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Performing Weight Change: A Performative Reading of Reality-making
Through a Relationship of Meaning and Doing

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ABSTRACT

Reading the reality-making processes that create bodies in weight change performances challenges us to understand the relationships between meanings and actions, or between discourses and materiality. This study uses a performative model to elaborate how discourses and materiality can be read in texts in such a way to bring transparency to the process of materiality-making, agency and causality. The texts used in this study are transcribed interviews of participants who identified themselves as undergoing weight change. Reading weight and body-making as a discursive-material relationship enriches a shared understanding in the interdisciplinary space of psychology and English. The performative model chosen for this study offers sufficient structure to read both the generic features of reality-making and individually-nuanced reality-making practices, presenting psychologists with a sophisticated understanding of change processes.

To read reality-making with detailed transparency, we require tools of analysis that can directly read discourses and actions as shared spaces of relationship, through which material entities can emerge. For such tools of analysis, this study utilizes and extends the model of performativity offered by Dr Karen Barad (2007). In using this model to read text performatively, the unique features that are creating performances of weight change are accessed through a reading of boundary-making practices, through the relationship between meaning and doing that establishes what matters in accessing possibilities for meaning and

possibilities for doing, and through the elaboration of subject-object relationships into a sequenced performance.

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Introduction

Act one: Reality matters.

A spectator is positioned on the playing field of contested realities. One reality faces another reality. As a spectator, the task is to decide which reality is 'best', most durable, applicable, convincing, valid. The task is to decide how one reality matters more than another reality. Do this task well, and the spectator becomes an actor in the performance of narrowing and selecting what matters.

Act two: Realities matter.

A spectator is positioned on the playing field of contested realities. Each reality is unique. As a spectator the task is to avoid the expectation of selecting and supporting a chosen reality, and instead to examine the diversity and the uniqueness of each reality. Any contest between meanings and ascribed authorities move to an irrelevant sideline as attention to the unique meaning-making process becomes the focus of the observed performance. Reality-making matters.

Act three: Reality-making matters.

A spectator is positioned in a playing field of entities that are acting as realities in performances of weight change, performances where body and meaning are in relationship. The spectator knows that body matters; discourse repeatedly writes meaning that becomes a delineation of "surface we call matter" (Butler, 1993, p. 9). The spectator knows that matter matters; matter itself has meanings and is given meaning, or is meaninged, through access to discourses that

are available (Barad, 2007). Reality-making is a dynamic relationship between language and matter. What matters matters.

This is a study of performance, the performance of weight change. It is a study of a performative reading of weight and body. It is a reading of what matters. What matters matters. In the dynamic relationship between body and discourse, what matters discursively emerges as matter and what meaning is offered to action determines what is recognised as recognizable physicality.

On a playing field where all possibilities for the meanings that could matter meet all possibilities for the physical doing that could matter, then understanding how particular meanings and how particular actions emerge as an agreed matter is important for reading the making of materiality. By reading what meaning matters in the discourses prevalent in texts, and by reading the meaning offered for how body matters, then we can read texts in such a way that allows us access to the making of materiality. As a spectator to the unique realities on offer through the texts being studied, the task of this study is to read details in untitled texts as performances of possibilities that create bodies in weighting-up and weighting-down performances.

Weight matters. Weight matters because populations are getting bigger and the subsequent health-related problems are more extensive. Research has suggested that more Americans will die of obesity-related problems than AIDS (Oliver and Lee, 2005). But this is not a study of the way weight matters in society. This is a study of the way we can understand how weight matters, how the reality-making processes of bodies that weight-up and bodies that weight-down can be read.

Why weight change? I come to this study as both a student of English and as a psychologist. Weight and body-making are positioned in a relationship of physicality and language. The field of psychology occupies this position through its interest in behaviour. A study of weight, or more specifically a study of weight-making, offers an opportunity to examine the reading strategies that could potentially liberate psychology from its history of writing meaning onto behaviour from prescribed discourses and position it into a future of reading meaning and behaviour as being intimately linked. But body-making also has an extensive history in English theory, particularly through the writing of Dr Judith Butler (1993) and her model of performativity. A study of weight, or body-making, positions itself in the field of performativity where language or discourse is understood to be inseparable from action or what we recognise as materiality. For an English student, a study of weight offers the opportunity to examine the inseparability of language and matter, of subject and object, through an insistence that such study will be applicable beyond the boundaries of academic theory.

As an English thesis, this study is a study of texts. In this particular study, the texts are untitled texts, unrehearsed and unedited transcripts of interviews of seven participants who identified themselves as losing weight. My key interest in this study is how texts can be read with sufficient detail to understand the unique materiality-making processes of each body-changing performance that these participants are involved in.

Texts are also the raw material of psychology, particularly the texts without titles that we speak of and live through as the meaning of our everyday lives. As a psychologist, this study is an exploration of the way psychology can move into understanding behaviour from and through the language that is creating it. As a

psychologist, I am viewing this study as an exploration of an exciting fusion of disciplines that can enable access to possibilities for reading behaviour and understanding how change can be effective through shifts in the subject-object relationship and performance.

Performativity theory, with its interest in the relationship between language and action, provides this study with its theoretical foundation. In choosing to read texts through Dr Karen Barad's (2007) model of performativity, I have chosen a model that understands materiality as a relationship between discursive meaning and material meaning. Materiality emerges through agreement on what possibilities for iterated actions are recognised as intelligible. It is an understanding of materiality as a relationship between some recognised meaning and some recognised doing that then opens the space of entity-making to detailed scrutiny and analysis.

This thesis elaborates examples of reading the space of meaning-doing to gain access to the diverse, unique features of reality-making that create a weight-change performance. The early chapters detail the theoretical foundation for this reading of weight change. Chapter one describes the performative model of Barad (2007) and the conceptual structures it provides through which unique meaning-making can be read. Chapter two describes discourses that dominate academic literature on weight. Discourse is critically important to this study as materiality is recognised as a discursive relationship with possibilities. Discourse functions in two ways: to write a meaning for body, enabling or constraining access to possibilities for doing; and through providing a repertoire of meanings for how what it is that matters as body can be recognised or silenced. What stabilises as an agreed relationship between what meaning matters and what action matters

emerges to be read as entity in text. Reading entities as they appear in texts is a reading of what has mattered in the individual, unique reality-making process.

By reading texts through the conceptual space opened to analysis through Barad's model, structures of meaning-making become transparent. The delineation of a boundary, the stabilising of a materiality through the relationship of discourse meaning and physical meaning, and the emergence of an entity into subject-object functions are the structures that can be read in and as performances.

Chapters three, four and five elaborate each of these structures in text that offer transparency to materiality-making. Chapter three examines boundary delineation by examining examples of the way food is able to enter some weight change performances. Chapter four considers examples of body-making. By elaborating the material-discursive relationships that create the unique boundary that delineates a body, it is possible to understand how variations in body-making occur in a population sample, all of whom share a common expectation that their bodies will weight down. By understanding how a body can access weighting-up actions, then it becomes possible to apply a sophisticated reading to understand a range of unique weight-change performances. Chapter five broadens the discussion of materiality-making by examining the function of subject and object in weight change performances. As a subject and an object emerge through a shared space of meaning, I argue that reading the way in which each is delineated and the relationship between them is critically important in understanding how agency and causality can be enacted in a weight change performance.

While much of this thesis is concerned with the detail of analysis, I hope the excitement behind the insights into reality-making that this model opens is also recognised. As an English student, applying language theory to everyday texts is

extremely gratifying. As a psychologist, to take a step to move the profession to a boutique service is refreshing, a service where the mapping of uniquely personal meanings replaces normative assessment or monocular observation. To move our understanding of change from behaviour management to a shift in subject position that enables access to new possibilities for behaviour is hope and creativity given professional licence. To rewrite assumptions of professional authority from a position of holding privileged access to knowledge to respectful negotiation of a position of inclusion in the uniquely crafted world of personal meaning makes this exercise of study deeply satisfying and ethically mindful of the relationships that connect us all in the performance of shared wellbeing and happiness.

Chapter One - Reading Untitled Texts

For my fluctuating weight, I would think that, um, that would be where my life was at crisis point, is that the sort of thing that you mean? You know, aye, like so, when I had my accident, I thought I would lose a lot of weight and I didn't. I put on weight. But I wasn't in the position to overeat because I was in hospital, so I didn't think that my weight - I thought that my weight would be controlled by stress, but I think it's a choice thing, that when it's up and down its purely and simply that I have time to eat, whereas - to eat normally - whereas my normal lifestyle is such that it's chaotic so my eating is chaotic, does that make sense?

Participant A – Interview one

Yes this excerpt does make sense, but what sense? Is this untitled text about weight? Finding out that being in hospital did not mean she lost weight? That weight fluctuates with crisis points? That weight is about personal choice? How should I read this text? What matters? What reality is being made?

The language world that we live through every day is awash in texts without titles, such as the excerpt above. These are spoken texts that are enacted without pause for rehearsal or rewrite, that create meaning, that are enacted as performances, and that function without titles. Without the writer, the producer of the words, assisting readers by cueing them to an intended meaning, readers are in

relationships with texts that directly expose the meaning-making tools they, the readers, bring to the reading of the text. In this study, I read untitled texts. I want to read these texts in such a way that the meaning-making tools I bring to understand these texts provide as much capacity for understanding what matters as possible. By that, I mean I want to read texts to understand how meanings and actions are in relationships, discursive-material relationships that create specific materialities.

Before continuing to describe the meaning-making tools used in this study, I will briefly describe the untitled texts that are studied. The texts that are being read are transcriptions of a series of spoken interviews. Seven participants, all of whom identified themselves as trying to lose weight, were interviewed three times over a period of three months. In these interviews, participants were asked to respond to six broad prompts that offered as little structure as possible (see Appendix 1). The aim was to access untitled texts from each participant. The same six prompts were used on each interview cycle. The series of interviews with seven participants were recorded, and spoken responses were transcribed to produce text. These texts are impromptu and unrehearsed, with no opportunity for editing or rewriting. Excerpts from these are the untitled texts that are examined in this study, transcribed word for word, punctuated as loosely as possible to retain the fluidity of the original text, while still providing some structure for readers.

Untitled texts are significant for two reasons. They privilege the meaning that a reader is creating, and, in doing so, move the position of authority to the reader's meaning-making. Untitled texts are texts that psychologists work with everyday. Reading untitled texts through a performative theory offers a way of bringing greater transparency to the profession's relationship with these texts.

Through a study of untitled texts, English language theory and psychology can share meaning, offering different understanding to the assumed authority claimed by traditional psychology through its practice of writing titles for texts. Inherent in this thesis is a desire to bring transparency to the reading of untitled texts in order to reposition the authority of title-writer for untitled texts away from selected readers to a shared relationship between reader and text. In the shared relational space between reader and writer, the transparency that a performative reading offers gives access to the unique way that what matters, which can be read in text as the nuanced positions of meaning and doing, makes a reality, and in this study, the materiality of body.

Bringing transparency to the meaning that is making a specific materiality, inevitably involves asking, whose meaning or what meaning is being accessed? Politics is present. Politics is present not only in the questioning but in the researcher's position to the question. Rejecting any assumption of a shared and mutual understanding of meaning, such questioning aims attention directly to the boundaries that delineate recognisable meaning from unrecognisable meaning. By drawing on the model of Karen Barad (2007), who, in turn, is influenced through the diffractive view of boundary demarcation elaborated by Haraway (2003), this study signals that it is deeply interested in bringing transparency to boundaries that delineate specific ways of knowing and specific actions. Reading boundaries diffractively "serves as a useful counterpoint to reflection: both are optical phenomena, but whereas the metaphor of reflection reflects the themes of mirroring and sameness, diffraction is marked by patterns of difference" (Barad, 2007, p. 71). Through the reading of boundaries we can examine the processes that delineate inclusion and exclusion of possibilities for meaning and doing. The

nuanced detail of the agreement between meaning and doing can be read in texts, bringing transparency to the shades of meaning-doing that create specific materialities. What matters begins to become accessible through reading texts; as what matters becomes more accessible, then the process that is creating materiality also becomes more accessible.

A reader of text is acknowledged as a key player in supporting or destabilising what is recognised as 'real' in text. Barad insists that a researcher is intimately within the world that they are studying: "Knowing does not come from standing at a distance and representing but rather from a direct material engagement with the world" (Barad, 2007, p. 49). This study examines the ways individuals "directly engage" in and through the reality-making of their untitled texts. Any assumption a reader may hold that their way of knowing the meaning of a text is the way of knowing the meaning of a text shifts as more direct access is given to the writer's meaning and way of knowing. From this position, readers are then challenged to read untitled texts, not through their prior knowledge but by accessing the processes of meaning-making and materiality-making that can be recognised in text itself. The politics in this thesis focuses at an individual, micro level.

Micro analysis of text is the foundation of English study. The purpose of the reading process in this study, however, is twofold, bridging two disciplines. The purpose of this micro-level analysis is to examine the reality-making of untitled texts with the rigour of discursive analysis, embedded in language theory in order to satisfy the need for a real-time process, and to understand reality-making in a way that can be used in the profession of psychology. This requires the reading to have sufficient generic application for professional use while still attending to

individual reality-making. In addition, a reading of these untitled texts is required to clearly elaborate the relationship of language and doing, the action or behaviour that is psychology's interest.

Because the texts being studied are being read as texts of the relationships between bodies and language, or discourses and materialities, then reading them is most appropriately assisted by the theory of performativity. This theory interests itself with the relationships between language and materiality. In this study, the theory of performativity offers a way of reading the relationships between specific words and specific bodies that weight-up and bodies that weight-down.

Through its development from the inaugural work of performative theorist, Austin, the theory of performativity has offered increasingly sophisticated concepts that allow a reading of a fluid, relational meaning-making process that creates objects with varying levels of stability. Through the work of Austin, whose contribution is recognised in his description of language as either constative, "an utterance that purported to describe the world" (Loxley, 2007, p. 167) or performative "an utterance that performs a particular action" (Loxley, 2007, p. 166), the way in which language is in relationship with action has been opened to analysis. While highlighting the relationship between words and action, Kirby (2006, p. 105) suggests that Austin's focus on words as the signifiers of meaning now sets this earlier work apart from the subsequent development in performative theory, which elaborates the relationship of discourse and materiality.

The work of two current performativity theorists, Dr Judith Butler (1993) and Dr Karen Barad (2007), has provided key concepts that are used to understand the reading of meaning in this study. Through the work of Butler and Barad, a reading of relationship between language (or discursive meaning), and

materiality-making offers sufficient transparency to the unique nuances of individual meaning that leads to an understanding of the making of the weighting-up and weighting-down bodies in this study. Performativity theory offers an understanding of the way language generates material meaning and the way that language meaning is in relationship with body-making.

These current performativity theorists offer two critically important concepts for an understanding of reality-making, the concepts of citation and iteration. These concepts have emerged with a significant role in performative theory through the work of Judith Butler (1993). Both citation and iteration contribute to understanding the way in which discourse is involved in materiality-making. Citation refers to what can be known or the words of a particular discourse that are being used or cited to make a particular meaning. Through Butler's model (1993), a performative reading of participants' texts attends to citational practices in reading what discourses are actively making meaning. While citation establishes the way something can be known, it is through iteration, the repetition of the specific way something can be known, that agreement is established on what is known. This concept of Butler's signals a need to read the discourses that are active in the making of meaning in the untitled texts of this study. Knowing what is understood as real is intimately connected to the discourse that is providing meaning.

It is through citationality and iteration that Butler offers another key concept for the reading of untitled text about weight change, a model of materialization. Materialization is critically important in this study as it offers a way to understand how the physicality of bodies is established and stabilized. It offers a way that we can understand the weighting-up or weighting-down of

bodies as a process of enacting meanings that can create variations in body materiality. Butler suggests that materialization is a process “that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface we call matter” (1993, p. 9). Continuing to develop this concept, she states, “what constitutes the fixity of the body, its contours, its movements, will be fully material, but materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power’s most productive effect” (1993, p. 2). These concepts propose that it is repetition of what can be known, of what is recognised as intelligible, that establishes the boundaries which signal what is agreed to exist and what remains as unknown. The concept of boundary and the undisputed presence of materiality are signalled in Butler’s model. From this theoretical base, the raw materials of a performative reading of weight change have emerged; matter is inherently physical and inherently genealogied.

In the concepts offered through Butler’s wide lense on the theory of performativity, our understanding of body changes. Rather than being understood as a pre-existing entity, a body can be understood as an agreed meaning that signals what ‘features’ of body is recognised with meaning and what is unintelligible. It no longer makes sense to read a body simply as a physical entity to which weight is attached or removed. Instead a body is understood to be constructed through meanings that function with boundaries of meaning that stabilize over time to “produce... [a] surface we call matter” (Butler, 1993, p. 9). By reading a body without any assumption of prior entity exposes a body to being read through the body-making processes that are delineating its boundary.

From Butler’s work, we know that discourse and materiality are critical elements of a body-making relationship. But how can the relationship be read? Important questions remain over the mechanics of reading the relationship of

discourse and materiality. If, for example, the participants in a study all identify themselves as engaging in a weight change process, and if those participants are awash in the same shared discursive field i. e. by the same citational possibilities, how is it that some participants are able to create weighting-down bodies and some are not? Butler's theory of performativity offers insufficient detail to explain how weight-loss discourses have been so ineffective in establishing and maintaining weighting-down bodies.

Discourses are clearly involved in body-making, offering the meanings that delineate how bodies can be understood. A simple reading of discursive norms, however, is too blunt an instrument to provide the precision required to understand individual, nuanced reality-making. In this study, I then have to ask how citational and iteration practices can be read with a level of acuity that will allow an understanding of individual materiality-making practices. Out of a shared discursive field, how can I read the unique language-body relationships in text in order to read the processes of materiality-making that make one weight-change performance uniquely different from another?

Significantly, Barad has identified similar questions over the applicability of Butler's model to an understanding of materiality, stating that both "Butler's and Foucault's theories fail to provide an adequate account of the relationship between discursive practices and material phenomena" (2007, p. 146). Further challenging Butler's model, Barad's observes that "it is not at all clear that Butler succeeds in bringing the discursive and the material into closer proximity" (2007, p. 64). Her model elaborates practices for reading the relationship between discourse and matter more closely. Her assertion that "matter is not a thing but a doing" (Barad, 2007, p. 151) stresses her level of determination that matter and doing will be read

as occupying the same space. For this reason, the performativity model elaborated by Karen Barad is a significant influence on this study.

Barad's model insists that we can read language and body as a mutually creative relationship; they are conceptually held in the same space. She states, "neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior" (Barad, 2007, p. 152). In a study of weight change, a specific body cannot be assumed to exist separately from the meanings that are being used to delineate what is recognised as that body: "material phenomena are inseparable from the apparatuses of bodily production" (Barad, 2007, p. 152). What this means for the reading of body through text is that matter and discourse are considered as one entity, one bounded 'space' of specific relationship between meaning and physicality, referred to in this study as a meaning-doing zone. Discourse or meaning is 'in' the zone, and the physicality of body, i. e. what it does, is also 'in' the zone of meaning-doing. Both are assumed to have agency within this space. The challenge is to read this relationship in a way that brings a transparency to the body-making process.

Reading zones of meaning-doing through text means reading the features that are delineating specific relationships with possibilities. Out of all the possibilities for meaning and all the possibilities for physicality that could be recognised, some meanings select some physicality as recognizable, and in doing so delineate a specific meaning-doing zone. An agreement over what is recognised and what has meaning can be delineated to function as materiality. Barad elaborates this in stating that "matter emerges out of, and includes as part of its being, the ongoing configuring of boundaries" (2007, p. 152). At this point, three features can be seen to be critical in the reading of the meaning-doing zone,

through which a specific body is recognised as being delineated. These three features are discourse, matter and boundary.

