Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Other-wise Old: Becoming-a-response-able-ancestor With Process Ontology and Nomadic Subjectivity

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Psychology

at Massey University, Manawatū,
New Zealand

Lucy Ann McLean
2026

Abstract

This project started off thought with the marginalisation of old and older women at the intersection of sexism and ageism, and resistance to the binary understanding of ageing as either decline, or successful ageing. Euro-US-centric knowledge production reproduces this binary that perpetuates the dominant single story of old people as deficit Other against 'young' as normative (Sandberg, 2013). Feminist psychology has not been attuned to the voices of old women (Mitchell & Bruns, 2011), while the harms inflicted through ageism have intensified (Baars, 2025). Whilst this was the starting point for this thesis, it was processual and indeterminate as it unfolded, and emerged as an inquiry into my own lived experiences with the purpose of reaching an adequate understanding of underlying power structures of domination and subordination embedded in conditions of an ordinary life. My narrative inquiry is grounded in my theoretical location that guides my process through specific ontological and epistemological commitments to process ontology and nomadic subjectivity that enable an understanding of ageing as constant differentiation. I engage a feminist politics of location in recognition that all knowledge is partial, limited, and perspectival, as I move to understand the difference of my ageing differently through critique and creativity. The text contained in this project aims to illustrate a process that prioritised affective flows of meaning making in the in-between of the gap between life and story (Fine, 2017), and as such it is a *moment of being* of becoming-with my storytelling as it unfolded (Tamboukou, 2008). The process affected me deeply, and my hope is for prompting other stories of embodied and embedded ageing that can collectively radiate outwards (Fine, 2017) to actualise the virtual of hopeful ageing futures where affirmative difference is recognised in our "living and dying well together" (Haraway, 2016, p, 29) in a journey of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor.

Acknowledgements

To Associate Professor Leigh Coombes. Your expertise, care, encouragement, affirmation, and becoming-crone wisdom guided me to places I did not anticipate going. Your supervision enabled a transformative processual movement that increased my capacity for love and joy. Thank you so much for the honour of working with me, and trusting me to reach a more adequate understanding through storytelling of embodied and embedded ageing in our posthuman times.

To Hazel. Thank you. I will never forget your thoughtful sharing of material, and encouragement, in the lead up to the institutional beginning of this thesis journey. It was like an oasis where I could sit and feel capable.

To my husband Warren. Quite simply, this would not have been possible without your love and support. Thank you for the hours of listening to me think out loud and staying with the trouble of my ramblings. Thank you for being interested, caring, and for constantly affirming my efforts and expressing how proud you are of me. You are my greatest champion and I appreciate and love you deeply.

To my children. You are some of my greatest teachers about love, care, and what it means to live an ethical life. Thank you for embracing me in your lives. I fervently hope that you will all experience socially just ageing futures with flows of love and connection that support your flourishing. I love you always.

Lastly, thank you to all the scholars whose work inspired me, motivated me, and give me hope for collective futures of living and dying well together in and of this world, and of course my teachers whose affirmations helped me to know what it means to become-a-response-able-ancestor.

Table of Contents

Abstract ..... **iii**

Acknowledgements ..... **iv**

Table of Contents ..... **v**

Prologue: An Invitation to Witness Processual Movement Through Other-wise Knowledge and Life Stories **1**

Chapter 1: An Introduction **5**

Western-centric Psychological Science: Resistance 5
My Motivating Purpose for this Thesis 9

Chapter 2: Theoretical Location: Ontological and Epistemological Positionality **11**

Politics of Location 11
Process Ontology, Subjectivity, and Nomadic Becoming 15

Chapter 3: Literature Review **20**

Old Matters 20
Posthumanism and Ageing: A Muse 24
Process Ontology: Becoming and the Undoing of Binaries 27
Relational Ethics and Affect 32
A Story: An Intergenerational Assemblage With Grief: A Memory of a Liminal Space 34
Narrative and Storytelling 36
A Reflective Pause 40
Personal Reflections: Memories and Connections 41

Chapter 4: Methodology: Narrative Inquiry, Relational Ethics, and Affective Flows **43**

Narrative Inquiry 43
An Interlude: A Small Story of Everyday Life 44
Interlude Over: Back to Narrative Inquiry 46
Affect and Meaning-Making 50
Relational Ethics 54

Chapter 5: Analysis: Theorising Lived Experience 58

A Juncture: Process and Movement Prompting Directional Change 58
An Ethical Pause at the Juncture 62
Embodied Shame: Utterances 63
Snippets of my Ageing through Utterances: Constant Differentiation and Becoming 75
Revisioning the Tapestry: Remembering and Forgetting 78

Becoming Noninnocent 78
Intergenerational Relational Connections of Affective Flows 81
Not Dead Yet: The Gift of Otherwise Knowledge 83
Revisiting Shame: Forgetting as Affirmation and the Reworking of Pain 85

Against the Success/Decline Binary: Constant Differentiation 88

Epilogue: Hope You Enjoyed the Journey 92

Never Finalised Transformative Potentials 92
So What? 94

References 98

Prologue: An Invitation to Witness Processual Movement Through Other-wise Knowledge and Life Stories

In 2026 I will turn 65 years old. My location in Aotearoa means I will qualify for state funded superannuation payments, having reached the age of retirement according to policy requirements through a process of governmentality that quantifies my subject formation (Braidotti, 2019b), and "through which bodies are linked to meanings, such as the classification of being 'old'" (Höppner & Urban, 2018, p. 5). In my disciplinary location of psychology this means I meet the categorisation of being old according to an undergraduate course in adult development, and a postgraduate neuropsychology course. Of interest, in some instances I qualified for the categorisation of 'old' by the time I was aged 60 years because much mainstream psychology research, such as Sharma and Bluck's (2023) inquiry into older adults' sense of purpose, considers aged 60 years as the cut-off for qualitative and quantitative research 'on' older adults. When I receive my old age pension I will view the financial benefit of superannuation payments as a privilege, however the ageism that accompanies my age status embedded in gendered age relations is experienced as oppression. Hence, it was the social injustice at the intersection of sexism and ageism that inspired this thesis, and piqued my curiosity as I wondered about something I can feel as I move in and of the world, but the 'something,' that is the denigration of my embodied difference, is not easily thought without accompanying thoughts that invalidate the feeling. The thought-feeling is the effect of the pervasiveness, and acceptability of ageism, and the single story that stereotypes my oldness as a binary of success/decline, alongside my own internalised ageism that invalidates my feeling of moving in the world as devalued Other. The Euro-US-centric knowledge production that dominates the mainstream psychology discipline, and categorises me according to the "colonialised and patriarchal power/knowledge nexuses" (Macleod et al., 2020, p. 301) was the springboard for my resistance to categorisation, alongside the teachings I have had the privilege of receiving in critical feminist psychology spaces. From my initial curiosity spurred by the injustice of ageism, what unfolded was processual, indeterminate, and did not follow the doxa of 'how to' do research in the mainstream of my disciplinary location of psychology. Supported by my marginalised sub-disciplinary location, my ambition was to perform an act of "conceptual disobedience" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 140) to the doxa in a productive manner that refuses to "imitate the master's voice" (Braidotti & Regan,

2017, p. 175) through disconnecting from established habits of thought, and notions of a unitary, bounded identity (Braidotti, 2019b).

The opportunity to attend university in later life was enthralling as it demystified for me the experience of attending university, having witnessed my eldest daughter's engagement with it, but having considered it was beyond my reach and capabilities until the introduction of 'fees free.' Encountering academic psychology's knowledge production was exciting as I savoured, and bowed to the authority of every word to satiate my appetite for 'formal' knowledge throughout much of my undergraduate degree. Undoubtedly my excitement was bolstered by the thought early on in my degree that "Actually, I'm quite good at this." One of my favourite courses as an undergraduate was called Brain and Behaviour, to the extent that at the time borrowing a book from the Massey University Library entitled *Essential Neuroscience* was habitual. I am now constantly astounded at the level of change process I have experienced from those first encounters with academic knowledge production. Critical feminist psychology, or rather the relational encounters that emerged through my engagement with it, expanded my heart and mind, and supercharged my curiosity. The mystery of the brain still fascinates me, however now I am also challenged by critical philosophy, and the meaningfulness of the entangled, interdependent, and complex webs of knowledge production processes that are co-constituted with relations of power. Encountering, and engaging deeply with other ways of knowing how we know is an ongoing process for me of emotion-thought that would not have been possible had I not traversed the authority of objective, rational science in the first instance. The tenet of 'understand, predict control/alter' of logical positivism, or what St. Pierre (2024a) called "the violence of the methodological enclosure" (p. 14) that I learned in 100-level psychology, now feels like epistemic violence of a power relation of domination by Major science that subordinates other ways of knowing of minor science, or nomad science (Braidotti, 2019b). My "commitment to voice the experiences, insights and understandings produced by the excluded and marginalized" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 112) is what motivates my curiosity, and openness to the new. Authoring this thesis has been a 'becoming' in continual process that I "could not have thought without writing" (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 605). There are still many fascinations for me when perusing mainstream psychological knowledge production, so it is more a case of and/and rather than adherence to one 'truth' paradigm. However, the values I hold found a home with the marginalised sub-discipline of critical feminist psychology.

The theory I engage with is meaningful to me. Tamboukou's (2018) engagement with Spinoza's 'ethics of joy' in relation to archival records of women workers, writers, and

educators, theorised their educational experiences as "creative and radical" (p. 868), and this has stayed with me in the resonance of what Tamboukou termed *knowledge-in-becoming*. In this understanding of knowledge production, my journey through this thesis connects with Tamboukou's (2018) theorisation of women workers' education, and how "lived experiences became the material basis of their educational adventure … creative educational practices encouraged them to re-imagine and indeed reposition themselves in the world with others" (p. 875) with greater understanding, and ability to act through affective, and relational encounters. Throughout my learning process, including the process of this thesis, Rosi Braidotti's work that is underpinned by a desire for social justice has been pivotal. It is how I can see this thesis as a contribution to the collective that holds onto hope for sustainable futures of generations yet to come through affirmative relational ethics.

My inquiry through this thesis is against methodological nationalism (Braidotti, 2010) but cannot be easily defined or categorised. It is underpinned by my commitment to theoretical orientations, and for readers familiar with the theoretical territory I traverse, it is an unfolding, wherein traces will escape what is contained, and constrained by the text. It is a journey of critique and creativity that started off somewhere but went elsewhere. It is a narrative inquiry, although 'narrative research' is conceptually slippery and open to contestation about what that means in social science research (Tamboukou, 2008). It is a journey through a process of becoming that moved me and surprised me, and it is my hope that it radiates outward (Fine, 2017) to move and surprise my reader. My inquiry started off thought with the marginalisation of old and older women, but through the process of the journey a divergence unfolded. I had anticipated talking to others, however something different happened through the feeling/thinking/writing. It was at this juncture in my process that my situated knowledge of being an old woman with many life experiences, exploded in a fusion with my theoretical understanding. I had to sit with, and hold gently and ethically, the discomfort, contradiction, and resistance, while also experiencing freedom, and joy. It has been a deeply meaningful process that enabled me to reach a more adequate understanding on many levels across my engagement with concepts, subjectivity, relationships, and the slippery, multifaceted, and even contested concept of 'affect' (Chamberlain, 2017; Seigworth & Gregg, 2010; St. Pierre, 2019) At its heart, my inquiry expresses my commitment to the collective desire for socially just futures for marginalised lives. It is feminist, anti-racist, decolonial, personal, political, affective, and relational. My inquiry is also storytelling but not in the sense of a narrative that is coherent, linear, "sequence-meaning-representation" (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 284) because it is processual, and moves in the in-between of the

"stretchy space of the 'gap' between life and story" (Fine, 2017, p. 118). It is contextual, embedded, embodied, and is interested in the 'how' and 'why,' (process), not the 'what' (identity) of stories and experience (Tucker, 2012). It is a "practice that studies relations with relations" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12). It is faithful to Haraway's (1988) assertion that "only partial perspective promises objective vision" (p. 583), hence it is situated knowledge that is against the doxa of universalism, human exceptionalism, essentialism, and individualism, and it is from a position of noninnocence. It is a theorisation of my lived experiences.

My inquiry is also an intellectual pursuit through which I hope my deeper understanding of the theory I engage with is evidenced. I hope it approaches a "methodological move towards a vision of subjectivity as ethically accountable and politically empowering" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 410). I also aspired to illustrate how my thinking could not be contained within the text, but rather as Braidotti (2010) stated, "it happens outside, out of bounds, in webs of encounters with ideas, others, texts" (p. 414). It is also an affective nomadic transposition that engages memory and heart with creative imagination (Braidotti, 2010). As such, it is an affirmation of difference while honouring differential capacities for being affected, and affecting others, embedded in power relations of domination and subordination, and differential histories, contexts, and vulnerabilities.

It matters to me here to point out to my reader that this inquiry would have been different were it not for the mentorship, inspiration, expertise, and knowing wisdom of my supervisor who takes "pleasure in the inherent creativity of academic work and teaching" (Stewart et al., 2024, p. 520). From my perspective, my supervisor lives the relational ethics she teaches. It matters because in the words of Donna Haraway (2016):

> We are all responsible to and for shaping conditions for multispecies flourishing in the face of terrible histories, and sometimes joyful histories too, but we are not all response-able in the same ways. The differences matter—in ecologies, economies, species, lives. (p. 29)

My headings and sub-headings within the Table of Contents will hopefully guide you through, my reader, as I take you on my journey of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor that has no beginning and no end, except that which is institutionally dictated, and is articulated as it unfolded through the writing of this thesis at this time, in this space, and this location that is personal and political.

Chapter 1: An Introduction

Western-centric Psychological Science: Resistance

From his location in critical social psychology, Parker (2007) responded to critiques from within the broader discipline of 'mainstream' psychology, and answered to the charges made against critical psychology, reflecting the power relations constantly at play within the discipline. Parker pointed out that psychology is always, already, political, and the dialectics of power relations within the discipline mean there is space for resistance to the dominant, and privileged ways of doing psychology that seek to maintain the status quo, thereby reproducing existing power structures. Similarly to feminists working within the psychology discipline, who acknowledge the diversity of feminist perspectives, or 'feminisms,' (Harding, 1992; Macleod et al., 2014; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Riger, 1992), Parker sees value in the multiplicity of critical perspectives as a source of debate, and accountability to specific socio-historical, and political locations. Relationship-building, and alliances among differing critical perspectives oppose any notion of 'alternative psychologies' of 'truth' that would merely serve to return 'radicals' to that which they resist (Parker, 2007). That is, mainstream psychology's knowledge claims of objective science, underpinned by universalism, individualism, and value-neutrality (Magnusson & Marecek, 2017).

From his standpoint, Parker (2007) highlighted the contributions of Tuhiwai Smith (1999) in Aotearoa New Zealand as an example of "the most striking advances in thinking methodologically against colonialism" (p. 11). Feminist psychology has formed alliances with Indigenous scholars in hybrid third spaces that are collaborative and change-making, and work towards decolonising the cultural hegemony of Western knowledge production (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006). For example, an editorial by Macleod et al. (2020) for *Feminism & Psychology* emphasised that alongside challenges and resistance to mainstream psychological science, feminist decolonising psychology must be accountable to the harms that dominant Euro-US-centric feminisms have perpetrated in reproducing universalist notions of gender oppression. Macleod et al.'s (2020) editorial draws from Mignolo (2010) in their description of coloniality as "a whole system of thought, a mentality and a power structure that constructs the Euro-US-centred matrix of knowledge as universally applicable" (p. 294). In an account of the ongoing effects of colonisation for the status of wāhine Māori, Indigenous Māori scholar Mikaere (1999) storied the deliberate strategy by the colonisers to

erase egalitarian gender relations within Māori social organisation, and asserted, "it is the imposition of patriarchy which I believe to be the most damaging impact of colonisation" (p. 47). Macleod et al. (2020) argued convincingly why the ongoing work of dismantling the "colonialised and patriarchal power/knowledge nexuses" (p. 301) must not fail. These authors proposed guiding principles for feminist psychology towards decolonisation, including different conceptualisations of methodology that are adequate to the task of meaning-making with complex, contradictory, heterogenous, and ambiguous subjectivities in constant flux, alongside the complex and adaptable power structures that work to maintain the status quo.

Parker (2007) maintained that critical psychology links in to a change process towards alternative visions of subjectivity both within and outside the discipline, through critical inquiry into the way psychological culture recruits the social imaginary via the expertise of professionals and academics in support of ideologically driven normalisation and pathologisation. Following on from the earliest charges of androcentrism against Western psychological science, such as that by Naomi Weisstein in the late 1960s (Magnusson & Marecek, 2017), feminists in psychology welcomed the seminal work of critical feminist philosophers who critiqued Western knowledge production, such as Haraway (1988) and Harding (1992) who theorised 'strong objectivity' through situated knowledges, or standpoint theory, and Bartky's (1990, 1998) theorising of patriarchal power relations. While Braidotti's (2012) nomadic thought of posthumanism was introduced to me in critical teaching spaces, feminist psychology is slow to engage with Braidotti's critical philosophy. In April 2025, a literature search with the word "posthuman*" within *Feminism & Psychology* journal yielded only seven results. Furthermore, a search of "process ontology" returned nil results. Perhaps this reflects the continued tendency to consider ontological and epistemological questions as emerging together as a theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998/2020). Or perhaps, it is indicative of persistent Western meta-theoretical assumptions succinctly critiqued by Parker (1989/2014), referring to social psychology when he said, "It is trapped within a representation of the world as organized by the meta narratives of humanized science, progress, and individual meaning" (p. 55). The hegemonic epistemological assumptions of Western-centric science articulated by Parker (1989/2014) point to the need for the conceptual leap of posthumanism against Western philosophical claims to the origins, or essence of the subject, or what Hook (2005) described as an "analytics of sameness" (p. 13) when discussing Foucault's 'eventualization' pointing to processual complexity that is never final. The traditional conceptualisation of the 'subject' that the psychology discipline adheres to (Venn, 1984/2005) creates binaries such as femininity/masculinity that have long been

critiqued by feminisms, and are addressed with Deleuze's ontology of immanence, and nomadic subjectivity, providing critical feminist thought avenues for moving on from the "'equality versus difference' debate" (Thiele, 2014, p. 11). As Theile (2014) articulated through engagement with Irigaray, Haraway, Barad, and Grosz, new materialist posthumanism's ethical response-ability is grounded in *ethico-onto-epistemological relationality* of becoming that does indeed reflect forces merging together in constantly moving instances, but not in the sense of the dominant social science research understandings that Crotty (1998/2020) addressed in discussions of ontology and epistemology. Braidotti (2017b) pointed out that critique of humanist universalism is hardly new, citing a French feminist activist writing in 1791 whose demise was the guillotine. The time is overdue for feminist psychology to make the conceptual qualitative moves into new territory, which they are well-placed to do considering their affinity with situated knowledges and long-standing critique of Eurocentrism. Harding (1992) eloquently acknowledged the socio-historical specificity of knowledge production at the end of her article, alluding to the need for strong reflexivity in turning the gaze back onto ourselves as feminist researchers, when she stated, "It will still be the thought of this era, making various distinctive assumptions later generations and others today will point out to us" (p. 463). It is to Rosi Braidotti's work that many critical feminist scholars in the social sciences have turned for inspiration for methodological innovation in ways of thinking and doing otherwise, that may just provide movement for the level of change Parker (2007) alluded to.

Encountering Rosi Braidotti's (2012) work in my postgraduate studies was experienced as disorienting as it disrupted my habits of thought. While the theorising in Braidotti's "Transposing Differences" may have been familiar to many working at the margins of my psychology discipline, as a student it was new to me. The tracing of the organisation of power structures of modernity, and humanist universalism premised on the Enlightenment ideal of huMan 'perfectibility' of the rational, unitary 'knowing' subject of reason (Braidotti, 2012) was confronting, but marked my 'becoming' with the challenge to defamiliarise and disidentify from such habits of thought, which at the time for me, were 61 years in the making. Entering university education later in life, and starting with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, but moving with more critical courses through to postgraduate studies, nevertheless meant I was ill-prepared for thinking with relinquishing habits of thought without a struggle—a struggle that is always in processes of becoming aimed at "decolonising the thinking subject from the dualistic grip" (Braidotti, 2012, p. 30). My location as having been an older woman who was new to university study when I enrolled

aged 56 years, reflected the paradoxes and contradictions of fluid, temporal, and complex subjectivities about which I was reading. I had only in recent years learned about psychological theories in the mainstream context, experienced as awe-inspiring, but then faced the very unravelling of such theories when entering critical conversations with an extensive genealogy. I was a novice in the academic sense, but experienced in life. I had also been versed in the psychology discipline's canon 'about' women, both as scholars within the discipline, and women outside the discipline (Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Nicolson, 1992) that marked the 'becoming' of my discontent with the mainstream discipline.

Braidotti's (2012) explanations that go beyond critique of Eurocentric knowledge production to the qualitative shift of nomadic theory, piqued my feminist sensibilities in descriptions of the Norm, or the Same of "The Majority: white, heterosexual, property-owing, and male" (p. 31); the hierarchical standard that polices a boundary between the Norm of the hegemonic vision of the unitary subject (The Majority subject, or the Molar centre of Being, or as Braidotti explains, Derrida's term is "phallologocentrism"), and the constitutive 'Others' determined by their measure of deviance from the Norm that marks their difference in pejorative terms. Central to Braidotti's argument for nomadic theory is the undoing of dualistic, or oppositional dialectics such as normal/abnormal, sameness/difference, and femininity/masculinity, and the necessity for the structural Others to disconnect from the subject identity of 'Other.' That is, sexualised others (women and LGBTQ+ people), racialised or ethnic others, and naturalised others, but also to disconnect from identifying with the 'Same' as the 'Other of the Same,' in processes of transformation towards freedom from the oppositional binary of being located in a dualistic mode of majority/minor to becoming-nomad (Braidotti, 2012; 2022). As Braidotti (2012) acknowledged, this is a monumental task to ask of the empirical subjects of 'otherness' who have been marginalised, excluded, oppressed, and dispossessed, and therefore have always been denied control over their subjectivities, hence the necessity for Others to first engage identity politics to claim location. As Braidotti (2012) stated, "the center is void; all the action is on the margins" (p. 42). It is the action at the margins that offer ways of 'doing otherwise' in speaking truth to power that posthuman knowledge creation offers if the call for moving beyond critique (Braidotti, 2017a, 2017b) is heeded. Indeed, as shown by Rosiek and Pratt (2024) contemporary scholars are engaging with posthuman affirmative social analyses beyond critique, however these authors point out the difficulty of such an endeavour that "changes the underlying logic of inquiry from a logic of representation to a logic of becoming" (p. 205). Feminist psychology must continue the work that rejects "psychological imperialism"

as a commitment to decolonising the psychology discipline in all its complexities and challenges (Macleod et al., 2020, p. 294). The politics of location, and situated knowledges assist in this work. As Rich (1987) stated, "We who are not the same. We who are many and do not want to be the same" (p. 225).

My Motivating Purpose for this Thesis

"What is inexhaustible is our capacity, our power even, to differ within ourselves, as well as between us"

(Braidotti, 2019b, p. 181).

The quotation above from Braidotti (2019b) reflects the hopefulness I feel in thinking with openness towards the possibilities and potentials that expanded horizons of thought hold for critical feminist psychology, and remind me of the privilege I have had of learning from scholars dedicated to the ongoing quest for "living and dying well together" (Haraway, 2016, p. 29). Such affirmation renders me capable. It was the force that underpinned my movement and motivation to undertake this project, initially prompted by the injustice of ageism, and marginalisation of older, or old women's lives.

The catalyst that aroused my anger at the injustice and harms inflicted at the intersection of sexism, ageism, and ableism happened when I was contemplating an assignment in a postgraduate feminist psychology course. Thinking with my assignment coincided with a 2023 news report from Australia about a 95 year old woman who was tasered by a police officer in her place of residential care, and subsequently died (Radio New Zealand, 2023). The officer reportedly said, "Nah, bugger it," before he inflicted the violence of tasering that ultimately killed her, and while the officer was found guilty of manslaughter, he avoided a prison sentence (Gregoire & Nedim, 2025). This reported event highlighted for me the continuing relevance of all I had learned in my studies because it illustrated the gendered power relations that subordinate women as 'less than,' and deviant, so the work for social justice remains a critical endeavour. There were a lot of things that disturbed me about that event and the ensuing media reports that prompted outrage at the police officer's actions. Had the perpetrator not been a White man, or the victim not been a White woman, would the outcome, reporting, and public outrage generated have been different? In my mind, the answer was undoubtedly, yes. As Salem (2016) pointed out, social identity is co-constituted

with power relations of domination and subordination, embedded in the structural conditions of everyday lives. It is why Haraway's (2016) insistence that "it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with" (p. 12) still matters. It is also why Harding's (1992) seminal argument still matters, wherein she extended work of feminist thinkers around theories of knowledge, in the claims that strong objectivity is achieved if we '"start thought from marginalized lives" and "take everyday life as problematic"' (p. 438). It is also why experimenting creatively with ways of doing difference differently requires a move away from prescribed methodologies of the doxa (Braidotti, 2006a; St. Pierre, 2019). Furthermore, I had come to realise that my becoming-with-education journey could well have been different had I not been drawn to course names such as The Psychology of Women, or indeed, if I had been an expert at statistics. Or even had I been much younger, and contemplating future work opportunities. I am grateful now that I was not enamoured of statistical analysis, nor contemplating a career, because the tangled mess of resistance, engagement, and intensity of feeling and thinking, whether contradictory or in synchronicity, that together has marked my processual movement, has changed me in ways that my experience of learning in mainstream psychology could not.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Location: Ontological and Epistemological Positionality

Politics of Location

Encountering scholars such as Haraway, Harding, Bartky, Mikaere, and Braidotti, alongside the scholars who introduced me to their work, and those that came before them such as Foucault, and Deleuze, inspired me to pursue postgraduate studies from my marginalised location of critical feminist psychology. They also inspired my research story because feminist psychology has not been attuned to the meaning-making and narratives of older or old women about ageing and/or ageism. Literature searches in the flagship journal of *Feminism & Psychology* yielded little beyond the experiences of menopause, heterosexual marriage, divorce, depression, employment, and a special feature in 2015 about the 2014 suicide of Sandra Bem, a feminist academic who had been diagnosed with dementia four years previously, titled *Feminism, suicide and assisted dying: Reflections on Sandra Bem's death*, with accompanying editorial by Kitzinger (2015). Interestingly, none of the commentators mentioned Bem's age when she died (see Andrews, 2015; D.S. Davis, 2015; K. Davis, 2015; Martin, 2015; Peel & Harding, 2015; Wilkinson, 2015). A Google search established she was 69 years old (Psychology's Feminist Voices, n.d.); possibly the commentators did not mention Bem's age because the spectre of dementia linked with suicide at 69 years old may well have been confronting, even for those much younger than Sandra Bem. Certainly, the social imaginary incites fear of dementia, alongside the moral panic in society of the 'burden' of the ageing population, as shown by Amundsen (2022) in the context of an analysis of online news media in Aotearoa. The psychology discipline is complicit in these social processes as exemplified by a psychology course prescribed text for neuropsychology that described people with a certain type of dementia as the 3Ws, elaborated on as "whacky, wobbly, and wet" (Schoenberg & Duff, 2011, p. 382)—an obviously well-known discourse within the sub-discipline that effectively inscribes the bodies of these people with deficit in dehumanising pejorative terms. I was disconcerted when I expressed my abhorrence to fellow students and received a nonplussed response. I could only surmise the exchange signified that the lives of 'people with a certain type of dementia, or 3Ws' were so abstracted from any felt experiences that they remained a textbook description of a fixed pathology. I was incensed by the pejorative description because my 95 year old father, who is

in a care home because of dementia, is not reducible to any of its effects, so I felt strongly my objection to the categorical naming. My resistance to the categorisation, pathologisation, and biomedicalisation of old people evident in the sub-discipline of neuropsychology highlighted for me that my values aligned with the teaching I received from critical feminist scholars. Undertaking the course was worthwhile in that it demystified neuropsychology, but more importantly it helped me to understand the necessity for what Braidotti terms as "supra-disciplinary sensibility," and a "becoming-minoritarian of knowledge production practices" (Braidotti, 2017a, p. 89).

The knowledge production of Western psychology 'about' women has been critiqued and deconstructed by feminist scholars since the 1970s (Nicolson, 1992). However, it was only through problematising the normalised ontological and epistemological underpinnings of Western psychology's knowledge claims, and examination of the power/knowledge nexus, that necessarily led critical feminist scholars to the philosophy of science (Nicolson, 1992). The seminal work of Rich (1987) gifted feminist psychology the politics of location, while Haraway (1988), Harding (1986), and Braidotti (1994) provided theorising for feminist psychology from a critical philosophy perspective. Haraway's (1988) "god trick" (p. 581) should be familiar to any novice feminist psychology researcher. Haraway's theorisation of the 'objective' gaze of scientific reason from nowhere, that sees everything, has been a vehicle for colonialism and male supremacy, as Haraway illustrated using a vision metaphor. In alignment with Braidotti (1994; 2010; 2012) who reiterated that all knowledge claims are partial and limited, Haraway (1988) similarly emphasised feminist commitment to accountability for "what we learn how to see" (p. 583) in her argument against 'objective' Western scientific knowledge claims, as she theorised the position of the Same, or "the unmarked positions of Man and White" (p. 581) who claim the power to see but not be seen. The ethical and political accountability inherent in the politics of location (Rich, 1987) is central to situated knowledges for critical feminist psychology to respond to power relations. Through thinking with the multiplicity of differences within dynamic subjectivities that emphasise one's location, or embedded and embodied perspective, an opening for exploring the operation of power through the degrees of differentiation from hierarchical 'Man' can provide a cartography, or mapping of "a theoretically-based and politically-informed reading of the present" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 409). An analysis of power remains an urgent and critical commitment for ethical feminist psychology praxis because as Braidotti (2017a) explained, our moment in time is one of intense interconnection, while for the peoples excluded from the centre subject position, the contemporary experience is one of heightened internal

fragmentation at the long-established axes of pejorative differentiation. That is, race, class, sexual orientation, gender, age, and able-bodiedness remain as categories of degrees of deviance from the Norm that limit participation in normal humanity. This is a central concern for critical feminist psychology because the parent disciplinary practices of categorisation, normalisation, and pathologisation perpetuate a colonial, patriarchal hegemony embedded in gendered power relations (Bharj & Adams, 2023).

