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LOCATING INTERIORITY:
TEXT, IMAGE, IDENTITY, AND THE DOMESTIC

2007

An exegesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts (Art & Design).

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed

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My children Shay and Gemma.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates ideas of interiority and thought in relation to the building of self identity. I express them through the visual means of text and photography, resulting in a conceptual self-portrait by way of installation.

Concerned with what thought terrain might look like and the way information perceived through the senses is stored, I explore the overdetermined evidence provoked by the unconscious. By the study of my own inner monologue in response to everyday rituals, I bring attention to the fragmented and overwhelming anxieties, fears, associations and fabrications of the mind - moments that often go unnoticed, but help concretize my experience of being in the world.

The thesis is made up of 80% practice and 20% written exegesis.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this exegesis in support of my art practice, is to explore my interest in interiority, thought and text concerning everyday living. From a Freudian psychoanalytical perspective I employ a conversational style of writing, merging it with theory where appropriate and in a reflexive studio practice. By writing about my personal experience as a single parent experiencing the solitary phenomena of raising children alone, I use local or 'little narratives', which avoids making assumptions or a single universal essence in describing all human experience (Lyotard, 1979).

Because the nature of my thesis deals mostly with thought and text to discuss the process of being in the world, I have structured the first chapter of this exegesis in a split-page resembling the cohesion of left and right brain hemispheres. Together they combine theoretical and conceptual aspects on the left, in tandem with the practical development towards the final thesis outcomes on the right: indicated by a grey background. It also discusses methods used, my contextual influences as well as image analysis where appropriate.

Chapter one talks about my definitions of interiority and its relation to the binaries concerning its public and private expression. With the idea of a third space blurring the boundaries of the binaries, I look at four stages of interiority that take individual private thoughts through to their expression on the external and public surface. Not only do I use text on surface as art, I explain my use of symbolism within the non-

figurative and everyday image as a conceptual self portrait: one that embodies social conditioning as evidence of the unconscious in action.

Chapter two discusses methodology and my distinction between phenomenology and phenomenography. It then continues to discuss the application of methodology in context with my year one art practice and its key developments. Providing an example of an analysis of a body of work, I use questions adapted from phenomenological research in art & design.

In chapter three, I present photographic documentation of my final exhibition works along with an analysis, and closing comments of further research uncovered between the exhibition preparation and final binding of this finished document.

Finally, a conclusion is presented in summary of my thesis, and a full reference section and appendices of monologues is included at the end of this exegesis.

CHAPTER 1 - SELF, MIND AND IMAGE

Interiority and its public and private definitions

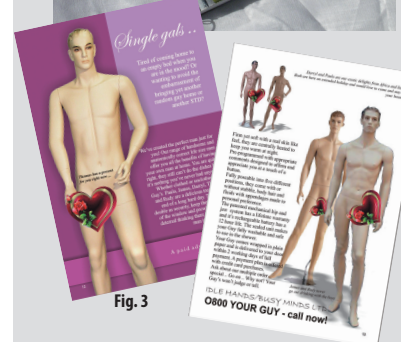
I use the terms interior/exterior alongside private/public to similarly describe two distinct bodies either physical or perceived - that which is interior and private, and that which exists as its opposite, the external and public. The public world pertains to the general population at large. Within the general body of mankind, the nature of information is well-known, and affects all people. Interiority denotes the interior quality or character of a being; its inner life, substance or psychological existence. The interior of an object refers to the space or part inside of it. It lies, occurs, or functions within limiting boundaries that separate it from the publicly perceived outside. As with all things inside, its nature is concealed and considered private.

Blurring the boundaries between black and white

However, the degree of overlap of interior/exterior and public/private, may vary in relation to the context in which they are used. For example, finding the interior of an object of mass could involve many layers, starting a chain reaction of locating the interior of each property back to the atom. Privacy has many faces, in concealment of knowledge from the public, down to concealment of information repressed so deep within oneself, that it can no longer be remembered. Private property can be located within a public area, and likewise, public areas can be part of private property.

A third space

In his book *Of Grammatology*, Derrida (1976) acts against the hierarchical dualities of Western thought called Logos, where one term is privileged over the other. For example, in the priority of speech over writing as the most direct and reliable route to thought, Derrida attempts to destroy the fixed position of the binary opposites that dominate Western philosophy. In developing the term *différance*, he takes the two separate entities of the binary and locates the thin membrane that marks the intersec-



Book as metaphorical space resembling thought terrain

In an installation to trial a book as a physical environment for interiority, [refer Fig. 1.] I took part in an exhibition at The Suter Art Gallery in Nelson, entitled 'Reason's For Being', between December 2006 and February 2007.

I used the idea of internal processes as expression of the mundane rituals of everyday living. In a self-published subverted Reader's Digest with 164 pages that I called '*Ruminator's Digest*', [refer Fig.2.] I used personal documentation from the past as a form of self-portrait through the eyes of others, such as my plunket book and school reports.

Fig.1. Paula Cunliffe. *Ingestion, Assimilation, Elimination*. Installation with found objects to support book. Dimensions variable. July - December 2006

Fig. 2. Paula Cunliffe. *Ruminator's Digest*. Self-published book of writings and digital imagery, 210mm x 148mm x 164 pages. July - December 2006

Fig.3. Paula Cunliffe. *Ruminator's Digest* - pages 12 & 13. Self-published book of writings and digital imagery, 210mm x 148mm x 164 pages. July - December 2006



I made mock advertisements that worked in conjunction with articles, [refer Fig. 3] in the way that traditional advertising is sold to complement features within print, television and radio [refer Appendix 1]. These were to symbolise internal beliefs and desires that seem unconnected to the actual events, but subconsciously work in ways to support what is happening. By using humour, I addressed female sexuality and desire from the point of view of being a single parent.

I used interior monologues in a variety of different ways to trial how they might be written, such as no punctuation or grammar, and a traditional narrative structure that included beginning, middle and end. I used a current photo of a house [refer Fig. 4.] for a three page spread advertising feature about housing [refer Appendix 2]. This was a house that I had lived in for six months as a child when my parents had separated. The monologue that accompanies the image was provoked by a memory as I drove past, and consequently photographed it. With

the deteriorating house as metaphor for my mind, the intent was to play on the idea of it not only as description of my experience in the house, but also the evidence of the psychological impact the event had on my thought patterns as I grew up.

As a whole, with its accumulated fragments of stories and memories stored within the book format, the Ruminator's Digest represented a physical form of thought terrain, one that was essentially a conceptual self-portrait. The Reader's Digest having been a staple of my upbringing, was an icon of good family values inculcated in its audience. By subverting these, I played on dysfunctional behaviours within the individual as absorbed and accumulating, shaping identity from the experience of being in the world throughout the course of ones life.

The public response had many mixed reactions and the installation received much publicity. After considerable observation of the public interacting with the installation, I felt the idea was largely successful but its accessibility to the viewer was limited due to the sheer volume of the work and was dependant on the amount of time they had to spend with it. Even though content could be accessed back and forth, it remained too linear in relation to thought. However, insight was gained for future strategies in writing monologues and image pairing. I felt too, the need to create an experience for the viewer to be immersed in with their whole body, not just with their mind.

Fig. 4. Paula Cunliffe. *Ruminator's Digest* - pages 26, 27 & 28. Self-published book of writings and digital imagery, 210mm x 148mm x 164 pages. July - December 2006

tion of both. This space does not belong to one or the other, but intrudes upon both. This defers the absolute meaning of the binary, creating instability and undecidability, from which I derive my meaning of a space that joins two opposites, creating a third space.

Four stages of interiority

Derrida's *différance* became the theory than began a journey of locating a recurring strip, bringing together opposing forces and opening opportunities for interpretation that could cross the boundaries into other areas. I use the idea of this third space to establish four stages of describing interiority between the unconscious mind of the individual, and the external object upon which the inner thought processes are projected. I also use it as a way of explaining text/image within my art practice, as the public expression of private thoughts.

Stage 1: Unconscious - *preconscious* - conscious

Identifies the *preconscious* as the third space or common ground, where it mediates between the unconscious and the conscious.

Stage 2: Preconscious - *conscious* - text/image

I see the stream of *consciousness* (private thought that we are aware of but yet to be communicated to the outside world) as a precursor to the common ground of its expression, text/image.

Stage 3: Conscious - *text/image* - surface

Identifies *text/image* as the third space mediator between conscious thoughts and the external and public surface.

Stage 4: Text/image - *surface* - object/subject

Identifies *surface* as the third space which absorbs the projected meaning of thought and beliefs.



Fig. 5

Fig. 5. Paula Cunliffe. *Wall process detail*. Poster paint, found imagery & text colour laser printed on paper, glued to brown paper on wall of home, dimensions variable. July 2006.

Fig. 6, 7 & 8. Paula Cunliffe. *Trials of private images in a public space*. Colour digital laser prints of domestic interiors and objects placed in various public locations. August 2006.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

Proverbs and sayings internalising society values

Exploration using the walls of my home are trialed - text and images that embody the contraction of internalised personal values and contained within proverbs and New Zealand sayings. Although there were aimed to work on society at the level of thoughts, they still did not allow room for individual experience or variation. Instead, they were a generalised essence of a belief applied to a large body of people.

Private places - public spaces

Keeping in mind, that these domestic images were metaphorical of private thought, I took photos of my private home out into public spaces within Nelson city. For example, I put my messy kitchen on the poster tower outside the local bakery [refer fig. 6], pictures of screws from the garage, on the local men's toilets [refer fig. 7], and



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

my toilet on the poster tower outside the carpark toilets in town [refer fig. 13]. They had a familiar yet unfamiliar feeling about them like Freud's idea (1919) of the uncanny.

Another site included a picture of my bedroom stuck to a Liquor king price sign [refer fig 14], just to see if connotations could be made between the random pairing of image and found text.

I made postcards of these public and private hybrids to send, with the idea that the personal could be made public in this way [refer fig. 15].

Jenny Holzer's (Auckland City Gallery, Mason, McDonald, Artspace, Gus Fisher Gallery, 2003) work combines text that exploits language and the authority of structures of social power, revealing the intimate, subjective and invisible realities of life. Holzer uses public space as a political arena targeting art as the forum of public conscience.

Her choice of location such as monumental sites in cities,

Figs. 8 -15. Paula Cuniffe. *Trials of private images in a public space.* Colour laser digital prints on found poster towers & signs, dimensions variable. August - September 2006.



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 13

in conjunction with her chosen texts, provokes a collision between systems and categories. Her public actions involve putting up posters, billboards and signs that borrow from privileges belonging to both the art world and social status.

I toyed with the idea of making a fictional event or exhibition from something that hasn't exactly occurred - much the way in which fantasy is played out within the individual mind. This was a valuable exercise, but it still did not express fully what I was trying to say with image alone. I decided to make more focus of the contents of the domestic to give them more of an edge when paired with monologues.

Self identity – constructed by our experience within the world

The self-contained individual is described by Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge in the book *Exploring Self and Society* (1998) as being bound by a bodily container that clearly separates the individual from other similar bounded selves. In Giddens book *Sociology* (2006), it is accepted that the sense of self or identity in the mind of the individual is formed by social constructions and the language we are shaped with, and without this, no sense of self can exist. Examples for certain behaviours are set early on in life through observation of role models, by instructions that individuals are given and by the way they are treated. The opportunity to imitate behaviour, both good and bad, is in direct proportion to the way the individual is set up to receive rewards or punishment. In the process of socialization and culturalisation, truth and myths about norms of acceptable behaviour, relationships, values and concepts are absorbed and internalised by the individual. They become an integral part of the self, and are used to judge all future experiences that the individual is exposed to – further building their sense of identity. This idea resembles that of Tabula Rasa, mentioned in Aristotle's writings (384 BC – 322 BC) and brought back in the 13th century by St Thomas Aquinas. But the modern application is mostly attributed to John Locke in the 17th century, where he calls the mind at birth a 'blank slate', upon which life's experience is progressively written. Being born without rules with which to process data, perception of the world comes about only by one's sensory experiences throughout life (cited 2002, by Winkler).

Thought

Intrapersonal communication is the use of internal language, or thought. The person becomes both the sender and receiver of communication, actively processing the symbolic messages in an ongoing process. In his essay, the *Construction of Fictional Minds*, Alan Palmer (2002) in a literary sense posits thought as overwhelmingly inco-

Documenting the everyday in images

I had now established that I wanted to use text and image as evidence of fleeting moments of thought. Using the digital camera, I documented the banal moments of everyday life within the domestic environment, along with inner monologues that occur in response to that particular area, or to the task assigned to it. For example, [refer Fig. 16 & 17] I made interior monologues as a running commentary on the contents of the bathroom cabinet. I looked to for evidence of objects internalised by the individual/family on a day to day basis in the course of living, and the fluctuation of site specific contents. Likewise, the clutter of the kitchen when the dishes haven't been done for a week and are allowed to build up. Although the images are not spectacular in themselves, they are a snapshot of a moment in time brought



Fig. 16

Fig. 16 & 17. Paula Cuniffe. *Bathroom cabinet visual diary Oct 5 & 10*. Installation, found objects, dimensions variable. October 2006

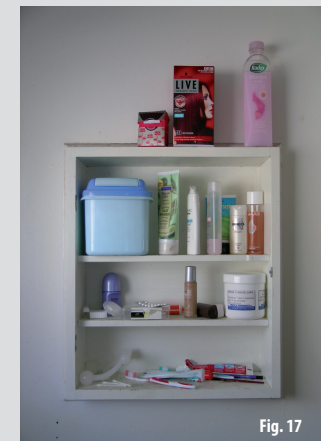


Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 22



Fig. 19



Fig. 23



Fig. 20

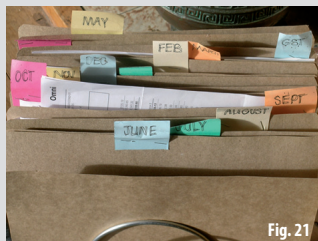


Fig. 21

about by being in the world. Capturing moments of private domestic chaos are not only a sign of the clutter of objects within the everyday, but also symbolic of clutter that occurs within the organisation of the unconscious mind [refer figs. 18 - 23].

Figs. 18 - 23. Paula Cunniffe. *Random images of home.* Found & existing objects within the domestic interior, dimensions variable. November 2007

Creating portraiture from unconscious evidence

I draw similarities with the photo-documenting of French artist Sophie Calle (DiPetro, 1999). In *The Hotel series* [refer Fig. 24], Calle takes on employment as a hotel maid and proceeds to photograph among many things, the contents of bathrooms and suitcases as well as reading personal documents. With most of her subjects, she attempts to reconstruct a portrait without having met them in person. She exhibits text of the notes she takes 'on assignment' along with the photographs. However, I use the public invasion of my own privacy, with its documentation of text and photographs. I attempt to recreate a self-portrait by way of inner workings, with the absence of my own physical identity.

I relate to the Dada Surrealists, followers of André Breton following his *Manifeste du Surrealisme*; *Poisson soluble* in 1924 (cited 2002, by MFA Publications).

