Unravelling Yarns: How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

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Tanya Jane Webb

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Dedication

For Huia, Eve and Byron,

For always being loving and supportive, and for believing in possibilities.

Abstract

This thesis uses narrative research methodologies to explore the experiences of women and knitting, and examines how those experiences might be used productively to enable educators to develop critical pedagogy skills in the classroom. Through gathering knitting narratives, a learning space is created for voices that are often unheard, to (re)examine and reflect on experiences of the past and present in order to generate new understandings.

Narratives have been collected from four women whose lives span three generations; the researcher, her mother, mother-in-law, and daughter. This spans time periods from World War II up until the present day. Field texts for each participant have been written using data from interviews, reflective writing, and photographs. Wider themes have been identified and examined in an educational context relating to the development of the critical classroom.

Additional data have been collected from books, online newspapers, journal articles and published reports.

This thesis posits that there are specific areas that might be useful for educators to examine further, to establish critical pedagogical philosophies in formal educational settings. The themes consider the importance of belonging, examining privilege, acknowledging the whole self, and the value of alternative sites of learning. These themes also encourage educators in turn to consider new perspectives through self-study, and to understand the experiences of their learners and the communities to which they belong. Finally, specific recommendations for educators, relating to the themes, are made.

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Chapter One: Introduction

> Despite what we knitters know to be true, the non-knitting world somehow persists in thinking that a "knitter" looks a certain way. Most likely, this picture is one of an elderly woman, grandmotherly and polite, sitting in her rocking chair surrounded by homemade cookies and accompanied by a certain number of cats (Pearl-McPhee, 2005, p. 211).

Many people have stereotyped and dismissed knitting and knitters, as described in the quote above. Stereotyping of knitters has occurred across different times and places, rendering it an undervalued activity by non-knitters, and perhaps causing awkwardness and tension in those who do knit. Throughout feminism, the status of knitting has evolved in a contradictory manner, from being seen as an activity that tied women to domestic servitude, to a celebration of the skills and knowledge that women have (Greer, 2011; Nicholson, 1998). Recently, knitting, and subsequently involvement in knitting communities, has been a growing activity, leading to a growth in the consumer industry of knitting (Turney, 2009). The reasons women have knitted have varied due to changing economic circumstances, like during and after World War II when women knitted out of economic necessity, and also for the war effort (Nicholson, 1998). Nowadays, the economic situation is different; the cost of buying resources for knitting is prohibitive for many (Springgay, Hatza & O'Donald, 2011). This project draws on a range of research studies and literature pertaining to knitting and women's craft. The private nature of knitting means it is an infrequently examined activity, yet one that we could learn much from when applied to other areas of life. Does the act of knitting only result in the production of a

garment? What other thoughts and issues arise when considering knitting in a broader sense? This project involved collecting the knitting narratives of four women in my family. I am included as both researcher and participant. In the words of Mitchell, Weber and O'Reilly-Scanlon, "To pick up on the metaphor of navel-gazing, there is nothing about focusing inwards on the individual that necessarily precludes simultaneously pointing outwards and towards the political and social" (2005, p. 4). This research therefore explores whether knitting experiences over several generations could inform critical pedagogical practice - might our stories, lives and experiences surrounding knitting inform educators how to better achieve more equitable outcomes in sites of formal education? These thoughts can be condensed into three research questions: What part does knitting play in our lives? What values are conveyed through our knitting? How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

Critical pedagogy, as an educational philosophy, seeks to examine the presence and effect of imbalances in power relationships in our lives, with the ultimate aim of seeking change to existing societal inequities (Freire, 1970). Many researchers and public intellectuals have examined these inequalities (Apple, 2004; Chomsky, 2011, Giroux, 2013; hooks, 1994; McLaren, 2003) and how, as educators, we might seek fair outcomes in our classroom practices. Critical pedagogy encourages educators and learners alike to hear previously unheard voices and histories in order to be able to recognise and question official discourses that exclude groups such as women, ethnic groups, the poor, and children (Apple, 2004). These key tenets of critical pedagogy challenge educators to consider how hegemonic power is maintained by not only the system (governments, corporations) but also by educators themselves. Educators must examine their own histories in order to understand how things have evolved to the way they are today. Critical pedagogy also stresses the importance of understanding ourselves (Palmer, 1998),

through examining everyday activities that we engage in, and how power imbalances fit into this. These ideas can be developed in many settings, including schools and universities.

In order to introduce this research, it is necessary to introduce myself. When I lived in New Zealand, I taught High School Music and Social Studies for twelve years. In the Music classroom there is room for students to select and learn music of their own choice, encouraging an engaged and active music experience for everyone involved. At the time I felt a tension; I am a classically trained musician who believed that Western Classical music knowledge and thinking was important, yet I could see, at the same time, that that was not the way in which many of my students worked. I was constantly exploring how to recognise the ways my learners considered and understood music, but I wouldn't say I was always successful. I struggled to shift my thinking away from what the classical academy promotes as being important, to finding ways to teach music authentically and with meaning.

In 2009 we shifted to Bahrain. While I was initially hired as a tertiary Academic Skills tutor, I have been able to develop Music courses for the degree Electives programme. It has been interesting to work with young musicians (and non-musicians) from non-Western backgrounds. Bahraini learners know things in culturally situated ways that are different than learners from Aotearoa/New Zealand, which has been fascinating. Through exploring my practice as part of this Masterate programme, I have developed my interest in and knowledge of critical pedagogy, including considering ways to foster a critical classroom. This thesis stands as my journey as a critical pedagogue, my example of exploring myself and my history. Examining my journey will help not only me, but also other educators who seek to develop critical classrooms.

To do this, I need to consider how my everyday life and activities might influence my own learning, and my teaching practice. Palmer (1998) notes that we separate who we are outside of the classroom with our classroom identity; our private from our public selves. Yet I am the same person wherever I am. As a Music educator, it would have been easy to look at my music background, but this was too obvious and perhaps simplistic. I wanted to explore a different aspect of my everyday life, while at the same time considering unvoiced history and how that history fits in with, or differs from, what is officially taught in schools and universities. Knitting is an activity that myself and my female ancestors have been doing - for generations. Men in my family have been taught to knit (my father, brothers and my son), but have not continued. If I am sitting down anywhere that is not at work, I can be found knitting. Why do I knit? Why do other women in my family knit? Have those reasons changed over time? What does our knitting say about us - what values does it promote? What kind of experiences have we had knitting? Does our knitting negatively affect others? Where does it sit with changing social, political and economic circumstances? There are many questions that can be asked. Could the answers help me to develop as a critical educator? If so, how? Formally recording women talking about knitting is a rarity; bringing our private lives into the public view is challenging, and part of the process of becoming a critical and aware self, learner and educator. Despite the fact that I am undertaking this research with the aim of my own personal development, there are themes and actions that come up that I invite all educators to consider and adapt, taking into account the many different educational sites and settings that educators and learners occupy. This research stands as an example of what might be learnt through examining daily practices, and further demonstrates the importance for all educators to take their own learning journey, whether formally or not.

This thesis consists of six chapters; chapter two through to chapter six are outlined below: Chapter Two discusses literature relevant to this project, especially that surrounding recent changes in attitudes towards knitting, and critical pedagogy, specifically in relation to the arts. Chapter Three outlines my epistemology and beliefs underpinning this project, and explains what I planned to do (research design) and what I actually did (research process). This chapter also discusses the ethical considerations of this research. Chapter Four consists of presenting the four research texts, and addresses the first two research questions. The third research question, making links to critical pedagogy, is explored in Chapter Five, the Discussion chapter. Here four themes are drawn out the connect the research texts to how educators might develop a critical classroom. Finally, recommendations for educator's practices and for future research are presented in Chapter Six, the Conclusion.

It is important to begin the journey by investigating what research studies and articles exist already, in Chapter Two, the Literature Review.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review selected literature relating to knitting, arts education and critical pedagogy. This review is organised into two main sections. The first examines research surrounding the tensions and contradictions pertaining to knitting, and the second examines research about how knitting and the arts can be connected to critical pedagogy.

Information for this review was gathered from a range of sources; books, online journals, newspapers and magazine articles. Information regarding yarn bombing was gained through personal correspondence with Victoria Gilliand. Information from journal articles was sourced from Massey University databases, e.g. ERIC, Academic Search Premier and Education Research Complete, using combinations of search terms such as 'knitting', 'education', 'teaching practice', 'feminism', 'female identity', 'leisure', and 'critical pedagogy' .

Literature relating to knitting: Tensions and contradictions

The literature illustrates contradictions and tensions within knitting, many as a result of massive social and economic changes over the second half of the twentieth century. Turney (2009) notes that even within the act of knitting there is contradiction; on one hand, knitting is easy, consisting of learning only two stitches, but on the other, a much higher skill level is needed to construct a whole garment. Changing attitudes towards knitting pose contradictions; knitting

sits in an old-fashioned and private, unpaid, domestic, female domain, yet is a modern, public, and subversive means of making political statements and seeking change. When stating "knitting is an ideology" (2009, p. 174), Turney makes multiple connections between knitting and society, presenting knitting as a complex activity. The key tensions and contradictions in the literature are outlined below.

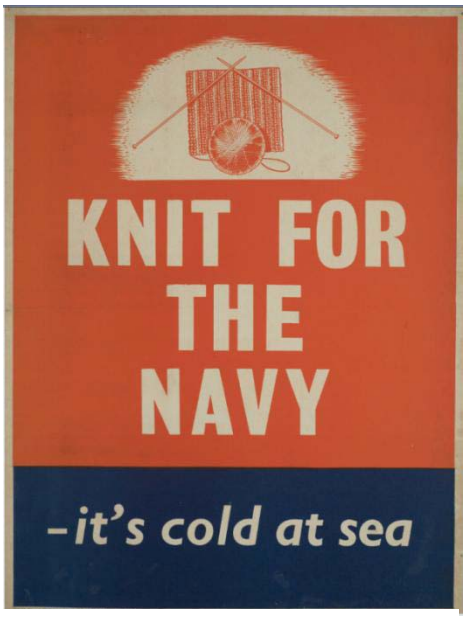


Figure 1: Knit for the Navy (circa 1940, Te Papa)

Knitting and feminism

Attitudes in society towards knitting have been changing and contradictory, from knitting being an important domestic skill, or a philanthropic act (see Fig. 1), to people displaying derisive and dismissive attitudes towards knitting and knitters (Nicholson, 1998). Greer notes that "before 2000, ... the term knitting evoked many thoughts of grandmothers, domesticity, and other pastoral and seemingly nonradical things" (2011, p. 14). As feminism developed, women's roles expanded, from solely being based around the home, to encompassing both the needs of the home and workplace demands. Nicholson (1998) discusses these developments up until the 1990s, and reflects the second-wave feminist notion of superwoman (Shaevitz, 1984). She notes that,

> ...initially, the women's movement denounced traditional domesticity and all its works: for some years it was not ideologically correct for a career woman to be caught with her knitting needles. To gain status,

> women were supposed to abandon their customary skills and begin power dressing and jogging (Nicholson, 1998, p. 3).

Because knitting was private and domestic, it was dismissed by second wave feminists and wider society. As second wave feminism effected change for middle class women in the 1970s (Thornham, 1998), many women did not learn to knit. Turney (2009) highlights that, according to Sparke, women at this point were developing in terms of identity, and instead turned to "the consumption of goods" (p. 19). Subsequently crafting skills and knowledge were not always passed on to the next generation, and twenty-first century women have invented modern versions of the knitting community, notably through the internet, to learn and fine tune their knitting skills (Greer, 2011). Greer (2011) adds because home-based traditions became neglected, they were eventually stereotyped, as older women became the majority of knitters.

Stoller's work (2003) has helped to engage a new generation of knitters, as well as raising new issues surrounding knitting and feminism:

> ...all those people who looked down on knitting - and housework, and housewives - were not being feminist at all... they were being antifeminist, since they seemed to think that only those things that men did, or had done, were worthwhile (Stoller, 2003, p. 7).

Stoller defends the relationship between women and knitting, and her thoughts are echoed by other contemporary academics and knitters (Greer, 2011; Springgay, 2010; Stalker, 2006).

Public versus private

One mode through which women have challenged the craft and domestic statuses given to knitting and women's crafts (Stalker, 2006), is through making artworks that bring the private sphere of women's crafts into public view. A current Aotearoa/New Zealand example is the subversive act of yarn bombing. Described as "a gentler form of street art" (Sillito, 2009, para. 1), the purpose of yarn bombing is varied, sometimes with a political agenda, but often meant to brighten up city streets.

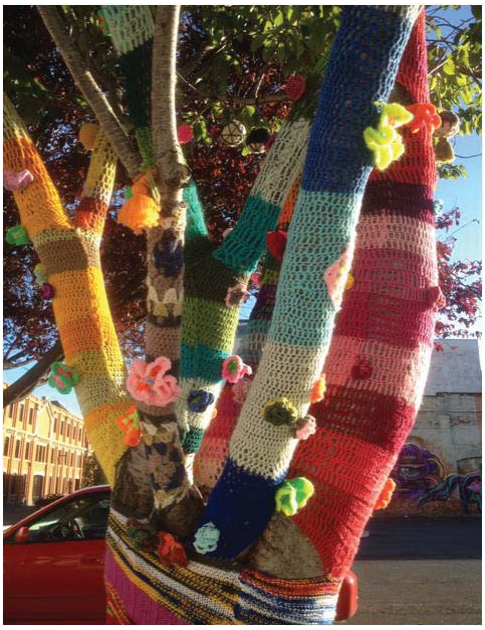


Figure 2: Yarnbombing (Gilliand, 2014).

Dunedin yarn bomber and street art photographer Victoria Gilliand (Fig. 2), aka streetkiwi, shares her work through Instagram, and feels it is important to make a record of street art, because of its temporary nature. She sees yarn bombing as her own contribution to public art (Personal correspondence, 2014). Articles discussing yarn bombing, despite its subversive and often illegal nature, consistently present it in a positive light (Lewis, 2011; Sillito, 2009), as opposed to the popular stereotypes of knitters, and gendered paradigm of fabric crafts (Stalker, 2006). Yarn bombing has not yet been extensively researched by academia; a database search reveals a variety of news articles but few available scholarly articles, whereas there are numerous books available (Yarn bombing, 2015).

Knitting and economics

Research studies and articles (Macdonald, 2010; Nicholson, 1998; Parker, 2010; Theaker, 2006; Sheppard, 2013) note that it was common in the past for women to knit for economic reasons; to save on the cost of buying garments, or to generate income through selling knitted items. To working class women, knitting became a necessary everyday activity (Sheppard, 2013) to generate household income, whereas to middle and upper class women, knitting skills became a symbol of femininity. Again, knitting is contradictory. It was seen as an everyday activity; "many women thought they must not be caught sitting down doing nothing, or worse, doing something they enjoyed" (Nicholson, 1998, p. 2). Yet, knitting was seen by others as a positive economic activity, an asset, and one that New Zealand women were especially good at - “Della Newman, United States Ambassador to New Zealand, maintained that pottery, knitting, and weaving were among this country's 'hidden talents', and were among the best in the world” (Nicholson, 1998, p. 174).

Knitting machines became more popular in the 1970s because of the high cost of oil that affected the production of synthetic fibres (Nicholson, 1998), but research surrounding the influence of knitting machines is scarce. Nicholson notes that many women produced machine knitted garments in the 1970s as a means of generating additional household income. Despite the talent of New Zealand knitters, it is economically unviable for hand-knitting to be a full-time career. Professional hand-knitters were paid an unreasonably low commission for each garment that they produced (Nicholson, 1998). Turney (2009) discusses the findings of a 1987 study that shows the shift of knitting from a work activity born from thrift to one of leisure, citing rising prices of craft supplies as a factor. Contrary to the past, knitting either for leisure or work in the present day is seen by many as being economically unviable. Its shift from work to leisure meant

that, for men, wearing knitted garments became "a sign of social status - (a) man who was wealthy enough for his wife not to work displayed this leisured status through the intricate work she produced for him" (Turney, 2009, p. 29). Springgay, Hatza, and O'Donald (2011) note that nowadays “knitting, in a sense, is a white, middle-class hobby. It, along with much crafting, is a luxury that many women cannot afford” (pp. 608-609). From the 1980s onwards, the availability of mass-produced garments was an influential factor, due to the use of synthetic fibres, factory production techniques, and lower labour costs resulting from offshore relocation (Greer, 2011; Nicholson, 1998; Stoller, 2003; Turney, 2009). These factors mean that mass-produced garments are considerably cheaper to buy than yarn.