The politics of location meant it was desirable and necessary for me to be accountable to my location in Aotearoa as a Pākehā woman living in a land where Indigenous knowledges, culture, and language have been systematically subjugated by imperial colonialism, and Indigenous lands stolen for capital accumulation (Tuhiwai Smith, 2021). Furthermore, in speaking on the feminist politics of location and nomadic thought, Braidotti stated it is important to be reflexive about my location to enable starting from where I am, in acknowledgement of being part of the problem if I am to be part of the solution (Braidotti & Regan, 2017). My commitment to contribute in a small way to being part of the solution is enacted through my everyday encounters and my research story that resists methodological nationalism by engaging with nomadic subjectivity counter to the hegemonic vision of the unitary rational subject of humanist Western ethnocentrism (Braidotti, 2010) that dominates the psychology discipline (Bharj & Adams, 2023; Macleod et al., 2020).

Feminist Māori scholars have made a significant contribution to the disruption of hegemonic Western frameworks for social research, and challenges to Eurocentrism. Connor's (2007) articulation of biographical research blended with Indigenous feminism and epistemology challenged Eurocentric notions of the unitary subject, and held space for differences in pursuit of the reclamation of diversity of experiences of cultural identity. Connor's proposed cultural hybrid approach for Māori feminist research illuminated the cultural specificity of the 'The Majority subject,' and serves as a reminder of gendered power relations as a colonial tool of oppression at the intersection of racism and sexism. Connor's work demonstrated engagement with identity politics to claim location (Braidotti, 2012), working at the margins of academia to disidentify with the Other of the Same in becoming-minoritarian in knowledge production practice through proposed critical alliances (Braidotti, 2019a, 2019b). Moving with Connor's emphasis on claiming location I hear the reverberation with Waitere and Johnston's (2009) articulation of how speaking "does not guarantee a hearing" (p. 14) within the context of academia because the limitations of the Western "institutional acoustic" render necessary the "struggle over the power to name, claim, define and theorise our lives" (p. 15). Simmonds (2011) emphasised the diversity, and respect for

differences that a Māori feminist approach entails, and found potential for alliances with contemporary Pākehā feminisms. The contradictions, paradoxes, and in-between-ness articulated by Māori scholars resonates with understandings of the theorisation of subjectivity in posthuman thought that critical feminist psychology teaching spaces introduced me to. Braidotti (2022) articulated the resonances of posthuman thought with Indigenous epistemologies, and implored feminist scholars to learn from, and listen to the wisdom of these knowledges. From her perspective as a Ngāti Raukawa woman, Mikaere (1999) shared knowledge of the places, spaces, and positions women occupied in accordance with tikanga Māori, or customary practices of te ao Māori (the Māori worldview), and her genealogical tracing exposes the power/knowledge nexus of coloniality and patriarchy. Bharj and Adams (2023) reiterated that a commitment to the decolonisation of psychology necessitates addressing the epistemic violence not only of Eurocentrism in psychology, but also the oppressive power of coloniality exercised through institutionalised hegemonic White feminisms of imperialism that persist in contemporary times. From my partial perspective and limited location, engaging with the theorising of Braidotti's (2010) feminist nomadic thought provided an anti-racist, and anti-colonial process of becoming-minoritarian through disidentification with the master's tools (Bharj & Adams, 2023) as an ethical responsibility.

Learning from Mikaere (1999) about the role of older women, or kuia, in tikanga Māori as "repositories of knowledge" (p. 37) and her tracing of the status and influence afforded to kuia in her own whakapapa provided me with a stark juxtaposition with theoretical models on ageing I have encountered in the psychology discipline. For example, the sub-discipline of neuropsychology examines ageing through a deficit lens of pathology and decline as a measure of deviance from what is considered 'normal' cognitive ageing (Schoenberg & Duff, 2011). Grappling with the implications of such divergent knowledge claims from my own location, and trying to make sense of the cacophony of voices in knowledge producing spaces while feeling impassioned about my research story, was when my engagement with Braidotti's work became meaningful. Although Braidotti's (2017b) version of posthumanism theory is complex as it weaves together rich genealogical strands of critical philosophy imbued with feminism, her deeply felt and communicated desire for social, economic, cultural, environmental, and ecological justice is infectious, as it offers critical feminist psychology creative imaginings for our collective futures. Thinking with Braidotti's (2019b, 2020, 2022) often repeated wisdom, '"we"-who-are-not-one-and-the-same-but-are-in-*this*-together'' (Braidotti, 2022, p. 7) provided me a meaningful way to remember our collective interdependence, while 'difference' becomes a site of transformative

movement away from negation and exclusion, or 'less than' the Same, in the rejection of dualistic modes of thought, through affirmative ethics (Braidotti, 2008a). Relatedly, Haraway (2016) is a constant companion in her reminder that differences matter in our living and dying together in the context of complex histories. Hence my commitment to my research story, underpinned by the ongoing work of disidentification with dominant representations, and commitment to deterritorialise from the dominant subject position of humanist Man through becoming-molecular (Braidotti, 2013) meant, "it matters what ideas we use to think other ideas (with)" (Strathern, n.d. as cited in Haraway, 2016, p. 12), and "it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12). The opportunity that emerges from our posthuman times to think about 'difference' differently is in subverting the dominant vision of the subject through ethical alternative views of the subject (Braidotti, 2019b). Relevant for feminist psychology, Braidotti's (2022) analysis of selected versions of feminism reveals that the notion of the subject of many feminisms concerned with 'equality' is premised on an individualistic, liberal self, and their analyses of gender equality are not neutral because capitalist, colonial, and patriarchal power structures of exclusion and oppression are underplayed. My line of flight away from pejorative difference of being an old woman meant embracing a processual indeterminate methodology that fleetingly prompted the thought it would have been easier to do a Foucauldian discourse analysis! However, the allure of doing difference differently at the intersection of sexism and ageism ignited my passion.

Process Ontology, Subjectivity, and Nomadic Becoming

Rethinking subjectivity is at the heart of Braidotti's (2017b) version of posthuman knowledge creation, with the explicit purpose of living together in a more socially just world that includes all matter, or "the totality of things" (p. 43). It is unsurprising the leap to thinking with process ontology that demands a defamiliarisation with habits of thought, or the taken-for-granted assumptions of Western philosophy, and by extension psychology, is difficult. Defamiliarisation is a methodological practice that includes an interrogation of one's privilege to unlearn it as a responsibility to elucidate one's participation in power relations (Braidotti, 2019b). Hence, acknowledgement of my location in psychology as part of the problem as it reproduces habitual forms of representation of the self and other, can

enable transformation to being part of the solution through movement with other ways of knowing.

While not being the equivalent, process ontology resonates with Indigenous systems of thought. Indigenous epistemologies and relational philosophies are a philosophical expression of perspectivism, and also reject dualism as a pathological condition of Western hierarchical humanist Man (Braidotti, 2022). In her writing about the simultaneously simple and complex understanding of 'mana,' Indigenous Māori scholar Pihama's (2019) articulation of mana wāhine emphasises the understanding of identities as fluid, contextual, and relational across time and space, meaning 'wāhine' cannot be conceptually thought through Western constructed binaries. Through disidentification from, and defamiliarisation with Western psychology's models of subject formation, space is opened up for decolonising praxis to escape Cartesian dualist ontology as the normalised order of things (St. Pierre, 2024b). It is indeed a leap beyond poststructuralism that Riger (1992) said was like "Alice falling into a Wonderland" (p. 734) for social scientists versed in positivism. St. Pierre (2024b) elaborated on the reasons for the difficult task of refusing foundationalism as she traced the foundational pillars of Western science that have been critiqued by a long history of scholars alarmed by the consequences of Descartes' *cogito* or rational unitary Man of Reason as both subject and object of knowledge, for the structural Others of modernity. It was the sciences of 'man,' including the psychology discipline, that Foucault critiqued as being about knowledge/power (St. Pierre, 2024a). As St. Pierre (2024a) asserted, methodological concepts of the social sciences are assumed to be universally applicable across all systems of thought—a point that highlights the arrogance of universalism's humanistic Man of Reason, even in recognition of his decline, or death of Man, as theorised by Foucault following Neitzsche (Braidotti, 2019b), and reinforces the urgent call "to decolonize the Anthropocene" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 61). The genealogy of Neitzsche's 'death of God,' (Grayling, 2019) to Foucault's 'death of Man' points to ethics as power—the authority of the Church usurped by the authority of science with the advent of the Enlightenment, and theorising what it means to live an ethical life (Braidotti, 2022).

Braidotti's theorisation of process ontology is influenced by Foucault, Irigaray, and Deleuze's critique of the unitary subject, and hegemonic power structures, however her version of posthuman knowledge is uniquely imbued with feminist theory underpinned by a politics of location—"a neomaterialist and relational vision of subjectivity" (Braidotti, 2017b, p. 7). While explanations of the complexity of process ontology are beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to note process ontology is understood as a perspective that avoids

binary oppositions because all matter (human and non-human) is one substance in dynamic, and different expressions, and matter is self-organising and relational (Braidotti, 2022).

St. Pierre's (2024a) discussion of Deleuze and Guattari's ontology of immanence resonates with Indigenous worldviews in the emphasis on the crucial difference in understanding this one-word ontology as an image of thought that cannot begin with the method of Cartesian dualism entrenched even in qualitative inquiry. Braidotti's (2019a, 2019b) theorisation of process ontology is underpinned by a conceptual framework of nomadic becoming, which draws from, and extends Deleuze's neo-Spinozist, monistic, vital ontologies. The "immanence" refers to the centrality of intelligent, self-organising matter. An understanding of matter as being one, immanent to itself, and as such immanent to specific locations, and conditions, enables an understanding of the importance of the politics of location in the refusal of transcendental universalism and mind-body dualism. What is important about the philosophy of immanence for thinking differently is stated by Braidotti (2017b) as, "situating the thinking subjects in the world, as relational, post-anthropocentric, mediated, and outward-bound" (p. 20). Hence, the situated knowledges of feminisms play a central role in posthuman knowledge production in Braidotti's (2017b) description of the posthuman subject as being a "materially embedded, multilayered, nomadic entity" (p. 6). In this framing, difference is understood as happening in continual differentiation of common matter of the totality of being, which dispenses with binary oppositional terms of humanistic Man. The ontological and epistemological assumptions of Western psychological science that centre the unitary, essentialised, psychic, and individual subjectivity of Enlightenment's humanist Man could well have been otherwise (Venn, 1984/2005). The humanist ideals, persisting from the Enlightenment, of moral universalism, human exceptionalism, and the linear civilisational progress of rational Man, embedded in fixed categories and stable identities, are displaced by processes of change and motion (Braidotti, 2013). Grosz (2005) described Deleuze's work as devoted to elucidating the cultural and biological 'becoming' of everything, or 'difference,' that is unbound from entities, terms, and states, defined as substance and self-identity, and rather is a relational ontology between and within fields of 'difference,' that produce differentiation continuously—a Life force. Identification with the dominant Majority as the Other of the Same that is static, and constantly reproducing itself, is displaced by a principle of change, and temporal motion, in nomadic theory as "becoming-minoritarian" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 344).

Rosiek and Pratt (2024) succinctly articulated posthuman subjectivity "as fluid and porous, constituted in relational assemblages that include both human and non-human

agency, knowledge systems, and material conditions, that change over time" (p. 199). Braidotti (2019b) emphasised the situated partiality of subjectivity that is embedded and embodied, and does not coincide with the unitary, liberal individualism of Eurocentric subjectivity. It is more a question of what we are in processes of becoming in transversal relational capacities to affect, and be affected by all others, as a continual work-in-progress. 'Nomadic becoming' is a conceptual framework developed by Braidotti (2012; 2019a) to account for the complexity of our present conditions, and extend beyond biopolitical scholarship to account for the non-human, and technological actors prominent in our posthuman times. It is a politics of affirmation that enables imaginative possibilities, through different degrees of perception, of the subjects we are in processes of becoming (the actualisation of the virtual) in a perpetual interplay with the subjects we are ceasing to be (the end of the actual) (Braidotti, 2019a). The issue of power is central for a posthuman cartography because a figuration, or a *"conceptual personae*" of a subject position is always socio-historically, and geopolitically located; is specific; partial; and singular, being immanent to itself, and such figurations can show structurally oppressive power relations of dominant subject-formations (*potestas*), but also can empower through a vision of alternative subjectivity in processes of multiple becomings (*potentia*) (Braidotti, 2019a, p. 34). Following the genealogy of thought from Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari, for Braidotti (2019a) power as potestas (prohibitive or restrictive force), and potentia (productive or empowering), is viewed as a process that is multi-layered, dynamic, strategic, and always interacting in co-existence rather than either/or.

The pathologisation of old and ageing women that permeates the social imaginary of age relations, and perpetuates ageism, is enabled by the psychology discipline largely ignoring old and older women (Calasanti, 2008; Freixas et al., 2012; Mazzucchelli & Íñiguez-Rueda, 2023). Indeed, feminist scholarship more generally has failed to adequately engage with issues of ageing and ageism, apart from some notable exceptions (Finlay, 2021; Gibson, 2018). However, Hogan and Warren (2012) pointed out that the research that has been undertaken at the intersection of sexism and ageism, has indeed been from a feminist perspective. Feminists within psychology have been accused of ignoring older women, and in the context of therapy Mitchell and Bruns (2011) highlighted the complexity of addressing internalised ageism and associated binaries. It seems being interested in hearing the missing stories of old women only occurs as women themselves become categorically 'old' in the Western informed imaginary and experience for themselves the stigma and stereotypes associated with decline and decrepitude. Segal (2014a) argued that the ideological

denigration of older lives reproduces cultural understandings linking old people with "ugliness, frailty, incapacity, and death" (p. 215). Referring to therapists' work, Mitchell and Bruns (2011) stated, "Feminists across age cohorts and generations need to come together to share in this process of unlearning ageism, rather than reinforcing the marginalization of the old by leaving the work of confronting ageism to only those who are socially identified as aged" (p. 121). When psychology does attend to issues of ageing beyond menopause it is predominantly from a location of binary understandings of young/old that render being old as pejorative 'abnormal' difference against the 'normal' of being young. This recognition that stories of older or old women beyond menopause were largely missing from feminist psychology's flagship journal, and that they did appear as a figure of pathologised Other at the intersection of dementia and suicide, was an important moment for me as it resonated with my experience and 'knowing' that no-one knows until arriving at older ages what the stigma and stereotypes feel like in our bodies as we move in the world. Engaging with feminist literature on ageism heightened my sensitivity to the embeddedness of the pejorative difference of old bodies that we are socialised into early in the life course, and it is that which underpins internalised ageism experienced in everyday life. My processual understanding has moved me to see why I can stand in front of a mirror naked, and feel disgust at my abnormal body juxtaposed with the spectacle of the young, fit, healthy, unmarked, normal body on which adornments are hung, and which confronts us in advertisements, and everywhere else. It is a disciplinary power that is everywhere and nowhere (Bartky, 1998). My reflection in the mirror experienced as an abject old body is the internalised gaze of my body as seen by another because I am embedded in a patriarchal and ageist society that inscribes my body with deficit. I can now understand this as an embodied affective knowing beyond the intellectual knowing that I felt energised by when first reading Bartky (1998) several years ago. I can make sense of why Segal (2015) noted that our inclination is to a disavowal of old age as a first response to ageism illustrated by the common refrain by old people in interviews of "I don't feel old" (p. 6). It is in critique of, and resistance to psychology's complicity with ageism, contrasted with my lived experiences of being an older woman, that prompted me to think with the missing stories of older and old women in my disciplinary location, inspired by the potentials of counter-stories with a vision of alternative subjectivities.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Old Matters

"Our observations suggest that the relative absence of attention to age is itself an example of the erasure of older women by social scientists"

(Chasin & Kramer, 2022, p.128).

Since Robert Butler coined the term 'ageism' in 1969 to define the discrimination against, and stereotyping of 'old' people (Amundsen, 2022; Gullette, 2018), social scientists have critiqued, and deconstructed ageism in an effort to create more equitable conditions for everyday lives (Calasanti, 2003, 2008; see also Calasanti et al., 2006; Gullette, 2017; Laws, 1995; Martin & Twigg, 2018; Sandberg, 2013; Segal, 2014a, 2014b; Woodward, 2002). However, as evidenced by the above quotation, the 'double standard of ageing' at the intersection of age and gender is as relevant now as when Susan Sontag identified it more than 50 years ago, wherein hegemonic culture denigrates, and discards ageing women at younger ages than men, in both public and private spheres (Segal, 2015). Emergence of the terms gendered ageism, and sexageism (Bouson, 2016, as cited in Westwood, 2023) acknowledged how the male gaze of patriarchy that subordinates the Other (Bartky, 1998) doubly inscribes the bodies of old women with shame and abjection from the gaze of youth (Calasanti & Slevin, 2006; Twigg, 2004). Westwood (2023) explored older women's narratives of experiences of invisibility and asserted that the nexus between the abjection (misrecognition) and invisibilisation (nonrecognition) of gendered ageism produces profound social injustices that can potentially be a matter of life and death. For example, the exclusion of older women from much intimate partner violence research results in a lack of service provision (Westwood, 2023). Gullette (2018) pointed out that the term 'ageing' has even become implicitly derogatory through association with ideology linked to the disease model of the biomedicalisation of ageing. The concept of 'successful ageing' was first championed by gerontologists, John Rowe and Robert Kahn in the 1980s, and 1990s, to counter the negativity of the decline narrative (Calasanti et al., 2006; Calasanti & King, 2021; Carney & Gray, 2015). However, as Calasanti and King (2021) argued convincingly in their call for a paradigm shift, 'successful ageing' reproduces the power relations of domination and subordination in an age hierarchy. Consumer capitalism profits from the decline/success

binary through the forceful demands of neoliberalism that holds individuals responsible for their decline/success (Pickard, 2024). Drawing an analogy with Braidotti's (2012) articulation of Deleuze and Guattari's capitalism as schizophrenia that promotes, for example, "feminism without women" (p. 27), the profit-driven multiplication and commodification of differences of 'others' as consumers of advanced capitalism produces ageism without old age because of the break in the traditional dialectic relationship of Others to the Same through the proliferation of commodified difference for profit, of ever-increasing multiple Others. For example, since Bartky's (1998) articulation of the disciplining of feminine bodies through beauty rituals there has indeed been a proliferation of profit for the "anti-aging industry" (Calasanti et al., 2018, p. 233). Gullette (2018) pointed out that "Adverse age-related judgment can begin about 35, as in Silicon Valley" (p. 266). It appears disciplinary techniques to delay the stigmatised status of being old, and therefore excluded, are being applied at increasingly younger ages, before any bodily decline occurs (Gullette, 2018).

Reviewed literature about ageing and/or ageism that was explicitly able to be identified as emerging from my disciplinary location in psychology was predominantly in areas of health (Chrisler et al., 2016; see also Garrison-Diehn et al., 2022), sexuality (Gore-Gorszewska, 2023; see also Towler et al., 2021), and therapy (Dougherty et al., 2016; see also Mitchell & Bruns, 2011; Pelc et al., 2020; Radtke et al., 2016). While not specific to ageing, Rice's (2009) article on feminist ethical practice addressed the challenges of representation when writing and researching "women's embodied lives" (p. 245). While most of the remaining fifteen articles were also from a feminist perspective, many adopted mainstream psychology's universalist and individualist approaches. For example, Dougherty et al. (2016) located the most negative consequences of age stereotypes as residing within women themselves because of their perceptions, and advised therapists to help women "transcend ageist stereotypes" (p. 27). Dougherty et al. outlined how therapists could help women combat ageism, through an approach grounded in individualism that renders women responsible for achieving successful ageing counter to the decline narrative. These authors suggested women adopt a positive attitude to ageing, and furthermore that women should adopt an attitude of gratitude because they may benefit from doing so more than men would, with the proviso they had no difficulty with emotional expression. Other scholars used framing familiar in social science research such as interpretative analysis using Western-informed understandings of wisdom (Radtke et al., 2016); resilience, sense of purpose, and memories (Sharma & Bluck, 2023). A review article by Glück (2024) on the relationship between wisdom and ageing was distinctly framed around psychological cognitive,

developmental, and personality models that are individualistic, and assume universality, albeit while acknowledging context but with no consideration of gender. In the area of geropsychology, Garrison-Diehn et al. (2022) published commentary on one section of a formal geropsychology knowledge competency framework designed as a guideline for the training of psychologists post-licensure in the U.S. to increase knowledge about attitudes of clinicians towards older adults. Garrison-Diehn et al. acknowledged that endemic ageism in the field negatively impacts the health and well-being of older adults, citing issues of practitioner bias, stereotyping, lack of specific training with older adults, reluctance of clinicians to work with older adults, and lack of research. While Garrison-Diehn et al. (2022) critiqued the 'successful ageing' model, they were of the opinion that it has "some merit" (p. 8) but pointed out the ableist connotations of successful ageing frameworks and recommended interdisciplinary collaboration among psychologists, gerontologists, and disability activist scholars. Garrison-Diehn et al. reiterated the need for resources, education, and research while demonstrating awareness of age hierarchies that reproduce harms through both positive and negative stereotypes. Collectively, the cited research in my disciplinary location of psychology followed the doxa of Euro-US-centric knowledge production wherein psychology is granted expert status, and old age itself is the problem whether addressing declining bodies or successful bodies, rather than age power relations which exclude, and marginalise old people. Calasanti et al.'s (2006) assertion is still relevant, when they stated that old people "suffer inequalities in distributions of authority, status, and money, and these inequalities are seen to be natural, and thus beyond dispute" (p. 18).

Krekula et al. (2018) problematised the notion of gendered ageism as it has been commonly understood as double or triple jeopardy through intersectionality, to emphasise the relational and performative aspects of gender and age as intersections of power and oppression that are context dependent, and dynamic. Krekula et al.'s stance that focused on gender as a relational process resonated with Gullette's (2017) call for attention to age as performative, or as 'doing,' and as an organising principle of power relations. Krekula et al. called for more nuanced and fine-grained differentiation of difference, and complexity, to open up processual, co-constituted understandings that these authors claimed require further theoretical conceptualisation. A move to nomadic subjectivity embedded in post-identitarian theorising may provide a more sustainable direction because potentials are never closed down in the move away from identity politics to "flows and energies, affects, desires and imaginings," as stated by Braidotti (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 33). It appears that while the lived realities of ageism continue to affect old people, the resistance to, and

activism against ageist practices, particularly for women, has stalled. Indeed, scholars contend that not only has ageism persisted, but that the harms and violence inflicted that spring from it have intensified (Baars, 2025; Gilleard & Higgs, 2011; Gullette, 2017; Segal, 2014a). Cynthia Rich stated when referring to old feminists, "They want to act, and they want to act as old women, but they have no theoretical base. I'm counting on academia, particularly Women's Studies, to provide them with one" (Lipscomb, 2006, p. 4). As Carney and Gray (2015) pointed out, the institutionalisation of ageism is beyond question, supported by over 50 years of research.

Some scholars have emphasised the importance of narratives, lived experience, and storytelling. For example Carney and Gray (2015) claimed that while there is "strong psychological literature on ageism," (p. 125) feminist scholars have been under-resourced when inquiring into the capacities and potentials of longevity because neoliberal capitalism has been the handmaiden of economic panic about ageing populations. Hence the idea that 'unproductive' old people are a drain on resources and an economic burden intensifies ageism, and has become a truth regime and is linked to the decline narrative meaning research has focused on the Western notion of 'senescence' while ignoring potential. These conditions have led to Carney and Gray's (2015) argument that some scholars "have not recognised that lived experience of old age might be a valid form of knowledge of ageing" (p. 125). Carney and Gray (2015) advocated fiercely for "a more radical epistemology of ageing" (p. 132) through starting points of highlighting that the personal is political, and recognition of the benefits of a politics of location through the standpoint of lived experience. Similarly, Gullette (2018) stated "My goal was to disrupt the automatic assumption that we know what *aging* is without stories" (p. 262).

When thinking with the research literature from my disciplinary location of psychology I felt a sense of familiarity that was like the sediment of the foundations of my learning. I felt a re-connection with the comfort of familiarity of mainstream institutional acoustics in memories of undergraduate study, but this was tempered with gratitude for movement that was made possible not only by my teachers from postgraduate study, and my openness to being affected, but all those feminists who paved the way. A line extracted from Stewart et al. (2024) reflected my feeling: "Unblinking eyes of our foremothers gazed to the future" (p. 521). It reminded me of the fluidity of subjectivity in the context of my educational becoming because I was left wanting more and/or different. It was like hearing bits and pieces but with something missing, accompanied by the feeling I get when attempting to explain, or impart something, in the hope of arousing the same level of passion

I feel about something, to someone else. Returning my attention to the teachings I have received from critical feminist psychology, I recognise them as the 'more and/or different' that motivated this thesis. I was curious to know more from my location about how understanding ageing with posthumanism may provide avenues for thinking with the nuance, complexity, and contradiction of everyday lives.

Posthumanism and Ageing: A Muse

Similar to the diverse genealogies of feminist inquiry, posthumanist perspectives are also diverse in their theoretical orientations, however the various interpretations in response to our posthuman conditions are unified by the following: a commitment to the monism of process ontology that prioritises relations over substance, and change and movement over representation of stabilities; rejection of human exceptionalism; and assemblages of human and non-human forces or intensities of affect (Andrews & Duff, 2019). In consideration of ageing, and aged bodies, critical gerontology scholars Andrews and Duff (2019) emphasised the commitment of all posthumanistic thinkers to ontological processual understandings rather than representational and pointed out that the 'posthuman turn' holds promise for a "holistic processual gerontology" (p. 53). Andrews and Duff (2019) have identified processual understandings salient for ageing contexts as, "aging emerging and expressed through relational material assemblages; aging enacted and performed by open vital bodies with vibrant objects; aging in immediate, pre-personal, more-than-representational space-times" (p. 48). The posthuman turn in critical gerontology recognises ageing human bodies as dynamic assemblages of human and non-human forces that re-situates the human away from internal characteristics of humanism to "modes of existence" (Andrews & Duff, 2019, p. 47). Critical gerontology is building on but moving past the limitations of constructionist concepts that centred the human being in relation to self/other, and the poststructuralist preoccupations with language through the posthuman turn (Andrews & Duff, 2019). Andrews and Duff's (2019) scrutiny and explanations of the numerous theoretical strands in the posthuman turn in critical gerontology add to the complexities and resonated with Rosi Braidotti's work, particularly in the prominence afforded to the "Deleuzian articulations of 'affect'" (p. 49). It is the feminist values underpinning Rosi Braidotti's work, most recently in *Posthuman Feminism* that resonated with my desire to reach a greater understanding from my location.

From a feminist perspective, Barnes (2018) claimed that while scholars who are themselves now ageing have become more prominent in theorising age and age relations, much work remains for feminist studies, and activism, before old age is foregrounded, even though 'ageism' was identified a long time ago. From her disciplinary location of social policy, and interest in relational ontology and care ethics, Barnes (2018) reflected the position of Gullette (2017) when she stated, "Unlike sexism, disablism or racism, ageism can still be seen as not only tolerated, but accepted in everyday discourse" (p. 211). Cozza and Wanka (2025) pointed out it is the privileging of the *human*, that accords categorisations of 'old' and 'aged,' and homogenises older adults with a fixed label, thereby obscuring the movement and processes of becoming. I understand this as the basis of ageism, arising from individualised identity politics and the reproduction of power relations within an age hierarchy in Western societies, that according to Sandberg (2013) assigns value to being young, or even midlife, as normative and desired, thereby positioning the ageing body in the decline narrative as Other. van Dyk (2016) analysed the othering of the success/decline binary designated to the young-old (third age) and old-old (fourth age) respectively, and concluded the affirmative othering of the third age (successful ageing, or active ageing, or productive ageing, or ageing well) that requires a positive qualifier reproduces a violent hierarchy that can only be dismantled through deconstruction of the binaries. The bifurcation of third and fourth agers (success/decline) reproduces the "unmarked universal benchmark of midlife in relation to which later life must always deviate" (van Dyk, 2016, p. 118). According to van Dyk's (2016) analysis that engaged postcolonial studies to advance her argument (for example the racist notions of the 'noble savage' and 'exotic oriental'), the complexity and nuance of theorising age and ageing arises from 'age' being "both a marker of difference *and* a life-long process" (p. 118). Sandberg and Marshall (2017) argued the binaries of success/decline must be left behind in their call for queering ageing futures that affirms difference while challenging normativity. The move away from human exceptionalism, and the proliferation of identity categories, and binaries, to assemblages and 'becoming' of posthumanism (Braidotti, 2017b) therefore has clear advantages when theorising ageing and difference. As Andrews and Duff (2019) argued, although there is much to be done, the posthuman turn in critical gerontology expands, and re-imagines theorisation of what ageing in our posthuman times means for "a wider range of processes, and the roles that materials, humans, relations, affects and meanings play as actors in these processes" (p. 53).

Scouring the literature on ageing and old age to ascertain the current state of understanding from my theoretical underpinnings meant it was necessary to be transversal, or

thinking relationally across categories and disciplines (Braidotti, 2022). Scholars engaging with ageing and posthumanism are necessarily transdisciplinary, emerging from disciplines such as gerontology, geography, social policy, health, sociology, political studies, philosophy, gender studies, disability studies, ageing studies, queer studies, and Indigenous and postcolonial studies. While I have included here research from Indigenous scholars because of the resonances with posthumanism, it is with respect for these knowledges as embedded and embodied, and with gratitude for those knowledges being shared through stories and other means. Changfoot et al. (2022) noted significant divergences between Indigenous Anishinaabe, and non-Indigenous stories, and emphasised they cannot be conflated, but rather advocated for mutual respect and learning in parallel, while Indigenous stories endow settler audiences insight into ways of ageing long practiced by Indigenous peoples, counter to successful ageing. Stories are shared by scholars in the spirit of "development and maintenance of relationship" (Changfoot et al., 2022, p. 1).

