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Haptic History: Heads, Hands and Hearts

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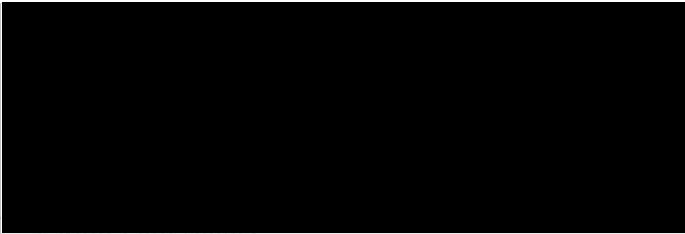
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Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.



John Paul Stuts

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Abbreviations

ACARA	Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority
BOS	Board of Studies (NSW)
CER	Centre for Education Research, Western Sydney University
CESE	Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (NSW)
CPR	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
DOE	Department of Education (NSW)
DET	Department of Education and Training (NSW) see DOE.
HDR	Higher Degree Research
HSIE	Human Society and Its Environment
HTANSW	History Teachers' Association of New South Wales.
HTAA	History Teachers' Association of Australia.
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NESA	New South Wales Education Standards Authority
NSW	New South Wales, Australia
SES	Social and Economic Status
SMC	Scottish Museums Council

Dedication

To my mother and her mother.
The women who first gave me a love of history.

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Abstract

This thesis was prompted by the issue of widespread student disengagement in history classrooms. I argue that a key factor in student disengagement with school history is disciplinary history's pedagogic legacy as an ocular, text-focused intellectual pursuit. This is part of a broader disjunction between public and academic history. Ordinary people primarily make sense of the past through the materiality of things—through objects, artefacts, landscapes and their bodies—but this is not reflected in the way history is usually taught in schools. My research addresses this problem by developing a materialist model of history pedagogy—'haptic history'—that has been derived from a close analysis of two groups who employ materiality in their history praxis: school teachers, who self-identify as employing a materialist approach in their history teaching; and historical re-enactors/living historians. These groups are the focus of this study. They have an avowed educative goal and use the materiality of the past as both source and method, to construct historical knowledge, 'do' historical thinking and experience historical consciousness. I explore the materialist praxis of these groups using a qualitative methodology of surveys, in-depth interviews, auto-ethnography, focus groups and case studies. In analysis, I draw on Collingwood's idea of history, together with interdisciplinary and theoretical insights from the fields of archaeology, social anthropology, museum, performance and material culture studies, to unpick and analyse the way materiality is used in these contexts as forms of historical consciousness and historical thinking. The analysis is then used to construct a model of haptic history pedagogy, with guideposts to support teacher classroom praxis. In the process of building a haptic history model of pedagogy, my research makes broader arguments around materiality and history. I argue that materiality is a significant part of 'historical consciousness' and our sense of self as historical beings. I further conclude that the (co)agency of 'things' weave webs of entanglement and connection between people in the present and the past that are deeply connective, engaging and serve to foster kinaesthetic empathy. This conclusion warrants an expansion of current models of historical empathy beyond the cognitive and affective, to include the kinaesthetic dimension.

My research makes a significant contribution to history pedagogy by demonstrating the importance of touch and embodiment as performative and experiential modes for knowing the past. I demonstrate that when the materiality of history is experienced synergistically through 'heads, hands and hearts', the historical sensation of *ekstasis* is facilitated. This research further contributes to issues of access and equity in history education; haptic history's materialist

approach engages a wide range of learners, especially (but not exclusively) those who struggle to engage with traditional, text-heavy forms of history. Beyond history pedagogy, this study advances the case for disciplinary history to embrace the possibilities and opportunities inherent in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the past. In venturing into the field of materiality, my research also raises significant questions around the co-agency of things in history, and in doing so joins others in prompting a reconsideration of an exclusively anthropocentric view of agency in the past.

Chapter 1: In Touch With the Past

1.1 Introduction

In the last 20 years, much of the energy in the discussion of history education in Australia has been about substantive knowledge ('content' or *what* is to be learned) at the expense of developing procedural knowledge (or *how* students learn history). In recent years, this imbalance has been vigorously addressed by a focus on defining and explicitly teaching 'historical thinking' skills and 'historical consciousness'. This research project locates itself within the history pedagogic frame of procedural knowledge. It explores and analyses the ways classroom history teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians make use of material culture to produce historical knowledge, experience historical consciousness and do historical thinking. These insights are sought for their utility in broadening the procedural knowledge practices of history and contributing to part of a loop, or flourish, in the signature pedagogy (Calder, 2006; Roberts 2010, 2013; Shulman, 2005)¹ of history.

'Haptic history' is the broad term I have adopted to describe materialist approaches to teaching historical consciousness and historical thinking with, and through, objects. The word 'haptic' derives from the Greek *haptikos*, meaning being 'able to touch or grasp'; it pertains to the sense of touch, especially 'the perception and manipulation of objects using the senses of touch and proprioception' (Oxford Dictionary). In this thesis I use the term 'haptic history' in a broader sense to encompass the materiality of the embodied multi-sensory experiences of the past that are not limited to, or proscribed by the sense of touch. Haptic history is about developing historical literacy through first-hand engagement with objects/artefacts, where touch, handling, use, experimentation and multi-sensory embodied experience play important roles in making meaning.

The thesis is subtitled 'Head, hands and heart' to signify the researcher's view of learning as a holistic process that involves the whole person. Similarly, 'head, hands and heart' reflects three

¹ Every discipline and profession has a signature pedagogy that defines 'the types of teaching that organize the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions' (Shulman 2005, p. 52). Calder (2006, p. 1361) defines it as 'ways of being taught that require them [students] to do, think and value what practitioners in the field [i.e., historians] are doing, thinking and valuing.'

interconnected modes for accessing history. Historically, Western thought has privileged the mind (what I call ‘head history’) at the expense of other modes of knowing and thinking—the physical/embodied/somatic mode (‘hands history’) and the affective mode (‘heart history’). Here I explore how the haptic experience of doing history, with its capacity to engage all three modes, might unlock opportunities for historical consciousness and historical thinking.

The study gathers the perspectives of historical re-enactors/living historians and teachers. Early conceptions of this research considered including student perspectives, but after some pilot research I chose not to pursue this aspect for a variety of practical reasons. First, teachers and schools were resistant to having students/classes recruited (especially because of the potential disruption to school days and burden of paperwork). Second, the data I gathered from students in the pilot study indicated that they enjoyed haptic history, but could not explain why beyond thinking it was ‘fun’, ‘different’ and not textbook work. This study seeks to understand *how* objects work; student data, compared to the sophisticated insights of teachers and re-enactors, would have limited value for the study’s goal. Further, adding the student perspective would have made the scope of this study unmanageable. The student perspective on haptic history is an area for future research.

At the core of this study—its *entelechy*, its *elan vital* (to borrow terms from vital materialism)—is my sense of self as a history teacher with a pragmatic quest. I seek to discover how that which is ‘fiendishly difficult’ to do—the ‘unnatural act’ (Wineburg, 2001) of historical thinking—may be achieved via the portal of material culture. I investigate two public/popular settings where history is explored with and through ‘things’: history classrooms (featuring teachers who use objects and artefacts in their pedagogy), and the ‘serious leisure’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 59) world of living history/historical re-enactment (where material culture is central to the praxis of ‘doing’ history). In this study, insights from the living history/historical re-enactment perspectives and the experiences of history teachers are explored and analysed for the purposes of constructing an explanatory model of haptic history, to enrich and expand the praxis of history education.

To problematise material culture approaches to thinking about, doing and feeling history, this chapter begins with an overview of the disciplinary tensions within history itself, as a field of study and practice. This legacy is evident both in history classroom pedagogy and the emergence of forms of popular and public history (such as historical re-enactment). In locating

this research in the liminal zones of interdisciplinary tensions, it is suggested that a bridge across internal divides is offered by the multidisciplinary approaches taken in this dissertation.

1.2 History, A Discipline Divided: Contextualising the Research Problem

1.2.1 History: A house divided

The discipline of history has been at war with itself for some time (Barton & Levstik, 2004). With disputes concerning the substantive knowledge of history (the so-called Australian ‘History Wars’²) still fresh, there are other battle fronts raging. The discipline of history is fractured. Proponents of the various ways of approaching the past identify their image of the academic discipline of history as ‘real history’ and dismiss others as ‘inadequate, inauthentic, or merely “popular”’ (Barton & Levstik, 2004, pp. 4–5). Within the discipline, the trend of fragmentation and over specialisation has further atomised academic history and rendered historical writing esoteric, inward-directed, technical and self-referential (Lowenthal, 2015; Samuel, 1994/2012).

Beyond the hierarchies within the academy of history there are further demarcation disputes;³ academic history distinguishes itself from (and deeply distrusts) other types of popular or public history,⁴ particularly since the populist zeitgeist of current times has empowered the public to construct their own notions of the past, free of deference to expert historians (Lowenthal, 2015). While such distinctions are unhelpful and unproductive (Barton & Levstik, 2004), they persist.

A more expansive, accommodating and productive view of history is one that recognises that the practice of history is not limited to historical academic scholarship and research (Clark, 2016b). Considering who owns and makes history, and the various cultural forms it takes,

² The Australian ‘History Wars’ refers to the heated public debate in the Howard Government era over disputed interpretations of Australia’s colonial past (Ashton & Kean, 2009).

³ At its apex are ‘real’ historians—academics—beneath them, those who create texts for students, and at the bottom are the ‘amateur brain surgeons’ and ‘enthusiasts’, some of whom occupy history’s ‘netherworld’ (Samuel, 1994/2012, pp. 4–5).

⁴ Public history is an ‘engagement with the ensemble of activities and practices in which ideas of history are embedded or a dialectic of past-present relations is rehearsed’. It is an awareness that academic history is only one kind of historical practice that needs to be in ongoing negotiation and discourse with other forms of history, where there is a concern with (a public) audience engagement with an awareness of audiences’ relationship with historical practice and public institutions. Thus, it includes social ritual, ceremony, everyday objects, museums, public memorials and moments, school classrooms, school texts, historical film and fiction, family history, genealogy and local and community history-making (Ashton & Kean, 2009). It often takes the form of ‘applied history’ in museums, tourism, local government and the heritage industry. Its focus is broad. It involves professionals and amateurs, and may use non-traditional sources and media. Public history engages a wide audience and is often dismissed for its flaws in accuracy or scholarship.

invites investigation into ways of historical thinking and historical consciousness both within academic history and beyond to its popular/public history formulations. Indeed, the skills used by historians to investigate the past are not exclusive to the profession and may be found among an array of others ‘who access the past’, often using methods that are ‘ingenious’ and ‘pay scant regard’ to the formal methodologies of historians (Jenkins 2003, p.38). History pedagogy may be enriched by the insights such unconventional approaches to the past provide.

In following Samuel’s (1994/2012) conception of history as a ‘social form of knowledge’, this study views history as both a product and a process embedded in culture. De Groot (2009) notes how the set of stories and discursive practices of history have been freely borrowed by popular culture. Samuel observed this democratising trend, stating that were we to conceive history as an *activity* as much as a product or a profession, ‘the number of her practitioners would be legion’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 17). He identified everyday ordinary people as history’s memory keepers—‘Clio’s underlabourers’, the multitude of ‘invisible hands’ who produce ‘unofficial’ historical knowledge—ironically, the very thing that has increasingly become the grist for the mill of the professional historian (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Samuel, 1994/2012).

Clark (2016b) argues that history is a unique and ubiquitous cultural activity in which ordinary people are immersed and, in the process of ‘making it’, define themselves. What makes history a social process is the fact that humans are fundamentally historical beings (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Clark, 2016; Ricœur & Thompson, 2016) It is thus argued that the popular and public history-making activities of ordinary people provide insights into the nature of historical thinking and historical consciousness. In accepting this, history-making activities as practiced by two companies from Clio’s legions that are the subject of this study—classroom teachers (who teach history haptically) and living history/historical re-enactors—are useful for exploring the insight offered by this ‘materialist turn’ to understand historical consciousness and historical thinking.

This is not to underplay the tensions and gulf to be bridged between the traditions of academic history and popular/public forms of history that engage with the past through material culture. Academic history bears the legacy of 2,500 years of Western thinking that has cast history as an intellectual pursuit that shuns other ways of knowing or investigating the past. It is the product of Greek rationalism, the Cartesian ontological schism between ‘mind’ and ‘matter’, and the Kantian epistemological divide of ‘knowing not the world, but only the world as rendered by the human mind’ (Tarnas, 1996, p. 417). This endowment has given the discipline

of history its modern rational character as a product and process of the intellect. Also evident in academic history's positioning of the mind over other ways of knowing are the legacies of Western ontological dualisms and false dichotomies between 'mind and body, reason and emotion, spirit and matter, order and chaos and so on' (Pearce, 2010, p. vx).

In elevating the head or mind over other ways of knowing, traditional disciplinary history has also privileged certain sensory modalities over others. This is also a product of a long legacy in the Western tradition, beginning with the Greeks. Aristotle enshrined vision at the top of the hierarchy of the senses. By the 19th century vision was the dominant, thinking sense (Denney, 2011; Jordanova, 2012; Pearce, 2010), set in opposition to other sensory modalities, especially touch, which sat at the bottom of the sensory hierarchy as animalistic and uncivilised (Classen, 2012; Denney, 2011; Jay, 2011; Paterson, 2007; Samuel 1994/2012). Consequently, approaches to knowing the past through non-ocular modes has largely ignored, and the haptic sense scorned.

Academic history's narrative form, and its preservation and communication through primarily textual genres, has also impacted its character as an intellectual and ocular discipline. This was reinforced by the 19th century formalisation of disciplinary/academic history in the Rankean source tradition of archival documentary history, which positioned the academic discipline of history in opposition to popular history, with its modes of connecting to the past in ways that are immediate, intimate and experiential (Landsberg, 2015; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998; Samuel, 1994/2012). Indeed, the focus of this study—the use of material culture to 'do' history, not just cognitively, but through somatic, experiential, embodied and affective modes—may initially appear to be beyond reconciliation with the academic discipline.

However, as Clark (2016b) argues, in the disjunction between history as a discipline (official, capital 'H' History) and its widespread personal, familiar, tangible and publicly consumed forms, are insights into the complex nature of historical consciousness. These are worth exploring. Further, it is possible to build bridges of understanding using the concepts of historical consciousness and historical thinking to bridge the gulf between academic history and its public formulations. To manage academic history's unfamiliarity with materiality as an approach to the past, interdisciplinary knowledge can provide new insights.

While history is seen as a fractured discipline, the 'History House' analogy (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010) offers a way to navigate its schisms and divisions. There are many separate

rooms in the History House, each representing different forms of history and historical engagement (Clark 2016b), but they are all under one roof. Some residents inhabit more than one room, others are considered unwelcomed guests and there are disputes about who owns the house (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010). The rooms in the History House are connected, but navigating between them requires finding right doors and passageways. Over time, renovations are needed—rooms added or extended, walls removed, new access points installed, the layout reconfigured. Research into materialist approaches in public history may add something to the renovation.

1.2.2 Historical consciousness and ‘things’

Despite the fractured nature of the discipline and practice of history, its various forms are open to analysis and discussion using the concepts of historical consciousness and historical thinking. While distinct, these terms are interrelated and together form the conceptual foundations for analysing the material culture approach to history that is the subject of this study.

The theoretical concept of historical consciousness’s polysemic nature has led to its ambiguous usage in history education (Gosselin & Livingstone, 2016). It originates from a German/European pedagogical tradition (Seixas, 2015), particularly the work of Jörn Rüsen (2006) who identified four types of historical consciousness. However, the current study follows the reworking of the European tradition of historical consciousness into the British/American pedagogical tradition of historical thinking, as done by Peter Seixas and others. Australian history pedagogy aligns closely with its North American and United Kingdom counterparts. Thus, the British/American definition of historical consciousness, that integrates historical thinking concepts, is the preferred ‘working definition’ because it aligns with the Australian, British and American participants who make up the bulk of the data in this study.

As a theoretical frame, historical consciousness is particularly useful because it encompasses the many and diverse forms that history, as a practice and a product, take. Essentially, all forms of history are expressions of historical consciousness. Clark (2016b, p. 7) captures this essence by describing historical consciousness as ‘humanity’s interest in its past—the ways we remember and why, as well as how we learn and engage with historical knowledge and practice’. It is equally the way the remembered past finds usage in everyday life. It is a story of stories that explain the present, provide identity and a sense of belonging, and orient actions (Gosselin & Livingstone, 2016).

Behind historical consciousness is the human urge for connection with the past—to make sense of it (and ourselves) by putting personal narrative into the bigger story of history (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Clark, 2012, 2016b; Holt, 1990; Polkinghorne, 2005). Clark’s observations on ‘a sense of connection’ as a driver of historical consciousness in Australia (accompanied by the emergence of public histories to meet this need) aligns neatly with research by Rosenzweig and Thelen (1998) and the results of a large-scale Australian national survey conducted by the University of Technology Sydney. The ‘Australians and the Past Project’ used Rosenzweig and Thelen’s research template to investigate historical consciousness in Australia at the beginning of the 21st century.

The results of the North American and Australian surveys closely mirrored one another. Rosenzweig and Thelen’s (1998) study (1500 participants) and the ‘Australians and the Past Project’ (500 participants) revealed that the kinds of history most North Americans and Australians chose to engage with were public history genres that allowed a participatory, immediate, intimate, ‘real’ and *personal* ‘sense of connectedness’ with the past. Respondents felt most connected to the past through family and familial history. Coming a close second, and at the top of the scale of trustworthiness, was first-hand engagement and the experience of material culture at museums and historic sites (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998), thus demonstrating the importance of material culture in historical consciousness. Objects (and places) are among ‘the most powerful carriers of meaning’ and a ‘central thread in many Australians’ stories about the past’ (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010, p. 63). This finding warrants the further investigation, which is undertaken by this dissertation.

A sense of connection is at the core of historical consciousness (Ashton & Hamilton, 2003, 2010; Clark, 2012, 2016b; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998). Notably, the ‘Australians and the Past’ data identified objects as the most important medium for creating narratives that connect ordinary people to history (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010). Objects (and places) are ‘mnemonic whiteboards that flag meaning, connections and associations’ with history (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010, p. 21). Thus, ‘things’ feature prominently in the ubiquity of historical consciousness and the way ‘people pursue the past actively and make it part of everyday life’ (Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998, p. 18). This thesis explores this observation with a focus on two public history fields: classroom history and historical re-enactment/living history.

In adopting Seixas’s (2006, p. 9) definition of historical consciousness as ‘the study of broad popular understandings of the past’, this study intends to keep its meaning(s) catholic enough

to capture its variations and nuances of usage. This definition is consistent with the European tradition of historical consciousness as ‘the ‘individual and collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors that shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and future’ (Seixas, 2006, p. 10).

Yet, as Seixas (2006, pp. 9–10) notes, while his definition of historical consciousness is inclusive, there are nonetheless ‘problematic relationships between the distinctly modern, disciplinary practices of historiography and the memory practices of populations’. Thus, historical consciousness is about appreciating that the past, and future, cannot be accessed without understanding our personal and collective orientation in the present (Seixas, 2017). It is our orientation in time or ‘presentness’ that permits action in the present, together with recognising that just as the past is a foreign country, so too is the future. Thus, concepts of the past and future are a function of our orientation in the present. This expansive and inclusive definition of historical consciousness allows better understanding of the innate everydayness of the ‘role history plays in our lives and the various ways *we* play with history’, regardless of external measures of competencies, standards of achievement or levels of expertise (Clark, 2016b, p. 10).

But as Seixas reminds us, however innate history is to humans for making sense of the past, it is also learned in the disciplinary practices of historical thinking skills (Clark, 2016b; Seixas, 2017). Equally, the rationale for employing ‘historical thinking concepts’ derived from academic historiography, is useful for analysing the cognitive processes that support the development of historical consciousness in education (Seixas, 2006).

Historical thinking supports and is concurrent with historical consciousness. Historical thinking is about the procedural/structural/disciplinary concepts and ‘specific cognitive processes’ (Duquette cited in Seixas, 2017, p. 63) concerned with how we ‘do’ history. ‘Disciplinary’ history, as opposed to ‘memory history’ (Bull & Anstey, 2013; Levesque, 2008; Taylor & Young, 2003; Wineburg, 2001), focuses on procedural knowledge (Levesque, 2008). It is process-oriented, where the doer of history takes an active role in constructing historical knowledge through the acquisition and application of the concepts and skills of historical thinking.

Over the last 20 years, substantial academic research has gone into identifying the key historical thinking concepts so they may be explicitly taught. Thanks to the work of Seixas, Wineburg,

Levesque, Taylor and Young and others (Bull & Anstey, 2013), there is now general consensus on the nature of the essential concepts and skills required to do or study history. This is reflected in the historical thinking skills strand of the *Australian Curriculum: History* (Bull & Anstey, 2013). The current research utilises Seixas’s ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts as tools for describing and analysing the ways history teachers in this study employ material culture to teach the procedural skills of history in their classrooms. Seixas’s ‘big six’ has currency both in Australia and overseas, and facilitates the dissemination of the pedagogic outcomes of this study for audiences in Australia and beyond.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the consensus on the key concepts of historical thinking and maps them across the historical thinking skills strand of the *Australian Curriculum: History* (Bull & Anstey, 2013). Further, it shows that the Australian Curriculum’s seven historical thinking skills align more with Seixas’s ‘big six’ than Levesque’s five.

Significantly, historical consciousness and historical thinking intersect. Seixas (2017, pp. 64–67) cites Duquette’s doctoral research to suggest that teaching historical thinking develops historical consciousness; indeed, the mediating influence of historical consciousness is embedded in the historical concepts of significance, evidence, continuity and change, and ethical dimension.

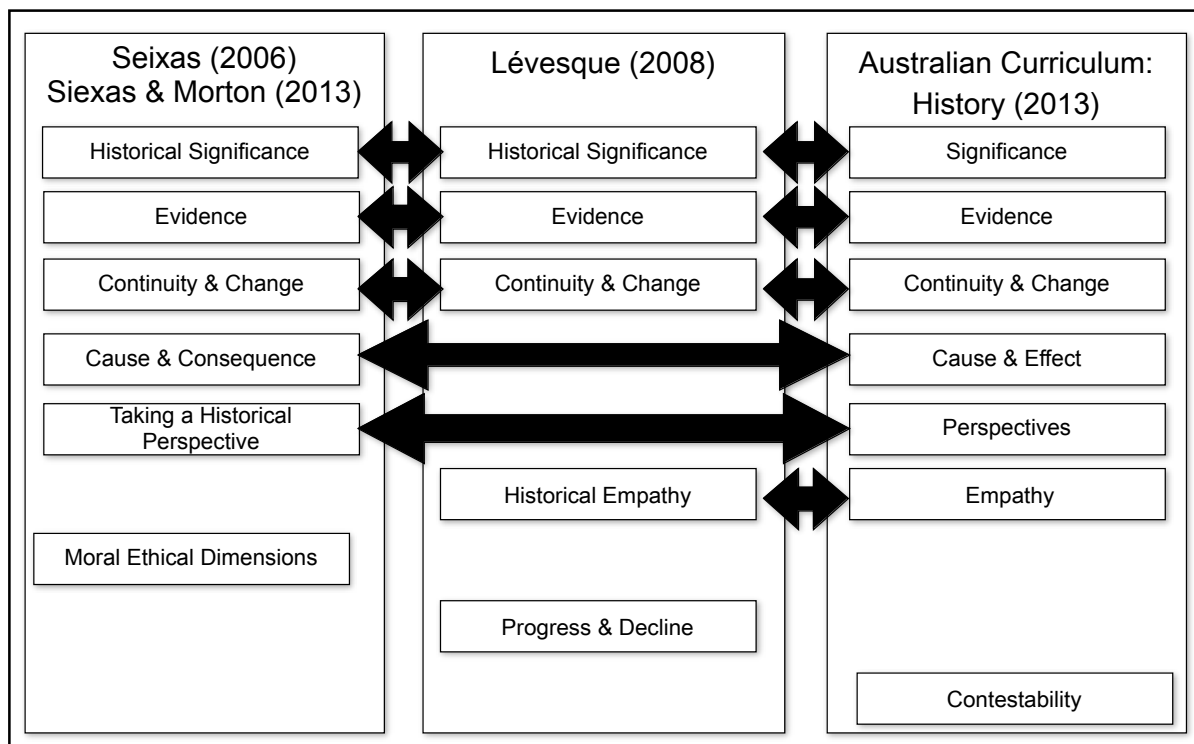


Figure 1.1: Historical thinking concepts (Adapted from Bull & Anstey 2013, p.3)

Taylor and Young (2003, p. 4), who define historical consciousness as a ‘sense of the past’ mediated by social and political processes in a society to form ‘collective memory’, have usefully applied the term of ‘historical literacy’ to encompass the interconnected strands of historical consciousness and historical thinking (see Figure 1.2). They argue that historical consciousness is core business for the whole history industry, and note teachers’ special role in building historical understanding for students through ‘a systematic process, with particular sets of skills, attitudes and conceptual understandings, that mediates and develops historical consciousness’ (Taylor & Young, 2003, p. 5).

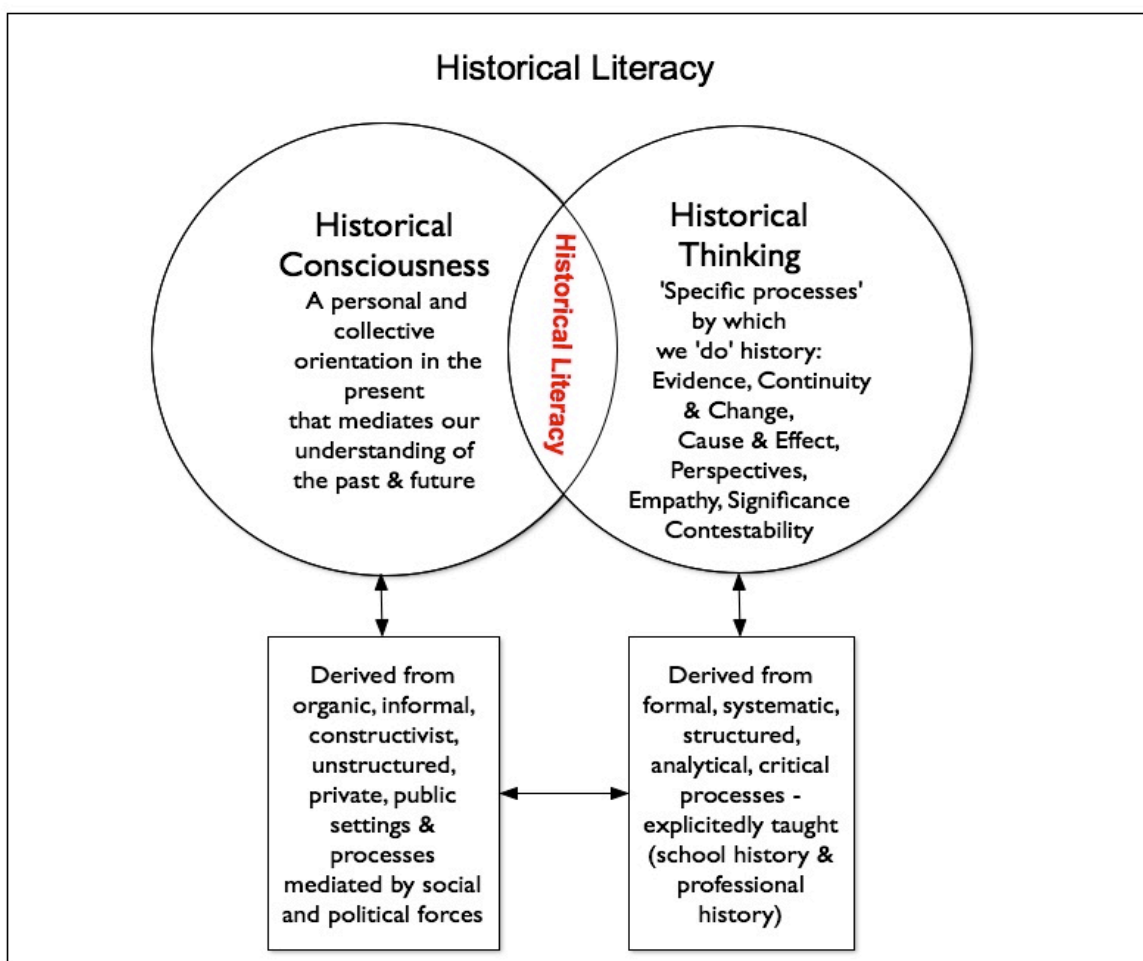


Figure 1.2: A diagram representing Taylor and Young’s (2003) conception of historical literacy as the intersection of historical consciousness and historical thinking

1.2.3 Taming the chimera: The need for an interdisciplinary approach

While the History House has many separate rooms, accommodating a wide range of approaches to history under one roof, there is an additional layer of complication (and possibilities). When it comes to studying the past, history is not the only disciplinary house in the neighbourhood.

The past is not the exclusive domain of historians. Knowledge of the past comes from three sources—memory, history and relics—each claimed by a specialist discipline: psychology, history and archaeology respectively (Lowenthal, 1985, 2015). Thus, Lowenthal argues that the past is chimerical; that is a the single body of knowledge with three different disciplinary heads. He argues that knowing the past therefore requires an interdisciplinary approach: ‘routes to the past [are] best transversed in combination. Each route requires the others’ (Lowenthal, 1985, p. 249). Further, ‘knowing the past embraces wider perspectives than these disciplines normally treat, transcending academic expertise’ (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 292).

The discipline of history has been reluctant to embrace interdisciplinarity; consequently, the emergence of popular and public forms of history-making utilise different disciplinary procedures. In the case of investigating the past through material culture, history’s sister disciplines of archaeology, museology, anthropology and material and cultural studies (Lightfoot, 1995; Papadopoulos, 1999; Trentmann, 2009) have developed their own disciplinary heuristics. Acknowledging the expertise in materiality that exists outside the history academy, the current research seeks to bring into the History House an understanding of the ways material culture of history can be used to develop historical consciousness and historical thinking.

Not only is the interdisciplinary nature of this study made necessary by the multiple pathways needed to access the past, but there is much to commend such an approach as a source of new insights and innovations to broaden and enrich the signature pedagogy of history. The notion that new knowledge can be generated by interdisciplinary approaches is not new (Cooper, 2013; Jordanova, 2012; Robinson, 2006; Yates et al., 2017). Interdisciplinarity is a process of hybridisation whereby connections between different fields of knowledge are explicitly identified and become the ‘common ground’ (Knappett, 2005, p. 2). This common territory is fertile ground from which new pedagogic practices for teaching historical consciousness and historical thinking can be harvested.

Therefore this research employs broad, multidisciplinary conceptual frameworks from its home field of study (history and education) and other disciplines with a strong material culture focus (anthropology, material culture studies, museum studies and archaeology). This materialist focus requires other disciplinary knowledge. The need to capture and make sense of the *experiential* encounter with the materiality of the past calls for interpretative methodologies derived from phenomenology, while the understanding of history as a social and cultural product directs this study to methodological approaches used in cultural anthropology.

In eclectically borrowing from multiple disciplines, this researcher is cast as a methodological, theoretical and interpretive ‘researcher-as-bricoleur’ (to use Denzin and Lincoln’s quilt-maker analogy). The qualitative research product is a ‘construction’ that emerges, changes and transforms as ‘different tools, methods, and techniques’ are brought to bear in modes that are ‘strategic, pragmatic and self reflexive’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4).

Qualitative research methodologies that use multiple interpretive practices are not without tensions and difficulties. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argue that multiple interpretative theoretical paradigms may resist synthesis or alignment, especially if they are located in competing philosophical systems. Thus this study’s methodological approach has its challenges (see Chapter 3). However, any disadvantages are compensated by the promise of new perspectives and understandings for teaching history haptically that come from multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and counter-disciplinary approaches (Nelson in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). As Robinson (2006, pp. 13, 24) suggests, new knowledge and creative solutions to problems ‘more often than not comes about through the interaction of different disciplinary ways of seeing things’. Thus, a bricoleur-like methodology is employed to loosen the bonds of the traditionally narrow disciplinary pedagogy of history and all its legacies, to generate fresh, creative perspectives from the collision of different disciplinary approaches.

The lines of distinction between history and its sister disciplines, as well as within history itself, blend and blur with different forms, audiences, authorships and purposes. Intersections between public and disciplinary history and their sister disciplines—the liminal zones—are rich in possibilities for fresh insights. Envisaging the History House in the neighbourhood of the past alongside other disciplinary houses, there comes a time when neighbours should not be strangers—neighbours need to build relationships, share resources and talk about what they have in common for the mutual benefit of their shared community of practice.

1.2.4 The problem of history teaching

Forty years ago, Plumb (1969) declared the past to be ‘dead’. The call was premature, but it did spark a ‘revolution in research into history teaching and learning’ (Taylor & Young, 2003, p. 17). The nature of history, historical thinking and how it can be effectively taught has subsequently been the subject of review, reflection and reform (Seixas, 2015, 2017).

Driving the reform was research in Australia and overseas that identified the widespread and enduring notions of classroom history pedagogy as ‘boring’, ‘dull’, ‘repetitive’, ‘uninteresting’ and ‘textbook dominated’ (Clark, 2006b). The JK Rowling/‘Harry Potter’ portrayal of history as ‘dead, dull and boring’ resonates as a valid representation of student experience and teacher practice (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Clark, 2008b; Curthoys, 2011; Halse et al., 1997; Roberts, 2013) and helps explain the problem of ongoing student disengagement in history classrooms.

Clark’s (2008b) research into Australian student attitudes to history provides insight into the primary causes of student disengagement. At the top of the list are teaching approaches that rely ‘too heavily on the textbooks at the expense of more interactive forms of learning’ (Clark, 2008b, p. 114). Her research also indicated that students wanted to ‘do history’ themselves in real and practical ways, revealing that the same driver behind popular history—a sense of connection—is one of the keys to student engagement (Clark, 2008b, p. 142). Students want alternative learning approaches and activities beyond the standard offer of teacher talk and textbooks in classroom history.

The legacy of Western thought that has led history pedagogy to be text-dominated, ocular-centric and intellectually exclusive has been reviewed. Lowenthal (1985, p. 256), who asserts the need for the routes to the past to be accessed in combination, notes that ‘history itself has tipped the balance towards historical knowing; written history has, by and large, gained at the expense of memory and artefacts’. Trentmann (2009, p. 307) goes so far as to argue that ‘the practice of history has been exceptionally text-based’ and this bias towards the ‘documentary’ approach to ‘doing history’ has been at the expense of other approaches for investigating the past.

Traditional ‘memory history’ and text-heavy approaches to teaching history have also undergone pedagogic challenge by new theories of holistic intelligence. New understandings of learning and notions of intelligence as dynamic, multifaceted and multimodal (Robinson

2001) contend that the senses are not just a tool of perception, but a means of thinking and communication. This fresh appreciation has demanded review of how history should be taught.

History educators have responded to this call for ‘cognitive pluralism’ in pedagogy (Levstik & Barton, 2015, p. 166) to address the perceived malaise/deficit of traditional approaches to classroom history. They advocate adoption of broad and diverse approaches to teaching history, as ‘the more avenues to the past available, the more likely students are able to make connections to what they already know’ (Levstik & Barton, 2005, p. 53). This is reflected in Australian student attitudes to history research (Clark, 2008b; Halse, 1997) and *The Australian Curriculum: History, Version 6.0*, which states that ‘students’ interest in and enjoyment of history is enhanced through a range of different approaches such as the use of artefacts, museums, historical sites, hands-on activities and archives’.

Learning theory also supports holistic, multimodal learning (Bull & Anstey, 2013; Bruner, 1966, 2006; Mazarno, 1998). A new wave of research reinforces the importance of the ‘poly-vocality’ of the senses (Denney, 2011, p. 608) and encourages investigation into the value of haptic approaches to learning. Minogue and Jones’s (2006) review of haptics in education confirms that traditional classroom pedagogy, with its emphasis on providing information and ideas using verbal and visual stimuli, moderates other modalities in learning, especially the haptic mode. However, they note that in everyday perception, visuals and haptics operate together; that is, the separate perceptual modalities interact, and readily exchange and integrate information (Minogue & Jones, 2006). Likien’s (2009) recent doctoral work on history classrooms appears to support the assertion that using combined sensory modes positively impacts learning. Likien (2009) observed that combinations of haptic and visual stimuli over visual alone improve long-term recall, and the cognitive research of Mayer asserts that students acquire and retain more knowledge when information is presented in multiple processing channels (Levesque, 2008).

The possibility that haptic approaches to history using material culture can contribute positively to (and address some of the problems of) history pedagogy is worth investigating. Through material culture, the haptic/materialist perspective offers exciting learning possibilities. Touch and embodied learning that uses all sensory modalities is a rich field for pedagogical investigation. As various scholars assert, ‘touch lies at the heart of our experience of ourselves and the world’ (Classen, 2012, p. xi); ‘the mind is in the skin’ (Harvey, 2011, p. 388); and it is the hand ‘as organ of touch that bridges mind and body’, and ‘to touch is simultaneously to be

touched’ (Jay, 2011, p. 314). Indeed, the deep interface between the sensation of touch and emotion is readily encoded in not just linguistic and non-linguistic representational modes, but profoundly in the affective representational mode, where it is chemically encoded in the limbic system—a powerful, permeating repository of human memory (Marzano, 1998). Thus, in touch we find all three dimensions of the ‘head, hands and heart’ domains of this study.

1.2.5 Insights from my own praxis

Pedagogical epiphanies of 30 years of classroom practice as a history teacher has been instrumental in me undertaking this research.⁵ My own experience suggested that traditional history pedagogy was an issue, especially for students with low written literacy or language backgrounds other than English, and I found text-heavy approaches to teaching history a barrier to engagement and learning.

This was powerfully brought home to me early in my teaching career in an intersection between ‘living history’ and ‘school history’ in the form of a travelling hands-on history show by a re-enactor called Peter Lee, who demonstrated how the haptic and embodied experience of the materiality of history could transform learning. Peter changed my approach to pedagogy and is the unwitting genius of this research, which seeks pedagogical insights into the materialist praxis of historical re-enactors and haptic history teachers.

My own decision to incorporate a hands-on haptic approach to teaching history was thus driven by the ‘practicality ethic’ (Doyle & Ponder, 1977; Mootz, 2014) and ‘enacted curriculum’ (Taylor & Clark, 2006; Taylor & Young, 2003). In the turmoil of surviving (and thriving) teaching history in low literacy, low socioeconomic status (SES), comprehensive, co-educational secondary schools in the suburban sprawl of South Western Sydney, ‘doing what works’ drove pedagogic praxis. In my classrooms, ‘doing’ history in what Clark (2006) refers to as real and practical ways involved the materiality of the past; that is, making, handling and experimenting with objects and artefacts. I had believed doing history haptically particularly benefited students with low literacy, but soon discovered it was a form of pedagogy that worked for much broader range of students because it connected them in ways that texts did not; it was accessible, engaging and, most importantly, fun.

⁵ My autoethnographical background is detailed in Appendix A.

1.3 Research Questions

Contextualising the research problem allows research questions to emerge. It has been argued that the problem of history pedagogy is a legacy of Western thought and academic history (its ‘tyranny of text’, together with its various fragmentations and hierarchies of practice). Emerging learning theory challenges the traditional text-heavy/linguistic modes that have dominated history as academic professional practice and pedagogy. The need of new ways of knowing the past, evident in public history and the interdisciplinary nature of the study of the past, provide opportunities to address the research problem by examining approaches to learning about the past through material culture and theories of materiality. These approaches will be examined through the conceptual history pedagogical lens of historical thinking and historical consciousness, which together form historical literacy.

In Figure 1.3 the research problem is visualised. Three arrows, each representing a challenge to traditional modes of history pedagogy, represent legacies and new possibilities for teaching history through interdisciplinary and multimodal ways using material culture.

This research is thus a ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ inquiry into the use of material culture (objects/artefacts/relics) to construct historical knowledge, do historical thinking and experience historical consciousness. Insights gained are sought for their contribution to enrich the praxis of history pedagogy.

The research questions addressed include:

1. What are the ways material culture gets used in history classroom pedagogy and in living history/historical re-enactment for the purpose of constructing historical knowledge?
2. Why do the teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians in this study use material culture in their praxis?
3. How do the participants in this study use material culture for ‘doing history’ (for thinking historically and for historical consciousness)?
4. What fresh insights for history and its pedagogy emerge from the materialist experience of the past?

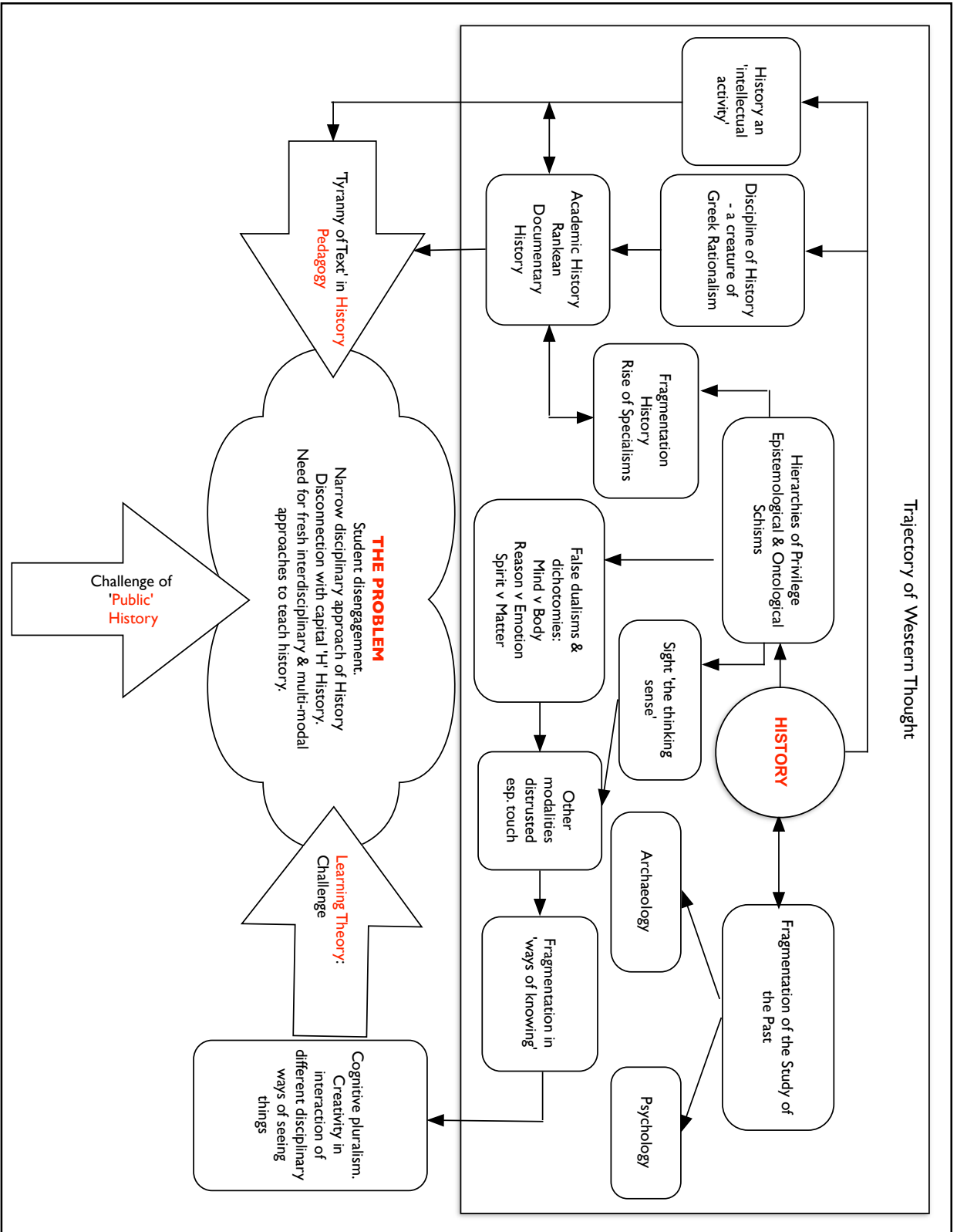


Figure 1.3: The research problem visualised

1.4 Teachers and Living Historians/Historical Re-enactors: An Odd Couple?

Initially, the choice of subjects for this research (teachers using haptic approaches to teach history with and through material culture, and living historians/historical re-enactors) appear to have little in common, other than both seeking to make historical knowledge through the use of material culture. Yet, there are other significant points of commonality that provide coherence and logic for their mutual inclusion in this study.

First, both the history teaching profession and the recreational field of living history and historical re-enactment operate in the field of public history outside the history academy. The teacher of school history is not a member of the academic historian profession. While they have experienced and graduated from the history academy, the version of history they deal with in the classroom is different. Classroom history bears surface similarities to the skills and processes of professional history, but the audience, materials and purpose marks it as public ‘proto-history’ (Nichol, 2012, p. 103). The teacher systematically breaks down, modifies and adapts the skills and knowledge of disciplinary/academic history into a form suitable for developing historical thinking and consciousness in ‘ordinary’ young minds. The school history teacher, one of ‘Clio’s underlabourers’, is driven by the practicality ethic (Mootz, 2014) and the phenomenon of the enacted curriculum (Taylor & Young, 2003). History teachers continuously encounter, engage with, manage, produce and consume public history in the form of the ‘past all around us’ (Clark, 2016b, p. 67). Their challenge (and joy) is to encounter the historical consciousness of their charges in the vulgar and vernacular understandings of history—in its various cultural (public) formulations—that students bring with them to the classroom (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010). Teachers impart the official and knowledge-based version of public history (Clark, 2016b) while managing popular history.

Lower in the hierarchy of the History House, living history and historical re-enactors share space with history teachers as practitioners of popular and public history. Living historians/historical re-enactors represent an ‘everyman’s’ understanding of history, one mediated by their use of objects and artefacts as the centre of their connection to the past and their historical consciousness. In their materialist-centred form of popular history, there are insights for historians and educators about the role objects and artefacts play in facilitating historical thinking and historical consciousness.

A second point of similarity is that both history teachers and living historians/re-enactors have educative goals and functions. The avowed *raison d'être* of living history/historical re-enactment is to educate the public. This shared goal/practice provides an opportunity to compare the haptic practices of teachers in formal history classroom with those engaged in the world of living history, and from it sketch a pedagogic model for haptic history.

Third, because both history teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians operate in the field of public history, they are ideal catchments for capturing the kind of historical consciousness that happens with and through objects. If historical consciousness is concerned with 'broad popular understandings of the past'—the ways ordinary people make sense of the past beyond the history profession (Seixas, 2004, p. 8)—then the research participants fit neatly into the study's focus on historical consciousness. After all, the study's participants are ordinary people doing history haptically, through (predominantly) ordinary, mundane and everyday materials and activities to explore the ordinary, everyday lives of ordinary people from the past. Thus, while most history *teaching* takes place in the classroom, most of the *learning* of history is situated all around us in sociocultural settings and contexts *beyond the classroom* (Clark, 2006b; Kitson, Husbands & Steward, 2011) including living history and historical re-enactment settings.

Lastly, dialogue between history education and the materialist-centred living history/historical re-enactment practices finds ready translation in the fact that many history teachers are also historical re-enactors. Of the 12 teachers who took part in this study, four were also historical re-enactors (and if counting my immersive ethnographic field work as a participant-observer in the world of historical re-enactment in that tally, I make a fifth). Teachers bring their pedagogically informed heuristics into their recreational praxis of historical re-enactment. Equally they bring their practice of living history into their classroom practices.

1.5 Mapping the Research: A Gap to Be Filled

While Chapter 2 reviews the academic literature, the gap in the research that this study seeks to help fill is previewed here.

Much of the research into the educational value of material-centred approaches to learning has occurred in museum education settings and most have been conducted overseas (see 2.8 below). Valuable Australian research has been undertaken by Zarmati (2012) on history education in museums, and Mootz (2014) on a taxonomy of history pedagogy, including his own perspective

on the use of material culture in his classroom and museum education praxis. A recent addition to the literature is Katherine Johnson's (2018) doctoral work on exploring historical re-enactment as both source and method from within a performance studies framework.

The current study seeks to add to this research by building on the work of Mootz (2014) to present a broader picture of the classroom praxis of haptic history, together with an investigation into the role material culture plays in the praxis of living history/historical re-enactment. Analysis of the data is conducted from both an interdisciplinary perspective (drawing on insights from museum studies, archaeology, cultural anthropology, performance studies and material culture studies) and a history disciplinary lens (the concepts of historical thinking and historical consciousness). In viewing disciplinary boundaries as dynamic and elastic, this study also connects with the research of Yates, Woelert, Millar and Connor (2017) into the disciplinary identity and knowledge-making of Australian history school teachers and university-based historians. Disciplinary knowledge is not inert or fixed and, as a social construct, responds to new challenges and change, over time. The current research positions itself as an example of 'the creative cross-fertilisation between fields that is creating new knowledge' (Yates et. al. 2017 p.5) and, as such, contributes to the field of history pedagogic practice.

In investigating the current practice of haptic history in classrooms and living history contexts—formal and informal learning—this study seeks to develop an explanatory model for the use of objects/artefacts/relics for the development of historical consciousness and historical thinking that incorporates multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives.

1.6 Significance

The exploration of haptic history in non-museum contexts promises to make a significant contribution by addressing a gap in history pedagogy—the haptic dimension of material culture as source and method. Understanding the role of haptic experiences with objects/artefacts/relics promises to enrich the pedagogy of history with new understandings and appropriations from the intersection of history, archaeology, museum studies, anthropology, performance and material culture studies.

As Trentman (2009, p. 207) argues, the materialist dimension has been neglected by the narrow disciplinary practices of history for too long:

Letting things [relics/objects/artefacts] in would expand the historical archive, the form of research training, and the kind of materials that we tend to think of as sources. The material world has too much history in it to leave it to the social sciences.

This thesis seeks to build bridges for historical understanding in education between history and its related material culture focused disciplines. Constructing an explanatory model around the praxis of haptic history and significance of materiality as an educational space, provides an opportunity to enrich and expand history pedagogy through material culture approaches to historical thinking and historical consciousness.

1.7 Thesis Structure

This chapter has identified the research problem of traditional history pedagogy, which has privileged the intellect and ocular sense over other ways of knowing the past, and is challenged by popular and public history genres that have embraced broader approaches to the past, including material culture. It has been argued that the multiple routes to the past need be traversed in combination, and this requires an interdisciplinary approach. The central concepts of historical consciousness and historical thinking are tools for analysing how material culture is used to explore history holistically, through the multiple modes of ‘head, hands and heart’ (cognitively, haptically/somatically and affectively).

In Chapter 2, a review of literature and theory is conducted to justify a materialist approach to history. Beginning with Collingwood’s conception of history, the study moves beyond the ‘head history’ of Collingwood and makes a case for investigating history through a multimodal material culture perspective of the past.

Chapter 3 details the methodology adopted, which captures and analyses the ‘historical sensation’ through the multimodal experience of history through material culture. A multidisciplinary approach that uses an ethnographically influenced case study methodology, is adopted to capture of data, which is then analysed using material culture theories and reanalysed through the historical theoretical frames of Collingwood and conceptual frames of historical thinking and historical consciousness.

Chapters 4 and 5 overview the praxis and materialist method of historical re-enactment/living history. Chapter 4 investigates the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ of historical re-enactment/living history as public history, and the role objects play in its practice. Chapter 5 teases out and analyses ‘how’ material culture is employed to connect with the past in the form of ‘becoming the

historical other'. The materialist grounded 'historic sensation' that is achieved is the product of cognitive, somatic and affective ('head, hands and heart') processes.

Chapter 6 uses a case study to examine in-depth the aspects of material culture in living history/historical re-enactment used to produce historical thinking and historical consciousness. The major case study is *Waterloo 2015*—an ethnographic fieldwork conducted at the largest-ever European historical re-enactment in Belgium on the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo. The agency of objects is explored, along with the use of sensory/haptic/embodied modes of knowing to engender a powerful affective experience. This is central in the empathetic understanding of 'otherness' as a form of historical consciousness and historical thinking. Nested within the major case study is a second case study—'The Disobedient Object'—which shifts the focus to observing how material culture exerts co-agency, shaping and directing human thought, emotions and behaviour.

The next three chapters investigate teachers who use material culture in their classroom history pedagogy. Chapter 7 overviews haptic history as teaching praxis, how the participants came to use material culture and why they use it. In Chapter 8 their material culture teaching praxis is analysed within the lens of cognitive processes (head history) using the framework of Seixas's 'big six' historical thinking concepts. Teachers' use of material culture is then examined using the materialist perspectives of hands history (embodied/somatic modes) and affective (heart) history. Chapter 9 shifts focus from the teacher to the objects themselves, and explores how powerful objects and artefacts are used affectively and somatically. Two classroom case studies are used to illustrate how combinations of head, hands and heart modes are brought together for high impact teaching of historical thinking and the development of historical consciousness.

The final chapter brings the findings of the two arms of the study together to distil insights from what a materialist-centred approach to experiencing and learning about the past might contribute to history pedagogy. A model of haptic history praxis is presented and potential areas for future research are identified.

1.8 Conclusion

The research problem this study seeks to investigate is the issue of student disengagement with traditional pedagogic approaches to teaching history, which are text-dominated and privilege the intellect and ocular over other ways of knowing past. This study researches an holistic, interdisciplinary and expansive approach to studying history using material culture, drawing on

the historical consciousness of ordinary people and how they connect to the ‘history all around us’ (Kitson et. al., 2011, p. 28) through the materiality of the past. Its purpose is to enrich and broaden classroom history pedagogy through approaches and practices of public history that use material culture.

This study makes an original contribution to the field of history pedagogy by investigating the material culture approaches used by classroom history teachers in their materialist haptic pedagogy, and in the public history praxis of living historians/historical re-enactment. This data is analysed using an interdisciplinary, materialist approach to the past alongside the concepts of historical consciousness and historical thinking.

In the next chapter, a review of literature and theory makes the case for incorporating a materialist approach to teaching history that lays the theoretical foundations for analysis of the case study research data that follows.

Chapter 2: Beyond ‘Head History’

2.1 Introduction

This research begins with a fundamental epistemological and ontological issue: how can that which no longer exists—‘the past’—be known. The know-ability of the absent past is a ‘small miracle’ (Harries 2017, p. 116) in which the interplay of materiality and the historical imagination plays a central role. In exploring the nature of how the absent past can be known in the present, this chapter sets the groundwork for the pedagogical issue at the heart of this research: how history is taught and historical knowledge constructed with and through objects via haptic experience.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the ideas of philosopher-historian R. G. Collingwood. His key concepts of historical imagination, history as ‘re-enacted thought’ and the nature of sources/evidence are examined before an exploration of the tensions and contradictions between Collingwood’s projection of history as an exclusively intellectual activity (‘head history’) and the very materialism of the historical sources that underpin it.

Next, the chapter moves beyond Collingwood’s head history to history’s more recent materialist and affective turns. While Collingwood’s key concepts are retained, theory drawn from the interdisciplinary fields of material culture (including archaeology, vital materialism, anthropology and museum studies) provides a materialist perspective on historical thinking. The cross-disciplinary fusion of Collingwood’s idea of history and materialist approaches to history provides a platform for examining how history is experienced, thought about and accessed, cerebrally (head history); haptically, embodiedly and performatively (hands history); and somatically and affectively (heart history).

The approach taken samples from a range of theorists across disciplinary fields to compile the concepts and theory with which to explore the what, how and why of an emerging materialist approach to history pedagogy, as represented in the concept map (see Figure 2.1). Figure 2.1 overviews the key theorists arranged by the framework of three interlocking domains of history praxis and pedagogy: head, hands and heart.

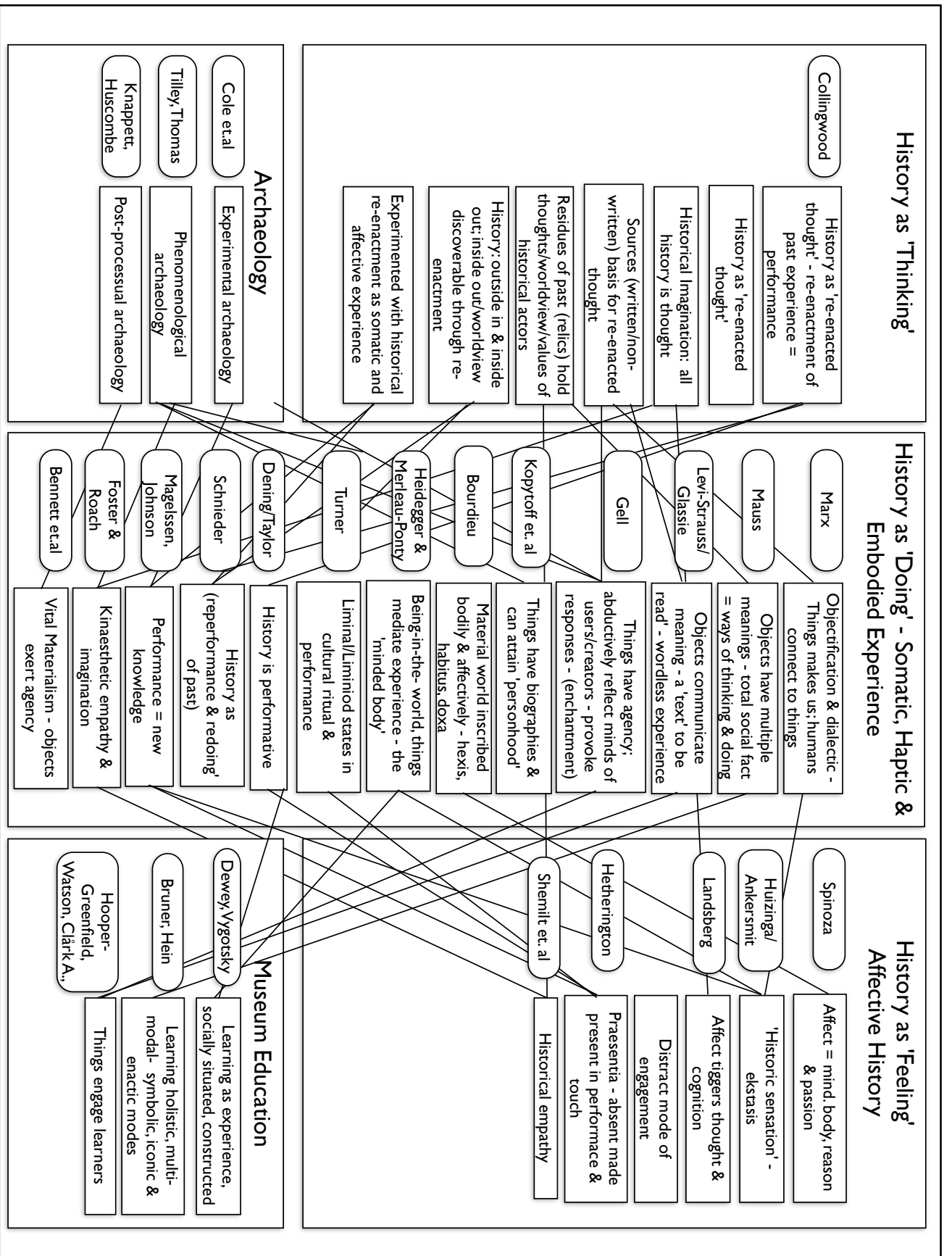


Figure 2.1: Key theorists employed in this dissertation: a visualisation of 'researcher-as-bricoluer'

From this broad review of materialist theory, the chapter narrows its focus to examine the materialist approaches to learning used in the museum education sector. Thus, broader theoretical insights on materialist theory are harnessed to provide insight into the pedagogical issues at the centre of this study.

The interdisciplinary scope of the chapter uncovers (recurring) tensions between traditional disciplinary/academic/professional history and new and emerging materialist-centred popular/democratic modes of doing history generated by ordinary people. ‘Clio’s underlabourers’ (Samuel, 1994/2012)—the foot soldiers of public and popular history (classroom teachers included)—challenge and push the boundaries of professional history as consumers, producers and disseminators of historical knowledge. This affray promises to bring new knowledge to broaden and enrich the history pedagogy.

2.2 Collingwood and Head History

Collingwood is a teacher, philosopher, historian and archaeologist who has deeply influenced historiography and history education (Hughes-Warrington, 2003). He is the primary focus of this chapter section because his philosophy of history encapsulates history as a creative, imaginative cerebral process but his methodology is grounded in the materiality of historical sources and their context. Collingwood’s influence is felt in both arms of this study: the field of historical re-enactment/living history and in history education. Further, while his philosophy emphasised history as a cerebral process, his ideas are readily transferred to a materialist approach to history.

Collingwood’s seminal work, *The Idea of History* (1946), is a touchstone for the historical re-enactment/living history arm of this study. His notion that all history is re-enactment and perspectival (Cook, 2004), underpins the plausibility of living history practice and historical re-enactment as acts of historical thinking, historical consciousness and historical knowledge-making through and with material culture. As Schneider (2014, p. 36) notes, Collingwood ‘conceptualised thinking historical thoughts through situated re-enactment’; his philosophy of history thus makes him the (unwitting) founding father of historical re-enactment movement and its methodology (Pickering, 2010).

Similarly, Collingwood’s analogy of the historian as a crime detective (Collingwood, 1946; Pickering, 2010) has been a core method in classroom history pedagogy. The historian as a ‘time detective’ is central to framing classroom history as a student-centred, active, evidence-

based inquiry process, through which students develop historical skills of interrogation, empathy and context-sensitive evaluation of sources to construct and contest interpretations of the past. This approach was introduced into history pedagogic praxis by the ‘British Schools Council History Project 13–16’ and the work of Booth and Hexter in the 1970s and 1980s, and remains a mainstay of history teacher pedagogic practice in Australia and the UK.

Further, Collingwood’s concept of historical imagination foreshadowed development of the all-important notion of historical empathy as an element of historical thinking and historical consciousness. This was first introduced into classroom history pedagogy in the 1970s by Shemlit’s influential work in the Schools Council History Project (Colby, 2007; Hughes-Warrington, 2003; Inglis, 2009). Thus, Collingwood’s philosophy of history is deeply embedded (although as Hughes-Warrington [2003] suggests, not necessarily well understood) in history pedagogy and notions of historical thinking and historical consciousness.

2.2.1 Collingwood and history as re-enacted thought: The role of historical imagination

As with the founding premise identified in Section 2.1, Collingwood’s thinking begins with the basic philosophical and epistemological problem of questioning how that which no longer exists (the past) is known (Collingwood, 1946). History and ‘the past’ are not the same. History is less than the past, the entirety and complexity of which can never be fully recounted or recovered (Lowenthal, 1985). The present, once it becomes the past, can only be indirectly known (Collingwood, 1946). Only fragments of the past survive into the present via memory (human witness), relics (the material remains) and history (the constructed, interpretative accounts of the past mediated by historians) (Lowenthal, 1985, 2015). The past, as retrieved by memory and constructed by history, is a refraction and process of the human mind. Even relics (objects and artefacts), while physical residues of the past, are not entirely identical to what they were in the past; their journey into the present has put them through processes, natural or cultural, that change them (Lowenthal, 2015).

Collingwood’s solution to the epistemological dilemma of the (un)know-ability of the past was to bring the past into the present so it might be examined. Making the past ‘present’ could only be achieved through an act of cognition: ‘the historian must re-enact the past in his own mind’ (Collingwood, 1946, p. 282), using interrogation of historical sources. Collingwood (1946, p. 282) argued that in sources, one could ‘discover’, using historical thinking—the thoughts and motivations of historical actors in the documents and relics they produced and left behind—to reveal not only what happened in the past, but why historical actors behaved as they did.

The famous passage Collingwood (1946) uses to illustrate his concept of history as ‘re-enacted thought’ is the Theodosian Code. His choice of a written source as an exemplum reflects his times (and the primacy given to written sources over the non-written in historiography), but it was also convenient for illustrating his point of locating and rethinking the thought/worldview/motivations of historical actors inherent in documents and relics. In documents/written sources, the act of writing is a transparent process of the mind, and the thoughts behind its construction and creation is more apparent than in a piece of pottery. However, Collingwood used the term ‘relic’ interchangeably to refer to any material residue of the past (be it a written source or otherwise).

Particularly pertinent to the current study’s focus on material culture as a tool for historical thinking is noting that Collingwood suggests that non-written sources from the past equally contain the thoughts of people from the past. These thoughts were capable of ‘transcending its own immediacy’ to ‘survive(s) and revive(s) in other contexts’ (Collingwood, 1946, p. 303). Thus, they can be re-enacted in the mind of the historian in the same way as written historical sources. In other words, material culture preserves within them the thoughts of historical actors, which are accessible to the historian through historical thinking. Thus, objects and artefacts are simultaneously a material record of history from the observable ‘outside in’ *and*, through historical imagination, evidence of ‘the inside out’ (the thoughts and worldview of historical actors that caused them to behave as they did). Equally, as sources, relics provide the necessary contextualisation for framing historical thinking.

