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**DISCURSIVE AND MATERIAL PRACTICES OF MOURNING: BODIES,
SPACE AND TIME.**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

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at

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Abstract

Within the territory of mourning, this thesis tells three autoethnographic stories of death; the unexpected death of the author's 16-year old brother, Grant, when she was herself a child; the later painful dying of her father; then the wrenching ending of her mother's life. Within these significant encounters with death and loss, three particular moments are selected in an exploration of the ways in which mourning, materiality, space and time are co-implicated. These moments are shown to embody an intersection of mourning and materiality – as bodies, tears, feet, dresses, breasts and fluids – space and time.

Poststructuralism and new materialist theorising frames the analysis of the ways in which mourning is both discursively and materially produced. Autoethnography becomes a diffractive methodology that uses self as ~~data~~, including showing the professional learning/teaching moments in which the connections between mourning, bodies, tears and loss were first made visible to the author.

In a further step, the thesis moves into the professional domain of counselling in a New Zealand secondary school. The author's experience of a death in the school community becomes a reflecting surface for noticing the ways in which mourning rituals constitute the subjectivity of those grieving. The author suggests that her professional practice as a school guidance counsellor is shaped by her earlier personal family encounters with mourning. In particular, she suggests, the deconstruction of the stories of these encounters produced particular practices in her work with students, staff and a community touched by sudden death.

Personal lived experiences with death and mourning are folded into the mourning school as a dynamic assemblage. In these ways, time and space are shown to meet with the temporal materiality of bodies (both alive and dead), tears, dresses, veils and fluids and their discursive implications, to produce a timespacemattering.

Acknowledgements

On the first day of my Master of Counselling study, my teachers asked me whom it was who stood with me and alongside me as I prepared for this learning journey. It was a magical question. I closed my eyes. I breathed deeply. I was at once embraced by the light and shade of my most significant people, places, forces and events. This question has stayed with me. It has nurtured, sustained and inspired me. It holds me still.

The question folded time and space. My brother, my father and my mother (all who have died) unfolded from my heart and were alongside me. Their stories have been gifted to me and appear in this thesis. I honour this inheritance and hope that the love I hold for them is reflected in the words that appear here.

Nestled beside me were my husband, Glenn, and my three children, Rachael, Gabriel and Reuben. They are my soft place to land and my spirit nourishment. They remain the place of courage and the space of love.

Now that I have folded this thesis into my study, I think about the question again. Fellow student counsellors and teachers, who I have studied alongside, stand with me too. I also have with me my supervisors, Associate Professor Kathie Crocket and Dr Elmarie Kotzé. Their steadying guidance, deep care and remarkable insight have companioned me throughout my study. I am deeply grateful to Kathie for the beauty of language, for encouraging my robust thinking and for her deep wisdom. I am indebted to Elmarie for the work of tears, her soulful passion and a desiring for justice. This study, the learning, the laughter and the tears have been a transforming experience for me.

“Kuhlangene isanga nenkohla” is a Xhosa proverb that says that the wonderful and the impossible have collided or joined. In this study the (im)possibility of mourning and the wonder of life are joined in the stories and in the theory.

“One’s always writing to bring something to life, to free life from where its trapped, to trace lines of flight” (Deleuze, 1995, as cited in Wyatt et al, 2014, p.412).

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Chapter One: These weeping eyes, those seeing tears.....	1
Of mourning	1
Bringing myself to mourning	2
The self	3
A mourning school	4
The territory of mourning	4
Deconstruction.....	5
Derrida and mourning	7
Time and space as folded	11
Autoethnography as (im)possible	13
Caring for ethical matters	17
Unfolding the chapters	19
Chapter Two: Matter and Meaning	23
Setting out the chapter	23
Foucault: Power/knowledge and docile bodies	25
Discourse and mourning	29
Territorialisation and lines of flight	31
Becoming	35
The fold: spaces and bodies	36
Differentiation	38
New materialism	39
Intra-action	41
Diffraction	42
A pause	43
Chapter Three: At My Father’s Feet.....	44
Folding theory with, “At my father’s feet”	48
An entanglement	49
Touching: matter and meaning	49
The question	50
Memories	50

Touching all Others: diffracting time	51
The force of mourning	51
The question	52
Spacetime negotiations	53
The work of this fold	54
Chapter Four: The Yellow Funeral Dress	55
Folding theory with, “The yellow funeral dress”	57
Dominant mourning discourse	58
Smooth space and striated space	58
Shifting deathscapes	59
Positioning theory	60
Subjectification: mastery and submission	62
Bodily inscription and performativity	63
Power/knowledge as productive	65
Decomposition	66
Lines of fracture	66
The dead body	67
New materialism and the matter of the body	68
Black is the colour of mourning	69
The work of this fold	71
Chapter Five: Mother Fluids.....	72
Folding theory with, “Mother fluids.....	75
Aporia	76
Timespacemattering	77
Foucault: disciplining the body	79
Compassionate witnessing and reasonable hope.....	80
The work of this fold	81
Chapter Six: Light, the white dress and the presentation	82
Folding theory with, “Light, the white dress and the presentation”.....	86
Matter and mattering: an entanglement of intra-action	87
Intra-action as agency	87
Differentiation	89
Becoming-with-white-dress	90
Timespacemattering	91
“What does it mean to follow a ghost?” (Derrida)	92

The work of this fold	95
Chapter Seven: An assemblage of entanglements	96
The mourning school	96
The assemblage at work	104
The yellow-dressed girl	106
The materiality of the dead body and “The white dress”	108
Encountering the body: a threshold	108
Encountering death: re-encountering Grant and “The white dress”	109
Entanglements as pleats	111
An ethical mattering	112
References	117

Chapter One

These weeping eyes, those seeing tears
(Marvell, 1681)

Of mourning

*I stand at the end of the long driveway of our home,
breathing
the cloying morning mist of a May daybreak.
It is cold
in my unslipped feet.*

*Night is still near,
the sunrise weaves through the moony light.
I bend to stroke my dog, Honey,
whisper in her ear.
Try not to think about what is happening in my parents' bedroom.*

*The ambulance's siren
breaks the filmy suburban night air
rends apart what is
familiar
safe .*

Dad is crying.

*My brother
slumped over my parents' bed,
blue feet forbidding
my entrance.*

*My mother
breathing life into my brother.*

“Go and wait for the ambulance so they know where to come!”

I stand at the end of the long driveway of our home.

Bringing myself to mourning

In the early hours of a May morning my 16-year old brother, Grant went into cardiac arrest in our quiet, suburban house. Despite my mother's attempts to revive him with cardiopulmonary resuscitation, he died on his way to the hospital in a St John's ambulance. I was 13 years old.

This sudden death of my brother is the site where I embark on a philosophy-rich autoethnographic study of mourning practices and rituals. In this study I share particular moments from within the death and dying of my brother, my father and my mother. From these private encounters with death and dying I bring together mourning, bodies, space and time as I analyse the discursive and material production of mourning rituals and practices.

The poem that begins this chapter is a re-worked portion of the presentation I offered during a noho marae at Maniaroa while undertaking the Discourse and Counselling Psychologies paper, facilitated by Dr Elmarie Kotzé. This paper is one of the core papers that make up the Master of Counselling study. For this presentation, and in the assignment that followed, we were invited to consider the discourses that may have shaped our professional and personal lives, and relationships, and to reflect upon how the shaping effects of these discourses became visible.

As my presentation ended, I was offered a rescued speech poem (Speedy, 2005) delicately crafted and evocatively gifted to me by Associate Professor Kathie Crocket. This rescued speech poem was a re-telling and a compassionate witnessing (Weingarten, 2003) of my words. Hearing my words offered back to me, together with an outsider witnessing definitional ceremony (White, 2007); where two fellow students (class mates) reflected on how my presentation had meaning, resonance and movement for them; were powerfully stirring. These two practices invited my noticing that from amongst the many interwoven stands of discourse, the particular discourses of mourning were meaningfully present for me.

I was drawn to mourning; the practices, rituals, discourses and shaping effects embedded in and of mourning. I was intensely curious about the ways in which mourning functions as a site for the production of subjectivity and the reproduction of discourse. This research curiosity is taken up in this thesis as I analyse the ways in which my personal and private encounters with death and loss were discursively produced by dominant hegemonic discourse. I lean into poststructuralist theorising in this study, applying this lens to an examination of mourning practices. I further notice that despite the productive force of dominant discursive mourning rituals, there was available to me the opportunity to resist the call of hegemonic discursive mourning positions. This line of flight made it possible for me to take up an-other subjectivity in response to death and mourning.

I then turn to new materialist philosophical theory in analysing the importance of matter and mattering, in order to bring together mourning, bodies, space and time. In applying the material turn to an exploration of mourning; its practices and its rituals, I unfold the ways in which my personal encounters with mourning were matters of both discursive meaning and matter, as materiality. I examine how matter, in the form of tears, fluids, voice (a question) and the wearing of a dress, intra-acts with discourse to produce and re-produce mourning and myself.

The self

I take up a poststructuralist understanding of the self as “fluid, non- essentialist and non-unitary, constituted and constituting herself through discourse and in social relations” (Gannon, 2003, p.4). In these terms, the self or the subject is open, contestable and multiple.

Applying these understandings to mourning it becomes possible to conceive of how mourning works in the production of a mourningself or selves, at each poignant encounter with mourning. Such an understanding permits an analysis of the ways in which the mourning for my brother, Grant, happened as an emerging, relational becomingsister self, where the practices of mourning intersected with the production of a mourning sister self – a becomingsister. Once constituted as mourningsister, which intersected with becomingsister, a mourning self was

available to me at the subsequent moments of encountering my father dying, and my mother in her days before death. This idea that the self is “a ‘discursive process’ rather than a ‘uniquely relatively fixed personal invention,’ a verb rather than a noun” (Davies, 2000, as cited in Gannon, 2003, p.20), I further develop in chapter four.

The stories of this autoethnography - which appear in chapters three, four, five and six - work to destabilize the notion of a fixed identity or self brought about by mourning. Rather, as I write self in these personal encounters with death and mourning, I am interested in the ways in which I bring my-self (my body, my voice, my tears, my memory) to death and to mourning, in process, constituted by and constituting the discursive and material realm of both becomingself and, in this thesis, mourning. In the later chapters I offer three stories of significant family loss and an encounter from my professional learning experience as autoethnographic data in order to research how mourning is an embodied and embedded experience.

A mourning school

On another May morning, our school was changed as news of the sudden death of a Year 11 student reached us. As a guidance counsellor practising in this high school, this bruised moment of loss was a professional encounter with death, grief and mourning. This thesis further traces how my personal lived experiences with death and mourning were and are a part of my ongoing becoming, both personally and professionally as a counsellor.

The territory of mourning

Immersed in the territory of mourning, I meet the philosophy of Jacques Derrida. As I read Derrida’s (1996, 2001) writings about death, loss and mourning, I am drawn to his reflections of the profound pain of mourning, and I find solace in this work. In Derrida’s theorising and his acknowledgment of how mourning is both necessary, impossible and ultimately doomed to fail, I am challenged and conflicted. Derrida’s writings bring me to mourning in particular ways that have informed my thinking and have framed the theorising of this study.

In this next section I outline deconstruction as a contribution from Derrida that supports the analysis I offer in this thesis. I then unfold some salient aspects of a Derridean mourning. Derrida's views on mourning, or what has been called a "politics of mourning" (Brault & Naas, 2001, p.1) is a (Deleuze, 1993) within this thesis. It appears here as a starting point and is folded in and throughout the writing of the thesis, especially in chapters three, five and seven.

Deconstruction

There is nothing thought that cannot be rethought. Even deconstruction itself must be deconstructed (Derrida, as cited in Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 18).

Derrida first applied deconstruction in his questioning of language, texts and the ways in which language formulated taken-for-granted and binaried knowledge claims. Since then, deconstruction has been taken up as a means of engaging in a range of poststructural reading, researching and writing. Deconstruction is interested in the "constant engagement with the tensions and omissions in such a way as to see how the 'orthodox, dominant interpretation has been produced' without interrogation" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p.15). In these ways, deconstruction is an ongoing questioning of meaning to expose the absences, tensions, interruptions, contradictions and inconsistencies in a text, a practice, an institution, a knowledge claim or discourse. By arguing that meaning and knowledge is never fixed, complete or uncontested, deconstruction is always already happening.

More than a practice or a procedure, deconstruction is neither critique, operation or method. It is not interested in truth-seeking or refuting claims. Deconstruction, in its holding of uncertainty, curiosity and contestability, is a kind of transgressive reading which, Derrida argues is, itself (im)possible. As deconstruction is always a happening, reaching for possibility, questioning what has been left out, marginalised, silenced or added, so it is accepted that deconstruction is never complete. Deconstruction is thus, a process "without beginning or end, without a centre in charge" (Sampson, 1989, p.15).

Since deconstruction seems to elude explanation, Derrida provided a means to appreciate a deconstructive analysis in offering the concept of erasure or *sous rature*. In order to highlight, or “undo” the binary thinking that was at work and the power such thinking had in claiming essentialised truth status, a concept or idea is placed under erasure. This involved writing the word and then crossing out this word by putting a line through it. The process of crossing out the word is deconstructive for it acknowledges that the concept, idea or word being placed under erasure is needed in our thinking, but that we may want think again about what the concept, idea, word, is not – what has been added (supplementarity), what has been excluded, omitted, left out or silenced. As Sampson (1989) states, “the deconstructive aim is to undo the very notions of identity and hierarchy” (p.7) and in this way to open up possibilities for thinking about how “each term contains both itself and its other” (Sampson, 1989, p.8).

Davies (2000) offers instead the idea of “troubling” in order to “represent more closely what it is that the deconstructive work can do” (p.14). Taking this smaller step of “troubling” taken-for-granted truths and binaried positions allows for a possible movement to include both the thinking of the binary and beyond the power/knowledge relations embedded within the discourse of which the truth claim is a part. In order to provide a metaphor for understanding discourse, Davies (1993) suggested discourse may be thought of as a pane of glass, like a window, that one disattends whilst looking through it. When a fracture or crack appears in the glass this invites a noticing of both the glass and now the crack. So troubling invites this similar agitation or disturbing of sedimented and dominant forms of thinking and knowing (Davies, 1993). It is a means of holding the glass in view and also the crack in the glass – a position of both/and.

In this study, I am interested in examining mourning from a position of “both/and” rather than re-inserting the binary of “either/or”. I take up the idea of “troubling” the binaried boundaries of mourning discourse and in doing so, I attend to the ways in which mourning, bodies, space and time work together. In this way I apply a deconstructive practice to death, mourning and loss.

Derrida and mourning

The shadows ... that twilight space of what is called mourning

(Derrida, 1996, p.176)

In this section I trace how a Derridean (1996) mourning rests on the understanding that “all work is the work of mourning” (p.172). I then explore how it is that Derrida’s deconstruction traces the impossibility of a mourning which necessarily implies a contemplation of one’s own death. I move on to show how Derrida argues that mourning is premised in a friendship/relationship that exists in acknowledging the recognition of the death that will come. Derrida further illustrates how in the force of mourning, one must fail at mourning in order for mourning to succeed.

I start with the contention that “all work is the work of mourning” (Derrida, 1996, p.172). Derrida (1996) describes “work” as a “labour ... insofar as it engenders, produces, and brings to light, but also labor or travail as suffering, as the enduring of force, as the pain of the one who gives” (p.171). From this idea of work, Derrida offers that in terms of mourning, the work of mourning, the labor, suffering, travail and the enduring of force, is already happening, working on each one of us, not from the start of death, but from the contemplation of one’s own death. For, “one cannot hold a discourse on the ‘work of mourning’ without taking part in it, without announcing or partaking in [se faire part de] death, and first of all in one’s own death” (Derrida, 1996, p.172). In this way, Derrida’s work of mourning is a working *at mourning* from the time of birth, of life, together with an awareness of one’s own death. This work of mourning is the “place of one’s own irreplaceability” (Derrida, 1995, as cited in Kirkby, 2006, p.462) since one’s death is one’s alone and cannot be undertaken by any other than oneself - a kind of “life-death”.

In its endurance, all work is the work of mourning. In this interminable work which is without end, Derrida (2001) reminds us that though we may taste the

tears of mourning, “one should not develop a taste for mourning, and yet mourn we *must*” (p.110).

This work of mourning does not happen at the moment of death, but already is there at the beginning; at the first breath, the first trace, the first mark/s. Since every mark, trace, writing, word contains the sign, evidence and effect of a person, it is “in its essence, testamentary” (Naas, 2015, p.114). As such, in its structure, the trace which remains behind after death is also the inheritance of the one who mourns, remaining alive. For, “whether want it or intend it or not, the traces we leave behind are never simply ours but are already and from the very beginning beyond us and outside our control” (Naas, 2015, p.114). In this way, the trace/mark that is produced is an effect of, and dependant on, the very death of oneself. So trace and mark-making, be they works, words, bodies, or “ordinary or everyday gestures” (Derrida, as cited in Naas, 2015, p.113), is contingent upon mourning and the contemplation of one’s own death and disappearance of trace. A trace or mark holds within it the very inescapable ending of such trace and mark – in death, which is as Derrida described the “unchanging form of [his] life” (Naas, 2015, p.118).

The mourning that is happening at the first mark or trace of a person, Derrida called an “originary mourning” (Naas, 2015, p.117). The mourning that is there at the start. This has effects on thinking about life. In these terms, life becomes contemplated from within the orbit of trace, rather than the other way around. And further, Derrida contended that the trace/mark implicates the death of the one producing the mark and the one receiving it, as inheritance. Trace-making is thus death-bearing since “all work is the work of mourning” (Derrida, 1996, p.172). Mourning continues, as a labour without end, always already there at the beginning.

Mourning then is not a place we arrive at on death, but is already there, present, at the moment of birth. The end is already there at the beginning. To further explain this idea of mourning, Derrida offered that in effect every letter written by himself was, in one sense, a letter from the grave, offered posthumously, “post him, past him” even though he was still alive. Mourning begins not at actual death, but it is

a kind of “life-death” or an “originary mourning” that does not wait for the actual body of death, but is always already happening (Derrida in *Le Monde*, 2004).

It is in this way that “we come to ourselves through this memory of possible mourning” (Derrida, 1986, as cited in Kirkby, 2006, p.465). In acknowledging the possible death of a loved one and in remembering the possibility of bearing witness and receiving inheritance from one who has died, we find within this memory, our own death, from within this possible mourning. Derrida (1996) deconstructs beginnings and endings, births and deaths, by arguing for this “memory of possible mourning” and in so doing seems to suggest a temporal collapsing of time/space. These ideas of time and the memory, and memory-work of mourning, are taken up later in this thesis.

In this “memory” of a mourning to come and in making the connection to trace as, in essence, testamentary, there is a recognition, not only of a personal death, but the death of the Other who is implicated in our own dying and whose dying implicates us in our own death. The work of mourning is done in concert with the Other, by acknowledging the trace of the Other and the disappearance of trace. Derrida wrote of this, “I mourn therefore I am, I am – dead with the death of the other, my relation to myself is first of all plunged into mourning, a mourning that is moreover impossible” (Naas, 2015, p.117/8).

Mourning must fail, Derrida argues. In order to succeed, mourning has to fail. This is wholly due to the structural nature of mourning. In its force and in its work, mourning must fail in order for it to succeed - as mourning. In this sense mourning is (im)possible, indeed aporic. The complexity of such an aporia rests in the understanding that mourning is a “work without force, a work that would have to work at renouncing force, its own force, a work that would have to work at failing, and thus at mourning and, getting over force” (Derrida, 1996, p.174).

For, when one reckons with mourning “whoever works at the work of mourning learns the impossible – and that mourning is interminable. Inconsolable. Irreconcilable. Right up until death” (Derrida, 1996 , p.172).

In this interminable and inconsolable mourning, Derrida borrows ideas of responsibility from Levinas. Derrida (2001) argues that whilst the one who dies, is “alteriably other” and “far away in us” (p.11), there remains still an ultimate responsibility to and for the Other. Thinking with Levinas about mourning and responsibility, Derrida states, “I am responsible for the death of the other to the extent of including myself in that death . . . I am responsible for the other inasmuch as the other is mortal” (Derrida, 1995, as cited in Kirkby, 2006, p.463). Death of the other invites us both into ourselves, in self-relation as it speaks the ongoing dialogue with the dead who are now both “within us” and “beyond us”.

The recognition of the Other is so much a part of mourning that Derrida (2001) argues that a friendship/relationship is only possible on the condition that such friends have “agreed” that one of them will die and the other will be left behind to mourn.

To have a friend, to look at him, to follow him with your eyes, to admire him in friendship, is to know in a more intense way, already injured, always insistent, and more and more unforgettable, that one of the two of you will inevitably see the other die. (Derrida, 2001, p.107)

Such a loss where we find “the world suspended by some unique tear” (Derrida, 2001, p.107) is at the heart of the aporia of speaking for and of the dead. It is an impossible task of seeming betrayal. In reaching for words to speak of the beloved, now dead, no words seem to capture the trace. Speaking seems like a usurping of the voice and the body, of the dead. Yet, not speaking feels an unkindly betrayal. In trying to speak and in trying to find the words, the bereaved is rendered at the force of mourning, which must fail. For the Other for whom one mourns is far away, outside of us, yet only in us, as memory and totally beyond us, as Other. This Derrida (2001) describes as the “unbearable paradox of fidelity” (p.159). This idea is further developed and appears in the chapters which follow.

Even as Derrida (2001) battles to find words, at a loss for words and sick with the impossibility of speaking/not speaking for his friend/s who have died, so Derrida works to make meaning of the unique and special loss of each one of his friends.

In this way, Derrida (2001) opens up conversation with the dead, as Other. Even as Other, Derrida acknowledges the ways we continue to be in relation and responsible to and for the Other, even in death. Brault and Naas (2001) claim that this then makes possible for the dead, “a kind of survivance, a kind of living on” (p.23), an ongoing dialogue where mourning remains.

It is this “living on” which has the potential to call people forward into the space of responsibility. As Derrida (2001) struggles to farewell (adieu) his friend, Levinas, so he calls on the words of his dear friend and entrusts his readers with the understanding that, “the death of the Other affects me in my very identity as a responsible I ... made up of unspeakable responsibility” (Levinas, as cited in Derrida, 2001, p.205).

As Derrida considered his own death he came to reflect both on his own trace/s, mark/s, written, spoken and unspoken and resolved that death is for the person who personally mourns, “nothing less than the end of the world” (Naas, 2015, p. 121).

Time and space as folded

In the previous section I noticed how Derrida’s writing about an originary mourning and the aporia of beginnings and endings worked to provide a different conceptualising of time and space. Just as a Derridean mourning works to destabilise ideas about time and space, so this thesis takes up alternate views of time and space.

Dominant Western thinking constructs time as a sequential, ordered and linear process, proceeding from a past which has happened and cannot be repeated, to a present which is happening now, and on into a future, which to a large extent is unknowable. This understanding of time seems to offer security and provides order to thinking and how we see ourselves in the world.

The radical thinking of new materialism reworks time and space so as to dispute entirely the classical linear notion of time. By thinking differently it is possible to

appreciate that time – the past, the present and the future – are a relation of matter performing itself. Such matter in its intra-action with all other matter, “materialises and enfolds different temporalities” (Barad, 2014, keynote address). The past is not something that was already there and the future is not something that is about to happen. Rather, “the ‘past’ and the ‘future’ are iteratively reworked and enfolded through the iterative practices of spacetime-mattering” (Barad, 2010, p.260/1). This shatters the idea of time and space as discrete entities compartmentalized in thought. Rather, than viewing time as a linear unfolding, the past, the present and the future are “threaded through one another in a non-linear enfolding” (Barad, 2014, keynote address).