Parker (2010) notes that contemporary women still see crafting in terms of connection: "the aspect of embroidery as a bond between women has lived on" (p. 215), and remains a female dominated area. An industry has grown around craft books (including Stoller's work) and events that are generally ignored by men (there have always been men who knit, but Nicholson (1998) notes that they tend to keep to themselves). This correlates with Turney's (2009) comments on contemporary women now being consumers.

Colonisation and globalisation

Another knitting related tension from an Aotearoa/ New Zealand perspective is ethnicity. On one hand, knitting was perceived as a low status activity, but was it also tied up with colonisation and subsequently globalisation? Did the teaching of knitting replace the handing down of the knowledge and skills involved learning Māori arts and crafts? If it did it could be considered oppressive and a contribution to the cultural assimilation of Māori that Walker (2004) discusses. However, some evidence suggests that Māori adapted knitting because it

easily incorporated traditional designs and motifs (Metge, 1976). In 1962 the magazine 'Woman: New Zealand Woman and Stitch' commissioned knitter and spinner Dulcie Svendsen to design a "monthly series of garments featuring Maori designs" (Nicholson, 1998, p. 206). What input Māori had in this series is undocumented, perhaps implying cultural appropriation.

Considering globalisation, Bratich and Brush (2011) discuss slow production, which sits opposite the current world-wide mass-produced industry that emphasises quantity and rapid output of garments. The industry also supports the use of sweatshop labour to achieve its profit making aims. Slow production forms such as knitting, "reappropriate the collective qualities of sweatshop labor, but without the exploitative discipline and hierarchical forms" (p. 236). They argue that the slow space in which crafts exist challenge the dominance of technology and the current "culture of speed" (p. 236) that exists globally. Moreover, craft culture (Bratich & Brush, 2011) promotes the act of giving or exchanging craft works as a response to mass production and globalisation. Here, the tension lies in the contrast between hegemonic practices, and using craft to challenge them.

Grafting knitting and critical pedagogy: Negotiating the tensions

The basic premise behind critical pedagogy is that schools reproduce the inequalities present in society, whether they be race, class, or gender inequalities (McLaren, 2003). This has been an ongoing process of recognising and transmitting dominant culture through "a selective ordering and legitimating of privileged language forms, modes of reasoning, social relations, and lived experiences" (Giroux, 1988, location 270). The education system undervalues the importance of the lives, experiences and histories of everyone who is not part of the dominant group. What

gets left out is just as telling as what is left in (Giroux, 1988). At the same time across the Western world, schools and universities are facing financial cutbacks, growing tuition fees, reduced salaries and increasing workloads (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2013). Here students become customers, and education becomes work-orientated training - where courses are delivered to learners (Giroux, 2013). Critical pedagogy seeks change to these unequal power structures through a variety of means (Brown, Bruce, Chapman, & Martin, 2008; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1998; hooks, 1994; McLaren, 2003). These writers see change as "the construction of hopeful proposals that focus on positive transformation and emancipation" (Brown et al., 2008, p. 80).

Critical pedagogy and the arts (including knitting) share common ground. There are a number of themes that can be drawn out from the literature showing links between the philosophy of critical pedagogy and the arts.

Engaging critical learners through the arts

Clover and Stalker (2007) argue that the production of art in various forms (including knitting) involves active participation from learners. The arts enable learners to interrupt the notion of life as a consumer, instead turning learners into "active producers and transmitters of culture and identity" (p. 13). They advocate arts in the critical classroom acknowledge humanness, and provide a means of developing critical thought and resistance. Clover and Stalker (2007) promote Wyman's (2004) idea of the "defiant imagination", where examining the experiences, lives and stories of individuals is cherished and are placed at the heart of learning. In the words of Wyman (2004):

> The stories we tell each other - in our plays, our books, our films - affirm the importance of the human, the local, the specific: they are the crackly bits that give society texture in the face of the blender forces of globalization (p. 5).

Wyman (2004), and Clover and Stalker (2007) argue that the arts, by their very nature, encourage independent and critical learning. Despite this potential, it should be noted that the arts are often taught in ways that continue to maintain dominant ideas, where learners are required to conform rather than to explore alternatives. This provides a justification for deliberately introducing critical pedagogy into the learning environment. Moreover, this is not only about learning that occurs in the classroom or lecture hall, but also in terms of community groups who are involved with the arts. Matarasso (1997) found that involvement in the arts can encourage stronger participation in other local projects, both individual and collective. To illustrate, 86% of the adult participants in the study expressed a desire to continue their involvement in arts projects, after being involved in their first initiative (Matarasso, 1997, p. 8). Cunningham's (2013) research reinforces how involvement with arts projects increases people's willingness to engage and work with each other. She notes, however, that the programme that her study is based around, consistently underestimated how difficult it is for participants to be open to new ways of seeing and doing, and that this was a key challenge for the future.

Challenging dominant knowledge

McChesney (1998) outlines the neoliberal ideology that "represent(s) the immediate interests of extremely wealthy investors and less than one thousand large corporations" (location 28), as having grown across the globe since the Thatcher and Reagan eras. A key tenet of neoliberalism is where its ideologies are marketed as giving people more choices. When governments

liberalise trade and finance through privatisation, the market takes control over decision making roles in these areas, perpetuating the idea that with the government relinquishing state control over the economy, individuals also have access to more choices as well (Chomsky, 2011).

The effects of neoliberalism are widely discussed throughout literature on critical pedagogy and by public intellectuals (Apple, 2004; Chomsky, 2011; Giroux, 2013; hooks, 1994). These influences include "a massive increase in social and economic inequality, a marked increase in severe deprivation for the poorest nations and peoples ... a disastrous global environment, an unstable global economy and an unprecedented bonanza for the wealthy" (McChesney, 1998, locations 42-45). According to Giroux, market-driven forces are actively seeking involvement in the education systems of many Western countries, including Aotearoa/New Zealand (Giroux, 2012, 2013). He (2013) argues that promoting critical thinking and democratic values in schools and universities poses a threat to this political and corporate ideology. Palmer (1998) refers to the culture of fear that operates under neoliberalism:

> The personal fears that students and teachers bring ...are fed by the fact that the roots of education are sunk deep in fearful ground. The ground ... is one we rarely name: ... our dominant mode of knowing, a mode promoted with such arrogance that it is hard to see the fear behind it (locations 705-707).

To interrupt and challenge dominant knowledge, Palmer (1998) proposes that understanding oneself is the key to being able to then know and understand others. This sentiment is directed at educators and learners alike. hooks (1994) adds that self actualization means that professors

will not need to hide behind the academy and its dominant discourses, but can instead strive for dialogue and developing new teaching strategies. Concerning knitting, Nicholson (1998) adds that we sometimes forget to see that our everyday activities contribute to ourselves and our culture. Knitting, as an activity principally done by women, is generally overlooked in understandings and discussions of ethnicity and culture. Of more concern Nicholson posits "there remains, albeit deep down, an old habit of making fun of women's activities" (1998, p. 3). Stalker (2006) supports Nicholson by pointing out that women have taught other women the skills of various fabric crafts for hundreds of years, over many generations. Women have a long history with fabric crafts and it is this history and everyday knowledge that can be used to challenge fear and interrupt dominant knowledge and ways of knowing (Springgay, 2010).

Learning spaces and communities

The places that women have knitted (both traditionally and in modern times) provide an alternative space to the classroom or lecture hall, and therefore can be used to challenge dominant thinking. The knitting community has also seen changes that reflect broader societal changes. In the past, knitting was handed down through families, or taught at school (Nicholson, 1998). Greer (2011) and Nicholson (1998) both discuss the role of the internet in creating new communities of knitters, where experienced knitters can help the less experienced, because of the loss of knitting knowledge. The internet provides access to patterns, yarns, and other resources, but at ground level it links knitters to local knitting groups, connecting people within communities. While Buszek (2011) is concerned that technology is eroding our everyday interconnectedness, crafts, she maintains, make it possible to intercept this dehumanising process. The internet is not without controversy, Turney (2009) highlights that "globalisation could be redefined as Westernization" (p. 193), yet it can be seen as a positive development

that connects the global knitting community (Greer, 2011; Stoller, 2003). In 2011, Google UK reported that online searches for "knitting for beginners" increased by 250% from the previous year (cited in Lewis, 2011). The online knitting community is growing.

Stalker (2006) sees fabric crafts and fashion as creating a space that is accessible to women. In fabric crafts a space is created in which traditional power dynamics are challenged - traditionally women are the experts and decision makers; this is an area that women are familiar with. Stalker cites Evans and Thornton (1991) who note that “practices which a culture insists are meaningless or trivial, the places where ideology has succeeded in becoming invisible, are practices in need of investigation” (Stalker, 2006, p. 168). Knitting is one such practice. Stalker (2006) posits that because many women are uncomfortable in an environment where direct discussions and arguments occur, that fabric crafts are a medium where rich women's "(un)learning" (p. 171) can take place. hooks (1994), posits that everybody has a responsibility to the progress of the learning group, and developing listening skills is paramount to this process. Without this process of (un)learning, Barrington and Gray note that "many women follow the dominant pattern without reflecting on the fact they are doing so and without ever contemplating an alternative" (1981, p. xiv). Stalker is in agreement with Bratich and Brush (2011) in valuing the collective nature of knitting. hooks (1994), like Stalker and Freire, note that this learning space, needs to also be a place where difficult thinking can occur.

As an example of an alternative knitting space, Springgay (2010) used knitting as a feminist pedagogy in her Women's Studies class where everyone learnt to knit together. The group used public knitting to create a space where collectivity and resistance could be explored, holding a knit-in to raise awareness for Darfur. Buszek (2011) cites the curator Anthea Black, who

observes that "it is the simultaneous unruliness and gentleness of public knitting...that creates a constructive dialog" (in Buszek, 2011, location 2374).

Embodied learning

Springgay (2010), and Robinson (2006), examine the relationship between our bodies, learning, and critical pedagogy. Like other critical pedagogues (Freire, 1970 for example), Springgay supports and discusses learning as doing - “something in the making, as an embodied, experiential, and relational process” (Springgay, 2010, p. 21). Robinson (2006) illuminates similar issues to those experienced in critical pedagogy. He argues that to suit the needs of industry, schools don't encourage creativity, and that adults and children alike have become scared of getting it wrong. This philosophy, endorsed by companies, stifles originality and "stigmatizes mistakes" (2006). In contrast Brown et al. (2008) highlight that the requirements of the New Zealand workplace are changing into those needed in a growing knowledge economy. The Aotearoa/New Zealand school curriculum has the potential to promote creativity, thinking skills and social justice outcomes (Brown et al., 2008), especially through the delivery of the arts curriculum. This supports Robinson's argument that in order to cultivate creativity (and analysis and critical thinking), education must incorporate the idea of embodied learning, recognising that ideas and (physical) ways of learning embedded in the arts are crucial for everyone, as we do not know what education or employment may look like in the future. Brown et al. (2008) add that educators who are developing critical pedagogy skills are not the norm; there is a gap between the written curriculum document and the enacted curriculum.

From a knitting perspective, Greer cites the work of Benson, who posited that “benefits can come from a spectrum of repetitive, mind-clearing practices that elicit the so-called relaxation

response—from swaying in prayer to saying the rosary to knitting" (Benson, cited in Greer, 2011, p. 38-39), hence likening the benefits of knitting to meditation, and its associated health benefits. Bevan (2011) cites research from the UK Crafts Council, who found that knitting is like meditation - the use of knitting in the classroom promotes well-being and decreases stress levels. Learning through using the hands can be powerful (Bevan, 2011).

To summarise, critical pedagogy has proposed interventions that disrupt the influence of neoliberalism. The arts (including knitting) can be actively involved in this process, for learners in schools, universities and in the community. Creativity, critical thinking and learning through the development of the self and the body are strongly embedded in the arts and arts education. Critical pedagogy encourages educators and learners alike to examine their own histories and backgrounds, in order to gain a better understanding of past and present hegemonic practices.

Research Questions

There is a growing body of articles and research that explore knitting from a range of perspectives and over a number of time periods. Views towards knitting have changed, often in contradictory ways, and economic and historical/social influences have affected knitting values, and the reasons why knitting has occurred. Some research relates to knitting and how it could be used in a critical learning environment, but there is a lack of research that examines knitting narratives specifically, and how women's everyday experiences with knitting could inform other aspects of life, such as critical pedagogy. Research shows there is potential to connect knitting to interrupting dominant and excluding discourses, and also to ease the fears of learners and educators that exist in many formal learning environments. Apart from actually knitting in the

classroom, which some studies have researched, what else is there for educators to learn here? Developing narratives that examine knitting experiences opens an alternative space for voices to be heard, and a space to make links to the critical learning environment. Narratives show how participants' actions and experiences are underpinned by their values.

The gap in the literature concerns research that examines participants' experiences of knitting, as exemplified by myself and my female relatives. There is no information about how knitting is a reflection of our lives and our values. Research data could be used to explore how these values and experiences might contribute to enabling me and other educators to further develop as critical pedagogues. The following research questions can be asked: What part does knitting play in our lives? What values are conveyed through our knitting? How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

This chapter discussed a range of literature that relates to knitting, the arts, and critical pedagogy. It identified tensions that exist when examining knitting, and showed critical pedagogy as a means of addressing those tensions in an educational environment. Chapter Three outlines the research design and process that was undertaken for this project.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In the previous chapter, gaps in the research were identified. In the first section of this chapter I explain my worldview and how it supports the methodology chosen for this research. I justify my choice of participants, and outline some of the ethical considerations that were involved. The process that I intended to use is explained. In the second section of the chapter, the process that actually took place is outlined and justified, in order to establish transparency in my research practices. Finally implications of this study are considered.

Research design and justification

For this project I have utilised Crotty's (1998) research process to provide a research design framework. Crotty outlines four 'elements' in the social research process; epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods (including data analysis). These are addressed below with respect to the research.

Epistemology: Constructionism

As I have been learning more about critical pedagogy and what it means to be/ teach this way, I have been challenged to re-examine my own schooling, teaching practices, and world view. Part of this is accepting the validity of, and exploring the meanings inherent in, the experiences and worldviews of others, especially the life experiences of those whose stories are not usually included in the history books. This has led to richer personal learning experiences. I now cannot ignore how the experiences of myself and my own family shape so much; from my own values

and perception of self and others around me, to my world view and my teaching style. In the words of Crotty (1998): "*All knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context"* (p. 42, italics in original). This construction of "meaningful reality", which involves making our private selves public, is the constructionist epistemology through which I see the world.

This philosophy lies behind the development of the research questions, and explains why it was appropriate to involve myself and family as participants. Furthermore, Neilsen (1998) reinforces this view of personal research by adding that "research is not only the creation of products to market at the academic ideology fair; research is the process of learning through the words, actions and revisionings of our daily life" (p. 8).

Crotty reinforces my beliefs, maintaining that in constructionism "there is no true or valid interpretation" (1998, p. 47). This research creates a space for participants to (re)examine, and explore new meanings through sharing our life-events, and an opportunity to bring these (re)examinings into teaching practice. The collective aspect of constructionism permeates the research design at different levels; from the research questions, experiences and meanings stemming from knitting, the sharing and construction of narratives, to contributing to and developing pedagogical practice. Palmer (1998, location 77) posits that "we teach who we are". This idea can be expanded - "we research who we are". Constructionism acknowledges this personal construction of meaning.