Although gerontology has been described as emerging from sociology, anthropology, biology, and also psychology (de Medeiros, 2016), psychology remains absent from the posthuman turn with understanding ageing. Fairchild's (2024) article that developed a concept of feminist materialist relational time for critical qualitative inquiry, singled out the Eurocentrism of developmental psychology that remains dominant and privileged in social research concerned with childhood. Similarly, scholars have critiqued the human-centric, individualistic, and linear Western-informed concept of generativity in older age as linked to colonial normativity that dominates successful ageing discourse (Chazan & Whetung, 2022; Dupuis, 2024; Sandberg & Marshall, 2017). Fairchild also acknowledged the need to be critically aware that for Black and Indigenous peoples, relational ontology and epistemology are not 'new.' Indeed, Pihama's (2019) essay about 'mana' that escapes adequate translation in the coloniser's language, nevertheless succinctly conveys the relationality, interdependence, cyclical temporality, reciprocity, and collectivism that are central to te ao Māori, or Māori worldview, and posthumanism enables me to think of the resonances for a deeper understanding of my coloniality.

As a Pākehā woman who is Tangata Tiriti; that is, I "do not whakapapa to a Māori ancestor" (Network Waitangi Otautahi, 2024, p. 60), I acknowledge my responsibility and commitment to honouring te Tiriti o Waitangi. My decision to undertake research under the guidance of critical feminist psychology was taken purposefully because of an alignment of values that support decolonisation praxis and social and political justice. Braidotti's (2022) articulation reflected my hopes through explaining that relational and transversal connections

promote desegregation of knowledge production through resonances among multiple differences. We are allied, but our differences matter—the heterogenous collective of Others tuning into Braidotti's opening that "'we'-who-are-not-one-and-the-same-but-are-in-*this*-together" (Braidotti, 2022, p. 7). My relational accountability to Tangata Whenua (people of the land) is in moving away from the institutional acoustic if it does not afford a responsible and ethical hearing and fails to account for the intersecting axes of oppression suffered by wāhine Māori (Waitere & Johnston, 2009). The relational ethics of Braidotti's posthumanism resonates deeply with the relational principle of mana for wāhine Māori (Waitere & Johnston, 2009), so relatedly, the following quote from Dupuis (2024) aptly expressed my own desire: "Here, I see myself adding to the thread of feminisms also grappling with the questions of relational accountability. This is a striving for multiple belongings crossed by colonial difference" (p. 4).

The remainder of this section of my literature review will be arranged in alignment with my theoretical underpinnings to provide an overview of scholarly contributions concerned with ageing and/or old age from a posthumanist perspective. I have proceeded in this manner with the purpose of clarity; however it is important to note that the strands are tightly woven together, and interdependent. Andrews and Duff (2019) pointed out that for posthumanist gerontology the decentring of the human opens out to "the social, affective and material expression of bodily aging" (p. 49). These authors cited Braidotti's (2000) discussions of the Deleuzian subject from the book *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, as an in-between of the simultaneity of being affected by external influences and flowing out of affects. More recently, Braidotti's repetition in *Posthuman Feminism* highlighted the importance of understanding: "The enfleshed subject is both brute materiality and signified sociality, but above all, bodies are relational and affective" (Braidotti, 2022, p. 112).

Process Ontology: Becoming and the Undoing of Binaries

During my postgraduate studies I was inspired by Linn Sandberg, a gender studies professor from Sweden, who engaged with theorists such as Rosi Braidotti and Elizabeth Grosz as an avenue for thinking with *affirmative old age* as a mode of resistance to binary categorisation of ageing as either decline (negation), or successful ageing—"being 'Others' of the Same" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 19). Sandberg (2013) proposed that the embodiment of ageing was conducive to a feminist framing of difference centred on nomadic becoming, where ageing can be understood as a continuous and ongoing process of differentiation, and

productive force may be seen as positive difference. Importantly, as Sandberg pointed out, 'successful ageing' does not signify a qualitative shift (Braidotti, 2017a), instead leaving in place the power relations of degrees of deviance from the Norm; in this case where 'young' in ageist societies is normative, so successful ageing discourse is an imperative to mask ageing (Mitchell & Bruns, 2011). Sandberg (2013) also emphasised that affirmative old age does not imply categorical distinctions between those who embody affirmatively ageing, and those who do not, which would merely reproduce power relations of the binary, but rather emphasises the materiality of the ageing body as potential for producing unexpected positive difference simultaneously as experiencing changes as loss, in a "continuous production of difference" (p. 19).

Following this initial theorisation of affirmative old age, Sandberg and Marshall (2017) extended critique and rejection of the success/decline binary through proposing a queering of ageing futures to challenge the hegemonic assumptions of normativity in the Western imaginary, of heteronormativity, able-bodiedness, and able-mindedness. These authors proposed feminist, crip, and queer studies as allies in imagining different, and inclusive futures for ageing bodies that are multiply marginalised. Subsequently, Sandberg and Marshall's (2017) invitation and provocation generated a flurry of contributions from scholars who rejected the dividing practices of the success/decline binary to imagine different futures (for examples see Changfoot et al., 2022; Chazan & Whetung, 2022; Jones, 2022; Jones et al., 2023; Manchester & Willat, 2024).

Jones (2022) drew on feminism as resource, theory, and participation to inquire into the usefulness of feminism for envisioning alternatives to the normativities of successful ageing hegemony. Jones (2022) concluded her research was more akin to opening a window, or pulling back a curtain, for a wider view rather than "spectacular, completely new visions" (p. 8). Participants' (who were self-proclaimed feminists) visions of a good old age deviated from, but also reverberated with successful ageing discourse, illustrating the difficulty of disidentification with habits of thought (Braidotti, 2013) responsible for internalised ageism. Barnes (2018) claimed "The internalisation of ageist messages remains a powerful brake on political action" (p. 211). Jones highlighted the difficulty of stepping outside social norms, such as the responsible, independent citizen of neoliberalism, and pointed out that what is intelligible to the researcher or reader about a good old age, may partly depend on taken-for-granted habits of thought.

Collectively, small stories are important for enabling response-able responses in seeing from another's point of view in recognition that all knowledge is partial, situated, and

perspectival. Small stories also offer collective resistance to the dominant singular story that reproduces stereotypes (Fine, 2017). As van Dyk (2016) pointed out, positive stereotypes such as ‘wisdom’ and ‘dignity’ are othering when they are assigned as an attribute to ‘elderly’ as markers of difference implying passivity, forgiveness, and non-competitiveness, opposed to the productivity, adventurousness, activity, and creativity of younger people, while also being gendered. For third agers, van Dyk maintained that notions of ageing with ‘dignity’ exert social control through regulating difference to conform to ‘an ideal old age’ discernible from midlife. Hence, older women who use disciplinary techniques to mask ageing may attract ridicule, such as “mutton dressed as lamb” (Fairhurst, 1998, as cited in van Dyk, 2016, p. 111).

Posthumanism has afforded critical gerontology new understandings of ontology that signal a radical departure from humanistic roots, to understand the ageing body as co-constituted and co-evolving on a plane of immanence existing as singular events with all other entities at the same level (Andrews & Duff, 2019). The reviewed literature took seriously this radical departure from human exceptionalism; dualisms such as mind/body, and nature/culture; fixity and stability; and representationalism, to the ‘becoming’ of process ontology (for example Barron, 2021; Changfoot et al., 2022; Chazan & Whetung, 2022; Cluley et al., 2023; Dupuis, 2024; Goulding, 2024; Manchester & Willat, 2024). Barron (2021) described the ‘deadening effect’ of Cartesian dualisms in geographies of ageing and provided a nuanced understanding of how everyday spaces were experienced as mediated through relational-temporal memories across the life-course, producing ‘entwined-becomings’ of performativity, counter to homogenised and reductive representations of older people’s experiences of place and space as diminishing with ageing. At the conclusion of a virtual discussion of “Revisioning Ageing Futures,” Jones, Marshall, and Sandberg (2022) reiterated the critical importance of surpassing the success/loss binary when reimagining ageing futures, so that the complexity and simultaneity of both joy and grief or loss can be heard. These authors pointed to the absence of loss, grief, and death in notions of successful ageing. This absence was made salient in research centring Indigenous knowledges where anticipated ageing futures were always already in relations with past, present, and future, across generations, place, time, and non-human elements in a collective continuity of cyclical regeneration (Changfoot et al., 2022; Chazan & Whetung, 2022). Speaking back to gendered ageism in the neoliberal institution that is the academy, Georgina Tuari Stewart commented wryly that “Regeneration is of questionable value in an era of profitability” (Stewart et al., 2024, p. 519).

Using feminist ethnography to make sense of embodiment as emplaced, Finlay (2021) provided nuanced analysis of power relations that perpetuate spatiotemporal injustice at the intersection of social categories, amplified for older adults as markers of difference that exclude, invisibilise, and marginalise. However, Finlay's research also illustrated older age as processual and dynamic through elucidating the ways older adults navigated physical bodily limitations through strategising within their environments, and relationships, that demonstrated new capacities and openings through affirmative difference. The effectiveness of such strategies was highly mediated by structural advantages, and disadvantages, such as class and race that shaped participants' capacities and constraints of daily activities. In the context of urban landscapes, able-bodiedness and able-mindedness are normative, and act to privilege youthful bodies. Finlay's (2021) inquiry of emplacement showed how empowerment and marginalisation are simultaneously experienced through co-constituted, and continuously re-constituted ecologies of "social, material, affective, and sensory environmental processes" (p. 82). Through engaging with lived experiences of older adults on their own terms, in mundane everyday life, Finlay's (2021) research provided rich insight into how emplacement can be theorised with process ontology, where every movement encompasses unique "processes, emotions, sensations, persons, and narratives" (p. 97). Finlay reiterated that although age operates as a power relation, the feminist canon seldom foregrounds age, and through citing Cruikshank (2009/2013), a feminist scholar of ageing, implied this may partly be because of the tensions between feminisms' longstanding rejection of biological determinism and the processes of ageing that almost always involve some bodily decline as happening 'in' or 'to' our bodies. The nomadic 'becoming' of process ontology enables this tension to be released through recognition of difference as constant differentiation beyond the successful ageing/decline, and young/old binaries that perpetuate difference as pejoration. As Braidotti (2012) stated, former "dialectical opponents" for example, of young/old, become "allies in a process of becoming that aims at undoing the common grounds of their former unitarian—and dualistically opposed—identity" (pp. 30-31).

Manchester and Willat (2024) explicitly located their research as feminist posthumanism, with relational ethics at the heart of their work that co-designed digital cultural experiences with older adults. Dupuis (2024) also centred relationality in her narrative inquiry of care, accountability, and reciprocity, while also centring process over outcome, in her exploration of well-being in older age, across generations and species. Cluley et al. (2023) explored and challenged the notion of 'frailty' applied to older adults in clinical settings through a posthuman lens that re-analysed existing interview studies to elucidate

‘frailty assemblages’ through the conceptual framework of affects, sociomaterial relations, and capacities. Cluley et al.’s research provided a good example of Andrews and Duff’s (2019) assertion that the posthuman turn does not mean scholars reject previous methodologies, or theory such as poststructuralism, but rather opportunities may present themselves for revisiting inquiry through a posthumanist lens. Cluley et al. (2023) addressed the resistance to interview studies from some posthuman theorists, for example from St. Pierre (2014, 2019) on the grounds it is humanist, through their emphasis on the insights “into the material assemblages, affects and capacities surrounding bodies” (p. 422). Goulding’s (2024) analysis of embodiment and space emphasised the relational intra-action between bodies and space that render body/mind dualism nonsensical, and illustrated the transformative potentials for connectivity. Centred in a dance group, Goulding’s research showed the agency of all matter as distributed, and illustrated how in the context of the dance group, intra-acting capacities produced a breakdown of the oppositional young/old binary that enabled audience members to recognise their own prejudices. Höppner and Urban (2018) theorised the limits of social constructivist and material gerontological concepts of age to advocate for processual understandings that view ageing as “co-formations taking place within relational processes that constantly re-shape the experience of age and aging” (p. 8). The relationality of a ‘becoming-older-body’ that is dynamic; an assemblage that is constantly becoming different, with capacities and incapacities, was a central theme in all reviewed literature, which opened out to imaginative possibilities, and illustrated the potentials for more socially just ageing futures. Scholars engaging with posthumanism to understand ageing demonstrated transversal alliances that creatively and collectively construct new subjects of knowledge, or ‘missing people’ across interconnected horizons of hope (Braidotti, 2019a). Engagement with this literature prompted me to think with my own ‘becoming-older-body’ and how storytelling in all its complexities has the capacity to produce more nuanced understanding because it is always already relational. The processes and changes experienced throughout life cannot be reduced to categories, measures, and internal characteristics because understandings gained from these tools ignore affective histories. Furthermore, striving towards a more adequate understanding of the conditions of our bondage increases our affective desire to become with all others as an affirmative ethical transversality that simultaneously “results in the freedom to affirm one’s essence as joy” (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 245). My processual movement through education that has enabled a greater understanding has been a source of joy.

Relational Ethics and Affect

For posthumanism, 'affect' is understood in Deleuzian terms as inseparable from processes of becoming, assemblages, forces and intensities, and the singularity of an event, constantly re-constituted in a plane of immanence (Cluley et al., 2023). Affect is not reducible to emotion categories, although may include emotional states, but is rather the core of assemblages of relations including all matter, and the capacity and agency for it to affect and be affected (Andrews & Duff, 2019; Cluley et al., 2023; Fox & Alldred, 2015). For example, Maclaren (2018) explored holistically all entities with older adults ageing rurally in a particular location, and the relational embodiments entailed in the processes that produced 'atmospheres,' understood differently to notions of affect discussed by Wetherell (2012) where it is conflated with 'emotion' in psychology. Fox and Alldred (2015) described the interpretation of Spinoza's *affect* by Deleuze, as replacing traditional conceptions of human agency, or as "the capacity to affect or be affected" (p. 401), and as 'becoming' indicative of the change and motion entities constantly reproduce through differentiated affects within assemblages. Fox and Alldred's interpretation aligns with Braidotti's theorising: "The core of the subject is 'affect,' that is to say the capacity for interrelations with others: to affect and to be affected by them" (Braidotti, 2008a, p. 18). The notion of affect then, is inseparable from ethical relations, and Braidotti's (2008a) affirmative ethics is underpinned by "the desire for active and empowering relations to others" (p. 18). Andrews and Duff (2019) described the emerging work at the intersection of posthumanism and ageing as enabling insights into "both the *affective dimensions of aging* (i.e. how important affect is to aging) and of the *affective force of aging* (i.e. how influential affective aging is in wider social life)" (p. 49). Even though, from a posthumanist perspective, 'the human' is de-privileged and decentred, the navigational tool of posthumanism does not render human relations unimportant, but rather broadens the lens of inquiry to consider all matter and entities as relational, and produced through relationships with each other of affective flows, constantly in flux, or becoming (Fox & Alldred, 2015). Undoubtedly this is why the terms 'relational ontology' and 'process ontology' were used interchangeably in reviewed literature.

Cozza and Wanka (2025) provided an editorial for a special issue in the *Journal of Aging Studies* titled "The Growing Older of Humans, Nonhumans, and More-than-Humans" that builds on understanding from Andrews and Duff's (2019) contribution. Like other scholars such as Fox and Alldred (2015), and Andrews and Duff (2019), Cozza and Wanka emphasised that the 'post' in posthumanism does not mean that more-than-human, or non-

human entities replace humans in a hierarchical power structure but instead focuses on an ethics of relationships. Hence, Cozza and Wanka (2025) emphasised that a posthuman approach focuses on "relational networks or *aging assemblages*" (p. 2). Researchers across reviewed literature were attentive to their own theoretical and methodological assumptions within the research process, and how this affected their intra-actions with all entities, and the knowledge produced. For example, Jones (2022) reflected on how a co-researcher could have extended her own thinking and reflexivity, and concluded that if this had been the case, her analysis would have been different because at the moment in time of her research, the anxiety induced through the Covid-19 pandemic influenced her to stay close to her familiar feminist roots of socialist inspired feminism. Jones herself participated in the research exercise, and this demonstrated how what happens in the folding-in of external influences, and radiating out of affects, emerges in relations across all levels of the process. Similarly, Manchester and Willat's (2024) care-full praxis that built connections between situated knowledges, and meaning-making, disrupted their 'researcher as expert' status. Reiterating Braidotti's (2017a) reminder that we are "embodied, relational, and affective subjects" (p. 87), Manchester and Willat emphasised their co-design process as relational, and centred affirmative ethics in their process to enable response-able design practice with marginalised older adults. Manchester and Willat's (2024) research provided an exemplar in the field of gerontechnology design in attending to ethical responsibilities of the "sociomaterial, relational and affective interdependencies" (p. 1) of older adults' everyday lives. Cozza and Wanka (2025) described such ethical care practices in design as "building, maintaining, and sustaining relationships" (p. 2). Cozza and Wanka's editorial highlighted Braidotti's voice regarding posthuman subjectivity, including the statement: "Conceptually, subjects cannot be reduced to their vulnerable mortality" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 155), to foreground the potentiality for thinking about ageing differently than as an "ontological paralyzing state of being" (Cozza & Wanka, 2025, p. 2). As Sandberg (2013) pointed out, the decline narrative is tied to the abjection of old age as a terminal phase close to death, while successful ageing discourses appeal to a denial of proximity to such a phase. Jones, Changfoot, and King (2022), in their editorial for "Revisioning Ageing Futures," highlighted how the Covid-19 pandemic reinvigorated the decline narrative, and cast older people as vulnerable, a risk or burden, and without agency. Cozza and Wanka's editorial invoked Braidotti to imagine a departure from the ageist abjection of decline and decrepitude while simultaneously refusing to deny vulnerability and finitude, which speaks to the heart of Braidotti's relational ethics of becoming for

transforming negative into positive passions through multiple belongings in interconnections with others (Braidotti, 2008a).

A Story: An Intergenerational Assemblage With Grief: A Memory of a Liminal Space

When Mum was diagnosed with cancer aged 82 years, in 2012, she was already at Stage 4, so her time from diagnosis to death was only three months. The oncology doctors did not afford her an appointment, and we found out via letter that she was not considered a viable candidate for treatment due to her age. When I first sat with Mum and Dad at their dining room table post diagnosis, I remember discussing with them the matter of hospice care in the future and trying to ascertain their thoughts about whether they felt it would be an option. Looking back, I can trace my movement in understanding more about dying and death and how I think now of that conversation, that I initiated, as constrained by Western cultural norms that Baars (2025) claimed as a form of ageism that emerges because of society's refusal of "finitude and vulnerability" (p. 8). Sandberg (2013) discussed the link between mortality and the decline narrative and stated: "The rejection/abjection of old age and the ageing body as something horrific is consequently connected to an endemic fear of death and dying" (p. 26). As it turned out, Mum died at home, and my Dad, my husband, and myself primarily cared for her. In the last couple of weeks there was a hospital bed set up in Mum and Dad's lounge room, and we moved a single bed next to it as we took turns in sleeping next to her.

I re-remember standing in front of the mirror in the bathroom as I took a deep breath in, focused on my reflection staring back at me, as I said aloud, "I can do this," when contemplating taking care of Mum's most private bodily need for cleanliness for the first time. In this moment of emotional and mental preparation I felt a connection with how Mum had cared for my needs when I was a baby, and what I felt as my response-ability was no different to how I had in turn cared for my own babies' needs. I held a sense that if I did not rise to the occasion my future self would be disappointed. I drew an empowering sense of strength from that moment that in hindsight, did feel like a force. Thinking with this thesis is the first time I have realised that this phrase, "I can do this" is the exact same phrase I made out of a collage of letters that I put in a little frame, when I first started university. It still adorns the wall next to my desk in its faded glory. This realisation carries an affective flow of meaning, and connection, which I now see as an energy previously beyond my awareness. It

reminds me that memories are "mobile and generative" (Barron, 2021, p. 618), as the little framed words beside me are an entanglement of past, present, and future.

I re-remember another event during that time that has since held particular significance for me because of the intergenerational meaningfulness it holds for me. I had purchased a book shortly after Mum was diagnosed, called *Enjoy Every Sandwich: Living Each Day as if it Were Your Last* that was written by a doctor who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness, and he had completed the book just before he died (Lipsenthal, 2012). I thought it would be a beneficial distraction to read it to her in the hours spent beside her bed, and it proved to be the case, but much more as well. For my re-telling of this story I retrieved the book in question from my box of mementoes because I thought I had written an account of events in the blank pages at the end of the book, which was the case, so can attest that Jessica, my eldest child, had also read aloud from it to Mum. When Mum was slipping in and out of consciousness, that turned out to be the day before she died, I had gone to work that morning but left shortly afterwards because I was overcome with a feeling of being physically unwell because I was in the wrong place. I went straight to Mum and Dad's where my husband, and Jessica were. It was a Friday so our younger children were at school, and Jessica was on mid-year break in her first year of university. I had a strong compulsion to finish reading the book aloud to Mum, underpinned by a slight panic because I *had* to finish it before she left us. And so I read. Towards the end of the book, I had to read in between tears, and on completion I gently closed the book and arose from my chair beside Mum's bed. Dad, my husband Warren, and Jessica arose from their seats at the same moment, and we met standing near the bed Mum lay in, and spontaneously formed a circular hug woven together with a mixture of arms and tears. I have also noted in the back pages of this book that Mum rallied a couple of times after that and smiled at the district nurses that night. It was the same night I slept beside her and told her about a deep shame I carried, but that I had overcome the source of it, and that would not change. Although she was non-responsive, as I held her hand I was convinced she could hear my words in the dark. She slipped away imperceptibly early the following evening as we were gathered around the dining table having dinner.

I re-tell this story because through my engagement with posthumanism I am enabled to reach a deeper understanding of grappling with mortality. Becoming-with finitude when I think of Mum and the memories that flow on and through us gives me strength. The event itself of finishing reading the book, and what followed, was a convergence, or assemblage of human and non-human forces and flows that were relational, material, and affective. Mum's hospital bed had agency in gathering us around her, and although she was literally dying, she

was still ‘becoming’ in her capacity to enable affective movement. The book itself had agency in the assemblage that aggregated matter with other matter, as Cluley et al. (2023) framed it, to collect us together in collective grief around Mum, and for Mum, in that space entwined with memory and imagination. There were no categories, linear time, or essentialised identities in that assemblage, but rather an instance of ‘becoming’ in relationality that was grounded in care. I leave you, my reader, with a quotation from Braidotti (2019b) at the end of this particular storytelling because it speaks to me about how I remember Mum moving with grace, and tranquillity, in her becoming-with-death: “It is an affirmation of the generative powers of life that involves friendship with impersonal death” (p. 176).

Narrative and Storytelling

Barnes (2018) discussed and extended philosopher Margaret Urban Walker’s critique of gendered ageism, and the effects felt in later-life status related to moral standing being linked to a ‘career self’ rooted in ideas generated from “influential, male, philosophers” (p. 204). Western knowledge production of the individual, autonomous, rational man on a productive linear career path is a single story that denies other ways of understanding later life; roles such as wise woman, orator, and mediator are among those Walker marked as absent. Drawing from her own experiences, and through relational ethics, Barnes extrapolated to the power of collective memory, connections, and recognition of vulnerabilities, as generative for thinking differently about the future where remembrance is not only about personal pasts, but generative for collective futures, and solidarity. Barnes pointed out the mutual benefits generated from interviewing that is re-imagined as a methodological storytelling practice when remembrance foregrounds connections that gives value to lives, while honouring the need for care to sustain well-being. ‘Remembering’ is also collective activism, even if not recognised as such in the conventional sense of being an activist (Barnes, 2018). Through a focus on relational connections, responsibility, and an ethics of care, Barnes illustrated through collective action projects she had been involved in, how ‘remembering’ can generate alternative narratives for generations of activism that transcend the generational divides of time and age, and individual accounts. Barnes’s analysis, prompted by her remembering projects with older adults, reflected a desire for what Braidotti (2022) termed “trans-generational memory” (p. 238) when referring to feminism as an affirmative force that is ongoing, and future oriented ‘becoming,’ while honouring past

successes as moments in a cycle of possibilities and fractures, rather than historical precedents. Connecting Barnes's work with Braidotti's (2022) theorisation of 'becoming' enabled me to feel my project as worthwhile because it matters for collective activism, while reinforcing the importance of remembrance as processual, relational, and always in flux: "a gesture of confidence in what we are capable of becoming; we who are not one and not the same but are in this posthuman convergence together" (p. 238).

With regard to ageing and posthuman inquiry, Andrews and Duff (2019) emphasised that narratives in interviews in posthumanist understandings go beyond meaning because they encompass diverse past sensings that emerge in any particular narrative event, as well as the immediacy of the performativity of the event itself that is co-produced, and important in its own right in effecting meaning. Chadwick (2020) addressed the methodological concept of 'voice' for posthuman inquiry through the foregrounding of 'breathy bodies,' and reiterated Haraway's (2016) point, that beyond being affected by entangled flows or 'socioaffective atmospherics,' we are becoming-with them, including power relations. Chadwick (2020) argued that beyond the vocalising and gesturing of speech, are resonances; as she stated: "affective, geomaterial, ideological, historical, and relational – that always exceed the bounds of what is (recognizably) said/uttered" (p. 3). A posthuman lens shifts the ways of thinking about 'interviewing,' and adequately responds to issues raised by Fine (2017) about the problematics of narrative: the linear or coherent narrative as good narrative; the unacknowledged stretchy space of the "gap" between life and story; and the individualistic tendencies to view stories in isolation from socio-historical, and geographical context. When these issues are approached with critical awareness, and addressed, it enables 'critical bifocality' to hear the voices of others beyond the spoken word (Fine, 2017). For posthumanist inquiry, Fox and Alldred (2015) advised that what has been traditionally thought of as interpretative methods such as narratives, and interviews, that centred the human, must shift from notions of agency to the notion of affect as 'becoming,' entailing "efforts to disclose the relations within assemblages, and the kinds of affective flows that occur between these relations" (p. 402).

Posthumanism and ageing literature rejected the dominant single story enmeshed in Western conceptualisations of the success/decline binary, and went beyond critique to imagine ageing differently, including through narrative and storytelling, offering "alternative narrative arcs that defy the 'active' or 'declining' categories and attend to the complexity of lives that are often ignored" (Côté-Boucher et al., 2024, p. 3). These authors also expressed concern that the stories of complex lives that included suffering, and were still lived with

meaning, dignity, and joy, may not be heard because they challenged the successful ageing narrative that works to deny vulnerability, and incites fear of decline and death. Indigenous approaches extended Sandberg and Marshall's (2017) theorising to include decolonial counter-narratives to White Western neoliberal, capitalist, heteronormative, individualistic, human-centric, and linear notions encapsulated in successful ageing (Changfoot et al., 2022; Chazan & Whetung, 2022). In their editorial of "Revisioning Ageing Futures" Jones, Changfoot and King (2022) highlighted Indigenous knowledges as valuable for critique that attunes to individualist, capitalist-colonial epistemologies that limit ways of thinking about ageing futures, while expanding ageing studies through Indigenous knowledges. As Changfoot et al. (2022) observed, Indigenous scholarship provides "a multiplicity of diverse narratives of Indigenous futures of aging" (p. 2). Cluley et al. (2023) inquired into existing interview transcripts to theorise frailty assemblages informed by new materialist methodology from a posthuman perspective to imagine a molecular 'becoming' across the whole of life, and beyond, rather than as the dualism of the biomedical and essentialist decline narrative, or the social constructionist critique of it that addresses stigmatisation, and the limits of what a body can do that produce an "un-becoming" (p. 418). Barron (2021) referred to stories encountered in her research as creating "an interrelated and processual dialogue" (p. 610), and found a relational perspective enabled collective memories, histories, and disruption to assumed narratives of older age. Temporalities of past, present, and future were re-constituted in the moment through memories, embodiment, and affect, resulting in new meanings. Barron stressed the importance of attending to the in-between of narratives because the life-course is neither coherent and ordered, nor entirely disordered and momentary, but its specific and contextual features colour the sharing of stories. Jones et al. (2023) analysed narratives of bisexual women in an online activist newsletter with global reach, providing a counter-normative, liminal space, and described the counter-narratives to the dominant success/failure binary as creative in the leap beyond critique, to imagining possibilities for inclusive queer futures. Reclaiming 'crone' identities, reflections that included discussions of death, and use of diverse narrative forms such as letters to the 'self' and poetry, featured in narratives analysed by Jones et al. (2023). In commenting on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, Jones, Marshall, and Sandberg (2022) reiterated that 'queering' is not confined to issues of sexuality and gender in ageing futures, but about the need for critical thinking more broadly, extending to questions of whose lives are deemed worth protecting, and who is considered as having a future. Manchester and Willat (2024) found that their care-full praxis throughout the design process made visible the unfolding of

ageing as movement, including through oral storytelling, that was entangled with power relations, and heightened their sensitivity to privilege, injustice, and their own positionality. Collectively, the reviewed research reflected desire in an opening up of possibilities for continual processes of becoming-otherwise through fleeing from binary categorisations; a process that attends "to the effects of differentiation and scrutinizes the heterogeneity, meshworks and flows of stories and subjects" (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 287).