Taking up this different idea of temporality, allows for a consideration of the past as a timespace that is folded through with materiality and mattering in the present. The present is itself a part of, and understood only as both past and future. Through the ongoing differentiation of the world, so time is produced, both past-time and future-time, and now-time. Since matter is agential, it produces itself in its ongoing intra-actions. In this way the performativity of matter materializes time and space, hence timespace-mattering. This materializing of time means that it is possible to trouble the rigidity of thinking of sequential time. This deconstruction invites the possibility of “re-membering the future” and “re(con)figuring the past” (Barad, 2014, keynote address).

Since “time can’t be fixed. The past is never closed, never finished once and for all” (Barad, 2014, p.183). What this means is that the past is in fact the “enfolded materialisations of what was/ is/ to-come” (Barad, 2014, p.183). Whilst we cannot undo or re-do the past, nevertheless trace remains. This trace is also the marks on bodies from the past, such ‘marks’ then materially represent the future and are a part of the present. For the past is not simply what has happened, or mere memory. Rather, time is folded in on itself, forwards into the future and backwards into the past in the shifting nonlinear materialization of the world.

Appreciating timespace and matter in this way allows me to think of the intersections of timespace and matter-ing in my personal stories of loss and my professional encounter with mourning as a spacetime-mattering. I therefore

appreciate that each of my entangled encounters with mourning involved such a folding of time and space.

This view of time and space is central not only to the personal stories I offer in chapters three, four, five, and six. But this particular view of time and space helps me in the unfolding of the final chapter as I draw together the distributed assemblage of personal encounter, philosophical theory and professional practice.

Autoethnography as (im)possible

In this study I take up a poststructural autoethnography as a means of bringing together mourning, bodies space and time. In offering autoethnography as a way to unfold my personal encounters with mourning, I do so, holding the tension that emerges in poststructural autoethnographic writing.

Gannon (2003) describes both the problematic and the productive practices of a poststructuralist autoethnography. In its productive capacity, writing *self*, as autoethnography, makes possible “reflexive, critical, multimedia tales and tellings” (Denzin, 2003 as cited in Gannon, 2006, p.475) drawn from memorywork and laden with richness. As such autoethnography has the potential to trouble dominant scientific discourse as to what constitutes data and how research is conducted (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Nevertheless, autoethnography is also problematic because

the paradox of poststructural autoethnography is that although autoethnographic research seems to presume that the subjects can speak (for) themselves, poststructural theories disrupt this presumption and stress the (im)possibilities of writing the self from a fractured and fragmented subject position (Gannon, 2006, p. 475).

From a poststructural perspective, the very act of writing *self* is fraught, already elusive and potentially compromised in the do-ing of writing. Barthes (1989) acknowledges this when he writes that “the subject of the speech-act can never be the same as the one who acted yesterday: the *I* of the discourse can no longer be

the site where a previously stored-up person is innocently restored” (p.17). So, the self is not a fixed, uncontested, known entity that exists through time. From this perspective writing of the emergent, relational, fluid and multiple selves appears almost (im)possible.

Rabinow (1997) invites autoethnography as a writing practice/s which may work to displace or “disassemble” the self as a hegemonic discrete and autonomous construct in the writing itself. Writing *self*, the flesh and bone body, in this (im)possible way through the “validity of tears” (Lather, 2000, as cited in Gannon, 2006, p.476) and employing the “epistemology of emotion” (Denzin, 1997, as cited in Gannon, 2006, p.476) is itself a deconstructive practice which destabilizes both research, data, discourse and power/knowledge relations. Acknowledging that self-writing is partial, limited, never complete and drawn from within the fold of memory, heightens, rather than diminishes its beauty and its possibility to move theory and practice forward.

In autoethnographic writing, the subject and object of the research are conflated, collapsed even, into the same subject – who is both researcher and the data of the research- both/and, and neither. St Pierre (1997) describes this inside and outside of the research process as a kind of folding, from Deleuze (which appears later in chapter two). St Pierre (1997) further placed data under erasure and sought to re-think data and researcher as both inside and outside, or folded into one another. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe this folding and acknowledging of the researcher as both inside and outside of data as a diffractive methodology, where the diffraction is a recognition that “knowing is never done in isolation but is always effected by different forces coming together” (Mazzei, 2013, p.778). In this way of honouring both the researcher, her body and the way she is written *into* the research as data and researcher, autoethnography as a particular writing and researching practice, may be seen as a diffractive methodology. I develop the idea of diffractive methodology later in this section.

Barthes (1977) further deconstructs the aporia of subject/object, self as data when he describes self-writing in the book, *Roland Barthes*. In this text there appear photographs of himself and his comment, whilst referencing the images/photographs of himself, seems to hold true for self-writing too. Gannon

(2006) quotes Barthes' (1997) claims about the nature of the photograph;

[The photograph] no longer has to do with the reflection . . . of an identity . . . (I never look like myself) . . . [but] such imagery acts as a medium and puts me in touch with my body's *id*; it provokes in me a kind of obtuse dream, whose units are teeth, hair, a nose, skinniness, long legs in knee-length socks which don't belong to me, though to no one else. (p. 481)

It is evident in the above quote that "the self writing a poststructural autoethnography both is and isn't the author of the text, both is and isn't subject and object of his or her experience" (Gannon, 2006, p. 484).

Barthes' (1977) text also suggests that decomposition as "a mutual recognition and reworking of possibilities" (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 86), is work at the level of the body. From within discourse and his own body, Barthes (1977) acknowledges that by decomposing, "I agree to accompany such a decomposition, to decompose myself as well in the process: I scrape, catch, and drag" (p.63). This decomposition is part of the potentially transformational work of *self* writing.

The recognition that the body is a site for the production of knowledge is further referenced by Jackson (2010) in describing self-writing's performing of *self as an event* (p.583). Taking up this idea that the body matters and that the body is powerfully productive allows me to think of autoethnography as a writing of self as an event, where the act of writing of self is productive and transformative. It is an emergent and organic unfolding which rhizomatically is the "pure effect of the production and interaction among immanent dynamics" (Jackson, 2010, p.583). Jackson (2010) cites Badiou (2007) who writes that "becoming becomes the event itself" (p.583). This leads Jackson (2010) to conclude that "the event is the expression of becoming" (p.583).

Autoethnography, as a writing and research practice, meets my interest in the body as not only research data which is acted upon, but also as matter already acting and intra-acting with all other matter in the re-telling of the stories of our lives. For according to Gannon (2006) "bodies themselves engage in theory making" (p.477). Zita (1998, as cited in Gannon, 2006) develops this argument in the claim that "theory-making is a labor of the body" (p.477). This means that the

body is implicated and involved in the production of subjectivity, and subjectivity is therefore, “a relational matter” (Probyn, 2003, as cited in Gannon, 2006, p. 477).

The body offers up knowledge, produces knowledge and is itself acting agentially as knowledge. Such ~~data~~ is “partial, incomplete, and always being told and re-membered” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p.3). But autoethnography also serves to “destabilize the authority of the self who writes and knows himself or herself as a discrete and autonomous subject” (Gannon, 2006, p.477). In new materialist terms, autoethnography with its focus on researcher as both data and researcher, where data itself is re-thought of, may be considered to be a diffractive methodology. Barad (2007) has described diffraction by drawing on the action of waves in the sea bending, breaking, flowing over and around an obstacle, such as a rock, in the ocean. As the waves move over and around and merge on the other side of the rock, they have been changed and transformed by their intra-action with the rock and the overlapping waves, and the movement itself.

It is this movement of overlapping where the waves *change in themselves* in intra-action with the obstacle of the stone, and with each wave accumulating, which signifies diffraction. In other words, diffraction effects are effects of *interferences*, where the original wave partly *remains within* the new wave after its transformation into a new one, and so on, wave after wave (Barad, 2007, p.71–83).

In much the same way, autoethnography provides for this diffraction, in that “diffractive analysis makes us aware of our embodied involvement in the materiality of the event of analysing data” (Taguchi, 2012, p.278). In the next chapter I explore further the ways in which matter and meaning are mutually interwoven and constituted. I do this by “plugging in” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.4) to new materialist theory. By taking up autoethnography as a diffractive methodology, I acknowledge the ways in which my ~~self-data~~ in the form of the personal and professional stories of death and loss are matter that intra-acts within a discursive and material realm to produce my becomingself, and mourning itself.

Since poststructuralism holds that the subject is productive and re-productive of

the multiple aligning and competing discourses, then autoethnography writing is more than self-writing. In one sense autoethnography becomes a way to notice and “to interrogate the always in motion ‘lines of subjectification’ operating on and through her at different points of her life (Gannon, 2003, p.261). But, autoethnography is also the place of connection with the Other – other bodies, other matter, other discursive practices, cultural rituals and power/knowledge.

[d]econstruction as a writing indebted to the other; writing as the effect of a vulnerability to the other; vulnerability as the impossibility of escaping the responsibility *to* and *for* the other because the other already creates and recreates my body through repeated inscriptions: events of birth, circumcision, sickness, loss, death, and mourning (Gregoriou, 1995 as cited in Gannon, 2003, p.295).

Caring for ethical matters

Autoethnography as a means of researching brings with it the need to attend to ethical matters. In this study my family based encounters with death, loss and mourning form the body of this study. As I prepared for the research and undertook the research proposal, with its attendant ethical considerations, I noted that since I am the last surviving member of my family of origin, my personal stories of mourning are gifted to me in legacy and as such the ethical responsibility for their inclusion in a thesis rests with me.

As the study developed I included an experience of the accidental death of a student at the high school where I work as a guidance counsellor. In the final chapter of this research I bring my own personal encounters with mourning together with this professional experience of mourning and try to understand how they work as an agentic assemblage.

On the advice of my supervisors at the outset of the research I sought and was granted permission from the deceased student’s mother and the Principal of my school to write in general terms about the death of the student. In the research proposal I stated that I would be guided by the ethical parameters of confidentiality, privacy and non-identifiability. Since the research was an

emergent design, I was mindful that should the research move beyond these boundaries that I would make an ethical application to ensure that I was attending carefully to ethical considerations.

To the personal stories of death and mourning in chapters three, four, five and six, I have added my professional encounter with mourning in the context of my work as a guidance counsellor at school. In the writing I have brought myself to a new understanding of the ways in which my personal encounters with loss were made available to me in my professional practice as a counsellor in a mourning school. As the writing emerged it became clear that some situating was required and that certain details of the accidental death of the student at our school would need the approval of the parents of the deceased student and the Principal of the school.

In order to care for ethical matters, I met with the mother of the deceased student, a colleague on the staff at my school. I shared the chapter that has details of the experience of this death. The student's parents have agreed to the detail that is included in this chapter and they have offered a pseudonym of their choosing to be used in the writing.

I met with the Principal of the school and informed him of the permission that had been granted by the deceased student's parents. I shared the parts of the chapter where he is referenced and the detail pertaining to the school, which is unnamed. The Principal has given his approval for these final parts of the thesis.

In caring for ethical matters, I have been advised through this process by my supervisors. I have taken care to understand the University's policies for the practice of research ethics.

In giving appropriate information and seeking consent of the parents of the deceased student to include specific details about their child and by gaining the approval of the Principal of the school, I have wanted to remain sensitive to and mindful of the ethical principles of minimising risk and harm, protecting privacy, seeking appropriate informed consent, non-identifiability in using a pseudonym and remaining sensitive and respectful of the emotional nature of this research.

Unfolding the chapters

The thesis proceeds from a theory chapter next and then into the personal encounters with death and mourning. In each of the ~~data~~ chapters I share first the story of my personal encounter with death and mourning. Then, I offer a deconstructive theorising of this encounter by taking up particular ideas from within poststructuralism and new materialism. Such theorising aims to research the ways in which mourning and myself are discursively and materially produced. The final chapter brings together my personal stories with a professional experience of death. From the midst of professional counselling practice, I trace back to these personal encounters with mourning as evidence of an assemblage at work.

Chapter two is the substantive theoretical chapter. It begins by tracing Foucault's theories of power/knowledge relations and the ways in which power works to effect a subjectification. Taking up a spatial reading of Foucault allows for an appreciation of how the generative and productive nature of power also makes available the means for resisting lines of force which intersect around death and mourning. The chapter then moves to explore how within the territory of mourning the hegemonic discourse/s around death and mourning have shaping effects on people's experience of death and loss. The works of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) add meaning to bringing together mourning, bodies, space and time. I trace the central ideas offered by these philosophers as they relate to my analysis of death and mourning. I am particularly careful with the concepts of territorialisation and lines of flight. The notion of becoming as an ongoing process, which is a part of the movements of de- and re-territorialisation, is then outlined. Since Deleuze's (1993) metaphor of the fold is significant in the analysis I offer in this study, I briefly introduce it in the next section of the chapter. Before moving on to an analysis of new materialism, I explore the idea of differentiation as a means of understanding how difference is both positive and in a constant state of becoming. New materialism provides another theoretical lens for my analysis of mourning. I take time to explore its rhizomatic emergence and its important concepts, which include, intra-action and diffraction. In appreciating

how all matter matters, I am able to apply this understanding to my researching of bringing together death, bodies, time and space.

Chapter three begins the first of the ~~data~~ chapters and in it I share the moment of meeting my father before his death. “At my father’s feet” traces the tender ritual of massaging my father’s feet as he was dying of lung cancer. I notice the materiality of this moment and explore how this was an exquisite moment of entanglement in which my hands and my father’s feet intra-acted to produce meaning for both my father and me. The ritual opens space for my father to ask a painful aporic question. In this moment, time is suspended and the death of my brother, Grant, twenty seven years earlier was brought into the moment of hands touching feet and words leaving lips, even as a whisper. I take up the idea of timespacemattering (Barad, 2007) to understand how memories and remembering are folded in through time and space as matter and meaning. The materiality of the moment of holding my father’s feet in my hands as I massaged his swollen feet brought with it “the force of mourning” (Derrida, 2001). I show how the death of the Other implicates me in this dying of my father and others. The massage ritual is an entangled intra-action, which in its dynamic assemblage, brings together death and mourning as a timespacemattering.

In challenging the non-linearity of time, I offer next the story of my brother, Grant’s death when I was 13-years old. Chapter four holds the story of “The yellow funeral dress.” In this story I highlight a specific moment of dressing for the funeral of my brother who died suddenly and unexpectedly. This medical emergency in our home when my brother stopped breathing and his heart ceased to beat marked me as Other – a mourningsister. In this chapter I unfold the poignant moment of dressing for the funeral and alongside this encounter with death explore the ways in which dressing in a particular funeral dress was both a question of mattering and meaning for my 13- year old self.

The next story in chapter five is drawn from a moment of visiting my mother in a hospice unit as she received treatment for liver cancer. “Mother fluids” details how the intersecting of body, space and time meet in the materiality of the body and how this shapes dying. I explore the disciplining of the dying body and the

ways in which medicalised care promotes a “docile body” (Foucault, 1975). I highlight in this encounter the aporia of meeting my mother in her dying, as fluids are being drained from her dying body. I take up a diffractive analysis and notice that the action of sitting alongside my mother calls me into becomingmother-becomingdaughter, as breastmilk flows from my body. As body fluids, leak together at-once with the dying body of my mother and the nurturing body of myself, a line of flight is opened as a moment of haeccity or wonder.

In chapter six, I am curious about the ways in which the mo(ve)ment of the retelling of the death of my brother at Maniaroa marae (which formed a part of my Master of Counselling study) was a “force” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). I try to understand this “force” as desire and the ways in which it contained the hope for my becomingself. I further explore the materiality and intra-action that was a part of the retelling. I focus in particular on the white dress I wore and the decision made to project images of my brother onto my body, onto the white dress. As the light intra-acted with the folds of the white material, I trace the diffraction which happened and how this moment of materiality was also a moment of mattering and meaning.

In chapter seven, I share the sudden death of a student at the high school where I work as a guidance counsellor. As I theorise this professional encounter with death, I notice how my counselling practice of meeting young people, staff and family in this space of profound loss, was an agentic assemblage. As my personal encounters with death and mourning intersected with the learning brought by my Master of Counselling study, so these became folded into this professional encounter with death. I trace how overarching discursive practices of mourning had shaping effects for how this loss was experienced and what was expected of the mourning school community. I show how resisting these hegemonic lines of force was a line of flight whose trajectory was smoothed by the advice of the yellow dressed girl of chapter four. Narrative therapy offered a way to meet with the students in counselling conversations. The central principles of narrative therapy also made possible different ways of making meaning of the loss and the space left by the death of one of our students.

By engaging in this autoethnographic encounter with mourning and materiality, I hope that such writing and research may produce a difference in my own new becoming-self and becomingcounselorself. This research may also offer a means to appreciate the ways in which new materialism and ideas associated with mattering can open possibilities for thinking about mourning and its associated practices as we live and as we die, and as we mourn. The hope extends to embrace the ontological ethicalness embedded in new materialism. In appreciating that all matter matters and in honouring the response-ability this evokes, this may bring people closer to each other. This closeness may invite the recognition of our imminent belonging to each other and as such an honouring of responsibility to and for all matter, as mattering.

Chapter Two : Matter and meaning

Setting out the chapter

In this chapter I introduce the work of the theorists and philosophers who inform this study. I have taken up a poststructural theoretical philosophy and apply this to my analysis of mourning rituals and practices, particularly as they relate to my personal encounters with death and mourning. This theory chapter outlines the particular concepts and ideas from within poststructuralism that I have made use of in my analysis of mourning. As the research has developed rhizomatically I have included the theorising of new materialism as a way of bringing together mourning, bodies, space and time. New materialism provides another theoretical lens which supports my analysis of mourning rituals and practices. This allows for mourning to be researched as an entanglement of discursive and material significance. I later argue that this material < > discursive entanglement functions as an assemblage. Within this assemblage each component of the assemblage; bodies, tears, space and voice, together with discursive practices and rituals, functions with its own agentic possibility. The assemblage works together in a distributed agency where the materiality of matter (human and non-human) intra-acts with discursive matter.

The chapter will begin by outlining Foucault's idea of (1980a, 1980b, 1982) power/knowledge as inextricably connected. Foucault's concept of power/knowledge as generative and productive is explored in both its production of subjectivity and re-production of dominant mourning discourse. I show how the technologies of self work to effect a self-scrutiny and surveillance. This subjectification has shaping effects on people at the level of their thoughts, actions and their bodies, which become recruited as "docile bodies" (Foucault, 1975). I outline the implications such lines of force hold for dead, dying and grieving bodies. Since power/knowledge is productive, I look at the capacity for resistance and refusal of the limiting operations of power. Taking up a spatialised reading of Foucault (Jackson,2013), I show how the production of the subject is located, not in linear time/space, but rather within the shifting and moving workings of power/knowledge, as it is immersed and articulated in relationship.

Death, dying and mourning is a powerful site for the articulation and constitution of discourse. In the next section I appreciate how hegemonic mourning discourse has shaping effects for the experience of grief and mourning. I further show how mourning practices and rituals effect a disciplining of the grieving body. I briefly notice the potential for therapy's emphasis on griefwork to constitute another line of force within dominant mourning discourse. I end this section by looking at the possibilities for troubling sedimented mourning discourse. The idea of resisting dominant mourning discourse, I develop further in chapters four and five.

From here, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer a way to appreciate the resisting of sedimented mourning discursive practices in their explanation of territorialisation, in the form of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation. This refusal of molar forms and stepping into an-other territory, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) is understood as a line of flight. I call on the metaphor of the wasp and the orchid to illustrate how territorialisation works. I link lines of flight and de- and re-territorialisation to show how it may be possible to "be able finally to think otherwise" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.119) about death, dying and mourning.

Staying with Deleuze and Guattari (1987) I describe the idea of becoming as an ongoing doing of living, mourning (and dying). I show how the movement of becoming has effects on both living, dying and mourning. I take care with exploring becoming as it is a central concept that applies to the understanding I hold about mourning bodies. Further, becoming is the hope I hold for my ongoing ethical practice as a counsellor.

Since the metaphor of the fold (Deleuze, 1993) is important in this study I introduce it here. I link the fold to smooth and striated space and show how I have applied the metaphor of folding in my analysis of mourning and death.

I turn next to the idea of differentiation (Deleuze, 1994) which is regarded as difference as a positive force. Differentiation is further explored as I recognise the ways in which differentiation is connected to the idea of becoming as an ongoing doing of positive difference. Difference allows for the taking up other meaning-making positions in response to loss and mourning.

In introducing new materialism I locate its philosophical theorising within discursive and material considerations. I am careful to avoid a linear definition of new materialism and therefore aim to show the relationship between new materialism's concern for the material as well as discursive elements within encounters. At the same time I recognise how poststructural theorising also holds care for discursive and material relationships. I demonstrate how new materialism focusses on the inter-relatedness of material and discursive intra-actions.

As I outline Barad's (1995, 1999, 2007, 2010) agential realism, I take special care with the ideas of intra-action and diffraction, which I explain. As the study unfolds, the concepts of intra-action and diffraction take on significance in my analysis of death, dying and particularly mourning practices.

The theory and philosophy introduced in this theory chapter provide a robust framework for my analysis of death and mourning as I bring together bodies, space and time.

Foucault: Power/knowledge and docile bodies

For Foucault (1975, 1980a, 1980b, 1982) power is understood to be relational and always in motion, circulating among people, institutions and structures, in a web of relationships. Power is described as "something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain ... through a net-like organisation" (Foucault, 1980a, p.98). Foucault (1980a) further stated that with regards the operations of power, individuals not only "circulate between its threads, "they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application ... the individual is an effect of power and the element of its articulation" (p.98).

Power thus is understood to be productive, and immersed in relationship. It is active and takes multiple forms. Power is operational, rather than a possession. Yet, power does not operate alone as an entity, in and of itself. For Foucault, the way in which power made sense was to understand it as inextricably interwoven

and related to knowledge, hence the power/knowledge doublet. Rather than conflating power and knowledge as one construct, Foucault contended that power and knowledge are in an inseparable relationship. He was interested in how power and knowledge expressed one another.

In this way of expressing one another, power-knowledge works on and upon each other, in a dynamic inter-relatedness. Knowledge is an effect of power and power is articulated through knowledge. These operation/s of power-knowledge Foucault appreciated as having shaping effects on people; their thoughts, actions and at the level of their bodies.

In the end, we are judged, condemned, classified, determined in our undertakings, destined to a certain mode of living and dying, as a function of the true discourses which are the bearers of the specific effects of power. (Foucault, 1980a, p.94)

Foucault (1980a) was interested in discovering “how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts” (p.97). He explained that power/knowledge worked together with discursive practices in particular ways to effect a subjectification of the person. Subjectification happened in different ways, with one means being the operations of technologies of the self. The operations of technologies of the self produced a person as a particular kind of subject – in the case of this study, a particular kind of mourning subject. Referencing Foucault’s work on subjectification, White (1991) described technologies of self as those practices

which permit individuals to effect their own means or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (p.138).

Foucault (1975) further noticed how people embark upon a self-scrutiny and surveillance, as a technology of the self, in order to meet the gaze of normalising judgement. Power/knowledge operates powerfully as people are co-opted into circumscribing and controlling their bodies. In a variety of ways people become complicit in the disciplining of their bodies, implicated in their own subjectification and working to police their own bodies, which become recruited as “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1975, p.135). I am curious about how power/knowledge relations operate when bodies are dead or dying and people are mourning a loss. Foucault (1982) helps me to understand the ways in which technologies of self, which is a mode of subjectification, works on the body as a disciplinary site; in thoughts, words and actions, to effect taken-for-granted ways of being and seeing mourning, death and dying.

