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**Can 'she' speak?
Spirituality in/through
psychology, feminisms, and feminist poststructuralism.**

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Abstract

In the context of women's exclusion from knowledge production and reproduction in psychology, this thesis is a reading of psychological, feminist and poststructuralist feminist texts for discursive resources that constitute spirituality. These readings informed my analysis of texts produced by 10 women. The analysis was focused on three questions: Do these texts reproduce the discourses identified in psychological, feminist or poststructuralist feminist accounts of spirituality? Are other discursive resources used, especially those which may be regarded as 'subjugated knowledges'? Do the subject positions constituted through the discourses realised in these texts, challenge the phallogocentric positioning of women at this local site of accounting for 'spiritual experience'? The discursive strategies used in analysis were informed by Parker's (1992) criteria for identifying discourses. The analysis focused on whether the women reproduced the discourses identified as they articulated their experiences of spirituality. Other discourses were identified. The discursive resources identified in the texts and their possibilities of transforming phallogocentrism are discussed.

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Preface: Embodied Desires

This story is a story of/in sexual difference, and stems from my desire to open up possibilities of recognising and transforming that which has been excluded, and/or excessive in knowledges which privilege the rational, coherent, unified subject of psychology. I write as a woman in an historical context of women's exclusion from the production of academic knowledges. As sexually specific subjects, women disappear from discourses of individualism, where experience is deferred from the discourses of knowledge to the realm of the personal (Woman). My desire stems from the complex interplay of inscribed bodies and ways of knowing that are not always able to be articulated. I, too, am caught in a language of abstraction, working through and with theories that historically constitute woman as lacking, invisible and silent. I am interested in articulations which are effective in enabling and constraining the production of speaking positions for women, what it means to be a woman within relations of social power which positions women as 'other'. The relationship between feminist discourses, psychology and poststructuralism remains problematic, while my writing style expresses my desire for a response, to bring out other voices, to enable other stories. It is more than a movement between alternatives, it is also an attempt to open up spaces of possibility for knowledges that are concealed, excluded, perhaps excessive.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Academic Exclusions

For in a perspective in which bodies and souls are seen as not simply constituted but also invested and *traversed* by relations of power-knowledge ... then what becomes possible in relation to 'women', special category in the catalogues of the human sciences, is something more than a history of 'construction': it is rather the possibility of a history of a strategic *specification* - a real one, productive perhaps not only of 'specificity' but also of its status as 'intrinsic' in fiction and in truth - and at the same time, a history of that in women which *defies* specification, which escapes its hold, the positively not specific, the unwomanly in history (Meaghan Morris, 1988, p.62).

Women have been excluded from knowledge production and reproduction within psychology. Psychology's history has been a history of male psychology where the masculine subject has come to represent all that is valued as positive: conscious, rational, visible, unified and (perhaps?) spiritual. Women's contributions to the discipline have (often) gone unrecognised or undervalued, appropriated or left invisible. Women's lives, experiences and interests have not only been excluded, but the lives, experiences and interests of men have been built on the silence/invisibility of women (Smith, 1988). Feminist contributions across disciplines have critiqued scientific knowledges which produce epistemological 'truth' claims as if they were ontological 'reality'. These critiques operate through the recognition of problematic relationships between these truth claims and women and women's bodies.

While feminist critiques focus on women, feminist theorists widely agree that women do not share a single personal narrative (Braidotti, 1994). Feminisms are, therefore, partial, limited, located in a particular position, and permeated by specific experiences and interests. Feminist discourses have questioned the principles and practices of psychology and other disciplines, recognising the social, political and historical relationships implicated in knowledge production and reproduction. Feminist discourses do not have established, relatively secure status in academic institutions.

There are conflicts between (some) feminist critiques of psychology and poststructuralism, tensions between stories of individual women and deconstructing the wider issues of women's exclusion from history (Burman, 1990). Perhaps these are the complexities of the territories, complexities of the category 'Woman'. The question of 'Woman' is related to problems of ontological and epistemological moments/movements and claims. While there may be agreement that patriarchy is ubiquitous, there is little agreement between feminisms as to whether a legitimate answer can be given to the 'Woman' question. As 'women' are discursively constructed differently and at different moments and in different situations, 'Woman' is an unstable category. This project recognises the complexity and instability of 'Woman' through acknowledging the partiality and limitation of the analysis it produces within the specific context of psychological discourse.

Within psychology, women's exclusion has taken many forms. Women have been excluded as practitioners of scientific knowledge through practices which make their limited, often isolated inclusion invisible, and the forms of invisibility which devalue 'feminine' principles, values and interests and privilege 'masculine' qualities remain the foundations of valid knowledges. While more women are being admitted as practitioners of science and while disciplinary histories are being rewritten to acknowledge the contributions of women, the task of revaluing the 'feminine' in the values and concerns of scientific knowledge remains problematic. Reversing 'masculine' principles does not provide an autonomous speaking position for women.

Women have not only been neglected as subjects of research (Unger, 1983), but have been excluded from data collection of research which then provides generic information about Man (Smith, 1988; Unger, 1983). Women's exclusion also has taken the form of collecting data from women, but analysed according to a particular position, namely male-dominated methodologies and interests (Squire, 1990; Harding, 1987; Unger, 1983). Where women do not appear as subjects in their own right, women's experiences become decontextualised. Another strategy of exclusion involves the manner in which experiences, behaviours or variables are

included. Texts which attempt to put women into discourse, often reproduce phallogentric positioning by using women as examples, often as victims, and are made 'special' examples, (re)positioned as 'other'.

Many feminist texts have raised questions about method, methodology and epistemology recognising particular social and historical relationships implicated in knowledge production and reproduction with some attempt to generate problematics from the lives, experiences, and interests of women (Harding, 1987). Attempts to write/speak a distinctively female epistemology do not provide an autonomous speaking position for women as 'she' is always already limited to difference.

Psychology's rational, stable, unitary subject depends on a language of male pronouns as referring to all people (Smith, 1988). It is a language of abstraction that constitutes women as lack, invisible, silent. It uses concepts of ahistorical, acultural, and generic human nature which constitute psychology's subject as a stable biological being. Natural and social realms remain separate, and practices which constitute female as nature reproduce women's exclusion. Women as nature links the 'feminine' with that which is excluded from knowing and reconstitutes 'her' as the object of knowledge. Where women occupy the position of nature, practices of universalism devalue 'feminine' principles and privilege the 'masculine' as foundations of valid knowledges. I can wish not to be excluded from the universal, but if there is only one universal, it can not be inclusive of difference. The 'feminine' remains absent from textual and theoretical processes which ensures that women's voices are covered by someone else's - Man's.

Feminist critiques have been cited in scientific discourse, but often reconstitute Woman as binary opposite to Man (Harding, 1986). Traditional dualisms such as spirit/nature, rational/irrational, mind/body may enable the 'feminine' to come to the fore, but in a phallogentric countermove, the 'feminine' (nature/irrational/body) is taken over (dominated) by the masculine and left lacking. The 'masculine' has no need to refer to its 'negative other' for its meaning. It has no meaning outside itself where the

speaking subject is assumed as the centre of knowledge, thought and reason. As negative to Man, if 'she'/Woman appears at all, it is as absence or difference. There is no 'identity' to 'her'. According to Grosz (1989), systems of representation which are produced by and reproduce this positioning of Woman in binary relationship with Man are phallogocentric.

There are three forms phallogocentrism generally takes: whenever women are represented as the opposites or negatives of men; whenever they are represented in terms the same as or similar to men; whenever they are represented as men's complements. In all three cases, women are seen as variations or versions of masculinity - either through negation, identity or unification into a greater whole (1989, p.xx).

To undo the historic solidarity of the Man/Woman binary embedded in psychology requires focusing on how phallogocentrism is implicated in psychological discourse and producing questions which problematise the position of woman and the feminine in discourse. Can there be a feminine subject in psychology? How could Woman possibly emerge and be heard? What strategies can enable 'her' absence appear? If the question of an (absent) feminine subject is opened, does it require a different language?

I am interested in the phallogocentrism of/in psychology, the ways of knowledge production, and I seek to disrupt relations of dominance to find ways of opening up new spaces where differences can be. This story is not about replacing psychology's theories with women's theories but to engage with the process itself, subverting intent and re-appropriating their meanings, rather than abandoning them for alternative forms, which would leave them untouched. What are the discursive practices through which the silencing occurs? What discursive strategies enable or constrain the conditions of possibility for the production of speaking positions for women, differently?

Psychology as a scientific discipline produces and reproduces knowledge as it discovers and exposes the 'reality' of human subjects. As empirical fact, psychology posits human subjects as a fact of nature (individual) and at times as a fact of the social (external to the individual). Psychology's

subject then is the individual, the transcendental subject of Western philosophy whose essence precedes and is independent of experience or the social realm (Hollway, 1989). The social is included in some psychological theories as a construct with which the subject interacts as if this construction solves epistemological problems. This separation of the individual and the social, constituted as an interaction, ignores other possible expressions of subjectivity.

Challenging the traditional psychological dualism between the social and psychological world, social constructionists (Gergen, 1985, 1991; Parker, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987) critique traditional psychological theories and argue that there may be no 'lives' apart from the infinite play of language itself, discourse, texts, social constructions of the world. Accordingly, individuals are constituted in and through language. Locating psychology's relationship within the fragmented knowledges of psychological discourses suggests connections with other social sciences and philosophy. The interconnections between psychology and philosophy are reflected within feminist (including psychoanalytic) critiques specifically attending to particular disciplinary practices which render the lives and experiences of women invisible. Some feminist readings of Lacan interpret the Oedipus complex describe the ways in which the ego is constructed and 'inscribed' within the structure of language (Flax, 1983). Here, inscription is read as a placing in relation to a privileged signifier, the phallus. Taking seriously the unconscious, Lacan objects to the subject as a unitary, transparently knowable, rational consciousness of Cartesian tradition, but is irrevocably split, first in the mirror, later in the Other of language (Flax, 1983). The phallus as the subject's symbolic figuration is, however, characterised by unity, solidity, visibility and this morphologic does not translate to the female sex organ - always multiple and fluid - and can only be represented in this masculine discourse as absence. Women are then deprived of their own imaginary, alienated from specificity within the mirror image of the male subject. Her vagina invisible, 'she' exceeds the limits of the mirror (Irigaray, 1985a).

Structuralist accounts of language tend toward a critique of representationalism and its concept of 'truth'. Structuralism questions the relationship between words and the world, arguing that the structure that we use to organise our experience comes into being with the structure of language that we use to express that experience. Structuralist accounts assume there *is* something, such as the meaning of the phallus which is determined by the structure of language. But this assumes that the structure of language exists independently of the way in which we represent it. And it is here that I find the work of Foucault useful as an alternative reading of psychology, of the conditions which produced the various strands of psychological knowledge and enable the unitary, rational subject. Foucault (1987, p.6) states that at the most we have "games of truth" which can be described, played or displaced but not justified from any timeless metaperspective.

Foucault (1983) challenges the subject of psychology. His archaeology of the human sciences challenges mainstream psychology's foundations by collapsing knowledge between disciplines and focusing on conditions of possibility in which psychology does not have a specific ontological entity as its object. Psychology emerged at a particular historical moment. In his history Foucault (1983) distinguishes specific forms of knowledge between disciplines. His genealogies of power/knowledge discard any attempt to formulate systematic discourses of totality which legitimate practices, describing the historical conditions that make possible particular representations of 'reality' which prescribe the kinds of statements that conjure what is true or false. What counts as 'truth' is looked at through a particular mode of knowledge. Foucault (1983) disrupts the notion of objectivity in the human sciences which produces knowledge dissociated from social power, by positing that power and knowledge are intimately connected. He argues that 'truth' claims cannot exist outside of power. Discourses are no longer representations of 'reality', but concern the power of discourse to produce realities and effect social power. These conditions are not only constraining but also enabling, containing possibilities for liberation as well as domination. Possibilities of enablement do not mean transcending power or global transformations, but question the

assumptions and prevalent ways of understanding ourselves and our theories in order to combat the constraining effects of totality. Foucault (1983), maintaining that where there is power there is resistance, rejects the notion that liberatory knowledge is possible where power relations are suspended. Resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Questioning the relationship between knowledge/power and science, Foucault (1983) disrupts the relationship through which truth claims come to mean 'reality', and opens a space for imagining psychology differently.

Discourse is a form through which the power/knowledge relationship operates, producing knowledges within power relations. Following a poststructuralist emphasis on the production of the modern subject through specific discursive relations and social practices, language is implicated in the production of particular truth regimes. Power, knowledge and language are intimately connected. Language is the precondition both for expression and for subjectivity. Rejecting the notion that the 'self' is the primary origin of meaning, contemporary theorists write/speak of the importance of the 'self' as always already enmeshed in language. It is the medium through which the world becomes articulated and it is simultaneously the limit of experience. Any experience that can be articulated necessarily presupposes language, discourse and discursive frameworks. Language is always constrained by discourses and determined by contexts, both of which are historically and culturally situated. For Foucault (1983), the subject is a product of discourses, multiple and contradictory. His genealogies trace the various practices that inscribe the human body, rather than 'discover' an identity. Specific identities are strategically constituted as sites of participation and/or resistance to the forms through which the relations of power operate. Knowledges are both produced and productive, constrained by available discourses of subjectivity and enabled through already present configurations of meanings. Discourse does not seek to exclude knowledge, but to open up an epistemic realm in which subjectivities are constituted as fluid, fragmented and conditional. Meaning is not fixed, but rather subject to reinterpretation (Gavey, 1989). Psychology occupies a specific position along with other human sciences where the

discourses of the human subject produce the subject of which they speak through their linguistic and material practices.

According to Foucault (1980, p.98) power infiltrates the very modes of our being and is not simply localised in the state apparatus and in institutions. Knowledge operates as a tracing of power exercised by institutions and practices formed by and forming knowledges about available subjectivities. Each of us has been constituted by relations of power down to our gestures, discourse and desires. Persons are not innocent entities, existing outside language, but always already constituted, deeply embedded in culture. Because power does not only "weigh on us as a force that says no...[but] traverses and produces things...induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse" there is always a need for profound self-criticality in unmasking the working of power every step of the way (Foucault, 1980, p.119).