From my location in Aotearoa, Stewart et al. (2024) collaboratively narrated their experiences of being older academics in the context of job insecurity at universities post-pandemic. Stewart et al.'s creative narrative methodology that included stories and poetry, reflected diverse understandings of ageing, but also highlighted common experiences of gendered ageism in the institutional context of university. Notions of wisdom woven through the stories moved between patriarchal constructions of older male academics as holders of wisdom, opposed to older women academics losing value as 'past it,' to older women as respected mentors in becoming-crone. For wāhine Māori academics, connection to their whakapapa (genealogy) and te ao Māori, moving with identifying as kuia (female elder), or kaumātua (elder) provided respect as it evoked wisdom, nurturing, and leadership as embodied qualities (discussed by Georgina Tuari Stewart and Yo Heta-Lensen). In the context of these women's lived experiences in contemporary neoliberal academic institutions, the "Western cultural tropes of the economically productive, law-abiding, autonomous man, pursuing a linear path through an individual career" that Barnes (2018, p. 206) referred to as emerging in modernity, remained relevant as evidenced by Stewart et al.'s (2024) assertion that "the focus of this work is the gender axis that makes feminism necessary" (p. 513). Reflections by Sue Middleton (Stewart et al., 2024) a retired academic, highlighted that the assumed linear career path of the "Enlightenment's 'rationally autonomous', prototypically male, individual" (p. 523) depended on the unpaid labour of women in the domestic sphere. Interestingly, although Sue Middleton is a Pākehā she stated the 'kuia' image provided a guiding light for becoming an ancestor for knowledge transfer, encapsulated by her statement: "the image of the kuia has helped me think about my 'genealogy' as intellectual and as writer" (Stewart et al., 2024, p. 523). It seems Indigenous understandings of 'wisdom' may be evoked because for Pākehā women access to our affective histories have been denied through Eurocentric and androcentric knowledge production practices. The relational connections that Barnes (2018) addressed in the context of Margaret Urban Walker's work reverberated through Stewart et al.'s narratives because of the absence of valuing of roles outside perceived neoliberal profitability that occurred in the institutional context wrought by

redundancies; roles of "orator, mediator, teacher, chaperone, or wise woman, all place old women in connection to others" (p. 207). Stewart et al.'s narratives can be thought of as activism in the linking of the personal and political through connections with others across time, place, and space, replete with resilience and vulnerabilities, of being older women academics. They illustrated an ethics of responsibility through relationality (Barnes, 2018).

A Reflective Pause

As I reflected on the literature of ageing and ageism, it was evident that the dominant single story of the success/decline binary inflicts damage on ageing futures (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017). Jones (2022) noted that 'wisdom' is absent from successful ageing discourse, however some participants in her *Imagining Feminist Old Age* research conjured the idea of 'powerful old women,' and 'purveyor of knowledge' for their later life visions. For Indigenous First Nations people in Canada, the term 'elder' is a marker of status as knowledge keepers, designated as an honour in recognition of wisdom and other attributes, but is not linked to chronological age (Changfoot et al., 2022; Chazan & Whetung, 2022). Similarly, for Indigenous people in my own location, the status or mana of wāhine Māori was violently usurped through colonisation; as I have previously noted, in pre-colonial society kuia were honoured as "repositories of knowledge" (Mikaere, 1999, p. 37). Waitere and Johnston (2009) spoke back to Eurocentric knowledge production, and their quotation from Pere (1982) stayed with me because it pointed out that the colonisers are also (although differentially) "damaged by colonisation" (p. 27). Jones, Marshall, and Sandberg (2022) noted that the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the colonisation of old age by technology, trading on old bodies through reducing them to functions, decline, measurement, and surveillance. Barbara Marshall expressed concern at the lack of joy, wisdom, and pleasure that may close down, instead of opening up creativity for imagining socially just ageing futures in areas of care, family, and embodiment. van Dyk (2016) added that the young-old have replaced 'women' in the capitalist system as a source of free labour in the context of ageing populations, and increased 'burden' of long-term care needs. The notion of 'wisdom' here is manipulated to promote caring, empathy, co-operation, and non-competitiveness, which in turn denies a right to anger at discriminatory practices and ageism. It was at this junction in my process that my focus narrowed to a desire to further ponder the notion of

wisdom from my location as an older, or even old, Pākehā woman in Aotearoa, although I rather prefer 'crone.'

Personal Reflections: Memories and Connections

I wondered why throughout my psychology degree I never stumbled across an adequate explanation for why I felt like a 'bad' feminist, and therefore never thought of myself as a worthy feminist, throughout the years of raising four children, because I had no desire to be in paid work and enjoyed breastfeeding my children until they weaned themselves. No matter how devoted my mothering was I could not alleviate the sense that I was somehow of less value than women who managed to work while having children, but I appreciated my privilege. I realise now, the reason can be found in the nature/culture divide perpetuated by the One, or Man, as an instrument of social hierarchy to maintain a position of domination. I posit the reason could also be located in identity politics of feminism at that time; as Probyn (2005) stated, "I've been shamed by feminism—what feminist hasn't?" (p. 75). Recognition of the marginalisation I experienced through feminism, felt as an unworthiness, moves my understanding of my engagement with the philosophical stance of post-identitarian theorisation. Instead of feeling resistant, as when I first encountered it, immediately jumping to thoughts of 'utopian ivory tower visions,' I feel something akin to a hopeful excitement. When discussing posthumanisms' methodological possibilities for social justice, Ulmer (2017) expressed her own initial discomfort with the word 'posthumanism,' and the difficulty of entering the 'posthuman' conversation. The reward of staying with the trouble of thinking otherwise, generating hopeful excitement, is the closest I can come to articulating the bodily sensations as I sit writing in my special space that is my study, that I now view as a room of my own, as I think with Virginia Woolf as a feminist foremother. This room, once one of the children's bedrooms, that my husband calls my happy place, has morphed over the years of study as paraphernalia has filled the space that always feels like coming home to myself now. I feel that privilege deeply.

I wondered why my grandmother's death left me with a sense of despair that I felt was more than the loss of her presence. I recognise it now as a relational loss because I would no longer be able to hear her stories, and it seemed to me at the time that her dying consigned her stories to history, and somehow memories of stories were elusive and inadequate. I remember saying to my Mum that life was very unfair because it felt to me that my

Grandma's undignified demise meant her accumulated wisdom disappeared with her which was somehow unjust. Now however, I feel more connected to those stories. I remember my own mother's dying, and the intimacy we shared when our hands were clasped together as she whispered weakly to me "We are strong women." Recently, Jessica (my eldest), showed me her latest tattoos (there are a few now), one of which is of a chain linking a St. Christopher medal at one end, and an owl at the other end. I was touched because the St. Christopher medal is linked to my mother who gave her a St. Christopher medal to keep her safe on her first school trip, and the owl is associated with myself. I collect owls (ceramic ones that is), which really only started when I commenced university because I liked the association with wisdom. This now seems somewhat naïve. The other new tattoo is of a World War I nurse with a banner "We're strong women." Jessica has completed her doctorate in history, and is acutely aware of the gendered hierarchy within her disciplinary location. The tattooed words "We're strong women" are at once affective, signifying, and past/present/future. It has been through navigating memories, affect, and stories with the conceptual tools of posthumanism that I have been able to see how any particular encounter and movement is co-constituted through intra-action (Barad, 2003) of all entities (human and non-human), constantly changing, always different, but always embedded and embodied, partial, and perspectival.

These memories and connections, alongside this work, brought into sharp focus that our affective histories are missing in the discipline that I chose as a knowledge-seeking vehicle when starting university. Walkerdine (2016) demonstrated how histories of affect matter through her attention to material and affective forces in the present that needed to be understood through relationalities across time, place, and connections, in her work with poverty, in the psychology discipline. So, I wondered, where are the affective histories of older White women, where are our kuia, and why do I sometimes feel a sense of loss and longing when I remember I used to imagine a line of women ancestors while meditating, as 'strong' women as I remembered Mum? Is it because I am ageing through an understanding with the White Western system at the colonial-patriarchal nexus that sees my difference as deficit?

Chapter 4: Methodology: Narrative Inquiry, Relational Ethics, and Affective Flows

"it matters what ideas we use to think other ideas (with)"
(Strathern, n.d. as cited in Haraway, 2016, p. 12).
"it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with"
(Haraway, 2016, p. 12).

Narrative Inquiry

My commitment to the theoretical underpinning of process ontology and situated knowledges guided my approach to narrative inquiry that legitimates storytelling as a creative space of meaning-making, and rejects the dominant single story (Fine, 2017). My rejection of the single story of the binary of ageing and old age as decline or successful ageing (Calasanti et al., 2006, Sandberg, 2013) signified a quest to provoke the conditions of possibility for otherwise knowing. Tamboukou's (2008) articulation of narrative as process decentres the ego-centric self, and sequential stories, in favour of "nomadic narratives" (p. 290) consistent with my theoretical commitments. From this perspective the focus is on the unfolding forces in relationship that are not time-bound sequenced events, but are moving, contingent, contextual, embodied, and interwoven actualities of flows of relational meaning-making. Hence, my narrative stance proceeded with a curiosity for what emerged in the spaces of storytelling, and how stories move us to understand ourselves differently in singularities of complex relational instances (Tamboukou, 2008).

Fine (2017) provided the guidance, from her location in feminist psychology, for response-able narrative inquiry. As I remembered Braidotti's (2008a) relational ethics, and Haraway's (2016) reminder that it matters what stories tell stories, I carried with me an awareness of how the collective stories I had engaged with in critical feminist psychology provided my impetus and desire for fulfilling my relational ethical obligation to stay with the trouble of resisting the hegemonic representation of ageing women, to hear difference affirmatively. I was committed to being attuned to how our socio-historical, and political conditions shape our lived realities through past, present, and future (Fine, 2017). Narratives have the power to move us in collective desire evoked by affective encounters that have the

potential to disrupt the singular story, and dogmatic image of thought, to provoke a different perspective (Fine, 2017). Through situated knowledges of embodied and embedded location, or the politics of location, narratives, along with memory, support subjectivity that is "relational and outside-directed" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 410). As I thought with the process of listening to really 'hear' the affective flows of meaning-making that are co-constituted in all encounters with entities, whether through text, talk, image, or feeling, that are always already relational, the responsibility for translation untethered from representationalism felt daunting. Fine's (2017) articulation of writing with the purpose of provoking 'wide-awakeness' provided me with the guiding principle to be 'in' my narrative inquiry, while also honouring the purpose for storytelling to flow out, and have the ability to provoke imagining different futures as a contribution to collective movement towards social justice—an aesthetic provocation. From her location in narrative gerontology, de Medeiros (2016) highlighted the importance of narrative inquiry that is interested in the small stories that disrupt the power relations of domination and subordination of storytelling with potential for counter-narratives to master narratives of ageing and old age. My inquiry then was nested in the question of how can our narrative process of storytelling through affective flows of meaning-making enable a re-telling away from the dominant single story of being an ageing or older women configured in the binary of decline or successful ageing, invisibility or hypervisibility? What are we in the processes of becoming within the conditions of possibilities and potentials from our partial perspectives and situated 'knowing' of being an ageing woman?

An Interlude: A Small Story of Everyday Life

In my process of thinking about storytelling in the early stages of this project, I remember that on one occasion, when I was verbalising my thoughts to my husband, he said, "Well, what if the women you talk to say, 'Nothing to see here, I don't have an issue, and I haven't experienced ageism'?" (W. McLean, personal communication, June 17, 2025). After a long pause of staring at him, while deciding how to respond, I said, "Thank you. What you just said," because his assumption that our experiences of ageing and ageism would not be gendered reflected the invisibility of women's subordination at the intersection of sexism and ageism. This recognition provided me joy because it signalled movement towards a more adequate understanding of gendered power relations, which underpinned my desire to continue to know more from my partial, limited, and perspectival location (Braidotti, 2019b).

To alleviate my husband's confusion I elaborated on my answer through the recollection of a time we were together in a paint shop when the man assisting us, who was of a similar age to us, completely ignored a question I asked, and instead directed his gaze to my husband and proceeded to furnish my husband with the answer to my question. The man in the shop failed to acknowledge my presence throughout the interactions in store. On being reminded of this, my husband recalled the exchange, and with a giggle, said that he had failed to notice it at the time, until I expressed my indignation when we had exited the store. I also reminded him of the time I said to a young man in a mobile phone store, "I thought you guys were supposed to be Ninjas," when there happened to be an active advertising campaign for the company using Ninja caricatures promoting technological expertise for customers. The young man's 'expert' service had left me feeling "patronized and erroneously assumed to be incompetent" (Westwood, 2023, p. 2). My 'Ninja' refrain gave me joy! My situated knowledge of invisibility, and hypervisibility at the intersection of sexism and ageism is exemplified in these rememberings and accompanies many similar instances in my daily life.

The conversation with my husband confirmed what I knew about interactions that took place in everyday contexts when we were together; my experience was vastly different to my husband's 'knowing' of my experience. My husband's comment illustrating his 'not knowing' of my lived experience of gendered ageism made me feel like *Alice* entering *Wonderland* even though we have been married for over 34 years. It reminded me of how easily I could relate to Riger's (1992) description of initial engagement with the strangeness of poststructuralism because the space between experience and knowing (Hydén, 2013) occurs in everyday relational exchanges in the in-between-ness of meaning-making. It illustrates the adaptability of gendered power relations in patriarchal societies, and reminded me that when I first read Riger's (1992) analogy of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (AAW)* and the strangeness of poststructuralism, I was enchanted; I smiled with familiarity at the comparison because *AAW* had been a favourite book that evoked childhood memories of wishing I could be *Alice* because I thought she was brave, assertive, and courageous. Since that first engagement with Riger's (1992) work in 2021, and intrigued by a comment from my thesis supervisor, my curiosity about feminisms' literary interpretations specific to *AAW* led me to an analysis by Shi (2016) that spoke to the colonial and patriarchal knowledge/power nexus through Shi's (2016) storying of *Alice* as "a defender of the oppressive Victorian system of colonization and patriarchy" (p. 198). My childhood memories of enchantment with *Alice* were crushed, illustrating that narrative does things because Shi's (2016) analysis

left me feeling a ‘yuck’ factor as she traced socio-historical and biographical interpretations of authorial intentions in her argument against *Alice* as a “feminist icon” (p. 180).

Interlude Over: Back to Narrative Inquiry

Connecting with noninnocence in recognition of my location as affording me White privilege, meant re-remembering my ongoing commitment to disidentifying with the Other of the Same in “shifting my imaginary identifications” (Braidotti, 2008a, p. 19) as an ethical responsibility. There is humility in the recognition of partial perspectives, joy in resistance to the ‘god trick,’ and joy in the refusal of the individualistic unitary vision of subjectivity through relational ethics. I digress; more on relational ethics later. Shi’s (2016) analysis, juxtaposed with my childhood reading of our family hardback book that flaunted an embossed cover and delightful smattering of illustrations, and Riger’s (1992) analogy, highlighted for me that the task of disidentification at the level of subjectivity, or molecular level (Braidotti, 2019b), while still being difficult, is a manageable place to start, and is not a lonely place because of the inter-connections, flows, and relations as assemblages of collectives of a multiplicity of different Others across time and place. I experienced recognition of a memory of mournfulness at the loss of ‘my’ *Alice* a long time ago in my embodied femininity inscribed with inferiority through the disciplinary power of patriarchy (Bartky, 1998). It reinforces for me the need to be reflexive and critical about which figurations are imbuing my thinking in constantly moving forces, at any one time, from my specific location, positionality, conditions, and partial perspective (Braidotti, 2019a). Scholars such as Tuhiwai Smith (2021) from my location in Aotearoa have taught me to pay attention to history, ideas, and stories because they matter. My commitment then to undertake research from a decolonising standpoint was taken up through a “refusal of the human sciences’ man and his methods,” (St. Pierre, 2024a, p. 1), and from my location in psychology, a refusal of the disciplinary force of what Deleuze called the “dogmatic image of thought” (St. Pierre, 2024a, p. 9).

Narrative inquiry carries potentials in the rejection of the ‘dogmatic image of thought’ that governs the Eurocentric assumptions of empirical methodologies (St. Pierre, 2024a), or what Braidotti (2010) terms methodological nationalism. Narrative can assist in the task of analyses of power, or cartographies, through the politics of location, and the recognition that all knowledge claims are partial, and limited, thereby enabling figurations of subjectivity that

are fluid, contextual, relational, and in-between states of identitarian figurations, which dissolve dualistic modes of thought such as nature/technology, and present/past (Braidotti, 2010). This post-identitarian stance is explained by St. Pierre (2024a) as an escape from the 'dogmatic image of thought' of the social sciences' attachment to identity categories that perpetuate an inescapable fear of difference, when difference is not assimilated to the Same, or 'Identity' as conceived by empiricist John Locke; "the sameness of a rational being" (p. 6) that is stable, and unchanging. As St. Pierre (2024a) pointed out, "history reminds us that *identity is a modern invention*" (p. 6). Strong objectivity, or situated knowledges offer a view from 'somewhere' in all its contradictions, complexities, and partiality, wherein the subject and object of knowledge cannot be separated (Harding, 1992), and are historically and socially contingent (Haraway, 1988). Moreover, from a relational ontological perspective, identity categories such as gender, and race, "are considered events, actions, and encounters between bodies, rather than simply entities and attributes of subjects" (Puar, 2012/2021, p. 724). Post-identitarian theorising is fraught with contradictions and contestations for feminist scholars. For example, Geerts and van der Tuin (2013) traced the genealogy of intersectionality as 'representationalism,' and proposed a way forward for intersectionality theory drawing from Deleuze, Verloo's conceptualisation of *interference*, Barad's notion of *agential realism*, and relational ontology. The point is that it is relational patterns or intra-actions between all matter, including subjects and objects, that create assemblages (Puar, 2012/2021) in processes of becoming in nomadic subjectivity (Braidotti, 2012). Disidentification from taken-for-granted practices through "differing as much as possible from all you had been before" is enabled in relational activity of 'remembering' that is not identity-bound (Braidotti, 2012, p. 33). Braidotti (2017b) clarified that posthuman thought does not deny identity claims but rather moves away from prolific quantification of identity politics to assemblages of expansive iterations of embodied and embedded materialities in a qualitative shift of theorising difference, or what she terms a "transversal alliance of the missing people" (p. 44). As I remembered nomadically the myriad patterns of intra-actions with narratives throughout my university studies, I could make sense of the transformative potentials of becoming-molecular as I reflected on locations and encounters with others, and imagined a research story with creative potential, where the 'difference' of my age was not reduced to pejoration (Braidotti, 2010). Such is the goal of critical feminist psychology in movement from critique to creation through ethical, or accountable relational activity (Braidotti, 2019b).

However, relinquishing habits of thought is a work in progress that needs to be consistently practiced, and reflexivity in and through my research story prompted me to question its worthiness when considering the stories of pain and suffering of marginalised peoples. In grappling with my doubts I returned to literature that had informed my initial passion as a response to the harms inflicted by the normalisation of ageism, notably a book of essays by two feminist activists, called *Look Me in the Eye: Old Women, Aging, and Ageism* (Macdonald & Rich, 1983/1991), because more than 40 years after this collection of essays was first published, the stories resonated with me. In 2006, Lipscomb interviewed Cynthia Rich, who had been Macdonald's long-time partner (Macdonald died in 2001), and it was Lipscomb's (2006) article that initially prompted my anxiety of the perils of 'ageism' and 'ageing' being viewed as "a bourgeois, frivolous, white women's issue" (p. 11). My anxiety was somewhat alleviated because Rich pointed out ageism "cuts across all ethnicities and classes" (Lipscomb, 2006, p. 11) that highlights why scholars of ageing, Calasanti et al. (2006), called for theorising hierarchical age power relations that render all of us who live long enough to attain the category of 'old,' as deviant. It is women who experience the full force of the stigma and stereotypes that circulate in ageist societies as the dominant narrative, or single story (Fine, 2017) of old women who are homogenised and deviant Other (Mitchell & Bruns, 2011). Gullette (2017) asserted that, "Many observers agree: compared to sexism, racism, or transphobia, ageism is the least censured, the most acceptable and unnoticed of the cruel prejudices" (p. xiii). As I reflected further on the harms of ageism, my anxiety about whether older and old women's narratives were worthy of mattering in a research context, shifted to understanding that these feelings materialised from my own embodied and emplaced realities of ageing in an ageist, patriarchal society that induces silencing in response to negative experiences of invisibility and hypervisibility, which Gullette (2017) views as endangering. It was important however, that I remained connected with the never-ending process of attempting to embrace becoming nomadic, remembering that it is a collective endeavour (Braidotti, 2012). The privilege I have had of receiving stories and translations that have travelled through the hands and hearts of those who have taught me how to listen, and hear with an awareness of 'not knowing' (Walkerdine, 2016), are carried with me in collective rememberings, and eases the struggle of disidentification with the familiarity of a unitary sense of identity, because "'we' are in this together" (Braidotti, 2006b, p.244).

While "we" may be in this together, our differences matter because "we are not one and the same" (Braidotti, 2020, p. 465). Through hearing stories of Māori women being marked as 'absent' through not being afforded a hearing in institutional contexts of academia,

such as from Waitere and Johnston (2009), it was my ethical responsibility to learn about the multiple subjugations experienced by wāhine Māori, and come to terms with the White supremacy of colonialism that I have benefitted from (Allen, 2023). Consistent with a critical feminist psychology social justice framework, this means striving to be an ally "beyond my own experience," as articulated by Allen (2023, p. 920). Waitere and Johnston emphasised the need for feminisms to recognise the complexity of occupying contradictory positions with blurred boundaries if non-Māori women hope to understand the lived realities for Indigenous women and support them in claiming space for resistance and revitalisation. The circulation of narratives, and stories of resistance provide an avenue for disrupting the hegemony of Western psychological knowledge production at the colonial/patriarchal nexus. Harding (2008) reiterated the boundaries of horizons of modernity were always premised on "patriarchal and racial / colonial / imperial" mutuality (p. 209). Therefore, efforts for political and social transformative change need to be collaborative between feminist and postcolonial approaches to dismantle hierarchies of patriarchy and coloniality, otherwise as Harding (2008) has argued, "each can continue to exercise its powers 'inside' the Other" (p. 210). Similarly, Braidotti (2012) emphasised the potentials for structural Others to be allies in processes of becoming that oppose identifying with being the Other of the Same.

Braidotti (2022) explained the practices of situated knowledges of the structural Others as a process of composing a 'missing people' through collaboration that can amplify the resonances between them to disrupt the hegemony of institutional Eurocentrism in university knowledge production, and the imperative for feminisms to decolonise. The 'missing people' includes women, LGBTQ+ people, and Indigenous people, and heterogeneity is assumed across differences, partial and multiple. Thinking with these ideas from my marginalised location in a critical feminist psychology space, fuelled my desire to disrupt the singular story of old and older women as deficit defined through the binary categorisation of 'not young.' The binary opposite of 'decline' (deficit) in ageing narratives is 'successful ageing,' and to age 'successfully' equates to 'don't age,' or at the very least to appear not to be ageing (Calasanti et al., 2006; Cecil et al., 2022; Sandberg, 2013); in other words to be the Other of the Same. The psychology discipline is complicit with these binary categorisations through Western knowledge production that reproduces the same stories of older and old women, even in response to gendered ageism (for example, see Cecil et al., 2022). While contributions such as that by Cecil et al. (2022) are important for understanding responses to the stigma and discrimination of ageism, I desired to approach narratives of ageing in the in-between-ness, process, and non-essentialising *moments of being*

(Tamboukou, 2008) of story-telling. My desire for a more adequate understanding was an effect of how I have been affected by engagement with feminist scholars. Refusal of "ontological and methodological individualism," and "neoliberal understandings of subjectivity" (Bharj & Adams, 2023, p. 185) meant being open to possibilities of the virtual in a process with excitement for the potentials of the 'not yet' of becoming-storyteller. Narrative that is interested in the how and why in the milieu of past, present, and future as co-existing, creates possibilities for inquiry that is processual as articulated by Tamboukou (2008) when she states, "narratives should be theorized as entities open to constant becomings, stories in becoming" (p. 284).

Affect and Meaning-Making

From her disciplinary location in psychology, Wetherell (2015) dealt with the vast theorisations of emotion and affect, and maintained "the psychology of affect often has a kind of 'hidden in plain view' status in social and cultural research" (p. 140) in support of her argument for what she termed an *affective practice* approach. In her critique of Ahmed's cultural politics of emotion, the point that Wetherell viewed as unarguable is that affect is a relational phenomenon. Wetherell (2012) contrasted the traditional understandings of emotions in psychology with the ontological and epistemological disruption encapsulated by "'post-human' and process-based perspectives" (Chapter 1, para. 5). Wetherell clarified that by 'affect' she was referring to *embodied meaning making*, or broadly what we might call *human emotion.* While Wetherell (2012) empathised with 'process-based perspectives' that engage with philosophers such as Deleuze, and Spinoza, whose contributions she deemed valuable in dismantling of binaries such as nature/culture, she strongly disagreed with interpretations by Massumi, and Thrift on the basis that "Empirical social research has lost something useful when the study of affect in its conventional senses is conflated with Deleuze's concept of becoming or emergence" (Chapter 3, Ways Forward on the Affective-Discursive section). Wetherell (2012) subsequently acknowledged psychology's problematic history while taking issue with conceptualisations of subjectivity in non-representational theory from fields of cultural geography, and politics. It was here that Wetherell stipulated that her interest was in individuals as specific sites of pattern-making, and in the personal affective history of individuals. Wetherell's focus on the individual demonstrates the persistent ideology of individualism in Euro-US-centric psychology that has been rejected by

critical feminist psychology (Crawford & Marecek, 1989; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Riger, 1992). It reminds me that the scholarship I am immersed in is still a marginalised perspective within the broader discipline, as did my foray into postgraduate neuropsychology. From Wetherell's (2012) perspective, it appears the slipperiness, flux, and monism of process ontology in the posthuman turn was unappealing, illustrated by the question, "Are human affective practice and human psychology literally indistinguishable from the practice and psychology of a talking parrot?" (Chapter 6, Hauling Back the Subject section). Engagement with Wetherell's work highlighted for me that older women's affective histories are missing in psychological knowledge production.

Also located in the psychology discipline, Walkerdine (2016) re-connected me with the importance of understanding relationality as an affective and material, or embodied outcome in the present, of collective socio-cultural and historical processes, in her analysis of inter-generational meaning-making in underprivileged, marginalised communities. This work continued Walkerdine's (2015) rejection of psychology's ahistorical, individualistic, neoliberal, and universalising tendencies that categorise and pathologise poor people. Similarly, from a decolonising perspective Franklin-Phipps (2024) helped me to re-connect with the affectivity of the unsaid, the unseen, or absence that can nevertheless be felt in the present through hauntings of the past that trace invisibility. In grappling with the tensions of producing meaningful knowledge, Franklin-Phipps (2024) posed a question that expressed far more eloquently than I can, an articulation of my becoming-researcher desire: "What might researchers do, stilling their judgment, silencing the narratives that have organized the world around us to connect differently with sites of inquiry in ways that matter? *Out of a concern for justice*" (p. 75). I re-remember Waitere and Johnston's (2009) absentia as a product of Western science's Eurocentric, colonial, and androcentric ontology and epistemology. I re-remember Mikaere's (2011) text that taught me how relationships understood through whakapapa connect past, present, and future of never-ending beginnings, and the responsibility kuia held for inter-generational knowledge transfer. I re-remember Stewart et al.'s (2024) experiences of ageism in a university institutional context in Aotearoa, and the ease with which women may be marked as hysterical when becoming-crone. The legacies of dualism of Enlightenment philosophy live on wherein reason, and rationality are the purview of the dominant group, or the One, and emotion, and nature are represented by the structural Others (Harding, 2008; Jaggar, 1989/2021). Feminist scholars have long pointed out the association of reason and rationality with masculinity, and emotion with femininity in

Eurocentrism (Chamberlain, 2017; Harding, 2008). Women, and especially Indigenous women are represented as ahistorical Others in modernity accounts (Harding, 2008).

Memories have both propelled and motivated me to search for the in-between-ness of the dominant narratives of ageing that stereotype and stigmatise older and old women, and inscribe us with abjection through perceived deficits in appearance, cognitive ability, productivity, and capabilities, thereby conjuring us as a burden and a risk. Through an understanding that it matters what stories tell stories I reject being silenced by the dominant stories of invisibility and hypervisibility that psychology tells of my experiences of being an older woman through recognising their partiality, absences, and hauntings. The cacophony of voices from the margins is getting louder though, in their collective ability to affect, and be affected through recognition of interdependence and relations with all others (Braidotti, 2008b).

Walkerdine's (2015) theorising of intergenerational affective transmission in critique of the genealogy of essentialised notions in psychology's singular story of poverty highlighted the limits and constraints of the psychology discipline which is entrenched in neoliberal notions of personal responsibility, and ahistorical accounts. Wetherell (2012, 2015) and Walkerdine (2015, 2016) alerted us to how the persistent absence of affective histories in psychology matters. While I was able to connect cognitively with Braidotti's (2006b, 2008a) theorisation of affirmative ethics that is relational, and sustainable, in processes of nomadic becoming, it was Chamberlain (2017), a scholar in the disciplinary location of creative writing, whose storytelling of affect through the social and political movement of feminist activism provided me a more adequate understanding of affective flows of meaning-making. What excited me in my engagement with Chamberlain was how I could feel joy through reflecting on my own becoming since encountering critical feminist scholarship, and the movement that inspired my research desires. Although Chamberlain's storying of affect is in the context of a social movement, her extrapolations of affect gifted me a more adequate understanding of the porosity of my subjectivities when reflecting on how the micro instances of relations have collectively changed me, through both negative and positive affects always involving heart and memory, so there was joy in recognition of becoming nomadic. Chamberlain's analysis, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Massumi, Ahmed, and others, illustrated for me an instance of what Braidotti (2022) states as: "I see this as collective praxis that aims at redefining negative differences positively and reworking them into cognitive, affective and relational sources for the elaboration of alternatives" (p. 224) . Chamberlain's tracing of the movement, complexity, unpredictability, contingency, and multiplicity of

negative and positive passions of affective flows in feminist activism brought to life for me Braidotti's (2008a) explanations of affect as a force of dynamic energy. Affect is realised in material relations of collectives as processes of becoming, and the 'virtual' of possible futures of empowerment through ethical relations that imagine "alternative social relations and other possible worlds" (Braidotti, 2008a, p. 12). In dealing with feminisms' negative affects Chamberlain's analysis resonated with Braidotti's (2008a) articulation that it is relations and intensity of forces that are indicative of affirmation and negation, or positive and negative affects. As Chamberlain outlined, 'force' is bodies acting, or being acted upon through reciprocity, and the negative affects that emerge with feminist activism are a source of critique that provoke movement; that is, while negative affects may create division within feminism, they can be transformed. Chamberlain's exploratory synthesis challenged the single story of affect as individualistic emotion in psychology which is constrained by the conception of a unitary bounded individual. Such individualism presented as universal human nature in hegemonic psychological knowledge production is epistemic violence that reproduces oppressive power structures of ethnocentrism, and androcentrism (Bharj & Adams, 2023; Harding, 2008).