Regardless of the nature of the source, Collingwood’s central notion of history as re-enactment of past experience requires the use of historical imagination. Historical imagination is necessary because of the past’s absence (aside from fragmentary and indirect manifestations such as texts and relics, themselves residues and products of human thought). Thus, historical imagination is an intellectual process (Lemisko, 2004) and the type of history dubbed ‘head history’ in this thesis.

While Collingwood’s conception of historical imagination and its role in historical thinking clarifies the nature of head history, it also exposes other modes for making historical knowledge not embraced, such as affective history (heart history) and somatic/embodied/tactile/sensory history (hands history).

Collingwood distinguished between two components of events in history: first, what could be observed and apprehended via our senses, or events ‘outside’ historical events; and second, ‘inside’ historical events, or the thoughts that motivated historical actors to behave as they did before, during and after the historical event. The ‘outside’ of historical events are knowable through observation (and leave their marks as evidence in historical sources), while the ‘inside’ of the historical event is only knowable through the process Collingwood called ‘re-enactment’ (Lemisko, 2004), whereby in the absence of direct empirical knowledge of the past, the ‘historian must re-enact the past in his own mind’ (Collingwood, 1946, p. 282). Thus, history has a *performative* dimension even if that conception is *performed/re-enacted* at a purely intellectual level.

Collingwood argues that to do this mental re-enactment of the past the historian must use historical imagination. Historical imagination shares much with imagination *per se*. Imagination involves asking questions, conjecturing worlds different to our own experience, possibility thinking, risk-taking and connecting ideas in original ways. It is fundamentally a creative process (Cooper, 2013). Historical imagination is a form of imaginative process that is *grounded in evidence* from historical sources and contextualised by *historical consciousness* (an understanding that the time, place and culture of the past is different to the present in which the historian operates).

Collingwood’s historical imaginative process is threefold. First, historians must ‘think themselves into the situation of historical actors’ by uncovering the problem or issue at hand for the historical actor and the thinking behind the actions taken. This involves understanding context, locating the thought inherent in all historical sources—textual and non-textual residues of the past—and rethinking in the present the thoughts of the past. Second, historical imagination fills in the ‘gaps’ of the (incomplete) fabric of the past through the imaginative act of interpolation and inferential thinking (using evidence to move from what is known to what is consistent with the evidence and reasonable to assume) (Johnson 1998, Lemisko 2004). Third, historical imagination involves critical thinking: ‘interrogating’ the sources to determine their accuracy and reliability, as these are ‘the pegs’ upon which the ‘web of imaginative construction (of the past) is stretched’ (Collingwood, 1946, p. 242).

By definition, historical imagination is an *a priori* process grounded in evidence used by the historian to re-enact ‘past thought in the historian’s mind’ (Collingwood, 1946, p. 228). The use of historical imagination in the (re)construction/re-enactment of history is central to

historical thinking because it underpins causal explanation and allows the historian to move from *what* happened to *why* it happened (Cook, 2004; De Groot, 2009).

Understanding Collingwood's notion of historical imagination is important for the current study because it is essential for historical thinking and predicated on the presence of historical consciousness—the two yardsticks used in this study to evaluate the praxis of producing historical knowledge through material culture in haptic history). Collingwood's history from the 'inside' out, as re-enacted thought, involves both historical imagination and historical consciousness—it is about the historian taking on the historical perspectives of people in the past. In doing so, there needs to be an awareness that the perspectives of historical actors are different from the historian's (and others in the present). In such rethinking, these thoughts are not identical copies of the original thought, but a 'performance of an act of a similar kind' informed by the historian's 'present awareness of it as an element in...[their] own experience (Collingwood, 1946, pp. 284, 289) conducted with a different purpose, which is to locate and understand the 'act of thought' (Schneider, 2014, p. 37). Thus, to think historically—and use historical imagination—historians must have historical consciousness:

The historical process is itself a process of thought, and it exists only in so far as minds which are parts of it know themselves for parts of it ... Historical thinking is an activity ... which is a function of self-consciousness, a form of thought possible only to a mind which knows itself to be thinking that way (Collingwood 1946, pp. 226, 289; see also Landsberg, 2015).

Thus, historical consciousness is reflective thinking. It begins with the historian posing a problem or question with a conscious sense of purpose and awareness of the criteria against which its achievement is measured (Collingwood, 1946). It is then followed by the context-sensitive critical evaluation of sources that provide evidence of the thinking done in the past in relation to the issue under investigation. It requires critical interpretation of sources and 're-enacted thought' (Collingwood, 1946) to uncover the thoughts that elucidate historical actors' behaviour. Even in the process of re-enacting the thought of historical others, the historian never loses touch with their awareness of the present-bound dimension of their reflective thinking.

Collingwood's idea of history provides this study's grounding of history as intellectual activity. History is a process mediated by thought, refracted reflectively through the re-enactment of past thought in the minds of historians. It is founded in the evidence of the thinking of historical actors, empirically discovered in context-sensitive analysis of the written sources and physical artefacts of the past. Thus, while all history is 'history of thought' (or head history) for

Collingwood, his notion of re-enacted thought opens up the possibility of the past being brought into the present through other forms of re-enactment (the somatic and the affective). This central notion to this dissertation is explored in the next section.

2.2.2 Collingwood's exploration of history as re-enacted physical and affective experience

While Collingwood makes the case for history as a cerebral activity, what is pertinent to the current study is his tentative exploration of the possibility that an experience of the past could be re-enacted through physical and embodied modes. While he immediately rejected sensual and somatic modes of re-enacting history in favour of reflexive thinking and history as a thoroughly cerebral activity, a review of his ideas anticipates the possibilities (and problems) of the somatic and embodied modes for accessing the past through material culture that will be explored in the use of material culture of the past for historical thinking/consciousness.

In *The Idea of History*, Collingwood (1946, pp. 297, 298) considers the possibility of using historical thinking for the purposes of empathy, sympathy or taking on the personae of an historical actor, but rejects this:

The immediate, as such cannot be re-enacted... those elements of experience whose being is just their immediacy (sensations, feelings &c. and such) can never be re-enacted ... the immediacy of the first occasion can never be experienced.

Yet, in his early formulations of the notion of history as re-enactment, Collingwood was less adamant about history being exclusively cerebral. In 1928 he toyed with the idea of somatic experience and material objects playing a part in the recreation of past experience (Bowan, 2010). Collingwood explored moving the *performance* of history outside the cerebral domain using the embodied, affective and immersive power of music to re-enact 16th century music through (re)performance using period-accurate musical instruments. Thus, Collingwood's early thinking on history as re-enactment countenanced performative, embodied, lived experience as a means of bringing the past into the present (Bowan, 2010). However, Collingwood's shift to re-enacting past experience as an exclusively intellectual activity reflects his concerns about the capacity for authentically reproducing and experiencing the past in the present in an *identical* manner to the originally encountered in the past, as well as his concern to claim history as a science (with all its assumptive trappings of distanced objectivity).

Indeed, Collingwood's argument to confine history to cerebral re-enactment sits uneasily with his own specialty in archaeology. As Pickering (2010, p. 127) observes, Collingwood

‘contradicted himself every time he held an object or shovelled some dirt’. The historian necessarily engages with the material world, as the sources (even those that are textual) take material form and thus, the historian engages with the physical and material world. In Collingwood’s terms, the cognitive act of historical imagination using material sources is premised on *a priori* assumptions (including those concerning the nature of the physical world); once the past has been re-enacted in the historian’s head, the outcome and output must again take a material form to become history. History is published ‘into the world’ in a physical form so others may engage with it.

Since the evidence of the past and history itself take material form, historicised thought exists outside the mind in physical form; it is encapsulated in objects and things. While Collingwood’s notion of re-enacted thought referred primarily to the historian’s use of textual residues of the past (Cook, 2004), he did not exclude non-written sources as a means of ‘discovering the thought’ embedded in the relics of the past (Collingwood, 1946, p. 282). History cannot escape its materiality (Carr, 1961; Elton, 1970; Marwick, 2001). Memory becomes history when it is elaborated and extended by historical thinking and preserved in a material form (Lowenthal, 1985). It is the materiality of the past, both as the raw source material of the historian and its finished physical product as history, that permits it to outlive, be knowable and extend beyond the life span memory of the historian, the historical actor and witnesses.

However, the presumed difference between the nature of the ‘thingness’ and materiality of the textual compared with the non-textual/physical residues (sources) of the past, may be overstated. The word ‘text’ derives from the Latin meaning ‘to weave’; a reminder that history is a construction of the past by the historian (not the past itself), and the meaning of any written source (and history) depends on understanding its *context*. Contextual understanding of sources comes with an evaluation of how sources are embedded in their physical world of origin—their time, place and setting—in other words, the very nature of their materiality.

The current research does not dispute the insight gained from Collingwood’s philosophy of history as a cerebral process; rather, it contests and explores Collingwood’s notion of history as an *exclusively* intellectual process. Interdisciplinary studies of the past, particularly those focused on material culture, have laid the foundation and justification for broadening the nature of historical study as head history and *beyond* (hands and heart history). This study seeks to build on this approach by examining the multimodal nature of history, experienced haptically (with the somatic and affective dimensions that this entails) in the areas of school education,

where teachers use objects and artefacts as a tool of history pedagogy, and post-school popular and informal history settings, where the past is not just re-enacted mentally, but in an embodied manner, with and through material objects.

Despite Collingwood's retreat from somatic and affective modes of re-enacting the past, he left the door open to revisit re-enactment. This has happened with the emergence of popular, materialist, performative approaches to history advanced by the fields of archaeology, anthropology, and museum and cultural studies. While the discipline of history has faltered in embracing the materiality of the past, preferencing 'text' over 'things', other social sciences have not been so tentative. The next section steps through the door left ajar by Collingwood to explore a holistic (cerebral, somatic and affective) approach to constructing historical knowledge in re-enacting the past using objects/relics/artefacts with the aid of concepts appropriated from materialist theory.

2.3 The Materialist Turn

Traditionally, history has been about words. For millennia, 'Knowledge' has been preserved and communicated through text. The 1970s interest in analysing the significance of text as a form of structuring, shaping and exercising knowledge-based power discourses has been termed the 'linguistic turn'. Following closely behind were other academic investigations into how historical knowledge is constructed and used: the 'materialist turn' (Ireland & Lydon, 2016; Johnson, 2015b; Trentmann, 2009) and the 'affective turn' (Agnew, 2007; Clough & Halley, 2007; Harries, 2017; Landsberg, 2015; Robinson, 2010). History as a professional discipline, popular practice and pedagogy has been shaped by these developments. However, as a discipline that traditionally draws on written sources and expressed in text, the material turn considerably challenged history (Harvey, 2009). Thus, the impetus of a materialist approach to history has largely been driven by its sister disciplines.

To move history beyond Collingwood's exclusively cerebral, head history, is to take the material turn. In taking an object-focused approach to how history can be taught and re-enacted, this research positions history materially and physically, as 'being in the world' and exploring how things make people as much as people make things (Miller, 2010). The next section uses a material culture interdisciplinary lens to theorise the power of 'things' and examine not only what they *mean*, but what they *do*, and explore how this shapes the way history is experienced,

thought about and taught. This requires a necessary interdisciplinary digression into philosophy and anthropology, which underpin the theories of ‘things’.

2.3.1 Interdisciplinary insights on the nature of ‘things’

As an academic field of study, material culture emerged in the last 40 or so years (Ireland & Lydon, 2016; Miller, 2010). Unlike other areas of academia, it is not a defined discipline. For Miller (2009), this is one of its strengths, as it can be interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and/or a-disciplinary, borrowing from a range of existing disciplinary ideas and perspectives that, in turn, can be utilised to provide insights into the nature and consequences of materiality. The arrival of *The Journal of Material Culture* in the mid-1990s provided a forum for the (then) new field of material culture. The journal asserted its interdisciplinary nature as both a feature and benefit for investigating the role of things in negotiating sociality and the relationship between people and things across time and space (Geismar, 2011).

Unsurprisingly, material culture studies draws on an almost boundless breadth of interdisciplinarity and cuts across numerous established disciplines (including philosophy, anthropology, phenomenology, archaeology and museum studies). If material culture studies have a primary disciplinary home, it would be archaeology and anthropology. Other branches of anthropology have made important contributions to studies of material culture, including the anthropology of time (archaeology and history) and the anthropology of place. Linguistic anthropology has also contributed in its notion of objects as language, and social anthropology has explored the role of material culture in social relations and economics (Tilley et al., 2006, p. 1).

As a material anthropologist, Daniel Miller (2010) models a non-exclusive theoretical framework assembled from philosophy, social anthropology and archaeology to explain how things make us as much as we make things. This provides a good starting point for a theory of things and illustrates the process of the interdisciplinary appropriation of theory that is a feature of studies in materiality. Complementary approaches drawn from phenomenology, archaeology and performance studies will then be added.

2.3.2 Historical materialism/Marxist anthropology

Marxist theory is a recognised school of historical interpretation, but also one that informs material culture theory. It is relevant to the current study in two fundamental ways: first, Marxism grounds historical actors, their behaviours and motivations within the contextual

framework (the affordances and constraints) of their material world; and second, Marx draws on the Hegelian concept of the dialectic, which provides materialism with the concept of objectification. Objectification is conceptually significant in this study because it provides the theoretical basis of the materialist assertion that things make us as much as we make things (Miller, 2010), and provides an explanation for why humans form powerful connections with and through things.

Marxist anthropology acknowledges human labour as the force that produces culture ‘in the form of stuff’ (Miller, 2010, p. 58), and culture, which is grounded in material conditions, is the product of human consciousness. Marxist materialist theory focuses on the centrality of human labour as a social evolutionary force. Human labour transforms nature into the artefactual material world we inhabit and operate in. Marx borrowed the Hegelian concept of consciousness (and the dialectic), but in Marxist anthropology, this is an awareness of how the material world of our creation makes culture: it reflects who we are, how we think and how we behave. As Miller puts it, the transformation of nature into objects creates a mirror in which we may come to understand ourselves (and others).

Further, the Marxist/Hegelian concept of the dialectic (the process of opposition/self-alienation and synthesis) helps theorise how the material things we objectify are, paradoxically, not contradictory to ourselves, but are elements mutually implicated in our being. Paradox is inherent in all truth, in all states of consciousness in the material world and culture (Tarnas, 1996). Understanding how the process of dialectic synthesis dissolves the separation of subject and object underpins the materialist anthropological assertion ‘that objects make us, as part of the very same process by which we make them’ (Miller, 2010, p. 60).

2.3.3 Social anthropology: A focus on what things mean (Mauss and Turner)

A focus on what things mean appropriates theory from social anthropology. It is important for the current study because it underpins the notion of objects as historical sources that communicate meanings about the societies of which they have been a part. While culture is a contested term (Eriksen, 2001, p. 3), it is defined here as ‘shared patterns of learned behaviour’ or ‘ways of knowing and doing’, cumulatively absorbed and transmitted from generation to generation (primarily through language/symbolic means) by members of a society and expressed in both material and non-material forms.

Social anthropology provides the notion that a society's material culture reveals the structure and organisation of that society. Thus, the value of studying a society's things is in what they tell, rather than what they are or do *per se*. Anthropology has a long pedigree of using material culture as an investigative and theoretical tool. For example, Morgan's (materialist-evolutionary) 19th century work on technology as a driver of evolution of societies, Boas's (particularist and cultural relativist) appreciation of material culture as a source of insight into a society, Durkheim's (structural-functionalist) view of the role objects play as social facts, and Levi- Strauss's (structuralist) view that cultural objects reveal the deep structure and thinking of people across time and space (Eriksen, 2001; Erikson & Murphy, 2013).

This dissertation also draws on Victor Turner's the anthropological concepts of 'liminality'/'liminoid', '*communitas*' (Turner, 1969) and 'flow' (Turner, 1974). His theories are readily applied in this thesis because history shares and shapes the roleplaying and ritualistic practices that Turner theorises as significant cultural mechanisms for communicating identity, ideology, belonging and a means for acting out events of cultural significance (Chandler-Ezell, 2010). This is particularly so in history practices centred on commemoration and re-enactment (especially when the latter is conceptualised as a form of 'play'). Objects and artefacts are deeply implicated in societal rituals and in imaginative and embodied practices whereby the individual or group, seek to access the historical 'other' through a variety of processes, including empathetic understanding, roleplaying and simulation.

To loosen or lose identity and belonging in the present is to enter the 'betwixt and between' (Turner, 1969, p. 95) of a liminal state. In post-modern societies, liminality takes the form of the 'liminoid', a commodity predominantly fashioned as leisure activities shared by individuals and groups (Turner 1974, pp. 85ff). Experiences of collective ritual, performance and play are accompanied by the liminal and liminoid; that is, a fresh and different experience of *communitas* (a transient sense of belonging that comes from shared experience), which are moments 'in and out of time' (Turner, 1969, p. 96).

Within *communitas* and liminal/liminoid states is the concept of 'flow': 'the holistic sensation present when we act with total involvement'. Phenomena like the 'historical sensation', *ekstasis* (see Section 2.5) and (in historical re-enactment) period rush, may be considered *communitas* flow moments (Turner, 1969, 1974). Combining Turner's concepts with the anthropological notion that objects themselves can attain personhood, offers the notion that material objects—as much as those who use them—also enter liminoid states.

A further illustration of the centrality of things in understanding society is powerfully illustrated by Mauss's seminal work, *The Gift* (1966). This is arguably the most significant and influential anthropological work of the 20th century (Eriksen, 2001), and demonstrates how material culture can be used to learn about a society and its culture, and the significance of objects to understanding human relations.

In *The Gift*, Mauss examined the role of the exchange of objects between groups in archaic societies. His study demonstrated how a society inalienably imbues objects/gifts with the identity and spirit of the givers (Mauss, 1966) and this, with the obligations of reciprocity, served to build human relationships and forge social bonds. Further, Mauss studied how society imbues objects with multiple meanings (total social fact)—‘legal, economic, religious, aesthetic, morphological and so on’ (Mauss, 1966, p. 76)—and, in doing so, makes ‘dumb’ matter, ‘thinking matter’; that is, a looking glass into the ways of thinking and doing of people in the past and present.

Another significant contribution to material culture theory is ‘structuralism’, which is the legacy of Levi-Strauss. One aspect of structuralism is the notion that things communicate meaning; they are texts ‘to be read’ (Tilley, 2001). Material culture reflects the deep structures of the societies to which they belong; artefacts are a human language that communicates through form rather than words. An artefact's properties and form correspond to the individual patterns in the mind(s) of its producer(s) and of the society to which it belongs. Objects are evidence of human intention and reveal a cultural and historicised-based need that *caused* the artefact to be made and variously used. Imaginative and careful study of the object thus reveals the driving human cause or need behind the artefact (Prown, 1982).

Thus, objects and technology are archives, transmitters and projectors of cumulative cultural knowledge. At the point of fabrication, an artefact is concrete evidence of the presence of a human intention. An artefact reflects the beliefs (culturally-based values, attitudes assumptions and ideas) of the maker, the commissioner, the buyer and the user, and therefore, more broadly, the beliefs and needs of the society to which the artefact belongs (Prown, 1982, p. 1).

A social anthropological perspective views objects as the passive reflection of wider social grammars, and the artefact's function reveals the functional imperatives of a present (or past) society. Herein lies the understanding of the historian's (and archaeologist's) readiness to accept and utilise the material culture of past societies as historical sources. This also underpins

an understanding of why teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians are drawn to things to construct historical knowledge and understanding.

However, objects do more than tell us about the societies they come from (or come into contact with). They are not passive texts; they are active agents in shaping the culture and society to which they belong. The next section explores what objects do and reinforces the notion that objects shape humans as much as humans shape objects (Bennett, 2009; Miller, 2010).

2.3.4 Material anthropology: A focus on what things ‘do’ (Gell and Bourdieu)

A focus on what things ‘do’ is essential for the pedagogy and praxis of haptic history as explored in this thesis, because it broadens the appreciation of the power of things: things exert agency. This agency is experienced by historical actors as much as those who encounter objects in the process of historical knowledge-making and historical thinking.

The significance of material culture (and its relationship to human beings) cannot be reduced to the status of a text to be read. By their materialist nature, objects are multimodal and polyvocal. They cannot be given a linguistic translation without loss or distortion of their meaning or significance. Things communicate ‘that which cannot be communicated in words’ (Tilley, 2001, p. 259), ‘aspects of the mind’ that differ, complement, contest and supplement those that are recorded in the literary records alone. They have an inherent and attached (aesthetic, spiritual, attitudinal) value (Prown, 1982) that reveals, embodies and reflects cultural beliefs.

Material culture offers a first-hand, sensory experience of the past. Objects can connect us to, and promote empathetic understanding of, people from the past. They offer historians something beyond text: ‘potentially [a] more wide-ranging, more representative source of information than words’ (Prown, 1982, p. 3) and access to the ‘wordless experience’ found in artefacts (Glassie, 1999; Harvey, 2009; Prown, 1982). Material culture provides access to everyday, non-elite aspects of past cultures that do not always find a presence in other kinds of cultural expression.

Further, while structural and functionalist anthropological approaches have taken the perspective that objects merely reflect or signify existing social relations, contemporary material culture studies view things as active, autonomous social agents that shape and create human experiences, sociality and identity (Harvey, 2009). This perspective is even more alien to the discipline of history than the notion of objects as texts. It moves debate beyond the mix

of sources with which historians need to engage and the new skills required to read the language of things. It provokes a post-humanist rethink of the place of human agency in historical causation and explanation, as well as an examination of the nature of the relationship between the historian and their sources. Sources could hitherto be viewed as passive, dead and mute, awaiting activation as historical evidence by the human agency of historical inquiry. This perspective is reflected in Levesque (2008, p. 117): ‘relics, do not talk to strangers and only speak when they are spoken to’. However, contemporary material culture perspectives suggest that a relationship with the things historians employ as sources may be a more nuanced and ambiguous feature of historiography.

The materialist theory of objectification is one way objects can be understood to exercise agency. People and things are dynamically related and mutually constitutive. Culture makes people, but the values, ideas, social relations that find expression in material and non-material cultural forms unfold in a dialectic process of becoming where neither takes precedence; one evolves with and shapes the other. Therefore, material culture is both an expression and medium of the generative genius of culture. Thus sociality and identity are made through the process of living with, and through, the very substance of material culture. Things attain meaning and significance through their use, exchange, production and consumption. In turn, living and interacting with things make us who we are and reproduces, reinforces and transforms sociality, identity and culture (Tilley et al., 2006).

2.3.4.1 Gell and object agency

To appreciate the power of objects is to consider what they ‘do’. Alfred Gell’s work (1998) provides a theoretical grounding for explaining the agency of things (Tilley & Bennett, 2008). It is an important theoretical concept for analysing how objects work in the praxis of materialist approaches for teaching history and the serious leisure pursuit of historical re-enactment/living history.

For Gell (1998, p. 16), ‘an agent’ is that (human or otherwise) which ‘causes events to happen in their vicinity’. He distinguishes between human agency and thing agency, but recognises that they are ‘entangled’. Gell (1998) argued that art (things) is a ‘natural sign’ (index) that permit causal inference to be drawn from it to a human cognitive operation; that is, things have abductive agency. Agency is driven by sentient thought, will or intention. Because objects have the thought and intention of the maker/user imbedded in them, they instigate causal sequences through the human social relationships in which they are enmeshed. Thus, for Gell, the agency

of things and the agency of persons are related, but different. Things have ‘second-order’ agency since they do not have minds of their own, but through the ‘abduction of agency’ they can exercise palpable effects on people (Harries, 2017; Tilley & Bennett, 2008). That is, they ‘intervene, they make a difference in the world (they) alter(ing) the minds of others’ (Tilley et al., 2006).

Gell finds affinity with Collingwood in his notion that things abductively reflect the minds of their creators and users, but he differs from Collingwood in ascribing to ‘things’ the agency to affect human minds and, in doing so, provoke human thought, emotion and action. Thus, Gell and Collingwood share an entirely cognitive (Tilley & Bennett, 2008) focus on the role of things. Indeed, Gell (1992) first considered the power of objects through the notion of ‘the enchantment of technology’, which is the spell-like powers objects exert on the human mind that is expressed and actioned socially and ideologically. Their aura and mesmeric power is derived from the technological processes of their making—the subsequent animistic and anthropomorphic processes they undergo to enmesh them in human social relationships—and the relational manner of their agency to impact other persons or things (Tilley & Bennett, 2008).

In giving things agency, Gell—in the Maussian anthropological sense—treats things as ‘persons’. They are conceived as having a lifespan, a personal biography, social relationships and intentionality (Gell, 1998). Thus, things also have (natural and cultural) biographies (Bennett, 2009; Kopytoff, 1988), including past living context (how the object/thing was made, used, recycled, lost, destroyed and interned) and extended biographies (transformations through various cultural contexts of time and place as part of the living cultural heritage system). Objects also have a social life encoded by human actors and ‘inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories’. Methodologically speaking, their significance is revealed by investigating ‘things-in-motion’ within human and social contexts (Appadurai, 1988).

Thus an object’s use, value, ownership, location, meaning and agency change over its lifespan (Hurcombe, 2007). Objects are dynamic, with multiple voices, meanings and effects. An object has the capacity to communicate and exercise agency with each society it meets and interacts with through its extended biography. In doing so, it becomes a rich source material for teaching and experiencing history.

However, Gell’s theory was focused on the agency of things in the cognitive domain. Apart from considering how things generate emotions and thereby physical responses via thought, he

did not consider the power things directly exercise in the very materiality of our being. Appropriation of Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theory method fill this gap.

2.3.4.2 Bourdieu and embodiment

This thesis appropriates a number of concepts from Bourdieu's work. His concepts of *hexis*, *habitus* and *doxa* are tools for analysing how culture is imprinted on historical actors corporeally, and can be used to provoke historical consciousness through teaching and learning experiences that are kinaesthetically (re)enacted in classrooms and beyond. His ideas provide a theoretical framework within which to explore the ways history may be understood and experienced haptically and somatically, through material culture and/as embodied experience.

Bourdieu's (2000) key notion is that culture is not just absorbed, learned and replicated cognitively, but is imprinted, enacted and embodied in the very materiality of our physical being. Thus, Bourdieu's model of culture usefully underpins the process of objectification ('things make us as much as we make things'). Further, the malleability of Bourdieu's key concepts readily avails themselves to fresh applications (Murphy & Costa, 2016, p. 4).

Originally an Aristotelian term meaning 'disposition', Mauss first used *hexis* in an anthropological setting to describe how individuals and groups embody social imperatives in the way they bear themselves (Lane, 2000). Bourdieu used *hexis* to describe how bodily postures and techniques (for example the making and use of tools as an extension of the body, speech patterns and everyday skills) are routinised through the subjective experience of the praxis of everyday life in the material world as part of enculturation, and embodied in our very being (Tilley et al., 2006). For Bourdieu, *hexis* is inscribed in the individual's body and is the product of a broader social set of dispositions he calls the *habitus*. Bourdieu (1977, p. 82) defines *habitus* as 'a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks'. *Habitus* is a product and process of cognitive, affective and material elements (in this thesis captured as head, heart and hands) that generate human thoughts, actions, emotions, perceptions and ideas. It is structured by the structuring of historical tradition, social conditions and the material environment (Tilley et al., 2006).

In other words, *hexis* and *habitus* provide an anthropological/sociological lens for doing historical thinking through materiality. Indeed, Bourdieu (1990, p. 54) conceived *habitus* as

fundamentally ‘a product of history, producing individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history’. Thus, viewing *habitus* as being acquired through culture, reflected and reproduced in material culture and embodied states, and as the product of history (Mu, 2016), invites consideration of how *habitus* might be used in history pedagogy as a tool for historical analysis from a materialist perspective.

Habitus, conceived as a methodology or as Bourdieu puts it, the ‘logic of practice’, lends itself to theorising the praxis of historical re-enactment. In a sense, historical re-enactment, whereby participants seek to adopt a historical persona, is about attempting to experience the *habitus* of an historical ‘other’. By immersing themselves in the material culture of a recreated ‘living history’ world, re-enactors employ material culture as a catalyst for becoming and understanding the historical actor/other of another time, place and culture. They employ an inverted form of ‘logic of practice’ when they immerse their bodies in the material culture of the past to physically (re)do/(re)perform history.

Indeed, Bourdieu’s concepts may be employed to unlock the worldview and cultural perspectives of historical actors via the very material medium of the things that have structured their *hexis* and *habitus*. To this can be added Bourdieu’s concept of *fields* (the arenas of structured cultural practices/systems of social positions such as a profession or institution) dominated by *doxa* (a ‘set of fundamental beliefs which do(es) not even need to be asserted’ [2018, p. 18]) because they are ‘held to be self-evident, undisputable’ and ‘goes without saying because it comes without saying’ (1977, p. 167). Thus, the rules of the *field*, together with the *habitus*, provide the historian, the teacher and the historical re-enactor with a materialist mode to access the collective worldview or *mentalité* of historical actors. By this logic, historical consciousness—the understanding of one’s perspectival orientation in time—may be explored by entering into the *habitus* and *doxa* of historical actors through the portal of their material culture:

The mind born of a world of objects does not rise as a subjectivity confronting an objectivity: the object universe is made up of objects which are the product of the objectifying operation structured according to the very structures which the mind applies to it. The mind is a metaphor of the world of objects which is itself but an endless circle of mutually reflecting metaphors. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 91)

To attempt to experience an historical actor’s *habitus* is to become aware of one’s own *habitus*, and the disparity between the self in the present and the otherness of the past. Whereas Collingwood would contend this can be done mentally, through historical imagination, the

experience of the embodied dimension of another's *habitus* through praxis in their material world proffers a different kind of historical consciousness that is physically, as much as intellectually, experienced.

Thus, Bourdieu lays some theoretical foundations to be explored in this thesis in the way haptic history teaching practices employ objects to teach perspective and empathetic understanding, and historical consciousness. It also provides grounding for examining historical re-enactment, in which participants use the material culture of the past to 'live' an adopted persona from history. In 'living history'—through the 'logic of practice'—re-enactors encounter, in a materialist dimension, the *hexis* and *habitus* of a figure, real or imagined. The mimetic process of replication, using both body and material culture, may thus provide insight into the *hexis* and *habitus* of historical actors and a physical sense of connection to the past through an embodied experience of the 'otherness' of a person from another time and place.

2.4 Phenomenology and Sensory Experience

To engage with the material world is to encounter it sensually and bodily. To theorise the somatic impact of encounters with material culture in the process of doing history is an essential element in the current study. Phenomenology—'the concern with the human encounter, experience and understanding of worldly things' (Thomas, 2006, p. 43)—provides theoretical insights into how the human experience of 'being in the world' is mediated by things through our senses (Johnson, 2015b). As a method, phenomenology is vexed and problematic (Tilley et al., 2006); however, acknowledging the phenomenological perspective has bearing on a materialist and haptic approach to history.

This study draws directly on legacy of two phenomenologists: Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Heidegger provides a useful philosophical foundation to a materialist approach to history in his notion of existential consciousness through 'being in the world' (an inversion of the Cartesian, 'I think, therefore I am' to 'I am, therefore I think'). This research draws further on Heidegger's notion that knowledge of the world through 'being in the world' is experiential and dynamically evolved; that is, it becomes 'unhidden' and reveals 'itself from itself' through the process of lived experience.

Heidegger also contributed to materialist thinking about the nature of things and how they mediate human experience. In his 1950 essay, 'The Thing', he explored how the 'thingness of things' come to reveal themselves to human consciousness and mediate experience, and used a

jug analogy to explain that human interaction with the thing—the ‘pouring from it’—reveals the thing’s ‘fourfold’ phenomenological nature. The act of pouring from the jug permits not an experience of the ‘juginess of the jug’, but also reveals a range of phenomena beyond the jug hitherto hidden (Heidegger, 1971).

For Heidegger, phenomenology was *philosophical* exploration of the nature of ‘being in the world’. Fellow phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2007, p. 354) took phenomenology beyond ‘the mind’ and gave it a fundamentally material grounding by embedding it in the ‘fleshiness’ of embodied experience:

My body is a thing among things; it is caught in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing. But because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself. Things are an annex or prolongation of itself; they are encrusted into its flesh, they are part of its full definition; the world is made of the same stuff as the body.

Thus, Merleau-Ponty dissolved the Cartesian duality of mind and body. Just as the material world and body are mutual constitutive, so too is the mind and body. People perceive and think with, and through, their bodies. The notion of the ‘embodied mind’ or ‘minded body’, where the material self is the ‘fundamental mediation point between thought and the world’ (Tilley, 1994, p. 14), underpins the theoretical plausibility that a haptic/kinaesthetic/somatic experience of bodily immersion into a ‘living history’ world (one replicating the material culture of the past) makes possible a different kind of (embodied) historical thinking.

The significance of things in mediating human experience (and its mind/body/affective nexus) has also been embraced by the emerging field of post-phenomenology, which focuses on how technology actively mediates experience and one’s everyday ‘being in the world’ (Aagaard, 2017). It views technology (and its artefactual expressions) as non-neutral entities that serve to modulate aspects of human experience in the world (amplifying some, and simultaneously reducing others). Experience of the world through the prism of technology changes the nature of human experience in a manner that reflects the character of the particular artefact (Aagaard, 2017). Technologies enable certain behaviours and actions and inhibit others; thus the human experience of the world is a product of the interaction between technology and its users, where agency is shared.

Common ground also exists between the field(s) of phenomenology and Bourdieu’s assertion that sensual characteristics of human cultural practices are enmeshed in and through the very qualities of their material culture. This observation is no less true for academic historians in

their encounters with the primary sources—the physical residues of the past—a phenomenon dubbed the ‘historical sensation’ (Robinson, 2010).

The concept of the ‘historical sensation’ was explored by 20th century Dutch historian Huizinga. It refers to the physical (and embodied) experience of connection with the past that is encountered with and through physical contact with material residues/relics of the past (‘the sources’). Huizinga describes ‘the historical sensation’ as being provoked by encounters with ordinary objects that the past has left to the present. He explains the phenomenon as:

...the conviction of an immediate contact with the past, a sensation as profound as the profoundest enjoyment of art, an (don’t laugh) almost ekstatic experience of no longer being myself, of a flowing over into a world outside myself, of a getting in touch with the essence of things, of the experience of Truth by history... This is the nature of what I call historical sensation. (Huizinga cited by Ankersmit [2005, p.126])

The ‘historical sensation’ is an interaction with the past, through things, that leaves indelible traces on the historian, particularly when the materiality of the past is touched. This sense of connection and oneness with a past that is palpable, present and real, is engendered through the reciprocity of (especially haptic) sensation. The physical/haptic encounter with the materiality of the past, even in its archival form, can be both sublime and ecstatic in nature (Robinson, 2010).

Thus, the phenomenon of touch brings the oft-repeated aphorism: ‘to touch is to be touched’ (Robinson, 2010, p. 513). The embodied and haptic experience of the material world also brings with it the entanglement of affect and further consideration of what things *do*; that is, their capacity to ‘move’ people and exercise agency through affect.

2.5 The Affective Turn

Affect theory is essential in the current study as it helps articulate a dimension beyond the cerebral and haptic/kinaesthetic in the material encounter with history. For encounters with the past that are fundamentally proximal, embodied, haptic, somatic and material, affect theory provides a basis for understanding the nexus between the affective and cognitive dimension essential for doing historical thinking and developing historical consciousness.

In the humanities, affect has been the focus of its own ‘turn’ in academic research, particularly in the fields history and material culture studies. However, agreement on its meaning, let alone its *modus operandi*, observation and measurement, is elusive (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010).

Modern scholarship on affect and materiality is theoretically grounded in the work of 17th century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (Hardt, 2007; Landsberg, 2015).

Spinoza (Ethics II, p13) rejected the dualism of Descartes' mind–body dichotomy and argued that the mind and body are of the same substance ('extended substance'); neither has primacy over the other, they exist in parallel, are autonomous and reflect one another ('the idea constituting the human mind is the body'). In the Spinozan concept of the universe, all things (bodies/matter) are in state of 'restlessness'—a state of motion and rest—and affect, and are affected by one another. All things, human and non-human alike have *conatus*—a striving to 'preserve in its being' (Spinoza, Ethics III, p6)—a notion that scholars in the field of vital materialism (see Section 2.7.2) use to assert that material things, as well as humans, exert agency. The human body, enmeshed in the flux of bodies in motion in the material world, is intimately and causally affected. Thus, the Spinozan notion of affect is a form of liminality that 'involves body and mind, reason and passion' (Robinson, 2010, p. 505). It is a pre-conscious sense of being 'moved' before one is aware of being affected or conceptualising the phenomenon. Affect influences the body's power to act, which causes a change in its state that may be 'increased or diminished, aided or restrained' and runs parallel with mind's 'ideas of these affections' (Spinoza, Ethics III D3). In the first instance, affect is experienced bodily; it releases the potential for action and is a catalyst for thought. In interactions with the material world, the body is obliged to 'act, think, process or question' (Landsberg, 2015, p. 18).

From a Spinozan perspective, the dictionary definition of affect as 'having a quality of influencing emotions' fails to adequately capture both the term's usage in academic discourse (McCalman & Pickering, 2010; Robinson, 2010) and its role and nature. Part of the issue is that affect—as 'ongoing, mobile, and therefore inherently unfinished or unfinishable' (Landsberg, 2015, p. 17)—is a slippery concept. Affect is amorphous in nature. It is also omnipresent, difficult to locate and isolate: 'Affect lodges in objects, in sentences, in architectures and images as much as in, and between living people' (Schneider, 2014, p. 44).

Nonetheless, as Bourdieu (2018, p. 116), in the tradition of Spinoza, notes, affect is integral in the bodily encounter with the objective and material world: 'We learn bodily. The social order inscribes itself in bodies through this permanent confrontation, which may be more or less dramatic but is always marked by affectivity and, more precisely, by affective transactions with the environment'. Thus, due to its liminal, amorphous nature, the dividing line between

embodied experience and affect is difficult to identify because ‘the experiential mode ... is fundamentally affective’ (Landsberg, 2015, p. 16).

Affect is also a prominent and powerful feature within Huizinga’s concept of the historical sensation. Huizinga describes a process called ‘*ekstasis*’, which literally means to ‘stand outside of one’s self’, and is used by Huizinga to describe the movement outside the self when ‘reaching for the past’. This haptic encounter with the materiality of the past has the capacity to trigger an affective sensation of connection with the past of sublime proportions. The experience is an aspect of historical consciousness and although fleeting, is extraordinary: a ‘short ecstatic kiss’ that ‘pulls the face of the past and present together’ (Ankersmit, 2005, p. 121). The term *ekstasis* is appropriated by this dissertation to describe the deeply affective historical sensations of research participants triggered by haptic encounters with the material archive of the past.

Given its conceptual and methodological challenges, it is not surprising that the role and place of affect in the study and teaching of history has been varied. For Agnew (2007, p. 310), history’s affective turn is one where historical representation is (particularly in its iteration in popular/public history manifestations such as a historical re-enactment) ‘less concerned with events, processes or structures that with the individual’s physical and psychological experience’. Others have been interested in exploring the role of affect on the process of historical research in their embodied encounter with the material archive (Robinson, 2010). There have been attempts to quarantine affect in the domain of memory and popular/public history as ‘sentimental history’ (Cook, 2004; Harries, 2017). Academic history has remained suspicious and distrusts affect as a potential enemy to history’s objective, dispassionate, distanced, scientific and evidentiary study of the past (Agnew 2007; Harries, 2017; Landsberg, 2015; Robinson, 2010).

The field of history pedagogy has similarly been a site to contest the place of affect, partly due to an overflow of hostility from academic history (Foster, 2001; Jenkins & Brickley, 1989; Barton & Levstik, 2004). In the field of history education, affect has been most debated within the framework of the historical thinking concept of empathy and the experience of empathetic understanding as perspective-taking (Davison 2010, 2012; Dulberg, 2002). Champions of empathy (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Booth, 1983; Davison, 2010, 2012; Lee, 1984; Lee & Shemilt, 2011; Portal, 1987; Mootz, 2014; Seixas, 1996; Shemilt, 1984; Wineburg, 2001) embrace affect, in partnership with cognitive analysis, as an essential part of historical consciousness and foundation of historical thinking.

What affect *does* in the creation of historical knowledge and understanding is the focus of Landsberg's (2015) research. Her work on the affective power of audiovisual/multimedia texts as a catalyst for historical thinking and historical consciousness provides this study with guideposts that readily transfer to understanding the place of affect in encounters with other kinds of material culture, such as objects and artefacts.

Borrowing from Deleuze, Landsberg (2015) argues that any sensuous encounter—one that has an embodied response to sensory stimulus—can act as catalyst to new thought. This is particularly the case when the encounter is with something not immediately recognised, as that which is not recognised is grasped through a range of affective tones—it is sensed, rather than known—and this, in turn, provokes a response to process, examine, reflect and make sense of the experience to understand it. Thus, that which is 'sensed forces the viewer into an active interpretive mode, a distracted state, which can be the first step towards the production of new knowledge ... in other words these encounters ... triggered sensuously ... demand cognitive processing' (Landsberg, 2015, p. 15). When these affective engagements happen in a historical frame, they can produce fresh historical insights. Further, it is also a way to theorise the manner in which historical re-enactment works (Landsberg, 2015).

Through the sensual and affective, Landsberg (2015) charts a path back to history as a fundamentally intellectual project. Notably, this kind of process that engages affect, the senses and the cognitive, moves history out of its familiar disciplinary ground. As Hetherington (2003) argues, the sensual dimension—particularly the haptic—is a different kind of knowledge that sits uncomfortably within the dominant Western paradigm of object–subject representational practice of knowledge-making. In the positivist paradigm, history values the objective stance of perspectival distance from its study of people in the past. Material, embodied, affective encounters with the past are, by their very nature, proximal, sensual and experiential.

Hetherington (2003) makes useful theoretical observations about the embodied and multi-sensory nature of proximal knowledge to which the haptic experience of history belongs. Whereas distal knowledge is defined, recognised, bounded and ordered ('distilled'), proximal knowledge is 'more fluid and uncertain' (Hetherington, 2003, p. 1935) and, in the Heideggerian/phenomenological/affective sense, emerges to become 'unhidden' and ongoing. In the blurred, liminal space where the body encounters the material world in and beyond itself, Hetherington (2003, p. 1936) argues that performative modes of proximal knowledge-making—such as the haptic (knowing through touch)—is essential to the embodied experience. Thus,

‘being-in-world’ is about making knowledge through the experience of the ‘performing (and performed) body’; that is, the ‘*doing-in-the-world*’ (Hetherington, 2003, p. 1935). To this notion, Hetherington (2003, p. 1937) brings the concept of *praesentia*, whereby that which is absent (such as the past and a focus of this research) can be made present by the performativity of the haptic encounter, which generates knowledge that is both embodied and has a non/more-than-representationalist dimension.

2.6 Performativity and History: (Re)Doing History With Bodies and Things

The understanding that cultural knowledge has performative dimensions is significant in this study. History—itself a cultural expression—is fundamentally performative (Denning, 1992, 2002; Johnson, 2015a, 2015b; Taylor, 2003). History is performed in a multitude of ways in and outside the archive (Taylor, 2003), every time it is read, written, imagined, taught and re-enacted. Performance is particularly apparent in history’s popular/public manifestations, including teaching and living history. History as (mental) performance is equally evident in Collingwood’s concept of history as re-enacted thought.

Considering the performativity of history in embodied and material forms is important for uncovering its role in the kinds of historical thinking and historical knowledge it fosters. The study of history’s manifestation in cultural forms beyond the archive has been a fruitful field for ‘ethno-historians’ (Johnson, 2015a, p. 37) and further builds on the theoretical discussion thus far on affect, phenomenology and materialism in the ways people seek to know and interact with history through bodies and things.

Embodied and performance-based practices function as a form of social knowledge (Johnson, 2015a) and are an attractive mode by which ordinary people seek to connect with the past (Anderson, 1984, 1991; Agnew, 2004; Clark, 2016b; De Groot, 2009, 2011; Lowenthal, 1985, 2015; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998; Samuel, 1994/2012). Schneider (2011, 2014), Magelssen (2014) and Johnson (2015a, 2015b) have all explored new possibilities for expanding the methodology of history by appropriating performance studies theory, in an effort to interrogate the performative possibilities of historical re-enactment as both source and method.

History’s performativity, through materiality of things and bodies, has the potential to connect present bodies to those of the past. Performativity serves as a catalyst for new ways of thinking

historically, and understanding both the present and the past beyond the archival record (Johnson, 2015a, 2015b). As Magelssen (2014, p. 7) argues, ‘embodiment is a powerful modality for acquiring and producing knowledge’. However, Agnew (2004, pp. 330, 335) reminds us that body-based discourses that reanimate the past through physical and psychological experience (such as re-enactment and ‘living history’) are problematic as an episteme for history.

From the field of performance studies, this research borrows the notion of kinaesthetic empathy as developed by dance historian Susan Leigh Foster (2011). *Kinaesthesia* posits the notion of human muscular connection with our deepest feelings, the orientation of our senses together with our sense of self/identity (Foster, 2011). It asserts that the form of affect (as lodged in one’s own physical sensibility) influences how one registers and experiences someone else’s feelings and emotions, and the experience of empathy has a ‘strong and vital component of kinaesthetic sensation’ (Foster, 2011, p. 127). Foster (2011) draws on the neuroscience of mirror neurons to support the notion of kinaesthetic empathy: actions we see performed fire the same motor circuits in the brain as those used when performing the same actions ourselves (without us necessarily needing to visibly move). We rehearse, and thus experience bodily, what we see and do.

Johnson (2015a) and Magelssen (2014) add Roach’s (1996, p. 26) concept of kinaesthetic imagination—‘a way of thinking through movements—at once remembered and reinvented’ to Foster’s notion of kinaesthetic empathy to explain how culture, whether past or present, is transmitted in embodied forms. This is particularly relevant to the present study if we accept that our bodies are the product, and an expression, of all aspects of culture, including material culture. The logic of this theory provides Johnson (2015a, p. 48) with the basis for a methodology of historical re-enactment:

If bodies are socially and culturally expressive, formed by, and forming culture and society, then re-enacting bodily practices may feasibly provide a link to the culture and society that created (and was, in part, created by) these practices.

This study seeks to investigate the significance of the experience of material culture on the re-enactment of bodily practices for (re)creating cultural historical knowledge that is haptically encountered. As Foster (2011, p. 154) remarks, kinaesthetic empathy can equally encompass a physical responsiveness to objects and things—the human ability to move ‘into’ and feel anything in the observable world, including the animate and inanimate.

This encourages consideration of the material dimensions of the theatricality and performance of history, with and beyond the body, by investigating the doing of history with material culture. The materialist ‘existential concreteness’ of the past (Lowenthal, 1985, p. 245) informs, directs and shapes historical thinking through the haptic and embodied experience of the past in the present, as encountered in history classrooms and living history settings.

2.7 Archaeology and Vital Materialism

In reaching beyond Collingwood’s head history, this interdisciplinary overview of theory from material culture studies, anthropology, phenomenology and performance studies might appear a stretch for studying history and history pedagogy. Yet, is argued that the very intersections of these disciplines are where new perspectives are discovered.

Having reached far beyond the traditional purview of history and history pedagogy, this chapter concludes with a review of materiality in the more familiar, ‘near-disciplinary, neighbourhoods’ of history: archaeology and museum history education. This is briefly followed by an overview of vital materialism, which demonstrates that there are stretches to come if we take a materialist approach to history to its logical conclusion and de-centre the presumption of the primacy of human agency in historical causation.

2.7.1 Archaeology and materialism

Lowenthal argues that the power of archaeology derives from its positivist affirmation of the presentness of the past and its authenticity as ‘real’. Objects/artefacts attest to the existence of the past in a way that memory and history cannot. Relics are not processes of human perception, but physical residues of human activity in the past with ‘existential concreteness’. The ‘diachronic continuity’ of objects means relics can ‘bring the past to us, palpable and potent’ (Lowenthal, 1985, pp. 57, 245, 247, 248).

In this positivist tradition, archaeology prides itself as a science, whereby the physical remains of the human past are objectively and empirically measured, quantified and recorded (Day, 2013) The existential concreteness of history provided by archaeology in the haptic encounter with the past is compelling. Nonetheless, alongside the positivist, scientific archaeological perspective is one informed by material culture studies, which views archaeological knowledge as deeply interpretative.

In archaeology, an artefact can be ‘backward mapped’ to reveal its utilitarian (technomic), and social (sociotechnic) functions, and thereby provide understandings into the nature of the society that produced and/or used it. Post-processual archaeology asserts that objects also have cognitive (ideotechnic) functions. Thus, in the tradition of Collingwood, objects provide the means to gain insight into not only the actions and structures of past societies, but also the thoughts and beliefs of people from the past.

The logic of backward mapping artefacts in their production or usage provides the theoretical rationale and logic of practice of experimental archaeology. Running parallel with Johnson’s (2015a, 2015b) methodology of historical re-enactment (see Section 2.6) and theories of performativity and embodiment, experimental archaeology seeks, to (re)perform, (re)create and (re)use artefacts in the context of place and time. In doing so, experimental archaeology applies abductive and deductive thinking to the material culture remains from the past.

Pioneered predominantly by John Coles in the 1970s (Hurcombe, 2007), experimental archaeologists make objects, structures and recreate environmental contexts that attempt to actualise conditions in the past to investigate the lives of people in a practical, hands-on manner (Holden, 2012). Experimental archaeology is striking similarly to the practice of living history (many living history adherents claim to be doing ethno-archaeology/history). As a field of archaeology, experimental archaeology has not always been highly regarded because it is also the domain of popular or recreational history, done not by academics but living history and re-enactment groups (Outram, 2008).

However, the fundamental attraction in challenging accepted orthodoxies, problem solving and contesting problematic knowledge in a hands-on, practical manner, has seen ethno-archaeological/historical experiments and experiences enter into popular/public history practices. A plethora of reality television programs work off the principle of transporting people ‘back in time’ to function within the materialist constraints of (a reconstructed) past context; for example, Channel 4’s *The 1900 House*, *The 1940’s House* and *The Edwardian Country House* and the BBC’s *Living in the Past* in the UK, and the Discovery Channel’s *Caveman* series and *The Colony* in the US.

Similarly, experimental archaeology has long captured the popular imagination, with examples such as the *The Kon-Tiki Expedition* and *The Brendan Voyage*. The Discovery Channel’s *MythBusters* have made forays into experimental archaeology by testing and retesting

Plutarch's account of Archimedes' death ray. More recently in Australia, the ABC's *The Boffin, the Builder and the Bombardier* (2013) challenged and tested established interpretations in an entertaining myth-busting style by using a materialist approach for 'deconstructing history by reconstructing the devices that made it'.

The success of an experimental archaeological project is not conclusive. While it proves (in the absence of other evidence) that it might be one of a number of possible ways something in the past has been fashioned, the failed experiment can produce equally valuable historical knowledge (Hurcombe 2007) and resembles Schneider's (2011) observation that failures and errors generate new knowledge and reflective thinking.

Alongside experimental archaeology is a branch of experiential archaeology that draws on phenomenological theory and embodied experience as core methodology (Day, 2013; Tilley & Bennett, 2008). In the tradition of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, phenomenological archaeologists like Tilley and Thomas draw on the notion that the world gains meaning through human interaction with things (Day, 2013). As Thomas (2001, p. 172) remarks, 'Thinking is not something that happens in an interior space; it is part of our bodily immersion in the world'. Pioneered in landscape archaeology, the haptic and kinaesthetic experience of the materiality of time-space is multi-sensory archaeology, which acknowledges that the body, senses and affect all are part of the cognitive process for constructing of meaning.

Just as objects themselves are rarely uni-dimensional, the bodily, haptic and kinaesthetic encounter with the materiality of the past is multi-sensory. For Tilley (2001, p. 260), the phenomenological experience of the thing is 'thickly textured':

With which we may engage with the full range of our senses: a synaesthetic interaction and knowledge. Things perform work in the world in a way that words cannot ... Material forms are practically, or performatively, as well as discursively produced, maintained and given significance.

Echoing Foster's notion of kinaesthetic empathy, Hamilakis (2010, pp. 192, 193) asserts that a phenomenological archaeological approach permits bodily memories ('mnemonics of the body') of past cultures to be reinvoked in bodies of the present through a 'shared mnemonic power of all material sensorial interaction' and, in doing so, brings the past into the present.

Yet, it is not only the body that stores memories of the past. Andrew Jones (2007, p. 225) uses material culture theory in archaeology to argue that social memory (history) is mutually constitutive in both humans and their things:

The material world provides a framework for remembrance... the social practices in which artefacts are engaged ... determines how remembrance is socially experienced and mapped out ... the object world as a kind of 'distributed mind', not only spatially distributed, but also temporally distributed.

In saying that archaeology, 'of all disciplines ... needs material culture most', Knappett (2005, p. 1) is doing more than making a motherhood statement about a discipline that concerns itself with the discovery, recovery and preservation of the material remains of the human past. His statement reflects a post-processualist view of archaeology that is strongly influenced by material culture theory.

Interpretative/post-processual archaeology acknowledges that things, in their extended biographies, have multiple voices and multiple meanings. An object says something to, and about, every society it meets and interacts with. Thus, artefacts actively, dynamically and continuously reflect, negotiate, enable and communicate the social relationships between people and things (Hurcombe, 2007). Indeed, such is the nature of the interplay and interdependency between people and things that objects become part of, shape and channel, human thought systems (Hurcombe, 2007; Knappett, 2005). According to this logic, material culture of the past is invaluable for deploying Collingwood's historical imagination—the vital ingredient for the 'small miracle' of historical thinking.

Thus, ways humans think, act and feel are reflected in, and shaped by, things and their 'thing-power'. The concept of object agency explored in the Gellian approach to things, is redirected by theories of vital materialism.

2.7.2 'New' or vital materialism

A Marxist anthropological perspective of material culture argues the centrality of humans to the nature of things (in the latter's production, exchange, use and impact on society). An alternative perspective from a Spinozan tradition asserts a non-anthropocentric view of material culture and ascribes to all things—human, non-human, animate and inanimate—a 'vitalism'. Thus, the theory of vital materialism also needs to be considered in a materialist perspective to capture the power of things in human life, culture and history.

Knappett (2005) illustrates archaeology's adoption of a vital materialist perspective. Acknowledging the materialist understanding of the blurred boundaries between mind and matter and body and object, Knappett (2005, p. 62) argues for the logic of the 'co-dependency of mind, agent and object'. He draws on actor network theory to move beyond the significance

of an object in terms of ‘affordance theory’ to see objects and people as ‘more fluid concepts’, which each has agency (Knappett, 2005, p. 75).

Knappett also utilises Bruno Latour’s (2005) ideas in arguing that the blurred boundaries between people and things makes for co- or distributive agency between humans and objects. Bennett (2009) also advocates the notion of vital materialism, drawing on Latour, Deleuze and Guattari, along with Epicurean and Spinozist traditions. Her aim is to supplant the hitherto dominant mechanistic materialism of Western thought; an anthropocentric tradition that sees humans (and/or God) as the unique source of agency who impose their intention/will/design on ‘dumb’ and ‘dead’ matter. She argues that all matter has vitality and a productive power that allows things to form ‘assemblages’:

Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within. ... Assemblages are not governed by any central head: no materiality or type of material has sufficient competence to determine consistently the trajectory or impact of the group. The effects generated by an assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in their ability to make something happen. (Bennett, 2009, p. 23)

Assemblages, in turn, connect to other assemblages and, aggregately, create networks of agency (Bennett, 2011, 2012).

In arguing the vitalism of things, Bennett cites concepts like Kant’s ‘bildungstrieb’, Driesch’s ‘entelechy’ and Bergson’s ‘elan vital’, which suggests things have a form of vitality. However, while vitalist materialist theory falls short of contending that things have an agency of their own, independent of people, it compels a consideration of ‘thing-power’ and the exchange of agency between humans and their material culture.

If agency is shared between humans and their things, then the adoption of a vital materialist perspective supports the case that history needs to embrace a focus on things at the same level as its focus on humans as historical agents. New materialism also provides theory through which to analyse the power of objects in history pedagogy and other materialist and embodied cultural forms for engaging with the past (such as historical re-enactment). Objects exert their vitality in their affective power on humans. People have an ‘irrational love of matter’ (Bennett, 2009, p. 61); the ‘evocative power of objects’ (Barlett, 2013; Hesse, Summers, & Yancey, 2012; Turkle, 2007) needs to be understood and assessed for their impact on historical thinking and consciousness in the classroom and beyond. As Turkle (2007, p. 6) states, ‘We live our life in the middle of things. Material culture carries emotions and ideas of startling intensity’.

Vital materialist theory provides the current study with a new tangent to explore thing-power in history and its pedagogy. It is not just the way the material world connects us and mediates our experience of the past, but the capacity of our things to exert (distributive) agency. This notion posits new challenges for historical thinking and historical consciousness.

2.8 Material Culture and Learning: Museum Education

Whereas the discipline of history has relied on its sister-discipline, archaeology, to lead the way in exploring the human past through material culture, history pedagogy has been slow to follow museum education's innovative use of material culture to teach history.

Since the 1990s, the museum sector has been encouraged to view education as its core business and start by considering how people learn (Hooper-Greenhill & Moussouri, 2000, p. 2). Influences on museum learning theory include the constructivist approach championed by George Hein (1991, 1995), who draws on the educational theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Dewey. Also prominent is the work of Falk and Dierking (2000), who emphasise the importance of the physical setting and the learner's motivation in shaping learning in museums. Jerome Bruner's (1964/2006) research in cognitive development has also been persuasive in establishing constructivism as the dominant pedagogic praxis in museums.

Bruner's learning theory underpins the museum rationale for learning with objects and bodies. Rejecting the strict hierarchy of Piaget, Bruner defines three modes of learning: the enactive, the iconic and the symbolic. Although developed successively, these three modes are used concurrently to make meaning in the world (Bruner 1964/2006, 1966; Cooper, 2013; Hinton, 1993; Hooper-Greenhill & Moussouri, 2000). The enactive mode relates to physical contact and manipulation; the iconic aligns with sight and visual interaction, and the symbolic mode is the way meaning is transmitted and encoded in the abstract sign system of language. Bruner argues that because learning is multimodal, effective learning occurs when the enactive (touch and movement), the visual (sight) and symbolic (language) modes are used in combination (Hinton, 1993). Further, of the three modes of learning, the symbolic is most abstract and the visual is less so, but the enactive—the one that involves learning through real things, such as objects, with or through people, events or 'doing' activities—is more accessible, inviting and enjoyable, as it requires fewer of the skills associated with formal learning (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994).

Bruner suggests that physical contact with objects is important for all learners, irrespective of their level of cognitive development. For Hein (1995, p. 4), ‘physical involvement is a necessary condition for learning for children, and highly desirable for adults in many situations’. Whereas everyone can benefit from the opportunity to learn haptically, ‘for some learners touching is an essential part of the process’ (Eldridge, 1995, p. 4).

Museums are institutions defined by their material culture collections, so it is unsurprising that they have made use of objects—themselves multimodal and poly-vocal things—to teach history. ‘Telling history through things is what museums are for’, argues the Director of the British Museum, Neil MacGregor (2010). Museums make effective use of the enactive mode of learning in museum education programs because objects, by the very nature of their materiality and biographies, invite engagement through touch and movement. Bruner’s emphasis on the pedagogic principles of teaching concepts, structuring and modelling inquiry, scaffolding, connecting what is new to what is known, and the ‘spiral curriculum’ has found ready implementation in the constructivist, student-centred, active learning programs that are characteristic of museum education (Cooper, 2013; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994). Bruner’s influence in museum education is also evident in the constructivist foundations of discovery learning—now rendered as ‘learning to discover’—and in understanding the importance of narratives in the construction and assimilation of knowledge.

Indeed, museum education and the historical skills-driven ‘new history’ of the 1970s bear a common forefather in Bruner’s educational theories (Taylor & Young, 2003). Thus, there is much formwork in place that bridges museum education and classroom history pedagogy, including the conscious alignment of museum education with history syllabuses.

The success of museum education—especially around engagement—has led to calls for museum pedagogic practices with material culture to be adapted to teach classroom history and archaeology (Staats, 2010a, 2010b, 2011; Zarmati, 2012). Forays into transferring such practices include of practical, hands-on workshops for history teachers hosted by professional associations such as the History Teachers’ Association of Australia (HTAA) and the History Teachers’ Association of New South Wales (HTANSW).

Data on the success of museum education, which mostly derives from the UK, has been used to justify utilising material culture to teach history. The Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) at Leicester University has presented good research demonstrating that

constructivist museum-based learning delivers measurable and significant improvement in student learning outcomes. Two studies in particular, the ‘Engage, learn, achieve’ study (Watson et al., 2007) and the ‘Learning through culture’ study (Clarke, 2002), show that museum-based learning improves learning and attainment, increases student engagement and motivation, supports the needs of pupils with different learning styles (Watson et al., 2007), and develops student skills in areas like observation, inquiry, speaking, listening, deduction and literacy (Clarke, 2002). Further, museum education inspires creative work; increases knowledge and understanding, significance and engagement; is inclusive of students of differing abilities from diverse cultural and social backgrounds; and enhances student self-esteem, confidence and belief (Clarke, 2002).

Indeed, many of the teachers interviewed in the current study draw on their own personal experience of museum history education programs as visitors, students or facilitators in their classroom teaching praxis. The disciplinary intersection between museum education and classroom history pedagogy promises to be a productive space for enriching the praxis of school history through the use of objects and artefacts.

There is also an emerging body of research that has investigated how museum education praxis supports the teaching of historical thinking and historical consciousness in museum settings. Beginning with the largely theoretical work of Eldridge (1995) and Randall (1996), Nakou’s (1996) doctoral research observed the impact of the museum setting on students’ historical thinking. Liken (2009) examined the use of museum objects in formal classroom settings, but her study was limited to how the use of objects improved the recall of knowledge. Jones (2011) examined the impact of living history performances (at museums and historic sites) and concluded that encounters with first-person interpretations at museums enhanced students’ historical consciousness. In Australia, the contribution of museum education praxis to history pedagogy was the focus of Zarmati’s (2012) research. From her observations of museum history education praxis, she proposed a useful model of museum history pedagogy. Mootz (2014) further proposes a taxonomy of history pedagogy that features his approach to teaching with artefacts, a practice informed by his work in the Museum of Ancient Cultures at Macquarie University.

Thus, museum education praxis provides this research with solid foundations on which to build in an investigation of haptic history praxis in history classrooms and beyond. The museum link

also provides means to assess the role objects and artefacts play in living history and historical re-enactment.

As De Groot (2009) observes, museums host professional living history performances as part of their interactive mix of history education offerings. This reflects the popular/contemporary consumption and appetite for forms of history that generate a sense of connection to the past that is immediate, visible and palpable (De Groot, 2009). Bodily experience is important in developing an understanding of history. In the process of re-enactment, the self is ‘reinscribed’ both in relation to the past and ‘to a set of tropes associated with a previous event or artefact’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 104).

Outdoor living history (themed) museums offer immersive, interactive experience with place, things and professional first-person re-enactors (sometimes called ‘costumed interpreters’) who bring to life material artefacts through their use (Allison 2016). Thus ‘performance ... animates artefacts and place’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 116). The interactivity between audience, performer, place and things facilitates a different kind of learning and engagement with the past, affirming the value of historical embodiment as both education and experience (De Groot, 2009).

Other museums are less immersive, but within their walls they offer a variety of museum theatre; that is, performances that enhance the education experience as a vehicle to introduce and present museum material collections in new ways. Like all theatre, performativity in museums works to suspend disbelief and engage the imagination through bodily re-enacting of the past through material culture. Thus, theatricality amplifies artefacts and the experience of history (De Groot, 2009).

Beyond theatre, museum-hosted object-handling sessions provide scaffolds for ready transference to history classroom object-handling sessions. Museum object-handling sessions model historical inquiry using a material culture: objects are to be interrogated, the skills of observation employed and the rules of evidence applied as the meanings of things are contested, narrated and experienced (Staats, 2010a, 2010b, 2011; Zarmati, 2012).

Museum research has also focused on the significance of the haptic experience in handling artefacts in their quest to make museums more accessible to blind museum goers and those whose cultural background privileges touch over sight as a mode of knowing. Broad recognition of the importance of touch has been the rationale for moving museum collections out of glass

cases and making them accessible to the haptic sensibility, as a form of knowledge-making that is ‘in our skin-on-skin relationship with the world’ (Harries, 2017, p. 115).

Thus, museum education is an excellent jumping off point for theorising the fields of investigation of the current research thesis: the role of objects and artefacts as tools for historical thinking and historical consciousness in the praxis of classroom haptic history, as well as in the amateur living history and historical re-enactment performed beyond the walls and reach of cultural institutions.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has made a case for moving history beyond Collingwood’s head history. By incorporating new understandings resulting from a dissolution of the Cartesian mind–body dichotomy, the study of history is put ‘in touch’ (both haptically and affectively) with the past it seeks to understand. Adding to Collingwood’s ‘head’, this study seeks to investigate the ‘hands’ and ‘heart’ dimensions of historical thinking and consciousness that are derived from a materialist perspective.