These three features, discourse, matter and boundary, bring transparency to a reading of the individual nuances that create a weighting-up or weighting-down body. Barad states, "What is needed is a robust account of the materialization of *all* bodies – 'human' and 'nonhuman' – including the agential contributions of all material forces (both 'social' and 'natural'). This will require an understanding of the nature of the relationship between discursive practices and material phenomena" (Barad, 2007, p. 66). By drawing on Barad's model to provide this "robust account" (2007, p. 66), a reading of text as reality-making involves a reading of what stabilises in the relationship between doing and meaning as agreement of what matters. It is this agreement between doing and meaning that emerges as a specific body. Out of all possibilities for what could matter, a specific meaning-doing zone has selected and delineated a range of possibilities to be included as what matters. From this point, we can proceed to examine how a meaning-doing zone can be read.

The way the three features, discourse, matter and boundary, can be read as the process of body-making can now be elaborated.

Discourses are critical to a performative reading of materiality-making as discourses signal what meanings are recognised as intelligible. Using Barad's model, discourse is defined as "not what is said; it is that which constrains and enables what can be said" (2007, p. 146). Identifying discourses that are active in the space of meaning is critically important as an indicator of what can matter and consequently what matter-making the space is able to produce.

Although chapter two elaborates the most readily identifiable discourses in more detail, examples of the way reading discourse adds detail to materiality-making may clarify the significance of their reading at this point. Because access to specific discursive meanings both enable and constrain what “can be said” or what can be recognised as mattering, a reading of discourse indicates what meanings can be seen to be mattering in the making of materiality. For example, if medical discourse the meaning that matters out of all possibilities for meaning, then a body that is overweight may be understood to have a metabolic dysfunction or a diabetes risk, and such a body may be involved in medical examinations. If a health and fitness discourse is making meaning, then a body can be recognised as an underperforming or handicapping body. Reading discourse indicates what sort of meaning a body may be given or expected to achieve.

But matter is also acknowledged with active meaning and agency in the space of meaning. Discourse, then, does not simply determine the making of a specific materiality, but also offers meaning for the reading of body-doing. So, for example, when Participant C hears herself described as “middle-aged”, she reads her body as “matronly” and “hideous” through an appearance discourse. Participant A so keenly enacts the moral discourse that, even when she approaches a cafe, she imagines the staff reading her body as immorally large, saying, “O here’s that fat bitch, what does she want a scone for?”

Already through the reading of discourse and its relationship with matter, details to the process of weighting-up or weighting-down can be added. Reading the discourses that are active in a meaning-doing zone enables access to the range of possibilities for doing that are actively creating specific bodies. By simply reading a discourse as it writes a meaning for body, it is possible to distinguish the

unique selections of meanings that have been made from all possibilities for meanings. These selections create the uniqueness that will distinguish one space of meaning-doing from another as they indicate what possibilities for recognisable physicalities are offered to create bodies.

From this initial reading of discourse, it also becomes possible to read the number of discourses that are enacted within a space of meaning, and to read the congruencies and discrepancies between discourses that are writing meaning onto body and the discourses that are being enacted in and through the physical action of body. This significantly influences the capacity for a meaning-doing space to establish stability and iteration, as will be examined later in his chapter.

Simply reading discourses, however, is not sufficient to distinguish individual nuances in zones of meaning that delineate matter. If it were we would be content to identify the five or six dominant discourses prevalent in making meaning around weight change, knowing that these alone explain all possible variations in weight change. Clearly they don't. In order to access the unique meaning-making that is acting to create materiality in any particular zone of meaning-doing, it is necessary to read the boundary that is acting to delineate a materiality.

Reading a boundary means reading the features that are delineating each unique relationship with the world of possibilities. From the relationships that are possible with all meanings that could be included and all doing that could be included in a specific meaning-doing zone, a reading of boundary clarifies what possibilities are being recognised as meaningful and belonging. A reading of boundaries is a reading of the meanings that are signalling what belongs and what does not belong, and a reading of the actions that are recognised as belonging or

not belonging. A boundary signals what particular meaning matters enough and with sufficient, consistent repetition to delineate a space as a unique selection of some possibilities over others.

Barad's theory offers assistance in formulating a reading of this boundary through the concept of apparatus. Barad suggests that apparatuses are the construction of "material conditions of possibility and impossibility; they enact what matters and what is excluded from mattering" (2007, p. 148). Apparatuses are the processes which delineate what matters, and what is excluded from mattering. In a reading of text, then, by reading apparatuses, we can read what is delineating boundary.

While Barad attends to apparatuses as physical measures, such as an ultrasound machine, in this study, apparatuses can be understood as being either physical or discursive. They may be discursive rules or conditions that are set to delineate how and what meaning can included or excluded from recognition, and what doing can be included or excluded. When Participant G states that weight change is "good for self esteem", this can be read as a discursive signal for what meaning is included as mattering. Equally, apparatuses can be read as physical delineators of what matters. For example, when Participant A decides not to accept the offer of a Muffin Break bag to carry her potato salad for fear people will read the bag and think she is carrying a cake, the labelled bag can be read as serving as physical apparatus, signalling what is included and what is excluded as mattering in the meaning-doing zone.

A boundary signals how well a space can preserve what matters from other possibilities for what could matter. This means a boundary must act to select some possibilities and eliminate some possibilities in order to retain delineation of a

specific zone of meaning-doing. Later, in chapter three, a more detailed reading of boundaries examines how effective inclusion and exclusion of possibilities is critically important in enabling a meaning-doing space to achieve the stability and iteration that is required create entities. If the expected or hoped-for entity is a weighting-down body, then reading how effective a boundary is in stabilising and repeating a process of weighting-down is critical in understanding materialization. This means it will be useful to read both how well a boundary can exclude all actions that do not create a weighting-down body and to read how well a boundary can include all doing that creates a weighting-down body. Such a reading of boundary offers a transparent process to understand the robustness and stability of the materiality-making process.

Reading the selected possibilities that are in the relationship of matter and discourse is an essential step in a generic reading of reality-making, but not sufficient to access individual, unique realities. Exactly how the delineated possibilities for doing and meaning become delineated as matter can now be read. This means we still have to read more of the materiality-making process within a boundaried zone. The question to be addressed is how some possibilities for meaning and doing function as unique meaning-doing zones creating recognizable entities that emerge to function with a unique materiality.

To understand exactly how discourses and matter are in relationship and how an entity can be created through such a relationship, Barad offers the concept of intra-action. The term *intra*-action is preferred instead of *interaction*, recognising that any relationship being established is not one between two prior existing entities (2007, p. 139). Intra-action can be thought of as the process that clarifies what doing and what meaning matters.

Barad's concept of intra-action, the process that determines what matters, provides access to what is being enacted through a meaning-doing zone. The dynamic jostling between what could matter and what does matter is intra-action. Ultimately the process of intra-action establishes a line of agreement, indicating which of the possibilities for what something could do and could mean have been stabilized into an agreement of what it does do and does mean. Barad elaborates this concept, "It is through specific agential intra-actions that the boundaries and properties of the components of phenomena become determinate and that concepts (that is, the particular material articulations of the world) become meaningful" (2007, p. 139).

Intra-action is a conceptual structure for reading how possibilities for meaning and possibilities for doing settle into an agreement of what specific meaning matters and what specific doing matters, and how an agreed relationship between them stabilizes into the function of entity. Intra-action conceptualizes a way of reading how meanings select particular possibilities for doing and how doing is accommodated with meaning. For example, when Participant A decided fitness mattered, she walked. When Participant B decided being fit didn't matter, she stopped exercising. When Participant C says size matters and she is no longer size 6, then her body no longer belongs in the meaning space it used to. Restrained from the possibilities for action that provide meaning, Participant C's body is relegated to a meaningless, redundant nothing. Iteration of such agreed relationships between meanings and actions create different body shapes. What matters determines what specific materialities are 'made' by selecting actions that, when repeated over time, will stabilise into a shape or form that can be recognised as enacting its meaning: "matter is not a thing but a doing" (Barad, 2007, p. 151).

The concept of intra-action signals a critical difference between Butler's and Barad's model of performativity. Having established, through Butler's work, that iteration and citation are significant processes that lead to recognition of entity, Barad clearly delineates a marked difference in her model, stating "In an agential realist account, performativity is understood not as iterative citationality (Butler) but as *iterative intra-activity*" (Barad, 2007, p. 184). This difference enables Barad's model to access further detail in the reality-making process, offering transparency to individual nuances in the entity-making process.

The conceptual move from "iterative citation" to "*iterative intra-action*" provides a way of reading a much broader plane of shared boundary between language and physicality. "Citation", referring through discourse, is replaced by "intra-action", a process of negotiating meaning and doing or discourse and matter through relationship. Intra-action provides a much more extensive range of connection between discourse and materiality along which individually-nuanced positions can be stabilized. The tool for reading individual reality-making is being sharpened (Barad, 2007, p. 28).

In moving an understanding of iteration and citationality into a wider space of readable relationship, then multiple positions of nuanced meanings can be read as recognisable, credible positions of meaning-making. Access is opened up to both what matters in the making of a specific reality and what is not mattering. For a psychologist interested in change with clients, this moves a focus of change away from any belabouring of what is mattering, into a process that accesses alternative possibilities for what could matter. For example, a shift in the discourse of meaning-making will shift access to enacting different possibilities of doing. The

profession can attend to subject-making not to elaboration of the object that has been made.

Space to examine positions for making reality is not just opened up within the process of intra-action. Attention to nuanced differences of meanings within and between discourses is also accessed. Because reality-making is understood as a relationship between language and physicality, then these nuanced positions of possibility for meaning and positions of possibility for doing require attention in the reading. In a reading of boundary and a reading of discourse, attention to the variations in positions for meaning can be read. In reading boundary, for example, reading the level of impermeability through reading the number of discourses that are providing meaning to possibilities for doing to be included adds detail to the way a unique reality-making process is being enacted.

Reading a position through which discourse is being enacted is significant in understanding both the concepts of subject and agency. A position in discourse impacts on the delineation of an entity and the way in which subject can act. For example, a position in discourse may be read as being quite precisely delineated. That means the subject is enacting a specific position of meaning within the range of meaning positions a discourse offers. If the meaning that is being enacted is a narrowly delineated position then, in turn, the doing or action that is recognisable in the meaning-dooing space will be a narrowly delineated band of accessed possibilities. By reading the discursive position that is being enacted, we can read nuances in the range of possibilities for doing that is available for a body to weight-up or to weight-down.

The importance of acknowledging variations in the positions through which discourse can be accessed is not new. Butler (1990) indicated that variations in the

repetition of discursive norms impacted on agency (cited in Barvosa-Carter, 2005, p. 177). From the untitled texts being studied, it is clear that a discourse can be enacted from different positions, which produces significantly different access to possibilities. In order to access language that can describe variations in position in discourse, I have turned to performance studies. The term 'spectator', from the community theatre work of Boal (cited by Quetzil, 2006), presented itself as a useful concept for describing a discursive position that crosses the boundary of performer and audience, enactor of discourse and observer of discourse. The position through which discourse is enacted is described as either actor or spectator. In subsequent descriptions of examples from participants' texts, I use the term spectator to describe positions that enact discursive meanings from the periphery of discourse and actor to signal position within the normative expectations of a discourse.

By adding these nuanced positions of meaning into a reading of discourse, further subtleties in the way materiality is being made becomes transparent. Specific positions in discursive meaning access specific possibilities for doing that can be included in the meaning-doing zone. For example, when Participant G says, "the weight change process is good for like self esteem and giving you confidence", she is speaking from the authoritative position of an actor of the discourse. She 'knows'. When Participant C says, "real women, real whatever, if I could be a size 10, I'd be there", she is demonstrating a desire to be enacting the appearance discourse, a spectator desperately wanting to be actor. And when Participant A says: "I don't see the body as you see it, it doesn't bother me as long as you are clean", she speaks from the position of a spectator to the appearance discourse, happy to demonstrate that appearance does not matter. The significance of reading

these positions is in the transparency they bring to the nuanced positions of meaning that create diversity in a body-making process. This transparency, added by reading the variations in positions on discourse, enables us to understand the range of possibilities for action that each participant has access to.

Through these refinements in reading individual positions in discourse, a more precise understanding of exactly what is being included in the meaning-doing zone is being accessed. Further, the way that included meaning and doing is being stabilised into an agreed relationship is also being read as the detail of discourse position signals the detail of what doing can be accessed. A rich understanding of the reality-making process is emerging. From this understanding, we can examine how specific entity emerges.

Entity emerges through the process of intra-action, through the process of jostling possibilities into an agreement of what is being done and what it is meaning. Remembering that “matter is doing” (Barad, 2007, p. 151), when discursive possibilities for meaning and material possibilities for meaning stabilise, then there can be agreement on what a thing is by agreeing on what it does.

Such agreement is signalled, in Barad’s model, through the concept of agential cut. This is the concept that Barad uses to describe how stability is achieved. An agential cut describes a delineated entity. When actions are recognised, delineated from other possible actions, meaninged and no longer negotiable, an entity has emerged. An agentially cut entity can be understood as a stable position of meaning repeatedly accessing a stable range of doing. A discourse that is being consistently enacted from one position consistently expects body to perform specific actions, thereby making a specific, unique body.

Importantly, through the concept of agential cut, a reading of subject and object is possible. Delineation of subject and object can be read as the foundation of ongoing performance as entities acquire agency, enabling them to enact what matters. Signalling the significance of agency in the emergence of entity, Barad refers to this process of agential cut as “specific intra-action... [that] enacts an agential cut... effecting a separation between subject and object” (Barad, 2007, p. 333-4). In the process of entity-making, a subject position can emerge as an iterated relationship, a repeated position of agreed relationship of discourse and materiality. Most importantly, the subject that is cut through intra-action is a subject that is delineated by what matters in a specific meaning-doing zone. This then removes the assumption of prior entity and the assumption of subject necessarily being human. When, for example, Participant A says, “the charts tell me I am obese”, it is “the charts” that have been cut with sufficient clarity to function as subject. Participant A is the acted-on object in this meaning sequence, an object that is being acted on by the authoritative meaning offered through the medical discourse. The conceptual mechanics of agential cut enable a subject to be understood as a stabilized position that repeats specific doing to act as entity. A subject is delineated from other meaning-doing possibilities that do not stabilize to the same extent. Entity, functioning as subject, can be distinguished from entity functioning as object.

The significance of entity which can function as subject is that it can enact agency as a performance. Agency is not assumed to exist prior, but emerges through relationships of meaning. Subject, as an agreement of what matters in the relationship of materiality and discourse, emerges as a meaning-doing relationship. A relationship is delineated into such a stable point of agreement that

this point of agreement can then function with subject-making authority. It can assume a position of acting on another entity, as a subject that acts on an object. So a subject that has emerged through a process of clarifying what matters can function to enact that specific 'what matters'. What matters now has its agency. Further, because entity, as subject, is that which can act, and object is that which gets acted on, then sequenced doing which can be read as performance is enacted.

Through a reading of the emergence of subject and object, with consequential causality and agency, a performative reading enables the reading of reality-making to move beyond simply reading a delineated entity as a 'thing' that is being produced. A performative reading enables access to an entity as a specific, relationally delineated stable agreement of meaning: "Knowing is a matter of part of the world making itself intelligible to another part" (Barad, 2007, p. 185). How one way of knowing is in relationship with another way of knowing allows us to examine the sequential meaning that a specific entity, functioning as subject can perform. A weighting-up body or a weighting-down body can be understood as enacting what matters, a specific relationship of what matters. The specific relationship that emerges as a subject will determine the relationship that is possible between a subject and an object, and so will determine the nature of the performance that is being enacted.

A performative reading of a subject as the delineation of what matters insists that a reading of meaning extends from a concern about what is being made into how a sequenced relationship between subject and object is being made. Again, the reading focus shifts to seek further nuanced detail of individual reality-making performances. Now attention can be paid to the way one meaning-making is in relationship with other meaning-makings. This then indicates the need to

examine what relationships any a particular entity is able to access. Or, more specifically, how is it that the way this particular entity does its doing impact on sequential relationships or performances? This means we have to examine how entity can enact what matters as performance. In doing so, we now need to understand a relationship between performativity and performance.

Not surprisingly, Barad places performativity and performance in relationship, stating that meaning is the “ongoing performance of the world in its differential dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility” (2007, p. 149). Academic discussion offers an array of descriptions elaborating the relationship. As the debate has not yet established clarity in delineating a relationship of performativity and performance, it can most easily be recognised as the dynamic, ongoing positioning and repositioning of boundaries in an intra-active process through which clarity may emerge. Butler’s original discussion of performativity and performance insisted on a distinction between the two. She describes “performance as bounded ‘act’ distinguished from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer’s ‘will’ or ‘choice’; further, what is ‘performed’ works to conceal, if not disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, unperformable. The reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake” (1993, p. 234). Through her intention to define what performativity and performance is, Butler writes of relationship between performance and performativity through what it is not.

In seeking to clarify the boundedness of performance as suggested by Butler, Lloyd (1999) concludes, “The lack of clarity about how a performance is to be understood leads to a paradoxical position. Since the performative produces

that which it names, and since gender is understood in performative terms as the effect of the intersection of discourse and practices of gender, and since these discourses and practices underpin performances, it suggests that a performance is itself performative. This distinction seems to be of little help. Indeed it raises more questions than it answers" (p. 209). The closeness of performativity and performance is a position echoed by Usher (2006) stating, "Performance conditions the possibility of any and all performatives, or to put it another way, as performance is itself enabled by performativity, so too performativity is realised through its performance"(p. 279).

This closeness of the relationship invites attention to the plane of connection where doing performativity meets performance. Alexander signals the usefulness in understanding this connection when he states, "Actions are performative insofar as they can be understood as communicating meaning to an audience. For the purposes of understanding such performance, it does not matter what meaning "really" is, either for actors themselves or in some ontological or normative sense. What matters is how others interpret actors' meaning" (2008, p. 179). Madison (2003) also intimates the significance of relationship between performer and audience in stating that performance directed to political change is where "both performers and audiences can be transformed" (p. 479).

The way that the relationship between performativity and performance in this study is understood is through a shared interest in elaborating and clarifying what matters in creating entity, and how what matters can be enacted through sequential relationships. Because performativity enables a reading of subject and object, and consequently a reading of agency and causality, then performativity is understood as intra-active; it opens up the reality-making space to detailed

understanding. Through performativity, we can understand what is able to form further relationships as performance. In this way then, performance can be understood as interactive, as the way one meaning is in relationship with another meaning. What matters impacts on both.

Critical to this study is the question of how the relationship of performativity and performance can be read in text. Reading the sequential causal relationship between a subject and an object is central to this process. Performativity enables an understanding of how a specific subject or object is being created. Understanding how subject and object are in relationship then allows us to understand how a specific subject may be in relationship with other meanings. So, for example, recognizing that a subject is delineated through highly impermeable discursive boundaries enables understanding of the possibilities for relationship with other meanings that it can access. A highly impermeable boundary is likely to easily eliminate and avoid connection to other meanings. A subject that is delineated through multiple meaning contenders, which consistently destabilise entity creations, may establish completely different subsequent relationships with other meanings, being unable to eliminate alternative meanings or doing from the meaning-doing zone.