Chamberlain (2017) provided me a more adequate understanding, through centring affect in storying the feminist activism movement, of the concepts of liminality, motion, reciprocity, process, force, collective, and interconnections between affect, emotion, and feelings, and elucidated the transmission of affect as becoming. These concepts are the entanglements of affect as becoming, as they point to the in-between-ness of processes of movement that cannot be pre-determined, and are uncertain as they unfold in relations that are contingent, and liminal states of passage and duration. Importantly, such entanglements are nonsensical if approached through individualism that searches for assumed characteristics of social identity categories as psychology persists in doing (Magnusson & Marecek, 2017). Chamberlain's articulation of the transformative power of affect for feminist activism emphasised the impetus for outward-looking political engagement. Reflecting on how my research storying with older women was inspired by passion interwoven with, and inseparable from learning, the binary of thought-emotion dissipated as I remembered Chamberlain's support of Sara Ahmed's plea to destabilise this binary that has worked to silence women. Chamberlain's storying of affect through an activist movement illustrated an instance of Braidotti's (2006b) "we" that are in this together as a collective, non-unitary, but desiring distributed force, that is nonetheless socio-historically grounded and embedded, embodied, and glued with dynamic affects in a commitment to duration. Hence, the feminist

mantra of the 'personal is political' became more meaningful for me when linking to the dissolution of binary categories of public/private, internal/external, emotion/thought that reproduce gendered power relations of domination and subordination. Chamberlain's fourth chapter, "Affective Temporalities" brought to life for me Braidotti's (2008b) call for an affirmative ethics of difference that "puts the motion back into e-motion and the active back into activism" (p. 22) while also reiterating the importance of interconnections with history because 'becoming' is not understood in a linear chronological scale of difference.

It follows that affect is central to the theorisation of nomadic subjectivity because it drives transformation through openness to affecting, and being affected through others, engendering complex webs of alliances and multiple belongings, while understanding non-unitary subjectivity as always, already embodied (Braidotti, 2006b). The movement of the dynamic flow of affects as a source of transformation is necessarily conceptually disconnected from an ego-bound identity as the subject is co-constituted in flows of forces of interconnections and interdependencies (Braidotti, 2008b). Chamberlain's (2017) analysis illustrated this point well through showing how centring affect in all its uncertainty, mobility, multiplicity, and indivisibility, was not incoherent, and made sense to me, as opposed to the wave narrative that Chamberlain critiqued as categories of identities and generations. To explore further, the transformative potentials, it is necessary to move to relational ethics, or the politics of affirmation (Braidotti, 2012).

Relational Ethics

"It was in the writings but also the actions and speeches and sermons of Black United States citizens that I began to experience the meaning of my whiteness as a point of location for which I needed to take responsibility"

(Rich, 1987, p. 219).

My location in Aotearoa New Zealand means taking responsibility to honour te Tiriti o Waitangi, being accountable in my responsibilities as a settler in a colonised land, and cognisant of the harms that continue to be inflicted upon Tangata Whenua (people of the land) through a neocolonial-patriarchal knowledge/power nexus. I chose the above quotation from *Blood, bread and poetry: Selected prose, 1979-1985* because it communicates the meaningfulness of the process of movement I have experienced in my later life education,

towards a more adequate understanding. Tamboukou's (2018) engagement with Spinoza's 'ethics of joy' related to education resonates with my own humble process of transformation through 'knowledge-in-becoming' that is situated, partial, and offers greater understanding through relationality, and the continuous flow of affecting and being affected by other bodies.

My ethical responsibilities are underpinned by the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants* provided by Massey Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa University of New Zealand (2017), and familiarity with *Te Ara Tika: Guidelines for Māori Research Ethics* (Hudson et al., 2010). I am committed to the universal principles outlined in the Massey Code, and my responsibility and obligations to the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi of partnership, participation, and protection, and a commitment to biculturalism encompassing whakapapa (relationships), tika (purposefulness), manäkitanga (cultural and social responsibility), and mana (justice and equity). Commitment to my theoretical underpinning of process ontology and situated knowledges acts to prioritise ethical conduct through extending beyond notions of liberal individualism and rights to pay particular attention to power structures, relationships, accountability, and situatedness (Braidotti, 2008b).

Relational ethics is practiced as a decolonial, and anti-racist affirmation of difference that challenges the humanist individualism and exceptionalism of Eurocentrism through foregrounding its inherent exclusions, while highlighting our interdependence, and affective capacities that constitute subjectivity as relational (Braidotti, 2022). There is an emphasis on ethical relations that disrupt the individualistic notion of internalised moral essence and are a site of creative becoming of counter-subjectivities for the structural Others (Braidotti, 2008a). I am reminded of resonances with Indigenous epistemologies, for example Waitere and Johnston's (2009) articulation of listening to really 'hear' that requires active participation in co-construction of relational meaning-making. Also, Mikaere's (2011) exploration of the significance of whakapapa for Māori meaning-making of the inter-relations of all things, and the importance of reciprocity, and mutual webs of responsibility. These examples illustrate why Braidotti (2022) urges posthuman feminists to learn from Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. Bharj and Adams (2023) reiterated the perils of reproducing colonial power relations if feminists in psychology fail to challenge habits of thought that construct the subject as understood through theory and methods in psychology. As Haraway (2016) reminded us through stories of relational ontology, affirmative ethics means paying attention to the response-ability of becoming-with all others in partial, contingent, and collaborative

worldings of relational complexity that demands staying with the trouble of seeing from another's perspective for flourishing collectively while respecting difference.

In the context of my research story if I proceeded with interviewing women, relational ethics would mean building relationships with those I talked to, and inserting myself in the affective flows of meaning-making. I had a vision of 'crones' around the kitchen table in a process of listening and hearing with care, compassion, and openness to stories as an unfolding in collaborative knowledge-making. Braidotti (2022) stated that "ethics is about power and forces" (p. 81), meaning attention to my position as researcher would be important for addressing the normative understanding of researcher as 'expert,' therefore I committed to a process of ongoing reflexivity in consistently questioning how my own 'dogmatic image of thought' may materialise through figurations of the binary categorisation of older or old women as 'decline' or 'successful ageing' (Sandberg, 2013). Creating a "relationally safe space" (Hydén, 2013, p. 5) for shared meaning-making would be my ongoing responsibility in the recognition of stories as gifts (Oakley, 2016), and my accountability for ethical considerations of handling with care issues of subjectivity (Braidotti, 2017b). I realised early on that it was crucial for the process of shared storytelling that I remained connected to my commitment to disidentification with dominant representations of ageing, and defamiliarisation with dominant figurations of the rational, unitary subject in my location in the psychology discipline.

Relational ethics meant holding, and staying with the trouble of feeling my research story was not 'worthy,' as an ethical response-ability if I were to honour women's stories in all their complexity, contradiction, and messiness, to explore the in-between-ness of experience and knowing about ageing and ageism. The feelings of unworthiness were particularly relevant in processes of engaging with Braidotti's (2008a, 2008b) work on de-psychologising the issue of pain and suffering, to de-link pain from suffering as a way to transform negative (potestas) into positive (potentia) passions. When the discriminatory conditions of everyday lives of pejorative difference are so pervasive and normalised, it is important to stay with the trouble of being attuned to power relations. It would mean grappling with my own internalised ageism if I were to honour ethical relations at the heart of subjectivity in nomadic affirmative ethics. I returned to the wisdom of Macdonald and Rich (1983/1991) to fuel the ignited passion I felt in the injustices of the pejorative difference of older and old women's minds and bodies: "But most women find that the more our bodies are perceived as old, the more our minds are dismissed as irrelevant" (p. 143). Hence, at this point of thinking with my research story, my desire to handle shared stories with care in

translation underpinned by relationships, and really hearing, was deeply important to my process because "it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12).

Critical reflexivity was a constant companion in my movement with the process of storytelling as a relational obligation to all Others indexed as categories of undeserving humans (Braidotti, 2020). Segal (2014a), a feminist age scholar speaking from her location in psychology, alluded to the responsibility I felt in passing on stories of subjectivities, when she stated:

> Nowadays, we are anyway skeptical of any notion of the "true self," knowing that any account we give of ourselves is built around the differing ways we have been recognized and accepted—or not—by others … with instabilities and tensions evident to the discerning listener in the gaps in our storytelling, the volatility of our memories and fantasies. (p. 216)

It was with an awareness of, and responsibility to my felt allegiance with the structural Others of the Same that flowed with me in recognition of ontological entanglements, the hegemonic knowledge production of psychology, and past, present, and futures in the envisioned movement in the "stretchy space of the "gap" between life and story" (Fine, 2017, p. 118).

Chapter 5: Analysis: Theorising Lived Experience

A Juncture: Process and Movement Prompting Directional Change

On reviewing the literature, I have traversed the nexus of sexism and ageism, and the long-established marginalisation of women that produces stigma and stereotypes of the singular story, and it became clear to me that much of this literature represents a "quantitative multiplication of options" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 412). As age scholar Margaret Gullette (2017) articulated, ageism is an age-old discrimination evident from the cultural critique of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, "Old Age" in 1862, Simone de Beauvoir's 1970 critique, to Glenda Laws' (1995) seminal essay on ageism. While the work of inquiry into gendered ageing and ageism is indeed important for social justice, and the posthumanism and ageing literature was inspiring in enabling a deeper appreciation for the insights a posthumanism lens offers ageing futures, this juncture signalled an affective re-appraisal of how I desired to work with my theoretical underpinnings. I understand this shift with Tamboukou (2008) who described how narrative holds flows of forces as sediments that may take it in unanticipated directions or create diversions from previous meanings and intentions that can be a threshold of a narratable, nomadic self.

It was through relationality, and the unfolding processes of supervision, and 'knowing' wisdom of my supervisor, that I was moved to the ambitious project of theorising my own lived experience through writing from memory and by heart in pursuit of a more adequate understanding of the in-between-ness, nuance, and complexities of stories. This avenue still supported my decolonising commitment to reject the "repetition of 'his master's voice'" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 414). My hope was to combine feminist critique with creativity wherein the boundaries of the use of text are blurred through its affective capacity to reach outwards, and leave an impression, as I explored through memory and by heart how I have come to strive "to differ from oneself as much as possible while remaining faithful to oneself, or in other words: enduring" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 416). Such "'faithfulness to oneself'" is of course not an attachment to 'identity' but rather sustainability through ethical relations, or being affected by, and affecting others (Braidotti, 2008b, p. 32). Additionally, I will trace through stories how "the folding-in of external influences" (Braidotti, 2008b, p. 32) necessitates critically examining cartographies of power intertwined with location, and

subjectivities who are heterogenous 'otherwise others,' and who reject being the Other of the Same (Braidotti, 2019a, 2022).

As I reviewed my reflexive journaling, I had to sit with this decision because while I see it as an act of resistance to the gendered power relations that have constrained my understandings and potentials throughout life, it is also an act accompanied by feeling deep vulnerability. I needed to ground myself with remembering I am not alone, because as the many feminisms concur, the personal is political (Chamberlain, 2017), and while this is my 'individual' attempt to add to collective minoritarian knowledge production, it is always in relational processes producing movement of becoming when undertaken through nomadism, as I seek to illustrate the fluidity of subjectivity that is "a portion of forces that is stable enough to sustain and to undergo constant, though non-destructive, fluxes of transformation" (Braidotti, 2006a, p. 201). Specific to the psychology discipline, the implications for theorising individual experience were addressed by Tucker (2012) who proposed understanding through Deleuze's 'individuation,' inspired by his contemporary Gilbert Simondon, which moves us away from any notions of internal properties to relational processes that are simultaneously singularities, and multiplicities. Tucker (2012) described 'singularity' as the convergence of particularities, or a "series of processes of individuation" (p. 778) or 'forces' in explanations of pre-individual, and post-identitarian subjectivity consistent with Rosi Braidotti's articulations of Deleuze's philosophy. Braidotti (2019b) explained individuation through the philosophy of immanence or unity of all matter that signifies the principle of differentiation itself, or in her own words: "It allows for individuation and diversity, while connecting humans to non-human forces" (p. 50). It is these 'forces' that "come to bear as individual experience" (Tucker, 2012, p. 778). It is with this understanding of singularity I proceed from my embodied and embedded location that is partial and perspectival as I move in cycles of unbecoming and becoming (Grosz, 2005) co-constituted through all my encounters past, present, and future. It follows that I reject the fixity of identity, and static reproduction of sameness, and engage with the never finalised constant differentiation in my desires for the continuous process of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor.

A further, and important catalyst for the movement of my thesis direction at this juncture was engagement with Elspeth Probyn's (2005) book, *Blush: Faces of Shame*. My choice of words earlier being, "I had to sit with this decision," belies the turmoil of oscillating between feeling inspired, and motivated, to feelings of, "No, I can't do this. This is a bad idea." However, my responses to Probyn's (2005) book on shame, and the change of

direction that emanated from it, conjure for me the idea of the unfolding of an *assemblage*, and it is difficult to find the words that adequately convey how unsettling this movement felt, in the simultaneity of compulsion and resistance. This was when I was profoundly stirred by the significance of shame as an affective flow that is both embodied and embedded, but also distributed, and deeply involved with notions of care, historicity, and potential for transformation. As Probyn (2005) emphasised, "I want to move away from the idea that telling shameful stories is concerned only with the person telling them" (p. 40). In other words, shame is relational, meaning as Braidotti (2019b) contended, power relations both as potestas and potentia can be drawn cartographically of figurations of oppression, and affirmative alternatives when thinking with experiences of shame, as with all affects. Inspired by Silvan Tomkins's work on shame, and drawing from Bourdieu's *habitus*, Probyn (2005) attended to how affective histories are embodied in present moments, to elucidate the link between shame and interest, or relationality, that when reduced signifies pain, which would not have been possible if connection had not been established prior to its disruption. In a subsequent interview about her book, Probyn mentioned the influence that Deleuze's writing about affect had on her own writing, and this is evident through her engagement with Deleuze's analysis about T. E. Lawrence's writing on shame and honour (Probyn et al., 2019). It presented a concrete example of an affective assemblage with shame. These were important insights as I remembered stories I might tell because the profound stirring I mentioned experiencing was like standing back from the tapestry of my lived experience to suddenly see that the threads of shame that were woven across time and place were dark, knotty, and resistant to unpicking. Thinking, feeling, reading, and writing became so entangled, and embodied that I was confronted with, and had to grapple with, remembering shameful stories that reached into my present and disrupted the carefully cultivated distance from the Other of myself, precipitating a flooding of an intensity of forces from figurations such as 'bad mother,' and 'not good enough.' These were uncomfortable feelings, and confirmed for me Probyn's assertion that writing about shame is painful, and that "shame is seen as deeply shameful" (Probyn, 2005, p. xiii). Crucially, I realised the meaningfulness of Braidotti's (2008a; 2019b) insistence on the necessity to de-link pain from suffering through de-psychologising the negativity or potestas of pain in an ethical move away from binary oppositions such as good/bad. Disidentification with habits of thought that reproduce oppositional binaries is indeed difficult and ongoing. My immersion in critical feminist scholarship had taught me well but remembering to think and feel with my own lived experiences of shame, and the ease with which I could shame others was confronting but

compelling. As Braidotti (2019b) stated: “pain and vulnerability in fact express the deeply affective and relational nature of all living entities” (p. 169). Gullette (2017) considered ‘shame’ and ageing worthy of a whole chapter in her book and stated: “The shame of becoming old may batten on earlier experiences of shame; therapists would say the affect re-infantilises” (p. 177). Probyn (2005) pointed out the diverse disciplinary interpretations of shame, but however it is viewed, Bartky (1990) claimed that for women, their subordination means shame is particularly disempowering as the affective flow of shame is a response to their patriarchal environment, and a “profound mode of disclosure both of self and situation” (p. 85). I felt this keenly as I thought, “It is one thing to be an anonymised participant, but quite another to bleed your own shame in ink on your page.”

Consistent with my theoretical commitments, the stories I tell will not be presented as sequential in *Chronos* linear time (Braidotti, 2019a), but rather will be theoretically threaded together to trace the affective flows of meaning-making consistent with relational time of nomadic narratives (Tamboukou, 2008) with the aim of reaching a greater understanding of the messy tapestry of bits stitched together by the conditions of an ordinary life. It is an instance of particularity through which I aim to illustrate the inadequacy of the either/or dichotomy, and necessity of moving with the complexity and nuance of the and/and/and of an affirmative praxis of difference (Braidotti, 2017a, 2022). In engaging a nomadic subjectivity perspective that is accountable through the politics of location, working from memory and by heart stimulates embodied remembering that counters dominant unitary visions of subjectivity (Braidotti, 2008b). Working from memory and by heart, or what Braidotti (2010) terms nomadic transpositions, meant I needed to be open to the unfolding process of thinking with the affective traces, or sediments, in the here and now that reflect the stories I choose to tell, and how I tell them (Fine, 2017), which matters to becoming-a-response-able-ancestor. I proceeded with an awareness of Tamboukou’s (2008) narratable subject as processual, and limited, in the production of moments of being with the hope of prompting further stories. Stories that speak our missing affective histories in shattering the silence, including the silence of the untellable stories that do not meet expectations of the figurations imposed by hegemonic understandings, and yearn to be heard. My endeavour is of course still highly relevant for my inquiry grounded in ageing and ageism considering I fit the ‘category’ of ‘old’ or ‘older’ woman, because I struggled to find echoes of my own stories reflected in the literature dominated by the decline/success binary categorisations of Western knowledge production premised on neoliberal subjectivity, which must be addressed in the interests of decolonisation, and feminism (Bharj & Adams, 2023). The remembering, and the heart work

that determine the composition of the tapestry I create in the present, is contingent on which threads of stories I choose to pick up, and how I weave them now, and while my accrued lived experience by virtue of the length of time I have been alive, understood as my age, is relevant, on its own it is insufficient to illustrate the potentials of processual understandings of my continual becoming-a-response-able-ancestor, and becoming-wise.

An Ethical Pause at the Juncture

Considering my change of direction to telling my stories of affect, I firstly had an ethical responsibility to speak with my whānau, particularly my eldest daughter Jessica, to ascertain whether she would be comfortable with my new direction because one particular story I might tell involved her. This conversation occurred shortly after I had done in-depth reading of Probyn (2005) and was a moment of being when the intensity of an assemblage of shame from the past overcame me, and I spontaneously had tears streaming down my face as I sat opposite my daughter. I was shocked at the impact of re-remembering in her presence, and acutely aware of my ethical accountability to her. I recovered my composure quickly as I understood our encounter as an ethical co-production of an embodied memory that flowed between us (Braidotti, 2008b), the pain of which had been transformed into affirmative relationality (Braidotti, 2010). I understand my reaction with Probyn's (2005) writing on Deleuze, as an assemblage of forces in the moment of re-remembering where subjective shame exploded in a particularity of "mind, body, place, and history" (p. 148). I also understand it at the same time as an outward-facing emotional response at the recognition of the transformation of negative passion into positive affect (Braidotti, 2006b). I had been animatedly explaining to Jess the specifics of Probyn's expansion of the shame-interest connection, and how shame can be generative, or productive. It was the moment I realised my embodied shame from an incident 15 years previously that had disrupted connection with my daughter still carried the power of the figuration of the bad mother, when "shame was called forth by the apprehension of some serious flaw in the self" (Bartky, 1990, p. 87). This was the moment I knew my fine-grained purpose for this thesis.

Embodied Shame: Utterances

"Was I a good girl in church today, Dad?"
"Bless me Father, for I have sinned…"
"Where ignorance is bliss it's folly to be wise"
"The only thing I liked about her is she came across"
"You'll get pregnant"
"Why didn't you tell us?"
"She killed herself"
"I think I'm an alcoholic"
"Isn't that street you live in, in an industrial area?"
"Oh no, not another O'Leary"

Before I tell the stories of these utterances that locate threads of shame in the tapestry of my experiences, I want to elaborate on the transition the very process of this thesis prompted because it was a convergence of unfolding, and unpredictable forces that could have been otherwise. I see this convergence as actualised moments that I could not foresee so took me by surprise, were relational, and evidence of always-becoming. Probyn's (2005) book evoked memories that moved me to the detail of my purpose to speak my affective stories of nomadic subjectivity across time and space of my embedded and embodied situated knowledge that is partial and perspectival (Haraway, 1988). Following all I have learned in the context of university, and in particular the movement provoked by critical feminist psychology through capacities of affect, this moment of being is my attempt to illustrate differentiation of the interdependent, vulnerable narratable self (Tamboukou, 2008). It is at this moment, and in this forum, the voice of the silenced Other of myself demands to speak, motivated by the desire of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor, and commitment to continuing transformations because I "want to become-minoritarian in a productive and affirmative manner" (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 241). This process is intricately woven with issues of identity made salient by the difficult task of taking up a post-identitarian perspective because my resistance to the raw exposure of vulnerability was underpinned by the very binary thinking I try to reject. That is, my 'good' university identity threatened with contamination by stories of shame that marked my body with 'bad,' and had been meticulously stitched over to become faded from view since their initial dark threads were woven, subsequently inspected, ruminated over, and tied off. I never anticipated (and

certainly not in the context of this thesis) re-examining or unpicking these threads until I re-remembered painful moments embodied in the affective force of shame through relating to Probyn's discussions. Also pivotal was a story told to me by my supervisor that haunted me, reaching into my nightmares as it reminded me of what might have been, and conjured one of the many sayings my Mum had that still weave in and out of my thoughts, "But for the grace of God goes me." Except, in my understanding this could just as easily be the capacity for affect.

These stories …

"Was I a good girl in church today, Dad?"
"Bless me Father, for I have sinned…"
"Where ignorance is bliss it's folly to be wise"
"You'll get pregnant"
"Oh no, not another O'Leary"
"The only thing I liked about her is she came across"
"Isn't that street you live in, in an industrial area?"

In his analysis of the cultural and historical specificity of the psychology discipline Kvale (2003) used architectural metaphors of the Church, the Factory, and the Market in relation to knowledge production. In Kvale's analysis pertaining to psychology, the Church schematically sits in medieval times, however relating to the history of my everyday life of being born into and raised in Catholicism, Kvale's descriptions of the disciplinary power of religion resonated. "Was I a good girl in church today, Dad?" was a question I posed weekly, and the well-rehearsed line that began each kneeling confessional of "Bless me Father, for I have sinned…" carries with it memories of embodied shame of not being good enough because the childhood fabrication of wrongs worthy of confessing constantly reinforced that I came up short; my very confessing was a lie. The religious, and indeed psychoanalytic 'confessional' has been claimed by Foucault as disempowering because it proposes knowledge of a 'true' self that one is obliged to inhabit but acts as an inscription on the body of subordination (Bartky, 1990). The context of my formative subjectivity was conducive to feeling shame at the nexus of patriarchy and religious morality and was very much not in medieval history! Kvale's descriptions of the societal functions of the church with respect to the development and interiority of the self were familiar to me in the context of everyday life;

not as something that can be captured, but rather, as Bartky (1990) expressed "a pervasive affective attunement to the social environment" (p. 85). I was reminded of the imposition of the coloniser's worldview of Christian morality on Māori society that Mikaere (1999) pointed out was deeply tied to patriarchy, and the status of the nuclear family. Braidotti (2022) reiterated that the institutionalisation of patriarchal power is achieved through relations of domination and subordination, wherein masculinity controls the "symbolic functions of cultural systems, namely religion, instruction, and war" (p. 73).

I was also reminded of my encounter with learning about neuropsychology because of Grosz's (2017) book chapter, "Deleuze and the Plane of Immanence," wherein she discussed Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualisations of the brain, and she stated: "The brain is no more clear, rational, or direct than the chaos in which it resides: it too is prey to opinion, belief, chatter*, which block thought as readily as institutions like religion* [emphasis added]" (p. 163). I now have a deeper understanding of why Dad's religious faith is synonymous with the regime of truth of church dogma, that precludes otherwise knowing. However, patriarchy and religion do not need to operate inside each other; these institutions that shaped the structural conditions of my everyday life also operate independently of each other. As Bartky (1998) argued, the disciplinary power of patriarchy is also "institutionally *unbound*" (p. 36). This is illustrated for me through memories I have of when I was breastfeeding my babies. I have a deeper understanding of why I felt more acutely aware of covering the top of my breast when breastfeeding if I was around Dad, for modesty's sake, and also because of bodily shame stirred through a performance of femininity, at the nexus of patriarchy and religion. Although in a patriarchal, and religious understanding, I was performing femininity deemed 'natural,' the memories of the disciplining of my feminine body through demands of modesty and 'good girl' conjured shame that was embodied. On the other hand, I re-remember a time I was at my antenatal coffee group social gathering we had every month, and one of the mothers announced she was going to cease breastfeeding because her husband "wants my breasts back." What horrified me at the time was not only the blatant and explicit sexual objectification of this woman by her partner, but that the women present all thought it was rather humorous, and acceptable. Here is an instance of obedience to patriarchy as discussed by Bartky (1998), where a woman "is importantly a body designed to please or to excite" (p. 42). I ponder now that my silence at the time was my complicity. I stopped being silent some time ago about such matters. However, there were many levels on which I could not relate to this group of women with whom my only bond was the timing of the birth of our first child. I was out of my socio-economic class, and while they could not wait to return to work, I was

desperate not to have to leave my baby. *My* breasts absolutely belonged to *my* baby, so my resistance to the sexualisation of women's breasts at that time in my life was absolute. My point being, that women must never be questioned in their right to own that choice, not as either/or, but in whichever configuration is their own choice. However, habits of thought that underpin psychology's knowledge production of the individual constrain and even deny 'choice.' Bartky's argument about the adaptability of patriarchy to maintain structural power relations of domination and subordination remains as relevant now as when she formulated her argument in 1990s, possibly even more so considering our posthuman times. The issue of 'choice' is blurred through the disciplinary power embedded in structural conditions that mean Bartky's question of "Why aren't all women feminists?" (Bartky, 1998, p. 37) is still important.

In my formative years, the figuration of 'good' girl carried individual responsibility to behave according to institutionalised norms and disciplinary practices not only of femininity, but religiosity. Of five girls in our family, I was the youngest, and alongside the sister closest in age to myself, took the responsibility of being a good girl seriously. Being a 'good' girl was slim on rewards though because the salvation of my soul was abstract and distant. I am reminded of this in the present when Dad says to me, "You'll get a high place in heaven," because I care about his well-being so visit him regularly in the care home and take him on outings because it gives him so much joy in the moment. Being a 'good' girl also did not guarantee being seen or heard on my own terms. I can still recall the humiliation I felt in the first assembly as one of the new incoming cohort at high school, when the head nun called my name during roll call, after which she elaborated with "Oh no, not another O'Leary." Was she trying to be funny? Feeling ashamed of three of my four older sisters, and where I came from, accompanied my high school experience, but I was fortunate to develop a close group of friends. When one such friend posed the following question about where I lived, "Isn't that street you live in, in an industrial area?" I remember disowning my roots through my response that we lived at the other end of the street. I always went to my friends' houses; they did not come to mine. No-one ever knew at the time that my family of seven lived in a two-bedroom house, nor that one of my sisters was addicted to heroin, nor that another had been diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder at age 16 (of course I did not know this at the time), nor that we attended 'family meetings' precipitated by inclusion in the mental health and justice systems of older sisters. I re-remember lying in my bottom bunk on a night Mum and Dad were at the hospital subsequent to an overdose of my older sister, and I fervently hoped that on their return they would say she had not survived. I propose thoughts such as this

reinforced my self-conception as ‘bad’ despite my performativity of ‘good’ girl through excelling at school and not presenting Mum and Dad with problems; they had enough.

I remember in form class one day we were advised collectively that we should refrain from walking the corridors holding our books in front of our chests with them leaning on our uniform belt because it made us look pregnant. I remember in my late teen years Mum being annoyed because I had not emerged from my bed by late morning after a night out drinking, so she came into my room to express her disapproval through confronting me with the threat of, “You’ll get pregnant.” In the context of the mid-late 1970s and early 1980s excessive alcohol use among my peers was standard fare, and normalised in society, like a rite of passage. However, behavioural limits were indeed enforced in peer groups when it came to sex—it had to be the ‘right’ kind of activity at appropriate times, and with appropriate others; heteronormative in the strictest of terms. When a close friend said she was ashamed of me one night it was in response to what she deemed was my inappropriate sexually oriented behaviour. I was responsible for morally corrupting her boyfriend’s brother at a party because he was engaged to be married. It appeared I owned the shame of ‘making out’ with him, but I was shameless. I think the word she used was ‘hussy.’ Bartky (1990) pondered the link between women’s shame, and the association in religious traditions of “female sexuality with pollution and contagion” (p. 90). In the context of contemporary Aotearoa, Farvid et al.’s (2017) research demonstrated that the sexual double standard is still relevant, and the Madonna/whore binary is constantly re-imagined and adapted to reproduce gendered power relations that work to silence, and ‘other’ women who do not conform to behavioural norms of what is deemed appropriate sexuality. At the same time, as a close group of friends, we were deeply supportive of each other, and caring as we worked on building each other’s self-esteem against the tide of it being washed away by the nuns that taught us. It reminds me that the battering my self-esteem took started early. When I was in early primary school, I re-remember getting smacked across the legs with the yard ruler for wearing rubber-soled slippers that Mum had bought for me because we were not allowed to wear our school shoes inside. The nun decided my functional, cost-effective slippers failed to qualify as slippers. I can still connect with the feeling of powerlessness that prevented me from protesting that they were indeed slippers. One of my older sisters was locked in a cupboard for a time for ‘bad’ behaviour. I remember my last year of primary school, equivalent to year 8, and the nun that taught us had a regular habit of a refrain in response to our attempted answers to her queries, of “Where ignorance is bliss, ‘tis folly to be wise.” She quoted lines of poetry that were meaningless to me but managed to convey to me my lack of worth, and this particular

line has stayed with me. On one occasion after a senior school dance with a boy's Catholic college, I still remember vividly the shame and humiliation I felt when I pressured my friends to tell me what it was they had heard on the grapevine about a boy's response to my liking him. Their reason for being reluctant to tell me became clear when the words, "The only thing I liked about her was she came across" washed over me. In the context of the era, the term 'came across' meant engaging in sexual activity to some degree. These threads from my history speak to my resistance that emerged in my later teenage years to the good girl figuration that was too rigid, too exhausting, and yielded what I considered a distinct lack of fairness in my everyday life, and only the remote promise of eternal life when I struggled to make sense of everyday life. In Foucault's (1982) terms, the functionality of pastoral power of Christianity institutionalised through the Church dispersed beyond the institution in a multiplication of areas of private and public life despite its usurpation by the Enlightenment. The power/knowledge nexus in my young life was shaped by the 'truth' claims of Catholicism in everyday social power relations, and the disciplinary power of normative femininity (Bartky, 1998).