Theoretical perspective: Interpretivism

I see the world through the experiences of a musician and music educator. From a musical perspective, music is culturally situated, a reflection of the lives and experiences of its composers, performers and audiences. Doing research that creates a space for unheard perspectives to be explored is, in my view, an important step in changing pedagogical practices. Recognition of the unique contribution that every individual brings into the classroom is empowering and transformative for all. An interpretivist perspective fits with my viewpoint, seeing the participants as being central, rather than seeing them through “the imposition of external form and structure" by an outside observer (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 17). According to Crotty, an interpretivist perspective allows participants to culturally and historically situate themselves and their everyday experiences, in this case, related to knitting, thus providing opportunities to share and (re)examine past events in a meaningful way. ("Everyone, who can knit … has a knitting narrative" (Williams, 2005, para. 7)). Interpretivism is an appropriate research approach - it recognises the subjectivity involved in participants retelling and interpreting their experiences (Crotty, 1998). Sharing these experiences creates meaning, opening a space that promotes critical inquiry and analysis.

Methodology: Narrative Inquiry

In keeping with interpretivism, using narrative inquiry as a research methodology fits well. "Narrative" in this sense, refers to either “any text or discourse" (Creswell, 2007, p. 54), as well as a qualitative research methodology where narrative texts are collected from a small number of participants, and subsequently analysed. Narrative inquiry puts participants first and focuses on capturing the experiences of participants, and the meanings that can be construed as a result (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It promotes gathering rich data from a variety of media

(interviews, reflections, photographs, knitted garments and memory squares) reinforcing the necessity of exploring the cultural context of participants. Furthermore, because participants each have different experiences and perspectives, the research questions create a space for a spectrum of times, places and contexts, to be represented through a range of data. Narrative research methods views each of the participant's experiences and memories as their own, rather than being part of a set of generalised themes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This is different from other methodologies that examine phenomena from one generalisable position. Furthermore, different types of analysis strategies can be employed when examining narrative texts, for example organising data into chronological order, a thematic analysis, or an analysis of the narrative form such as oral history or biographical studies (Creswell, 2007).

Methods: Participants, interviews, field texts, self-reflective writing

Participants

This project aimed to examine how values inherent in the act of knitting might inform my critical practice, and in turn, that of other educators. Consequently, it was necessary to involve participants with whom I have had long and meaningful relationships; hence the use of my relatives as participants. To critically examine my perspective it was important to examine where that viewpoint came from. This research involved collecting the narratives of four female family members. My mother, mother-in-law, I, and my daughter have all had experiences with knitting that have occurred in different settings, over a period of three generations. Participants knitted for reasons that have changed throughout our lives.

Although men in my family were taught to knit, this research focused on the female experience of knitting, because it has been traditionally less valued in academia (hooks, 1994; Neilsen,

1998), and because of the ease of connecting to myself as a female researcher and educator. It is only women in my family who have continued to practice knitting to the present day. I do not know any men who are knitters, and not all of the female participants are knitters either. The youngest participant is not, but it is important to include the voice of a younger generation, and to consider the reasons she is not a knitter. The involvement of a small number of participants is because the process of developing rich and in-depth texts produces a large quantity of data. Rudestam and Newton (2007), note that “the longer, more detailed and intensive the transcripts, the fewer the number of participants" (p. 108).

Interviews

The primary data gathering instrument used for this project was interviews. A semi-structured interview approach was utilised to encourage participants to discuss things they felt were important, to develop a sense of ownership of the process and to reduce any feelings of me having a researcher’s agenda. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that while interviews are commonly used in narrative research, they "normally have an inequality about them" (p. 110), because interviews are usually organised and planned by the interviewer. When researchers and participants are intimately linked, formal interviews become impossible, and often result in a more conversational type interview. Subsequently, interviews are referred to as either 'interviews' or 'conversations' throughout the project.

Because of the relationships I have with the participants, and because of the need to create a balanced researcher/participant relationship, the interviews were deliberately semi-structured and conversational in nature. The participatory nature of the research made it necessary to be explicit about this 'interview' process with participants. Questions were developed around

eliciting information relevant to the research questions, and to encourage participants to reflect and elaborate on their experiences. Because I am also a participant in the research, I kept a written journal, one aspect of which covered the conversation topics, instead of being an interviewee.

Seidman (2013) advocates a three-interview series. In this case, the first explores knitting in the past, the second, knitting in the present, and in the third links are drawn and meaning making occurs. This format fitted with my intentions for the interviews, and with the initial writing task, and was suitable to adopt for this project. Three interviews allow events to be explored and connected from a temporal perspective, enabling participants to examine how their experiences relating to knitting have influenced them today.

Particular attention was paid to the interview process prior to the commencement of the interviews. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) highlight the importance of the behaviour of the interviewer/researcher in determining the relationship with participants. The timing of the conversations was negotiated with participants, and they were held in our respective homes, via Skype. Elliot (2005) offers guidance in the interview process, highlighting that establishing the narrative intent of the interview happens at the start, by the interviewer mindfully listening and being careful not to interrupt the participant. The research process plan involved three interviews:

Table 1: Proposed research plan:

Phase 1:	Participants initial journal writing: 1. Childhood: knitting *for* me (the participant)	July 2014

	2. Adulthood: Knitting for others (and myself) 3. The present day	
	Conversations #1	
	Collecting field texts, journals. Participants edit transcripts	
Phase 2:	Conversations #2 - discussed interpreting previous interview, field texts	August 2014
	Collecting field texts/edit transcripts	
	Conversations and field text collection #3	
Phase 3:	Analysis and write-up of material Final write-up	July-October 2014

Field texts

Field texts strengthened the participatory aspects of the project, enabling participants' voices to be heard and promoting ongoing involvement and ownership of narratives. I chose to utilise them for this project because participants can both edit and include omissions, and have the option to use different media to represent themselves, to illustrate ideas, validate data, and to remember experiences. Field texts encourage reflection and meaning-making from the remembering, and from the research process itself. Through this process links to pedagogy can be made.

To clarify, field texts are supplementary texts that were developed by the participants. Field texts included photos, personal journals, knitted items, or letters and documents. Participants

located or developed these texts before and after each conversation. Field texts illuminated and validated the narratives through providing evidence or illustrating ideas, in the case of photographs, knitted items or documents. Knitted items could consist of old artefacts that participants have kept, or participants were encouraged to make new knitted artefacts, in the form of memory squares. Memory squares could use a knitting pattern, range of colours, or a design that reminds the participant of something from their narratives. The act of knitting is therapeutic in itself (Turney, 2009), and could facilitate further reflections around the topic/process. Making memory squares could develop into the making of a blanket; a way of representing this research through art (Jeffers, 1993). Interview transcripts are included in the category of field texts as they were edited by the participants.

Self-reflective writing

The pre-interview writing task was designed to encourage participants to consider the presence of knitting throughout our lives. This concept was based on the process used by Szabad-Smyth (2005), where an initial writing task is given to participants before the first interview, as a means of generating themes. Field texts also took the form of personal journals where participants discussed things that came to mind, and how they were feeling about the interview process and the events being discussed. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) "take for granted that people, at any point in time, are in a process of personal change" (p. 30), and the use of personal journals and knitting aids support this process of change. Neilsen (1998) notes that the writing process enabled her participants to "rethink themselves as readers and teachers... to bridge the public and the private, the self and the social" (p. 82). This building of connections is one aim of this research.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis involves making meaning from the interviews and field texts. There were two parts to the data analysis process for this project, the first being the utilisation of Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space to interpret and examine the narratives. The second was where Neilsen's (1998) critical questions allowed connections to be made between the narratives and the teaching practice of myself and others.

Clandinin and Connelly's three-dimensional space

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) create a three-dimensional space to suit the needs of analysing and interpreting narratives. The space enables the examination of narratives from different viewpoints. The researcher focuses on creating a balance between each element that is fitting to the shared narratives. The three elements concerned are: personal and social (both inward and outward), past, present, future (over time), and place (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998).

According to Clandinin and Connelly, in order to truly "experience an experience" (1998, p. 50), it is necessary to both experience it and to ask questions along these dimensions. The researcher must question, examine and develop field texts, explore interpretations and write a "research text that addresses both personal and social issues by looking both inward and outward, and addresses temporal issues by looking not only to the event but to its past and to its future" (1998, p. 50). Research texts were written for each participant as narrative inquiry values individual voice that produces themes that cannot be generalised across participants or to the greater population.

Neilsen's critical lens

Neilsen's (1998) questions provide a critical lens through which to examine the data, specifically the research texts. Her questions include:

> What cultural myths do these texts reproduce? What gender stereotypes do they reinforce or disrupt? ... Whose perspectives are unvoiced or silenced? ...Which assumptions are tacit, ... without thought to their effects on certain individuals, groups, or populations? ...How are each of these texts political? What power does each have and how is that power enacted or enforced? (1998, p. 252).

Ethics

There were a number of ethical issues that needed to be considered (see Appendix one for the Massey University Ethics Approval letter). They are outlined below.

Risk of harm

According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), considering the relationship with participants in narrative research is paramount. The participants and I could be affected negatively during the research process.

Participants

Participants may have felt uncomfortable sharing parts of their narratives. Because the interviews were semi-structured, participants may have felt uncomfortable or upset if the interview had gone in a direction that they didn't expect, or if I had interpreted a narrative from

a perspective that the participant did not agree with. Participants may have felt that they were not able to stop an interview, or withdraw as a result of discomfort. Because the interviews were conducted via Skype, there was also a possibility that participants may have felt alone and unsupported during the interview process.

Possible strategies

Initially, clear information about the process was provided. Sensitivity in interviewing techniques, for example allowing time for silence and space, was one strategy that was used. The option to invite support people to be present during interviews meant that the participants felt more confident to express their opinion. Participants were invited to freely write about how the experience was going via personal reflective journals, where they were encouraged to explore their own narratives more deeply. Participants had control over the direction of the conversations and the gathering of field texts, and could edit and add information. A mediator was included in the support structure of the project. Ms. Tania Tait is known to all the participants. In the event of needing to talk on a confidential basis, from general feedback to options regarding withdrawing from the project, Tania was available as an impartial mediator/support person.

Researcher

I may have experienced high levels of stress, due to the level of attention that was necessary to give in terms of developing relationship and communication skills. When viewing the narratives from a critical pedagogy perspective, there was a risk that I could have upset or alienated family members through findings that participants disagreed with. I may have felt reluctant to discuss

sensitive aspects of the participants' narratives, because of the ongoing nature of relationships with participants.

Possible strategies

Outlining feelings as part of the reflective journal was an integral part of the project. Research journals provided a space for me to explore and maintain the sensitive and empathetic manner needed to communicate effectively with participants. I could have shared my own research journal with participants, to show this was a process we were all going through and that I was not emotionally removed from or judging of the process. Ongoing conversations with supervisors and support people were important for me to maintain during this research. Johanna Visser agreed to be a support person to provide guidance to me, should any of the above situations have occurred.

Informed and voluntary consent

Information was given to participants via email and through Skype discussions. Information sheets, consent forms, unedited transcripts and journals were emailed (Appendices two and three consist of the Information Sheet and sample consent form). Further questions or points that needed clarification were explained through informal discussions and emails between me and the participants.

Privacy/Confidentiality issues

Because the participants were family members, there were issues surrounding confidentiality. I did not give out any information that identified participants to anyone else, but it was necessary to highlight to participants that they may be able to be identified. This was done through the

information and consent forms. Participants were asked to provide a pseudonym, and their faces were removed from the photos to prevent identification.

Conflict of role/interest

Participants had control over all parts of the gathering and discussion of their own narratives, transcripts and field texts, until the point of analysis and final write-up. It was important that I pre-empted problem situations by engaging in ongoing self-reflection and discussion with participants. Reflective journals, and support people were important strategies in this process.

Cultural considerations

Two of the participants are of Māori descent. Narrative research creates inclusive spaces where shared understandings can be negotiated. Historically there have been tensions surrounding Pākehā 'doing' research 'on' Māori (Penetito, 2010), so the use of participatory research methods allows for different ways of doing and looking at things. Maintaining effective and ongoing communication is a key feature of narrative research. Participants were given the opportunity to invite support people to the interviews. This was because the interviews were conducted via Skype so the researcher was not present in person, and also to ensure that participants felt supported. The act of situating oneself through narrative ensures that the integrity and voices of the participants are valued. Finally, I sought advice and guidance regarding cultural protocols and ways of doing that needed to be observed as part of the narrative collection process. Rangi Dansey served as an advisor in providing guidance around observing protocol. Before interviews were conducted, he was provided with the participants' information sheets and the interview schedule outlining the research process, with the intention that he provide advice with regards to proceedings, which he did.

The research process

Because I currently live outside of Aotearoa/New Zealand, data collection had a high reliance on electronic and internet technologies. Conversations were held over the internet telephony service Skype, and were recorded using the programme Litecam HD. Interviews were transcribed by myself, and edited by participants. Transcripts were typed using Microsoft Word, to facilitate ease of editing, and sent via email.

Interviews and reflections

Evelyn, Minnie and I had two interviews instead of the proposed three (Seidman, 2013). We had covered both knitting in the past and the present through the first interview, and combined with the reflections that participants wrote before and after the first interview, created a large amount of data that adequately covered Seidman's proposal for the first two interviews (see Appendix 4 for examples of interview questions). The reflections showed participants had later developed deeper meanings from the conversations, making a third conversation unnecessary. This data from the first interviews and reflections involved discussion of individuals knitting 'time-lines'. The second interviews focused on (re)examining interpretations and eliciting more depth from previous conversations, and considering implications of the process thus far. Minnie and Evelyn submitted three reflections and many photos. Participants checked and edited all of their work. The reflections, especially participants' comments on the process, generated data that was rich and relevant to the interviews and research questions. Minnie submitted her reflections and field texts in hand-written form, which I typed and sent to her for correcting. Because I submitted written 'interviews', my pieces tended to be a combination of answering the interview questions and reflecting simultaneously. Pixie, as the youngest participant, and

the only one who doesn't knit, participated in one interview, and submitted two pieces of writing, along with photos. Her age and experiences with knitting meant that a different, shorter approach was appropriate.

The interviews were conducted later than anticipated in the schedule. Interview 1 with Minnie, Evelyn and me occurred at the beginning of July, 2014. The second round of interviews were held in late August, 2014. Pixie's interview took place last, at the beginning of October, 2014.

Field texts

Participants all contributed field texts, predominantly photos. Evelyn submitted numbered pictures with an explanatory key. Minnie sent photos that her husband had added titles to, and Pixie assumed that I knew what all her photos were of so supplied minimal explanation. The pictures were mostly showed participants and their families wearing knitted garments. Minnie also sent pictures of knitted garments on clothes hangers. For the final thesis, only images of the participants were included in the research texts, and their heads were removed from the photos to prevent identification. Other field texts consisted of knitting patterns, notably Granny's slipper pattern and the Wallace and Gromit jersey pattern. None of the participants chose to submit memory squares, so there is no knitted representation of this research.

Data Analysis

First and second levels of data analysis: The research texts

Tensions existed when developing research texts in terms of respecting the narratives and the relationships with participants, while at the same time considering purpose and audience. The conversations were held in consideration of creating Clandinin and Connelly's three-dimensional

inquiry space (2000). Questions were asked about place, identity, and the future. Consequently, the three-dimensional space considering place, looking inwards/outwards, and forwards/backwards was evident in the field texts. This guided me in identifying themes and organising the field texts into research texts. The major themes across all participants were identity, relationships, place, technology, economics, and the future. These themes were identified through the three-dimensional space, and were evident in each of the research texts. To clarify, the themes of identity and relationships encompassed both looking inwards and outwards. Economics and technology sat comfortably into thinking about the past, present and future. Place stayed the same. All of the participants chose to discuss each at some point in their interviews and reflections, although this was not deliberate on my part. I was not trying to create generalisable themes, preferring to let them grow on their own. While each theme did come up for each participant, certain themes seemed to be more important to different people. The influence of economics featured strongly in Evelyn's narrative and relationships in Minnie's; whereas identity appears in my narrative, and belonging, in Pixie's narrative.

The Findings and Discussion chapters are organised into three levels of data analysis. The first level consists of the four research texts, which were edited by the participants, and here their involvement with the project ended. The second level of data analysis addresses the first two research questions - because the questions are specifically about participants' perspectives, a synthesis of parts of the research texts was developed. Here I outlined specific participant's viewpoints, to avoid generalising and therefore reducing their experiences, in keeping with the spirit of narrative research. The third level data involves addressing the third and final research question.