Through accessing the relationship between performativity and performance, then specific patterns of sequential relationships can be read. Relationships between a subject and an object may be linear, with a clear line of cause and effect, for example. Alternatively, they may be circular, temporary, or with the robustness of meaning that will enable sustained performance. Chapter five elaborates these concepts through examples.

The task I set myself, in this study, is to read untitled texts with sufficient detail to explain the unique variations in the materiality-making of participants' bodies. Barad's model has offered critically important ways of understanding the relationships between discourse and matter, bringing transparency to the processes that create bodies by enabling a reading of materiality-making. Combining Barad's model with aspects of performance theory produces a reading model that gives access to weight changes as performances of what matters, offering rich understanding of reality-making. Reading entities as meaning-doing relationships opens access to possibilities for sophisticated ways of supporting weight change management through understanding and managing subject position.

Chapter 2 - Discourses: Script writers for the performance of weight and body

Reading reality-making through text begins by reading discourses. Discourses offer meanings for materiality and for accessing the process of materiality-making. The first step in accessing each participant's meaning is to recognise the most readily available possibilities for meaning-making, the discourses that offer meaning for body and weight. This chapter describes the discourses that are prevalent in making meaning and reading meaning into materiality.

Identifying discourses and being familiar with the meaning they offer and the consequent realities they can make is a prerequisite for the task of reading the nuances of individual meaning-making. In this performative reading however, I am seeking access to as much detail and nuanced meaning as possible in order to understand the obvious variance in materiality that is created in weight change performances. In a performative reading of discourses for the study of weight change performances, it is not sufficient to simply read what normative expectation of discourse is being engaged. More detailed reading of the way a discourse is acting in the meaning-doing space is required (see Appendix 2). In addition to describing key discourses that are active in meaning-making in weight loss performances, this chapter describes the ways in which this performative reading engages with discourses in order to read the unique nuances of meaning that create specific weight change performances.

As the intention of this study is to open the space of relationship between meaning and doing to close examination, discourses are read in three ways. Firstly,

discourses can be read as the providers of meaning, or as meanings that access particular actions or doing. This means they can be read as scriptwriters. They 'write' or offer meaning that can be enacted into materiality. Secondly, discourses can be read as offering positions in their field of meaning from which more nuanced meanings can be enacted. Enacting a normative position offers access to very different possibilities for action than a position that challenges the validity of discursive meaning. Finally, discourses can be read as being in relationship with other discourses through contesting or overlapping meanings. At this point it is useful to elaborate each of these ways of reading discourse.

Discourses are read as the providers of meanings. Any discourse that is enacted will determine what possibilities for entity-making are recognised, satisfying Barad's insistence that a subject and an object occupy the same space. The meaning that is enacted through subject is also enacted in object-creation. For example, if health and fitness discourse is enacted through a subject, it offers meaning for a body as a physical performer. This meaning will read a body as muscle tone, body fat or as cardio-vascular performance. Out of possibilities for body-doing, the health and fitness discourse will easily recognise the meaning in a body doing exercise in a gym every day. Each discourse will differentiate those possibilities for doing that are recognised and included and will exclude those possibilities that are not recognised. Each specific discourse offers access to possibilities that can be enacted in the making of body, and which may ultimately stabilise to create a specific body.

The position of meaning from which a discourse is enacted is also significant. The position from which a discourse is enacted affects access to possibilities for doing. If discursive meaning is enacted from the normative

position of discourse, then discourse in the meaning-doing relationship will recognise and enable connection with the actions that support the normative expectations of that discourse. For example, if appearance means having a small body then making small-body-making will be recognised as meaningful and included in the repertoire of doing, while large-body-making will be recognised as disrupting the agreed, accepted meaning for body. Longhurst (2005) recognises this significance of position in discourse when she states, “fat bodies can be seen to occupy a borderline state that disturbs order by not respecting ‘proper’ boundaries” (2005, p. 256).

If the position from which discourse is being enacted is one that is rejecting the normative expectations of that discourse, as when a spectator position is enacted, then the actions that can be included into the zone of meaning-doing are very broad. The normative meaning of that discourse simultaneously matters and does not matter. In this way, access to a much wider range of doing is able to be recognised as belonging through the meaning of a spectator position in discourse. As a result body can be created through a wide range of body-making possibilities.

Discourses also matter in this study because, through Barad’s model, both discourse and materiality can exert agency in the relationship of stabilising matter. Discourses offer meanings through both sides of the meaning-doing relationship. This means that further nuanced connection between meaning and doing can be read. Discourses can be acknowledged through their role in selecting possibilities for doing, and also in the meaning they offer to the physical doing that enters through the materiality of a body. In some instances, the discourses in these different roles will be consistent; the meaning that writes connection to particular actions will also write the same meaning to body as it acts in the space. For

example, if weight is given meaning through an appearance discourse then small-body-making actions can be included as belonging and physical body can be read as success; small body is meeting the normative expectations of discourse. In other instances, the discourse that offers a meaning for action to be included may be different from the discourse that reads material doing. For example, a body that is given meaning through a health and fitness discourse is expected to perform exertion activities. If a body doesn't perform in this way, then several discourses can read the meaning of this body action. Through the moral discourse, a body may be read as a moral failing or as lacking the required fortitude, or, through the medical discourse, a body may be understood to be sick or unwell.

Such discrepancy between the discourses offering meanings for action and the discourses that write meaning onto action is important to consider in a reading of materiality-making. When a body is being written through one discourse but its physicality is being read through another, then diverse meanings are in the material-discursive relationship. Any stability around 'what matters' becomes more difficult to establish because of competing and possibly conflicting discursive meanings. Such conflicting discursive meanings can frequently be seen as the struggle between possibilities for action. For example, Participant D's health and fitness meaning writes body action into doing exercise in a gym, but, as she showers at the gym, her large body is read through the appearance discourse so she struggles with these competing meanings saying, "That's terrible that they need to see me like this". As these meanings are competing at the boundary of meaning and doing, any agreed meaning on specifically what matters is more difficult to achieve. In a reading of reality-making, such discrepancies offer rich understanding of the nuanced meanings that are making a specific materiality. In

the making of a materiality, even with a clear intention to create a weighting-down body, the matter that is recognized in the meaning-doing space may acquire its meaning through a completely different discursive voice than the one that acts to destabilize any prior agreement of what matters.

Relationships between discourses offer a third dimension in elaborating subtle nuances of meaning in reality-making. Some discourses cluster or overlap in their meaning in a way that can assist in a stability-making process. Wellbeing and physical appearance discourses frequently overlap, for example. When Participant G says that she began to lose weight because she “just wanted to look better”, and then adds that “if you’re losing weight you’re feeling good about yourself”, she is accessing meaning through both an appearance discourse and a wellbeing discourse. Their meanings overlap in such a way that there is no contested boundary between them. A subject enacting one discourse can readily link to a subject enacting the other. These discourses share meaning and so they share the actions that each discourse recognises as meaningful and belonging.

Having considered the way that discourses offer meaning to this study, we can now examine the rich smorgasboard of discourses that act to provide possibilities for meaning in weight change performances. From a survey of the literature, several discourses appear to dominate the writing of meanings for weight and body: weight as a medical issue; weight as a moral issue; fat acceptance or weight as personal choice; weight as a health and fitness issue; weight as an appearance issue. In the following section each discourse is described and attention is given to the possibilities for action that each discourse offers and how discourses function in the process of reality-making.

Weight as a Medical Meaning

“... but I need to keep track of my weight gain or loss or whatever because of my blood pressure – I’ve never mentioned blood pressure in my other weeks but now that it’s happened I know that I am digging my own grave or eating my own grave”. Participant A

In academic discussion, the medical discourse remains the heavyweight voice in discussion of weight and body. From the meaning of this discourse, weight is clearly understood to be a medical issue: “Within medicine, obesity has been embraced as a disease” (Salant and Santry, 2006, p. 2445). In a paper examining the key players that are contesting the media attention in obesity debates, Saguy and Riley (2005) state, “The view that obesity is a serious health problem dominates studies of obesity”, adding that “medical research on obesity has ballooned since 1995 and has preceded a subsequent increase in mass media reporting on obesity” (p. 875).

The medical discourse has dominated debate by providing detailed meanings for both personal body and for meanings across the collective performances of weight change at a societal level.

The meanings offered for individual body reflects the high level of stability around the meaning of physicality that the medical discourse has achieved. The medical discourse writes confidently, using its own specialised language, built over many years of iterated agreement on what matters. It offers many connections to meaning for physical body. Rich (2006) refers to an earlier paper by Doyal (1995) in describing the “medicalised or biomedical model which views the body as a

series of separate but interdependent parts” (p. 294). The medical discourse creates detailed meanings for bodies as biological components.

Medical meanings for body and weight are presented with such stability that the medical discourse offers them as definitions of key features involved in weight loss. They are referred to as components in a recognised biological process. Obesity, for example, is defined as “an excessive accumulation of body fat and weight... referred to as BMI, body mass index, which is calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres” (Cheah & Kam, 2005, p. 1009). Eating is defined as a physical process governed by biology: “Appetite is regulated by the hypothalamus by the interaction of the satiety centre in the ventromedial hypothalamic nucleus, and the feeding centre in the lateral hypothalamus” (Cheah & Kam, 2005, p. 1010). The solution to obesity is also defined through a biological meaning as the medical discourse asserts that “surgery is the most cost-effective method for sustained weight loss in morbidly obese patients”(Cheah & Kam, 2005, p. 1017). In a medical performance of weighting-up or weighting-down, the physical body is given maximum meaning, with attention given to physical processes such as disrupting digestion, changing calorie intake or the chemical processes of digestion.

The medical discourse also writes meaning for weight as a public health issue, as an epidemic: “Obesity is one of the most important public health problems today. An estimated 65% of US adults are overweight or obese, with 112,000 to 280,000 annual deaths attributable to obesity” (Simons-Morton, Obarzanek & Cutler, 2006, p. 826). The frequency with which obesity is referred to as a health epidemic is noted by Schlesinger (2005, p. 793), observing “it has become almost impossible to find a policy maker who does not refer to obesity in epidemic terms”.

In confidently stabilizing bodies into entities, the medical discourse supports assumptions of cause and effect as a relationship between two distinct entities. Within this discursive field of meaning, 'person' has a limited role other than as object called patient. Salant and Santry (2006), referring to a study by Chang and Christakis (2002), observe that over decades of comment in the *Cecil Textbook of Medicine*, "The obese individual increasingly became a passive subject of the disease and, by implication, of its medical treatment" (Salant and Santry, 2006, p. 2447).

Although the medical discourse writes a meaning for weight as the addition of physical fat onto a body, Chang and Christakis (2002) note that the medical discourse may be recognizing that medical meaning may need to extend from purely physical to the relationship between person and their weight. The writers note that the 2000 edition of the *Cecil Textbook of Medicine*, states: "obesity is a frustrating condition for patient and physician alike. Its underlying cause is rarely clear, and its treatment is fraught with difficulty and failure" (cited in Chang et al. , 2002, p. 164).

Findings by Oliver and Lee (2005), in a study examining public attitudes to obesity and obesity policy, suggest that there are insufficient meanings or discursive options for meaning for many people to connect to a medicalised meaning for body. Their study determined that "even though obesity is a source of far more deaths than AIDS, most Americans see it as a less serious health problem", and in the sample population surveyed, "like the general population, more than half the sample is overweight, but fewer than one in four respondents see their body weight as a serious or very serious health concern" (p. 932). This might be explained through the delineation of bodies with the medical discourse. As a

physical body is the prime interest of the medical discourse and as enacting this discourse requires body to be understood as an object in a relationship with a practitioner of the discourse, then a reading of the survey results could suggest that the medical discourse does not offer meaning that directly accesses actions for a person to enact as a subject position.

It is interesting to note that, through Barad's model, any domination of attention to the physical side of the material discursive relationship will enable a consequential increase in dynamism, or the potential for meaning connections around discursive meaning possibilities. As the discursive side of the relationship has not settled into agreement, many possibilities are available for access as few are being recognised as not belonging. This suggests that as the physical domination diminishes, then many discursive possibilities for meaning can become active. The model suggests that performances can then change very quickly, as new possibilities are accessed.

As the medical discourse primarily provides meaning to the physical side of the material-discursive relationship that delineates bodies, then recent papers, indicating gaps in the domination of medical meaning, can be understood as this discursive dynamism challenging the stability of material-discursive boundaries which, in turn, will enable the relationship between discourse and materiality to be renegotiated. Salant and Santry (2006, p. 2445) suggest that through the increased marketing of medical interventions, the medical discourse appears confused in its attempts to link with other discourses related to psychological wellbeing and, as a result, are offering confusing messages to potential clients. A variety of meaning connections are offered but not yet with convincing authority.

It is the discrepancies that are apparent between the discursive messages that signal weight as a public health concern and the personal responses that do not act on discursive meanings that motivate this study to examine effective ways of reading individual enactment of a weight loss discourse. Lawrence (2005) also suggests a shift has occurred within the discourse from writing individual into the focussed role of personal problem, to acknowledging the environment as unhealthy. Such a shift allows more space in the debate for other discourses that offer meanings in the relationship between individual and environment. Lawrence indicates that this has enabled the moral discourse to comfortably occupy the space, noting "while there is more talk than ever about an unhealthy environment contributing to obesity, there is less acceptance of the idea that risk has been *incurred involuntarily* by overweight adults" (2004, p. 71).

While the medical discourse has claimed meaning-making authority over physical bodies, other discourses are positioned to offer meanings to the relationship between weight and the individual. Although I am proposing that a performative reading rewrites the assumption of separation of body and the individual, the present discussion describes discourse meanings as they appear in current literature. Several discourses function as meaning-makers in the assumed relationship between body and individual.

Weight as Moral Meaning

“... I think that people just think that you’re fat and lazy or a stay at home person that does nothing – I just think that’s the way most people judge morbidly obese people”.

Participant A

The moral discourse provides meanings for the relationship between ‘person’ and action. It explains how a person can have knowledge about what actions they should take, but fail to take. Moral meanings enable judgment of individuals who are large as indulgent or lacking control. It provides a way of understanding large bodies as being created by people who lack the necessary will-power to control their intake of food or to manage a healthy exercise regime, both of which would reduce the build-up of fat on physical body. Moral discourse does not offer meanings for a physical body with the same detail that medical discourse does, but moral discourse offers meanings that explain how weight change performances are not enacted. Moral discourse understands that there is something wrong with a large-bodied person and, because of personal fault, large bodies are recognised as rampantly uncontrolled.

Madden and Chamberlain (2004) comment on the prevalence of negative associations with overweight, stating that “in the individualist culture of western society, people who are overweight or obese are stigmatised as being lazy and undisciplined and construed as lacking in self-control and self-denial” (p. 585). The stigmatising of the overweight population has been examined by Saguy and Riley (2005) who suggest that the framing of obesity as a high health risk provides a link between the medical and the moral high ground, concluding “fat bodies are read as evidence of both preventable illness and moral failings” (p. 885). Oliver and Lee

(2005), reporting on prevalent attitudes expressed in a sample population suggest that "Most Americans viewed obesity primarily as a case of individual moral failure rather than the result of the food environment or genetics" (p. 925), adding that the culture of thinness was considered "as a standard for health, fitness, moral rectitude and even patriotism" (p. 928).

The effect of stigmatising overweight people is documented in studies (Harris, Walters and Waschull, 1991; Chang and Christakis, 2002), but the extent of its effect is emphatically expressed by Greewald and Golden (2004) in reporting on their interview study with thirteen obese people. They state that, "In analysing the interviews about living with obesity, the researchers were not surprised to find that the obese women were subjected to stigmatisation and discrimination. However returning to the literature to understand the participants' stories of stigmatisation, powerlessness, and humiliation, the authors were startled to find that the insidious and pervasive casting present in the narratives epitomize what Harvey has called *civilized oppression*" (p. 304).

The moral discourse frequently offers meanings on a more personal level as a fear of judgment. In a study by Broussard (2003), the fear of judgment emerged as a shared theme in narratives of women who experience bulimia. This same study labelled another theme as "being at war with the mind" (p. 47). The vigilance required to avoid the scorn of the moral discourse emerged through Sarlio-Lahteenkorva's (2000) study of women who maintained a weight loss over several years, even though " weight loss maintenance was seen as an ongoing battle" (p. 85).

The moral discourse extends its meanings to food. Chamberlain (2004) comments on "good food" and "bad food" (p. 473) , and on the guilt experienced

through the choice of some foods. The language of moral meaning for body is read in texts through the rules of self restriction and judgment and through the dual positioning of subject as both judged and judger. Benford and Gough (2006) suggest that one way to manoeuvre from the moral discourse into a meaning that is not so restrictive is to realign 'bad' as sick, a delineated strategy that emerged in a study of chocaholics. Realigning 'sinful' pleasure as addiction restricted the authority given to moral meaning.

The moral discourse emerges as a powerful writer of meaning for body, food and as a judger of person. It is clearly a discourse that can spread its influence across the key elements in weight change performances.

Weight as Fat Acceptance Meaning

"I don't care that I'm fat, I don't, it doesn't bother me. If people can't deal with it, it's their problem, not mine." Participant B

The fat acceptance discourse is a voice speaking against the normative discriminating of the overweight population. The fat acceptance discourse is primarily a discourse that provides a challenge to the dominating discourses by delineating meaning for peripheral positions in discourses that insist a small body should be the only body that is recognised as mattering. Functioning through both personal and social-political meanings, fat acceptance is becoming increasingly evident in the debate around weight and body. The fat acceptance discourse challenges the construction of weight as a problem, instead offering a meaning for weight as an indicator of natural variation of size within a population. Identifying the fat acceptance proponents in their study, Saguy and Riley (2005), suggest that

fat acceptance “has reclaimed the word *fat*, much like the civil rights movement reappointed the word *black* and the gay movement reclaimed *queer*” (p. 807).

While Saguy and Riley identify the way that the fat acceptance discourse challenges the norms of the medical and moral discourses at a social and political level, Hole (2003) in a study of fat female identities in comedy, offers a more individual position for the enacting of fat acceptance discourse:

If you are big enough, you are freed (excluded rather than excused) from many of the time-wasting concerns of those “normal” women who must strive for femininity. If you are big enough, you do not have to follow fashion (indeed it is almost impossible to buy fashionable clothes), you are not expected to spend hours on hair and make-up. Everyday encounters with men become desexualised. Even maternity becomes less expected. Further defeminized by avoidance of those attendant hassles of normative femininity, the self-confident big woman can embody a power denied her smaller sisters (p. 319).

In an attempt to promote fat-acceptance into current academic discourse, Longhurst (2005) states that her intention is to “make some space in the academy for geographers and others interested in spatiality to take up the issue of ‘fatness/corpulence/bigness’ in research and teaching” (p. 248). By introducing her intention, she also focuses on the relationship of bodies as they exist in relationship with space and suggests that bodies “have been treated as though they exist outside spatial relations” (2005, p. 256). She understands that the fat acceptance discourse provides meanings for physical belonging across populations of diverse body sizes: “In Asia I feel colossal and find myself continually clenching

my body in an attempt to take up less space, but in the Pacific Islands, surrounded by larger-bodies people, I feel more relaxed” (2005, p. 253).

The fat acceptance discourse challenges the boundary that has excluded large bodies from recognition as being meaningful, and, as a result, is promoting relational understanding that enables large bodies to be included as valid across a wider range of performances. It is interesting to read the influence of this discourse, in relation to the traditionally dominant discourses that provide non-acceptance for large bodies. Through Barad’s model, the relationship with diverse meaning positions could be read as the dynamic zone of intra-action through which a different relationship of meaning and doing is being negotiated. It would be expected that the boundary between fat acceptance and other discourses would produce dynamic exploration of possibilities which will diversify meanings and actions around weight.