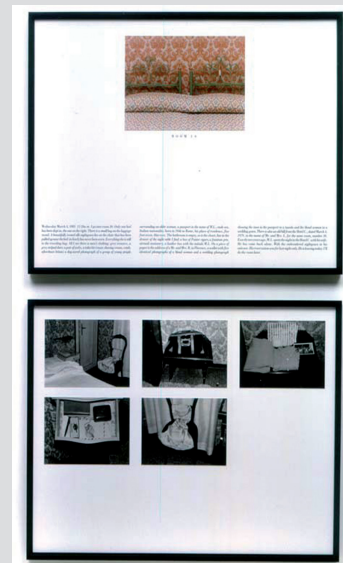


Fig. 24

Fig. 24. Sophie Calle. *The Hotel, Room 30, March 4, 1983.* Gelatin-silver prints, ektachrome print, and text. Edition 3/4. 2 panels, 41 1/8 x 57 inches each (framed).

herent and overlapping. It is produced in a fragmented language with symbols that defy comprehension as we know it. In *The Language of Thought*, Jerry Fodor (1975) coins this language as mentalese. It can be described as an internet page, containing non-linear links to other pages with explanations for the multiple uses of each word, all accessed at lightning speed. Intrapersonal communication includes dreaming as well as day-dreaming, speaking to oneself and reading aloud, writing or typing thoughts, making gestures to accompany speech, and when it comes to communication between body parts, for example; the acknowledgement of hunger and tiredness. The name given to this phenomenon is qualia. Among several philosophers, Dennet (1991) describes qualia as feelings or perceptions that arise from the body as a response to it being present within the world. They can only be described as sensa-

tions that are 'like' something else in their explanation, such as 'pins and needles'.

Holder of information - the unconscious, preconscious and conscious states of the mind

The individually constructed mind is privy to the thoughts it creates in response to its daily actions, interactions, and bodily sensations. This stored data having passed through the senses, now has a trace within memory [refer Fig. 25]. Having adapted Freud's first iceberg model of consciousness from *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900,

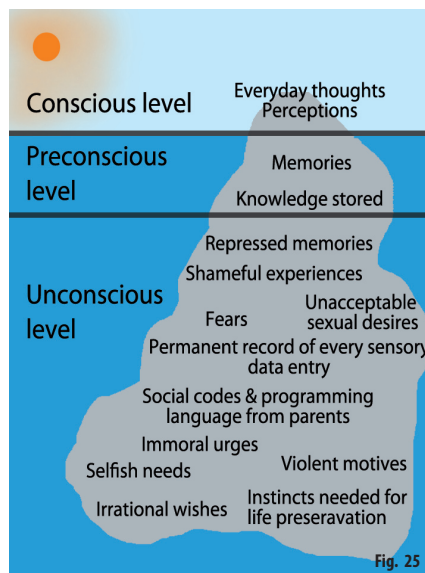


Fig. 25. Paula Cunniffe. Adapted from Freud's earlier Iceberg model of the mind from 1900. Photoshop illustration. 2007

They worked with free association dream analysis in attempts to unleash the hidden unconscious using writing, speech, performance and imagery to express thought. They wished to change the way the way humans perceived their experience in the world - one that was free of social and political restrictions. In pure psychic automatism brought about by the Surrealists, American Jackson Pollock derived his drip-style from 1947 (Malyon, 2007) as evidence of unconscious thought expressed without the influence of control brought about by reason or rules. With a similar style of free association and recording thought monologues, I have been researching my own style of writing. Like Pollock, I found that by physical activation of the body, language was able flow freely from the mind, without the overwhelming urge to censor it.

Writing mediums

Using a former installation, I took the plastic sheets with water-based enamel-painted words to the beach [refer figs. 26 - 27], to test what would happen to these private words within a public environment. They came off in the wind and congregated in the water. These stills came



Fig. 26



Fig. 27

Figs. 26 & 27. Paula Cunniffe. *Wind & water trials with words on Tahuna Beach*. Video stills, water based enamel text, dimensions variable. November 2007.

I demonstrate how information is stored within the mind Interpretation, new ideas and perceptions are formed not only by new data being filtered through the senses, but in conjunction with prior experience that has already been recorded and stored within the unconscious.

In *Writing and Difference*, (1978) Derrida talks about his development of Freud's use of the word 'trace' in semiotics. A sign carries its history of all its previous uses over time causing the word to become sensitively loaded in any context, leaving it open for multiple interpretation when expressed in language. Freud (1900) calls this concept, overdetermination. I play on the word projection within my work. Projection is a psychological defence mechanism established by Freud and later refined by his daughter Anna (A. Freud, 1937). The individual projects unacceptable feelings onto other people or objects in order to reduce anxiety caused when desires and other impulses within the preconscious are in conflict with social codes of programming. However, I use it not only through the literal meaning of using an overhead projector as a method, but the use of the walls and objects as a recipient of this projection as a narrative device to tell a story.

The metaphorical and narrative self portrait - without figurative representation

Based on Descartes 17th century claim in *First Meditations on Philosophy* - that we are only able to know the contents of our own mind, I decided to forgo using participants in which to collect data representing the self (1996). Through the use of my own experience as research, I have been seeking to represent myself through text and without figurative representation. Self portraiture traditionally involves a physical likeness of the artist themselves. Jeanne Ivy (2006) in her paper on *The Exploration of Self: What Artists Find When They Search in the Mirror*, talks about the metaphorical self-portrait that lacks any kind of figurative representation. Ivy cites artists such as Rothko and

from the video I took, but I decided not to use them any further. Among various household substances, I used flour and coffee to trial writing within a public environment [refer figs. 28 - 31]. Both the beach works and flour writing on the public road drew interesting interactions with the curious public.



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



Fig. 31

Figs. 28, 29 & 30. Paula Cuniffe. *Writing trials at home*. Common household white flour on tarmac & grass, dimensions variable. January 2007

Fig. 31. Paula Cuniffe. *Writing trials at home*. Created balsa wood stencil & coffee ink prints on paper, dimensions variable. February 2007

Pollock represent feelings rather than any physical likeness as part of Abstract Expressionism. Chagall and Picasso in their narrative portraits are also cited by Ivy, where they use the self as a character in images that have little to do with their own physical appearance.

Home as symbolic of the mind in dreams

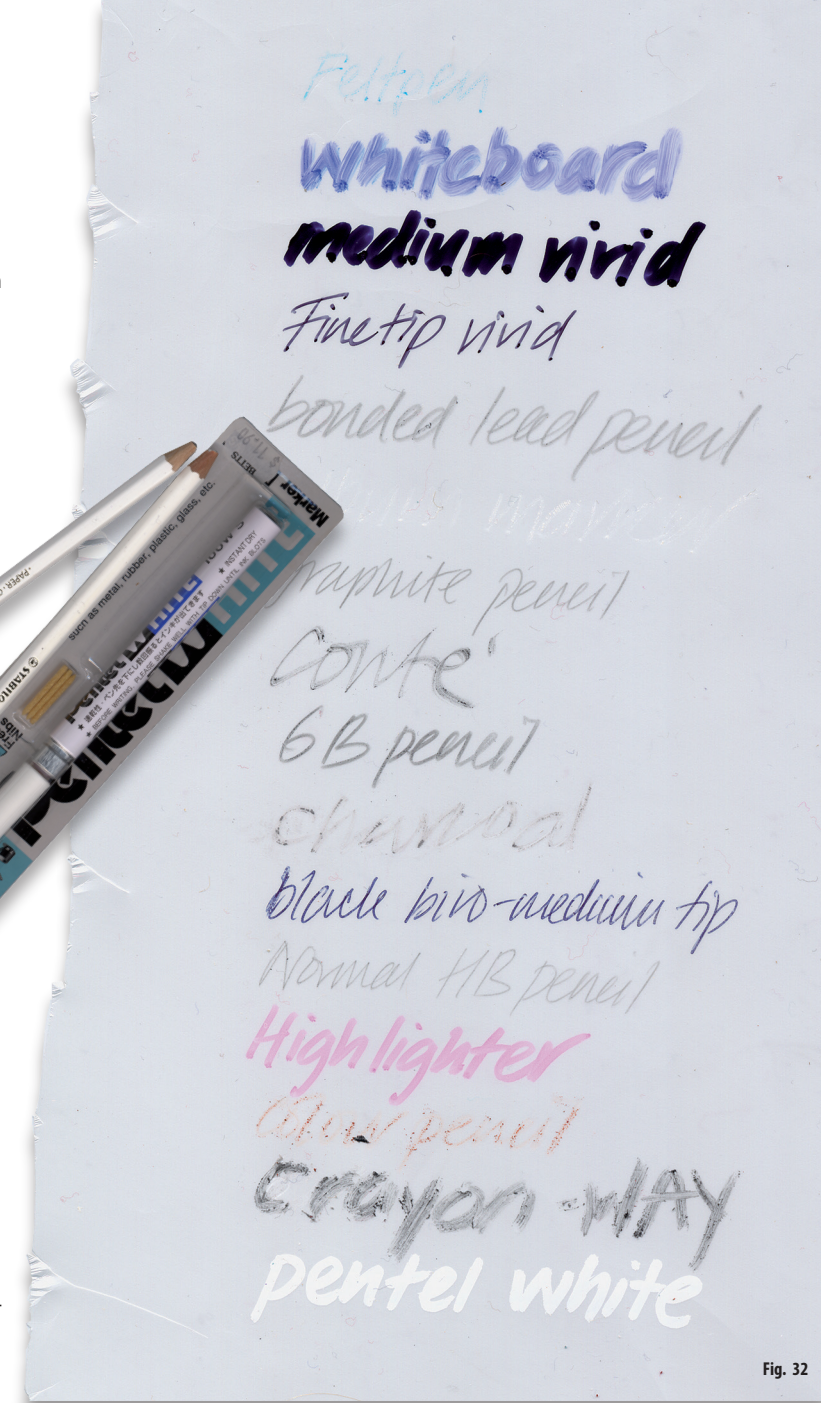
During the process of looking at the 'self', I had a recurring dream that I'd had since childhood. I was in a new house with my own furniture, trying to make it fit the new rooms. Every time I turned around, the furniture had moved and the rooms now opened out and connected to new rooms. First published in 1900, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (cited 1976) discusses the meaning of the house in dreams as a symbol of the mind. The different rooms are parts of the self, and the changing around was symbolic of the mind's processing of thoughts, residue of the day and problems during sleep, much like a computer going through a defragmentation process in order to sort files and work more efficiently. In *Exploring Self and Society*, Billington, Hockey & Strawbridge (1998) state that "[...in Western Society...] the private house can in some ways be seen as symbolising the private self; it is a container with clear boundaries which shut out the public world." The private home and the nuclear family in Western culture has been dominated by Christianity and taboos surrounding the body. The home is divided with walls into spaces designed for the private maintaining of the body, such as hygiene, sexual reproduction, sleeping, eating, relaxation, and social interaction. Ideally, it is a place that the family roles are played out according to societal norms and the way in which our unconscious mind has been programmed.

The practise of Écriture féminine and intertextuality

The stream of consciousness style of writing made famous by James Joyce in books such as *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegan's Wake* (1939), is what Hélène Cixous describes as an example of *Écriture féminine* in *The Laugh of the Medusa* (cited 1981, by Cixous). Having borrowed from Derrida's deconstruction and the term of *différance*, Cixous explains that Western writing is masculine in its structure and that *Écriture féminine* embodies the feminine qualities that are inherently lacking in traditional writing. Cixous displaces the binary of masculine



Fig. 32. Paula Cunniffe. *Media studies & writing tools for final works*. Various media on plastic gift wrap to be used on walls, dimensions variable. March 2007



preference over the feminine in *Écriture féminine*, which is translated as gendered women's writing. It puts experience before language with a priority on the non-linear and cyclical 'stream of consciousness style' suited to women, rather than the traditional and structured masculine writing. She calls this writing 'white ink' in reference to mother's milk, and the retelling of female experience as it really is. Cixous encourages women to write their own stories of their experiences, as women have either been written out or misrepresented in history. Using Cixous's term 'white ink' literally, I abandoned traditional use of narrative in order to stay as close to real life as possible - life where there are no neat outcomes or succinct endings designed for the satisfaction of the viewer. The use of my own handwriting over computer generated writing is to put myself more in contact with the work and direct association to the unconscious. Whereas in earlier methods, I used computer text to suggest a form of control over thought content from an outside force.

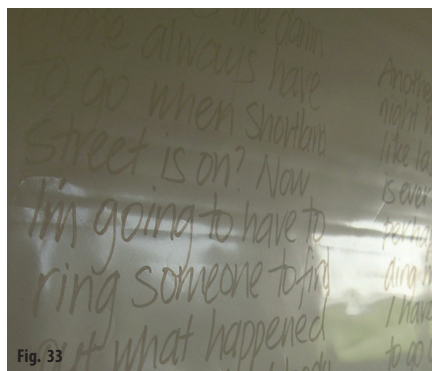


Fig. 33. Paula Cunniffe. *Intertextuality sample & Shortland Street*. Installation detail, white pentel pen on plastic gift wrap, dimensions variable. April 2007

Also used in Joyce's style of writing is the term that Julia Kristeva (1980) calls intertextuality. The use of referencing other texts or locations within a body of writing helps to shape its meaning for the reader, by anchoring them to a moment or location in time and giving the text reality. Kristeva suggests that through intertextuality, a text's meaning is not transferred from the writer to the reader, but is understood in the terms of codes passed on by the inclusion of other texts.

Writing with 'white ink'

My white writing is virtually undetectable to the naked eye until viewed at a 45 degree angle where a chance encounter with bouncing light causes the writing to be seen. I use this effect to mimic the way in which thoughts are fleeting.

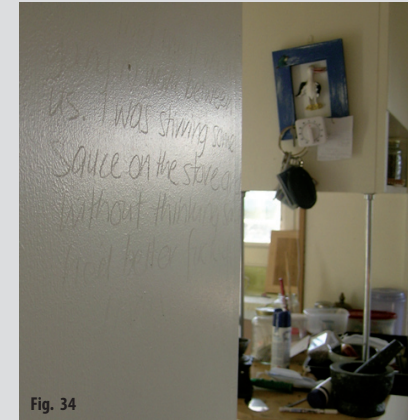


Fig. 34. Paula Cunniffe. *Wall memory*. Installation detail, all surface white pencil on painted hardboard, dimensions variable. April 2007

Mary Kelly (1999) wrote from her experience as a mother in *Post Partum document*, about her relationship with her young son. In an ongoing series between 1973 and 1977, she exhibited charts, drawings and objects in association with his growth. Kelly also draws on the works of Freud and other psychoanalytic theorists. I see my documentation of my own thoughts and events within the home in a similar vein, that I chart the trace of conversations, thoughts and memories that have happened over a span of time throughout the upbringing of my children.