Subsequent disruptive possibilities both expose psychological discourse to contradiction and difference and enable the articulation of subjectivities which are open to that which has been historically excluded: the 'other' and the body. Such possibilities enable attention to be focused on a particular problematic, women's relationship with legitimate knowledges, and perhaps the constitution of embodied, desiring, specifically female subjectivities. From a Foucauldian perspective the embodied subject is a material effect of the interstices of knowledge/power relations, an effect that works as a complex and interrelated network of truth, power, and desire centred on the subject as a bodily entity. What constitutes the body and its experience is already implicated in language and discourse. While psychology's concern with the human subject reproduces a separation between knowing subject and object of knowledge, challenges to this separation are crucial to the transformation of discursive material which historically locates Man as the knowing subject and Woman as the object of knowledge. If rational thinking is understood as an epistemological value which is itself produced and reproduced, then explanations of knowledges which carefully abstract all traces of embodiment can be enabling as well as constraining. A redefinition of subjectivity, one that develops notions of

corporeal materiality by emphasising the embodied and therefore sexually differentiated speaking subject may well be such an epistemological project.

Feminist discourses have recognised the problematic relationship with women and women's bodies. Body and nature have traditionally been put in opposition to mind, spirit and reason. Moreover, the 'feminine' has been identified with the body, and the 'masculine' with mind, spirit and reason. To write/speak of ontologies of sexual difference, the discursive production of 'the body' in specific and different locations remains problematic. To disregard or exclude the body is to suggest a construction of subjectivity which does not grant sexual difference ontological status. To write/speak of subjectivity, the idea of embodiment can not be excluded. This notion involves the idea of writing/speaking the/from the body. Speaking/writing from the body invites articulation of the possibility of women's voice finding its expression in language. The body/the embodiment of the subject suggests interconnections that do not place the subject 'woman' as essence, but as a site of multiple and contradictory sets of experiences. This position maintains a politics of "as if" at the same time (Braidotti, 1994 p.6) since the world behaves as if 'she' unambiguously exists. Writing/speaking 'as if' simultaneously challenges and dislocates dominant discourses, and opens up a space for silenced subjects to articulate their experiences and to explore spaces for new forms of subjectivity that exceed or escape being non-Man. These spaces are not outside discourses that exclude women or make women invisible, but bend back upon themselves, a transformation within which woman may inhabit discourses.

The work of Luce Irigaray (1985a; 1985b) explores the specificity of woman's body, a plural, multiple, diffuse sexuality. Her strategy works with deadly deliberation, refusing to separate discourse on 'the feminine' from the historical realities of the condition of women in Western culture. The female body is seen as socially produced and inscribed at the same time as it is experienced by women as lacking and incomplete. The relation between the female body and language is a question about a relation between two terms. For Irigaray (1985a; 1985b), the structure of language

as we know it, the search for unitary meaning and objective truth maps the morphology of the male body onto the language and determines the construction of the subject within language (Whitford, 1991). A woman can mimic either the woman of patriarchal discourse, or the man, but there is no place from which she can authentically speak. Irigaray (1985b) uses images of morphology and sexuality - the language of the 'feminine' body, woman's desire - such as the two lips which suggest both closeness and non-closure, as a cultural ploy organised by the binary logic that she attempts to dismantle at the same time as she wittingly refuses. She argues for a different feminine subjectivity which would no longer be constrained by this masculine logic by subverting traditional representations of female subjectivity. Irigaray (1985b) re-covers the feminine as an absencing (rather than as a positive and previously hidden absence) to subvert and undermine phallogentrism. These strategies are to "re-cover, un-veil, and express" the absencing of the feminine (Braidotti, 1994). Re-covering the absencing of the feminine at least offers hope of radically different ways of transforming our cultural notions of power, knowledge and subjectivity. Reading this absencing as an historical event can disrupt the notion of history itself. As Irigaray (1985b) writes "one plus a lack does not equal two". To resuscitate feminine absence we might need to follow it into the cracks of difference itself, exposing the relations of power that determine differences. This is not a move toward evoking the feminine out of silence as though it were a positive presence reinforcing the masculine/feminine opposition and perpetuating the notion of 'out there' rather than also 'in here', but to reveal not one but multiple, overlapping, interconnected relations that are historically constructed and reproduced through everyday practices that implicate subjectivities in contradictory ways.

Psychology may be seen as a complex of power relations where human beings are made into subjects, and where the body is the privileged target of the mechanisms of power/knowledge relations. A continuing dialogue with feminisms and poststructuralism allows me to imagine aspects of psychology's power/knowledge relations. Situating myself in relation to questions raised by these convergent frameworks, questions of sexual difference and practices of exclusion, I am challenged to both theorise and

act upon assumptions that my own positioning in psychology as a field of knowledge production and reproduction is limited by the contradictory ways in which I repeatedly participate in reproducing both complicity and resistance to practices of access and exclusion. I struggle to deny myself a place of privilege outside the historical boundaries. This partial refusal has both pleasurable and troubling implications for differently embodied knowledges. As I move out from within the boundaries authorised within psychology, I am open to questions and methods between disciplines through which I experience the dangers/pleasures of writing/speaking out of place. This project stems from my desire to negotiate the relations I have lived - between psychology, feminisms and poststructuralism - my positioning as a woman that I can not reach - desires between bodies - inarticulate utterances. Language remains partial, falters, slips, as I enter into dialogue with questions that I can not answer.

Writing from the position that women have been excluded from knowledge production and reproduction within psychology, I am concerned with questions which involve the effects of this exclusion on the speaking positions which psychological discourses enable for women. As a focus for these questions, I have taken the topic of spiritual experiences. 'Spirit', like 'reason', has traditionally been posited in opposition to 'body' and so aligned with the masculine side of the Man/Woman binary. Simultaneously, 'spirit' has been excluded from most legitimated - especially scientific - knowledges of human subjectivity. It has been relegated to the realms of theology and metaphysics. As an 'exclusion' spirit may be aligned with the feminine side of the Man/ Woman binary. As a term with ambiguous associations, 'spirituality' may be regarded as a particular, privileged site through which problematics of women's specific subjectivities can be addressed.

My concern with these problematics relies on a poststructuralist articulation of the relationship between human subjectivity, power, knowledge and discourse. Poststructuralist theories challenge psychology's traditional 'object' of study - the individual. Where the individual in psychology is posited as a rational, conscious, knowing and unitary being with insight into

the nature of their essential humanity, poststructuralism proposes a subjectivity which is often contradictory, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak (Weedon, 1987). Subjects are, therefore, embedded within discourse; subject positions provide multiple modes of being, and of construing meaning. Individuals may not always position themselves within dominant discourse, as other discourse may be available. The availability of multiple discursive positions may explain the sometimes irrational and ambiguous nature of experience (Gavey, 1989). Discourse analysis enables a partial and limited understanding of the enabling and constraining effects of discourse on the constitution of subject positions. In the context of my concern with women's specific subjectivities, discourse analysis becomes the privileged mode of addressing questions about the effects of women's exclusion from psychological knowledge production. In acknowledgement that psychological theory will not provide the only discursive resources through which women can articulate their spiritual experiences, my analysis will also address two other forms of 'legitimate' knowledges about women's spirituality; feminist and feminist poststructuralist theories. I have focused on these theories because, together with psychology, they provide some of the discursive resources which I draw on to produce this thesis. Their inclusion allows for a reflexive doubling which challenges the traditional separation between 'object of study' and knowing 'subject'. I will also address the possibility that some form of 'subjugated knowledges' may provide other discursive resources for women's accounts.

Through this project, then, I seek to explore the network of relations between some psychological, feminist and poststructuralist discourses of spirituality as they are put to use in some specific accounts of women's spiritual experiences. From a poststructuralist perspective, I am interested in the ways in which these accounts reproduce discourses and discursive objects, and simultaneously produce speaking positions for women. I will explore the ways in which some psychological, feminist and poststructuralist discourses enable and constrain the articulations of specific experiences by identifying their use as linguistic resources.

This project involves two stages, firstly reading the accounts of 'legitimate knowledge' about spirituality and then exploring 'more subjective' accounts of women's experiences. Firstly, I will introduce selected psychological, feminist and poststructuralist accounts of spirituality so as to identify the discourses through which the notion of spirituality is produced and reproduced as an object of legitimated knowledge. I will then use discourse analytic readings to explore the accounts of spiritual experience provided by ten women.

The following chapter introduces selected psychological, feminist and poststructuralist accounts of spirituality which inform my reading of the women's accounts. Chapter 3 provides details about the women's accounts of spirituality and the analytic reading practice which I use to identify discourses as resources for creating speaking positions. Chapters 4 and 5 present the analysis itself. In the final chapter I bring together some of the strands of the analysis and briefly discuss some specific limitations of this project.

Chapter 2

'Legitimate' Texts

This chapter provides an introduction to three specific 'forms' of legitimated academic knowledge about spirituality through readings of specific texts. The three bodies of text include psychological accounts of spirituality embedded in humanistic discourses, the work of Mary Daly (1978, 1985) as a feminist account of spirituality, and the work of Kathryn Stockton (1992), who moves across disciplinary boundaries encompassing feminist theory and poststructuralism.

Emphasising the construct of spirituality, I explore the ways in which psychology has approached the study of spirituality and the ways in which spirituality has been incorporated into feminist writing. I am seeking to identify the discourses available within these various accounts and to consider their implications for speaking positions for women.

The particular texts I have chosen to read are not intended to 'represent' forms of academic knowledge in any comprehensive manner. They have been chosen because, after reading more broadly in each area, I thought of them as reproducing statements which were 'characteristic' of particular discursive fields. I have chosen the three 'fields' which I negotiate in producing this thesis as a gesture towards disrupting the 'subject/object' split of traditional scientific practice and as a reflexive practice.

Although spirituality has received little attention within mainstream empiricist psychology, some attention has been paid to theorising the construct in humanistic approaches to psychology. Within these approaches, spirituality has been defined as belief systems (Prest & Keller, 1993), personal growth (Decker, 1993) and the search for meaning and purpose in life (Chandler, Holden & Kolander, 1992; Decker, 1993; Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf & Saunders, 1988).

Embedded in humanistic discourses, the construct of spirituality is connected to a humanistic notion of the 'true' self. Since humanism posits the 'self' as the primary origin of meaning, the subject and consciousness are conflated. The subject is positioned as the master of meaning and a source of knowledge. Spirituality is construed as the means by which an individual can create a "new and more complete self" (Chandler et al. 1992, p.169). Implicit in this is the notion of a pre-given subject, with the language as the bearer of self-constituted meanings. Notions of 'self' become framed by what is good, true, rational, authentic, unified (Baumgardner, Kaufman & Cranford, 1990; Chandler et al., 1992; Elkins et al., 1988; Prest & Keller, 1993). Notions of the 'real' and the 'true' constrain multiplicity of meanings to a single conceptual order, based on the exclusion of sexual difference. The qualities that are traditionally reserved for the feminine, the irrational, chaotic and multiple are presented as in need of order. This effectively excludes a position for woman except where 'she' is positioned as similar to man.

Personal growth is linked to psychological concepts of authenticity, inner potential, values and beliefs which enable individuals to interpret their behaviours in order to move beyond them toward greater good (Chandler et al., 1994). The 'true self' becomes framed by what is good, what is valuable. Thoughts, ideas and feelings are located inside the subject and contrasted with objects in the world outside. The 'self' is constituted by a notion of an inner/outer spirit/nature split and the partitioning of the world that goes with it excludes the political, social, and institutional practices where women are alienated from the 'true' self.

Prest and Keller (1993) argue that spirituality is a belief system which connects human and metaphysical systems and enables individuals to construct meaning in their lives. For them, belief systems *represent* reality and form the foundation for attitudes and actions. Humanistic discourses assume a conception of what it is to be human which implies self-conscious, ethical subjects. Rarely is ethics conceived on the basis of embodied subjects or corporeal specificity (Grosz, 1989). Spirituality is

dependent on its universalisability, that is, independent of any particular corporeality, experience, or subjective position. There is a belief in the intrinsic goodness of human nature, whether this is taken to be the result of 'God-given' reason, or of conscience, or faith in the inherent 'goodness' of human nature. The autonomous subject is a conceptualisation of human subjectivity based on the self-determination of the subject and the perception of the uniqueness of every individual. This subject is the product of a set of discourses which traditionally exclude women.

Spirituality defined as the search for purpose and meaning in life involves transcendence (Decker, 1993). Knowledge of the world is understood as subjective; it is individuals who decide what the world means. There exists no meaning other than that which the individual creates and acts, where the subject is a self-contained entity positioned in but not a part of the material world, a being capable of transcendence. This construct of spirituality implies that the subject, as fixed, gives meaning and value to existence. It is evident in the notion of a fixed subject that that which is female remains outside the generic realm of humanity. The process of becoming transcendent subjects depends upon phallogentric discourses which have denied women and bodily existence. Where the pursuit of transcendence requires the taking up of particular values, which are based on the lives, experiences and interests of men, women appear as a rupture, an excess.

Each of the the humanistic psychology texts I have introduced associate spirituality with some aspect of 'self' as a unified, rational subject. In some cases the discourse which enables this association also produces an 'intermediary' object: 'truth' or 'authenticity', 'personal growth', 'belief systems', 'purpose or meaning in life'. I take these objects to be characteristic of particular humanist psychological discourses of spirituality. For the remainder of this thesis I will refer to them as the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems' and 'purpose' discourses.

According to Foucault (1984) humanism has vague boundaries and a range of positions including liberalism and existentialism each of which

incorporates ethical, political and epistemological elements. Foucault argues that “the humanistic thematic is in itself too supple, too diverse, too inconsistent to serve as an axis of reflection” (1984, p.44). Some feminists have rejected humanism as masculine hegemony which assumes a universal model of rational Man. Jane Flax (1983) and Jane Gallop (1982), have postulated that many of the preoccupations of Western philosophy, particularly the conception of an immaterial rational self, the attempt to ground objective knowledge in reason, and a way of characterising reason according to which it is opposed to the bodily and the ‘feminine’ are the result of masculine gendered subjectivity. Through this reading, discourses of spirituality produced in humanistic psychology do not enable sexually specific speaking positions for women.

Questions of sexual difference have traditionally been based on the Man/Woman binary, where Man has been associated with reason, spirit, subject, consciousness, and interiority, and women has been associated with his body opposites, passion, nature, object, non-consciousness, and exteriority. Can feminist discourses of spirituality, in the context of legitimate academic knowledges, provide the conditions outside binary oppositions to posit a different female subject, where it is possible to speak a female subject who exceeds/escapes being non-man?