In this study, the fat acceptance discourse is important because it allows fat-bodies to exert agency. The fat acceptance discourse provides a meaning that can access a different range of doing that matters to large bodies. It opens the possibility for reading a large body as mattering, healthy, bold and not guiltily bound to expectations of thinness. In the discursive-material relationship, fat acceptance discourse provides a way for what matters as a fat body to be read as a valid subject position rather than a fat body being read as an object created into an agency-deprived position through a range of alternative discourses.

Weight as a Health and Fitness Meaning

“I think it’s important to be healthy and fit ... and the type of food you eat will depend on how healthy you are and maybe to help keep you healthy and lose weight and stuff’.

Participant G

The health and fitness discourse easily shares its meaning with other discourses such as the medical, appearance and moral discourses. What matters to the health and fitness discourse is physical body performance. Wright and Burrows (2004), referring to educational theorists who promote health education, describe “healthism” as a discourse that “inevitably positions the body centrally in the creation of health, linking deliberate physical exercise and a range of other bodily practices with the attainment of health, where health and well-being are indicated by body shape, size and weight” (Kirk and Colquhoun, cited in Wright and Burrows, 2004, p. 215). Bodies that are written with meaning through this discourse are bodies that are expected to perform well physically. Consequently, looking good and being healthy share an audience that recognises the meaning of both.

Research indicates that both the health and fitness and the appearance discourses offer gender-specific meanings. Clarke and Griffin (2008), in a review of literature on body image, refer to Franzoi who “asserted that women are socialized to perceive the body as an object of discrete parts that others aesthetically evaluate”(p. 417). In contrast, men are socialized to conceptualize the body as “a dynamic process where function is of greater consequence than beauty” (cited in Clarke and Griffin, 2008, p. 1085).

As with other discourses, the health and fitness discourse offers meanings for both the social-political level and personal levels of action. Fullagar (2003) examines Australian policy aimed at encouraging physical activity for health, and suggests that government policy communicated through “masculine metaphors” (p. 54), function to selectively inhibit activity by women and “... may indeed negatively impact upon women’s participation in active forms of leisure” (p. 48). The significance of persuasive messages, encouraging participation in physical activity, was also the focus of interest in a study by Bailis, Fleming and Segall (2005). These studies signal that the meanings offered for bodies through the health and fitness discourse discriminate both social and personal participation in physical fitness through gender boundaries.

The extent to which the health and fitness discourse successfully offers meaning emerged in a study by Burns and Gavey (2004). This study focused on narratives from women who practise bulimia. Women who used a health discourse for bulimic practices justified being slim as a most significant health benefit. Bulimia was rewritten to fit a meaning offered by the health discourse.

Weight is about Appearance

“For me definitely, like, how my body is, changes the way I feel about things... how your body is sort of dictates how you feel, like if you’ve been eating heaps you kind of, like, your body’s looking gross but really it’s probably not...”

Participant F

Popular culture asserts the importance of body appearance. An attractive body is expected to be slim and toned. The body is to be looked at. The appearance discourse writes an expectation for body that many find difficult to achieve. As a

result, the appearance discourse is often enacted through body dissatisfaction, through the spectator position, wanting to be included in the exclusive zone of discursive acceptance. Moulding (2007), in a paper that examines self care of the body, draws on work by Polivy and Herman to state that “body image dissatisfaction is widely regarded as a ‘normative’ female experience” (p. 58).

The appearance discourse has offered meaning to female gender roles more than male gender roles. The gender specific meaning offered by the appearance discourse was highlighted in a study by Conner and Johnson (2004) who state, “Body dissatisfaction was higher in heterosexual women and homosexual men compared to heterosexual men”. In a study by De Souza and Ciclitira (2005), the authors state that “heterosexual men were constructed as unconcerned with their appearance and dieting mainly for ‘good’ reasons such as health, whereas women were constructed as dieting for less ‘good’ reasons, such as vanity and concern about their looks” (p. 800). This finding signals the close links between the health and fitness and appearance discourses.

The disproportionate enacting of the appearance discourse through female gender positions is being challenged in two distinctive areas. Weigers (1998) suggests that male body building has emerged as the masculine expression of this link between masculinity and appearance. Body building has become “increasingly acceptable... recognizing the body as a project [that] entails the acceptance that its size, shape and appearance are subject to reconstruction according to the designs of its owner” (p. 147). Within this description of body building, not only does the sharing of meaning around shape and appearance emerge but also the assumption of a body as an object that can be written on by a clear discursive meaning.

In a study of elite female athletes, Brace-Govan (2002) comments on the positioning for meaning required by female body builders and female weightlifters, a group within the population who challenge the gender differentiating meaning within the appearance discourse. While the weightlifting women interviewed “found little to say about their appearance” (p. 414), the author concludes this group of females performed their physicality distinctively as “these women did not invite the gaze” (p. 416).

Rather surprisingly, given the extensive meaning offered for body through the appearance discourse, studies indicate this discourse may not function to provide sufficient and exclusive meaning for body. Rather, the appearance discourse is one that functions effectively in relationships with other discourses. Researchers Madden and Chamberlain (2004), in a paper examining the “discursive construction of food and healthy eating in text appearing in popular women’s magazines”, conclude that the “feminine beauty discourse” is active with four other identifiable discourses, “a moral discourse, a biomedical discourse, a scientific discourse [and] a mothering discourse” (p. 588). Capdevila and Johnston (2005), for example, in examining narratives of new mothers and the meaning of body changes, noted that while body changes were prevalent in responses, analysis of narratives indicated that “body image seems to be of variable importance for many mothers” (p. 28). The limited direct influence of the appearance discourse was also examined by Paquette and Raine (2004), who suggested that women’s perception of body was more influenced by relationships with “partners, other women and health professionals” (p. 1056) than by media portrayals of expectations for appearance.

From Barad's theoretical framework, the appearance discourse can be understood as functioning as an apparatus, delineating the boundary for inclusion and exclusion. This may account for the dynamism around this discourse and also for the limits to its meaning-making capacity. Granberg's (2006) study, for example, examining narratives of change through weight loss, presents several examples which illustrate the motivating pull of appearance discourse and the disappointing lack of meaning that the discourse also offers. Nonetheless appearance discourse is widespread, offering clearly delineated meaning for body in weight change performances.

Summary

The discourses described above, medical, moral, fat acceptance, health and fitness and appearance, offer the foundation of meanings through which possibilities for doing bodies can be selected. Reading discourses is fundamental to a performative reading of reality-making as discourses offer meanings that write create materiality and provide meanings for materialities that exert a presence in a meaning-doing zone. Recognising discursive meanings is critical in beginning to understand the process through which specific bodies will emerge in weight loss performances.

Chapter 3 – Reading Food and the Boundaries of Inclusion and Exclusion

Reading the zone of meaning-doing can begin with a reading of boundaries. Boundaries delineate any specific relationships with possibilities as identifiably distinct from all other possibilities for relationships with meaning and doing. Food enters all weight change performances across boundaries. Because food enters all weight change performances, both physically and discursively, it offers a nice example of the way both discursive and physical boundary can be read. We can read the unique way food enters a meaning-doing zone as both discourse and physicality.

Boundaries signal what possibilities for meaning and what possibilities for doing are being included into a meaning-doing space. Boundaries also signal what meanings and what actions are excluded from the meaning-doing zone. This means boundaries can be read for both their including qualities and their excluding capabilities.

In the reading of a boundary, a key feature is the level of impermeability. How well a boundary can include or exclude meaning or doing is a significant signal of the capacity of a performance for change and for stability. If many meanings are active in a zone of meaning-doing, then there is dynamic possibility for different meanings to position themselves on the relationship boundary. This will enable change, as numerous possibilities for action can be accessed. But multiple meanings may make stability difficult to achieve. When too many meanings could matter, stabilising what does matter becomes difficult.

Through Barad's model of performativity, by reading boundaries as they are presented in texts, we can read how food can enter a meaning-doing zone or how it can be excluded. If food can easily enter a meaning-doing zone, it signals that a boundary is porous. If food is selected to enter a space through a narrow, specific range of meaning that recognises only a limited range of food as belonging, then the boundary is functioning with high impermeability.

In a text, reading the level of impermeability and porosity means reading the meanings offered to food that allow it to enter the meaning-doing zone that is body, and reading the meaning that exclude food from the zone. This means reading discourse. More specifically this means reading the discursive meanings that invite food to enter and that offer meanings to food within the meaning-doing zone.

There are two features of discourses that can be read as signalling boundary impermeability in the meaning-doing space: the amount of meaning (the number of discourses that are actively providing meaning-making); and the type of meaning (the position within each discourse which is providing meaning-making). Multiple discourses that offer multiple meanings or multiple reasons for access into the meaning-doing space make boundaries porous. If food, for example, is given meaning for health, for pleasure, and for appearance, then each one of these meanings can provide access to specific food. Food that is low fat, chocolate indulgent and full of anti-oxidants may be recognised as belonging or making sense, and so these foods can be chosen off the supermarket shelves. If food has meaning only through a health discourse, then what is taken from a supermarket shelf rigidly complies with the healthfood shopping list.

The discursive position through which meaning is being enacted also creates variability in the porosity of boundary. This can be understood as a variation in access to actions. A discursive position that is close to the normative expectation of a discourse provides access to a limited range of possibilities for action. For example, believing that only healthy food matters will mean only healthy food will be placed in the trolley when faced with all food choices on supermarket shelves. The boundary is quite impermeable. If the position in discourse that is being enacted is more towards the periphery of the discourse, then healthy food may matter but, at the same time, may not matter. Such a position can be understood as retaining the dynamic flexibility of the intra-action process, prior to its settling into an agreed relationship of meaning and doing. This means healthy food may be selected, but other food may also be put in the trolley. In this instance, a boundary is more porous.

The porosity of a boundary impacts on the materiality-making process by affecting the stability in the relationship of what matters, the intra-active process. From Barad's theory, entity emerges as an agreed, stable boundary delineating a specific selection of possible meanings and possible actions. The iteration of an agreed boundary over what matters establishes the stability that is a key feature of entity-making. The porosity of boundary impacts on this process. If a boundary is porous and a wide range of meanings function to allow entry to a wide range of 'what-matters', then agreement, iteration and stability are much more difficult to achieve. The meaning-doing space is active with the dynamism of multiple meanings accessing multiple possibilities for action.

All of these features of discourses are considered in the following examinations of boundaries and food selections. In the discussion that follows, I

examine four different types of boundary and their relationship with the process of intra-action. One is an impermeable boundary, and two are porous boundaries, with many discourses involved. A fourth, distinctly identifiable boundary offers an example of a boundary that is established with discourses that are non-delineating. Such boundary is less effective in creating consistent delineation between what is included and what is excluded into the meaning-doing zone. By reading each of the boundaries, we can gain an understanding of the reality-making processes that create unique weight change performances.

An Impermeable Boundary: Participant G and the “so you have to choose what sort of food to eat” boundary

A clearly enacted discursive boundary delineates Participant G’s selection of food. The health discourse offers meaning to healthy food, and excludes meaning to other food. It is a simple, clear discursive delineation of what is included and what is excluded. What this means is that when faced with all possible types of food, a very narrow band of meaning that recognises that food is about health is used to select what food will be included into performance and what will be excluded. No other discourses are recognised as offering a valid meaning for the inclusion of other food.

A simple boundary makes the act of choosing food easy. From Participant G’s description of her grocery shopping, it is not difficult to recognise that the decision about what to buy is based around health. The clear boundary works to select food that belongs in a weighting down performance, a health performance. It creates a relatively uncluttered meaning-doing zone.

Food enters Participant G's weight loss performance by being recognised as belonging to the one identifiable discourse which matters in this performance, health. She says, "We went and got the groceries last night and we got healthy food, Weight Watchers products, we don't buy chocolate biscuits or anything so we have pretty good stuff in our cupboard." Non-healthy food is left on the supermarket shelves. So out of all possible foods that could enter the space, a clear criteria for selection is offered.

As healthy food is taken into the performance space it finds meaningful connection with the health and well-being discourses; its belonging is confirmed. Participant G says, "The type of food you eat will depend on how healthy you are um maybe to help keep you healthy and lose weight and stuff". What is recognised as mattering is enriched by the discursive meaning that is given to food that has entered the space. Additional discourses are able to connect with the meaning of the food selected through a health discourse, overlapping their meaning to enrich the initial meaning enabling access to further actions that support weighting-down.

Once food is inside the zone of meaning, its belonging is affirmed. Participant G adds, "You definitely feel better when you're, like when I'm eating, like good food that's good for me, I'm losing weight, you just feel better and you feel healthier, I think it's better for just like your skin and everything". Food-for-health now makes sense for appearance as well as health and well-being. Food that is in the performance space now has additional meaning that support food's initial relationship with health meaning. Agreement over what food belongs and what food should be excluded is not confounded but rather is strengthened through this additional meaning.

Reading the boundary of Participant G's performance indicates a simple food selection is complemented by added meaning supports. These additional meanings stabilize to an agreement on what food means and so what food should enter the meaning-zone.

But how effectively can the dominant health discourse that Participant G enacts exclude unwanted food from the space? How robust is the boundary? The example below suggests that food for health is maintaining an effective domination of the boundary, specifically by suggesting healthy food "could be just as nice" as excluded food.

In the following example, the health discourse challenges the meaning of food as an indulgent pleasure. In the excerpt, these two meanings for food compete to determine which meaning will select the food that can enter into the meaning-doing zone:

I don't know there's all types of food and you always want to eat food that you're not allowed to have, probably because you're not allowed to have it, like if you're losing weight that is... um... whereas something healthy could be just as nice, but yea, and there's all ads and stuff on TV for food, if sometimes we're trying to be good and we watch TV and there's ads for KFC and everything, we're like ooo I'd love some KFC.

The health discourse is able to provide sufficient meaning to maintain control of the permeability of the food selection boundary.

The boundary of this meaning-doing zone is sufficiently rigorous to both narrow the selection of food choice and to eliminate food that is offered access into the zone through meanings provided by alternative discourses. Through this rigour, the range of meanings and doing is limited. An agreed relationship between

what matters and what actions belong in the zone will be relatively easy to establish and maintain. This is not a meaning-doing zone that will be disrupted by intruding meaning or doing that recognises different matterings. The boundary signals that this is a meaning-doing zone that is delineated so well that it can achieve stability in relationship. Such stability allows the iteration required to establish a delineated weighting-down performance. The weight loss, reported by Participant G over the previous months, indicates that this meaning-doing zone has succeeded in enacting a stable weighting-down performance.

A Porous Boundary: Participant C and the "... melting moments is my choice of weapons..." boundary

Participant C's weight change performance is one rich in food. She says, "I like nice food and good food". Then she adds, "I like food, I like good food". Under the guise of questioning, more food is offered meaning, "why does citron tart seem so much more appealing than green salad?" Then she adds humour to the rich diversity of food in the meaning doing space, "so we wake up and have that for breakfast. What did you have for breakfast? Cornflakes? No lemon polenta cake."

Being audience to this performance, it is not difficult to notice that for a weight loss performance, the meaning-doing zone is immensely busy with a lot of food that does not seem to belong in a weight loss performance. The discursive supermarket trolley that Participant C uses to select food is more than happy to accept a broad range of food from all the possibilities of food on offer.

Reading the boundary that is delineating the selection of meaning and the selection of doing elaborates the process that is creating this weight change performance. The variety and type of food that has entered the performance space

indicates a highly porous boundary. This, in turn, suggests that many discourses are actively recognizing food as belonging with their meaning, and so a broad range of food possibilities can be selected as belonging. In this type of boundary, food can enter the performance through multiple meaning connections. And it does. The following excerpt indicates the number of connections to food Participant C's discursive boundary offers.

Beginning with food as pleasure, Participant C states, "I like food. I like good food". Additional food is given meaning through social experience when she says, "I like food being a really social experience as well". Health discourse adds a further meaning to food as she says, "I think you can eat good food without it being fattening". Staying with food as having health meaning, she considers the marketing of food, briefly stepping into a consumer role saying, "but I think increasingly we need more information on the food packaging". Food that has meaning as pleasure enters the space again, this time in the form of "fresh bread from the bakery which has to have butter on it". Again, referring to food through the health discourse, she adds, "often what we want is we're having a coffee it would be nice to have something sweet but I don't want this huge great big quarter of a cake deal but I would quite like a little tiny bikkie". Referring back to a hint of food as a health choice, Participant C adds, "I wish more restaurants would sell good food like salads that you could have for lunch without heaps of gluecky dressing all through them", before a medical warning to body to enters the boundary chorus, "I could be a sitting duck for type 2 diabetes considering my father has it so I need to start reining in my weight and controlling it".

Almost the entire range of food on supermarket shelves can leap into this trolley, chocolate, salad, low sugar, high sugar, low fat, high fat; all have a space

here because all are recognised as valid for inclusion through connection to meanings. There is very little food that is excluded by this boundary.

With such an array of food that is meaningful, the potential for change in selection is high. On any day or any part of a day, it is possible to select food based on a specific discursive meaning. The problem with such an array of meanings is that any boundary between diverse meanings and diverse actions will struggle to achieve the stability that is necessary to establish agreement on exactly what meaning should be acting as the selector of food. Multiple meanings signal multiple ways that food will be able to enter into the meaning-doing zone. What matters in this performance is constantly changing, and, as a result, no specific boundary can be iterated. Through this relationship of meaning and action, no stability of meaning and doing can be established as a clearly delineated meaning-doing zone. Such porosity in boundaries will impact on the stability required for reality-making.

Boundary is also active in providing meanings for food that physically enters the meaning-doing space of Participant C. Two features of Participant C's boundary are significant. First, the reading of food that has entered the space uses discourses that do not strengthen the excluding potential of boundary. Two discourses are noticeably enacted: a moral reading, with Participant C being read through a moral discourse as weak-willed and morally-failing, and a medical reading. Both of these discourses directly give meaning to food that has entered the space of performance. So food that has physically entered the meaning-doing space is provided with a meaning that enables the continued performance of this intrusion.

The moral discourse does not strengthen the excluding function of boundary because it directs meaning more to Participant C than to food selection. Her use of the moral discourse creates agential cuts that delineate Participant C as lacking the capacity to function with agency in the performance. What is created as entity through this discourse is “the awful beating up on yourself”. Meanwhile food is not being meaninged in any way that would eliminate it from the meaning-doing space.

Another boundary discourse that gives meaning to food that has entered the performance space of Participant C, the medical discourse. The enactment of this discourse also reduces the excluding function of the boundary. Food is offered a meaning that permits its inclusion. She states, for example, that “fat is addictive”. The medical discourse has read food that has physically entered the space of performance in such a way that a meaning is provided that allows it to be included. Fatty food has been meaninged as addictive and, as such, is powerfully beyond the influence of most other discourses. Its meaning will not be destabilised easily. It can stay within the meaning-doing zone as recognisable, valid and physical.

A Chaotic Boundary, Non-delineating Boundary: Participant A performing the “catch 2:20 situation”

I don't know but if you don't eat properly and have good health you're not going to be able to exercise so it's a catch 2:20 situation.

Participant A

Participant A's selected meaning-doing zone is delineated by discourses that combine to create a porous boundary. Discourses are ineffective in delineating

a clear zone of inclusion and exclusion in three keys ways: discourses are enacted through a subversive, spectator position; a dominant discourse is non-delineating in its selection role; and a discourse offers a highly inclusive meaning for the physical intrusion of some food.