People’s experiences of and encounters with death, dying, loss and mourning are powerfully shaped by the operations of the technologies of self. The production of a particular kind of grieving subject works as both a matter of some alarm, in its demarcation of the grieving person as being in a different state because of the death they have experienced, and in the ways that grieving is shaped by discourse. At the same time, death and loss brings with it a kind of desire in wanting to acknowledge the loss, and recognising this loss in grief. As the line of force embedded within dominant mourning discourse works to effect a subjectification, which signals not only the death and how to grieve, so it also recognises the desire to grieve the loss brought about by the death. Powell (2011) argues that although death may be individually experienced, it comes to be “determined” in some ways by hegemonic mourning discourse. And so the "multilinear ensemble draws together, with [pleasure and] vulnerability, power and knowledge, working together to produce the subject" (Davies et al, 2002, p.300).

However, the generative and productive notion of power/knowledge means that we are never totally in the grip of power. Alongside normalising practices and lines of sedimentation where power/knowledge constricts and conscribes, there exists an open “field of possibilities” for acting, reacting and taking up different subjectivities. Since power is operational, it “traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge and produces discourse” (Foucault, 1980a,

p.119). Foucault (1980a) further argues for “points at which discourses are transformed in, through, and on the basis of relations of power” (p.69/70). Since power is on the move, circulating in and among people, relations and practices, there exist these “points” where there are places and spaces of resistance and struggle. Although “disciplinary power” works to effect a “subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects” (Foucault, 1980a, p.97), there also exist lines of breakage or fracture within power/knowledge. In noticing the shifting relations of power/knowledge and its generative and productive capacity, this means that the possibility of refusal and resistance is both possible and available.

The process of subjectification is not an outward imposition in the form of domination and subjection. People are involved in and part of the articulation and operation of power/knowledge as “acting subjects” (Davies et al, 2002, p.298). The acknowledgement of how it is that humans intersect with the lines of force means that “there is no power without potential refusal or revolt” (Foucault, as cited in Davies et al, 2002, p.298). The possibility of resistance is part of the instability and inherent tension of power relations. “As a network of relations, power is ‘constantly in tension, in activity’ and power relations are made of various points of instability that produce multiple sites and modes of resistance” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p.55). Further, “a power relationship necessitates that the one over whom power is exercised is recognised and maintained as a person who acts, who has a degree of freedom” (Foucault, as cited in Davies et al, 2002 , p.298).

The idea of “acting subjects” refusing or resisting hegemonic discursive practices, is realised in taking up a new materialist or spatial reading of Foucault’s power/knowledge nexus. Implicit in Foucault’s concept of power/knowledge is a particular appreciation of space. Since power is ascending, in motion and productive this means that the space within which power/knowledge operates is itself “dynamic, changing, infused with agency, and ... continually being re(con)figured by discursive-material practices” (Jackson, 2013, p.839).

If power is always on the move, productive and multiplicitous, then power enfolds spatiality into a fabric that is neither pre-existing nor determining. Spatially, power is thus an iterative and agential force because, rather than *containing* things, it *makes* things. According to this non-container view of space and time, the subject “does not evolve in linear time; nor do practices of the subject unravel in a continuous, uninterrupted manner within an unchanging spatial context” (Jackson, 2013, p.840). In this view the subject is produced and re-produced as a dynamic interplay within the moving folds of power/knowledge, not in a linear time or space. This means that a subject is agentially produced and that the subject’s participation in power relations reproduces the territory of power/knowledge, and themselves. This spatialised view of the subject and their agentic possibilities shifts the concept of the subject located in a discrete time-space boundary to an appreciation of the subject as rhizomatically re-produced in an ongoingly changing time-space matrix. Therefore, in this view, the subject is “discontinuous” and “shifting”, “iteratively (re)made in spatial relations of power/knowledge” (Jackson, 2013, p.840) .

Within the shifting spatial relations and the multiple intersections of power/knowledge there exists lines of fracture or “breakages” (Foucault, as cited in Davies et al, 2002, p. 297). Here, it may be possible to disrupt hegemonic power relations and thus bring forward a “disturbing and destabilising [of] sedimented thinking” (Davies, et al., 2002, p.295). This reading for spatial meaning, allows for a consideration of the “becoming spaces for power relations to produce new possibilities” (Jackson, 2013, p.845).

Discourse and mourning

For the purposes of this study, I hold that discourse/s “are systems of thought and systemic ways of carving out reality. They are structures of knowledge that influence systems of practice” (Chambon, 1999, p.57). Discourse/s can be seen to comprise a series of deeply embedded and taken-for-granted assumptions. These assumptions are so accepted that they are, at times, rendered invisible or transparent. As such, they are often “disattended” (Davies, 1993, p.153). Discourses are thus “sets of physical, behavioural, and cognitive practices that

generate bodies of knowledge, experience, phenomenon and, subjectivity” (Powell, 2011, p.354).

It follows then that subjects are never outside of discourse. Additionally, people contribute to and reconstitute discourse through their participation in the discursive practices of the multiple discourses of which they are a part. And these discursive practices offer both possibilities and limitations for the position calls (Drewery, 2005, p.314) people may take up or refuse.

Mourning practices and rituals are shaped by and have shaping effects on embodied personal encounters with death, dying and loss. The dying body, the dead body, loss, grieving and mourning are powerful sites for the articulation of the relations of power/knowledge. Death makes griever and mourners of us all. The weight of hegemonic discourse acts upon griever and mourners, effecting a disciplining of grieving bodies.

Foote and Frank (1999) contend that grieving (and dying) can be appreciated in Foucauldian terms as a technology of self, where the right kind of grieving and dying is bound by dominant discourse around dying and mourning. Further, that dominant discourse/s of mourning and dying is shaped by aligning and competing discourse/s (of for example, parenting, gender, culture). Powell (2011) argues that, “death takes us, as individuals, to a place that exists at the brink of the crisis of modernity. We are not in control; we do not understand; our sense of self; our relations with others; even the way we experience time is challenged” (p.353).

Here, therapy itself is a potential site of normalisation and/or pathologising of dying and grieving. Embedded within its care for “grief work” sits the implicit taken-for-granted assumptions that shape understandings of mourning and the subjectivities of the grieving. Some of these knowledges hold, for example, that in mourning there are normal and ab-normal responses to loss. These ab-normal responses call for an intervention that may bring about a medicalization of grief and certainly an individualisation of the person whose grieving has become disordered. Grieving is thought to proceed through stages towards a resolution and

the grieving subject is situated within this territory and polices themselves within these boundaries in order to effect a “good grieving”.

Foote and Frank (1999) further argue that these workings of power speak of the understanding that “grief, like death itself, is undisciplined, risky, wild. That society seeks to discipline grief, as part of its policing of the border between life and death” (p.170). Therapy, in its care for the bereaved, however, carries the possibility of providing a truth-status of getting through grief and in this way to effect a disciplining of the body and a circumscribing of grieving rituals and practices. This disciplining of grief operates to manage the boundaries between life and death and to manage the mourning body through a medicalization and pathologisation of grief. As death is ordered, so the practices of individualising the grief experience and totalising mourning behaviours, operate on and upon people in their different state, as mourners.

As already described earlier in the chapter, Foucault’s analysis of power is that power is both relational and always in motion. Further, that despite the operations of power/knowledge, there is the space for resistance and refusal of dominant discourses around death and mourning. In fact, Foucault argued that resistance happens at the level of the body. “One is not radical because one pronounces a few words; no, the essence of being radical is physical; the essence of being radical is the radicalness of existence itself” (Foucault, as cited in Foote & Frank, 1999, p.175). I am interested in this embodiment of resistance and how it plays out at the level of the body in mourning, grieving and loss. In chapter four I take up this curiosity and show how I was able to resist hegemonic discourse in the wearing of a particular kind of funeral dress.

Territorialisation and lines of flight

Calling on Deleuze and Guattari (1987) I suggest that resistance to dominant mourning discourse can happen as a line of flight. This embodied “radicalness” or resistance to discursive mourning practices I explore further in this next section. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari (1987), I examine the spatial metaphor of territorialisation; specifically de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation, in order

to show how it may be possible to take up a line of flight within the territory of hegemonic mourning discourse.

Death, loss and mourning can be thought of as a particular kind of territory, with a certain terrain, landscape of practices, routes and pathways. Whilst this conventional image and metaphor of a territory is appealing, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) further develop the idea of a territory and explain that rather than a place, space or image, “a territory borrows from all the milieus; it bites into them, seizes them bodily (although it remains vulnerable to intrusions)” (p.314). This is useful in considering that beyond the common sense idea of a territory, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) consider that in its essence a territory is “marked by ‘indexes,’ which may be components taken from any of the milieus: materials, organic products, skin or membrane states, energy sources, action-perception condensates” (pp. 314-315). This is helpful in thinking about the territories of death, dying and mourning which I unfold in the later chapters of this study.

In further explaining territories, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) state that territorialities “are shot through with lines of flight” (p.76). Within lines of flight the authors suggest that there are “movements of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation”(p.76). Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) often use the terms, de-territorialisation and line of flight interchangeably, although they are not regarded as the same.

De-territorialisation may be understood as the “vector flight” from one territory to another territory, with the “taking flight” being a line of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.131). Here taking flight is thought of in terms of “fleeing or eluding ... flowing, leaking and disappearing into the distance” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.xvi). The process of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation, is a complex one in which these concepts are related to each other, but not conflated with one another. De-territorialisation and re-territorialisation happen simultaneously as movements where de-territorialisation is “thought of as a perfectly positive power that has degrees and thresholds (epistrata), is always relative and has reterritorialisation as its flipside or complement” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.75). So rather than being two separate and discrete actions or

operations, de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation are intertwined and occur as part of territorialisation.

These complex ideas are best understood through Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) description of the relationship between the wasp and the orchid. In noticing that every orchid has the shape of a wasp embedded in it and appreciating that the wasp's form is a real part of the orchid, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) offer the poetic becoming of the wasp-orchid assemblage. As wasp and orchid meet each other, each is de-territorialised in a vital interplay which effects a re-territorialisation and a becoming-other, for both wasp in becoming-orchid and for the orchid in its becoming-wasp.

The orchid deterritorializes by forming an image, a tracing of a wasp; but the wasp reterritorializes on that image. The wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen. Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome. ... a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp. Each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialization of one term and the reterritorialization of the other; the two becomings interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialization ever further. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.31)

In other words, in the process of de- and re-territorialisations (which are inter-related), a line of flight is opened. That which emerges from this process, and is a part of the line of flight, is implicated in the new "rhizoid" assemblage – in the above example, becomingwasp, becomingorchid. I further develop this idea of becoming in the later chapters.

What is significant in the above reference is the idea that becoming is emergent and happens rhizomatically. The rhizome is another important idea that I have plugged into in this research. I have adopted the metaphor of the rhizome as a process and as a concept. In its organic and emergent nature, the rhizome offers this research the movement and fluidity to grow and evolve as part of a

rhizomorphic action. In describing the multiplicity, the transforming and transformational nature of a rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) take up, and refuse, the metaphor of a tree in describing a rhizome when they write, “there are knots of arborescence in rhizomes, and rhizomatic offshoots in roots” (p.2).

The idea of a rhizome is important because it contains within it molar forms/ lines which work to create boundaries, hierarchies and rigid striated spaces. At the same time the rhizome also holds possibilities for opening smooth space in a de-territorialised taking flight. A rhizome is a system, process, or being that is “founded upon interactions, that refuse linear causation and transform the notion of time” (Deleuze, 1990, p.32). The rhizome is diverse, multiplicitous, defies structural delineations and emerges organically in its connections and inter-relatedness. Even in this rhizoid-formation, becomingrhizome, there exists both and at the same time molar lines and smooth spaces, re-territorialisation and de-territorialisation. The assemblage works together, based not on speed or energy. But, rather, the rhizome is relational, “relative always connected, caught up in one another” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.31).

Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.30)

A line of flight is a kind of movement or passage, a reconfiguring whereby the process of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation allows for a taking flight, in the creation of a rhizome which is connected to but separate from what was involved in the de-territorialisation. This other-rhizome or assemblage is itself a kind of becoming. And so a line of flight has within it shifting or changing multiplicities which become part of the assemblage itself.

In tracing this complex idea of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) make it possible for me to understand the nuanced

operations of de- and re-territorialisations which mark the stories of mourning and death I offer in this study. The concept of the rhizome and the operation of territorialisation supports my analysis of how it is that molar lines or the striated spaces which form around dying and mourning may be resisted, and space opened for the embodiment of a different kind of grieving subject. In this study I research how lines of flight and places of de-territorialisation allowed for a becoming-other in my stories of loss and mourning.

Becoming

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of becoming is related to the process of de-territorialisation and thinking with the rhizome. Becoming is a movement where a line of flight makes possible a new subjectivity, a new sense of being in the world. Becoming is understood as *process*; ongoing, interrelated and transforming, to "be-between, to pass between [. . .] never ceasing to become" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p.277) and in this way, becoming is understood to involve movement, multiplicity and fluidity.

In the previous section on territorialisation, I offered Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) metaphor of the wasp and the orchid as a means of understanding de- and re-territorialisation. The explanation is further expanded to include a description of how in the processes of de- and re-territorialisation, that which emerges and is part of the line of flight, is a new rhizoid assemblage of becomingwasp, for the orchid and becomingorchid, for the wasp. Jackson (2010) develops this concept of becoming further by quoting that "the *becoming* is in the relationship between the wasp and the orchid. The *becoming* is the something else, the newness that is created. *Becoming* is the movement through a unique event that produces experimentation and change" (p.581). As wasp and orchid de- and re-territorialise on each other and themselves, they become part of a multiplicitous rhizomatic assemblage which is never complete or finished.

Accordingly, Deleuze regarded becoming as about movements. Becoming is a state of ongoing transforming and transformations. "There is no being beyond becoming, nothing beyond multiplicity; neither multiplicity nor becoming are appearances or illusions ... multiplicity is the affirmation of unity; becoming is

the affirmation of being” (Deleuze, as cited in May, 2003, p.143).

Whilst becoming does suggest a movement, Jackson (2010) acknowledges that although becoming is directional, in that it is a movement away from rigid molar forms, it is nevertheless neither intentional nor driven. Rather, “a line of becoming is not defined by points it connects ... on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.293). In its “passing between points” and its “coming up through the middle”, becoming as process, disturbs and disrupts the molar. Becoming is therefore a state of being in-between, of the “continual production of difference immanent within events” (Jackson, 2010, p.581).

Despite these explanations I have offered for becoming, attempts to define becoming are fraught, since becoming itself “cannot be adequately described. If it could, it would already be what it is becoming, in which case it wouldn’t be becoming at all” (Massumi, as cited in Jackson, 2010, p.583). What this means then is that becoming is future-focussed in its hopefulness, since all becomings are moments of becoming, rather than arrival points or destinations. What is involved is an opening up of ourselves to possibilities, to difference, to ongoing constitution, to constantly transforming relations (Coleman, 2008).

As I investigate my experiences with mourning, I am interested in applying the idea of becoming to my encounters with the dead and dying body. However, since becoming is an ongoing and continuous process without end, I appreciate this by adopting a particular way of writing about becoming, such as, becoming-mourner. The hyphen indicates the ongoing and continuous nature of becoming, as process. At certain points in the thesis, I do not make use of hyphen and write instead, becomingsister. I do so to indicate the ways in which this process of becoming is itself an entangled assemblage. The concept of assemblage, I introduce as the research emerges.

The fold: space and bodies

Since the idea of the fold is central to my analysis of death and mourning, I offer a brief explanation here and then continue to develop the idea throughout the study. As I take up Deleuze’s (1993) description of the fold, I notice how the fold also

includes an appreciation of the relationship between bodies and space. Deleuze (1993) illustrates this when he writes that the

fold affects all materials that it thus becomes expressive matter, with different scales, speeds, and different vectors (mountains and waters, papers, fabrics, living tissues, the brain), but especially because it determines and materializes Form. It produces a form of expression. (p.39)

Looking to Foucault and Leibniz, Deleuze (1988) was interested in how the fold, working as a movement in two directions, could be helpful in understanding the process of subjectification. In referring to Foucault, Deleuze noticed that

in Foucault there are four primary folds ... the folding of our body ... the folding of a force impinging on itself rather than other forces, truth enfolded in relation to us, and finally the ultimate folding of the line outside. (Deleuze, 1995, as cited in Malins, 2004, p.484)

In these terms fold/ing is connected to bodies, to space, to discourse and to becoming. The fold is a way to appreciate the spatiality and materiality involved in subjectification. Deleuze (1988) further re-thought of space as a particular kind of relationship between bodies and space. Rather than conceiving of space as something fixed, concrete and geographical, Deleuze held that,

the outside is not a fixed limit but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside. (Deleuze, 1988, p.96 - 97)

According to Deleuze (1993), the fold and indeed, folding and unfolding is neither a single event nor a description of a technical movement. Rather, “folding-unfolding no longer simply means tension-release, contraction-dilation, but envelopingdeveloping, involution-evolution” (p.19). When applied to death, dying and mourning, folding is appreciated as an ongoing “envelopingdeveloping”, rather than a single event – death. As “involution-evolution”, dying and living are

“precisely the inside of the outside” (Deleuze, 1988, p.96-97), inter-related and intra-acted with each other.

In describing the relatedness of bodies to space, Deleuze and later Guattari (1987) further expanded their thinking into smooth and striated space. Thinking about smooth and striated space/s provides the possibilities for a *movement* of space, a de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation, in which bodies become folded differently. Hickey-Moody and Malins (2007) help to explain the relationship between bodies to each other and to the space/s around them as they write that,

bodies enfold that which surrounds them and, at the same time, they fold out into the world to shape the spaces they encounter. A body can be understood to have many folds, and to be folded in many different ways. Bodies can develop rigid folds, which stratify them in a particular way, reducing their potential for change. They can also unfold their relations with the world; unfurling the categories of identity and habit that make them what they are. (p.11)

I take up this particular idea of folding and unfolding in the stories I offer of my personal and professional encounters with the dying and the dead body, and mourning.

Differentiation

Alongside deconstructing space and time, Deleuze further sought to understand how difference or differance was a positive force. Differentiation is applied to my study as I consider that the ways in which bodies take up different mourning practices may be regarded as a positive force, rather than different ways to do mourning.

In describing differentiation, Hultman and Taguchi (2010) reference Deleuze when they state that according to Deleuze “different bodies, human life and matter are different in that they have what he calls *different styles of becoming*: they *become* different in their own different styles depending on the qualities by which they actively differentiate in themselves” (p.528). Differentiation is thus distinct from difference – differance is not different from or different to. Rather,

differance is “caused by connections and relations within and between different bodies, affecting each other and being affected” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.529). Differentiation happens at each moment and at each event. As matter relates to each other, in each singular event, so differentiation represents that event and the flux and change inherent in each encounter. As each of my encounters with death and dying brings forward a discursively and materially produced mourning, so in each moment-by-moment encounter, differance is both happening and being produced.

In Deleuzian terms, differentiation is considered as positive and itself in a constant ongoing state of becoming. When related to death, dying and mourning, differentiation allows me to analyse the ways in which taking up other ways of mourning may be regarded as a differance in the way in which bodies; both dead and alive, relate to tears, voice, dresses and fluids.

New materialism

I turn now to a description of new materialism as another philosophical lens which I have applied to this research. New materialism has alternatively been called posthumanism, immanent naturalism, agential realism and a philosophy of becoming (Connolly, 2013). It is both poststructural and post-feminist in its articulation. New materialism is, however, neither new nor the only theorising to account for the materiality of people and practices. The thinking which is included in a new materialist philosophy emerged rhizomatically and is connected to the theorising of Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze and Butler, amongst others. The aforementioned philosophers also theorised the entangled nature of the material and the discursive. To a large extent Foucault, Butler and Derrida were drawn first to the discursive practices of knowing which are interwoven into and emerging out of the material realm. For new materialists “the material is always already discursively produced, and the discursive is always already materially produced” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p.111). This means that for both poststructural and new material theorising, the discursive and material, are regarded as significant and of importance. In tracing these connections, Jackson and Mazzei (2012) state that new materialism “reflects a move from an emphasis on the discursive with Derrida ... ; to the discursive ↔material, with Foucault and Butler, to the

material↔discursive, with Deleuze and Barad” (p.110). The inter-related connection between the material and the discursive is highlighted by Barad (2007) in the claim that

neither discursive practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior. Neither can be explained in terms of the other. Neither is reducible to the other. Neither has privileged status in determining the other. Neither is articulated or articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated. (p.152)

New materialist thinking folds into poststructural theorising the dynamic inter-relationship or intra-action between matter and meaning. The focus on re-inserting matter and materiality into the conversation offers a rethinking of the relationship between being and knowing. Since knowing and being are irrevocably intertwined, new materialism reconsiders how subjects are produced and how people come to know what they do within the entanglements and intra-action of all matter.

In new materialist terms all matter - human, nonhuman and the more-than human (Alaimo, 2010) is vibrant, alive and of significance (Bennett, 2010). Accordingly vibrant matter comes into being through and by the interactions (intra-actions) between all other vibrant matter. Further, vibrant matter is a part of the iterative intra-actions of the entangled assemblages of which we are all a part (Barad, 2007). What this means is that things come to matter in an agentic relationship (entanglement) with all other matter, human, nonhuman and the more-than-human. This acknowledgement of the intra-action between the material and the discursive (which has come to be represented visually as material < > discursive) shifts binaried, dualistic thinking and folds in an appreciation of fluidity and multiplicity, in being and becoming. Barad (2003) further connects knowing and being in her claim that

Practices of knowing and being are not isolatable, but rather they are mutually implicated. We do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because “we” are *of* the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming.(p.829)

In my study of mourning practices, I am particularly interested in the ways in which new materialism has taken up the matter of materiality. In the next section I turn to Barad's (2007) ideas of intra-action and diffraction. Both these concepts bring forward a different kind of knowing, understanding and positioning for myself in the territory of death and mourning. Intra-action and diffraction are central in my analysis of mourning, death and dying.

Intra-action

Intra-action is important in new materialist theorising. Intra-action is distinct from interaction in its process and its philosophical understanding. Interaction implies a specific causality and the relationship implicated in interaction is usually unidirectional and linear, with each entity existing prior to the interaction and each being changed or transformed as a result of the interaction. Intra-action is neither linear nor causal in nature.

Accordingly, intra-action offers a conceptual shift and radicalises ideas of relationality. What intra-action holds is that matter and meaning do not exist as separate entities prior to the encounter. In fact there is no independent and separate existence or meaning for human, nonhuman and more-than-human matter. All matter comes into being through this intra-action, which is dynamic, agentic and generative. Barad (2007) contends that, "individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-acting" (p.ix). This intra-acting, is not regarded as an event or process, or something that comes into being all at once. It is not even connected to place, space or time. Intra-action is a kind of iterative reconfiguring which troubles the distinctions between "creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future" (Barad, 2007, p. ix).

New materialism offers the idea of an entanglement as a way to describe how the intra-action may operate. It is through the emergent and reciprocal co-constitutive entanglement that intra-action occurs. Intra-action, as emergent, co-constitutive and ongoing, means that intra-action is both productive and generative. There do not exist realms, entities, individuals or even matter outside of intra-action.