Connecting the research texts to the learning environment

Initially the aim was to use Neilsen's (1998) critical questions (p. 38), which she designed with specific learners in mind. When conducting the analysis, the three research questions themselves provided a more appropriate structure. This does not mean that Neilsen's questions were not addressed. In the third level of data analysis, the aim was to link the narratives, while considering connections to the literature, to how they might influence critical pedagogical practice.

This shift from Neilsen's work came about as I struggled to take a critical approach to the narratives themselves because they are the authentic experiences of the participants. This process is about the self-empowerment of participants to make new discoveries about themselves through re-examining their experiences. The narrative process did involve the acknowledgement of how each participant's experiences aligned with, or differed from, dominant discourses. Through examining answers to the research questions, Neilsen's questions are also addressed. For example, 'whose value systems do these texts represent', (1998, p. 252) is part of looking at the values of the participants in research question two. The political aspect is covered through looking at how the narratives can inform critical pedagogical practice, a highly political act. Discussion of the stereotypes surrounding knitting and those who knit has also occurred. So through answering the research questions, Neilsen's questions have also been addressed.

Ethics

Ethics permission was sought for this project, and was given by the Massey University Ethics Committee (see Appendix 1). Despite all the potential issues and risks that were identified, no

problems arose. None of the participants felt that they needed to call the designated support person. Rangi Dansey consulted with Minnie regarding Māori protocol, and she articulated to him that she was very happy and comfortable with the process as it was outlined to her in the information sheet; no further considerations were necessary. As mentioned earlier, the two older participants both involved their husbands in helping them with the process; they were both present during the interviews. In their written reflections, all participants consistently expressed how much they had enjoyed being involved in the research project.

Reflective thoughts on the research process

Minnie referred to being Māori when discussing feminism, but she did not discuss being Māori in the conversations about self identity, or knitting identities. I wondered whether knitting, as a Pākehā craft, had replaced Māori arts and crafts, but didn't ask this; I wanted to avoid having an interviewer's agenda. I wanted to discover whether Minnie thought it was relevant. She didn't include any explanation of this, and perhaps this was because we have discussed it in the past, or that it is part of the taken-for-grantedness of our relationship. Maybe she didn't think it was relevant.

The men in our lives are involved with our knitting, aside from just wearing it. In Evelyn and Minnie's interviews, their husbands were present, helping with the technical aspects of Skype, recording the interviews, and later scanning and sending files and pictures. Minnie's husband helped to organise and show Minnie's garments, Evelyn's husband contributed his own comments, and my husband spends time finding out about knitting traditions and purchasing us yarn from overseas. They are great supporters of our knitting.

Limitations

Perhaps because I am related to the participants the narratives were different to what they would be if I were not. The participants may have assumed or taken for granted that I know something so they might not have explained it fully. I encouraged participants to explain in detail what they were discussing, but at times I did not raise certain topics because I wanted participants to shape the direction of their narratives themselves. The narratives reflect what the participants thought was important.

The number of participants involved could also be a limitation. The involvement of only four participants generated a massive amount of data, because of the use of narrative inquiry. But the data can't be generalised to a larger population, and stands as the experiences of four specific people. However, ideas were developed that are also relevant and accessible for other educators, based on what I have learned from this research. However, this research is centred on the experiences of women; how male learners experience education is possibly completely different, and is not considered in this study.

This chapter outlined the research design and what happened during the research process. While the project ran smoothly, changes were made based around my new learning about the narrative process. The next chapter includes the research texts of each of the four participants, and findings from these texts are presented, addressing the first two research questions.

Chapter Four: Findings

First level of data analysis:

The first level of data analysis consists of four research texts, one for each participant. These were developed according to the narrative inquiry process of creating a three-dimensional space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), and are based around the themes of looking inwards and outwards (identity, relationships), backwards and forwards (time, economics, technology, the future), and place, as outlined in the Methodology chapter. In this way the research texts are constructed from the interviews, field texts and reflections provided by the participants.

Evelyn

Time and place

"The 1940s were a time of uncertainties. The World War was affecting everyone's lives. The country was still recovering from the depression of the 1930s. I grew up in a different age". Evelyn was born in 1937 in the Wellington city suburb of Miramar. Miramar was like a village, in terms of size, and of connections between people. Her mother visited 'town' (central Wellington) regularly, to pay the bills, and for a time Evelyn went with her because her mother found her interesting company (she talked a lot), until she was about ten. Her Mum believed that it was important to buy good quality clothes so they would last longer. As a child Evelyn mostly knitted at the dining room table; as a primary school teacher, while on duty walking around the playground; and at home after dinner while watching TV.

Economics

Figure 3: The twinset

The most significant factor that Evelyn talks about in terms of her experiences growing up, her perspective as an adult, and her connection with knitting, is economic. The first garment that Evelyn knitted was a twinset (Fig. 3), made from a garment that a neighbour had donated, and one which she had to unravel in order to recycle the wool. She did not like the result, but out of necessity had to wear it for the next three winters. Evelyn felt "imposed upon" having to knit the twinset, and thought they were "horrible" garments, because of the colours; brown, fawn and yellow. At times Evelyn had to be encouraged to knit by her mother, to finish things, and she resented this. She would have rather been doing embroidery or other crafts, but there was no opportunity to and knitted clothes were what people needed. Scraps of material and things that could be used for craft were put aside to use for patching holes and repairing, like the coats and dresses that her mother sewed for them. Nothing was wasted. When her mother knitted, she knitted sleeves from the top down, so that when the elbows wore out, they could be undone and re-knitted. Necessity meant simpler and more frugal lives. People didn't own many clothes, and all of Evelyn's clothes fitted into one small drawer in her bedroom; three cotton dresses, "something for best", and a jersey. In terms of other leisure activities, economics again was a dominating factor. Evelyn could go to the library and take out one book, but the library was a half hour walk away and by the next day she would need another book. She wasn't allowed to play in the street, and until she won some in a colouring competition, Evelyn didn't own any coloured pencils. Besides, her mother didn't like her reading books, and thought that embroidery was a waste of time. Evelyn was, however, allowed to knit. Everyone was in the same situation when Evelyn was young, and despite of, or because of this economic hardship, she was always grateful for what she had.

While at times she wanted to complain about the situation, she now feels lucky for the opportunities she had; they were greater than those that her parents had, as children before her.

As an adult with young children and a husband at university, Evelyn knitted for a newly formed local company. She did this to bring in some extra income, for something to do, and to support the neighbour who set up the company. Producing three jerseys a week on the knitting machine paid for food and housekeeping costs.

Relationships

Evelyn's first knitted garments as a baby were knitted by her mother. Evelyn's mother did not enjoy knitting; it was too slow, and she had not learnt to knit until she was an adult. So her mother encouraged her to knit all her own garments from when she was ten. Evelyn remembers that as a child her home was not a happy one. Her parents were not well educated and her mother especially tried to compensate for this by being meticulous about appearance, so people would think she was a good mother. Evelyn feels that her mother tried her best with the skills she had, but the household was joyless. Evelyn is thankful that her parents believed that education "was a way to higher things". She was first taught to knit by one of her aunties, when she was four, but at that age was not very successful. When another aunty helped her two years later, Evelyn was proudly able to produce a hot water bottle cover for herself, and other things for the family.

Evelyn looked up to her paternal grandmother, who lived in Christchurch. Evelyn describes Granny as a "quiet", "unassertive", and clever woman, with a lovely smile and a twinkle in her

Figure 4: Evelyn in a Granny knit

eyes. Evelyn remembers the times Granny visited, because they always went on daily trips to places, for example the zoo and art gallery. If Evelyn commented on something that she liked, her Granny would buy it for her. Evelyn also visited Granny in Christchurch annually with her family. Granny was always crafting. She knitted for all her grandchildren (see Evelyn in a Granny cardigan, Fig. 4). Evelyn's mother didn't like Granny knitting for her girls, as they would be wearing the same clothes as their cousins. Granny was a prolific reader, she "worked in educational books" and had read every book in the Opawa library. Evelyn liked staying there as she was allowed to read her book while eating cheese, at the table. This is still one of her little pleasures.

Identity

Economics strongly influenced Evelyn's young identity. She had few choices in terms of leisure activities, as children at the time were seen as not being important. When talking about Fig. 5, Evelyn described herself as a lonely and unfulfilled child (she is wearing the last knitted garment that her mother made for her). There seemed little point in wishing to be doing anything else, so she didn't. The opportunity to learn the piano instead became an important part of Evelyn's life, and identity as a person, mother, and teacher. In a different life, Evelyn would have liked to be an opera singer, but the chance to do this was nonexistent, as her mother thought that people

Figure 5: Evelyn in a jersey knitted for her by her mother

who performed in the theatre and on the stage were immoral. While knitting for Evelyn was initially born out of necessity, she enjoyed it and has continued knitting throughout her life. Economics also influences Evelyn when she is not knitting. Currently she is not knitting as she doesn't need anything. She has already been given two jerseys this year and doesn't know if she will ever be able to wear them out. "You can't keep knitting if your clothes haven't worn out".

Evelyn struggled to figure out how she fitted into her family, wondering how it could be that she wasn't adopted, she was so different. They saw her mother's side of the family often. They were working class farming people and Evelyn did not relate to them. On her father's side, however, they were the "poor relations" - his family had come from a higher social class, and as a result were generally better educated and had had more opportunities in life. This project prompted Evelyn to do some research into her Granny's origins and family, and she made a surprising discovery.

> My Granny was one person that I looked up to, especially knitting-wise, so I thought that I would look more into her background. What an amazing surprise!!!!! I discovered that her father had been a notable opera singer. I had thought that in another life that was what I would like to be. At last in my extended family there was someone that I could relate to. Now I could see where I belonged!

Evelyn adds that it would have been wonderful to have made this discovery as a teenager, as she would have felt "more confident in my skin". But better late than never, Evelyn has realised that she is "not a freak after all". This has made the world of difference.

Knitting has correlated with the different roles Evelyn has played throughout her life. She knitted for herself in childhood and as a young woman, for her father (after Granny died in 1961), for her husband, and as a mother of four. Considering gender roles, Evelyn married a man who was happy to share workload and domestic chores. Consequently, she stayed home with the children because, as a primary school teacher, she didn't want to teach children all day and then come home to her own. Similarly, for Evelyn as a mother, knitting after dinner remained an ongoing choice, something that she enjoyed. As an adult, Evelyn had more choice over what she knitted as a greater variety of patterns and yarns became available. Consequently she enjoyed knitting for her children, and being able to combine practicality with the creativeness of fashion in her knitting. "We knitted things to wear but we knitted things we liked the pattern of and that were fun". Evelyn feels that knitted clothes are more practical than shop bought ones, and have the added benefit of being able to custom fit garments to the intended wearer. Now Evelyn embroiders more as she feels young people don't want knitted jerseys. Evelyn hopes her attention to knitting fashionable yet practical garments shows that she is an interesting and creative person.

The future

Contrary to the past, Evelyn finds she is unconcerned about trends in fashion. Shops are all geared towards the young. Not many people knit or wear jerseys - we live in a throwaway society where people own a lot of stuff. This impacts us in many ways - new houses have large walk-in wardrobes in which to put all the clothes we now own. Evelyn notes that there is a wide range of fabrics and knitting yarns to choose from and children can participate in swimming lessons or whichever activities they choose. She remains confident that the skills she learnt in

the past out of necessity will be invaluable in a future where there could be big economic changes, resulting in people returning to living the way they did in the past.

Minnie

Relationships

Minnie begins writing by naming her mother's brothers and sisters. Of the ten women in her Mum's family, only her mother didn't knit. She embroidered instead. Minnie's Grandmum taught her to knit when she was eight. Grandmum had a stitch, "Grandmum's scarf stitch", that was easy to remember: "wool forwards slip stitch then cross". Minnie would often pick up her Grandmum's knitting and do some, but Grandmum would have to undo it because their stitches were so different, although she never said anything. The family knitted together - they knitted for everyone and handed down knitted garments to everyone, not just their own children.

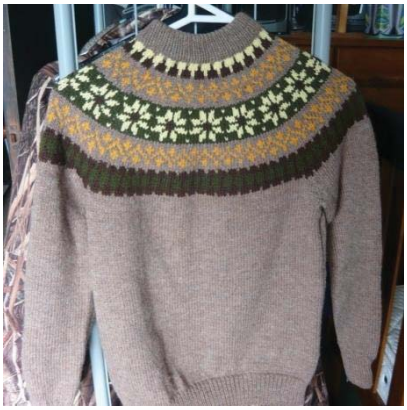


Figure 6: Yoke jersey

Minnie remembers all her cousins, even the girls, singing and playing the guitar - while she knitted. Knitting is special because you can do it with others - "Drink tea, sing and gossip". Minnie recalls knitting with one of her aunties, who, as a young woman during World War I, knitted (mostly socks) for the soldiers, and sung Scottish knitting songs she had learnt at school. Minnie's paternal grandmother (whom she did not know well until her teens) was a constant knitter who carried her knitting with her as she walked. An aunty always said that television would be the death of needlework, and had a special chair set up so she could knit while watching TV. This aunty also helped Minnie, when she was making a jersey with a yoke design (Fig. 6); Aunty knitted the yoke for Minnie.

Everyone wore hand knitted garments, even though store-bought ones were available. The berets and scarves worn as part of the school uniform all had to be hand knitted. Minnie remembers nuns in Irish films making comments about girls who were so poor that they had to

have hand knits - she felt sorry for children who *didn't* have anyone to knit for them. Having knitted garments was a sign of being loved and cared for. There were children around who wished that their mothers did knit.

Minnie considers her knitting to be plain, simple, yet practical. She loves knitting but has never tried to improve her skills like she has with other things, like gardening and cooking. Now Minnie's children are grown-up, some with grandchildren of their own, only her eldest daughter knits. Minnie still has things on the needles because of her shared interest with her daughter, who finishes things. Minnie has a large wool stash, but regularly goes to fairs and markets to source old patterns and cheap wool.

Knitting with others meant that help was there when needed. At secondary school, girls were 'apprenticed' to a nun who would instruct them in a new craft project each term, knitting included (Form 3, term 2). Minnie knitted a scarf in a pattern that looked like weaving. All the girls who were boarders knitted, to "stave off boredom or insanity or both", and was a social activity. Minnie's friend, who lived down the road and attended the same school, was a prolific knitter, turning out a garment a week. Minnie had forgotten how much fun she used to have at her house, and commented on how lovely it has been to think about all the people involved, specifically the girls at school, and her grandmothers.

Place

Minnie was born in Hawera, but began life living on her grand-parents farm in Oeo. Oeo was a small community of farms mostly owned by her family - each farm surrounding Minnie's grandparents farm was owned by a relative. Oeo had a school, a hall, a river, and the Pa. As well

as being surrounded by farms, Minnie was surrounded by family. Nearing the end of the war, not everybody was there. Her Dad was serving, along with many of her Uncles and cousins. The young women were also away, they went to Wellington, to jobs in the factories. To support them, her Aunty and Uncle, "who had the farm at the back", bought a house where all the young people could live "so they didn't have to go into hostels". In Oeo, Minnie's mother worked on the farm while her Grandmother looked after all five of the little children.

People mostly knitted at home, in kitchens and lounges, where families gathered, or in the homes of relatives and friends, as knitting was portable, more so than embroidery. Because Minnie went to a school where there were boarders, a lot of her teenage knitting occurred there too. At meetings many women knitted, for example, in the women's division of Federated Farmers. Minnie's father used to feel uncomfortable when women would take out their knitting when he spoke. She thinks he would have rather that they got out pencils and notebooks. Consequently, Minnie didn't knit at meetings.

Economics

In the post-war years, nobody had much money. People knitted because it was economical, and because hand knitted garments lasted for generations; they were treasured and passed down. Post-war housewives became valued for their ability to be thrifty, saving things from fabric and yarn scraps, to butter paper, brown paper, bits of string, and pins. Minnie's Aunty was an expert at this; she was thrifty and creative with scraps. This need to be extremely economical resulted in a competitive atmosphere in housewifely skills, and gossip around who had them and who didn't. Minnie likens it to the Biblical quote about a "good woman" that was often read at weddings, and wonders why women ever got "brainwashed into this manure?" In the sixties and

seventies Minnie remembers that factory produced garments were accessible and cheap. People could now afford to buy more clothes more often, and changing fashions encouraged this. People consequently wore clothes that were more similar to each other, and people fitted in. Minnie's sister-in-law used to knit the most beautiful things, but often would undo finished garments in order to make something else - to continue knitting as she couldn't afford the wool each time. When her mother-in-law knitted for her (Fig. 7), Minnie always bought the wool.