The content of my writings constantly references other everyday texts such as brands and advertising, television, current world events, and local hap-

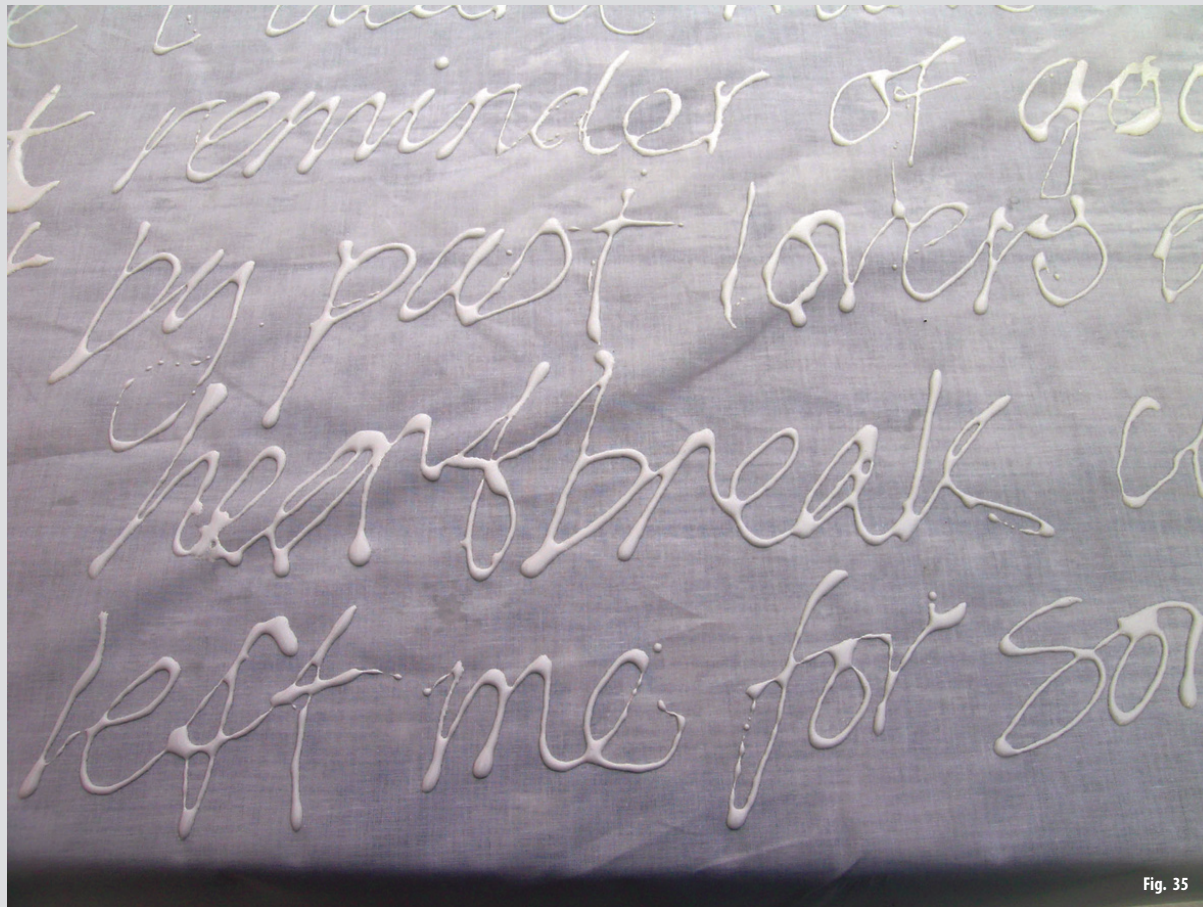


Fig. 35

Fig. 35. Paula Cunliffe. *Paint test for couch fabric*.
Water-based enamel paint on calico, approx 1x1.5m.
May 2007

penings that will trigger individual meaning for the viewer. It lends along with the domestic and autobiographical environment, its site-specific status of the private home as an artist run space.

The absurd image

I see the photograph as capturing fleeting moments of time that pass quickly, like thoughts that would otherwise go unnoticed. Having taken a photograph of what seems like a mundane everyday situation, I find I can attribute certain symbolic references of meaning to it on reflection. I use the inclusion of these photographs within the installation to indicate what I imagine to be points of conflict created between the preconscious and unconscious states of mind, that will be unique to each individual viewer of my final work. The images capture unspectacular moments of the everyday domestic, meaning those that are ritual events encountered by the general public in the course of living day to day.

The digital photograph, through the process of computation, records and stores data in a way that is similar to human thought (Dewdney, 2006). It freezes a moment in time in a world that is constantly in a state of flux and change. In his 1980 book *Camera Lucida* (cited 1982), Roland Barthes posits that the photograph not only gives a real representation of the world, but it also represents implied meanings used by the bourgeois culture to infer naturalistic truths. The book *Exploring Self and Society* (Billington, et al., 1998) suggests that interpretation is an active process of producing values and meanings, a process that always occurs within specific cultural and political contexts, directly linked to the world in which the viewer lives.

Symbolic meaning in image

Barthes (1982) describes two elements in photography: Its symbolic meaning, of which he calls the studium; and the personal meaning (dependent on the individual), that which 'pierces the viewer', the punctum. If attempts are made to explain these to the viewer, their relationship is in danger of having its logical significance collapse (either personal or symbolic). Aside from the reality of the photograph and its literal



Fig. 36. Paula Cunniffe. *Shrine to Venus de Milo*. Installation of found objects in toilet, dimensions variable. October 2006



Fig. 37. Paula Cunniffe. *Family Christmas*. Installation of found & existing objects. December 2006

meaning, the viewer witnesses the image according to their own experience, an accidental reality bordering on the avant-garde happens, which Barthes describes as the third meaning. I lend this third meaning also to the 'absurd' creation of art. In his 1941 book *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus (cited 2004) coined the term 'absurd' in explaining our placing as subjects in an ambiguous and objective world where the meaning hasn't been given. In relation to the photograph or art, our sense of the content like our sense of the world, must be derived by our own methods, no matter how unstable the findings might be. When individual consciousness which longs for structure, intersects with the other's lack of order, a third element called the absurd happens.

Freud (1900) says the images of fantasy or dreaming produced by the individual, are because of the unacceptability of unconscious desires, fears, drives, and so on to be expressed within reality. These wishes are often in opposition with specific codes of social conditioning such as sexual desire but can often be more sinister in nature. These psychic conflicts are filtered through the preconscious that works to mediate between consciousness and the unconscious. The resulting images, either in dreams or imagination, are what Freud calls overdetermined in nature, where there are multiple meanings of which any one is an adequate explanation. Carl Jung explains a mediation technique he discovered between 1913 and 1916 called active imagination, which strives to bring together the fragmented parts of the mind (cited 1965). The process allows the emotions to be translated into image or narrative, personified as separate entities. Through imagination and fantasy, this acts as a link between the conscious and unconscious.

The inability of consciousness to distinguish reality from fantasy – the hyperreal home environment

It has been my own experience as a single parent and sole keeper of the home, that I anxiously self-monitor my actions to maintain an appearance of order, as evidence

Fig. 38.² Paula Cuniffe.
Fabricated blog entry.
Digital file, A4. February
2007

Blog as metaphorical space resembling thought terrain

As part of my practice I posted my texts and corresponding everyday images, along with analysis in my blog on the internet [refer to sample Appendix 3]. I liked the idea that the internet resembled thought terrain, its network connec-

tions spreading publicly on a worldwide basis. I contemplated its use as a final exhibition medium. I imagined that the 'exhibition' could be held at an internet cafe - a public place to display private thoughts. See www.mastermistress.wordpress.com for more examples of these works.



Fig. 38

of my worthiness. With the constant voice in my head of my mother's instructions of how I should behave, and present my home to the public, it is further added to by the advice of home keeping magazines of how my home should look. Baudrillard¹ would call this an example of the hyperreal, being an environment of domestic perfection as "the simulation of something which never really existed" (1993). It is an image in a magazine of a home façade, created without the intention of ever being lived in. Billington, Hockey & Strawbridge (1998), posit that if one is too self-reliant on their interactions with others to form or confirm their sense of self, they remain in a constant state of anxiety caused by the conflicting codes embedded in their unconscious. In his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Foucault uses the panopticon argument in his adaptation of Jeremy Bentham's 18th century prison model, to include the modernisation of society in the same manner. The guard in a central tower watches over the prison cells constantly. Aware of this fact, the prisoners modify their behaviour. Even when they can't see if a guard is in the tower, they still perceive that they are being watched and act accordingly. The self-monitoring continues in a constant monologue that consumes the conscious realm of thought on a day-to-day basis. As the sole keeper of my home, I perceive that I am being observed and judged as I welcome people into my home, but also because I observe and judge in return, therefore reciprocating the unconscious communication of the power relation. This behaviour is described by Freud (1965) as coming from neurotic thought, but is an inevitable part of becoming civilised.

Using my home as exhibition space

Not only do I see my home as a metaphor for my own mind, I see the spatial living areas of the home such as lounge, kitchen and dining room, as common ground in which social time is shared. The space is neither completely private nor public. So, in

¹ Other theorists of Hyperreality - Albert Borgmann, Daniel Boorstin, and Umberto Eco.

I used the category section of the blog interface as a filing system under which memory and sensory data was stored in ways that I imagined human thought to be. I liked the non-linear access of the internet, where the hyper-link can take the viewer to relevant information stored within its complex system. But as things were developing within my handwriting, I felt that it was more appropriate to use my home as a resolution to my research at this stage, rather than to branch into the largely unfamiliar territory of new media. However, I intend to explore this avenue further in the future.

Projections of anxiety within the home

Specific sites of the home become places for projection of anxiety and hold a trace of events [refer fig. 39].

An artist-run space is an alternative to the restrictions of the public and private galleries, and often temporary (Neshich, 2004) In deciding what form my final works should be exhibited in, I chose my own home as a site specific location, because it fit with the metaphorical structure of identity and the private space of the mind.



Fig. 39

Fig. 39. Paula Cuniffe. *Sites of anxiety trials/absurd images*. Installation detail, beetroot, knife & chopping board on the sink, dimensions variable. April 2007

In seeing each surface within the home as having its own separate body in space, each became a sight for interaction with the viewer in relation to their own body. Each text written according to each surface from my associations with it, becomes a form of concrete or shaped poetry with its own site specific location. Patrick Jones' essay on *Words and Things*, discusses the socio-political ambitions associated with concrete poetry in the past. Having influenced text-based art in the last half century, its language has a semantic and visual impact that has equal significance in the weight of the work. It frees language from the static page or surface and constantly shifts. With the placement of the furniture or objects within the home, the surface being the common ground that unites meaning for the house keeper - becomes an overdetermined site for the communication of text/thought as a specific site of expression. It is anticipated that interpretation will change for the reader of the works, depending on their own associations with the objects. The works are made with projected text directed at the surface of occurrence, so that they can be read as the location of the thought at the time of writing.



New Zealand artist John Reynolds, uses language in a way that is local to him also. (Garret, 2007) With colloquialisms that are specific to New Zealand identity, he hangs them in random fragments that defy logical sense. They can be read at close range, but when the viewer steps back, the words become a haze. In his installation *'Cloud'*, the silver paint reacts with light in a similar way to my white writing [refer fig. 41]. Designed to catch light on certain angles that highlight parts of words, it further fragments any attempts to give them meaning. They shift in and out of focus depending on the relationship of the viewer to them, in a way described as fugitive phrases. I relate this to the way Palmer (2002) explains thought as incoherent and overlapping.

CHAPTER 2 – METHODOLOGY IN ACTION

PHENOMENOLOGY VS: PHENOMENOGRAPHY



Fig. 41

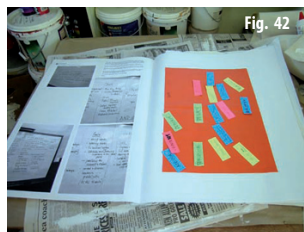


Fig. 42



Fig. 43

Figs. 41 - 47. Paula Cuniffe. *Methods of recording & visualising*. Wall-size pinboard, A2 workbook, mural process, various dimensions. July 2005- January 2007

The object of phenomenology and phenomenography both share human experience as their motivation. However, phenomenology is a branch of philosophy built around the philosopher's own interpretive investigation of the phenomenon, whereas phenomenography is concerned with the empirical study of the relationship between the one experiencing the phenomenon, and the phenomena itself. 'Phenomenology studies the personal experience from the individual's perspective, then aims to reveal through its description; the values, ideals and beliefs that have been absorbed within social culture and taken for granted.' (Manen, 2002)

With phenomenology, I am investigating my own existence to help form my sense of identity through being in the world. By using phenomenography's qualitative methods, I gather and bracket the data of my interactions with everyday living within my own domestic environment. I use the collection of my own experiences within this defined area in an art installation, as a conceptual self-portrait for the reader/viewer immersed in it.

My governing empirical methods of data collection are to describe, record and bracket my own internal dialogue in response to everyday rituals. I also use digital photography in an intuitive response to the written dialogues. By the integration of gathered insights and information from the accompanying research into a reflexive studio practice (Gray & Malins, 2004), I am able to investigate the methods I use to comprehend being immersed in the domestic world by giving it reality and concreteness (Moustakas, 1994).

I look for reoccurring thought patterns within in myself and my work, to find parallel meanings to explain any one phenomenon in which to apply to my practice. With my theoretical base of psychoanalysis and its later adaptations, I work from Freud's concepts of the topography of the mind. I look at words in particular and their associated meanings as a way to integrate more meaning into the work and as an example of how we have multiple interpretations for the same words within our language. I acknowledge that the borrowing of Freud's ideas often leads to combining schools of thought that are in conflict, especially in the concept of consciousness, the self and his earlier theories of the mind. However, I try to find common ground by using my own experiences, locating parts of theories and bracketing the 'like' experiences.



Fig. 44



Fig. 45



Fig. 46



Fig. 47

I work from a set of questions derived and adapted from Gray & Malins (2004) book *Visualizing Research : A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design*. What follows combines the chronology of key moves within early practice as an example of my methodology in action.

External evidence - everyday dockets as a starting point

“Based solely on the finding of a docket in a local woman’s purse, she confessed and was convicted of wasting police time by fabricating a crime against herself.”

Had this throwaway piece of everyday evidence not been found, it was possible that the alleged crime may have remained unsolved. I was intrigued by this and began collecting dockets. I was looking for evidence of identity and social conditioning within the individual, from the nature of the purchases. They were concrete evidence of a moment in time, like the fleeting nature of thoughts. I was interested in the narrative of interpretation and fabrication of events within the viewer, as they tried to construct a portrait of the purchaser in their minds. My psychoanalytic background elaborated meanings to do with a found pizza docket; the heat marks on the thermal paper, the greasy fingerprints, plus notions of female desire and orality [refer Fig. 45]. Based on my parents’ views instilled in me as a child, and despite never having been there, this small docket from Karangahape Road [refer Fig. 46] had connotations to do with sexuality and multiculturalism. These throwaway dockets become public property once they leave the purchaser. They are documented evidence of the action of private mental events and beliefs, resulting in the transaction in question.

