that were intangible, such as its spiritual elements.[3] In an unpublished essay for Melbourne University, Alex expressed his concern with the industry's overall lack of "cultural and ethical explanations…in preference for pure scientific and technical descriptions of an object's treatment" ('The Yin and Yang', 1). After talking with Alex, I began to imagine the story of the remains and to wonder what would become of them if their cultural significance were not acknowledged, or worse, were known and consciously disregarded. To add complexity, and to give early clues to the identity of the remains, I imagined that a piece of weaving had survived, buried under the sediment inside the cavity of the pelvis. The weaving I imagined was a sister basket, which is particular to Ngarrindjeri culture. I was able to pitch these ideas to a few employees of the conservation team who confirmed that, given the right set of circumstances, it could be possible for weaving to survive.

In the first draft I included the discovery of the sister basket and I wrote about archival photographs of this basket in relation to the main character's research. However, I was very concerned with how to represent Ngarrindjeri people and culture, especially because of the nature of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair and I chose not to be specific. I did not mention the remains belonging to a particular group. When Sandra Saunders read

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[3] In a more recent discussion, Alex spoke about how these approaches are changing in relation to museums and maritime archaeology. In an email to me he referred to a speech by Dr. Dawn Casey (Director of the Powerhouse Museum) who described museums overall as places that need to include the views of minority groups ('Re: Important Clarifications'[2] Kilpa, par. 2).

the first draft she asked me why I hadn't mentioned Ngarrindjeri people and culture, when clearly that was what I was writing about. I explained that I was still unsure if I should or shouldn't. From her point of view that choice seemed 'hidden' instead of specific. Why not name it, if that is what you are writing about? From Sandra's perspective what I was doing was respectful and I would continue to consult with her as the manuscript developed.

After the second draft I worked with Judith Lukin-Amundsen. As mentioned in chapter one, one of our discussions concluded that I had two stories competing for priority. In a sense they were cancelling each other out. Eliminating one of those narrative strands meant that there was room to explore the story I had decided to keep, and that was the discovery of the Aboriginal woman's remains. By this stage I had named the remains and the weaving as Ngarrindjeri, but the Hindmarsh Island bridge was still an unexplored aspect of the story. Around the same time I realized that I had relied on a convenient (and unlikely) way of determining the provenance of the remains via DNA testing. I began to investigate how I could depict this more realistically. I had already spoken with Dr Kathryn Powell, a forensic-anthropologist, who was able to explain to me how bones could be easily determined as male or female via the shape of the pelvis. Kathryn directed me to a couple of people working in the field of bio-archaeology, including Dr Donald Pate, Professor of Archaeology at Flinders University. I learned that around the time of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair, Pate and his team were working with the South Australian Museum (SAM) to determine the provenance of the remains of approximately ninety Aboriginal people in the SAM collection. This was part of an on-going repatriation process with Aboriginal peoples from South Australia, including Ngarrindjeri people (Pate, Brodie and Owen).

For me, the SAM had other resonances. During the Royal Commission employees of the SAM, anthropologists Philip Clarke and Philip Jones, gave evidence against Ngarrindjeri women's spiritual beliefs in relation to the island, "arguing that the Ngarrindjeri women's business was a recent invention" (qtd. in Hemming 64). During the von Doussa case, Clarke's diaries were subpoenaed and they were found to contain evidence that he had invented and circulated the fabrication theory. Von Doussa found that:

His [Philip Clarke's] diaries show that he was the originator of the fabrication theory, and that he thereafter embarked on a course to undermine and discredit Dr Fergie and

her opinion, at times attributing blame for the fabrication to Dr Fergie, [and] Mr Hemming… (von Doussa, par. 373)

In 'Objects and Specimens', Steve Hemming, a former curator working with the Aboriginal collections in the SAM, writes about why he left the museum after the Hindmarsh Island events. "In many ways, this experience clarified my understanding of the political functions of museums and in some cases, their continuing, colonising relationship with indigenous Australia" (64). In his article Hemming describes the Australian Aboriginal Cultures Gallery (AACG) of the SAM (opened in 2001 and curated by Philip Clarke and Philip Jones). In the AACG "Non-Indigenous visitors meet their old friends: the boomerangs and spears that have long stood as symbols of Aboriginal culture in Australia – symbols of the 'primitive other' that underpin a symbol of whiteness" (65). As an institution of knowledge, the SAM reinforces how whiteness is blind to the power it has to define others. "There may be multiple voices in the AACG, but it is the dispassionate, scientific, curatorial voice that dominates and directs the story. This voice remains unidentified, masked, naturalised and authoritative" (Hemming 66).[4]