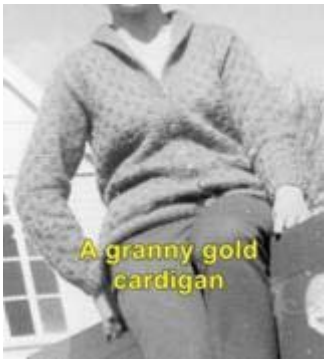


Figure 7: A Granny gold cardigan

Economics was also why Minnie knitted for her own children. She thinks that there are two kinds of knitters, two strands. The first is the practical: make it yourself in order to save money, and secondly the aesthetic or artistic, who produces "beautiful not necessarily practical things to show you were accomplished and a lady of reasonable means". Although Minnie knits because she enjoys it, she considers herself the practical kind; she never tried to improve her skills over the years.

Identity

People are an important part of Minnie's identity. Knitting is a "connection with the past, part of the family, part of the culture, with all those people" - her people were/are ordinary people who are "disappearing from the earth". They are reflected through her being homely, pleasant, and a person with her feet on the ground. Knitting was one of the "things that women do", and for Minnie, one of the things women did together. Knitting together was relaxing. People were happy to be together, and supported each other in their tasks. Minnie thinks there are correlations here with the classroom. Her involvement with knitting connects her identity with women who also knitted - she is one of them, and makes the connection to the past. Most of

the women she identified with have passed away. Now, she wants to knit for the babies in the family but is adamant that knitting and roles are not related - she knits because she likes to -she has bought knitted things for some babies rather than knit for them. "Because I'm a grandmother, I don't have to do grandmothery things". Minnie never felt compelled to knit *because* she was female, as she took plenty of opportunities to participate in other activities as well. Knitting for her is an ongoing, conscious choice. She concedes that if she were a boy she wouldn't have knitted because none of the boys around did. However, Minnie never felt that she shouldn't knit, even with the arrival of the feminist movement in the late sixties, where Minnie followed women's progress with interest. She agreed with the theories that men and women needed to be equal under the law, but held strong anti-abortion beliefs that limited her involvement with activities and protests. These beliefs, Minnie maintains, don't come from being Māori, or Catholic. She struggles with the idea that women gained power, only to use it against the most defenceless in society. Yet Minnie didn't feel any tension between her feminist beliefs and her life in reality. Feminists at the time never knitted, and Minnie did. These two lives were separate in Minnie's mind. While needlework was important in women's lives in the past, and while she loved all the crafts they learnt to such a high level at school, Minnie would rather have been studying Maths and Science. This process, she notes, has been enlightening because it highlighted while she thought she was "knitting in isolation", she realises that her knitting is connected to current issues: gender, cultural (Irish nuns), historic (war knitting), and bonding (family/peer groups). Minnie's house is a depository for all the family's knitted things, like a knitted historical library. She stockpiles wool and patterns, and thinks that people probably see her as being a bit "nutty". She prefers the term eccentric.

The present and future

Minnie knows of few people who still knit, and even fewer who wear hand knits. In retirement, she feels no pressure to finish anything like she did in the past. She knits purely for enjoyment; it makes her happy. Minnie has returned to a simpler way of life, one that connects more to her past. They grow vegetables, make bread, recycle, and don't buy things that they don't need. Her connection to the past, where people did this out of necessity, is also a connection to the future; it recognises sustainability, and shows respect for the environment. Minnie feels comfortable in this familiar place. Actually, she says, maybe she's a pioneer.

Me

Identity

Figure 8: When I arrived there were already knitted garments ready for me

I was born in Wellington in 1972 (Fig. 8) and was taught to knit by my mother when I was eight. This was nothing eventful; she taught both my brothers and my sister to knit as well. I think my mother liked to keep us engaged and busy, a habit that has stayed with me until today.

I have no need to knit, and do so because I enjoy it. I identify myself as being 'a knitter', belonging to a global group of knitters, and descended from a line of women who knitted and crafted. This is important to me, being a knitter means something - I have people to knit *for.* I'm proud of the things I've knitted, mistakes and all. I sometimes knit things because I'm curious – they are interesting garments, not necessarily functional, or they use an interesting technique or stitch. Contrary to the past, being a knitter is something that makes me different. Knitting is relaxing, serene, a comfortable connection to the past and the present. It's like tea, toast, soup, and pyjamas. I knit as the world moves - my connection with knitting has gotten stronger even through times when women had rejected knitting. Now it's a bit cool in a subversive way. I knit to protest the overconsumption of inferior store bought clothes. Now there is a tension between being a knitter and being a consumer, buying mass produced garments. As a knitter, I'm also a consumer, just of different things - materials instead of finished products. The year after I learnt to knit I was diagnosed with epilepsy, and spent a lot of time waiting in hospital corridors. Maybe this is why Mum encouraged me to knit. As a teenager, I knitted less in the lounge with the family and more in the sanctuary of my room, knitting to music. Pink Floyd and

Queen's Greatest Hits. I felt that I didn't have much control over my life as a young person. Epilepsy contributed to this, because of the randomness of seizures, and the subsequent parental restrictions that were put in place. My memories of knitting while I was at home are solitary ones. During my teens I rarely told people that I knitted - I often was on the receiving end of laughter or derisive comments. Knitting was being backward, simpleminded, what old ladies did, and not for the modern woman. I was never interested in the business world, I thought it was too intense, intimidating and unlike me, so I kept on knitting, in opposition so to speak. Knitting really helped during my painful menstrual cramps, so I kept knitting. Pixie was born when I was 20. I knitted for her, but I don't remember exactly what. Others knitted for her too, especially Mum. In the first half of my life, knitting was waiting, pain, teenage angst, and discomfort. I don't feel this way anymore: I'm happy, I'm not sick, I don't feel alone, and although it often seems I am a lone knitter, having other people to knit for means I am not knitting alone. Change came along.

Thinking about gender, I had plenty of choices in what activities and hobbies I did. I don't feel I knitted because I'm female; other people saw it as a female activity and that is one aspect of knitting that I now relate to. We shifted when I was ten, and everything was strange and new. New relatives arrived, my great-Aunty being one of them. She commented that my stitches were very even. I figured that this was probably a compliment, and wondered why if you were going to say something nice, why the evenness of one's stitches was so important. Now, I can see that she was probably raised in a time when the neatness of girls' handiwork was considered a good sign of other things.

My garments don't always turn out how I imagined, or sometimes they don't suit me. I give them away or put them in a drawer, intending to adjust them later, and move on to the next thing. I'm knitting out of interest rather than necessity. I knitted my husband a big cable cardigan with a shawl collar years ago, out of possum wool. We call it the Hugh Heffner cardy. It's too hot for him to wear even in Christchurch. Most of it I knitted poolside when the kids went to swimming lessons a few times a week. Women passing by made the most interesting comments. Many loved the fact I knitted and wished they had never stopped or that they weren't able to knit such a difficult pattern. One was convinced that because the wool was so fine that I'd never finish it. She would never knit *that*. I was unused to strangers supporting or talking to me about knitting. I knitted at many children's activities, but I also knitted at home in from of the television, and while having philosophical discussions with my family.

Figure 9: My favourite cardigan

Relationships

Our knitting life centred round one person: Mum. Everything knitted for me that I remember was knitted by Mum. I like my six year old school photo (Fig. 9), in which I'm wearing a big grin and a brown 70's Fair Aisle cardy with a shawl collar. Mum knitted for me until I was fourteen, when she encouraged me to do my own. When I started Intermediate School in 1983, kids that wore hand knitted school jerseys stood out as being different. I hoped that my mother would not do this to me, I was trying to avoid looking too homespun. Thankfully (to my eleven year old

self), she bought me a second hand one instead. Cheap imports of clothes into NZ changed the hearts and minds of youth.

Thinking of knitting and relationships now, my husband and children are first in my mind. There's nothing like knitting for an appreciative wearer. My daughter in particular, I have knitted for regularly for a long time. The first garment I remember making for Pixie was when she was 3 - I found a simple pattern with a roll neck. She chose the wool, the brightest most variegated yarn she could find. When she was 16 she did the same thing with her hair! Maybe it's all connected. I've tried out lots of different things for her; I'd never knitted socks before I made a pair for Pixie (Fig. 10). The sock yarn in New Zealand is all variegated and turns into miraculously stripy socks. Pixie loves them. I have knitted a number of pairs for her; she wears them all the time because they go with everything. And they don't seem to have worn out yet. I think I've knitted more for an adult Pixie than I did for her as a child. Maybe it's something to do with trying to figure out the adult Pixie. Trying to find different patterns that she will wear and love and that will continue to suit her has been fun.

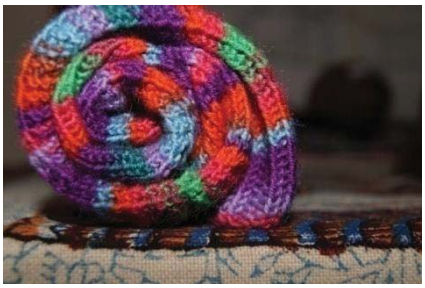


Figure 10: Pixie's socks

The other notable jersey that lots of people wore was the skull jersey (Figs. 11, 12). Because it's hard to substitute yarn, the size didn't really work. The body was too short and the sleeves long. While I made it for my son, Pixie and I both wore it, and Minnie has threatened to steal it. My family think that my knitting belongs to all of them - I love this sense of belonging.

Figures 11, 12: Pixie and Dodge selfies

When my husband travels for work, he always spends time buying locally made yarn. The women in the shops are amused that he would spend so much time in a wool shop. He knows a lot about yarns now, another way knitting connects us all. I have a huge yarn stash here in Bahrain as a result of his travels.

Economics

Having choices affects the way I see knitting. Because I don't have to knit out of necessity, and I can choose yarns from around the world, I have become a consumer of knitting-related products. I'm not unravelling garments and recycling the yarn. I'm not even buying locally anymore; living in Bahrain has put a stop to that. Although I have all the yarns in the world to choose from, some yarns I don't buy - I can't justify the cost and it's more expensive than buying something readymade. Thinking about this made me consider my life from my position of privilege as a white, middle-class woman, and how the places I go and the way I see things, even the way I buy yarn, come from this viewpoint. This is new thinking for me. There is a new tension, between knitting being looked down on in a stereotypical way, and that of economic privilege. I know things have changed because as a child we hardly ever actually bought clothes. Now it's different, whenever I feel like it or see something I like (or that fits).

Future

I'm becoming more aware of ethics, and I feel I need to *do* more, than just reading and writing about it. I should be knitting for premature babies, or for people who need it more than me, but I haven't yet. I admire the ongoing efforts of craftspeople who act in times of trouble and need, for example the morale-building crochet-covered container (Fig. 13) that appeared in Sumner after the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. Knitting may become a bigger part of a future where oil is costly and the current cheap production techniques become uneconomic. It's a survival skill that shouldn't be forgotten in case we ever need to rely upon it again.

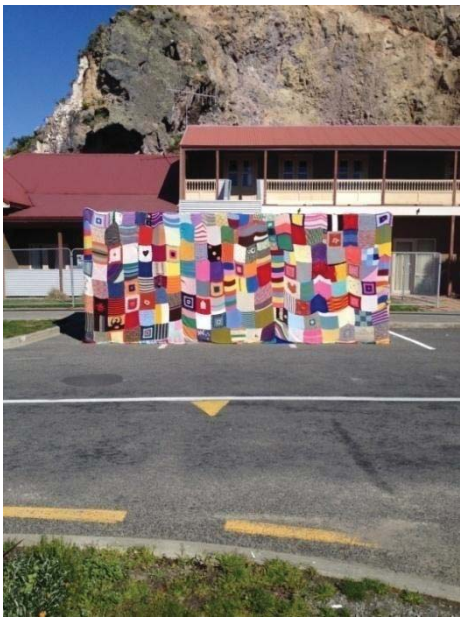


Figure 13: Knitting and crochet covered container, Sumner, 2012

Pixie

Place

Pixie was born in Auckland, in 1992. She moved to Christchurch when she was four, and identifies with growing up and living there.

Identity

Pixie was a child of the nineties, "I just remember ...playing in grass all the time, and I just feel there was no lack of outdoor time". She remembers "crazy trending obsessions among children", like Pokémon and Dragonball Z. These obsessions did not consume Pixie; she was involved in her own activities, especially swimming, guitar, and later, piano. Because she was busy, Pixie didn't always keep up with the trends; "I feel like a lot of stuff went by me", and, she notes, it wasn't like her parents were going to let her spend fifty dollars on Pokémon cards.

Figure 14: Pixie rollerblading in a Grandma jersey

Pixie remembers receiving lots of knitted garments - wearing them was normal. She interacts with knitting everyday; knitted things were as commonplace as any other clothes. Pixie always saw people knitting, and remembers wanting to learn how. However, she never remembers how to knit, and it's not from a lack of being taught. She remembers at the time, but on her own, forgets. Knitting appealed to Pixie the child - the nice thing about actually knitting was making something permanent, something of your own that wasn't made out of lego blocks. Pixie needed to "conquer knitting"; she likes to learn the basics of something, and then move on to the next thing. She observed that while there is a gendered aspect to knitting, that that wasn’t present at the time. She wasn't restricted to female-based activities, and participated in

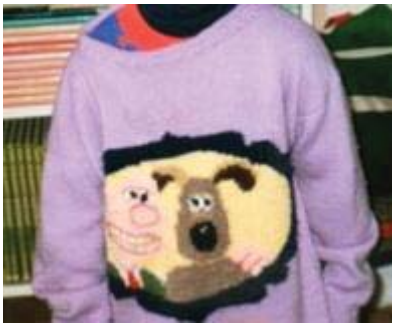


Figure 15: Pixie and the Wallace and Gromit jersey

a wide range of hobbies (Fig. 14). A memorable childhood jumper was the blue/grey fuzzy jumper; the "snugly at home jumper". Pixie also mentioned the infamous Wallace and Grommit jumper, knitted by her Grandma, and lost on the Picton ferry, many years ago (Fig. 15). The loss of this special garment is brought up frequently by family members, but barely remembered by Pixie, although she'd quite like one to wear now!

As a teenager, knitting wasn't cool, and Pixie didn't want to be seen wearing a jersey that was knitted by her Mum. Now, Pixie is a grateful receiver and wearer of knitted garments. She admires knitting, but is not keen to pick up the needles herself. She has studied fashion design, and wants to learn how to embroider. Her most used knitted items are her socks. They are easy to wear, and are odd colours that for some reason go with everything. She should wash them more but hand knits are difficult to care for. Pixie notes that people wouldn't mind hand washing an expensive dress, but that knitted garments don't have that same monetary value, they have a different kind of value. "Knitting is probably one of the few things that had sentimental value before I even received it". To Pixie, store bought knits look cheap and poorly made when compared to hand knitted garments.

When discussing values and knitting, Pixie found it challenging to put together an answer. She believes herself to be a non-traditional person, and sees knitting as something that could reflect that. Knitting is wholesome, hurts nobody, and is positive and happy, whether it is traditional or not. Today, "it may even come down to me not knowing what my best values are". Knitting is an environmentally friendly activity. If local yarns are used then transport costs are lower. Pixie

doesn't dress like other young women and receives compliments about many of her knitted clothes, notably her grey legwarmers. People aren't surprised that she wears unusual clothes, they go with her unique fashion sense, and their reaction displays a look of "oh of course you would wear that". Now she thinks that knitting is a "cool craft", but considering what other people think, Pixie adds that "it really depends if people view knitting the same as you". From this project, Pixie observes that knitting is not just about knitting. She associates it with the people who knitted each garment, as well as belonging:

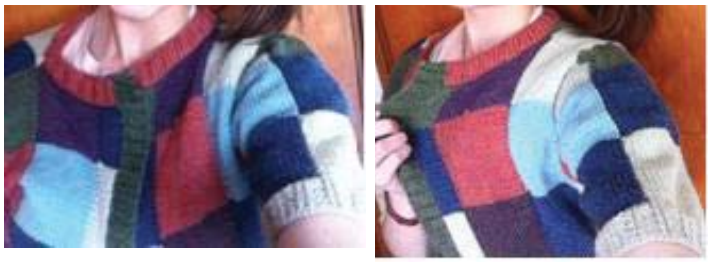
> Well I guess when I wear knitting I feel like, ...wearing a team jumper....I might as well be wearing a jumper that says "Webb Family, and Proud!" ...the members of your team actually got together and physically, thread by thread, made your damn jumper that's how much they like you to be in their team.... And it's an old-arse team, like you feel traditional ...people three hundred years ago were still wearing knitted things....It is like wearing a team jumper... but your team represents, your team is massive. Your team is history, your team is your family, your team is time, and love, and sentimental value... your team is environmentally friendly and cool. Your team is made by a sheep, with not a lot of ...processing to it... I'm part of the knitting team, even though I myself don't knit.