I found a fake receipt font on the internet and fabricated my own supermarket docket [refer Fig. 47], leading to the

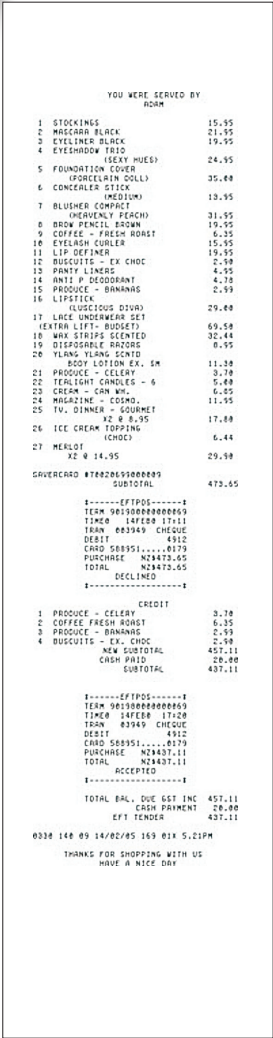
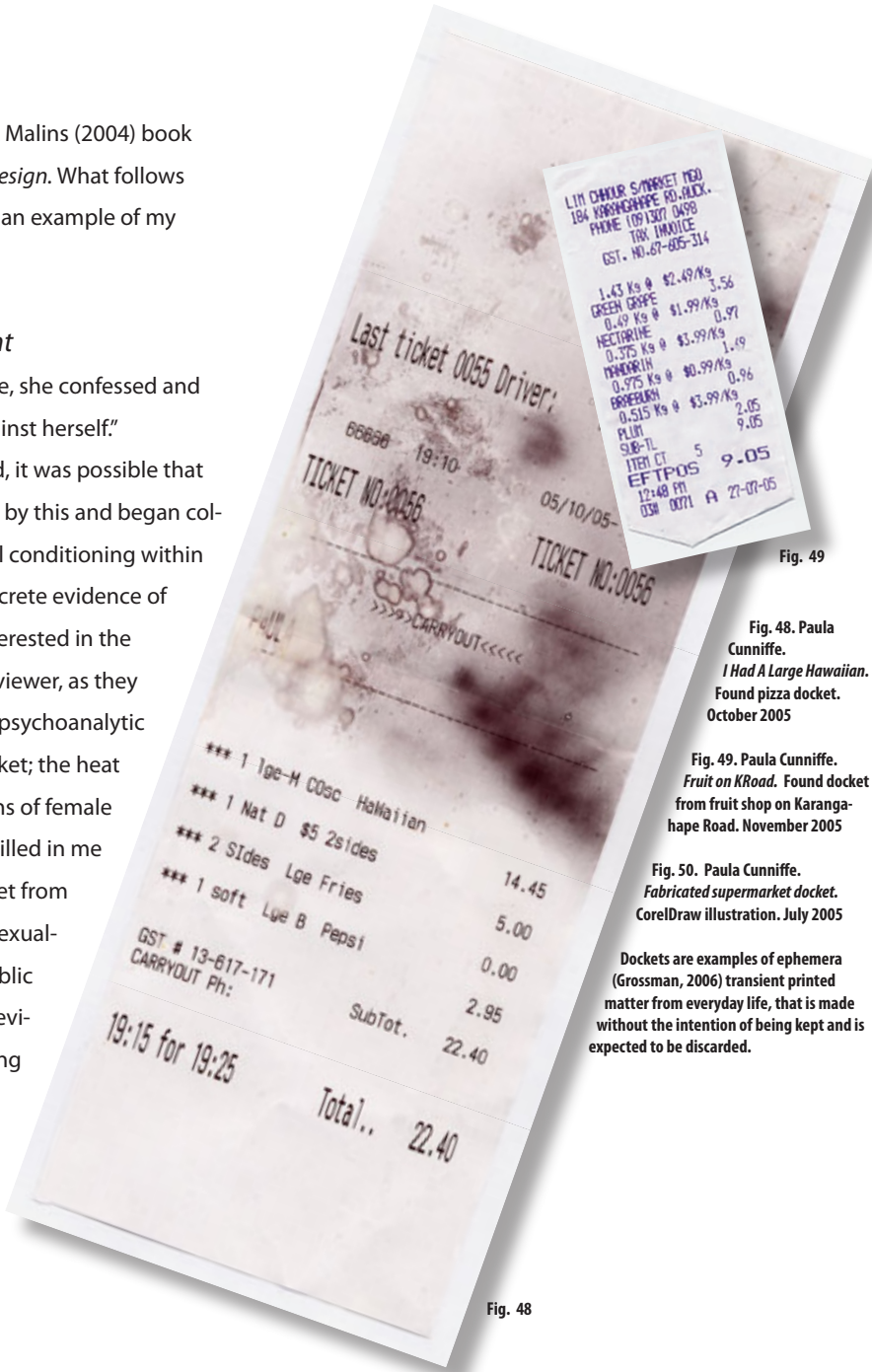


Fig. 50

impression of a woman readying herself for a night of romance as part of its narrative. Along a feminist theme, I used this docket as a basis for a concrete work to trial my ideas to the public in an exhibition called 'Fig. 4' held at Reflections Gallery, World of WearableArt & Collectible Cars Museum in September of 2005. [refer Figs. 48 - 51] It included three other pieces involving everyday language, a clothing label, symbols and a sign that were overdetermined in nature, exploiting the meanings of the materials and methods. It was evident that interpretation was different for each viewer, that their own backgrounds and knowledge changed how they read the work.

Conceptual artists Joseph Grigely (Fineman, 1996) and Robert MacPherson (Smith, 2001), share some common ground in their documenting of the everyday; by using text that evades comprehension. Grigely collects ephemera on which he records parts of conversations related to his deafness. When he is unable to lip-read or understand possible multiple meanings, he asks for clarification. The result is a composition of juxtaposed fragments of language on scraps of paper, which the reader struggles to make sense of when they see the words out of context. Likewise, MacPherson con-

nects people to specific locations by recording the use of the everyday vernacular language. From roadside signs and similar, he constructs fractured works that expose the limitations of our spoken language and the multiple meanings that we assign to them.

Playing around with words and their meanings, I began to experiment with 'projection' and Photoshop 'filters' in a literal sense. Filters are a Transactional Analysis term for the way that we perceive things according to previous experience. Using an overhead projector and a transparency of the fabricated docket, I photographed the resulting projections onto a variety of objects including myself. I was interested in how the text melded to fit the object's surface and how its combination with a non-associated object, changed or created meaning for the viewer. The idea of a portrait formed when corresponding text fell on my face, suggesting make-up, masks and illusions that belied what was within. I was more interested in creating a likeness without a human presence, in how external things were consumed by the individual, how they become a part of that person and help form their identity. Also in whether the products are physically absorbed, what beliefs the individual might gain from having

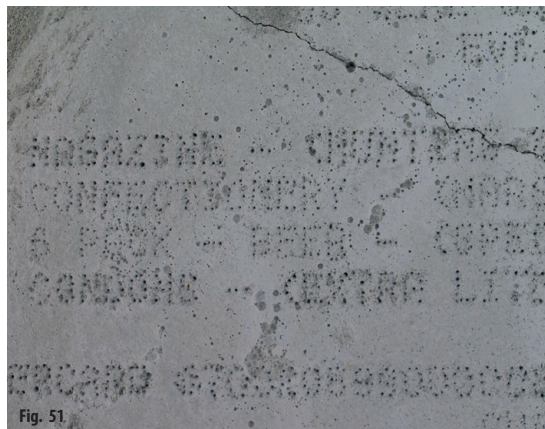


Fig. 51

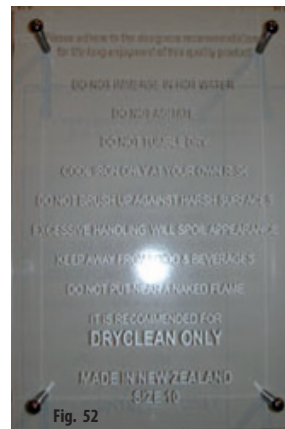


Fig. 52

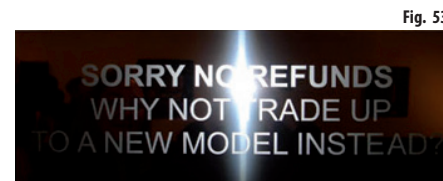


Fig. 53



Fig. 54

Fig. 51. Paula Cunliffe. [detail] Concrete docket. Concrete, stainless steel chain & meat hooks, 750x250mm. August 2005

Fig. 52. Paula Cunliffe. Washing Label. Frosted vinyl lettering on glass, A2 size. August 2005

Fig. 53. Paula Cunliffe. Sign. Frosted vinyl lettering on mirror finish stainless steel, 750x250mm. August 2005

Fig. 54. Paula Cunliffe. Please. Engraving & embroidery on mild steel & copper, 750x250mm. August 2005

used them, and what drives them to want to use them in the first place.

Intuitive process - remaining open to unexpected sources as a valid part of research

It was part of the phenomenological process, where I remained open to intuitive readings or events that I could use to influence my work. I used a recurring dream that I'd had since childhood concerning a house. In further research concerning this prompting, I read in Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1976), that the house and its contents in dreams are also interpreted as a symbol of the mind, and its corresponding rooms as parts of the self.

With the idea of the home in parallel with the mind and text as thoughts, I now turned my attention away from an external reading process to the inner processes of the viewer. In response to the fabricated docket, I created an inner monologue concerning what the purchaser was thinking as she walked around the supermarket [refer Appendix 4]. I imagined myself walking the isles of my local store, its layout and what my thoughts would be in response to objects or people encountered from prior experience. I put the idea of this projected monologue and home into my mid-year assessment, the text being like fleeting thoughts, overlapping and incoherent in some places as explained by Alan Palmer in *The Construction of Fictional Minds*.

Figs. 52 - 62. Paula Cunliffe. *Text projection on surface studies*. Shadow on face, body, crumpled paper, wire, corrugated iron & manipulated in photoshop, dimensions variable. August - September 2005

Fig. 63. Paula Cunliffe. *Water-based enamel studies & colour swatches*. Paint on cartridge, various dimensions. October 2005

Fig. 64. Paula Cunliffe. *Font sample for supermarket monologue*. Fabricated docket purchase in fake receipt font done in Coreldraw, various dimensions. September 2005



Fig. 63



Fig. 55



Fig. 56

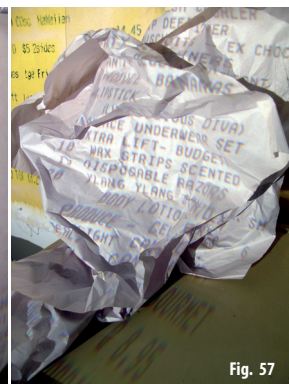


Fig. 57

Fig. 64 (right)

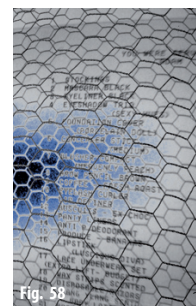


Fig. 58



Fig. 59

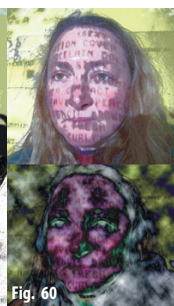


Fig. 60



Fig. 61



Fig. 62

SHIT WORK HAS BEEN TOO MUCH TODAY CAN'T WAIT TO GET HOME AND RELAX GOT TO GET TO THE SUPERMARKET BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE DOES BUT FIVE IS THE EARLIEST I CAN MANAGE THE BLOODY CAR PARK IS FULL ALREADY THANK GOD THERE'S NO PARKING CHARGE HERE AS I DON'T HAVE ANY SPARE

CHANGE
HENCE THE
THIRTY DOL-
LAR FINE
FOR THE
SECOND DAY
IN A ROW
CAN'T WAIT
TILL PAYDAY
AND I SWEAR

THIS TIME I
WONT DIP INTO THE PARKING METER MONEY FOR
ANYTHING ELSE KIDS ARE ALREADY AT MY SISTERS
BET HE WONT REMEMBER ITS VALENTINES DAY WHAT
DOES HE CARE ANYWAY HE THINKS SEX ANY DAY OF
THE WEEK IS VALENTINES DAY SO WHAT'S ANOTHER
DAY WITH A SPECIAL NAME THERE'S SOMEONE SELL-
ING RAFFLES FOR A CHARITY AND I HAVE NO MONEY
WONDER IF I JUST DON'T GIVE EYE CONTACT THEY
WONT SPEAK TO ME BUGGER THEY DID I HATE SAY-
ING NO TO A WORTHY CAUSE I JUST LIED AND SAID

I WOULD
BRING THEM
SOME CHANGE
ON THE WAY
OUT WISH
THERE WAS
ANOTHER
DOOR HAVE I
GOT THE

CREDIT CARD WITH ME NO I WILL HAVE TO CHANCE
THERE BEING ENOUGH MONEY FOR EFTPOS PAY
SHOULD BE IN TONIGHT HOPEFULLY HOPE HE
DOESN'T NOTICE HOW MUCH I'VE SPENT NOW WHAT
DO I NEED BETTER GET SOME VEGES AND FRUIT
ALWAYS MAKES ME FEEL BETTER JUST TO HAVE IT

I adapted a line of questioning from the book *Visualising Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (Gray & Malins, 2004) in which to access and analyse work, looking for key questions in which to make my next move. These are based on intuitive reactions to events that have taken place. I followed a similar questioning process to assess the suitability of key literature as well.

PAULA'S JOURNAL EVALUATION – reflection in action (Refinement, narrowing and focus)

When? – November 2005

Where? – Two rooms in B block studio's at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology

Context? Robert MacPherson, Joseph Grigely, Jackson Pollock/Automatism.

How? – Factual description of what I did? Using an interior monologue of a fictional shopping experience and typed in a fake receipt font, I projected a transparency of the printed text using a overhead projector directly onto the walls, ceilings, and floors in the two rooms. References to 'I', 'me', 'my' etc, were written in pencil. Shadows of objects in the room, including myself were traced with pencil depending on the direction of the light source. Receipts that had been the inspiration for the work, were swept into a circle in the second room.

EVALUATION - What was the most difficult thing?

The actual physical installation and packing out. It was quite hard on the body and emotionally, with the enormity of the task that took three days to install and three weeks to return to its former state.

How well did I do it? – It evolved quite intuitively which worked for me in this case. I responded to a dream about houses, which turned out to be symbolic of the mind and the processing of thoughts and parts of the self. So the use of the rooms worked well within the concept.

How valuable was it? – I made a conceptual leap from the external readings of ephemeral evidence, to the internal processes of personal experience immersed in the phenomena.



The fleeting thoughts themselves became evidence of ephemera recorded as text.

What did I learn? – during the process, the active involvement of the body allows the accessing of both parts of the brain. I was able to come up with ideas that I couldn't access if sitting at the drawing board. The use of pencil described above, was used to indicate the fragile and changing nature of the sense of self. The shadows were traced as evidence of being there for a fleeting moment in time, because of changing perception due to location at the time of thought, and as a result of where the projection

fell. I had intended to use the dockets on the walls, but in light of what was happening, they became an unnecessary part of the project from this point on. That resulted in the symbolic sweeping of them into a circle as leftover residue.

What didn't I learn? – failed at the beginning to realize the consequences of direct application of paint to the surface, and the cleaning up effort required.

How did I feel about it? – fantastic when finished. I knew I had made a breakthrough for myself although I had been uncertain at the beginning, working on a hunch. It was highly experimental and it paid off.

What sources' of information did I find? - Alan Palmer's Construction of Fictional Thought, psychoanalytic interpretation of dreams (Freud), philosophy and sociology regarding the self. Narrative and literary devices.

How valuable were they? - Alan Palmer's description of thought as incoherent, overlapping and constantly changing.

Why did I make a certain decision? - I had used the fake font receipt to imply mechanical input outside of our control, of being expected to think or act in certain ways according to our programming of language. This switched to my own handwriting as I realized a direct connection between my own thoughts and that expressed through my hand. This worked better with the concept of automatism and beliefs embedded into the unconscious of the individual.

What would I have done differently? - as a last minute thought, I splashed some paint around to give the impression of incoherency. In reflection, it was not necessary as the dripping and overlapping text already implied that.

Accessibility to the viewer? - not many people knew about it as it was on the second floor during the holidays.

SUMMARY: List pro's and cons of strengths and



Fig. 67



Fig. 68



Fig. 69



Fig. 70

weaknesses - mainly positive as above.

What does it all mean? - a great stepping stone to base all research on from this point.

What advice would you give someone? - the painting of text with waterbased enamel paint comes off more easily within a few days of putting it down. After several weeks, it requires a commercial sander and/or monotonous manual scraping.

Identify new key questions? - Public and private issues for expressing thought, does it need to be site specific or can it be created in a public gallery? Define interiority, what is the role of text within that?