The writings of ‘spiritual feminists’ such as Mary Daly (1978, 1984) rely upon and advocate a universal, ahistorical, feminine principle. In an ontological vein, Daly (1978, 1984) offers feminism a universal vision for women. This vision requires a spiritual revolution in order to move beyond patriarchy towards transcendence. If Daly’s strategy can be summed up in one word, it is *re-member*. She advocates ‘re-claiming’ earlier women-centred systems and symbols, images and myths masked by the devises of patriarchal language, myth, image and theory. This is her process of transcendence, the process of weaving/spinning/creating new meaning.

Based on the cult of the Goddess, women’s ‘becoming’ allows for the restoration of divine nature. Spiritual value is determined by the rejection of

non-being through which women may find their 'true' Selves and emerge from the darkness where they are confined by patriarchy. The Self is conceived in wholly organic metaphors in *Pure Lust* (1984). The 'natural' harmony Daly believes is in/among women, just happens, that's the way 'nature' is. Thus, her politics of spiritual superiority maintain the image of woman as 'natural' and reproduces an historic association between woman and nature. Daly holds an essentialist notion of the feminine, relying on the naturalisation of the category Woman.

The body remains problematic in Daly's notion of Self, where the naturalisation of the feminine excludes discourses on the body other than those which privilege biological difference. Evident in her writing are the finite, fixed oppositions Man/Woman, good/evil, true/false strong/weak which, rather than enabling possibilities for articulating ontologies of sexual difference, may serve to constrain women to phallogocentric positioning as 'Other'. Reversing the mutually exclusive Man/Woman binary in favour of (some) women not only loses sight of the many varied strategies of women's exclusion, but also allows no space outside binary oppositions to posit a different female subject. Daly's strategies of picking out semantic resources from the systems of patriarchal meanings so that 'Others' can piece out new architectures of meaning in order to reverse the order of things, returns to phallogocentrism. Where the Man/Woman binary remains uninterrupted there is no place from which 'she'/Woman can authentically speak.

In Daly's texts, there are echoes of the discourses reproduced in humanistic psychology texts. Like these, Daly's texts produce a 'true Self' which is authentic and essential. Her reliance on organic metaphors is compatible with the 'growth' discourse identified in Chandler et al. (1992). There are distinctions created through Daly's production of a 'universal feminine principle' and her notion of 'divine nature'. In reference to these distinctions I will label the discourse I read through Daly's texts as the 'Self Woman' discourse and the 'Nature' discourse. While these discourses include references to sexual differences and challenge the universal subject

constituted by humanistic psychology, they do not necessarily challenge woman's positioning as 'Other' to man. The specificity of the feminine is produced through a binary relationship with the masculine which also reproduces the body as the site of essential biological difference.

The work of Luce Irigaray (1985a, 1985b) involves an attempt to transform discourses on the body and sexual difference by articulating the body, not as a biological construct but a surface which allows for the construction of subjectivity through an interplay of identity, language and alterity. Seen in this light, the body is never only biological, but is situated at the intersection of the biological and the symbolic and as such it marks a metaphysical surface of integrated material and symbolic elements that defy separation. While she assumes that woman has a sexual morphology of her own as distinct from man's, woman is not yet, as no language yet exists to inscribe her specificity. Irigaray's reflection on language is at the centre of her critiques.

Irigaray (1985a, p.179) argues women's bodies are (like) commodities, which are split into two, "her 'natural' body and her socially valued exchangeable body. The body is at least two, lived matter and a socially meaningful materiality. The body as material can not be separated from discourse, as embodiment is always being articulated in and through social and political contexts. Thus, Irigaray (1985a) argues that for women to speak of difference, they need images of their own, their own language, imaginary and symbolic representations, including the divine. She claims there is nothing more spiritual than female sexuality, yet it has been deprived of its spiritual dimension.

According to Irigaray (1985a), language and the divine are intimately related. God has always represented male subjectivity, reflected male self-image. As women historically represent 'the body', they remain excluded from the transcendent. Thus the projection of a women's divinity could introduce sexual difference into the symbolic, creating an interval of

exchange and spiritualising the female body through the transcendental, where the imaginary and symbolic, language and body are linked. Irigaray (1985a) refers to the “sensible transcendental” which recognises and symbolises the body in such a way that women are no longer represented as guardians of the body. This “sensible transcendental” disrupts the historic split between the sensible and intelligible and challenges the body/mind binary. Through the divine there is the possibility for women ‘becoming’, possibilities of speaking bodies, desires differently.

Kathryn Stockton (1992) argues the tensions between the body as a figure in discourse and as material presence requires a spiritual discourse arguing that materialism which names matter on its own terms and material relations which are still submerged, hidden from view, evoke the shadowy forms we call spiritual.

Central to Stockton’s (1992) notion of spiritual discourse is how language constructs human beings and their world and the excesses that render bodies outside their constructions. She argues that the points of friction between bodies and language rests with a poststructuralist belief in ‘real bodies’ as ‘material presence’ against a notion of bodies outside their cultural markings. Thus bodies are split into two; the ‘material body’ onto which we map our constructions and the ‘natural’ body which is matter on its own terms, that which resists our constructions. Stockton (1992) attempts to locate the point where the body stands apart from/against social constructions.

Stockton (1992) argues that problematising the body ends up as spiritual materialism, with bodies which elude constructions. Thus, the failure of language to capture the materiality of real bodies requires a belief in spirituality, a belief “in something real that escapes and exceeds human sign systems” (p.119). Thus, spiritual discourse is defined as discourse about that which exceeds human sign systems, discourse on ‘spaces’ where human meanings fail, discourse on escapes from discourse, and culturally constructed discourse on escapes from culture. Thus, Stockton

(1992) characterises poststructuralist discourses on spirituality as discourses on escape and concealment. In her analysis of feminist theorists conceptualising the body, Stockton (1992) positions Gallop (1988) and Haraway (1988) as feminists of escape. Irigaray (1985a, 1985b) is positioned as a feminist of concealment.

Escape evokes a desire to produce bodies elsewhere, differently. An attempt to acknowledge material bodies apart from their construction requires escape from established discourse, signalling something beyond discourse that we can never get to through language. Failure of meaning immerses us in discursive attempts to escape from discourse, where meaning can only appear as discourse that transcends established discourse. When bodies are left indeterminate, with no fixed unity, faith in an escape for bodies is required. This discourse posits that, while real bodies exist, they can only be reached through the same means that separate us from 'reality'. Spiritualising gestures suggest themselves as a way to produce escapes from the symbolic, cultural order back to bodies. According to Stockton (1992), faith in escape for our bodies, parallels the belief in materiality which, like God, escapes our constructions. Matter, like God, is inaccessible to view. Real bodies never appear. Escapes, therefore, become materialist gestures that bring us back to bodies. If material bodies elude capture through language so they never appear, it is the material instead of 'God' which is positioned as elusive.

Haraway (1988) uses a notion of the body as a biological entity. At the same time, she wants to hold in tension the discursive figures and material presences without escapes from embodiment. However, Stockton (1992) argues that in order for Haraway to maintain that tension, she relies on 'poststructuralist humility'. This humility comes from the effect of recognising something outside 'human' control. Stockton (1992) equates this notion with Christian believers' required humility before God, with God representing the possibilities outside believers' control. Limits are acknowledged and held against the search for disembodied transcendence, and so possibilities are allowed of a world and bodies that transcend us,

that is, they escape us and return outside our constructions. Transcendence, therefore, becomes a means for getting to the outside. While Haraway (1988) is against transcendence on behalf of materialism, her discursive strategy of escape to bodies outside the discursive realm makes a certain kind of transcendence possible.

Gallop (1988), like Haraway (1988), believes we need tension between discursive figures and material presence. She rejects the notion of 'body itself', unmediated textually, but acknowledges that there is 'a body' that resists linguistic domination. The morphological distinctions of embodiment are difficult to articulate as they fall outside language. Stockton (1992) argues that whatever is positioned outside language is represented in the same way as God is represented by Victorian writers. Gallop (1988) believes the body is what escapes discourse and at the same time predates it. The body is thus defined in terms of escape, failure of meaning, and is, by definition, unavailable for scrutiny. At the same time as it is matter, it is elusive. As it escapes capture, it escapes our domination - like the Victorian figure of God.

Stockton (1992) argues that Irigaray uses spiritual discourse to bring into existence a discourse on materialities which have not yet been seen. Concealment is posited as a mysterious sign of 'reality', a concealed presence. While the body is experienced, it is not known. Remaining a mysterious sign of 'reality', its presence is concealed, and it is the concealments that cannot be captured through language (Stockton, 1992). The body, apart from its social constructions, simultaneously bends toward concealment and revelation.

For women's bodies to appear, Irigaray "seeks to lavish upon them concealments that they might wear" (Stockton, 1992, p.135). Thus, she seeks to un-cover a body from dominant constructions. At the same time, according to Stockton (1992), Irigaray believes in bodies that exist other than constructions, and she therefore places 'hope in failure', the failure of our constructions to capture 'woman'.

In this sense, women's bodies are concealed by constructions, and Stockton (1992) argues that Irigaray's metaphorisation of the two lips, where women are posited as not one, nor two, but as excess, shows that what is concealed is a slit. Thus, Irigaray makes bodies mystical in their escape by theorising a body outside constructions which we can escape to in our genitals. The lips "wear their material concealment for all to see" (Stockton, 1992, p.140). Where I read concealment as mystery, darkness, chaos, absence and ambiguity, unconcealment may be read as the historicity of 'truth' events, a revealing. In our contemporary age, concealment, whose cluster of characteristics are similar to those historically associated with the feminine, is suppressed, feared and understood as that which must be brought into the light of unconcealment. The light of reason is set against the darkness of the concealed.

According to Stockton (1992), poststructuralist feminist discourses posit material bodies as the something that escapes discourse, that resists being incorporated into discourse, and is concealed in mystical encounters. Visible concealment and escape become the means to see and know bodies differently.

Through my readings of Stockton's readings of poststructuralist feminist theory, it is possible to identify discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment'. The 'escape' discourse may be recognised by its references to 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances'. The 'concealment' discourse refers to an unknowable body which is a mysterious presence. These discourses are noticeably different from those of either the humanistic psychology texts or Mary Daly's texts. They produce no true or authentic self, no growth, or belief system or purpose, and no nature. The 'objects' they produce are barely recognisable as objects - form, utterance, presence. The notion of spirituality they construct challenges that which is constituted through reference to a unified, rational subject, even 'one' who is essentially feminine.

In this chapter I have identified a range of discourses in the discursive field of spirituality. According to Foucault (1972) discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. While discourses are multiple, offering competing and often contradictory ways of constructing meaning, they are also constitutive of subjectivity (Gavey, 1989). Following a poststructuralist emphasis on the production of the modern subject through specific discursive relations and social practices, language is implicated in the production of particular truth regimes. Knowledge claims, especially the scientific, can be theorised as power moves, not moves towards 'truth' (Haraway, 1988). Specific subject positions are strategically constituted as sites of participation and/or resistance to the forms through which the relations of power operate. Knowledges are both produced and productive, constrained by available discourses of subjectivity and enabled through already present configurations of meanings. Language is not expressive of some pre-given relation between a (potentially) all knowing subject and a fully knowable object, but language as a practice materially gives (and takes away) particular objects to and from historically specific subjects. Within psychology I have identified discourses of the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems', and 'purpose' which indicate the pervasiveness of liberal humanist tradition. This tradition discursively places the subject at the centre of reality or history and has failed to grasp the extent to which the subject is fragmented. The structuring language of these psychological discourses assume fixed ontological conditions with assumptions of neutrality limiting access to the 'real' world.

Reading feminist texts, I have identified discourses of a sexually specific Self and of feminine nature which is in harmony with Nature which may challenge the universal subject of humanist discourse but reproduce Woman in the position of Other. Through the feminist poststructuralist readings, I have identified discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment' which involve transformations of traditional constructions of the body as the site of essential biological difference.

The discourses I have identified are not necessarily exclusive: they are certainly not comprehensive of the discursive resources used to read these texts, and they themselves are open to other readings. My partial and limited identification of discourses will be used in the following chapters to address specific questions concerning particular women's accounts of spiritual experiences. I am interested in whether these women reproduce these discourses in attempting to articulate their experiences, whether they make use of other discursive resources, especially those which may be regarded as 'subjugated knowledges', and whether the subject positions constituted through their texts challenge the phallogocentric positioning of women.

Chapter 3

Method

As I have shown in the previous chapters, my speaking position emerges from a discursive frame which includes psychology, feminisms and poststructuralism. This position informs and supports my continuing concern with the exclusion of women from the production and reproduction of legitimate knowledges and the phallogocentric position of women in the processes and institutions authorising these knowledges. In this context, I have already read selected academic texts to identify some of the discourses which are realised through them. This chapter introduces a second set of texts, those of women's accounts of their spiritual experiences. It also introduces my approach to analysing these texts.

The analytic method I will use arises from the political implications of my speaking position, from my desire to refuse to silence what is unsaid. This requires a method that traces the power relations in the research practice itself. Power operates in the relationship between the researcher and the participants, in the reading of the texts for analysis, and in the writing of this text, my Masters thesis under examination. I do not pretend to be objective, neutral, or value-free reproducing empirical discourses which privilege the researcher as expert and the subject as the object of knowledge. Rather, I position my own readings as partial, fragmented and conditional in an attempt to subvert the power relations I seek to transform and at the same time I recognise I am inscribed in and through what I seek to transform.

In this section of the study the focus of my readings is a set of questions about the discursive resources through which the texts become meaningful. Do these texts reproduce the discourses identified in psychological, feminist or poststructuralist feminist accounts of spirituality? Are other discursive resources used, especially those which may be regarded as 'subjugated knowledges'? Do the subject positions constituted through the discourses realised in these texts, challenge the phallogocentric positioning of women at this local site of accounting for 'spiritual experience'?

In the following parts of this chapter I will introduce the women who participated in this study by providing me with accounts of their experiences, the procedures through which these accounts were constructed, and the specific analytic approach I have taken to reading the accounts.

Participants

Ten women agreed to participate in this study. Five of the participants were friends or acquaintances known to me to have an interest in spirituality. Five further participants became involved in the research project through discussions with friends about my research topic. Each of them contacted me expressing an interest in participating. All ten women were included because they were willing participants and because they were interested in spirituality. They were not selected because of particular experiences of spirituality. My knowledge of the participants outside the context of the research indicated that many of the women were informed by feminist discourses. Their ages ranged from thirty to fifty-two years. All names have been changed to protect anonymity and any identifying material has been omitted.