Enacting discourses through a subversive-spectator position creates a boundary that can select food from two meaning positions simultaneously. Meaning can be enacted both from the discursive position that says 'this matters' and from the position that says 'this does not matter'. The following example illustrates these two meaning positions. Participant A says:

I know all the right things that you're meant to eat that's obvious know what you've got to eat, blah blah blah, I find that difficult 'cos I don't, for me, because I don't eat red meat and animals, but I think that, again if you follow all the diets, I've done Weight Watchers, I've done Jenny Craig and whoever else is out there, and um, I just think that you must know yourself what you want to eat, I don't think a programme can tell you, because that programme goes broke or they close down or you can't afford to go you're knackered, so you've got to learn yourself.

Within this excerpt, Participant A says that she knows what is the 'right' food to eat but the continued dynamic jostling of what matters and what could matter, means that 'knowing' has not stabilised into an agreed position which consistently offers access to a specific selection of food. Both knowing and not knowing remain active as the boundary; what matters can just as readily not matter.

She continues in this excerpt, referring to diets, saying she has tried dieting, but that she doesn't "think a programme can tell you". The normative expectation of discourse is known but alternative meaning positions very easily disrupt any

stability in how this is known. Participant A can enact both knowing the discourse and not knowing. This means she can access the selection of food that belongs with the normative expectations of the discourse and, at the same time, can access the selection of food that does not belong within the normative expectations of a diet discourse.

As a boundary to food selection, this position offers meaning that enables food that belongs to a weighting-down discourse to be selected as well as food that can demonstrate that a weighting-down body does not mean anything. Participant A's comment, in a later interview, can be read as an example of precisely this meaning-making:

I'd drive into Jenny Craig, get the food zap it in the microwave and eat it and so by eating the right food, I didn't lose weight and I don't know why because I did what they said, but I think your mind has got to be at it.

Food is selected from the position of knowing it is weight reducing food, but is offered a meaninged 'reason' or is offered belonging by being food that is not weight reducing as well when Participant A concludes " your mind has got to be at it".

The subversive, spectator position also enables Participant A to play with the normative meanings ascribed to food. For example, when describing 'healthy food' the subversive position enables Participant A to rewrite the normatively accepted discursive meaning into another meaning:

I think that I don't get it. I know what a vegetable is and all that, I find it really difficult when you read magazines and they say, I don't know... I don't even know what those omegary things are, all that stuff like to me, if you eat meat and veges, cereals for breakfast, I don't know salad for

lunch, meat and veges for tea, go for a frigging walk it should work, but obviously it doesn't anymore so, because you see all those vitamins and shit like that, so I don't understand any of that side of it, I could do the eating properly but when you do the multivitamins and that I don't know how much of that is bullshit or how much actually helps you... because I don't eat meat I don't know what replaces meat, I know iron comes out of meat but I don't know you've got to eat 2 kilos of fucking silver beet equals 100 grams of meat well, fuck of, I'll be bloody there all night, so that side of it I don't understand, and then you go to the supermarket and you read, now, the other day I got those snap frozen Chinese stir fry veges and it said they have more goodness than buying fresh, whereas this shit comes along it goes to there if you buy it from the market it's fine but by the time it goes to the supermarket and that you've got to eat bloody 20 carrots to make it worthwhile , so who wants to eat bloody 20 carrots and 10 oranges or something when if you can do it quicker doing it the other way. I don't know, I think they're all telling lies.

The effect of this boundary that selects food from the subverting position of a discourse is that it allows a wide range of food to be selected. In addition, it diminishes any authority offered to food through normative discursive meanings. Food can enter by being healthy just as easily as it can enter by being recognised as food that demonstrates the 'lies' that are being told about food. The important function of a boundary that, in a weighting-down performance, needs to select food through reference to a weighting-down discourses is not established. This boundary is not able to function effectively in eliminating food that is not

recognised as belonging. This meaning-doing space is delineated by a boundary that is porous, offering access for a wide range of meaning and doing.

A lack of clarity in the discursive meaning that functions as a boundary can also be read in text. For Participant A, discursive meanings have not cut any specific meanings to act as clear boundary delineators. So, rather than describing the clearly meaninged food that is selected by the boundary, Participant A talks of 'eating'. While obviously closely related, eating as a way of making meaning for food selection does not clearly delineate what can be included and what can be excluded. All food can be included as the boundary of selection is eating.

Participant A's texts indicate the non-selecting function of 'eating':

Well just leave it there and I'll eat it... I'm quite happy to admit that I think my weight gain over weight thing is about over-eating and eating at the wrong time you know eating late at night to stay awake and shit like that.

Food itself is not given meaning in this example; rather, it is the process of eating that functions as the selector in the boundary.

I am suggesting that by using 'eating' as the apparatus that is delineating this boundary, then any food that is included in the space is not clearly delineated by a specific discursive criteria for belonging. This lack of specificity increases the porosity of the boundary as the following indicates, "like OK somebody's given me this I'll eat that, somebody's given me this, I'll eat that, I couldn't give a shit, food's to keep you alive".

The physical act of eating functions as a selective boundary in this weight change performance. This means the meaning-doing zone offers access through the act of eating food. The cumulative effect of minimising discursive meanings on food selection is easy to anticipate. The process that selects food does so with such

limited meaning that all food on the supermarket shelves is provided access into this space. No food is selected out of this space because specific meaning is minimised.

Participant A's relationship with food, however, is even more confounded by the meaning offered to food that enters the performance space. Food that physically enters the space is offered a more clearly delineated meaning through a position of compliance with discursive expectations. This means that food that intrudes into the space is then offered an accepted discursive meaning, exacerbating the lack of delineated selection for weight changing food. A meaninged acceptance is offered to intrusive food. For example:

The reason, I think, for my increase in the last few weeks is the change in medication. Probably four weeks ago, it started to kick in and I could taste it all the time, and so I started eating carbs. I don't normally eat a lot of bread, so I was eating a lot of carbs. I was eating a lot of bread, a lot of rice, trying to shove this stuff down and to keep it down and I'd go to bed at night and I'd be up at half past one in the morning having a piece of bread or I was eating just dry crumpets, just cooking the crumpets, but just nothing on them and eating them, or I was eating a packet from like tea time till when I went to bed, because taking the tablets, I had to take the tablets four hours before I went to bed and in the morning, but then you can taste it, coming up, so I think that that has contributed to that, because I've still done the normal fruit and stuff but absolutely the carbs just piled it on.

Participant A's text does not describe a process of weighting-down but offers cogent, agentially cut explanations for the inclusion of food into her meaning-doing

zone. The powerful authority of the medical discourse has provided a meaning for food to intrude as it has a delineated meaning within a meaning-doing zone. The medical discourse is signalling that what matters more than a weighting-down performance is a medical performance. Any boundary that was functioning through 'what matters is weight loss', has been disrupted by boundary selections that are created through 'what matters is a medical performance'. Explanations such as "the change in medication" provide meaning for food that has accessed the meaning-doing space. Food is offered a recognisable meaning through the medical discourse, which is given priority over weight loss.

The boundary of Participant A's meaning-doing zone is porous. The boundary is too porous to select specific food or to delineate a clear meaning that discriminates one type of food from another type of food; food is selected into this space if it can be eaten. In addition, the medical discourse provides clear, specific meanings for the physical intrusion of food, which disrupts a weighting-down performance. The continued dynamism in all the discursive positions creates a meaning-doing zone that has a highly diverse range of meaning and doing. Stability and iteration will be extremely difficult to establish and maintain.

A Partially Impermeable Boundary: Participant D's "... need to make sure I don't succumb to temptation..." boundary

Participant D's text offers an example of a boundary that is partially selective but not excluding. It is therefore limited in its capacity to function as an effective boundary that selects food for a weighting-down performance.

Participant D's boundary can be understood as a boundary that is discursively active but which is not sufficiently enacting a clear discursive position to maintain a stable selection of meaning. Participant D says, "I'm very conscious of the food I eat, there again sometimes I care and sometimes I don't". This indicates that the boundary is not selecting weighting-down food from a stable position. At times when she does not care, boundary is open to intrusions from alternatively meaninged food. Examples of these intrusions can be read in text as: "[you] would have seen me having a sweet mochaccino and a treat yesterday afternoon... that was me trying to feel better about my day". When providing food for visitors, she noted the food choice saying, "You don't serve them up a portion of chicken... I went and bought a little loaf cake thing thinking this isn't going to be very good for me".

Interestingly, these intrusions are not massively disruptive to the weight-losing performance. The interview texts suggest they are not hugely disruptive because these intrusions are quickly and efficiently meaninged into a weighting-down performance. The clear meaning for exercise offered by the health and fitness discourse functions to delineate a boundary that can still support weighting-down. Exercise is used as a patch where breaches of the food selection boundary have occurred: "... the last three days have been really good apart from yesterday and the loaf thing. I am really enjoying getting out with our dog ... so I've been vigilant lately". She adds that the intrusion of unplanned food was "... not a major binge and that feel bad and run for six miles sort of thing".

Food that is not weighting-down food can intrude into the meaning-doing space. It is offered meaning that still aligns it with a weighting-down performance. Food that enters is not directly selected by a weighting down discourse, but it is

meaninged in such a way that it does not compete nor disrupt the weighting-down performance. Because the boundary of selection is a disrupted one, it cannot iterate to form a specific, sustained performance. The meaning-doing zone, for the most part, continues to be dominated by weighting-down meanings and actions but through a boundary that is in continual need of repair.

The fragile boundary of Participant D's material-discursive relationship demands a constant vigilance around weight. She says "it's [weight is] an ever present, maybe it would be nice for a couple of days not to have it nagging in the background". This need for vigilance can be understood as a boundary that is retaining a dynamic jostling around what matters, and so it is not robust in delineating the meaning-doing zone. It can select food through specific discursive meanings, but the range of meanings also indicates that the boundary struggles to eliminate food through any consistent meaning. Her weighting-down performance was marked by fluctuating small losses and small gains.

Summary

Boundaries matter. Reading boundaries through the discursive and physical delineators of what is included as recognisable meaning and recognisable doing signal what possibilities within a zone of meaning-doing are included in the process of reality-making. Reading boundaries signals what matters in the meaning-doing zone and it signals how it matters.

Most significantly, boundaries signal the level of stability within a meaning-doing space. The stability that is essential for the iteration of a relationship between meaning and doing that will establish entity is created through a

boundary. Reading boundary offers understanding of what matters, and how stable any particular what matters is within the meaning-doing zone.

Chapter 4 –Reading Body-Making

Bodies emerge from and through the meaning-doing zones that are being delineated out of possibilities. Through Barad's model, as it is used in this study, a body can be read as enacting the relationship between meaning and doing. It enacts the specific relationship between the specific meanings and the specific doings that are functioning as a delineated zone.

The previous chapter examined how boundaries function to include and exclude possibilities, and how a boundary impacts on the processes of materiality-making, through which a specific weighting-up or weighting-down body will emerge. This chapter now attends to the specific processes of materiality-making that create unique bodies.

Bodies are prescribed a clear role in weight loss performances. They are expected to reduce in size, to weight down. But for the participants in this study, many bodies did not perform as weighting-down bodies. Why? The question that this chapter addresses is how we can read the meaning-doing zone through text so that we can describe how bodies emerge as specific weighting-up or weighting-down bodies.

Why would bodies that are in the performance of weight loss, that are awash with weight loss discourses, not do the actions that would make them weighting-down bodies? Explanations commonly assume that bodies function in a different realm to words of intention. A body can do body things while thoughts or intentions do thought things and they may not necessarily coincide. In fact, evidence that bodies may weight up even though the intention is that they weight

down reinforces this fundamental assumption of separateness between mind and body.

A performative reading of bodies does not recognise this separateness. By understanding a physical body as an entity that emerges through the enactment of a specific material-discursive relationship, then any reading of a body is a reading of the meaning that is iterating the actions that create a specific body. Some iterated meanings will repeat actions that will make weighting-up bodies and some will create weighting-down bodies. Bodies are doing; they perform what matters. A performative reading of a specific body through a text asks: what doing is creating a specific weighting-up body or a weighting-down body?

Before elaborating how specific body-makings can be read in texts, it is useful to reiterate the process of intra-action that is central to understanding materiality-making through Barad's model. Through the concept of intra-action, a material body can be read as an entity that emerges through the repetition of its relationship between what matters discursively and what matters materially. The way that we can read the process of intra-action, in text, now needs to be elaborated.

At this point in the reading of the process of a specific body-making, attention needs to be focused within the reading of material-discursive relationships. A range of meanings and a range of actions are in relationship. Barad refers to this meeting of a range of possible meanings and possible actions as the material-discursive boundary. I am going to describe this relationship as a plane of connection. By thinking of the boundary as a plane of connection, it is easy to consider the plane as an expanse of connection possibility that could be broad or limited depending on the range of meaning and the range of doing that is in the

relationship. It is through repetition of this material-discursive boundary, or plane of connection, that body will emerge, as it is through the material-discursive relationship that possibilities for body action can be repeated sufficiently for body to emerge with a specific, delineated materiality.

Now we can begin to broadly explore how variations in material-discursive relationships work to create nuanced differences in the materiality of bodies. To explore these variations, we can examine different possibilities for the type of relationship that can be read as a material-discursive boundary. For example, if multiple discursive meanings are active in the meaning-doing relationship, then multiple possibilities for doing are recognisable. In such circumstances, a plane of connection will be broad. A body that emerges from this relationship can do a range of activities, all of which are recognised as meaningful. Some of the body-doing activity may be weighting-down activity and some may not. If a wide range of possibilities can be enacted, it will be difficult to stabilise specifically what matters in such a relationship. Any body that emerges through this type of relationship will struggle to be a weighting-down body. A weighting-down body can stabilise to emerge as a weighting-down body only when the material-discursive relationship is such that access is given to those actions that will belong in a weighting-down performance. Such a body enacts a material-discursive boundary that enables access to weighting-down actions and which does not enable access to weighting-up actions.

By contrast, if few discursive meanings are active in material-discursive relationship, then it is easier for a weighting-down body to emerge. As fewer possibilities for body-doing activities are recognised within the material-discursive relationship, then the range of actions that have meaning is more restrained. What

matters is much easier to delineate. If what matters is weighting-down, then body can more easily enact weighting-down actions as there will be fewer meanings offered that provide access to weighting-up actions.

When an agreement is reached between what meaning matters and what actions matter, a stable boundary is achieved. A delineated agreement on what matters has been established. If a specific 'what matters' can be repeatedly enacted, then a physical body emerges which can be read as the iterated enactment of this particular relationship between the meaning that matters and the doing that matters. The process that establishes where the material-discursive boundary will delineate an entity is the process of intra-action, described in chapter one. Where the boundary of relationship between materiality and discourse settles into agreement of what specific meanings matter and what actions matter, then that agreed meaning-doing can be stable and repeated sufficiently for a body to emerge as an entity with specific materiality. Such a body can be either a weighting-up entity or a weighting-down entity. What matters can achieve stability because the dynamic negotiation of what it could mean or could do has settled into an agreement of what it does mean and what it does do. With stability, the delineation of relationship can be iterated. What matters can now be recognised as a delineated weighting-up or weighting-down body.

Using Barad's model, a physical entity can and must be read through both sides of the material-discursive relationship. This means that a body can be read as the meaning that is writing or selecting actions to be included in its body-doing. It also means that a physical body can be read through the possibilities for meanings which are active in the meaning-doing space. The meanings that are recognising specific body actions and the meanings that are excluding any

recognition of specific body actions must also be read as the meaning-making of a specific body.

To read the making of bodies from texts, we are reading the process of entity-making. To read the process of entity-making we are reading what is working to create the iteration and stability, from both sides of the material-discursive relationship that will allow an agreed meaning-doing zone to function as an entity. It is through the iteration of a specific meaning and a specific doing that the relationship between what something means and what it does can settle within agreed boundaries with sufficient stability to begin to act as an entity. Through stability, a specific meaning can emerge that can act as a subject. Once this occurs, it can be named, function as a subject and can be recognised as an entity. Importantly, entities can also be read in texts. A performative reading brings transparency to the processes that are creating an entity.

This transparency is read in the material-discursive relationship evident in texts. By reading the material-discursive relationship, we have access to the stability and iteration required for an entity to emerge. The conditions required for stability and iteration can be read in texts through two features.

Firstly, it can be signalled by how many options for meaning are included in meaning-doing zones. Reading how much meaning is in a meaning-doing zone involves reading the range of discursive meanings that are being accessed for meaning-making and reading the positions that discourses are being enacted through. Both of these features directly impact on the range of actions for doing that can be included in a material-discursive relationship. The greater the range of meaning and doing, then the greater the challenge to distinguish and maintain

exactly what meaning and what doing is going to matter in the meaning-doing relationship.

Secondly, iteration and stability are affected by the consistency between meanings and doing on each side of the meaning-doing relationship. If, for example, a discourse that writes a meaning onto body and acts as a filter for including possibilities for action is different from a discourse that is used to provide a meaning for a body when it is seen to act 'on its own', then the relationship of meaning-doing has a much broader boundary of meanings through which stability is being negotiated.

Most bodies in this study did not enact stability. They did not emerge as stable weighting-down bodies. This means the material-discursive relationships did not delineate exactly what meaning mattered and what action mattered with such agreement that stability was achieved. The relationship could not specify what mattered with sufficient clarity for clearly delineated entities to emerge, bounded as weighting-down bodies. Rather than emerge as weighting-down entities, most bodies in this study enacted the fluctuations of a range of discursive meanings, accessing a range of possibilities for body-doing.

Some of the bodies in this study emerged through material-discursive boundaries in which discourses dominated the boundary that selected access to actions. For other bodies, the material-discursive relationships through which they emerged could be seen to be relationships that offered significant meanings to the actions of the physicality of bodies. Some material-discursive relationships seemed to be discourse-dominated and others materiality-dominated. The bodies that emerged through these relationships obviously differed.

Bodies are entities that emerge through relationship between materiality and discourse. Each material-discursive relationship creates the unique materiality of a body. Texts can be read to examine the unique material-discursive relationships through which bodies emerge with their materiality. A performative reading of text brings transparency to the reading of bodies as entities in text by offering a conceptual model that we can use to read the processes that are creating each unique body materiality. In the following four examples, I read texts to examine the material-discursive relationships that are creating specific body materialities.

The making of Participant G's body: discourse writing meaning onto possibilities for doing

The material-discursive relationship through which Body G has emerged has created a weighting-down performance. Participant G reported that she had lost over 22 kg in weight in the previous ten months. The discursive performance, as read through text, is one that has stabilized the 'weight change process' into such a delineated meaning that it functions as a subject signalled in text, as "the weight change process is good".

How is Body G being made? Out of all possibilities for doing body, an agreed relationship between some selected meanings and some selected doing has stabilised and has been repeated to create a weighting-down Body G. What features of text can be read as a way to understand how Body G is being created? In order to address this question, I am examining the relationship between discourses that write meanings onto possibilities for doing, and discourses that

offer meaning to physical body actions. In reading the making of Body G from her texts, I am suggesting that the stability that emerges as Body G is created through enacting a relationship where discourses dominate the material-discursive relationship. Discourse writes meanings onto possibilities for body-doing. This discursive dominance is supported by a range of meanings for the physical body actions that enter the relationship. Through this discursive dominance body meaning is in the relationship, ensuring discourse alone provides access to selected possibilities.