Humans are not independent and acting on the material world, as knower and observer. Rather, human, nonhuman and more-than-human come into being through and by the intra-action which is shaping of their ongoing becoming.

Matter, like meaning, is not an individually articulated or static entity. Matter is not little bits of nature, or a blank slate, surface, or site passively awaiting signification; nor is it an uncontested ground ... Matter is not immutable or passive. It does not require the mark of an external force like culture or history to complete it. Matter is always already an ongoing historicity ... matter is substance in its intra-active becoming—not a thing, but a doing, a congealing of agency. Matter is a stabilizing and destabilizing process of iterative intra-activity. (Barad, 2003, pp. 821 – 822).

What this means for mourning and death is that dead and grieving bodies come into being through their intra-action with all other matter, as a kind of mattering.

Diffraction

Diffraction is about differences, patterns of differences and appreciating and noticing what these differences are and how these differences emerge in intra-action. “Diffraction is a narrative, graphic, psychological, spiritual, and political technology for making consequential meanings” (Haraway, 1997, as cited in Barad, 2010, p.254).

In chapter one I introduced diffraction in speaking of autoethnography as a diffractive methodology. I return to the metaphor of waves in the sea encountering an obstacle which Barad (2007) adopted to explain diffraction. In these terms, diffraction is the study of difference, interferences and change/s. Diffraction is the breaking of the waves, the constitution of the waves as they re-emerge on the other side of the obstacle – changed and interrupted, yet re-constituted. Diffraction is the ongoing movements of difference, interruption, transformings that happen across space and time.

Diffraction is not a singular event that happens in space and time; rather, it

is a dynamism that is integral to spacetime-mattering. Diffractions are untimely. Time is out of joint; it is diffracted, broken apart in different directions, non-contemporaneous with itself. Each moment is an infinite multiplicity. (Barad, 2014, p.169)

Diffractive thinking acknowledges that knowing is a relationship of differences, interferences which happen as an ongoing intra-action. Thinking with Barad (2007) I appreciate that “knowing is a matter of part of the world making itself intelligible to another part of the world” (p. 185).

A pause

By plugging in (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to theory and philosophy, I take up diffractive thinking which appreciates that the dynamic assemblage of which theory, data, stories, bodies, time and space are a part is ongoingly constituted as an intra-action of mattering and meaning. I hold to the Baradian (2012) idea that “theories are living and breathing reconfigurings of the world” (p.207). In analysing the entangled nature of material and discursive (material < > discursive) I am able to bring together mourning, bodies, space and time. These are the stories of my personal and professional encounters with death and dying which appear in the next section of the thesis.

Chapter three: At my father's feet

The wheels of the car comb across the tarmac of the driveway of my parents' home. The tyres shake off loose tiny stones with a susurrantion. The car's window reflects the grand pine tree standing guard over the prickly pine cones dropped from its branches. The cones smell of freshness and promise, their touch, a gamble of pointed barbs and silky bark. The dogs yap a greeting as the sliding door opens and the verandah welcomes me.

I notice my shoulders rise; my chest expanding as it draws in air and this breath, loosens me from my working day as a counsellor at school. I bring myself to meeting my dad, and my mother; in this moment and all the moments enfolded into my childhood home.

Meeting mom; our arms outstretch and enfold us to each other and the place of tenderness between our bodies. I lean into the embrace, clothes meet skin, skin touches skin and the squeezing fingers and pressure of bodies hold her gentle asking to make things better. Across her grey eyes skids too the hauntedness of days spent within the spectre of my father's pain. A tear pools in the corner of her eye. Our gestures, apart from dad in the kitchen, bring us to each other. My presence releases my mother from her vigil over my dying father.

I come every day. My dad waits for me every day. Our massage has become a daily ritual and so my daily visits bring hope into the home. Hope, not for living – my dad's body is dying, but hope for the time in-between a living and a dying; this shadow space where the light falls from net curtaining and dust particles can become dancing fairies.

I step into the lounge and see my father, his eyes closed, his physical body, changed, lying small and emaciated on the Lazy Boy lounge chair. His eyelids doggedly open. Our eyes touch and shadowed there is pain - and hope, as we prepare ourselves for this time together, now.

I notice his effort and also his reaching to me, his daughter. It is a moment of suspension where the tick tock of the cuckoo clock that sits on the wall, a gift from grandparents who travelled to Switzerland, cannot carve up as calculable time.

In the space between daughter and father are also enfolded the beautiful moments of giddily exciting piggy back rides, being safely enclosed by my father's arms and carried sleeping from a car, being walked down the aisle on my wedding day and handing over, with tenderness, my new born baby daughter, Rachael, the only grandchild he would hold in his arms.

As we silently prepare for our daily massage ritual, we enter a place where words sit behind the movements of touch. The rocker foot-rest, which was a bucking bronco when I was 5-years old, welcomes me. This stool now cradles my adult body; a daughter, a wife and a mother.

I place my hands on my father's feet.

I take my father's foot in my hand and smooth the cream over the instep and around the underneath of the sole of his foot. I touch ponderous veins pulled tight against the skin, swollen with gathering fluid; water the body can no longer drain and which now strains against the skin of his feet. I gently motion at the fluid, urging its removal and some slight easing or comfort for my dad. Purple, blue veins meet red splotches which lace his foot. As my hands caress these places, I lift my eyes. I hear a sigh released from between my father's lips.

His head is tilted backwards resting against the brown suede of the chair. His hands that have held fast to the armrest with the effort of breathing, now relax from the elbows and his hands melt into his lap. His nose is reddened and drying from the nasal cannula transferring oxygen to his body. His hunched shoulders, usually accompanying each inhalation and exhalation, which is becoming increasingly difficult, ease and his eyes lighten with the sigh.

I see my thumbs moving over the instep of his foot and at the same time I exert extra pressure on the ball of his foot where I can feel nodules and bumps. I witness my hands touching my father's foot.

Hands touch feet, feet touch fingers - up, down and around, up, down and around - we bring our bodies to each other and into this space - this time, this moment - now.

My eyes return to my father and his head is inclined towards me. He is watching the movements of my hands over his foot. I notice a quietness, a contemplation and at the same time a kind of urgency in the incline of his head. A soft smile touches the edge of my mouth.

The sun dips in the afternoon and dances through the net curtaining of the sliding door. The light touches my wedding ring and my hands move the golden light. Up down and around, up down and around.

In the space ... in the stillness ... my father offers a quiet question,
“Where should I die, girlie?”

The net curtains barely move in the space of the open sliding door. The humidity vibrates as cicadas click their Christmas song. The air is thick with the question between a father and a daughter.

What is dad asking me? To die? Where to die? How to answer? I cannot begin to know. It is impossible.

I look down from my dad's questioning eyes and I see my hands holding my father's foot. I notice the way hands and feet seem to merge – fingers, feet, skin, light. The question not quite whispered, but offered care-fully, travels in sound waves. Its echoes vibrate in the chambers of my body as it skims across the light bouncing between mouths, ears, hearts.

The words shift the space in the room. The words meet the silver framed photograph of Grant, my brother who died suddenly of a heart attack seventeen years ago. Grant, my 16-year old brother, strong athletic and vital, collapsed in the early hours of a May morning and suffered a fatal cardiac arrest in my parents' bedroom, even as my mother desperately tried to breathe life back into his body.

My hands are still. My eyes hold my father. The question sits between us.

Into the space the words fall again,

“Where should I die?”

The words, five words, carry my father and me with them. Back into the morning mist those years ago when my brother's heart stopped. When my brother was stretchered from this very house, straining to catch breath. The ambulance crew struggled to negotiate his embattled body on the stretcher down a narrow passage, as we watched, helpless.

My father tenderly reaches now towards his own death in the hope that it will not tear and rent my mother and me. The scarred reminder of Grant's sudden and dramatic death seems an impossible force within the uttering of his yearning question.

“Where should I die, girlie?”

My father and I are both back in that tight passage now, agonising over that difficulty. His words reach back to that encounter and forward into the time of his own dying, so imminent.

The cuckoo clock's rhythmic tick tock marks time, signalling the passage of this time – and hands touch feet and feet meet hands – a father and a daughter, a cancer in the lungs and words spoken and unspoken. Hands touch feet in a daily ritual of massage as a father and a daughter meet each other in living and in dying.

Folding theory with “At my father’s feet”

In this fold I explore the daily massage ritual that my father and I participated in during the last days of his life. I try to understand how this ritual of massaging my father’s swollen feet was more than a means to ease his physical discomfort that the cancer was causing him. I regard the encounter as an exquisite moment of entanglement where the intra-action of hands and feet in an assemblage of touching shifted time and space in a spacetime-mattering (Barad, 2007).

Thinking with Barad (2003, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014), I explore first the idea of entanglement. I am interested in intra-action of hands and feet. I become aware of how touch, the physical encounter of massaging is a matter of substance and significance (Davies, 2014).

I then analyse how memories and re-membering are unfolded and enfolded in space and time. The intra-action radically reconceptualises time and space. In new material terms matter and meaning become appreciated beyond the boundaries of time and space in this encounter with my father. As my father and I both reach back into the past and feel the weight of the death of my brother, Grant, so time and space collapses in a timespace-mattering (Barad, 2007). My father and I fold time back and fold it forward into a time when his body will cease to exist. Deleuze’s (1993) idea of the fold makes it possible for me to hold this ritual moment as a significant mourning practice.

I next consider how Derrida (2001) invites thinking of the ways in which the death of the Other implicates me in this dying. My father’s evocative question about his own dying calls me into a position of becoming-daughter (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Butler (2004) further highlights this responsibility to the Other and I explore the shaping connections between my brother’s death, my father’s imminent death and the responsibility to the dead, the dying and the living.

An entanglement

As my father and I meet each other in our daily massage ritual, so this encounter becomes an experience of what Barad (2007) has called an entanglement. This moment of entanglement recalls the last touchings, words (spoken and unspoken) between my father and me. Folded into this encounter is the poignant knowing of a time where living matter will give way to a coming death-time for my father. The intra-action between the living body of my father and myself involves a reaching back to a remembered time and forward to an imagined deathscape. The mo(ve)ment (Davies, 2006) provides the rich tapestry for interweaving understandings of mourning practices and rituals. My father and I do a different kind of father-daughter relationship. In the entanglement of the encounter my father and I hold this moment as a precious marker of our time together,

In chapter two I highlighted the ways in which new materialism forwards the inseparability of meaning and matter Barad (2007) further argues that no force, no energy nor movement can tear matter and meaning apart. This irrevocable connectivity affords an appreciation of the intra-action that happens in the encounter between my father's feet and my hands.

Touching: matter and meaning

I touch my father's feet in a massage ritual and there is an enfolding of my love and care into each circular motion. The physical act of touching, of matter meeting matter (hands meeting feet), is enriched with the discursive importance of the care and love I hold for my father, and he for me. Touching becomes an intra-acting between the matter of flesh and the meaning of all the touching holds. This intra-acting happens in the discursive <> material moments of touching.

Barad (2012) further explores how in touching "there is a sensuality of the flesh, an exchange of warmth, a feeling of pressure, of presence, a proximity of otherness that brings the other nearly as close as oneself" (p.206). This moment becomes one in which my father and I are intra-actively interwoven into each other. The touching flows into the silence, where the knowledge we both hold of the passing of his body, which must inevitably come, is enfolded into an aliveness that sparks in the light and the space between touching.

The question

The tenderness of touching brings forward my father's question. These words are uttered with the deep yearning to care for my mother and me. My father contemplates his dying and diseased body. He anticipates a death-time. He folds in an-other death – my brother's death. My brother's body, his dying body, is present in my father's question. My father and I are re-made in the intra-action of this moment – as hands meet feet, and words caress the tender spaces of a sadness almost unspeakable.

Memories

My father and I hold and re-call memories from the past. This re-remembering invokes an already happening in this time-space of the now and it harkens to a future-time in an arcing interweaving. "Memory does not reside in the folds of individual brains; rather, memory is the enfoldings of space-time-matter written into the universe, or better, the enfolded articulations of the universe in its mattering" (Barad, 2007, p.ix).

Contrary to the conventional notion of memory as a place of storage which we tap into. Barad (2015) regards memory as "a field of enfolded patterns of differentiating-entangling, it is a matter of re-remembering, of tracing entanglements, responding to yearnings for connection, materialized into fields of longing/belonging, of regenerating what never was but might yet have been" (Barad, 2015, p.406 - 407).

Thus, memory, re-remembering and the spaces, times and the bodies which inhabit the memories, speak of an interconnectedness, an intra-relatedness of "creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future" (Barad, 2007, p.ix). It is this "here and there, past and future", this "beginning and returning" that illustrates the mo(ve)ments which happen in this encounter between my father and me. The infinite possibilities of interactions, of touching and self-touching, means that

self-touching is an encounter with the infinite alterity of the self. Matter is an enfolding, an involution, it cannot help touching itself, and in this self-

touching it comes in contact with the infinite alterity that is ...what is being called into question here is the very nature of the “self”, and in terms of not just being but also time. That is, in an important sense, the self is dispersed/diffracted through time and being. (Barad, 2012, p.213).

This means that there may be new and other ways of thinking about matter and mattering. Davies (2014) noted that, “when one body ‘encounters’ another body, or an idea another idea, it happens that the two relations sometimes combine to form a more powerful whole” (p.8). This encounter with my dad of touching and speaking was a moment of “mattering ... simultaneously a matter of substance and significance” (Davies, 2014, p.4). My father and I become Other in this encounter. We do caring in a way that boldly speaks a truth of the weight of dead bodies and how these are negotiated from a home.

Touching all Others: diffracting time

Since all touching possesses an infinite alterity, then it follows that “touching the Other is touching all Others, including the “self”, and touching the “self” entails touching the strangers within” (Barad, 2012, p.214). As my hands touch and massage the feet of my father, so I am brought in these mo(ve)ments to a kind of a self-touching and simultaneously, of otherness.

Touching involves a radical contemplation of oneness and infiniteness. In the massage ritual touching transcends that moment of the touch and reaches into the time of a non-father body and, dare I say, my own death. “That is, every finite being is always already threaded through with an infinite alterity diffracted through being and time” (Barad, 2012, p.214). It is in this *in-between* where a de-individualisation and a constitution of different ways of being bring forward a becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

The force of mourning

Death and dying becomes re-thought of in this light of indeterminacy whereby the very notion/s of identity and non/being are re-worked. I return to Derrida’s consideration of where and how the Other and I meet in dialogue. Death initiates a conversation between the irreplaceability of oneself, even the (im)possibility of contemplating one’s own death , and the birth of responsibility. As noted in

chapter one, Derrida's (1996) deconstruction of the aporia inherent in a mourning acknowledges the (im)possibility of the force and principle of mourning. There is a recognition of the ongoingness and unendingness of a mourning which is irreconcilable. Part of the (im)possibility of mourning rests in the contemplation and knowledge of one's own death, which ends with the ending of the body. So, we "remember" the possibility of mourning even before the death of the loved one, and in certain respects meeting the death of the Other is meeting our own death.

Alongside this self-death aporia, Derrida (1996) grapples with the force of mourning, which he argues is never finished. The entangled encounter between my father and me has this aporic force of mourning in the intra-activity of hands moving over feet and words spoken and bodies dead and dying.

The question ...

"Where should I die, girlie?"

I feel the weight and the might of the question. My father's question holds words of deep care for my mother. The question carries his hope for dying *well* enough and a fierce sense of responsibility. Now as adult, I am joined with my father in the responsibility to care for my mother. The words call me into an adult place, as an adult daughter. Still, though, a "girlie" with all its tender childhood endearments.

The question must fail, must ultimately collapse upon itself. For any working at dying well, for my father, for his wife (my mother) and his daughter (me) will inevitably contain within it the trace, the memory, the scar and the wound of a previous death, of Grant, my brother, his son.

Tick tock, up down and around, tick tock. The cuckoo jolts out from behind its wooden door, this time now is folded back into the relationship my father and I are doing. It is the timespacemattering in which time and space become collapsed and folded into each other. My brother's death from the past is threaded into and is a part of the question of my father's dying body. The question is offered as a hope, an offering, a desiring of an-other way of dying - without force, without

horror. Yet, this encounter is itself “a work of mourning of the absolute of ‘force’” (Derrida, 1996, p.174). It is an exquisite entanglement of aporetic force. As a pleat (Deleuze, 1993) the massage ritual is both an anticipation of a death to come and a re-membering, in all its materiality, of another death in this very place, our home. My father had within his dread an image of his own body stretched awkwardly down the narrow passage of our house. He holds a remembered image of where he stood behind the stretcher bearing the body of his 16-year old son. The stretcher and the body is manoeuvred with painful negotiations, as a matter of haste and urgency, to the awaiting ambulance.

Spacetime negotiations

In this manner of thinking of a temporalization of time, Derrida (1996) recounts the connection of space-time in a work of mourning. By describing how the dead are not with-us in death, but are *in-us*, this *being-in-us*, both constitutes and anticipates a mourning, a loss.

When we say “in us”, when we speak so easily and so painfully of inside and outside, we are naming space, we are speaking of a visibility of the body, geometry of gazes, an orientation of perspectives. We are speaking of images ... The image sees more than it is seen. The image looks at us. (Derrida, 1996, p.188)

This image, “far away in us” (Derrida, 1996, p.189), is the constitution of mourning. It invites an interconnectedness, a responsibility, an image of the dead as Other in us and as Other. Each death reminds us of other deaths, including our own. This vulnerability and the political nature of the social constitution of our bodies (Butler, 2004), brings the entanglement with mourning at a personal and social level. For Butler (2004) vulnerability is irreconcilable as it “precedes the formation of an ‘I’” (p.31). It follows from a vulnerability to the touch of the other and opens us to each other at the level of the body, materiality and space.

This ethical relation and holding of the Otherness in the Other sees us looking at ourselves. Butler (2004) offers that it is the possibility of a wounding which connects us to each other. But more especially we are connected to each other by a foreignness, an unknowingness of ourselves which implicates the Other in me.

“I find that my very formation implicates the other in me, that my own foreignness to myself, is paradoxically, the source of my ethical connection with others” (Butler, 2004, p.46). Connection is about responsibility. Such responsibility becomes an ethico-epistemological ontology – a yearning for justice. However, such a justice is not a finite arrival space in time or being, but rather, justice is a thread of entanglements. Justice regarded as,

not a state that can be achieved once and for all. There are no solutions: There is only the ongoing practice of being open and alive, to each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities or living justly. (Barad, 2007, p. x)

The work of this fold

As I remained “open and alive” to each moment of exquisite entanglement of the massage ritual with my father, so the touching it embraced brought with it a matter of time and space - a timespacemattering. My father’s question had within it the body of my brother. Grant’s body brought the question, with all its care and responsibility into the encounter of the massage ritual. This dead body was present in the space between my hands and the red blotchy veined feet of my father. Time-space was folded and became a pleat (Deleuze, 1993) which called my father and I into responsibility – for mourning, for dying and for living on. My father and I were able in this response-ability to death and mourning to bring ourselves to a different kind of father-daughter relationship. In the massage ritual, as hands and feet intra-acted, space was opened for the asking of the painful question – a question of the ending of a body. It was also a question of living on, and a question of originary mourning. But, as the question left my father’s lips as a whisper, so its echoes “breathed life into ever new possibilities” (Barad, 2007, p.x). These were evocative refrains of possibilities of caring and the melancholy traces of goodbyes. As the golden air held the question of a body dying and a body, dead, an answer danced a reply; “you are teaching me to die, dad, you are teaching me to live ...” Its whispered answer enfolded me as becomingdaughter.

Chapter four: The yellow funeral dress

Black is the shade of mourning, black is a way to honour the dead. Black embodies the solemnity and reflects the pain of the loss. Black, yes, the funeral dress should be black.

I am 13-years old, my 16-year old brother, Grant, the other half of our sibling pair, has died. I cannot yet fathom this or understand what is to come, for I have not ever attended a funeral or memorial service. I haven't even seen a dead body and I am not sure if my brother was alive the last time I saw him slumped on his back over my parents' bed, his fleecy pyjama pants exposing his blue feet, evidence that his body demanded oxygen.

I sit now on the carpet of our lounge floor and hear around and above me conversations about a funeral service to be held for my brother. My mother reaches for me gently remarking that we'll get a "nice black dress" for the service. And suddenly, I know – I won't wear black.

I have a yellow dress, bright iridescent yellow which I know I want to wear. I'm not sure why, just then. But, I feel in the heaviness of my stomach that if I wear black, I somehow may be agreeing with this horror that has happened. If I wear the yellow dress, I protest, I stand apart from the mourners and I claim a different space, a sister space, a yellow space.

I wait to talk with mom and dad, not wanting to make a fuss and find that this terror of the death of my brother, has brought with it too, a gentleness for me. I cannot make my way through the convolutions of "why?" Why Grant ? Why us ? Why this ? If this, then why not me?

The yellow dress hangs in my cupboard, holding memories of parties and outings. It has a frill around the neckline and a shiny yellow belt around the waist. It is not funeral attire. It should not be worn to a funeral – should it?

As I pull the dress over my head, I feel its silkiness create static in my long hair and the electricity quivers off my skin. I steal a glance at myself in the mirror on the back of the cupboard door. I see the dress. I notice how it falls from the waist around my legs. The frill is pretty, its ruffles soften the neckline and as the layers of fabric enfold upon each other, they catch the brightness of the yellow.

The dress is speaking. I become the dress – a funeral dress. A dress fitting to meet a brother in death. The dress is speaking. As the dress fits me, so my body softens into it and I am unfolded into a different kind of grieving sister. A yellow dress, silky against my young skin, a beautiful yellow funeral dress. I lift my eyes from the reflection of the dress in the mirror and see myself looking back. This is the day - and this dress will make this day possible.

My mother wants to do my hair, although I have been managing it myself for years. The attention pulls at me and I feel the urge of an irritation. But, I let that slide and gently submit to her attentions, aware somehow of the comfort this moment of brushing my hair and fixing it in a neat, slick ponytail will bring her. This moment becomes a repeated doing and a way I will try to make meaning of the “why?” questions which weigh so heavily.

As we enter the church – last, I walk down the hushed aisle and feel the burden of eyes full of sympathy and compassion. My grandmother presses some tissues into my hand and this is another irritation which rankles. I won’t be needing these, I won’t be crying here.

And then, my body betrays me. I feel the tell-tale horror of a dripping nose and know before the drop falls that my nose is bleeding. I am suspended in the moment as the red drop falls through space and lands with a stain against the bright yellow frill of the beautiful yellow dress. The red splotch spreads as the silken fabric absorbs its redness and my grief is visible for all those gathered to witness – in a red blood droplet on a bright yellow funeral dress. The dress is marked and I am stained with sadness.

Folding theory with “The yellow funeral dress”

In this fold I trace the discourse/s of mourning which have shaped my experience and meaning-making of the death of my brother, Grant. I hope through this (re)membering to engage in a decomposition (Barthes, 1997) of self whereby the constitutive effects of, particularly, the discourse of mourning becomes visible. I develop further, from chapter two, the idea of striated and smooth space offered by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) as a way to appreciate the operations of mourning discourse upon my body.

Inspired by Davies et al (2006), idea of mo(ve)ment I attempt to understand how the wearing of a yellow dress to the funeral of my brother became a line of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). I make use of positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1999) to explore the kinds of positions calls that were made available to me and those which I resisted within the discourse of mourning. I look at the ways in which my grieving body was storied through the complex operations of mastery and submission in the process of subjectification (Butler, 1995).