In my novel, I wanted to explore this kind of disregard for difference. Characters such as Barton were developing into fictional symbols of whiteness, and the inclusion of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair meant I could also present a real event in which the impact of whiteness occurred around issues of land ownership, Aboriginal culture and spirituality. By contextualising the novel within the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair, I was attempting, in part, to make visible the ways whiteness is privileged by the laws of a country that asserts itself as being "a community of equals, joined in shared struggle and blessed by equal opportunities" (Maddison 23) when clearly it continues to operate with whiteness as its a priori.

In many ways the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair has been silenced, or made invisible, and I wanted to refer to such an historical event in a fictional context as a way of illustrating how whiteness gets away with it. I was able to use the *Historic Shipwrecks Act*

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[4] The combined knowledge of Pate's work (in the area of repatriation) and the work of Clarke and Jones (as museum curators and 'experts' in the area of Aboriginal culture), exemplified to me the paradox of colonial institutions. The two disparate approaches co-exist, illustrating how institutions such as the museum operate towards reconciliation while at the same time functioning under firmly entrenched colonial ideologies. In relation to the novel the SAM symbolizes this paradox.

(1976) and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act* in order to support Barton's ambition to do just that.

Australian maritime archaeologists and object conservators work to a code of ethics that is enforced by the *Historic Shipwrecks Act*. In 'Introducing maritime archaeology', Keith Muckelroy explains that archaeology, overall, is not the study of objects simply for themselves; "the archaeologist is digging up, not things, but people" (24). What Muckelroy means by this is that archaeology is not concerned with the object's value as a thing, but the value of objects in relation to human society. He goes on to explain that "[m]aritime archaeology is concerned with all aspects of maritime culture, not just technical matters, but also social, economic, political, religious, and a host of other aspects" (24). Treasure hunters on the other hand are interested in being able to profit from their finds. For example, it is legal to sell such artefacts on the market and it is accepted that some auction houses knowingly sells treasure hunted objects, but there are questions around whether or not these kinds of transactions are ethical (Anderson).[5] Maritime archaeologists would describe Barton as a treasure hunter: in other words, unethical and self-serving. However, he is able to operate for the most part within the law, and this is something his character shares with the developers of the Hindmarsh Island bridge. In regard to the way law operates in Australia McAllan states:

> From the earliest settler contact, indigenous peoples have been denied their very different law and land relations, which recognise belonging 'to' rather than 'possessing' land… Colonial Australian law, organised within the overarching structure of ownership in the Crown, created a fixed relation with the land and capital, dispossessing the original occupants and relegating them to the outer fringes of the 'Australian' community. (37)

McAllan argues that Australian common law is still set up to maintain non-Indigenous rights while dispossessing Aboriginal people. She writes:

> …as white law assumes indigenous law is constituted through a normative system

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[5] According to Cos Coroneos "[t]he essence of any discussion on ethics and maritime archaeology is about value. The value of a shipwreck is understood in terms of how much individual items can be sold for, or the value of a shipwreck as it relates to grappling with understandings of our humanity and its contribution towards the refining of a cultural identity" (111-112).

made up of a collective body of conforming people, it misses how traditional laws are: "intrinsic to an inter-substantiation of human ancestral beings and land. Indigenous people are the human manifestations of land carrying title to land through and on their bodies [Moreton-Robinson, qtd. in McAllan 39]". (39)

I think these are important connections to make in relation to 'The Broken Hold'. By addressing the difference between the ownership and possession of land and the nature of dispossession, McAllan and Moreton-Robinson both refer to land and people as being interconnected. Chronologically speaking, the first act of dispossession in 'The Broken Hold' is when the captain of the *Violet* takes the Aboriginal woman from the mainland. This act is reiterated in the present through Barton's assumption that he has the right to take the remains of the same woman, and the weaving, back to Britain. Barton's lawyer is able to find real loop holes in both the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act* and the *Historic Shipwrecks Act* that would allow Barton to get away with exporting the remains to England, with the only likely consequence being a fine for not informing the Australian coroner of the discovery of the remains.