It is neither possible nor intended to represent the diversity of experiences within and between women in this research, nor do I intend to make generalising statements to apply to 'Women'. Acknowledging that the texts were produced within the context of this research, I do not assume that the texts produced reflect individual experiences as subjectivities are produced within discourse, history and social relations. A Foucauldian position holds that power is present and productive in all social relations. As researcher, my reading writes me into the accounts, positioning me as an active participant.

Procedure

All participants were interviewed and transcripts were made of their oral accounts. Three women were interviewed in their own homes and seven elected to be interviewed in my home. Interviews ranged from fifty to eighty five minutes.

At each interview participants were given an information sheet (Appendix 1), and we engaged in some preliminary conversation to achieve rapport. All participants read and signed the informed consent form (Appendix 2) prior to the interviews.

I used unstructured interviews to enable participants to begin where they wanted and to allow them to control the flow of their stories. I invited the women to talk to me about their experiences of spirituality at length, with little interruption. I encouraged the women to tell their stories by listening and reflecting and occasionally asking for clarification. The unstructured interview process enables participants to be active in the construction of their accounts enabling them to give meaning to and express their understanding of their experiences (Mishler, 1986). I was not seeking coherent, linear 'truths', but rather my intention was to enable the participants to explore their experiences of spirituality without necessarily specifying a beginning or resulting in a closure. I acknowledge my participation in the production of the texts. As interviewer I am always already implicated in the construction of the text being analysed, where my own assumptions and questions enter into the evolving temporalities/textures/depths of the interview.

The interviews were audiotaped, fully transcribed and returned to the participants for editing, comment and change as they felt appropriate. They were given the opportunity to withdraw any material they did not want included in the analysis.

Responses to the interviews were very positive. Six of the ten women interviewed phoned me following the interview to thank me for the opportunity to talk about their experiences and to let me know that they were continuing to reflect on what they had articulated.

Analysis

Poststructuralism has enabled me a framework of analysis in which the relationships between theory and practice are brought into tension. Working within and between disciplinary boundaries, between psychology,

poststructuralism and feminisms, requires an air of abandonment for the distinctions around which they have been organised, a position Weedon (1987) refers to as feminist poststructuralism which she describes as a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change (pp.40-41).

There can be no set procedures for the actual doing of discourse analysis. Every research project requires the development of a method that is specific to that project, and is integral to the practice of the research (Burman & Parker, 1993; Gavey, 1989; Parker, 1992). To articulate the theoretical understandings of the concept of discourse, the epistemological and ontological postulates underpinning discourse analysis require expression. Weedon (1987, p.41) argues that discourse is not simply a language or a piece of text, but is a "structuring principle of society", an historically, socially and institutionally specific structure of metaphors, statements, terms, categories and beliefs. Discourse both constitutes and reproduces subjectivities. Discourses may be contradictory, with some being more dominant to such an extent that they seem natural, universal, common sense. Discourse analysis enables the reading of texts for the ways in which language produces and constrains meaning and where social conditions give rise to the forms of talk available (Burman & Parker, 1993; Gavey, 1989).

The method I use in unfolding my reading of the texts is informed by feminist poststructuralism (Gavey, 1989, 1992; Weedon, 1987). The analysis and interpretation of the texts are based on poststructuralist notions of discourse and meaning. I read the participants' articulation of their spiritual experiences as a discursive field through which I identify the enabling and constraining effects of discourses as they constitute specific female subjectivities. The texts provide access to the discourses available to these women, to the subject positions offered by these discourses and to the ways in which knowledge/power operates through them and in relation to specific discursive positionings.

I read and reread the texts and identified the discourses that emerged through my readings of psychology and feminisms as outlined in Chapter two. I then developed a coding system to identify the discourses and coded fragments of the transcripts accordingly. These fragments were then placed together in clusters based on the similarity of 'objects' constructed in the piece. I then read and re-read again these fragments in relation to each other, returning to the transcripts to find other possible readings. Other discourses emerged from my readings and further codes were added. The discourses identified were then discussed with my supervisor. Fragments did not fit neatly into separate clusters indicating the multiplicity and ambiguity of the texts, and the way discourses implicate subjectivities in contradictory ways. Some fragments were therefore coded under more than one theme. My own reading shifted and changed as I struggled to make some sense of the discourses the texts evoked. As researcher I faced practical and moral dilemmas. As I broke the texts into fragments I had to explore the tensions between the texts and the context, knowing I could never resolve the dilemmas of imposing meaning on other women's texts. I will address some of these tensions and their implications in the discussion chapter. The dilemmas that I faced enabled me to have a clearer understanding of the limitations of the study and my own role as researcher. As Parker (1992) states, discourses are not already waiting in texts to be found, but emerge through my reading/writing practices as well as through the texts.

I have found Parker's (1992) account of research in a poststructuralist framework particularly useful in focusing my reading and structuring the account of my analysis which is presented in Chapters 4 and 5. Parker (1992) provides guidelines for discourse analysis and specifies seven criteria through which discourses may be identified: a discourse is realised in texts, a discourse is about objects, a discourse contains subjects, a discourse is a coherent system of meanings, a discourse refers to other discourses, a discourse reflects on its own way of speaking, and a discourse is historically located.

I have addressed these criteria in producing my analysis. As Parker claims, the criteria are not components of a method and need not be “employed sequentially” (1992, p.5). Since my project has a particular focus and location, the seven criteria have been emphasized differently and addressed in different ways. In the following section I will briefly outline the strategies I have used to incorporate each criteria into this project.

A discourse is realised in texts

Parker describes texts as “delimited tissues of meaning reproduced in *any* form that can be given an interpretative gloss” (1992, p.6). To identify a discourse at work in a text requires that our objects of study be treated as if they were texts. In this project I have chosen ‘spirituality’ as the construct which might reasonably be taken as an ‘object of study’. Because I am interested in the discursive constitution of subjectivity and the effects of women’s exclusion from legitimate knowledges, this object has been treated as a specific construction of localised texts - specifically texts produced by academic writers about spirituality and texts produced by women in interviews about their experiences. It is through working with these two sets of texts that Parker’s first criterion has been met.

A discourse is about objects

Parker (1992) refers to two ‘layers’ of objectification in relation to discourse analysis. The first ‘layer’ concerns the construction of particular objects in and through specific discourses. In relation to this, discourse analysis is concerned with identifying and describing the objects constructed by a discourse. In the following chapter I use this criterion to address questions about the objects which are constructed in the women’s texts and which are used to explicate their experiences of the object ‘spirituality’.

The second layer of ‘objectification’ refers to treating the discourse itself as an object. Parker (1992) refers to this as “talking about the talk as if it were an object, a discourse”. Throughout this thesis, discourses are treated as objects in this sense - they are looked for and identified, named and described, and they are treated as if they have ‘real effects’ on ‘real people’. Through these two strategies Parker’s second criterion is met.

A discourse contains subjects

According to Parker, discourses make available 'spaces' "for particular types of self to step into." (1992, p.9). These are the 'spaces' I have referred to as 'subject positions'. In focusing on the production and reproduction of phallogocentric positioning for women, this criterion is incorporated in the formulation of the thesis questions. Additionally, chapter 5 includes a discussion of the subject positions constituted in the women's texts.

A discourse is a coherent system of meanings

The notion of a discourse as a coherent or regulated system of meanings "explicitly draws on Foucault's work" (Parker, 1992, p.11). Like the criterion of subject positions, this criterion is incorporated through the formulation of my thesis questions. The coherence of a discourse enables it to produce objects which are compatible with each other and which systematically produce a coherent "mapping... of the world" (Parker, 1992, p.12). In the following chapter, which explicates the identification of discourses through the objects they produce, the coherence of discourses becomes apparent in the compatibility of these objects. This criteria is further incorporated in Chapter 5 where the coherence of particular systems of meaning is the foundation for examining the relationships between the discourses that are identified in Chapter 4.

A discourse refers to other discourses

One way of describing this criterion is through the notion of 'co-articulation'. Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine (1984) write that the "systematic character of a discourse includes its systematic articulation with other discourses" (p.105). Parker (1992) suggests that this criterion can be addressed by examining the contrasting objects that discourses may produce and also looking for ways in which they "overlap, where they constitute what look like the 'same' objects in different ways" (1992, p.14). Examining contrasts and similarities in the production of discursive objects is focus of the opening section of Chapter 5.

A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking

The 'reflexive' aspect of discourse is explained by Parker as "instances where the terms chosen are commented upon. At this point the discourse itself folds around and reflects on its own way of speaking" (1992, p.14). This reflection is addressed in the analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. Where the texts include commentary on the inadequacy of language for the purpose of articulating experience, this is identified as a discourse in its own right. This discourse is identified through Stockton's (1992) work as an 'escape' discourse.

A discourse is historically located

According to Parker, "discourse analysis cannot take place without locating its object in time" (1992, p.16). He suggests that this can be achieved by examining the manner and location of a discourse 'emerging' and describing how the discourse has changed. Given the number of discourses already identified through reading academic texts in Chapter 2, a comprehensive history is beyond the scope of this project. This criterion is partially addressed, however, by limiting the focus of the study to particular *contemporary* texts and placing it within the context of a specific historic practice - the exclusion of women from the production of legitimate knowledges. This frames the 'academic' discourses identified in this project as emerging from a history of women's exclusion and focuses the question of their 'changes' on how they enable transformations which 'include' women.

As well as the seven criteria which have been addressed above, Parker (1992) presents three auxiliary criteria for identifying discourses: a discourse supports institutions, a discourse reproduces power relations, and a discourse has ideological effects. These criteria concern the politics of discourse analysis and address questions of power relations. Given the context of this project, the institutions which I am concerned with are those of psychology. The power relations which are the focus of my attention are those which enable and constrain speaking positions for women. The ideological effects I want to examine are those which continue to reproduce phallogentrism and which operate to position women's experience as

'subjective' and 'subjugated'. Parker's (1992) auxiliary criteria are, therefore, addressed through the formulation and focus of this research project.

Chapter 4

Analysis: Constituting Objects

Discourse analysis enables the reading of texts for the ways in which language produces and constrains meaning. In this chapter I have read the women's accounts of spiritual experiences to identify the discourses which produce the resources for creating speaking positions. Drawing on the Foucauldian notion that discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak, I have read the texts to identify particular objects that are used to explicate experiences of spirituality. Discourses are multiple, offering competing and often contradictory ways of constructing meaning. Identifying the objects about which it is possible to speak/write enables a reading of the texts for the ways in which subjects are constituted in discourse. I am interested in whether the discourses already identified in Chapter two are reproduced in the women's attempts to articulate their experiences and whether other discursive resources can be identified. Initially, then, I focus on those objects which are constituted through the psychological, feminist and poststructuralist feminist discourses discussed earlier. I then read for objects systematically constituted through other discourses.

Psychological Discourses

The first section in this chapter focuses on the psychological discourses of the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems' and 'purpose' which discursively place the subject at the centre of 'reality'. I have read the texts for their constitution of objects which are consistent with the use of these discourses and provide evidence of how these discourses are embedded in women's talk about spirituality.

The discourse of the 'true self' produces an authentic, rational, unitary self as its primary object. In the women's texts there was evidence of a link between their notion of spirituality and their sense of 'self'. In some cases this link produced themselves as an object - me:

...giving me a sense of who I am (Sage)

...and be a more real me (Clara)

...really knowing me, really knowing who I am (Isabella)

...I have me (Sophia)

In two of these quotes there are references to the 'real' which are characteristic of the 'true self' discourse. In other instances there were references to the 'me' consisting of 'parts':

It's very hard being me when I'm here and here. It's like there's two mes. And there are two mes, um, there's the bolshy um, stuff your feminist me, and there's the, what's the word, the conformist me (Clara)

...the ugly part of me...the brave part of me (Clara)

...that spiritual part of me (Isabella)

It's the part if you like...that holds all the rest together (Sophia)

...a separate part of my being, but it's an integral part (Cerridwen)

In three of these quotes spirituality is explicitly linked to the 'parts' of 'me'. Although it would be possible to read the construction of 'parts' as fragmentation of the 'self', this reading is disturbed by the particular construction of the parts as 'belonging' to a singular 'me'. The implied singular 'me' is a unified object, similar to that produced by 'true self' discourse.

Psychological discourses of the 'true self' produce an essential human nature which constitutes an autonomous subject based on self-determination and the uniqueness of the individual. The notion of an 'essence' in relation to 'self' was employed in fragments of the women's talk. This 'essence' was sometimes employed explicitly, "the essential part of me", and sometimes implied through references to some kind of inner 'reality':

...the essence of who I feel I am (Clara)

I guess it's um, me, my core, my essence (Clara)

Just knowing that, in my essence (Cerridwen)

It feeds my essence, my basic energies (Cerridwen)

It's that lovely essence, my identity (Molly)

It's already there (Arachne)

...being who you are (Sage)

...this comes from within (Victoria)

It's self-awareness and self development and this strong inner strength (Victoria)

I have this sense of centrednessand of being very unique (Sophia)

In some these quotes the production of an essence also enables the constitution of 'a core', 'a centre' and an 'inside'. References to the 'inside' of 'self' were also involved in the construction of the object 'soul':

I have this inner, you know, whole side to myself (Victoria)

It's the thing that's in us, or me, yeh ,my soul (Sage)

There's a sense in which my spirit or my soul is a separate part of my being (Cerridwen)

...we have them...we do have a soul (Isabella)

This object, 'soul' is not explicitly produced by psychological discourses of the 'true self'. In these fragments, however, it is linked to the 'self' as object through its location as an aspect of 'me'.

Enabling the articulation of 'me' seems to require not only the production of particular discursive objects, but also certain processes produced through the discourse. In the following quotes, one account explicitly refers to process while the others characterise particular processes, such as exploration, vision and pursuit:

... and realised how much of myself that I lost in that process...and I'm rapidly trying to find it all again and um, and set it up as me (Clara)

I'm basically exploring me (Isabella)

Once you've got started you can pause, but at the moment I'm actively seeking my own self (Victoria)

I went off on all sorts of tangents chasing things, but what it came down to at the end of it all when I'd done all my chasing and chased myself stupid was that I knew that all the answers that I needed were inside me and I wasn't going to do any more chasing (Sage)

...reclaiming aspects of myself (Grace)

...finding my own answers, finding me (Victoria)

...and it is revitalising and recharging and giving me a sense of who I am (Clara)

...and when I imagine situations it's very easy to see myself (Clara)

...and in my vision I see me (Grace)

These processes enable the women to give meaning to their sense of who they are, and imply that the object 'me' is already constituted so that it can be 'found', 'seen', 'reclaimed' or 'explored'. The effects of these processes is the reproduction of a 'self' which is an object pre-existing its 'discovery'. This object shares certain characteristics with the 'true self' of psychological discourse. It is essential, unified and authentic.