I explore how despite the bodily inscription of hegemonic mourning discourse, it was possible for me to become a different kind of grieving sister. By appreciating that power/knowledge relations are productive, I analyse the lines of fracture that opened up within the striated territory of mourning. I examine how the refusal to witness my brother’s dead body and the wearing of a yellow funeral dress operated as a line of flight. I take up new materialism theorising in order to understand how the dead body is both materially and discursively produced. This provides a means to understand what meaning I made of my brother’s dead body. By leaning into Deleuze and Guattari (1987) I understand that the mo(ve)ments of resistance to hegemonic mourning rituals made possible a becoming. Such a becoming opens a “kaleidoscope of possibilities” (Davies et al, 2006, p.91) for doing mourning differently.

In the early hours of the 1 May 1980, my 16-year old brother, Grant went into cardiac arrest in our sleeping suburban house. Despite my mother’s attempts to revive him with CPR, he died on his way to the hospital in a St John’s ambulance.

Dominant mourning discourse/s

As my brother left this world, so we, his living family, became participants in the hegemonic discourse/s surrounding mourning. Hedke and Winslade (2017), Carpentier and Van Brussel (2012) [and others] have traced the evolution of grief psychology which has come to form striated space/s (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) within dominant mourning discourse.

Striated space and smooth space

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggest that rather than existing as binaries, striated and smooth space are the conditions which have effects on movements, relations and possibilities. The authors further notice “that the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.474).

Hickey-Moody and Malins (2007) explain that, “striated spaces are those which are . . . structured and organised, and which produce particular limited movements and relations between bodies” (p.11). These striated spaces may be considered to be representative of molar forms that constrain and restrict. In some sense the discursive landscape or “deathscape” (Maddrell & Sidaway, 2010) of death and dying is “gridded” (Massumi, as cited in Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.xiii). It is composed of many striations which manifest molar forms of being and doing mourning.

Nomadic or smooth space/s is space that is de-territorialised, fluid, permeable and malleable. It has the potential for becoming-other, where “new movements [to] become possible . . . where new connections can occur; where experimentation can open up a new line of flight” (Davies & Gannon, 2009, p.21).

Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) descriptions of the “operations of striation and smoothing” (p.500) provide a means to understand the forces at work within the hegemonic discourse of mourning as striated space. The authors also reference the opportunities for striated space to become smoothed.

Striated space may be understood to some degree as the Western cultural practices around death and dying. It is these dominant discursive understandings, around dress, tears, bodies, funerals and speaking rights, which shaped the responses I had to the death of my brother. I participated in and contributed to this discursive world. Yet, these deathscapes do not and have not remained static. There has been a shifting in the landscape of death and dying.

Shifting deathscapes

Maddrell and Sidaway (2010) understand deathscape as “the relationship between space/ place and death, bereavement and mourning” (p.1). These space/place relationships have shifted over time and place.

Prior to the twentieth century death was largely communal, happening in the home with clear ritualised markers to denote grieving and death. Aries (1974, 1981) has described death as “tamed”, understood and managed. With the emergence of the science of medicalisation, death and dying became institutionalised within the site of the hospital. Foucault (1973, 1975) has traced how these institutional sites; the prison, the clinic, the hospital, act as powerful means of constraint whereby “the human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down, and rearranges it” (Foucault, 1994, p.182).

Within the site of the hospital, “death became hidden, mystified, and ‘driven into secrecy’” (Carpentier & Van Brussel, 2012, p.106). The untamed death of the middle ages became wrought with fear, suspicion and dis-ease. It needed sanitising and constraining.

Grief psychology matched these developments and constructed the death and grief experience as “an individual, symptomised, private, inner experience” (Hedke & Winslade, 2017, p.32). This largely Western model of mourning, not only located grieving within the individual, but it established within its discursive practices, what Foucault (1980a) has called, “regimes of truth” (p.131). These taken-for-granted and largely invisible truth claims were the means by which an individual’s responses to death and dying were shaped and constituted.

So firmly entrenched were these discursive understandings that my family would have floundered at the Bhutanese practice of thinking on death at least five times a day. Eric Weiner, a travel writer offers the view that

unlike many of us in the West, the Bhutanese don't sequester death. Death – and images of death – are everywhere ... No one, not even children, is sheltered from these images ... Ritual provides a container for grief, and in Bhutan that container is large and communal. After someone dies, there's a 49-day mourning period that involves elaborate, carefully orchestrated rituals. (BBC Travel magazine article)

Bhutan is not dissimilar from many other cultures that have their own discursive practices around death and mourning. However, it stands in contrast to the construction of grief and the subject positions made available to me as my brother's heart stopped beating and he was pronounced dead.

Maddrell (2015) expands further that “shared cultural values and practices shape the leave-taking and way-finding associated with bereavement, as they influence both the experience and expression of grief and mourning” (p.8).

As my brother's heart stopped beating and his breathing ceased, my family and I found ourselves situated within Western cultural norms and immersed within the striated spaces of discursive mourning practices. Death was held as a serious matter, regarded with great reverence and not spoken of, except in hushed tones. Mourning was a private affair, little understood and alternately attracting and repelling those outside the mourning circle. Certain practices needed to be adhered to in order to perform a “good” mourning. Certain people had speaking rights. These certainties positioned people in particular ways and this positioning shaped the mourning experience.

Positioning theory

Davies and Harré (1999) were interested in how conversation (including language, speech-acts, non-verbal communication, actions and discursive

practices) offer people invitations into certain subject positions. “A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights and duties for those who use that repertoire” (Davies & Harre, 1999, p.35).

Once “called” by an utterance, a person has available certain speaking rights and privileges as shaped by the “particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned” (Davies & Harre, 1999, p.35). The discursive realm, embedded with lines of force, offers positions that people may, or may not, take up. Drewery (2005) notes with regards to subject positions that,

the subject positions one chooses to take up in response is the outcome of the interplay between speakers; it is not a simple, one-way power play. The subject thus produced is a subject-in-relation, which may be called into existence briefly, or it may be longer lasting. (p.312)

This possibility of choice, of an authoritative positioning where people take themselves up as particular subjects, means that people may accept or refuse certain subject positions. As people take up or negotiate other subject positions, so there is smoothing of striated spaces, as molar forms become molecular (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). By escaping sedimented thinking, or “making choices between contradictory demands, there is a complex weaving together of positions” (Davies & Harre, 1999, p.49). These weavings and negotiations, make possible an ongoing production of the self and this offers a greater sense of agentic positioning, as we participate in the multiple storylines of our lives.

The dominant discursive framework of the bereaved required that I take up the associated position of compliant mourner, devastated sister, submissive griever. Shaped by cultural factors and sharpened by conventional grief psychology, my parents and I took up the subject positions offered to us within the striated space of bereavement discourse. This position call met my pained loss and was indeed part of my preferred meaning-making (Kotzé et al, 2011) as a way to honour my brother.

In the days following the death of my brother, I first took up an observing position. I watched what happened as visitors came to the house to “pay their respects” and offer solace to my parents. It was clear from the hushed tones, tears, hugging, frowning and hand wringing that this was a solemn and serious ritual. Very few children, if any, came through the house and I was given puzzles and books to occupy myself during this time. The practice of observing the, mostly adult, restrained behaviour, functioned as a normalising gaze (Foucault, 1975). I became caught within interlocking power/knowledge relations which provided the dominant constitutive truth of this contained and measured grieving. I came to measure and discipline my own tears, sighs and behaviours as the gaze of mourners re-performed for me a subdued and quiet grieving. Like Bentham’s Panopticon (Foucault, 1975), which provided omniscient surveillance, my observation of these particular mourning practices demanded a bodily submission and a self-surveillance in order to honour my brother and my parents. It was this surveillance, working at the level of the body, which resulted in a subjectification.

Subjectification: mastery and submission

By looking at the ambivalent concepts of mastery and submission, Butler (1995) traced how this process of subjectification happens.

Submission and mastery take place simultaneously, and it is this paradoxical simultaneity that constitutes the ambivalence of subjection. Where one might expect submission to consist in a yielding to an externally imposed dominant order, and to be marked by a loss of control and mastery, it is paradoxically marked by mastery itself ... ; the lived simultaneity of submission as mastery, and mastery as submission, is the condition of possibility for the subject itself. (as cited in Davies et al, 2001, p.168).

The more I took up, and indeed, submitted to, these expected ‘adult’ behaviours of restraint, control and discipline, the more I was able to achieve mastery over the wild, chaotic ‘childlike’ expressions of pain. In achieving mastery of this restrained grieving, I disciplined my body by containing my tears, speaking in whispers and demanding very little from my parents. I was rewarded for this

surrender by pats on the head and grimaced smiles from well-wishers. As I achieved mastery of this discourse of grieving, I submitted my body to its demands and heard, “she’s a good girl”, as evidence of my success. This further reinforced the process of submission and indicated that I had both achieved mastery of, and had submitted to the ongoing demands of the hegemonic discourse of mourning. In this way a subjectification occurred and the more inscribed with the discourse of mourning I became.

Foucault (1975) supports this dual process of mastery and submission in his comment about the ways in which disciplinary power works on and upon the body. The “potent effects” of power are the shaping effects it has on the body. This self-governance is the way in which people turn themselves into subjects through the participation of their bodies in surveillance and regulation. It is this kind of “discipline [which] produces subjected and practised bodies, ‘docile bodies’” (Foucault, 1975, p.138). The subject renders themselves complicit by their mastery of the body in submission to the demands of discourse.

Davies (2006) further illustrates how mastery involves an “imaginative capacity” on two levels. Firstly, a person, particularly a grieving person, needs to understand their new self, and indeed to master the not-yet-known, an unknown self – a mourning self. In my experience, this was an unknown brotherless self - cut apart from a sibling pair. The second imaginative capacity extends to mastering “a set of culturally sanctioned signifiers of the thing they see that they must become” (Davies, 2006, p.433), which they may not wish to claim. In my experience, this was a grieving sister.

Bodily inscription and performativity

As I performed this grieving sister, I silently observed the rituals surrounding the memorialisation of my brother. I was not consulted or involved in the planning of the funeral ceremony. Details about flowers, hymns, readings, coffins happened in conversations above my head as I sat passively on the carpet, colouring and doing puzzles. I was considered in need of protection from the hideousness of funeral details; too young, too fragile, too much a girl. Harked to by dominant mourning

discourse and positioned as compliant and subservient, I did not expect to be considered in this adult decision-making. I participated in these ritual truths of mourning. I fiercely disciplined my body to act within the lines of force positioning me as a grieving sister. I recognised and performed myself as a gentle grieving sister.

As I observed the particular mourning rituals of greeting hugs and the sharing of pain during the early bereavement of my family, I willingly took up the discursive practices of quiet obedience, as a commitment to and respect of both my parents and the memory of my brother. This sharing-of-the-pain ritual seemed to offer my parents some solace and support. The fact that this ritual offered me no such comfort and the fact that I experienced the visitors as an unwelcome intrusion only served to heighten the gaze and increase my self-surveillance, and hence the intensity of my subjectification. I practised these discursive actions so well that they became part of my “preferred meaning-making practice” (Kotzé et al, 2011, p.752). In this way, I believe, it is in the taking up of the discursive practices that they became inscribed on my body.

From within the discourse of mourning, and in the disciplining of my body, I took up a position of good girl mourning sister. I was riddled with the immobilising guilt of, “Why did I live?” and confused by a loss so profound. The death of my brother also positioned me as a survivor. This survivor’s shame could only be answered by an invitation by gender discourse to perform a dutiful, responsible, obedient and compliant girl. Thus, the most available position to me was to take up the position as good girl.

It was not the only position available to me in terms of there being no other positions to choose from. For, as Davies (1991) highlighted, “we are constituted through multiple discourses at any one point in time” (p.47). Rather, it was the only available position to me by virtue of me wanting or desiring that position. Davies (1991) further noted that a person’s

positioning within a particular discourse makes the ‘chosen’ line of action the only possible action, not because there are no other lines of action but

because one has been subjectively constituted through one's placement within that discourse to want that line of action. (p.46)

In this way, the particular position I adopted was a line of force within hegemonic mourning discourse. I was working "to become an appropriately subjected being in order that she (I) can have existence" (Davies et al, 2002, p.300).

Thus positioned as the good girl, I returned the speaking rights to my father as reasonable patriarch, in control of himself and his family. As I practised all that it meant to be this good girl I became ever more proficient at it and mastered all it entailed and it became for me, a "pattern of desire" (Davies, 1991, p.47). In this way, I exhibited how gender is "performative" (Butler, 1995). By "always doing gender" in this way, my body, as a docile mourning female body, became inscribed by a pattern of desire. This good girl position afforded me an identity claim from within the discourse of mourning and it was supported by both the discourse around mourning and the dominant discourse around gender.

Power/knowledge relations as productive

The taking up of a discourse and participating in its operations is however neither simple, unified nor complete. We are both constituted by and constitute the discourse/s of which we are a part. Deleuze described the operations of power/knowledge as a kind of cartography where traces of interlocking "vectors and tensors" (as cited in Davies et al, 2002, p.297) may be mapped and charted. "Multiple lines continually change their relation to each other, change direction, bifurcate, fork and drift" (Davies et al, 2002, p.297). This idea of movement and motion means that within these angled and interlocking lines of force, there are also possible lines of breakage, fracture or disruption.

Since power is productive it follows that power/knowledge relations have the capacity to create and make possible conditions that release and create new movements. As displayed in chapter two, Foucault (1980a) contended that power does not exist as an entity, but rather as an articulation. Power is operational, it works through the many criss-crossing and interwoven lines of force and fracture.

This positions people differently; as “vehicles of power not as points of application” (Foucault, 1980a, p.98). This theorising of power/knowledge relations holds within it the possibilities for refusal, change and transformation. Since power is in motion, operational and relational these conditions also enable a disturbing and destabilising of sedimented thinking.

Drewery (2005) offers the idea of an agentic positioning which is understood as the opportunity to negotiate meaning. So “to be positioned agentively is to be an actor in a web of relationship with others who are engaged in co-producing the conditions of their lives” (Drewery, 2005, p.315). It is through this negotiation, through the refusal to take up certain subject positions that other possibilities for doing mourning emerged for myself.

Whilst I had disciplined my body in a process of subjectification, there were within these molar forms, certain lines of fracture and breakages available. It is this working at the level of fracture and disruption which is known as a decomposition.

Decomposition

Davies et al (2006) describe the process of decomposition as the “subjective movement through which we unmoor our embodied selves from those discourses we have worked on deconstructively to make them unthinkable” (p.99). This deconstruction is a “messy” and incomplete work. It is work which happens on the material body as an ongoing “scrape, catch and drag” (Barthes, 1997, p.63) in the process of inscription, reinscription and rendering visible the criss-cross arced lines of force and fracture.

Lines of fracture

As my mother and I waited at the humming reception of the hospital that my brother had been taken to, I saw in the faces around me in the waiting room, a tension. Eyes that never quite caught my eyes in the hope that whatever tragedy that had befallen us, would miss them. As we enquired about my brother, so

people tried not to look, drawn nevertheless hypnotically to the energy of our almost tangible fear.

A doctor, dressed in blue scrubs, walked towards my mother and I in the waiting area, and without preparation and without ceremony, stated, “Your son was dead on arrival.”

I am not sure if there was a “sorry” in his words. I did not hear it.

Carpentier and Van Brussel (2012) trace the doctor’s response to my mother and the pronouncement of my brother’s death as a potential product of the medical-rationalist discourse that holds death as an extreme example of illness. Accordingly, dying is considered as a technical matter devoid of personalisation. My mother and I were addressed as though we ourselves were participants in this discourse, as though we had access to how death was regarded within the hospital and by its staff. As our world shifted with these uttered words, we were taken to another room. I tried to grasp what the doctor had said. It made no sense - “dead on arrival”, what had happened? What did that mean?

A short while later we were asked to view my brother’s body. I refused. In the tumult of that morning, my refusal was glossed over. My parents and the hospital staff regarded this as an appropriate response from a frightened 13-year old sister. I was not asked what this refusal meant for me nor what meanings, other than those of a frightened sister, it may have held for me. This act of refusal was, for me, not further evidence of the performativity of a young griever. Rather, I understood this refusal to see my brother’s body in the mortuary of the hospital as a particular position call in response to death and dying.

The dead body

Dominant discourse around death and dying regards the body in specific ways. Ritualised leave-taking of the body is believed to bring the griever to a state of reality. Acknowledging the lifeless body of a loved one is held as a means to begin a process of healing and moving on. Carpentier and Van Brussel (2012)

show how “certification of the death is a ritual activity of the modern epoch which symbolizes the medical construction of death as essentially located within the body of the dying person” (p.106). Holding to these understandings, the doctor, nurses and my parents believed that by seeing Grant’s dead body I would know that his life was over and that I needed to move on – brotherless.

This was not the place of meaning for me. I **was** frightened, I **was** angry. But, I was also resisting the idea that I needed to take leave of my brother. I did not want to see his dead body, not primarily because I was afraid to do so, but because I was, more significantly, refusing the idea that this body was who Grant was to me. The hospital’s expectation of viewing the dead body of my brother operated as a line of force, exerting pressure to conform. Heeding the demands of this line of force rendered my mother and father as correctly participating in the death rituals considered necessary to their recovery. It marked them as appropriately dealing with the death of their son.

My resistance to this line of force went largely unnoticed and unremarked. I was not completely in the thrall of its force, positioned as I was on the boundary of its might. Yet, taking up an-other position to the materiality of my brother’s death, made possible other subject positions for myself, unmoored from the sedimented thinking operating within medicalised mourning discourse.

New materialism and the matter of the body

From a new materialist perspective the body itself is rethought of in terms of its materiality and meaning. Van der Tuin and Dolphijn (2010) argue that bodies may be regarded as “texts that *unfold* according to genetic coding” (p.165).

Further, the boundaries that demarcate bodies are “tricky” and fluid, based also on their material-discursive nature. The conditions for determining body/materiality flow from social and relational interactions. Haraway (1989) holds a particular view of bodies and boundary conditions as she writes that,

bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes. Their boundaries materialize in social interaction. Boundaries are drawn by mapping practices; ‘objects’ do not pre-exist as such. Objects are boundary projects. But boundaries shift from within; boundaries are very tricky. What boundaries provisionally contain remains generative, productive of meanings and bodies. Siting (sighting) boundaries is a risky practice (p.200 -1).

This particular appreciation of bodies invites a different lens for interpreting the dead body. Rather, than the dead or lifeless body being a scientific construction with its attendant medicalised readings; the body has relational and discursive significance. My brother’s dead body in the hospital was stripped bare of its relational import to myself. Sanitised beyond recognition, I was unable to draw a boundary between my brother of living matter and the inert matter I was expected to farewell. My resistance may further be appreciated in the light of the “boundary mapping work” I was unable to engage in from within the walls of the hospital morgue and its aligned dominant discourse of death, dying and mourning. The process of intra-acting; my body and that of my dead brother’s body, was halted. By actively resisting (although it may not have been read as such by adult others) this sedimented layer of discourse, I was able, from that very first day of grief, to begin to trouble the certain limiting discursive mourning practices.

Black is the colour of mourning

Dominant discursive practices around funerals and memorial services suggest that black be worn by mourners to show their honouring of the solemnity of the occasion and respect for the loss. My parents felt a sense of comfort in knowing what to wear to “say goodbye” to their son – they would wear black. This was appropriate, it indicated their position as mourners and marked their grief by the clothes they wore on their body – black – the colour of mourning.

I did not want to wear black. I felt this decision in and on my body, as a visceral knowing. Like my response to viewing my brother’s body in the mortuary, I knew that black would not honour my sense of who my brother was to me. So, as the conversation turned from coffins to clothes, I took up the wearing of a bright

yellow dress. This mo(ve)ment meant that I was able to disrupt the line of force from within the discourse of mourning by actively resisting the discursive practice of wearing black. Davies et al (2006) conceived of mo(ve)ment as “the embodied subject decomposing itself” which “signify[s] the simultaneity of specific embodied *moments* and the *movement* toward the subject as process” (Davies et al, 2006, p.92). This mo(ve)ment allowed for a shifting position in relation to the deeply sedimented knowledge around the discourse of mourning.

So I proclaimed that I would wear my yellow dress to Grant’s funeral. In defying the tradition of wearing black as a means of resistance this action was a smoothing of striated space and a de/re-territorialisation in the territory of mourning. Wearing a bright yellow funeral dress was a line of flight towards a becoming - a becomingsister (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), even in the absence of a brother. In taking on the wearing of a yellow funeral dress onto my mourning body, my body produced another meaning-making of loss.

I am looking at my full-length body reflected in the mirror. The dress glides and folds over my body. As my eyes catch the yellow dress reflected in the mirrored glass, so I see myself as a becomingsister. The yellowing of the dress and the light it holds transforms this moment of dressing for a funeral. I become other than the compliant, grieving sister. The yellow silken fabric brushes my skin and this movement fractures a line force. In the moments between the dress falling over my head and down my body I experience myself as becomingsister. The static electricity that accompanies the touching of fabric and skin speaks of this otherness, this line of flight.

The yellow funeral dress, in opening up a line of flight carried a mo(ve)ment which re-stored and re-storied my relationship with my brother, Grant. The yellow dress held symbolic value, as a particular means of ritualising the farewell of my brother. But it also participated in the production of the funeral ritual. As it folded around my body in waves of yellow fabric, so that fabric, and the movement of the fabric on flesh, carried the meaning of the dress, of the moment, of my brother. This embodied mourning practice was a celebration of the life and vibrancy of my brother, Grant, and our ongoing relationship – sister and brother.

The yellow dress made it possible for me to make this identity claim as a sister, a becomingsister. In the missing space-place of a physical relationship, the yellow funeral dress spoke of an ongoing relationship with my brother that transcended his embodied presence.

The work of this fold

As I stepped into the yellow funeral dress, with its folds sliding over my young body, so this mo(ve)ment made possible my becomingwith the yellow dress. The materiality of the yellow funeral dress functioned as a line of fracture within the territory of dominant mourning discourse. Such a troubling of the striated space/s of ritualised and discursive mourning practices made possible a preferred positioning for myself as becomingsister.

Chapter five: Mother fluids

Stage 4 liver cancer.

Black ink proclaims these clinical words, stabbing at my eyes from their authoritative place on the medical chart at the end of my mother's hospital bed. My eyes harden and move from the scribbled words to the closed eyes of my mother, lying in the bed of a hospice room.

Her hands have been carefully placed on each side of her body and they rest, heavy and unanimated. Her fingers are laced with her gold rings; her wedding band, engagement ring, the ring my dad bought for her in Singapore, the rings she wears to symbolise the births of both her children, my brother and me.

I have watched her hands, mesmerised by the glint of the beautiful rings as my mother has cooked dinner, sewn clothes, washed dishes and held my children. Her fingernails are now slightly purple, but her hands are slender and long, the veins pronounced. I lift my hand and place my own smaller hand over my mother's, feeling the rings graze my palm. Skin meets skin. I inhale ... mom, here we are in this hospice room- here we are.

The beginning of a tear threatens to fall. I feel it prickle at the back of my eye and it brings a thickness in my throat, which I swallow. These tears must retreat. When my mother's eyes open, mine must be clear, unambiguous and comforting. I breathe through the tears.