Beginning with an examination of the active discourses that offer meaning for doing, a number of similar discourses can be seen to be active in the material-discursive relationship. This means that out of all possibilities for physical ways that Body G can act, the meanings that recognise some action as belonging are in a similar range. The following examples indicate that body meaning is clustered around appearance. The appearance discourse writes a meaning for Body G. Looking good is recognised as a valid meaning. Participant G says, "I think your body is important because you live in it every day and that's how other people see you and how you see yourself when you look in the mirror, so how your body looks affects you quite a lot". She then adds, "I guess that your body is quite important because that's what you are like in everyday and that so you have to look at your body so I guess it's best if you're happy with it".

But closely aligned with 'what matters to body is appearance', the well-being discourse adds access to actions that are closely aligned with appearance. In this way a cluster of related meanings begin to delineate specifically what matters: "the weight change process is good for like self esteem and giving you the confidence like if you're losing weight that is". What matters now is looking good

and looking good matters because it “gives you confidence”. Although these meanings are not exactly the same, they are so closely aligned that they will offer meaningful access to a similar range of actions, importantly, weighting-down actions.

The health discourse also adds meaning into the discursive cluster that is dominating the material-discursive boundary. Participant G says, “I think it is important to be fit and healthy”.

As this cluster of discourses dominates the material discursive relationship for Participant G, they signal clearly what matters for body. Because their meanings are closely related, the range of possibilities for what meaning matters and what doing matters is reduced. This means there is increased likelihood of agreement for what matters and therefore increased likelihood for stability in the meaning-doing relationship. The material-discursive relationship is selecting actions that will enable Body G to repeatedly access actions that create a weighting-down, feel-good, look-good, confident and healthy cluster of actions that stabilise into materiality as body. This means that in the relationship boundary where all possibilities for doing body actions meet all possibilities for meanings that body can be, only this limited cluster of meanings for body are recognised as mattering. These are discursive conditions that are conducive to stability. It is easier to establish an agreed, stable relationship when the range of possibilities is limited. Disruptive meanings are limited.

But the other side of this relationship is the meaning that physical body is offered in the material-discursive boundary. In this performance, Body G’s weighting-down stability is complemented through the meaning that is being read onto body-doing. Stability is not disrupted as body-doing is also offered highly

selective recognition of what physical body can mean, i. e. what materiality meaning is active in the material-discursive relationship. Disruptive meaning is excluded from the performance of body. For example, when the desire to eat food like Burger King threatens to disrupt the healthy meaning that matters, the meaning offered to this physical body offers a meaning to hunger not as hunger but boredom:

but yea it's kind of mind over matter like sometimes you just think you're hungry but you're not even... also you just eat when we've got nothing to do kind of like what shall we do.

What matters to body (being hungry) is not recognised as mattering. Because body mattering is so limited, this leaves the relationship between meaning and doing as one that is largely a discursively-driven relationship.

The meanings offered to physical body-doing complement the cluster of discourses writing a meaning for Body G. Weighting-down performance is delineated as what matters. Participant G says, "You just kind of become naturally fitter because you're not so big and carrying so much weight". Because the meaning offered to this physical body is close to the discourse meaning that is writing onto body, the range of possible meanings continues to be limited, enhancing stability and iteration. A clear entity, delineated as weighting-down matters, can emerge and function as the subject that enacts weighting-down matters. Discourses that tell this body it has meaning if it loses weight are able to dominate the possibilities of doing body that are available for this body's performance. As the agreement between what matters is stable, 'losing weight' is clearly delineated and, therefore, this body can physically enact a stable meaning to delineate what doing matters.

In this enactment of the material-discursive relationship, Body G emerges with a weighting-down materiality. This is created in three ways. A strongly delineated cluster of meanings for what matters as body provides access to very specific weighting-down body actions. In addition, the agreed material-discursive boundary is sufficiently robust to eliminate actions that do not belong. What is included in this meaning-doing zone is clearly written; what is excluded is also clearly written. Actions of body are given meanings that support weighting-down. Losing weight is a highly meaningful action of that enables a clearly delineated selection of actions that create a weighting down body to emerge. The emergence of this material body is sustained by a clear agreement in a material-discursive relationship that has stabilised around a meaning and a set of actions that are delineating weighting-down as mattering.

Body D and “... it’s not the easiest thing in the world to just go and do” body-making performance: discourse as writer and reader in a struggle for meaning relationship.

The material-discursive relationship that creates Body D is one that fails to stabilise either a weighting-up or a weighting-down body for any sustained period of time. The performance fluctuates, with weight losses countered by weight gains. Body D emerges as a material body entity that performs both weighting-up and weighting-down. This pattern indicates that there is insufficient stability in the material-discursive relationship for agential cuts to stabilise a clearly delineated weighting-down body as an entity. By examining the transcribed texts of Participant D’s interviews with the transparency offered by a performative model, we can gain access to the material-discursive relationship, which, for Body D, does

not establish the stability or iteration required for a weighting-down body to emerge.

What is apparent in Participant D's texts and what emerges, through the material-discursive relationship, to function as an entity is the struggle and the fluctuation in weight. Participant D says that the "fluctuations are major", and she adds that her weight "fluctuates a lot". The instability of her weight draws further comments as she says, "I'm quite conscious of weight ... sometimes it worries me greatly; most of the time it worries me a little bit so it's always something that is consciously there".

In reading the body-making that Participant D is enacting, her transcribed texts indicate that the relationship between what matters discursively and what matters materially has not stabilized into a clear delineation of what her body means and what her body does. A dynamic negotiation of what matters remains active in this relationship. As a consequence, the subject that emerges enacts the continuing struggle to find stability rather than any established, sustainable point of agreed entity. What matters in this performance is how difficult it is to delineate what matters.

Because Participant D, as a meaning-doing space, is a complex assortment of meanings, any stability of meaning that could emerge as an entity is more difficult to achieve. Body D enacts the fluctuations of a range of meanings that are writing on the performance of possibilities. At times it is weighting-up, and, at times, it is weighting-down. Reading the meaning-doing space that is Participant D's body performance involves a reading of this fluctuating body-making process.

The instability in this performance can be read as an enactment of two features of the meaning-doing zone. First, there is a range of discourses which are

writing a range of meanings onto a wide range of possibilities for body-doing. This means that any agreement of exactly what doing matters and what meaning matters is more difficult to achieve. But in addition, discourses in this performance read meanings on body-action that allow weighting-up-body-actions to be recognised as meaningful and to be included in the performance, even though they are counter to the ascribed intention of weighting-down.

Beginning with an examination of the range of discourses Participant D is enacting in her making of body, the first meaning that is signalling what matters for this body is a family-social meaning. It hints towards genetic or family-identity meanings that tell Body D it has every reason to be big, or to do big-body-making actions. She observes, "there's a family identity with being loud and that's who we are: we're big people and we take up a lot of space... I come from a family [in which] we eat quite a lot, quite often".

To counter the meaning offered to large-body, the appearance discourse writes an alternative meaning for body that signals an expectation that body should do weighting-down actions. These contrary meanings create conditions for instability in the material-discursive relationship. Participant D's description of an upcoming special occasion emphasises the need for her body to comply with appearance discourse expectations. She says, "My niece is getting married in January. I'd like to be another 5 kilos lighter for that so that will mean different clothes fitting ... I want to be able to fit better into my summer clothes."

The health and fitness discourse also offers a clear prescription for the actions that this body should engage in. Participant D, positioned as an actor in this discourse, says, "I have a quite regular fitness campaign, exercise campaign

programmey sort of thing. I don't stick to a programme but I do try and take care of my health".

And in addition to these discourses, the medical discourse is also active in this performance, adding its meaning to what doing body should perform. "I'm not struggling health-wise with my weight although I know my system is under pressure because I am 20 kilos over what I should be". The material-discursive relationship that is delineating Body D is attempting to accommodate a number of contrasting discourses which offer access to contrasting actions for Body D.

The range of discourses in this material-discursive relationship that are selecting what actions will create this body makes stability difficult to achieve. Any agreement on what matters is disrupted by alternative meanings that also matter. The material-discursive boundary, attempting to delineate this body, can be imagined as a broad plane of connection with a range of different, conflicting discourses all offering meanings for actions that will stabilise as this specific body. Without the complementarity in their meanings that was evident in the previous example with the cluster of discourses available to Participant G, then Body D struggles to stabilise as a clearly delineated enactment of 'what matters'. What this means is that many possibilities for body-doing can be enacted. Body D, then, is a body whose doing belongs in different meanings at different times, enacting a series of body performances that act sequentially, some to weight-up this body and some to weight-down this body.

With so many options for meaning, offering recognition and signalling inclusion to a wide range of actions, there is less chance of sufficient agreement on what specifically matters to stabilize a clearly delineated relationship. As a result, multiple meaning-doing relationships are being enacted as this body. No single,

stable agreement of what matters can be sustained and iterated over a period of time. Body D fluctuates between weighting-up and weighting-down performances.

The relationship between a contrasting cluster of discourses, alone, would make stability difficult to enact, but, in addition, Body D action is read through diverse positions of discursive meanings that do not delineate what matters. The material-discursive boundary in this performance, then, is opened to even more options for meaning and doing. Actions which are counter to weighting-down are given meanings that allow them to remain included as belonging in this performance, yet from a position in the discourse that does not necessarily enable direct, sustained action.

In the following excerpt of text, for example, the appearance discourse suggests body should not be seen, but the health and fitness discourse tells it to go to the gym anyway:

I would never have gone to the gym and showered and done anything like that, which would mean other people, I think being subjected to me more than anything else, so I've had quite negative body images in that way, so I'll go to the gym and go out running and do things anyway, but sometimes it's quite an inhibiting factor for me, particularly if there are students in there, I think o god that's terrible that they need to see me like this, so I very much flip flop around between ok and being not ok in those things...

In addition, the moral discourse can be heard adding a meaning that body can or should be smaller, but then any delineated function of this discourse is diffused by the jostling of various meaning positions. Participant D says, "I'm disappointed that I'm as heavy as I am but I know exactly why I'm as heavy as I am but... I've lost 10 kilos over this year that actually is not bad going". A moral

meaning is added into the space but is not able to function as an apparatus that delineates what matters.

The health and fitness discourse also offers meaning for the physical body actions of Body D, but this discourse, too, is enacted from the position of enthusiastic spectator. The contribution of the health and fitness meaning is accepted but it does not function alone to clearly delineate what matters for body doing. As a result, sufficient stability cannot be achieved to create a clearly delineated body entity as the excerpt below signals:

It would have been nice to have been buying a different size but I didn't and that's fine you know sort of the awareness level. I was walking yesterday on the mountain... and thinking I was I'm fit enough to keep up with you not a problem, but I'm actually larger than I would like to be right now so I am aware of body size.

Body D emerges through this material-discursive relationship as a work in progress, or rather, a debate in progress. It is the delineated enactment of the continuing jostling around what could matter and what does matter. What matters has not been stabilized, and so Body D enacts multiple positions in the debate, multiple positions in the relationship between discourse and materiality. Body D's fluctuations in weight is the performance of meanings in this dynamic relationship. It enacts weighting-up and weighting down. Multiple meanings are included in the performance but with insufficient stability to provide enough agreement on what matters. With insufficient stability to establish a stable, delineated material-discursive relationship a delineated stable weighting-down body entity cannot emerge.

Participant A and the “no wonder I’m obese I couldn’t give a toss” performance:

Discourse as an ineffective writer of meaning onto possibilities

During the period of the study, Body A emerged as a weighting-up body. Body A increased in weight, reportedly by over 5 kilograms. Reading the material-discursive relationship brings transparency to the process that enables Body A to weight-up even though it is expected to weight-down.

Beginning with an examination of the active discourses in the material-discursive relationship, it is evident that Body A is emerging as a weighting-up body through relationships with many active discourses that do not restrain access to weighting-up actions. Multiple discourses create a very large plane of connection in the material-discursive relationship. This will make stability in the material-discursive relationship difficult to achieve. But the position from which discourse is enacted creates an even wider inclusion of body-doing. An examination of examples will clarify how this enables Body A to weight-up.

From the example of Participant A’s text below, the medical discourse can be identified as offering access to specific medicalised actions for Body A. However, Participant A enacts this discourse from a position of spectator. From this position the validity of the medical meaning is recognised and access is given to actions that enact the discursive meaning. But from the position of spectator, access is also given those actions that recognise medical meanings as not mattering. The material-discursive relationship is one where meanings remain in a dynamic jostling relationship. There has been no settling to an agreed boundary over what meaning matters. Stability has not been achieved. In the excerpt of text

below the jostling of meaning positions within the medical discourse can be recognised. Participant A debates the varying meaning positions she could occupy:

... the charts tell me that I'm morbidly obese (laughs), morbidly obese even though I've lost nearly 19 kilos I'm still morbidly... so if you don't have sense of humour about it, well it's stuff it, and I haven't had a heart attack so, yea, you read the charts and, you know, but I still don't let the charts guide me because I don't know, I'm no bloody doctor or anything, but I seriously look at what they want my healthy weight range to be, and I haven't been that since, I was bloody, before I had my kids, so yea, I think that with the weight range things that they teach you, I don't believe they take into account your age or your bone structure. I only remember one place ever measuring my wrists and ankles, and told me I had wrists and ankles the size of a man, or my wrists are bigger than the average man so it was absolutely ridiculous for me to be expected to be that weight...

Because of this jostling of meaning positions, material-discursive boundaries remain unsettled. The possibilities for actions that are offered inclusion through this range of meaning positions vary from enacting health-driven restraints on body weighting-up to actively enabling body to enact weighting-up in order to demonstrate how invalid medical meaning is. From the spectator position in discourse, Body A enacts not only that medical meaning matters but also all the possibilities for actions that recognise that medical meaning does not matter. This material-discursive relationship is such that Body A emerges through meaning positions that enable access to an extremely broad range of possibilities for action.

A very similar pattern emerges with the appearance discourse, which is active as a material-discursive relationship. Again, enacting this discourse from a

spectator position means that the material-discursive relationship is one where a range of meanings might matter. From a spectator position in the appearance discourse access is given to a wide range of actions as the following excerpt indicates:

Because I'm going to be rude, because if you can still get laid and your body is like that well... somebody must find me attractive (laughs)... no, I see, I don't see the body as you see it, it doesn't bother me as long as you are clean or something. I don't know, does that make sense? No wonder I'm obese, I couldn't give a toss.

The position through which this appearance meaning is enacted enables Body A to be large. In fact, through this position in the appearance discourse, her large body will more effectively demonstrate that any meaning given to body for its appearance is not recognised as mattering. The material-discursive boundary that is being enacted as Body A is very broad. As a stable relationship between what meaning matters and what doing matters is still under dynamic negotiation, varying positions of enacting meaning and doing are recognised as valid and can be enacted. Weighting-down is not delineated as mattering. This material-discursive relationship cannot offer any delineated meanings that will exclude weighting-up.

The health discourse also offers meaning to this material-discursive relationship. Again, however, this discourse is enacted from a spectator position which does not constrain access to weighting-up actions for body. By accessing meaning as a spectator in the health discourse, Participant A is not enacting a position that can specifically select weighting-down actions. This means the material-discursive relationship, through which Body A emerges, is a relationship that has not delineated weighting-down as what matters. Body A does not have

access only to those actions that delineate weighting-down as mattering to health. Rather, Body A has access to a wide range of body-making possibilities including actions that mean that the health discourse does not matter. The excerpt below through a wide range of actions:

I'm a fitness fanatic - No- Um obviously your weight affects your health -
I'm morbidly obese. I find that sometimes hard to accept that because like
all my family's got heart disease and I'm the fattest of the lot and I don't
have heart disease.

The possibilities for actions that matter in creating Body A range from being a fitness fanatic to proving that being fat has no effect on fitness and health. This material-discursive relationship is one where multiple discourses open access to the range of actions. The positions of meaning from which discourses are enacted, the cynical periphery of the norms of discourses, mean that significant access is opened to actions that signal health does not matter, appearance does not matter and health and fitness does not matter. Body A emerges as the delineation of access to these possibilities for action. Discourses in this performance are rendered ineffective as writers of weighting-down meanings onto actions.

In addition to the broad possibilities for action that this material-discursive relationship offers access to, Participant A's body is read through meanings that allow a high level of acceptance of a body doing weighting-up actions. In Barad's terms, this can be understood as apparatuses or boundaries that do not provide a tight delineation of what is included and what is excluded in the body-making performance. In Body A's performance, apparatuses signal that an extensive space is available for body meaning, particularly weighting-up body meaning. Body A is allowed to be very large; large-body meaning is delineated as a recognised, valid

entity. For example, the apparatuses that would signal Body A's weighting up is unacceptable allow a significant expansion of her body to be recognised as valid. She says "it's not like I'm stuck in a chair like an oversized whale, I can still fit behind the wheel of a car and things like that... my weight doesn't restrict me from doing anything, I can still run around like a lunatic". Through these apparatuses, it is not until her body is "stuck in a chair like an oversized whale" that it will have breached the delineator of boundary that is being used to signal what can be included as body and what is to be excluded. Body A is offered an extensive space where meaning will recognise its size as valid.

The reading of meaning onto Body A uses a range of discourses that provide meaning for large body. Large-body meaning is accepted because it provides the subversive evidence that a cynical spectator position expects. The appearance discourse is used to read a large body as having a valid meaning. Large body is included as mattering in the relationship between discourse meaning and materiality meaning: "... to me my body is fine so long as it is clean".

Because the material-discursive relationship that creates Body A as a weighting-up body is not one where weighting-up discourses dominate the access to body actions, this material-discursive relationship is one that does not exclude weighting-up and access to weighting-up actions. Body A, as a large body, is offered meanings through discourses that do not recognise that reduced bodies matter. Participant A describes a period when she lost weight:

when I lost that weight I certainly felt different, but I didn't feel like, it didn't make me feel like a million bucks, but I did feel different it didn't make me feel like wooww I'm going to live to a hundred or anything

like that so obviously when I'm not doing it whatever I didn't feel better so now I don't feel bad.

The difference that Participant A felt when her body reduced is not offered connection through discourses that are signalling that being smaller matters. In addition, meanings are offered that delineate weighting-down as being unable to matter.

Stress is also offered as a meaning that recognises the validity of large body:

For my fluctuating weight I think that would be where my life was at crisis point... I need to be able to reclaim me things in order to lose weight, me time is more important to me than actually losing the weight.

The point here is that this material-discursive relationship offers meaning for a large body. The relationship does not exclude weighting-up actions and, as a result, a large body can be delineated as an entity with recognizable meaning.

Until the final interview Participant A's performance was one that offered little meaning for weighting-down, but just before the final interview Participant A was diagnosed with a major blood pressure problem. During the last interview she indicated that the medical discourse may offer a meaning that matters. This suggests that a different material-discursive relationship could clearly delineate that health matters. This would then signal a clear inclusion of weighting-down actions and exclusion of weighting-up actions. If such a change occurred then Body A could emerge, delineated as a 'health matters' entity.

Comments from her final interview signal a possible shift of position in the medical discourse. She is not acting the discourse but is shifting her position to one where she can access the actions that it recognises as meaningful. Medical meanings begin to matter more:

It gets harder every day carrying it around - no I now know although the doctor has told me it my weight has not contributed to my blood pressure because I have always been big I absolutely know that it is and I'm only fooling myself thinking it's not but if I don't get my weight sorted I'm going to be dead dead dead .

She continued, adding detail of her knowledge of the discourse:

I think now since I went going back to that blood pressure thing now I'm really aware now of weight from under your boobs to your pubic bone about the weight around your middle is the killer it's not whether you've got stumpy legs or whatever I'm aware of that around your middle so I know I have to do it.

A medical meaning is being accessed from a position of an interested spectator rather than a cynical spectator. From this position, the material-discursive relationship changes and access is offered to different possibilities for actions.