During the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair the Howard Government passed an amendment to the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act.* The amendment, the *Hindmarsh Island Bridge Act (1997)*, meant that no one could make an application for the protection of the area proposed for the bridge. In short, it made "Provisions facilitating construction etc. of the bridge" (The Parliament of Australia 4). While this event is not written in the text of 'The Broken Hold', my knowledge of it supports how I have imagined the way in which Barton is able to 'bend' the rules, or more correctly, 'use' the rules, to his advantage. History, and the recent past have proven that the laws of whiteness have enabled the dispossession of land, with specific relation to Aboriginal women's knowledge, spirituality and bodies. Barton's position is granted by way of the rights that whiteness brings him and he is protected by the laws that whiteness maintains.

For example, under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act* it is legal for international companies to recover, at their own expense, ships of theirs that have been wrecked in Australian waters. Due to the cost involved very little is brought up these days in the name of maritime archaeology (Anderson). However, I was told an anecdote during my research about P&O funding a costly recovery of a ship expecting to find gold (Staniforth).

Apparently there was none. This meant that it was feasible to expect that another company might do the same. In 'The Broken Hold', Barton is initially after gold, but when his team fails to recover any, the Aboriginal woman's remains become his 'prize' possession. While the maritime archaeologists I spoke with thought it unlikely that in the time that 'The Broken Hold' is set someone would imagine taking Aboriginal bones away from Australia, they were talking about how they work, which as I mentioned is to a code of ethics. Barton's character does not behave in this way and it was my challenge to make his behaviour a feasible proposition in the novel.

The wharf area on which the Hindmarsh Island bridge was built was redeveloped not long after the bridge itself was completed. Even though the development occurred after von Doussa's judgement there was still no agreement in place between Ngarrindjeri people and the Alexandrina Council to negotiate development on Ngarrindjeri land/Crown land with regard to heritage issues. During excavations for the foundations of the Goolwa Wharf, Ngarrindjeri elder, Tom Trevorrow sent a Ngarrindjeri person to oversee the digs (Hemming and Trevorrow 307). About one month after excavations began, the remains of an Aboriginal woman and child were unearthed in the banks of the mainland. The development was halted. Tom Trevorrow explains that prior to the development the local council were warned that they would be digging into Aboriginal heritage. Trevorrow says that after the find the Alexandrina Council "realized then that they had been caught out and it put them in an embarrassing situation. So, we said 'now because you have done this, isn't it time that you sit down around the table with Ngarrindjeri people and recognise us, and we put in place an agreement and recognition so that this type of thing doesn't happen again?'" (307). This agreement was signed on the 8th of October 2002. Considering governments' inability to recognise Ngarrindjeri people's real and pressing heritage concerns I do not think it is a long shot to imagine a character such as Barton acting with a similar sense of entitlement at the time in which the novel is set. In Barton's defence, the fictional manner in which the bones are 'buried' means they are not protected under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act*. And, under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act*, there are no specifications to ensure that Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal bones are dealt with in specific ways. Barton can claim ownership of the bones under his wreck because they are older than seventy-five years and therefore classified as relics. Barton is free from legal responsibility. And, as I explain in the novel, repatriation is not

mandatory; rather it is an international agreement set up between countries to enable the return of remains.

In some aspects 'The Broken Hold' is a story about Aboriginal experience. And yet, Aboriginal experience is not represented from Aboriginal people's points of view. Instead, I decided to tell the narrative from the perspectives of non-Aboriginal characters whose views vary according to how they position themselves in relation to Aboriginal people. While I think it is possible for white writers to write from inside a black person's point of view, and vice versa, it was important in the context of 'The Broken Hold' not to do that. The main reason for this was because during the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair the media controlled Aboriginal women's voices. The women were portrayed as fanatical activists who were fabricating their connection to the island and their own voices were often heard in a manipulated fashion or not at all. As a result I chose not to write from 'inside' Aboriginal perspectives. Instead, I decided to write from the perspective of non-Aboriginal characters whose 'knowing' comes from positions of whiteness and to show how that knowing might operate differently within particular characters' points of view. As such, colonial narcissistic capture and, perhaps less malevolently, ignorance, play out through the actions of non-Aboriginal characters, making whiteness visible.