Public response? - many people visited and spent time with this work. All described the overwhelming feeling of being immersed within the mind and thoughts of someone else.



Fig. 71

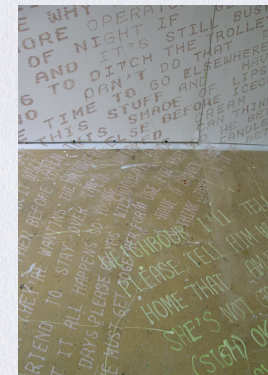


Fig. 72



Fig. 73

Figs. 67 - 73. Paula Cuniffe. *November Installation*. Water-based enamel paint over existing surfaces of 2 rooms including gib, linoleum, formica, wood & flameguard, dimensions variable. November 2005



Fig. 74. Paula Cuniffe. *Left over paint scrapings from November installation (untitled)*. Water-based enamel paint, part linoleum, part gib, part flameguard, part wood, various dimensions. January 2006

It took three days to install the work, and three weeks to return the painted room to its former clean state. I had time to reflect on the full meaning of interiority. Being aware of the strength and effort involved both physically and mentally, I became precious about saving the scrapings [refer fig 74] that were evidence of fleeting thoughts. I documented them in their separate piles according to the surface plane they came from, and even contemplated weighing them. I was curious about the weight of thoughts, memory and the stor-

age of the thoughts when they have passed. These scrapings were not only remnants of the text, but part of the surface they had been on had come away also. It occurred to me that even though this room was interior to the building, the walls formed an exterior boundary to the empty space that was inside it. The text mediated the two surfaces of interior and exterior, not being one or the other, but a part of both.

Text as mediator between private thought and public space

In preparation for the end of year examinations, I began to experiment in Photoshop with overlaying text for possible projection [refer figs. 75 & 77]. I trialled manual applications of paint on surfaces within the home [refer fig. 76], as well as using any other

everyday domestic products that could be manipulated to produce text. I wanted to see if I could forgo the use of walls by using plastic sheeting for the painted surface, to give the illusion of this private text being suspended within the public gallery.



Fig. 75



Fig. 76



Fig. 77



Fig. 78

Figs. 75 & 77. Paula Cuniffe. *Overlapping text studies*. Digital files manipulated in Photoshop, various dimensions. February 2006
 Fig. 76. Paula Cuniffe. *Wallpaper studies*. Water-based enamel paint overlapped on wallpaper, A2 workbook. March 2006
 Fig. 78. Paula Cuniffe. *Paint and colour studies*. Digital files manipulated in Photoshop, A2 workbook. May 2006

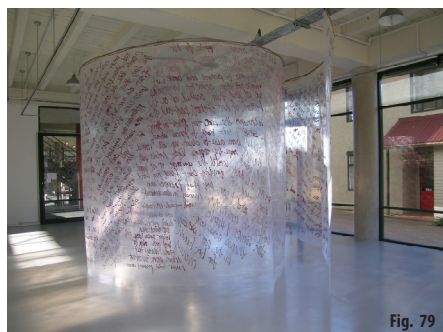


Fig. 79

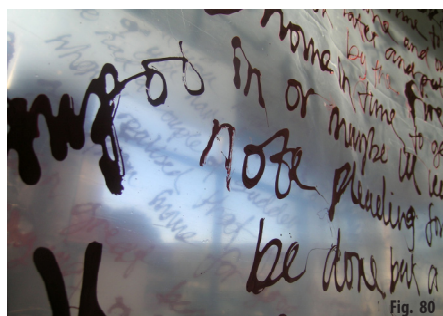


Fig. 80

In addressing the suitability of the public gallery for use of private thoughts, I installed 2x 5x3m plastic sheets in an interlocking spiral in the middle of the gallery, allowing a space where viewers could walk through. However there were many unanticipated technical difficulties encountered. As well as demonstrating Alan Palms description of thought as incoherent, overlapping and constantly changing, I wanted to use a reading of Walter Benjamin's *The Arcades Project*,

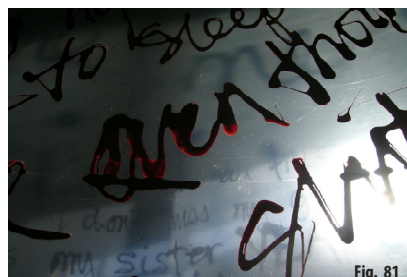


Fig. 81



Fig. 82



Fig. 83

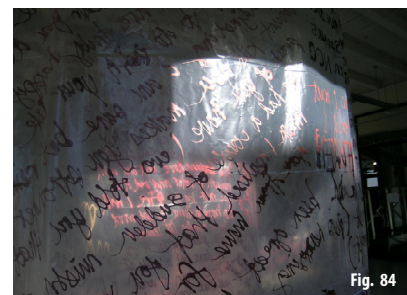


Fig. 84

Figs. 81 - 87. Paula Cuniffe. *June Installation* photos in the Fish Bowl Gallery, Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. Water-based enamel-paint on plastic, stainless steel, plastic ties, nylon rope. Various dimensions. June 2006

to show his idea of the individual's beliefs being reflected in the collective of society and vice versa, the collective reflected in the individual. Shadow effects of the text trialled successfully in the studio didn't happen in the gallery, making the piece quite redundant. There were moments of brilliance when the sun lit up several layers with refracted light at once, these themselves were fleeting and changing like thoughts. This gave good opportunity for photographs that were more successful than the work itself. As far as addressing private thoughts in a public space, the words lost their intimacy and impact which left me thinking that more domestic involvement was suitable, and that the image was more important to do with thought than I'd anticipated. I decided to also look at narrative to see if it should be constructed or left as is, and to look at other ways for public expression of private thoughts. However, I witnessed the installation being visited by several people whom enjoyed the physical interaction within the space.



Fig. 85

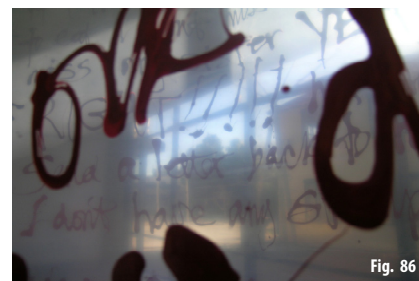


Fig. 86



Fig. 87

CHAPTER 3 – FINAL EXHIBITION [m‘I’n(e)d]

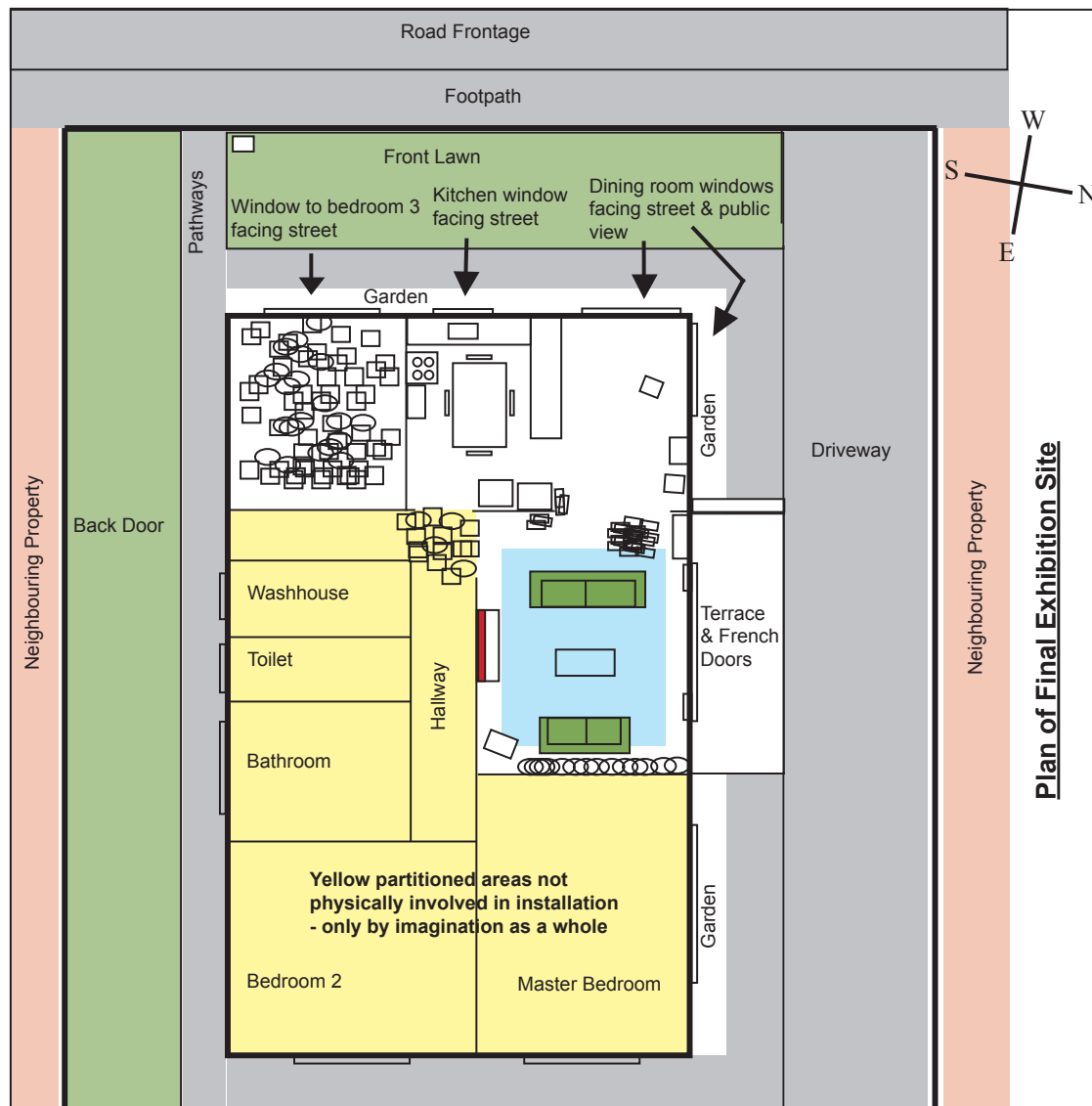


Fig. 88 Fig. 88. Paula Cuniffe. *Plan of Final Exhibition*. Illustration in InDesign. July 2007

The domestic interior of my home was used as a metaphor of the mind. Spreading over three common-ground rooms (kitchen, dining room and lounge) the exhibition contained objects found within the course of daily living. This was available for the public to access. Using my home as the alternative space with my own personal experiences as a single mother, I reveal the intimate, subjective and invisible realities of life.

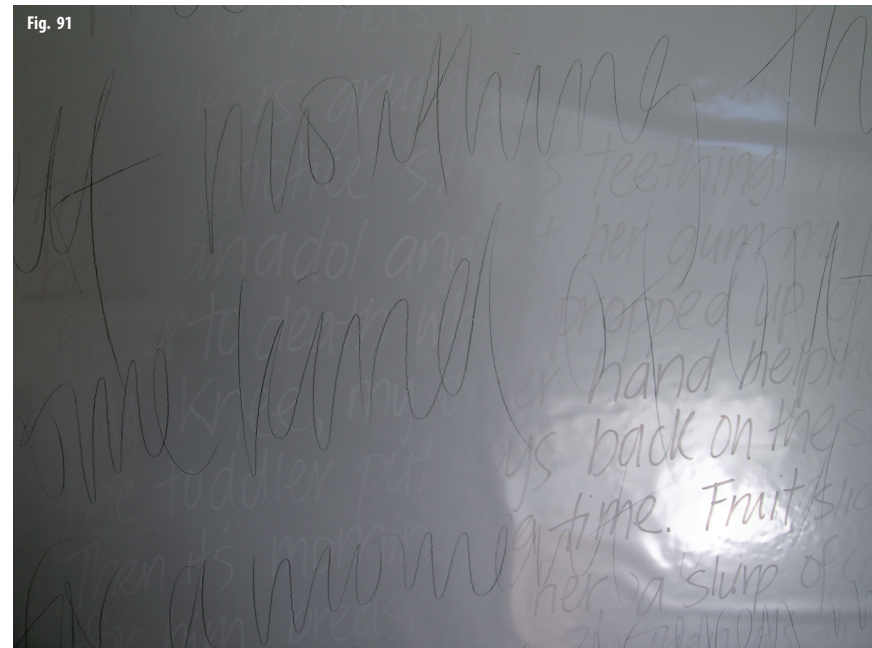
As a woman, British artist Tracey Emin uses the intensely personal and confessional aspects of her own everyday life within the public arena. Her text based works are of a diaristic nature, revealing secrets of a past that are held within the mind and thus invisible without expression of some kind. Her 1997 work entitled 'Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1965' (Merck, M., Townsend, C. & Emin, 2002), a small two person tent containing 102 names of past lovers, companions with which she has shared time with throughout her life: engages the voyeuristic tendencies of the viewer, forcing them to go down on all fours to enter this small and private confessional space within the public arena.

Emin's use of simple objects such as an empty cigarette packet become open to viewer association with the knowledge that it was had been held in the hand of her uncle when he was decapitated in a car crash (Merck, M., Townsend, C. & Emin, 2002). Emin's places low or everyday objects such as soiled underwear and used condoms alongside an unmade bed in

'My Bed', displaying personal contents of her bedroom interior where she spent days contemplating her suicide. This work breaches the exclusive realm of the private, nor does it feel comfortable in the realm of public knowledge.

The installation included the partitioning of the common ground from the more private spaces of the home. Barricades were made of everyday items in two doorways. This could be seen through, but did not give physical access to the rest of the house. Many items featured text & imagery as inherent features, some of which were incidental but then became important in the reading of the work.

The walls and surfaces of the lounge area contained an overlapping and almost incoherent tapestry of personal handwritten texts (thought, memory, fantasy) regarding sites of anxiety pertaining to the course of everyday living, which were specific to the spaces within those three rooms [refer to samples Appendix 5 & 6].



Materials included all-surface pencil in white, red, black and silver, as well as tomato sauce. Surfaces of objects include wood, metal, glass, fabric, vinyl, linoleum, hardboard, brick, formica, whiteware and the inclusion of a filmy textured wallpaper used in parts. Its static cling made it adhere to the wall in a way that flexed with the temperature of the room, shifting the illumination of certain parts of text with the changing natural light source.

Fig. 89. Paula Cuniffe. Lounge detail - final installation. Installation, found objects. June 2007

Fig. 90. Paula Cuniffe. Lounge - detail of final installation separating public and private space. Installation, found objects. June 2007

Fig. 91. Paula Cuniffe. Lounge wall - detail of overlapping white texts - final installation. Installation, pencil and white pentel pen on white plastic gift wrap. June 2007



Fig. 92

Fig. 92. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge longshot - final installation. Installation, found objects. June 2007

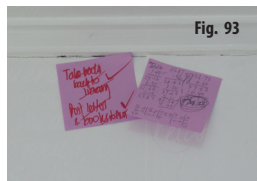


Fig. 93

Fig. 93. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge - detail of random sticky notes. Installation, found objects. June 2007



Fig. 94. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge wall south - detail of overlapping white texts, images and found objects - final installation. Installation, pencil and white pentel pen on white plastic gift wrap, digital prints and found objects. June 2007

Fig. 95. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge french doors - final installation. Installation, found & existing objects and white all surface pencil. June 2007



Fig. 94



Fig. 95

Found sticky notes with messages were used at random as a contrast to the stark whiteness and quips to disrupt the intense monologue.