Following in the footsteps of scholars in the field of material culture, this chapter has sampled, in a non-exclusive manner, theories across disciplines to produce a conceptual tool kit with which to examine the pedagogy and praxis of haptic history. From Marxist anthropology is derived the notion that humans and their material culture are mutually constitutive and thus, a rich historical source for historians and teachers of history. Social anthropology demonstrates that objects—as ‘ways of thinking and doing’—have multiple meanings over time. They can be read and communicate wordless experience. Beyond Gell’s notion of abductive agency (things reflect the minds of their creators and users), objects have a form of agency, biographies and can even attain personhood. Vital materialism draws on Spinozan notions of affect to assert the agency of things in the absence of the human actor and calls for a rethink of how history locates agency. From Bourdieu derives the notion that the material world is inscribed bodily and affectively; we experience and think about the world not just with the intellect but through the minded and affected body. Accepting that history is performative—and done with mind, body and affect—means to (re)perform history through bodies and material culture (*praesentia*) is a source and method for producing new historical knowledge and ways of thinking. This is reinforced by notions of kinaesthetic empathy and imagination to supplement Collingwood’s cerebral historical imagination as tools for re-enacting history as past experience. Re-evaluation

of the role of affect in history, and the power of objects and bodies to trigger it, provide an explanation for phenomena of the sublime experience—‘historical sensation’ and *ekstasis*—experienced by those who study history in their encounter with its material archive.

In arguing a theoretical case for doing history materially, the logic of practice commends a methodology that is at once theory and practice. The multidimensional, multimodal, thickly textured nature of things (Tilley, 2001) demands a mode of investigation that can capture synaesthetic experience alongside reflexivity. Thus, an ethnographic approach is advocated, which is the core subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Capturing Small Miracles

3.1 Introduction

This research's focus on the materialist dimension of teaching history through objects and artefacts, and the central role objects-in-use play in the praxis of historical re-enactment, demands a methodology capable of capturing the embodied, sensual, tactile, cognitive and affective human *experience* of history when explored through material culture. This, together with the acknowledgement of history teaching and historical re-enactment/living history as a fundamentally cultural manifestation (within the frame of 'popular' and 'public' history), informs the research methods adopted by this study. They have been influenced by the disciplinary methodologies of anthropology.

The methodological challenges for this study derive from the nature of the 'unnatural act' of historical thinking as a 'small miracle' which, as already argued, is not exclusively the domain of the intellect, but is found in the blurred intersections of the cognitive, affective and somatic dimensions of the material experience of the 'historical sensation'. The methodological tension is heightened by the deep suspicion that disciplinary/academic history has for forms of knowledge that derive from individual somatic (and thus affective) experience. Disciplinary history contests the validity of personal experience as a source of unambiguous evidence for knowing about the past (Agnew, 2007).

The personal experience of Australian historian Iain McCalman vividly illustrates the tension between disciplinary and experiential/popular history. As historian cum re-enactor in the 2001 BBC documentary *The Ship: Retracing Cook's Endeavour Voyage* he was scathing of the shortcomings of experiential, 'extreme history', which he rendered as 'Big Brother at sea' and 'the little ship of horrors' (McCalman, 2004). Surprisingly, six years later it was McCalman who suggested resolving the methodological tensions between the forms of historical knowledge produced by professional/disciplinary historians and 'others' engaged in the history industry. In the case of historical re-enactment, he suggests that the materialist experiential approach to history is 'best explored through an interdisciplinary lens' (McCalman & Pickering, 2010, p. 13).

Thus, with a nod to McCalman, this thesis adopts a methodology informed by ethnography. Ethnography is an approach that lends itself to capturing the strokes and harmonics to be found in the messy and sticky layers of meaning that humans construct when seeking to know, do and experience history through material culture. In treating history as culture, and using research tools from the field of anthropology to gather and interpret data, I intend to secure some ‘methodological congruence’ with the research problem (Bloomberg & Vople, 2012, p. 27). While I have methodologically strayed from the discipline of history to capture and interpret data, the subsequent analysis of the data uses theories of historical thinking—specifically, Seixas’s ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts and Collingwood’s notions of historical imagination and history as re-enactment—which (re)locates the study findings (back) in the field of history pedagogy.

3.2 An Ethnographic Approach

Epistemological assumptions and the paradigm of the researcher shape and determine the nature of the research question or problem and drive the choice of methodology. If methodology is the grand logic and design that links the (paradigm-related) research question(s) to the choice of methods, then the ethnographic methodologies employed in this research are validated by the notion of history as a socially mediated, cultural set of processes, practices and products.

As Lowenthal (2015) reminds us history, unlike memory, is intrinsically social. It is a collective endeavour necessary for personal and group identity, social cohesion and continuity. Thus, it is fitting that disciplinary methodologies like ethnography, founded on symbolic and interpretative cultural anthropology, find a place in this research. Living history/re-enactment, and much of the focus of ‘new history’ at the core of school history syllabuses, finds affinity with ethnohistory. Like popular and public history, ethnohistory focuses on the social and cultural practices of ordinary people, which are experienced through and shaped by material culture.

My own pedagogical paradigm has been moulded by my training and 30 years’ experience as a history classroom teacher. This has served to affirm, in the tradition of Dewey and Vygostky, an understanding that learning is an actively constructed, situation-specific and socially mediated phenomenon. A focus on social interaction as the basis for knowledge, with the aim of describing and understanding the phenomena of experiencing, teaching and learning through things, situates the study of haptic history in the interpretivist paradigm (O’Donoghue, 2007).

The interpretivist paradigm lends itself to qualitative inquiry, particularly as the research aim of the current study is both exploratory and open-ended in nature.

The interpretive paradigm places this study in the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism. Its underlying theoretical assumptions are that people actively and volitionally make meaning from events, and define reality based on the meaning they attach to 'things' such as material objects, people, ideas, their environment and institutions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The meanings people create determine how they act. All meaning is learned by interacting in their social and material world; thus, understanding and knowledge are constructed through mutual negotiation in everyday activities specific to particular contexts or moments in time (O'Donoghue, 2007). The 'everydayness' of the activity is important: 'everyday activity is the building block of a society (culture) where people interact with other people (rather than in isolation), and negotiate in the creation of meaning (O'Donoghue, 2007, p. 17). Thus, this study seeks to articulate the everyday making of historical understanding that comes with using material culture in history.

Social interactionism contends that people do not experience reality directly; rather, they make sense of the world through their 'perceptual filters' or perspectives and this, together with the material context, is what determines their actions in any given situation. The research implication of this understanding is that to fulfil the aim of defining or explaining the what, how or why of social phenomena, the researcher must enter into 'their world' through methods such as participant-observation, observation and interview to identify, record, document and analyse the perspectives of those involved in the social phenomena being studied in its natural and everyday context (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). From a materialist perspective, an appreciation of the contextual nuances asserted by the physicality of the material world is equally important for understanding 'everyday' perspectives.

This research employs qualitative research approaches. Qualitative research techniques focus on the discovery, description and exploration of complex sociocultural phenomena, and are best suited to developing a deep understanding of phenomena from the participant's perspective (Merriam, 1998). This may be achieved through the qualitative research methods of observation, participant-observation and interview. The symbolic interaction of social phenomena is visible through strongly patterned or 'routinised' behaviours (Jones & Somekh, 2011) shaped by material culture and conditions. Observation and interviews are tools to uncover and give voice to the perspectives of the participants.

In taking an approach informed by ethnography, this research acknowledges the semiotic legacy of Geertz's (1973) methodologies of 'thick description' and 'participant-observation'. Geertz's view of culture is essentially semiotic. Behaviour is culturally conditioned by, and reflective of, the 'webs of significance' humans have spun for themselves. Therefore, to understand the meanings of human behaviour, the researcher must identify, analyse and interpret the 'web' of culture (Geertz, 1973) in which that social action occurs. Behaviours and their meanings are specific to their cultural 'web' or context. Context is central to understanding the conceptual world of the social actor; this understanding permits the research to 'converse with them' and make sense of the social discourse (Geertz, 1973, p. 24). Thus, the ethnographic method is 'actor-oriented', engaging with those being studied and focusing on what they say and do in context (Geertz, 1973, p. 14). Context is not just social webs of significance but also, from a material culture perspective, the material and physical world that is the setting for social action.

Geertz's emphasis on the semiotic importance of context and actor orientation is the rationale for this study's adoption of the ethnographic methodologies of 'thick description', interview and participant-observation. Thick description is a methodology for capturing and analysing context. It also allows participants to 'speak for themselves'. Denzin builds on Ryle's and Geertz's notion of thick description as:

More than a record of what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion and the webs of social relationships that join one person to another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of the experience, or of the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions and meanings of the interacting individuals are heard (as cited in Savin-Badin & Major, 2013, p. 15).

Thick description has methodological congruence with this researcher's aim to capture the phenomenological and experiential dimensions of the cognitive, affective and somatic experience of haptic history.

Similarly, the use of participant-observation reflects Geertz's (1973, p. 23) insight that 'highly participative' fieldwork grounds the data in a 'sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely about them [the people being investigated], but, what is more important, creatively and imaginatively *with* them'. That is, the deep immersion of participant-observation can assist the researcher to dissolve the barrier of ethno-centrism and move away from the ethnographer's objective 'outside in' gaze to one that can encompass the 'inside-out' perspective of research participants.

There is much that aligns the methodology of the ethnographer with that of the historian. There is a common understanding of the significance of context as the key to interpretation; the need for *imagination* to understand the perspective of the cultural/historical other; and the goal of cultural relativity as the means of avoiding anachronistic (ahistorical) judgements. Indeed, ‘thick description’ finds alignment with Collingwood’s twofold methodology of reconstructing history from the ‘outside in’ (thin description) *and* the ‘inside out’ (thick description). Hughes-Warrington (2003, p. 57) observes that Collingwood’s inside-out dimension of history is essentially thick description because it encompasses the social meanings of action contextually anchored in the world/conceptual view of the historical actor.

However, this study’s adoption of an ethnographically flavoured approach is not free from methodological tensions. As the participant-observer, the researcher knowingly abandons the traditionally valued objective and distanced stance of the scholarly (and archival) historian. Embodied participation brings the contested nature of the affective turn into play (see Section 2.5) and the vexed issue of its place in the production of historical knowledge.

However, utilising rich and thick description as a reflective process—‘thinking and reflecting’ and ‘the thinking of thoughts’ (Geertz, 1973, p. 6)—serves to relieve some of the methodological tension. The reflexivity in thick description assists the researcher in the current study to shift from immersed participant to analytical observer. The selection and use of other sources, such as case study photos, video/film and social media posts, serves to add clarity and a level of objective veracity to the experiences captured in both the interviews and my own personal experience in fieldwork. This was particularly true in the fieldwork for the *Waterloo 2015* case study. Another level of anchoring the data in the real world of lived experience was achieved by incorporating the physicality of the material objects that research participants reference or use. These objects have lives of their own and, although they do not have a conventional voice, they are cultural signifiers of meaning and can be interrogated through both words and their use.

However, employing thick description—the rendering/translation of experience into words—does not entirely sit comfortably in a study into the experience of ‘doing’ history through material objects. As previously argued (see Section 2.3.4), the multimodal and poly-vocal nature of objects themselves resist linguistic translation. For Pinney (2006, p. 156), the legacy of the linguistic turn has ‘emptied the mind of its body’ and Geertzian anthropology has reduced material objects to ‘decorporalized signs and encrypted messages requiring decipherment’.

Can the ‘wordless experience’ of artefacts be accurately and comprehensively translated into words regardless of how thick and rich the description?

Geertz was aware of the conundrum posed by inscribing social discourse. Inscription sets fluid phenomenon into a fixed account—one that, while imperfect and incomplete, allows for analysis and reflection (Geertz, 1973, p. 19). Although words may imperfectly grasp the multimodalities of experience, they are a means by which word-rendered experience can be communicated and analysed, as to name something is to give it form and existence. Recognising that much is lost in any translation, this research endeavours to compensate with the richness and thickness of the inscription of interviews and fieldwork. It is hoped that in doing so, less is lost in translation, and the breadth, depth and range of the experiences captured compensate for the shortcomings of ethnographic methods. I consider this goal achieved if the reader gains a personal sense of living the inscribed haptic history experiences presented in this study.

There is also an element of auto-ethnography in this study. I have spent my 30-year professional career as a classroom history teacher exploring the impact of material culture in teaching history. I have tried not to intrude too often in this study with my own anecdotes and experiences as a teacher, but as a ‘participant-observer’ who has done eight years of fieldwork in the area of historical re-enactment/living history, I am already implicated and present in the data.

One of the teacher interviews also served as an auto-ethnographic episode. One interviewee (a teacher himself newly enrolled in doctoral research at another university) ‘turned the tables’ on the interviewer and, after his interview was over, asked me about my haptic history practice. The audio recording (and subsequent transcription) captured my reflections and provided auto-ethnographical material for this study.

3.3 Qualitative Methods Overview

The qualitative research methods employed in this study are an online survey (349 participants); semi-structured interviews (12 teachers and 13 re-enactors); participant-observation (*Waterloo 2015* fieldwork); two focus groups (one of re-enactors and one of teachers); auto-ethnography (reflections on my own teaching practice); and eight years of ‘deep hanging out’ (Geertz, 1998) as a member of an historical re-enactment group (the NSW Corps of Marines Inc.).

The research also monitored and analysed news and social media online posts themed around the practice of historical re-enactment and living history. Specifically, the media around the

case study of *Waterloo 2015* (the bicentenary re-enactment/commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo) was examined. This served to complement the perspectives and analysis of data I collated both as a participant-observer and in the (seven) interviews of re-enactors present at this event.

There were two arms of this study: secondary classroom teachers who self-identified as teachers who use objects and artefacts in their praxis of history teaching, and living history/historical re-enactors who, as a ‘serious leisure activity’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 59) hobby and pastime, participate in the popular and public history practice of the use of material culture to (re)create, (re)live and (re)perform history. The two arms were not mutually exclusive, as four of the teacher participants in this study are both teachers and re-enactors. Further, the boundary between re-enactors and their experience of being taught high school history is blurred. Their experience of school history influenced both the decision to join the hobby and their practice of historical re-enactment/living history.

3.3.1 Case studies

While there is some debate around what defines a case study (Merriam, 1998), the consensus view is that a case study is the study of a situation or phenomenon in its real-life context, with all its complexity (Simons, 2009). Case studies are well suited for researching ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions in research settings where it is impossible to control all the variables. The case study’s focus on contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts (Yin, 2009) allows it to report on complex social and educational activity. It is premised on social interactionist theory and seeks to identify and describe social phenomena (Chadderton & Torrance, 2011).

Case studies illuminate multiple perspectives concerning ‘an instance in action’ in a manner that is descriptive, inductive and heuristic. Case studies retain and capture the dimension of the interconnectedness of individuals as active, autonomous meaning makers within their complex social (and material) environments (Pole & Morrison, 2003), such as schools and living history contexts. A case study method has been chosen in this research because of its flexibility and capacity to capture rich description; thus, it has been used to incorporate a wide and full variety of evidence, to engage participants, and to reflect and explain (multiple) perspectives (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2009).

Defining the boundaries in case studies is complex (Merriam 1998; Yin 2009). The bounds of the case studies for the teacher arm of the study were defined by their shared membership in

the teaching profession; regulation by the Australian history syllabus; the common features of the secondary classroom; minimum qualifications (university history and education graduates); and memberships in professional associations. In this sense, each teacher participant in the study is an ‘instance in action’ in a ‘bounded system’. Individually, they are standalone case studies of haptic history practice, with different experiences depending on variables such as length of teaching service, geographic location and school system. The 12 teachers in this research all teach secondary history in New South Wales (NSW) under the auspices of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). All teacher participants in this study are current teachers in Sydney or regional NSW schools.

However, rather than present each teacher in the study as a separate case study, I draw on them selectively to shed light on themes that emerged from the data. Their voice is heard—sometimes individually, other times collectively—in the how and why of using objects and artefacts to teach history. Their praxis is then analysed within the frame of history pedagogy as defined by Seixas’s ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts and the broader issue of historical consciousness. My approach has been to treat them as a collective choir of practice, where my role is that of conductor and arranger. I draw out, highlight, contrast and compare the themes embedded in their ‘music’ of practice; individual and collective voices are heard within the context of the whole, so themes are heard, some in ensemble, others as a featured solo.

Similarly, each of the 13 re-enactors individually interviewed are bounded case studies. Although there is no regulatory body for historical re-enactors/living history to demarcate the hobby, as it is a social activity, it takes place within organised clubs or groups with constitutions and group norms. In Australia, some re-enactors who use firearms are obliged to be in a registered group to justify their ownership of firearms and other weapons. Separate clubs and groups come together for large-scale events (festivals, battle re-enactments, ‘meets’). This, together with a prominent online presence through membership of Facebook re-enactor/living history groups, provides re-enactors with a sense of belonging to a cohesive group.

The temporal bounds of the case studies are set between 2015 and 2017, which is when most of the data (surveys, interviews, focus groups and the *Waterloo 2015* case study) were collected. The geographical bounds of the teacher group is NSW, Australia. While the re-enactors interviewed were primarily located in Australia (seven of 13 participants), other were located in the US (three), UK (two) and the Netherlands (one). The overseas re-enactors were interviewed using internet ‘VoIP’/video calls.

From the 12 teacher participants, is also selected ‘vignettes of practice’ case studies, which focused on the use of a particularly ‘powerful’ object and how this facilitated teaching historical thinking. Two of these vignette exempla—the ‘Gott Mit Uns Belt and Postcards’ (see Section 9.4.1) and the ‘Holocaust School Museum’ (see Section 9.4.2)—are discussed in full, while other samples of teacher praxis are used throughout the analysis to illustrate particular aspects of the use of objects and artefacts in teaching history.

In the re-enactor arm of the study, each interviewee is also considered a separate case study of praxis; however, as with the teachers, the survey and interview data provided the opportunity to likewise delineate case studies around the themes that emerged. I focused on particular objects that interviewees identified as being essential or interesting for their praxis of re-enacting and (re)living history. One case study vignette that emerged from the re-enactor data included the black powder musket and its form of agency that made it a ‘disobedient object’ (see Section 6.7). Other object vignette case studies observe the techniques that re-enactors use when weaving the object into their narrative and embodied practice, such as the periscope rifle, the Sutton Hoo axe-hammer and the Civil War surgeon (see Appendix H).

One case study—*Waterloo 2015*—due to its size and the magnitude of available data, could not be contained as a vignette, so it became the major case study for the re-enactor/living history arm of the study. Multi-perspectival data was collected from in-depth interviews with seven re-enactors; the re-enactor survey responses; and a collection of online representations of the event via social media, YouTube, blogs, posts and tweets. The richness of this data complemented that collected during fieldwork as a participant-observer at this event.

A further significant factor in the ethnographic methodology of this study was the necessity of the researcher to be highly participative. Building rapport and trust as a ‘fellow traveller’ in the field (both as a classroom history teacher and historical re-enactor) was an important element in recruiting participants for the study. Initial attempts to recruit teachers through a survey disseminated via email to NSW Department of Education schools, an Australian War Memorial loan box mailout and an article in the NSW History Teacher’s Association *Teaching History* journal was underwhelming (15 returns with only three eventual participants). The researcher had to demonstrate his bone fides by running workshops and delivering conference papers through the HTANSW and the HTTAA on haptic history to recruit the bulk of teacher participants in this study. The pedagogic interest and enthusiasm generated by these presentations and follow-up papers in professional journals, was an important element in the

recruitment of participants and underpinned the openness and frankness of the interviews that followed.

Similarly, a personal profile within the re-enactor community was important for recruiting this arm of the study. Five of the interviewees were from the re-enacting group I joined at the end of 2010. I got to know them over four years as I moved from the position of a complete novice in re-enactment to an elected official (vice-president and then, president) in the club. It was in the fifth year (following the Waterloo fieldwork/case study) that I formally invited these five participants into the study. Four of them had been with me at *Waterloo 2015* and were able to provide perspectives that balanced my own as a participant-observer. I had come to know a further three re-enactor participants, and the focus group, through encounters in multi-group re-enactment events in Australia. Indeed, two people from the focus group and another of the interview participants had also been at *Waterloo 2015* (adding further perspectives to my own as a participant-observer). A further seven re-enactor participants were recruited via the re-enactor survey tool, and the final participant was a re-enactor/educator I met through a ‘living history’ school show.

The re-enactor survey tool also needed to be credible. I joined a number of online Facebook groups for re-enactors/living historians in Australia and overseas. The Facebook presence for re-enactors is significant and part of their community of practice as a share point for research, buying and selling re-enactment items, and notifications of upcoming events. There was some initial suspicion when I sought permission to post the re-enactor survey tool. Again, I had to demonstrate bone fides—this time as a re-enactor—and respond to some hostile posts, but after that the online survey was enthusiastically embraced. Over one weekend, more than 300 re-enactors from around the world completed the survey. To maintain my integrity and honour their commitment and time in completing the survey, I wrote a summary of the data and findings (see Appendix D), which was posted on the Facebook sites that had hosted the survey link.

In addition to supplying potential candidates for in-depth interviews, the survey became a rich and detailed source of data. Although designed primarily as a recruitment tool for in-depth interviews, the survey’s use of open-field textboxes elicited a large number of detailed reflective responses concerning the nature and practice of their hobby. This thickly descriptive data was an unexpectedly rich source for coding.

Case studies were built around an individual's experience (as a history teacher or re-enactor), an event (*Waterloo 2015* Re-enactment), or an object. In the case of the history teachers interviewed, case studies were drawn from their discussion of their most successful history teaching experience with a powerful object(s). The *Waterloo 2015* case study was a five-day intensive and deeply immersive participant-observation experience with the researcher as a re-enactor in the largest-ever European historical battle re-enactment, held in Belgium in June 2015. The re-enactor object case studies were identified partly from the emergent themes from the large-scale open-text survey data and in the follow-up, in-depth interviews. The in-depth re-enactor interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of the role objects played in their praxis of living history, and for them to nominate the objects they considered significant in their praxis of re-enactment and living history. A number of these objects were given 'space of their own' to 'speak for themselves' via the voice of their co-agents (owners?).

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

More than a half of the survey respondents (150+) volunteered to take further part in the research via online interviews. From these, I selected seven using the following criteria: an evaluation of their text responses for evidence of reflective practice (historical thinking); the richness of the survey data (as measured by coding intensity); whether they claimed to have experienced the historical sensation (referred to in the hobby as 'seeing the elephant' or the 'magic moment'); an awareness of the role material culture plays in the praxis of their hobby; and whether they participated in *Waterloo 2015* (for further perspectives on the major case study).

Three teacher interviews done by telephone call and nine were conducted face-to-face (eight in school settings and one at a history teachers' conference during the lunch break). Six of the re-enactor interviews were conducted face-to-face and the remainder remotely via Skype.

All participants were given pseudonyms when referenced in this study to ensure anonymity. A summary of teacher and re-enactor interview participants is provided in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 respectively.

Table 3.1: Teacher interviewees summary (with pseudonyms)

Name	Demographic	Role in Study	Other Information
Cheryl	Female, late twenties	Interview	Teacher Metropolitan Secondary Government School, early career teacher, Sydney
Drew	Male, mid-forties	Interview	Teacher Regional Secondary Government School, early career teacher, NSW
Elise	Female, mid-fifties	Focus Group Participant	Teacher, Regional Secondary Government School, late-career teacher NSW
George	Male, mid-sixties	Interview	Retired Head of Department, Metropolitan Government Secondary School, University Lecturer
Giles	Male, early forties	Interview	Teacher Metropolitan Independent Secondary School. Archaeology background, Sydney
Kerry	Female, mid-thirties	Interview	Teacher Metropolitan Secondary Government School, mid-career teacher, Sydney
Lachlan	Male, early fifties	Interview	Teacher Metropolitan Secondary School, late-career teacher with Industrial Arts background, Sydney
Liam	Male, early forties	Interview	Head of Department, Independent Suburban Secondary School, Sydney
Linda	Female, late fifties	Focus Group Participant	Teacher Regional Secondary School, NSW
Mark	Male, late forties	Interview	Teacher Suburban Secondary Government School, mid-career teacher, Physical Education background, NSW
Megan	Female, mid-thirties	Interview	Teacher Metropolitan Independent Secondary School. Archaeology background, mid-career teacher, Sydney
Michael	Male, late-twenties	Interview	Teacher Suburban Secondary non-Government School, early-career teacher, historical re-enactor, Sydney
Michelle	Female, mid-thirties	Interview	Head of Department Suburban Secondary Government School, mid-career teacher, Sydney
Phillip	Male, early fifties	Interview	Teacher Suburban Primary Government School, late-career teacher, historical re-enactor, Sydney

Table 3.2: Re-enactor interviewees summary (with pseudonyms)

Name	Demographic	Role in Study	Other Information
Brad	Male, late fifties	Interview	Nurse, Sydney, Australia
Geoff	Male, mid-fifties	Interview	Retired military, banking administration, Florida
Hamish	Male, mid-seventies	Interview	Retired, Regional NSW Australia
Jan	Male, mid-twenties	Interview	Office manager, New Jersey, USA
Jeremy	Male, mid-thirties	Interview	Theatre Technician, London, UK
Jerry	Male, late-fifties	Interview	Storeman, Sydney Australia
Luke	Male, early twenties	Interview	University student, Sydney Australia
Lyn	Female, mid-forties	Interview	Surveyor, London UK
Miles	Male, late-fifties	Interview	Telecommunications Technician, Sydney Australia
Neil	Male, late fifties	Focus Group Participant	Pre-school worker. Musician Regional NSW Australia

Paul	Male, mid-thirties	Interview	Military, Netherlands
Rebecca	Female, early fifties	Focus Group Participant	Translator, Musician, Regional NSW Australia
Simon	Male, early-twenties	Interview	University student, Sydney Australia
Tegan	Female, late fifties	Focus Group Participant	Stage Technician, Sydney, Australia
Tom	Female, late twenties	Interview	Grazier, NSW Australia
Walter	Male, late-fifties	Interview	Retired firefighter and medic, Tennessee, USA

The use of semi-structured interviews provided latitude to pursue different lines of inquiry, drill down for detail, and clarify and check understanding. The constants in the interviews were the guiding questions (provided to the participants beforehand), the interviewer and a device to record the audio (and make transcriptions of the interviews for close analysis). However, the flexibility of the interview structure provided for variables and fresh data collection opportunities. For example, the location/settings of the interviews were significant. When the interview or focus group setting was a living history site/event for re-enactors or a school setting for teachers, the availability of the objects they used in their praxis of haptic history became part of the texture of the interview, as objects were handled, demonstrated and used. When the interview took place ‘on location’, a physical tour of the site, classroom and object collections were incorporated into the interview. This added sensory layers of meaning beyond the words used by the participants.

Some of the interviews conducted via Skype/VoIP platforms also featured the objects as interview ‘participants’. In the case study of the Civil War surgeon, the participant insisted on providing a full live audiovisual performance of his living history display as a prelude to responding to interview questions. The richness of the history performance and the objects in use informed the direction of the subsequent interview.

As already noted, the flexibility of the interview structure allowed for the interviewee to turn the tables on the interviewer and ask questions of the researcher and his experience. Thus, within the interview structure, variables in the way interviews were conducted became part of the data. Unsurprisingly, the handful of interviews done without the presence of physical objects or visuals (audio only interviews) were more challenging due to the visible or physical absence of the objects at the centre of their haptic praxis of history. Other interviewees had the assistance of published material beyond the interview, which they referred to in their interview.

This material was complementary data that supported the perspectives they expressed in the interview. For example, one re-enactor referenced the objects used in his role as a presenter in the myth-busting history show, *The Boffin the Builder and the Bombardier* (Concannon, 2013). A number of teachers in their interview also referenced objects, lessons and strategies that had featured in various forms of publication from professional journal articles, PhD dissertations, conference papers and workshops, and newspaper articles. The availability of such material was another (welcomed) variable in the collection of the data, as it fleshed-out, enriched and verified the perspectives expressed in the interview data.

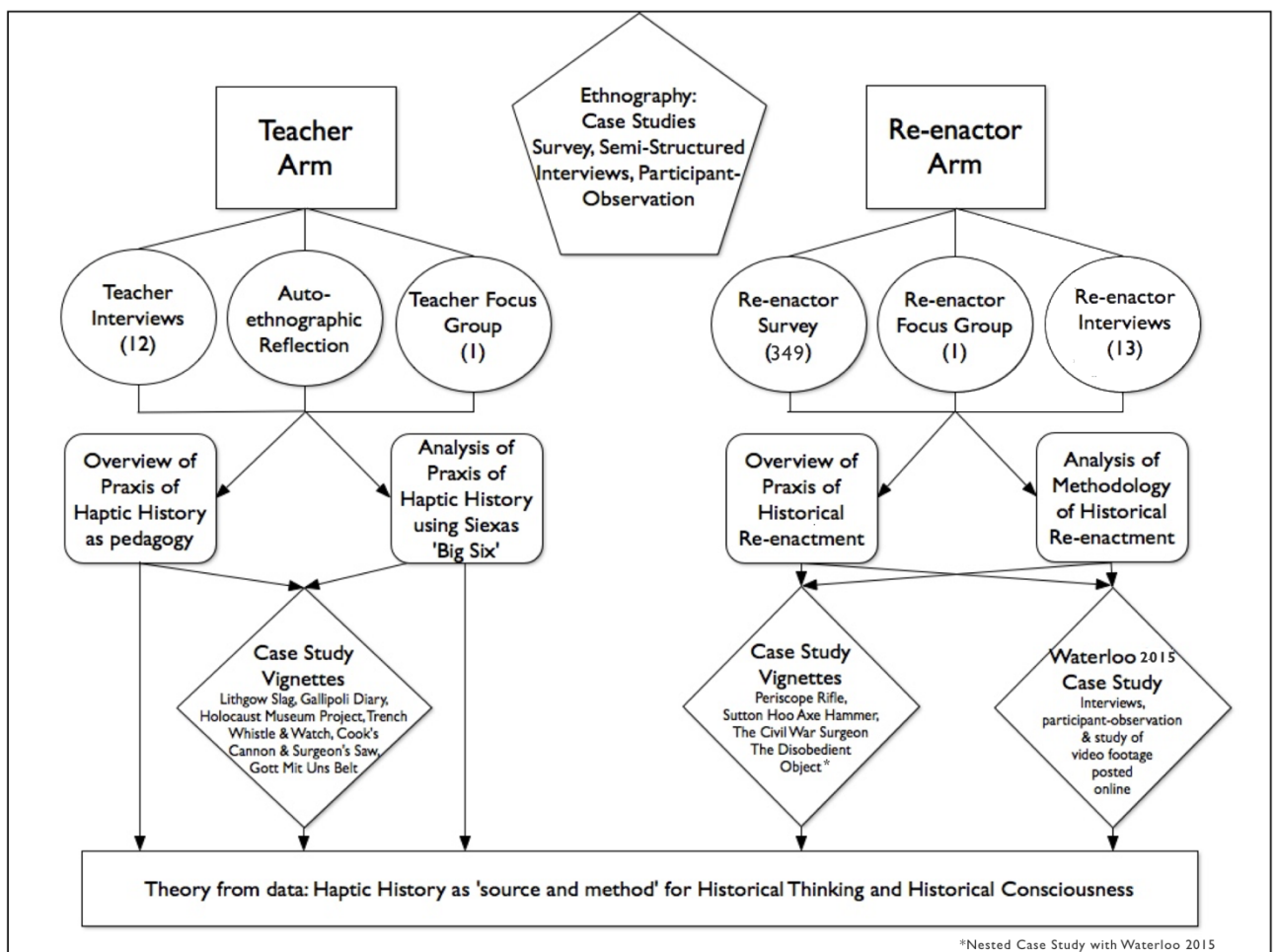


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Flowchart of Research Design

3.4 Data Analysis

This study has taken a two-stepped approach to the analysis of the data. The first step was to apply coding to identify emerging themes and patterns in the data (Saldaña, 2015). When

applied to the survey data, density of data coding was a tool for identifying survey respondents to be followed up for in-depth interviews. The second step of data analysis involves theory-led interpretative analysis of the data and its themes using the theoretical frameworks of Seixas's notion of historical consciousness and 'big six' historical thinking concepts, together with the philosophical premises of Collingwood's *Idea of History*. The interpretation and analysis of the re-enactor/living history data also employs theoretical concepts from the fields of performance and material culture studies.

3.4.1 First cycle of data analysis: Thematic coding

The first cycle of data analysis involved coding. Beginning with the macro-theoretical conceptual premise that the practise of history involves the three broad domains of the cognitive, somatic and affective ('head, hands and hearts'), the researcher then initially coded the data using the constant comparative method first developed by Glaser and Strauss in the late 1960s. The method has been widely adopted and is well understood (Corbin & Holt, 2011; Merriam, 2009). As an approach to the analysis of data, it constructs a theory about social phenomena from a detailed study of individual cases (Taber, 2000). As such, this approach sits well with a case study approach, as it allows for the generation of theory from data about the phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants (O'Donoghue, 2007).

Here it is important to acknowledge how this researcher's perspective and paradigm has shaped the manner of the data's coding. Theoretical perspectives impact on the interpretation and coding of data (Jones & Alony, 2011). My theoretical perspective has been informed by the research I had undertaken prior to commencing the current study. My first 20 years of teaching history, with and through objects, is best described as unconscious competence. Experience taught me that it engages students in a way that text-heavy approaches do not. I endeavoured to make my competence in teaching with objects one of conscious competence when I participated in the 2008 Australian History Summer School, whereby each delegate began a research project in the area of history pedagogy. My research project investigated the use of object-based learning at the Australian War Memorial and the National Museum of Australia. Here, I was introduced to museum learning theory and teaching through material culture, and became familiar with research emerging from the UK museum sector. By the end of 2009, with the help of a NSW Premier's Teachers' Scholarship, I completed a five-week study tour of 37 museum education services in the UK and Ireland with a focus on how best practice in object-based learning could be adapted for the classroom context. This informed and underpinned my own

practice of haptic history and served as a catalyst for further research (the current study). The prior research provided the conceptualising of haptic history as a practice of the head, hands and heart (Staats 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2014).

Thus, informed by field and practice of history pedagogy, this researcher's approach to the first cycle of data analysis was done with a 'general idea' of where to begin (Jones & Alony, 2011). The three theoretical conceptual categories—head, hands and heart—were brought to the data. However, this did not limit or preclude the additional coding of themes and concepts. In the process of 'drilling down' into the data, the researcher used the constant comparative method to compare, contrast, confirm and disconfirm, participant experiences against the macro-conceptual categories. It also served to identify fresh sub-categories, themes and axial connections from the data. Indeed, the theoretical macro-level framework of 'head, hands and hearts' provided this study provided both structure, and flexibility. This is illustrated by the coding sample provided in Figure 3.2. My approach to the first coding of the data was to both chunk up to the three broad categories brought to the study (head, hands, heart) *and* drill down to locate variations, connections and themes within, and beyond, these macro-conceptual categories.

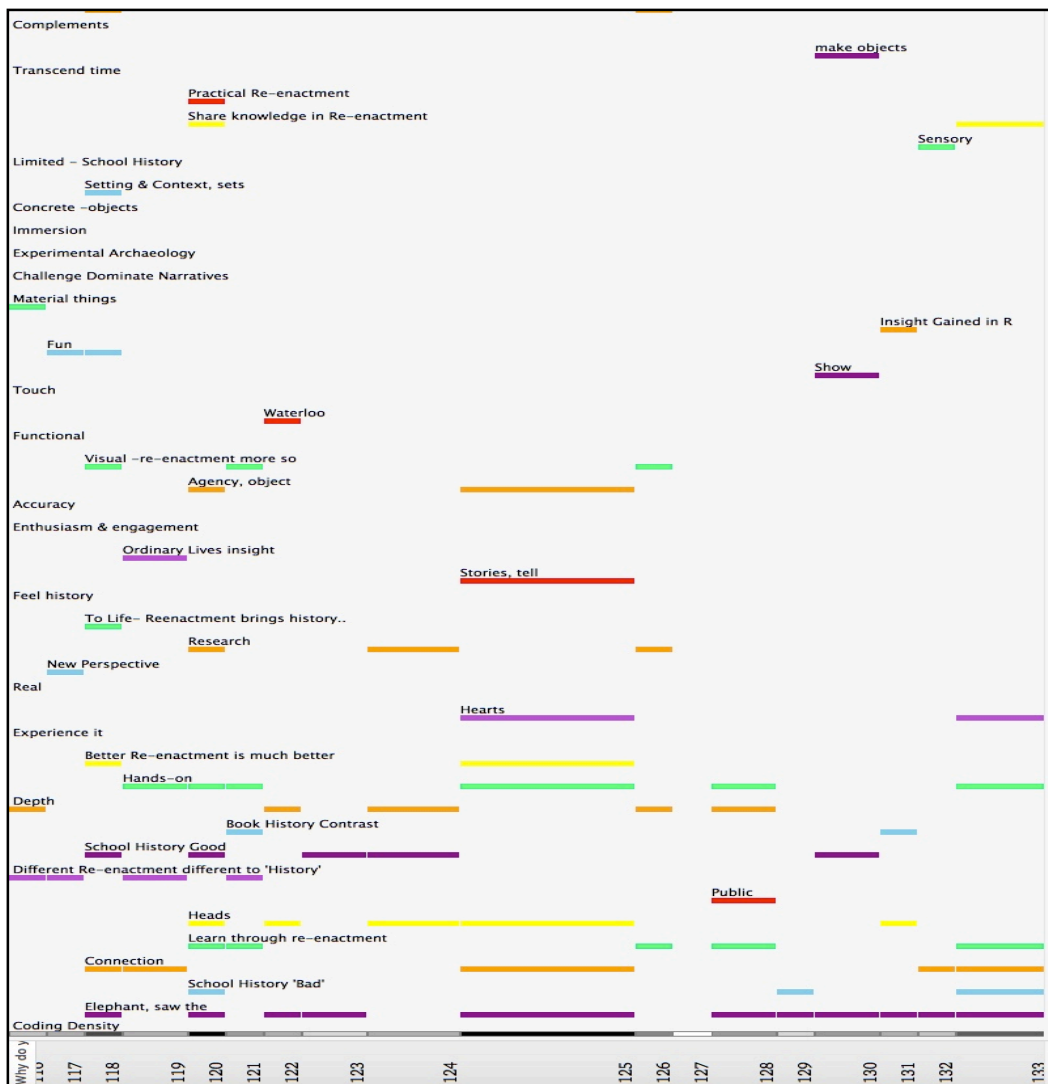


Figure 3.2: Sample of coding of survey data using NVivo 11

Thus, whilst the first cycle of data analysis (open and axial coding) was informed by a ‘theoretical perspective’, the researcher endeavoured to approach the data with an open and receptive mind, and a stance of ‘general wonderment’ (Jones & Alony, 2011, p. 99). This was fruitful in providing fresh conceptual and thematic categories and the opportunity to identify axial connections and patterns in the data.

Furthermore, the process of coding also was invaluable for storing, organising and managing the large amount of data, particularly from the re-enactor ‘open text’ survey. The use of open coding concepts, collated with the aid of NVivo 11 software, allowed the research to both manage and stay true to the *personal* perspectives that run the risk of being lost when encountering voluminous data. The researcher sought, wherever possible, to code ‘in vivo’ in

order to stay ‘close’ to the data. The process of coding ‘in vivo’ is especially congruent with the anthropological approach of thick description to capture the richness of the data.

The process of coding also assisted in identifying participants for the in-depth interviews and cross referencing the data by thematic content. Coding allowed for the ready identification of dominant/recurring themes (using the coding frequency function of NVivo 11) as well as identifying the ‘richest’ data sources (indicated by the coding density, see Figure 3.2). Coding density became one of the criteria for selecting survey participants for follow-up, in-depth, interviews.

The coding approach has its limitations. Like the process of thick description, coding also translates phenomena of wordless experience into nominal categories. The materiality of things in haptic history and the ‘historic sensation’ may prove, by their very nature, resistant to the abstractive processes of coding. The use of thick description serves to offset the reductionist tendencies of coding and assists this research to stay sensitive to idiosyncrasies in the data. It recognises the unique nature of every case study and acknowledges that a unique experience may defy abstraction.

3.4.2 Second cycle of data analysis: Interpretative theoretical frameworks

The second cycle of data analysis made use of the material coded by theme in the first cycle of the analysis within the interpretative theoretical frameworks of history and history pedagogy. This follows Yin’s (2009) approach to data analysis, which contends that case studies should be theory-led.

Following the initial coding of the teacher interview/focus group data, theoretical frames drawn from history pedagogy and philosophy led the analysis. Conceptual frames drawn from Collingwood’s notion of historical imagination and history as re-enacted thought, together with Seixas’s ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts and the lens of historical consciousness, complemented the first stage of data coding. In the spirit of Geertz, the use of thick description gave voice to the data and allowed it to ‘speak for itself’. The NVivo software was utilised to organise and cross-reference the interview material.

A similar theory-led analysis was applied to the re-enactor/living history data. In addition to the theories of historical thinking and historical consciousness, the re-enactor/living history data invited analysis using theory drawn from the fields of material culture and performance studies.

These theoretical lenses, which were previewed in Chapter 2, are applied in the analysis of the data in Chapters 4, 5, 8 and 9.

The second cycle of analysis of the data using interpretive theory permitted the emergent themes from the coding cycle to be readily investigated within the well-established and widely accepted theoretical framework of historical thinking and historical consciousness. A key benefit of this was the ease of transferring and practically applying the conclusions of this research to the praxis of classroom history pedagogy.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter is entitled ‘small miracles’ in recognition of the methodological challenges entailed in the ‘mysterious process’ of capturing perspectives other than our own (something core to both the praxis of cultural anthropology and history). There is another ‘small miracle’ inherent in the phenomena that is being researched—the unnatural and impossible act of doing history itself—as a process of bringing that which no longer exists—the past—into the present. The focus of this study is how this is done through the diachronic paradox of ‘things’—historical objects and artefacts that are at once of the past, but also of the present—and the possibilities that objects thereby proffer as a vehicle for historical thinking and historical consciousness.

The ethnographically flavoured case study methodology is adopted as the most appropriate tool for grappling with the slipperiness of the phenomena, a form of history that—through the materiality of things—is multimodally experienced across the domains of the head, hands and heart. There are (exciting) tensions and shortcomings in an approach that uses methodologies from cultural anthropology to investigate history and its pedagogy. However, I concur with McCalman and Pickering (2010, p. 13): the prospect of new knowledge emerging from the dialectic of an interdisciplinary approach is ‘worth the risk’.

Chapter 4: Everyday Praxis of Haptic History — Historical Re-enactment and Living History

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on historical re-enactment and living history as a popular and public form of history that has, at the core of its praxis, the use of objects and artefacts to make historical knowledge. As a predominantly post-school, lifelong learner activity, historical re-enactment and living history has a complex relationship with school history. Its emergence and popularity is both a consequence of, and reaction to, the experience of school history. It is also the product of a bigger trend in democratising history and a craving among ordinary people to feel connected to the past.

The chapter begins by defining living history and historical re-enactment before introducing the study's survey data. The survey data provides a broad overview of the motivations and purposes that drive historical re-enactment and living history. These motivations include the materialist experiential episteme as the basis for first-hand knowledge of the past, and the avowed educative goal of the hobby. These aspects of the materialist praxis of history is relevant to the current study's focus on history pedagogy.

Next, the complex relationships between historical re-enactment/living history and academic/professional history, together with collective memory, is explored. There has been a remarkable growth and popularisation of living history and historical re-enactment in post-school settings and for lifelong learning. This suggests its materialist methodology models a type of engagement that might find fruitful transference and application in classroom settings. However, historical re-enactment and living history's experiential episteme needs to be critiqued as part of an assessment of its validity as a pedagogic praxis.

4.2 Definitions and Terms Used in Living History and Historical Re-enactment

One of the difficulties in securing definitions in the popular history praxis of living history and historical re-enactment is that terms and their usages/meanings are fluid. For example, among American Civil War enthusiasts in the 1990s, the term 'living historian' denoted a hardcore and

serious historical interpreter, while ‘re-enactor’—or the ‘r-word’—was a derogatory term reserved for those who fell short in achieving the standards of historical authenticity and realism (Horwitz, 1999). Twenty years on, the terms ‘living historian’ and ‘re-enactor’ are less value-laden.

In its strictest sense, historical re-enactment is the attempt to recreate and re-enact a historical event or specific moment in time. In the hobby, this event is nearly always associated with a battle (Jackson, 2001; Jones, 2007). There is script (sometimes based on an historical account), and within this narrative, the participants (re)perform the event from the past in an attempt to access the experiences of the original historical actors.

‘Living history’ is a term coined by Carl Becker in the 1930s to describe a form of historical recreation/interpretation of the past that usually focusses on *generic* (non-battle) enactments of daily life and general practices from an historical time or period. This is done by ‘interpreters’ who dress in period clothing and perform the routines and activities of ordinary people in the past (Schneider, 2011; Thompson, 2004). Living history practices are also associated with modes of performance-based historical investigations and demonstrations connected to museums, heritage sites and archaeological digs (Schneider, 2011). In practice, there is significant overlap between historical re-enactment and living history. Living history focuses on non-combat aspects of period activity; thus, many living historians are re-enactors, but not all re-enactors practice living history. Being non-battle oriented, living history involves a broader range of participants (women and children) than re-enactments which, being battles, reflect a gender bias.

Common to both historical re-enactor and living historian is that their activities are grounded in research to authentically and as accurately as possible, materially, physically and performatively portray the lived experiences of people from the past.

Two elements are essential in the activity of historical re-enactment/living history. First, an ‘impression’ or persona needs be adopted or developed. The persona is about being an ‘historical other’ in the past as opposed to yourself in the present (Handler & Saxton, 1988). This persona is ‘inhabited’ (Schroeder, 2012, p. 14) during re-enactment/living history events as a way to direct and focus the individual’s effort to recreate the past. Many re-enactors adopt a persona that simultaneously straddles the ‘self-in-the present’ and ‘other-in-the-past’—a complex doubling of being. Their impression retains a connection to the present self as ‘a period

version of whom they believe they would be' (Clemons, 2007, p. 152). Within impressions/personae there are typically a choice of three perspectival positions to adopt: the first-person, second-person and third-person impression/persona (Jackson, 2001, p. 72ff). The type of 'time travel' illusion varies with the personae adopted (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 479).

A first-person impression is a form of deep immersion in the past. It is a 'portrayal in which a re-enactor acts and talks as if he or she were living in the period portrayed' (Thompson, 2004, p. 292). By comparison, the third-person impression/persona retains a distinction between the re-enactor/living historian as a person in the present and the historical figure they portray (Handler & Saxton, 1988). They refer to people in the past as 'they' as distinct from themselves. Third-person impressionists who interact with the public are sometimes referred to as 'historical interpreters'. While they dress in period-appropriate clothes and use historical objects, they stay in the present as their modern selves to translate across time the meaning of past culture and activities to a modern audience; they act 'as a bridge between the modern world and that other world (the past)' (Townsend, 2017, Ep. 3). To take on the educative role as a third-person/historical interpreter requires a level of historical consciousness—an understanding of the 'past as a foreign country', where values, beliefs, attitudes and worldviews were different to our own. This requires they understand the 'inner person' of the impression, to represent their external appearance and the appropriate worldview of their persona's historical context, including a social class 'backstory' from the past. The third-person is the impression most commonly adopted in living history/historical re-enactment.

There are further hierarchies based on historical knowledge and experience. While first-person immersive living history is recognised as the most demanding (Clemons, 2007) and the third-person/historical interpreter needs a certain level of historical expertise, at entry-level, the novice participant is not expected to have detailed or in-depth knowledge of the past or the persona portrayed. Sometimes referred to as 'eye-candy' (Townsend 2017, Ep. 7, Part 1) or 'mannequins' (Thierer, 2010, p. 10), their role is to flesh out the scene, to act as a backdrop for the visual setting as a background person or a prop. This kind of re-enactor is most concerned with the outer person and 'looking the part': 'they can be as simple as 21st century people dressed in 18th century clothes' (Townsend 2017, Ep. 3).

The second-person persona is not usually adopted by re-enactors themselves. It is reserved for members of the public who are invited to try out or participate in an activity (Lowenthal, 2015; Magelssen, 2014). This is the kind of persona experience school students encounter with living

history excursions and incursions, and role-plays/simulations in living history museums and heritage sites (Magelssen, 2006).

The historical re-enactor's goal of becoming the historical 'other' in their impression-making and impression-taking, is somewhat paradoxical. Ironically, the deep, immediate and *personal* connection with the past is made by the illusion of being someone other than themselves. However, there is dialectic at work between the states of the present self and the inhabited historical other. The dialogue and dialectic between these two positions is the space in which historical consciousness operates and can flourish. Yet, the hobby recognises the dangers when that reflective space does not exist. It has been termed 're-enactment pathology' (Lowenthal, 1985; Thompson, 2004) and is discussed in Chapter 5.

Two other terms—'farb' and 'hardcore'—are used in the hobby by participants to describe a re-enactor's success or otherwise in achieving an authentic or convincing historical impression. Two dimensions of the impression are judged. The first is a visual assessment. Re-enactors are evaluated by the authenticity of their appearance. Essentially, this is a focus on the historical accuracy of the material culture 'in motion' (clothes, shoes, hat, equipment, etc.) that has been assembled in support of the impression (Anderson, 1984, p. 45). Anachronisms and errors evident in the materiality of the impression leaves the re-enactor open to the insulting appellation of 'farb'⁶ (Bates, 2016; Clemons, 2007; Horwitz, 1999; Jackson, 2001). A farb is 'a bad, inauthentic re-enactor' who is 'judged as having failed to establish a legitimate link to history' (Thompson, 2004, pp. 291, 216). The status and credentials of a re-enactor are contingent on the authenticity of the material culture component of their impression. Academic historian and avid re-enactor Gapps (2010) remarks, that as a re-enactor he 'wears the contents' of his 'research as costume'. He says this is more 'nerve racking than formal historical writing' (Gapps, 2010, p. 52). This may partly explain the obsessive attention to the authenticity and accuracy of their historical 'kit' that is evident in the re-enactment community (see also Section 4.13).

The second dimension of a convincing historical impression goes beyond appearance, to performance (Thompson, 2004). Re-enactors and living historians who behave anachronistically or exhibit a period-inappropriate 'mindset' or 'karma' (Thompson, 2004, pp. 292, 293)—what academic historians might call *mentalité*, paradigm or worldview—can

⁶ The origin of the term 'farb' is disputed (Clemons, 2007; Daugbjerg, 2014; Horwitz, 1999; Jackson, 2001; Thompson, 2004).

equally be labelled a ‘farb’ (Clemons, 2007; Jackson, 2001). Thus, in historical re-enactment/living history, authenticity is derived from ‘things-in-use’, in combination with an historically appropriate mindset, to produce a performance.

The opposite of a ‘farb’ is a ‘hardcore’ (‘superhardcore’ or ‘progressive’). These are serious re-enactors/living historians for whom the authenticity—of material objects *and* experience—is paramount (Handler & Saxton, 1988; Thompson, 2004). Yet, although the term is used as a compliment (Bates, 2016; Horwitz, 1999) these kind of re-enactors are often criticised within the hobby for taking the authenticity of both appearance and experience to unattainable or unreasonable extremes (Horwitz, 1999; Jackson, 2001; Thompson, 2004). The term ‘stitch-Nazi’ has also been coined to describe the exacting standards of accuracy and detail (‘to the stitch’) in clothing and equipment demanded by hardcores of themselves and of others (Schroeder, 2012, p. 36; Thompson, 2004, p. 211). Hardcores are known to make virulent and often public attacks on other re-enactors who do not live up to hardcore standards of authenticity. This is a source of tension in the hobby (Thompson, 2004). A third group of re-enactors—called ‘moderates’ or ‘mainstreamers’—fall somewhere between the extremes of farb and superhardcore on the re-enactor spectrum (Bates, 2016; Jones, 2007; Thompson, 2004).

While more will be said on the motivations of re-enactors and living historians, the elusive quest for authenticity (of appearance and experience) that lies behind the divisions in the re-enactment/living history community is driven by the pursuit of a state called ‘the magic moment’.⁷ Deemed the ultimate objective of re-enactment (Handler & Saxton, 1988; Jones, 2007, 2010; Thompson, 2004) it goes under various other names, including ‘period rush’ and ‘time slip’.⁸ The magic moment is defined as ‘the elusive pinnacle of the hobby, when a re-enactor experiences a completely “authentic” moment while re-enacting; it is often described as involving the sensation of time travel’ (Thompson, 2004, p. 293). The magic moment is a ‘brief transcendent burst of emotional connectedness’ that makes the past ‘seem real and tangible’ (Jones, 2007, p. 10; 2010, p. 219). It is a moment of deep absorption, of being in the flow (Turner, 1974) to the extent that the re-enactor momentarily disconnects from the present and, in a liminoid state, believes they are actually in the period they are re-enacting (Thompson, 2004). In Chapter 5 I argue that it is a form of ‘the historical sensation’, a phenomenon observed

⁷ The magic moment is highly addictive (Horwitz, 1999; Thompson, 2004).

⁸ Other terms for the magic moment include ‘tunnel vision’, ‘seeing the elephant’ and ‘in the zone’.

in contexts other than historical re-enactment by scholars such as Huizinga and Ankersmit (Robinson, 2010). It is also a form of historical consciousness, which Handler and Saxton (1988, p. 256) describe as ‘evanescent flashes of consciousness ... flashes that themselves may be instances of reflexive consciousness’.

At this point it is fitting to pause and reflect on how this information concerning re-enactment/living history, and its terminologies, relate to issues of history pedagogy, historical thinking and historical consciousness. First, *learning* is central to re-enactment/living history. As De Groot (2009, p. 107) observes, historical re-enactment/living history is ‘fundamentally educative’. It is a form of experiential learning and historical knowledge-making that centres on the materiality of things and bodies. Second, re-enactment/living history, as a post-school activity, is enormously popular.⁹ It is precisely the kind of personal, tangible and palpable connection to history (Samuel 1994/2012) ordinary people crave (Clark, 2012, 2016b; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998) (see Section 1.2.2). The levels of engagement achieved in historical re-enactment/living history promises to provide insights into methods to improve engagement in history classroom pedagogy. Third, as a form of learning history, it is done with, and not in isolation from, other forms of history (traditional and/or public). However, historical re-enactment/living history participants use their materialist approach to the past to contest and extend traditional academic historical interpretations (see Section 4.7). As such, it is a form of historiography worth studying in its own right, as its methods can inform, enrich and enliven history pedagogy.

The penultimate point made here is that historical consciousness is inherently found in the very terminologies and tensions within the hobby. Two examples illustrate this point. First, in the invention and the use of the term ‘farb’ is embedded the notion that another has failed to demonstrate historical consciousness. In other words, a ‘farb’ is a re-enactor who does not have appropriate understanding of the difference between the past and the present, as evidenced by the intrusion of anachronisms in both their appearance and behaviour. Second, historical consciousness is intrinsic to a third-person impression as ‘historical interpreter’. It recognises that ‘the past is a foreign country’ (and because) ‘they do things differently there’ (Lowenthal, 1985, p. xvi) ‘interpretation’ is required to make it comprehensible to the present.

⁹ There are 44,000 American Civil War re-ena (Jones, 2007). Hartford (2016) estimates re-enactors across periods in the UK number 20,000.

As a form of experiential learning, re-enactment and living history are fundamentally ‘performative’. Figure 4.1 shows the various and diverse performance contexts for living history/historical re-enactment—some public, others private. As a public (re)performance of history, historical re-enactment shares common elements with other cultural modes of performance in Western theatre (Elliot-Wright, 2000; Lamb, 2008; Schneider, 2014). However, unlike some forms of theatre, it must be enacted through period-authentic material culture and, where practicable, places.

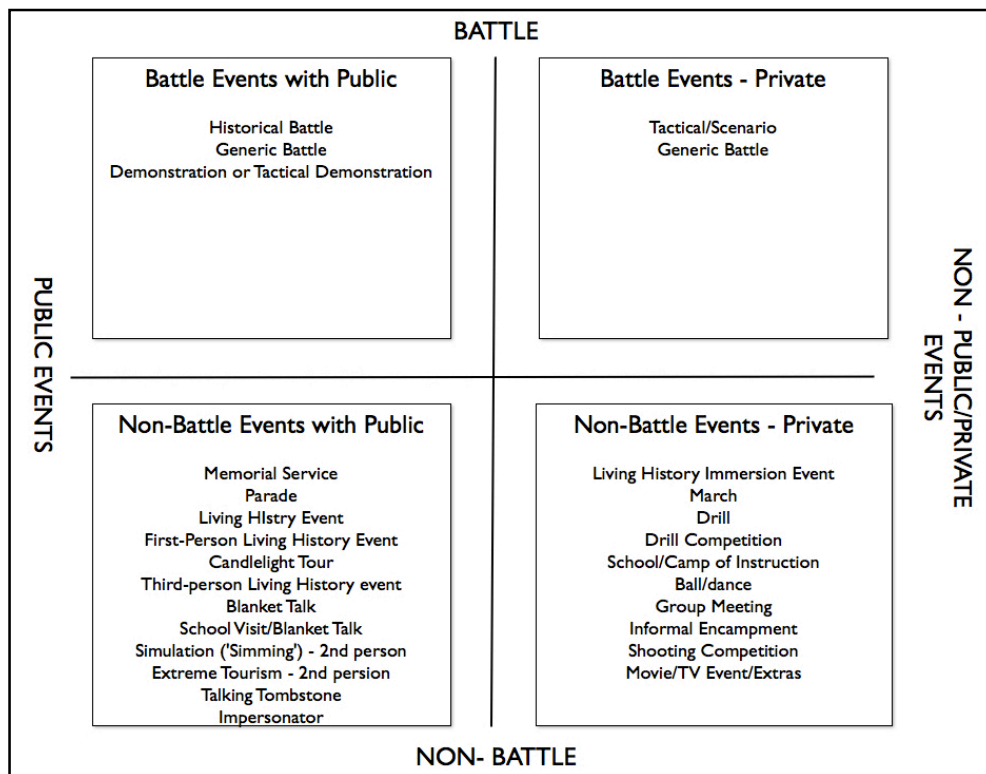


Figure 4.1: Re-enactment and living history as performance types (adapted from Jones, 2007; Magelssen, 2014; Thierer, 2010)

These observations serve as a segue into this study’s research data. In the next section, the re-enactor/living history survey moves the discussion beyond the ‘what’ of re-enactment/living history (definitions/terminologies) to ‘who’ re-enacts, and ‘why’. This acts as a prelude to an examination of the materialist methodologies, or ‘how’ living history and historical re-enactment construct historical knowledge, and the premises that underpin this approach.

4.3 Survey Data

The current study was designed to serve several functions. First, to gain access to the perspectives of re-enactors and develop an understanding of their motivations and practices that

centre on the materiality of the past. Second, as a tool to identify and recruit participants for in-depth interviews. The survey conducted an online survey of 349 re-enactors and living historians in November 2015. This data is reported using simple descriptive statistics. Nonetheless, the data collected in the survey adds to the body of knowledge concerning historical re-enactment and living history community that has been collected in similarly-size surveys¹⁰ over the last 20 years. This survey primarily reflects the North American re-enactor experience (238/349 returns, see Figure 4.2). However, when considered alongside two smaller surveys of re-enactors in the UK—a 2003 survey of 98 re-enactors (Hunt 2004) and 2016 survey of 160 re-enactors (Hartford 2016)—this study’s survey data captures some of changes in the demographics of the hobby over the last 10 to 15 years. The current study also provides data on historical re-enactment closer to home (around 10% of the respondents were from Australia). Another point of difference in the current survey was it specifically asked about ‘how’ and ‘why’ material culture is deployed in the hobby. It also probed experiences of the magic moment and the circumstances involved.

Figure 4.2: Survey respondents by location—North America (238), Europe (70) and Australia (38).



The data collected in the survey affirms the major themes and findings in the literature about the demographics and the motivations of those who engage in historical re-enactment and living history. As the survey participants have been de-identified, they are referred by their code

¹⁰ Thompson (2004) reports on 300+ returns, Jones (2007, 2010) on 350, Stanton (1999) on 62, and Bates (2016) on 400 responses.

(‘RS’[re-enactor survey] + letter [A, B or C]¹¹ + number [e.g., 15] = ‘RSA15’) when cited throughout this chapter

4.4 Demographic Profile of Re-enactment/Living History

Re-enactment/living history is a ‘serious leisure’ activity (Hunt, 2004; De Groot, 2009; Robinson & Yerbury, 2015) that is predominantly a phenomena of the affluent West. Gordon Jones (2007, 2010) paints the typical American Civil War re-enactor as urban, middle-class, conservative, white, male and middle-aged (‘tubby bearded guys’ or ‘TGBs’).¹² Jackson (2001) notes that according to occupation, the hobby cuts across all walks of life, but is predominately white and male. Because it is expensive—a basic kit can cost over US\$2,000—(Jones, 2007; Schroeder, 2012; Thompson, 2004) and time-consuming, it is a leisure activity that favours the time-rich and affluent (De Groot, 2009; Jackson, 2001). Nonetheless, though those on lower incomes can find ways to participate (Jones, 2007). Thompson’s survey data (on North American 20th century war re-enactors) concurs with this overall profile of the American Civil War re-enactor community¹³ as predominately white and male, but diverse in terms of income, occupation and education. However, she notes that compared to the US population overall, re-enactors have higher average incomes and education levels (Thompson, 2004).

The current study’s survey, which was not limited to American Civil War or 20th century conflict re-enactments, presents a somewhat similar picture. However, this study, along with Hartford’s (2016) survey, detects a shift in the gender demographic of re-enactment. While previous North American surveys showed an overwhelming male demographic (90%+), the current survey, along with Hartford’s, show that while male re-enactors are the majority, female participation has risen significantly (to around 40%). There is also a shift in the age of re-enactors, with those aged 20–40 years comprising more than half the hobby demographic, along with middled-aged re-enactors. In the current survey, younger re-enactors (aged 15–30 years) were represented in equal numbers to older re-enactors (see Figure 4.3). Although ethnicity and income were not metrics captured in the current study, the hobby has been called ‘blindingly

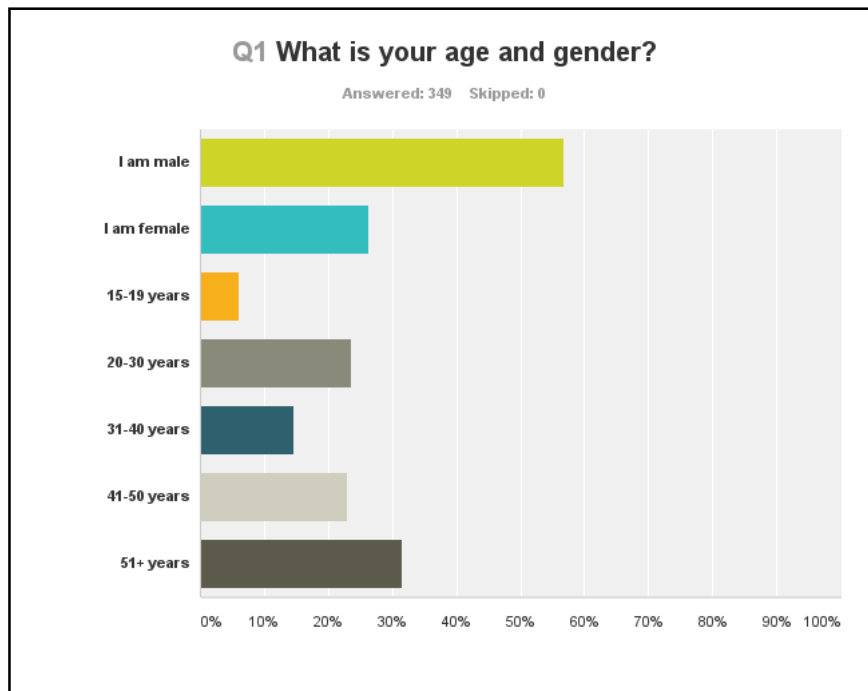
¹¹ Chronologically speaking, batch ‘A’ was the first group of survey responses, batch ‘B’ the second and batch ‘C’ the last. Thus, ‘RSA129’ = **R**e-enactor **S**urvey, (batch) **A** (respondent number) **129**.

¹² Jones (2007, p. 239 ff) reports the demographics of participants as 92% white, 89% male, an average age of 38 years and average income of US\$41,000.

¹³ Thompson (2004, pp. 79, 82) reports 97.8% white, 96.8% male and predominantly politically conservative. See also Jones (2007).

white’, and the spread of occupations (students and retired people the largest categories)¹⁴ suggests it is a hobby for the time-rich and those with disposable income (see Figure 4.4). The occupation cloud in Figure 4.4 also reflects the demographic of re-enactors as primarily lower-middle to middle class.