And these stories …

"She killed herself"
"Why didn't you tell us?"
"I think I'm an alcoholic"

In discussions of women and shame, Probyn (2005) pondered whether those who are subordinated may be more adept at shaming others because their ability to detect shame has been more finely honed through familiarity with it, than those who are privileged. It prompted me to re-remember the tragedy of my sister Fiona's suicide at aged 61 years just prior to when I started university in mid-2018. Her funeral was held as part of a mid-week church service after which the mandatory 'cup of tea' was in the church hall. It was here a parishioner approached me to express her condolences, after which she inquired about my sister, indicating she was unaware Fiona was unwell, and further inquired as to what had ailed my sister. I looked directly at her and said, "She killed herself" while simultaneously thinking "Fuck off." And she did. On reflection in the present, I wonder whether the affective intensity of being back in a church prompted a re-experiencing of the "the field" of the habitus of the social space of church, and the shaming I associated with it (Probyn, 2005, p. 49). I felt very out of place, so without being aware of the force, perhaps I attempted to

shame a member of the church congregation as punishment for what I perceived as a prying intrusion, and anticipated judgementalism. Or perhaps I was just being unkind. Or perhaps I was ashamed that my sister had committed suicide. Or perhaps I perceived her as nosey and uncaring. Or perhaps I was just angry, grieving, and too worried about Dad to find any commonality with this woman. Nomadic subjectivity enables me to see that all these things can be present at once in the assemblage of the singularity of my encounter with the parishioner on that day. I will add I have no regrets about that encounter, which allows me to recognise "the process of becoming-ethical" (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 242) in a transformational mode to stay with the trouble of seeing from another's perspective, and "holding the unasked-for pattern in one's hands" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12) is ongoing, as habits of thought constantly pull us back to less complex and more familiar "modes of representation" (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 243). I do not need to apologise for this however, as I continue to try amidst life's messiness.

Thinking with my embodied history reminds me that motherhood is a monumental process of transition that is illustrative of the unfolding and ongoing of processes of becoming, from the virtual to the actual marked by ongoing dynamic change (Braidotti, 2010). The interwoven threads of past, present, and future, as well as differing from oneself as much as possible, and ontological relationality come more sharply into focus when I think with being a daughter and mother, and the motivating force of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor. It was not until the life transition of having my first child in my early 30s that a memory from my early teenage years prompted a slow-burning recognition that what had happened to me was an instance of sexual abuse. I theorise now that the fierce love and protective feelings for my child moved me to re-remember my own vulnerability when I was a child, the memory of which manifested as a sort of postnatal malaise that I now see as the result of a fixation on a wound that was hard to forget (Braidotti, 2008a). At a time of great joy, and total immersion and focus with my child, the intrusion of the memory was "unwanted, the untimely, the un-assimilated or in-appropriate/d" (Braidotti, 2008a, p. 24) disruption that eventually prompted me to see my doctor that led to funded counselling at the time. Yet, in the paradox and complexities of life stories, I carried great shame and self-blame with me about this event, and even post-counselling the affective flow of shame remained as a sediment, and remained untellable through responsibilising myself to leave it in the past, and move on.

For context it is necessary to bring to my text what happened to me. When I was in middle childhood, a life-long friend of my Dad's moved with his wife and young child from

Christchurch where Dad had spent some growing-up years with him, to a town in Waikato that was closer to where we lived in Auckland. Subsequently their friendship was revitalised with visits between locations. Prior to, and during my early teenage years, in the Christmas holidays I would go to stay with this couple for a week or so, whose only child was several years younger than myself, but I proved to be a suitable playmate for her. I enjoyed these visits as they lived next door to a large farm property that housed a large family who generously took us for horse rides and we even stayed in one of the paddocks in tents on occasion. My Dad's friend became like a much-loved 'TV dad' to me. He listened to me with interest, told me great stories of his friendship with Dad when they were young, and generally made me feel special, and valued. The last holidays I visited I was 14 years old, and New Year parties were happening in their community. They were invited to one such party, which was really a lot of couples gathered for drinks, and so I was able to go with them. I had never had alcohol until that night, and in my memory, there was some discussion as to whether it was appropriate to give me a drink, and the consensus was a little would be fine. I have no idea how many drinks I was given but I do remember they tasted very strong, and that it was Dad's friend who was putting them in my hand. The next thing I re-remember is being awoken in the night in the bedroom I was staying in at their house, by Dad's 'friend' looming over me coercing and cajoling touch that was alien to me. I was shocked and confused, but remember turning to the wall after a time, after which he disappeared. As it turned out, it was easy for me to avoid these holidays in the future under the guise I had grown out of them. A few years later they returned to live in Christchurch so Mum and Dad had little contact apart from Dad and his friend exchanging letters. Until they came for a trip to Auckland when Jessica was a baby, and at Mum and Dad's suggestion I agreed to have them over for afternoon tea one day because it was difficult to refuse. This was the catalysing force that eventually led me to counselling because of the impact from seeing him again. It was also the reason that some considerable time later I decided to disclose to Mum and Dad what had happened to me. When I very briefly told them the 'who' and 'when' of sexual abuse I saw Mum's face cloud with a pained expression before tears flowed silently, and Dad's response was an expression of pained anger, followed by "Why didn't you tell us?" I fail to remember my own response to that, except that I was not angry at Dad, but spent some time trying to see from his perspective, and remember thinking to myself, it would not be fair to expect him to understand. How could he possibly? He had to deal with the betrayal of his own trust in his friend. Furthermore, after my disclosure this 'friend' was wiped from their lives. It was never spoken of again. What I do remember feeling angry about was the structural conditions of

patriarchy that rendered Dad's response possible. I also remember however, an affective sense of solidarity with Mum, like an unspoken thread of understanding and searing pain that I can now make sense of in the intergenerational flow of meaning-making about the pervasive, and corrosive effects of subordination that can counter-intuitively strengthen relational bonds of solidarity. Now that I was a mother myself, there was a recognition of Mum's pain from my disclosure, around normative femininity of mothering as nurturance, and protection.

To return to the embodied shame and blame I carried from the event of the abuse, Bradbury (2017) citing Kierkegaard, articulates well how I feel in the present: "Life is lived forwards but can only be understood backwards" (p. 17). Through the privilege I have had of studying under the guidance of critical feminist scholars, I re-tell and re-remember this story of situated knowledge, not only for the purpose of my processes of becoming-minoritarian, but also in the hope that it adds to the kete of our collective understandings that counter the hegemonic stereotype, or single story of "nothing really happened" that I internalised as a young teenager, and which purchased my silence (Kelly & Radford, 1996, p. 19). My internalised 'nothing really happened' and 'bad girl' narrative guaranteed my silence in later years when I was raped, because I was at a party, was drinking, and therefore it must be my fault, despite the memory of saying "No, no, no, get off," then deciding it was no use, and becoming inert under his weight until it was over. I knew from the moment it happened, this was rape by any definition, but in re-remembering I can connect with the thought that I had a stance that dismissed the questions of how or why did it matter; it didn't. However, I understand this stance as embodied history because there is more to the story of when I was 14 years old—the unspeakable (Kelly & Radford, 1996), or untellable part that embodied my silence because it was the piercing affectivity of shame and self-blame that underpinned it. Because "it matters what knots knot knots" (Haraway, 2016, p. 12) I am compelled to elaborate here. I now see it as tragic, and rather sad, that the day following the event of sexual abuse at 14 years old I thought that what I had experienced must be some kind of 'love.' My failure to fully reveal to Mum and Dad this dirty little secret, as I saw it, reinforced the belief in my own deficit and deviance, quite aside from the belief I must be a 'bad' girl, in the aftermath of the event itself. Probyn (2005) stated: "shame, even when its effects are negative or destructive, still allows for another way of thinking ethics and politics" (p. 73). In the context of the stories I have just told I tend to disagree with this assertion because rather than a discrete event provoking shame, they trace "a perpetual attunement, the pervasive affective taste of a life" (Bartky, 1998, p. 96). In fairness to Probyn, she was referring to the body

politic, and she acknowledged that the effects of shame are not necessarily generative in a non-destructive way, necessitating the telling of many, and varied stories of shame if we are to better understand the operation of power. This returns me to the centrality of relational ontology, and nomadic subjectivity, because in processes of becoming there are always potentials through the not knowing of what a body can do (Braidotti, 2006b; 2013). While Braidotti is referring to what a body can do in a collective political sense this non-individualistic framing of ethics recognises the embodied, affective subject who is capable of empowering relations through affirmation. She points out however, that the historical conditions matter for a subject's boundary-markers, or thresholds of sustainability towards transformative ethics. As a feminist theorist, Braidotti consistently highlights the necessity for a politics of location, for example when she stated "we need to learn to think differently about ourselves and our system of values, starting with the accounts of our embodied and embedded subjectivity (Braidotti, 2008b, p. 27).

Following from my explanations for the directional change of this thesis as an unfolding process wherein relationality, thinking, writing, and feeling are inseparable, it illustrates Tamboukou's (2008) theorisation of narratives as "stories in becoming" (p. 284). Indeed, as Braidotti (2006a) reminded us, thinking is doing; a nomadic activity that is relational with human and non-human entities (Braidotti, 2010). Having spent my whole university education avoiding an encounter with the Other of myself in this context, I felt the force of the questions Tucker (2012) posed as adopting a Deleuzian approach of process over substance. That is, the 'how' and 'why,' instead of the 'what' of identity. This is a freeing move away from the haunting figurations of facets of identity that have become reified as essences or properties of the self. Here appears an instance where I celebrate my older age because the length of time of accrued lived experiences that grow in complexity across the life-course (Bradbury, 2017) affords me an expansive tapestry to work with. It is only through the convergence of processes of thinking with lived experience in this moment of being (Tamboukou, 2008) that I am enabled to speak my affective meaning-making of embodied shame. It is important to note here, that in honouring an ethical stance with my own subjectivity in handling my stories with care, I did not actively seek to deny 'problem drinking.' It was more that when I started university it was something that was in the distant past so I considered it irrelevant and dealt with. The concepts of nomadic subjectivity and affective flows of meaning-making have taught me otherwise. However, it was movement through engagement with Probyn (2005) that brought shame into view, and my subsequent talking with Jess and emotional reaction that highlighted for me that the affective flow of

shame remains as a sediment. Yet, paradoxically, while I consciously thought I was distanced from shame, I remember in the intervening years a time when I said to someone else, "Oh, you don't need to tell me about shame. I know all about shame." Paradoxes and complexity such as this reflect the pre-personal and post-identitarian nature of affective flows of meaning-making. Hence, this next story re-remembers the figuration of my pathologised, deviant Other of my drinking self, or bad mother, or drunk mother, that was threadbare, and invisibilised in the tapestry to ensure her banishment from the pretty portion of tapestry of my university excelling that held tightly to the antithesis of shame, that is pride. A pride in my academic achievements that Catholicism, and the conditions of my everyday life denied me when younger. Bringing her into view is a painful memory of an intense shame assemblage that I am committed to because it matters what stories we tell for our affective histories, and it moves my process of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor. It is my response to Fine's (2017) prompt for our ethical obligation, "now that we know, what will we do?" (p. 121).

Tamboukou (2008) reminds me that "the narratable self is always provisional, intersectional and unfixed" (p. 288). In re-remembering this episode stripped in my text from wider forces (by necessity for this thesis, and because all stories are partial and perspectival), and acknowledgement of the "stretchy space of the 'gap' between life and story" (Fine, 2017, p. 118) this is comforting. When Jessica was 17 years old, and my husband was working night shift, by late one night the idea of 'just one more' wine became many, many more. Jessica woke to find me slumped on the bathroom floor attempting to stop the bleeding on my head that occurred as a result of stumbling in the kitchen, falling, and hitting my head on the edge of a cabinet. Even in my drunken state, I was horrified she had found me like that. I do remember looking at her hopelessly and mumbling, "I think I'm an alcoholic." From memory, her response was something like, "You're telling me." The next day she disappeared with a friend for the day, and on her return with her friend at the front door, when I was cooking dinner, my shame was so all-encompassing that I wished I were dead. According to Lamb and Kougiali (2025) the 'alcoholic' narrative perpetuated by Alcoholics Anonymous is shame-inducing, and gendered, so women are especially susceptible to shame and stigma "from the polarised positions within societal narratives of addiction (e.g. bad mother, alcoholic)" (p. 1761). This is the first time I have ever performed a literature search about alcohol dependence, or women's narratives around it. It moved me, and on first reading provoked a strong emotional, affective response of sadness. Subsequent to reading Probyn's (2005) *Blush: Faces of Shame* it also enabled a revisioning of my experiences that was more layered, nuanced, and freeing from the grand narratives of dominant figurations of alcoholic

mother, bad mother, drunk mother. These stereotypes are a single story of dominant representation (Fine, 2017). Probyn (2005) asserted that "our bodies and histories are constituted by so much more than we usually allow for" (p. 72). The figuration of the bad, drunk mother could not account for becoming. Its incompleteness is encapsulated by one of my most precious taonga that is a box labelled "Mum. Moments and Memories" filled with cards where the first line is printed, and underneath is space for handwritten responses. Jess gave this to me several years ago. My favourite cards contain these messages:-

> "The qualities I hope to inherit from you: *Bravery, strength, self-awareness*.
> My favourite family tradition: *Being strong women*.
> Something that always amazes me about you: *You face every challenge with strength and dignity.*"

My tapestry of lived experiences of shame were not just dark, knotty threads, but had clouded the whole vista, which is why I had worked so hard to dissociate the darkness from my bright, energetic, passionate, and joyful university experience. This experience has been threaded together with high grades, affirmative feedback, and relationships of respect, and dignity amidst the joy of learning.

The more layered, and nuanced understanding is at heart enabled by nomadic thinking with relationality foregrounded. The burden of shame following the event, or "the occurrence of a unique happening that shifts the flow of series" (Tucker, 2012, p. 774) was a catalyst or force, that was an unbearable pain no longer sustainable—I had reached a threshold. The immanent threat of what I saw as withdrawal of love by my children whom I loved beyond words, and the pain I inflicted upon Jess in that moment that ruptured our relational bond (Probyn, 2005) was something I could not endure. But it was 'endurance' as a transformative process (Braidotti, 2008a) and ethics of affirmative relations through an ability to affect and be affected that enabled me to move beyond the pain, the potestas, and self-destructive negative passion, that underpinned my decision in that moment of being to never have another drink. Braidotti (2008a) expertly reflects my sentiment here: "Negative passions are black holes" (p. 22). While the narratives Lamb and Kougiali (2025) trace in their research had some resonance with my own experiences, I could not locate relatable narratives of recovery. My decision that night was final. I never sought help through groups of women to share with, information, or other means. I had told the sister closest in age to myself, and one time when she was visiting from Auckland, we were visiting a second-hand shop, and I had

spotted a book on alcoholism that I asked her to purchase for me because shame precluded my taking it to the counter. I read the book once. It was very dated and very grounded in a disease model similar to Alcoholics Anonymous. I discarded it in a refusal of an alcoholic identity. The only other action I took was visiting my doctor several weeks after the incident, who was compassionate, and after mentioning a drug he could give me that induces feeling ill if alcohol is consumed, he dismissed it as unnecessary. I see my rejection of the book on alcoholism as resistance to the "repressive structures of dominant subject formations (*potestas*)" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 136) and my concerted efforts at re-building trust and interest (relations) as an understanding of affectivity and an "ontological drive to become" (Braidotti, 2008b, p. 33). My stories here are illustrative of this 'old' woman being unable to be 'captured' by the dominant figurations of the success/decline binary.

Snippets of my Ageing through Utterances: Constant Differentiation and Becoming

These snippets …

"This is a thinking course"
"Uni has radicalised you, Mum"
"How else can I tell you that you should care about other people"

Taking up a position of noninnocence to enable ethical accountability is a processual movement, and in my learning it happens imperceptibly in a non-linear fashion through relational encounters. The above snippet, "This is a thinking course," were the words of wisdom from a course co-ordinator in critical feminist psychology (who is now my supervisor), and these words hold so much more meaning now than when I first heard them. At the time I remember my non-verbalised response was, "Oh good, I can do that." The messy, ongoing, and complex tapestry of my lived experiences would mean there was plenty of scope for thinking, and engagement. However, when starting postgraduate study my internalised ageism was activated when I expressed my doubts about what I was doing in this first postgraduate course, because I was not going to 'become' a feminist researcher, nor any other career-oriented persona. I was old, and furthermore, was not performing a version of ideal old age, or successful ageing because instead of concern with retirement savings I was accumulating an ever-growing student loan. However, through relational encounters in the

context of the course I was undertaking, the binary of young/old embedded in identity politics, and categories, is that which was resisted, hence my presence was affirmed, and contributions valued. I perceive my university experience in critical courses as a convergence of intensities and forces in relations and processes as occurring in a place-event of learning which was intertwined with my ageing processes; it affected and transformed me (Finlay, 2021). In a discussion of social science from the perspective of postfoundational inquiry, Jackson and Mazzei (2024) stated that "Becoming undone through encounters also *reconstitutes* the inquirer" (p. 7), and in the context of my learning I propose the 'inquirer' is distributed far beyond the position of researcher because as a student I was deeply moved by the unfolding processes of questioning, discussing, resisting at times, and trying to make sense of the complexity of knowledge production praxis. As Braidotti (2019b) stated, "Thinking is not the predication of a transcendental truth, but it is a relational activity" (p. 68). I also re-remember Probyn's (2005) engagement with Deleuze's ethology when she said, "you do not know beforehand what a body or a mind can do, in a given encounter, a given arrangement, a given combination" (p. 159).

As will be clear by now, my learning experience has had an impact. I have been fortunate to be able to have the time to devote to thinking by virtue of my age and situatedness. However, if someone had told me even 10 years ago that I would be sitting here writing a thesis I would have thought them quite unhinged. While the introduction of 'fees free' first year, and encouragement from Jess prompted my initial enrolment, the desire to keep broadening my horizon of thought was underpinned by my lived experiences. It was a quest I embarked on in search of a deeper understanding of how and why my lived experiences had unfolded as they had; hence I chose the psychology discipline. Remembering a time of personal betrayal trauma, our third youngest child (at the time she was 16 years old) said to me, "It won't always be like this, Mum." Even at the time in the midst of my pain I thought she was wise beyond her years. Although it is a cliché, my children have been some of my greatest teachers. I have a relationship with my second eldest as a daughter who was named as a son. Over the years of study Jess has intermittently repeated to me that "Uni has radicalised you, Mum." I always find this rather amusing because I was never conservative leaning, but treat it as a gift that testifies to an ongoing openness to always becoming that is relational. Possibly, Jess was alluding to my refusal to fade into the background of silence. 'Thinking' as doing has rendered me more capable of empathy, less cynical, more hopeful, and ignited anger. Woodward (2002) explained how 'wisdom' in the Western imaginary has usually excluded passionate feeling such as anger, instead being associated with rationality.

Woodward (2002) advocated for revisioning "a wisdom that is feminist, or perhaps better put, a wise anger" (p. 187). Through ongoing processes of unlearning White privilege (Allen, 2023; Mikaere, 1999; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021), and "to learn how to see faithfully from another's point of view" (Haraway, 1988, p. 583) I am becoming-a-response-able-ancestor as I think with Braidotti, who said, "The future is the virtual unfolding of the affirmative aspect of the present, which honours our obligations to the generations to come" (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 36).

Another oft-repeated pearl of wisdom from Jess stems from her exasperation with the social injustice of our times, and her imagined response of, "How else can I tell you that you should care about other people," to those who benefit from the growing inequality gap. I repeat it here because I consider that it is the word 'care' that is at the heart of relational ethics; our capacity for affect that empowers affirmative transformations and transpositions for sustainable futures (Braidotti, 2019b).

And these snippets …

"Hairdressers' mirrors must be the most unflattering mirrors on the planet"

And yet …

"Oh no, I'd much rather be me now, than 25 year old me"

The brute materiality of my ageing body cannot be denied. My fine hair is thinning, I am indeed 'long in the tooth' necessitating specialist dental care from a hygienist, have prolapse from carrying and birthing four children (likely genetics too), walk slower than I used to, turning over in bed is not the agile bounce it once was, and the lines etched on my face could double as a city streetscape. Recently, on my return from a visit to a hairdresser I exclaimed to my husband that "Hairdressers' mirrors must be the most unflattering mirrors on the planet!" and he replied "Oh, I know, I thought the same thing the other week." We looked at each other and suddenly found it hilarious as we spent the next minute in a fit of laughter. For me, this is the taste of freedom from the imposition of the decline/success binary. As Sandberg (2013) reiterated, the body that is ageing is a lifelong process of differentiation, not a discreet event, and an either/or dichotomy fails to acknowledge heterogeneity, and multiplicity, or the 'and/and' of processual understandings of motion and change. I am reminded of another of Mum's sayings that are woven through the tapestry of our family: "You can't put an old head on young shoulders." The vulnerabilities of my ageing

body in its materiality, and constant differentiation, are co-constituted with transformations through lived experiences and deeper understandings that mean I feel more empowered now than at any other time in my life. From the perspective of body/mind parallelism, my ageing body is one with my mind, hence rather than viewing its vulnerabilities with fear and disgust, I honour its capacity for becoming. As Braidotti (2019a) stated, bodies are "both embodied and embrained" (p. 51). Rejecting the binary of decline/success enables resistance to the imposition of the abjection and shame of ageing. As Sandberg (2013) concluded when advocating for respecting heterogenous differences in old age, "Affirmative old age is as such ultimately a political force and empowering strategy" (p. 35).

Affirmation of difference is encapsulated in a sentence I uttered to my husband some time ago when we were reminiscing about the decade of our youth, and I said at the conclusion of our discussion, "Oh no, I'd much rather be me now, than 25 year old me," as I struggled somewhat to understand his perspective. Possibly my stance arose because of the freedom from some of the constraints, and disciplinary practices of femininity I now refuse. Possibly, it also reflects regrets about lived experiences I would rather forget. These things co-exist in a co-constructed life that entails relationships with joy and suffering.

Revisioning the Tapestry: Remembering and Forgetting

Relational ontology and nomadic subjectivity enable me to revision my tapestry of lived experiences in new hues. The knots, colours of stories, and loose threads continue to change, blend, and break as they trace lines of flight away from dominant figurations of the molar/majority to becoming-molecular (Braidotti, 2013). The thinking as doing in the writing of this thesis has moved this process through re-remembering how pieces of the tapestry were woven, and my attention being drawn to the act of forgetting as affirmation in my movement that is underpinned by my desiring of becoming-a-response-able ancestor.

In what follows I hope to illustrate through threads of my own stories that compose bits of my tapestry now, how relational ontology and nomadism enable revisioning at this juncture in my life course, that is change-making, and hopeful for imagining possible futures.

Becoming Noninnocent

Remembering another of Mum's sayings of "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," leads me to appreciate the opportunities for transformation my learning journey has gifted me. Allen's (2023) comment about her childhood resonated with my own experience when

she stated, “Little did I know then that we were being socialized into the systems of domination—racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism—that served to keep most of us in our places” (p. 915). A memory of something else Mum said triggers my ancestral White shame, as I remember Probyn’s (2005) discussion of ancestral shame. Mum organised her own funeral, and when we had a meeting with the parish priest who would officiate, Mum stated she did not want any te reo Māori at her funeral. It reminds me of the complex histories of living in this colonised land where my ancestors were bearers of colonial Eurocentric identities. I do not blame Mum for this, but am accountable now for what I am capable of becoming, as I think with Braidotti (2010) who said, “methodological nationalism must give way to self-criticism and self-transformation on the basis of accountability for our complex history” (p. 410). I am reminded of a conversation with Jess several months ago, and while I cannot recall the exact framing of our conversation (possibly it stemmed from something in the news), I vividly recall Jess saying, “Well, we’re all racist, Mum.” I now have a deeper understanding of how we are all noninnocent, but differentially response-able, just as Haraway’s (2016) ‘SF’ pigeons; a complex relationality of “partial and flawed translations across difference” (p.10). You can indeed teach an old dog new tricks. Braidotti (2019b) expanded on the connection between “the fascist inside you” (p. 179) that is a totalising grasping of molar identity formations that block affirmative relations and prevent an adequate understanding of the underlying power structures of our conditions. Acknowledging, and working with the ‘isms’ that are so easily internalised because of our embeddedness in the very conditions we are struggling to change is the work of transforming the negative through ethical relations, or “learning to live the non-fascist life” (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 179).

Transformative learning did not occur through textbooks, but happened in the situated, and relational spaces I experienced, empowered by affective flows of meaning-making that rendered each other capable in response-abilities to listen to really hear in pursuit of flourishing in our differences (Haraway, 2016). This is not to say the experience is without defensiveness, resistance, or anxiety. Nor is it to say my becoming-a-response-able-ancestor can be understood through Western conceptions of progressive, linear development that is hierarchical. It is to say I am committed to being accountable to our complex histories as I stay with the trouble of becoming response-able, and take seriously my ethical responsibility of knowledge production that offers alternative figurations of subjectivity. To adequately convey the meaningfulness of my learning experience, the following two quotations that I carry close to my heart are, I think, sufficient to communicate how I have been affected:

> When I think about my life as a student, I can remember vividly the faces, gestures, habits of being of all the individual teachers who nurtured and guided me, who offered me an opportunity to experience joy in learning, who made the classroom a space of critical thinking, who made the exchange of information and ideas a kind of ecstasy. (hooks, 1994, as cited in Tamboukou, 2003, p.209)

"Old paint on canvas, as it ages, sometimes becomes transparent. … That is called pentimento because the painter 'repented', changed his mind" (Hellman, 1973, as cited in Fine, 2017, p. 120).

Learning about the violent colonial history in my location enabled a deeper understanding of stories from my own history. For example, when I was a child, I stayed on a marae with my parents for a whānau event in Rotorua. I was name-called for my freckles, bullied, and ostracised by my cousins and their friends. Possibly I was perceived as an intruder in their safe space so was subjected to an experience of othering they themselves experienced from being marginalised by the dominant White colonial culture. Similarly, I re-remember being the only White girl chosen for the top team at netball grading one year in high school, however the honour was short-lived because I was dropped from the team a few weeks later. While I felt at the time it was unfair, there was some relief because it had been made clear to me I did not fit in. Reconnecting with these memories highlights for me how I have been moved to understand differently through my learning journey. The move away from conceptualisations of the Euro-US-centric unitary individual enables a deeper understanding of history, and the power structures of exclusion underpinning imperialism and colonialism. My experience in the netball team, and on marae, had little to do with the individual children, and girls, but was a response to the structural conditions that marginalised their identities and denied their legitimacy and belonging in a hostile dominant culture. I also re-remember when Jess was 2 years old, and I had just pulled up to a dairy in our local neighbourhood in Auckland, when some people exited the store, and Jess astutely observed from her car seat in the back after pulling her thumb from her mouth, that, "Mummy, some people are brown, and some people are white like us," after which she promptly returned her thumb to her mouth. Jess had very advanced communication skills for her age. Spring forward from aged 2 years, to when Jess was in her late 20s, and I remember I showed her my course reading list for the 300-level Psychology of Women course, and she expressed interest in the readings by Pihama (2019) and Connor (2007). At the time, Jess

elaborated on how enamoured she was with the concept of mana wāhine because of its embeddedness in the idea of women's status, and authority linked with ancestors. This was just an in-passing comment but remembering it in the present leads me to feel the yearning I recognise in myself for our missing affective histories, and the absences and silences imposed by hegemonic Western-centric and androcentric knowledge production. It reminds me that in times of experiencing pain I was able to draw comfort from an imagined genealogy of women ancestors. As a scholar of history, Jess was well aware of the multiple marginalisations experienced by wāhine Māori, so this was not a romanticisation of collective remembering. Maybe it was more an attraction to the notion of kinship, and pluralised selves that celebrate difference (Connor, 2007), which I think is what Sue Middleton was conjuring in invoking the image of kuia when discussing genealogy as intellectual, and responsibilities that come with that (Stewart et al., 2024). Remembering reminds me that we are not born denigrating difference, but are socialised into othering practices, which is partly why I am so enamoured of the potentials for post-identitarian theorising for our current posthuman conditions of intensified identity politics. Complexity, and multi-functionality mark the post-identitarian 'body' of nomadism that constitutes subjectivity, that in Braidotti's words, is "a point of overlap between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological" (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 33). It allows me to see that becoming noninnocent is not about binary understandings of guilt/innocence of individuals and collectives, but relational and ethical accountability, and being response-able in being of the world and caring in becoming-with its interdependent inhabitants (Haraway, 2016).

Intergenerational Relational Connections of Affective Flows

Unexpected memories have been triggered through working with my 'tapestry' of lived experiences, bolstered by my deliberate efforts to foreground affective flows, connections, and relationality across my life, as opposed to chunks of time, or categorical distinctions underpinned by 'stages' such as having children. The effort is reaping unforeseen rewards that leave me feeling uplifted because I can trace new threads of my affective history. Threads that entail the bonds of connection that are not bounded by time, but are past-present-future oriented, and are not constrained by figurations of pathologised, and essentialised identity categories such as 'bad' mother, or 'older' woman defined through either success or decline.