Windows and glass doors to the outside contained monologues of thoughts arising during conversations whilst talking to people in those spaces or the threatening thoughts in anticipation of those that might come [refer Appendix 7].



Fig. 96

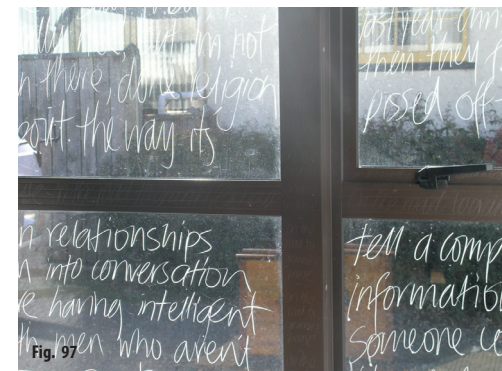


Fig. 97

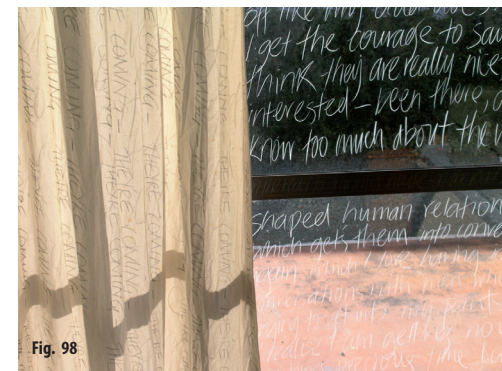


Fig. 98

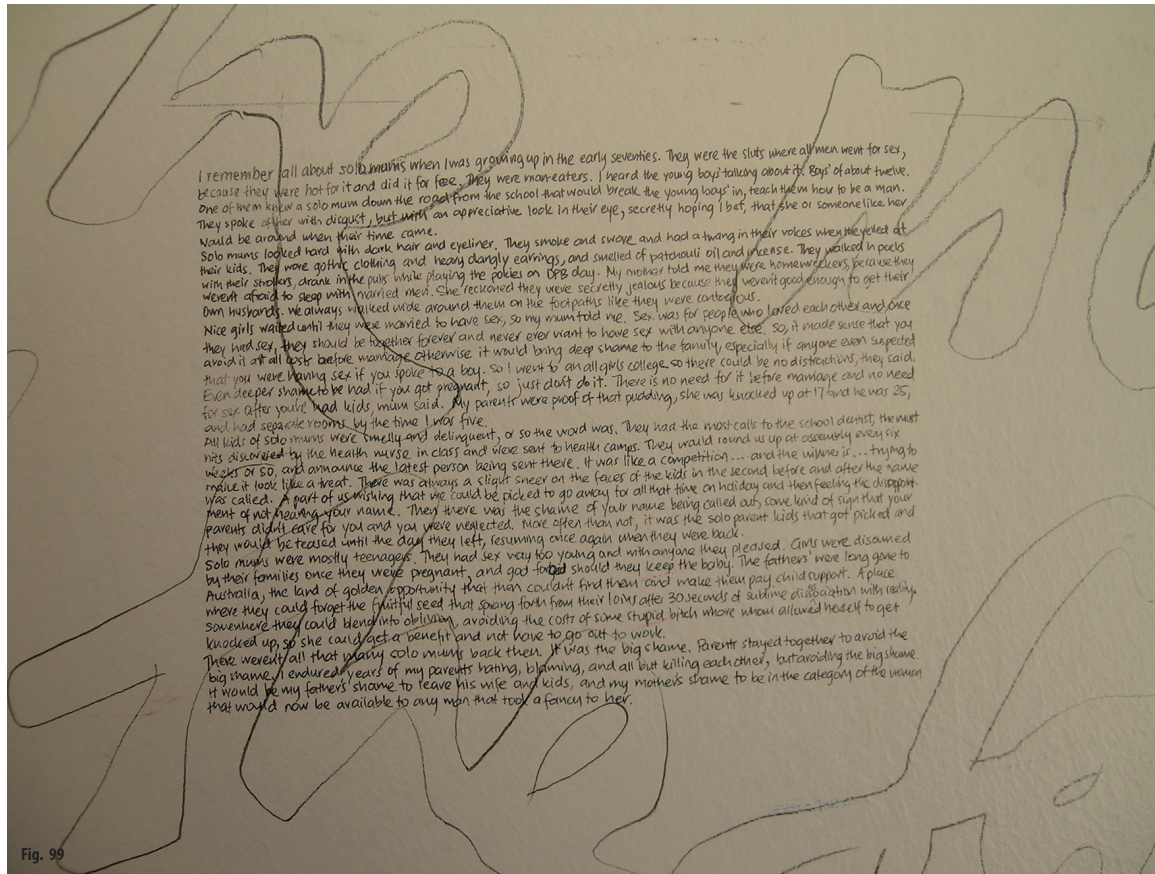


Fig. 99



Fig. 100



Fig. 101



Fig. 102

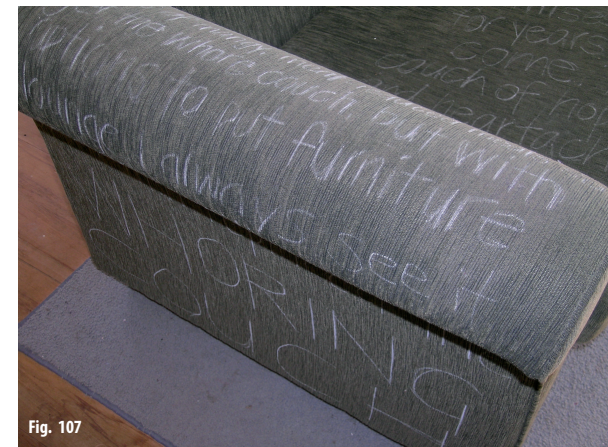
A part of the installation revolved around a minuscule piece of text [refer fig. 99], referring to a childhood memory concerning single mothers [refer to full text Appendix 8]. Discrete aspects linked in to each other around the room, such as the sauce bottle [refer fig. 101] with its contents having been used for text in the next room. This then relates to the window dialogue referring to the

- Fig. 99. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge detail - solo mum monologue - final installation. Installation, grey all surface pencil on existing wallpaper. June 2007
 Fig. 100. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge mid shot- detail of solo mum monologue . Installation, grey all surface pencil on existing wallpaper. June 2007
 Fig. 101. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge detail cross section - detail of intersecting texts on wall and fireplace, and empty sauce bottle used for text in other room - final installation. Installation, pencil and white pentel pen on white plastic gift wrap, red all surface pencil on brick and found objects. June 2007
 Fig. 102. Paula Cunliffe. Lounge door detail - solo mum text projection- final installation. Installation, all surface grey pencil on existing door. June 2007



staining of materials and how to remove them. In a play on words and associations, the stain monologues presence is linked to the single mother text and staining of reputations through beliefs and associations from childhood.

The fireplace monologue [refer fig. 105] is of memories of events that have happened there [refer to full text Appendix 9]. This holds true for the couch text [refer figs 106 & 107], which appears uninviting without its supporting cushions to give comfort [refer to full text Appendix 10].



Figs. 103 & 104. Paula Cuniffe. *Long shot & close up of wall text overlapping images - final installation.* Installation, grey all surface pencil on existing wallpaper. June 2007

Fig. 105. Paula Cuniffe. *Fireplace text close up.* Installation, red all surface pencil on brick. June 2007

Figs. 106 & 107. Paula Cuniffe. *Couch detail - final installation.* Installation, all surface white pencil on existing couch. June 2007

Fig. 108



Forensic type photographs containing scenes of domestic chaos, fabricated or otherwise were scattered on the walls at random – creating another time lapse dimension and displacing their association with the room from where they originated. Here they become enmeshed within the overlaid writing that occurred within the space. These were originally intended to be exhibited amongst a tidy interior, creating conflict over the contrast between their polar opposites as representative of fiction, fantasy and the absurd. However, a later decision to leave in the everyday grime may have complicated aspects of the reading.

The act of constructing the installation attracted attention from passers-by in the weeks prior to completion, leading to the feeling of being watched within ones home.

Fig. 109



The observance by passing public of the installation process, and an introduction of time-based objects involving the static sound of radio and television, turned the installation into performance sculpture. Items such as the grime of daily living, messy refrigerator, plus the inclusion of a cat bowl and food also contributed to the performance. Text could be seen from the street, and a room facing it revealed a buildup of everyday objects in the window. A homeowner would normally be horrified to reveal this to the public eye - a representation of the clutter of the unconscious and how we work to conceal parts of our own true inner selves.

Fig. 108. Paula Cunliffe. *Lounge detail - television - final installation*. Installation, existing television with static in between channels, bar of Dove soap & laminated A2 colour laser print. June 2007

Fig. 109. Paula Cunliffe. *Lounge - detail of final installation*. Existing exposed wiring, cords & laminated colour A3 prints of bathroom contents. June 2007



The removal of curtains in the dining area contributed to the feeling of being stripped bare, observed and judged. The accompanying text written in sauce [refer Appendix 11] upon the surfaces made another connection with rooms which contained various displaced and chaotic objects [refer fig. 110]. Anxious and repetitive text surrounded the formal grid structures of frames and windows [refer fig's. 113 - 116].

Fig. 110. Paula Cunniffe. *Dining room detail - final installation*. Installation, existing dining room, stereo & books, cords, power board, telephone and radio static sound, text in tomato sauce and all-surface grey pencil. June 2007

Figs. 111 - 116. Paula Cunniffe. *Dining room - close-up details of final installation*. Existing domestic surfaces written on with tomato sauce and all-surface grey pencil. June 2007

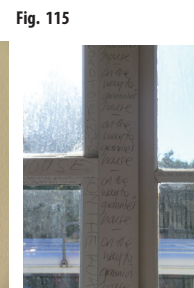
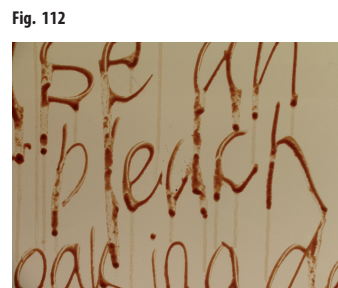
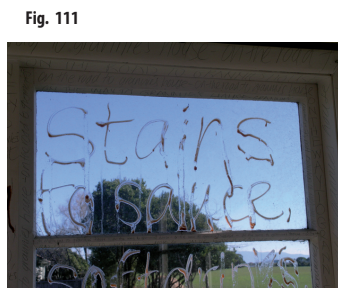




Fig. 117

Fig. 117. Paula Cunliffe. *Dining room detail of stereo speaker sculpture - final installation*. Installation, existing stereo speaker, books, power station and electrical cords. June 2007

Figs. 118 - 120. Paula Cunliffe. *Dining room - panoramic view - final installation*. Existing domestic surfaces written on with tomato sauce and all-surface grey pencil. Laminated A2 colour laser prints, stereo, books, cords and table cloth. June 2007

Self-help books form a sculpture with a stereo speaker emitting an ethereal static sound [refer fig. 117]. Precariously perched on top, a power board connects a telephone on a bench nearby with its only power source across the other side of the room. The absence of a table is highlighted by the remaining tablecloth that has been discarded on the floor in the space. Instead the table is cramped into the kitchen where its function is displaced [refer fig. 126].

In the place of a family portrait on the wall [refer fig. 120], is a representation of a family celebration in absentia [refer fig. 37 on page 23].



Fig. 118



Fig. 119



Fig. 120



Fig. 121



Fig. 122



Fig. 123

Sculptural elements included everyday objects displaced, such as washing built up in a line along the wall. This was added to with piles of books from a shelf organized in areas of interest and involving self-help. The book titles were used for their random meanings en masse, that correlated with anxious aspects of the self.

Imagery on place mats at the table [refer fig. 125] suggested psychological undertones in regard to mixed messages around the family table, traditionally a place of comfort and nurturing.

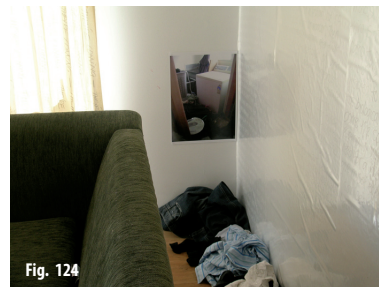


Fig. 124



Fig. 125

Figs. 121 - 123. Paula Cuniffe. *Bookshelf and sculptural arrangements of books - final installation*. Installation, existing bookshelf, books and glass bowl with all-surface pencil sharpenings. June 2007

Fig. 124. Paula Cuniffe. *Lounge detail - washing line sculpture - final installation*. Existing clothing piles and laminated A2 colour laser print. June 2007

Fig. 125. Paula Cuniffe. *Kitchen detail - final installation*. Existing table, chairs, kitchen equipment and laminated A2 colour laser prints. June 2007



Figs. 126 & 127. Paula Cunliffe. *Kitchen panorama details*. Installation, existing kitchen furniture, laminated A2 & A3 colour laser prints & cat food in bowls on floor. June 2007

Fig. 128. Paula Cunliffe. *Kitchen detail - towards passage with blockages*. Installation of existing kitchen furniture, laminated A2 colour laser prints, found items in doorway. June 2007

Fig. 129. Paula Cunliffe. *Kitchen detail - Rubbermaid*. Installation, chilly bin with found text. June 2007

Fig. 130. Paula Cunliffe. *Kitchen fridge detail*. Installation, found text on existing fridge. June 2007

Images not expected to be associated with the kitchen, such as dirty washing with surface scum and ornaments adorning a toilet cistern, feature in the kitchen [refer fig. 126]. Found text within the environment such as instructions written on the fridge and brand labels further add to a jigsaw of seemingly unrelated words [refer figs. 129 & 130].

Fig. 127



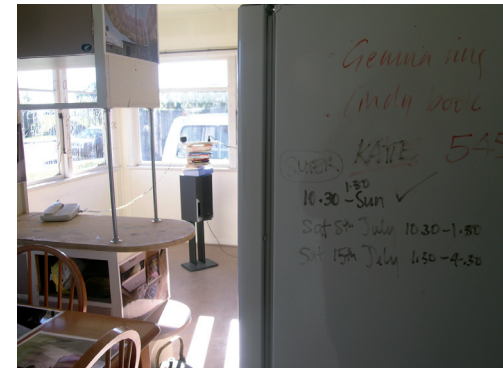
Fig. 128



Fig. 129



Fig. 130



Using my home as an alternative art space could be seen as a blending of high and low culture. One that makes a personal and political statement concerning several factors - the placing of an artwork within a common domestic setting, the highlighting of issues relating to single parents, of being a woman, and of revealing the private contents of inner thoughts to the public. The alternative art site such as the home, challenges existing forms of cultural control and representation upheld by institutionalized art spaces such as galleries and museums. Without a required aesthetic or political/social ethic, the alternative site avoids predetermined ideas about how the work should be read within an institutional space and allows the artist to manipulate every material, surface or site as part of the intended experience to be witnessed. An artwork/installation is only made such by the act of being seen by an art public (Loeffler, C. & Tong, D., 1990). My next challenge is to successfully transfer this installation to a more public arena in January - March of 2008. Thereupon further simplification, this work may become even more emotive and powerful than at this point in time.

CONCLUSION

I have undertaken a personal exploration of interiority and text surrounding thought. Interested in its impact both absorbed and projected back at society, I wanted to find tangible evidence of embedded social codes that help form identity within the unconscious, in turn, concretising our experience of being in the world.