Figure 4.3: Survey Participants by Age and Gender



When the Australian data is considered separately,¹⁵ it is consistent with the wider international snapshot of the re-enactment and living history community. Given the small sample size (38), not much weight can be put on the differences between the international and Australian data. However it does appear that a greater proportion of older males currently make up the Australian hobby demographic.¹⁶ The occupational data (see Figure 4.4) is comparable between the two groups.

¹⁴ This can be compared to Hartford’s (2016) survey, with students as the second largest occupation group (10%) and academics the third (9%).

¹⁵ Overwhelmingly, the Australians in the survey thought re-enactment was better (23/38), with around a third indicating they had a very negative experience of school history. A few (3/38) acknowledged that school history was just different to re-enactment and around 20% (8/38) said their experience of school was good and a factor that led them into the living history/re-enactment or further study (4/38).

¹⁶ There were 66% males and 42% aged over 51 years in this group.



Figure 4.4: Re-enactor occupational data (word font size is weighted to data—larger words are proportionally greater in number in the category)

Beyond descriptive statistical data, the survey provides qualitative data on the motivations, practices and perspectives of living historians and historical re-enactors. The open-ended text boxes in the survey elicited rich and detailed data that was coded using NVivo 11 software. In the following sections, survey responses are provided as evidence to illustrate participants’ perspectives, which enriches and thickens the data, and provides the opportunity for the participants to ‘speak for themselves’.

4.5 Why Historical Re-enactment/Living History

There is a substantial body of literature concerning the motivations of re-enactors and living historians. The reasons for re-enacting history are complex and diverse (Bates, 2016; Jones, 2007; Schroeder, 2012). Jackson (2001) asserts there are four key motivations: to socialise, commemorate, learn and teach. Camaraderie and a sense of community and *communitas* (Turner, 1969) are important motivators in the hobby (Bates, 2016; Jones, 2007; Schroeder, 2012; Thompson, 2004), which is a reminder that re-enactment/living history needs be done with, and for, others. Commemoration (especially battle re-enactments) features prominently among reasons people give for re-enacting military history (Jones, 2007; Thompson, 2004). There is a desire to connect, reanimate and reinvent the ‘dead’ historical actors from the past

with and through objects, artefacts and bodies (Bates, 2016; Roach, 1996). These commemorative and performative aspects of re-enactment characterise it as an exercise in ‘collective memory’ (see Section 4.11). However, the motivation to learn and to teach go straight to the crux of this study and require deeper analysis.

4.6 Historical Re-enactment/Living History as Learning

The survey data of this study affirms the importance of learning and teaching as drivers of re-enactment and living history (Jackson, 2001). Survey participants were asked why they use objects and artefacts to explore history, and to comment on the roles ‘things’ play in their construction of the past. A significant number of respondents (94/349 or 28.9%) commented on how material culture in re-enactment and living history serves as a source for learning, teaching, understanding, educating and explaining history. In the first instance, the learning is for the re-enactors themselves:

I find that I learn the most doing the research prior to putting together an impression for an event, but the events do provide some unique insights and ‘a ha!’ moments’ (RSB146).

Notably, here ‘learning’ does not stop with the research phase, but continues with the objects-in-use. In the second instance the insights and understandings derived from living history and re-enactment are shared among hobby peers or with the public:

I started doing my own research and that got me into living history as a way to share it with others ... Objects are a huge part of it, especially things the public can touch and use (RSB206).

The ways re-enactors and living historians talk about learning and teaching reflect their beliefs about how knowledge is constructed and how learning happens (see Section 4.14 for a discussion on the primacy of the experiential episteme in historical re-enactment). Notably, survey respondents broadly voiced beliefs about the kind of learning (and teaching) that works in the materialist praxis of historical re-enactment. From the survey, four significant themes emerged, which were that learning and teaching happens best through touching, showing, doing and telling.

Touch was the foremost sense survey respondents identified in their use of objects to re-enact/(re)live and thereby learn about the past. The haptic sensation of hands—touching, feeling, holding—and the tactility of the tangible and concrete was a factor nominated by 27%

(95/349) of respondents regarding the role objects and artefacts play in their (re)creation of the past for themselves and others.

A close second was the importance of the visual (seeing, looking and showing), which was an element nominated by around 22% (79/349) of the respondents. Re-enactors imagine—that is, construct in their minds using historical imagination—an image of what the past looks like (informed by collective memory). They then measure their enactment of history against this ideal (Gapps, 2010; Jones, 2007). The visual is fundamental to authenticity (Thompson, 2004). Visually, re-enactments can go beyond the real to the hyper-real (McCalman & Pickering, 2010). The verisimilitude of the simulacra can also be a compelling mode for re-enactors to make the past ‘real’ for the public and as a means to insert themselves into history (Thompson, 2004). They consume and produce film and photography as media to affirm and contest authenticity. In blurring the visual distinction between the past and the present, re-enactors achieve for themselves, and the public, the goal of closing the gap between the present and the past and making the past seem real.

The last two themes on learning and teaching from the survey data included the importance of ‘doing’ as a way of learning, and the role of stories and narratives.

Almost without exception, the participants in the survey remarked on the importance of their objects-in-use. Almost 30% of respondents (100/349) used the word ‘use’ to explain the place of material objects in their hobby. While there was a wide variety of uses commented on (predominantly ‘experiencing’, ‘showing’ ‘demonstrating’, ‘personae/impression building’, ‘storytelling’, ‘connecting’, ‘explaining’, researching, ‘linking minds’ and ‘empathy’), the significance of this theme is that it is in the *usage* of objects that knowledge is made and communicated. Learning is not passive, it is dynamically done with and through ‘things’.

Similarly, storytelling and narratives are a key part of living history/re-enactment. Over 10% (39/349) of survey respondents mentioned how they use objects to tell stories. Narratives are essential for making history and for recreating it. It is through stories that we make sense of ourselves and others in the present and the past (Cooper, 2013, Polkinghorne, 2005). When re-enactors engage with the public as third-person/interpreters, they use objects to tell stories:

Archaeological artifacts (sic) and the replicas/reproductions [we] use help tell all sorts of stories, to learn about cultures and societies different (and not-so different) from our modern ideas and esthetics (sic) (RSB227).

There is an appreciation that the stories are poly-vocal and serve to connect the past, present and future:

Whether an antique item is used, or just displayed, handling it brings us closer to our ancestors. Knowing that at some point this object was; hand made, purchased, carried, depended upon for survival, cherished, repaired and cared for, and passed down through the ages means a great deal. To think of the stories it could tell, now and after I'm gone and have passed said object on, is humbling. And taking care of objects from the past is our duty, so that the stories of men and women who used them won't die, but will be passed on to future generations as well. (RSB175).

Sharing stories through words and performance also serves to create collective memory (see Section 4.11) and is a process through which ordinary people (like re-enactors) insert their private lives into public histories (Clark, 2016b).

4.7 Historical Re-enactment/Living History as Serious Historical Research

Re-enactors/living historians appropriate the language and processes of history and academic research. This is not entirely surprising as membership of the re-enactment community extends to practising historians, undergraduate history students, graduates with history majors, students, history teachers and members of the academy itself. In this study's survey, 20% of the respondents were involved in some form of education as students (16%), teachers (4%) or employed in a history-related field (5%).¹⁷ In Hartford's survey, academics comprised 9% of the respondents. Re-enactors discuss and debate historical interpretations and use terms like 'primary and secondary sources'¹⁸, 'evidence', 'accuracy', 'reliability' and 'usefulness' (Jackson, 2001, p. 107 ff). They demonstrate an understanding of the limitations of historical knowledge, the problematic nature of primary evidence and representativeness in historical research (Jackson, 2001).

It is difficult to assess the quality of the research done in the hobby. As a de-centralised hobby (Jackson, 2001; Jones, 2007) there are no controls or formal standards to ensure all engage in high quality research (Jackson, 2001). While research is important to re-enactors/living historian, the scope of their research is usually narrower (focuses on individuals and specific categories of material culture) than that undertaken by professional historians (Bates, 2016).

¹⁷ In the survey, 53 respondents were involved in some form of education, as students (39), teachers (14) or a history-related field, including historians (4), a lecturer (1), a doctoral candidate (1), archaeologists (2) and museum professionals (8).

¹⁸ Thompson's (2004, p. 236) survey reports that 20% of 20th Century war re-enactors report using only primary sources as the research base of their impression.

Nonetheless, re-enactor research can be rigorous (Roth, 1998; Thierer, 2010). Indeed, re-enactors have won a reputation from the public as ‘as walking, talking archives’ (Gapps, 2010, p. 53):

I have a degree in history and the classes were nothing compared to the research I need to prepare for a living history event (RSC15).

I've got a degree in history so necessarily it's a different experience. Re-enactment can be very serious on the hardcore LH [living history] level with a huge amount of research and analysis going into it (RSA29).

Part of the sense of community in the hobby is its function as a community of practice in the way expertise and research knowledge is shared (Jackson, 2001; Thompson, 2004). Research is at the foundation of their holy grail of authenticity and accuracy. The rationale for authenticity is the belief that experiencing the past in an authentic manner can only be done by faithfully replicating (through research and its application) the materiality of the past. Further, research is a tool by which participants establish their status, credentials and authority in the hobby (Thompson, 2004). These observations are reflected in the critical comments made by a college student in the survey:

History through re-enactment while it does have a great hands-on component often lacks the intellectual rigor I've experienced in my academic school history. Most re-enactors don't know how to evaluate and use primary sources and don't do their own research and instead often rely on poorly written and sourced secondary sources. Hence why me and others in my unit focus on bringing academic history standards to our re-enacting, spending days at the National Archives and other archives pouring over original documents, interviewing veterans, and the like (RSB88).

Re-enactor/living historians' reliance on primary sources may reflect good research practice, but it also belies their distrust of interpretations of history that they have not tested with their own research and experience. In the re-enactment episteme, the experiential informs research. Re-enactors' experiences (re)living history influence their (re)readings of primary source material (Brædder et al., 2017; Horwitz, 1999; Jackson, 2001; Thompson, 2004) and/or serve as the basis with which to contest the accuracy of a historical source (Thompson, 2004):

Objects allow you to test written theories and as often disprove than prove them (RSA46).

Some re-enactors/living historians cast themselves in the role of experimental archaeologists, using experience of the object-in-use to fill in the lacunae in written sources, especially concerning the mundane and everyday aspects of life (and objects) that were never documented:

It provides a wonderful insight into written historical sources and the artefacts themselves, filling in gaps and shedding light on all the little cogs that have turned in time that go in to make up the larger, more popular parts of history (RSC6).

I became a history professor. I use re-enacting as a tool to research how things actually worked in practice (RSB180).

Thus, the materialist episteme of personal experience is a significant feature in the research methodology of historical re-enactment.

Academic historians have disputed the capacity of living history/historical re-enactment claims to make valid historical knowledge. This is partly due to the distrust of the experiential episteme (see Section 4.14), but also a belief that, as amateurs, historical re-enactors are unable to exercise historical consciousness, and backward map onto the past present-day perspectives. Thus, re-enactment has been labelled as nothing more than ‘the present in fancy-dress’ (Denning 1992). However, in much the same manner that re-enactors demonstrate an understanding of the problem of historical sources and evidence, they also appreciate that their materialist praxis has an epistemological ceiling. They understand that, regardless of their efforts at authenticity and realism, their recreation of the past is a mere approximation and falls well short of its goal (Brædder et al., 2017; Handler & Saxton, 1988). Survey respondents remarked that their activity ‘in no way captures exactly the conditions’ (RSB102) of the past, but merely provide a ‘glimpse into history’ (RSC25) to ‘experience some of what they [people in the past] experienced’ (RSB223) and get as ‘close to reliving that day as a man living in 2015 is able’ (RSB261).

Their capacity for historical consciousness is summed up in one survey respondent’s observation, which captures the euphoria of understanding the limits of historical knowledge:

It’s just an awareness of where you stand in relation to what has gone before, like crack, only without the dangerous side effect (RSB248).

4.8 Historical Re-enactment/Living History as Teaching

If research and experiential practice are core to re-enactor’s learning about the past, then equally important is their self-assigned roles as educators. This is driven by their beliefs concerning the general public’s ignorance of history (Jackson, 2001; Thompson, 2004) and views on the quality of school history education (see Section 4.13). The satisfaction that comes from teaching (Thompson, 2004; Schroeder, 2012), particularly when a public audience has been deeply affected by the presentation (Jackson, 2001), is also a motivator.

The trope of the history-ignorant public is not just the failing of public education. It is a function of forgetting what we used to know, and the insidious impact of other forms of public history (especially Hollywood) that pedal myths, fictions and inaccuracies (Clemons, 2007; Jackson, 2001). Thus, much of the efforts of re-enactors and living historians revolve around debunking myths and teaching/demonstrating the technologies, handicrafts and skills of a bygone era. The latter has a double reward: the living historian fulfils their duty to keep the skills of the past alive, and get the satisfaction of eliciting the ‘wow’ factor from an audience enchanted with (past) technology (Gell, 1992). Thus, third-person interpreters have a complex relationship with the public¹⁹; they depend on the public’s ignorance for relevance, yet ridicule them for it (Jackson, 2001)²⁰.

4.9 Historical Re-enactment/Living History’s Relationship with Academic History

Just as re-enactors disparage the public’s knowledge of history, the failings of the praxis of living history/re-enactment has been highlighted by those further up the (social) hierarchy of knowledge and expertise (Bates, 2016). Academic historians²¹ have been quick to point out what they consider to be the shortcomings of re-enactment/living history (Agnew, 2007; Brundage, 1998; Cullen, 1995; Cook, 2004; De Groot, 2011; Dening, 1992; Hale, 1999; Handler & Saxton, 1988; McCalman, 2007; McCalman & Pickering, 2010; Thompson, 2004).²² The hostility and distrust cuts both ways (Jones, 2007). Some re-enactors complain of professional history’s scholarship (Thompson, 2004), including perceived academic biases (both in interpretation and choice of specialty), omissions and a lack of focus on social history:

American history books and classes r (sic) partially one sided/wrong (SRB93).

So re-enactment is brilliant in highlighting and enacting history that is too often forgotten (SRB155).

Big Man and Wars history ... never satisfied me. I always wanted to know how ordinary folks lived. Living history was the answer to that yearning (RSB224).

¹⁹ Re-enactors often see the public as an intrusion on their attempts to experience the past authentically; hence, the emergence of (private) re-enactor-only events (Thompson, 2004).

²⁰ For a further discussion on re-enactors’ complex relationship with the public, see Thompson (2004).

²¹ Indeed, historians have not been alone in the ridicule and stigmatisation of re-enactors. Their representation as ‘weirdos’ and ‘wackos’ by social elites (and themselves) diminishes their credibility. See Bates (2016), Schroeder (2012) and Thompson (2004).

²² American Civil War re-enactment has been especially painted as a vehicle of right-wing reactionary, anti-feminist racists (Jones, 2007). McCalman and Pickering (2010, p. 122) note that condemnation ‘hangs in the air like Damocles’ sword over the head of any historian willing at least to take it seriously’(122).

Ultimately, re-enactors/living historians want to ‘know for themselves’, from first-hand *personal* experience rather than consume a version of history that has been pre-filtered by someone else, no matter how well qualified. The immediacy and accessibility of tangible things—apprehendable via the body and its senses, unmediated by the processes of another’s mind (as text or story)—is part of their evocative appeal (Lowenthal, 1985).

In doing history for themselves, re-enactors take control. To borrow from Flaubert (as cited in Lowenthal, 2015, p. 337), if writing academic history is like ‘drinking an ocean and pissing a cup full’, then many re-enactors want to drink directly from an ocean of *their* choice, and fill a cup of *their* choosing. As one re-enactor stated:

Because I want to know more than just someone else's opinion, I want to know what it was really like to do/make/taste/live/work/etc back then (RSC34).

Thus, re-enactment/living history reflects the march of democratic popular history where ordinary people are no longer content to be passive consumers of history, but increasingly wish to actively construct their own historical knowledge (De Groot, 2009).

In addition to the four main motivations Jackson (2001) identified as driving the hobby, this study examines several other significant factors: connection, performance and collective memory.

4.10 Historical Re-enactment/Living History as Performance

Re-enactment and living history are popular and public histories that are fundamentally performative. Re-enactors (re)live, (re)do, (re)tell and (re)perform the past for a variety of audiences (including themselves) and purposes. It is argued in the next chapter that the material culture—the ‘things’—re-enactors/living historians use shape, negotiate and sometimes even direct the performance, and thereby the meaning and historical knowledge constructed. Things in the performance are essential to aiding the historical imagination, becoming the historical other, and experiencing the historical sensation (period rush/magic moment) and empathy. As part of the analysis of data in Chapter 5, the study draws on Collingwood’s concept of history as re-enactment. Together with insights from the fields of performance studies and materiality, this will extend Collingwood’s notion of history as re-enactment beyond a cerebral-only exercise to encompass somatic/embodied and affective domains.

Here it will suffice to position re-enactment/living history as having a long performance pedigree. Its origins can be traced back five millennia to the performance of Ancient Egyptian

religious rituals (Lowenthal, 2015). ‘Authentic’ battle re-enactments were a feature of Roman spectacles (Schroeder, 2012) and affect loomed large in medieval passion plays. The phenomenon of living history emerged as part of the rise of 19th century folk museums (Anderson, 1984) and modern re-enactment bears the legacy of 19th and 20th century pageantry and commemoration of pasts, such as the American Civil War (Jones, 2007). As a public (re)performance of history, historical re-enactment shares elements of other cultural modes of performance in Western theatre (Elliot-Wright, 2000; Lamb, 2008). Schneider (2011, p. 14; 2014) demonstrated the significant intersections between modern theatre and historical re-enactment, with historical re-enactment as a distinct form of (history) (re)performance that is embodied, ‘syncopated in time’, non-linear and seeks to ‘literally touch time’.

4.11 Historical Re-enactment/Living History and Collective Memory

Living history and historical re-enactment also have a significant role as expressions of, and a shaping force for, collective memory. As Robinson and Yerbury (2015, p. 593) assert, historical re-enactment is ‘an ethnographic performance which interprets the past and adds to the collective memory of modern society in an educative way’. Much academic discussion has been around a concern that re-enactment/living history plays a distortive role in the way it shapes popular representations of the past (Jackson, 2001; Lowenthal, 1985).

Re-enactments contribute powerfully to collective memory. Collective memory refers to cultural processes that create identity and identification (Brundage, 1998; Wright, 2007). Re-enactment/living history plays a significant role in the construction of shared cultural meanings that are attached to people, events, places and material objects. Such activities as ‘the recalled past’ go beyond identity formation and are implicated in ‘issues of power, authority, cultural norms and social interactions’ (Brundage, 1998, p. 562). As shared cultural knowledge, it is transferred through public performance and storytelling, and is a powerful force in re-enactment. It is associated with the affective pull of collective acts of commemoration and belonging as well as shared experiences such as magic moments (Jackson, 2001). As Lowenthal (1985, p. 197) observes, humans seek to connect their own deeply personal memories to the wider past—collective memory and public history.²³ Memory is, by nature, personal and affective. In collective confluences of memory, like re-enactment and living history, the involvement of the personal and affective is one of its compelling attractions, and stands in

²³ This perspective can be compared to Clark (2016b).

contrast to traditional history where affect, poignancy and immediacy to the past is generally absent (Lowenthal, 2015).

4.12 Historical Re-enactment/Living History as Personal Connection

The most important motivator in historical re-enactment and living history is the ordinary person's urge to connect to the past. This, in itself, is an expression of historical consciousness. Connectedness (Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998; Landsberg, 2015) is a 'quest for immediacy, the search for a past which is palpably and visibly present' (Samuel 1994/2012, p. 175), and is offered in the materialist praxis of historical re-enactment and living history.

In the current study's survey, 31% of the respondents indicated that they used the materiality of re-enactment/living history to 'connect', 'experience', 'feel' and 'relate' to the past in a manner that was 'personal' and 'first-hand'. Connection takes many forms. For some it is an 'ancestral tug' (Horwitz, 1999, p. 163), an attempt to slip down a 'DNA wormhole' in time (Schroeder, 2012, p. 123) and connect to personal heritage (Thompson, 2004, p. 266), and/or 'the dead' (Bates, 2016, p. 167 ff). Material culture is the connective bridge to the past in re-enactment/living history (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998). Many re-enactors are obsessive collectors (Bates, 2016; Thompson, 2004) and treat material culture in a Harry Potteresque manner, as a 'portkey' to the past. As one survey respondent remarked:

Original items take me back just by touching them. Replica items give me a hands on experience as does wearing the period clothing (RSB190).

Thus, the absence of a genealogical link to the past being re-enacted is not an obstacle. Indeed, through re-enactment, participants insert themselves in a past that may not bear an ancestral connection. In the quest for a deeply personal experience, re-enactors insert themselves into history—not to relive someone else's past, but to live the past for themselves (Thompson, 2004). In doing so, they seek a form of liberation—to 'lose themselves' and (temporarily) escape the present (Bates, 2016, p. 178). However, the ultimate connective in the hobby remains the (elusive) experience of the historical sensation of the magic moment (Thompson, 2004), where all the elements (what I term 'head, hands and heart') come together.

Apart from anything else, the kind of connections—intellectual, physical/ embodied and affective modes of engagement—are a versatile vehicle for making connections to the past. Whatever the history-related interest, historical re-enactment/living history is a vast umbrella activity that accommodates within its materialist bounds, diverse ways for connecting to and

using, the past (Bates, 2016). From a pedagogic perspective, its diversity is a rich resource on offer for teachers wanting to explore how material culture can connect and engage students with history.

4.13 Re-enactment/Living History: Relationship to School History and Education

Living history and historical re-enactment satisfies the desire of ordinary people for an active, participatory, immediate, unmediated, ‘real’, palpable and personal connection with history. This stands in stark contrast to the widespread experience of school-based history as passive, textbook driven, ‘dead, dull and boring’ (Curthoys, 2011, p. 8).

However, it would be a mistake to position living history as the antithesis of school or disciplinary history. The relationship is more nuanced. Whereas a significant number of living history survey respondents expressed the view that their school history experience was ‘terrible’ (compared to their experience of living history/re-enactment), a second theme to emerge came from respondents who reported a positive experience of school history. This latter group viewed living history/historical re-enactment as an extension of their education, albeit in a post-school setting. A third theme that emerged was that doing history through re-enactment and living history is neither better nor worse than school history, its materiality just made it *different*.

4.13.1 School history was terrible

Nearly a third (103) of respondents reported a negative experience of school history. Of these, around a quarter used the word ‘boring’ to describe their experience. For some (11), the intensity of their negative experience was demonstrated by the sentiment that they ‘hated history’ at school or that it was ‘woeful’ or ‘deplorable’:

Miserable. I did not know I loved history until I had an amazing college professor who told real individual stories of lives and material culture in an interesting way (RSC8).

I loathed history as a child ... There was no connection to apply history to my world (RSB52).

Indeed, for some the experience was so negative they remain completely dismissive of the history that they were taught at school:

History was rubbish at school lol (RSB250).

The data provided an opportunity to identify a number reasons for this negative view of school history pedagogy. Six respondents complained specifically about the quality of the history teacher as a factor in their dissatisfaction:

School teachers know bugger-all, they are not worth even considering, total idiots (RSB251).

Others perceived their negative experiences of school history as deriving from the prescriptive nature of the syllabus (covering only certain periods and/or being insufficiently in-depth):

School history sucked for the most part. The curriculum was limited and uninviting (RSB132).

Ten respondents identified a teaching approach focusing too much on content—‘names and dates’ and tests—as opposed to skills as a factor in their negative experience:

School history was uninteresting and regurgitated dates and facts (RSB25).

This image painted of school history very much fits the picture reflected in the literature concerning the causes of student disengagement in history classrooms (Clark, 2008b; Curthoys, 2011; Roberts, 2013).

4.13.2 School history was good but re-enactment/living history is better

Around 20% of respondents (68/349) reported a positive experience of school history and acknowledge this experience as the foundation that led to historical re-enactment and living history:

School history was engaging and the reason why I wanted to re-enact, history was fun growing up (RSA4).

One respondent even did living history at school:

I had a unique experience in terms of the way I was taught history in school ... Much of the instruction included living history. For example, in 4th grade we recreated the Oregon trail with wagon trains and dressed in bonnets and dresses and walked the trails on the vast 100-acre campus. In 8th grade we recreated the sinking of the Titanic in a student's swimming pool ... We also visited Colonial Williamsburg (RSB116).

For 14 respondents, their teachers were the influential factor in encouraging lifelong learning of history beyond the classroom:

I was fortunate enough to have teachers who loved history, and one in particular who was a collector and brought items in. It stoked a passion in me for history that has never faded (RSB60).

Notwithstanding the positive experience of school history, 21 respondents reported that while school history was good, re-enactment and living history is ‘better’ for a variety of reasons. The recurrent theme was ‘fun’:

I enjoyed my school history classes, but history is far more interesting with swords and explosions (RSB97).

Respondents identified that part of the appeal of historical re-enactment/living history derives from the it being an active, participant-centred and direct form of learning:

Re-enacting is far superior. Mostly due to the freedom to research whatever you want instead of being limited like in school (RSB192).

It also caters for their ‘hands-on’ learning style: “‘Hands-on’ is the best way to learn’ (RSB90). Re-enactment/living history allows them to do ‘real’ history (engage with primary sources and research) in a manner not possible at school:

School involved very little work with primary documents, re-enacting is all about primary sources (RSA41).

School history was limited to what we read in a textbook. I've done far more research, and found a love of history through re-enacting (RSB226).

Academic history has positioned forms of public history, like re-enactment, as a threat to be vanquished. However, in its very difference as a materialist-driven genre lies its capacity to engage and operate as a resource to (literally) enliven and enrich history pedagogy.

4.13.3 School history and re-enactment/living history are ‘different’

Regardless of their school history experience, 68 respondents expressed a view that acknowledged historical re-enactment and living history is not necessarily better or worse than the classroom/school history, it is simply *different* because its approach is materialist, experiential and practical. In affording new ways to connect with and experience the past, living history/re-enactment provided new points of access and, with it, fresh insights:

Re-enactment/living history gives you an in-depth, hands-on approach. You get to learn the WHO, WHERE, WHAT, WHEN, and WHY ... sometimes even HOW. You are able to become one-on-one with history by looking at it through a viewpoint different from a book (RSB123).

There was also an acknowledgement that re-enactment/living history has a different focal length than school or academic history; it allows for an in-depth engagement with the past:

Re-enacting makes no comparison—the interactivity and depth is really engaging. While there are so many little details that may seem unnecessary to the average student, it makes an experience more memorable (RSB24).

As already noted, living history focuses on social history—the everyday man with whom the everyday prosumer²⁴ (Toffler, 1980) of history can identify, relate and connect with:

Living history allows you to focus and explore ... more mundane elements of history including the common day to day life and experiences of people and allows you to relate to history as well as experience it (RSC19).

However, it is the manner in which living history/re-enactment makes the past come ‘alive’ that makes it different to other kinds of history: ‘Objects from the period really bring history alive instead of leaving it as abstract ideas’ (RSB61). The notion that doing history through objects and artefacts makes the past come alive was a strong recurring theme (42/349 or 12% of respondents) in the survey. Material culture used in re-enactment, simulates a ‘time machine’ (Anderson, 1984, p. 12):

Objects and artifacts (sic) correctly researched, replicated using correct materials and processes become the connection; along with the experience to the past: a time machine if you will (RSB7).

I use them because I haven’t got a time machine. If you do things the way they used to be done, I find that you learn things you couldn't learn in any other way. And the more closely you approximate historical accuracy in that process, the more it has to teach you (RSB224).

Evident in these comments is a materialist methodology (see Section 4.14) with the consequence that history ‘isn’t on the page anymore’ (Thompson, 2004, p. 145). History is no longer just a cerebral and imaginative activity; it takes a three-dimensional, inhabitable, multi-sensory and immersible form. The differences between ‘book history’ and ‘living history’ are not necessarily a rejection of the former. Re-enactors recognise that the experiences of re-enacting and living history enhances and supplements disciplinary history:

Living history has been a great way to absorb certain tactile experiences to complement ‘big picture’ understanding and research (RSA38).

Objects allow for visual, tactile kinesthetic, auditory and olfactory stimulation. The role is to focus on the material culture and relate that to time period and alternate (sic) ways of thinking about history (RSB230).

²⁴ ‘Prosumer’ is a term for people who are both the producers and consumers of their own productions

4.14 Historical Re-enactment/Living History and the Experiential Episteme

Episteme is defined as a ‘way of knowing’. Thus, the term ‘experiential episteme’ is a way of knowing from experience. However, experience occupies an ambiguous place in epistemology. Personal testimony can be compelling, and has a long tradition as a source of knowledge and authority in Western culture (Wright, 2007). As noted in Chapter 2, experience underwrites the constructivist model of knowledge and learning. Indeed, the practice of history as an intellectual exercise relies on the *experiences* of individuals, as *documented* and archived as eyewitness accounts, memoirs, documents, film and photographs.

However, while it is asserted that the historian’s craft can disambiguate individual experience and transform it (from experience to recorded source to evidence), the profession remains dismissive of re-enactment’s capacity to do so. Experience in re-enactment is treated in the same manner as personal memory: individualised somatic (and by association, affective) experience cannot be a source of unambiguous evidence about the past (Agnew, 2007). As noted in Chapter 2, this is a legacy of Western thought and privileging the intellect in the Cartesian mind–body dichotomy.

However, while re-enactors have been labelled as naïve for believing that personalised experience can function epistemologically to connect the past and present (Johnson, 2015b), the premises for asserting their epistemological legitimacy requires some attention.

The possibility that past experiences can be re-experienced in the present is premised on an assumption about the universality and commonality of human experience and emotions across time (McCalman, 2007).²⁵ In the tradition of Thucydides, I would argue in favour of the validity of this assumption, as without it, human behaviour in history would be incomprehensible.²⁶ Living historians/re-enactors believe that the experiences of the historical actors they seek to re-enact may be (re)experienced (to some degree) in the present by replicating the materiality of the past. The logic is that the more authentic, comprehensive, real and accurate the physical and material world of the past that the re-enactor immerses themselves in, the more likely the re-enactor will encounter an ‘authentic’ experience of history. This explains, in part, the re-

²⁵ For further critique, see Schwarz in McCalman and Pickering (2010) and Clendinnen (2006).

²⁶ However, this notion is tempered by an understanding of how historical context distinctively shapes perceptions and sensibilities of those in both in the past and present (Seixas & Morton, 2013).

enactor obsession with the ‘holy grail of realism and authenticity’ in the objects they use—the view that attention to ‘objects’ in minute details serves to ‘narrow the gap between past and present so that we might touch it’ (McCalman & Pickering, 2010, p. 6).

The critique of the place of the experiential is also premised on assumptions about where thinking is located. As argued in Chapter 2, materialist theory disputes the traditional mind–body dichotomy of Western thought. In the tradition of Bourdieu, Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze and Spinoza, it has been argued that cognition is not exclusive to the intellect but done with, and through, bodies. Concepts of the ‘minded body’ and kinaesthetic imagination/empathy challenge old notions of thinking, and affirm the embodied and experiential as reflective tools. Landsberg (2015) rightly acknowledges that experiences first encountered through affective, embodied modes are opportunities that trigger reflective thinking and generate new historical knowledge and historical consciousness.

The research literature focuses on the primacy re-enactment’s experiential warrant for its knowledge claims (Handler & Saxton, 1988); however, as Wright (2007) contends, living history draws on multiple warrants. These are ‘experience’ (based on the materiality of personal, bodily experience), ‘professional history’ (grounded in the materiality of textual and visual records) and ‘collective memory’ (drawing its authority on cultural memories in the form of stories, memorials and shared rituals). Wright’s (2007) thesis conceptualises living history as a multi and inter-layered combination of these elements. It is the triangulation of these three elements that give living history greater authority in its claims for making historical knowledge. Thus the experiential episteme is but one of several knowledge warrants at work.

However, I seek to stand on the shoulders of Wright’s model and add a layer that has been under-theorised, which is the authority of the objects at work in living history/historical re-enactment themselves. In the following chapters, this study presents additional research and draws on materialist and vital materialist theory as presented in Chapter 2 for its interpretation. It seeks to explore the knowledge warrant of objects themselves, and how their existential concreteness and biographical trajectories exert agency and shape the kinds of historical thinking that is done with and through them. Understanding the ‘authority of the object’, as an additional layer in the praxis of re-enactment/living history, offers to deepen an appreciation of how objects might be used in history pedagogy.

4.15 Conclusion

Historical re-enactment is a product of public history's democratisation of the past and bears a complex relationship with school history. The hobby shares many characteristics with disciplinary history, yet its use of deep, experiential first-person experience of the past through material culture marks it as different to history as a purely intellectual exercise. The public history praxis of historical re-enactment/living history meets the deep urge of ordinary people to find connection to the past in a way that is immediate, palpable and *personal*. They wish to know the past first-hand—cerebrally, somatically/embodiedly and affectively—in a manner that makes the absent past tangible so that it may be *experienced* in the present.

This attraction to things as a means of connecting to, and learning about the past, makes the case for a materialist approach for teaching history. The academic literature largely positions living history/historical re-enactment as amateurish and naïve in their use of the experiential in their knowledge claims. However, the data shows that members of the hobby have an awareness of the limitations of both their methods and their product (historical knowledge) when re-enacting the past through material culture. Indeed, the kind of historical consciousness experienced bodily with, and through, this deep immersion in the material culture of the past is tempered by *communitas* and a degree of reflexivity that has been overlooked in the literature.

The next chapter uses in-depth interview data from re-enactors/living historians to explore how they use material culture in their persona-taking to achieve their empathetic goal of becoming the historical other, and permits us to see the authority of the object at work in this process.

Chapter 5: Becoming the Historical Other—Objects and Materiality

5.1 Introduction

This chapter's central focus is how historical re-enactors and living historians achieve an empathetic understanding of people in the past through the materiality of an embodied experience of the past. Chapter 4 noted the primacy of the experiential episteme among re-enactors, together with their use of historical persona-taking, as a vehicle for connecting to the past via material culture and to make for themselves, via first-hand experience, knowledge of 'what it was like' in the past. This chapter builds on this body of data (the survey) by adding data from the individual in-depth re-enactor and the focus group interviews to uncover the methodology that re-enactor/living historians use to experience historical consciousness as an embodied experience of historical otherness (*ekstasis*); one that is shaped, directed and informed by their use of the materiality of the past.

Re-enactors speak of a two-stage process for their persona-taking. The first is about attending to the outer shell of the historical persona they seek to take. This involves dressing their body and using objects and artefacts to allow the materiality of the past to be experienced. For re-enactors who go no further than the third-person persona, tending to the materiality of the outer person is sufficient. However, for those who wish to go deeper and take on the first-person persona, there is a second stage beyond the outer shell, which involves taking on the mentalité/worldview of the inner person of their historical persona. This too involves the materiality of bodies and things.

The structure of this chapter reflects the two-stepped methodology of re-enactors/living historians. The first section examines the materialist and embodied techniques involved in the assembly of the outer person; that is, the dressing of the body, the thinking-through-doing of objects-in-use, and the affective and sensory experiences of places and settings. In the second section of the chapter, attention is given to the 'inner person' and the construction of the persona's worldview. Although this primarily involves heavy intellectual 'head' work, the process of perspective-taking is aided by the materialist and embodied practices of living history/historical re-enactment.

Throughout this chapter theoretical concepts around the nature of materiality, performativity and phenomenology outlined in Chapter 2, are drawn upon to analyse the data. It is argued that living history, as a body-based discourse, is about materiality. Materiality is necessarily physical: ‘we know it everywhere, inside and outside our bodies because we apprehend it through our senses’ (Pearce, 2010, p. xv). Its ‘very presence, visibility, and constructed identity of the body ... makes living history living’ and distinguishes it as a historiographical practice from ‘written modes of historiography in which the body is de-emphasized, erased, or silenced’ (Magelssen, 2014, p. 34). Re-enactors use the materiality of past culture to inscribe on, and perform with, their bodies identities and experiences other than their own in the present. In this way, material culture and embodied experience become vehicles for historical empathy. The historical knowledge constructed in living history/historical re-enactment ‘blends the experience of the historical artefact such as experienced in museums with individual revelation’ (De Groot, 2009, p. 103) from objects-in-use.

While employing interdisciplinary theory, this chapter retains its central focus on the nature of historical knowledge and historical consciousness. Collingwood’s notion of history as (mental) re-enactment using historical imagination from the outside in and inside out is applied to theorise historical re-enactment’s materialist-driven empathetic practices of the outer and inner aspects of persona-taking. The place of the intellect is challenged by historical re-enactment’s embodied materialist praxis of (re)performance(s) of the past in the present. However, it is not supplanted, but rather enhanced and enriched by the incorporation of somatic and affective experience.

5.2 Otherness

The very essence of empathy and perspective-taking is about ‘otherness’. For philosophers like Collingwood, it was a function of historical imagination. However, the otherness that is fundamental to the practice of living history manifests itself in a range of complex experiences not limited to the intellect. This chapter explores a particular sense of othering—the use of materialism by re-enactors/living historians to have an embodied experience of the past as a *person* from or in the past. The term *ekstasis* is used in this chapter to capture this sense of otherness. *Ekstasis* is used in its three (connected) meanings: its literal original Ancient Greek meaning ‘to stand outside of oneself’; its Dionysian sense of the ‘loss of oneself’ and Huizinga’s sense of the sublimity of the affective experience of the historical sensation (Ankersmit, 2005; Robinson, 2010).

The concept of *ekstasis* is especially relevant because living history/re-enactment is practised by adopting personae. Here, there are degrees of ‘losing’ and ‘standing outside’ oneself, depending on the persona adopted (the deep immersion of the first-person impression is the most intense). Further, the ecstasy of *ekstasis* (words that are etymologically connected) takes the form of experiencing the magic moment that re-enactors yearn for in re-enactment/living history.

5.3 Becoming the Historical Other: Persona-taking and the Connection Between the Outer and Inner Person

The adoption of a persona and the meaning of ‘actor’ within the term ‘re-enactor’ invites comparison and theoretical insights from the field of performance studies (see Section 2.6). Objects and artefacts foster the imaginative, embodied and performative elements that facilitate living historians/re-enactors in moving outside themselves and, through this process of *ekstasis*, experience historical consciousness.

In Chapter 4 it was observed that re-enactors/living historians employ a variety of persona types, with first and third-person personae predominating. Regardless of the kind of persona taken, all re-enactors pay careful attention to historical accuracy; that is, the authenticity and ‘look’ of their impression. Their obsessive attention to the outer appearance, and use of material culture to (re)perform everyday activities from the past, has been dismissed as ‘token isomorphism’ and a ‘*dys*simulation’ of the past (Saxton & Handler, 1988). However, the current study’s data joins a growing body of research (Braedder et. al, 2017; Daugbjerg, 2014; Johnson, 2015b) to argue that the materialist isomorphic practices of living history/historical re-enactment should not be so readily dismissed as tokenistic.

Mimesis has long been recognised as a mode for understanding ourselves and others (Schneider, 2014). Participants in this study recognise how the mimetic materialist *and* embodied practices of living history/historical re-enacting—the dressing of the bodies with, and the performance of the everyday/mundane activities using ‘authentic’ material culture—has the power to change the re-enactor’s sense of self and identity. This gives them access to the inner person, the *mentalité*/worldview or perspective(s) of their target persona. This form of historical consciousness, where the materialism of the past shapes both the outer and inner aspects of persona-taking, going way beyond ‘the look’ to the very materiality of the way objects are embodied. In changing the way re-enactors think, feel and behave, material culture

is central to their imaginative, physical transformation and experience of historical otherness. In the materiality and performativity of re-enactment/living history, the processes of objectification and kinaesthetic empathy (theorised in Chapter 2) are made visible and, for the re-enactors themselves, palpable and poignant.

The outer person of a re-enactor /living historian's persona is a shell or exoskeleton built from a layering of things. This exoskeleton provides the structural architecture that is the foundation for the persona, the praxis of living history and *ekstasis*. Literally meaning an external skeleton, I borrow the biological term exoskeleton to draw attention to the ways layers of material culture in the praxis of living history serves a similar function for re-enactors as for other organisms that employ exoskeletons.

The material culture exoskeleton of re-enactors fulfils a variety of functional roles. It changes their appearance; provides a semi-rigid structural architecture that shapes, articulates and defines the range of muscular and bio-mechanic movement; it is a means for sensing the world; and it provides protection. In the world of re-enactment, this protection is both literal and figurative; the latter being protection from the intrusions of the disruptive anachronisms of the present into the world of the past being (re)created and (re)enacted. In an inversion of the usual thinking about the skeleton as the bare-bones upon which the flesh adds the detail, the material culture exoskeleton of re-enactors is the detail, and works inward to shape the flesh and minds that operate within. The exoskeleton analogy is not a perfect fit. The re-enactor's own endoskeleton, shaped by acculturation and present-day identities is still present. There is tension between the re-enactor's exoskeleton and endoskeleton, yet this is a source of insight and historical consciousness.

There are other material external layers at work too, such as the choice of setting and environment, that further support the praxis of historical re-enactment and living history. Together, the layering of objects, clothes and settings works to facilitate re-enactors to move from and stand outside themselves, and take on a character/persona.

5.4 Foregrounding the Re-enactors and Their Perspectives

It is timely to introduce the perspectives and experiences of the living history/ historical re-enactor participants who make up this study. They give voice to how they employ the material culture of the past to reach their goal of being/becoming the historical other. In the in-depth interviews and focus group, the study participants (indicated by name; e.g., 'Tom') speak of the

way objects and artefacts allow them to access an understanding of historical otherness that begins with outer-appearances, but then takes them deeper to access the inner person of their persona. This data is enriched by interweaving the perspectives of the study's survey respondents that was provided via their often very detailed open-text written responses to the survey questions.

It is noted that some of the re-enactor's interview responses are foregrounded more than others. In particular, the perspectives of Jeremy and Tom find prominence. Jeremy's perspectives were particularly insightful because he brought to re-enacting all his stage and performance understandings as trained actor and theatre technician. Re-enactors are aware of what they do, but not all are aware of the *how* or *why* of their praxis. Jeremy has drawn some conscious links between his theatre background and his hobby, and this is a rich insight that is captured in interview and presented as data. Tom is also exceptional. He is one of the most experienced re-enactors in Australia. When he came to the interview he had prepared 15 pages of hand written notes in response to the interview questions (which were provided beforehand). This illustrated the deep and thoughtful consideration he gave in his responses. The richness of his insights are reflected in the data.

5.5 Re-enactor Perspectives: Becoming the Historical Other—the Outer Person (Clothes, Hats and Shoes)

For some re-enactors, there is a clear process and ritual for losing their present-day self and taking on a historical persona (Roth, 1998). Removal of clothes strips away present-day identities and, in donning period dress, they 'become' the historical persona. Study participant Miles, a middle-aged Australian who re-enacts colonial history, takes on the persona of a First Fleet marine. His transition from 21st century telecommunications worker builds gradually with each layer of the 18th century military uniform he puts on. He is moved, in degrees, to and from his present self into, or away from, his persona by the materiality of clothes:

It [the marine uniform] all adds. Putting each bit on, its layers of how committed you are to being the character. (Miles)

The one piece that shifts him decisively into his military persona is his leather neck stock:

I will put that one on ... Once I put that on I am playing it more seriously. You have days where you are not quite with it [in character]. Not quite within. But once you get the leather stock on it makes heads sit up. (Miles)

Miles observes that in adopting the ‘heads up’ stance forced on him by the rigid leather neck stock of the uniform, obliges him to adopt a body posture alien to his own and the stance, working together with the material culture, supports his persona-taking.

In changing the body, the object changes the person. Thompson (2004, p. 199) notes how it was common for World War II re-enactors to internalise the persona of the soldier when they put on their uniforms: ‘a military uniform changes your whole bearing’. Johnson (2015b) discovered the phenomenon is not exclusive to military outfits. In her auto-ethnographic experience as a participant-observer in the world of re-enacting at the Jane Austen Festival Australia, she noted:

Clothing shapes not only the physical appearance of our bodies, but also the ways in which we can/not move. The consciousness of my bodily posture and motion was augmented by moving in a way I am not usually accustomed ... kinaesthetic empathy can be developed through embodied practice—in the case of re-enactment, by (re)doing activities and (re)creating similar experiences from the period being studied (Johnson 2014). In a very practical and tangible way, that corset—and the experience of moving with/in it—gave me a (partial) embodied sense of (a particular class of) female bodies of the Regency past. (Johnson, 2015b, p. 200)

Simon, another study participant and an Australian university student and re-enactor, has similar experience to Miles when in his 18th century soldier impression. For him, it is not the neck stock, but the military leather cross belts (working in much the same manner as Johnson’s experience of the regency corset) that shapes his body, stance and movement; this assists him bodily to assume the persona of another in the past.

Simon identifies his hat as another object that plays an even more significant role in allowing him to experience the historical other. He says wearing it ‘pulls you in’ to your persona. In this, he attributes to his hat a kind of agency. Unlike Miles, his process of person-taking is not gradual, but comes in an instant with the donning of his hat:

If I put the hat on, it [getting into persona] is automatic. It's like wearing a military uniform that pushes your back back or makes you go straight ... I put the hat on and I feel as if I'm back in the 18th century ... I mean, throughout history hats denote social status and military unit, they're always present.

Both Miles and Simon are relating how they, through objects, acquire the postures and stances of their target persona. In this they are accessing the embodied memory of ‘the dead’ (Roach, 1996). They draw on an embodied repertoire of knowledge of the past that is partly retrieved from archival sources and partly acquired from ‘vital acts of transfer’ inherent in material and bodily (re)performances of past human experience (Taylor, 2003, p. 22). Connerton’s (1989, p.

72) notion of social memory and history as both inscribed and *incorporated*—‘sedimented’ and ‘amassed in the body’—provides a theoretical understanding for the embodied praxis of living history. Such ‘sedimented’ social memory, retrieved in the performativity (Connerton, 1989) of bodies, permit re-enactors and living historians to access historical knowledge and consciousness found in the ‘mnemonic reserves’; that is, the ‘patterned movements made and remembered by bodies’ (Roach, 1996, p. 26). This understanding of the materiality of the trace remains of the past is the basis of Foster’s (1995, p. 7) notion of kinaesthetic empathy—a kind of stirring that ‘connects past and present bodies’—‘an affiliation, based on a kind of kinesthetic [sic] empathy between living and dead but imagined bodies’. This concept is similar to Roach’s (1996, p. 27) ‘kinesthetic imagination’; the sedimented resources, ‘a way of thinking through movements – at once remembered and reinvented’ through bodies.

Another study participant, Jeremy (a UK theatre technician in his 30s) appears to be alluding to this notion of kinaesthetic imagination when he speaks of the importance of his hat to him in becoming his historical other. Jeremy’s military shako (hat) is not the most important item once he is at the battle re-enactment, but oddly, it is the one that affectively and imaginatively lingers and reminds him of the persona he had been:

The one item that I miss afterwards ... that's wearing a hat ... It feels like I have pressure around my temples there but it's just not there. I do miss it, bizarrely. It's like a ghost of a hat ... I certainly do have a connection with my hat. Out of all the items, that is the one thing that I don't pack away into my cupboard when I get back from an event. It's always sort of sat up within eyesight.

Having realised his connection to his hat, Jeremy then drew on his theatrical background to reflect on the significance of hats in acting and re-enacting. In doing so, he added another item to the ensemble of what is significant for the re-enactor and living historian: shoes:

If you give an actor the right shoes and the right hat, then ... it doesn't matter what the rest of them is dressed as.

In this, Jeremy and other re-enactors in this study make clear how period correct footwear fosters kinaesthetic empathy in the manner that these objects shape and channel their embodied experience of the past.

Historically and phenomenologically speaking, our ‘being in the world’ has an enormous amount to do with the primary way we literally connect to and perceive the planet as bipeds. Study participant Tom, a veteran re-enactor from Australia, says he grounds his understanding of re-enacting a Roman legionary in the haptics of feet-in-shoes:

I learned that walking in *caligulae*, Roman military sandals... You've actually got to adopt a flatfooted walk. Otherwise if you don't you learn that pretty quickly you're going to be lying on the cobblestones ... First off, it probably changes you in ... how you walk. That changes you.

In the study re-enactor focus group (held in the evening of a re-enactment event around an open fire with the researcher and participants all in medieval garb) Rebecca, Neil and Tegan—a family unit of three middle-aged living history musicians—shared a similar perspective to Tom's and also emphasised the importance of footwear. Shoes build the persona from the 'feet up' and serve as an empathetic link to people in the past:

Rebecca: Saying you don't know what's going on until you've walked a mile in my boots comes to bear if you have shoes on that fit and portray the era you're trying to do, because a lot of tactile feeling comes through your soles of your feet. If you're walking in shoes that feel proper, it builds you from the feet up. You're feeling it. You're living it.

Neil: It changes the way you move.

Tegan: For every step you take your perspective is altered by the shoes that you wear.

Rebecca extrapolates from shoes to the whole person, and presents a perspective that validates Foster's notion of kinaesthetic empathy (1995, 2011):

The gear that you wear. The way it has a feel. The way you can move in it. From the senses it feeds back to you and it gives you a feeling how it would have been to be a person in that era moving around the way you can move in the garments. The way it feels on your body. The way it makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable gives you a direct idea of what it would have been like to be a person in that day and age ... It gets you to settle more into ... a role, the definition of what you're trying to portray. Gives you more of an idea.

Of course, when Rebecca says 'more of an idea', she is referring to the fact that simply putting on a pair of medieval shoes does not provide her with access to the complete target persona. Re-enactors have a pre-conception of their persona informed by research, historical imagination, collective memory, prior experience, group norms and so on. However, what objects do is literally flesh out the mental, visual and sometimes even affectual imaginings that are involved in projecting and inhabiting a persona. The materiality of the past provides new dimensions of understanding (somatic and by extension, affective) not possible to glean from books, imagination or visual images.

For many re-enactors, shoes, hats and clothes are enormous aides for persona-taking. They are, in Taylor's (2003, p. 28) terms, the 'furnishing' of bodies for the 'meaning making scenarios

of discovery' that are at work in the embodied experiential episteme. The effect of items on their bodies is not only a signal for the wearer and others that they have moved out of the present self, but in changing their stance, movement and gait, they use kinaesthetic imagination (Roach, 1996) and experience-embodied kinaesthetic empathy (Foster, 1995, 2011) with their target personae or other bodies in the past. However important or attached, re-enactors feel other material layers are necessary to support their entry into a three-dimensional material world of the past.

5.6 Historical Re-enactors' Perspectives: The Outer Person—Other Layers

In this section, other external materialist layers that structurally and functionally provide support for the outer person of the persona are examined. First, I examine the role of objects-in-use and the way they work by directing bodies and thinking towards the historical other. Next, consideration of the contextual impact of settings, landscapes and the engagement of the multi-sensory is examined, followed by another external contextualising layer: the impact of audience(s) and the performance frame of re-enactment/living history.

5.6.1 Objects-in-use directing bodies and minds

An essential part of the re-enactor's persona lies in their *usage* of objects. Entire personae are built around objects-in-use. The demonstration of a craft or activity in practice is an essential part of the authenticity of experience that helps both define the persona taken and, by being absorbed in its usage, assists re-enactors maintain their persona. The use of objects is an educative and productive performance for the public and other re-enactors; it sets the scene for living history and is a powerful portal for re-enactors to 'link minds' with a person from another time period. Study participant Tom describes the phenomenon:

Understanding what they were thinking [with] what they were doing. Later in life, I did a saddlery apprenticeship ... I started then, to look at ancient leather work with a different eye. I could look at something made 2,000 years ago and I knew exactly how they made it, and why they made it in that manner ... reverse engineering ... you can actually sit in their shoes and you can actually make the same stuff, get just as frustrated then, stick the awl through your thumb, and probably swear (in a different language), but it's exactly how they would've done it ... you're experiencing probably the same problem 2,000 years later. That is a shared experience going over time, definitely.

Tom examines the leather artefact and derives the *chaîne opératoire*, which allows him to use the finished artefact to 'reverse engineer' and reproduce the object in the present. Chapter 2 theorised materiality and considered the implications for reliving and rethinking the thought

processes of people from the past. Artefacts are the surviving material expression of mental processes (Sykes, 2015). In the *structure of 'doing'*, by using similar or identical processes to those in the past, dictated by the 'affordances and constraints' of materiality (Knappett 2005) and the haptic experience, objects impose themselves on the *structure of thinking*. The cognitive sequence of thinking, then doing is reworked in living history as doing, then thinking, as well as doing *and* thinking. Objects and artefacts 'hold(s) and encapsulate(s) both action and thought (Knappett, 2005) of people who made and used them in the past and this is a resource that is accessed by re-enactors to (re)perform and construct historical knowledge.

Study participant Jeremy's experience supports this interpretation. He talks about his entry into re-enactment in the persona of a working blacksmith. The materiality of the iron, tools and forge, together with the end point (the production period objects), compels him to repeat/re-enact the thinking of the blacksmith from centuries past:

It's incredibly hands on. It's a craftsmanship that's been around for ... millennia and so many different roots within it, as well. To understand what you're trying to achieve ... you very much have to step into the mindset... you're dealing with challenges that generation upon generation are dealing with and you're having to constructively think about how to get around them. ... nine times out of ten, you are historically accurate because the brain works in the exact same ways as it has done for the last four million years or so. (Jeremy)

Tom, another study interviewee, also talks of linking minds through crafts. He uses the word 'tune' to indicate he has reached the same wave length as his persona from the past. This tuning is far from a purely or exclusively cognitive process. 'Tuning' is done with the whole person, through touch, the 'feeling' and the bio-mechanic feedback of tools-in-use:

There's certain things I do sort of mechanically and I know that things are correct by what I hear and what I feel coming through the needles or coming through, to ... I think, 'That's it. That's got it'. (Tom)

In the absence of a direct link to the minds of the people of the past, re-enactors use objects as a materialist bridge to connect to the minds (through minded-objects and minds-in-bodies) of the people they seek to (re)enact. Collingwood's connection was through the historical imagination and re-enacted thought. The use of objects complements (and can inform) the 'head history' of Collingwood. Things mediate and negotiate the experience of pastness and being the historical other. Things used in a similar manner across time trigger bodily understandings through the process of kinaesthetic empathy and imagination (Foster, 1995; Magelssen, 2014). This capacity of bodies to deeply connect, take on affect, and shape the sense of self and identity

(Foster, 2011), validates the methodology of living history (Johnston, 2015a) as *ekstasis* through persona-taking.

This close association with things is an essential part of what material theory calls the process of objectification, where the dialectic between person and thing dissolves. Re-enactors speak of how the objects they use become an extension of themselves or their persona. Gapps (2009, p. 406) cites the notion of re-enactors as ‘mobile monuments’—an ‘individualising of history in the body of the re-enactor’. Study participant Tom says, ‘to me my entire impression, if you want, is my object. Look, I am the object. I become the object’. The relationship between objects, self and the historical other can be intense. Speaking of his relationship with firearms, Tom explains how objects become so integral to who he is, that the distinction between self and ‘thing’ melts:

With some firearms I've had to use professionally, they've been extensions of me ... things just happened... [The distinction] between person and thing ... it was just melted, melted together ... that's a very, very rare experience.

Focus group participants Neil and Rebecca likewise see their (reproduction) medieval musical instruments as an extension of themselves. The materialist notion that ‘objects that make us as much as we make objects’ (Miller, 2010) is evident in the way Rebecca speaks:

The hurdy-gurdy I'm playing here ... The way I play each instruments does depend on the physicality of the instrument ... I work with the instrument. The instrument taught me because I didn't have a teacher ... People cannot imagine me without the instrument ... they ask, ‘Have you got your instrument here?’ it is like, ‘Well ... have you got skin on your body today?’ It's like, ... ‘Are you still breathing?’ and you might as well ask the same thing because for me playing the hurdy-gurdy, it is actually my child ... it's an extension of myself.

The melding of self and object is highly sensory (‘my skin’) and affective (‘my child’). It also blurs the site of agency. Rebecca ‘works’ the instrument, but the instrument ‘taught’ her. Medieval instruments continually demand attention from their users in an ever-evolving bio-feedback cycle with its user. Neil notes:

The gurdy has to [be] dust[ed], you have to change the cotton, and resin. They're changing all the time. It's very dynamic. You've become one with it, and you're aware of it.

Neil takes the notion of dynamic things further, and picks up on Rebecca's comments regarding the location of agency. In his entangled relationship with things, is agency with the human actor, the object, or is it shared? He speaks of how (in a vital materialist sense) assemblages of objects work to ‘control him’. In the 1990s, he purchased a 1960s Vespa GS150 scooter:

That object changed my whole appearance in life ... every time I step on that scooter I have to wear the right clothes. The object is controlling me ... It controls me, it says if you get on this and ride you need to look ... right ... That one object controls haircut, dress, everything ... I've gone back to what I used to be doing in the early 80s [1960s re-enactment] ... It's like getting into the moment, but with authentic, real clothes. (Neil)

Such fusions and collusions between people and their things do not happen overnight. They are evidence of a long and complex (and affective) relationship with things. Yet, the basic methodology of living history (shared with experimental archaeology) is founded on the premise that the replication patterns of activity from a historical period ('doing') using period correct objects ('with things') unlocks historical information and insights that cannot be attained in any way other than the material and the physical.

Further, in that process of doing, what begins as 'looks like' is but a short step to 'acts and thinks like'. Performance as an embodied praxis and episteme (Taylor, 2003) is central to re-enactment and living history. The structures and strictures of the materiality of things, their nature as minded-objects (Hurcombe, 2007; Knappett, 2005) means the modern-day re-enactor can use them both as the tools designed by their original makers and users, but *also* as a source for accessing the mindset of the period and people being re-enacted. This is a double experience of pastness. Objects being used for their intended purpose(s) are valued by living historians because, although their experience of their use is not identical to the original, the concreteness of things makes them a constant that can persist and resist the flow of time. Tom makes the point that external appearance is the starting point, (and in this things are all-important), but re-enactors who want to be more than mannequins need the exoskeleton to support the building of the inner person of the persona. There is a movement from what is on the outside, inwards:

Things are your character. Things make your character. They give you your look. Again, you can look like a soldier. If you look like a soldier, you start to possibly act like one. (Tom)

This is where the obsessive attention to detail, noted as a characteristic of living history/re-enactment, takes on one of many levels of importance. The outer person of the persona needs continuous reinforcement in the face of the present (in all its anachronistic intensity), which threatens to burst through and dispel the artifice and illusion of a past that has been meticulously crafted. Deep absorption and attention to minute details are a defence against the intrusion of the present. The materialist architecture of the persona's exoskeleton is reinforced by multiple layers of detail:

A simple thing as a toothbrush or a shaving razor made out of bakelite makes the whole experience much deeper and thorough, where one lives as they did, ... The experience becomes a lot more complete the deeper in detail you go, instead of 'looking like', you 'are' (RSA31).

Tom has a similar perspective, and argues that re-enactors can be helped to connect to their persona via attention to small details of things. They share the human, the mundane, the everyday:

Detail is 110% of what you've got to do ... you can't take shortcuts in your construction of how you do things, how you make things, even how you wear them... It also helps too, if they (re-enactors) can relate to the objects ... a good re-enactor, they'll ... have what's called haversack fillers, or pack stuffers ... like a comb ... a toothbrush, coins, playing cards, all stuff they have themselves that they can see, 'Look at that, they (the target personae) have the same things.'... there's a connection ... they're (the target personae) are actually people. (Tom)

Thus, objects serve to personalise history as relatable human experience (Schroeder, 2012).

The historical *object-in-use* is both a physical and material mind map *and* a road map to access a connection to people (via personae) and develop a working understanding of the past. For the living historian, when the static object is removed from its context-in-use, its meaning is muted. In a Heideggerian sense, the 'being in the world' for both person and thing—their lived experience together— makes 'unhidden' (reveals) the object's true nature (Heidegger, 1971).

The everyday life, mundane living history activities might be usefully thought of as 'scenarios' (Taylor, 2003, p. 29) whereby the performance of the living history setting *and* activities— bounded by the very materiality of bodies, things and environments—are 'formulaic structures that predispose certain outcomes'. Scenarios, like Bourdieu's *habitus* (Taylor, 2003, p. 31) are 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions'; they provide for the frame for the 'continuity of cultural myths and assumptions' However, as (re)performances, (re)playings and (re)doings of pastness, scenarios, as cultural imaginings, invite change, adaption, invention and thus generate new historical knowledge and perspectives.

In using objects as a source and method for their persona-taking, re-enactors thereby access and weave their persona-biographies with and through their use of material culture. However, some re-enactors who build their persona as the *makers* of things also seek to uncover the biographies of things. Veteran Australian re-enactor and study participant Brad, whose fascination for craft tools grew out of his need to make reproduction objects for his re-enacting, sees objects beyond what they appear. Brad strips back the layers of the finished product to locate the forgotten

craftspeople and tools involved in its making. He seeks connection to the thing via its very biography. He calls his approach ‘the hammer of Christ’. He notes how the Middle Ages fetishised the relics of the true cross and the holy lance, but ignored the role of the ‘hammer’ without which there would have been no crucifixion.²⁷ Study participant Tom also speaks about the need to remember the layers of people, and their skills, that lie behind the finished articles of material culture. When interviewed, he expressed it in a more conventional theoretical context of Marxist materialism and commodity fetishism:

We fetish the final product ... we forget the layers of production and materials that went to make the final product. The final product has value, but we tend to forget the workers ... the craftsmen, who actually put the thing together.

The layers within things are deep pools for reflection for many re-enactors and assist them to think about the past in new ways.

5.6.2 Settings and the sensory: Adding context

Beyond the re-enactor’s immediate experience of hats, clothes, shoes and tools (objects in motion with, and on, bodies), the exoskeleton of the persona is supported by contextual layers external to itself in the form of landscapes, settings and people. The act of persona-taking and experiencing the historical other is more satisfying if deemed ‘authentic’ and ‘real’. Historical research is one way to measure authenticity and accuracy. The senses—how the material world is known first-hand—are also valued by re-enactors as a legitimate form of historical knowledge-making. Experiences that are rich in multimodal intensity and diversity are perceived as being ‘real’ in the world external to the mind, as opposed to being subjective and in ‘one’s mind’. Thus ‘I-was-there-sensory detail’ (Luhmann, 2012) is an important component reinforcing persona-taking and the experience of being the historical other.

Re-enactors and living historians reflect Western cultural bias towards sight as the primary sense. That which fails the sight-test is deemed ‘farb’ and dismissed. When re-enactors take on the external trappings of the target persona, the viewing of the self-as-the-other is their first test and is often followed by inviting peer group assessment. The first step is usually to seek a judgement about the accuracy of the ‘outer person’ in their ‘look’, clothing, equipment and stance. This is typically done by seeking feedback from fellow re-enactors, be it within ‘the club, or via the re-enactor online community. One popular social media site, ‘Living History—

²⁷ Brad’s other example is Michelangelo’s paint brush: ‘Well, he couldn’t have done the bloody Sistine Chapel without it, could he?’

Show Your Impressions'²⁸—is devoted to seeking feedback on the authenticity of the look of the impression/persona and has over 15,000 members.

Feedback on, and validation of, the outer-persons is important. The intrusion of a visual anachronism in living history is considered an anathema. It breaks the 'bubble' of the suspension of disbelief that underpins persona-taking. It also undoes hours of work and attention to detail, and the effort other re-enactors have invested to create the materialism for shared illusion (for themselves, as much as others) of being in the past. The strength of feeling about the visual is evident in the sentiments of study participant Geoff, a veteran American (and World War II) re-enactor:

It's got to be done right. You've got to do your research. Get your haircut. Wear proper glasses. Don't wear modern watches. If you're going to go back 75 years, then go back 75 years and do it right. There's nothing worse than seeing ... a farb ... It's like cleanliness is next to godliness. Farbiness is next to devilishness. We don't want you around if you're going to do that.

Cultural anthropology has drawn attention to how sensibilities are culturally mediated. In Western culture touch, smell and taste are at the bottom of the sensory hierarchy as 'savage' and 'uncivilized' (Classen & Howes, 2006). Thus, it is not surprising that re-enactors, with their Western cultural demographic, reflect their culturally mediated vision-sense bias. However, the use of the experiential episteme invites a mix of other senses.

Classen and Howes' (2006) concept of 'sensescapes' argues that every artefact embodies a particular sensory mix and, as such, is accessible to particular ways of sensing. The meaning of an object is revealed in an object-specific sensing-mix attuned to its social use and environmental context. The implication of this is that re-enactors bring different senses into play depending on the object(s) and its uses. This explains the diversity of sensory mixes and modalities of the living history encounter with objects. Sight and touch predominate, but participants in this study spoke of a range and variety of sensory experiences, the diversity of which reflected combinations of objects-in-use, preconceptions of what the past might look and feel like, and their perspective shaped by their persona. However, it is the sensed alignment of setting and context with that of the persona that adds to the materialist exoskeleton of the authentic and real.