What is enacted through the material-discursive relationship as Body A is the wide range of meanings and actions that are actively jostling for a stable agreement over the boundary of the relationship. Because discourse meaning is repeatedly enacted through a spectator position, then discursive meanings offer access to possibilities for doing that include both what does matter and what does not matter. The position in a discourse, 'what does not matter' provides access to all possibilities for all actions; it does not select to any specific meaning. A weighting-up Body A emerges from this material-discursive relationship because, out of the broad range of mattering present in the relationship, a clearer recognition of inclusive meaning is offered to body weighting-up than body weighting-down.

Participant B –“ I will be immobile and ill in the next year or two... ”: Body meaning consuming discourse meaning.

The material-discursive relationship through which Body B emerges is one that enables a steady, consistent weighting-up of “5 kilo’s plus a year”. This steady weighting-up can be understood in reading the material-discursive relationship. This material-discursive relationship is one in which discourse meaning is unable to delineate what matters in the relationship. What matters is left to the meanings offered to physical body. Body B is delineated through meanings that support the emergence of largeness.

An examination of the way this material-discursive relationship creates Body B brings transparency to the silencing that enables Body B unrestricted access to weighting-up actions. Key discourses that could write a meaning on the possibilities for body doing are dismissed, leaving body able to access all possibilities for weighting-up actions.

The key feature of this material-discursive relationship is that discourses are enacted from a disengaged spectator position. The appearance discourse is included in the material-discursive relationship but from a position in this discourse where the meaning is clearly signalled to not matter. Body B can be delineated without this meaning mattering. Participant B says, “... there’s this wonderful thing called the ideal weight that apparently everyone should be, everyone of a certain height should be a certain weight which is absolute tosh”.

The health and fitness discourse is also included in the material-discursive relationship. The health and fitness discourse offers meanings that could function

to restrict access to weighting-up actions. From the position that this discourse is enacted, however, its meaning is dismissed as mattering, and so access is opened to all the actions that support the meaning that health and fitness does not matter. This material-discursive relationship delineates an entity, as Body B, that enacts weighting-up; meanings that could restrict weighting-up are not recognized as belonging. Participant B says:

[There's] that horrible thing called exercise. You know, actually I think health and fitness have two totally separate areas for me. Health is your day to day, are you alive and able to function? Um normally I operate slightly below par for most of the time, but that's ok as long as I am generally happy I'll consider myself healthy even if other people might not.

A moral meaning around weight is also included in the material-discursive relationship. Moral meanings that could act to restrict access to weighting-up actions are dismissed as not mattering when she says, "it doesn't bother me that people describe me as large, it bothers me that people think they have the right to make comments on me as a negative thing". In this example, the role of fat acceptance discourse as a challenge to moral meaning is also evident. Size is being reclaimed as a valid meaning. The assumed authority to write moral meaning onto large body is rejected; its meaning does not matter. The material-discursive relationship is not one that includes weighting-down for moral reasons and so the body that can emerge through this relationship is one unfettered by moral restrictions on its actions.

The medical discourse is also active in this material-discursive relationship. Unlike the other active discourses, it is recognised as a meaning that could matter. It could act to select access to some weighting-down actions. Participant B says:

Experience tells me that it is damaging on small joints and so on more than anything else – the only sign I have seen of it affecting my health it make climbing stairs harder, running harder, and there's a reason elephants don't jump um – you know it seems to put more pressure on my joints, other than that I don't think anything more I can specifically say except diabetes which I'm told is weight related but I always think of it as a body chemistry thing.

Even though the medical discourse is offering some recognisable meaning, the authority of this meaning is made conditional by enacting the discourse through the position as a spectator to its meaning.

None of the discourses that are active in this material-discursive relationship stabilise a boundary that constrains the weighting-up actions that Body B can do. This material-discursive relationship therefore cannot delineate an entity that enacts weighting-down matters. Through this material-discursive boundary, the doing of Body B has unrestricted access to a wide range of actions for weighting-up and very little access to actions that create a weighting-down body. This material-discursive relationship stabilizes and delineates an entity that is performing what matters materially. There is little discursive meaning in the relationship that can restrict access to body actions. Body has stabilized the doing that it performs with little negotiation needed between what matters discursively and what matters physically. As a result, Body B performs what matters materially, unhindered. As Participant B's text indicates that her body emerges as an entity that has stabilized into a weighting-up body:

I would describe myself... I just turn it to things jokey like you'll recognise me because I have my own field of gravity or a woman of substance was one I used quite a lot... bodies are temples everybody knows that, and mine

is just a very big temple, mine is St Paul's cathedral, basically body is the packaging for the intellect, the soul, the spirit and they come in all shapes, sizes, colours [they are] the thing we agonize about far more than we agonize about our spirit or soul or our intellect and I'm not sure if that's wise or not.

Body B is delineated through this material-discursive relationship as a large body. Discourses have a limited delineating function in providing access to weighting-down actions for this body. The discursive position meanings that are active in delineating what access to action this body has limits access to weighting-down actions. At the same time, meanings that recognise a large body as a delineated, stable entity enable a repetition that enacts a weighting-up body. The discursive meanings that are active in this material-discursive relationship provide access for weighting-up body actions and very limited access to weighting-down body actions.

Summary

Bodies emerge through material-discursive relationships as the stable, iterated doing of what matters. By reading the unique material-discursive relationships, we can read individual nuances that create variations in the materiality of bodies. When material-discursive relationships stabilise to an agreement between what meaning matters and what doing matters, the bodies that emerge can be clearly delineated as entities that enact what matters. If a material-discursive relationship stabilises to an agreement that weighting down matters, then the body that emerges will enact weighting down. In this study, several of the material-discursive relationships could not clearly stabilise an

agreement that weighting-down matters. As a result, several bodies enacted weighting-up rather than weighting-down.

Through these readings selected texts, individual body-making can be read as the material enactment of a specific relationship between meaning and doing. A performative reading of these texts elaborates the process of materiality-making with sufficient precision for the unique features of body-making to be understood. Through such readings, we have access to bodies as they emerge through the actions that matter as creating them.

Chapter 5 –Reading the Performances of Weight Change

“Meaning is not a property of words or groups of words but an ongoing performance of the world in its differential dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility”.

Barad, 2007, p. 149.

Finally in this study of texts, we get to read the performances, the meaning-doing relationships that are being enacted as weighting-up or weighting-down performances. What was originally intended as a study of identity through weight loss has become the study of the relationship between texts and behaviour. A performative reading of material-discursive relationships brings transparency to what matters. Reading stability and iteration in material-discursive relationships means we can read the bodies that emerge from material-discursive relationship as either weighting-up bodies or weighting-down bodies. Reading a weighting-up or a weighting-down performance is a reading of the way the entities that emerge through material-discursive relationships as subjects or as objects can enact what matters.

This chapter moves beyond understanding how entity is being created and stabilized out of possibilities to examine the relationships between meanings that emerge as a performance, as a “dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility” (Barad, 2007, p. 149). Reading weight change performances is a reading of what matters and how particular entities can create ongoing performances. So far, in the reading process, I have elaborated how we can read what matters in establishing

boundaries that delineate what is recognised as included and excluded, and how we can read what matters with sufficient clarity and repetition to establish how a meaning-doing relationship can stabilise as an entity function.

As we examine how entities extend relationships into a performance, we move beyond entity-making into an understanding of how an entity functions in relationship with possibilities for doing. The dynamic boundary of relationship between meanings draws a performative reading into performance theory. Our understanding moves from an interest in entity-making to a focus on a relational model. This means we can understand an entity as what it enacts or what it can do. The final challenge in this study is to examine how the unique features of specific entities extend to create unique performances. In examining the move from entity to performance, we must examine the relationship of performativity and performance.

Performance has been recognised as a useful conceptual frame for understanding a field of diverse relationships. Through ethnography studies, Conquergood (2002) examines a range of meanings through performance. He emphatically views performance studies as “uniquely suited for the challenge of braiding together disparate and stratified ways of knowing” (p. 152) by bridging legitimated knowledges with lesser recognised knowledges in a creative alliance that allows new and different relationships to emerge with shared recognition. Bastain (2006) hails Haraway’s concept of figurations, as entity creations that bridge the diverse knowledges of “heterogeneous actors” (p. 1027). In this study, interest is in the ways multiple discourses can act in performance. When multiple meanings matter in delineating subject and object entities, how does this impact as performance?

Accepting that a fusion of creative possibility and discursive analysis is required in a reading of performance-making, the framework used for analysis must offer both analysis of what is in performance, i. e. entity-making, and an analysis of how entities are in relationship in performance. The performative reading that has brought transparency to entity-making must now extend to bring transparency to the unique relationships that each unique entity can establish. All performances include entities that have emerged through specific material-discursive relationships. Entities enact what matters. In some performances these will be readily identified as person, but when person is read as lacking agency, this now means that an alternative subject can be identified. No performance is without an agency, but person in performance sometimes can be.

From what matters as a relationship between materiality and discourse, subjects and objects emerge. This simple development allows an understanding of how performance is established. Moving from the entity status of a single relationship between 'thing' and 'doing', the way a unique subject can impact to create further entities can be read. The mattering that is making subject is also the mattering that is making object. What matters is growing into performance as one entity can assume authority to act on another. So by reading the relationship between a subject and an object, we are reading the sequence of the way what matters is impacting on other possibilities. This signals the importance of reading subject-making and subject-object relationships in text.

In the texts being studied in this research, some enactments of what matters make weighting-up performances and some make weighting-down performances. This means that some subject positions emerge through processes where what matters is not weighting-down, even though the intention of all

interviewees was to weight-down. The subject positions that do not enact weighting-down performances, as has been elaborated in chapters three and four, may have emerged with insufficient delineation to effectively offer a boundary and select only the 'relevant' weighting down doing. Subject positions that are unable to eliminate disruptive weighting-up actions also enact weighting-up performances. Through a detailed understanding of the way in which a specific subject is emerging in through a material-discursive relationship, we can read how a created subject is enacting a unique performance of weighting down, a unique performance of what matters. What is acting as a subject creates what can be recognised as an object.

Subject positions emerge through the process of intra-action, the process that clarifies what matters. Through the process of intra-action, agential cuts can delineate the positions of a stable material-discursive relationship that can function as a subject and an object. The level of stability and clarity around what matters determines what can emerge as a subject. From selected examples in this study, the way each unique subject-making can be read as emerging through relationships of meaning and action. Several types of relationship can be identified in the texts that are being studied. Some relationships between meanings can be identified as being in contesting relationships. These relationships attempt to create one meaning that dominates others. When one meaning is silenced, then one subject may dominate performance, enabling a simple linear subject-object relationship. If several subject positions emerge then they may function sequentially, creating a series of objects. If so many meanings are in the meaning-doing space that no delineated subject positions can clearly emerge, then the

diffused or chaotic subjects that emerge will be in diverse relationships with a range of objects.

Performance is being read as the relationship between subject and object. What emerges as a subject and what emerges as an object offers a clear signal of what matters. What matters is enacted as a performance. Performativity brings transparency to the process that is enabling these entities to emerge. Through this transparency, what emerges as causality and agency are also elaborated.

The concepts of causality and agency are important in reading weight performances because these performances are frequently exposed to expectations for change. Without the traditional comfort of assuming causality as a relationship between two prior entities and assuming agency as an attribute that is ascribed to human subjectivity, then causality and agency also become relationships that emerge through the reality-making process of performance. Knowing what and how a weighting-up or a weighting-down performance is being driven is important for knowing how and in what way a performance might change. For psychologists interested in facilitating change, understanding agency and causality is critically important.

Traditionally causality has been understood as a relationship between two distinct entities, one of which acts on the other. Agency has often been ascribed to a person in performance. Barad's theory rewrites both these assumptions. Without prior entity as a site of causal relationship, the assumption that one prior existing entity can act on another becomes redundant. Causality emerges as the "specification of the material apparatus that enacts an agential cut between determinately bounded and propertied entities" (Barad, 2007, p. 176). Without an assumption of any prior external and internal boundaries or isolated defined

entities, "cause and effect emerge through intra-action" (Barad, 2007, p. 176). The intra-active process that determines what matters also determines how entities can matter in relationship with each other. Causality can be read through examining what entity has emerged as a subject and, therefore, what emerges as an object. Causality can be understood by examining unique entity-making processes as the relationships that create subject-entities also create object-entities.

Agency is also understood as a relationship, understanding what it is that enables one entity to emerge as subject and one to emerge as object. Agency is not assumed or ascribed to any entity prior to performance. Agency, "cut loose from its humanist orbit" (Barad, 2007, p. 177), is much freer in this model. Agency can be understood as the authority to act that is claimed by the subject position which is given access to possibilities. Without any assumption of anthropocentric authority, agency can then be read by asking how the process of entity-making allows one entity to emerge with capacity to act or to emerge in as an object-entity, to be acted upon.

What it is that has agency is a useful point of reading, but understanding the reality-making process that enables agency offers much more transparency to the performance. By reading what emerges with sufficient stability to act as a subject, to assume a relationship with verbs, a direct relationship with action will be useful in a professional role that is interested in subject change. If we can read the emergence of subject and how it is in relationship with object, then the plane of boundary between one meaning-doing zone and possible other meaning-doing zones is much broader and much more exposed, giving access to more individual nuanced detail.

From the texts under study, there are two distinct ways that a subject position can emerge with sufficient repetition for performance to be sequentially shaped. One is through a delineating agency where a subject is clearly delineated, created by clear boundaries which write clear selection onto possibilities for object. This enables a subject to act with authority in a performance. Such a subject is able to be read as a person enacting the delineated discursive position created in this agentic pattern.

The other way that agency can drive the action of performance is through diffused agency. In this agency, subject positions are not clearly delineated. If subject entities are not clearly delineated, then object entities cannot be either. This results in a confusing mass of mattering that both is unable to access a specific narrow range of doing possibilities but also is unable to exclude some action. Without a sufficiently delineated agency, the meaning that could exclude some actions, the reasons why some actions action should not belong, cannot be accessed.

Compared to a delineated subject that effectively writes what can be included into the meaning-doing performance, a diffused subject functions as being unable to exclude possibilities from the performance. What drives these performances is the lack of delineation, the lack of capacity to select what belongs and what doesn't belong. In these performances, the space of meaning that can select actions is wide and varied; consequently, the actions that can be accessed are wide and varied. The 'confusion' of meaning and doing is less likely to acquire entity status or nounced recognition, and instead remains as a space of ever changing subject. A subject, as a delineation of what is not able to be stabilized, emerges as enacting the agency that drives performance.

In a weight change performance, delineated agency can enable a person to enact a clear discursive position. In contrast, a diffused agency will constrain person from being able to discriminate what belongs and what does not belong, what matters and what does not matter in a relationship of meaning and doing. In these performances, person can be read as unable to enact a stable subject position. Such a subject position can be recognised as being buffeted by the array of contenders for subject position. This understanding of agency has clear and profound implications for any therapeutic change relationship. If a therapist can read the agency beyond an assumption of human attribute, then change in the performance can be effectively created in numerous sites. Person can be understood as enacting a performance, but person is not the performance.

At this point, an examination of participant performances will assist in clarifying the role of agency and causality in reading weight change performances.

Participant G – Doing weighting down as “the weight change process is good” performance

From the selected texts being studied, the simplest weight change performance, Participant G’s performance, offers an example that can be read as delineated agency. A clear subject position emerges through enactment of the health and appearance discourses. Participant G’s physical body emerges through a clearly delineated relationship where no alternative meaning that disrupts the authority of a weighting-down subject position. Out of all possibilities for what an object could do, the subject that emerges in this uncluttered performance clearly selects what doing and meaning specifically and precisely matters.

This subject position is clearly recognisable as a person in a subject role as it is given unimpeded enactment through Participant G. She directly enunciates the acting of discourses that signal the intelligibility of weighting-down. The examples of text that follow illustrate how this subject is a clearly delineated agent of what matters. Participant G states, for example, "I think the weight change process is good... I have a food diary and I write in what I've eaten... I take lunch to work so I don't have to buy food". This subject enacts the health discourse very clearly. The subject function is enacted through 'I', with no separate delineation from Participant G. This is a meaningful space where what matters is highly delineated through a dominant discursive meaning. What matters in this intra-active relationship is discourse, the discourse cluster (as outlined in chapter 4) that writes meaning onto possibilities for doing weight loss. More specifically, what matters in this performance is a clearly delineated position in health discourse that Participant G can enact with no disruptive intrusion from other meanings. The material discursive relationship has stabilised to write the boundary of what matters as a clear and uncontested entity, offering precise selection of possibilities for meaning and doing for Participant G to enact.

So how does this make a specific performance and how does the performance then function to enact what matters in intra-activity? Body clearly emerges as delineated object in this performance. It is acted upon by the meaning of discourse: "I guess that your body is quite important because that's what you are like in everyday so you have to look at your body so I guess it's best if you're happy with it". A sequenced performance between subject and object is clear, one acts and one is being acted on.

Causality, in this performance, is also a simple linear relationship. The subject acts on an object; a discourse writes a purpose for body. Appearance and health are important, so this body will comply with the expectations of these discourses. This subject can access actions that are meaningful to discourse without any confounding meaning from body, and so it establishes and retains the role of enacting what matters. The physicality of body is silenced. There is no meaning from body that is acknowledged as intelligible. It is offered no disruptive meaning in the meaning-doing zone. The material-discursive relationship that is Participant G is mutually enacted. The dominance of subject offers no space of meaning for object; the silence of object sustains the dominance of subject.

The significance of a performative reading, in this example, is in acknowledging the direct relationship between the delineation of the subject as dominant and the delineating of object as silenced. Agency, in this performance, is enacted entirely through a subject, a strongly discursive subject that can be read as person. Subject is delineated by a narrow range of meaning and subsequently selects a narrow range of doing. That which is acting (subject) is in a simple relationship with a limited range of doing; acting and acted-on can be easily recognised. Performance is a simple, linear sequence.

The implications of this causal delineation of subject and object for an effective weight loss process are clear. When such a simple delineation of subject and object is established as a weighting-down performance, then weight change can be effectively maintained. Any dissenting meanings that could interrupt the delineation of what is acting and therefore what is acted upon, are dismissed as unintelligible. They are recognised as not belonging in the meaning-doing space and can be excluded. Stability is achieved. For change to happen in this

performance, a meaning must disrupt the stability, breach the delineated boundaries with a very compelling, alternative meaning that matters.

Participant D: The shared functioning of subject

Subject-object delineation is the vehicle through which what matters can be read as performance. In the performance of Participant D, multiple subjects emerge as enacting discursive meanings. Causality, the intra-active process that can delineate a subject and an object, cannot stabilize sufficiently around one entity for it to act as subject. Several concurrent performances emerge, each with their own causality and agency. Agency, in this instance, is diffused.

While the analysis from the text of Participant G, above, offers an example of a clearly delineated subject established through uninterrupted enactment of what matters, the text of Participant D presents examples of diffused, shared subject positions. If Participant G's boundary of subject-object is clearly delineated, then Participant D demonstrates more porous boundaries that struggle to establish a firmly delineated entity to function as subject. Participant D's weight change performance is an amalgamated series of performances, some more directly enacting weighting-down as what matters than others.

Using examples of text, I will examine the subject-making boundary and then discuss the implications for the relationship between subject and object. In the first example, Participant D begins with a demonstration of subject functioning. "I notice when I am doing weights the size of my body shrinks quite rapidly because the muscle gain, so I'm starting to get back to my weights programme..." When 'I' is clearly enacting fitness discourse, then body is clearly acted upon.