Using both theory and relevant contextual references, I have been able to support my findings. In the studio I have been able to access remnants of this deep thought and its anxieties, with an active engagement using the whole body. In conjunction, I have used photo documentation of the private everyday domestic environment, that reflects my own story as a single parent.

In my line of phenomenological and psychoanalytical questioning regarding interiority (with the home as metaphor for the private mind), I was able to imagine a space that existed between objects and concepts, as located through Derrida's deconstruction and the term *différance*. In this thin membrane that separates one entity/object from another, I could then develop a process of four stages that highlights this space - from the unconscious to the physical object, and the transfer of meaning throughout. It remains an exciting process to develop for use in future works.

The findings have resulted in a conceptual art installation for exhibition within my private home. It combines two separate but interconnected series of works: of surface text on existing home interior in pen, pencil and paint line, and printed digital images.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1.

Your Guy

A paid advertisement. Single Gals? Tired of coming home to an empty bed when you are in the mood? Or wanting to avoid the embarrassment of bringing yet another random guy home or another STD? We've created the perfect man just for you! Our range of handsome and anatomically correct life size men offer you all the benefits of having your own man at home. You are quite right, they still can't do the dishes but it's nothing you've never had anyway.

Whether clothed or unclothed, the Guy's Paulo, James, Darryl, Thomas and Rudy are a delicious treat at the end of a long hard day. They also double as security, keep them in view of the window and prowlers will be deterred thinking there is a real live man in your home! Firm yet soft with a real skin like feel, they are centrally heated to keep you warm at night.

Pre-programmed with appropriate comments designed to affirm and appreciate you at a touch of a button.

Fully poseable into five different positions, they come with or without stubble, body hair and fluids with appendages made to personal preference.

The patented mechanical hip and jaw system has a lifetime warranty and it's rechargeable battery has a 12 hour life. The sealed unit makes your Guy fully washable and safe to use in the shower.

Your Guy comes wrapped in plain paper and is delivered to your door within 2 working days of full payment. A payment plan is offered with credit card purchases.

Ask about our multiple order special .. Go on .. Why not? Your Guy's won't judge or tell.

Illustration captions:

Thomas has a present for you right now ...

Darryl and Paulo are our exotic delights from Africa and Italy. Both are here on extended holiday and would love to come and stay at your house.

James and Rudy never go out drinking with the boys ...

IDLE HANDS/BUSY MINDS LTD - Call 0800 YOURGUY right now!

Appendix 2.

0800 HOUSING

Family -

Function: noun

Text: 1 a group of persons who come from the same ancestor <the Adams family made remarkable contributions to American life for more than two centuries>

Synonyms blood, clan, folks, house, kin, kindred, kinfolk, kinsfolk, line, lineage, people, race, stock, tribe

Related Words nuclear family; extended family, kin; brood; descendant (or descendant), issue, offspring, progeny, scion, seed; clansman, kinsman, kinswoman, relative; dynasty

Near Antonyms ancestry, birth, descent, extraction, origin, pedigree

2 one of the units into which a whole is divided on the basis of a common characteristic <the flute, the clarinet, the oboe, and other members of the woodwind family>

She told me when she picked me up from school we weren't going home. We had a new house now. It was a new old house. It was a house but not a home. It's got character she said. It's got an aviary and a tree hut up the hill. The floor wasn't straight anywhere inside. I finally had my own room. But it was the first time I'd slept in a room on my own. My room was on the right side of the house and sloped down towards the north. The bed had a large hollow. I could lay in bed at night looking at my toes

without effort. I had a hole inside my heart as big as a basketball. I would watch my brother play basketball outside in the driveway. My heart was that basketball. I was nine years old. I had to bike across morning town traffic to get to school. I was scared. Sometimes I would get off and push my bike because I was crying. I had a stomach ache a lot. But I did like the aviary. It was long broken and would never hold birds again, but I imagined that there were many in there with beautiful colours. Sometimes I wanted to let them out but I was scared that they would feel lost and not be able to find their way home, where ever that was. The tree hut was on a scary part of the hill and I didn't like to go there. The air smelled funny and empty. Sometimes it was sunny and it shone on my bare skin when I was outside, but I always felt cold. The sun never came into the kitchen or lounge. The heat from the coal fire never went past the hearth and it's dark stench burned the back of my throat. The winter was horribly cold. I used to try and see if my breath could reach my toes when I lay in bed. There was no getting warm. My sisters friend felt sorry for us. She came to visit me and brought some posters for my room, an airbrushed cat and a dog. I loved animals. They made me happy but I cried instead. I turned ten in that house. I had a party and my mum tried hard. I had many friends there but I didn't know if they were there for me or the party food. I look at photos of that day and I was so tomboyish and brash looking. I stood in a robust pose like there was nothing wrong, with a basketball under my arm and a slight sneer on my face. We only lived in the house for six months before we went back home, but it seemed like forever. I will never forget it. Twenty eight years later I drive past that house every now and then. A tree has grown up through it but it is still as saggy as ever. The guy who lived there for several years with his goat died not long ago. Housing worries? CALL 0800-HOUSING

Mental bric-a-brac

HOME WHO AM I?



Appendix 3.

Blog Sample Monologue

DECEMBER 25, 2006

Christmas with the family ...

I wanted to give them a surprise so I arrived nice and early. The birds were still chirping and I hoped I'd make it before the mozzies started biting.

I had my stash of goodies, and not wanting to wake them before I decorated I worked away, silently cursing under my breath because once again I had forgotten my deck chair. It meant I would have to kneel on the hard ground with pebbles and grit etching into my skin. Ah well, there are worse things one has to put up with.

Surprise! Merry Christmas and all that ... I've brought goodies with me. It's so good to see you again, you too mum and you haven't shaved again Mike. I suppose I'd expect that if I get you up this early. So how has everyone been treating you around here? I see Mavis's family has been to visit already. Oh, that was yesterday because they have gone on holiday and left her all alone? Well, at least they came I suppose, that

Lest I forget ...

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has to count for something when all is said and done. I decided not to give you both a gift this year because I realise you are short on storage space, so I wrote you a poem instead, mum. I'll leave it here so you can read it later, I can't read it because it chokes me up and I don't want to cry on Christmas day. Yeah, I know you aren't the poem type Mike, but things are also a little tight money-wise at the moment, and I was hoping you'd understand. I have a video on my cellphone I thought you'd appreciate ... It's your mate Graham's son competing at a local motocross event last weekend on your old bike. Yeah, I thought you'd appreciate that.

Sorry the kids aren't here. Teenagers, you know what they are like. Yes, I know mum, I was just like it myself and you can't really scoff either Mike. I think they are finally too old for Christmas, last year even though they can't get up before lunch on the weekend they still managed to get up at 6am for presents ... Not this year though.

They sound like a pretty boring lot around here, do they visit often? Yes, I know I should visit more often too but I was hoping that these guys might look out for you too when I can't make it.

Yeah, dad is ok. He is getting a bit rusty around the joints at 71. I never thought of him as old because he has been so active with the business. Now the semi-retirement is great for his brain, but he is getting weaker in ability because of the lack of movement, but yet it's enough to make him sore all over. He's spending a fortune at the chiropractor and also the doctors because one of his leg scrapes turned into an ulcer. He only has to knock against something and he bleeds like a stuck pig. Muuumm ... Easy, I know you didn't get on but I still have to live with him. He isn't actually that bad anymore, he's really mellowed. I think you'd like him now. As for you Mike, he is always bringing up stuff about you and how he wished he'd been more patient and told you he loved you. Yeah, well, I'm telling you now. Both of you. He always tell's

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- ☺ Christmas with the family ...
- ☺ Raving random notes to self at 3.30am
- ☺ Dead thrush inspection - different day, different view
- ☺ Thrush equivalent - what's it all for anyway?



everyone mum, that you're his best friend, that times may have been rough, but you stuck through it thick and thin. But could never tell him I knew that you were planning on leaving him before your 50th birthday, that would break his heart.

No! Not me. I've done my dash with love and romance and all that. I'm too busy for all that carry on these days, and I tell ya, I've never been happier. I get so much done and I actually like who I am now. As soon as I am in a relationship, I feel so vulnerable and fragile like I might break at any moment. Yes, it probably is selfish, but that is rich of you to suggest it even, mum.



No, I'm not getting snarky. I do get annoyed that when I make the effort to come and see you, you always bring up stuff from the past. Maybe I'd better go. Sorry Mike, but you know how

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mum is. The sandflies are pissing me off too and I haven't brought insect repellent and the ground is too lumpy. The kids will be up and I'd like to be there for them.


Ok, I'll leave the food for you. Both of you have a good day and I'll give your best to the others.


And then I leave pissed off and make my way home.





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Appendix 4.

Supermarket Monologue

Shit work has been too much today can't wait to get home and relax got to get to the supermarket before everyone else does but five is the earliest i can manage the bloody car park is full already thank god there's no parking charge here as i don't have any spare change hence the thirty dollar fine for the second day in a row can't wait till payday and i swear this time i wont dip into the parking meter money for anything else kids are already at my sisters bet he wont remember its valentines day what does he care anyway he thinks sex any day of the week is valentines day so what's another day with a special name there's someone selling raffles for a charity and i have no money wonder if i just don't give eye contact they wont speak to me bugger they did i hate saying no to a worthy cause i just lied and said i would bring them some change on the way out wish there was another door have i got the credit card with me no i will have to chance there being enough money for eftpos pay should be in tonight hopefully hope he doesn't notice how much i've spent now what do i need better get some veges and fruit always makes me feel better just to have it in the fridge even if no one gets around to eating it coffee yes i'll try the plunger type for a change jeez is that really my reflection in the cabinet door i look a mess that's what he's talking about my bum being flat like an old womans i'm sick of this bloody foundation i'm wearing always caking up by this time of the day bugger it i'll get some more may as well get a whole new lot as i've had this stuff for ages and now i get conjunctivitis if i wear this stuff for more than eight hours in a row could be why my skin is a bit dry lately too oh shit no thanks i don't want a free sample of baby shampoo and lotion smells nice no thanks no young babies in my house any more thank god excuse me please move your trolley thanks sorry didn't see you psycho mother with toddlers she sounds like i used to here it is why do they have to put these mirrors here in this awful light my skin looks so yellow better get some concealer too hell here comes my

neighbour don't have enough time to talk over the fence let alone here good i think she just ignored me too i wonder why better get some panty shields period is due and i'm sick of staining all my nice undies but still not a good enough excuse to wear nana undies who knows when he's in the mood oooh i might try some wax strips to do my own legs it will save money on having them done at the salon going without will soon get a protest from him anyway doesn't bother me that reminds me i better get his razors some scented body lotion will be nice but will be slimy once i'm in bed and will stain the sheets oh what the hell hope he has a shower before we go to bed i'm sick to death of the smell of his feet and he just thinks it's funny how am i supposed to be turned on when the smell of vinegar is everywhere his feet touch better get some deodorant too yes with the antiperspirant stuff although i worry about the aluminum content i've heard so much about that lately and tumors there's a nice bra and pants set that might cause some stir for him probably will when he sees the price must destroy the receipt he is home at six do i have time to cook dinner and get ready no i might get some fancy heat and eat meals or should i get take away no i haven't got time to wait for indian and drive through wont do here these look nice enough mmmmmmm roast and veges tastes like cardboard when it's heated no indian these aren't spicy enough for him could've waited for indian takeout by now look at the bloody checkout line hope it's smaller by the time i get there fuck i've got to stop swearing he hates it when i swear he thinks i'm quite the lady if only he knew if only he know who i really was yes wine is good some merlot it's the only drink we agree on hope he doesn't go overboard and bring up anything to do with business tonight ok i think these gourmet meals will have to do i can almost rearrange them to make it look like i've cooked it although he might be suspicious if there are no dishes on the sink and he knows i won't have enough time to clear the bench after cooking a meal by the time he gets home he hates spending money on food that i should make myself hell the line is still full of people why the hell can't they get more operators on at this

time of night if i get to the line and it's still busy i'm going to ditch the trolley and go no i can't do that i don't have time to go elsewhere and get this stuff and i haven't seen this shade of lipstick anywhere else before icecream yes whipped cream and chocolate sauce i can think of a use for that god he better have a shower oooh candles i think that is it he better appreciate this effort i've gone to i'd like to get one of those should i ooooh ooh no i'll leave it to next time when i'm not so rushed (laugh) when am i never not rushed in here at least the kids aren't with me asking for something every five minutes and tantrums in the line ok only three people ahead of me i can handle that may as well read cosmo while i'm waiting bitch of course i'll buy it that's why i'm looking it didn't really want to buy it but now i guess i have to she's looking at me like i'm a criminal or something don't put that in the bag with that can i have a separate bag for the wine please is that so much trouble can't you just smile for a change thankyou card declined how embarrassing and there just has to be six people waiting behind me all looking ok i'll take some stuff out the supervisor looks annoyed that she has to come with the key why do they make her walk so far it would make more sense to put the service centre in the centre of the checkouts wouldn't it what to leave out ok i'll leave the fruit and veg maybe the coffee can go here's a twenty dollar note try the card again god please let it be accepted i want to die thankyou thankyou thankyou thankyou thankyou i can't believe it all cost that much and no food to show for it for the rest of the week i'll have to come in really early before work to get enough food for school lunches once the pay has gone in tonight i'll have to tell him i've forgotten to get something crap there's the raffle man i promised to give some change to sorry mate what a saint to give up his personal time for a cause that doesn't give him any benefit at all the world needs more people like that where's the car it's raining again where's the key not that one must remember to put a tag on that key so i don't have to go through the whole bunch why the hell has that person parked right there i can't get out of that i'll have to get them at the service counter to page and ask

someone to come and move it where's a pen so i can write down the number plate there's the neighbour i'll tell her to please tell him when she gets home that i am running late no she's not going straight home (sigh) ok back to plan a go to the checkout oh no here the driver is a big finger to you buddy that's ok sir no problem at all you're ok why am i smiling let me sit quietly in here for a moment now the groceries are in the back not to long that icecream isn't wrapped in newspaper the stupid bitch it should come standard when someone buys icecream maybe i could invent some kind of packaging to prevent that that could be a big selling point hey here's some change on the floor i'll go and give it to the raffle man no thanks i don't want a ticket just make it a donation i really don't have time to fill that out ok i need another pen this one isn't working i don't really need another bbq but what the hell no sticker ok thanks for the sticker quick run there's someone else i know yes hello how are you i've really got to run we're having a special dinner you know yes he is a romantic guy i'm so lucky aren't the kids are eight ten and eleven now i know it happens so fast doesn't it one minute they are small and screaming and you think it will last for ever then before you know it they're wanting their boyfriend to stay over the night it all happens so young these days please go yes i will ring we must get together for a coffee soonish i know how it is we're all so busy and don't have time for the things that really matter anymore ok please go just turn around and walk away and smile and say later yes i've got a promotion now and it's all good sorry to be so rude but i've got to go please ring me i mean that ring me ok bye love to the family that woman gave me so much strife why does she want to know about my family right got to beat that traffic to get home

Appendix 5.