I look up from my hand covering my mother's hand and notice how the hospital gown, with its pink overtones, blends with the pinkness at my mother's chest. I concentrate on the rise and fall of my mother's chest as she breathes easily and deeply. This rhythmic motion, at once a heartbeat - elemental and hypnotic - collapses time. My father and brother, in their dying, are brought into the room. I try to mirror my mother's breathing. We are joined in this breathing. The air around us vibrates. My brother and father, both of whom struggled for air, neither

alive any longer, seem to meet me now in this easy place of breathing with my mother.

The gentleness of this moment is disturbed by voices from outside the room; busy, routine voices. Once again the words, *stage 4 liver cancer* assault. How does this stage 4 cancer in any way stand for my mother? How do I find my mother in a stage 4 liver cancer.

My gaze drifts to a tube snaking from my mother's abdomen under the crisp, white hospital sheets to a bottle hidden beneath the bed. My mother's abdomen has ballooned with the accumulating fluid, which is causing her great pain. Her body's means of draining fluid has been compromised by the burgeoning, metastasised cancer.

Pain is a known companion. My mother and I were at a similar hospital bed when she underwent a partial lobectomy to remove a portion of her lung tissue destroyed by cancer, seven months ago. That hospital bed and that operation offered the possibility of beating the odds and overcoming the cancer. This hospital bed, a respite bed in a hospice unit, signals that the cancer has already traversed her body. So this *procedure* is about providing *quality of life*. The medical language is breathed in the sanitised air around me. It feels close and cloying.

I look again at the tube as the fluid leaks from my mother's body. The tube is opaque and thick. It disappears under the sheet and I try not to think about where or how it penetrates my mother's skin; enters her body.

I glance down at my own chest. I feel a tug in my breasts. My son, Gabriel, born nine months ago, is still fully nourished by my breast milk. As I feel the pressure in my breast I recognise the letdown reflex that signals a release of breast milk, usually a prelude to feeding Gabriel. I feel the moisture around my breast as the milk is released. I become mesmerised by the oozing from my body. My shirt sucks up the fluid and makes visible a small, wet mark on the front of my blouse.

The blouse is loose, not a maternity top, but a comfortable shirt that allows me to easily feed Gabriel. We have become relaxed with breastfeeding. My mother speaks with honour of this nurturing. There must be no interference to this sacred ritual of feeding Gabriel. She guards this ritual with maternal ferocity. My mother makes my mothering possible. Her eyes shine with delight when she sits with me as I feed my baby. She encourages me in the time and space needed to breastfeed a baby. She has become a guardian of the choice I have made to nurture Gabriel with only mother's milk.

It is this mother-protection that has kept her from calling to me at night when she has been vomiting bile from a diseased liver. She has kept this from me. Gabriel needs me - I must feed my child, she says.

A mother caring for a child.

A child caring for a mother.

It has felt an impossible exchange.

As the bile has been ejected from her dying body, so my body has been producing life-sustaining milk. Bile and milk. Mother and child.

The milk merges with the weave of the fabric of my blouse and I realise that this milky spot will mark her too. It will signal a time away from Gabriel and my body's need to feed him. She will feel the weight of her body in this hospital bed and the weight of my presence here with her. I do not want her to see the milky mark. I do not want this fluid to bring guilt into the sterile room. I want to be here, totally here with her, now.

I feel an impulse to cover the wet patches, to hide my body's gestures and this fluid which speaks of nourishment and life. I have nothing to cover the leak. If I fold my arms across my breasts I cannot touch my mother, and my hands urge to feel her. My breasts urge too. I am torn. The skin pulls tight across my breasts. The pull is a pain.

The opaque snaking tube drains fluid, fluid which brings death ever closer to my mother.

Fluids of death.

Fluids of life.

Mother fluids.

I feel a flutter under my hand and my mother's grey eyes fill me up. I bend to kiss her forehead and the lightness of her hair caresses my nose as her head grazes my milky breasts.

Folding theory with "Mother Fluids"

From the very heart of the im-possible one would hear the pulse or the beat of a deconstruction (Derrida, 2001, as cited in Raffoul, 2008, p.270)

I regard sitting beside my dying mother as a tender encounter of materiality, space and time. My mother's death will not only mark her passing, but it will also leave me marked as motherless, and the only surviving member of my family of origin. This weight suspends my mother in her dying and becomes the bitterness of the bile she released from a cancerous liver. That her body is failing is evident, that she is dying is inevitable. She desires to leave behind pain, death promises this end. Yet, this passage to death becomes an im-possible movement for each of us. I sit with heavy breasts and the knowledge of the aporia that is inseparable for my mother and me, in dying and in living.

In this fold with theory I analyse how this encounter with my dying mother is laced with the kind of aporia that Derrida (1993) describes as the im-possibility of an event. For Derrida, deconstruction is a kind of aporetic thinking. I take up this deconstructive thinking in the next section to make visible the impossible exchange of mother-daughter and death-life.

I then go on to show how this aporetic moment holds within it the folds of time, past-present-future. I show how the intersecting of body, space and time work to effect a timespacemattering. By taking up a non-container view of time (Jackson

& Mazzei, 2016), I analyse how this encounter with my dying mother was a matter of meaning and significance. In considering that all matter matters (human, nonhuman and the more-than-human), I trace how my dead father and my dead brother were constituted in encounter with my dying mother, a moment of haecceity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), in its wonder and mattering.

I return to Foucault (1975) in order to understand the disciplining of the body. I apply this analysis to the ways in which medicalised care promotes a “docile body” (Foucault, 1975) in effecting a ‘good’ death. I display how sanitised dying had the capacity to act as a line force within my mother’s dying days. Yet, by holding reasonable hope (Weingarten, 2010), my mother and I were able to respond with care for each other in the days before her death.

I compassionately witness (Weingarten, 2003) that this body that is dying is my mother’s body. I come to this writing with the benefit of some distance of time and space, and hence some emotional cushioning. I hold gently the shifting positions made available to me in my sitting place next to my mother’s hospice bed. A breastfeeding mother, attentive to the needs of my baby and the demands of my body, I am also a caring daughter. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari (1987), I look at how this encounter held within it the lines of flight of becomingdaughter-becomingmother.

Aporia

This encounter with my mother, her dying body and my abundant body, holds the complexities of an aporia (Derrida, 1993) - for me, as daughter-mother and for my mother, as dying-mother.

My mother’s dying body strains towards death, even as life calls her to live - to mother me, her daughter. Mothering holds her with me. Death summons her flesh. This aporia meets my own body in its situated place, sitting next to my mother’s hospice bed, waiting for her sleeping eyes to open. I desire to be with my mother in this hospice room. But, my body pulls me from this place, to breastfeed my child.

Derrida (1993) leans on Aristotle in his explanation of aporia when he states that “[aporia] concerns the impossible or the impracticable. (*Diaporeo* is Aristotle’s

term here; it means "I'm stuck [*dans l'embaras*], I cannot get out, I'm helpless." (p.13). I understand the stuck-ness and the helpless-ness of this encounter with my dying mother, as an im-possible event, marked by the threshold of mothering. Death and life meet in this threshold place, where milk from my body intra-acts with the fluid draining from my mother's body. Mother fluids.

As mothers, we meet in the embracing folds of aroha (love)—caring for the bodies of our children. But, I am also a daughter, caring for my dying mother. The landscapes of mothering and mourning are inseparable. It is the place of aporia “in which I have found myself, let us say, regularly tied up, indeed, paralyzed” (Derrida, 1993, p.13).

My mother is dying. Her body, aching. Her flesh, suffering, stretched taut from too much fluid that the body cannot drain. I watch as her punctured flesh accepts the plastic tube that will drain the fluid into a bottle resting under the bed. I am sickened by the sight. I find the wound an unbearable opening. Yet it brings a soothing to my mother and allows her some release. I am moved by the discomfort of the snaking tube, my body responds with its own demand to release breast milk to feed my son. My breasts ache with the aporia.

The aporia tears at me. I cannot leave my mother - my daughter-ness calls me here. My mother must leave this life - her diseased body calls her forth. My breasts willfully leak milk in a mothering which is urgent - as urgent in its affirmation of life, as the fluids leaking from my mother which herald death. We, my mother and I, constitute the entanglements of this aporia. We meet each other as mothers, in the territory of death, in the paradoxical im-possibility of an aporia in which its “iterability [holds] the conditions of possibility as conditions of impossibility” (Derrida, 1993, p.15).

Timespacemattering

Whilst I sit with my mother in this hospice room, I re-call another hospital room where my family were told of my brother's death. Simultaneously, another time is also present; the time of despair when my father asked a question about where he should die. Past-present-future timespace become folded together as a timespacemattering (Barad, 2007). For, “time is not given, it is not universally

given, but rather [that] time is articulated and re-synchronized through various material practices” (Barad as cited in Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p.66).

I sit mirroring my mother’s breathing. I watch her chest rising slowly. I focus on the pinkness of her chest. I hold my breath. I watch and I wait. It is silent, still. Then, her body releases air and her chest sinks. I match the movement. Hushed stillness settles in the space between my mother and me. The silence becomes part of the materiality of the moment ... I sense a change in the air. I have an experience of humming particles - an energy of “thing power” (Bennett, 2010). I am joined and companioned as I beside my mother. In this elastic time (Hedke & Winslade, 2017) the space in the hospice room vibrates with the presence of my brother and my father.

This is more than nostalgic yearning. New materialism provides a means of appreciating the creative energies of the nonhuman or more-than-human (Alaimo, 2010). Indeed, Barad (2007) argues for a “dynamic, changing typology that is continually being re(con)figured by discursive-material intra-active practices of humans and nonhumans” (p.94-95). My meaning-making in this encounter stretches beyond the confines of the room, beyond the human bodies in the room and is enfolded with “vibrant matter animating an agential assemblage” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2016, p.95).

I consider that all matter in the hospice room is “vibrant”, alive and possessing “thing-power” (Bennett, 2010). This means that inanimate and material objects (the tube, the bed, the sheets, the silence, the breasts, the fluids) have the “curious ability ... to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle” (Bennett, 2010, p.6). Barad acknowledges that human, nonhuman and more-than-human matter is agentic, with their own energies, trajectories and creative possibilities, when she affirms that, “matter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns, and remembers” (Barad, as cited in Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p.59). Recognising that all matter matters, and in appreciating the elastic folding of time, makes possible the vibration of energy and the creative movement of atomic particles that manifest the presence of my brother and father in the room with me.

This is the “sheer wonder of the spacetime entanglement at work” (Kirby, 2011,

as cited in Jackson & Mazzei, 2016, p.7). It produces an experience of mattering for me in which the presence of my dead father's body and the presence of my dead brother's body vibrate with materiality. I experience this as a moment of haecceity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In this "emergent moment(s) of grace" (Davies, 2014, p.26), the presence of my father and my brother witnesses how the boundaries of space-time are wrapped in wonder. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) "a haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin or destination; it is always in the middle. It is not made of points, only lines. It is a rhizome" (p.263). I pause in this moment of absolute grace and wonder.

Yet, beyond the room, busy and routine voices disrupt the calm in the room. These are the voices of the doctors and nurses, called to care for my mother's diseased and dying body. The hospital gown my mother wears, the way her arms have been placed alongside her body, the plastic tube piercing her flesh, all constitute my mother as a particular kind of subject – a dying subject.

Foucault: disciplining the body

Medical advancement and technology has offered horizons of healing and ever more efficient ways to manage pain. Alongside these advances are interwoven "regimes of truth" (Foucault, 1980a, p.131) that demand a disciplining of the body to take up the subject positioning of a dying body. Medicalisation makes possible a sanitized or even "deathless death" (Kastenbaum, 1993, as cited in Foote & Frank, 1999, p.169). The threat of death as "undisciplined, risky and wild" (Foote & Frank, 1999, p.170) is mediated through a web of power relations as well as the "great anonymous murmur of discourse" (Foucault, as cited in Deleuze, 1988, p.55) which seeks to manage death as a contained and clinical process.

Shamed by the sense of bodily betrayal and held by the dominant discourse of illness and death, people engage in "ascetical" practices "of self upon self by which one tries to work out, to transform one's self to attain a certain mode of being" (Foucault, 1988, as cited in Foote & Frank, 1999, p.161). This certain mode of being includes the right kind of dying body. Aligned with a discourse of right dying is the idea that the dying person needs also to attend to the emotional pain of their family. These relationships of power/knowledge, persuasively colonise the dying body as a site of disciplinary power. Dying discourse becomes

gridded with the molar forms of a moral imperative to not allow the family of the dying person to suffer too much.

Three days before the organs of my mother's body ceased, a visiting oncologist promised that a round of chemotherapy would "sort out" the building fluids that the body was finding difficult to drain and which was causing significant discomfort and pain. My mother, who until that suggestion had been bringing herself to dying, caught a glimpse of the promise of more time. She was ready to submit her body to another haunting chemotherapy regime.

Power/knowledge relations, though webbed and pervasive, are not complete or hegemonic in their effect. Inherent within power/knowledge relations is the possibility of resistance. Foucault (1988) articulated this place of resistance when he claimed that "we can never be ensnared by power: we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to a precise strategy" (Foucault, 1988, as cited in Foote & Frank, 1999, p.172).

Despite the seduction of more time, more life, my mother resisted the professional advice of the oncologist and declined the offer of chemotherapy. As my mother and I talked about ways forward, it was important for me that she not feel a sense of duty to embark on this chemotherapy as a way to care for me. I was, similarly care-full not to abandon all hope, wanting to hold on to reasonable hope (Weingarten, 2010) in this time of endings. My mother and I folded the remaining time around us. We took time with each other. My mother shared the stories of her beautiful rings and stories of family. There were also stories of the future time which marked this time as precious.

Compassionate witnessing and reasonable hope

Reasonable hope, as a relational practice, as something that we do with others, holds the future as open, uncertain, whilst accommodating contradictions, despair and doubt. By doing reasonable in this way, my mother and I were able to recognise that there were available goals and pathways for us both in this time of endings and dying. Folding in my care for my mother and my mother's care for me, in this relational way, made it possible for us to weave between the striated spaces of right dying. A line of flight opened and an-other way of seeing and

being in dying as an unfolding of the not-yet-known became available for my mother and me.

This troubling of medicalised dying discourse was made possible by a desire to be fully present with my mother and to compassionately witness the ending of her life. According to Weingarten (2012) compassionate witnessing “entails empathic awareness of suffering followed by actions in the interests of the other person, not in the interest of relieving one’s own distress as a witness to another’s pain” (p.10). By compassionately witnessing my mother in her dying, and witnessing myself, in caring for my mother’s dying, I took up another position in death and dying. I understand that my own mothering and my daughtering intra-acted in this encounter, as a transforming becomingdaughter-becomingmother.

Becomingdaughter-becomingmother

Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari (1987) I appreciate how becomingdaughter-becomingmother functioned as the “machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another” (p.88). According to this analysis, the “passions” of my body and the “intermingling” with my mother’s dying body de-territorialised the striated space of dying. Together with holding reasonable hope and compassionately witnessing my dying mother and myself, a line of flight opened for my becomingdaughter-becomingmother self. As my mother’s death fluids leaked together at-once with my breast fluids, so I, as daughter and, as mother, was constituted as both/and – daughter and mother – becomingdaughter-becomingmother.

The work of this fold

I understand this tender encounter with my dying mother through a diffractive lens whereby the mother fluids (breast and body fluids) constituted the territory of mothering and mourning. My body, caught in the aporetic tension of mothering and mourning, performed the work of diffraction in the milky mark staining my shirt. In this encounter, “time is diffracted through itself” (Barad, 2010, p.244), mother –daughter fall away into a becomingdaughter-becomingmother for myself.

Chapter six: Light, the white dress and the presentation

It is time.

She bends, reaches into the bag and gathers the folds of the white dress, watching it glide over her hands as the dress emerges from the bag. She notices how the dress falls in one motion over her body and how this voluptuous movement envelopes her in the wearing of a dress to tell a story; to speak words which will be witnessed. She performs this story as part of a presentation to teachers and peers on a noho marae.

The dress is long, silken, white and the flowing folds caress her legs as she walks forward to tell her story. It is a story of mourning; the death of her brother, Grant.

The data projector hums and light bounces from the machine and illuminates the white screen as she breathes. Her hands stroke the dress; a stilling, a calming. Fabric and skin meet. She begins. The words form.

In the early hours of 1 May 1980, my 16-year old brother, Grant went into cardiac arrest in our quiet, suburban house. Despite my mom's attempts to revive him with CPR, he died on his way to the hospital in a St John's ambulance.

The words leave her lips and as they travel in waves of sound, so she moves her body, stepping across the white screen. Her body encounters the light.

The light from the data projector meets the white fabric folds of the white dress the woman wears. The image of herself as a young girl appears on her body, caught by the light, moving with and in the folds of the dress.

She is the young girl. This image of the young girl is carried within the light and the image fills her body. It touches her skin and is imprinted upon the very flesh of her skin and the weave of the fabric folded and enfolding her in the white dress.

She is the woman. In this moment of her stepping into the light, of her speaking words, she is witnessed. The witnessing happens as others hear her words and see the images carried by the light of the data projector. Discursive ↔ material entanglements are held and shaped by the speaking and hearing of words, and by the seeing and containing of images. The telling makes possible this witnessing of mo(ve)ments and the joining and coming together of a dress, a sister, a woman.

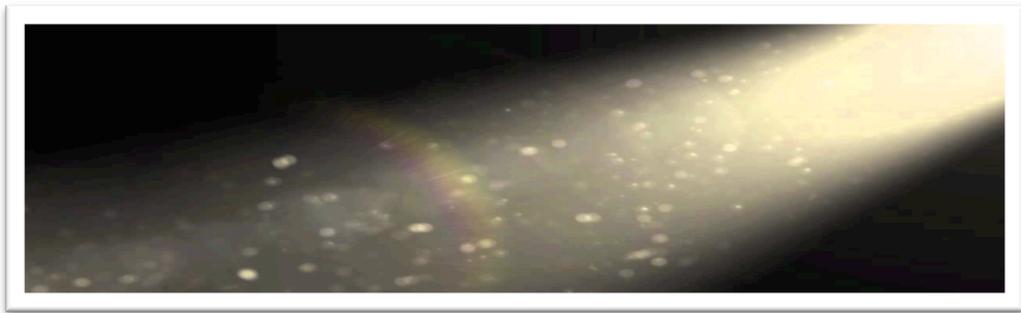
She stands interrupting the light, troubling the image, projecting it onto her body, onto her skin, onto the dress. The light breaks differently around her body - its diffractions caught within the lighted folds of the dress.

She comes to rest within the light. She stills her body. The white fabric touched by the light, glows yellow. Her body meets the light. As the body encounters the light, the body asks questions of the light and the light makes itself known to the body. In this encounter her body absorbs light. It holds the light and makes itself known to the light. The light bends, stretches and overlaps as it intra-acts with the body, with the fabric of the white dress. The body, the light, the white dress, all are changed in these entangled movements, in a re-configuring of body, light, white dress, woman, sister.

The body, so deeply moved by the death of her brother, now moves in a discursive-material encounter with loss, a bodily constitution of loss. The body, now of a woman, re-calls the 13-year old body of a sister, gripped by a visceral loss. In the movements of the body and the shifting light, is this woman, unmoored by the death of her brother.

The body becomes the means and the doing of diffraction – the body as diffraction. The body working as diffraction, transported and transformed. In this way, the body becomes past, present and future. The telling today is with the body, in the body and of the body. Time and space collapse in a flow of spacetimemattering. This moment of telling at the marae, and the moment of the funeral of her brother, meet in the movements of the body and the shifting of light.

She steps out of the light. As her body moves, the light plays with the dust particles in the space left by the body. This movement out of the light makes possible a longer light, unfractured now by the body. The movement is slow and deliberate. It is gentle and organic. The delicate flow of white fabric swooshes silently and traces of the body linger behind in the space now taken up by light and words. In this diffraction, the body, the light and dress participate in an assemblage of encounter which transforms each and the other with multiple possibilities.



(Photograph of light, dust particles)

Her body comes to rest alongside the white projected light. The light, now undisturbed, holds the white screen. She is speaking still and her words move into the space left by the body. The echoes are held within the light as the projected image meets the white screen and the golden words join the white lit screen.

Grant – her brother, dead at 16-years old, carried from her house, not breathing, lifeless, heavy and lightless.

There is a moment of quiet; tears, falling tears, tears working to form words – Grant - to make words and speak of a loss immense. The words join the tears.

As I stand, nose bleeding shamelessly on to a yellow funeral dress, I feel the presence of a sympathy so forceful and whispered, “She’s the one whose brother died”, that it will continue to follow and lick at the edge of my consciousness.

The tears fall through the yellowing light and are enfolded by the fabric as the white dress becomes the yellow dress worn to the funeral of her brother. Past, present and future are stitched together in this telling and witnessing. And the light from the projector holds the golden letters which shape the word, GRANT, on the white screen.

She steps in to and out of the projected light and the movements both of her body in the stepping and the light - moving in, on and with the body - carry the story for her.

She is moved with the light. She speaks of Grant, her dead mother, her dead father and her mourning country. Others passed, other losses and goodbyes, other tears, others joined in mourning.

The white dress intra-acts with her legs in her sideways motion of stepping across the word. The image and the light seem to ask each other questions of their becoming as they move in undulating waves across the skin of her arm, the flesh of her shoulder.

She comes to rest directly in the centre of the lit words. The image changes and her brother's face fills her body, held by the white dress. The data projector hums and the light dances.



Photograph of my brother, Grant.

Folding theory with “Light, the white dress and the presentation”

I am transforming in intra-action with the light above me, below me, and within me, and with all manner of other beings. I am not myself. I am becoming multiple, a dispersion of disparate kinds. (Barad, 2015, p.415)

The white dress story first emerged when I prepared for my presentation during the noho marae at Maniaroa for my Master of Counselling degree. As recounted in chapter one, this presentation formed part of the Discourse and Counselling Psychologies paper. The presentation required inquiry, a deconstructing of the shaping effects of discourse. The responses of peers included a form of outsider witnessing practice (White, 2007), a compassionate witnessing of self and others (Weingarten, 2003).

For my presentation, I offered my understanding of the discourses I considered had shaping effects on my life by deciding to wear a particular white dress. I had prepared a data slide show and as I presented my story to the witnessing audience, through words and projected images, I moved my body across the light, across the screen, and the images became imprinted on the fabric of the white dress and on my body. There were also in these projected images photographs/images from my birth country, South Africa. These images all caught the light and were carried in the folds of the white dress as it touched my body.

Taking up poststructuralist theorising, I had been reaching through the form of this presentation to begin a Derridean deconstructing of the multiple intersecting discourses which aligned and competed in an arcing discursive interplay. I hoped that images projected onto my skin and onto the white dress would offer an embodied appreciation of the working of discourse on my very body. Thus, by moving my body into and out of the light and by containing the image on my skin and on the fabric of the dress, I hoped to make visible the ways in which subjectification, mastery and submission (Butler, 1995) happens through a bodily inscription (Davies, 2000). Further, my use of the white dress, the images and my body put to work a Foucauldian understanding of the technologies of the self and the ways in which “the body is directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it; mark it, train it, torture it,

force it to carry out certain tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs” (Foucault, 1975, p.25).

Through the week of the noho marae stay, beyond these moments of my formal assessment, as conversations swirled and connections were made with the learning and with each other, I shared in particular conversations about mourning, loss and grieving. I then wove these moments of contemplation, reflection and meaningful encounter into my writing of the assignment that then built on the presentation. In this assignment the yellow funeral dress, which I wore to my brother’s funeral, was made visible to me as I further theorised my embodied response to this loss. And so, the yellow funeral dress of chapter four was written into being, made possible by the wearing of the white dress at Maniaroa.