Sandra Saunders has read drafts that contextualise the story during the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair and make connections between that event and the fictional event of repatriating the remains found under the wreck. We have had several discussions about character; for example, Sandra was unsure if Snap (a male character) should accompany the female characters who are involved in the return of the remains. After rereads and further discussions we decided that he was the only character who was able to do so. It is significant in the context of this story that when the bones are returned, the act of moving them from white to black 'possession' is carried out by women. Snap in this sense is supporting from the outside, without having to own, or know, the interaction that occurs between the female characters. Regardless of gender, however, the reader has access to this exchange. This could represent the complexities that surround the issues of representation, or, now that I am faced with it, perhaps it represents my position of whiteness, in that as a writer I have made it available.[6]

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[6] In her discussion about white writers and scholars engaging in the theory of whiteness, Anne Brewster asserts "even if we can stand outside our whiteness intellectually, whiteness is something we cannot easily, if ever, divest ourselves of. Nonetheless, the defamiliarisation of whiteness can enable a recognition of our

Eliminating a main story strand, including the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Affair and incorporating the bio-archaeological information required further research, writing and a major restructure. In this process the recovery of the Aboriginal woman's remains became a means through which whiteness could be represented. The question that Katherine faces, to conserve the bones for Barton, or to return them to Daphne Ellis, explores the role that whiteness and post-colonial institutions play in determining the rightful ownership of Aboriginal 'artefacts'. When Barton's team includes Katherine's ex-husband, Gerard Sloan, Katherine's position is further challenged. Her death is caused by her rejection of the professional agreement with which she is ideologically at odds, and because she resists giving over her professional identity to Gerard. I chose this ending for Katherine because I wanted to symbolize the extent to which whiteness, and therefore narcissistic capture, will go in order to maintain its position. Ultimately, Katherine is annihilated for acting toward the kind of intersubjectivity that Marcia Langton describes, as well as for positioning herself as an equal player in intersubjective relations with Gerard and her colleagues. Despite this, I wanted the conclusion of the novel to suggest that both kinds of intersubjectivity are possible, and this is what the final chapter of my exegesis is concerned with.

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embeddedness within a racialised hierarchy and allow for the possibility of reworking the intense affect of a shamed and traumatised whiteness and of refashioning our ethics of relationality. I don't want to suggest, therefore, that the indigene can deliver us from whiteness but that the alterity of indigeneity interrupts and refunctions whiteness by reminding us of our own otherness" (par. 25).

Chapter four
Recovery

For there is no peril greater than the sea. Everything is
constantly moving and remains eternally in flux. Hence with
a thawing wind, bad fortune arrives. As well as salvation.

(Irigaray Marine Lover, 37)
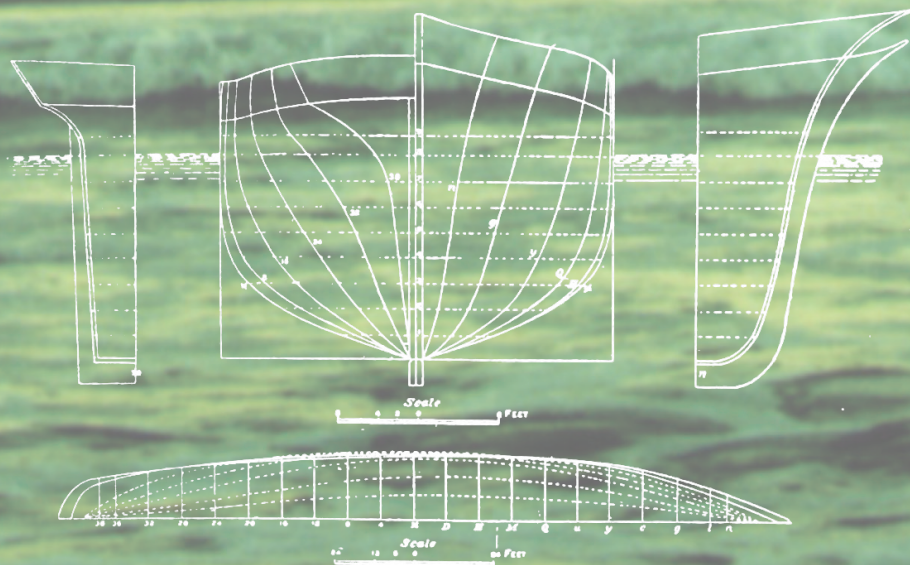
Chapter four

Recovery

Overall, 'The Broken Hold' and this exegesis consider the possibility of recovering from narcissistic capture. Or the possibility of becoming. So, in the end, what does recovery in this context mean? Maritime archaeologists often use the term recovery to describe the process of exhuming and conserving shipwrecks and/or any objects found in association with a wreck. Generally speaking, maritime objects are not restored; they are conserved in ways that recognize the scars of their survival. Once conserved these objects are arguably halted in their process of degradation. However, the process allows for the object to have become something different. Similarly, recovery from narcissistic capture does not result in "a return to a normal state" ("recover" def. 2). It too calls for change.