Implicit in the processes that produce the object 'me', are associations with personal growth. Personal growth also depends on a notion of a pre-given subject who, as an authentic, rational and unified individual with inner potential, is able to assess and interpret their behaviours and move beyond them toward something greater, better, good and valuable. Discourses of 'growth' were evident in the texts, with both explicit and implicit references to growth and development:

It's an ongoing thing that I want to develop (Clara)

...very slowly and quietly developing (Clara)

...but you will grow (Grace)

It's an area of growth for me at the moment (Cerridwen)

*I guess, you know, moving in a new area of growth
(Cerridwen)*

...all those things that are growing to maturity (Scarlet)

I've got to have room to grow (Isobella)

So there's a sense of becoming, growing, developing (Molly)

And more implicitly:

There are seeds of life in it (Grace)

It's an unfolding process to (Victoria)

Other accounts were not as explicit, but imply growth and development through reference to processes which require reassessing 'lives' and 'values' and leaving often unspecified 'things' behind.

It is a refining process (Sage)

...reassessing your life, your values (Victoria)

...to do that type of reflecting (Cerridwen)

I have left that behind (Victoria)

Other fragments implying growth and development included reference to forward and/or upward motions, going on a journey, learning, and moving on:

I'm ready to move forward (Scarlet)

This whole thing is about journey's (Victoria)

...and along my journey (Scarlet)

Yeh, it's a big journey all right (Isobella)

...teach you something valuable (Grace)

I have learned something (Victoria)

Discourses of 'growth' assume individual subjects move toward something good and valuable. While 'value' was evident in some accounts shown above, the women articulated a range of more specific qualities which gave

meaning to their construction of 'growth'. There were general references to health and well-being including more specific feelings of happiness, care and strength:

..like my whole well-being is taken care of (Clara)

I have just gone from strength to strength (Victoria)

...making me happier (Grace)

It's all part of well-being and health, and um, happiness (Cerridwen)

It allows me to be really, in a healthy sort of way (Clara)

It's about healing (Scarlet)

There were also references to holism linking the emotional, spiritual and physical non-specific 'parts', and synthesising and/or linking non-specific 'things' where the subject is but one 'part':

We have a physical condition, but what about the emotional, spiritual, you know, what are we doing about that? (Sage)

How I experience spirituality in my life at the moment is, um, in a very holistic sense really, it's everything (Isobella).

When you have a flower, you get a daisy instead of pulling its petals off and putting them in one box and pull the stamens off and put it in another box, and then look at the end and say we've got all these bits here, but you haven't got any flower anymore. And what..and what holds the flower together and makes it a flower is its spirit. And it's not a separate entity, or a separate thing, it's the whole of the parts (Sophia)

It is the synthesis, the life force that synthesises everything. It's not really a beginning or an end, or a coming together, it is everything all the time (Sophia)

There is a unison, um, there is a thread that links these things and um, yeh and I think that um, in a sense, there is a sort of synthesising going on, you know (Cerridwen)

When I talk about spirituality it's about everything, it's about the whole of which I am one (Sophia)

References to holism through discourses of 'growth' reproduced the 'self' as the primary origin of meaning. Through 'growth' discourse, spirituality is associated with some aspect of 'self' as a unified, rational, knowing subject. Simultaneously the 'self' was constituted as a 'part' of a greater 'whole'. The greater 'whole' may be read as a 'belief system' which connects human and metaphysical systems.

Some humanist psychological discourses produce 'belief systems' to constitute spirituality. Through these discourses, 'belief systems' represent 'reality' and form the foundation for 'individuals' attitudes and actions'. Subjects are positioned as self-conscious and ethical. This positioning assumes a rational, unitary 'self'. The women's attempt to articulate experiences of spirituality utilise the production and reproduction of 'belief systems' discourse. The following fragments contain explicit references to 'beliefs' and 'belief systems':

I mean people believe things (Victoria)

We all just believed in Christianity (Victoria)

Bahai believe that religion is progressive, and I believe that (Scarlet)

I believe in prayer (Cerridwen)

I believe in the wise woman and I believe in the Crone (Isobella)

I mean it was a whole belief system (Molly)

'Belief system' discourses were constructed in and through explanations of whole belief systems or parts of belief structures of church and/or religion embedded in institutional belief systems producing objects such as 'churchy stuff', 'Catholic values', 'Bahai faith', 'sacraments', 'God figure', 'Christ person'. These objects were constituted in the context of talk about the limits of institutional beliefs. Some accounts explicitly referred to the constraints of the institutional practices:

My experience was limited by the hierarchical stuff (Clara)

I think it was really the sexist issues in the whole system that made me discard it (Victoria)

I reject the hegemony (Isobella)

Some women disclaimed institutional beliefs because of their limiting effects. Subject positions were paradoxically enabled through the institutional belief systems which constrained them:

God was always part of it, so I had very limited vision (Clara)

I was never tempted by orthodox religions because they never held any answers (Sage)

There was an otherness to it, but as time went on, I couldn't relate to it (Victoria)

All that churchy stuff is way over there, I hate all of that (Clara)

From right back then, even though I was kind of orthodox, it didn't make sense, it wasn't real (Victoria)

The church is an important part of my history, but a lot of it I see as absolute nonsense (Cerridwen)

I have learned not to equate religion with spirituality, and I don't think all that going to church has got anything to do with it (Isobella)

...I learned it in my Catholic upbringing, but I can jettison Christianity without it having any difference to my spirituality (Sophia)

The above accounts enabled the women to disclaim institutional 'beliefs' and simultaneously position themselves in relation to them. The positioning enabled some of the women to reconstitute and claim particular objects, such as 'wisdom', 'prayer', 'commandments', and the rules of institutional 'belief systems'.

I don't really believe in this Christ person, although I believe in him as an historical person (Victoria)

...But I do believe the commandments are good rules for living (Victoria)

We were brought up to pray...and one of the things I come back to is the Hail Mary...not so much that it's Mary I'm praying to, but just that it's a prayer that I'm saying (Cerridwen)

A lot of those Catholic values I think are very good really, you know, an appreciation for a sense of the sacred (Molly)

And some of that makes sense to me because I really have a belief in unity (Scarlet)

I'm not an active Bahai, but I do see the wisdom in some of their teachings (Scarlet)

Jesus Christ as a human being was a very good example of knowing what love is about (Sophia)

In their reconstitution of these objects the women simultaneously disclaim particular 'belief systems' and at the same time produce and reproduce them in their attempts to articulate their spirituality. Reproducing 'belief systems' discourse differently, enabled some women to challenge traditional institutional 'beliefs'. This effect is clearly shown in one account where the ritual practices embedded in institutional 'belief systems' enabled her account of particular experiences:

We do share rituals and liturgies, but we invent them, or create something that is meaningful to us (Cerridwen)

For other women, different belief systems provide alternatives to the institutional belief systems which they experienced as having excluded them:

I have always been able to separate my spirituality from Christianity and I think I always have done because I have had a very strong element of paganism throughout my whole life (Sophia)

I practice rituals that shift the symbolic meaning into a powerful place for women (Arachne)

The reproduction of 'belief system' discourses in these accounts contains challenges to traditional 'belief systems', but continue to produce a notion of 'belief' through which the 'self' is constituted as a rational agent. The 'self' produced through this use of the discourse is similar to the psychological 'self' implicated in 'belief system' discourse.

Among the discourses of spirituality identified through reading psychology texts was the 'purpose' discourse which constitutes spirituality as transcendence. This construction of spirituality implies that the subject, as a unified 'self', gives meaning and value to existence. It produces 'selves' who create their own meaning and 'spirituality' as the process through which meaning is attributed. The notions of 'meaning' and 'purpose' are central to this discourse. The women's texts also made use of notions of 'meaning' and 'purpose' to explicate experiences of spirituality:

It is whatever has meaning (Grace)

It's what gives my life meaning (Cerridwen)

...the sources of meaning for me (Sophia)

...this very magic sense of purpose (Sophia)

As in psychological use of the discourse, the women's texts focus 'meaning' and 'purpose' on the object 'me' through the attribution of qualities of importance and attractiveness and the construction of movement and motivation. These texts provide clear examples of 'me' being used in the process of attributing these qualities:

...is valuable and important to me (Grace)

...they are really important (Victoria)

It's whatever moves us (Grace)

...and gives me motivation (Cerridwen)

...and they make me feel good (Clara)

...it's attractive to me (Sage)

The women produced and reproduced a 'self' similar to that constituted through psychology's 'purpose' discourse - a 'self' who is the creator of meaning.

The objects constructed in and through psychological discourses of the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems' and 'purpose' were similarly constructed in the women's texts as they attempted to articulate their experiences of

spirituality. The effects of these discourses was the constitution of an authentic, rational, unitary 'self' who knows. The constitution of the object 'me' produced a 'self' with an essential inner 'reality'.

Feminist Discourses

In this section I address the question of whether the women's texts reproduce discourses of 'Self Woman' and 'Nature' which discursively produce the 'Self' as authentic and essentially female. Together these discourses reproduce an historic association between women and 'nature'. I have read the women's texts to identify and describe the objects consistent with these discourses.

The discourse of 'Self Woman' produces a 'true' sexually specific 'Self' as its primary object. Being sexually different was explicitly talked about in the texts producing a link between spirituality and sexual difference. This fragment is an example:

...and spirituality might be my experience or a way of claiming difference. Certainly different, because I want to claim being different (Arachne)

As they articulated their experiences of spirituality the women produced 'Self Woman' discourses through talk which produces objects referring to a specifically female 'self'. Some women claimed sexual difference to construct themselves, their 'being', as specifically female:

...the spiritual essence of all that matters I see as being strongly female (Clara)

I have this strong spiritual female (Clara)

My being is saturatedly female (Sophia)

We are very different beings (Victoria)

Psychological discourses of the 'true self' produces an essential human nature which constitutes an autonomous subject. These discourses are now being specified as essentially female. In other instances, a female essential 'Self' was constituted through difference from men:

For me spirituality is, this is what it is to be a woman with other women, a place where there is no interruption and you can't have that with men (Molly)

So spirituality is all those wicked things that are so powerfully good and solid and scrumptious that happen when it's not about men (Arachne)

I don't doubt that there's any difference at all between men and women (Sophia)

They're from a different planet (Cerridwen)

What we share as women is distinct from what we share with men (Cerridwen)

I think women's spirituality is different from men's (Isobella)

In the women's texts, spirituality enabled ways of experiencing a sense of 'Self knowledge' based on sexual difference. The women used talk which constructed 'intuition' as specifically female object, and 'other ways of knowing' through claims that women know differently to men:

Our ways of dealing with knowledge are very different (Sophia)

Men are very limited in the ways that they can experience these things. They want to know about them and believe in them, yeh and so, it's like it's precious stuff and I'm not going to cast it to the swine (Clara)

Men intellectualise things, they start talking as though they're channelling arch angels, or they put themselves in authority positions. Women knew intuitively (Sage)

It's just an intellectualising of knowledge and that isn't the way it is and that's why, for me, being with women is really important. It's because there's an intuition and there's a knowing when you're with a whole lot of women (Sage)

In this world, in the way we're running it now is according to masculine energy and the intellect, and that's not how we know it as women (Scarlet)

In these fragments the women articulated a split between 'knowledge' and 'intuition', where men have 'knowledge' and women have 'intuition'. Constructing women's 'knowledge' as 'intuition' does not explicitly produce a 'true Self', but is linked to the 'Self' as object through claims to sexually specific knowledge. The effect of 'Self Woman' discourses enables the constitution of a sexually specific female 'Self', challenging the universal subject constituted by psychology. At the same time, it produces and

reproduces a 'true Self' which is authentic, essential, and 'self-knowing'.

The importance of 'nature' in relation to 'Self Woman' discourse is through its use to naturalise the feminine and to valorise women's difference from men. The women construct 'nature' and 'nurture' as objects in discourse as they explain their spiritual experiences. In their talk they have made use of 'nature' and objects that constitute 'nature' to explain their experiences of spirituality. This links women and animals, and women and natural elements such as wind, forest, land, water:

...the trees and the wind and the water and the sun, the huge clouds, the lightning, and everything for us (Grace)

...and aspects of nature and environment, the sea, blue skies (Clara)

and I look up and there's the universe above me, ...and I get really excited about the full moon (Cerridwen)

Water, I must be near water, and trees, and birds... (Isobella)

...it's the ordinary way ordinary things happen, the grass grows, the daffodils bloom, the birds fly through the air, the water crashes over the waterfall and goes down the river, the sea comes, the tides come in (Sophia)

Conceived as a feminine principle, 'nature' is linked to the 'earth'. In these accounts the women make use of 'earth' to talk about spirituality:

It's about being able to see and being able to touch the Earth (Isobella)

It's a power from the earth up through my feet and from the sky down too. It's particularly earthed, I think (Sophia)

Well, like the Earth Mother, that reverence of the female and the female body, and all the qualities and characteristics that are female (Clara)

In the last of the above quotes, the production of 'Earth Mother' links the feminine principle explicitly to the 'earth' through the notion of an 'Earth Mother'. This link enables the constitution of a 'body' which contests the separation between 'human' and 'nature'. In this fragment, the body is

linked to feminine specificity which reproduces the body as a site of essential biological difference.

Connections between 'nature' and women sometimes involves a relationship between Mother and Earth, where Earth, like Mother, is constructed as nurturing:

There's a part of my being that is in the earth there, ...a bond that I feel with the Earth, the strong nurturing woman. (Clara)

I can't get this vision of Earth Mother out of my mind. It's this huge voluptuous brown body sort of lying in the sea, you know, cradling things and nurturing things, but being so strong and um, withstanding the storms and the elements and the sea...that sort of enduring (Clara)

The production of 'nurture' as an object in 'Nature' discourse produces an authentic and essential 'Self' which connects women and 'nature' through a relationship between Mother and Earth. The links between 'nature' and Mother Earth enable these women to talk about nurturing as part of spirituality. The production of an 'essence' in relation to 'Self' was employed in fragments of the women's talk. This 'essence' was explicitly referred to as being 'nurtured', or implied through references to some kind of 'inner self', including the construction of the object 'soul', being 'fed' or 'restored':

It is a really enlivening experience, really nurturing (Victoria)

It's anything that um, is nurturitive to the soul, anything that would actually feed my essence (Cerridwen)

It's so restorative (Isobella)

...the things that feed me spiritually, it's so nurturing (Isobella)

Through 'Nature' discourse, the articulation of 'Self' not only requires the production of 'nature' and 'nurture' as particular discursive objects, but certain nurturing processes produced through the discourse are required to enable the women to give meaning to their sense of who they are:

It can be revitalising and recharging...a refuelling process, and I can get out there and be Clara, the woman who I am (Clara)

It takes a lot of nurturing to get back the sense of, you can trust

your own sense of who you are (Grace)

They are experiences that are more nurturitive, they're all part of the ebb and flow of life...and that's the thing of being a woman (Cerridwen)

The above fragments imply that the 'Self' is already constituted, and through 'nurturing' can be reclaimed. This 'Self' shares particular characteristics with the 'true self' of psychological discourse - essential, unified, authentic - but through 'Nature' discourse is reproduced as essentially feminine.