At the beginning of this project, Pixie was worried about participating. She didn't have much to offer because she didn't have enough experience; she isn't a knitter. Her answers wouldn't be good enough. It was a bit weird to be interviewed by her Mum, but Pixie was surprised that

she wrote and talked so much. She found the process relaxing and enjoyable, and ended up feeling empowered because she felt she was able to make a real contribution to the research.

Relationships

Knitting is a female activity, and a family activity. Pixie feels a strong connection to knitted garments because of her relationship with the people that knitted them: "You know that the person who gave it to you has sat there for hours making this. They've thought about you as they've made it, looked over those knitting patterns... from start to finish. There's so many hours...but you know that when you receive (it) that not one of those hours went by without that person thinking about you. It's just lovely". Pixie discusses her relationship with her Mum when it comes to knitting. She spent many hours in swimming training, after school and in the weekends, and she knows that for most of them, her Mum was sitting poolside, "just being damn patient and nice". While knitting is "an extremely lovely gesture", without it her relationship with her Mum would still be "pretty good"; "the knitting I've received wouldn't have happened without the relationship". Considering this relationship, Pixie doesn't specifically associate it with knitting. Pixie has always been the receiver and wearer of knitting, and hasn't had the experience of being the knitter, creating something, and then giving it to another person.



Figures 16, 17: Pixie's favourite cardigan. The pattern and wool were bought by Dad in Denmark, and knitted by Mum.

Economics

Pixie comes from a generation where cheap (and cheaply made) clothes are available, and indeed preferable. During the interview Pixie stands up and proudly models a $5 dress she has just purchased. "I love saving money by not paying full price for anything". Because the dress was so cheap, it means nothing, and is disposable. She writes an interesting analogy:

> I like to think of the comparison of a fire to a heater. A fire takes a while longer to get going but once done it lasts, it warms you through and through and in general is more pleasant to have around than a heater. A heater gives out instant warmth but the warmth is gone just as quickly as it appeared as soon as the heater is switched off, as well as being unremarkable in a room and is barely ever the main feature. To me, handmade knitting is the fire and mass produced knits are the heater.

Technology

The internet is important for knitters and other craftspeople; it is Pixie's main source for looking at knitting and crafts. For Pixie the internet is not only the present and the future, but also the past. She doesn't remember a time when she didn't have it - it's normal. The internet is her go-to for academic work and browsing for enjoyment. It's accessible and there is so much available. Knitters "can talk to someone from Iceland about what they knitted". There were aspects of knitting that Pixie didn't really think about before this project - the internet included. Because knitting isn't a necessity anymore, and people buy cheaper store bought garments, knitting has

a smaller public presence. Pixie wonders about this, how knitting appears to be shrinking, yet the internet has enabled the practice of knitting to grow globally.

Today and the future

Knitted garments are not frequently seen these days among adults, but Pixie notes that there always seems to be a demand for knitted clothes for babies and children. Some women she knows are always at the ready, waiting for anyone they know to announce a pregnancy so they can whip out their needles and knit for the baby. Perhaps this need will continue into the future. Thinking about knitting raised some interesting questions for Pixie. In her own words:

> I have knitted pretty basic pieces, I could pick up a cross stitch and fairly easily complete it. I've learned how to make felt in multiple ways, and can make a garment from scratch. I have done all these things and enjoyed all of them but still wouldn't consider or sell myself as a super crafty person, and I realised that if I think this way then what do people who grew up without a craft background and have completely different interests think or know about knitting? Can they fix a ripped seam? Could they sew on a button? I had never realised how easy it could be to just not have these interests in your life. I also realised that this is a pretty modern thought.

Pixie feels that knitting will become rarer in the future; it's easier to buy and care for machine knitted, mass produced pieces. She acknowledges the contradiction in terms of the growing presence of knitters on the internet. Knitting may be around for a while yet.

Second level of data analysis

The second level of data analysis addresses the first two research questions, focusing on the experiences and perspectives of the participants. The data presented in response to the first research question introduces ideas that are further developed in later research questions. The first question simply challenged participants to consider the place of knitting in their lives.

The second research question, discussing values, is organised within Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space. Interviews were conducted using the three-dimensional space as an underlying structure, themes that participants discussed easily fit into this space, and subsequently the organisation of this section. Looking inwards and outwards includes the themes of identity and relationships. Looking backwards and forwards incorporates economics (past and present) and technology. Place includes knitting communities and sites where knitting occurs.

Research question 1: What part does knitting play in our lives?

Knitting has varying levels of importance for each participant. While knitting is an important part of my life, Minnie and Evelyn note that knitting does not play a big role, and Pixie talks about knitting from the perspective of the wearer. Despite this perception of knitting having a small role, each of the participants wrote about, reflected on and discussed knitting for a considerable time. Knitting memories led to remembering and reminiscing, and became associated with other things, places, people, and feelings, as narratives evolved. As Pixie says, “knitting is not just about knitting”. Because of their relationship with knitting, participants became involved

with this project, for example. It might be only a small part of life but knitting has, for all participants, always been present, a constant throughout different life stages and different time periods. A key finding for Minnie was remembering how much happiness knitting has brought into her life, through remembering people with whom she knitted - times from the past that she hadn't thought about for a long time. The remembering and the knitting have made Minnie happy. In this context, knitting plays a bigger role in her life than Minnie thought it did.

To summarise, when thinking about knitting as only being about the act of doing (or wearing) knitting, most participants feel that it plays a minor role in their lives. Knitting is, after all, made up of only two stitches (Turney, 2009), and there is a lot more to life than knitting. Yet thinking about why we knit prompts thinking about other factors, like where and who we knitted with, economic necessity, and gender. When we think about how knitting relates to other things, it develops a more significant and permeating meaning, as discussed in the remaining two research questions.

Research question 2: What values are conveyed through our knitting?

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space allowed participants to consider broader values. This section utilises the space, focusing on participants' voices. Links to research are made when addressing the third research question.

Inwards and outwards

Identity values

The research texts show participants making connections between knitting and identity. Evelyn tried to knit garments that are fashionable and practical, portraying her as a creative and interesting person. There is, for Evelyn and myself, the enjoyment of a challenging knitting technique that develops our skills. Pixie sees wearing her knitted garments as part of her unique fashion look, again showing creativity and difference from her peers. A key discovery for Pixie was the empowerment that came from discovering that she had a valuable contribution to make through her narrative. Assuming that she is not a crafty person, Pixie surprised herself with the length and breadth of her narrative; she found she had much to offer. Knitting contributes to the way participants view themselves, from creating a unique personal appearance, to making discoveries about oneself.

I like the unique look that comes from knitted garments, but I also attribute the act of knitting to being part of my identity. I enjoy the fact that I *do* something differently from other people. At times, knitting has for me has been cathartic, and at other times knitting feels like a lovely meditation on the person that I am knitting for. Knitting is an activity that incorporates physical and mental learning. It is an embodied act, an action that leads to self-realisations. Minnie explains her values related to knitting and personal identity through how she sees herself. She considers herself to be a knitter of simple and practical garments, reflected through her self-image of a grounded, homely person, and connecting her to people and relationships that remind her of where she came from. Minnie's knitting style reveals how she perceives herself as a person and connects her to her sense of belonging. Minnie, Pixie and myself see the gendered aspect of knitting as positive rather than restrictive, through which we can be connected to

other women, whether related or not, in the past, present and future. In Pixie's words, "your team is massive". Gender creates a sense of belonging for participants. When feminism encouraged women to stop knitting, Minnie, Evelyn and I knitted anyway. Consequently, Minnie separated her knitting life from her feminist thinking. We still chose to knit because we enjoyed it. Knitting is/was relaxing and therapeutic, and for Evelyn, was a source of income.

The research texts show strong links for participants - from feeling deep connections to relatives from the past, to knitting as a reflective process, or seeing simply knitting as a fashion statement - participants outline a range of links between self-identity, and aspects of knitting.

Belonging and relationship values

Participants also connect personal identity with belonging somewhere; to a community, a family, a group. This connection seems to be greater across all narratives than that of self identity. It was more important to be part of, and realise that we belong, somewhere. For some participants that seeking and realising has taken longer than others.

Throughout life, Evelyn has not felt that she fitted in with her immediate family. Through thinking about her Granny for this research, Evelyn investigated more about her Granny's family. Evelyn's discovery of an ancestor who was an opera singer (Evelyn's dream in an alternate life) was a significant breakthrough in her perception of where she belonged, where she fitted in. She felt she had found her place. As an adult, I have discovered that my family see my knitting skills as being something that belongs to all of us, not just something that I do alone or for me. They are supportive and lovingly receive and wear garments I've knitted. Furthermore, they also select and purchase yarn and patterns with the expectation that I will

knit for them. This group ownership of my knitting skills is a key finding for me - I'd never thought about it like this. The importance of belonging comes out as a key value for all participants. Here is another contradiction. Evelyn, Pixie and I all knit and wear knitting partly to be seen as unique individuals. Yet, as Pixie beautifully describes, we fit into a team, albeit a team of knitters. As mentioned earlier, Minnie connects knitting and happiness to the family and friends with whom she knitted. In her experience, women knitted and crafted together. She explores how her knitting is an ordinary activity, but one that connects her to other ordinary people, who she identifies with and who were around her when she was growing up. Hence, the importance of belonging cannot be understated. The relationships that participants discussed, with their mothers, grandmothers, daughters and friends, have been important factors as to why we have knitted and worn knitted garments.

Place

Traditionally, knitting has principally occurred in the home. I am the only participant who has regularly knitted in public places. Considering knitting and the places where we knitted raises the idea that we learn things that are important to us at home, with family and friends, and more recently online; not only at school or university.

Communities

Modern clothing production techniques and the need for community have contributed to the development of internet knitting resources. Perhaps because there are now fewer people to learn from locally, global communities of knitters have proliferated online. There is a separation influenced by the ages of participants here. Evelyn and Minnie both mention the presence of knitting on the internet, but prefer more traditional ways of finding knitting resources. Minnie

has been buying old patterns from fairs and markets, and Evelyn has recently been revisiting her existing, vast collection of patterns. She has sent me some old patterns that evoke memories of the past. They have been added, along with Granny's slipper pattern, to the 'special pile'. In contrast, Pixie and I both rely heavily on the internet to access contemporary knitting and craft resources. The online knitting community is large and diverse, and offers choice. This is a move away from traditional ways of sharing knitting knowledge.

Past, present and future

Economic values

Our narratives reflect the massive economic changes that have occurred in Aotearoa/New Zealand and globally during the last seventy-five years. Evelyn and Minnie's narratives come from World War II/post-war era perspectives. Minnie discusses one perception of female identity in the 1950s as being the picture of the thrifty housewife, running a household where everything was saved to be cleverly reused. Evelyn notes that this had a big effect on her childhood identity. She couldn't make things - everything was repurposed. Nobody had surplus income, and the activities she was allowed to do were subsequently limited. Evelyn cites economics as being a key factor in her upbringing, influencing her choices and opportunities. Knitted garments were well constructed, often knitted in a fashion to make mending easier, and lasted for several winters. Sometimes they were made from recycled wool. In Minnie's family, knitted clothes lasted a long time as they were handed down to other children, or adults. Necessity resulted in sturdy garments that lasted a long time. This has changed in my lifetime. While store bought garments were available to Minnie and Evelyn, they were not the norm.

During the 1980s this situation reversed, and it became easier to buy mass-produced garments as they were cheaper. The development of the internet as a new global market has given me choices when it comes to finding yarns and patterns. Online stores are often cheaper than buying wool in New Zealand, so I have taken advantage of this. However, knitting clothes, no matter how easy it is to access resources, is not cheaper than buying them nowadays. Minnie's sister-in-law unravels her finished garments and reuses the wool as yarn is unaffordable. I have become a consumer of knitting related products; from a position of privilege. I can easily access and buy yarns, books, patterns, and magazine subscriptions. This raises new questions for Pixie. The perception of female identity today includes that of being a consumer; not only reflected by being frugal (getting a bargain), but also through the fashion choices made from the many available options. Coming from a knitting family, Pixie likes that her knitted clothes are sturdy, practical and fashionable. Yet she loves to buy things on sale, liking the thought of having saved money. She does not respect or hold dear the clothes she has bought on sale - citing poor construction and cheap fabric that wears out quickly. Here Pixie sees being frugal is at the expense of quality. Whereas her knitted clothes did not cost her anything - their value lies in the fact that they were made especially for her, and they are unique. The other participants, as adults, have had to purchase the necessary materials and then make their own knitted garments.

Our knitting reflects the economics of the times we have lived through, and the choices we were/are able to make. Evelyn does not plan to knit anything for herself this year, because she doesn't think that she needs anything. She has already been given two garments lately. I think this is refreshing and thought provoking in an age where constantly purchasing has become the norm, a leisure activity.

The future and sustainability

Despite the growth of online knitting communities, all participants see a decline around them of people who knit. Pixie notes that her concerns, about people not being able to sew on buttons let alone knit, are modern concerns. Minnie, Evelyn and I share this perspective. Minnie sees herself returning to old ways of life, ways that connect her to people and times past, and also point to the future. Growing vegetables, making bread, and knitting were all skills learnt out of necessity for Minnie and Evelyn. They have continued these practices into retirement. Minnie and I note that this is also a sustainable way of life. Pixie sees hand knitting as being more environmentally friendly than mass production techniques, but worries that the loss of crafts like knitting could be a problem in the future. We are losing the knowledge and skills that enable us to *do* things, and to take care of ourselves; our abilities to make things and to be independent and sustainable.

In this Findings chapter, the interviews, reflections and field texts were presented in the first level of data analysis, as research texts. The first two research questions were addressed from participant's perspectives as the second level of data analysis. The research texts and the second research question were organised utilising Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space, as discussed in the Methodology chapter. Further analysis and discussion of the findings will occur in the following Discussion chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

In the previous chapter, the research texts were presented and findings relating to the first two research questions were considered. It was seen that knitting is connected to the participants through a range of values, playing a larger part in participants' lives than we anticipated. This Discussion chapter draws on data presented in the research texts, addressing the research questions using Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space. As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, some of Neilsen's (1998) questions have been addressed throughout, but did not contribute to the overall structure of the chapter.

Research question 3: How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

The research texts link to ways that educators can improve critical pedagogical practice. I have drawn out four themes; Belonging, Whole self healthy self, Examine privilege, and Sites of learning and alternative learning communities. The themes are based on Clandinin and Connelly's three-dimensional space (2000), but there is some overlap between them. The backward/forwards aspect of the three-dimensional space is present through thinking about the past and the present in most of the findings.