Wall Monologue

It's always the awkward bit, I'm afraid if we stop talking about the weather then we will have nothing worth talking about at all so we talk about it longer than we should even try and make it sound more intellectual than it is which leads to the inevitable global warming, is it for real or a conspiracy for global social control since religion doesn't have the same amount of control over the masses like it used to, now that everyone can think as an individual and all, then I can see that their eyes are shifting around the room and taking in the not so perfectness and there is that awkward silence space between a change of subject which I can't stand and I feel the need to control where it is going so I do a quick compose in my head and let it come out my mouth which is totally different to what I imagined in my head then I suffer a moment of amnesia long enough having been triggered by the shock of what I actually said. Was it about them or me? All I know is that it is something to deflect away from having them have to visit the kitchen, or me offer to make them a drink because they will follow me and see how messy it is and how unprepared I was to have visitors and why I didn't invite them in the first place. I can still see my mother hiding when visitors came up the driveway but I don't know why not I still get the knee-jerk reaction to do the same, to make elaborate excuses like I'm just going out or I have no coffee or milk or whatever I know it is they require short of saying 'fuck off' anyway if I were to offer them a drink they'd need to use the toilet which hasn't been cleaned in ages and it's pot luck if it has shit stains on it or floaters from the morning rush. Then they'll see the build-up of dust and tampon wrappers in the corner and will feel a shudder of horror that will have them running for the bathroom to wash their hands. If they haven't tripped on a pile carefully and not so carefully stacked clothes and other everyday necessities awaiting a magic fairy to put them in the right place, not that I have found a right place for them yet, they'll see that the bathroom has at least twenty towels

unwashed and smelly. The shower has a build up of scum partially hidden by hairs rolled into balls so that they can't be sucked down the drain. Then there are piles of clothes that won't fit in the overflowing washhouse floor, all waiting for a spare moment when I'm not working or feeding kids or sleeping, but it's like a magnet to people, they somehow sense that I'm free and come flocking, all with nothing to say, waiting to be entertained, but I have nothing to give them. I see the revolt spread over their face at the realization of the sloth that I am, everything that a good, nice, sweet, sexually viable nurturer my mother said I should be, but forget about the sex part, she hated sex or maybe that was just with dad? NO, she was a real prude, and didn't think anyone should need sex once they'd had kids just because one didn't want it at all. So no innuendo's were allowed, which is probably why I'm so perverted with them now, seeing double or triple meaning exist when no one else can. I think too much or at least I think I think too much. So I'm trying to keep them here in the lounge and out of the kitchen. If I change to clear a piece of the couch, they can sit facing the wall without having to see all the other clutter, if they see the kitchen they'll see weeks of food spillage build up, rubbish that hasn't been binned, rotting food and every single dish that should be in the cupboard, on the bench unwashed. So if I'm pushed to make a drink for a visitor, I have to clear the sink first to get near the cold water tap. Then I'll have to wash a cup, not one for me because that will take longer and their natural curiosity will draw them to the kitchen about what the hell is taking me so long. Then I have to sort through all the dishes with a loud and unsophisticated clatter as I find or at least try to find a teaspoon, but can't, only a knife which I rinse under the hot tap to melt off the butter and marmite from breakfast this morning or maybe it was yesterday's breakfast. So I carefully measure out what I think one teaspoon will be and so it goes on. But I try to avoid this scenario by claiming and overcompensating that I am a shocking hostess, self-deprecating to the max, before I feel the sting of the fact implied by their careless comments. Then I've managed to bypass that and I'm still

feeling vulnerable while still struggling for conversation, then I've paused too long and they ask 'so how is your love life?' They assume somehow that a woman my age and with the amount of relationship challenges that I've had in the past that I must have considered becoming a lesbian, but no I say, no special man or woman. Then they look embarrassed again after their attempts to be sympathetically pc and they say that they aren't homophobic at all but had worried about me because I'd been letting myself go, not wearing makeup but sporting brushed cotton shirts and track pants, not to mention they'd seen me out with some butch looking women who were known all around town as being lesbians and if I didn't want people to think I was one then I shouldn't associate with them. Then I point out it is my ex-sister-in-law-turned-lesbian they are talking about and I'm silently torn between my loyalty to her and her partner whom I adore and some shallow face-to-face confrontation in which I am compelled to make myself look like a saint, so here I go again, over compensating and feeling the guilt of not backing her up, but pointing out that I've never seen her happier in her whole life and each to their own and the like even though she constantly says to me once you try it you'll like it and never say never but I don't say it. Then I make it clear that I couldn't make a relationship with a man work so what makes me think I could make a relationship based on the same principals work with a woman? But I don't say that on the odd occasion I've had a girl crush in case I confuse things for them. Never sexually attracted to a woman, but I've admired their strength or beauty without feeling like I wanted to lick their pink bits, which I know with absolute certainty in my mind that I never have wanted to, or have done so, and in fact never want to lick pink bits. It's all I can do after acquiring a taste for marinated mussels, to keep myself from looking at them because if I do I start gagging at the sight of them going near my mouth let alone the smell, but only from what I hear. So that makes me wonder if the whole fish thing is true? So then I go to great pains to explain that I think the whole romantic love concept was made up and attached to the emotions that

came with the biological urge to procreate. Then come the sour grapes comments, especially when I say I have no logical need for a husband or boyfriend. I can give myself everything I need because I can see past the biological urges. I don't need the status of being financially looked after or protected. My friends male and female give me all the emotional support I need ... why get into a relationship where the injustices are magnified because of some inset expectations about what our roles should be? Maybe I have come to this conclusion, because romantic relationships bring out all the things I don't want in myself, anger, jealousy, envy, rage, disappointment, stalking, suspiciousness, depression, negativity, possessiveness and a whole lot of demonic like possessions of my mind that make me want to take a large knife to my throat .. or his. But I could NEVER tell them or anyone this. I can't stand being half of a whole. I want to know the full story. Not being fully aware gives me insecurities too hard to bear. On the other hand, knowing everything causes an ongoing hypervigilance that is debilitating, making me even more insecure. I'm not a control freak. I don't want to control anyone else, just to control my own pain .. that is the key. Anything to avoid the pain of myself real or imagined. Ignorance is bliss I want my life to be directed by me sitting in the armchair, watching the telly with the foresight of what the other characters are like – then turn it off. I'm not a control freak, more like an out of control freak, trying desperately to control it. So I'm sitting here trying not to give away too much because I'm strung out with anxiety my mouth belying my calm exterior. I know because I've watched myself do it in the mirror.

Appendix 6.

Nightmare Monologue

n the dark forest, the sound of a roaring chainsaw rips through the night, the fear of its sound splitting my heart in two like it's being pulled in separate directions. I can feel myself screaming hysterically but there's no familiar sound of my own voice. No one can hear me above the chainsaw. In my mind's eye I can see myself mouthing the scream, the sheer terror on my face like some kind of outer body experience. The chainsaw putters for a moment and I think I have this escape as it coughs and starts up again with a roar even more horrific than the first. But this time I'm running, running for my life but my legs feel like they have been drugged. I fall to the forest floor and I realize that the chainsaw is directly above me, I turn over and beg for it to end this agony. I feel it's whizzing metal chew into my chest and the warmth of the blood oozing onto my clothing. As it turns cold I realize I am still alive and it's at this moment I wake up with breast milk all over the sheets and the baby is still crying. Instinctively I sit bolt upright, I learnt quickly that is the best thing to do. It's still dark and I know the steps, I don't even need to open my eyes. It's mid-winter and a quick dash without bothering to get a covering before stealing the baby back to bed is the ideal. There's no option of a partner to bargain with over who gets the baby. Maybe it's best this way. The baby is convulsing with hunger and frustration over the wait. His head is bobbing like a clown at the fair with mouth wide open, snorting like a pig, eyes not seeing a bit like a shark. This is all natural I tell myself, women have been doing it all for millions of years now. I am so numbingly tired. Eight hours of solid sleep must be a convention of socialization because it sure has nothing to do with procreation. Night after night and I feel my eyes sinking further into my head, the day time seems like an extension of night, the loneliness, the lack of feedback and affection, seeing through eyes of fog and with a nil attention span. As I struggle to free a nipple and aim the baby's head in its direction but he is beside himself. Mental note to self to respond more

quickly next time. But when is responding quickly helpful and when is it teaching him that he gets everything he wants when he demands it? I'm too tired to argue with him or answer my own question. I'm not adept at multi-tasking yet. Then there's the relief of him finally finding it and the sensation of not quite latched on with a slight adjustment of outer flesh to get past the sharp searing of cracked nipples, I should have taken nipple preparation with massage more seriously while pregnant I thought it was some kinky new age sex thing with your partner but I didn't have one to do it for me. Then there's the silence apart from the sucking, at least it's not the screaming, no wonder we learn the habits of sticking things in our mouths to sooth us when growing up so I can blame eating when stressed on that. My eyes are closed but I already know this routine so well. It's almost like the rhythm of CPR he sucks four times then I hear the escaping of air as he releases his held breath before taking another one, then sucking again and so on. His little body presses into my belly as he breathes and it's in this moment all is forgiven. I relax and I feel my head swooning as I try to stay awake, momentarily losing consciousness with a quick dip that startles him, then he keeps sucking. I've haven't kept check and he drains one breast totally leaving the other one painfully swollen and weeping silently. He's had enough now. I feel him roll his head back in the dark and I know he's looking at me. His wee body hesitates with a sharp intake of breath and I hear a quiet coo. I sit him up, I know exactly where to press from trial and error, the air escapes like a drunkard at a bar. He's already almost asleep. Thankfully he hasn't soiled himself yet as I lay him in the empty spot next to me in the bed. The wet sheet and nightgown has turned to an icy chill as I lay back down. Too cold, too exhausted to change it, or make the trip to the crib with the baby I put my head on the pillow and thank god that falling asleep is no longer a problem for

Appendix 7.

French Door Monologue

What a shameful waste it is – those cute Maori and Islander boys selling their faith door to door. I can't help but at least talk to them just to hear a cute mans voice. What a waste. I could convert them from Gods work if I had half a chance. I never let them past the front door though. Can they do anything for me? Like those dishes or some housework? And I shift my body and the door to a smaller slit in case they caught a glimpse of the pig sty behind me. And I'm wanting to say that their God wouldn't actually approve of what I really wanted them both to do with me, but instead I smile and say no thanks, not today. When can we? They smile innocently and they come around some other days because I haven't got the guts to tell them to fuck off like my dad does. Finally I get the courage to say that I think they are really nice but I'm not interested – been there, done religion, know too much about the way its shaped human relationships which gets them into conversation again, of which I love having intelligent conversations with men, who aren't trying to get into my pants... and I realize I am getting nowhere, wasting precious time that I could be spending time with my kids who are waiting, hungry and bored. So I hastily end the flirtation until the next couples come another a few months later. But every time I always turn down Sky offers. Does that mean it is free forever I ask with a sweet smile? No they say quite shocked. I'm on the DPB I explain. Many of our customers are they said and they can still afford it, well, I'm still paying off my couch and last years Christmas presents that are on H.P. then they finally get the hint and then I'm pissed off that I've been manipulated into telling a complete stranger my personal information again. Mostly if I see someone coming up the driveway like marketers, survey people or salesmen or women, I hide behind the curtain because I know I'll get sucked into their people manipulating skills. So I bought the book How To Win Friends and Influence People but I haven't read it yet.

Appendix 8.

Solo Mum Monologue

I remember all about solo mums when I was growing up in the early seventies. They were the sluts where all the men went for sex, because they were hot for it and did it for free. They were man-eaters. I heard the young guys talking about it. Boys of about twelve. One of them knew of a solo mum down the road from the school that would break the young boys in, teach them how to be a man. They spoke of her with disgust but with an appreciative look in their eye, secretly hoping that she or someone like her would be around when their time came.

Solo mums looked hard with dark hair and thick eyeliner. They smoke and swore and had a twang in their voices when they yelled at their kids. They wore gothic clothing and dangly earrings and they smelled of patchouli oil and incense. They walked in packs with their pushchairs and drank at the pubs on benefit day. My mother told me they were homewreckers, because they weren't afraid to sleep with married men. She reckoned they were secretly jealous that they didn't have their own husbands. We always walked wide around them on the footpaths like they were contagious.

Nice girls waited to have sex, so my mum told me. Sex was for people who loved each other and once they had sex, they should be together forever. It was best to get married first and avoid sex before that otherwise it would bring shame to you and the family, even more so if you got pregnant. So just don't do it my parents said. There is no need for sex before marriage or once you have kids. My parents were proof of that pudding, having separate rooms from as far back as I can remember.

All kids of solo mums were smelly and delinquent, or so the word was. They had the most calls to the school dental office, had nits discovered by the health nurse checks

in class and were sent to health camps. They would round us up at assembly every six weeks and announce the latest person being sent there, like it was a competition ... and the winner is... trying to make it look like a treat. There was always a slight sneer on the faces of the kids in the second before and after the name was called. A part of us wishing that we could be picked to go away for all that time on holiday and feeling the disappointment of not hearing your name. Then there was the shame of your name being called out, some kind of sign that your parents didn't care for you and you were neglected. More often than not, it was the solo parent kids that got picked and they would be teased until the day they left, resuming again once they were back.

Solo mums were mostly teenagers. They had sex way too young and with anyone they pleased. Girls were disowned by their families once they were pregnant and god forbid she should keep her baby. The fathers were long gone to Australia, the land of golden opportunity that made them forget the fruitful seed that sprang forth from their loins. Somewhere they could blend into oblivion, avoiding the costs of some stupid bitch allowing herself to get knocked up so she could get a benefit and not have to work.

There weren't all that many solo mums back then. It was the big shame. Parents stayed together to avoid the shame. I endured years of my parents hating, blaming and all but killing each other, but avoiding the big shame. It would be my fathers shame to leave his wife and kids, and my mothers shame to be in the category of the woman that would now be available to any man that took a fancy to her.

Whatever way you look at any of it, it was a whole lot of shame. Shame and guilt. The guilt that comes in anticipation of the shame and then the guilt you feel once you have the shame. Always waiting for the moment when you shamed someone in the

family, degraded the family name and lost your pride. Guilt and shame kept families together. It was stronger than love.

Love, sex, guilt and shame.

Appendix 9.

Fireplace Monologue

And we lay down here beside the fire, his hand gently cradling my head and the other one stroking my face. I prayed to God that if he were true, he'd make this man love me and my children, because just once we deserved to have some happiness, that I'd have someone to love me at the end of the long hard days and give me some other reason to make the effort to get up every morning to the never-ending ground-hog day that was my life. It dawned on me that God would never allow something that breathtakingly wonderful on an ongoing basis for me. This man made me feel sexy and loved. At least the closest thing to what I would ever call love. I also realised that after six years of doing this ... he would never leave his wife, no matter how much he hated her, and that even if he did, some other silly bitch would soon get sucked in and become the other woman getting the best of him, while I stayed lonely at home with the kids.

Appendix 10.

Couch Monologue

I bought this couch to take away the pain of past lovers, hours of feeling loved and liked by someone other than little babes, but it was feigned affection lying this way. Kind words I wanted to hear of many promises to love me for years to come. A couch of hope and heartache and ugly design. Head rests here. If I crouch down here with the curtains closed, no random visitors looking through the dining room windows can see me. Foot rest here, no bare feet, no shoes, just sox, no sex. One month to go until

this couch is paid off. Three years of mangy, meat-reduced meals so I would forget the whore couch, but with limited options to put furniture in this lounge, I always see it in the same position as the couch that replaced the whoring couch.

Visitors sit here, so they can't see the messy kitchen. I'm determined for this to stay a virgin couch. No future romance hopes live here.

Appendix 11.

Stains Monologue

To remove stains caused by coffee, tea, tomato sauce, juice, wine, chocolate and soft drinks, use an enzyme treatment before washing. Use bleach if it is safe for the fabric, if not, soak in a detergent and wash as soon as possible to make sure the stain is completely removed.

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