One such unexpected memory is of being in my maternal Grandma's house, or more specifically her kitchen/dining room and lounge room. Grandma's house was attached to our house because she had gifted land to Mum and Dad to build on so they could afford a house when they got married, subsequent to Mum's father dying. We simply knew and loved her as Grandma-next-door, and that she had trouble hearing because she had something called Paget's disease. The shape of this particular memory is formed through sights, aromas, and touch. I remember the tapestries that hung on her walls in the lounge, which was something I had completely forgotten about, and wonder now if my tapestry analogy sprung from this submerged memory. The tapestries on Grandma's walls were all varying hues of brown, and while I cannot remember what scenes were depicted in them, I can remember gazing at them, just as I gazed at, and was allowed to handle the shiny, spotty shells that were in Grandma's cabinet, along with various other artefacts collected on her trips to the Pacific Islands. She had a fondness for the landscapes and people of the Pacific Islands, and often said, "Be kind to the natives." Such is the privilege of "unmarkedness" in Western settler-colonial communities that enables "*willful forgetting*" of violent histories (Beausoleil, 2020, p. 665). The term 'unmarkedness' used by Beausoleil in Aotearoa is an illustrative example of how Haraway's (1988) 'god trick' operates as a power relation, and reminds me of my accountability, and response-ability linked to my geographical, disciplinary, and ancestral location.

The aroma of a combination of raisins and chocolate constantly hung in the atmosphere of Grandma's kitchen, and occasionally the aroma of burnt toast. I have always been partial to chocolate raisins and burnt toast. Mum told me the story on more than one occasion of how when I was a very young child, she would watch Grandma and myself toddle off down the garden path hand in hand, and that she often thought to herself, and said to Dad, "Well, they get on like a house on fire even though one of them can't hear, and the other can't speak." I hold an early memory of the sheer joy of making mud pies with Grandma in some old aluminium pots using earth, and water, then transferring the mixture to her littlest ceramic garden pots and then decorating our creations with daisies. Grandma's gerberas were off limits, but we did get rewarded with chocolate for weeding them. While I knew Grandma had a hearing impairment, it did not stop me from playing the piano for her when I was a bit older, despite the fact I could not play piano, but secure in the knowledge that if Grandma could not hear, it did not matter, and she applauded my efforts regardless. Grandma was a lover of Shakespearean works, and three of our four children also love Shakespeare, and our youngest, while not developing a love of Shakespeare, did follow his

siblings into drama so undertook extra-curricular Shakespeare. Our third child was selected from a national festival to attend the Globe Theatre in London while at high school. When Jess very recently got married, she honoured me with the task of reciting a Shakespeare sonnet at the ceremony. She also honoured our foremothers because she asked me if she could wear an heirloom necklace that was worn by myself, Mum, and Grandma-next-door, at our own weddings. Jess wore the necklace, and I surprised her with gold earrings on her wedding day and told her they were not only for remembrance of the day, but symbolic; to always hold with her that "We are strong women." An act in the present that was future-oriented, and connected to the past with her Nana. Jess was so thrilled we could enable her Poppa to attend the ceremony and reception, and she personally escorted him to the Driving Miss Daisy vehicle that collected Dad from the venue. Another of Mum's sayings comes to mind here, of "What goes around, comes around." I wonder again; was it forces of encounter (Braidotti, 2006b, 2008a; Chamberlain, 2017; Seigworth & Gregg, 2010; Tamboukou, 2008) beyond my awareness that meant our children had very close relationships with my own parents?

I have storied these bits of memories of Grandma-next-door because it is only through my immersion with the knowledge production that underpins this thesis that I have been able to really feel the embodiment of seeing differently. It changes how I feel about the occasions when I have been asked, since starting university, "What are you going to do with that?" or "Why are you doing that?" from invalidating my yearning to quench my thirst for knowledge as selfish, because of my age category, to a stance of validation for being invested in becoming-a-response-able ancestor, and imagining better futures for generations to come. To revision a tapestry that is not bounded, all but finished, and unchangeable, but one reflecting patterns of capacity for change, for being affected and affecting others, and woven through with threads of relationality that connect with love, hope, and joy.

Not Dead Yet: The Gift of Otherwise Knowledge

After Mum died, and when the ache of not having her physical presence in my life subsided, my awareness of being closer to the end of my life than the beginning grew with each passing year, and I experienced a parallel rise in an existential fear of death and dying. On reflection, witnessing Mum's sadness at leaving precipitated a grappling with my own mortality. Mum tried her best to protect us from the emotional pain she was suffering at the

prospect of leaving us, and it seemed to intensify with each passing week after she was diagnosed. I was acutely sensitive to her sadness which I recognise now as relational knowing, and the prospect of her 'leaving' weighed heavily. I was devoid of a sense of humour at that time. I re-remember the doctor visiting her at home one time, and he made a joke about the pointlessness of turning her bed toward the television because she would not get to complete a series. Mum engaged with the joke along with him, but I was incensed as I thought to myself, "My mother is dying, on what level can you possibly think this is funny. This is not funny at all because it's agonising." Using humour to alleviate suffering has never been a strong point for me. She really did not want to leave, even when her illness intensified. Like Dad, Mum had a very strong faith so carried with her certainty about where death would carry her, but her sadness that shrouded the knowledge she was leaving affected me deeply, as did the equanimity she exuded, despite the sadness. On the evening she died, the undertaker said, "She looks very peaceful." In my grief, and cynicism, I replied that I supposed he said that about everyone. His calm response was to reiterate her serene countenance, and that he indeed did not use it as reassurance. This relational encounter of affirmation stayed with me throughout that grieving period, and provided me solace, and deepens my understanding at the micro level of a "mode of empathic co-presence" (Braidotti, 2008a, p. 25). I understand my pain at Mum's dying was tightly bound with negativity, reflected in my cynicism, and Western understandings of linear time marching towards finality. Negativity diminished my capacity for reciprocity through an affective flow of compassion with the undertaker in that encounter. Braidotti (2020) described negativity as a narrowing of possibility that promotes inaction, and a "fragmentation and a shattering of our relational capacity" (p. 468).

Since purchasing a gold locket in an antique shop several years ago when visiting one of our daughters in Wellington and replacing the very old photo it held inside of a man with one of Mum (sorry, Man), I always wear it for significant events, such as graduations, and recently, Jess's wedding. It breaks the link of death with annihilation. While not physically with us, I now have a stronger sense of Mum joining us on such occasions. Working with process ontology, nomadic subjectivity, and learning about Indigenous worldviews has alleviated the fear, and allows me to sit with a sense of 'never-ending beginnings,' to borrow from Mikaere (2011), that reflect the affective flows that link past, present, and future. It reminds me I am not done yet, contrary to what society's narratives may tell me about my burdensomeness, decline, and irrelevance. Gullette (2017) stated: "At some level, we do all intuit that the imposed demotions—not old people in themselves—are what, for everyone,

make the life course ahead fearful" (p. xxi). This has been an important process of meaning-making for me because loosening the grip and continuing to break free from habits of thought embedded in Western understandings of ageing has only been possible through hearing my own recognitions through my storytelling, supported by my learning with others. It is with humility I quote Tamboukou (2008) whose words reflect how I feel: "Working with narratives creates an assemblage of power relations, forces of desire and intense pleasures for narratable selves to make connections, sense their vulnerability and become exposed to their dependence on others" (p. 290).

The gift of otherwise knowledge when thinking with mortality, vulnerability, and finitude has had a transformational effect for how I wish to conduct whatever life I still have to live. Part of the 'knowing' of the process is directly attributable to my age. Putting off re-inventing the 'self' through seeking critical self-knowledge is easy to do when one is young, particularly if understanding and possibilities have been constrained by the knowledge/power nexus of patriarchy and coloniality. Braidotti (2020) stated, "We need to make friends with death" (p. 468). An awareness, acknowledgement, and acceptance of the vulnerability of finitude can be an empowering motivation for becoming-a-response-able-ancestor in the present, as it is co-constituted with the past and future. A quote from Baars (2025) reflects my shift in perspective on ageing—what I now see as a benefit: "Facing the finitude of life can increase the intensity with which we live it; also, or especially, as we are aging" (p. 18).

Revisiting Shame: Forgetting as Affirmation and the Reworking of Pain

The re-activation of shame through engagement with Probyn's (2005) *Blush: Faces of Shame* was instructive for helping me to make meaning from lived experiences, however the figuration of 'bad, drunk mother' that was re-remembered, had powerful sediments that coerced me back into an essentialised, deficit, and deviant fixed identity. These were the tears that flowed when relating to Jess. This recognition allows me to wonder now whether Jess's reticence at engaging deeply in that interaction, apart from offering her ethical endorsement for my thesis, reflected affirmative forgetting because she did not want to revisit the pain of my shame that had been reworked through relationality. I can see how 'silence' is neither good nor bad, but is contextual, situated, and in the in-between-ness of meaning-making; in this instance I can feel it as empowering and affirmative, instead of reading it as confirmation of my 'bad' mother figuration. It renders me hopeful for becoming-wise in the move away from dialectical oppositions. Probyn (2005) stated that, "shame can revisit you long after the

particular moment of shaming has passed" (p. 46). It was against the backdrop of this re-visiting in the moment that I framed my identification with my university experience as 'good'—one which held no space for contradiction or paradox as it banished badness. Yet the flows and forces of my life course that meant I attended university were "defined by relations not intrinsic properties" (Tucker, 2012, p. 781).

In reviewing this part of my writing, I can re-frame the distancing from the 'Other' of myself as a form of forgetting that was deliberate, and was merely reflected throughout my university experience in synchronicity with the other parts of my life. Braidotti (2008a) claimed: "Affirmative ethics is about freedom from the burden of negativity, freedom through the understanding of our bondage" (p. 28). I understand my deliberate forgetting of my shameful drinking self as an ethical act of putting down the burden of carrying the weight of shame. As one of my daughters said to me a few years ago, "It doesn't define you, Mum." My reader will recall my re-telling of when Mum was dying, and I told her of my shame around drinking, and how I had stopped. More than this, I declared to her that I knew this was permanent. At the time I felt somewhat cowardly because Mum was drifting in and out of consciousness by then, but my intent felt courageous, even though I knew she would be silent because of the incapacity of dying. In re-reading a letter that Mum wrote to me, that was to be read after the leaving was done, I am still affected by the ethical silence of deliberate forgetting Mum took up when she was still alive, in the intervening time from when I gave up drinking to when she died; about 18 months. She never questioned me about stopping drinking, and I naïvely thought she never considered it at all. The contents of my precious letter told me otherwise, and I repeat here only what is relevant to my re-storying, where she wrote "I was so proud when you gave up the wine, not easy at all." Here it is—the antithesis of shame—the same 'pride' I felt keenly when relating my university experience. She also wrote that she thought I was a great mother, counter to the figuration of bad mother of my shame. Bringing into view different threads, colours, and contours in the tapestry of my lived experiences at the molecular level has been enabled through embodied remembering that is always already relational and has moved my process of understanding affective flows of meaning-making. It has also left me with a sense of urgency and truly felt conviction of the importance of how and why the stories we tell matter; for our affective histories, and a deeper understanding of how our differences matter in ordinary everyday lives of situated knowledges—differential constraints, possibilities, and capacities for affecting and being affected.

The overcoming of the burden of shame can be framed as a source of strength that vitalises imagining possible futures because through striving to continually become-a-response-able-ancestor, relationality and care are foregrounded. I take from this my accountability for passing on affective histories but being in the present with a view to always-becoming-with-others, and this 'present' renders me responsible for not passing on or staying stuck with painful stories around harm whose reworking for deeper understandings has been undertaken. I have previously noted that I think my children have been some of my greatest teachers, and this process has enabled me to view differently how being stuck in hegemonic understandings of identity categories is harmful at the molecular level. It seems when I consider conversations and encounters with my children, and my partner, their 'forgetting' occurred long before I resisted demonising my 'self.' I was stuck for a long time in the 'bad' mother figuration that went hand-in-hand with the 'not good enough' narrative internalised through structural conditions of everyday life. To deliberately forget shameful, painful stories that are part of my tapestry was not denial but reflected processes of transformation so as not to reproduce and perpetuate painful stories, in the hope of becoming-a-response-able-ancestor.

Working with affective flows of shame through relational ontology, and nomadic subjectivity when thinking with my own shame has moved me to a decision to act as part of the process of this thesis, related to the shame of another. For ethical reasons I do not need to elaborate on this story because my point is to emphasise how deeper understandings have moved me to a symbolic act of what I see as the last layering of forgiveness that is response-able in finally moving beyond the pain, the remnants of which are carried in my body. It is an unexpected unfolding that is not indicative of a linear trajectory of 'coming to terms' with a past trauma, but a purposeful decision to recognise that destroying some journals I kept from the time of this trauma is what Braidotti (2008a) refers to as "micro-political practices of daily activism in and on the world we inhabit for ourselves and for future generations" (p. 18). I feel this decision as an ethical response of affirmation that finally acknowledges the reworking of pain, and reparations that have been enacted in the ensuing years following the traumatic events that fractured my life into a 'before' and 'after.' My decision is symbolic of a monumental shift; a commitment to extinguish the final vestiges of a flickering flame of shame and blame that has encouraged another to keep the pain of their own shame burning. I now commit to actively encourage another to put down the burden of their own shame to honour our relationality, and the depersonalisation, de-psychologising, and reworking of the pain of the event that has been undertaken (Braidotti, 2008a). It is also consistent with my

values underpinning my desire in becoming-a-response-able-ancestor and connects me to Mum's wisdom of silence around my own shame. What is meaningful to me comes from Braidotti (2019b): "ethics is the practice of extracting knowledge and wisdom from the reworking of pain" (p. 175), which is both individuated, and collective.

Against the Success/Decline Binary: Constant Differentiation

Stories I have shared through memories and affect that constitute the tapestry of my lived experience have hopefully illustrated that attempting to map onto categories of ageing as decline, or successful ageing, is nonsensical. The decline/success binary is a dominant single story of ageing that reproduces the stigma and stereotyping of aged bodies that Gullette (2017) described as being "aged by culture" (p. xiii) because "*aging is the process that serves as the trigger for ageism"* (p. xiv). The binary is being dismantled by those dedicated to social justice, for example from scholars' contributions subsequent to Sandberg's (2013) theorising of affirmative old age, as well as prominent scholars in the field who are themselves 'old' such as Lynne Segal (2014a; 2014b; 2015) whose disciplinary location is psychology. The field of posthumanism and ageing clearly has much to offer critical feminist psychology for other ways of knowing about ageing. In undertaking this project I aspired not only to illustrate the inadequacy of dominant single stories (Fine, 2017), but also to show how understanding subjectivity through refusing the "foundational conceptual order" (St. Pierre, 2024b, p. xxiii) of "human sciences' man and his methods" (St. Pierre, 2024a, p.1) opens alternative figurations that differ "from the patriarchal, colonial, individualistic, scientific, Western principles of psychology" (Macleod et al., 2020, p. 298).

I am learning to love my wrinkles. They are the outward-facing evidential decline embodied in my ageing processes, but they are so much more than this as well. They are evidence of lived experiences that collectively hold stories of my values, struggles, joys, and suffering. They are evidence of my refusal of partaking in disciplinary practices to appear younger because I now consistently struggle to actively reject being "psychologically oppressed" by patriarchy (Bartky, 1990, p. 22). The processes of my ageing allow freedom from caring about living in my body as seen by "an anonymous patriarchal Other" (Bartky, 1998, p. 34). Yes, the changes in and to my body cannot be denied, but neither do I want them to be because they are co-constitutive with my relational, ever-changing subjectivities in processes of becoming. From my limited and partial perspective, this is a benefit, and

indeed a privilege. It is hard work though, that leads me to strongly agree with Barnes (2018) when she posited the reason there is no mass 'old people's movement' similar to the 'women's movement' could partly be because there is "a continuing discomfort with personal ageing that obscures engagement with the political as well as personal significance of growing older" (p. 211). Similarly, Carney and Gray (2015) pointed out that "we rarely study the developmental potential of old age, the adaptability or ingenuity of older people, or the opportunities presented by longevity" (p. 124), and further, "ageing scholarship lacks the support of a counter-cultural political movement comparable with that provided by the women's movement for feminism" (p. 124). It is unsurprising then that the lack of an affirmation of difference intensifies the internalisation of ageism, which I am now acutely aware of, and continue to resist. I will not always succeed. For example, when Jess and her new husband, Toby, came over to show us wedding photos and a video of the wedding ceremony, while I thought my husband looked quite distinguished in his Barkers suit and tie with matching pocket handkerchief, that I chose, when I saw myself in these photos and video, I instantly thought to myself "Oh my God, I look terrible—a cross between a prune and a Teletubby, or a prune-ified Teletubby." An oxymoron considering Teletubbies are perpetual toddlers, but the Teletubbies' rounded shape was relatable and I had formed a habit of silently naming my image in a mirror 'Teletubby.' This was my internalised ageist (and sexist I might add) response. Such is the power of the patriarchal figuration of 'woman.' However, it failed to detract from the relational joy, and care that wrapped around the occasion. I continue to try. Sometimes I feel like a walking contradiction.

Nor can I be defined by 'successful ageing' as I actively refuse neoliberal imperatives of autonomous responsibility to age well, that deny structural conditions of inequality, promote healthism, and naturalise ageism (Calasanti et al., 2018). I can understand my resistance to neoliberalism not only through my knowledge-in-becoming (Tamboukou, 2018), but also through our affective history. My husband and I had four children, which some could interpret as irresponsible in a neoliberal context considering our socio-economic position. I still view that decision as one of an affective flow of love and care. I can connect that intergenerational flow of love and care with Dad in the rest home now because my experience of his being there has meant I discerned the necessity for advocacy; a relation I willingly take up through an ethical act of caring about his well-being. Barnes et al.'s (2013) conceptualisation of "well-being as relational and generative" (p. 474) that was illustrated through a participatory study with older adults as co-producers of knowledge, highlighted the policy links in the United Kingdom of well-being with 'active ageing' linked to personal

responsibility, independence, and consumerism. Such policies evolve from research recommendations by 'experts' guided by individualistic, and neoliberal understandings of well-being; "rational actor strategies" (Barnes et al., 2013, p. 489). Rejecting 'successful ageing' imperatives from my limited and partial perspective I also see as a benefit, and privilege.

I do not want to be, and furthermore cannot be, defined and categorised by the homogenising decline/success binary because as I have demonstrated, I am not either/or, but both/and … and much more as well. From my partial and situated knowledge of being an ageing woman inhabiting an ordinary life, the complexity, nuance, process, contradiction, and change that stitches together my tapestry of lived experience makes much more sense to me viewed from the perspective of relational ontology, and nomadic subjectivity, than the unitary, rational, and bounded individual of mainstream psychological knowledge production (Bharj & Adams, 2023; Macleod et al., 2020; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017). Revisioning my tapestry from my embodied and embedded location has enabled me to relish becoming-crone, and continually strive for becoming-a-response-able-ancestor—"thinking of, in, and for the world" (Braidotti, 2017b, p. 32). I am reminded that my entanglement with other-wise knowing through this thesis that has been composed of my personal stories and memories, as an older woman, is also political as my horizons of thought have expanded simultaneously with an increasing awareness of my "responsibilities to care" (Manchester & Willat, 2024, p. 5). I am reminded of Barron's (2021) posthuman inquiry into the experience of place and space as entwined with relational memories that enhance 'becoming,' counter to the dominant understandings of older people's experience of place and space as increasingly diminished with ageing. I have experienced the place and space of my study as relational, expansive, affective, fluid, and processual. I certainly feel a much greater responsibility and response-ability in my capacities of being in the world since my first encounters with the scholars' works that underpin my theoretical commitments embedded in this thesis. I am reminded again by what Ulmer (2017) said about posthumanism: "These are not, however, easy conversations to enter" (p. 832), which validates how my slow-burning but steady engagement enhanced understanding. I am reminded by Barnes (2018) of hopefulness for "how older activism can generate alternative collective narratives and alternative imaginings that offer hope for promoting connection rather than conflict between generations" (p. 205). This has been a journey through how my past, present, and future are "constitutive of the self as narratable" (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 288) through my ageing process, that escapes the decline/success binary of essentialist understandings of being 'aged.' It was this rejection of

identity politics that I found so affirmative in my experience of the critical feminist psychology classroom. I fervently hope that in theorising my lived experiences I have added to our collective kete of relational feminist knowledge.

Epilogue: Hope You Enjoyed the Journey

Never Finalised Transformative Potentials

> *"Others, alien, external foreign, monstrous or unfamiliar looking others are the site of powerful promises, of creative potential, of staggering new combinations. It is up to the dominant subjects to open up to them and see this affirmative aspect"*
>
> *(Braidotti, 2008a, p. 23).*

My journey through this thesis stemmed from attention to, and anger about, the harms and violence inflicted on women at the intersection of sexism and ageism that marks older and old women as deviant Others (Calasanti, 2003; Mitchell & Bruns, 2011). The stigma, stereotypes, and harms of ageism are well established in the literature, including psychological literature, however this is within the constraints of Euro-US-centric knowledge production (Calasanti, 2008; Carney & Gray, 2015). The narratives and lived experiences of older and old women have been largely ignored, including by feminisms (Barnes, 2018; Calasanti, 2008; Calasanti & Slevin, 2006; Freixas et al., 2012; Mitchell & Bruns, 2011). As will be clear to my reader, this was the catalysing force.

As I approach the end of the process of this thesis and contemplate how to adequately perform the institutional requirement of an ending, words do not come easily, and I can feel in my "embrained body and embodied brain" (Braidotti, 2017a, p. 91; 2019b, p. 181) resistance to the idea of completion. It is akin to a sentiment of, "But wait, there's more, because I haven't properly portrayed my conviction or passion." This is despite understanding my location as partial, localised, and perspectival, meaning I do not feel attachment to my theoretical underpinnings as a dogma of 'truth,' but as resonant with my values, and helping me make sense of the potential freedom of subjectivity "that is no longer indexed upon a phallogocentric set of standards, but is rather unhinged and therefore affected" (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 245). Relatedly, I understand my impassioned resistance to completion of my narrative inquiry with Tamboukou (2008), who theorised narratives in their flow, temporality, and limitations, with attention to emergence rather than content. I am enveloped in, and elevated by an emotional feeling of expansiveness, and I recognise this feeling from other moments in the writing of this thesis. For clarity, for you my reader, the most obvious one that springs to mind is the intensity of emotions, and affective flow I experienced as I sat here writing in my special space, and connected the experience of 'a

room of my own' with one of our feminist foremothers, Virginia Woolf. This has not been a lone endeavour even though my storying is grounded in the situated knowledge of my experiences, because through memories, recognitions, and thinking and doing other-wise, I have further deepened my understanding that we are always, already relational in becoming with all other entities. I also recognise this feeling of expansiveness as a result of movement towards an adequate understanding, articulated by Braidotti (2019b) when she said, "Adequate understanding provides the subjects with an increase in their power to act, which is experienced as joy and the renewed desire to go on knowing more and better" (p. 131).

Because of an unfolding that shaped the form of my inquiry, my eldest daughter Jessica has featured prominently throughout this thesis, and so I feel it pertinent to add another memory here that speaks to how relationality can be heard through the innocence of childhood. While it is a memory, it is a recorded one because I kept diaries for each of our four children from before they were born, until starting school. I consider them treasures now that trace our children's emergence as little 'selves.' Interestingly, none of our adult children feel the need to be in possession of these diaries right now, so for the time being I remain the keeper of these innocent wisdoms. When Jess was 4 years and 1 month old, she was dancing in front of the mirror, and declared, "Everybody loves me, everyone in the whole world, even everyone who doesn't know me." Whilst this reflects the optimism, hopefulness, and innocence of childhood, remembering it moves me to understand how cynicism, disillusionment, and negativity block affirmative relations when I return to my thoughts of first encountering Rosi Braidotti's work, and my initial reaction of cynicism in response to theorising I deemed a utopian vision. I was missing the point. It is just such utopian visionary thinking that is required if we are to actualise the virtual of more socially just futures. Speaking of ageism, Gullette (2017) expressed the need for a "utopian demand" (p. 203) when concluding her book *Ending Ageism, or How Not to Shoot Old People*, defined as a "political demand that takes the form not of a narrowly pragmatic reform but of a more substantial transformation of the present configuration of social relations" (Miller & Tougaw, 2002, as cited in Gullette, 2017, p. 203). In our current times of uncertainty, intensified melancholia, and negativity (Braidotti, 2008), let alone the rise of populist illiberalism with a fascist flavour (Braidotti, 2019b) which together seem to be intensifying all the 'isms,' rather than feeling immobilised, the process of movement prompted by this thesis enables a sense of urgency, empowerment, and even hope for better futures. I may indeed be noninnocent but that does not close down possibilities for striving towards actualising the virtual through collective revisioning of what we are in processes of becoming. At the risk of labouring the

point, I quote Braidotti from her book, *Posthuman Knowledge:* "At the level of subjectivity, it requires the transformation of one's sensorial and perceptual self-understanding, in order to make room for the collective nature and outward-bound direction of what we still call 'the self'" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 158).

Throughout my learning journey at university, it is the development of critical thinking skills at the level of 'thinking as doing' (Braidotti, 2006a) as a relational activity that I now consider to be the most valuable for becoming-wise, and becoming-a-response-able-ancestor. Central to this process is an understanding of nomadic subjectivity that is "both post-personal and pre-individual, relational and hence in constant negotiation with multiple others and immersed in the conditions that it is trying to understand and modify, if not overturn" (Braidotti, 2019b, p. 42). It is this non-attachment to a unitary identity that took me the longest time to come to terms with, but it is also the source of freedom from devalued difference, or what Braidotti called a "threshold of transformations" (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 34). The transformative changes I have experienced happened imperceptibly, and it is only through looking back with critical bifocality (Fine, 2017) I can intuit the extent to which I was attached to a unitary sense of identity. Connecting with Fine's (2017) narrative responsibilities was both a gift and an obligation that enabled the opening up of horizons of thinking with my ontological relational entanglements with all others. Revisioning my 'self' "as a threshold, a door, a becoming between multiplicities, an effect of a dance between power and desire, nomadic and yet narratable" (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 285) holds imaginings of hopeful possible futures for those that come after; both in a personal familial sense, and a feminist collective sense.

So What?

> *"The narrative relational obligation asks, now that we know, what will we do?"*
>
> *(Fine, 2017, p. 121).*

Theorising my lived experience begs the question, "So what?" My hopes for sharing my stories through the moments of being (Tamboukou, 2008) that are this thesis, exceed the movement I have experienced in its writing, which in itself has been transformative, because the wider purpose is "to provoke an aesthetic awakening" (Fine, 2017, p. 120) that encourages the telling of more, and different stories of ordinary lives. Following Deleuze and Guattari, Tamboukou (2008) articulates the challenge I have attempted to meet

through sharing my stories when she described her own project of working with Gwen John's letters: "my project is about freeing thought from deterministic essentialisms and showing that what has been actualized in women's lives cannot close down possibilities of other ways of being or rather of becoming a woman" (p. 287). From my embodied and embedded location and partial, and limited perspective, the stories of my situated knowledge woven into the tapestry of my lived experiences have been threaded with affect for the purpose of producing feminist relational knowledge. Such was my lofty ambition. I am reminded that Harding (2008) not only suggested starting off thought from marginalised lives, but also ordinary women's lives in households. I am reminded that Probyn (2005) stated, "shame demands that we tell other stories" (p. 72). I am reminded that the psychology discipline, including feminist psychology has neglected to hear the stories of old women beyond menopause, even while attending to ageism. Against the background of my theoretical underpinnings, learning, and situated knowledge, theorising my lived experience through this journey of revisioning was motivated by my responsibility to tell other-wise than psychology's figuration of being an old woman as a binary understanding. As Braidotti (2019b) reiterated, "'We' can only intervene in *this* as transversal ensembles, acting collectively: 'We'-who-are-not-one-and-the-same-but-are-in-this-convergence-together" (p. 182). Hence, we need many stories of doing difference differently.

I am rather taken with Pickard's (2020) exploration of the mediating role of abjection in ageing, and the possibilities for an alternative subject position of powerful Hag. Admittedly, this is a diversion, however I wish to quote from Pickard (2020) something highly relevant to my project, because it speaks to silence:

> In addition, feminist theory and autobiographical writing have a long history of theorising from the daughter's perspective, leaving the (post)maternal largely unacknowledged and unexamined. When accompanied by the powerful taboos against being a 'bad mother', this leads to its being surrounded by a profound cultural silence. (p. 162)

Some silences need to be broken. So our stories, histories, knots, and thoughts matter collectively for imagining better futures in becoming-with others that is an affective, relational endeavour that requires staying with the trouble of honouring difference, and our response-abilities to care (Haraway, 2016). In storying my own affective history from my

situated knowledge of being an older or old woman, I hoped to illustrate, through tracing my processes of understanding beyond the constraints of mainstream psychological knowledge production, how thinking differently holds never-ending possibilities for transformation. Remembering Walkerdine's (2015) inquiry into the pathologising of poor people, the harms inflicted on old people similarly arise from psychology's commitment to the 'god trick' that demonises old people as abnormal; we need collective affective histories to understand our bondage entrenched in systems of gendered power relations. While personal stories underpin my inquiry, this project is also political in my hopes for invigorating more stories of ageing to add to collective consciousness raising, because as Gullette (2017) said, "Each one of us can do more, and together we can do much. This is the great coalition, yearning, observing, listening, pondering, teaching, complaining, explaining, judging, calling to account" (p. 204). Understanding my lived experiences through my theoretical commitments, and the process of this thesis, matters as a political endeavour to illustrate how rejecting the master's tools holds potential for thinking, doing, and knowing other-wise, which in itself bolsters my becoming-response-able-ancestor, and is also joyful.