Belonging

The narratives show it is important for us to feel that we belong somewhere, as part of a relationship, family, or a whole community. Participants feel a sense of being heard and valued, for their knowledge, contributions, and skills, when they feel that they belong. This might not have been through a traditional knitting situation, but participants explored their feelings about

discovering how they fitted in somewhere; how they had a place. As McLaren (2003), Giroux (1998) and Brown et al. (2008) posit, the education system reproduces inequity through curriculum, teachers, sites of learning and ways of thinking and knowing. These practices exclude learners who are not from dominant groups in society. Many key voices in critical pedagogy (Apple, 2004; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 2012, 2011) explore how learners are excluded in an educational context. Developing a sense of belonging is the opposite of exclusion; belonging encourages inclusiveness and recognises the right to equality for everyone in the learning environment (hooks, 1994). Just as the knitting environment enabled Minnie to feel happy and relaxed, because she belonged, a sense of belonging in the classroom is important to critical pedagogy. Here the focus is on hope; the possibility of positive transformation and social change (Brown et al., 2008; Giroux, 1998; hooks, 1994). Moreover, just because a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere is developed, it does not mean that learners are not being challenged or critical. Belonging is a crucial first step in terms of seeking ways to develop a classroom where all students feel comfortable to speak up, share their stories, and are unafraid of making mistakes (Palmer, 1998). Pixie's anxiety about doubting her ability to contribute was reduced after she felt more comfortable during her interview. Moreover, like Evelyn's initial reluctance to knit, resistance or disinterest from educators and learners can disrupt the critical process (Cunningham, 2013). Critical theorists (Brown et al., 2008; Giroux, 1998; hooks, 1994) assume that all families care about and support their young people, and here the role of the learning community in maintaining an environment where everybody belongs, is important. Despite resistance that learners and educators may have to critical change (Cunningham, 2013); the concept of belonging can make the learning environment a safe, relaxing, critical and challenging place.

The literature identifies groups that women and knitters belong to, for example wives, daughters, mothers, providers, artists and consumers (Gilliand, personal correspondence, 2014; Nicholson, 1998; Turney, 2009). Pixie discusses one group that she belongs to in her description of "team Webb", while Minnie strongly associated with her school friends. These groups influence critical pedagogy through the concept of power sharing. Springgay (2010) explored the importance of placing the teacher in the learners' shoes when she and her students learnt to knit together. The 'doing' and the 'together' parts are important; they help to create a community that is engaged (hooks, 1994) and perhaps relaxing, but also a community where new or challenging thinking can be established (hooks, 1994; Springgay, 2010). Learning together can create an environment where challenging thinking can lead to new perspectives relating to equality within groups, the key goal of critical pedagogy. Furthermore, personal discovery and development is discussed in the research as being crucial in exploring the perspectives of others (Clover & Stalker, 2007; Palmer, 1998; Wyman, 2004), and also to challenge "the blender forces of globalization" (Wyman, 2004, p. 5), where conforming is an inherent part of globalisation. Exploring our stories provided opportunities for participants to examine how their own unique history and circumstances in the past (e.g. knitting for necessity) influence how they see the future (e.g. sustainability and returning to a simpler way of life). Living a sustainable life counters globalisation, and could (if the participants choose to share their knowledge and skills) contribute to a community-based, grassroots movement that fosters positive change, and belonging. As hooks (1994) discusses, learners and educators are equally responsible for creating a critical learning community that everyone can belong to. Sharing our skills and knowledge gave Pixie and I the opportunity to learn about the experiences of the older participants, and Minnie and Evelyn have gained insight into how and why Pixie and I might see things differently. Sharing personal discoveries was enlightening.

When considering how narratives might inform critical practice, Cunningham (2013), and Matarasso (1997) discuss how involvement in community arts projects increased participants' critical awareness, and their enthusiasm to be involved with further arts initiatives. Involvement and citizenship are key, and link to developing a 'belonging' learning environment that supports critical learning. Critical pedagogy supports how we belong to place. There are no set rules for how to 'do' critical pedagogy, or how to establish a classroom where everyone involved feels that they belong, but encouraging genuine belonging in the learning environment, in the hope that most learners will respond and participate, is possible. Educators can employ a number of strategies like group work, and power sharing through development of curriculum and assessments, but it is important that educators constantly engage with learners and show an awareness of what is taking place in the learning environment. hooks (1994) advocates consciously practising listening techniques where the educator talks less and directs conversation back to the learners. Embarking on an open-ended journey that is relevant to the place and situation of learners, where everyone is learning, including the teacher, is a strategy that considers belonging. Challenging stereotypes (such as that of knitters) and encouraging questioning, not only of our own thinking, but also identifying and questioning what official thinking is, can occur through organising learning experiences that involve telling stories, sharing experiences and practising listening skills.

Whole self, healthy self

There are two parts to this theme that arise from the narratives - firstly, acknowledging the role of the body in learning situations, and secondly, examining the influence of our everyday activities on learning. These factors enable learners and educators to recognise different aspects

of the 'whole self', working towards a developing concept of the healthy self (Palmer, 1998; Robinson, 2006; Springgay, 2010).

The three participants, who knit, all knit because they enjoy it. Knitting is relaxing, and Minnie, Evelyn and I all mention that it makes us happy - acknowledging this initiated the theme 'whole self healthy self'. Evelyn sees knitting as an activity for people with 'twitchy hands' - good for those who have trouble sitting still or doing nothing. Nicholson (1998) notes that women in the past felt they needed to be seen doing something all the time, and according to Minnie women were judged by their ability to be a good housewife (like the neatness of my knitting stitches). This links to research (Robinson, 2006; Springgay, 2010) where learners benefit when the whole body is engaged in learning, effectively developing creative, critical and reflective thinking skills. Robinson's (2006) comment on how traditional Western education teaches from the neck up highlights that the rest of our bodies are neglected in learning. Schools and Universities encourage sitting quietly and still in the classroom, and physically restrictive assessments like exams do not suit all learners. There are possibilities involved with experimentation, understanding perspectives, and discovering, practicing, and figuring things out, when learners are able to think through their whole bodies (Robinson, 2006; Springgay, 2010).

Knitting is relaxing and meditative because it is repetitive and uses body and mind together (Benson, cited in Greer, 2011; Bevan, 2011). Using the body to learn in an active and meditative way holistically acknowledges its presence as part of the learning experience. Using physical activities in class, from role plays to constructing things, enables learners to gain a deeper understanding of issues and content, and this counters the dominant 'sit still' learning model. Educators cannot afford to ignore the presence of bodies in the learning environment.

Considering the body and how it represents learners through gender, ethnicity and age (hooks, 1994) informs the judgements and unwritten rules that society makes. Resisting judgements and stereotypes is crucial, through moving beyond superficial and descriptive topics, perspectives that challenge inequalities related to our bodies, to including ways action can be taken to address this (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2011; hooks, 1994). Using the body to learn is different from a conventional school or university approach and might involve space, movement, noise, mess and chaos - all of which might be interpreted as unusual. Students might not have conventional books, so it might not look like they are learning, but embodied learning means a more whole-self approach with less teacher control.

Considering the importance of life-stories and voice in critical pedagogy, and Palmer's (1998) work on understanding self, it is important to not overlook the everyday things that we do and hold dear - the things that make us happy. This is seeing learners as whole, unique individuals, and therefore is a healthy view towards learners. Valuing our narratives by accepting them and taking them seriously challenges the perception that knitting is passive and nonthreatening. Learners participate in their own interesting activities and know interesting things that they learn and do off-campus. Often, as with knitting, this knowledge sits outside what schools and universities think is important to know (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1988) - there is a disconnect between the classroom and its learners. Two of the three knitters in this research were not involved in knitting at school or university, as it principally occurred at home. When teachers always decide what students should know then schooling could seem irrelevant to its participants. By recognising other knowledge that learners have, educators see them as whole people, and don't separate what happens outside the classroom from what happens inside the classroom. Exploring our everyday activities acknowledges that the lives of learners are relevant

and integral to who they are - this is bringing humanness into learning. Of course educators are learners too (hooks, 1994), who participate in their own activities, which could be relevant to learners. Furthermore, some activities that learners engage in, like knitting, are culturally situated, and could come from cultures other than the dominant one, or like knitting, are overlooked activities (Greer, 2011; Nicholson, 1998; Stalker, 2006). This presents the opportunity to develop first-hand and authentic knowledge and understandings of different community groups.

Finally, including everyday activities that are accessible to learners could create a constructive dialogue (Stalker, 2006), that can be used to counter the fear of the system and making mistakes that Palmer (1998) discusses. Minnie's description of knitting as being a relaxing activity combined with Benson's research on knitting and relaxation (Greer, 2011) point to ways of using embodied and everyday learning that are both relevant and beneficial to learners, and could lead to actively challenging issues of inequity in society. Educators can bring both embodied learning and the everyday lives of learners into the classroom through concepts like recognising prior learning, developing reflective skills, creating games and activities that involve moving around the learning space, role plays, constructing things, arts activities, popular culture, and investigating family or local history.

Including the whole self in learning recognises things that are important to students and educators. Through paying attention to developing the self as a whole, body and mind, educators are in turn working towards healthier selves.

Examine privilege

Examining the changes that happened over time in our narratives sheds light on our changing roles, from knitting out of necessity (work) to knitting through choice (leisure). This shift of knitting to a leisure activity brings to the fore issues of privilege. As a consumer of knitting products, I am privileged. Developing mindfulness about privilege affects other aspects of my life and worldview, and this is important as my worldview in turn influences how I teach (Palmer, 1998), especially through a critical perspective (Freire, 1970). Things are easier for me to access now than they were for women in the past; I have more choice and economic freedom. But it is alienating for my students for me to assume that everyone can easily purchase or access whatever they need (for example knowledge, skills, books, learning resources etc.). Examining privilege, and in turn power, is one of the core aims of critical pedagogy (Apple, 2004; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 2011), with the intention that this is then followed up by taking action to address the issues (political, economic, social) surrounding imbalances of privilege and power. Being aware of one's privilege, or lack of, is a first step in the critical pedagogy process. As discussed earlier, the New Zealand school curriculum establishes the potential to do this (Brown et al., 2008), but it needs to be a deliberate decision made by educators. How discussions surrounding privilege could take place depends on the educational setting in which educators work, as determined by the different economic, ethnic/cultural, political, and gender-based environments of schools, universities, and their communities. Relevance to the learners involved is highly important.

Now that I have considered aspects of my own privilege, it is crucial that learners in my class, as well as other educators have the opportunity to do the same, and that I/we listen to the different perspectives that arise. Listening and empathising are two practices that are pivotal to

the process. Educators play an important part through the deliberate teaching and role-modelling of these practices. Considering the implications of all perspectives might inform what actions the class could take, possibly including campus activism, becoming involved with supporting community initiatives, making news videos for local media, or writing letters and asking questions of the local Member of Parliament.

Minnie and Evelyn have chosen to return to the simpler lifestyles in which they were raised - they see it as being sustainable and better for the environment. For them, shopping at the mall is not a hobby, and necessity still influences their spending choices. Evelyn is not knitting herself a new jersey this year as she doesn't need one. If Minnie or Evelyn need or want certain clothes, or vegetables, for example, they can also produce them. Here, privilege appears in an interesting way - through access to tacit knowledge and skills. Pixie wondering what people do when they can't mend a seam or sew on a button is further evidence of this. Critical theorists equate being male, white, and economically advantaged as being privileged (Apple, 2004; hooks, 1994). Yet having unique knowledge and skills, might be interpreted as a form of privilege as well. Minnie sees her skills as being an insurance, meaning that they could always be independent and able to feed themselves and their families. In this way they would never be poor, because they could also sell their skills. Now she is choosing to use her knowledge and skills to live a more sustainable life. Being aware of how her skills and knowledge can give her choices in life makes Minnie privileged. Minnie connects her knitting to cultural, historic, and bonding issues – she has an awareness of how her skills and knowledge influence her choices. Were she to share her skills and knowledge, she would be further challenging the status quo of modern society where shopping and spending are seen as being essential activities. Factory-produced garments wear out quickly or become unfashionable, so people are encouraged to

continue spending (Bratich & Brush, 2011; Nicholson, 1998). Minnie utilising and sharing her skills also challenges the sweatshop industry and poorly paid labour. The act of recognising and sharing our unique skills and ways of knowing can be used to identify what learners think privilege looks like, and how it might be used to challenge inequity. Designing learning experiences involving discussion and interaction between learners, and projects where learners demonstrate a range of tacit strengths, is helpful. Examining different perspectives involving privilege can occur through assessments that require discussion of multiple sides of issues, for example, through holding a mock trial or debate. Examining privilege through citizenship and economics, especially through activities such as involvement in school student councils, and problem-solving student-identified community issues, can be taken into the public arena. Generating and activating solutions to authentic issues of privilege, lie at the centre of critical pedagogy.

Sites of learning and alternative learning communities

Participants' knitting experiences are situated around different learning sites, both private and public, none of which are in the form of a classroom or formal learning situation. Non-formal sites are perhaps one of the reasons why participants have enjoyed knitting over such a long period of time. Participants have different reasons for thinking this, from Minnie and me enjoying the company of friends and family, to me enjoying solitude, to Evelyn being able to knit as a relaxing activity after the day's work is done. Knitting is for both work and leisure. The involvement of people who are present in these places was a key factor to participants' enjoyment of the knitting process. When linking critical learning sites to the narratives, there are a number of possibilities. Minnie talks about the potential in bringing the relaxed feeling of knitting at home into the classroom. This is an interesting idea that proves challenging in some

contexts; for example when faced with a class of thirty-two 14 year olds. Many learners need time and space to allow for engaged learning to occur, to gain confidence and feel relaxed. Formal learning sites like schools and universities do not always have facilities that cater for this. There are systemic constraints at work here; with schools and universities facing increasing pressure in terms of budget cuts (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2013), students are affected by bigger class sizes, and consequently less space. There are a number of strategies that educators might use to develop a more relaxed classroom, such as utilising well developed group -work, or group seating arrangements, where students can sit together and can hold conversations while working. Aside from day-to-day chatting, learners can be encouraged to discuss their work, including giving peer feedback. Emphasising a collaborative classroom environment mirrors the narratives, and at the same time creates a supportive space for dialogue and critical thinking. In an informal setting, learners who are given a choice in terms of how and what they learn are entering into a power sharing arrangement; for critical pedagogy, this means that students might attempt to solve a problem that they feel is important and one that directly affects them.

As discussed, Palmer (1998) and hooks (1994) posit including and valuing our everyday selves and lives in our learning, which can involve connecting with possible alternative learning sites. Informal learning opens up alternative ways of knowing (for example kinaesthetic), relationships between teachers and learners that are different to those at formal sites of learning, and knowledge (such as personal histories and story-telling) that is overlooked or sidelined by official institutions (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1998). Critical theory is ideally suited as an umbrella theory that can encompass other concepts; informal, place-based, and holistic learning. Provided the learning process is seeking to change an existing imbalance, there are many paths that can be taken to get there.

The research articles and books available did not discuss the experience of wearing knitted garments in public; however, the participants in this research did. Evelyn, Pixie and I all discuss comments we receive when we wear knitted garments out. Based on some of the comments that are made, the decline of knitting skills (Greer, 2011) has meant that many women wish they had the time and skills to knit. The willingness of so many women to approach a stranger in public to talk about knitting creates a space for dialogue to occur. This raises the idea of the contribution that local community might make to a critical classroom, and conversely, the contribution that learners might make to their local communities. Accessing the skills, experiences and knowledge of a diverse range of people, through for example, dialogue, or teaching specific skills to learners that are not known in the classroom, can invite new ways of knowing and understanding. Exploring experiences of the past could generate new understandings of the present, especially relating to issues and themes that affect students. Organising learning experiences that include members of the community, outside of the campus can strengthen the other findings of this study. Developing a sense of belonging, for example, could benefit both learners and their communities. Consequently this might increase learners' feelings of citizenship, encouraging them to become actively involved (Giroux, 2011). For educators, especially secondary teachers, the logistics of leaving the school campus can be fraught. An alternative could be setting assessments that require students to organise and involve their own connections in society. Here learners are recognising their everyday selves through involving people with whom they have a meaningful relationship, while investigating authentic and different perspectives on relevant issues.

Out of all the participants I was the only one who knits in public, with mixed responses. Taking students and their work into the public sphere was also considered in the research. When

knitting takes place in public it has involved organised activism by groups (Springgay, 2010) and yarn bombing by individuals (Sillito, 2009); both are examples of using knitting to develop social awareness of issues. The internet is a public learning community where Pixie and I go to investigate online knitting groups and resources, instead of the local knitting shop. The internet enables people from everywhere and of all ages to contribute. These public spheres have potential to embody critical pedagogy - learners can research and publish findings to raise awareness and generate wider support for issues, either on a campus-wide, local, or global level. Both the internet and public activism (as practiced by Springgay, 2010), create spaces for discussions, and a wide range of solutions can be explored by a diverse range of people. The internet gives learners the opportunity to engage in critical evaluation skills because of the global and diverse nature of its users.