The objects constructed in and through 'Self Woman' and 'Nature' discourses were similarly constructed in the women's texts as they explicated their experiences of spirituality. The 'Self Woman' discourse produces a universal feminine principle through which women may find their 'true Selves' producing a specifically female/feminine essential 'Self'. I found a similar, specifically female essential 'Self' in the women's texts through identifying the objects sexually specific 'Self', 'knowledge' and 'intuition' and 'difference'. The 'Nature' discourse relies on a notion of 'divine nature' which naturalises the category Woman. The naturalisation of Woman and the associate feminisation of 'nature' were evident in the women's texts and identified through the construction of 'nature', 'nurture', 'Earth Mother' and the 'body' to constitute an essentially biological different 'Self'.

Feminist Poststructuralist Discourses

This third section focuses on the feminist poststructuralist discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment'. These discourses posit a body that can only be reached through the same means that separate us from 'reality'. Stockton (1992) attempts to locate the point where the body stands apart from/against social constructions, where the tensions between the body as a figure in discourse and as material presence results in spiritual materialism. I have read the texts for their constitution of objects which are consistent with the use of these discourses and provide evidence of how these discourses are embedded in women's talk about spirituality.

'Escape' signals a 'beyond' discourse that can not be reached through language and is evoked through 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances'. In their attempts to articulate their spiritual experiences, the women used talk which produced objects which evoke 'shadowy forms' that are inaccessible to view:

It's the part that's unable to be captured (Sophia)

It's not concrete stuff (Arachne)

It is a continuing mystery...into the unknown (Grace)

...things that are unseen (Victoria)

...this mysterious unfolding (Molly)

Some women talked of 'spaces beyond' material presence, and the material body:

...into the timeless spaces in the world (Sophia)

I'm also talking about moving between other spaces and the spaces between myself (Arachne)

Language constructs subjects and their world, and the excesses that render matter outside their construction. The following fragments produce unspecified 'things' that can only appear outside 'reality', things that escape our constructions, to constitute spirituality. These 'things' can be named,

It can have many names...I could call it Lucy (Cerridwen)

It is a presence (Victoria)

...It is the presence (Scarlet)

...the source (Scarlet)

but experiences are articulated through 'shadowy forms' and remain elusive. While 'it' is experienced by the women, 'it' also appears 'outside' of them:

It transcends culture (Molly)

It isn't mine in one sense, but it is in another (Sophia)

It's something that is also outside me (Scarlet)

Language, however, produces and constrains meaning and limits the forms of talk available. 'Escape' signals a 'beyond' discourse we can never get to through language. The talk the women produced to construct spirituality reflected on the inadequacy of language. In and through escape discourses, what I have called 'inarticulate utterances' produce the object 'words' as characteristically inadequate. The following fragments show how 'words' are not only constraining but are also elude representation:

It's unable to be, it's, it's beyond words. I don't want to put it into words because that would limit it (Molly)

I'm just trying to find the right word, um, I don't know (Cerridwen)

It's about, um, the words just disappear (Sophia)

To say what it is is to put it into words...and that's a struggle for me (Arachne)

I actually find it really hard to put words to those experiences (Clara)

There don't seem to be the words (Grace)

The constraining effects of language were also implied through talk of difficulties in speaking:

Putting it into words would change it (Arachne)

It's just that it's untellable (Sophia)

...it's difficult to say (Arachne)

How can I explain it? (Victoria)

And in saying that I don't know what I mean (Arachne)

Through their talk these women made explicit references to the limiting effects of language. Some women, however, talked about possibilities 'outside' words that enable possibilities of 'speaking' differently:

...anything that enables us to speak from our own experiences is really important, and by speaking I don't mean words (Grace)

All the words don't mean anything now, I have to translate (Sophia)

Communicating it is important, but I do it differently, it has little to do with words (Sage)

In and through discourses on escape, these women are able to articulate spirituality as 'real' and at the same time constructed it as excessive of language. In articulating tensions between what can be constructed and something 'real' outside their constructions, they reproduce discourse of escape.

For Stockton (1992) spirituality can be read as discourse on that which exceeds human sign systems where language fails to capture materialities not yet seen. In this context, concealment is a mysterious sign of 'reality', a concealed presence and it is concealment that cannot be captured through language. I have identified the discourse 'concealment' through reading the talk the women used to produce unspecified objects. These objects are experienced as 'real' and are yet not seen:

I could almost see it, it was there (Victoria)

...those things which are behind you and you actually don't know what they look like yet (Grace)

You can feel it, it's real (Molly)

You know it's like, um, there is something there (Scarlet)

It has to do with the things that are unseen (Victoria)

*...and I knew there was something there, I don't know what
(Sage)*

'Concealment' produced mystery, darkness, ambiguity and absence as objects in the women's attempts to articulate what 'it' was that was concealed. These qualities were either explicit, or implied through reference to unspecified 'things':

...this mysterious unfolding (Molly)

...and it's mysterious (Grace)

...things that are kept in the darkness (Grace)

It's just a shift (Sage)

Discourses of concealment locate objects as 'outside' language at the same time that they are experienced by the women as 'real'.

Discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment' were evident in the women's texts as they explicated their experiences of spirituality. Stockton (1992) identifies these discourses as producing spiritual materialism, where the body is constructed in relation to material and spiritual presence. The 'escape' discourse evokes a desire to produce bodies elsewhere, differently. The 'body' is produced as an object which resists constructions. 'Escape' signals a body 'beyond' discourse that can not be reached through language. The failure of language to capture 'real bodies' evokes 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances'. In the women's texts, there was evidence of escape discourses which produced objects that evoked 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances'. However, in these texts, the body was not produced as an object. 'Shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances' constituted spirituality rather than bodies through escape, effectively rendering spirituality as something 'outside'. In so doing, spirituality is positioned outside language and is represented in the same way as Stockton (1992) claims the Victorian God is represented.

According to Stockton (1992), the poststructuralist feminist discourse of 'concealment' is a mysterious sign of 'reality'. The body is not known; its

material presence is concealed and is unable to be captured by language. 'Concealment' produces the material body as the something that is concealed by mysticism. In the women's texts, 'concealment' implicated a not knowing 'self' through the production of objects that were experienced as 'real'. 'Concealment' also produced unspecified objects such as mystery and darkness. 'Concealment' was used to constitute spirituality itself, rather than the 'body' as in Stockton's (1992) text.

Subjugated Knowledges

In the final section of this chapter, I have identified discourses that constituted 'subjugated knowledges' produced in the women's texts. I read 'subjugated knowledges' as knowledges that do not have legitimacy in dominant institutional, social and political structures in psychology. They therefore remain invisible or are read as other than knowledge. I have identified an 'outsider' discourse, a 'connectedness' discourse, and a discourse on 'the body' as discursive resources produced in the women's texts. These discourses are recognised as subjugated knowledge as they are excluded from 'legitimate knowledges' in the reading of the academic texts included in the writing of this thesis.

In an attempt to articulate their experiences of spirituality the women have used what I am calling 'outsider' talk. 'Outsider' talk is characterised by constructions of objects which fall into three categories, 'non-human', 'alien', and 'mad'. These are particular constructs which the women use to characterise their 'selves'. They either identify with the object by relating to objects already 'outside' ordinary social relations,

I used to feel like a little robot... (Sage)

I just, I felt like I'd been brought in from Venus or somewhere stupid (Sage)

...its almost like madness (Cerridwen)

I know its mad... (Arachne)

or they identify themselves as different from other objects 'inside' social relations, by not being like 'the family', 'the system', 'sane ordinary people', 'mainstream':

I used to watch my family's life going on around me, but I was just totally disjointed from them (Sage)

Where do I fit in amongst all these sane ordinary people? (Sage)

...in as much as it's like it's not mainstream (Cerridwen)

...fitting in with the system that doesn't really want you (Molly)

The effect of these constructs enabled these women to give meaning to their distinctiveness. Constituting their 'selves' as mad, non-human or alien, these women were not like other 'selves'. This was achieved by relating the 'self' to objects already identified as different, or as being different from objects such as the 'system'.

'Outsider' discourse enabled the production of a discrete, autonomous 'self' which was able to be located 'outside' social systems. This was achieved through making some kind of conscious decision to 'step out' or 'wander off' from the constraints of being within social systems or by making some kind of decision to operate 'outside' them:

But the sense which when one is stepping out, um, and it is risky... and that's okay, but it does feel sort of vulnerable, risky (Cerridwen)

I think over the years you get conditioned to fitting in and us, you learn, you get sneaky. You learn ways of keeping you but fitting in with the system that doesn't really want you [.....] I fit where I want to fit, and I know the people I fit with. I don't waste time and energy anymore trying to fit into situations where I don't because that just doesn't work. (Sage)

You know like what we are doing at the moment....it's a bit weird you know. I mean I don't know where its leading but I know it's the right thing at the moment, you know and um, that's okay, but if I suddenly think about it too much I can get a bit panicky (Cerridwen)

I just wander off (Arachne)

This partial refusal to deny themselves a place within the boundaries of the 'system' has both troubling and pleasurable implications - there are strategies that enable them to resist practices which exclude them from participating within social systems, but they are also constrained by remaining 'outside'. The discrete, conscious, autonomous 'self' constituted through 'outsider' discourse is able to be located 'outside social relations as if the 'self' is independent of social relations.

Another discourse that constituted subjugated knowledge produced in the women's texts was that of 'connectedness'. 'Connectedness' is identified

through the constitution of a relational 'self' and through connections with people and places, and across time.

In their attempts to articulate their experiences of spirituality the women have used talk which produces a non-discrete 'self', a subject dependent on connections. There were explicit references to connectedness with people,

So there's a really deep spiritual connection there between myself and people that I've loved (Clara)

It was these women who just knew, it was a connectedness (Victoria)

There's a sense in which you're sharing with somebody...I'm into interconnections (Cerridwen)

It enables you to see the threads that actually connect us (Cerridwen)

And we might cast a circle together and energies mix...it's is about many kinds of connections (Arachne)

And it was handed down to me by my stepmother...it's kind of a key to exploring my spiritual connections (Isobella)

Connectedness goes with people (Sophia)

and with with places which produced a sense of belonging:

It locates me. It gives me a place. It gives me belonging (Molly)

And there are connections between other places...places I can belong to (Sophia)

And connections with trees, I belong in places that have trees (Isobella)

Connections with people and places produced a relational 'self' positioned in and among social relations. Connectedness with people and places from the past was also evident in the texts, constructing the relational 'self' through a sense of belonging, or of history:

It enables me to have an ongoing connection with relationships that have not continued, like my brother who is

no longer here to engage with (Clara)

*I know this place and I know that I have been here before
(Arachne)*

*The whole thing of genealogy and the threads that have been
passed on down the generations (Cerridwen)*

*Spirituality is a way of claiming new ways from connections
from the past (Arachne)*

*So connections with those ancient sites have huge power for
me, connectedness across time (Sophia)*

*I feel connected to something very ancient, like I have this
strong sense of history (Victoria)*

The articulation of connectedness produced a relational 'self' enabled in and through social relations.

Another discursive resource identified as a subjugated knowledge was a discourse of 'the body'. Traditionally 'body' has been produced in opposition to 'mind' and 'spirit'. Where women occupy the position of 'body', not only is the body privileged as a site of biological difference, but the masculine is privileged as the foundation of valid knowledge. Feminisms have recognised the problematic relationship with women and women's bodies, and while 'the body' was not talked about in the women's texts as much as the 'self' or 'me', it was produced as an object in talk about spirituality.

In their attempts to articulate their experiences of spirituality, the women have used talk which has produced 'the body' as an object in discourse, linking bodies and the physical with the spiritual. In the fragments that follow, the spiritual and 'the body' are intimately connected. In the first quote, the spiritual is constituted as physical, implying spirituality is in the body:

*It is physical, it's totally physical in the same way as wind is
physical and breath is physical, life is physical (Sophia)*

The 'body' is also produced as a 'part' of spirituality,

I like to sort of use my body and yahoo a bit you know, and that's part of my spirituality (Cerridwen)

The whole body is very much a part of, just being aware of myself physically is part of my spirituality (Cerridwen)

and the spiritual is also constituted as 'parts' of bodies:

We can't do it without our bodies. We're in our bodies. We're meant to be in our bodies, yeh, the spiritual energy has always been a part of it (Scarlet)

In these fragments, it seems that 'the body' as a site of spiritual experience marks both a material and a spiritual surface that the women refuse to separate.

'Sexuality' was also produced as an object linking bodies and spirituality, enabling sexuality a spiritual dimension. Sexuality, spirituality and the body all produce associations that resist separation differently. The first quote links sexuality and the body and constitutes spirituality, through 'connectedness' discourse as the overall connection that defies separation:

In my experiences I guess, that sexual pleasure is very closely connected to my sense of delight of physical pleasure and somehow connects all of those things in at once (Sophia)

The following fragment links sexuality and the body to spirituality through a negation of separateness. In an attempt to constitute sexuality, the body and spirituality together, sexuality and the body are constituted within the spiritual and at the same time the spiritual enables bodily experience:

Sexuality is not separate. It's about claiming our bodies within the spiritual. It's a way of experiencing our bodies. I think spirituality enables a lot of different ways of sharing our bodies (Arachne)

Sexuality for me could be the symbol for the spiritual (Arachne)

In these accounts, the spiritual, the body, and sexuality are intimately connected. The spiritual enables ways of experiencing bodies and sexuality. At the same time, some women used talk that enabled them to experience spirituality through the body:

I could feel it running up and down my arms (Victoria)

...and the power that it raises, that's real. I could feel it tingling through my fingers and arms (Victoria)

It would touch you, sort of like a part of me that nothing else can (Cerridwen)

It can do great things for me, dance and movement...being able to yell and scream and rant and rave when it suits me and go yeh, yeh, yeh, yeh, yahoo and do all sorts of motions (Cerridwen)

And when I invite the presence in, I feel it rushing down into my body and I can feel an embrace (Scarlet)

The interrelationships between body, sexuality and spirituality defy traditional separations of sexuality, spirituality and embodiment.