While 'The Broken Hold' is informed by classical paradigms for character change, its content attempts to address questions of social change, including the possibility of recovering from the powers of whiteness. The idea that change requires space in order to occur is not new and the manner in which these spaces are described and applied varies across disciplines. This chapter touches on the concept of 'thirdspace' in relation to the 'The Broken Hold' and looks at how these ideas come to answer my overall research question.

Derrida describes imagination as "enlightening… the locus of fiction" and "a place of mediation – especially in Kant where imagination is precisely the third term" (TFS 5).[1] Derrida describes his version of the third as "the place where the system does not close" (5) and he is referring to the way imagination, or imaginative works, can participate in the system, for example, of western culture, while at the same time avoid participating by evading assimilation. I think what Derrida is saying is that while imagination reflects on, or responds to the system, it is not owned or defined by it. Generally speaking, Derrida's idea applies to the way in which novels, as a form, have the capacity to reflect, or respond to the world in which we live. I have related his idea to the content of 'The Broken Hold'. In my novel the system, or the overarching world that I aimed to create, is that of

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[1] David Hume describes Kant's use of imagination as an explanation of what grounds us in our experience of the world, mediating between sensibility and intellect (487). Derrida's 'mediation' might then refer to the role imagination has in creating a third term from which dominant and non-mainstream societies might perceive the world differently and together. Perhaps Derrida's version of imagination mediates between what exists in the present and the possibility of what is to come, much like Irigaray's becoming.

narcissistic capture and whiteness. Characters such as Katherine and Alice, Daphne and Snap, work on the outskirts of this system, navigating its dominance in order to assert their differences.

Many argue that working on the margins comes out of necessity, as resistance to the dominant world, or culture. In *Thirdspace* Edward W. Soja uses the work of bell hooks to illustrate the idea of 'radical openness' and the 'politics of location.' This space is located on the margins of dominant culture; the edge, for hooks, being the place of risk (84). Similar to Derrida's ideas about imagination, the margins participate in the system while operating from the outside. For hooks, it is a space in which to revise the cultural formation of Afro-American identity and in turn the formation of whiteness (85). It is also a space that allows for the connecting up of more than one subjectivity at once. hooks' thirdspace helps to locate where and how Katherine, in particular, revises her ideas about cultural identity, especially Aboriginality and whiteness. However, while Katherine's revision occurs on the edge, that is, outside the constraints of Barton and Gerard, it is important that her part in intersubjectivity takes place on "common ground" (Langton 'Nations', par.2).

In her lecture 'The Nations of Australia' Marcia Langton said, "The purpose of Australians who support Reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians is to find common ground for our respective membership of this nation beyond the old prejudices and beliefs of the frontier culture" (par. 27). Common ground is a space for us to create a shared version of each other in Australia. Similarly, when discussing the representations of identity in film, (the portrayal of Aboriginality and perhaps therefore non-Aboriginality) Langton describes the "artistic interventions" of some film makers "where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people engage in actual dialogue… in these inter-subjective exchanges, the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals involved test imagined models of the other, repeatedly adjusting the models as responses are processed to find some satisfactory way of comprehending the other" (WIHI 82-83).

In relation to 'The Broken Hold', Katherine's ignorance of Aboriginal people and the fact that she is captured in a professional role that does not promote knowing otherwise is her greatest challenge. Retrospectively, Langton's 'testing' gives me a way to think about the extent to which Katherine has the capacity to change through revising her comprehension of the other and therefore herself. Gerard, on the other hand, is incapable of

re-evaluation; he reflects the narcissistic subject's refusal to accept difference and therefore the inability to change.