Alternative learning spaces can be created outside of the classroom but still on campus, as Springgay (2010) did. Facilities like music practice rooms, theatres, cafeterias, sports fields and other outdoor spaces can be used to challenge the dominance and restrictions of the classroom, the curriculum, and the roles of student/teacher. Activities at these sites already take place on a regular basis, over long periods of time, such as sports practices and music rehearsals, reflecting Bratich and Brush's (2011) concept of slow learning. In this way, the knitting narratives bring our every day selves back into the learning environment. Extra-curricular activities connect to critical pedagogy through encouraging power sharing relationships, and acknowledging the process of learning and discovery, but there is further potential to develop these sites towards places where critical learning occurs.

In this Discussion chapter the third research question was addressed, again through using Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space. This constituted the third level of data analysis. Links were made to the literature, and the themes from the narratives were connected to the further development of a critical classroom. The following Chapter draws conclusions from the research.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

The Discussion chapter outlined four findings of this research; the importance of belonging, whole self healthy self, examining privilege, and exploring alternative sites of learning and learning communities. Links were made connecting the research texts to critical pedagogy, and suggestions offered as to how educators might develop a critical classroom. The conclusion chapter considers the implications of this research, including recommendations for educators' teaching practice, and for future research.

What do we know now?

All of the participants assumed knitting did not play a significant role in their lives. Upon reflection it was found that knitting is not just about knitting - it connects with people, beliefs, and wider society when considered in more depth. Our values are shown through us doing and wearing knitting. These values range from belonging and identity to values related to economics, community and sustainability. Many of these values have changed throughout the participants' lives, and, despite the tensions involved, the participants still knitted regardless of negative public opinion. Nowadays the participants see knitting as an activity that promotes sustainability and even a better world in the future.

The narratives provided data showing a relationship between knitting experiences and critical pedagogy. The first two findings - belonging and whole self healthy self, address the necessity of examining and understanding one's own practices to be able to examine the practices of others. They highlight the importance of social interaction and feeling comfortable in the learning

environment, and also of exploring different ways to learn, for example, using physical activities and movement in the classroom. Including the everyday lives and activities of learners as part of learning incorporates a more holistic approach to education, and recognises learners as being more complex than what they show of themselves in the classroom. Acknowledging and using learners' unique knowledge and skills is a key finding of this project.

The second two findings - examining privilege, and communities and sites of learning, enable authentic issues to be identified and addressed by learners, at an individual, campus, or community level. The narratives showed that changing economics, on a personal and societal level, influenced the life choices of participants. Examining this on a wider basis, on and off campus, creates opportunities for activism and social change to occur. Learning and participating outside traditional classrooms or lecture theatres was one appealing and engaging aspect of knitting for the participants.

This project has implications for educators, offering a set of findings and suggestions to consider, and providing a model or guide through which other educators might examine their own beliefs and practices. The findings show that there are different aspects to consider in the critical pedagogy journey, from examining our own practices and beliefs, to considering those of others, to taking action either in the school or university, or in the wider community.

Through answering the research questions I have a more meaningful knowledge of how our everyday activities can be seen as a challenge to the status quo, and how I might further embed critical pedagogy into my teaching and everyday practices through making connections like those above, between the narratives and critical pedagogy.

How does this sit with other research?

While this work is unique in the sense that the narratives are our own, our experiences fit in with existing research to some extent - they add in "crackly bits" (Wyman, 2004, p. 5), to what we know about history and critical pedagogy. We are not the traditional stereotype of knitters, so this challenges existing beliefs still prevalent throughout society. This project provides a set of findings that bring together threads and key ideas that run through critical pedagogy theorists (e.g. Apple, Palmer, hooks). Belonging, whole self, place, and privilege, neatly knit together these more widespread ideas and incorporate holistic, embodied and alternative learning theories. The more that researchers and writers formally present their own narratives, the bigger the challenge to the official account of history. The more research that takes place about our family and local histories and into our everyday activities, then the more these knowledges and skills are valued. The more education is valued and relevant to its participants in these ways, the more challenges to dominant knowledge and ways of knowing could occur.

Recommendations for practice

The Discussion chapter provided broad suggestions for ways in which educators might further implement ideas from critical pedagogy into their learning environments, whether they are in a classroom, university, or community-based setting. Implementation of the findings is a process that has two levels. The first relates to establishing and maintaining a classroom that acknowledges the belonging and whole self findings. It feels somewhat simplistic and trite to recommend things like doing warm-ups in class at the beginning of the term, in order to get to know one's students, and to create a sense of belonging in the classroom. This process seems to

need more depth, it is not that simple. Schools and universities need to support an environment where educators can experiment and work with their learners through a range of strategies to implement the concepts of belonging and whole self healthy self, where everyday lives and selves are acknowledged. Activities that learners engage in outside of schooling could be incorporated into the curriculum. Educators could develop activities and assessments that involve learners connecting their learning to other things, for example people, places, activities, histories, issues or ideas. Connecting could involve learners reflecting on themselves and their learning progress, and then connecting that to something else, perhaps a film, piece of music or an issue. Connecting activities could also be used to link the everyday activities that learners are engaged with, with topics and skills that are being discussed in the classroom. Furthermore, connections could be made between classroom topics and social justice issues that learners are affected by. In this way, learners can make links between their lives, subject-specific topics, and social justice outcomes. Sharing work with others could encourage a sense of belonging in the learning environment also. This is one strategy that would implement the themes of belonging and whole self healthy self into the classroom.

The second level of growing a critical learning environment is through the findings of examining privilege and learning communities. Here, critical pedagogy more fully develops into activism. Teachers often want easy ways to introduce critical pedagogy; quick, sure-fire tricks that can be used without having to think through the process and effects on the learning environment. Teachers are busy, and often look for a template-like activity that can be easily introduced into class. Templates and graphic organisers do not necessarily mean students are learning to think critically. To develop a critical classroom, educators need to apply these findings to themselves first. It is a risk for students to share their stories with each other and to listen empathetically.

Educators cannot expect this from learners without having walked this path themselves, and learners need to see this. It is a risk to bring students work, worked on in the sanctuary of the classroom, out into the public arena where striving for social change can be an abrasive process. Educators need to be adept at communicating with learners, their educational institutions, and the community. Projects like this one are an example of one type of self-study journey that educators could embark on.

As a result of this study I recommend that educators:

1. Promote awareness of self and others through modelling and practicing listening, speaking and reflective skills.
2. Develop activities and assessments where students connect their lives to current events, issues and theories, or other texts.
3. Engage in self-study and draw together family stories.

Recommendations for future research

Further research is required to ascertain whether implementing the suggestions from this project help to develop critical pedagogy in the classroom. While there is no one way to implement critical pedagogy, further research into my own journey, focusing on implementing the findings of this study is necessary. This project could also inform the direction that other educators take in looking at ways to implement the critical pedagogy process into their specific classroom settings authentically. Will these recommendations work? How would they need to be altered to implement them in a specific learning environment? What influence could place have on implementing the recommendations? Would the findings be different if the everyday

activity that was examined was a team sport rather than knitting? Research could involve educators investigating how to address their own needs, and the needs of wider groups of learners than were included in this study (Males, Māori, Polynesian, Asian, for example).

Furthermore, this research is presented from an arts-based perspective - how could other educators apply the findings in more technical or scientific based learning environments? Subsequently, it would be interesting for educators to develop this work further as a group, including educators, learners, or even parents, as collaborative research in a specific educational setting.

The idea of how tacit knowledge and skills can be used to develop equality could also be further researched. Is sharing tacit skills a viable direction for critical pedagogy to take? Promoting awareness of skills (e.g. production of clothes and food at home) also promotes independence and sustainable values, where people question consumerism and the dominance of corporations. Is the classroom the place to promote this slow revolution? In current times, is the sharing of tacit knowledge and skills increasing at the grassroots level, concurrently with the growing inequity gap in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

Personal Reflection

This research has been a fulfilling experience. Practicing narrative research process has been an insightful, challenging, and loving experience. Working with women in my family has been lovely, I was privileged to listen to and read their stories, and to watch our thinking grow and develop throughout. I've enjoyed the process of connecting an activity that I enjoy, to

education. Many things that I did as a young person were never considered at school, so this has been refreshing and validating to me personally. I've discovered how many people, when asking about my research, have wanted to share their knitting stories. Everyone has one - whether they are from New Zealand, the USA, Canada, the UK, Ireland, India, Bahrain or the Philippines - folks have knitting stories that they have wanted to share. It's a seriously underrated activity, and nobody who has a knitting story has any negative words to say about knitting. I'm an idealist, but maybe such gentle, loving and creative pursuits should be encouraged rather than stereotyped in today's competitive consumer climate. I hope that more educators develop their interest in critical pedagogy and its philosophy of hope, through investigating their own lives and histories, and the lives and histories of their learners and communities. More stories are waiting to be told.

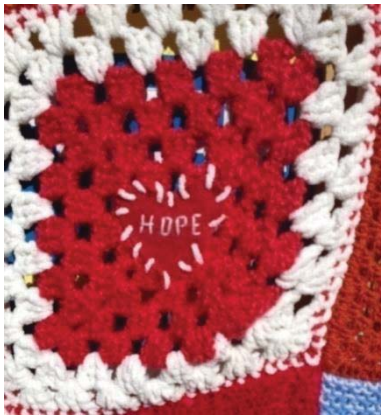


Figure 18: Insert from knitting and crochet covered container, Sumner, 2012

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval letter

Appendix 2: Letters inviting participation

Appendix 3: Participant consent form

Appendix 4: Outline of interview questions

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval Letter:

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

17 June 2014

Tanya Webb
[redacted]

Dear Tanya

Re: HEC: Southern B Application – 14/27
Unravelling yarns: How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

Thank you for your letter dated 16 June 2014.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

J. O'Neill

Prof John O'Neill, Acting Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B

cc Dr Linda Leach
Institute of Education
PN500

Dr Kama Weir
Institute of Education
PN500

A/Prof Sally Hansen, Director
Institute of Education
PN500

Mrs Roseanne MacGillivray
Institute of Education
PN500

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand **T** 06 3505573; 06 3505575 **F** 06 350 5622
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz; animalethics@massey.ac.nz; gtc@massey.ac.nz **www.massey.ac.nz**

Appendix 2: Letters Inviting Participation

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Institute of Education
Massey University Manawatu
Private Bag 11-222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand

Unravelling Yarns: How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

Hello it's Tanya here. The purpose of this sheet is to give you information about the research I am doing for my 90 credit Master of Education thesis. This project will use participants' narratives to link an ordinary family practice, in this case knitting, to the development of social justice awareness in teaching.

Project Description and Invitation

I propose to conduct a narrative study of knitting in the lives of women in my family, focusing on how to examine issues of social justice in teaching. Many writers advocate starting this process by examining one's own background and family history. Historically, knitting is an activity that nearly everyone in my family has been involved with, whether in school, at home or in public settings. I intend to explore questions such as: What values do we have that are reflected in our knitting? How do I show these values in the classroom? Are these values dominant in that they override the values of others? To make these links I intend to conduct a series of interviews with participants regarding the place of knitting in their lives. Participants will also be invited to write personal reflective journals about the interviews, and will have the opportunity to share photos, letters, knitted artifacts etc. to further illustrate their experiences. We will then discuss the narratives in terms of any themes that can encourage new ways of seeing and understanding the narratives. The final stage of the project will be undertaken by myself only, and involves analysing how the themes and values from the narratives are reflected in my teaching. I will reflect on and suggest 'next steps' with regards to how I can continue to develop teaching processes that seek equitable outcomes and raise social justice awareness in the classroom.

I invite you to participate in this project. It would add to the richness of our collective narratives if you were to agree to share your personal experiences. In addition, it would allow me to further develop my skills as an educator who seeks social equity in her work. Findings from the project will also provide useful information for other teachers.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

- You are invited to participate in this project because you are my close female relative.
- I am hoping that four family members will participate.
- Although there is no physical risk to participating in this project, because of the personal nature of collecting narratives, there may be times when discomfort regarding (re)telling stories of the past may be experienced.
- While you will not be named in the project, the nature of your participation may be such that you may be able to be identified.

Project Procedures

- This process will require approximately three hours a week, for two months, beginning in June 2014.
- You would be involved in a number of processes. Firstly, in the collection of 'field texts'. Field texts consist of personal journals and reflections, gathering photos and images, and perhaps even knitting memory squares. Memory squares are knitted squares that you could knit in order to both remember and to show what a piece of knitting from your past was like. Secondly, you would be involved in a series (2-3) of continuing interviews about knitting in your life. Lastly, because the research is participatory, you would be fully involved in deciding which parts of your work will or will not be included.
- Using both interviews and field texts will give us the opportunity to revisit your narratives more than once. The interviews will be held via Skype, recorded, and then transcribed by me; you will be given access to the transcripts for editing purposes - you can check, correct or change what you said. Field texts in the form of your journals or old photographs can be scanned and emailed to me, and any knitted articles or memory squares can be digitally photographed before emailing the image to me. Further questions or themes that arise can be discussed in subsequent interviews, where we can (re)visit aspects of the narratives. Themes derived from the narratives will be linked to my experiences and ongoing development as an educator in the final section of the thesis.
- As this project involves my family, it is important to address any potential conflicts of interest that may arise. This may happen if the interview goes in a direction that you feel uncomfortable sharing with me, or because of the lack of confidentiality involved with research based around the life experiences of identifiable participants.
- Because communication is a key value underpinning this research, it is hoped that you and I would be able to address any issues that arise in a number of ways. You could discuss the issue off-camera with me, or the issue can be outlined through your journals regarding how the process is going. You are welcome to invite a support person to be present during the interview process. Interviews can be stopped anytime at your request. As mentioned above, the 'participatory' in 'participatory narrative research'

means that you are fully taking part in how your narratives will be presented and revisited, which in this project will occur up to the point of analysis and linking to teaching.
- In the instance of needing wider support, Ms Tania Tait (03.xxx.xxxx) has agreed to act as an independent mediator. Feel free to contact her if you have any worries or concerns that you want to discuss about the project.

Data Management

- The data collected from you will be in different forms, such as personal reflective journals, scanned photos and documents, or even images of knitting and memory squares.
- Data will be stored on my laptop, with backup files copied to a separate hard-drive. You will be able to decide whether I should destroy any data collected, or whether you would like it to be returned.
- You will be provided with a summary of the findings that incorporate your narratives, and can request to be sent a PDF of the thesis if desired.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any point before data analysis begins;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

Researcher:	Tanya Webb	+973.xxx.xxx.xx	tanya.webb@xxxxxxxx
Supervisor:	Linda Leach	+64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 84457	L.J.Leach@massey.ac.nz
Supervisor:	Kama Weir	+64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 84385	K.J.Weir@massey.ac.nz

Please do not hesitate to contact either myself, the researcher, or the projects supervisors, listed above, if any queries, questions or issues arise.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 14/27. If you have any concerns about the conduct of the research, please contact Prof John O'Neill, Acting Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 350 5799 x 81090, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 3: Participant consent form

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Institute of Education
Massey University Manawatu
Private Bag 11-222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand

Unravelling Yarns: How might knitting narratives inform critical pedagogical practice?

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to the interview being recorded (sound and image).

I understand that while I will not be named in the project, the nature of my participation may be such that I may be able to be identified.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to be emailed a soft copy of the completed thesis.

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

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name - printed

Appendix 4: Outline of Interview Questions

This is an example of the questions specific to Pixie. Other participants responded to many of the same questions, but over two interviews.

- Purpose of interview - Pixie does the talking
- Situate yourself: where, when, what kind of society
- Anything else that's on your mind as a result of the writing task
- Other kids wore knitted clothes?
- A memorable garment (photo), time, place
- Change over time
- Relationships - what relationships come to mind? describe
- Your knitting - why did you knit? I have fashion school
- What I discover when I think about knitting is...
- How does (wearing) knitting convey who you are?
- What do others say about your knitting that reveals how they see you as a person?
- Things from writing task - internet, environment, future for you
- Feeling a connection to the past?
- Have your socks worn out yet?
- What part does knitting play?