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/276536462442923/>

Participants in the study provided numerous examples of the role of the sensory in a seemingly authentic experience of the past when in persona. This aspect is analysed and finds detailed analysis in Chapter 6 when the magic moment/historical sensation is explored through the *Waterloo 2015* case study. The common element across all the examples was the manner in which materiality produced sensory mixes across modalities to create an atmosphere that supported the re-enactors' imaginative leap into the past.

The following examples illustrate the importance of setting and scene. While acknowledging that some items (like his hat and braces) were particularly helpful and insightful for his persona-taking, study participant Jeremy recognises that the comprehensive setting, free of intrusions of the 21st century that supports the outer person. The imaginative element is supported by materialism of the living history world:

I very much want to have that [living history setting] surrounding around me to be able to understand it and to live within it ... there is certainly an element of imagination there, but it is made so much easier when you are surrounded by these items, these artefacts, and you've not got your mobile phone in front of you every five minutes. (Jeremy)

The importance of 'setting' is further illustrated in the following example by a survey respondent who rendered in text the detailed mix of sensory stimuli that supported her experience of being in the past:

In the woods behind me the sound of a tin whistle and laughter rose, then the nicker of a horse. Wood smoke and the smell of cooking drifted on the wind. Huge fork-tailed banners waved languidly in the evening breeze across the lake, with an occasional snap and pop. Suddenly, a large owl jumped from the top of a 50-foot flagpole and swooped in a low silent glide just above the lake. The hair stood up on the back of my neck and I couldn't escape the feeling that what I had just experienced was real, and that I was somehow back in time (RSB221).

She identifies sound, ('whistle' 'laughter' 'snap and pop'), smell (wood smoke/cooking), visual/sight ('languid banners', 'lake', surprise at the owl) and finally, an affective response ('the hair stood up on the back of my neck'). Again, the combination of sensory modalities operate to create the atmosphere—the 'I-was-there-sensory-detail'—conductive for the sense of realism and authenticity that invites the historical sensation of being back in time. The passages demonstrate two further things: first, the absence of anachronistic intrusion that might dispel the illusion of another place in time, and second, how affect accompanies bodily sensations.

The sense of smell is deeply ambiguous in re-enactment. Historical re-enactment (for health and safety reasons, as much as the comfort of the public) falls well-short of presenting the past in its full olfactory intensity. Modern sensibilities of washed, perfumed and scented bodies stand in contrast to the unadulterated human odours of the past. Some smells are welcomed for their atmospheric (albeit sanitised) scent of (nostalgic) pastness: ‘wood smoke, sweaty wool and people’ (RSC10) has its appeal, but cesspits, tanneries, fermenting refuse is a step too far for all but the most hardcore re-enactors. By contrast taste, via the medium of period-authentic food, is among the welcomed everyday experiences of a living history setting.

Few living history/re-enactment settings can be truly free of the intrusion of anachronisms; however, as detailed in Chapter 6, atmospheric settings, with their multi-sensory combinations can, on occasion, provide the magic moment that seemingly makes the past present and palpable. When cultivated in combination, the poly-vocality of the senses form a kind of sensory overload that can ‘bombard’ you into an experience of pastness. Study participant Tom explains the role of objects in making this happen:

History is about once living people. That's it. They may be dead, but once they were living, breathing forms. Really, you've got to be able to bring that history alive again so the observer can actually be part of them and be part of their lives. That's where the objects come in, and the objects can actually activate the senses. That's what you want to do, okay? It makes it real, that whole sense of bringing things alive. If you can do it properly, you can actually put the observer in the middle of that experience.

Multimodal channels—all the senses—must be appealed to. The more channels open, the more likely the connection to the past will break through. Tom likens the technique to horse training:

When you train a horse, you give two or three different signals, hoping that one of those signals is going to get through and the horse will react to it ... It's the same thing with activating the senses with an object. It's your sight, your smell, your touch, your feel, all those. If you can bombard that person with those senses, then maybe one, one'll get through and they'll get it.

When multiple signals ‘get through’, the possibility of the ‘historical sensation’ heightens. Thus, sensory depth and detail makes the experience of the re-enacted past not just more real, but sublime. It supports and reinforces the exoskeleton of the outer person. Yet, the exoskeleton of the outer person is linked to the inner person and there is two-way spillage; each influences and shapes the other.

5.6.3 Contextual layering of landscape, affect and audiences

Affective sensations are another layer of authenticity re-enactors seek to reinforce their persona-taking. Once the body and senses are engaged, affect is present. Its influence can be

heightened by the realism of the scenario being played, the effect of settings/landscapes and the reactions of audiences.

In seeking out the actual site of historical events, re-enactors try to see in the past in the presentscape. 'Presentscape' is a term I use to capture the notion that whatever the vista of a present-day place may be, it is but an aggregation of the palimpsests of the place in the past. Re-enactors seek to perceive the 'pastscape' in the 'presentscape'. Sight predominates, but other senses (along with affective imaginings) are also involved in picking up the palimpsests of the past. Locating the past and making connection is particularly significant for places of commemorative significance (Schroeder, 2012).²⁹ In attempting to know the past through sensory experience in the present, re-enactors unwittingly employ practices used in landscape archaeology. The sensory is a valid mode of discovery and draws on phenomenology's understanding that first and foremost, our knowledge of the material world comes 'through flesh to influence the embodied mind' (Tilley, 2008, p. 20). This, when combined with commemoration results in heightened affect.

One hardcore re-enactor survey respondent gives an account of re-enacting (in 2010) the British Expeditionary Force retreat to Dunkirk (covering the exact route taken in 1940; 75 miles in two and a half days):

A WWII bunker that was a key point in the defence of the retreating troops... we stayed in the bunker, I slept next to the spot where a German grenade had detonated. We found ammunition that had exploded This was on the exact date [anniversary] of the battle. We were recreating history...Our battalion experienced every emotion and feeling. (RSB229)

For this re-enactor, the past in the presentscape was an essential part of the historical sensation experienced. In seeking to sleep next to the grenade crater, the re-enactor sought to be close to the past, in figurative, literal and affective senses.

Another re-enactor survey respondent recalls something similar. Having participated in the American Civil War 150th anniversary re-enactment of the Battle of Franklin, he encountered in the landscape, atmosphere, setting and context, a collusion of factors that created a powerful historical sensation:

I walked through the rod iron gates of the McGavok cemetery. The sky was dark and somber. I stood in front of the graves of the men from the 46th ... I could feel a large

²⁹For an understanding of the materiality of landscape in historical events, see Horwitz (1999) and McCalman and Pickering (2010).

lump forming in my throat and my eyes start to water, I couldn't control myself ... I walked away from that experience a different person. (RSB107)

The presence of an audience (whether self or other) is another external buttress for the persona in re-enactment. Re-enactors stay in persona to put on a convincing show for their peers (Schroeder, 2012; Thompson, 2004) and/or the public. Taylor (2003) acknowledges the significance of participants, witness and spectators as part of the multi-coded mix in the vital acts of transfer of performative scenarios. The public can be both part of the living history frame/scenario and outside it; the 'fourth wall' is fluid and moveable.

Witnessing the affective impact re-enactment can have on the audience triggers affective responses in re-enactors and gives them an historical sensation through a deep sense of connection to others and the past:

Participating in a (WWII) Polish veteran's parade ... A gentlemen wearing the armband of a Polish resistance fighter came up with tears in his eyes and said my wife looked like the 'angel' who had pulled him out of the gutter ... in the Warsaw Uprising. He welled up and walked away in tears. We stood around speechless. (RSB27)

The demarcation between public and living historians/re-enactor is normally clear; the public is 'behind the rope', on the other side of the display table, identifiable because they are in 21st century garb. Occasionally, the public is invited (in the second-person persona) to join the living historian and the fourth wall becomes blurred. A good example comes from study participant Geoff and his 'Von Kessinger's Express' event where members of the public are *in* the performance frame with the re-enactors and take on the personae of passengers on a 1944 German troop train ambushed by French partisans:

We do vignettes on the train with the passengers ... People do want to connect on a personal, one-to-one level. This is history happening. This is the page coming to life and stepping right in front of you.

Thus, the performance frame works for both the re-enactors and the public, and an immediate, 'real' and personal connection to the past is realised as both spectator and (second-person re-enactor) participant. This is what Hughes (2011, p. 146), drawing on performance theory, calls a liminal experience, where the imagination, empathy/affect, together with the realism of sensory detail transports an audience to another reality, a liminal one that feels real.

The presence of audiences thus mediates the operation of the persona. Audiences are empowered by their 'gaze', yet they are also subjected to the authority of the re-enactor who provides them with a viewed, scripted performance and story. The living historian has the upper hand in the relationship because they have the authority of knowing history as a participant-

researcher who can speak with the authority of personalised experience (De Groot, 2009). There are a range of experiences in the re-enactor's encounter with the public, from those epitomised by playfulness and fun, to serious inquiry, education and frustration (Clemons, 2007). Yet ultimately, the public's presence is one of the mediating devices that distracts from the living historian's goal of authenticity and realism; it serves to remind them of their self, a performer of the past, in the present.

5.7 Becoming the Historical Other: Objects and the Inner Person

To be the historical other requires a capacity to take on another's worldview and with it, empathetic understanding. The capacity to empathise is predicated on a cognitive process—what Collingwood termed, the *historical* imagination. Thus, creating an authentic inner person in living history is about understanding and replicating appropriate feelings (affect) and thinking of the people from history. In applying the *historical* imagination, the living historian is no different to the academic historian. Both use sources and evidence to contextualise and understand the thoughts, values, beliefs and motivations—the worldview—that led people in the past to behave as they did. Taking on the worldview of the historical other is central to the methodology of first-person historical persona-taking and necessary for third-person persona work as a historical interpreter.

5.7.1 Constructing a worldview

Constructing the worldview of a person of a particular, time, place and station in life is no mean feat. This is heavy intellectual 'head' history work. Researching and documenting each facet comprising a worldview is intricate, detailed and deeply embedded in historical context (Roth, 1998; Townsend, 2017, Ep. 7, Part 2). If the impression is based on an actual person in history, then it needs to be fully referenced; if it is a generic persona, attention is given to fleshing out a convincing backstory. Re-enactors often choose an ancestor to re-enact and, as a result, family history with anecdotal stories and traditions add the depth required for the person to feel real. It also adds an additional layer of connectedness between the re-enactor and the past.

On the credit side, the imaginative process of creating a persona and bringing it to life requires thoughtfulness, research and historical consciousness. This depth is not for everyone, and represents the hobby in its most extreme and 'hardcore'.

The materialism of objects as the persona's exoskeleton serves to support the re-enactor's inner person. Material objects, when used as sources and evidence, serve to transform pure imagination into *historical* imagination. 'Things' contextualise the imaginative experience; they are a source of, albeit, material (and experiential) evidence. Objects used to re-perform mundane activities of the past not only provide materialist evidential correctives and a grounding for the imagination, they also act as a reprieve from the heavy head work of imaginative thinking. Objects immerse the re-enactor in a different kind of thinking—thinking by 'doing' with, and through, material things—which allows the stored cognition in objects to ground the relived-past using the iterative patterns and rhythm of everyday activities. Thus, the use of objects help re-enactors stay in persona while adding a sense of authenticity to their re-enactment.

For focus group participant Rebecca, objects are a sensory feedback system that embody the cognition she needs for her inner person. As minded-objects they are cognition and memory repositories, where ideas, actions and routines are stored. This helps her sustain her inner person persona. Her period clothes behave like a 'mind palace' of stored cognition:

If I'm wearing medieval clothes. I find it really difficult to see music from a different century that's not appropriate to what I'm wearing. I cannot quite remember it. If I'm wearing Napoleonic, the whole French repertoire is in my head. If I'm wearing this [indicating her medieval dress], it's the medieval. (Rebecca)

Some re-enactors take shortcuts in the first-person persona and import experiences, skills and relationships from their present-day self to flesh out the backstory of their inner persona. One example of this comes from study participant Walter. His third-person persona is that of an American Civil War surgeon. Out of persona, in real life, he is a retired nurse and paramedic; however, he uses this knowledge (in conjunction with his 1863 medical journals and original period surgical tools) to inform his impression.

Occasionally the persona and the 21st century identity of Walter gets mixed up and he finds himself in a liminoid (Turner, 1974) state:

I was still going out onto the field, working real medicine besides fake medicine ... We've had anything from spider bites to cardiac arrest.

Like other re-enactors, he uses clothes to step into persona ('the bloody apron... when I put the apron on, the doctor is in'), but as a third-person interpreter, he gives himself permission to step out of character and engage with his audience as his 21st century self. His persona's knowledge is topped-up by his engagement in the present. Modern medical professionals identify (the

largely unchanged) surgical instruments and instruct Walter on their use, and he readily incorporates this information into his impression.

The blurring of ‘self in the present’ and ‘other in the past’ is not uncommon in historical re-enactment/living history. Method acting methodology used in re-enactment (Horwitz, 1999), drawing its value from the fact that it anchors the common physiology of bodies in a material context that can provide common-sense and kinaesthetically empathetic insights. One survey respondent explains how he consciously uses his theatrical training in method acting techniques to understand and portray his persona:

I learned the techniques of method acting in which an actor fully immerses themselves (sic) in a role. The belief is that by sleeping in the characters' bed, wearing their clothes, feeling the cold that they felt, eating the food that they eat, feeling the kind of fear that they felt, will give an actor richer understanding of the person and the experience, allowing them to portray the role more accurately.

Like living history, method acting uses the experiential episteme and kinaesthetic imagination and empathy (Foster, 1995, 2011; Roach, 1996). This can be valuable. Schneider (2014) draws parallels between Collingwood’s situation-specific ‘re-enactment of history thought’ and the method acting techniques developed by Stanislavsky. However, when identities become blurred and are fuelled by affective sympathy, the method becomes a liability not a resource. Recent academic research has identified the psychological issues of over-identification with roles played in theatre: emotional exhaustion and trauma (Ohikuare, 2014; Sawoski, 2010; Taylor, 2016). The same may be true for re-enactment, especially when the events being recreated are violent and (re)perform trauma (Taylor, 2003). A number of ex-servicemen in the survey recounted how the experience of re-enacting battle was so real it triggered traumatic flashbacks of past battle experience:

My first civil war reenactment (the)125th anniversary of Perryville Kentucky, first time on the line and (I) was shaking like a leaf, (I had been in real combat) and had not felt like that, and when the order was given to fire I thought I was going to passout! (RSB218)

Years ago I took out a Sherman with a magnetized black smoke grenade! I am a Vietnam vet, and it brought back the rush, including the ‘shakes’! (RSB98)

Re-enactment, particularly military impressions, attract a significant number of ex-service personnel. They are attracted by the camaraderie, the regimentation, drill and perhaps the opportunity to relive military life on and off the battlefield. But objects, settings and scenarios can shift them from their present self, not into their persona, but into their past selves. Study

participant Tom notes how the placement of a military longarm involuntarily snaps an ex-soldier into their past military self—the drill, the stance, the muscle memory take over: ‘they get the stance. They throw back to that. ... how they pick up the weapon. They get back into that zone’. Re-enactment’s concern with ‘individual’s physical and psychological experience’ (Agnew, 2007, p. 310) and persona-taking exposes it to ‘deep(er) malfunction’ called ‘re-enacting pathology’. This is an over-immersive state, where living historians lose ‘an intelligent perspective on reality’ and live in ‘an alternative reality’ (Thompson, 2004, p. 200 ff). Coming out of the ‘zone’ or character is part of the complexities of taking on a comprehensive persona.

The issue is not the same for all re-enactors. As a form of theatre and performance, living history invites the suspension of disbelief for participants and audiences by drawing them into a theatrical frame (Hughes, 2011). Performance of personae, physical settings, clothes and objects intensify modalities to assist all involved take the imaginative leap into the past, while being aware of their present-selves.

‘Conceptual blending’ or ‘seeing double’, is the capacity to think two conflicting notions at one time (Hughes, 2011, p. 137). It is central to the doing of living history and re-enactment’s method of persona-taking. It takes many forms; for example, performer and audience recognising the distinction between the re-enactor and the persona played, yet setting this aside to make sense of the drama/activity. It allows for typical re-enactment paradoxes to coexist: ‘being the self and the other’, ‘being-in-now’ and ‘being-in-then’, and knowing ‘what-I-know-in-the-present’ and ‘what-I-know-in-the-past’. The capacity of ‘seeing double’ underpins the suspension of disbelief that plays such a large part in living history.

Hamish, a veteran Australian re-enactor and study participant, provides an example of a technique he uses to support both his persona-taking and the audience’s understanding of the ‘past in the present’ and the ‘seeing double’ of historical re-enactment. The technique is also a manner to heighten the historical consciousness of his audience. Hamish relates how, in his 18th century dress and persona, he interacts with the public and will do so provocatively expressing the worldview of the time of his first-person persona. However, when he needs to move to third-person interpreter, he uses a simple technique to make the transition:

If someone (in the audience) wants to speak to me the normal thing is ... I’ll draw a line (in the dirt) with my foot, I’ll step over (it) and say, ‘Yes Sir, I am in your time period. I step into your time’. I’ll have my discussion in the idiom of 2016, 17, 18, whatever you are in, and when I am finished I say, ‘Well I am now going back into my time’ and I’ll step back over that line and I am Watkin Tench of the NSW Corps of Marines.

Hamish shows enormous flexibility in shifting to and from persona, but he anchors that persona in material culture and a concept of time that has a physical and embodied place ('my time' behind the line or 'your time' over the line).

Re-enactors rarely cut loose from their anchor in the present—the unavoidable intrusions of their modern world interrupts their illusions of pastness no matter how well contrived. When the anchor comes loose, they call it 'period rush' or the 'magic moment'; it is a (welcomed) fleeting historical experience and enormously affective.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has described and analysed the materialist methodology involved in the adoption of persona and becoming the historical other in the re-enactment and living history. This two-step methodology—creating the outer and the inner person—strikingly parallels Collingwood's historiographical methodology of mentally re-enacting the past by means of the 'outside in' (observable, physical events) and the 'inside out' (by reconstructing the thoughts and motivations that led people to behave in the way they did in the past).

The outside of the outer person of the re-enactor historical persona is constructed with a layering of material culture with, and on, the body. Objects-in-use assist re-enactors to move out from themselves into persona. The worldview of the inner person of the historical persona is achieved through research and deep absorption in everyday activities of the past. Objects and artefacts are employed by living historians to tune into the minds of people in the past. This process of accessing the past through minded-bodies and unlocking the minds-in-objects involves kinaesthetic empathy and kinaesthetic imagination. It is an holistic process that involves somatic, affective and cognitive modes which, in rare circumstances, provide re-enactors with an intense, short-lived and sublime form of historical consciousness called (variously) period rush, the magic moment or time slip. This historical consciousness as *ekstasis* is a form of the historical sensation.

This materialist methodology moves the re-enactment of history from the inside head activity of traditional history, out into the physical and material world of bodies, senses and affect. Re-enactors use material culture to think, feel and touch the past. In doing so they give 'head history' body and heart. The inner and outer person of the persona is permeable and mutually informative. The blurring of distinctions between mind/body/object also provides fresh insights into the agency of things. The concept of the 'minded-object' and the place things can play in

shifting perspectives, commends living history's use of the materialist experience as a both source and method for history pedagogy.

The next chapter uses auto-ethnography and interview material in a case study of *Waterloo 2015*. It further investigates how objects work to facilitate historical consciousness, states of *ekstasis* and the sublime experience of the historical sensation. This 'magic moment' is theorised, and the issue of the co-agency of 'things' considered through a case a study into a 'disobedient' object.

Chapter 6: *Waterloo 2015* and the Disobedient Object

6.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the auto-ethnographical field work of the author as a participant-observer at *Waterloo 2015*, the largest-ever European historical re-enactment held on the original site of the Battle of Waterloo on the occasion of its 200th anniversary. The auto-ethnographic data is interwoven with in-depth interviews from other re-enactor participants, media reports and online social media activity to analyse historical re-enactment and living history as a form of historical thinking and historical consciousness that is informed by a materialist approach to making sense of the past.

The chapter begins with ethnographic data. I wanted to discover how an embodied experience, shaped by the conflation of the materiality of things-in-use, landscape and assemblages of human bodies, makes and disseminates historical knowledge. I sought to discover the kinds of historical thinking I would experience as a result, and how materialism acts as ‘vital act(s) of transfer’ (Taylor, 2003, p. 22) transcending ways of knowing beyond the traditional historical method with its focus on written sources (Magelssen, 2014).

In (re)performing the past in this re-enactment of the Battle of Waterloo, I was also wary of (and excited by) the nexus between the haptic/somatic and affect; after all, to touch is to be touched. Affect’s amorphous nature moves individuals in bodily and cognitive ways (Landsberg, 2015). What influence would the bodily experiencing of a re-creation of history bring to bear on history as a cerebral activity? Would I, or others, catch the rush of ‘time slip’? What would be the results of the interplay between the dimensions of head (the cognitive), hands (haptic) and heart (affective)? How would the interaction of these impact on my historical consciousness and capacity to think historically?

This chapter also analyses the experience of *Waterloo 2015* as a form of historical sensation or ‘magic moment’ using the psychological anthropology framework of Luhrmann’s (2012) theory of sensory override. Of the one-in-six respondents in the re-enactor survey (58/349) who claimed to have experienced the magic moment, a quarter nominated *Waterloo 2015* as an episode where they experienced it. This nominates *Waterloo 2015* as worthy of deeper analysis

as an exemplum of how the materiality of things, bodies and settings evokes the cognitive, sensory and affective ('head, hands and heart') elements of the 'magic moment'.

The chapter concludes with a case study built around a singular object, deeply implicated at Waterloo and its re-enactment: the Brown Bess musket. The focus on this 'disobedient' object is used to explicitly explore the concept of vital materialism and the co-agency of things.

6.2 Waterloo 2015

Waterloo 2015 featured more than 6,000 re-enactors, 300 cavalry and 120 cannons. It drew 120,000 spectators (60,000 per day) as well as re-enactor participants from across the continent and the globe. It was an extraordinary re-enactment, in terms of the size, location (the actual historic battlefield) and intensity of its physicality. This lent it a level of realism absent from many small-scale re-enactments. As an exemplum of re-enactment, it demonstrates how the interplay of objects, landscape and people creates a kind of experience of history beyond that found in books:

This is a history you can touch; you can feel and you can live inside. It's not only a book you can read. You can have the taste; you can have the feeling. (Beardsley, 2015, 01:29)

Considerations of scale (6,000 re-enactors compared to 190,000 troops in the actual battle) and spectator visibility, saw the size of the battlefield reduced to about one-fifth of the actual battlefield. Scale reproductions of fortified positions at La Haye Sainte and Hougoumont were built in this designated battlefield area (see Figure 6.1). Within this framework, the organisers and generals made 'as-authentic-as-possible' deployment of troops.

I was attached to the 73rd Regiment of Foot. In the battle re-enactment, this unit was deployed near the centre between the fortified farmhouses of Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte, very close to the actual position the 73rd Regiment held in 1815. This put me in the 'thick' of the re-enacted action: on the receiving end of both the massed French cavalry charges and the final, desperate attack of the French Imperial Guard. The unit was also positioned to deliver, at bayonet point, the final Allied counterattack that decided the battle.

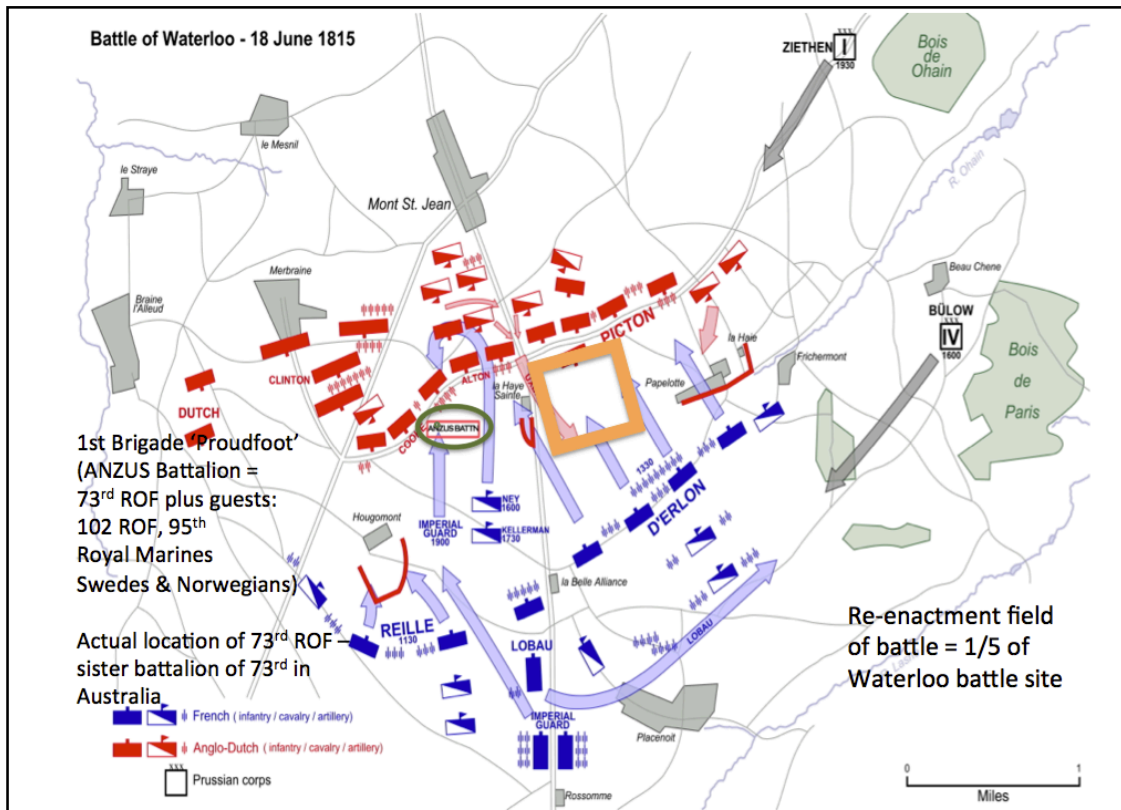


Figure 6.1: Battle of Waterloo, 1815 and 2015—the orange square indicates the approximate size and location of the re-enactment in Waterloo 2015 and the green oval shows the location of the 73rd Regiment of Foot in 1815.



Figure 6.2: The researcher, (far left) with his 'platoon' at Hougomont.³⁰

³⁰ In 1815, 15,000 died on the spot where we slept in 2015. It gave me a palpable sense of connection with the dead (see Section 4.5).

6.2.1 The violence of the physical: Battle re-enactment as extreme history

Typically, at large European battle re-enactments 5% of the re-enactors get injured. Apply this statistic to *Waterloo 2015* and it constitutes around 300 real-world casualties. No official injury rates have been published, but the 5% rate was evident in our unit³¹ (the so-called ‘ANZUS Battalion’) and those deployed close by. One re-enactor from 2/95th Rifles (on our immediate right) referred to the number of injuries at *Waterloo 2015* as:

A lot ... two sets of burning gunpowder to the eyes, two concussions, one bayonet to the top lip, several twisted ankles and knees and countless cuts and bruises. (Dare, 2015)

This is ‘dangerous’ and ‘extreme history’; history that is both physically and psychologically demanding (McCalman, 2004, p. 470). As Lamb (2008, p. 248) argues, physical discomfort—‘pain’—is for re-enactors an evidential ‘authenticity bridge’ to the past; it gives rise to an affective experience (‘sentimental history’) and engenders a sympathetic mode for experiencing the feelings of others. The physicality of the embodied experience (with its discomfort, ‘pain’ and associated affect) was central in my experience of *Waterloo 2015*.

Attaining the grail of realness comes with a somatic and affective experience. The engagement of the intellect (head history) comes before and after; the former in researching the history and persona to be enacted through period-accurate things; the latter in the reflection on the meaning of the somatic and affective experience of the performance of the past.

Before *Waterloo 2015* I had experienced a number of battle re-enactments in Australia. In Australia and America, re-enactors abide by stringent safety standards, including (for black powder events) a no contact rule.³² In Europe, the rules are different. European re-enactors have a reputation for being very physical—the hobby is described as ‘more like a contact sport’:

There was this big camp rumour that they (the French) wanted to push us off the hill. So we were practicing these ... scrum tactics. So you ... would pack in tight, punch out your elbows ... and try and push them off the field ... we're very litigious ... [in America] and everything's very safe and controlled. And this was like madness and we said, looking around the English guys, 'So do you do this a lot?' And then you see they've got their teeth missing ... These guys were having some serious ... fighting here... Knowing that we might not survive does give this experience a little bit more of an edge than usual. (Woolf, 2015, 02:42)

³¹ The 5% figure was certainly true for the group of Australians who travelled to Waterloo.

³² The no contact rule is due to the possibility of weapons discharging and the danger of injury from bayonets.



Figure 6.3: Waterloo 2015 - The researcher, as participant-observer is front row, 4th from the right.

The 2015 Ligny Battle re-enactment (a precursor battle to *Waterloo 2015*) gave me my first taste of the physicality of European ‘scrum tactics’. My unit³³ faced off against a column of the ‘elite’ troops of the French Imperial Guard. A (unscripted) blunder by our American commander, had served to annoy the French. In a bad temper, they advanced in a twelve-deep column onto our two-deep line. My field notes record the primacy of the physical in the experience, but hard on the heels of the somatic was affect; this was an experience of ‘hands and heart’ history:

The Guard advanced into view ...at the charge ... They ... chant(ed), ‘Le poussée, le poussée,’ (‘The shove, the shove’) as their column came on in a giant pulsating, mechanical, surge of men and bayonets.

I felt our line waiver. Part of me knew this was a re-enactment, a ‘pretence’, but another part of my brain was telling me ‘this is real’. Uncertainty about what would happen next grew in me: ‘Would they stop? Would they withdraw their bayonets in time?’

The French Guard crashed into our line with an audible crunch. Their muskets, and ours, moved to the ‘port-position’³⁴ ... and, at the last moment, clashed together. This was particularly unnerving because most of us had a live charge down the barrel.

³³ On this occasion, I was part of a Prussian Landwehr (militia).

³⁴ Port positions put the musket diagonally across your body so bayonets are averted.

“Le poussée! le poussée!” they continued and pushed against us. ... they were too strong and 12 deep to our two. The female re-enactors to my left cried out in anguish and crumpled into my flank.

It was a strange phenomenon, a kind of ‘group think’. Just as I had decided to break contact, it seems that everyone else’s resolve in the unit also evaporated...we turned and ran as one. I became aware of how difficult it was to move quickly; the greatcoat, crossbelts and musket weighed me down. The waist high rye clawed at us, and held us; the furrows in field played havoc, with our footfall made worse by the shoes and their lack of traction. It was like moving in slow motion (Field Notes).

For two of our number, the physical exertion was too much; they vomited and collapsed.

An additional layer of physical danger was the presence of gunpowder and firearms. Fortunately, on this occasion there were no accidental discharges. The same could not be said of the sound, light and pyrotechnic show on the evening before the *Waterloo 2015* battle re-enactment. It was aptly called ‘Inferno’. My 19-year- old son was part of this opening ceremony spectacular. However, the artistic organiser, Luc Petit, did not have a clear understanding of gunpowder. He positioned the re-enactors (with their cartridge boxes stuffed with black powder charges) backstage, within reach of the overhead shower of sparks from the stage pyrotechnics (see Figure 6.4). A spark got into the cartridge box of one of the re-enactors standing five metres away from my son. She went up in a fireball, as did two others. My son told me:

It was legitimately terrifying ... even just for a couple of moments I instinctively knew, ‘Jesus I need to get out of here’—you have enough gunpowder to blow half of your rear end off....[the people running from the explosion] was an avalanche—if you tried to stand against it, they would have run over you ... There was terror in the eyes of people. We ran ten metres back. There were panicked shouts and the cries of ‘medic’ ... I took up the cry myself ‘... something had blown up and someone had lit up’.



Figure 6.4: Showers of sparks fall above the stage of ‘Inferno’

As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the history of black powder re-enactment is peppered with gunpowder injuries. Even in the absence of accidents, there is something unnerving about a single person, let alone a hundred, discharging (albeit blank) firearms at you. Etiquette has it that you never directly point and fire a weapon at another person; even with this proviso in place you experience the volley viscerally and physically. When fired on, I cannot help flinching: you see the gush of yellow flame from the barrels and a percussive wave of emissions (burnt powder, smoke, cartridge paper) in the air (and, at Waterloo, a ripple on the waist-high barley). Seen, heard, smelled and felt by those on the receiving end, a musket volley elicits from me an involuntary affective response. This object and what it stands for, literally and figuratively impresses upon the user(s) physically and psychologically.

In this period of ‘horse and musket’ warfare, the former adds to the mix of dangerous physicality. However well trained, horses (and their riders) get spooked. Big animals, moving at speed over rough terrain are a danger to themselves, their riders and others. *Waterloo 2015* was no exception. One hussar died when he fell and broke his neck; Marshal Ney (contrary to history and the script) came off his horse in the opening moments of the battle re-enactment (see Figure 6.5), and was trampled by his mount. He left the field with a triple fracture of the collar bone, five broken ribs and concussion (De Ghellinck, 2015).



Figure 6.5: ‘Ney’ comes off his horse in the opening moments of Waterloo 2015

Assemblages of bodies also take on fresh meaning and intensity on the battlefield. Foot soldiers get some protection from cavalry (historically and for re-enactment purposes) when operating

collectively in a formation called ‘square’. As its name suggests, it has four equal sides; on each side infantry face outwards, front row kneeling, with their bayoneted muskets forming a bristling wall to repel cavalry. A lunge with the bayonets and roar from the infantry helps persuade the horses to shy away. The fate (and identity) of the individual is subsumed in the collective entity of the roaring regiment.

However, squares are not always a failsafe protection against cavalry. In the 2012 re-enactment of Waterloo a British dragoon, possibly suffering from ‘re-enactor pathology’ or ‘buckfever’ attempted to perform a (unscripted) re-enactment of Ensign Charles Ewart’s historic seizure of the French 45th Regiment’s eagle (colours) and drove his horse headlong into a square of French re-enactors (R. Herman, personal communication, 18 February 2016) (see Figure 6.6).



Figure 6.6: Waterloo 2012, A British dragoon charges into a French square³⁵

At *Waterloo 2015*, the presence of charging cavalry provided me with a hefty dose of physicality. A forceful blow by a passing dragoon to the side of my bayonet keeled me over; a full frontal charge by a hussar, who shied away at the very last moment, was an act of intimidation, as was an attempt by a lancer to transfix me with his [rubber-tipped] lance. For the cavalry it was a game—how many hits or ‘kills’ could they notch up—for me it was a ‘white knuckle’ experience.

³⁵ Photo courtesy of Roly Herman (2012).

There are occasions when re-enactors cannot reach the protection of a square. This happened to Jerry, who was only three files away in my platoon. Jerry experienced what Luhrmann describes as ‘sensory override’:

I’m standing there, with my musket in the air ... with my feet trapped in the wheat ... the [French] cavalry milling around me, and our guys moving further away, the din, and roar of the guns and the smoke, everything ... my head was spinning ... a [French cavalry] guy comes down with his sword... it slid along the musket and just caught my arm ... I fell to the ground ... my foot was tangled. I’m trying to disentangle it and (our) line withdrew - it swung around behind me into a different facing, and I’m sat out in the middle...

Jerry survived the cavalry, but the experience left its mark physically and psychologically on him and others; after the battle, on the five kilometre march back to camp, Jerry collapsed. With three others, I dragged him off the road. To the backdrop of rank upon rank of soldiers marching past we desperately performed first aid. I was experiencing a degree of realism I had not anticipated and was engulfed by affect; fear that I would lose a buddy, and relief when he came round. My stress and anxiety levels rocketed; ‘survival’, ‘get through’ became new priorities for myself, my son and my comrades. I was experiencing something of the ‘soldierly bond’ or ‘band of brothers’ phenomenon; that affective relationship formed in the face of common adversity (Whitehouse et al., 2014).³⁶

The final element of danger came from re-enactors themselves. In seeking to re-enact the soldier, the adoption of the warrior ethos, combined with the adrenaline rush triggered by the dangerous physical circumstances on the battlefield is a heady mix. Whereas *ekstasis* can be euphoric and cathartic, liberation from the present self is a license to behave in a manner that would otherwise be unacceptable in any modern leisure setting. ‘Re-enactor pathology’, ‘buckfever’ and ‘wargasm’ has its ugly and dangerous side, as illustrated in this disturbing remark from one Waterloo re-enactor in 2014:

It’s something quite satisfying pretending to shoot another human being. (Di Martino, 2014: 00:09)

Re-enactors in my immediate platoon are rational, responsible, respectful and gentle beings as their 21st century-selves. At *Waterloo 2015* a number become overwhelmed by the somatic and affective experience of re-enactment and behaved differently. Michael, a young Australian history teacher member of the regiment, found that 12 continuous days of deep immersion in the physicality of camp life changed him and the way he thought and behaved.

³⁶ See re-enactor survey data; the ‘*gemeinschaft*’ of the re-enactment as a powerful driver of the hobby.

You know when place and setting sweep you along with the events, but this was something different. ... the place and the setting were trying to be the same thing I was trying to be ... I had 12 days living in a tent, in a military encampment environment ... I smell, I'm hungry, I'm really over the taste of salt in everything I eat.

Michael gives agency to objects for 'pushing him' out of his 21st century self:

All those little things added up. It's those little material things that, in many ways, pushed me out of the 21st century... I lost my last name. I became Private Michael... because no one can remember my last name. I became Private Michael, 102nd company ... I became that person because I was in this environment.

Michael took his 'Private Michael' soldier self/persona onto the battlefield with dangerous consequences:

Everything was chaotic and nothing had prepared us. I had to be reigned in with other people to not kill the French horses with the bayonet ... (on) The first day, it's lucky I didn't take out a horse's spleen. They (the French) looked (like) they were playing for kicks, and I felt the need to play for kicks also ... It was very much these are two sides trying to kill each other. I got caught up in that because of the whole week, and I think the guys on the other side equally got caught up in that (see Figure 6.7).



Figure 6.7: Webcam view of an infantry charge (French Imperial Guard) at 'Waterloo 2015'.

On one occasion, in the interests of avoiding real world injuries, I intervened to 'burst the bubble' of a fellow re-enactor who had caught the rush and was in a state of frenzied 'wargasm'. It was the climactic moment of the battle, the act on the last day of the re-enactment; we fired a volley and delivered the charge against the French Imperial Guard:

‘Wellington’ himself took command of us and ordered the charge. Bayonets fixed and with a mighty, guttural roar, we lunged forward – all our pent up stress and anxiety was released in an almighty wave of adrenaline. We crunched into the French line. I saw uncertainty and fear in the face of the French re-enactor who was facing off against the Australian ... on my right; the Australian was going too hard, there was a glaze in his eye. I threw my arm across his chest. ... The bubble ... burst. (Field Notes)

The organisers must have been well aware of how *Waterloo 2015* could turn into ‘extreme history’; re-enactors were required to sign a personal liability ‘waiver’:

Each participant must be aware of the risk of physical injury or of death posed during each stage of the re-enactment, and agrees to accept this risk by entering into these activities (Waterloo 2015, n.d.).

For others, the trauma of the realism of battle affected them differently. This was particularly the case for ex-servicemen. In our first musketry volleys our sergeant (a service veteran) completely lost control, hurling liberal 21st century abuse at the enemy between musket volleys. Before the battle, as the troops muster ready to march out, one of our number (an ex-Timorese Australian army veteran) refused to come out of his tent. The commanding officer told me he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and had had a meltdown (possibly not the first, as he was one of the re-enactors who collapsed and vomited at the Ligny re-enactment a week earlier).

All these aspects raise ethical questions concerning how historical re-enactments permit, perpetuate, trivialise, provoke and produce violence for entertainment (Lamb, 2008; Taylor, 2003). On more than one occasion over the two days I was surprised and discomfited by how I had positioned myself to receive, and initiate, acts of violence. Whereas most of these were conducted within a performance and play frame, there were moments when others stepped outside that permissive frame. For example, during Day 1 of the battle an officer in command lost his self-control when we were the target of cavalry charges. He stalked the front of our line, brandishing his sword, foaming at the mouth shouting, ‘I will hit the next person who back answers me! I am trying to give orders here’ (Field Notes).

The sheer physicality of *Waterloo 2015* and its precursor event, the Battle of Ligny, had surprised me. Perhaps the remarkable size and scale of *Waterloo 2015* served to magnify the physical dangers, the affective responses and, consequently, the sense of realism. Six thousand lethal weapons, four tonnes of gunpowder, 120 cannons, 300 horses, uneven and treacherous ground, the unpredictability of horses and the people around you who are being other than their normal selves, were part of its power and appeal for spectator and participant alike.

6.3 My Body as Vessel for Experience: A Source of Historical Consciousness

I acknowledge that my body was an imperfect vessel through which to receive an authentic experience of the generic foot soldier at Waterloo in 1815. An oft made (and valid) criticism of living history and historical re-enactment is that the disparity and differences in the human body over time mitigates against (together with the culturally defined workings of the human senses and culturally imprinted *habitus*) the possibility of ever reliving the past as it was experienced by the historical actors:

I looked around our unit and observed that ... many of us are too old and/or too fat to do an authentic impression of soldiers in the field. At Waterloo the average age of a soldier was mid-twenties, with a quarter of the army aged between 17 and 19 years. We had way too many 'grey beards' in their forties and fifties to even come close to 'looking right' (Field Notes).

I became acutely aware of how my mid-50-year-old body, physically and culturally contextualised by my life and times, struggled in the alien environment of things, objects and other bodies of a Napoleonic military setting. It was one thing to have learned the drill and the formation changes on the parade grounds of Australia and Belgium, quite another to execute them successfully when under the physical and psychological (semi-real) stress of a battlefield.

'Authentic' reproduction equipment, military formations, the heat and humidity and situation of a battle with real and present dangers made *Waterloo 2015* an effective 'mode of performative historiography' (Magelssen, 2014, p. 34). It connected me to the material realities of the soldier's experience of two hundred years ago in a way that visual and written texts could not. The cacophony of a hundred cannons rattled my every sense—physically 'felt' as much as heard—combined with thousands of muskets that cracked, boomed and thundered with deafening effect. Then there was the smell: burnt powder, the stink of sulphur. It stung our eyes. Powder flashes and cinders burnt faces and billowing plumes of gun smoke obscured vision, giving real meaning to the term fog of war.

Agency also shifted, along with the sense of self. On the uneven furrowed fields of Waterloo the landscape had agency; the ground continuously dictated our movements and interrupted decisions. The objects we carried also asserted control, especially the musket. It was the ultimate 'disobedient object' (see Section 6.7). Its very form—weight, shape, design and function—together with the need to coordinate its use across a hundred people in close order, dictated our every move. The waist-high barley clawed and dragged at our every step and

exacerbated the effect of the heat, dehydration and fatigue. The field played havoc with our visual cues; undulating ground ('dead ground') made it impossible to see threats. Cavalry would suddenly appear at full charge, as if the ground before you had opened up and spewed them forth. The well-practised, drill-manual manoeuvres of the parade ground were impossible to replicate on the battlefield, and added to stress and distress (see Figures 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10).



Figure 6.8: Parade ground drill; in square formation (the ideal)



Figure 6.9: Battlefield reality (note the interruption/mediating presence of spectator stands beyond the musket smoke)



Figure 6.10: The 'Regiment' partly obscured by dead ground and waist height barley.

However, while my body was the primary mode for experiencing the past—after all, the embodied experience is what makes living history *living* (Magelssen, 2014, p. 34)—it was equally an obstacle for receiving the past as experienced by the historical actors.

It is useful to draw on Bourdieu and his concept of *habitus* here. My *habitus* as a 21st century, middle-aged school teacher was far and away different from the *habitus* of a 19th century British foot soldier. Re-enactors have not had the time, nor the lifetime, to acquire the *habitus* of the target persona they attempt to re-enact. Therefore, they *always* fall short of their goal of authentic experience. The '*habitus* gap' between the weekend modern-day re-enactor and historical actor is unbridgeable, yet this gap is a fertile reflective space that provokes historical consciousness; it is also a place for the creation of new (or the remembering/(re)discovery of lost) historical knowledge.

This links to Magelssen's observation of how the 'discomforting of bodies' (particularly when combined with stress, anxiety and emotional and psychological uneasiness) can be a technique for engendering fresh insight (Anderson, 2004; Magelssen, 2014, pp. 39, 43). I note my awkward clumsiness in performing the most routine tasks of a Napoleonic soldier, especially when under duress. However, as Schneider (2011, pp. 86, 112) argues, inverting the normal re-enactor paradigm of 'authenticity is accuracy', the 'getting it wrong', 'the errors, the cracks in

the effort’, ‘the almost but not quite’ gives a performative re-enactment ‘a kind of touch across time’ and access to fidelity.

This appreciation of the difference between the *habitus* of lived bodies of historical actors and the present-day body of the historical re-enactor serves to generate a ‘distance’—a Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* (Magelssen, 2014, p. 38)—where audience and performer can critically reflect on the past as being different from the present. Thus, historical re-enactment, even (perhaps especially) when it falls short of faithfully replicating the past represents *historical consciousness in an embodied form*; an embodied orientation in time that permits reflection on the difference between past, present and future, and an insight into the nature of re-enactment as an historiographical conundrum.

6.4 Testing the Limits of Historical Imagination

Sensory experience of the materiality of objects supports the imaginative step necessary to do history. For Collingwood, imagination was an intellectual act that, when grounded in sources and evidence, becomes the historical imagination. A similar process happens in the materialist approach to history, except that in historical re-enactment, the imaginative *mental* act of Collingwood’s method is supported, shaped and informed by the materiality and embodied experience of historical objects-in-use.

Further, in rare ‘Goldilocks’/‘flow’ (Turner, 1974) circumstances, the materialist experience of historical things-in-action—bodies, objects and settings—can trigger for re-enactors a fleeting, sublime experience of connection to the past called the ‘magic moment’. Of interest to this study are the possibilities and limitations of objects as fuel for the historical imagination and historical consciousness. To know how objects work to create the historical sensation, albeit it in its most virulent form as the magic moment, has value for its adaption for use in other contexts, such as history pedagogy.

Historically and culturally, objects have a long history of being used to focus attention and make abstract concepts real. *Waterloo 2015* illustrates how ‘living’ and (re)enacting history served to ‘intensify the imaginative act... engage the senses, evoke vivid memories and ... generate powerful emotions’ (Luhmann, 2012, p. 161). Notably, I am taking Luhmann, a professor of anthropology at Stanford University, out of context. Her specialty is psychological anthropology. Her research is about the phenomenon of first-hand, embodied, tangible and ‘real in the world’ encounters with the non-corporeal and absent; specifically, in the religious

experience of an encounter with God. Her study focus is different, yet her observation of the role played by materiality and imagination provides a useful analytical theoretical framework for the current case study.

Luhrmann identifies two sets of conditions as necessary for an embodied experience of the non-corporeal and absent. The first is imaginative capacity and ‘absorption’. The second is a context where ambiguous stimulus, cognitive expectation and emotional arousal causes a phenomenon she labels ‘sensory override’.

Re-enactors and living historians meet Luhrmann’s first set of conditions—imaginative capacity and absorption in, with, and through ‘things’. Objects are aids to imagination. Their multi-sensual, existential nature are a focus for imaginative attention. They supply the ‘sensory I-was-there’ detail (Luhrmann, 2012, p. 223) that fuels the imaginative belief that the (recreated) past is present, real and can be lived. Experiences we encounter in high modality with ‘sensory vividness’ are associated ‘with memories of real events’. (Luhrmann, 2012, p. 224) and these memories and experiences provide re-enactors further foundation for imaginative belief. Re-enactors become absorbed in their world. In psychology, absorption refers to ‘the capacity to become absorbed in inner sensory stimuli’ at the expense of awareness of external stimuli. When in a state of deep absorption in something, the individual is difficult to distract and their ‘sense of time and agency begins to shift’ (Luhrmann, 2012, p. 142).

Absorption is a characteristic of living history praxis. It is evident in persona-taking (especially first-person), the adoption of worldviews, historical research and the attention to the minutiae. It is inherent in the deep immersion in the iterative processes of replicating past routines through, and with, material culture of the past. It is also evident in re-enactors’ capacity to shut out anachronistic intrusions and be in ‘the flow’ (Turner, 1974). The high modality and vivid experiential episteme create real memories that further underpin the ‘realness’ of current sensory experience and supports the imaginative processes involved in recreating, re-enacting and reliving the past.

Luhrmann’s second condition of ‘sensory override’ is relevant to the debate around the validity of the experiential episteme. Humans use a cognitive process called ‘reality monitoring’ (Luhrmann, 2011, p. 73) to interpret whether momentary experience is ‘internal to the mind’ (e.g., daydreaming) or external in the world (i.e., reality). Situations that involve a cognitive bias about what is anticipated (cognitive expectation), together with sensory information that is

open to interpretation (ambiguous stimulus), combined with an affective state (emotional arousal) may result in sensory override. Sensory override describes the momentary overwhelming of the cognitive process of reality monitoring, resulting in the mind perceiving an experience to be real because the senses heard, saw, felt and smelled it (Luhmann, 2012, p. 217). This is what makes it possible for people to have a ‘real’ experience of that which is immaterial and absent (like an encounter with God or, in the case of the magic moment, the experience of time travel).

Luhmann’s theoretical framework allows for deeper analysis of the magic moment as reported by participants at *Waterloo 2015*. Critics of living history assert that re-enactors ‘hallucinate’ the past (Denning, 1992, p. 4). I would argue that living history, as an imaginative process, creates an *illusion* of the past (one recognised as such by participants and audiences) rather than a hallucination. A hallucination is a perception experienced in a conscious state, in the *absence* of external material stimulus (Luhmann, 2005, p. 216), whereas an illusion, while also experienced in a conscious state, involves the *presence* of material external stimulus. Both hallucinations and illusions are misperceptions; the former originates within the mind, the latter originates outside of the mind. Materiality is the source of external stimuli. The concrete, detailed, real-to-life modality of things, combined with embodied sensation, puts objects and artefacts in use at the fore of the experience of pastness as a form of historical imagination and historical consciousness.

Luhmann’s sensory override theory is employed as an analytic frame for the cases of the magic moment/historical sensation reported by re-enactors at *Waterloo 2015*, where the materiality of objects, landscape and other bodies were central to the overwhelming sensory experience that provided individuals with a sublime connection to the past and historical insights.

6.4.1 Cognitive expectation

In the lead up to battle re-enactments, a number of steps prepare participants for an affective and physical experience (Jones, 2007). The first is the ‘build up’, a form of cognitive expectation in which past experience—both individual and collective memory—is recalled in preparation and anticipation of an authentic encounter with the past. These memories are drawn on as part of cognitive expectation and used for making sense of current experience.

Because of their materiality, experiences had in living history have a high modality; they feel real and are stored as memories for both the persona and non-persona-ed self. These memories

need not be the person's own. Living history memories take the form of a 'prosthetic memory' (Landsberg, 2004, 2009). Prosthetic memories are those that do not accrue from lived experience, but from memories created via mediating devices. In the context of this study, they are the mediating *embodied* devices of a persona or a living history/re-enactment performance/scenario. Like normal memory, they are archived and drawn upon as the basis of subjective interpretation and understanding of self in time (Landsberg, 2004, 2009). Prosthetic memories are used to make sense of, and anticipate, the meaning making of future experience; that is, they contribute to cognitive expectation.

The *communitas* of re-enactment plays a role in creating collective memory. Jones (2007) demonstrates how shared campfire stories of period rush is caught and quickly absorbed and owned by all individuals in the group, regardless of whether they themselves experienced it first-hand. This kind of group-generated prosthetic memory plays a significant role in the anticipation and cognitive expectation of future experiences such as the magic moment. Cognitive expectation provides the contextualisation and interpretative framework for making meaning out of sensory experience; it is vital for translating ambiguous stimulus and emotional arousal into the 'historical sensation'.

At *Waterloo 2015* there was a heightened sense of cognitive expectation created and compounded by the bicentenary hype, voluminous academic scholarship, popular cultural understandings and re-enactor memory. In short, at *Waterloo 2015*, cognitive expectation was a meeting of memory (prosthetic and otherwise) and history. I, among many, was complicit in this. I knew Waterloo in an historical sense, having studied and war gamed it (with miniature figurines) on and off for 40 years. I visited the site and walked the battlefield in 2009, and recall discussing with my wife in 2010 the possibility of going to Waterloo as a re-enactor for the bicentenary as one of the justifications (along with doctoral research) for joining a black powder re-enactment group in Australia later that year. Along with 6,000 other re-enactors, most of the 120,000 spectators who attended, and a worldwide audience tuning in via the media, I had cognitive expectations. This included, in addition to the official re-enactment battle script, individual narratives of the battle against which they would adjudge the authenticity of the re-enactment.

Yet, the script for re-enactments of historic battles are, at best, followed only 40% of the time (Jones, 2007). Much of what happens on the recreated battlefield is spontaneous and unscripted. Very few battles in history have gone according to plan, and it is no different in their

(re)performance. At *Waterloo 2015*, the performance went off-script on multiple occasions. Further, as Gapps (2010) notes, re-enactors often have a desire to rewrite history. Adrenaline and ‘buckfever’ also play their part. As one French re-enactor at Waterloo remarked:

Re-enacting a battle is like stepping into another life. The adrenaline and stress of the battle transport you, and it's sometimes hard not to want to rewrite history (Beardsley, 2015, 01:37).

Ironically, for a hobby that obsesses itself with notions of authenticity and accuracy as its yardstick of success, it is precisely the disparity between historicised script and the reality of its re-enacted execution that makes it a fertile place for the generation of new historical knowledge. The awareness that the re-enacted event has run contrary to the historical record is (like that of disparate embodied experiences across time) a source of historical consciousness. Re-enactors reflect on how and why the (re)performance of the past deviated from the event recorded in the historical archive. Indeed, the way re-enactment plays itself out challenges notions of human agency and provides spectators and participants the opportunity to evaluate other (non-human) agents at work.

Nonetheless, at *Waterloo 2015* there was a strong cognitive expectation in the form of the script to be followed. This reflects the primacy of the historical narrative in imposing order on the chaos of the past to make it comprehensible. My field notes reflect that I tried to give my 19-year-old son, who stood in the ranks behind me, a running commentary of each phase of the battle (in addition to the commentary over the loudspeakers). Just as significantly, the artificial order imposed by narrative faltered when (again and again), the chaos inherent in the unfolding of things upset and disrupted the structure of this meta-narrative of Waterloo.

Re-performances of the past defy the neatness of the narrative structure and in this, things as much as people are complicit. A few examples from *Waterloo 2015* illustrate this point. As already noted, Ney fell off his mount in the opening moments of the re-enactment and never led (in person) his famed mass cavalry charges (see Figure 6.5). A bridge collapsing under the weight of artillery caused a delay to the battle start and an unplanned redirection of the Allied Forces through the actual historic building of La Haye Sainte. Similarly, the Prussian’s arrival on the first re-enactment was delayed because a power cable on the ground had to be removed before they could safely advance (De Ghellinck, 2015).

Re-enactment undoes and unpicks the threads of the narrative work of the historian and in doing so, puts on display the raw materials that are hidden when refined by the historian’s craft into

coherent narrative. These raw threads are insightful and proffer opportunities to weave new narratives with a different nap and thread and thereby challenge and drive new insight and fresh historical interpretations.

For our platoon member Miles, his historical insight was how the messiness and chaos of the battle re-enactment reflected the lowly soldier's perspective of 200 years ago. Miles, like the infantry private of Waterloo, was just as unaware of the generals' grand plans and largely bereft of the benefit of the hindsight of the historical (meta)narrative.

Like the foot soldiers of the day, his behaviour was proscribed by what he could see and the orders he was given:

The smoke ... It is amazing. That was ... 'the fog of war' ... across everywhere. You couldn't see more than 20 metres at some stage ... these people could just walk straight up on you and you would not know ... I actually felt that in a lot of ways, I might have had more of an idea of a soldier because I really didn't know much about Waterloo... as a soldier, I wouldn't have known where I was going ... You would really stand there and if they said shoot at that lot then you would shoot at that lot. (Miles)

There are also moments and experiences in a (re)performance of history that have been overlooked, or failed to be recorded, that emerge in the re-enactment. You can be surprised and arrested when encountering little moments of humanity unnoticed and unrecorded in historical accounts and sources. The very basic act of urinating was one startling instance. Cognitive expectation and emotional arousal expressed themselves in embodied ways, including the need to empty the bladder. At *Waterloo 2015*, this took unconventional forms that 'seemed' authentic. It was captured in the visual (and participatory) experience of lines of uniformed figures relieving themselves against the historic, and much hallowed structures (such as Hougoumont), or kneeling down in the waist-high barley (in front of a public audience of 60,000, and 6,000 re-enactors) to execute the act.

Cognitive expectation often takes the visual form (Luhmann, 2012). Preconceived images based on art, or in more recent times photography and film footage or popular historical films³⁷ shapes what re-enactors expect to see. When the visual expectations are met, it is recognised as real and authentic. Thus, visual memory is one of the *déjà vu* elements involved in period rush (Jones, 2007). This preconceived image is necessary for the historical imagination; it is needed,

³⁷ In the case of *Waterloo 2015*, this included the 1970 film *Waterloo* and the 1990s ITV series *Sharpe*.

along with other appropriate sensory information, to recognise what the past should, and will, look (and feel) like.

Much energy was spent striking poses and postures to replicate the visuals stored in the historical archive. One of the often-repeated tableaux was the British Square (see Figure 6.12). This tableau references an 1874 painting by Lady Butler Thompson (see Figure 6.11), which is, ironically, itself an historical re-enactment performed for the benefit of the artist.³⁸



Figure 6.11: Lady Butler Thompson's painting Square at the Battle of Quatre Bras (1874)

³⁸ Lady Butler directed the re-enactment and employed many of the techniques used by modern re-enactors, including acute attention to detail, commissioning the authentic reproduction of objects.



Figure 6.12: Re-enactors at Waterloo 2015 re-enact Lady Butler Thompson's 1874 painting³⁹

6.4.2 Emotional arousal

Period rush is often triggered by fear (Jones, 2007). Encounters with death or (seemingly) near-death encounters are features of battle re-enactments and their commemorative focus (Jones, 2007; Lamb, 2008). However, the anticipation or actual experience of real injury or a near-death experience in the dangerous environment of a battle re-enactment is not an imagined fear; it is one that is experienced with head, hands and heart.

Emotional arousal is an important element in re-enactment and living history. As Quinn and Matthews (2016) argue, emotional arousal activates brain systems simultaneously, more so than cognitive activity alone.⁴⁰ The involvement of multiple brain systems increases the intensity of the arousal, co-ordinates learning and has an impact on the understanding of self (Quinn & Matthews, 2016). When emotionally arousing experiences (like period rush) are shared and given cultural meaning, it consolidates the experience in neural associations and cognitive schema. Repetition of the emotional arousal reinforces the neural pathways and can reinvoked the original emotional arousal, with all its attendant intensity (Quinn & Matthews, 2016). Thus, the powerful feelings experienced in the magic moment can be reinvoked and re-experienced with the appropriate emotional trigger. Similarly, the cognitive schema established by the

³⁹ Source: <https://www.gettyimages.com.au/license/477688428>

⁴⁰ Amygdala studies resulted in this finding. The primary role of the amygdala are emotional reactions, memory and decision making.

original emotional arousal provides the cultural framework for interpreting new emotional stimulus. Consequently, once caught, period rush is more likely to be caught again in the future; hence its addictive lure for re-enactors.

My field notes are peppered with evidence of my own emotional arousal (and that of others). For example, the guilt I felt for exposing my son to serious injury at *Inferno* (and the relief I felt when he was spared injury); the shock and fear that I would not survive the battle when I heard that in the battle the afternoon before, a Canadian re-enactor around my age had dropped dead; and the ‘gut drop’ when Jerry collapsed and I readied myself to administer CPR. This emotional arousal was on top of any sense of physical danger experienced on the battlefield by horse, cannon, musket and foe, as well as the excitement and trepidation of being in one of the most talked about re-enactments for which I spent 12 months (possibly even a lifetime) preparing.

6.4.3 Ambiguous stimulus

Stimulus gains meaning from context; if the contextual frame (in re-enactment for example, the performance or ‘play’ frame) becomes unclear, so can the interpretation of the nature of the stimulus and/or what it means. Typically, this occurs in a battle re-enactment when what we expect is contradicted by what our senses actually experience. This is a source of potential cognitive ambiguity. In historical re-enactment and living history, sight is the sense that retains its primacy as a means for perceiving and interpreting the world. Thus, it is not surprising that when the stimulus becomes visually ambiguous, the brain can become confused and taken in by the illusion.

It has already been noted how the visuals of the atmospherics are commonly reported as magic moments (typically early in the morning or late at night, or when fog or mist or ‘powder smoke’ hangs). I certainly experienced a change in my thinking when the smoke from thousands of muskets and a hundred cannons obscured my vision and provided the ‘fog of war’ that Miles acknowledges (see Section 6.4.1).

However, the battlefield became a very different place when I was denied sight. To feel the approach of charging cavalry through the ground was far more emotionally charged when they were hidden from view by both powder smoke and dead ground. Other things can ‘blinker’ you and cause a perspectival shift that works to shut out the field of vision and other stimuli. Absorption and flow can be experienced by re-enactors mid-battle in the form of tunnel

vision—a loss of peripheral vision due to an all-encompassing focus on what is immediately before you (especially if perceived as a source of threat or danger). Because fear and/or adrenaline are concurrent with this experience, re-enactor tunnel vision is almost always associated with period rush or the magic moment.

I experienced tunnel vision on a number of emotionally and physically charged moments. In the encounters with charging cavalry my full absorption in fending off the attack was experienced with tunnel vision. The other occasion was less physically triggered and more driven by affect. It occurred in the final act of the re-enactment—the *coup de grâce*—that ended Waterloo (battle and re-enactment), the destruction of the French Imperial rear guard action. It is an historical moment laced with affect and cognitive expectation. Moments before this occurred, I went off-script. I suppose I was overcome by a commemorative urge, knowing (with the benefit of historical hindsight, what would come next). I fixed my focus on the French guard directly to my front and snapped into the military salute with my musket. The Frenchman looked startled by my gesture, recovered himself, and returned the salute. Tunnel vision kicked in: everything went strangely mute, my peripheral vision faded. It was if we were the only two people on the battlefield. It lasted only seconds, but was a ‘gotcha’ moment—a sense of sublime personal connection with a complete stranger and through him, a commemorative gesture to the dead of 200 years ago. It surprised and moved me.

6.5 Interrupting *Ekstasis* and the Magic Moment: Mediating Devices and Historical Consciousness

Much of the discussion has been given over to how objects and artefacts work to trigger the historical sensation of ‘period rush/the magic moment’. Equally important is that materiality—the very ‘presentness’ of ‘things’—works *against* the experience of *ekstasis* and the magic moment. In doing so, it triggers reflection and historical consciousness.

Landsberg (2015) notes something very similar in her study of how popular history, in the form of mass culture, uses techniques like absorption, affect and embodied experience to bring participants and/or audiences close to an historical event and identify as or with the historical actors. However, she notes facile over-identification stifles the ‘historical distance’—the understanding of the alien nature of the past and our distance from it—needed for both historical thinking and the creation of new knowledge (Landsberg, 2015, p. 10).

However, Landsberg argues that intrusion and one's awareness of mediating devices serve to disrupt the danger of over-engagement and over-absorption. Mediating devices (like an interruption in the field of vision) provoke the self-conscious reflexivity necessary for historical thinking. She calls this the 'distracted mode of engagement' (Landsberg, 2015, p. 15). In living history and historical re-enactment, these mediating devices are the interruptions and intrusions of the 'present frame' into the 'pastness frame' of the fabricated, living history world. As previously noted, these interruptions are usually 'farbisms' (anachronistic objects or behaviour), or the presence and awareness of the performance frame and the public or other audience.

At *Waterloo 2015* there were ever-current reminders of the present that fostered 'the distracted mode of engagement' and historical consciousness. The visibility of tens of thousands of spectators in the stadium bleachers and a public address system blaring out music and narrative was one such mediating device (see Figure 6.15). There were also objects that fell short of convincing historical accuracy; for example, the plywood representations of the fortified farms of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte with clumsily painted on windows that fell to pieces (see Figures 6.13 and 6.14), or the Congreve rockets that fizzled and comically dropped well-short, landing (dangerously) among re-enactors on our own side. Likewise, the magic of a dragoon galloping by was dispelled by the visibility of his GoPro action-cam strapped to his helmet.



Figure 6.13: The plywood fortified farmhouse of Hougomont (with its 'painted on' windows)



Figure 6.14: In a deviation from the script, the Hougoumont farmhouse falls apart⁴¹



*Figure 6.15: Mediating device: Spectators and stadium seating on three sides of the 'battlefield'
[Source: Waterloo 2015(2015)].*

⁴¹ See Sawyer et al. (2015).