It is worth reiterating here that this project was processual; an unfolding that took unexpected turns that took me elsewhere. There is risk and vulnerability that is embodied in the re-telling and re-storying of my tapestry through this thesis. The weaving, reworking, and layering of a journey that has no beginning and no end but formally started with the psychology discipline as I embarked on a meaning-making quest to understand the tapestry of my lived experience. I feel keenly the risk of exposing my vulnerabilities, flaws, and shames, and the losses that have been accrued thus far in becoming other-wise. The risk and vulnerability is somewhat mitigated through the privilege of writing this thesis that is deeply meaningful considering it started as a tiny seed of curiosity when I enrolled in a one year diploma because it was 'fees free.' I recognise a continuity and connection here about curiosity. One of the few affirmative memories I have of the nuns that taught me at high school comes from a comment on a school report where my form teacher stated that I had "A thoroughness born of interest in discovery." I find the use of the word 'discovery' amusing in its irony now; it speaks to my age, meaning-making, and movement. The risk and vulnerability of feeling exposed is also worthwhile if I contemplate the possibility of radiating outwards to convince my readers, particularly in the discipline I chose, that the stories of old and older women need to be heard because we have something to offer. Critical feminist psychology will be richer for hearing our collective voices. If I succeed in affecting

my readers, prompting the telling of more stories, and provoking contemplation on becoming-a-response-able-ancestor, my purpose for this thesis will be fulfilled.

The tapestry of my lived experiences will continue to be reworked with new knots forming, some fading, while others are stitched together. It will always involve relational flows of negative and positive affects. Until one day, it will stop being worked on just as Mum's tapestry was, and the tapestries on the walls of Grandma-next-door's lounge room. But my tapestry will continue to live in hearts and memories, as does Mum's. However, in the meantime, until the materiality of my tapestry stops taking up new shapes with different threads leading to expanded horizons, I have a deeper understanding now of how and why the threads of my tapestry are patterned up to this point as they are, and a commitment to an ethics of care and responsibility, where remembering is generative, the personal is political, past-present-future interconnected, and relationships are nurtured (Barnes, 2018). Even when the tapestry's threads are no longer worked with, there will be continuity through a special necklace, and the whisper of crone knowledge, or maybe even powerful Hag knowledge, that "We are strong women." However, in the meantime I am not done yet because I am always becoming-a-response-able-ancestor.

References

Allen, K. R. (2023). Feminist theory, method, and praxis: Toward a critical consciousness for family and close relationship scholars. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *40*(3), 899-936. https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075211065779

Amundsen, D. (2022). A critical gerontological framing analysis of persistent ageism in NZ online news media: Don't call us "elderly"! *Journal of Aging Studies, 61*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2022.101009

Andrews, J. (2015). II. Keeping older women safe from harm. *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 105-108. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353514562810

Andrews, G., & Duff, C. (2019). Understanding the vital emergence and expression of aging: How matter comes to matter in gerontology's posthuman turn. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *49*, 46-55. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2019.04.002

Baars, J. (2025). New forms of ageism, its hidden sources and perspectives for cultural inclusion [Special issue]. *Age, Culture, Humanities*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.7146/ageculturehumanities.v8i.142467

Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs*, *28*(3), 801-831. https://doi.org/10.1086/345321

Barnes, M. (2018). Continuing to get out of line: Reflections on ageing activism and moral agency. *Ethics and Social Welfare*, *12*(3), 204-215. https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2018.1505927

Barnes, M., Taylor, D., & Ward, L. (2013). Being well enough in old age. *Critical Social Policy*, *33*(3), 473-493. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018312471163

Barron, A. (2021). More-than-representational approaches to the life-course. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *22*(5), 603-626. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2019.1610486

Bartky, S. L. (1990). *Femininity and domination: Studies in the phenomenology of oppression / Sandra Lee Bartky.* Routledge.

Bartky, S. L. (1998). Foucault, femininity, and the modernization of patriarchal power. In R. Weitz (Ed.), *The politics of women's bodies: Sexuality, appearance and behaviour* (pp. 25-45). Oxford University Press.

Beausoleil, E. (2020). "Gather your people": Learning to listen intergenerationally in settler-indigenous politics. *Political Theory*, *48*(6), 665-691. https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591720919392

Bharj, N., & Adams, G. (2023). Dismantling the master's house with the mistress' tools? The intersection between feminism and psychology as a site for decolonization. In E. L. Zurbriggen & R. Capdevila (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of power, gender, and psychology* (pp. 173-189). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41531-9_11

Bradbury, J. (2017). Creative twists in the tale: Narrative and visual methodologies in action. *Psychology in Society*, *55*, 14-37.

Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects: Embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist theory.* Columbia University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2000). Teratologies. In I. Buchanan & C. Colebrook (Eds.), *Deleuze and Feminist Theory* (pp. 156-172). Edinburgh University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2006a). Posthuman, all too human: Towards a new process ontology. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *23*(7-8), 197-208. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276406069232

Braidotti, R. (2006b). Affirmation versus vulnerability: On contemporary ethical debates. *Symposium*, *10*(1), 235-254. https://doi.org/10.5840/symposium200610117

Braidotti, R. (2008a). Affirmation, pain and empowerment. *Asian Journal of Women's Studies, 14*(3), 7-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/12259276.2008.11666049

Braidotti, R. (2008b). Of poststructuralist ethics and nomadic subjects. In M. Düwell, C. Rehmann-Sutter, & D. Mieth (Eds.), *The contingent nature of life [electronic resource]: Bioethics and the limits of human existence* (pp. 25-36). Springer.

Braidotti, R. (2010). Nomadism: Against methodological nationalism. *Policy Futures in Education, 8*(3-4), 408-418. https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2010.8.3.408

Braidotti, R. (2012). *Nomadic theory: The portable Rosi Braidotti.* Columbia University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2013). Nomadic ethics. *Deleuze Studies*, *7*(3), 342-359. https://doi.org/10.366/dls.2013.0116

Braidotti, R. (2017a). Critical posthuman knowledges. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, *116*(1), 83-96. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-37493337

Braidotti, R. (2017b). Posthuman, all too human: The memoirs and aspirations of a posthumanist. *Tanner Lectures, Yale University*, 1-2.

Braidotti, R. (2019a). A theoretical framework for the critical posthumanities. *Theory, Culture & Society, 36*(6), 31-61. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276418771486

Braidotti, R. (2019b). *Posthuman knowledge.* Polity Press.

Braidotti, R. (2020). “We” are in *this* together, but we are not one and the same. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, *17*(4), 465-469. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-020-10017-8

Braidotti, R. (2022). *Posthuman feminism.* Polity Press.

Braidotti, R., & Regan, L. (2017). Our times are always out of joint: Feminist relational ethics in and of the world today: An interview with Rosi Braidotti. *Women*: *A Cultural Review*, *28*(3), 171-192. https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2017.1355683

Calasanti, T. (2003). Theorizing age relations. In S. Biggs, A. Lowenstein, & J. Hendricks (Eds.), *The need for theory: Critical approaches to social gerontology* (pp. 199-218). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315230849

Calasanti, T. (2008). A feminist confronts ageism. *Journal of Aging Studies, 22*(2), 152-157. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2007.12.009

Calasanti, T., & King, N. (2021). Beyond successful aging 2.0: Inequalities, ageism, and the case for normalizing old ages. *Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, *76*(9), 1817-1827. https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbaa037

Calasanti, T., King, N., Pietilä, I., & Ojala, H. (2018). Rationales for anti-aging activities in middle age: Aging, health, or appearance? *The Gerontologist*, *58*(2), 233-241. https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnw111

Calasanti, T. M., & Slevin, K. F. (2006). Introduction: Age matters. In T. M. Calasanti & K. F. Slevin (Eds.), *Age matters: Realigning feminist thinking* (pp. 1-17). Routledge.

Calasanti, T., Slevin, K. F., & King, N. (2006). Ageism and feminism: From “et cetera” to center. *NWSA Journal*, *18*(1), 13-30.

Carney, G. M., & Gray, M. (2015). Unmasking the ‘elderly mystique’: Why it is time to make the personal political in ageing research. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *35*, 123-134. https://doi./org/10.1016/j.jaging.2015.08.007

Cecil, V., Pendry, L. F., Salvatore, J., Mycroft, H., & Kurz, T. (2022). Gendered ageism and gray hair: Must older women choose between feeling authentic and looking competent? *Journal of Women and Aging*, *34*(2), 201-255. https://doi.org/10.1080/08952841.2021.1899744

Chadwick, R. (2020). Methodologies of voice: Towards posthuman voice analytics. *Methods in Psychology*, *2*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.metip.2020.100021

Chamberlain, P. (2017). *The feminist fourth wave: Affective temporality.* Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53682-8Ch

Changfoot, N., Rice, C., Chivers, S., Williams, A. O., Connors, A., Barrett, A., Gordon, M., & Lalonde, G. (2022). Revisioning aging: Indigenous, crip and queer renderings. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 63. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2021.100930

Chasin, B. H., & Kramer, L. (2022). Ageism and sexism: Invisibility and erasure. In M. T. Segal & V. Demos (Eds.), *Gender visibility and erasure: Advances in gender research* (Vol. 33, pp. 127-144). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1529-212620220000033015

Chazan, M., & Whetung, M. (2022). "Carving a future out of the past and the present": Rethinking aging futures. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2021.100937

Chrisler, J.C., Barney, A., & Palatina, B. (2016). Ageism can be hazardous to women's health: Ageism, sexism, and stereotypes of older women in healthcare system. *Journal of Social Issues*, *72*(1), 86-104. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12157

Cluley, V., Fox, N., & Radnor, Z. (2023). Becoming frail: A more than human exploration. *Health*, *27*(3), 417-434. https://doi.org/10.1177/13634593211038460

Connor, H. (2007). Māori feminism & biographical research: The power of self-definition. *Women's Studies Journal, 21*(2), 59-82.

Côté-Boucher, K., Daly, T., Chivers, S., Braedley, S., & Hillier, S. (2024). Counter-narratives of active aging: Disability, trauma, and joy in the age-friendly city. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *68*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2023.101205

Cozza, M., & Wanka, A. (2025). Editorial for the special issue the growing older of humans, nonhumans, and more-than-humans. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *72*, 101305. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101305

Crawford, M., & Marecek, J. (1989). Psychology constructs the female: 1968-1988. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *13*, 147-165. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1989.tb00993.x

Crotty, M. (2020). *The Foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003115700 (Original work published 1998).

Cruikshank, M. (2013). *Learning to be old: Gender, culture, and aging* (3rd ed.). Rowman & Littlefield (Original work published 2009).

Davis, D. S. (2015). VII. Feminism and suicide in the face of dementia. *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 131-136. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353514562817

Davis, K. (2015). IX. Dying, self-determination, and the (im)possibilities of a “good death.” *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 143-147. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353514562818

de Medeiros, K. (2016). Narrative gerontology: Countering the master narratives of aging. *Narrative Works*, *61*(1), 63-81.

Dolphijn, R., & van der Tuin, I. (2012). *New materialism: Interviews & cartographies.* Open Humanities Press. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.11515701.0001.001

Dougherty, E. N., Dorr, N., & Pulice, R. T. (2016). Assisting older women in combatting ageist stereotypes and improving attitudes toward aging. *Women & Therapy*, *39*(1-2), 12-34. https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2016.1116308

Dudgeon, P., & Fielder, J. (2006). Third spaces within tertiary places: Indigenous Australian studies. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *16*(5), 396-409. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.883

Dupuis, C. (2024). Aging with her garden: Mutual care across species and generations. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *69*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101236

Fairchild, N. (2024). Multiverse, feminist materialist relational time, and multiple future(s): (Re)configuring possibilities for qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *30*(6), 493-501. https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004231176753

Farvid, P., Braun, V., & Rowney, C. (2017). ‘No girl wants to be called a slut!’: Women, heterosexual casual sex and the sexual double standard. *Journal of Gender Studies, 26*(5), 544-560. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1150818

Fine, M. (2017). Circulating narratives: Theorising narrative travel, translation and provocation. *Psychology in Society, 55,* 108-123. https://doi.org/10.17159/2309-8708/2017/n55a7

Finlay, J. M. (2021). Intimately old: From an embodied to emplaced feminist approach to aging. *Hypatia*, *36*(1), 80-100. https://doi.org/10.1017/hyp.2020.51

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry 8*(4), 777-795.

Fox, N. J., & Alldred, P. (2015). New materialist social inquiry: Designs, methods and the research-assemblage. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *18*(4), 399-414. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2014.921458

Franklin-Phipps, A. (2024). Absence and refusing the given. In L. A. Mazzei & A. Y. Jackson (Eds.), *Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry* (pp. 65-77). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003298519-7

Freixas, A., Luque, B., & Reina, A. (2012). Critical feminist gerontology: In the back room of research. *Journal of Women and Aging*, *24*(1), 44-58. https://doi.org/10.1080/08952841.2012.638891

Garrison-Diehn, C., Rummel, C., Au, Y. H., Scherer, K. (2022). Attitudes toward older adults and aging: A foundational geropsychology knowledge competency. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, *29*(1), 4-15. https://doi.org/10.1037/cps0000043

Geerts, E., & van der Tuin, I. (2013). From intersectionality to interference: Feminist onto-epistemological reflections on the politics of representation. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *41*, 171-178. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.07.013

Gibson, P. C. (2018). Cindy Sherman in a new millennium: Fashion, feminism, art and ageing. *Australian Feminist Studies*, *33*(98), 481-497. https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2019.1567256

Gilleard, C., & Higgs, P. (2011). Ageing abjection and embodiment in the fourth age. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *25*(2), 135-142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2010.08.018

Glück, J. (2024). Wisdom and aging. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *55*, 101742. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2023.101742

Gore-Gorszewska, G. (2023). 'Why would I want sex now?' A qualitative study on older women's affirmative narratives on sexual inactivity in later life. *Ageing & Society*, *43*, 2347-2371. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X21001690

Goulding, A. (2024). Carving and making space through dance – Older people using dance to experience their ageing body and challenge ageist discourse. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 69. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101225

Grayling, A. C. (2019). *The history of philosophy*. Viking.

Gregoire, P., & Nedim, U. (2025, April 7). *NSW police officer who fatally tasered great-grandmother avoids prison: The reasoning.* NSW Courts. https://www.nswcourts.com.au/articles/nsw-police-officer-who-fatally-tasered-great-grandmother-avoids-prison-the-reasoning/#:~:text=White%20stood%20trial%20before%20a,the%20Crimes%20Act%201900%20(NSW).

Grosz, E. (2005). Bergson, Deleuze and the becoming of unbecoming. *Parallax*, *11*(2), 4-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/13534640500058434

Grosz, E. A. (2017). *The incorporeal: Ontology, ethics, and the limits of materialism*. Columbia University Press.

Gullette, M. M. (2017). *Ending ageism, or how not to shoot old people.* Rutgers University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1q1cqsm

Gullette, M. M. (2018). Against 'aging' – how to talk about growing older. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *35*(7-8), 251-270. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276418811034

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, *14*(3), 575-599.

Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene.* Duke University Press.

Harding, S. G. (1986). *The science question in feminism / Sandra Harding.* Cornell University Press.

Harding, S. (1992). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is "strong objectivity"? *The Centennial Review, 36*(3), 437-470.

Harding, S. (2008). *Sciences from below: Feminisms, postcolonialities, and modernities.* Duke University Press.

Hare-Mustin, R. T., & Marecek, J. (1988). The meaning of difference: Gender theory, postmodernism, and psychology. *American Psychologist*, *43*, 455-464.

Hogan, S., & Warren, L. (2012). Dealing with complexity in research processes and findings: How do older women negotiate and challenge images of aging? *Journal of Women & Aging*, *24*(4), 329-350. https://doi.org/10.1080/08952841.2012.708589

Hook, D. (2005). Genealogy, discourse, 'effective history': Foucault and the work of critique. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 2*(1), 3-31. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088705qp025oa

Höppner, G., & Urban, M. (2018). Where and how do aging processes take place in everyday life? Answers from a new materialist perspective. *Frontiers in Sociology*, *3*(7). https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2018.00007

Hudson, M., Milne, M., Reynolds, P., Russell, K., & Smith, B. (2010). *Te ara tika: Guidelines for Māori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members.* Health Research Council of New Zealand on behalf of the Pūtaiora Writing Group.

Hydén, M. (2013). The teller-focused interview: Interviewing as a relational practice. *Qualitative Social Work, 13*(6), 795-812. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325013506247

Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2024). Postfoundational inquiry after method: Reorientations, enactments, and openings. In In L. A. Mazzei & A. Y. Jackson (Eds.),

Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry (pp. 1-16). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003298519-1

Jaggar, A. M. (2021). Love and knowledge: Emotion in feminist epistemology. In C. R. McCann, S.-K. Kim & E. Ergun (Eds.), *Feminist theory reader: Local and global perspectives* (5th ed., pp. 649-667). Routledge. (Original work published in 1989)

Jones, R. L. (2022). Imagining feminist old age: Moving beyond 'successful' ageing? *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2021.100950

Jones, R. L., Changfoot, N., & King, A. (2022). Revisioning ageing futures: Feminist, queer, crip and decolonial visions of a good old age [Editorial]. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2022.101083

Jones, R. L., Jen, S., & Reiter, B. (2023). "Courage to cobble something new": Women's queer and creative narratives of bisexuality and ageing. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *65*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2023.101133

Jones, R. L., Marshall, B. L., & Sandberg, L. J. (2022). Virtual roundtable discussion of 'Revisioning ageing futures: Feminist, queer, crip and decolonial visions of a good old age.' *Journal of Aging Studies, 63*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2022.101082

Kelly, L., & Radford, J. (1996). 'Nothing really happened': The invalidation of women's experiences of sexual violence. In M. Hester, L. Kelly & J. Radford (Eds.), *Women, violence, and male power* (pp. 19-33). Open University Press.

Kitzinger, C. (2015). I. Feminism and the 'right to die': Editorial introduction to the special feature [Special feature]. *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 101-104. https://doi.org/10.1177/095935351456363

Krekula, C., Nikander, P., & Wilińska, M. (2018). Multiple marginalizations based on age: Gendered ageism and beyond. In L. Ayalon & C. Tesch-Römer (Eds.), *Contemporary perspectives on ageism* (Vol. 19, pp. 33-50). Springer Open. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73820-8_3

Kvale, S. (2003). The church, the factory and the market: Scenarios for psychology in a postmodern age. *Theory & Psychology*, *13*(5), 579-603. https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543030135005

Lamb, R., & Kougiali, Z. G. (2025). Women and shame: Narratives of recovery from alcohol dependence. *Psychology & Health*, *40*(10), 1736-1773. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2024.2352191

Laws, G. (1995). Understanding ageism: Lessons from feminism and postmodernism. *The Gerontologist*, *35*(1), 112-118.

Lipscomb, V. B. (2006). “We need a theoretical base”: Cynthia Rich, Women’s Studies, and ageism: An interview. *NWSA Journal*, *18*(1), 3-12. https://doi.org/10.1353/nwsa.2066.0013

Lipsenthal, L. (2012). *Enjoy every sandwich: Living each day as if it were your last.* Bantam Press.

Lupton, D. (2024). Towards a gerontology of everything: A more-than-human perspective. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *71*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101278

Macdonald, B., & Rich, C. (1991). *Look me in the eye: Old women, aging, and ageism* (2nd ed.). Spinsters Ink. (Original work published 1983)

Maclaren, A. S. (2018). Affective lives of rural ageing. *Sociologia Ruralis*, *58*(1), 213-234. https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12196

Macleod, C. I., Bhatia, S., & Liu, W. (2020). Feminisms and decolonising psychology: Possibilities and challenges. *Feminism & Psychology*, *30*(3), 287-305. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353520932810

Macleod, C., Marecek, J., & Capdevila, R. (2014). Feminism & Psychology going forward. *Feminism & Psychology*, *24*(1), 3-17. https://doi.org/1177/0959353513515308

Magnusson, E., & Marecek, J. (2017). Feminisms, psychologies, and the study of social life. In B. Gough (Ed.), *The Palgrave handbook of critical social psychology* (pp. 17-35). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51018-1

Manchester, H., & Willatt, A. (2024). Towards care-full co-design with older adults: A feminist posthuman praxis. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *70*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101250

Martin, N. (2015). VI. From the theoretical to the personal: Weighing further feminist concerns on physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 124-130. https//doi.org/10/1177/0 959353514562813

Martin, W., & Twigg, J. (2018). Editorial for special issue *Ageing, body and society*: Key themes, critical perspectives. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *45*, 1-4. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2018.01.011

Massey Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa University of New Zealand. (2017). *Tikanga whanonga matatika mō te rangahau. Code of ethical conduct for research, teaching and evaluations involving human participants. Revised code 2017.* https://www.massey.ac.nz/research/ethics/human-ethics/#Usingparticipantsinresearch

Mazzucchelli, N., & Íñiguez-Rueda, L. (2023). Older women and situated knowledge: A contribution from the narrative productions methodology. *Qualitative Psychology*, *10*(3), 533-542. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000250

Mignolo, W. (2010). Introduction: Coloniality of power and de-colonial thinking. In W. Mignolo & A. Escobar (Eds.), *Globalisation and the decolonial option* (pp. 1-21). Routledge.

Mikaere, A. (1999). Colonisation and the imposition of patriarchy: A Ngāti Raukawa woman's perspective. *Te Ukaipo, I,* 34-49.

Mikaere, A., & Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa. (2011). *Colonising myths – Maori realities: He rukuruku whakaaro.* Huia Publishers.

Mitchell, V., & Bruns, C. M. (2011). Writing one's own story: Women, aging, and the social narrative. *Women & Therapy, 34*(1-2), 114-128. https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2011.532701

Network Waitangi Otautahi (NWO). (2024, May). *Who are Tangata Tiriti?* https://nwo.org.nz/resources/who-are-tangata-tiriti/

Nicolson, P. (1992). Feminism and academic psychology: Towards a psychology of women? In K. Campbell (Ed.), *Critical feminism. Argument in the disciplines* (pp. 53-82). Open University Press.

Oakley, A. (2016). Interviewing women again: Power, Time and the Gift. *Sociology, 50*(1), 195-213. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515580253

Parker, I. (2007). Critical psychology: What it is and what it is not. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 1*(1), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00008.x

Parker, I. (2014). *The crisis in modern social psychology: And how to end it*. Routledge. (Original work published in 1989)

Peel, E., & Harding, R. (2015). VIII. A right to 'dying well' with dementia? Capacity, 'choice' and relationality. *Feminism & psychology*, *25*(1), 137-142. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353514562811

Pelc, N., Hasan, N., & Mollen, D. (2020). Feminist storytelling: Representing the stories of diverse women in psychology. *Women & Therapy*, *43*(1-2). https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2019.1684683

Pere, R. R., & University of Waikato. Department of Sociology. (1982). *Ako: Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition / Rangimarie Rose Pere.* Dept. of Sociology, University of Waikato.

Pickard, S. (2020). On becoming a hag: gender, ageing and abjection. *Feminist Theory*, *21*(2), 157-173. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700119859751

Pickard, S. (2024). Neither the third nor fourth age: Viewing old age through the philosophical lens of ambiguity. *The Gerontologist*, *64*, 1-6. https://doi/org/10.1093/geront/gnad113

Pihama, L. (2019). Mana atua, mana tangata, mana wahine. In L. Pihama, L. Tuhiwai Smith, N. Simmonds, J. Seed-Pihama & K. Gabel (Eds.), *Mana wahine reader. A collection of writings 1999-2019*, *Volume II* (pp. 191-197). Te Kotahi Research Institute.

Probyn, E. (2005). *Blush: Faces of shame.* University of Minnesota Press.

Probyn, E., Bozalek, V., Shefer, T., & Carolissen, R. (2019). Productive faces of shame: An interview with Elspeth Probyn. *Feminism & Psychology*, *29*(2), 322-334. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353518811366

Psychology's Feminist Voices. (n.d.). *Profile: Sandra Bem*. https://feministvoices.com/profiles/sandra-bem

Puar, J. K. (2021). "I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess": Becoming-intersectional in assemblage theory. In C. R. McCann, S. Kim & E. Ergun (Eds.), *Feminist theory reader: Local and global perspectives* (5th ed., pp. 722-740). Routledge. (Original work published in 2012)

Radio New Zealand. (2023, May 25). *Clare Nowland, 95-year-old woman tasered by Australian police, dies in hospital.* https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/490604/clare-nowland-95-year-old-woman-tasered-by-australian-police-dies-in-hospital

Radtke, H. L., Young, J., & van Mens-Verhulst, J. (2016). Aging, identity, and women: Constructing the third age. *Women & Therapy*, *39*(1-2), 86-105. https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2016.1116321

Rice, C. (2009). Imagining the other? Ethical challenges of researching and writing women's embodied lives. *Feminism & Psychology*, *19*(2), 245-266. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353509102222

Rich, A. (1987). *Blood, bread and poetry: Selected prose, 1979-1985.* Virago.

Riger, S. (1992). Epistemological debates, feminist voices: Science, social values, and the study of women. *American Psychologist, 47*(6), 730-740.

Rosiek, J. L., & Pratt, S. S. (2024). Ontologies of possibility *and* loss in posthumanist inquiry. In L. A. Mazzei & A. Y. Jackson (Eds.), *Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry* (pp. 195-209). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003298519-19

Salem, S. (2016). Intersectionality and its discontents: Intersectionality as traveling theory. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 25*(4), 403-418. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506816643999

Sandberg, L. (2013). Affirmative old age: The ageing body and feminist theories on difference. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life, 8* (1), 11-40. https://doi.org/10.3384/ijal.1652-8670.1381

Sandberg, L. J., & Marshall, B. L. (2017). Queering aging futures. *Societies*, *7*(21). https://doi.org/10.3390/soc7030021

Schoenberg, M. R., & Duff, K. (2011). Dementias and mild cognitive impairment in adults. In M. R. Schoenberg, & J. G. Scott (Eds.), *The little black book of neuropsychology: A syndrome-based approach* (pp. 357-404). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-76978-3

Segal, L. (2014a). Temporal vertigo: The paradoxes of ageing. *Studies in Gender & Sexuality*, *15*(3), 214–222. https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2014.939022

Segal, L. (2014b). The coming of age studies. *Age, Culture, Humanities*, *1*. https://doi.org/10.7146/ageculturehumanities.v1i.129944

Segal, L. (2015). Portraying ageing: Its contradictions and paradoxes. *Working with older people*, *19*(1), 3-11. https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-12-2014-0040

Seigworth, G. J., & Gregg, M. (2010). An inventory of shimmers. In M. Gregg & G. J. Seigworth (Eds.), *The affect theory reader* (pp. 1-25). Duke University Press.

Sharma, S., & Bluck, S. (2023). Older adults recall memories of life challenges: The role of sense of purpose in the life story. *Current Psychology: A Journal for Diverse Perspectives on Diverse Psychological Issues*, *42*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03439-7

Shi, F. D. (2016). *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as an anti-feminist text: Historical, psychoanalytical and postcolonial perspectives. *Women: A Cultural Review*, *27*(2), 177-201. https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2016.1227154

Simmonds, N. (2011). Mana wahine: Decolonising politics. *Women's Studies Journal (Auckland, N.Z.)*, *25*(2), 11-25.

Stewart, G. T., Devine, N., Jenkin, C., Heta-Lensen, Y., Maurice-Takerei, L., Stuart, M. J., & Middleton, S. (2024). As the crones fly. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *56*(6), 513-526. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2022.2154206

St. Pierre, E. A. S. (2014). A brief and personal history of post qualitative research: Toward 'post inquiry.' *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, *30*(2), 2-19.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2018). Writing post qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *24*(9), 603-608. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417734567

St. Pierre, E. A. (2019). Post qualitative inquiry in an ontology of immanence. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *25*(1), 3-16. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418772634

St. Pierre, E. A. (2024a). A primer for post qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Research in Psychology.* https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2024.2347579

St. Pierre, E. A. (2024b). Foreword: Refusing man and his method in postfoundational inquiry. In L. A. Mazzei & A. Y. Jackson (Eds.), *Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry* (pp. xix-xxxi). Routledge.

Tamboukou, M. (2008). Re-imagining the narratable subject. *Qualitative Research*, *8*(3), 283-292. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106093623

Tamboukou, M. (2018). The joy of learning: Feminist materialist pedagogies and the freedom of education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *50*(9), 868-877. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2017.1396213

Thiele, K. (2014). Pushing dualisms and differences: From 'equality versus difference' to 'nonmimetic sharing' *and* 'staying with the trouble.' *Women: A Cultural Review*, *25*(1), 9-26. https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2014.901110

Towler, L. B., Graham, C. A., Bishop, F. L., & Hinchliff, S. (2021). Older adults' embodied experiences of aging and their perceptions of societal stigmas toward sexuality in later life. *Social Science & Medicine*, *287*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114355

Tucker, I. (2012). Deleuze, sense, and life: Marking the parameters of a psychology of individuation. *Theory & Psychology*, *22*(6), 771-785. https://doi.org/10.1177/095934312442787

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* Zed Books.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2021). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (3rd ed.). Zed Books. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350225282

Twigg, J. (2004). The body, gender, and age: Feminist insights in social gerontology. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *18*(1), 59-73. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2003.09.001

Ulmer, J. B. (2017). Posthumanism as research methodology: Inquiry in the Anthropocene. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *30*(9), 832-848. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1336806

van Dyk, S. (2016). The othering of old age: Insights from postcolonial studies. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *39*, 109-120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2016.06.005

Venn, C. (2005). The subject of psychology. In *Changing the subject*: *Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity* (pp. 133-165). Taylor & Francis e-Library. (Original work published in 1984)

Waitere, H., & Johnston, P. (2009). Echoed silences: In absentia: Mana Wahine in institutional contexts. *Women's Studies Journal, 23*(2), 14-31.

Walkerdine, V. (2015). Transmitting class across generations. *Theory & Psychology*, *25*(2), 167-183. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354315577856

Walkerdine, V. (2016). Affective history, working-class communities and self-determination. *The Sociological Review*, *64*, 699-714. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12435

Westwood, S. (2023). "It's the not being seen that is most tiresome": Older women, invisibility and social (in)justice. *Journal of Women & Aging.* https://doi.org/10.1080/08952841.2023.2197658

Wetherell, M. (2012). *Affect and emotion: A new social science understanding.* SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250945

Wetherell, M. (2015). Trends in the turn to affect: A social psychological critique. *Body & Society*, *21*(2), 139-166. https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X14539020

Wilkinson, S. (2015). X. Refusing to live with advanced dementia: Contemporaneous and prospective decision-making. *Feminism & Psychology*, *25*(1), 148-154. https://doi.org/10/1177/0959353514562809

Woodward, K. (2002). Against wisdom: The social politics of anger and aging. *Cultural Critique*, *51*, 186-218.