In this section, I identified 'outsider', 'connectedness' and 'body' discourses that constituted subjugated knowledge produced in the women's texts. 'Outsider' discourse produced a discrete 'self'. This was achieved by relating the 'self' to objects already identified outside the system, such as 'robots', or by identifying the 'self' as different from objects such as the 'system'. The discrete 'self', although located 'outside' social systems, reproduced a 'self' similar to psychology's 'true self' whose essence is independent of social relations. A different 'self' was produced through the connectedness discourse. This 'self' was constituted as relational, producing a non-discrete 'self' achieved through connections with people and places, and across time. The third subjugated knowledge discourse produced a discourse of 'the body'. The body and sexuality were produced as objects. Links between the physical and the spiritual problematised the mind/body, spirit/nature binaries. The discourse of 'the body' resisted traditional separations of sexuality, spirituality and embodiment.

In this chapter I have read the women's texts to identify whether the objects produced in and through the psychological, feminist and poststructuralist feminist texts were reproduced in their attempts to articulate their spiritual experiences. Psychological discourses of the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems' and 'purpose' were reproduced. Feminist discourses of 'Self

'Woman' and 'Nature' were both realised. The poststructuralist feminist discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment' were also identified, although the women constituted spirituality as the object and not the body constituted in Stockton's (1992) text. I also identified discourses which constitute subjugated knowledges: 'outsider' discourse, 'connectedness' discourse, and a discourse of 'the body' which linked sexuality, spirituality and embodiment. These discourses provide the discursive resources for creating speaking positions. The following chapter will draw on the objects identified in this chapter to read the texts for subject positions constituted through the discourses realised in the women's texts. Particular attention will be given to whether the discourses reproduce phallogentric positionings or transform them to produce specific speaking positions for women.

Chapter 5

Analysis: Speaking Positions

In the previous section my focus was on examining the texts to identify discourses through examining the objects of which they speak. In this chapter, my concern is how the production and reproduction of discourses and discursive objects simultaneously produce speaking positions for women. From a Foucauldian perspective, the subject is a product of discourses, multiple and contradictory. A subject is a location constructed within discourse where the space that a discourse creates enables a speaking position and constructs ways of speaking (Parker, 1992). Spirituality is not the product of a single discourse because discourses do not exist independently of their productions, nor are they confined within the boundaries of specific disciplines. As the previous chapter indicated, psychological discourses are not the only discursive resources through which women can articulate their spiritual experiences. In the women's texts I have read, feminist and poststructuralist feminist discourses, along with others, co-articulate in knowledge production. These texts illustrate the multiplicity of discourses. This multiplicity often offers competing and contradictory ways of constituting objects through complex relationships with other discourses. Discourses are regulated and systematic in the production of knowledge. There are rules for their co-articulation which include combinations of and contradictions with other discourses, enabling and constraining the production of possible speaking positions which are theoretically limitless (Parker, 1992). At any particular moment, several coexisting and potentially contradictory discourses enable possibilities of different speaking positions.

The systematic character of a discourse includes its systematic articulation with other discourses. In practice, discourses delimit what can be said, whilst providing the spaces - the concepts, metaphors, models, analogies - for making new statements within any specific discourse (Henriques et al., 1984, pp.105-6).

In an attempt to understand the interrelationships between the different discourses identified in the first section, I will now read for their co-articulations with other discourses. I am particularly interested in the

subject positions enabled through these co-articulations. Given this interest, I will focus this chapter on the various constitutions of 'self' enabled through talk about spirituality. I am looking to locate specific limitations, particularly attending to the ways phallogentrism operates in the co-articulations which produce 'self'. Phallogentrism may be read as a process of representation through which the only subject specified is the masculine subject, where the only representation of women made possible is always already limited to difference. Phallogentrism generally takes three forms; where women are constituted as the opposites or negatives to men, as duplicates of men, or as complementary to men (Grosz, 1989).

The humanistic psychological discourses identified construct a rational, conscious, knowing, unitary 'self'. Co-articulations with feminist and poststructuralist feminist discourses may produce compatible objects, such as a discrete essential 'self', or may contrast and produce objects that are not compatible through constituting the object 'self' differently. All the 'self' objects constituted in and through spirituality discourses provide conditions of possibility for what can be said and who can say it. Do the co-articulations between and among these discourses reproduce phallogentric positionings or transform them to produce specific speaking positions for women?

Humanistic psychological discourses of 'self' and Daly's 'Self Woman' discourses combine to produce compatible objects. Where the individual in psychology is constituted as a rational, conscious, knowing and unitary being with an insight into the nature of their essential humanity, 'Self Woman' discourses also constitute an authentic, essential 'Self'. 'Self Woman' discourses challenge the universal subject constituted by humanistic psychology by constituting 'Self Woman' as specifically feminine/female. In their co-articulation, 'Self Woman' and psychological 'self' discourses construct an essential 'self' in different ways. Psychological discourses construct the 'self' as universal, relying on notions

of sameness, and 'Self Woman' discourses construct the 'Self' as specifically female, relying on notions of sexual difference. The following quote is an example of their co-articulation from one of the women's texts:

I don't have an intellect separate from my body, separate from my emotions, separate from my whatever else. I have me. I have being [...] my being is saturatedly female [...] I'm separating it because I think they have, as though it is of women. I don't doubt there's any difference at all between men and women. At some kind of common level, there must be an overlap, we are the same species after all, but! (Sophia)

The effects of using these discourses together constructs sameness and difference simultaneously, returning women to the self same position as always already 'Other'.

'Self Woman' discourse produces a 'true Self' which mirrors the 'true self' in humanistic psychology. 'Self Woman' discourse includes references to sexual difference produced through the notion of 'divine nature' to challenge the universal subject of humanistic psychology. 'Self Woman' discourse co-articulates with 'Nature' discourse, naturalising the feminine so that Woman is representative of Nature, valorising women's difference to men. Constituting the 'self' as essentially female/feminine, Woman remains a metaphor for difference. 'She', like nature, is embodied in the natural, characterised as disordered, emotional, and irrational. The co-articulation of discourses of 'Self Woman' and 'Nature' links the feminine with that which is excluded from knowing constituting 'her' as an object of knowledge. This co-articulation can also be read in fragments of the women's texts, for example:

There's nothing that is masculine that I can accept in a spiritual way [...] the spiritual essence of all that really matters I see as being strongly female. That is how I see it, of all that matters, not necessarily all that is recognised, or all that is revered, but all that is really essential, I think, I hope, is largely female. Well, like the earth mother [...] and just loving that reverence of the female and the female body, and all the

qualities and characteristics that are female [...] the nurturing, the strong nurturing woman, um, like the unconditional love, yeh, the ability to, of want, of desire to be there for someone without the expectation that something is going to be given back [...] That sort of enduring, yeh. Um, it's not something that I go about doing deliberately, there are parts of it that I think are there in me (Clara)

The effects of this co-articulation produces the specificity of the feminine through a binary relationship with the masculine, reproducing the body as the site of essential biological difference. The reversal does not provide an autonomous speaking position for women. Rather, like the co-articulation of the psychological 'true self' and the 'Self Woman' discourse, it reproduces the phallogentric positioning of woman as 'Other'.

The 'Self Woman' discourse, with 'Nature', relies on organic metaphors to produce an authentic and essential 'self' connecting women and nature through a relationship between Mother and Earth. These discourses co-articulate with 'growth' discourse in the production of spirituality. Discourses of 'growth' produce an authentic, rational, unified 'self' with inner potential, capable of assessing and interpreting their behaviours as they grow and develop. 'Growth', read as an organic life metaphor, implicates nature and nurture. The following quote illustrates this co-articulation:

I think in regards to my spiritual being, my part of myself I see very much as growing now, I'm nurturing it and I'm definitely feeding it, like doing the things that I want to do. Hey it's okay to explore who I am and what I value and what gives me nourishment and I think that giving nourishment is the spiritual connection. You know, I've got an interesting job for next year and I'm going to do the best I can [...] and definitely not deny myself of the things that feed me spiritually (Isobella)

The 'growth' discourse produces a rational, unified 'self' with inner potential where the subject is contrasted with objects in the world outside. Whatever

'Self Woman' might evoke, 'she' as Nature, remains caught within the effects of the binary opposites of inner/outer, spirit/nature. The effect of this co-articulation limits 'her' - as the negative partner 'she' becomes the object of 'growth' rather than the subject.

The above readings recognise that humanistic psychological discourses co-articulating with feminist discourses do not produce a unique, autonomous position located 'outside' other equally discrete and autonomous discourses. Through the power of phallogentrism, a distinctively female subject is limited to difference.

Co-articulations among discourses not only produce complementary objects, but may produce contradictory objects through their different constitutions of spirituality. Contradictory 'self' objects were produced through co-articulating 'outsider' and 'connectedness' discourses. The 'outsider' discourse enabled the production of a discrete 'self', an autonomous individual. This was achieved by identifying the 'self' as different from objects such as 'the system' or 'mainstream' or by relating the 'self' to objects already identified as different, such as 'robots'. Through the production of a discrete 'self' which is able to be located 'outside' social systems, this discourse reproduces a 'self' similar to the individual 'self' of psychology whose essence is independent of its social context. In contrast, the 'connectedness' discourse produced a non-discrete 'self', a subject dependent upon connections with people and places and across time. This 'self' is relational rather than autonomous. 'Outsider' discourse enables positions which differentiate 'self' from 'other' and operate outside the constraints of social relations as if the 'self' is independent of the social realm. At the same time, 'connectedness' enables positions in and among social relations. The following fragments illustrate how both discourses co-exist in constructing spirituality.

I know its mad [...] I won't live in the boundaries that are prescribed as legitimate [...] I don't get caught where I don't belong. It's like I am already in a different place and I know that I have been here before, and it's like, old crafts have been kept alive...and I have been gifted with the knowledge of the

past. [...] And it's about many kinds of connections and it's important to share with others of the same or similar visions. And in this experiencing there are many ways of being together (Arachne)

Read in terms of the discursive strategies which enable and constrain the conditions of possibility for the production of speaking positions for women, meaning was achieved through competing discourses which constitute the object 'self' differently. These 'selves' are differentiated through the operations of an individual/social split which produces 'selves' as either autonomous or relational. Through this split, the woman speaking is the 'outsider', an individual similar to the 'true self' of psychological discourse although 'excluded', and simultaneously a non-discrete 'relational' self. The 'outsider' position constitutes the woman speaking as a 'self' who is both the same as and different from other individuals. The 'connectedness' position challenges the constitution of the 'self' as an individual. Used together, these discourses produce a co-articulation through which the speaking subject is paradoxically positioned both inside and out, as both discrete and non-discrete.

Another site of the production of contradictory 'selves' is the co-articulation of psychology's 'true self' discourses with 'escape' discourse. The 'self' constituted in humanistic psychological discourses produces the object 'me' as discrete and knowable. This 'self' is not compatible with discourses of 'escape' which produce a self 'beyond' the discretion of a unified material presence. Psychology's discourses of 'self' posit the individual as an essential unity which is the centre of meaning and knowledge. Discourses of 'escape' constitute a not-knowing 'self', implicating other ways of knowing. 'Escape', evoked through 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances' signals a 'beyond' discourse. In the following fragments both psychological 'self' and 'escape' discourses co-articulate to construct spirituality:

For me, it's all about myself. It's paradoxical because while it's the part that is unable to be captured it's also the only part that is worth capturing. It's almost by definition unable to be, it's

beyond words. I don't want to put it into words because that would limit it [...] It's, it's my identity, and there's that real sense of uniqueness [...] so the place that I take up in the universe nobody will ever be able to take up and it's that irreducible little bit that's left after you explain everything else away [...] It's the thread that...holds all the rest together. So all through my life I have had this sense of centredness, of um being in touch with the essence of what things were about for myself, but also being in the context of a moving, living existence of which I am a very unique and irreplaceable part [...] I have me. I have being (Sophia)

Psychological discourses of 'self' enable a knowing subject, invoking notions of sameness and unity with an inner 'reality'. In the fragment above, this discourse may be read in references to 'uniqueness', 'centredness' and 'essence'. At the same time, drawing on poststructuralist feminist discourses of 'escape', it is possible to read references to that which is 'beyond' the 'self'. These articulations problematise the unitary, rational 'self' through references to 'shadowy forms' and 'inarticulate utterances'. The self 'beyond' may be read as a recognition of a moment and/or movements between self knowledge and other knowing processes. This movement/moment also produces paradoxical speaking positions. The woman speaking is both in possession and not in possession, both centred and moving.

'Concealment' discourses also constitute not-knowing 'selves' and produce positions which are not compatible with 'true self' discourses. The following quote provides an example of the effect of their co-articulation:

It's just an awareness of another existence, and an existence of what I don't know. Some source of power, or um... yeh, power or life force really. Yeh, but it's part of me but also not part of me but something that there's an interaction between. Yeh, it's very sort of nebulous (Clara)

'Concealment' discourses constitute unspecified objects. Here an unknown, unspecified 'existence' or 'power' is constituted simultaneously as part and not part of the speaking 'me'. The speaking woman both knows (is aware of) and does not know (of what) 'she' speaks. Here, as in the example above, the co-articulation of discourse produces paradoxical speaking positions.

Talk about the 'body' is another site of co-articulation of discourses. The 'body' produced in and through 'Self Woman' and 'Nature' discourses, while sexually specific, initially appears as compatible with humanistic psychology's subject - a stable biological being. The practices of universalism privileges the 'masculine' as the foundation of valid knowledge. Body and nature have traditionally been put in opposition to mind and spirit. The following fragments produce the 'body' both as biologically determined and at the same time problematises the mind/body, spirit/nature binaries by linking bodies and spirit.

It's because there's some essential, fundamental difference that's about us that um, are somehow determined because we have got completely different bodies [...] The whole body is very much part of my spirituality, just being aware of myself physically and all those things that you sort of, all those things that you experience physically as being a woman. It [spirituality] would touch you, sort of like a part of me that nothing else can (Cerridwen).