Anachronistic behaviour from members of our own unit were also a mediating device that burst the suspension of disbelief. The most memorable (and cringe-worthy) came at the climactic close of the re-enactment: the final advance of the French Imperial Guard. The light was fading, flames lit the horizon, the spectators, stands and flimsiness of the fortified farmhouses were obscured by the blanket of gunpowder smoke, and the cannon and musket noises drowned out the public address system narrative. All the factors were in place: cognitive expectation (we knew the Guard was coming and this was the climax), emotional arousal (we were exhausted, dehydrated and incited by the events of the battle), and the stimulus was ambiguous (21st century visual and aural intrusions were absent). We heard the French coming before we saw them—they were singing a French period marching song. They became visible in the misty ambience of trampled rye grass and the atmospherics of hanging powder smoke. Then they fell silent. Period rush was ready for the catching:

They (the French Guard) demanded a response. Someone in the Australian ranks cried out, “Aussie, Aussie, Aussie”.

A handful of voices faltered an, “Oi, oi oi”.

I hung my head. The magic was gone. I caught sight of Brad Manera (historian and curator at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park Sydney). He too was shaking his head in wide-eyed disbelief and shock. What an appalling lapse. (Field Notes)

The moment was disappointing, but it was also a huge jolt out of the past and into the present. On this occasion, historical consciousness came in the form of the humiliation and embarrassment experienced in falling short of being period-appropriate/accurate. However, as already noted, it is the ‘almost but not quite’ of re-enactment that offers ‘a kind of touch across time’ (Schneider, 2011, p. 112) After all, if the historic moment could be replicated in its original form, it would impair its comprehensibility in the present (Schneider, 2011). In interpreting the past for the present, something of the original is lost in translation, leaving the original both inflected and intact.

6.6 Shifting Perspectives: Kinaesthetic Empathy

As a re-enactor, participant and observer I became aware of how I experienced perspectival shifts, many of which were dictated by embodied experience and affect rather than conscious/cognitive choosing. While my training as an historian predisposed me to occupy the station of objectivity proffered by the perspectival distance of the third-person observer, I quickly discovered that as a participant, circumstances compelled me to shift to the first-person

(associated state) when my body needed to respond to physical stimulus, especially stimuli that absorbed attention such as marching, formation changes, firing and responding to threats.

Indeed, I was most comfortable when our unit was not in the ‘thick of it’, and I could indulge in third-person narrative commentary. On these occasions I was not unlike any of the 60,000 members of the public as an observer, albeit a privileged one, with a close-up, intimate view of the battle. Becoming the target of threats and (real and imagined) danger shifted me to a first-person absorbed state and positioned me for encounters with tunnel vision and, when circumstances colluded with things, the possibility of catching period rush.

However, nothing quite prepared me for the encounter with the second-person perspective in a mode that was foreign to me. My understanding and practice of historical empathy had hitherto been an intellectual exercise, but on the field of *Waterloo 2015* I encountered it in its embodied form as kinaesthetic empathy. As Foster (2011) notes, a change in one’s own physical sensibility influences how one registers and feels as, and for, another. It also encompasses the human ability to move ‘into’ and feel anything in the observable world, including the animate and inanimate (Foster, 2011). Further, the action we see performed fires the same motor circuits in the brain as we use to perform the action ourselves (without us necessarily needing to visibly move); that is, we rehearse, and thus experience bodily, what we have seen (Foster, 2011).

My encounter with kinaesthetic empathy came at the moment of the last stand of the French Imperial Guard. We were no longer in the front line, so we watched, as privileged spectators, the use of overwhelming firepower to ‘destroy’ Napoleon’s rear guard:

From our new vantage point we watched the French Guard stand and take volley after relentless British volley to its front and flank. In the dying light of the summer evening the French Guard were engulfed by the orange flash of musketry volleys that lit up the voluminous plumes of billowing powder smoke. My initial elation wrung from our contact with the Imperial Guard quickly evaporated; this was sickening to watch; ...I physically flinched with every volley. (Field Notes)

I cannot claim to have experienced kinaesthetic empathy in the persona of a 19th century soldier—I acknowledge the role of culture and history in shaping distinctive embodied sensitivities—and readily admit that my response was contextualised by a multiplicity of personal factors.⁴² Nonetheless I somatically ‘felt’ the musket volleys directed at the Guard. I

⁴² Notably, I experienced discomfort in my own experience of being fired upon, identification with the French in past re-enacting roles and the impact of battlefield tours of World War I and II.

physically flinched at each and every volley delivered. This was ‘overkill’ – a frenzy of violence. Reflective of what happens in ‘real’ battle, the insight gained, while intellectually valuable, was physically sickening.

This experience of kinaesthetic empathy personally validated Foster’s (2011, p. 13) argument regarding the ‘existence of corporeal epistemes that participate in the production of knowledge and the structuring of power’. It also prompted questions about the nature of empathy largely unacknowledged by academic historians. History pedagogy identifies two kinds of empathy: affective empathy and cognitive empathy. Foster’s work, along with neuroscience research into ‘mirror neurons’, suggests there is a third dimension of empathy: kinaesthetic empathy. In other words, empathy cuts across the three dimensions of head (cognitive), hands (kinaesthetic) and heart (affect).

6.7 The Disobedient Object: The Brown Bess Musket



Figure 6.16: 'Brown Bess' Musket

This case study emerges both from questions asked in re-enactor interviews concerning the influence objects play in shaping their historical re-enactment, and my own ethnographic experience of at *Waterloo 2015*. It is a nested case study, as it sits within the major case study of *Waterloo 2015*. Of the 13 re-enactors interviewed, seven identified black powder weapons as being a ‘disobedient object’; one where agency is shared between the human actor and the object. At *Waterloo 2015*, including the precursor event at Ligny and countless other re-enactments in Australia, I have become intimate with the ‘Brown Bess’ musket, the disobedient object and focus of this nested case study.

At *Waterloo 2015* the muskets used were issued to us (including Michael and Miles) for the event. Although they were not the muskets used at home, through their intensive use at

Waterloo 2015—drilling, cleaning, loading and firing—they quickly made their idiosyncrasies intimately known. When talking about ‘their’ muskets in the interview, Tom, Jeremy, Miles, Jerry and Michael all refer to their experience of the generic object as a much as the singular musket they own, manage and know.

Given (1994) called the black powder musket ‘pernicious’, as much for its ‘disobedient’ nature as its malevolent role in colonial oppression. He provides evidence, using the principles of experimental archaeology, to demonstrate the multiplicity of factors (human, and otherwise) affecting the performance of the musket (Given, 1994, p. 93 ff). What is interesting in this case study is how these factors manifest in the *relationship* between the human user and the object itself and with it, *agency*.

A reflection of the mismatched *habitus* of the 21st century re-enactor with that of their 19th century soldierly persona, is the way the musket demands their attention and absorbs them; and shapes their identity, thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Unlike other objects that change over time at a molecular level—imperceptible to unaided human senses—the changes in the musket are much more apparent, confronting and demanding.

There is a ‘Heraclitian’ sense in the musket’s changing nature and thus its relationship with its modern user. Just as ‘you can never cross the same river twice’, you can never fire the same musket twice (both user and the musket have changed). The musket behaves differently with every shot: the flint loses its edge, the frizzen gets worn; the powder interacts differently with barrel and lock as the weapon heats up; atmospheric conditions change the behaviour of the powder; and the residue from the burnt powder fouls the lock and barrel. The musket-in-use’s dynamic and rapidly changing nature demands ongoing attention from its operator, and with that attention comes a complex, entangled relationship between the thing and its user.

Among black powder re-enactors, the musket defines them:

The musket is ... the reason why we're there, historically. It is the tool that was used to dish out death. It was how we fought the battles. It is the weapon of choice and there is a bizarre connection between someone and their musket. (Jeremy)

The defining thing is my Brown Bess musket ... my entire time is occupied in handling it, carrying it, caring for it, and then getting in trouble when it doesn't work. It is the height of what occupies my mind ... I need to take care of it, love it. I need to bring spare parts for it, so it occupies pretty much 90% of my thinking when I'm in my impression. It defines what I do. (Michael)

The attention the musket demands builds a relationship between thing and user:

I've not named mine, I possibly should. From everything, to keep it dry and not go rusty to, during the events, we often sleep with the things ... certainly surprising when you find cold steel next to you when you wake up in the morning ... There is a bizarre connection and respect, as well. (Jeremy)

Some re-enactors develop a very close relationship. For Michael, his musket carries affective stories of its previous owner and defines its current owner. Michael's musket has anthropomorphic qualities:

I just named it Jezebel... It follows me ... I suppose that would be the story of the item. I try to use it on almost every impression I do... I want to use this one. It's my gun. It's mine. I like to keep bringing it with me. It has an emotional value ... Peter was a real mentor to me in the group, and with his passing, it's sort of a way of keeping him in the whole thing. I can always say, 'Yeah, this is Peter's gun. It's mine now and I look after it.' It's got an old story and it's got a new story, and it helps define my story as a re-enactor.

There is shared agency between Michael and the object, and the meaning he had attached to it surprised him:

In many ways, you start thinking that you and the gun are kind of a team, or the same thing. It's like a partnership. You look after it and it looks after you.

I just personified an inanimate thing!

Having reflected, he moves on and elaborates the significance of the object for his whole persona and the notion of co-agency:

[A] sort of a symbiotic relationship. What I'm trying to be is a Napoleonic era soldier. I can't be that without that weapon ... it defines my military role, it defines my experience, it defines everything I'm trying to do ... If it's successful, I'm successful. If it's unsuccessful, I'm unsuccessful. All I do is carry it and look after it.

The object often has more agency and power in the relationship. It exerts control over the way Michael thinks, feels and behaves (head, hands and heart):

It has the power in the relationship, usually at the most inopportune times. Yeah, it does change the way you think of yourself when you're using something that's out of your normal life ... you're really aware of the imperfections (of the musket). In many ways, those imperfections shape the way you think, what you do, and how you plan. I call it Jezebel because it can be incredibly disobedient ...

Can I swear? It can be a real c*nt to use, that's why. I have to love it because it also makes me feel good ... I put a lot of thought into that name. ... Yeah. I talk to her, I name it. It goes from everything from, 'We're gonna work today. I've cleaned you. Shit,

I need to clean you. Oh, you better work. Oh crap, you didn't work. Why?' And then from there. Yeah, I do talk to her.

It's so important in what I do. It can't not be in charge of at least some of it - for the amount of authority I hold it in.

Michael is not unique in his co-agency with his musket or the way the musket affects the mood, thinking and behaviour of its user. Miles observes:

It doesn't control you. Influence. It can influence your mood. It can make you angry. Because it won't do what it's told. It's a temperamental woman. Same as cars. Most of the time (when) it doesn't work then it's a female...

It could be a disobedient object but ultimately I have the control because I can just go, well you are not being used, we are putting you aside. So go back to bed you naughty thing.

Likewise, Jerry acknowledges that control resides ultimately in the human choice to use it or not; the object cannot function according to its designed function without the human agent. However as soon as it is in use, agency is shared:

You are in control of the musket and you are responsible for it and what it does. So that side of it is on your behalf. But, the musket dictates how things go, because of the nature of the beast.

Tom offers a fresh insight. He argues that the reproduction muskets and modern powders behave differently to the originals. Further, he asserts that

Every *original* black powder firearm I've handled, or fired, they've been totally different... they've been hand finished ... It's almost actually black magic, I'm sure, to actually get the things to work. Again, it's just something like a craftsman. It's like 20, 30, 40 years in the job, (one) could only understand by how something sounds and feels, as he's handling it. ... They're tuned. That object is their life. It's their child, so they're probably more attuned to the noises the musket makes than, say, their screaming toddler.

There is a mismatch of *habitus* between original makers/users and re-enactors. Tom observes that neither the modern manufacturers of the reproduction items nor the re-enactor users are attuned to objects they make or use in the same way as people in the past. Re-enactors have not acquired the *habitus* of the Napoleonic soldier, a *habitus* shaped by the musket. Tom observes that Napoleonic soldiers drill with their musket a minimum of two years, 12 hours a day 'if you can get a re-enactor to drill 12 hours in 12 months, you'd be doing well for yourself.' Thus, the *habitus* gap probably gives the musket the upper hand in its relationship with its modern user.

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the auto-ethnographic case studies of *Waterloo 2015* and the ‘disobedient object’ were employed to investigate the kinds of historical thinking and historical consciousness that comes from an embodied experience of history with and through an assemblage of objects, other bodies and landscape. This methodology allowed the researcher insight into how multiple perspectives and different kinds of historical knowledge are made possible through kinaesthetic empathy. I experienced a holistic kind of historical consciousness (and empathy) that is understood somatically, affectively and cognitively.

The case studies foregrounded and analysed another form of historical consciousness—the sublime experience of historical *ekstasis*—in the form of the historical sensation of period rush. Period rush was analysed as a form of sensory overload and distracted engagement. It was also observed that historical consciousness could be experienced corporeally. Further, as a performance with the goal of authenticity, falling short in a re-enactment can be an opportunity for historical consciousness. Engagement with the disobedient object (Brown Bess musket) at *Waterloo 2015* and in other contexts brought into focus the notion of vital materialism and object (co)agency in the manner that objects shape and direct their users.

In the following chapters, attention shifts to the teacher cohort. Unlike the re-enactors, whose focus is on the somatic and affective experience method for knowing the past, the teacher’s goal is intellectual; that is, to teach historical thinking and through it, develop historical consciousness. However, teachers in this study tap into the power of things and use the somatic/haptic and affective power of things as effective tools for teaching historical thinking and historical consciousness.

Chapter 7: Haptic History As Teaching Praxis

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the teaching praxis of haptic/materialist history. The teachers in this study provide stories of how they came to use haptic history in the classroom (see Table 3.1 for a summary of the participants). The genealogy of their praxis marks an organic synthesis of interdisciplinary threads, the influence of popular history, personal backgrounds, and a healthy dose of teacher practicality and pragmatism for what works in their own classrooms.

There are two drivers in the emergence of a pedagogic practice of haptic history. The first is the way objects serve to personally connect students to history. Objects, as a connective to the past, was an equally prominent theme in the re-enactor arm of this study. People get entangled with their ‘things’ and, through things, connect their personal pasts to a bigger history narrative. The second factor driving teachers in their materialist approach is pragmatic: students learn and engage with objects in ways different to traditional text-heavy history pedagogy.

Engagement and connection do not happen by accident; teacher art and craft are evident behind the successful haptic praxis of the teachers in this study. Thus, for history teachers in this study, engagement is about how they deploy object and artefacts to capture student interest and direct object power to teach historical content, concepts and thinking.

7.2 Genealogy: The Origins and Interdisciplinarity of Haptic History as Praxis

Today, ‘hands-on history’, ‘doing history’ and even the term ‘haptic history’ is increasingly accepted as an emerging form of history pedagogy. However, the teachers who have expertise and experience in using objects and artefacts to teach history in classrooms, cannot remember any formal training as part of their undergraduate teacher studies. This appears indicative of the common experience of history teacher training over generations.

7.2.1 Caught not taught

Inverting the conventional notion that skill expertise is ‘taught not caught’, teachers report that they ‘caught’ onto the idea of teaching through objects and artefacts through unplanned

encounters in their personal or professional life. Inspired by their own first-hand experience, they thereafter evolved their own version of haptic history without any formalised instruction.

Megan, a young professional archaeologist-cum-teacher at an exclusive girls' high school in central Sydney relates her undergraduate experience from 15 years ago:

Teaching teachers how to look at artefacts ... in my teaching qualification there was zero, and I had a really good system method teacher as well, but we didn't do it at all... it was something we didn't discuss really. How to look at objects from a teaching perspective.

Teachers in the study reported that they felt as though they somehow discovered or invented 'hands-on history'⁴³ and, in doing history in this way marked them as different to their colleagues, many of whom greet their haptic classroom activities with indifference and, sometimes, outright hostility.

Megan reports the response to her enthusiasm for championing her use of objects and artefacts to teach history:

Teachers in my own staffroom ... rarely use artefacts ... it's like pulling teeth when they do. They absolutely hate using them ... They appreciate the fact that the students enjoy it, but for them, it's a stressful experience.

Likewise Giles, an experienced teacher⁴⁴ in a private boys college in central Sydney says that he spent his first 10 years feeling like:

A lone ranger, particularly with those in the ancient history sphere... I kept being confronted by the... 'No, we don't touch the objects because they are too problematic'. It felt as if ancient history was being taught in very much the classics tradition where we solely rely on the documents ... whenever I wanted to bring in archaeological material they say, 'Oh, that's a bit novel. What do you want to do that for?'

Phillip, a primary school teacher of 20 years and historical re-enactor in suburban South Western Sydney, shares a similar experience. He believes his practice of teaching with and through objects is a specialised skillset that is perceived by his colleagues as unconventional. He feels he is regarded as:

⁴³ This notion is exemplified in the following interaction:

Interviewer: Where did you learn how to do it?

Kerry: My own head.

Interviewer: Your own head?

Kerry: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you feel you invented it?

Kerry: Yeah.

⁴⁴ Like Megan, Giles has a background as a practising archaeologist.

A bit of a quack. You're on the fringe. You're a bit left field if you are actually using objects in the classroom. They say "It has value. ... the kids are really engaged." ... Trying to actually instil on (sic) other teachers that you can actually do this as well, for a similar impact, is a challenge. (Phillip)

George, a now retired history teacher and current university history method lecturer, has been at the forefront, advocating teaching through objects. He began his own journey with haptic history 50 years ago and remembers that it got some unwanted attention:

The deputy principal coming over to complain that my kids were making too much noise and then he found out that I was actually hosing them down with a fire hose in the playground! ... we'd been making cuneiform tablets and ziggurats out of clay. (George)

My own classroom experience mirrors George's. On a number of occasions I have been approached by other teachers complaining that when doing 'hands-on history', my students were making too much noise and having too much fun, and this was unfair because it makes it difficult for other teachers in adjoining classrooms to teach 'proper history' with textbooks. Haptic/materialist practice of teaching history has not been well understood in a teaching profession where the legacy of head-heavy Rankean-style documentary history remains dominant⁴⁵.

7.2.2 Emerging communities of practice

Classrooms can be isolating places. It is not always easy to develop a community of practice, particularly when your colleagues or head teacher/supervisor views your classroom 'experiments' as novel, but not the core business history teaching. However, the practicality ethic and pragmatism drives an enacted curriculum and there are signs of change in attitudes to haptic approaches to history. These have grown and linked to provide enough mass to sustain a professional discourse on learning history with and through material culture. The terms 'hands-on' and 'haptic' history first won wide currency within the museum education sector. Now the term is used in professional teacher journals, university teaching methods and professional learning workshops.

The growth in popularity of recreational forms of history consumption with a materialist turn (such as museums and popular archaeology) has further fuelled the emergence of a community of materialist-informed history teaching praxis. However, informal professional communities

⁴⁵ See Yates et al., (2017). In this Australian research history teachers spoke primarily of their disciplinary subject knowledge in terms of the heavy cognitive 'head work' of history as (written) source work, essays and critical thinking. By comparison, the physics teachers in the study spoke of the importance of the combination of the cognitive with 'hands-on' (p. 234) experimentation in their disciplinary knowledge-making.

of practice drive the praxis of haptic history. For example, George acknowledges that influential encounters with teaching colleagues over many years has shaped his haptic teaching methods. He recalls the origins of one his 'trademark' haptic history practices: the object box:

A colleague many years later [in his teaching career] introduced to me to what he called his object box. ... I've got a wardrobe full of them now for different reasons, some for World War I, some for Australian history at times.

Drew, an early-career teacher at a comprehensive high school in regional NSW, identifies his entry into haptic history practise as triggered by two factors: first, the colleagues in his own history faculty share their successful experiences teaching history with objects and artefacts, and second, an article that inspired him (see Kiem, 2010):

It was about a guy retiring. It was about how he constructed his room. His room is full of all sorts of objects, models and artefacts ... it was known as the history room. There was so much that would stimulate the people. They (the students) wanted to actually go and experience (it), and I thought that was a really good idea.

Shared practice and experience shapes pedagogic beliefs about the nature of history and how it can be taught, and this is reflected in innovative teaching practices in the classroom, such as haptic history.

7.2.3 Historical re-enactment and living history as inspiration

Lachlan, an experienced historical re-enactor, practising industrial arts teacher and part-time history teacher in a comprehensive state high school in South Western Sydney, says it has been useful for him to trace his genealogy of practice and find the origins of his haptic practice as both teacher and re-enactor. Applying his suggestion, I am surprised to often find only a few degrees of separation in the genealogy of practice among history teachers and beyond, in the world of living history and historical re-enactment. One example follows.

In 1986, as an early-career history teacher I encountered Peter Lee, an historical re-enactor turned educator with his one-man medieval, hands-on history show. In engaging the most disinterested students with weapons and armour, Lee first opened my eyes to the power of objects to teach history. Less than five kilometres away, Lachlan, then a 14-year-old student, was likewise inspired by Lee and began his lifelong journey as a re-enactor and haptic history teacher. Lachlan later introduced Phillip, as an undergraduate student, to historical re-enactment. Likewise, another teacher/study participant (Mark) reports that he was also inspired to teach in a haptic mode by Lee.

Lee was equally influential in the formation of the first historical re-enactment groups in Australia. Lee was a pioneer who (unwittingly) bridged the divide between schools and re-enactors. The Peter Lee 'ripple' continues to radiate from its beginnings some 40 years ago and genealogically links popular history, schools, teachers and re-enactors. It also indicates how teachers are willing to draw from outside their disciplinary fields to do 'what works'.

7.2.4 Interdisciplinarity: Archaeology, history and beyond

Another driver for the emergence of haptic teaching praxis has been a kind of interdisciplinarity evident in the background, life experiences and studies of the teachers involved in this research. Great teachers put something of themselves into their craft and bring their experiences and passions to bear in way they teach. Probably the most influential (and obvious) interdisciplinary intersection to shape the development of haptic teaching practices has been between history and archaeology.

Megan sees herself as an archaeologist first and history teacher second, and she brings her passion for archaeology into her classroom practice:

I was an archaeologist before I came into teaching. My love affair of objects and artefacts goes way back ... any chance that I ... can use artefacts in the classroom and get kids engaging with them, I take.

There was kind of a lack of job opportunities (in archaeology) when I graduated, so I had to kind of think of what I was going to do. It's [history teaching] definitely allowed me to keep in touch with my original profession ... it enables me to kind of infuse, if I can, that kind of passion in students (for)...archaeology ... being able to keep in contact with my original profession and that has allowed me to be, I think, a better teacher in the classroom.

Megan's experience rings true for Giles too:

I had trained originally as an archaeologist, and transferring out into history was a practical, financial solution ... my heart has always been more on the side of the artefactual rather than the documentary side of history ... whenever there's been an opportunity to incorporate artefacts it has seemed the natural progress for me ... it's my own background which has led me to be incorporating artefacts or objects, the physical, into the history classroom.

Liam, an experienced teacher who has taught in faith-based high schools in Western and North-Western Sydney, has a different archaeological background, having been raised in a household of practising Australian battlefield archaeologists. This significantly influenced his history teaching practice:

My grandfather ... was a military historian and archaeologist. He wrote somewhere in the vicinity of 130 books and ... at one time or another had ... the largest military museum in private hands... so I had a long history of handling all these sorts of artefacts ... from a personal basis, history was always something which was very tangible and very rooted in the real world and in archaeology and artefacts, and it was a very physical thing, as opposed to just ... something from books and from written resources.

In addition to growing up with archaeology, Liam brings a museum focus to his history teaching practice, having spent a lifetime conserving and cataloguing the family's private collection.

George's professional teaching career is also an exemplum of the interdisciplinarity between archaeology and history. George has a bower-bird like approach to pedagogy; he 'borrows' practices from other disciplines to inform his pedagogy. He recalls an important moment that occurred late in his teaching career when his capacity to interrogate objects was informed by a cross-disciplinary pollination of history, anthropology, museum studies and archaeology:

When I began work at the Museum of Ancient Cultures I had the very good fortune to work ... with Dr Jaye McKenzie-Clark, the archaeologist from Pompeii. Jaye introduced me to the two or three questions that's used, and then I added my own. (George)

Liam, Megan, George and Giles bring their passion for and knowledge of archaeology to the broader history teaching profession in NSW as experts and opinion leaders on the use of material culture in the history classroom. Their contributions to professional journals, conferences, archaeological workshops for ongoing teacher professional learning, research scholarships and publications have been important steps in the dissemination of haptic and material culture approaches to teaching classroom history. Similar work has been done by the researcher, George, and Louise Zarmati in identifying the successes of museum education and transferring their practice of using objects for teaching in classroom settings.

Kerry, an early career teacher at a far western Sydney comprehensive co-ed high school, and 'avid museum-goer' identifies one of her inspirations for teaching with objects and artefacts as museums and the way they provide interactive, provocative, tangible and affective experience of history through objects. She nominates a particular kind of museum learning experience; one that is first-person, interactive, immersive and deeply affective. She seeks to replicate this in her haptic history classrooms (see Section 9.4.2 for a case study of Kerry's Holocaust Museum Project). She believes her openness to this style of learning is influenced by her training as:

An English teacher so I think narrative and sensory exploration and emotion while historians tend to like to think we don't use those things, we do. (Kerry)

However, archaeology and museum studies are not the only interdisciplinary elements teacher participants identified as influential in the development of their haptic style of teaching.

George and Phillip, nominate their background in science, together with their experience in primary teaching, as elements that have shaped their practice of teaching history with and through ‘things’. George explains:

I was a primary school teacher to begin with ... right from the first I used a lot of practical stuff. ...I liked earth sciences ... used a lot of rock specimens and I had kids out pulling off bark off trees, that sort of thing... I suppose the primary background might have something to do with it.

Science teaching, with its use of specimens and experiment practicals, has a tradition of being far more hands-on than classroom history (Yates et al. 2017). Phillip also sees the use of the concrete as essential supports for teaching formal/abstract concepts to primary school students, or older students with an intellectual disability:

The whole tactile exploration of an object just brings learning to life. They can conceptualise concepts and ideas that you're actually trying to convey to them, or invite them to explore themselves. It speaks all languages, objects speaks all languages in learning. That's the great thing. Even in kindergarten.

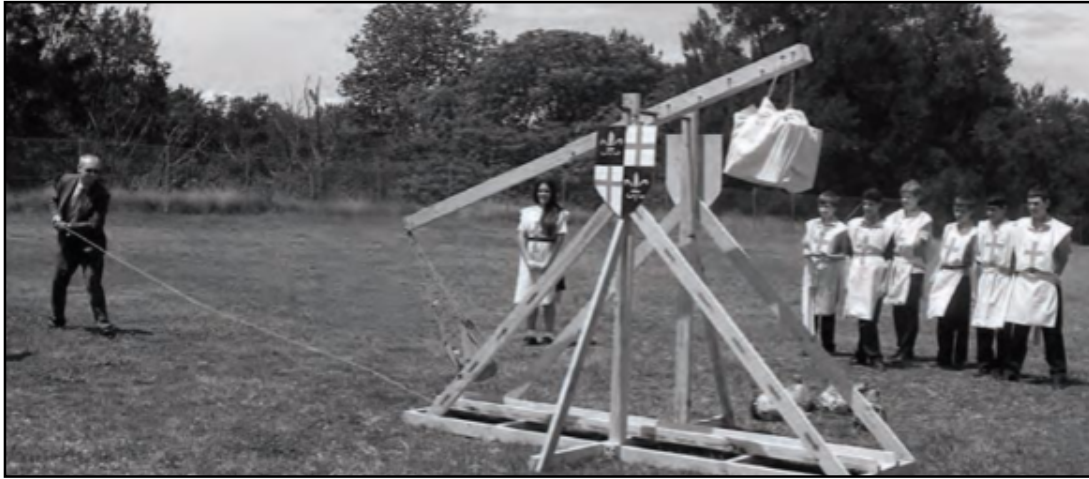
George agrees. His experience in primary schools taught him that regardless of age, stage or IQ, students could do abstract thinking if given the right approach and supports:

I've always been of the belief that some of the least literate kids in your class are actually the best historical thinkers ... Very often with the archaeological material... those kids shone and I never was surprised by that. ... I taught a class of kids who had IQs below 60 and I found that they could learn things if I found the right medium.

Lachlan brings a different disciplinary strand to his haptic history teaching practice. His concrete and hands-on experience as an industrial arts teacher gives him the capacity to literally design and build replicas of objects from the past for students to use, test and experience. Echoing *The Builder, the Boffin and the Bombardier*—a TV program modelled on the successful science-based *MythBusters* show—Lachlan recreates aspects of the past for students to experience materially.

Liam's Experimental Archaeological Club shares a similar approach. Bringing the disciplinary strands of science (experimental method), technical and applied studies (design, building and construction), archaeology and history together, students investigate the things of history. Among the projects explored are a five-metre tall (functioning) replica of the Trojan Horse and one-fifth working scale model of a medieval trebuchet (Laffin, 2014). The Trojan Horse was

used to contest the account of the Trojan Horse in Homer's *Illiad* (see Section 8.2.6). The trebuchet (see Figure 7.1) it was tested for range, accuracy and payload by the students, dressed appropriately as a medieval 'crew'.



*Figure 7.1: Liam's Trebuchet in action*⁴⁶

7.2.5 'It worked for me' (as a student)

Decisions to use haptic approaches in history teaching can reflect a teacher's own learning experience. Teachers use their personal experience of how they learned best to guide their pedagogical choices (Oleson & Hora, 2014; Richardson, 1996; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000). This was certainly true for Mark, a teacher with almost 20 years' experience. He came to teaching late after service with the Australian military. Mark is dyslexic, so the traditional text-heavy approaches he experienced at school did not work for him:

Reading, writing, listening was the way most things were taught. And for me, that didn't do it and these days, most kid's research shows [they] like learning like I did: if I get a better feeling for it, it helps me remember it, if I can touch it, feel it, use it, do it, then it sticks in my mind better.

His own teaching practice is influenced by a personal philosophy of '(if) it helps me learn. Surely it helps other people learn'. This is also reflected in his unusual combination of teaching methods: history and physical education. Thus, he practices a kind of history pedagogy that is physical, kinaesthetic, embodied and tactile.

⁴⁶ Image from *Emu Leonay Gazette* (2 Dec 2012, p. 9).

The practice of teaching history haptically, through and with objects and artefacts, is a form of enacted curriculum that has evolved over time. Influenced by multiple disciplines, the experiences of teachers is emerging as a community of practice.

7.3 Why Do Haptic History? Engagement and Connection

The teachers in this study perceived themselves as knowledgeable about and successful in the classroom with teaching history through objects and artefacts. Unsurprisingly, they are fulsome in praise for an approach that works well for them. When asked why they teach using objects and artefacts, the most compelling response student engagement.

It is difficult to define, let alone measure, engagement. As Trowler (2010) observes, there are different kinds of engagement—behavioural, cognitive and emotional (or affective)—with different purposes (including to improve learning, social equity, institutional prestige, curriculum/vocational relevancy). Newman’s definition of an engaged student is one who has made a ‘psychological investment in learning’ and is motivated by a desire for competence and a ‘love of learning’ (Ladwig & King, 2003, p. 16). This definition might equally apply to the engagement found among historical re-enactors. There is also the dimension of engagement as social support (Marks, Secada & Doane, 1996).

Munns, Sawyer and Cole (2013, p. 26) provide a definition that encompasses small ‘e’ engagement (being ‘on’ and ‘in’ task), capital ‘E’ engagement (a student’s sense of an enduring relationship with school and learning in the present and beyond) and motivation; that is, the ‘MeE’ framework. These three elements of MeE are reflected in Clark’s comment on what engagement looks like for history students in classrooms:

Engagement ... that means a curriculum which extends their knowledge and historical understanding, allows for discussion and debate and connects kids to the past itself (Clark, 2008b, p. 142)

These ideas underpin historical literacy, where the ‘interest and appeal’ that drives engagement is the intellectual complexity of the subject (Clark, 2008b, p. 142).

Engagement cannot be separated from student interest and motivation in learning. Although teachers cannot directly control factors that influence an individual’s interest, they can control situational factors (Bergin, 1999). With the right ongoing supports, they can trigger student interests and give rise to ‘affective-cognitive synthesis’ (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000, p. 156). This is necessary for the development of long-term individual interest and intrinsic motivation.

Engagement is enhanced when teachers *catch* student interest (through the situational spark) and then *hold* it, nurturing the spark into the sustained flame of individual interest and motivation (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). Bergin's (1999) model of individual and situational factors that influence interest, provides a useful framework to identify the variety of engagement points the teachers in this study hit upon when teaching history through objects and artefacts.

However, the complex nature of student engagement is compounded by its difficulty to observe.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, teachers in this study universally reported student engagement as one of the observed outcomes (and consequently, a key motivation) for their use of objects and artefacts to teach history.

While student engagement is complex and depends on a multiplicity of factors, one thing remains constant—engagement cannot occur unless students become *connected* with what they are learning about. Underpinning every kind of engagement teachers report in haptic history is the fact that they have found a way to connect students to history, and utilising objects and artefacts play a central role in fostering this connectedness.

7.3.1 Engagement

Classrooms where students are engaged, interested, 'on task' and 'in task' are the dream positions for teachers. Discipline issues lose its urgency, student interest and participant drives learning, positive relationships are built and a learning environment conducive for learning evolves. In this study, teachers were upbeat about their capacity to engage students using haptic history. Megan recounts that she has:

Never had a student be disengaged in an activity where we are doing something haptic ... something hands on. It just engages all them to a greater or lesser degree ... even the most-naughty year nine girl who just has no interest whatsoever in what she's learning, she'll engage if we do something that's hands on.

Megan acknowledges that while her hands-on activities engage universally, there are degrees of engagement. All students may be 'on task' (demonstrating compliant or procedural behaviour/involvement), but not all students are necessarily, or equally, 'in task' (substantive, active, enthusiastic and involvement/engagement) (Munns et al., 2013, p. 19).

⁴⁷ As Ladwig and Gore (2003, p. 23) observe, 'serious engagement, however, often lacks demonstrable forms'. Further, up to 40% of what is actually occurring in classrooms is missed by teachers (Nutall as cited in Hattie, 2009).

Drew's success has been less than universal and he is often surprised by which students get engaged:

I think most students are attracted to the objects and the experience. It's just finding the right experience for them. I found it difficult to predict who's going to really enjoy it and who's not. Quite often, you get people that you think are ... really not going to get into this (then) ... all of a sudden getting into deeper engagement.

7.3.2 Comparative engagement: More engaging than what?

As Barton and Levstik (2004, p. 5) and Wineburg (2001) argue, there is no one way or right way to teach history. Traditional text-heavy approaches, lectures, seminars, 'chalk and talk' and the Socratic method (in all their variety of different mixes) can be effective teaching methods. Therefore, teacher talk about haptic, object-centred approaches to teaching history as being engaging is best positioned as a comparative rather than an absolute. A recurring theme among the teachers in this study, regardless of their location, age, teaching experience, gender or school system, was that haptic history is *more* engaging when compared with alternatives.

Liam explains that teaching with objects and artefacts:

Allow(s) me to engage kids that otherwise would be excluded to some extent from the learning process. I've had a huge amount of success ... engaging kids for whom books and written sources just don't do a great deal, whether for literacy reasons or just general disaffection with learning and school.

One of the artefacts is a disabled World War I grenade. When you put a grenade in a boy's hand, you hold all of his attention ... they're fully present in the moment in a way that often written sources would fail to do for some of these kids.

Likewise, Megan sees the engagement she gets from *all* her students when doing history haptically because it is more 'fun' than textbook learning:

It's fun looking at objects and doing something very different rather than just reading the textbook all the time ... when I did history in high school, it was 99% textbook reading and it was just, for someone ... intellectual, but it was definitely boring. I hated it ... (Learning with objects is) going to be beneficial for all students and particularly the ones who tend to get disengaged the most.

For Liam, the very physicality of haptic history opens another point of access and engagement:

By giving them physical things to hold, to feel, to understand history physically as opposed to just trying to do it in an abstract way through [the]use [of] books and just written resources.

George concurs:

I think they communicate to more people maybe. You don't have to be able to read (text) to interpret an object. You only have to be able to think. If someone teaches you how to think you can do an object. You don't have to have a dictionary to decipher the words. Someone doesn't have to write you a glossary ... you've got the object ... It's more accessible.

Thus, teachers viewed teaching with objects and artefacts was more inclusive and accessible to a wider range of students than forms of history pedagogy that were text-driven.

7.3.3 More engaging for whom?

Teachers in this study expressed a strong view that haptic history was particularly suited to students with a particular set of characteristics. George argues that students with poor literacy benefit from learning history through objects and artefacts:

Now it might have something to do with the fact that they've had to learn a bit of cunning ... other ways around the knowledge gap that they have because they're not terribly literate.

Yet, the benefit is not exclusive to those students with poor literacy:

I thought it [teaching history through objects] worked best with all students regardless of whether they were very literate or not, but I thought objects said something special. I think I might have expressed it something like, 'There's a tangible sense of the past when you have an object and you can feel it.'

Similarly, Kerry feels haptic history works for all students, but appears to have an extra benefit for students with poor written literacy:

They work well across all grades and across all ability groups ... (from) my elective history kids ... down to my bottom year seven kids, ... they're more engaging for people who struggle with writing because it's a way to access information without having to read it. And it kind of takes down that barrier that they would normally have in class if I give them a chunk of text... They can interpret meaning from an artefact. They can work it out, because they can ask questions, and we can answer them together, and we can have guesses.

I don't think there's a specific group that it's worked better with than others because I use it differently. I use different artefacts for different reasons in different groups, but I find that junior classes especially just really, really love it because it's so different to what they're doing in their other subjects ... to what they've done in other history classes.

Phillip found that his hands-on praxis work particularly well with more challenging students. It works well for the general student population and across stages and those with special needs:

Students who might [be] a little bit distracted in class ... have a very short attention span, students with autism, they can see it, they can touch it, they can feel it. It engages all their senses as a learner, which is great.

I've spent three years in a behavioural setting for students in years 5–10 ... It was great for those students ... I've used it for students in support units. Again, students with

autism, the whole tactile exploration of an object just brings learning to life. They can conceptualise concepts and ideas that you're actually trying to convey to them, or invite them to explore themselves. It speaks all languages, objects speak all languages in learning. That's the great thing. Even in kindergarten ... I've used it from K all the way to year 10.

School data identified Year 9 as a disengaged group in Lachlan and Michelle's low SES school in South Western Sydney. They employed a haptic, project-based, immersive World War I learning experience as a successful cross-faculty (history, technological and applied studies [TAS], English and geography) engagement strategy:

The main reason why we were doing this ... is for engagement. It's year nine ... all our data has reflected that, they're the least engaged in school ... And (through hands-on learning)... I think we've seen an increased engagement. (Lachlan and Michelle)

Liam's after-school Experimental Archaeology Club was designed with a particular student clientele in mind. Also located in a relatively low SES area. His 'trade training centre' designated school, had a male-heavy demographic.⁴⁸ Liam's target engagement group was:

A lot of boys who were there because their parents didn't see them as academic performers. ... not dumb, but they are kinaesthetic, they are really physical kids ... benefited from the sort of thing that we were doing.

What surprised him was the mix of students beyond his target group who were attracted to this approach to doing history—'non-academic boys', but also academic girls:

[The] top history girls who would smash every part of NAPLAN, and then the rest would be boys. So probably 80 to 90% boys, depending on what we were doing.

Liam's experience rings true for Lachlan and Michelle:

I think it caters to both ends. I think that's the trick ... So you've got the kids who know this stuff, who struggle in the classroom, and the kids who actually know beyond that, who can actually add more to it.

Michael, a teacher in Western Sydney and a re-enactor, agrees that haptic history works for all students but is particularly useful for the student who is normally disengaged. He also perceived a gender difference in the way the boys and girls in his class worked with objects. Hands-on learning works with:

The ones that never want to participate in a lesson at all. The really quiet types. ... They will get it. Particularly the guys that do not want to be in the room at all and their favourite subject's PE Prac, or lunch, or fence climbing. Those guys will love it. I say 'guys' 'cause it usually is the football team that do not want to be in the classroom.

⁴⁸ Two-thirds of the Year 7 enrolments were boys.

Girls as well. Girls, I find, can be better problem solvers, especially because they'll talk to each other. Boys will just take it away and go, 'I want to figure it out. Screw you' ... Girls will sit there ... be more engaged ... They're better at that socialised learning because ... they can talk to each other and work as a group. They'll be able to figure it out.

Michael also noticed that practical/haptic aspect made the learning more equitable and accessible. Normally, articulate 'top level' students would dominate the learning, but in haptic history, students who had kinaesthetic competencies would come to the fore.

Liam also recognised that the types of hands-on activities selected impacted which groups of students he engaged:

We were really open to the idea that different activities would engage different groups of kids. So [in] the gastro-archaeology term⁴⁹ we probably had 40% girls. When we dug a life size World War I trench ... [I]... don't think we had any girls that term. But that was fine because we engaged with ... the whole different group of boys who were really into digging and World War I history.

Apologetically, Kerry admits that student age and gender influences her decision on which objects she uses:

As horrible as it is, I look at gender. If I have a very boy-heavy class ... I go straight for the war stuff ... bullet casings ... a bag of shrapnel ... I go for the Hitler stamps. I go for the photos of my partner's great grandfather in military uniform ... I have a collection of letters that my granddad wrote ... I find that letters and language and relationships work more for the girls.

Despite this perception that the selection of objects and types of activities used could be fine-tuned to appeal to different audiences, teachers like Megan see haptic history as beneficial for all learners, even the most 'studious ones':

[A] variety of different activities is always going to be beneficial, but I think ... mixing up between the written and the physical ... object type things ... (is) really helpful for all students, even the most studious ones who are happy to read a ten-page handout and answer questions. Even they like that kind of interaction with physical objects. So I think it's beneficial for everybody ...

In this passage, Megan links her use of haptic history with her belief in 'the way ... students learn'. Three teachers in this study justified haptic history praxis with explicit reference to learning style theories. They identified the 'hands-on' haptic history approach as a 'kinaesthetic' learning style. Giles frames his haptic praxis using multiple-intelligence theory:

That whole idea of multiple intelligences. For those who have an artistic bent, for those who have an engineering bent, a mechanical bent, they seem to be able to grapple with the ideas of the object a lot quicker. For those who are more hands-on, I guess, those

⁴⁹ This activity allowed students to taste the past, by researching and cooking dishes through history.

who have a theatrical, drama bent also because they're prepared to pick it up and think things through. They seem to have a greater engagement with the objects, so the visual, the kinaesthetic, the mechanical thinkers, which again, I think, is verging away from the traditional emphasis upon the written format.

Michael also finds that learning style theory helps him explain why haptic history works for his students:

Sometimes those people that are great at book smarts are completely useless with their hands. Myself included, I'm getting better, but still I've never been good with my hands. The guys and girls who are good with their hands ... they'll come to the fore (in haptic history).

Likewise, Liam cites his inspiration, multiple-intelligence theorists like Gardner and Robinson:

I've developed a particular interest in different learning styles and became a huge fan of David (sic) Gardner ... different types of intelligence. I became a huge fan of ... kinaesthetic learning ... (in) My early career ... I was put on a drama class ... it did give me a real appreciation of kids needing to learn physically. As Ken Robinson would say, 'Kids who need to move to think.' ... and found that I could engage kids who otherwise would be very disengaged, by using these sorts of techniques....

Liam further cites Robinson's assertion that

We think less and less about people as whole human beings, and more and more about a very narrow range of their intelligence... that sort of reasoning, rationality, right side of the brain type intelligence ...to the exclusion of all else. Kids who think well by moving, who learn kinaesthetically, who have a whole range of different intelligences ... we just ignore those things in favour of a very narrow range of abilities.

For Liam, hands-on history goes some way to address the inherent inequity in education that favours a certain kind of intelligence and learning.

The consensus view among the teachers in this study was that haptic history engaged all students regardless of gender or academic ability. Teachers reported a bounce in engagement, especially for those who had weak written literacy skills, most of whom were boys. However, there is another group whose experience need be considered in terms of successful engagement, which is the teachers themselves. The teachers in the study clearly enjoy teaching history haptically and their infectious excitement, passion and enthusiasm is an inspirational part of their successful haptic history praxis.

7.3.4 How do you know it works?

The teachers mostly talked about two kinds of outcomes resulting from teaching history through objects and things: engagement and the kind of historical thinking developed. This section examines teacher observations of student engagement, while the latter is the subject of the next

chapter (see Chapter 8). Notably, the following are simply teachers' impressions, judgements and perceptions, as the study was not designed to measure student engagement specifically, or be a comparative between haptic history and other approaches to teaching history. That said, teachers' measures of engagement were typically observed to be small 'e' engagement: students being 'on' and 'in' task.

Kerry's students are very vocal about what engages them and what doesn't. She reports:

They will very quickly tell you if something is really terrible. 'Miss, this is crap, why are we doing this?' Or they'll turn around and say to you, 'Miss, this is amazing, I love this.'

Their verdict on hands-on history was overwhelming positive and reflected in students taking elective history classes.

Liam reports how enthusiasm for the extra-curricular Experimental Archaeology Club also finds vocal expression and spills over into regular history classes:

A heap of Year 7 and 8 kids who ordinarily in class weren't particularly engaged, a lot of our naughtiest kids ... they'd gush about what they were doing in archaeology club in history class.

In addition to active participation and vocal affirmation, Kerry measures engagement in a willingness to produce written work in response to a hands-on lesson:

If they're willing to write anything down ... with confidence, that's a sure sign that they're engaged ... our go-to operations system at this school is, if they're not understanding it, they shut down ... The fact they're straightaway asking questions, answering questions, and writing things down tells me straightaway they're engaged.

Liam and Kerry also cites evidence of engagement in terms of improved behaviour, self-regulation and compliance. A change in behaviour reflects engagement in the form of 'school is for me' (Munns et al., 2013). Liam explains:

These kids [in the Experimental Archaeology Club] who were in trouble everywhere else ... (come) along rain, hail or shine to this group ... with us they were really fantastic ... so engaged and excited and interested ... it was a matter of channelling their energy rather than trying to stop them having any.

Likewise, Kerry's experience has been that the engagement from haptic history transfers across into better regulation and application in non-haptic history lessons:

Truancy, all of that, I don't see any of that in my class... [reporting on a middle to low, mixed ability Year 10 who were left work whilst Kerry was away] another teacher reported to me that she had stuck her head in to see how they were going, and they were all working silently, she said, 'Why are you working so quietly?' ... 'this is really

interesting'. I've seen them in other subjects. They have Geography across the hall from me, and they're not like that in Geography.

While this study was not designed to look at academic results as evidence for the success of haptic history pedagogies, teachers in the study identified the success of their haptic praxis as a factor, albeit an indirect one, with a positive influence on their students' results in history. Behind this lies a range of interconnected factors that come with good pedagogy regardless of its mode, such as improved relationship with teachers, student self-confidence, catching of interest, positive learning experiences, and prior knowledge and experience. Liam explains:

It's hard to measure... we had our absolute cream-of-the-crop top stage 4 students and the absolute lowest achieving, naughty, behavioural kids and not much in the middle. So certainly those kids who were ... the naughtier kids, by building relationships they were more engaged in class, their marks, I would argue, would be better than they would have been otherwise... We weren't collecting data as such apart from ... numbers of kids showing up each week to measure engagement as a rough guide, but not really academic achievement.

Kerry sees hands-on history as an important part of the transformation of history from a subject previously avoided and detested at her school, to an increasingly popular one. Further, enjoyment of the subject is translating into good academic grades:

I've noticed it particularly with the Year 10s, ... they are coming towards the top of the grade, and they're a mixed ability on paper for other subjects - the middle to low ... They're a mixed ability pile of learning needs and ADHD, behaviour.

7.4 Teacher Craft: Creating Connection to History Through Objects and Artefacts

The presence of an object or an artefact in itself will not make learning happen. It is the craft and the skill of teachers to select, contextualise, locate and draw connections between people, things and history that make objects and artefacts powerful tools for learning.

7.4.1 Cultivating connection: Object selection, individual interest and interdisciplinarity

Giles consciously exploits the interdisciplinary opportunities embedded in objects to connect to the pre-identified 'personal interests' of his students. Individual interest is shaped by factors such as 'competence' and 'background knowledge'; people become more interested in learning more when they perceive themselves as being knowledgeable and successful in a domain of knowledge (Bergin, 1999, pp. 91–92). Giles consciously exploits this in his interdisciplinary approach to teaching history:

If one starts to tap into their interest in science or tap into their interest in DT design ... (or) another area that they have an interest in, then there's a cross-fertilisation. If I can capture that interest that they have ... that then helps them to be able to engage with the (history) material.

In situations where student interest and motivations are unknown, he inverts the process to 'flush out' student interest to locate points of engagement:

Sometimes if I don't know enough about them, I'll bring in a variety of objects and will just have a smorgasbord of objects on the table, and then based up (sic), they will often migrate towards the object that they have a better engagement with. (Giles)


This notion that people 'migrate' to the objects they are 'interested in' was explored in the study's teacher focus group, which was part of an object-handling workshop I ran in May 2015. The workshop and teacher reflection was an opportunity to examine what draws teachers (and their students) to connect and engage with material culture. The workshop featured an object/artefact 'speed-dating' activity. Teacher participants had three minutes to interact (in a manner of their choosing) with any five objects from a smorgasbord of things. They recorded a snapshot/first impression response for each object they chose (circling an emoji graphic—'love it'/'not sure'/'hate it'—and recording their comment/thought/questions; see Figure 7.2). The activity was designed to get an immediate and affective response from the participants, hence the time restrictions and use of emoji graphics. Like Giles's object smorgasbord exercise, the activity served to 'flush out' personal interest/background knowledge as a driver of engagement, but just as significantly, it demonstrated other factors that cause humans to connect to objects.

There were also some striking parallels between behaviours observed among re-enactors and the teachers' interaction with objects. Specifically, hats drew interest, and the visual (striking poses/looking at self/taking selfies while wearing hats) was a feature of the interactions. Like re-enactors, teachers sought to 'see' themselves as an historical 'other', even briefly.

In the activity reflection, teachers in the focus group discussed the range of factors that drew them to different objects. Individual interest factors—background knowledge and a curiosity to explore a 'hole in the schema' in their high level of (historical) knowledge (Bergin, 1999, p. 92)—lured some into a close examination of an object or artefact with which they were familiar from other, non-haptic contexts.

Curiosity was another factor that drew them to engage with (unfamiliar) objects. None of this came as a surprise to the group. What did shock them was the 'magnetism' of objects; that is,

how *certain* objects and artefacts worked to ‘draw them in’ and connect with them at a very personal and affective level. Their life experience, as a form of ‘background knowledge’, played a significant role in catching and holding their interest. The magnetism of objects and the manner they served to connect and entangle the user is examined further in the next section.



Object Speed Dating
















Object Number	Love it	Not Sure	Hate it	Comments/ Thoughts/Questions
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Figure 7.2: Object speed-dating response sheet

7.4.2 Teacher focus group: Object magnetism and entanglement

The following vignette from the teacher focus group/object-handling session reflection and discussion, makes visible the web of entanglement people find themselves caught in when they engage with objects (see Figure 7.3). Objects trigger memories, stories and emotions, and serve as a rich source of engagement whereby people connect their own stories to the larger narrative of history.

One participant in the focus group was overwhelmed by the affective response provoked by a replica 1813 Prussian *Landwehr* army cap that she ‘speed-dated’:

Elise: The German cap. I’ve, my father was an Austrian Nazi.

Focus Group: (Shock/laughter/surprise).

Elise: I just, I was thrown when I saw the inscription on it. I have no idea what it was for or who would have worn it.

Interviewer: (Hands cap to participant and invites her to translate it)

Elise: (Stands up) Oh, it's something about, something about the Fatherland and God I think (examines plate). For God ... for King and country, King and Fatherland, yeah 1813. Oh my god it's weird, can I tell a little story without boring people?

Dad was with the Austrian navy ... he was born in 1913 ... He was a great cousin to the Hapsburgs and he grew up being told throughout the 20s and 30s ... that Hitler was going to help them and restore their pride and country etc., and he can remember Hitler wandering around Vienna because—seriously this is bizarre—the Vien Krakenhaus specialised in venereal diseases and it was common knowledge ... that Hitler had syphilis even before he came to power ... That's another story.

Dad had this great big ... teal colour, leather coat from when he was in the Austrian navy. It was ... really thick sheep-skin lined ... but it became the coat that went on the lounge when any of us were sick. So if you were sick, that was the coat, like ... a blankey ... that would come out and would be put on you on the lounge so you could watch the black and white TV, you know, and wonder what kind of colour Gilligan's shirt was, when you were little.

Focus Group: (Laughter)

Elise: This big old coat from the Austrian navy—sorry about that (inaudible)

Interviewer: You've just demonstrated ... the understanding that things spark memories, connections.

Elise: Mmm (affirming).

Interviewer: Recollections, feelings, emotions? – so, that hat took you somewhere?

Elise: Oh absolutely, yeah.

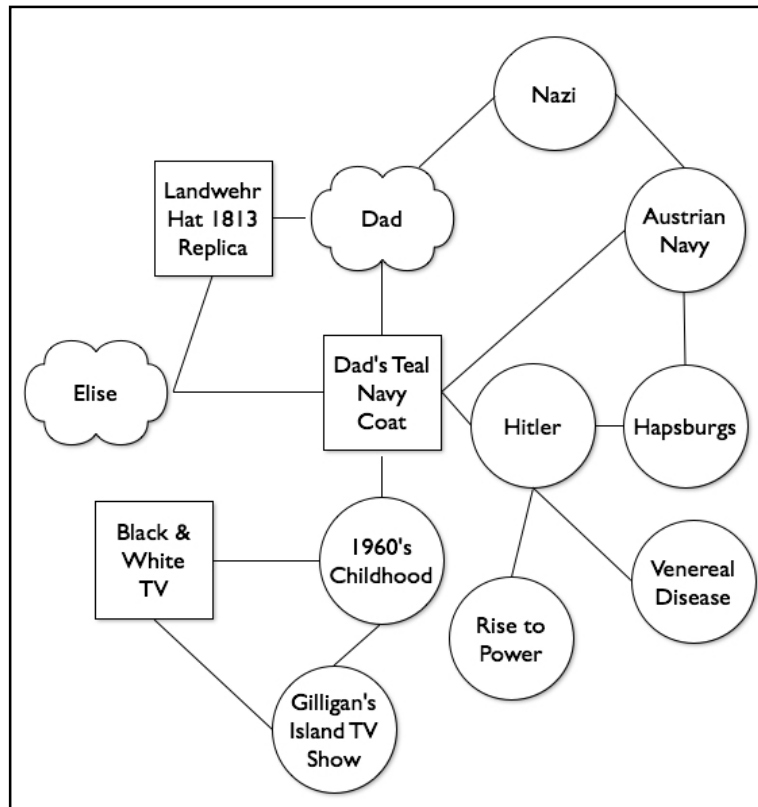


Figure 7.3: Object entanglement web, showing people (clouds), things (squares) and historical and personal narrative (circles) in a connective web of stories, memories and affect

The 1813 German cross (object) transported Elise into her past and connected her to a person, place, object and event, as well as a physical and psychological state. It also unpacked a series of narratives—some historical, others personal. There was also a sense that this encounter with an object provoked an experience of the historical sensation.

7.4.3 The personalising connection: Family

For Elise, the encounter with the object drew her unexpectedly into a personal and familial connection to the past that featured links to bigger historical narratives. Some teachers, like George, consciously draw on family and background connectives (his own and that of his students) as a method and source in preparing students for engaging with, and being hooked and held by, history. Objects or family artefacts become part of the connective tissue that links personal stories to bigger narratives:

The narrative that I had going in my classroom always started with my story. I'd put my family on the timeline that we made up, and all the kids fitted in that ... I brought in (family) artefacts. My grandfather served and died in the First World War so I used to use those artefacts regularly. Kids then brought their own family artefacts (in).

I used to get all the kids to make their own time capsule. ... You've got to have your story in there. Choose one object, one written document, etc.

The objects ... some of them ... were very personal like, 'This is my first teddy bear'. Others had things like, 'Oh this belonged to my father's father and it was one of the things that I was given.' It was obviously quite meaningful to them.

Giles similarly acknowledges that the most profound engagement through objects comes when he draws on student family connection:

There's a lot of kids whose parents have a refugee heritage, and in year 10 there's a history project where they do an interview ... (with their) parents or grandparents and their refugee experience. And often it'll be the passport, or ... the one object that was brought out with them and survived the trip, which has become this talisman of the experience. Then, ... [in] a 1500-word essay, (they explain) the significance of these experiences - it makes it very powerful for them - and relate it to the object. The object takes on so many other levels of meaning.

We have these surveys ... at the end of year 12 asking about what was the most moving moment for you in six years of [school] history. Often they'll talk about this ... task because ... they're being a historian themselves. They're doing individual research. But it's also this connection which is heightened more so than with other areas, in being able to bring in the artefactual component. It just elevates it to another level of engagement.

This web of familial and personal entanglement through things can 'catch and hold' the most disengaged classroom student and 'low ability' student. Focus group participant Linda explains:

With Year 7 particularly, having them bring in objects ... some of the things they bring in just floors you. The kid can actually talk about [what] they own. You get [the kid] that won't talk ... in front of class ... A lovely boy in Year 7 who is virtually illiterate ... fails at what ... we think is important ... he'll bring something, an object, from the farm and he can speak for an hour and a minute. So kids bring what they associate with and will have historical value to their family. It's a really, really excellent way to bring history to life.

However, some students and their parents are not always aware of the historical significance of their family heirlooms. Linda recalls a time when a student said he had no family object to bring into school. His Dad sent him in with a scorebook:

It was from the Bodyline Series. It was the actual book his grandfather had marked all, listening by radio, the scorebooks from the first Bodyline. And he said, 'This is all I've got'!

Likewise, Kerry tells a story of the student with 'spy' ancestor. The child, in the face of parent disinterest, was encouraged by Kerry to bring in the family artefacts:

She had a family member ... who was a double agent during World War II, and they had both sets of his ID at home ... amazing. It was fantastic. They had his birth certificate and licence from his first name, and then his other name ... he was a Soviet

spy, he was allowed into America afterwards and then ended up here, but he worked for Britain at some point during the war.

So we spent the whole time trying to Google all the words and trying to translate them, and the whole class got involved ... I think for her, having that audience ... who actually cared about what she was talking about and was excited about (was important).

Despite her parents' lack of enthusiasm, the child found profound connection to the past and the big narratives of history via the personal connection and encouragement of her teacher and classmates.

7.4.4 Connecting via the recognisable and familiar, yet different

Sometimes the cultivation of connection can be as simple as selecting an object that is disarmingly familiar, or has some information on it that students recognise from their own cultural or background knowledge. Coins and stamps were artefacts that many teachers in this study used due to their ready recognition by the students and connection to their world. The historical insight comes from moving outside what students know, into the unfamiliar and strange (Wineburg, 2001, pp. 24–25). Kerry illustrates this point:

With the year sevens, I go for anything that's really visual ... that are really easy to interpret, things like stamps, coins ... The stamps that I use have swastika symbols on them, or they have Hitler's face on them ... they all know Hitler, and the ... the swastika ... (the) stamps. ... have ... the date that they went through circulation. I think it's like 1937 ... pre-war, which leads us to a discussion.

Megan thinks making the connection to students' own world is particularly important for middle school students. While younger students exhibit innate curiosity, students age 15 or 16 years are different:

To engage students that are 15 or 16, the Year 9 or 10 kind of age ... if you can make connections to their world, they tend to respond a little bit better... drawing from their world ... transposing what they see as being familiar and ... and then translating that back to the time period in which we were studying. I found that to be useful They just don't care about anything except what's going on in their own lives, so you ... have to make that connection for them to be engaged with what you're doing.

7.4.5 The personalising connection: The 'I' factor

A universal feature of the teacher' success with haptic history is their use of objects and artefacts to facilitate active, student-centred learning. This student-centred focus fosters a sense of connection with history in two ways: first is the student's sense of 'I', as in my personal story *is connected with/to the content of history*; the second sense of 'I' is the student at the *centre of the learning process* itself (as in, 'I' am a producer/maker of historical knowledge). The former

is about being ‘in’ the ‘content’ and the latter is about being ‘in’ the process. These two ‘I’ factors transform ‘history’ into capital ‘I’ ‘hIstory’, one that is personal, intimate, immediate and thus deeply engaging.

Megan identifies the ‘I’ factor as a key ingredient in her successful archaeological dig simulation lessons. She acknowledges the multiplicity of factors at work—novelty, physicality and fun, but the prime element that makes it work is the ‘I’ factor:

They're doing something that they have never done before ... It's something where they're the ones discovering. They're making the discoveries ... it's actually extremely exciting to find ... They get super excited about finding even the most mundane of things ... I think the fact that they're doing, they're experiencing, they're finding the objects as well ... makes the whole experience more exciting ... interesting and more engaging ultimately.

7.4.6 Connection: Teacher entanglement

The teacher can also be a point for connection in catching student interest. Teacher-as-embodied-provenance adds immediacy, tangibility and poignancy to the objects they bring and use to teach history in the classroom. The teacher, with their object, is only one degree of separation from connection to the ‘real’ past of a ‘real’ historical actor. George’s ‘Gott Mit Uns’ lesson (see the case study in Section 9.4.1) draws much of its affective power because the focal person in the lesson is George’s grandfather, an ordinary man caught up in a moment of history. That ordinary soldier’s existence is testified, not just by the intensely intimate nature of the objects and artefacts the students hold in their hands, but by the flesh and blood bridge to the past in the form of his grandson, the teacher who stands before them. George, using the connective power of the objects, invites the students into his family with powerful outcomes.

Likewise, Mark finds that his identity, his persona as a teacher, is entwined with the connective capacity of objects:

I have a lot of mediaeval armour... The concept of me dressing up and then (the students) being able to shoot arrows at me ... the kids love that. They want to watch the videos [showing Mark in Battle Re-enactments] of ... me being beat up ... it brings that element of humanity to it. It's not just something you see in a museum, it's not just something you see in a textbook. It's real... It's personal.

Indeed, teachers become entwined as the living, breathing contextualisation for the artefacts they use to teach history. Some objects have become integral to them; they have lived with and through them. In a sense, the objects have become an extension of themselves. Linda talks about a dress she brings in to teach social and cultural change in the 1960s:

I('ve) got ... a perfect dress from the 1960s which I wore and it's still got like, a perfume smell, and the kids go, 'Yeah, what's that smell?' It's the same smell that I remember from my past.

I asked her if she thought the past was in the smell. She murmured an affective 'Mmm' and even in that present moment, without the object present, she was 'absent' and entangled in her past.

The focus group mused over themselves as an embodiments of the past. They, like objects, have been marked by the passage of time. For older teachers, the past seems both close and distant.

Elise from the focus group reflects:

I've been teaching for too long not to be part of the historical context and references ... I can remember Indo –Chinese kids (refugee children) popping into my senior classes as I was coming out of high school...to me it's quite immediate, but when I teach Indo China [today] I realise that it is so distant to the kids I'm teaching.

Teachers' entanglement in an object's biography can also be a source of interest for students.

Kerry explains that much of the curiosity her students display in the object is about how a thing, from a faraway time and place, came to be owned by the teacher and present in the classroom:

'Are these real? Where are they from? How did you get these, miss?' ... [the students] were convinced that I dealt them on the black market ... I explained each artefact has a story as to how I collected it as well ... they really loved hearing that, and trying ... to work out how these artefacts travelled ... they found ... really fascinating ... how history isn't just the place that it happened ... (The objects) have travelled all over the world... and I think that gives it agency as well. Not only is the object from the time, but it somehow ended up in ... Australia in my classroom. ... 'What happened to it beforehand. I wonder who owned it?' (They ask) All these kind of questions.

7.5 'Wonderment and Awe': Encountering the Historical Sensation

Personal connection with history is heightened by the sense that the encounter is real and tangible. Teachers in this study use objects to make history real, and come alive for their students. Objects and artefacts foster connectedness. They become a visa with 'existential concreteness' (Lowenthal, 1985, p. 245), sensuous immediacy (Iles, 2006; Dannehl 2009; Harvey 2009; Harvey, 2011) and evocative appeal (Lowenthal, 1985), which teachers use to help students reach the 'foreign country' that is the past. Teachers in the study spoke of moments of 'wonderment and awe' for their students—an historical sensation evoked by the sense of bringing with the past to the present through an encounter with artefacts.

Liam talks about the 'wonderment and awe' of making history real through the use of historical artefacts:

When you bring in real artefacts, I tend to find kids fanatically taking pictures of the artefacts and of themselves holding it, because I think real artefacts can help kids develop an emotional connection to the history ... something about real artefacts as well ... they do get a sense of ... wonderment and awe. There's somebody going, 'Oh, this is real, and this was there when it happened, someone actually wore this' ... so you see kids handling these things, there's no other word really than reverently, then carefully. But it's not just a careful of, 'This is expensive'. It's a careful of, 'This is a real piece of history that matters.'

Megan also thinks the sense of the realness of history engendered by an authentic artefact is part of its evocative connective power. Speaking of an authentic Gallipoli diary:

Because it was connected to an actual person, like the person has physically held that and written in it, I think that that perhaps made it a bit more real for them.