The inability to find new ways of being in relation to others became as important to the conclusion of the novel as change did. In 'Irigaray and the Culture of Narcissism' Margaret Whitford relates Irigaray's use of narcissism to Freud's death drive. "What it means in practice is that 'nothing new happens' as [Irigaray] puts it succinctly; history is repetition; there is an 'almost fatal repetition at the cultural level'. Narcissism here is the instinctive hostility to anything new or different or other than self" (ICN 32). Whitford explains that in psychoanalysis an individual can only make developments if they are engaged with another mind. She explains, "failure to make that contact, or inadequate and unsatisfactory contact, gives rise to destructive pathology" (ICN 32). "Nothing new happens" (ICN 32) is a reminder of a fixed and self-referential position that makes engagement between subjects impossible. This idea is depicted in the novel through Barton and Gerard's characters and the symbolism of the Hindmarsh Island bridge.

According to Margaret Whitford, becoming provides a third element in the relationship between patriarchal systems of knowledge and the place women are allocated within such culture (PIF 47-52). Whitford quotes Irigaray. "[Love] may be the motor of becoming which allows each its own growth…each one must keep its body autonomous. Neither should be the source of the other" (166). In 'Irigaray And The Divine', Elizabeth Grosz illustrates how Irigaray uses the concept of the divine to suggest an alternative image for women to identify with in Western culture. This image is located in a new genre or a horizon. As a space for women outside the constraints of social function, it offers a goal to look towards; a way to become 'autonomous'. The idea works in contrast to narcissism and it connotes a form of change as well as intersubjectivity. As a development from her work on gender difference, Irigaray's later work is concerned with difference as it relates to the idea of 'circulation' or a particular kind of 'exchange' (Grosz).[7] For Irigaray circulation between subjects "comes in the economy of the gift", the idea being that one

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[7] Fiona McAllan uses the idea of *partage* to discuss relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as a form of exchange. "Following Jean Luc Nancy, an unconditional community accepts that subjects are not fixed identities but are always reconstituting in relation to each other. Difference is the finitude or limit that each individual shares with the other. Contrary to a self-determinism, Nancy says there can be no 'I' but only 'we' because subjects constitute in relation with others. The only way to allow for an incommensurable subjective perspective is to mutually recognise this fundamental subject-to-subject relation. Nancy finds that in sharing this limit relation, finitude takes place as community. Being finite is 'being-in-common'. He sketches this relation as 'partage', which means both a partition and a partaking, or both a sharing and sharing out" (38).

can receive from the other "without loss to the self" (17). Grosz writes: "an economy of the gift may occur without the presumption of an underlying identity" and she describes this as "[a]n exchange that genuinely involves taking and giving, implies disparate identities, disparate needs, between which different gifts may circulate. These gifts have the capacity thus, not to endlessly defer the limitations of each position in the exchange circuit, but to help expand those limits" (17).

As a novel, I wanted 'The Broken Hold' to allow for an imaginary depiction of personal relationships that involves intersubjectivity. I worked towards contrasting this through representations of narcissistic capture, which included whiteness. If, as Moreton-Robinson argues, whiteness operates outside the study of race, it is perhaps in the deconstruction and re-representations of whiteness in cultural production that this change may occur. Likewise, Langton writes that "Aboriginality is not a fixed thing. It is created from our histories. It arises from the intersubjectivity of black and white in a dialogue" (WIHI 31). One of the aims I had in writing 'The Broken Hold' was to contribute to the kind of dialogue Langton describes.

Furthermore, I wanted the novel to be an exploration of the acceptance of difference. Even though the story is told through the voices of non-Aboriginal characters its aim is to depict the possibility of equal subjects working together in an act of exchange. As the main character, Katherine does the hard yards toward this act. Her efforts to face her own whiteness and her role in that system of knowing are what drive the story. However, when the Aboriginal woman's remains and the weaving are returned to Daphne, it is Alice who is able to participate in the exchange. This scene is set on a lake and the last lines of the novel describe Alice looking across the water to the horizon. In keeping with Irigaray's becoming, Alice can be seen to be looking toward a new genre of autonomy. And considering that the act of exchange has just taken place, the horizon itself could be seen to represent the ongoing nature of intersubjectivity. This suggests that recovery from narcissistic capture is possible, but that it requires imagining a place beyond capture; for example, 'air' in 'the clearing', or a thirdspace, in which to reform existing definitions of self and other that leave things open for further becoming.

Appendix

DVD of three short experimental films

       One: Capture

       Two: Lost Objects

       Three: Whiteness

NOTE:
The appendices are on a DVD included with the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

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