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Reflexivity in psychology: Practices and performances

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology at Massey University

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ABSTRACT - This thesis is an inquiry into practices of reflexivity in psychology. It starts from a recognition of the difficulties in defining such a concept and proceeds to examine ways by which psychologists conceive and construct reflexivity. It utilises a methodology by which reflexivity can be understood and subsequent analysis reveals coarticulating discourses acting to produce reflexivity. Such discourses are themselves construed as a 'new resource', and consequently are used for critical analysis in order to reveal reflexivity 'at work'. This thesis maintains a concern with its own status as thesis, psychological text, work, with reflexive performance acknowledged through different forms of textual expression. It attempts reflexive engagement within the topic rather than production as a treatise *about* reflexivity alone.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS - This thesis took a long time to write, and I would like to thank the people who helped me complete the task.

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PREFACE - This is a progressive piece of work which can be read as a process. Written in the order that you find it, it attempts to demonstrate progression from 'naive explorer' to 'informed investigator'. The introduction is informed by initial reading, an attempted literature review, and work up to a particular point. It was written prior to a substantial change in direction. However, in order to demonstrate 'progression', it was deemed imprudent to alter the introduction by including new ideas developed along the way. Although it would be an interesting exercise, and it is tempting to adjust both the introduction and the first few chapters by incorporating new insights, such alterations would not only change the reader's experience of this work, but would also disrupt the development of reflexivity as a concept which can be understood through the work of the thesis.