Matter and mattering : an entanglement of intra-action

Poststructural theory offered me an understanding of the shaping effects of discourse. Building on these ideas, I was later introduced to new materialism’s consideration of “affective physicality, human-nonhuman encounters and a keen interest in what emerges in mutual engagements with matter” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.526). I now apply this understanding of the mutuality and entanglement of discourse and matter to my account of having worn a white dress for the presentation at Maniaroa.

Intra-action as agency

Arguing for an inseparability of discursive practices and material phenomenon, Barad (2003, 2007, 2010) offered intra-action as agency producing and forming. In this way, the white dress, the light and the projected images, were agency producing and forming in their intra-actions. Barad pays attention to encounters with matter-materiality (nonhumaness) and she is interested in both the encounter itself, and also in what happens in the encounter - the intra-action.

A focus on an encounter as intra-action, which is agentic and productive, troubles the conventional idea that humans are active upon the material realm, with the nonhuman-material as passive, inert and without agency. Barad (2003) argues for a rethinking of the relationship between matter-meaning and between human-

nonhuman, challenging even the binary of human-nonhuman. In this way, Barad's (2003) agential realism argues for a mutual relationship, an entanglement of encounter with human-nonhuman. In this entanglement, discursive < > material factors work together as intra-action, to produce a-becoming. This becoming is part of and woven into the agential and mutually constitutive relationship of material-discursive practices.

Material-discursive practices are specific iterative enactments agential intra-actions—through which matter is differentially engaged and articulated (in the emergence of boundaries and meanings), reconfiguring the material-discursive field of possibilities in the iterative dynamics of intra-activity that is agency. (Barad, 2003, p.822- p.823)

In looking particularly at data and research, Jackson (2013) stated that “the material is not purely produced by human intention, nor does human agency pre-exist or transcend the material: they mutually constitute one another” (p.744). By this I understand that the white dress, the light and even my brother's dead body, or images of his alive body, did not exist purely because of my production of them. As I took on the wearing of the white dress and as the light intra-acted with the dress, the images and my body, so the white dress and my-self were mutually constituted, as an entangled encounter. This “material-discursive co-constitutive complexity,” or discursive↔material intra-action, steps away from the binaried and hierachical essentialism of humanism (Taguchi, 2012, p.266). The white dress, the light, the images, the data projector, the space between the light and my body are vibrant matter (Bennett, 2010). Through the intra-action of the entangled encounter (here, the presentation offered the encounter) the performative capacities of all matter involved (white dress, light, images, body) are intertwined with discursive practices (mourning rituals, speaking rights) in an agency-forming and -producing relationship.

Considering the ways in which the white dress, the light and the projected images intra-act with my body to produce my-self and mourning is, in new materialist terms, a kind of diffractive thinking. “Thinking diffractively, in short, means thinking as a process of co-constitution, investigating the entanglement of ideas

and other materialities” (Taguchi, 2012, p.271). I lean into diffractive thinking so as to understand how the materiality of the white dress, the light, the space between the projector and the white fabric take on agentic significance.

Thinking diffractively is supported by the Deleuzian (1994) idea of differentiation, which I introduced in chapter two. I apply it here to analyse how it is that all matter, in its positive difference, invites questions from all other matter, and in so doing all matter co-operates to co-constitute each other and the meaning held within each.

Differentiation

Differentiation refers to an understanding of the intra-action that happens between matter - human, nonhuman and the more-than-human (Deleuze, 1994). Differentiation (where difference is different in each event) means that “human and non-human bodies can thus be thought upon as forces that overlap and relate to each other. In doing so, they can be understood to borrow or exchange properties with each other” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.529).

What this means is that as the presentation at Maniaroa unfolded, so the white dress and the light and my body can be thought of as these “forces that overlap and relate to each other.” As each of these forces intra-act so they “borrow or exchange properties with each other” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.529).

Rather than considering that I, as the subject am active while the white dress, the light and the images are passive. I consider that nonhuman matter (white dress, light, data projector, space) is agency producing and forming. This view of nonhuman matter allows a consideration of myself, and such nonhuman matter (white dress, light, data projector, space) as “performative mutually intra-active agents” (Barad, as cited in Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.527).

In these terms, differentiation brings forward continuity and multiplicity, where different is read as positive and where difference itself is in a constant ongoing state of becoming. As the white dress meets my body and the light from the data projector, these elements “‘pose questions’ to each other in the process of trying to make themselves intelligible to each other as different kinds of matter involved

in an active and ongoing relation” (Barad, 2007, as cited in Taguchi & Hultman, 2010, p.530). By the ‘questions’ asked and by the overlapping of the elements, the matter involved in the presentation comes into being in a state of *becoming with* each other. Hultman and Taguchi (2010) further explain that

In the *event* the subject can no longer be understood as a fixed being, but rather a ‘way of being’ – a verb rather than a noun. The subject is an effect of multiple encounters that entails the history of previous encounters, the present and the potentialities of the future encounters that might take place. (p.532)

This means that in the event of the presentation my-self as subject, comes into being together with the nonhuman matter of the presentation. Time-space is collapsed precisely because such an event involves not only this moment-by-moment happening, with myself stepping in to and out of the light. But, as the stepping into and out of the light happened, so it contained within it, the becoming-with the yellow dressed girl from the past. The presentation as event carries a history of previous encounters as well as future encounters yet to happen.

Before taking up the concept “event” I theorise the presentation itself as a matter of meaning and materiality.

Becoming-with-white dress

I stand with the folded fabric of the white dress falling with gravity around my legs. I see the light of the data projector and hear the hum of the machine. The white dress moves around my legs, shapes them differently and is itself differently moved by the different direction in which I step. Simultaneously, in this moment of stepping-moving-flowing-white-dress, this stepping brings forward an assemblage of interconnecting forces; gravity, atomic interactions, movements of muscle, neural firings in the brain. These forces bring about not just physical movement for myself, but indeed a shifting of spacetime-mattering. This spacetime-mattering marks my becoming-with the white dress. In this encounter time shifts and brings into the moment of the stepping into the light, the yellow funeral dress, from chapter four. In this way and with this mo(ve)ment, I am produced as a yellow-dress-white-dress becoming self. I am the woman wearing

the white dress, but I am also the yellow-dressed girl, becoming sister. The entangled intra-action of the white-dress assemblage, shifts time/space and interrupts the linear notion of time. As time-space is collapsed so the white-dress assemblage, becoming woman and the yellow-dress, becoming sister, encounter each other.

The light from the data projector is an active force, travelling in waves and making itself known to the dust particles which dance in the space between my white-dress body. As the light meets the white screen, it is read as light by myself and by my witnessing audience. The dust particles and the fabric of the white dress meet the light in an assemblage of enfolding as they each come to know each other, in a mutual flow of interconnectedness. My body (skin, legs, arms, flesh) and matter (data projector, white screen, white fabric) and force (light) engage in an overlapping of inseparable intertwining. In this encounter they come into being in the mutuality of the intra-action.

In this way “the body does not hide or reveal an otherwise unrepresented latency or depth but is a set of operational linkages and connections with other things, other bodies” (Grosz, 1994, as cited in Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.531). Bodies, things, matter and other bodies intra-act in “an assemblage of a multiplicity of encounters” (Hultman & Taguchi, 2010, p.532). In doing so rigid molar lines are deterritorialised (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) and space-time flattens. Thinking with new materialism means that the rigid molar lines of sedimented mourning discourse which is contained in the wearing of black, is deterritorialised from the time-space of my 13-year old becoming sister self. In this intra-action in the moments of the presentation, the territory of mourning, with its discursive implications, is shifted and re-territorialised in a becoming-with the yellow dressed girl.

Timespacemattering

I am a 46 -year old woman standing on marae in Aotearoa doing a presentation, wearing a white dress. As the light diffracts off the fabric and projected images of my brother, I am a 13-year old bereaved sister walking down the funeral aisle of a church in South Africa, wearing a yellow dress. The materiality of the moment of stepping into the lights meets and produces the discursive encounter of white-

dress. As the material of the white dress touches my lit body a material↔discursive space is made possible. This material↔discursive event is one that invites a yellow funeral dress to speak together with the voice of a becoming-woman. As time-space is shifted, so bodies, matter and discursive entanglements all come to matter in a Baradian timespacemattering. Such a timespacemattering is witnessed by the way in which light meets fabric, fabric meets body, body meets image and light and words carry tears which fall through a material↔discursive space. These intra-actions produce new ways of thinking, of knowing of mourning and being with mourning.

“What does it mean to follow a ghost?” (Derrida)

Mourning continued to be with me throughout the week. Here, I focus on the day we visited Parihaka. We had been encouraged to learn about this settlement. I had researched about Parihaka, a small community nestled between Mount Taranaki and the Tasman Sea (Scott, 1981). I had also learnt of the ways in which this largely Maori community had embarked on a non-violent passive resistance to government land confiscation and European land settlement in the 1880s (<http://www.critic.co.nz/features/article/2316/the-children-of-parihaka>).

We travelled to Parihaka. I sat with fellow student counsellors and our lecturers in the whare at Parihaka. In this place government troops had been greeted by singing children on the day of the armed raid in 1881. This whare is a time-space of greetings, welcomes and farewells. As it holds manaakitanga (hospitality) so the inevitable responsibility of hospitality is held within its walls.

For Derrida responsibility, or a “politics of memory” (Craps, 2010, p.467) resides in an acknowledgement of justice, a justice-to-come. In his claim of speaking with ghosts and of speaking justice, Derrida (1994) writes

If I am getting ready to speak at length about ghosts, inheritance, and generations, generations of ghosts, which is to say about certain others who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of justice. (p.xviii)

During my presentation I projected onto the white dress and my body, an iconic

image that records the injustice of the system of apartheid, in South Africa. This photograph is a graphic depiction of the violence of the Soweto uprising. On 16 June 1976, school children took to the streets to protest against an inhumane regime. These were the children of resistance and protest. In the police response, violence escalated with devastating results and by the end of the raid many school children were dead or wounded. The photograph I projected shows a dying Hector Pieterse being carried by Mbuyisa Makhubo, while his sister Antoinette Sithole runs alongside them. Hector Pieterse was killed when police opened fire on the gathering school children.



(<http://time.com/4365138/soweto-anniversary-photograph/>).

This photographic image of a school child cradling the dying body of another school child, pieta-like, in his arms, running down a township street in Soweto, South Africa, intra-acts with the light from the data projector as a force of desire. It meets the folds of the white fabric of the dress I wear standing on a marae in Aotearoa, with the singing children of Parihaka in the waved folds of the dress. This is the Deleuzian desire, which is the life force and the aporetic moment.

Deleuze and Guattari appreciated that desire was a kind of impersonal life force (as cited in Biehl & Locke, 2010). As a force, desire is that “which generates life; enabling bodily connections and social relations” (Hickey-Moody & Malins, 2007, p. 14). Rather than being negatively regarded as a lack or need, desire is positive and productive. Deleuze and Guattari (1983) further contended that

“desire is not bolstered by needs, but rather the contrary; needs are derived from desire: they are counterproducts within the real that desire produces. Lack is a countereffect of desire” (as cited in Buchanan, 2011, p.17). Desire-flows into and out of an assemblage and is produced within an assemblage.

In this aporia of desire and ethics, justice and responsibility intersect as a mournful force (Derrida, 1996). It is the aporia described by Derrida (1994) as

[the aporia] of justice where it is not yet, not yet there, where it is no longer, let us understand where it is no longer present, and where it will never be, no more than the law, reducible to laws or rights. (p. xviii)

Desire is the movement towards the possibility of justice-to-come, in which the voices of Parihaka’s children intra-act with the cries of dying children in South Africa. This force is of mourning and with mourning. According to Derrida (1994), it involves learning to live with ghosts, as a response-ability to ethical care and a responsibility, to ethics, to ghosts and to a justice-to-come.

It is necessary to speak of the ghost, indeed to the ghost and with it ... no ethics, no politics ... seems possible and thinkable and just that does not recognize in its principle the respect for those others who are no longer or for those others who are not yet there, presently living, whether they are already dead or not yet born. (Derrida, 1994, p.xviii)

This reckoning with ghosts is an aporetic (im)possibility, even as it is a response-ability. According to Raffoul (2008) a Derridean ethics “takes place in a leap beyond knowledge” (p.285). I would suggest that this “leap” is the force of desire in which, according to Derrida (2004), “the impossibility of finding one’s way is the condition of ethics” (cited in Raffoul, 2008, p.290). For me, newly arrived into Aotearoa, this desire, as a productive force, operated as a “spectral moment, a moment that no longer belongs to time” (Derrida, 1994, p.xix). In a timespacemattering, Parihaka and Soweto, intersected in the welcome of the karanga, the call onto the marae and the vuvuzela¹ horns trumpeting in the streets of my home town, Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa.

¹ The vuvuzela is a traditional Zulu horn used to call villages for a gathering. It was made from kudu buck hide, but has since been remade in plastic. It is a sound of celebration and communion.

These sounds call to me as a note of desire, both possible and im-possible. It is a force of being in mourning and of mourning. It is a response-ability for the inheritance of ghosts. It is a desiring for an ethics of being and an ethics of practice. For, “there is no inheritance without a call to responsibility” (Derrida, 1994, p.114).

The work of this fold

I am a 49-year old woman sitting on a marae in Aotearoa. The voices of the singing children of Parihaka with white feathers in their hair, vibrate in the spaces of the open field of Parihaka and meet in the echo chamber of my body. I am also a daughter of South Africa, with an inheritance of wounded children. In this meeting house, with the chorus of children singing and children dying, mourning is enfolded in timespacemattering. And I am called to an ethical responsibility. This is a desire, which is a force, both im-possible and aporetic, yet it is carried in the white dress assemblage of the presentation on the marae. This desire is folded into my ongoing becoming as an ethical counsellor.

Chapter seven: An assemblage of entanglements

The assemblage itself is a hub of emergence and possibility with various agents coming in and out of focus (Jackson & Mazzei, 2016 , p.105).

I understand from this study that the personal stories of my experiences with loss intersect with philosophical theory and that the assemblage joins together here in the final chapter with my professional encounter with mourning in the mourning school.

In this final chapter I offer an analysis of how the assemblage works. Personal story joins with philosophical theory and meets with counselling practice. I show how it is that this assemblage operates with a distributed agency. The ways in which the assemblage works both reflects and constitutes the hope and desire I hold for my ongoing ethical, compassionate counselling practice.

I offer first my professional encounter of loss in the mourning school. I then fold in specific personal stories of loss from chapters four and six. In the entangled assemblage of personal story, philosophical theory and professional practice, I bring together mourning, materiality, space and time.

The mourning school

It is Sunday, Mother's Day. I have enjoyed a family breakfast and have the rest of the day to work in my room at school. I have an assignment for the Master of Counselling paper I am enrolled in and the luxury of time to enjoy the work.

I look up and through the window as I hear footsteps on the deck outside. My eyes catch the Principal walking towards my room. His body carries the weight of some news. I am almost afraid to hear him speak.

“Something terrible has happened ...”

There has been an accident. It is a hunting accident. A student has died. It is Mother's Day. The student is one of ours, his mum is one of ours. John ...

The news reaches my body and the very particles of air carry unspoken questions. These questions meet disbelief and together they thicken the air as I reach for breath - the opposite of death. As air rushes to fill the chambers of my lungs, the spaces in my body echo with the vibrations of loss. I am Othered by this death (Derrida, 2001). I am other than how I was before I received the news.

At the very moment of hearing the news of John's death - in its immediacy - time and space collapses in a suspended moment of un-anticipation, of unexpectedness. The visceral response at the level of the body; the falling stomach, the held breath, the urge to vomit, is the Othering that happens when death is encountered. In certain respects death makes us "inscrutable" to ourselves. "Who 'am' I without you? I have gone missing as well" (Butler, 2004, p.22).

By 11am the Traumatic Incident Response Team of which I am a member is formed and collaboratively we work to formulate a plan for Monday and the coming week. This team is working with a document known as the Traumatic Incident Response Plan (TIRP) which guides and supports a school in response to a traumatic event or incident. The document's articulated aims/ objectives are stated as:

- *a return to normality within the school*
- *to establish debriefing procedures appropriate to the event*
- *to prevent further crisis, and facilitate the recovery process*

(School Policy Document, 2016. This document has since been amended.)

The TIRP holds care for all students during this time of loss. It is a well-meaning and carefully thought out document which hopes to ensure the support of all those who would be affected by a traumatic incident. I too hold this understanding and want to honour the value of care of the document. Yet, I also appreciate that the TIRP document is itself a production of the discourse of grief, one in which the grieving self is an object of some power (Foote & Frank, 1999). I understand from my reading and my Master of Counselling study that this policing of the boundaries of grief shapes the subjectivity of the bereaved. I think of how grief is positioned and the potential for a disciplining of mourning. Such discipline is usually made possible through normalizing, medicalising and individualizing

practices (Foucault, 1975). I also recognise the desire to offer a sense of containment or safety to young people to mitigate against the chaos which death brings. My thoughts swirl as tears fall, tissues are passed and pragmatic details pored over. The TIRP document exercises a significant discursive pull on me.

As the talk wheels around the table, trying to order grief, I feel the call of modernist thinking about grieving as a crisis event. The dominant discourse of mourning, represented in the TIRP, holds too that loss is recovered from in a time period with a “return to normality” (TIRP document) as a stated ideal. There is the idea that this grief will be temporary; painful yes, but there will be a return to ‘normal’, albeit without the presence of the deceased student at school, and that this will be a normal and good way forward.

So the TIRP begins to take form, each staff member leaning into the pain of loss, which is both public and personal. I wonder how I might gently weave poststructuralist thinking about grieving into this procedural guideline. This document offers a comfort of getting through the pain of grieving. I understand too that each staff member on the team will be engaged in their own private dialogue with death and loss. So I take special care with my language and with my offering to this crisis team to honour their knowledge.

After careful thought and gentle planning, the team decides to use a telephone tree to allow Heads of Departments to have conversations with their staff about the death of the student. This idea springs from wanting staff to be supported as they learn of this traumatic news. This acting of care is the kind of stepping into a relational space that is informed by my understanding of the multi-storied nature of our lives (White, 2007) and that each of us has a relationship with death.

As part of this care for staff, I undertake to frame some thoughts about what a form teacher may wish to share with their form class on Monday. I am supported in the drafting of this document by an advisor from Ministry of Special Education. We work together to frame the words carefully. I hope that the document can sit alongside teachers as they share the news of the loss with their class. I hope that the language will also invite a particular shaping of the conversations teachers and

students can engage in. This is a guidance role, where my level of influence is in framing thinking about dialogue, and troubling in this way certain conscripting practices of death and loss.

Despite the school's policy document's desire for a "return to normality" (TIRP document), I urge for an allowance of space for the school to be grieving – or not - and so we negotiate that there will be dedicated spaces; the counselling rooms, John's form class room, the Rugby coach's room, the Volleyball coach's room, the wharenuī and the library, where students can gather together, with the support of staff, in order that they may experience a stepping alongside each other in grieving. I have the sense that these spaces themselves might be dynamic, generative and enabling. These physical spaces might offer a distributed agentic possibility where students' tears, bodies and memories can come together in a dynamic assemblage (Barad, 2007).

This break from routine, however, marks us as a school as different, changed, Other. In some ways the grieving comes to belong to the school, and the presence of Ministry of Special Education advisors, who come to support the school, is a further indication that the school is in a different state, needing specialized support. The death of one of our students shifts how we experience ourselves as a school. For many who have a relationship or connection to John, their loss is profound and deeply personal. Yet, for those who may not know John, or whose connection is peripheral, they too are acted upon by the overarching effects of hegemonic mourning discourse and the Othering of death (Derrida, 2001).

Monday is intense in the outpourings and embodied experiencing of grieving. Since the accident happened on Sunday, some students arrive at school carrying their grief along with their school bags. For others, the news of the death is striking and shocking in a place where death usually does not fit. Death brings with it a breaching of routine, of the everyday and the expected.

The Counselling rooms (and others) are fluid spaces as groups of students gather, sit, weep, hug and move on and back again. The image of the whirling convergence of flocks of birds evokes the physicality of the students moving

through the spaces. As each group comes together, gathers, disperses, re-groups and merges, so each encounter of bodies, tears, hugs, silences and tissues intra-acts with a vibrant force (Barad, 2007).

Two students hold each other as they merge into the room. Each carries a crumpled and soaked tissue which they worry with their hands. They sit close together on the couch. Tears thicker than tissue paper soak the front of their school shirts and are caught by the school motto embroidered on their breasts, *kia manawa nui* (have courage, be brave of heart).

There are no words. We sit with tears and silence, almost “undone” by grief (Derrida, 2001). At such a time of sitting, the students and I find “ourselves at a loss, no longer ourselves...” where it is “difficult to speak at such a moment of mourning, difficult to get the words out and difficult to find the right words” (Brault & Naas, 2001, p.5).

Yet, the hands working the tissues speak and the tears speak. Tissues and hands and bodies carry the pain, loss and a mourning profound. The words are yet to come, so the silence gives space for the students’ bodies to hold each other. Bodies intra-act with tears, tissues and the space of the room. Together we do mourning. Tears themselves are materialised as agentic.

I find myself listening with great care, for the unsaid, for the not-yet-said, for the unspeakable. I listen to the silences in the mourning for John; the hush on the rugby field, the susurrations of many feet as students shuffle into the auditorium, the students’ silent tears vibrating in the space of a classroom. I can “hear”, too, guns being put away, the deep and raspy mek mek of mallard ducks, and bullets resting in the chamber of a hunting rifle.

At each encounter I am doing this negotiating: the speaking, the not-speaking. I am meeting a person, a group, a wave of pain, a washing of tears.

As groups of students gather and talk, so questions of speaking rights emerges. Who gets to talk of John and in what capacity? Who gets to speak about John and how? As these questions are brought forward so the counselling conversations

become rich with sharing about such things as speaking rights, as students try to make sense of their own grief and how they want to represent and speak of John.

Alongside speaking rights is also the aporia of not-speaking about or for John. Implicit in the absence of words (Carey et al, 2009) is the struggle to find voice – what kind of voice? Students are mired in the twisted questions of how to speak for and of a friend. Yet, not speaking is an intolerable betrayal for it seems to deny the value of their friend in their life. Voice (the utterances of questions) and silence, are forms of matter. Voice, and silence contain and express the discursive implications of different voices with their differing rights to speak. Voice (as matter) and speaking/silence (as discourse) are “mutually constituted in the production of knowing” (Taguchi, 2012, p. 268).

Derrida (2001) further explains this aporia when he writes of how death brings forward issues of fidelity and responsibility in mourning.

Two infidelities, an impossible choice: on the one hand, not to say anything that comes back to oneself, to one’s own voice, to remain silent, or at the very least to let oneself be accompanied or preceded in counterpoint by the friend’s voice (p. 45).

These and other complex understandings of who gets to speak of John and whose voice/s are heard become interwoven into the fabric of the mourning school.

The day unfolds. I look to narrative therapy to offer a way to understand that the telling and re-telling of stories shapes and informs our experiences, indeed “we make sense of our lives through stories” (Brown & Augusta-Scott, 2007, p.xii). Where talking is happening, I actively invite the telling and re-telling of stories of John, of stories of friendship, of stories too of longing, regret and missing. “What does John mean to you?”