The 'body' in this co-articulation marks a surface which is not only a matter of biological difference as in Daly's version of the 'body', but links the physical and the spiritual. However, the speaking position it produces is not clearly distinct from that produced by 'Self Woman' discourse. The reliance on sexual *difference* as the determination of physical difference continues to produce the speaking woman in the position of 'Other'.

Through identifying the discourses and attending to the ways in which discursive co-articulation produces speaking positions, it is apparent that multiple discourses constructing multiple and sometimes contradictory

'selves' have been employed in these women's accounts of their spirituality. In reviewing this analysis I will briefly return to the questions I sought to address: Do these texts reproduce the discourses identified in psychological, feminist or poststructuralist feminist accounts of spirituality? Are other discursive recourses used, especially those which may be regarded as 'subjugated knowledges'? Do the subject positions constituted through the discourses realised in these texts, challenge the phallogentric positioning of women at this local site of accounting for 'spiritual experiences'?

Psychological discourses of the 'true self', 'growth', 'belief systems' and 'purpose' were all realised in these texts. Feminist discourses of the 'Self Woman' and 'Nature' were also identified. While the feminist poststructuralist discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment' were identified, they were not used to constitute the same object - the body - as in the academic texts. Rather, they were used to constitute spirituality itself and therefore reproduced a more traditional 'spiritual object'.

The women's texts also realised an 'outsider' discourse, a 'connections' discourse and a discourse of the body which resisted traditional separations of sexuality, spirituality and embodiment. These discourses constituted subjugated knowledges to the extent that they are excluded from the academic discourses which are 'legitimate knowledges'. However, because the 'academic discourses' included in this project are limited to specific texts, it is possible that these discourses are realised elsewhere as 'legitimate'.

In relation to the question of subject positions, the discourses produced multiple and often contradictory speaking positions, identified in this chapter through the constitution of multiple 'selves'. Some of these positions clearly reproduced phallogentric positioning of the woman speaking as different from or the same as 'Man'.

The subjects constituted by the psychological discourses of the 'true self' and the feminist 'Self Woman' discourse were both positioned as centres of

self knowledge and able to speak with authority about their spiritual experiences. The psychological discourses enabled speakers to constitute spirituality as a journey or growth towards self knowledge. In this position the woman speaking occupies the same space as the traditionally masculine subject who is the centre of knowledge and meaning. The connection between Nature and Woman constituted through the co-articulation of 'Nature' and 'Self Woman' discourses, positions Woman on the feminine side of the man/woman binary. This positioning challenges phallogentrism only to the extent that the spirit/body binary is challenged. However, since 'spirit' has traditionally been excluded from legitimate scientific knowledges, this challenge reproduces 'Woman' in the traditional 'excluded' space.

Through the co-articulation of 'connectedness' and 'outsider' discourses, 'true self' and 'escape' discourses, and 'true self' and 'concealment' discourses, a number of paradoxical speaking positions were enabled. These paradoxical positions constitute a challenge to phallogentrism to the extent that they resist positioning the speaker on one side or other of the man/woman binary. Paradoxes imply the simultaneous presence of both sides, replacing 'either/or' formulations with 'both/and'. In these cases the speaking positions enable both an autonomous *and* a relational 'self', both a knowing *and* a non-knowing subject. This paradoxical position provides resistance to a unitary speaking position for women through which 'she' is distinctively the same as or different from 'man'. This resistance remains caught within the sexual difference binary while simultaneously challenging its operation.

Where discourse on 'the body' was co-articulated with 'Self Woman' discourse, the reliance on sexual difference as determining physical difference, reproduced phallogentric positioning of the woman as 'Other'. However, not all 'body talk' co-articulated with 'Self Woman' discourse. The 'body' was also produced as physical and spiritual and in a relationship which included sexuality, but made no reference to sexual difference. This 'body' marks a break with mind/body, spirit/nature binaries traditionally associated with phallogentrism. The woman speaking this 'body' is neither

the same as nor different from Man. Rather, she is enabling a position through which it is possible to resist biological reductionism and simultaneously avoid the determination of her specificity through a biologically given 'female essence'. This positioning may be read as a challenge to the exclusion of the body from "notions of subjectivity, personhood or identity" (Grosz, 1987, p.5). When "women's *psychical experiences of their bodies* are coupled with revised biological models more appropriate to women" (Grosz, 1987, p.15), it may be possible to contest the representation of women as subordinate to men. The particular production of the body as a configuration of the physical, sexual and spiritual produced through these women's texts may be read as articulating such 'psychical experiences' and therefore challenges women's phallogocentric positioning.

Chapter 6

Discussion: Possibilities for Transformation?

As I began this thesis I articulated a desire to open up possibilities of recognising and transforming that which has been excluded and/or excessive in academic knowledges which privilege the rational, autonomous, unified subject of psychology. My desire is informed through my own positioning in psychology, as a site of knowledge production and reproduction, and through my participation in and resistance to practices of access and exclusion. My own speaking position emerges from a discursive frame which includes psychology, feminisms and poststructuralism. Reading and writing from this position both informs and supports my concern with women's exclusion from the production and reproduction of legitimate knowledges, and the phallogocentric practices embedded in the institutions that authorise these knowledges.

I opened this thesis with desires of opening up possibilities of recognising and transforming that which has been excluded and/or excessive in academic knowledge. Through my reading and writing practices I have attempted to identify and open up spaces of possibility for transformations of discursive material which might enable speaking positions for women to speak/write differently. Women's speaking positions have become the focus of my attention.

The women's texts, which I have read, realise multiple discourses, including those realised in psychological, feminist and poststructuralist feminist accounts of spirituality. The ways in which the women's texts reproduced these discourses and made use of 'subjugated knowledges' were addressed in Chapter 5. For the purposes of this discussion I return to the question: Do the subject positions constituted through the discourses realised in these texts challenge the phallogocentric positioning of women at this local site of accounting for 'spiritual experiences'?

Multiple discourses constitute multiple subject positions. The textual realisation of multiple discourses not only constitutes the object 'spirituality'

differently, but also produces a number of speaking positions through which experiences of spirituality may be articulated. The engagement of this multiplicity in the women's texts implicates both legitimate knowledges and subjugated knowledges as forms through which the women constitute their experience. While some of these discourses reproduce notions of unified, rational and authentic subjectivity, their multiple engagement resists producing a unified position for the woman speaking. Through my reading, some of the multiple speaking positions identified in Chapter 5 reproduced phallogentric positioning of the women as different from, or the same as 'Man'. The third 'form' of phallogentricism, where women are represented as men's complements, was not realised in these texts. There were also challenges to women's phallogentric positionings. Do these challenges/contestations provide access to transformations of discursive material which may constitute speaking positions for women, transforming what is already available into a specifically female subjectivity?

Among the challenges were co-articulations of discourses which enabled 'paradoxical' speaking positions, positions where it was not possible to 'fix' the woman speaking on either one side or the other of the 'man/woman' binary. While these positions challenge phallogentricism and constitute a site of contradiction, their potential for opening a 'space' to enable specifically female subjectivity is somewhat constrained by their reproduction of the binary itself.

In Chapter 1 I wrote:

writing/speaking 'as if' simultaneously challenges and dislocates dominant discourses, and opens up a space for silenced subjects to articulate their experiences and to explore spaces for new forms of subjectivity that exceed or escape being non-Man.

In the women's texts, writing/speaking 'as if' the body, spirituality and sexuality were inseparable, challenged the binary opposition spirit/body, reproducing 'Woman' in the 'space' traditionally excluded from 'legitimate' knowledge. Writing/speaking from the body may provide the 'space' for women to inhabit discourse and for discourses to constitute subjectivities excessive of binary oppositions.

I chose Kathryn Stockton's (1992) text as reproducing statements characteristic of poststructuralist feminism to use as a discursive resource to read the women's texts. For Stockton (1992) spirituality can be read as discourse on the failure of language to capture the materiality of the 'body'. She argues the 'body' can be split in two; the socially constructed body and the body which eludes our constructions. It is the body which can not be captured through language that requires the belief in something 'real' that escapes our constructions indicating a 'space' where human meanings fail. Through discourses of 'escape' and 'concealment' Stockton (1992) produces the 'body' in the space where spirituality traditionally used to be. This production of spirituality challenges phallogentrism through producing a 'body' without reference to a unified rational subject, not even 'one' who is essentially feminine. 'Escape' and 'concealment' therefore, transform the traditional constructions of the 'body' as a site of biological difference.

The women's texts constructed a 'body' that was not apparent in the 'legitimated knowledges' of psychological texts, nor in the feminist texts which constituted speaking positions for women the same as or different from Man. The 'body' was constructed as both 'physical' and 'spiritual' without reference to sexual difference or to women's specificity through a biologically given 'female essence'. The production of the 'body' as a configuration of the physical, the sexual and the spiritual challenges the mind/body, spirit/nature binary opposites and enables a speaking position which contests the exclusion of the body from subjectivity. This position can provide a place 'outside' phallogentrism for women to speak/write differently. This 'body' was not produced within the context of psychology, or within the feminist or poststructuralist feminist forms of 'legitimate knowledge' about women's spirituality considered in the production of this thesis. Both the women's construction of the 'body' and Stockton's (1992) 'body' may transform women's phallogentric positioning posing a challenge to women's exclusion from psychological knowledge production and reproduction. However, the absence of women's accounts of spirituality from the contemporary psychological literature, limits the possibility of such a challenge. This thesis may be read as an attempt to address this exclusion and open other 'spaces' by examining texts of women's

experiences, and attempting to position feminist and poststructuralist feminist theories as 'legitimate knowledge', in the context of psychology.

Of course, this thesis operates within certain limitations and constraints. It emerges through my reading/writing practices as well as through the texts. My readings are not comprehensive of the discursive resources used in the academic texts or the women's texts, and they themselves are open to other readings. In Chapter 3, I wrote of having concerns with imposing meaning on other women's texts. I experienced practical and moral dilemmas as I broke the women's texts into fragments removing pieces of text from from the context in which they were articulated. I read these tensions as a limitation of my use of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis does not enable a reading of the effects of the texts as a story. It was evident in the women's texts that spiritual experiences were enabled through contexts which gave meaning to those experiences. For example, the following excerpt was embedded in a context of talk about the 'self' not fitting in.

I knew there was part of me that just didn't fit in, that just wouldn't fit in. [...] Spiritually, I think I was learning but on a different level. I mean, I would say that the eight years that I was married I learnt so much, just so much but on a different level. It was a refining process. You have what you have and you refine it, yeh. But he us, and I, I mean he wasn't what I needed. I should never have married him. I did an injustice by marrying him and us, (laughter) I definitely wasn't what he needed, us so anyway, we moved back up here, up to Nelson. We had two daughters and oh, I left him quite a few times 'cause he was just driving me mad and us, all the time, all throughout my life I'd been catching glimpses of people walking through my life and just ignoring them. Like I'd be at work and there'd be someone standing behind me and I'd turn around and I'd catch a glimpse of them but they'd go. Just always these people all around me and us, and when the kids were born, I think it must happen to a lot of women, you become aware of...you're so strong you can look after these kids and what's more, your husband's so bad he's never there so you're doing it on your own anyway. And when he's around he's just a bloody inconvenience, I mean he gets in your road, he messes up your thinking space, how can you possibly read the kind of books you want when he's sneering over your shoulder and is spending all your money on booze or broken up cars. So after a while I decided that enough was enough so, yeh, we ended that relationship which was really

painful and its still painful today because there were a lot of good qualities that were there in him and yeh, its hard to look back and see those good qualities and to have left them behind. [...] And I felt like I wanted to take the world on. I was just so happy that he'd gone and that I was free and that oh wow, I just started to, people just started coming up in my life that would teach me things, you know, one after the other after the other (Sage)

Breaking this story into fragments to identify the discursive resources that constitute spirituality, misses some of the effects of the context of the story which informed the spiritual experiences. Perhaps a narrative analysis would add some understanding of the effects of various narrative components in the texts. It may also enable an examination of the ways in which story-telling practices reproduce phallogocentric positioning of women. While this might also contribute to 'opening spaces' within legitimate knowledges, its contribution would still be limited and partial.

I began this thesis with an extract from my own story as a contribution to producing a speaking position. I will finish it with an extract from one of the women's stories which resonates with my understanding of the limits of contributing to 'legitimated knowledges'.

Oh there are a lot of symbols for me...leaves I've talked about already. The triple spiral of Newgrange obviously, ...um...the sun is a very important symbol for me... the moon too of course...some particular stars, and stars in general....because they are long gone before we see them and there's something very...satisfying to me about that, that we see the light that was emitted so long ago, that's that time, when it disrupts time like that, things that disrupt time are particularly satisfying. Not that I understand ... or anything, but I suspect, I'm quite sure that we'll understand this increasingly as time goes on. We'll collect this kind of information and know more, but I do enjoy the unknowable (Sophia)

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Appendix 1: Information Sheet



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WOMEN AND SPIRITUALITY

Information Sheet

What is this study about?

The aim of this study is to explore how women experience and talk about spirituality and to see whether women's accounts of their own experience are related to psychology's accounts of spiritual experience. The research is being done by Leigh Coombes as a thesis for her MA under the supervision of Dr. Mandy Morgan in the Psychology Department at Massey University.

What would I have to do?

If you agree to take part, you will be interviewed by the researcher. During the interview you will be invited to talk about your experiences of spirituality. All of these interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed. I will do the transcription myself so no other person has access to identifying information you might give me. After the research is completed the audiotapes will be destroyed.

What are my rights?

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- * refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the study at any time.
- * ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- * provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential to the researcher. All records are identifiable only by code number, and are seen only by the researcher. It will not be possible to identify you in any reports that result from the study.
- * turn off the audiotape at any time during the interview.
- * have access to your own transcripts.
- * be given a summary of the findings from the final report.

In the unlikely event of any personal issues arising for you as a consequence of the interview full support and help will be available.

If you are interested in taking part, please let me know. We will then arrange an interview at a time suitable for us both. Please contact me through my supervisor on (06) 3504133 if you have any further questions.

Leigh Coombes

Appendix 2: Consent Form**PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN: WOMEN AND SPIRITUALITY****CONSENT FORM**

I have read the information sheet for this study and have had the details explained to me. My questions about the research have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, and to refuse to answer any particular questions. I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that it is completely confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than this research.

I agree to the researcher audiotaping the interviews with me, and also that she may use brief direct quotations from the interview in her reports of the study provided these do not identify me in any way.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out on the Information Sheet.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher: _____