Subject and object are delineated through a stable relationship of meaning-doing based in the fitness discourse.

As the text continues, the subject position is partially occupied by an alternative meaning. As a result, the object is no longer delineated as a position which is acted upon, and the subject function broadens into the dynamic dialogue of an intra-active material-discursive relationship:

Now the reason I haven't been going to do weights is because my whole timetable has changed so it's around living somewhere further away for a start and having a dog now , I like to get home, and now I'm starting to work at home more which means I'm more likely to go for a run or walk or do something there rather than pump weights at the gym, so I'm not back in my regular classes that I have wanted to do , so I hit a boredom threshold as well so I know that there were changes there and I've been looking at them and regulating them, and I've just lost my running partner so I need to get out there and start running.

The change signals that an alternative meaning has confounded the subject function. From having clear access to a meaning that enacts fitness, an alternative meaning has intruded into this space, signalling that what did matter is no longer the only mattering to act as a subject in this space.

The boundaries that were able to delineate the previous subject, based on enacting fitness as mattering, have been perforated by numerous meanings that recognise that doing weights is not the only mattering in the performance. The subject is now a contested space between several meanings and the objects consequently become more diverse. Causality is not a clear, linear relationship between a subject and an object. Alternative meanings are competing and

cluttering the material-discursive relationship. The most obvious signal of this impact in text is the expansiveness of space now functioning around the dynamic jostling of alternative meanings.

The importance of this enactment of agency and causality in a weight change performance is in signalling the fragility of the subject position. As subject function is intruded, any agency that was attributable to one subject dissipates. The performance ceases to be a linear sequence of acting meaning and being acted upon (cause and effect). Instead it becomes the circular performance of re-negotiating what matters and, while this occurs, there is no clear delineation of subject and so no clear sequencing of meaning into performance.

This pattern of intrusion of subject function is repeated. In the following example, the circularity of re-negotiation of what matters becomes delineated to act as subject. Again the excerpt begins with a clear delineation of subject and object in a linear cause and effect relationship: "One thing I haven't done is given myself a solid goal for where I want to go". A clearly delineated subject enacting goal-setting acts on "where I want to go". The relationship is clear; causality is linear.

As the text continues, further meanings disrupt the original subject function, leading to a period of circular performance with less well delineated subject and object functions:

So I'm kind of aiming, my niece is getting married in January, I'd like to be another five kilos lighter for that um so what will be different is fitting clothes will be different, I want to be able to fit better into my summer clothes because I haven't been able to wear – I didn't - I wasn't able to wear

them last summer and I didn't want to go and buy lots and lots of other clothes to fill the wardrobe.

It is interesting to note that as the subject function acts from a more peripheral, spectator position in discourse, delineated as "I'm kind of aiming", then object (what is acted on) is also more diffuse and speculative in delineation, read as "fitting clothes will be different". Agency is diffused; the entity functioning as subject is delineated by a wider band of discursive possibilities. A diffused subject space cannot eliminate alternative meanings from mattering. Rather than a single delineated point of discursive meaning that accesses possibilities for doing, the subject position is wider, enacting variance in the meanings or positions in discourse. Subsequent access to possibilities for doing is also broader. As this excerpt continues, subject function again changes:

I know that the one thing that doesn't change when my weight changes is how hard I am on myself about what I am doing and really should be better, so that's one thing that [my partner] often talks, tries to talk to me about is that I do things then I am hard on myself.

As "one thing that doesn't change" assumes the role of subject it acts directly on Participant D herself, on "how hard I am on myself". The shift here has been a shift of subject function to a discursive subject 'rule'. It is difficult to see a physical "one thing that doesn't change", but it is a delineated position of meaning that is acting on Participant D. The significance of this is in understanding possible sites for change. When "one thing that doesn't change" is present in the performance, Participant D's formerly subject-acting, 'I', is now an object with diminished capacity to act. It would be a naive assumption to hear the word 'I' and assume person was enacting agency. At this point in the performance, agency is now being

enacted through the “one thing that doesn’t change” entity and the causal relationship creating an object has shifted. “One thing that doesn’t change” cannot directly create a weight change performance; the object that it can create is emotion for Participant D. So while Participant D’s ‘I’ subject is concerned with weight change, other subjects deviate the performance away from weighting-down. The result for Body D is a fluctuating, weighting-down performance. The result for Participant D is the frustration and emotional battering of the contested subject positions, some of which enable her to act directly, and some of which act on her.

From this performative reading of Participant D’s attempted weighting-down performance, it can be seen that an effective change will be assisted through a more stable subject position. Participant D’s performance is one where too many meanings matter and are able to assume too much authority. The subject position is repeatedly disrupted and the diffusion of this boundary means a relationship between a specific subject and a specific object cannot be sustained. Without this causal pattern, performance cannot establish a sustained sequence.

Participant A: Doing Circular ‘100% or nothing’ Performances

Participant A’s performance offers an example of the way a performative reading brings transparency to entities that are non-person, in this instance, functioning as subject, creating a circular performance.

Participant A’s texts indicate a lack of clear delineation between a subject and an object. As a result there is little effective writing of discourse meanings onto possibilities for doing effective weighting-down and instead the performance becomes a repetitive contest for what matters. Consequently what functions as a

subject in this performance is the confusion of space that is open to consecutive, diffused subject contenders.

In Participant A's field of rich complexity for what could matter, subjects and objects contest meaning positions as one meaning attempts to dominate over the others. What can emerge as subject and object is directly impacted upon by this contest as the material-discursive relationship through which they emerge cannot establish an agreed boundary of what matters.

An example of text illustrates the contest for a discursive meaning that can dominant what matters to achieve stability. Opening a response with "I've read the charts and the charts tell me I'm morbidly obese". Participant A's identity, as 'I', is immediately being acted upon. It functions as an object, as 'the charts' enact a subject position. 'I' enters as the subject, momentarily: "I've lost nearly 19 kilos". But body then contests the meaning field, indicating that other intelligibility (what matters to body) is also recognised as offering a valid meaning e. g. "[they] told me I had the wrists and ankles the size of a man or my wrists are bigger than the average man so it was absolutely ridiculous for me to be expected to be that weight". The original discursive meaning that signalled that weight-loss is important for health is directly challenged as being "ridiculous". The subject that could have enacted this original meaning is disrupted by an alternative meaning that delineates an alternative subject. Neither can be delineated with sufficient stability to establish a clear sequence between a subject and an object as a performance.

The result is an inconclusive delineation of what matters. Discourse does not matter. Body can not matter. Agreement on what matters is not clear and so a subject position struggles to be delineated or stabilise sufficiently into a

relationship with a created object. The discursive subject does not enact a meaning that enables precise access to specific possibilities for doing, or writing clearly what matters onto body possibilities. This body, in turn, cannot access a meaning that allows what matters to it to move from being acted on to acting, to move from an object position to a subject position.

This performance can be understood as one with insufficient stability in this intra-active process for a subject function to emerge through which body can act a specific intelligibility. One discourse is intruded upon by the conflicting meaning of another discourse, disabling its function as subject making for the 'I' identity of Participant A, and body is constrained by lack of access to subject-making. Agency is diffused. Subject can be delineated not by what matters, but by what does not matter. Neither materiality nor discourse can function as a subject. Neither 'I' nor body are clearly delineated as an entity. Specific meanings are not enacted and so the performance slides into a circular performance. With no delineated subject function there is no object function and so the performance lacks any linear, sequential momentum.

But assuming that all performances have a subject function, some more readily recognizable than others, what repeatedly emerges as subject in this text is an entity called, '100% or nothing'. It acts as subject, maintaining 'I' in the being-acted-upon role of object, with constrained access to possibilities for doing weight-change. What matters in this meaning-doing zone is the inability to act and that is creating an entity '100% or nothing'. This has emerged as the most clearly delineated and stable entity through the material-discursive relationship. The '100% or nothing' emerges as collaborating in subject position throughout Participant A's texts:

I don't want to start a diet and then not be able to exercise so it's got to be all or nothing so it's nothing... to me it's got to be 100% or nothing and it's nothing... it's just a matter of being disciplined, I'm disciplined, but if you can't do it 100%, I don't want to do it 98% so it's got to be all or nothing.

The significance of the '100% or nothing' entity is that it functions by combining as a selective apparatus that functions with the subject delineated as person, 'I'. This means the subject in this performance is in an entirely conditional relationship with the delineator of the inclusive and exclusive boundary. 'I' is given access to discourses and access actions only through the condition of '100% or nothing'. Also of significance is the extent to which '100% or nothing' can extend its influence. As a discursive entity, it can occupy a position across any discourse; it can connect with the meaning of any discourse that 'I' seeks to enact. In this way it becomes an extremely influential subject in the performance, confounding a clear causal relationship between subject and object. Any effective weight change for Participant A will need to accommodate the extensive agency of '100% or nothing' in order to enable subject positions to emerge that can enact discourses through the clear delineation of what matters.

The perforated boundaries that are unable to delineate a clear subject and a clear object in this performance allow easy access to alternative meanings that could matter. In this performance where agency is diffused, sequences of meanings can only enact the inability to eliminate possibilities. A perforated subject creates an object that is the inability to act. This is an enactment of repeated patterns of meaning-making intrusions. Participant A is on a roller coaster of meaning-making that offers very limited agency as person.

The subject positions of this performance are spaces of intruded occupation and so are not delineated by any specific delineation of what matters. If a subject does not have well-delineated boundaries, then both subject and object remain in the dynamic, intra-active material-discursive relationship, prior to establishing stability around an entity. This means that a range of discursive positions can be enacted, which, in turn, give access to a range of possibilities for doing. Because neither the subject nor the object have boundaries which clearly delineate what belongs and what can be excluded, then Participant A's space of meaning-doing is one that cannot carry a meaning into a single linear sequenced performance.

With a clear discursive position being compromised, then performance can be intruded by alternative meanings and doing. Without clear discursive meanings, the performance can easily be occupied by physical meaning. When, for example, Participant A bought potato salad, her performance became physical:

It's like when the girl at that McMuffin thing yesterday gave me the potato salad, it was in a plastic carry box thing and then she went to put it in a Muffin Break bag and I said o no it would be fine like that because I didn't want someone to think I was walking around with a great big cake.

Caught in the contesting discursive positions of selecting food through an indulgent meaning while also wanting to enact a health discourse, no dominant discursive meaning could be accessed and so action could assert its meaning into the material-discursive relationship.

Participant C – The Physical Performance of “and then I can tell people it didn’t happen”

Participant C’s performance of weight change also includes a significant physical performance. Through Barad’s model the relationship of discourse and materiality is the foundation of entity-making. A physical performance can emerge when a discourse is not offering sufficient specified access to action. A discourse cannot act to constrain access to actions, enabling all or any actions to be included in the performance.

Participant C’s performance enacts the confounding array of discourses available for meaning-making. Her physical performance, which can be understood as the diffused agency of this array, signals the inability of a discursively delineated subject to effectively offer meaning that can manage a material performance.

The physical performance is dramatic. The rolling fluctuations in subject position with meaning are very evident in the opening switching of pronouns, as are the two performances which are simultaneously being enacted. Her description follows:

If you, one, is emotionally upset, I do binge eating, but that is really secret so nobody knows but me, and then I can tell people that it didn’t happen. If I’m binge eating like that, I will destroy all of the evidence, so you will hide a chocolate wrapper in the bottom of the rubbish, or you’ll, um yea, if I make something, I’ll do the dishes and I’ll put those things away, so that living with A, she won’t come home and say, “O did you make something today?... such and such is in the dishwasher”, so it’s just getting rid of it. Coming back from town sometimes, there’s a gorgeous delicatessen, and I’ve called in

there and got things like, you know quiche or yummy pies or something, and then you've looked over what they've got, because they do all the baking on the premises, its good food, Oh I'll just have one a little lemon syrup cakey thing or something, and sometimes you'll pretend, as you're getting them because it looks rather a lot, and so, you know, as if they care, you're shopping for two people, or you take it home and you'll hide it because of where I am, so I'll put it downstairs and I'll scoff it the next day. Yea sometimes when I get tired my body craves sugar, that instant boost... in New World supermarket there's a brand that do these little tiny melting moments, and they come in packs of nine, um yea and I can just basically eat four of those, and then think My God destroy the packaging and pretend, so it's really just weird it's bit like if I deny it and get rid of the evidence it didn't happen.

The physical performance of Participant A provides a example of the way unrecognisable or excluded meaninged-action struggles to be accommodated in a meaning-doing zone. Her pretend world can be read as the possibilities for actions that are accessed beyond those normally selected by specific discourses. As such they are 'beyond' access to conventional meanings. In this instance, her pretend world has access to possibilities for actions that are excluded by moral discourse. It is not just that she can access actions that are excluded by moral discourse, but that they are offered no access to meaning through other discourses, so the physical actions of this performance remain meaninged as the shunned, shameful exclusions of morality which remain undelineated by her 'known' discourses.

Enacting a subject function through the position of cast-out spectator to moral meaning, the 'failed' restrainer of food intake', Participant C can then access

an extremely wide range of possibilities for doing. As the meaning-doing space continues to be meaninged by moral discourse, enacted from the excluded position of this discourse, then no other meaning is accessible that can offer a stabilising and iterative entity. Without access to weight acceptance for example, food indulgences cannot be meaninged in any way that may create entity-making boundaries to delineate this activity. The result is that the doing, the physical performance, continues to dominate this space as a non-meaninged and hence 'pretend' subject. Without meaning that offers any inclusion into the meaning-doing space, the only way that can be seen for this reality-making to be delineated into acceptable moral meaning is to "deny it and get rid of the evidence". Then, quite simply, that performance "did not happen".

Summary

Identifying where and how effective change can occur within change performances demands sophisticated reading skills. In opening the relationship between performativity and performance to closer examination through the role of subject-object delineation, then it becomes possible to read the changing dynamics of performance around what is mattering as a performance. In particular, a reading of agency frees itself to acknowledge multiple sites of agency, some of which may be human and some not. It also signals a focus on the range of possible sites that could be targeted for effective change. A reading of causality that does not assume a linear relationship between two entities enables an understanding of the way change may be instigated through numerous sites of relationship.

Epilogue: Reading Reality-Making Matters

Reading reality-making is delineated as a reading of what matters in the relationship of meaning and doing. The exciting possibilities for such reading are now open to further elaboration in the diverse world of untitled texts.

Reading reality-making matters in the interdisciplinary space of psychology and English language theory, as it presents the rewriting of psychological practice to a profession that reads behaviour as enabled or constrained access to possibilities. Reading reality-making moves the professional scriptwriting of psychology from a zone of prior selected knowledge into the dynamic relationship of shared knowledge-making. The boundaried and often bleak confines of psychological metaphors need no longer dominate the profession, as reading skills can focus on the dynamic zone where individual meaning-making is accessed directly through elaborating material-discursive relationships that are creating unique realities.

So how does reading reality-making matter?

Reading behaviour means reading meaning-making and reading performance. This means reading boundaries, discourses, stability, iteration, agency, subject function and doing. It means reading all the unique features of individual reality-making, as an immensely valid process.

Reading the boundaries that delineate unique zones of materiality and meaning rewrites behaviour as a reading of access to possibilities. Reading the boundaries that delineate a meaning-doing zone means asking how it is that behaviour is able to enter the zone of meaning-doing and how is it that behaviour

is not able to be excluded from the zone of meaning? What meanings 'invite' it in and what meanings allow it to stay?

Reading intra-action, the process that creates entity, rewrites dysfunction catalogues, focusing instead on a reading of what matters and what is unable to matter. Therapeutic change is no longer concentrated on delineating the entity that has been cut by problem-making discourse, but is an exciting and rewarding opportunity to clarify what matters and to perform what could matter.

Reading causality is liberated from humanist, prior assumptions of cause and effect, to be read as it emerges through relationship. This means access is gained to numerous sites for change, through discourse, position in discourse, and position within performance.

Reading agency means reading person beyond the confines of anthropocentric vision into the humbling, funny, dramatic, brief, prolonged experience of performance. What matters is not a person but a person as performance.

Reading reality-making matters in delineating knowing and learning as a shared relationship. Psychological practice may become part of the ongoing learning of shared knowledge, accessed through the privileged position of learning how we all negotiate the titles for our texts, how we all perform our unique relationship with the world.

APPENDIX 1

Methodology: Participant Selection

Seven people took part in the study. These participants were selected by informal, snowball contact. Participants were interviewed three times with approximately one month between each interview. Interview responses were recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

The texts chosen for closer reading analysis in this study were selected as offering a range of weight-change outcomes. I was interested to analyse texts of participants who were enacting a weighting down performance, participants who were enacting a fluctuating or non-changing weight performance and participants who were enacting a weighting-up performance.

Interview Questions

- 1- If you were talking to somebody about identity and weight change what would you say?
- 2- What do you know and what would you like to tell me about:
 - Weight
 - Body
 - Eating and food
 - Health and fitness
 - The weight change process.
- 3- Has your weight changed over the last two weeks and how do you know?

- 4- Tell me about your weight-related behaviour, so if someone had been observing you for the last three days, what would they have noticed you doing that was to do with weight change?
- 5- What will be different when your weight changes?
- 6- What else would you want someone to know about weight and identity?

APPENDIX 2

Sample of Text Analysis

<p><u>Text in transcription</u> (sample of continuous text, Participant C, Interview 1)</p>	<p><u>Identified discourse and position in discourse</u></p>
<p>I think weight is related to what we eat and drink and</p>	<p>Medical or health and fitness discourse as from an actor position (weight is about food, calories, and drink)</p>
<p>I like food and alcohol too much</p>	<p>Moral discourse offering judgment on consumption through the words “ too much”</p>
<p>I’ve really noticed , um , turning forty, since I turned forty, as I, each birthday my body is changing</p>	<p>Medical discourse with detail enacted through actor position, referencing aging and the effect on body</p>
<p>and I hate that our sedentary lifestyles</p>	<p>Health and fitness discourse, suggestive of a spectator position</p>
<p>weight around your middle which I am aware of is bad weight which puts stress on other organs blah blah blah</p>	<p>Medical discourse from an actor position within the discourse</p>
<p>yea, how to get rid of it you have to work so much harder to stay in the same position</p>	<p>Health and fitness discourse suggesting the need for work to tone body into shape</p>

<p>Um skin changing getting thinner all the time all this appearance stuff because I see this reflected in the media and I think I'm still terrified I have this small wish somewhere that I don't want to spend the rest of my life alone and I booted the last bloke out but there's a real fear grounded in appearance so that comes back to how I look and very much then how much I weigh and how clothes look on me and buying clothes I love the way Trelise Cooper sizes her clothes differently so that if you're really fat you only buy something that is a size 2 or something which translates in another person's size into an 18 or something so all of these image things are around weight</p>	<p>Appearance discourse acting from the position of knowledge from within the discourse</p>
<p>continually I think I wake up every morning thinking I'll be very good today</p>	<p>Moral discourse suggesting self control</p>
<p>and I'll be very careful about what I eat and I'll drink more water and I went out to lunch with R and I had an icecream</p>	<p>Moral discourse with the words "careful about what I eat" indicating surveillance of intake linking with health or medical knowledge</p>

<p>but yea it's always there weight image</p>	<p>Appearance centred through the word 'image'</p>
<p>It hit me the other day when a student came in about tutorials [and described me as] the blond middle-aged one... but that really stuck with me because it's the first time I've heard it and middle aged still has the connotation of matronly weight, getting, you know, hideous</p>	<p>Appearance discourse positioned as being excluded from the normative recognised zone of acceptance</p>

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