A small group of John’s friends find this question helpful and it opens space for them to share together what John means to each of them. The words pass between them as each John-moment shared brings forward another. Their words bruise

each other in the place of loss but they also touch the place of John-joy. As these stories of John's tenacity in rugby emerge, so they invite other stories. John embodies the "heartiness" of a team rugby player, he is playful and up for teasing. John's friends bring John into the room as they share specific details of his rugby-playing prowess, his sense of humour and his aliveness. As each event is brought forward so laughter joins with loss in a dynamic intra-action which plays with time. The talking about rugby, teammates and the bonding of rugby works to stitch the group to each other and to John in ways that have less to do with "letting him go" and more to do with "remembering" John. This meaning-making brings forward John in his being-aliveness or *zoe* (Braidotti, 2010).

Michael White's (1988) describes this process as re-membering. Instead of the dominant grief ideology which calls for the bereaved to "say goodbye" to their deceased loved one, White (1988) offered instead the idea of "saying hullo again" as an active remembering. This sense of bringing the deceased person into an ongoing relationship was taken up Hedtke (2003) in the use of the metaphor of origami. Hedtke suggested that just like the actual folding of origami, so the deceased person can be folded into the lives of the living.

I take up this idea of remembering and appreciate that rather than "moving on", we are inviting John back into our "membership, into our club of life" (Hedtke, 2003, p.59). The students and I participate in creating new meaning and performing, through the talking, the crying, and the silences, a re-membering of John.

The counselling room is therefore more than a space to gather. Students are invited to speak in certain ways about loss, death and sadness – and about John. The counselling room is a place for voice and a space to gather - a matter of space and time. It is a place where students bring memories of their dead friend in their ways of being with each other. For some students their memory holds an almost intolerable recognition of the absence of their friend.

All we seem to have left is memory... in mourning we must recognize that the friend is now both only 'in us' and already beyond us, in us, but totally

other, so that nothing we can say of or to them can touch them in their infinite alterity. (Brault & Naas, 2001, p.11)

Re-membering is about memory, story and talking. But re-membering is also about action and do-ing. The students use the whiteboard in the counselling room and they begin a mindmap of 'John-ness'. Students add to the qualities as they come and go. John appears before our eyes in the coloured whiteboard pens and the words people connect to him. By the end of the day the board is filled with brightly coloured words that the students associate with John. We decide to take a photograph of the whiteboard creation and print it in colour.

I bring into the counselling room journalling books, felts, vivids, stickers and glue and students scrapbook notes to John. Students become absorbed in writing stories of connection and expressions of loss. News spreads and other students arrive to record their connection to John. As students work on these books so they talk with each other, and so amongst each other the conversation organically includes John, and each other. After three books are filled the students decide that they would like John's mum to have these books. On narrative therapy terms this becomes a taking-it-back practice (White, 1997, p.132) where the students witness for John's mum the meaning of John and their connection to him. In writing these messages for John and in offering these to John's mum the students take John back to his family and witness for them what he means to them.

Alongside supporting the students who are openly gathering, I am also mindful of other students who explicitly and implicitly convey their desire to be left alone, to not be looked over and to be free to mourn privately. Whilst they are initially away from school, their return to school brings them directly into the gaze of mourning.

As the week passes, my counsellor-self is listening very carefully to the reverberations of loss from this latter group of students. I hear the air passing through the space in the group where John would sit in the classroom and on the field. I hear the swish of bags as groups of students turn to follow these students' movement around the school. I see the sad eyes and the rigid shoulders keeping

grief at the school gate. I feel the pull to follow procedure and call in this group of students to check how they are doing. This is what the TIRP of the school suggests. In my care-full listening, I am stepping away from protocol, and feel the vulnerability of this. I think deeply about my responsibility as a school guidance counsellor and how I am positioned by this great loss, which is a school loss, and also how we are all enacted upon by the dominant discourse of death and loss.

But I also value the deep listening I am doing in the absence of the physical presence of the students. I feel this group's presence profoundly in their absence. It seems the kind of "emergent listening" (Davies, 2014) where the absence of conversation is in fact a kind of a conversation of the not-yet-said or the absent but implicit (Carey et al, 2009). I have a sense that even gently stepping towards these students, individually or as group, when they so clearly are articulating not wanting to have to talk may make less possible relationship building later when the gaze of grief may not be as pervasive. I hear them resisting the truth of needing to talk about pain as a way to speak against the technologies of power of the very dominant discourse of mourning.

These students' refusal to seek out the counsellors challenges the boundaries of mourning and this refusal to conform to safe, rational practices around grieving opens a space for this group of John's friends to grieve in an(other) way and in this way to challenge "the politics of mourning" (Derrida, as cited in Brault & Naas, 2001, p.2).

The work I undertake is precious, demanding and deeply fulfilling. As the week moves towards the weekend the Ministry of Special Education leave and school routines slide over the rawness of grief. The conversations in counselling bring John's body into the room as students and I travel to John's home to meet with him.

The assemblage at work

Many voices speak here in the interstices, a cacophony of always already reiteratively intra-acting stories. These are entangled tales. Each is

diffractively threaded through and enfolded in the other (Barad, 2012, p. 206/7).

At the end of writing this professional encounter with mourning I analyse how my personal encounters with loss were made available to me in my counselling practice of the mourningschool. I show how private mourning encounters, together with philosophical theory and narrative therapy, operated together with the professional encounter of the mourningschool as an assemblage.

Into this discussion of the assemblages, I re-introduce the writing of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and return to the author's description of assemblage.

[An assemblage consists of] two segments: one of content, one of expression. On the one hand it is a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand, it is a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies. (p.88)

As such an assemblage consists of an entangled collective of elements, discursive, material, human, non-human and more-than human, "all existing on different temporal and spatial scales that work together collectively to produce a territory" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2016, p.100). The territory produced in the mourningschool was the "living, throbbing confederation(s)" (Bennett, 2010, p.23) of which the personal stories of loss and the philosophical theory of study were a part.

In the remainder of the chapter, I show how it is that the yellow-dressed girl - and indeed the yellow dress itself (my becomingsister self) was folded from the past into the ways in which I was able to notice and trouble the hegemonic practices that produce caring for young people who have experienced a death in the mourningschool. I further analyse how it is that the body of my brother, Grant and "The white dress" (chapter six) took on "thing-power" (Bennett, 2010) in the intra-actions of the mourningschool assemblage.

The yellow-dressed girl, the body of my brother, and the white dress, show how the assemblage is at work in the “swarm of vitalities at play” (Bennett, 2010, p.32). I uncover the “contours of the swarm and the kinds of relations that are made and unmade between its bits” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2016, p.101). In doing so the distributed agency of the assemblage is displayed. Mourning school, personal encounters of loss, and philosophical theory all draw together in an agentic assemblage which I now unfold.

The yellow- dressed girl

I meet my becomingsister self and a bright yellow funeral dress.

As time is folded from this timespace back into the past and forward again into the now, so the yellow-dressed girl and the bright yellow funeral dress meet the students who are mourning the death of their friend. In this way, meeting with mourning students is also an encounter with my 13-year old becomingsister self, wearing a bright yellow dress to the funeral of my brother.

As a 13-year sister, grieving for her dead brother, I was positioned by dominant mourning discourse as a-part from the grieving adults, and silenced save for the embodied wearing of a yellow dress. This apartness, which I had encountered as a child-griever, is folded into the curiosity I hold now about these grieving students who had met death. I begin to wonder how counselling conversations might make a range of possible positions available for the yellow-dressed-girl and these students now touched by death.

Produced by dominant grief discourse and identified as a child mourner, my becomingsister self nevertheless had available to her thoughts of refusing conventional black by wearing a yellow dress to the funeral of her brother. In her embodied apartness - by being a child-griever and by wearing a yellow dress - I become curious about what the yellow-dressed girl may be able to advise me in this time of young people mourning. I hear her speak. The yellow dress’s advice is a wistful call from the past. She has embodied knowledge of the gaze of mourning. She was Othered from the first moment of having a medical emergency

in her home. Death had brought with it the politics of mourning and caring eyes that stare and watch for tears. I hear now the wisdom of the yellow-dressed girl to dress in yellow as a form of resistance. Now, if her speaking could be brought forward, what would she advise me for the students who are the age of her brother at the time of his passing? This meeting and encounter is a diffraction and a folding of space and time – a timespacemattering.

The yellow-dressed girl alerts me to the mattering of bodies and of speaking and not speaking. As she slips a yellow dress over her young body, so the dress talks too about normative and counter hegemonic practices of mourning. She feels the silky dress slide over her legs. She sees herself in the mirror, the yellow dress folding and flowing as she catches her reflection. The yellow dressed girl is standing on behalf of something she cares about – relationship, her relationship with her brother which is bright and iridescent – like a golden yellow dress. The yellow-dressed girl witnesses a way to live out a form of mourning that has some residence in her body. In this standing apart from hegemonic mourning rituals and standing on behalf of relationship, she evidences an “iterative reworking of past and future” (Barad, 2010, p.260).

When this other group of students and I did meet, we did so in a space of negotiated meaning. By holding care and threading it through with the meaning of the absence of bodies, when the students and I did meet, it held the force of a vibrant assemblage in which agency was distributed across the deterritorialised space of these gatherings. Our times together were rich with talking and not talking. Our gatherings were an agentic assemblage in which the hegemonic discourse of mourning was deterritorialised. These students deeply appreciated the space they had been afforded and valued, too, the place now to talk – or even to talk about not-talking.

I was able to bring the “advice” of the yellow-dressed girl into my encounters with dominant mourning practices. The well-intentioned Traumatic Incident Plan of the school (supported by the Ministry of Education) was a document ripe with discursive implications for the students who were in pain and for me, one of the guidance counsellors in the school. As the positioning of the yellow-dressed girl

intersected with the students' own encounters with mourning, so the mourningschool happened as a timespacemattering.

The materiality of the dead body and “The white dress”

The young man who died was 15-years old, a contemporary of my brother who had suddenly stopped breathing at 16-years of age. John's body had been ravaged by a gunshot that shattered his flesh. My brother's own heart exploded in his chest and halted his breathing. Whilst the marks of a failed heart were not visible on the surface of my brother's body, John was marked in death. The materiality of these two young men's bodies was, for me, an almost tangible presence as I met in counselling conversations with students and staff in our grieving school.

I had chosen not to see my brother's dead body. Now at this loss I came to sit with John's body. This encounter was a practice of diffraction in which the unwitnessed body of my dead brother was folded into the witnessed body of John. These two bodies of young men intra-acted in a threshold space of timespacemattering.

Encountering the body: a threshold

Details of the hunting accident emerged and we became aware of the brokenness of John's body. How the body had changed in death brought the materiality of death forcefully present. The body of this young man, both his vibrant alive flesh and his shattered flesh, brought questions for students about how they might be when they visited his body.

My brother's dead body, unwitnessed by me, operated as a threshold (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013) as I thought about bodies in death. As a threshold, my brother's unwitnessed body was a middle place, a passageway between two possible points. Thinking with Jackson and Mazzei (2013), a threshold may be thought of in physical space terms as a passage which can operate as either an entry or an exit – or both. A threshold is given meaning and purpose by being connected to other spaces. This idea of threshold helps me to understand how it was that the dead body of my brother, Grant was embedded in the materiality of John's body.

As students made their individual journeys to be with and sit alongside the body of their dead friend, so I too became joined in this ritual of care. Time became folded in the sense that as the students talked about preparing for visiting the dead body of their friend, so my brother's dead body was an absent presence in the preparation conversations with the students. Whilst Grant was never discussed with the students and though they had no knowledge of my own experiences with his death, nevertheless, Grant (in his living and his dying) was matter that was an agentic part of the dispersed assemblage of which the students, myself and all matter were a part.

New materialism materialises all matter in a dynamic intra-action of dispersed agency. Noticing and appreciating the rich involvement of all of matter in counselling conversations is the ethical hope which I hold for my counselling practice. This means that as a counsellor I regard it as my ethical response-ability to take care of these intra-actions, to be mindful of what is given voice and what is left out. In this diffractive practice, meaning is made and care for all matter is, in my experience, witnessed as a hopeful practice.

Encountering death: re-encountering Grant and “The white dress”

The room was beautifully prepared for visiting. Great care had been taken in hospitality and welcome. Mattresses had been placed on either side of John so that people could pause and visit. Light was offered by the window which was above where John's body lay on the floor in the lounge of the family home. As the afternoon sun intra-acted with the transparent glass of the window pane, shards of light settled on John's face.

I noticed that a veil had been placed over the part of his head where the harm from the wound was manifest. The veil was white, delicate and intricately woven. It shrouded and protected John's face. In its cloaking, the white veil held him as dear, precious and reverent. I was drawn to the finesse of the white veil and the way it fell over the robust face of this 15-year old young man. The rugby jersey he was wearing was evidence of his athleticism. The special trinkets and treasures

that had been placed alongside him also suggested his meaning to those who has visited with him. Yet, I was held by the white veil and its diaphanous detail.

My daughter's baby blanket was white, crocheted and beautiful. She had slept with it strewn across her face, able to breathe through the fine holes in the crocheting. Try though I might to move the blanket, she was drawn to its feel across her face and in its protective embrace she slept peacefully. A baby's face, cherubic, pink and veiled by a soft crocheted blanket met me in the middle of my chest as the light touched the white veil laid across John's damaged face.

The veil shrouding John's face held that the body had been marked, irrevocably marked and was best not witnessed. As I sat beside the body, I held in that movement of sitting down beside him, my unwitnessed brother's body, firm in its materiality, yet marred by death. Two young men, two young bodies and a baby's face veiled in sleep. "All grief, anyone's grief, you said, is the weight of a sleeping child" (Michaels, 1998, p.281).

The moment was one of delicate diffraction in its material < > discursive intra-action. I was called to remember the white dress I had worn during the presentation for my Master of Counselling study at Maniaroa. The folds of the dress held the images I had projected onto my body. As the light and the dress intra-acted with the material < > discursive entanglements of words and images, so the assemblage of body, dress, light and images produced a diffraction which held within it an agentic force. Here, too, the white veil performed more than its sensitive obligation of keeping the audience and John's broken face safe within its folds. The veil was **of** mourning and in its vibrant force produced those who came to sit with the body of the dead young man as becoming-mourners. It too intra-acted with the unseen damaged flesh it concealed and revealed in its intra-action the sacredness of the body and of John. It was both and at once an object of great beauty and some alarm. The veil brought me to John's dead body and acted as a kind of threshold which I could move off from and return to. During my visit I found my eyes drawn to its patterning and then from this place I could resume my visit.

I left this place with some reluctance, curious about what this encounter had offered in its poignant beauty. I had a yearning to touch the body of my long dead brother, in its place of death. Yet, the body of this student became pleated into the folds of my experience of my unwitnessed body of my brother as I folded backwards and forwards the moments shared with these bodies. Concertina-like, the movement or action of folding and pleating is itself an event which richly layers meaning in ways which are transformative.

The students returned from their visit/s and shared what this meeting had meant for them. These conversations met my own embedded and embodied encounter with the body of this, our student. This brought John materially into the room. Our encounters evidenced the kind of “radical openness” to aliveness and deadness which is “at the core of mattering” (Barad, 2012, p.214).

Entanglements as a pleat

As the deaths of my brother, my father and my mother, intersected with my experiences of mourning rituals and practices so I brought my embedded and embodied self to each mourning student.

These intersections made possible the yellow-dressed girl encountering grieving students. Her advice became enfolded into the different ways of enacting mourning. The unseen dead body of my brother was the threshold space of my sitting with the veiled body of John. These materialities, these things, objects, experiences and people (living and not) became part of the assemblage of the mourningschool which itself intra-acted with a vibrant agentic force, reconstituting and reconfiguring the territory of the mourningschool.

The mourning we as a school were a part of called me as a school counsellor into a range of roles, performing different kinds of support, guidance and counselling. The mourningschool represented mo(ve)ments of deep significance in my counselling practice as living and dying intersected in stories of personal mourning and professional practice. It was a folding in of experience, learning and hope.

I conclude this chapter by showing how desire (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) is the force which shapes my ongoing ethical counselling practice. I further make visible how desire and a care for an ethical being and practice intersects with new materialism. Desire is threaded through this writing and indeed the learning in my Master of Counselling study.

An ethical mattering

A delicate tissue of ethicality runs through the marrow of being. There is no getting away from ethics – mattering is an integral part of the ontology of the world in its dynamic presencing. (Barad, 2007, p. 396)

New materialist philosophy is aligned to the desire for ethical responsiveness, justice and hope. At the heart of its philosophy is an “onto-epistemological justice” in its recognition that all things matter and in its call for “fostering just relationships among the world’s diverse ways of being/becoming” (Barad, 2012, p. 207).

In decentering the human subject and acknowledging the “force of things” (Bennett, 2010) in a vibrant and dynamic assemblage where agency is distributed, there is a call to care for **all matter**- human and nonhuman. Space and time become extended beyond human constructs of bounded time and this trajectory invites a hope-full forward thinking.

Focussing on the dynamic intra-action of all matter encourages an “active ethical citizenship” (Braidotti, 2010, p. 204). In acknowledging that humans, nonhuman and the more-than-human exist in a rhizomatic swirl of multiple belonging lies “an ethics that respects vulnerability while actively constructing social horizons of hope” (Braidotti, 2010, p.207).

At the intersection of living and dying is the desire for a deep vitality of care. In noticing that death Others us all and that it is the originary mourning (Derrida, 2001) present at our birth, this offers the possibility to look beyond binaried understandings of living and dying and to be curious about all that matters in

living and in dying. Death does matter, all deaths matter. All lives matter. This mattering brings us closer to each other and fully aware of our Otherness to each other in a reciprocity of vulnerability and responsibility.

In living we are implicated in our Otherness to each other. Death too brings a connection where “loss has made a tenuous ‘we’ of us all” (Butler, 2004, p.20). Our related vulnerability to each other and hence our ethical responsibility to and for each other grows from within the inter-relationship between an “I” and an Other.

I speak as an "I," but do not make the mistake of thinking that I know precisely all that I am doing when I speak in that way. I find that my very formation implicates the Other in me, that my own foreignness to myself is, paradoxically, the source of my ethical connection with others. (Butler, 2001, p.37)

Otherness frames the possibility for ethical connection whilst also holding an awareness of the wounds that we may and do inflict upon each other in our Otherness. This aporia is also part of desire. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) desire is positive and productive, but also flowing into and out of an assemblage. The authors note that “assemblages are passionate, they are compositions of desire. Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled, desire” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.399). As “passionate”, assemblages invite an ethical accountability to all matter (Other, Othered – human and nonhuman)

According to new materialism meaning and matter are enfolded into each other in delicate and tender ways that join living and dying in a dynamic assemblage. This ethical responsibility holds the desire for a living and a dying which nurtures care and care-fullness of entangled encounters of which we are all a part.

In his last interview, two months before his death, Derrida (2004) evocatively proclaimed that despite his preoccupations with death, that he “never learned-to-live.” By tracing the connections between living and dying, Derrida

acknowledged that, “I have not learnt to accept death ... I remain impervious to learning when it comes to knowing-how-to-die” (Le Monde, 2004).

I think here of my father’s poignant question, “*where should I die, girlie?*” and wonder about what it says about learning to die and learning to live. It seems that my father’s dying was framed by a deep care of and sense of responsibility for my mother, and me. He wanted to die well and in a way that would ease the loss for my mother and me. In some sense, as my father brought himself (and me) closer to death, he affirmed for me the being-aliveness, the *zoe* (Braidotti, 2010) that connected him to life and indeed death. This ongoing aliveness is contained in the idea of *survival* (Derrida, 2004).

Derrida (2004)’s deconstructing of learning to live well and dying brought him to the idea of *survival* which he regarded as extending beyond and through death and which is in and of life. “Survival is life beyond life, life more than life, and the discourse I undertake is not death-orientated, just the opposite ... deconstruction is always on the side of the affirmative, the affirmation of life” (interview with Derrida, 2004). On his death, Derrida left the trace of only a few lines for his son to read at his funeral. Loving language and keenly deconstructing the trace of language, Derrida bequeathed the words, “affirmez la survie ... affirm survival” (Derrida, as cited in Butler, 2005, p.34). Survival is more than surviving, it is originary and “constitutes the very structure of existence” (Butler, 2005, p.31). From the midst of writing about death and in his own shadow of death, Derrida (2004) offers a provocative and inspiring question- “**how to learn how to live?**” (Le Monde, 2004). This opens an ethical space for all lives and all deaths – indeed, all matter.

This ethical space which Derrida (2004) cared for in *affirm survival* meets Braidotti’s (2010) “ethics of affirmation or affirmative compassion” (p.213). In arguing for an ethical position which focuses on “those who come after us as the rightful ethical interlocutors and assessors of our own actions” (Braidotti, 2010, p.216), people are invited to future-focus and live in sustainable and hopeful ways. This “intergenerational justice” is a hope which is a “sort of ‘dreaming

forward', it is an anticipatory virtue that permeates our lives and activates them all. It is a powerful motivating force" (Braidotti, 2010, p.217).

By re-thinking the body and considering the idea of a nomadic body as "multifunctional and complex, as a transformer of flows, energies, affects, desires and imaginings" (Braidotti, as cited in Dolphijn & Van Der Tuin, 2012), people can come to appreciate how matter and meaning are enfolded together. "Ethics is about mattering, about taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are part, including new configurations, new subjectivities, new possibilities" (Barad, as cited in Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p.70). Freed from the bound notion of subject, space and time, new possibilities for thinking and for being become available. If we pay attention to what comes to matter, to what is attended to and what is left out, we can assume a response-ability (Barad, 2012) to the operations of power in the complex field of forces, human and nonhuman, material and inanimate. This response-ability is not an action to be performed or a calculation to be figured. Rather, response-ability is "a relation always already integral to the worlds' ongoing intra-active becoming" (Barad, 2010, p.265). This means that our being in the world as ongoing entanglements and agentic encounters is threaded through with ethical significance.

Entanglements are relations of obligation—being bound to the other—enfolded traces of othering. Othering, the constitution of an "Other," entails an indebtedness to the "Other," who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the "self" (Barad, 2012, p.217).

In honouring this ethicality in the distributed agency of an assemblage, it is possible to step away from rigid sedimented molar forms and in doing so embrace a becomingimperceptible (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). "Meeting each moment, being alive to the possibilities of becoming, is an ethical call, an invitation that is written into the very matter of all being and becoming" (Barad, 2007, p.396). Such a becoming is guided towards a transforming, an ever moving thinking and being in and of the world which gently motions living and dying as entangled assemblages where matter and meaning intersect in a timespacemattering. In these entangled intra-actions we yearn, we strive, we listen for and we reach for a

justice-to-come (Derrida). Barad (2007) has described this justice-to-come as “the ongoing practice of being open and alive, [to]each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly” (p. x).

As the stories of my personal encounters with mourning meet the story of my counselling practice in the mourning school, the “ongoing practice of being open and alive” to death “to each intra-action” intersects with the desire I have for *survival* (Derrida).

Survival ... I think of yellow flowers adorning a grave

It is my own grave

I am unveiled ...

Living to die well.

This grave and these flowers are unfolded from the future into the present and through into an entangled agentic assemblage of my becomingself. In a Derridean sense I *survive* in doing my counselling practice in an ongoing ethical way that shores up living and dying in the fullness of its materiality. The force of desire which flows through and in these bright yellow flowers on a grave, my coming grave, vibrates with a hush, as a yearning as I meet myself and others in living and dying.

One mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly forever. Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (perhaps one should say submitting to transformation) the full result of which one cannot know in advance.

(Butler, 2004, p.21)

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