But Megan also believes the connection can take you further back and put you in touch with people from a more distant time and culture:

One of the things I found most appealing about archaeology was the fact that ..., when I'm holding these objects ... made by someone that was alive two, three, four, five, ten thousand years ago ... I felt like I was making connection, a real connection to people from the past. It's different when you read someone's words to when you pick up a pot that someone actually owned and used ... To be able to think about the kinds of things that they possessed actually can make a real connection to young people.

The realness of history is made tangible by objects, says Kerry; they are a portal to the past for her students:

It makes it more tangible, and it makes it more concrete, ... it makes it seem like history is not a foreign land or a foreign concept, that it was a thing that actually happened and impacted actual people because here is proof in front of you ... it's that tangibility of history ... something that actually happened, that is real in the world and is connected to them now through this portal of the artefact. It's that anchor point ... this is a thing that really existed at that time that I can touch ... so I'm connected to that place, and suddenly they're much more willing to hear about it...

She argues that artefacts transport her students through time and place:

An artefact is ... that bridge for you. Even if you can't go to those places, the artefact can come to you.

To the impact of tangibility, George adds that artefacts have another kind of affective pull too. He argues part of the realness comes with the depth, detail and richness that objects bring to understanding history:

There's a tangible sense of the past when you have an object and you can feel it ... The objects make it so much ... realer ... That is to say tangible, poignant ... I bring my Roman lamps and I introduce them to the olive oil cycle. It's those sorts of things that make the ancient world real to them. It's those details.

Drew describes the affective visceral impact that the 'real' has on students:

...they ask how much of this is real? ... We look at where I bought it from and the history of the objects and providence of it. Then also, the fact that there is a blood stain on it ... shock ... People drop everything ... stand back and, "Horrible."... that object comes alive because that's really attached to something, that's someone else's blood. They used it. That went somewhere in there. That object has a story... the real has a story. How did this thing get to be like it is? Who's blood is that? Where did it come from? ... the real has a story.

Yet for Giles, the authenticity of an artefact can become a distraction. In his experience, some students want to commodify the object, and in doing so miss its true value for learning history:

As soon as you say something is 500, 1000, 1500 years old, the kids immediately say, 'How much is it worth?' I get a bit irritated that they suddenly want to value the object monetarily ... [I'm] trying to say, 'Well no, it's as common as muck, but it's valuable because of the information that it brings out.'

Nonetheless, Giles also judiciously makes use of original artefacts to trigger 'awe and wonder' in his students, especially to help students imaginatively connect to an individual in history:

There's one little coin, which, it's so innocuous. It's a little bronze prutah minted between 26 and 36 AD by Pontius Pilate. I'm saying, 'Here's a coin that Jesus could have held.' I'm always putting it in the conditional tense, but they're saying, 'Wow!' ... Those tangible things, when we're dealing with individuals, seems to have a really big impact.

Artefacts that have been endowed with cultural, almost mythic, significance such as those connected to the ANZACs appear to exert a mesmerising power on students. As Liam points out, this has been heightened by recent centenary commemorations:

I'm not sure what would be the case if they were objects from a different period, but given that most of what we have is so connected to World War I and the ANZAC experience, there's an added layer of reverence there, I think.

Mark finds that the playfulness that often accompanies hands-on lessons changes with the World War I connection:

I put out my World War One stuff, which is real, which is artefacts, there's more reverence. There's no playing, they look at it more sombrely when they know it's real.

Megan finds her hard-to-engage Year 9 and Year 10 girls respond to the ANZAC object:

At the school ... we had a diary from a soldier in World War I ... and the girls in year nine, even the ones who couldn't give a rat's about Australian history, when they read some of the stuff in the diary ... they were really moved by what they were reading.

I'm not sure whether it was because we physically had the diary there and it wasn't something that was just written in a textbook ... I've always found that that was well received when we'd use that particular object when we were looking at stories from Gallipoli.

While reproduction or replica objects are used by teachers in this study, the experience of a 'genuine' artefact evokes a different kind of connection and provides an experience of the 'historical sensation'. Sitting alongside the wonderment of the real is the 'enchantment of technology' (Gell, 1992), which gives things further affective pull. This aspect, along with other dimensions of the affective power of things, is further investigated in the following chapters.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on why and how teachers have come to develop haptic approaches to teaching history in their classrooms. Teachers' motivations for using material culture to teach history revolves around a practicality ethic and the utility of engaging and connecting students with the past through the materiality of the 'real' present. Haptic history is viewed by teachers as a pedagogy that works for all students, especially students who struggle to engage with traditional pedagogy, including low literacy boys and gifted and talented students.

Yet, there is some else at work here—the 'wonder and awe' that teaching history through objects and artefacts can bring to the classroom. Objects and artefacts are complicated 'things'; they are beguiling in providing a sense of the past's immediacy and intimacy. In their allure, both students and their teachers become implicated, entangled and often transformed. Artefacts and objects in 'use' build relationships. This was evident in the deep entanglement of teachers in this study with the objects they used in the classroom and the manner they connected teachers and students to each other in the present, as much as to people in the past. Further, objects are experienced cognitively, affectively and physically and thereby involve the 'whole' person in learning. The historical consciousness they engender can be potent.

The next chapter uses case studies and vignettes to focus on the ways teachers use objects and artefacts to teach specific historical skills and concepts, and foster historical consciousness. In doing so, it begins to identify the elements that form a haptic history teaching methodology.

Chapter 8: Schools, Haptic History and Historical Thinking

8.1 Introduction

This chapter uses teacher interview data to survey how teachers use haptic history lessons for teaching the key concepts of historical thinking. As outlined in Chapter 1, this study employs Seixas's 'big six' historical thinking concepts model (Seixas & Morton, 2013) as a framework for analysing the praxis of haptic history. While the focus of this chapter is on historical thinking, its intersection with the broader concept of historical consciousness (Seixas, 2017) is also explored.

In their model, Seixas and Morton (2013) give equal weight to each of the 'big six' historical thinking concepts: historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives and the ethical dimension. However, the teachers participating in this study commonly nominated two concepts having particular utility when teaching historical thinking through objects and artefacts: evidence and historical perspectives. Reflecting the weight of the data, this chapter analyses the use of haptic history for thinking, beginning with evidence, followed by historical perspectives, and then the remaining four historical thinking concepts.

To some extent, the analysis in the chapter is forced. When asked to comment on how they used objects and artefacts to teach history, teacher participants did so without specifically referencing any one pedagogic model of historical thinking. Teaching does not occur in a controlled environment like a science laboratory where each item under investigation can be neatly distilled and separated for individual and discrete study. History and learning are organic, 'messy' and spontaneous environments, where ideas and concepts interplay and morph. While the chapter's focus on historical thinking directs attention to history as a cognitive process (head history), as argued in Chapter 2, 'thinking' is not exclusively a cerebral function. To think is to feel (affect), and thinking and feeling are embodied, sensory processes.

While forcing the theoretical frame of the 'big six' historical thinking concepts is useful for analysis, it cannot be neatly done. The cognitive domain of historical thinking in haptic history,

inevitably spills into the domains of affect (hearts) and the physical (hands). Where this occurs, it is noted in the discussion of the data.⁵⁰

8.2 Teaching Evidence: Inquiry, Sources and Context Through Objects and Artefacts

The inquiry method of history distinguishes between sources and evidence. History begins with (an) inquiry question(s). A source is information from the past selected for its relevance to, or significance in addressing that inquiry. Sources must be evaluated; the historical context of the source provides the key for unlocking meaning and assessing its reliability, authenticity, accuracy and usefulness. The process of asking good questions about a source turns the source into evidence. Evidence is used by historians and students to produce an account of their interpretation/narrative of the past. Thus, asking questions and making inferences from sources are core historical skills that must be explicitly taught and modelled.

Teachers select sources that students analyse. In this sense, students are apprentice or proto-historians. They are not doing the full range of the work of the professional historian, rather they undertake pre-prepared exercises to learn historical skills and thinking. The sources—in this study’s focus, the objects and artefacts—are pre-selected by the teacher with a learning purpose in mind. Teachers in the study described how they modelled and taught students how to ask questions of the sources to extract the evidence or, as George puts it, ‘pull the meaning out of sources’ in various learning tasks.

8.2.1 Inquiry process

‘Sourcing questions’ is a term for the inquiry process used to interrogate primary/secondary and written/non-written sources (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 47). Teachers model sourcing questions in their use of objects and artefacts; students, in responding to the questions their teachers ask, use the object or artefact as evidence in a manner that makes visible the thinking behind the inferences they draw from the source material.

A common method teachers employed in object-handling sessions was the inquiry process. Key interrogatives used by teachers when teaching with objects are readily deployed, yet do not

⁵⁰ Chapter 9 equally makes artificial demarcations in its separate treatment of the affective (heart) and embodied and haptic (hands) domains in analysis. However, this artificial demarcation is addressed in the chapter by presenting holistic case studies that illustrate how the three elements of head, hands and heart work together as a powerful haptic history teaching praxis.

belong to a particular schema of inquiry. Some recognised that their questions reflected Bloom's taxonomy, others that they mirrored the approach they typically took when analysing written sources. Active involvement in the lesson, modelling of the inquiry process, challenging student responses and encouraging students to think hard and aloud, were characteristics of the teachers' inquiry method with objects/artefacts. George calls this a Socratic style of inquiry, which he was introduced to when joining the staff of the Museum of Ancient Cultures at Macquarie University, and has since embellished.

Socratic questioning is a guided, structured question/answer process that, when first introduced, is led and modelled by the teacher. The teacher asks questions of the subject matter; in responding, students make their thinking 'visible' and explicit. The teacher listens attentively and then uses the student response to pose further questions designed to probe and challenge students' beliefs, assumptions and conclusions. In the process, questions unfold and evolve, and students evaluate and reflect on evidence and their thinking (Paul et.al., 1989, p. 24).

George explicitly teaches this process:

Inquiry only occurs after a skill set is mentored. This has to be explicit, kids will not learn how to deconstruct a source just by having sources put in front of them. They have to be shown or taught a process ... I will deliberately teach kids an inquiry process and I literally teach them how to pull meaning out of sentences. I do the same thing with objects by a Socratic method,

The style of Socratic teachers employ to teach the historical thinking skill of inquiry, are (unsurprisingly) those that challenge students to provide their reasoning, supported by evidence drawn from sources (see Figure 8.1).

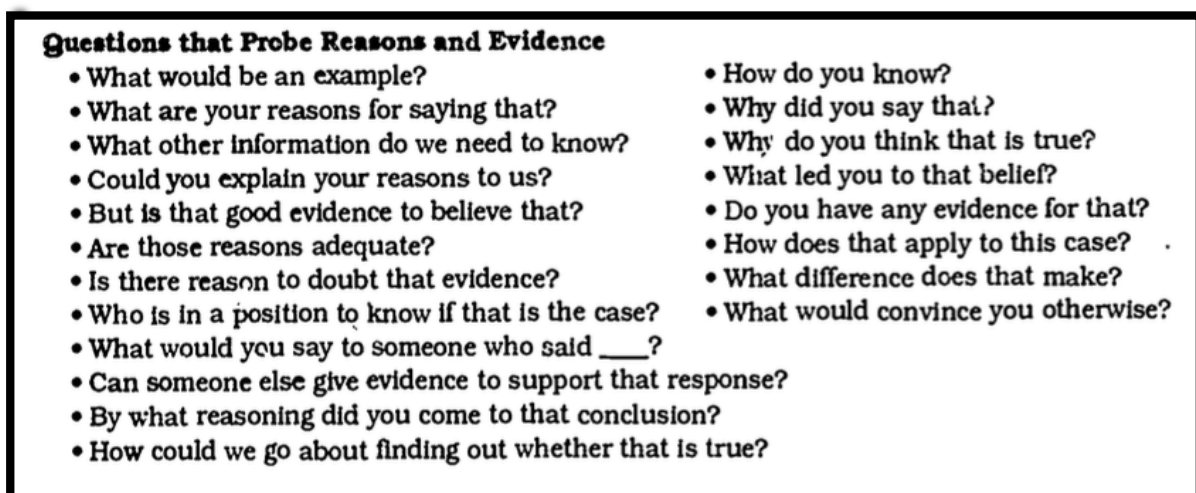


Figure 8.1: Socratic questions that probe reasons and evidence (Paul et al., 1989, p. 29)

The core Socratic question George uses in object analysis has become his ‘mantra’, internalised by his students as an historical thinking heuristic:

My mantra is always, ‘Yeah? Well what's your evidence for that?’

Megan models her equally Socratic questioning style, but does not explicitly teach it:

It's not that I specifically train them. Those things come out as we do the exercises ... when we do artefact exercises ... It's done with groups, so they can discuss between themselves ... I move between the groups and ... push them to go further than the kind of superficial things that they tend to record or look at to begin with. Push them to think a little bit more carefully about them than that. Generally speaking, that's how we go about learning how to interrogate artefacts as opposed to written sources... the best way to do it is for us to model, to question, to get them to think more deeply by questioning them back.

Kerry’s questioning style also has a Socratic flavour. She feels her haptic history lessons are sometimes ‘haphazard’, partly because the decision to bring out objects is spontaneous, and partly because her line of questioning unfolds organically, tailored to reply to the reactions and responses of the students:

I never have a set answer for what I'm expecting kids to give me, because I want them to impress me. I want them to challenge me, and I want them to think for themselves ... I don't ask them easy questions. I don't ask them comprehension questions. I ask them thinking questions, and I want them to think ... As a result, I think I am building inquiry classrooms ... I don't want them to give me the answer they think I think is correct. I want them to think for themselves ... here's the artefact ... I'm going to ask some questions about it, they can start asking questions that are a bit bigger and a bit broader, and it allows more thinking in the classroom.

The starting and end points are known, but the journey—the questions asked and path(s) taken with any particular class—can vary enormously. For the teachers in this study, the surprising turns and sense of the unexpected, the active weaving of meaning through unfolding loops of inquiry and response, is part of the excitement and pleasure of doing history haptically.

8.2.2 Inferential thinking

To prepare her students for object interrogation, Megan begins by exploring with her students how ‘mute objects’ (Lowenthal, 1985, p. 243) can answer the questions we ask of them:

We generally tend to start with some sort of discussion on what kinds of questions we ask someone from the past if we wanted to find out about things. Then I say to them, ‘Well, the objects that we're going to look at, they can't directly answer our questions, so what kind of questions would we be asking of the objects?’ They tend to come up with similar sorts of questions, just ones that are a little bit more ... indirect ... we have that kind of discussion beforehand.

Megan provides clues to what she means by the term ‘indirect’ questions. She uses a two-tiered inquiry process. The first tier are direct questions, a forensic observation with a processualist flavour. Once the descriptive data (the ‘what’) has been extracted from close observation, students are encouraged to make inferences using deductive, abductive and inductive thinking. Abductive thinking begins with an observation but may have no definitive conclusion. It reflects the provisional and contestable nature of all historical interpretations. This second tier of questioning is post-processualist, ‘indirect’ and inferential in nature:

When looking at objects ... kids will be looking at quite narrow fields of view such as ... what they're made from, what shape is it ... but then we try and broaden it a bit and say, ‘Okay, that's fine. Who might have made it? Who are they making it for? Where would they have gotten the materials from? What ... can (you) see on the object? What does that... indicate for us in terms of contact with other people or trade or things like that? Are there any other kinds of scientific techniques that we can use to investigate more about this that we can't get from just looking at it as a layperson or an archaeologist?’

George likewise uses a two-tiered inquiry process. The first questioning set is about extracting descriptive data from observation. He then moves student thinking up a ‘level of abstraction’ with a particular question: ‘So what?’ Typically, this gets students to move beyond the descriptive and the ‘what’ to consider the ‘how’ and ‘why’:

When we're at a certain point [in the object analysis] I always say ... ‘So what?’ What does this actually tell us about Romans', Greeks', Egyptians' everyday life? Is this significant? Is it important? Does it reveal anything to us?

I think that's often the thing that teachers leave out when they come to a certain point. We've got this data on it, well done, we've all done a good job. But I think we really ought to do something [more] ... That's where the kids learn the most...

Typically, the first level of abstraction (the ‘so what?’) demands that students address the technical know-how behind the object’s manufacture/creation, and this, in turn, leads students to examine the technomics of a society:

Sometimes I would deliberately bring an object that would be completely foreign to them. I'd use that then to ... illustrate the forensic process by which we question the object. We don't know what it is but what can we learn about the society? I don't know what that is, but it's made out of metal and that metal's been extruded in some way and it's an alloy. We've suddenly got a whole lot of science and technology. We've got an emerging picture of what sort of society could have produced this. Whether we have to find out what it is may be immaterial because we still interrogated the object and got a lot of evidence from it.

Gell’s (1992, 1998) notion of the enchantment of technology (see Section 2.3.4) goes some way to explaining the success George has with his object-focused inquiry process. Objects and

artefacts, even the everyday and mundane, are full of rich information about the societies that made them, and the tool to unlock this subtext in each and every object and artefact, is inquiry.

George illustrates:

I usually grab one of those chairs and put it up on the desk and say to students, ‘This is a source, but it's not going to give you any evidence until you start talking about it.’ ... ‘You all know how to make plastic, don't you? You know the chemical formula for plastic? You know how to extrude aluminium? ... Stop and think what sort of technology, what sort of science, what sort of social organisations makes it possible to have factories and so on?’ Suddenly the seed that's inside of every lay object is a whole world of information.

The process of revealing this information provides the context necessary for students to take historical perspectives and develop empathetic understanding (see Section 8.3).

8.2.3 Historical imagination

At the core of making source-based inferences and doing abductive thinking is historical imagination and context-sensitivity. Historical imagination is necessary for interpreting sources, filling in the gaps and making sense of the thoughts and feelings of people from the past to understand their behaviours and actions. It is included in this chapter on historical thinking because, in the tradition of Collingwood, historical imagination is deemed a process of the intellect. As argued in Chapter 2, Collingwood applied the notion of historical imagination to objects. It is used by the teachers in this study when they engage students in the process of asking questions of artefacts so they can speculate on the purpose and significance of objects, who made and used them, and what they can disclose about the society that produced them (Cooper, 2013, p. 47). This is especially so when the object (as so often is the case) is ambiguous, incomplete, out of context or unfamiliar.

Liam speaks about a personal shaving kit belonging to a trench-tunneller in World War I.⁵¹ The teacher prompts students to use their imagination to complete the story, the factual details of which can never be known. Liam refers to this imaginative ‘gap-filling’ as completing ‘a number pattern’ that begins with the archaeological record:

We don't have vast amounts of written information about this specific individual and their personal life. ... so I think anytime archaeology is done, you've got the beginning of the number pattern and you're trying to complete it. There's lot of different ways you can complete it and so I think that's in a large part what we're doing.

⁵¹ The object is discussed further in Section 9.2.4.

Megan, who very much sees herself as the ‘scientific’ archaeologist, hesitates to use the word ‘imagination’ but acknowledges the role objects and artefacts play in getting a glimpse of what the past might have been like:

I don't know if imagine is the right word, but (they) can see in their minds what it could have been like ... that's something that adds great understanding and greater richness to their knowledge of particular periods in history.

While he does not use the word ‘imagination’, Drew uses the concrete and embodied experience to trigger an ‘image’ or ‘impression’ in the imagination of his students:

Using the Australian uniform ... They are trying to get an image or an impression of what conditions were like ... We can't transport students into those trenches, we can ... kit them up ... trying on the uniform and trying on ... the equipment they had. ‘What does it feel like?’ ‘How much can you carry?’ ‘How comfortable is it?’ Gives them a real image of what a day in our frontline soldiers' conditions were like.

Evident here are the slippages where the imagination is being shaped by embodied and affective processes. Slippage is likewise evident in Mark’s observation that, in getting ‘kids holding something’ you are ‘getting to their imagination’ by asking questions:

Bullets I have from the Western Front that the farmers just pick up off the ground ... they look at them and question: “Did that bullet kill someone? Was it German, was it English?”

8.2.4 Inquiry models and scaffolds

Two teachers in the study, George and Giles, have rendered their object inquiry processes into instructional models for object-handing. These models have been shared in a variety of settings via presentations, workshops, publications and conferences hosted by professional bodies like the HTANSW.

Giles’s schema for object interrogation mirrors the inquiry process used for the analysis of written sources:

I'm going through written source analysis with the students, saying, ‘Okay, here are logical steps for us to go through, but we can also apply it with the object ... this is how I would apply it to the physical,’ so I'm relating it back to the written evidence and showing that there is a parallel process.

In the younger years it's ... a case of asking six questions: ‘Who, what, when, where, why, how’, and they generate information that way ... with the seniors, ... (I apply a) more systematic approach; it does take a little bit more time with the objects, but after I've modelled it a couple of times they're then able to ask appropriate [questions].

Likewise, Giles uses iterative questions to go from the descriptive to the abductive: he calls his question sequence his '*chaîne opératoire*' for material source analysis:

Those six basic questions are so simple ... more astute students dig further and further, and I draw the parallel saying, 'Well you know how every time I write on your essay saying, "Not enough depth?"' The same is when you're explaining an object. How much information do we need to gain a better understanding of this and how it relates to the society that we're studying associated with it?'

George's object/artefact inquiry has four basic questions. He uses Socratics to probe, prompt and contextualise to draw out student answers grounded in the evidence from the object. George seeks to delay, as long as possible, the identification of the object until the object's subtext has been extracted and other valuable information has been 'read' that otherwise might be overlooked in the rush to nominalise the object (Durbin et al., 1990; Vella, 2001).

The first question type—'What is the artefact made from?'—is all about close, forensic observation. Socratic questions are used to expand description beyond the medium to include the observation and recording of other decorative and/or textual features that may be present.

The second question category explores 'How it was made'. For George, this is the opportunity to make use of a series of 'so what?' questions to move students to a level of abstraction as they consider the subtext of the object—the knowledge, expertise, technology and scientific know-how of the society that made, used or produced it. Uncovering subtext is supported by the strategic introduction of contextual information. This round of 'so what?' questioning draws on 'the enchantment of technology' and considers the economic and social structures that underpin the science and technology inherent in every object (Andreotti, 1993, p. 14ff).

The third question set is 'What was it?/What was it used for?' Here George uses the object or group of selected objects, to pull data and inferences from the artefacts and create a narrative. The objects are woven into an account of everyday life and the cultural practices of people from the past. The narrative with, and through, the objects is a point where students develop their knowledge, understanding and empathy.

The last question in George's model is a plenary 'So what?' This is the opportunity for students to reflect on their new understanding and perspectives about the people from the past they have uncovered through an analysis of objects and artefacts (Andreotti, 1993, p. 31).

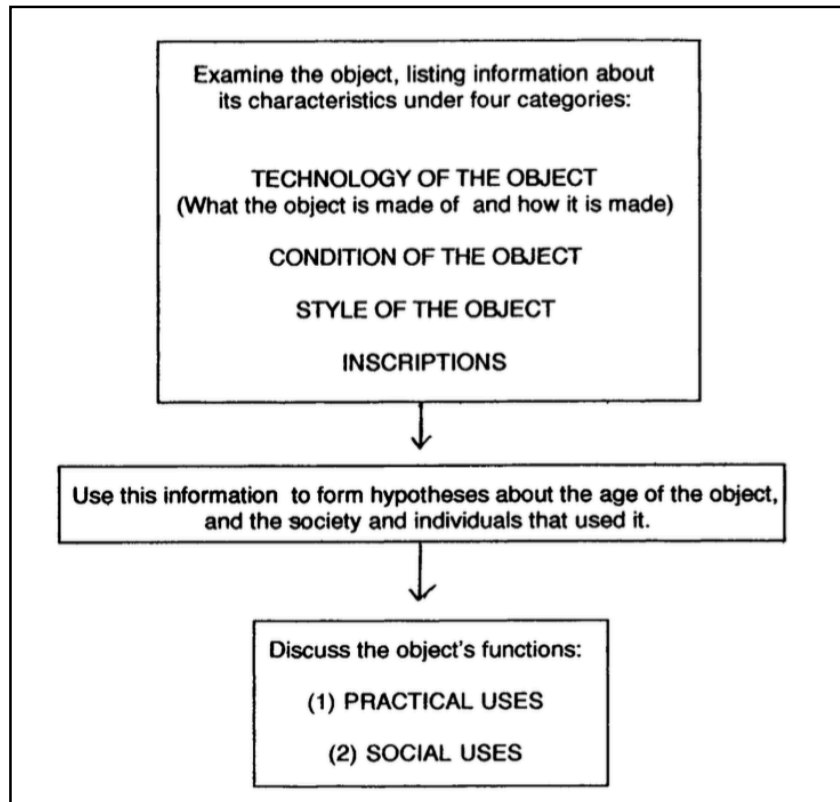


Figure 8.2: Andreotti's (1993, p. 13) model for investigation and analysis of objects

Liam identifies three typical questions he asks students when he puts ‘things in their hands, firstly just, "Identify it, what is it? What ... was it made of and how do we place that in context?"'. Liam uses the last question—'What does it tell you about the nature of... whatever it is that we're studying?' as an endpoint similar to George's ‘So what?’ question. As Liam explains, ‘It's to get kids to go through that act of extrapolation, of forming logical conclusions using evidence’.

For expert educators, the ‘so what’ moment needs an operative outcome to make the historical thinking visible. George borrows a computer programming analogy: objects and artefacts are the ‘inputs’; inquiry, analysis, experiences are the ‘processes’; but for significant learning to occur, there must be an ‘output’. His observation is that this final step—closing the loop with an operative outcome⁵²—is the piece missing when teachers report that doing history through objects and artefacts has not been successful:

Input, you get your sources there, or your objects or your document. Process, you do your Socratic questioning and you make your notes. You've got to have an output to go do something with it to actually be a useful exercise. ... Many times they'd (pre-service teachers) come back saying, ‘Kids are bored with sources at the outset’ ... then

⁵² See Bull and Anstey's (2013) ‘Inquiry Model’.

somebody will say they know why they're bored because you're stopping at the point where it's actually going to become a meaningful exercise; where you're going to get them to either produce a narrative or edit a narrative.

Michael concurs:

They have to solve a problem with it. They can't just play with it. It's not a toy. They have to use this to solve a problem, to experience something. Then have them write that down. Sometimes when they go to write it down, they have that 'Oh shit' moment, and that's the thing, is that 'Oh shit' moment.

The attainment of the 'so what' or 'oh shit' insight flags historical consciousness at work; it is the realisation of a fresh perspective that was previously hidden. In a Heideggerian sense, this is a process of *aletheia*, where the nature of things become 'unhidden'. However, as will be argued, that moment of revealing is a holistic experience of which the cognitive is only part of the operative outcome (albeit an essential part).

8.2.5 Reading objects: Material literacy

Reading an object is much like reading a written text. There are two levels of comprehension: reading the words (literal understanding) and reading for meaning (the literal with the inferential). This approach is mirrored in the two-tiered inquiry process discussed above. Careful observation and recording of objective, measurable data (form, size, weight, fabric, etc.) must be followed by a reading of the object's subtext. Since much of the meaning in objects is culturally encoded, its meaning needs to be drawn out through the teaching of historical context (see Section 8.2.6). However, some of the teachers in the study argue that students need to be taught a different kind of literacy for reading objects.

Some objects have written text that can be deciphered and read in much the same way as written documents. However, the object itself has a subtext: a culturally encoded meaning embedded in the object's form, fabric, function, decoration, audience, purpose and production. The ideas, values and beliefs of a society can be read if one knows how to read 'between the lines' or read for meaning. Booth (1983) distinguished the different kinds of thinking required to read text and subtext; the former is concrete and the latter formal, where historical imagination and affect plays a significant role. Equally, contextual information is essential for making sense of objects and artefacts and the historical actors behind them.

Giles goes further and argues that a new kind of literacy needs to be explicitly taught alongside the skills of object analysis and interrogation: 'material literacy':

If we've got a visual literacy and we've got a written literacy ... I want to say that there's a material literacy as well ... the present schooling systems are inadvertently putting emphasis upon, first and foremost the written literacy, understandably, because everything is in a written format. Visual literacy seems to be being brought back into the curriculum, but ... I think the students are losing their familiarity with something that they have naturally, a material literacy.

Giles's own observation is that in object analysis, his younger pupils are 'making all of these astute observations' and this is lost in later years. He fears that school teaches students to unlearn their material literacy, and this trajectory continues onto teachers themselves.

Objects and artefacts are texts that communicate in more than one semiotic system. Bruner (1964/2006, 1966) argues that learning happens multimodally (the enactive, iconic and symbolic).⁵³ Objects as multimodal texts need to be decoded and read using different modal literacies. Bull and Anstey (2013) apply multimodal literacy concepts current in the teaching of English, to History. The grammar for each of the five semiotic systems (linguistic, visual, gestural, audio and spatial) need to be learned by students so they can read and make meaning of multimodal texts like objects and artefacts (Bull & Anstey, 2013)⁵⁴. The importance of the 'material' and 'physical' as modal literacies is examined further in Chapter 9.

8.2.6 Objects as and for historical context

Teachers in this study commonly provide context to support student analysis of objects. Historical context is about understanding the historical setting, which includes the prevalent perspectives and worldviews (see Section 8.3) *and* the conditions (cultural, material, social, economic and physical structures) that constrained the world at that time.

Teachers typically provide the contextual information students need to make sense of a past that is foreign to them. This often comes in the form of a strategic release of contextual information 'as needed', to help students make sense of the objects or pull students up when presentism is detected.

George describes how he adds context during Socratic-style object-handling sessions. He asks, 'What if I were to tell you that ... (teacher provides contextual information) ...?' This alerts

⁵³ See also Marzano (1998).

⁵⁴ Bull & Anstey's (2013) gestural and spatial semiotics only partially accord with the full sensory experience of objects and artefacts. There are oral-gustatorial and touch dimensions that are not encompassed in their five semiotic modes.

students to the subtext of the object, which they can now access and decode using the new background knowledge and historical context the teacher has provided.

The use of role-plays, living history, re-enactments, reconstructions and simulations are used by teachers for the purpose of teaching context through, and with, objects (Shemilt 1984; see also Section 8.3). However, on occasion, there are rich interactions when re-enactors (like Peter Lee) or teacher-re-enactors (like Michael, Mark or Lachlan) provide historical context via a concrete, physically embodied or haptic living history experience at school—a notion that is further explored in Section 9.3.

However, even when the physicality of the materialist experience is present, it needs to be interwoven with imagination and reflexive interruptions to trigger historical thinking. One example is Lachlan and Michelle's simulation of a World War I trench attack. It is based on Charles Bean's account of a platoon attack on an entrenched machine gun position. In this school yard simulation, students advance on a trench position they have previously dug. The trench (and their route of advance) has a physical presence. They want to 'try' different things to achieve the goal of reaching the machine gun but Lachlan, as the teacher/moderator drops in contextual information that is both imaginative and physical to constrain and shape what students can do at every point:

They're in action ... every bullet is representing a hundred bullets going off, and ... (their) platoon (is) charging forward... The kids ... heads (were) spinning, that they just didn't make it to that machine gun nest. ... and the kids are going, 'But why can't we run?' I said, 'Well, it's No Man's Land. There's crap everywhere.'

Giles also uses objects' physical and material properties to ground student's contextual understanding in his 'Café Zimmerman' exercise. However, like Kerry's Holocaust Museum Project (see Section 9.4.2), the objects he uses are created and brought to the café as both products of historical research *and* material (re)construction. Each object students research and introduce to the café becomes, in itself, a case study through which to explore the historical context while simultaneously providing an immersive and holistic understanding of context via experience:

There's a great activity ... I did on trade and commerce ... There's this café in Leipzig called Café Zimmermann where ... Johann Sebastian Bach was a friend of the proprietor, and he would take his quartet to play music to serenade the coffee house drinkers, and of course they'd stay longer and drink more coffee, and so it became this haunt of all the intellectuals and all the thinkers ... It used to import all these things, so I said, 'Okay, we're going to reconstruct a 17th century coffee house, and every one of you is going to investigate an object attached to it.' We rebuilt the whole of Café

Zimmermann, from the music to the entertainment, the cakes, the recipes, the buildings, the people who were attending it. That insight into the 17th century, linking the world into one little place.

Giles identifies one of the elements underpinning the success of the immersive approach as the multi-sensual dimension of the learning experience, and was astounded by the sophistication of the *thinking* that resulted:

There was one fellow who is on a music scholarship, he was mad about (Bach) ... We put it into a little book ... A book on Café Zimmerman, and he wrote this ... 3000 words on the coffee cantata of Bach, and I think, 'This is a 13 year old !'

The objects were a source for deeper, contextualised, engagement—a spark that leads out from the 'thing', from what is known, to new understandings. I asked Giles if he thought objects had a particular capacity for making this happen:

Yes, definitely. Being able to relate it to something, that empathy idea ... the students are able to engage more critically with it. I think it has a really big impact and case study seems to help as well. Whether it's going to be a case study centred around an individual or a place, such as the building, then that does have a greater impact.

By its very nature, Liam's Experimental Archaeology Club seeks to test interpretations of the past, where the concrete and the material provide contextual understanding about what is possible, probable or plausible in history. Liam's 'Trojan Horse' activity (see Section 7.2.4) uses the popular science television *MythBusters* model to test the story of the fall of Troy. Contextualised understanding is the key to doing historical thinking; giving the imaginative reconstruction tangible and concrete expression. The first step in this concrete contextualisation was elicited by colliding the archaeology of Mycenaean fortifications with the physical and material possibilities of building in timber, and to a size and design capable of achieving the objective recounted in the written source. Liam explains:

We looked at a whole bunch of pictures ... fortifications from the time ... like the Lion Gate from ... Mycenae looking at things like the foundations of the various walls at Hissarlik in Turkey How big would the gate have actually been? ... are we talking something 50 feet tall by 20 feet wide ... like the Lion Gate? ... As the legend goes that they wheeled this thing inside, how big could it have been? How big could they have made it, how many people could fit inside, would that have been enough to capture the gates?

We actually built the Trojan Horse ... at about five metres tall ... You could probably fit about three or four men inside it. What does that do for the story? ... does it confirm or deny looking at the *MythBusters'* rule? ... you could certainly fit a few men in there, it would have been desperately uncomfortable, how long could you stay there ... before you suffocate? We were certainly trying to prove or disprove (the legend) with that one,

but in the end we ... (concluded using) the *MythBusters*' model, (that) it was plausible. Plausible but not confirmed.

Other learning experiences with objects allow students to discover contextual understanding through a personal, physical experience. The totality of the historical conditions that framed and directed behaviour of historical actors can never be fully created. However, an approximation of some physical and material aspects can work as a contextual key, which in turn prompts (an historically conscious) understanding of how the past differs from the present.

8.3 Teaching Historical Perspectives Through Objects and Artefacts

Perspective recognition is central to historical consciousness—that orientation of self in time. It is about recognising differences between present-bound perspectives *and* those held by people in the past (something that is arguably also central to persona-taking practices of historical re-enactment/living history). It is also about empathetic understanding; that is, the capacity to see the past from the perspective(s) of historical actors. Perspective-taking involves (Collingwood's) 'historical imagination'. The re-enactment of the thoughts and *mentalité* of historical actors in the mind of the historian is necessary to gain:

An understanding of the past from the point of view of a particular individual or group, including an appreciation of the circumstances they faced, and the motivations, values and attitudes behind their actions (ACARA Version 6.0, 2013, p. 90).

Perspective-taking and empathetic understanding necessarily ventures into the thoughts and feelings of others and, in doing so, enters the 'dangerous ground' of affective history. The interplay between cognition and affect in historical perspective-taking and empathetic understanding—what Dulberg (2002, p. 11) calls the 'back and forth rhythm between affect and cognition'—is discussed further in Chapter 9. Teachers' use of objects to connect and engage students, to bring the student closer to the event or person in the past, to evoke a certain intimacy, proximity, familiarity between the past and present, was observed in Chapter 7. Equally critical for historical thinking to occur, this affective lure of connectedness must be accompanied by a cognitive trigger that jolts the student into the reflexive mode. This cognitive interruption has been variously called a 'perspective jolt' (Mootz, 2015), a 'distracted mode of engagement' (Landsberg, 2015) and a 'pattern interrupt' (Staats, 2018).

Strategic questioning is the most-used cognitive interruption in the history teacher's repertoire and is integral to the process of sourcing. It invites students to think critically about sources and evidence and, as Mootz (2015) argues, promotes an appreciation that all sources (whatever their

form) are perspectival in nature. Their examination unlocks the worldviews/*mentalités* embedded their authorship/construction, uses and audiences.

Question sets, such as those produced by Seixas and Morton (2013), model how teachers can use questions to move students to consider perspectives other than their own. This process also requires historical imagination. In using questions and historical imagination to move students to perceptual positions other than their own, is to engage in a powerful phenomenon—the exploration and experience of ‘otherness’—and not exclusive to the practice of history. Schneider (2011, 2014) has observed that history and theatre share much in common; both historian and thespian are required to move ‘out from themselves’ and adopt perspectival positions other than their own to act or, (in the case of the historian, imaginatively) re-enact history in their heads (Collingwood, 1946). The imaginative capacity of humans is what makes perspective-taking and empathy possible.

Theatre has long realised the power of *ekstasis* and that the imaginative leap required to stand outside oneself is aided by the use of objects. In Ancient Greek theatre the use of masks assisted the thespian’s craft (Harwood, 1984). In contemporary theatre, it is commonplace for actors to use hats and shoes in their technique to enter into character—a technique already observed in the practice of historical re-enactment. Teachers in this study have equally observed the power of things (including hats and shoes) to assist students in developing historical perspective-taking and empathy.

Cheryl describes how a World War I helmet triggered a perspectival shift. The document study was failing to engage her Year 9 class until she introduced a World War I helmet to trigger an ‘historical sensation’:

They just weren't interested ... I found these (written) sources about the battle Fromelles; it was quite confronting, there was one about a man being buried alive with his helmet ... scraping down his nose, and so I read it to the class ... and nobody cared ... we actually had a helmet at school ... I went and got the helmet and I made every one of them put it on. And suddenly they were able to see what that would have felt like scraping down your nose and scraping the skin off ... the whole room changed, everyone was suddenly quite interested.

Me reading it and them reading it, nothing, no reaction ... No reaction until we pulled out the helmet.

I ... asked them questions like, ‘Think about how heavy it is’ ... it was ... about empathy and seeing how that would have felt to have worn that ... if they can get the empathy they tend to connect more with whatever it is that you're learning.

Drew was surprised by the way shoes shifted the thinking and behaviour of his students. He gets students to try on different army boots:

The boots turns them into soldiers. They start to march...They walk differently. ... all the boots ... have hob knobs on them, they make that wonderful crunching marching sound. Without fail, students start to do almost like a goose step march, crunch, crunch.

Drew believes that the boots (unconsciously) trigger an imaginative leap from self to other. When wearing the boots, he notes that they are ‘slipping into a character effectively ... They don't realise they're doing it’ (Drew). But the ‘slip’ into the other is momentary, as they quickly ‘jolt’ back into themselves: ‘Then, they have that manner realisation as, “Oh my god. I'm marching.”’ (Drew).

A very similar experience of the agency of shoes to alter the sense of self and incite the user to action was experienced by the teacher focus group when they put on army boots. Two participants exchanged their observations: ‘You can see why they did it. It gives you a sense of power while you’re actually doing it—it’s really quite scary’. The other remarked, ‘I felt like marching as I put that on’.

Phillip’s location at Kamay Environmental Education Centre (EEC) (Botany Bay) is the setting for an exploration of perspectives around Cook’s landing at Botany Bay in 1770. The physicality of the location, the role-play (entitled ‘Meeting of Cultures’), the use of costumes, props and objects supports primary school aged students to take on the perspectives of the historical players. There are obvious parallels here with performance theory and the role costumes, props and sets play in supporting actors and audiences to imaginatively move from their world into the world occupied by the theatrical actors and historical re-enactors. However, there is an additional element at Kamay EEC: to stand in the place where the historical actors stood is a powerful aid to historical imagination. The physicality, context-rich sensations of physical place, and the materiality of ‘things’, support students to move *out* of themselves and their world and *into* the places and world of historical players of 1770.

Phillip explains that the formal thinking required to do historical thinking can be overwhelming for young students without an anchor in the physical and concrete. The ‘Meeting of Cultures’ re-enactment/play was ‘someone(’s) ... bright idea’ to use the physicality of the landing place to make the abstraction concrete and tangible. Students use their senses and observation of the present-day site to ‘see it’ as it was 240 years ago.

To stand on the actual site of Cook's landing provides a physical connection for students with 'sensory "I-was-there" detail' (Luhmann, 2012) to a moment in history. By adding the dimension of being there physically (in the sense of being on the same site), the role-play takes students a step further to being there imaginatively and mentally. Involving the students in role-play and workshopping the perspectives and dilemmas of the historical actors in the 1770 meeting of cultures, supports historical consciousness. Students are obliged to rethink and re-embody a moment in time, and beyond. Students are divided into two groups (English and the native Dharawal) and take on their respective perspectives to resolve a dilemma. The students are instructed as follows:

Let's step back in time to 1770, April 29th. You're Captain James Cook. You're presented with this dilemma ... You have to land. How are you going to try to communicate with the Dharawal?

Dharawal people, you've got these people that have invaded your land. You've never seen those strange people. You're telling them to go away in your own language, 'Wara, warawai'. They're not listening to you. It's quite rude. How are you going to respond to that?

The post role-play debrief the discussion explores historical perspective from the position of the present, and with it the ethical dimension. The children are asked, 'Is this a Dharawal narrative or an English narrative? ... Was this a good thing or a bad thing?' In an astute moment of historical consciousness, one nine year-old responded, 'It depends on who you are. Depends on who you are today'. The material experience of place, props, costume, context and scenario provided this student a rich context that triggered historical consciousness and a sophisticated perspectival insight.

8.4 Teaching Historical Significance Through Objects and Artefacts

Teachers use objects and artefacts to teach historical significance. An object or artefact is analysed to reveal, from the particular and the specific, aspects of the past that have resulted in change of 'deep consequence' for many people over time. It is also investigated for what it can reveal about compelling issues and concerns that affect our lives today.

The choice of objects is important. The object selected must reveal something about the 'enduring or emerging issues in history or contemporary life' (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 19). Thus, objects become a window into the event or person of historical significance. A singular object or artefact or an assemblage can be used to extrapolate the broad development and trends of history that have shaped the present. The process of inquiry, the inferential and abductive

thinking that teachers use are all part of this process of ‘uncovering’ historical significance. When the personal memories and narratives entangled in objects and artefacts are linked to the public narrative of history, high levels of engagement follow.

Thus, objects are exempla with which to illustrate historical significance, and central to their use is the way they are woven into a bigger narrative (or equally, contest, disrupt or problematise established narratives). Narrative structures are essential for the construction and assimilation of knowledge (Bruner as cited in Cooper, 2013); to be effective vehicles for understanding, narratives need to be deconstructed and interpreted. Museums view objects and artefacts as essential to telling stories, and this approach is mirrored by teachers’ use of objects to teach historical significance.

The exemplum I use in workshops on haptic history to illustrate how objects can be used for teaching historical significance comes from the University College London Centre for Holocaust Education. It is a video called *Ordinary Things*. In it, the museum educator models for the audience how a single child’s shoe can be analysed for what it ‘reveals’ about the Holocaust, of which it is a (fragmentary) relic; the educator contextualises the object by use of narrative, interwoven with other contemporary (photographic) primary sources to demonstrate how the story behind the singular shoe recounts the consequences for the many and its reverberations into the present.

The video is a remarkable demonstration of the way historical imagination is cultivated to transform a ‘mundane’ object, by use of contextualisation and narrative, into a portal for understanding historical significance at both affective and cognitive levels. It is debatable whether the intermediary presence of film as a medium inhibits the full impact. To be in the presence of the object itself, to be able to touch and handle it, adds an additional dimension of immediacy and tangibility that sharpens the affective ‘punch’. George’s experience confirms this, albeit much amplified by the encounter with hundreds of Holocaust victims’ shoes at Idaho. The affective impact of encountering the physical residues of events of historical significance is overwhelming:

The little video you showed ... one of the barracks... (at a holocaust museum site)... it's literally filled with shoes. ... That broke me, that broke me ... [pause—speaker showing emotion] ... I think that's a powerful connection for people to make that connection. If some people might say it's a bit too sentimental, maudlin, whatever. I think human emotion should be a part of what we do.

In George's account there is an unabashed acknowledgement of how object-triggered perspective-taking spills across all three levels of the cognitive, the embodied and the affective.

The significance of shoes is a recurring theme; they are intimate, personal and form a point of commonality between peoples across time, culture and place. They are a point of connection and means of accessing the experience and perspective of someone other than ourselves. To move from the particular to the universal using an object is a technique employed by museums and teachers alike. The notion of understanding the singular, and then multiply that experience by the number who underwent similar experiences can be a powerful tool for teaching historical significance.⁵⁵

An assemblage of objects is equally useful for teaching historical significance. George demonstrates how it is done without engaging affect. He does this when teaching the 'olive oil cycle' of the Ancient World:

I tend to put together a group of objects which allow me to have a narrative. I'll have a lamp and I'll have unguentarium⁵⁶ and maybe a little aryballos⁵⁷ ... I'll introduce them to the lamps. 'What's the fuel?' They'll talk about perfume and soap and what's the ingredient in olive oil and so on. When we crush the olive, what's the first thing we're going to use it for? Well, you think this up, aren't we eating it? ... we get the olive oil cycle going.

Similarly, sometimes you can get a commercial cycle going. You've got some coins and you've got some weights and measures, cylinder seals until you can get sort of an economic argument.

The added benefit of using such an assemblage is that students are more likely to make a connection and develop knowledge, understanding and empathy from 'ordinary' things of daily life than the abstractions of politics and the rise and fall of civilisations.

Historically significant dates/anniversaries are also opportunities participant-teachers took to endow objects with a synergy and relevance to students. Mark times the use of his grandfather's service medals and teaching Australia and 20th century conflict to align with the approach of ANZAC Day:

The real stuff ... kids do respect it. ... if you have year nine at the start of the year... you do World War I right around ANZAC Day... touching my Pop's medals, which are real, they're his, by touching the bullets, the shrapnel, the pellets ... Bringing in ... gas

⁵⁵ This is further illustrated in the 'Gott Mit Uns Belt Case Study' (see Section 9.4.1)

⁵⁶ An unguentarium is a Roman perfume or soap container.

⁵⁷ An aryballos is a Greek perfume container.

masks, and putting that on and seeing how claustrophobic that is ... it gives that view of “Well, how would you be spending all day in this”.

Place also plays its part in generating an appreciation of historical significance. The earlier discussion of Phillip’s ‘Meeting of Cultures’ roleplaying activity and debriefing at the site of Cook’s landing place at Botany Bay noted how students explore perspective from within the context of historical significance. A central point in the discussion revolves around the indigenous objects Cook took from the site—the shields⁵⁸—and slips into another historical thinking concept, the ethical dimension’.

The Kamay re-enactment gains an additional sense of historical significance on occasions when the student re-enactment is observed by La Perouse Aboriginal Elders. On the high ground above the landing place, La Perouse Elders sometimes gather to watch this ‘re-performance’ of a moment of their history. Their presence is a living testament to the event, and adds a tangible authenticity to exploration of its historical significance. Thus, students experience historical significance first-hand in the layers of change physically enjambed in the landscape; the currency of the issues explored in front of First Nations Australians, who are living proof of the historical significance of the landing; and in the connection to the past experienced through objects and role-play.

8.5 Teaching Continuity and Change Through Objects and Artefacts

Objects and artefacts are concrete and material expressions of time and place and readily lend themselves to teaching continuity and change. Seixas and Morton (2013) affirm that for students to think historically they need to understand change as a process that varies in tempo and direction. Turning points mark the moments in history where change shifts in direction or pace (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 82). Continuity and change are interwoven and lend themselves to evaluative judgements about progress and decline.

Teachers in the study used assemblages of material culture to teach concepts of chronology, seriation and sequence. The concrete and tangible invite exploration of change and continuity: What has changed? What remains the same in an object’s form, function, design and decoration?

⁵⁸ One of these shield tours the world as an exemplum of historical significance as one of the artefacts in the ‘History of the World in a 100 Objects’ exhibition and book (MacGregor, 2012).

George uses an exercise with two Coca-Cola marketing/promotional items spanning a 50-year period to demonstrate the simultaneity of continuity and change, progress and decline:

I've got a couple of objects that I use regularly to show change and continuity. I've got a miniature Coke bottle which was given out to children in 1954 by the Coca-Cola company when the Queen came ... One of my students in university a couple of years ago gave me a miniature Coke can. There's the continuity ... when (you) pull this one (the 1954 item) open it's a cigarette lighter. For kids! This (other) one you pull it open and it's a thumb drive. For kids... Progress and decline! This is progress: we move from cigarettes to metadata. It's a nice little exercise.

Giles uses the principles of seriation to teach complex notions of change and continuity through a study of 18th–19th century tombstone decorations from New England, America (Deetz, 1996; Dethlefsen & Deetz, 1966) (see Figure 8.3). The tombstones invite an investigation into the complexities of change and continuity:

There are three tombstone heads. One's got an angel on it, one's got skull and crossbones, and another one's got a willow on it. ... These graphs (show) ...starting point, the most popular point, and the dying off point. You can have three things being used, one is in the process of gaining popularity, one is in the process of losing popularity, one is ... they're all being used concurrently. Those sort of ideas, I've found that it helps the kids to understand that history isn't quite so simple.... There's complexities. (Giles)

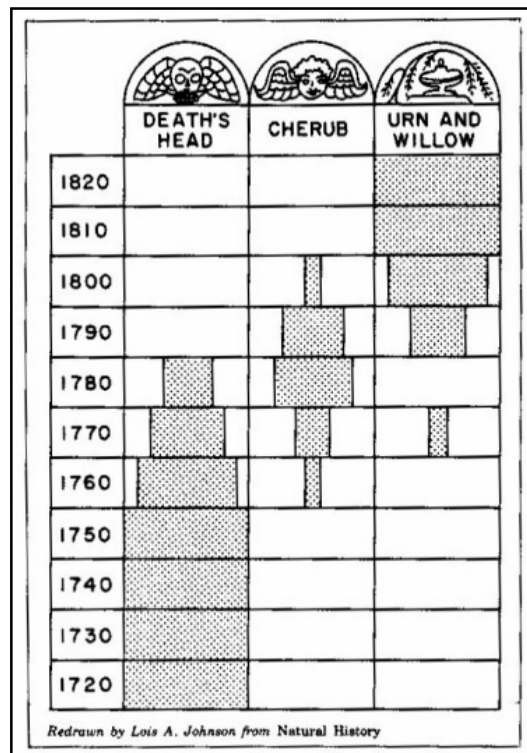


Figure 8.3: Seriation graph use by Giles to teach continuity and change (Dethlefsen & Deetz, 1966)

Having taught the concept of the simultaneity of change and continuity through a specific example of 18th century material culture, Giles then has his students apply this new concept from material culture as a broader intellectual tool for teaching social and political change and continuity:

I use that model to try and explain the development of modernism in Tsarist Russia. To show that you could have really, really avant-garde ideas like communism concurrent with autocratic Tsarist Russia, and that two can coexist unhappily ... I find the use of archaeological concepts in history brings a different way of thinking for students and sometimes it helps them to be able to engage with it.

Drew puts together an assemblage of Australian military uniforms through time—1815, 1915, 2015—to explore the continuity and change in the nature of warfare over the last 200 years. Students note the obvious changes (highly visible redcoat, to World War I khaki, to 21st century camouflage) and draw conclusions about the changing nature of warfare. The continuities equally surprise to them: unit patches, rank insignia, webbing and the weight of the soldiers' packs are consistent across time.

Liam does a similar exercise in the change and continuity of military thinking in World War I by using bayonets to illustrate continuity between 1815 and 1915, and artillery shells to illustrate change:

One of the things that we'll often show in sequence will be ... a (WWI) French bayonet ... basically the same sort of bayonet ... the French were using at Waterloo... they're designed purely for lining up shoulder to shoulder, marching great long ranks across open countryside ... then we show some great big artillery shells and nose cones and bits of driving band and all that sort of thing

So talking about the learning process that happened amongst both Entente and Allied powers during World War I and the kind of ... mistakes in thinking that were going on and the failure to understand the nature of changed warfare and how artillery changed the war.... By showing in that sequence, it's really quite interesting to see kids going, 'Oh'. You get those moments of revelation.

Lachlan and Michelle also embed the concept of change and continuity in their immersive experience of the Middle Ages by subtly changing early medieval objects with late medieval objects:

We wanted the kids to understand historiography and change. We started early mediaeval in the morning, and then we did 15th century in the afternoon. ... the campsite changes, so the objects that were ceramic changed to glass or pewter, and so the kids get an idea of change over time and the changing roles of men and women as well ... Yeah, 400 years change. Bang.

8.6 Teaching Moral Ethical Dimensions Through Objects and Artefacts

Teaching the ethical dimension is about imbuing the study of history with meaning (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 170). At its simplest, it is about an ethical awareness of the behaviour of people in the past to make informed judgements about issues in the present and beyond. It requires striking a balance between the inevitable ‘presentism’ of contemporary values and beliefs against a contextually-sensitive understanding of how historical perspectives and worldviews (and hence ethical standards) have changed over time. Learning to make fair ethical judgements guides understanding of the past and shapes ideas around historical significance, commemoration and memorialisation (Seixas & Morton, 2013).

The commemorative function of objects and artefacts is a strong theme that emerged from the teacher data. Most prominent among these objects were relics from the World Wars. It has been observed that teachers use them to make the past tangible, poignant and present for their students. Some objects are specifically selected for their utility in exploring the ethical dimension of historical thinking. The holocaust shoe from the University College London Centre for Holocaust Education’s *Ordinary Things* has already been discussed (see Section 8.4), but its usage spills over and is used to explore the deeper meanings of the ethical dimension (see Figure 8.4).

Holocaust Education
Development Programme

Leading education and social research
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University of London

What are the ‘deeper layers of meaning’ ?

Why did they kill a three year old child?

Why didn't somebody save him?

Why didn't more people fight back?

How was this possible in the modern world?

Did people know what was happening?

Can one person stand for millions of victims?

Why did they keep the shoe and kill the child?

Why the Jews?

What would he have done with his life had he lived?

Why didn't his parents protect him?

The innocence of the victims

What does this tell us about other mass killings?

11

hedp

Figure 8.4: Slide from ‘Ordinary Things’ presentation, HEDP

George's use of his grandfather's postcards and the 'Gott Mit Uns' belt (see case study in Section 9.4.1) examines the ethics of war. Like the Holocaust shoe, the focus on the singular individual (George's own family's experience through his grandfather's personal items) is extrapolated to the millions of other victims of World War I.⁵⁹

Similarly, Phillip's 'Meeting of Cultures' role-play, which uses place, objects and costume to explore historical perspective, is a rich resource with which to trigger student discussion around the ethical issues with their ongoing reverberations in the present day:

Objects too are morally and ethically charged, like those particular tools that Cook took Again, perspective of the Dharawal, it was theft. ... the Aboriginal people here, the Elders would want to see these objects returned ... We ask the students, 'Do you think the Dharawal people should be getting their spears back?' Some go, 'Yes, yes, that's a good thing to return their spears' ... then... one little fellow said, 'Well, no.' The teacher said, 'Why not?' We had Elders watching this He says, 'What if more than one group ... actually... (claimed) ownership of it? ... It could actually cause friction or conflict within the Aboriginal community to dispute ownership.

The little boy said, 'Well, maybe those things are better off in British museum where they've been safe guarded for 246 years.' ... that deep thinking from a student was quite surprising from an eight or nine-year-old.

Kerry's 'Holocaust Memorial and Museum' project is different. Students were required to create museum objects and, as part of the design process, had to explicitly define an ethical stance/narrative as well as the method used to communicate it to the target audience. Their purpose was to provoke a response (and reflection) from the viewer.

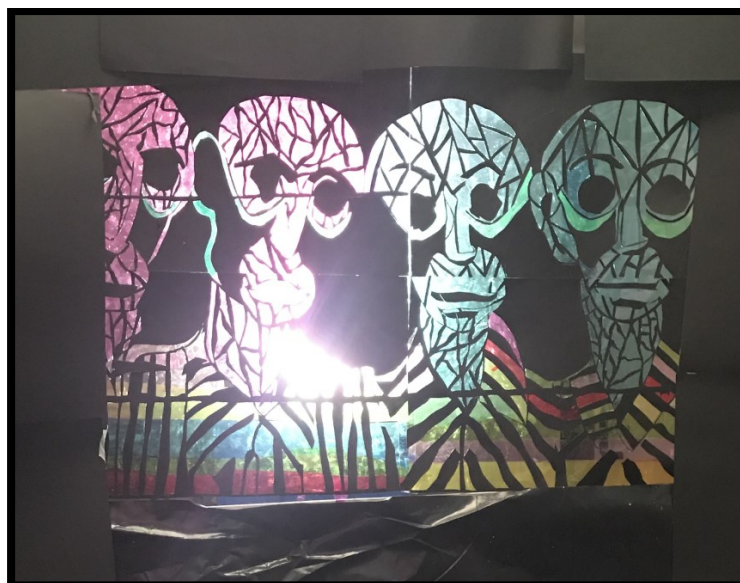


Figure 8.5: One of the exhibits from Kerry's Museum Project

⁵⁹ The fate of millions is almost incomprehensible. The strategy of focusing on the singular is applying the (misattributed) Stalin maxim: 'The death of one man is a tragedy, the death of a million is a statistic'.

The exhibition was re-curated, with exhibits included in the *Courage to Care* Exhibition tour of regional NSW (see Figure 8.5). Kerry's students worked with the curators to explain:

How they came up with these ideas ... to conceptually teach the Holocaust ... (the Courage to Care organisers) think that their curators don't have the skill level that my students showed...

The educational value of the approach was also recognised. As Kerry recounts, 'one of my lecturers at Sydney Uni wants me to come and teach her professional practices class ... and take some of the students in for an interview with them'.

This attention (and the publication of an article on their project) left the students impressed, and provided them with a sense of doing real history with a real-world purpose, audience and impact. The project is discussed more fully in Section 9.4.2.

8.7 Cause and Consequence Through Objects and Artefacts: A Matter of Agency?

To think historically about cause and consequence, students need to move beyond the notion that human agency—the motivation and actions of historical actors—is the only driver of history. To understand causes and consequences, there needs to be an ecological perspective. For Marxist materialists, this perspective (as discussed in Chapter 2) considers how the material conditions of the age constrain, enable and shape both actions and thought of historical actors. This is what social theorists call 'structure', phenomenologists render as 'being in the world' and historians describe as – the physical and material context of the 'larger ecological systems' or 'broader conditions' (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 106).

An understanding of cause and consequence therefore requires an appreciation of how human agency is shaped and directed by prevailing material conditions/structures of the age. Whereas social theorists conceive 'structure' in broad terms of recurring patterned social, institutional and cultural arrangements, this study, with its materialist focus, is equally interested in exploring the role that *individual* and *specific* objects play in influencing history and its study. Thus, this study seeks to explore the vital materialist notion that we share agency with 'things'; that is, the co-agency of objects that have been the artefacts *of* history as well as their ongoing, shared agency in their subsequent biographies when they are used *for* the study of history.

Teachers in this study were asked about their views concerning the agency or co-agency of objects and artefacts. For most, it was something had never really given much consideration;

however, the agency of objects was closely tied to its affective power to ‘move’ its user (a notion that is explored fully in Chapter 9).

For Liam, his relationship with the objects inherited from his grandfather’s museum and bequeathed by the public, has nothing to do with ownership, but rather custodianship. He is an agent to perpetuate memory and uphold the ethical dimension of memorialisation, but this role is heavily laced with affect (see Section 9.2.3).

Mark is comfortable taking a structuralist position in explaining agency in objects. He argues that the shape, design and function of the object at hand guides students’ movements and actions:

You see it when you give the kids different weapons, and they play with them differently. A sword will be more 'swish', give them an axe, and it's definitely more 'chop'. The boys put helmets on they want to head butt each other. Yeah, the piece you use, what you have in your hand, does influence the way they behave.

Phillip agrees and notes the role played by background or ‘field’ knowledge as much as the object’s shape, design, weight and characteristics in guiding students:

We test the hypothesis, using your evidence, using the object ... they might have prior knowledge, field knowledge about it. For example, if I handed them something that looks like a wedge-shaped boomerang, boys say, ‘Well, this looks like a boomerang. I know what a boomerang is used for’ ... They've looked at it. They've made connections between what they've got and what they already know, to similar objects and say, "Well, this is a larger version. It's lopsided. I think it was probably used to hunt down maybe wallabies or emus...

Giles drew on his archaeological background to grapple with the question of the agency of things. He sees co-agency in the world. Human agency is evident in their impact on the material world, but he argues that ‘things’ ‘push back’ and shape humanity in turn. He cites three diverse examples: the Puebloian Indians, the architecture of the Angkor Wat temples, and the way musical instruments dictated the unique characteristic of pre-Corellian music. Co-agency between things and people can be observed in how the material parameters of the object dictate to humanity, which responds in turn.

George is equally forthright in acknowledging the power of structures to shape human agency:

Think how many times in history people decided to do things because of the physical structures around them or simple things like furniture and so on.

He notes that sometimes things and structures enable human agency and other times they are obstacles. Things:

hold(ing) us back, (impose) ... limitations ... there was a wonderful short story years ago. A guy was convinced that inanimate objects were trying to take over the world... It's true. You know yourself, when you've got to mow the lawn and the lawnmower won't work, as soon as the technician arrives to fix it, it starts first time. (George).

George goes further and asserts the agency of objects. In this he is unusual. He notes how some museum objects at a (then) recent professional learning evening for teachers 'attracted everybody to them'. This notion of the affective power of things to move people and George's museum experience is discussed further in Section 9.2.4.

8.8 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on teacher use of objects and artefacts as tools to teach historical thinking as a *cognitive* process. While teachers use objects and artefacts to teach all six historical thinking concepts, this study emphasised the utility of material culture to teach, in particular, the skills of historical inquiry. Teachers provided guidance through Socratic questioning and modelling inquiry in a supported learning community, which was used with objects and artefacts to develop the inquiry heuristic. Beginning with descriptive, analytic and forensic skills of observation, the inquiry process progressed to the 'so what' of how objects communicate through their materialist modalities to reveal something of the societies that created and used them. The 'so what?' tier of inquiry employs the abductive, inferential, indexical and post-processualism of formal/operational thinking.

Teacher guidance is also important for student reflexivity. Teacher questioning provokes the 'distracted mode of engagement' and historical consciousness. Some teachers, like Giles, recognise that material culture speaks in a different language to text and advocates the adoption of a new material literacy. He argues that material literacies are needed so students can 'think' with and through objects using modalities different from that which they bring to text.

Second to inquiry, teachers found objects and artefacts useful for teaching historical perspective-taking and empathy. Objects and artefacts provide students with a tactile, embodied and affective experience of 'historical otherness' and this supports student historical imagination, empathy and perspective-taking. All teachers in the study valued the materialist approach as a means for teaching history's intellectual processes. However, while teachers recognised that objects were powerful, there was no consensus on the nature of object as historical agents.

The power of objects, beyond their utility to stimulate the intellect, is the subject of the next chapter. Chapter 9 investigates the engagement of the bodily, multi-sensory and affective domains of haptic history and considers how teachers make use of materiality to engage students in the affective ('heart') and physical/sensory ('hands') modes for learning history and creating new knowledge.

Chapter 9: Haptic History in Schools—Affect, Touch and Embodied History

9.1 Introduction

This chapter has two parts. The first part siphons off the affective and haptic/sensory/embodied components of the teacher praxis of haptic history to examine them separately. This continues the reductionist approach taken in Chapter 8, which distilled (albeit imperfectly) the cognitive component of teaching history through material culture. While useful for demonstrating that the materialist practice of teaching history is a multifaceted pedagogic phenomena, it is counter-intuitive to a holistic approach to learning. The process of categorising haptic history risks repeating the Western tradition of putting the rational above the phenomenological and reinforcing flawed Cartesian notions of mind–body dichotomies (or, in this case, triune of mind/body/affect—‘head, hands and heart’).

The second part of the chapter reverses the study’s atomistic trend by presenting a series of case study exempla that pull together the three elements of head, hands and heart in the teaching praxis of haptic history, to reveal its organic and holistic nature. The case studies are constructed from the teacher interviews. Teachers were asked to talk about their most successful lesson with objects and artefacts, nominate their most powerful teaching object, and explain how it worked. The use of case studies recognises that complex phenomena are always more than their identified parts, and can only be fully understood as a functioning, organic, whole. Afterall, the beauty of the cut diamond is not found in the observation of its isolated facets and individual cut faces, but rather in the way the faces come together to shed a refracted light that reflects the complexities of observed phenomena.

9.2 Affective History Through Objects and Artefacts

In history teaching, the place of affect is lodged within the concept of empathy. Empathy requires both cognitive and affective modes of operation (Lee, 1984). It entails the capacity to recognise and understand one’s own thoughts and feelings and then differentiate them from thoughts and feelings of historical actors (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). Thus, empathy is fundamentally an exercise in historical consciousness.

Yet, empathy is the most discussed, debated, criticised and avoided feature of history education (Barton & Levstik, 2004) because of its affective component. It is argued that affect endangers history as an objective, scientific study as it is responsible for ‘over’ or ‘too easy’ identification with people in the past to the point where the sense of the past as a foreign country is lost. This leads to presentism and anachronism. Historical consciousness is lost. The past is misread and modern-day feelings and thoughts are projected onto historical actors. Empathy is confused for sympathy, and imaginative thought free of historically sensitive contextualisation becomes the (mistaken) foundation for historical knowledge (Davison, 2012; Lee, 1984; Landsberg, 2015).

Thus, many scholars have attempted to draw a distinction between perspective recognition (as a purely cognitive process) and empathy (involving affect) to separate the cognitive from the affective domains. Even with this distinction, others wish to entertain a separate notion of empathy, redefined as ‘care for and about people in the past, to be concerned with what happened to them and how they experienced their lives’ (Barton & Levstik, 2004, pp. 207–208).

However, it is unhelpful (and impossible) to quarantine affect in matters regarding human beings. Research demonstrates the inseparable relationship between thought and feeling in cognitive development (Barton & Levstik, 2004). The combination of the rational and irrational defines the human condition. Historical empathy is complex and contradictory because it defies the traditional Cartesian model of the mind–body divide. Empathy requires both thinking and feeling. Davison’s (2012, p. 13) study of the pedagogy of empathy in school history summarises the delicious paradox of the way empathy works across the dual domains of cognition and affect:

Having established that historical empathy requires students to enter into the past, but also to remain somewhat aloof from it, and to work both cognitively and affectively, it can be defined as:

Enter[ing] into some informed appreciation of the predicaments or points of view of other people in the past ... it is simply a word used to describe the imagination working on evidence, attempting to enter into a past experience while at the same time remaining outside it. (Department of Education and Science [UK], 1985, p. 3)

In facilitating this dance between the present and the past, intimate yet alien, close yet distant, and familiar yet strange, the teacher has the potential to facilitate a ‘historical sensation’ for

students. This is a sublime historical experience of ‘a past breaking away from the present’ (Ankersmit, 2005, p. 265) which is, in itself an act of historical consciousness.

Rather than fearing affect, in this study, teachers embrace it and, by adding to it ‘reflexive’ and context-sensitive components, make it an ally and enabler of historical consciousness. Teachers use affect as one of their ‘tools of the trade’—it is the springboard for engagement and interest, and is essential for humanising the past. Affect can be found in the narratives the teachers construct and the relationships they build through objects; between themselves and their students, and their students and the historical actors of history. The ‘affective impact’ is also a consideration in teacher selection of material culture sources for use in the classroom.

Levstik and Barton (2015) have further attempted to reconcile the tension between cognition and affect by acknowledging the aesthetic experience of the material encounter in history. This is one that ‘engages both intellect and (your) emotions, and often moves beyond the power of word to explain’ and serves to ‘jolt you out of familiar ways of seeing. You understand, to some degree, not just an event or idea, but a world of feelings’ (Levstik & Barton, 2015, p. 171). Their argument is part of their call for an arts-infused history curriculum, in which historic art and objects are both source material for historical study and a mode for expression of historical understanding (see Section 9.4.2). Their case faintly echoes Gell’s (1998) notion of the aesthetic agency of things.

The teachers in this study have discovered that objects and artefacts are a powerful source that can deliver an ‘affective punch’. This seems to be due to the physical residues of history, objects/artefacts/relics that give the past a level of ‘existential concreteness’ (Lowenthal, 1985) that aids the imaginative thinking required to do empathy. Objects and artefacts make the past present, tangible and real. After all, as Collingwood (1946) reminds us, the difference between imagination and *historical* imagination is that the latter is contextualised and grounded in evidence from sources; in haptic history this grounding is palpable, present and material.

9.2.1 What affect does

This study sidesteps the vexed issues of affect’s definition (see Chapter 2) and its place in disciplinary history and pedagogy to focus less on what affect *is* and more on what affect *does*. This stratagem has been applied with good effect by Landsberg (2015) in her study of

affect as a form of engagement and historical consciousness in popular culture (especially in film and television).⁶⁰

A number of her observations about what affect does in her field finds ready transference to this study's focus on materialism. Landsberg notes how affect (in film) fosters a sense of connection and intimacy, which bears striking similarities to how affect operates through materialism in living history practice. Both film and haptic history have a:

Capacity to bring the past literally into view, to make it feel real, to flesh it out ... the illusory promise that the viewer can slip back into the past and 'know what it was like' by means of a simplistic, facile identification with [in the case of film/TV] an onscreen character ...

[It]... authorizes its viewers to inhabit subjective positions to which they have no natural connection. It offers spectators [and in the case of re-enactors, its participants and audiences] access to another person's mind and motivations, and that person might have very different life experiences, convictions and commitments. (Landsberg 2015, pp. 29-32)

Landsberg identifies filmic techniques that incite affect and can equally provoke historical consciousness and reflexive thinking. These affective techniques are used to foster in the viewer a closeness and intimacy with the historical actors and their world. This is then interrupted to 'jolt' the viewer 'back into their own bodies' and a 'distracted mode of engagement' that allows for the kind of reflexive thinking that is at the centre of historical consciousness (Landsberg, 2015, p. 36).

This methodology aligns with the pedagogic techniques teachers use when deploying affect using material culture. In haptic history it is the teacher, not the film-maker, who weaves the narrative and brings to life the historical actors and, with the aid of objects and artefacts, creates a diegetic world that invites affective engagement and connection to history. Objects and artefacts, like film media, work in a complex mode of address—visual, aural, olfactory and tactile—to cultivate affective engagement. A cognitive interruption is then used to produce a state of 'distracted engagement' or 'cognitive dissonance'. This jolts students into the reflexive mode necessary for historical thinking.

⁶⁰ Popular culture forms include films, television drama, reality shows and websites

9.2.2 Teacher talk: The affective pull of things—A form of agency?

The notion of the ‘agency’ of objects and artefacts from a structuralist perspective (see Section 8.7). History, as an anthropocentric/humanist discipline is biased towards humanity as the sole source of agency in history. As argued in Chapter 2, this bias extends to material culture, which is viewed as essentially ‘mute’, ‘dumb matter’. It extends to history methodology; human agency, in the form of inquiry, is required to transform inert matter into sources and, thereafter, historical evidence.⁶¹ As Lowenthal (1985, p. 243) observes, ‘Relics are mute; they require interpretation to voice their reliquary role. Relics are also static’.

However, teachers in the study observed the affective pull that objects exert on themselves and their students. As Phillip puts it, objects are a ‘provocation’, a ‘three-dimensional provocation for learning’ that elicits an imaginative and empathetic response:

We got a sense of the people who might have (owned them) ... the stories that these objects were telling, just by looking ... at how they've been used and how they've been worn. I could tell that a child has been using this for quite a number of years. It was cherished because it's in such excellent condition. That was just a different experience of objects.

Part of this affective pull can be explained using the central idea from materialist theory that ‘things make us as much as we make things’ (Miller, 2010). This phenomenon was discussed in Chapter 2 and demonstrated in Chapter 7, where teachers were in a sticky web of entanglement with the history objects they were using. Liam is an excellent example, as he notes how integral objects from his grandfather’s WWI museum are to him as a person and teacher:

I've grown up with these things, and so my whole understanding of history, my learning history, has been bound up with physical things to a greater or lesser extent.

Liam tries to put objective distance between himself and these objects, but notes how the personal items bequeathed to the collection are held in trust, never to be parted with for ‘love or money’.

Teachers put something of themselves—part of their personal story, memories and pedagogical individuality—into the objects they select and use. This mutually influences and extends the biographies of the object as much as that of its human user.⁶²

⁶¹ Further, Levesque (2008, p. 117) contends that ‘relics, do not talk to strangers and only speak when they are spoken to.

⁶² Another chapter in the object’s biography is written as the object gains a new function—that of a teaching tool—added to its story.

Students also get caught in that tangled web of teachers and things. They become enmeshed in the social dynamic embedded in things which, in the tradition of Vygotsky, is fundamental to the constructivist view of learning as a form of social interaction. Allowing another to engage with an object of *personal* significance, changes relationship; there is a level of intimacy in touching, handling and discussing objects that have become a part of who you are. It is a form of affect that lodges ‘between living people’ and, by extension, the no-longer living people of the past; it is ‘sticky’, it travels time and space (Schneider, 2011, p. 36; 2014, p. 44).

Thus, in haptic history, teachers, leverage affect at two levels: the interpersonal (between themselves and their students) and the historical (between themselves, their students and the historical actor(s) who previously made, owned or used these things). This affective impact is in addition to the palpable effects that objects exercise on people through their abductive agency (Gell 1998). Objects are thus a conduit through which people find affective connection with others in the present and the past.

9.2.3 Teacher talk: The affective power of things—Objects, affect and agency

Teachers display a range of affective sensitivities to objects and artefacts. This is not surprising. Materialist and anthropological theory asserts that objects enculturate us, exercise abductive agency and function as total social facts. As such, they are deeply enmeshed in social relations with biographies and even ‘personhoods’ of their own, and with this comes an affective entanglement with their human agents. The lived experience of the object is frequently revealed in the classroom through the lived experience of its owner/user/affiliate. This has affective impact. Yet the capacity of an object to exercise an affective impact is not entirely determined by its personal, familial or cultural significance to its owner or audience.

Teachers reported that being in the mere presence of a mundane, everyday object can trigger their imagination, affective response and empathy. Phillip details a visit to an antique store in his quest for artefacts to use as a teaching resource:

I thought, ‘I’d like to do a little bit of antiquing, have a look around’. I felt physically sick walking through it. Both my wife and I said, ‘We have to leave this shop’. Just from the energy of looking at these things ... We felt physically sick making connections with these objects in this antique shop ... We had to leave. I was overwhelmed by it.

In this encounter, Phillip describes the ‘tension’ and ‘energy’ behind objects. He got a strong sense of the people behind the objects, ‘as if the owners were talking to us through [them]’.

Phillip is not claiming the paranormal powers of the pseudo-science of psychometry⁶³ (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010, p. 78), but rather his empathetic and imaginative sensitivity to things. His response was equally intense with an original/authentic 18th century surgeon's capital saw, which he identified as one of his most powerful teaching objects. He is fully aware of the affective potency of this original item, which bears all the marks of extensive usage. A key factor in its affective punch is that it is 'real', and not a replica/copy:

It took me about six months to pick up my 1790s capital amputation saw because it tells a story. I couldn't hold it. I physically felt sick holding this saw in my hand because it was actually used to saw through someone's femur without any anaesthetic at all.

This object is a direct connection to real people, real events and real suffering in the past. It is an object whose affect 'jumps time' (Schneider, 2011). Whereas Collingwood advocated the need for historical imagination supported by sources for re-enacting the past in the mind of the historian, the physicality and materiality of Phillip's original surgeon's saw makes the imaginative understanding of the past more vivid and confronting. It also evokes a visceral affective response from Phillip's students. Original artefacts have the power of invoking 'reality':

Reality. Reality ... This is the real thing. It was made in the 1790s. This is a capital amputation saw. Look at the grip. Look at what is said inside the medical case. How do you think they would have used it? How many double strokes do you think I could use to take off a femur?

They say, 'This is real?' 'It actually is, look at the teeth on the saw. They're blunted from sawing through femur.' That's high impact. That's high impact when you ... have ... objects that were actually there. Again, in a museum, you can say, 'That's the real thing.' I say, 'Well, it's not pretend. It's not make believe. This is actually real.' It deeply connects people.

However 'real' the object is, contextual information and an imaginative leap is still required for students to connect the objects to a person, place and event in time. The surgeon's saw is an example of history given existential form: the past made present and imaginative thought made vivid by the sensory engagement. Phillip uses it to tell a powerful, confronting story:

The teeth are blunt on it. It was actually used... a fleeting insight into ... the human condition of actually being secured to a table and somebody cutting down to the bone and trying to remove your leg ... to save another person's life. The object tells a very powerful story, even though the user is long gone.

⁶³ Psychometry was the invention of Joseph Rhodes Buchanan in the mid-19th century and asserted that material things have an energy field. They absorb the spirit of the maker/user/owner/society and this energy can be psychically read. Thus the 'past is entombed within the present' in the form of objects; objects can thus be used to explore the history of man (Buchanan, 1893, p. 73).

Phillip's affective reaction to 'things' is suggestive of the vital materialist notion of objects as actants, and Bennett's (2011, 2012) assertion that people have varying levels of sensitivities to things.⁶⁴ There is a strong suggestion in Phillip's encounter in the antique store of the agency of objects, a notion reinforced by George's observation of the impact of museum objects on history teachers: 'It was almost like they [the objects on display] were calling out'.

This is phenomena was already observed in other contexts of this research, such as the teacher focus group/object 'speed-dating' activity (see Section 7.4.1), with re-enactors' relationships with things (see Section 6.7) and in teachers' classroom experiences. Kerry uses the word 'resonate' to suggest that people (students and teachers) and things are attuned⁶⁵ to each other:

I think objects have more power than we give them credit for. It is interesting ... not every student reacts to the same artefact the same way. I have kids gravitate to different ones at different times, and I find that really interesting because I think every artefact has agency, and I think every artefact has validity, but I don't think everyone will respond to it in the same way, and I don't think that changes its validity or its agency. ... your personal response is shaped by your personal context or your personal interest ... Some of the stuff I have doesn't particularly interest me. I don't really care about a bag of shrapnel, but the boys love it ... I try to collect things ... personally interesting to me, interesting to others. I look for things that I think other people would resonate with.

An important part of the agency of objects is their affective 'thing-power'; that is, 'the(ir) curious ability of inanimate objects to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle' (Bennett, 2009, p. 6). The authenticity of the real, and the possibility of making an empathetic connection, is one of the appeals for teachers in employing objects and artefacts in history pedagogy.

Megan's original Gallipoli diary has the affective power to trigger the 'historical sensation' and move an audience that normally do not 'give a rat's about Australian History'. Robinson (2010) identifies the affective impact of original archival sources, which derives from the materiality of the thing as much as the words within. She observes that 'being able to "touch", "peer into" and "savour" the "perfume" of archival documents is a powerful affective experience' (Robinson, 2010, p. 504). This has epistemological consequences for historical consciousness: 'the feeling of oneself to be in direct connection, physical contact with "the past" at the same time as being unavoidably aware of its absence' (Robinson, 2010, p. 504). The powerful

⁶⁴See also Luhrmann's use of the TAS (Tellegen Absorption Scale) – used as a marker of a predisposition to imaginative, all encompassing engagement – 'the capacity to lose yourself' (Luhrmann 2012, p.199)

⁶⁵ Re-enactors in this study have spoken about how they 'tune' into the mind of the historical actors through the use of objects. See Sections 5.6.1 and 6.7.

corporeal component of encountering the materiality of original source documents engenders not only a sense of connection, but a fundamentally affective experience—to touch is to be touched (Robinson, 2010). What Robinson argues as true for the materiality of a written archive, is equally true for the non-written archive, and is evident in the capacity of historical relics to trigger the ‘historical sensation’.

Thus, Megan’s Gallipoli diary draws its affective thing-power from both its materiality as a ‘real’ object (with a connection to the past and a person with existential concreteness) *and* because the words within tell a story made more poignant and present by the material testimony of the object itself. She has used transcriptions of the contents of the Gallipoli diary, but observes that it does not have the same impact as when used *with* the artefact itself:

This was the actual diary that was written by the soldier and they would get to look at it ... I think that, because it was connected to an actual person, ... the person has physically held that and written in it, I think that that perhaps made it a bit more real for them.

Extracts in textbooks—digital/print facsimiles—‘just do not cut it’ (Robinson, 2010, p. 509) in the same way as the physicality of an original archival source. The textbook extract/reproduction, which is digitised, sanitised, pre-digested, edited, processed and truncated, loses the affective power that an original object acquires from its material ‘presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be’ (Benjamin as cited in Robinson, 2010, p. 509).

The affective punch of the materiality of Megan’s Gallipoli diary, although aided by the cultural significance of the ANZAC mystique, is only fully realised when she weaves a story around, and through, the object:

I think [they]... were really moved by what they were reading. I mean, the story was tragic. This young man lost his life ... at Gallipoli ... the ... whole drama and tragedy behind it ... The more personal you can make it, the better... I think it does make it more real ... because you can connect it to an actual person. I think that's why that diary worked so well ... it had a personal connection to a former student from the school as well. It just made it all the more real for them

While an object can be used to tell its own affect-laced story, it is equally a blank slate upon which others can bring, imprint and store stories, memories and emotions of their own. This is precisely what one focus group teacher does with some objects she encounters:

If I see something that reminds me of something that’s at my grandmother’s house ... I think ‘My grandmother had that cup’, then I would buy that cup and then it actually ends up becoming ... not the cup that I bought from there, its grandma’s cup.

The cup is transformed into ‘grandma’s cup’ and with it comes the attachment, connection and affective ‘thing-power’ of the original. The piece of china, in an analogous throw to JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter*, becomes a ‘pensieve’—an object to store (and retrieve) life experiences and memories. The use of objects as places to attach or store information has been articulated as the practice of distributive cognition or the ‘extended mind’ (Clark & Chalmers, 1998; Hutchins, 1995; Tollefsen & Dale, 2018). Material culture and embodied experience is a repository of distributed cognition and affect at both individual and collective levels; a place where individual and collective memory, along with (the often mythical) elements of history, meet and become porous (Schneider, 2011).

The web of affect teachers weave through objects can be found in the manner they select and deploy assemblages to tell stories. The context that is woven around one object can also shape the affective response to other objects. This was experienced by the teachers in the focus group/object workshop. Whereas the German World War II objects attracted their fair share of initial teacher attention, handling and discussion, after the affective experience with the infant Holocaust shoe in the *Ordinary Things* presentation, teachers commented how this made them reluctant to handle any of the German artefacts on display thereafter. It demonstrated how the contextualisation and empathetic connection with one object shapes the affective and cognitive reception of other artefacts. This notion is explored in vital materialism where the thing-power of objects work as ‘actants’ through assemblages as a form of distributive agency (Bennett, 2009).

Another dimension of objects as affective agents unfolds in the way teachers, students and objects are transformed through their usage in the classroom; they acquire and assert new meanings and stories, memories and affective entanglements. When teachers in the study were asked to recount their ‘most successful lesson with an object or artefact’, it was clear that the object’s noteworthy use for learning added fresh layers in the affective relationship between ‘thing’ and educator. Attached to the objects were memories of affective engagement that had transpired. Through the object, the teacher relived and re-enacted the lesson. Consequently, the teaching objects acquired a new affective chapter (with power of its distributive agency) through transformed biographies, imbrued with the positive memories and emotions from use in teaching practice.

Teachers in the study were largely unfamiliar with the Spinozan notion (see Section 2.5) of the affective agency of bodies that underpin the vital materialist perspective. Yet they were aware

the affective power of things to ‘move’ them and their students, and consciously cultivated this dimension of thing-power. George declares that:

There's an almost tangible presence that some objects have ... there are some ancient objects that have their own presence and to some extent they demand attention from you. Whether it's because they're beautiful or whether they're intriguing or mysterious.

He is aware that he is making a risky and contentious—in his own words, ‘New Age-ish’ and ‘Atlantean’—observation. Yet, he has witnessed how objects change teachers’ behaviour. His explanation sits comfortably within the Gellian model of object agency,⁶⁶ yet he is prepared to acknowledge that some other ‘New Age-ish’ intangible is also at work in the affective thing-power of objects. Vital materialist theory (see Section 2.7.2) explains the phenomenon that George and other teachers had experienced in their pedagogic practice centred on objects. However, the overwhelming majority of teachers in the study were very cautious about attributing any level of agency or shared agency with the objects and artefacts—especially those with an archaeological background—and were more comfortable keeping objects and artefacts at the safe cognitive distance of scientific analysis.

Overall, the kind of agency teachers in this study conceded to objects was limited to their capacity to stimulate inquiry, interest, connection and a sense of the presence of the past. While Phillip calls them a ‘three-dimensional provocation’ for learning, Cheryl is more moderate:

I think certainly they prompt us don't they? I mean you see something and you're automatically thinking, ‘What is this for?’ Or whatever it is. I don't know whether or not that gives an agency, I'm not sure to be honest, I think that's a really complicated question. I guess to some extent though because inherently what they are is going to make us think something about them.

9.2.4 Teacher talk: The praxis of cultivating affect for empathy with objects/artefacts in praxis

Chapters 7 and 8 examined teacher use of objects as a tool for engagement, an aid to memory and recall, for fostering a sense of ‘connectedness’ with the past and as a mechanism for perspective-taking and *ekstasis*. Teachers in the study saw objects and artefacts as valuable tools to teach the important (and difficult) skill of empathy.

⁶⁶ The Gellian view that objects have agency to affect human minds and thus provoke thought, emotion and action (see Section 2.3.4.1).

In the context of using objects in teaching history, George explains the importance of empathy:

If you go back to Shemilt's ... and Ashby and Lee's research, ... empathy, this getting inside their heads is the hardest and it takes the longest (to teach) ... But ... if we're ... giving them the opportunity to experience it, then that's going to accelerate their ability to develop that sort of awareness.

For George, objects and artefacts are tools for achieving this and with it he readily employs affect:

Some people might say it's a bit too sentimental, maudlin, whatever. I think human emotion should be a part of what we do.

Kerry also thinks it is important that affect is part of what is used in haptic history:

I think narrative and sensory exploration and emotion while historians tend to like to think we don't use those things, we do, where we're all passionate about the things, We're passionate about because there's some connection there. And I think that kids need to see that.

Kerry also harnesses affect as a learning experience and employs it in unexpected ways. For example, to teach the concept of archaeology as difficult, painstaking work, she gets her students to have an emotional experience first:

We do the mosaic activity, ... I cut it into impossibly tiny pieces ... they were furious with me, but I wanted them to have that emotional experience of how frustrating it was to be an archaeologist ... I don't think they would have understood that as well if I had just ... told them.

Hattie (2009) notes the importance of passion and emotion in learning—the thrills and the frustrations. Kerry makes use of this emotion to energise learning:

I like making them frustrated ... because then they'll engage in much more active discussion, and it allows for a lot more whole-class engagement.

Affect can also be a driver for teaching new concepts. Kerry explains how she reframed the meaning of Nazi anti-Semitic posters (in use in her classroom as part of a Year 12 modern history unit) to teach a Year 10 topic and get a personal connection and empathic response:

I have ... a couple of Indigenous kids, and I said, 'Imagine if instead of saying that Jew, that says Aboriginal,' and that opened up a whole different discussion.

I find that I can teach difficult concepts quite easily with hands on things in a much quicker, less confusing manner than I would've done if I tried to explain it with PowerPoints and textbooks.

Michelle and Lachlan likewise harness genuine student feeling elicited in an immersion exercise to drive discussion and reflection: the simulated experience was enlistment in World War I:

Groups that came in at the beginning of the day were following 1914 enlistment standards. But the ones later on in the day were 1916 enlistment standards ... that alone created some debate ... kids in the beginning of the day weren't allowed to ... (be enlisted) because of their height, and yet these ones that came at the end of the day (were enlisted) ... It engaged some genuine discussion about how unfair they felt. And that's the great thing about this. When they engage, there's nothing artificial. They're genuinely feeling that way.

For Michelle and Lachlan, the use of period objects completed the empathetic experience and historical consciousness:

And even this, the aspect of using a quill and ink. That alone, and it doesn't need to be these big things that switch them, that make them feel that sort of different. It's little incidentals that make them feel a different time.

In a manner similar to Cheryl's perspective-changing use of a World War I helmet (see Section 8.3), Michael finds that using objects aids imagination and empathy:

Their ability to empathise with a slave ship (experience) was negligible ... but once I could put stuff on them and then pose problems to them, and make them do things that are a little uncomfortable ... they started to click, to appreciate how to interpret somebody else's experience.

The selection of object is an important element cultivating affective impact. Personal, intimate items need to be carefully contextualised and woven into a narrative for affective impact to be realised. Questions need to be used strategically, deployed to help students make the perspective shift for empathy. Liam has an item that has an enormous affective impact on his students. First, he contextualises the object's 'specialness'; it is a personal thing, an expensive gift to a soldier at the front in World War I and it is real:

One of the artefacts ... is a personal shaving kit with a little silver handled razor and it's a velvet lined little silver case that would have been, in its time, a real expensive gift. It would have been a really posh present to send, but also small enough to post.

Next, Liam adds the context of its recovery, the 'blue clay' present on the artefact connects it to time, place and human tragedy:

And again that was found in the trench, it's still got some of the blue Flanders clay on it from about 1916.

Liam weaves an imaginative understanding of the human relationships this object connotes:

We always make a point of talking to kids about, ‘Look, you know, this would have been a really expensive present, this was a big deal. This would have been someone’s Christmas present sent over by a wife, a mother, parents, family would have got together to buy one of these and send it over ‘cause it was quite a luxury sort of gift.’

There are layers to explore in this object: the choice to gift a razor could imply the recipient was youthful, for whom shaving was still new and novel; the expense of the gift suggests the arrival of a special age or for a special occasion. The final affective layer is delivered by the suggestion that the joy felt by the recipient may well have been cut short by his death in the trenches: ‘And here it is, only one of the razors has been used out of the pack’ (Liam).

Liam describes the empathetic impact in encouraging his students to make connections to their own experience of gifts from their parents and connection to a ‘real life’ person that makes it ‘a big deal’:

‘Think about the things that your parents would send you.’ It’s that real connection with a real life person. We don’t know who owned it ... but it’s a big deal.

This is the force of the tangible and poignant power of objects. Using objects and artefacts to trigger an affective response from students is the everyday use of ‘the historical sensation’ to make learning about and connecting to history, a powerful, memorable and transformative learning experience.

9.3 The Somatic Power of Things

Chapter 6 noted the importance teachers ascribed to the physical and tactile nature of objects and artefacts and how this gives history ‘realness’ and tangibility. A whole new sense of the realness of history occurs when somatic experience is brought into play. In recognising the poly-vocality of the senses (Denney, 2011), and that we think with and through our bodies (Robinson, 2011) leads to consideration of how the experience of the historical object or artefact ‘in use’⁶⁷ is a factor in understanding the teacher praxis of haptic history.

Disciplinary history’s suspicion of the place of personalised experience in the construction of historical knowledge has been well articulated (Agnew, 2007; see also Section 9.2). The notion of Cartesian mind–body duality, which views the senses as misleading and deceptive, continues

⁶⁷ In his essay, ‘The Thing’, Heidegger (2001, p. 169) argues that the true nature of the thing is only revealed in its use.

to have currency within professional history. History and its teaching is reserved as an activity of the head where hands (haptics) and hearts (affect) must be kept at arm's length.

Nonetheless, driven by the engagement imperative, history teachers seek out new and novel ways to connect students to the past, and one of these is by having the past come alive by making it present, 'real' and exciting through the first-hand, multi-sensory and embodied experience of things-in-use. The experience might be engaging and fun, but what transforms the experiential into historical thinking is the addition of the reflexive step. Teachers must have their students critically reflect on the meaning of the experience for their understanding of the past, for it to constitute historical thinking and historical consciousness.

9.3.1 Teacher talk: Embodied history

Teachers in this study were aware of how the sheer physicality of an embodied experience can provide new insights into history. An experience of the strictures of time, place and technology that accompanies the use of objects and the physicality of their settings, provides a somatic and sensory awareness of the past as being different to the present. Historical consciousness in haptic history, experienced first with and through the body's encounter with the materiality of the past, can be intense, rich and diverse when the cognitive is engaged with the somatic and affective.

Giles cites an exercise in both experimental archaeology and re-enactment when a 'body double' for Richard III—Dominic Smeede, who has a case of scoliosis interchangeable with that of Richard III—demonstrated a physiological understanding of the medieval monarch through and with 15th century armour (Johnstone, 2014). It illustrated how embodied experience produced valid historical knowledge that tests and contests the narratives from the past based on written evidence alone. Mark gets his students to experience something similar when he demonstrates the relative military prowess (and thus status) of a medieval knight and archer by allowing students to shoot real arrows at him while advancing in full plate armour (see Figure 9.1).

Mark knows the power of armour to change his own 'state':

I find when I put my helmet on, I'm very nervous. But when I put the face shield down, it's business time, I focus, I'm not nervous anymore.

and extends that understanding in an embodied manner when he gets his students to try on his medieval suit of plate armour:

When we're talking about a knight being the tank of the mediaeval day, when they put the armour on, they realise that they are encased steel, they quite literally are in a tank (Mark).



Figure 9.1: Mark allows students to shoot arrows at him when in full medieval armour.

Some historical insights from embodied experience work at a collective level; an embodied experience of bodies. Giles explains how one of his sport history teacher colleagues uses his ‘body smarts’ to teach the history of warfare. In this case, the object-in-use is not an external thing, but the body as an object in itself:

One of my other colleagues with the year sevens forms them up into a testudo and using the rugby scrum machines and ... He's a rugby coach ... He splits them in half, and so he's got one group as a hoplite phalanx, and another as the testudo, and... it demonstrates, ‘... his is what happens when a Greek and Roman army clash.’ ... that class is then able to see, ‘Oh, so this is why certain things happen on a battlefield.’

As a athletic history teacher, Mark⁶⁸ likewise uses a kinaesthetic approach to teaching history by ‘doing’. He uses basic bio-mechanics of the human form to re-enact human movement from the past, in the present. The example he gives is the boys in his Year 8 class who used their bodies collectively to learn about medieval dance. It began in a medieval immersion day when the one of the historical re-enactors reframed their 21st century thinking about the role of dance and movement by providing a medieval perspective:

⁶⁸ Mark has twin teaching methods—physical education and history—in his teaching degree.

The minstrel told them ... that dance in mediaeval [period] is more for the men than women. More like a job interview If you're a good dancer, you can remember things, you're hip, fit, healthy.

Over the subsequent weeks a handful of boys took on the challenge to learn medieval dance first as a cognitive exercise and then as a bodily one:

They had to research it ... They had to find the dance, they had to find the music. They had to learn it and they had to teach it. ... those boys who taught it really enjoyed it. Then the boys they taught [it to] enjoyed it (... the girls were all away playing union) and the next lesson... (all of the) boys (in the) class were able to teach the girls ... I had a prac teacher in that lesson. He was amazed .

Mark reflects on this student-centred, peer-taught, haptic learning of history:

I had nothing to do with those lessons... They did it. That's probably one of the light bulb moments that this [haptic history] works.

Drawing on her English method training, Kerry also experiments in putting the whole body into the history learning frame to get personal/individual responses in her Holocaust Museum Project (see Section 9.4.2).

The embodied haptic history learning experience can involve the whole self and all the senses, or just one or two sensory modes. In Phillip's student exploration and experimentation with Indigenous artefacts and technology, touch and weight are part of the conceptual and physical understandings. He borrows a learning concept from Mathematics, 'hefting':

The maths syllabus. They talk about hefting. You got to be heft an object ... when they're learning ... about kilograms and other measures of weight, you need to heft this object and hold it to try to get a sense of how heavy it is ... the weight of an object can actually predispose their thinking, and guide them in certain ways in relation to who would have used an object, how it would have been used as well, so on.

Phillip explains how hefting is fundamental to the way he uses Aboriginal artefacts with local Indigenous students:

Having the Aboriginal students out here, we're very hands-on with it, with the boomerangs. We actually went out there and we were throwing them and actually talking about. ... saying, 'Well, how do you think a Dharawal warrior would have used a boomerang?'

Is it strength or is it skill? It's skill. How do you throw it? ... They actually were able to construct that understanding by exploring the application of objects, by throwing it.

In this sense the very form of the object, its materialism, shape, weight and design, as a 'minded-object' (Knappett, 2005) exercises a form of co-agency with its users in the manner it guides and directs student bodies (see Figure 9.2). The (re)performance of throwing these artefacts, fire mirror neurones and stimulate kinaesthetic imagination and empathy. The bodily interface with

indigenous artefacts also invited reflective comparison between the different 'habitus' of the 21st century student and the pre-contact Australians.



Figure 9.2: A student 'hefting' an indigenous spear at Kamay EEC

Similarly, Michelle and Lachlan talk about the importance the weight and touch of an object. They compare seeing the object being used on the screen and actually experiencing it in use:

We've got great movies that have been made, but that's a screen, it's a box on a wall. When you actually reach out and touch that object, that's a different thing.

When you pull out a real fake Mills grenade, and say to the kids, 'Right, if I pull this pin,' and you see kids jump. And you say... 'It is, it's okay. Because it's deactivated.' But that is what it looks like ... when you see a guy in a movie or a film throw this thing, this is it. They can feel the weight of it in their hands:

I think that's a huge part. It's not just being able to see the object, but it is that whole new element of touch. Weight. The weight of it. The dimensions of it. The smell of certain objects.

It does something more, and enhances knowledge ... particularly, I believe, memory recall so much more than just learning about it in a very two dimensional form.

9.3.2 Teacher talk: Beyond touch

Teachers like Lachlan and Michelle use weight, touch and even smell to explore history with objects and artefacts. In his Experimental Archaeology Club, Liam explores the sense of taste by doing experimental ‘gastro-archaeology’:

We got the kids researching mediaeval recipes and recipe books and we basically played Heston Blumenthal in the kitchen for a term ... after school. ... we were looking for a really physical experience of history and connecting food with history. ...there wasn't the emotional response, apart from sometimes a bit of disgust, but ... (we had) a totally different purpose. We wanted them to taste history and to experience history in that completely different sensory way. ... (We tried) really hard to follow the recipes as much as we could and figure them out so that we could say, ‘Look, this is what Carthage porridge tasted like. This was a really popular breakfast meal following the Fall of Carthage ...

The gastronomic sensation is accompanied by historical thinking. This reflective component moves the experience from a sensation to an *historical sensation*:

We talked about how ideas and food and tastes then spread with conquest, with trade, with all those sort of things. They got a kind of fairly abstract understanding of history in that sense, but also a really concrete understanding, and this is what it tasted like.

Food and taste was also part of the experience for Lachlan and Michelle’s World War I immersion day. Universals of the human condition—basic needs like food, clothing, warmth and shelter—are points of access between people in the present and people in history. Food from a distant place in time, and with it the gusto-olfactory senses, is familiar yet foreign, and can stimulate historical consciousness. Lachlan and Michelle finish one of their immersion days with a World War I meal. The sense of the past being ‘different’ is engendered by the cooking on open fires, the cooking utensils, brown paper wrappers and the taste of a period meal—the ‘full experience’ of sights, sounds, smells and taste:

The copper boiler ... we did cross-curricula. Hospitality VET created Maconochie's stew, the first world war dish, and they brought that over in big, stainless steel vats.... The kids line(d) up with their historic cups, 100 deep ... then we had ... fruitcake... the kids thought it was the bee's knees. It was wrapped in brown paper ... and ... brown paper wrapped ANZAC biscuits It's a fire, it's a copper pot, they haven't seen it before.... they're going, ‘So, can we have a cup of tea?’ ... for these kids, it was the full experience. They wanted to try the stew, ... They'd just been ... working the trenches, so it was all that hands-on, tactile experience for them...

For Lachlan, this kind of immersive, experiential interaction with a simulation of the past has two significant benefits: student engagement and improved retention. The material is engaged multimodally and this, together with an affective experience, contributes to classroom interest (Bergin, 1999; Schiefele, 1991), memory and recall (Tyng et.al., 2017).

Experimental archaeology can also use taste, smell, texture and weight to teach abstract concepts in unexpected ways. In my own practice, in the ‘Fish Mummy’ experiment, students test out Ancient Egyptian mummification techniques on a fish (*‘Troutenkahmun’*). They are introduced to the concept of ‘desiccation’ as a preservation technique by comparing dried fruit and fresh fruit. Students use touch, sight and taste (they eat the fruit) to make predictions about what will happen to the weight, colour, texture and size of the fresh fish in the process of mummification, and then do the experiment. In the assessment that follows, students access their personal experience of mummification as a technique with universal success.

Needless to say, not all the experiential or embodied activities with, or through, objects result in historical thinking. Often the use of objects and artefacts are for fun, play and novelty, and do not result in significant historical thinking. Drew provides an example he calls the ‘Tobruk gift’. Two student volunteers dress up in World War II kit—one Australia, the other German (North Afrika Korps)—and on hot afternoon race each other across the school quadrangle. Time off to ‘play’ with objects and artefacts is a healthy thing, it satisfies curiosity and may well spark ongoing interest in the study of history.

Michael demonstrates how he uses written sources *in combination* with embodied experience through objects and artefacts to trigger, what he calls, cognitive ‘confusion’ in his students. The materiality of the World War I uniforms and kit, together with an embodied experience of wearing it is fundamental for provoking a ‘distracted mode of engagement’ (Landsberg, 2015) or cognitive dissonance. Michael’s observation that his students are experiencing ‘cognitive dissonance’ flags to him that his students are developing an awareness of the past as a ‘foreign country’—a sure sign of historical consciousness:

We’re talking 14, 15 year-old kids here. ... they had read about the ways that soldiers could be fined, or put on a charge, for various breaks of the military code. They thought that was absolutely ludicrous ... more ludicrous once they wore the uniforms ... Then, once they felt the weight of some of the equipment, the idea of scrambling out of a trench and running in it was absolutely alien to them. In many ways, it confused them. The good thing about that confusion is that they were experiencing ... trying to confront something that happened 100 years ago... trying to reconcile their ... 21st century perspective of the world, versus ... a late 19th, early 20th century perspective ... they just couldn’t get. In many ways, it helped them to understand that 100 years ago is actually a really long time ago. Everything is physically different, everything’s made out of different stuff, everything ... (it) was really reinforced by that hands on experience.

In the follow-up written activity, students' physical experience with objects was central to allowing them to identify the past as being different to the present and reflect that in the way they wrote a letter as a soldier to their parents back home. Michael explained to them:

Letters to your parents would be quite formal in character (and) they were able to go, 'Oh yeah. Because they thought really different.' That wasn't something I had to feed them. ... they actually knew that they didn't really understand 100 years ago ... It is this country, but in many ways it's a very foreign country to them.

The hands on experience of being able to touch things, wear things, feel things, and then in one student's case, try to eat biscuit harder than rocks definitely got (them) the idea that history was a very different world. That the past is a very different world from what it is today.

Another kid said, 'So this is like a foreign country from Australia. It can't be Australia.' Without knowing ... he actually quoted David Lowenthal in that.

The auditory can be a featured sense in the embodied and immersive experience. Kerry's students made effect use of sound in her Holocaust Memorial Museum Project (see Section 9.4.2) as did Giles in his use of music as part of his classroom recreation of 'Café Zimmerman', where the music of Bach's Coffee Cantata became the portal through which students experienced the sounds of 17th century Europe. Chapter 2 noted how Collingwood himself toyed with the possibility of 'hearing' the past using the Early Music Revival movement as a means of somatically re-enacting the past.

Somatic reflexivity is an awareness that, no matter how authentic efforts are made to replicate sensory experiences of the past, it is impossible for people in the present to experience them in exactly the same way as people did in the past. Historical actors experienced their world differently because culture and experience guaranteed that their senses were attuned differently to our own (Bowen, 2010; Classen, 2012). The kind of sensory and embodied immersion experienced through the use of material culture in school is, compared with that of historical re-enactors/living historians, at best superficial. Nonetheless 'the almost, note quite' (Schneider, 2011) authentic somatic experience creates an opportunity for engendering student awareness of the 'otherness' of the past, an element essential for historical consciousness.

Giles speculates on why the physical and embodied modes of experiencing and exploring the past have been resisted by academic history. To go beyond the cognitive is to invite ways of producing historical knowledge that are far more problematic. Keeping history as an exclusively cognitive exercise, centred on written text, is neat and manageable:

There a degree to which people consider the possibilities of the incorporation of the physical into the history and say, ‘This is just going to explode the parameters, and therefore it's unmanageable’ ... If I ... just (explain) the cause of the first world based on documents, it is manageable, it is finite, it has limits that are accessible to the teacher and to the student.

Giles sees a bigger issue for history and its pedagogy:

But that then raises the question of do we want ... A broader discipline?... Do we want history to be unfathomable, to be immeasurable? Or do we want it to be ... Neat and finite and manageable? Do we want depth or breadth in our understanding of this subject? And if so, do we keep it organic, and therefore infinite? Or do we keep it inorganic and limited?

Giles acknowledges how history in its broadest sense is ‘organic’, ‘unfathomable’ and ‘immeasurable’. This is the ‘void’ of history that Robinson (2010, p. 519) identifies as ‘a maddening paradox, (where) concrete presence conveys unfathomable absence. ... (an) irresolvable tension which drives the historical discipline and which determines its affective character’.

It seems teachers teeter on the ‘void’ when, in the pursuit of their goal of cultivating student engagement, connection and relevance, they draw on the affective and somatic in their praxis of haptic history. Yet, this is precisely the thrill and excitement of a sense of the immediacy and palpability of the past that they impart through their use of material culture in their teaching practice.

9.4 Holistic Case Studies

The final section of this chapter uses two case studies to demonstrate how teachers use material culture to work holistically, synergistically and organically across the three domains of history—head, hands and hearts—and deliver extraordinary exempla of history pedagogic praxis. Insights from these case studies provide data for the use of materiality to evolve the signature pedagogy of history.

Initially, seven case studies of teacher haptic history practice were developed from teacher interview data. For reasons of space, only two have been chosen. They demonstrate two contrasting approaches: the first is a series of lessons built around an assemblage of original artefacts, and the second is a unit of work that required students make and use objects. Both case studies demonstrate how teachers work across the domains of ‘head, hands and hearts’. In addition to the seven case studies, many ‘mini-case study vignettes’ appear throughout this

dissertation to illustrate haptic history at work. Table 9.1 summaries the seven full case studies that were developed:

Table 9.1: Overview of case studies developed from the teacher interview data

Teacher	Object(s)	Location
George	Gott Mit Uns Belt & WWI postcards	Section 9.4.1
Kerry	Holocaust Museum Objects	Section 9.4.2
Giles	Lithgow Slag	Appendix G.1
Megan	Soldier's/ Gallipoli Diary	Sections, 7.7 & 9.2.3
Liam	World War I trench whistle & watch	Appendix G.2
Phillip	Cook's Cannon & Surgeon's Saw	Section 9.2.3 & Appendix G.3
Lachlan & Michelle	World War I Immersion Days	Section 9.3.2 & Appendix G.4

9.4.1 Case Study: George and the Gott Mit Uns belt and postcards

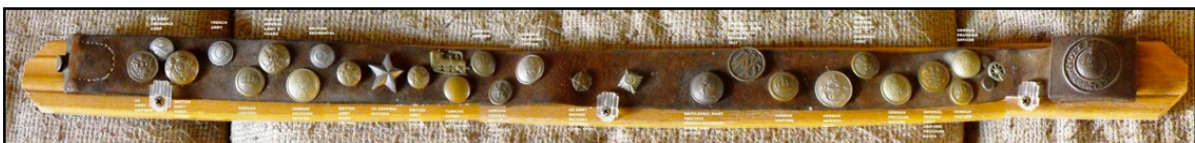


Figure 9.3: An example of a Gott Mit Uns 'hate belt'

George's 'Gott Mit Uns' belt, postcards and medals are a powerful assemblage of artefacts. Their nature as an assemblage is a central element in their success and they also have a touch of the 'ANZAC' mystique (even though the items belong to George's *English* grandfather). They give the past existential 'presence' both by their materiality and by the vicarious connection to the past in the form of the teacher who is a living link to the historical actor under study (Arthur, George's grandfather).

George's assemblage is used to engender and build sustained, disciplined inquiry *and* sustained affect. The questioning technique is Socratic and the climax of the investigation employs a powerful affective punch as a 'perspective jolt'. This has an enormous transformative impact on students and teacher alike. It is an illustration of the 'historical sensation' experienced in a classroom setting. In the expert hands of George, haptic history becomes reflective, 'tangible and poignant'; it engages 'head, hands and heart' with remarkable impact.

George's objects are an extended assemblage. They include his grandfather Arthur's 'Got Mit Uns' belt, service medals, Dead Man's Penny, original photos and various written sources, including a bible, postcards sent from France by Arthur during his war service and service records. Although a number of the sources might be considered 'written', the materiality of the original item on which the writing appears has all the affective power of an archival, original source (Robinson, 2010; see also the discussion of the Gallipoli diary in Section 9.3.2).

In the 'Gott Mit Uns' belt lessons, George deploys the assemblage using a slow release method, to build up an extended narrative of World War I through the life experience of one man, Arthur. Students construct a narrative that follows a World War I story that concludes the death of Arthur in Belgium 1917 and its impact on his family and friends. The slow release method helps students build a narrative and chronology of events around Arthur and builds to an affective climax centred on his final postcard home. The perspective jolt is delivered through an embodied experience of the hate belt that reveals layers of meaning and significance hitherto hidden in the artefact.

The lesson series begins with teacher-led Socratic inquiry for artefact analysis. In this stage of the lesson the cognitive domain is dominant. The artefacts are interrogated, questioned and 'sourced'; students use forensic analysis to collect data from the objects—names, dates, places, events—they record these and employ research for contextual understanding. The objects are sequenced into a chronology that provides the basic narrative. It is the descriptive 'what' that is being established at this point in the investigation of the objects.

At this stage, George begins to lay the ground work for affect and empathy. He employs the objects in a manner to build connection between the students and Arthur. They know what he looks like and intimate family details; relationships become evident through stories from the front and from home interwoven with the source material. This is the 'skin and hair' detail technique (Landsberg, 2015, p. 31) that makes George's grandfather 'come alive' for students.

George's has an explicit affective purpose; he uses the postcards to focus on emotions and states and personalises student connection to the past. Through Arthur's postcards George wants the students to get a sense of the changing psychological and emotional profile of his grandfather and an understanding of the meta-events behind it:

I've 25-40 postcards that he sent back embroidered ones... they've got writing on the back of them. I put them in front of the kids and say, 'Okay, you've got the 1916

ones, you've got the 1917 ones. What's his state of mind?' Once he's chosen that postcard to his children, 'Remember Your Daddy,' what's the psychological?

Students get a sense of the growing fatalism of Arthur—from both the choice of postcards and the evolving nature of what is written on them. The psychology behind 'Remember Your Daddy' (sent home shortly before he was killed at Passchendaele) is clear for students; Arthur does not expect to come home to his children. His morose and depressed state is affirmed when George slowly releases, as 'breaking news' one of Arthur's photographs showing all his mates from Ypres; the reverse reads, in Arthur's hand, 'All dead'.

For impact, George crafts a further an affective connection between his students and his grandfather. He himself is an authentic vicarious 'living link' between his students and Arthur. The materiality offered by the original artefacts is another factor in making Arthur real, present and immediate for the students. However, what clinches the affective connection is that, in reading Arthur's postcards, the students get close to him. They share in his private and intimate thoughts and emotions; they get to know his wife and children by name and sight and learn his 'pet' names for his small children; they study the messages he left for his children to read in the wake of his death. In sharing these intimate details they get to 'know' Arthur and develop a concern for him. This is affect at the level of intense, personal, intimacy. This is not just a story. For students, the materiality of the objects, handled and experienced first-hand makes it real and authentic—this is history, poignant and palpable.

Landsberg's analysis of the techniques film-makers employ to get 'affective engagement', provides some insight into what is happening with George's use of objects for an empathetic connection between his students and his grandfather. In film the director employs techniques to get the audience to 'identify' with a character or their point of view. George achieves something similar with the sense of 'closeness' and the relationship his students get privileging them with Arthur's intimate moments with his family and friends. These details flesh out the humanity of this soldier: a thinking, feeling man. Arthur begins to matter to them; they are invested in what happens to him. The mimetic response, explored in cinematic spectatorship theory (Landsberg, 2015) and as kinaesthetic imagination and empathy (Magelssen, 2014) looms.

However over-identification with an historical actor is anathema to historical consciousness (Lee, 1984; Landsberg, 2015) and sympathy, not empathy, can result. George must carefully manage the familiarity and emotional proximity the artefacts proffer. He regulates this through

strategic questioning and the ‘perspective jolt’, which returns the students to their own bodies, their own century and, into historical consciousness. The tool for the ‘jolt’ is George’s most powerful artefact—the ‘Gott Mit Uns’ belt—and he is deeply entangled with it: ‘It’s a *personal* object. It’s a World War I ‘Gott Mit Uns’ belt’ (George).

George’s earliest encounters with it was as a child with no historical consciousness or appreciation of its historical and familial significance:

As a kid I used to sneak into the wardrobe and get the belt out and I’d wear it around the house playing cowboys and Indians sort of thing which is interesting because now ... I take it to schools.

The object, and its biography has changed and grown with George the boy, the man and the teacher. His deep entanglement occurs at many levels and reflects the materialist theory on how material culture provides a mirror by which members of society come to understand themselves (Miller, 2010). The belt’s sticky web catches George’s childhood memory and his familial connection to a grandparent he never met. It evolves when George, the historian, becomes aware of the historical significance of the object, and in the way it connects his personal story to the meta-narrative of World War I. And, finally, it catches the students he teaches.⁶⁹ This artefact currently entangles its teacher and students in a ‘head, hands and hearts’ experience that will deliver them a ‘historical sensation’.

The ‘Gott Mit Uns’ (translating as ‘God With Us’) belt was so-named because it was the words on the belt buckle of World War I German soldiers. Among the Allies it was called a ‘hate belt’ because it was a ‘death souvenir’, taken as a trophy from dead soldiers and thereafter added to with buttons and insignia from other dead enemies. As a child, George had no historical awareness of what he was wearing and stories about the past it carried.

As a history teacher, George now uses the belt with full awareness of its historical meaning and impact with his students. After telling the story of Arthur through his things, and using his postcards to build affect, intimacy and empathy for his grandfather, George brings the ‘hate belt’ into play. This gives his students a massive perspective jolt that interrupts the possibility of ‘over-identification’ with Arthur and triggers historical thinking and consciousness:

‘Gott Mit Uns’ belt. Right?... It’s covered with badges. Right? It’s a war crime. My grandfather committed a war crime. He either retrieved or collected something from dead soldiers. The badges on the belt (are) British, German, French, at least one might

⁶⁹ The interface between private lives and public history drives popular history (Clark, 2016b).

be Russian. These badges all had currency in the trenches. They'd swap them and so on. He sent it back to England in 1917 and he was killed a couple of months later.

There's a second perspective jolt about to be launched on the unsuspecting students, the impact of which will be amplified by embodied experience and kinaesthetic empathy. It is only when the 'hate' belt is put on a student that a new, and shocking, layer hidden in the nature of the item is revealed:

Then I bring out the belt. I have to choose a really small girl in the class to put it on because it no longer fits around my waist and it would have originally been worn over a tunic and possibly over a great coat. The only possibility is it's a boy soldier. Whoa, impact.

They had seen that. 'What do you mean a boy soldier?' I get out a photograph, 15-years-old standing beside the grave of his mate. That often has a real impact for kids.

They have been moved, surprised, shocked, haptically engaged and cognitively challenged. This has been an intense learning experience for students—and one that is not readily forgotten. But the journey is not over yet. The postscript is equally tangible and poignant. George argues that students better understand the enormity of the tragedy that is the Great War through the ripples of personal tragedies:

What I do with these I bring Arthur to life for them. They get to be empathetic towards a single soldier from the war whose wife, his children, his mother, his twin sister whose husband was killed on the Somme, his workmates. Because I've all those things, the death note, the thing [the death notice] put in the paper and so on. Then I say to them, 'Here's Arthur at the top and here's this pyramid of grief now you apply that to nine million men across Europe.'

The value of this haptic study does not end here; it becomes a springboard for understanding the worldviews of post-war attitudes, including how appeasement 'made sense' as a response to the threat of a second Great War. The discussion of 'boy soldiers' provides insights into why Germany lost the war and catapults discussion into ethical issues around child-soldiers of today and yesterday.

George, and his students, are overwhelmed by affect in the lesson:

I give them Arthur's last postcard and they can cry... I choke up in the presentation. I don't know, I have no concern about that. I'm not embarrassed by it.

In this collective unloading of grief George (re)performs and re-enacts the sorrow of World War I. In crying, the students have not just the cognitive understanding of the social impact of World War I, but they have had an embodied and affective first-hand experience of it at a number of levels. The sense of grief and loss experienced in that moment may not be clinically

or exclusively for Arthur, or the losses of the Great War. Like ‘grandma’s cup’, it is a place where teacher and students bring, express and imprint on the life of Arthur their own experiences of personal grief and loss. Slippage is part of affect’s interpersonal stickiness.⁷⁰ George’s history lesson is also a commemorative act, and commemoration—personal or public—works through a powerful common affective register connecting us to the past in personal and emotive ways (Clark, 2016b, p. 43). This collective experience gains additional power through the *communitas* (Turner, 1969) it has built in George’s learning classroom.

The ‘Gott Mit Uns’ lessons are a cathartic, sublime experience. Emotions ‘prompt, strengthen and cloud connections to the past’ and provide a powerful entry point to the past. (Clark, 2016b, p. 38); so do objects and artefacts. When used in combination, the materiality of the past—made present and tangible—serves to heighten affect and the ‘historical sensation’ for students. George delivers holistic learning in his combination of ‘head, hands and heart’, with and through artefacts. He illustrates of the power of objects to deliver sustained affective engagement and empathy using synergy of the intellect, the affective and the somatic. His observations about the power of affect in the classroom, is equally a reminder about the nature of history (and teaching): ‘It’s a very human thing’ (George).

9.4.2 Case Study: Kerry and the Holocaust Memorial Museum Project



Figure 9.4: (Re)performed holocaust memory using the artwork of a Holocaust survivor

⁷⁰ See Clark’s (2016b, p. 38) observation of ANZAC commemorations as a place where she unloads ‘all her sadness’.

Kerry's Holocaust Museum Project is another striking illustration of the use of material culture to teach history across the three dimensions of 'head, hands and hearts'. It too engenders historical consciousness and a transformative historical sensation. However, unlike George's assemblage, Kerry and her students did not have any artefacts from the Holocaust with which to populate the exhibit. Her solution was to have students *create* objects for the museum and, in doing so, their objects became endowed with thing-power as embodied and material (re)performances of the past.

The project had a clear cognitive thread from beginning to end. It began when Kerry and her students analysed and deconstructed how interactive museums use the materiality of the objects and spaces to deliver an affective and somatic experience that makes the museum-goer *think* and reflect. The goal was to use that understanding to create a museum whose objects and spaces had power to cause visitors to reflect on the meaning and significance of the Holocaust.

Kerry explored with her students the practices and techniques of museums. Her students analysed and reverse-engineered museum examples to understand how and why they worked, so they could replicate the techniques in their own classroom museum:

I talk about what I've seen in museums, I show them images ... from the exhibits and talk about what my response was to them. Or in some instances I show them videos that people have taken going through similar monuments or museums or spaces and ask for their response. And in showing them how these spaces can be created or these archives or these artefacts can evoke a reaction, it kind of gets them thinking about how they could do that for someone else and how they could replicate it.

Kerry therefore insisted that the materiality of the museum exhibits should not be:

Tokenistic. They didn't create things for the sake of creating things ... Everything they had put in there had purpose and fore-thought and planning, because they knew the power of what they were showing.

Apart from museology, another interdisciplinary approach Kerry drew on (as noted in Section 7.2.4) was her training as an English teacher. She sees objects as affective 'narrative texts' and marries this notion with the manner that contemporary museums communicate with audiences through objects:

I kind of absorbed ways that museums create information or present information in *different* ways.

Specifically, she wanted to capture the interactivity and the sensory, embodied and affective experience of contemporary museums with a strong narrative style. She cites the Grenoble Resistance Museum in France as an inspiration:

The whole museum was set up like a town, so you went through it and as you went through different sections of the town, motion sensors would kick in and you'd have guards shouting at you in French for your ID papers, or you'd have lights shining on you, you'd have sirens going around you. And I just thought it was such an immersive and emotive experience that I wanted to try and replicate here.

She was inspired by interactive exhibits that demand an embodied response that ‘puts it into you’:

The other museum that I use a lot ... is the Jewish museum in Berlin with the memorial section, specifically the faces that you have to walk across and the idea of acknowledgement of what you're looking at. So you don't just look at a thing and walk past it, you have to step on it, you have to touch it, you have to do something *that puts it into you* a little bit more *dramatically*.



Figure 9.5: Entry to the School Holocaust Memorial Museum

Kerry’s students used this idea in the entrance way to the school museum space (see Figure 9.5), so visitors had no choice but to encounter, and acknowledge, the faces of Holocaust victims hanging from the netting above. The faces of the victims were sequentially repeated in a continuum of full resolution, fading to black in order to represent then notion of loss of issues of the loss identity and the danger of ‘forgetting’ the victims of the Holocaust.

Students provided the historical context for the Holocaust. This too was done in sensory and interact ways. For the example, the display on the rise and fall of the Nazi party was displayed on classroom tables arranged in the shape of a giant swastika. To read the information the viewer is obliged to walk the outline the swastika. Meanwhile while a looped radio-recording blares Hitler hate-speech. This wash of sound invades every part of the museum and serves as a contextual reminder of the origins of the Holocaust.

In the process of designing exhibits with an ‘emotional narratives’ that incorporated somatic and affective elements that would trigger reflection, the students needed to exercise historical consciousness. The students did the very kind of reflexive thinking that they hoped their objects and installations would elicit from their museum visitors. Thus, the objects/installations they created were as much conceptual art pieces (and ‘minded-objects’) as ‘artefacts’. For example, the piece shown in Figure 9.6 works to incorporate body and mind as an exercise in perspective-taking. The viewer must use their body to move into a particular physical location in order to ‘see’ the disconnected balls (representing individuals who perished in the Holocaust) as part of a connected whole (Star of David).



Figure 9.6: The artefact as conceptual and performative art

The student’s historical thinking and purposeful use of technique for an affective impact was visible in the planning, preparation and design drafts produced for their teacher, as well as in the guidebook and the curation notes for the exhibit. As previously noted, the students presented

their methodology to professional museum curators to show them how they developed their ideas on conceptually teaching the Holocaust.

Kerry reflects on how students used the combination of affect, interactive sensory experience and conceptual art to transport people to the past using objects. Indeed, she still accords to the ‘authentic’ artefact impact to make a ‘distant’ and ‘fiction-like’ past concrete and ‘real’. The

Past can seem really distant ... it can seem like you're reading a piece of historical fiction ... but when you see a thing that was at the place that something happened, I think that's really significant.

However, the experience of the Holocaust Museum Project changed her idea of how things can ‘throw a bridge’ to the past. The ‘real’ and ‘authentic’ objects, as physical residues of the past, are powerful; they can bring their ‘pastness’ to you wherever you are:

One of the (French) museums I used with the Year 10s is a ... a children's Holocaust museum, ... but they [The French Museum] actually got one of the [bunks from] ... the barracks from one of the camps [Auschwitz], ... they bought it and brought it across ... I like the idea ... the fact that artefacts ... still has (sic) meaning outside of its location; that you don't need to physically go to a location to have that historical connection or to sense that realness of history.

Yet what she discovered was that the student-made, newly-created objects of the school museum still had some of the ‘thing-power’ of original artefacts, and through them, the original event. The (re)created and (re)performed settings, sounds and objects are ‘citational acts and embodied re-performance of precedent’ (Schneider, 2011, p. 43). Like the Auschwitz bunk, the newly-made/invented memorial artefact demonstrated, ‘even in a slight way’, a capacity to take people to events, places and times in the past:

We didn't have artefacts. We didn't have anything connected to the Holocaust, which is how museums like Auschwitz are so powerful, but they [Year 10] were able to do it without [original artefacts]. They were able to capture that emotional narrative, historical understanding, without any original artefacts, and I think that's really powerful that you can take people to an event without taking them to the place that it happened.

Figure 9.7 illustrates Kerry’s point on how (re)created settings can serve to ‘take’ people to a time, place and event. The foyer is transformed into Treblinka and the audience/students must ‘put themselves dramatically’ in to by stepping over, through on travel rail lines. This is proximal and performative form of knowledge—what Hetherington (2003, p. 1937) calls ‘*praesentia*’—an intimate and touching encounter with the presence of an absence that is Other to direct and previously known representations’. The foyer is transformed into a liminal/liminoid (Turner, 1969, 1974), transitory space where one leaves the 21st Century Australian school and enters the ‘ghost’ world of Treblinka Concentration Camp.



Figure 9.7: *Re-performances of the past (left entrance to school Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2017, Right (re)performance in Kerry's Holocaust Museum Project.*



Figure 9.8: *(Re)performances of the past (left: original photo Dachau survivor, 1945, Middle: 'A Right (re)performance as conceptual art in Kerry's Holocaust Memorial Museum Project*

Similarly, the exhibit object in Figure 9.8 demonstrates how iconic pictures and memories are (re)performed for new audiences, indexing something of prior events, places and people with all its affective 'stickiness'. On the right is the student (re)performance of the 1982 work 'Camp of Twins: Auschwitz' by Holocaust survivor Edith Birkin (middle) which is, in itself, a memory of original images (left) such as Blau's photography from 1945. It is a demonstration of how objects (or in this case, their performative recasting in the present) serve to fold time on itself

in a chiasmic manner (Schneider, 2011). In these ‘performing remains’ (Schneider, 2011) the ‘past’ is restored, ‘reiterated’ and ‘twice-behaved’ in a manner that is indexical, though non-identical, to the original. Yet, what emerges for both student curators and their audiences, is new knowledge, a fresh experience of, and affective engagement with, the ‘past’ in the present.

For Kerry, the goal is to use the physical and performative to get an affective response to trigger historical thinking. The affective hook (‘heart history’) brings in its wake the historical thinking of ‘head history’. Kerry is an innovator; she brings to her classroom, among other things, a museum education perspective where learning through objects is core business:

I've tried to replicate the excitement I've had in those museums by giving my students a glimpse of that ... I want them to get a glimpse of what that excitement for learning looks like.

Whereas other teachers in the study have employed objects to lead their students to historical thinking, Kerry inverts this. Her students do historical thinking and this led to (the creation of) poly-vocal objects that tell affective narratives, made all the more impactful because they engage viewers in multi-sensory and embodied modes. Things are used to ‘put it into you more dramatically’. The affective and somatic experience is orchestrated to get a reflexive response from the audience. Kerry was surprised by what her students achieved in this project. In synergising ‘head, hands and heart’ history with the haptic and somatic materiality of things, Kerry brought together elements of a potent history pedagogy: ‘Look at what my brilliant students did. My god, they schooled me on this’ (Kerry).

9.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined how teachers make effective use of objects and artefacts to engage students affectively and somatically and make history ‘come alive’ for their pupils. They marry this engagement and connection with the hard intellectual ‘head’ work of history to teach both content and historical thinking, especially the skills of empathetic understanding and perspective-taking that is central to historical consciousness.

Unlike academic historians, classroom history teachers are less cautious about employing affect. Driven by the practicality ethic, teachers exploit the affective ‘stickiness’ of things across place, time and people as a tool for engagement, connection, relevance and interest with their students. Teachers weave affect, using narrative, historical imagination and a somatic and sensory experience of objects, into stories that matter. In that process they (and their students) become ‘entangled’ with the objects and artefacts in use. This is the materialist notion of

objectification—‘things make us as much as we make things’ (Miller, 2010)—at work. The power, appeal and ‘stickiness’ of affect was revealed in the teacher data and emerges as a central feature in the success of the materialist pedagogy of haptic history.

Yet in this the affective pull of objects—their ‘magnetism’, agency and attraction—is tempered by teacher intervention. This typically involves the strategic use of cognitive interrupts, usually in the form of questions, that fosters the student reflexivity necessary for historical consciousness. It also involves the slow release of contextual information, including the introduction of other objects into assemblages, as part of the affective ‘mix’. When objects and artefacts are used to attract students and bring them closer to historical actors, affect is a powerful tool for empathy; equally, affect can be used to shock and repel students from an over-identification with the past and provide the sense of distance and difference that central to historical consciousness. Teachers have observed how they, and their students, ‘gravitate ... to certain objects’, and while they may not be able to clearly articulate why objects have such affective torque, the teachers in this study make productive use of this feature in their pedagogy for engagement, empathy and historical consciousness.

The affective power of objects is heightened when combined with somatic experience history as ‘real’ and present. Objects bring to an encounter with history a sense of ‘authenticity’ and ‘presence’, especially when an individual or group can verify and validate its ‘realness’ through the testimony of their own senses and bodily experience. In addition to heightening awareness of the past as both ‘real’ and ‘immediate’, objects and artefacts provide a platform for historical consciousness in the form of *kinaesthetic empathy* and a somatic reflexivity that is experienced cognitively *and* in embodied modes. Kinaesthetic imagination and kinaesthetic empathy allows students to embody and (re)perform, (re)enact and (re)experience an aspect or sense of the past. Thus, it is argued that existing models of empathy, which focus on the combination of the cognitive and affective, have overlooked the significance of a third, somatic, dimension of kinaesthetic empathy.

The electric synergy of haptic history when taught with head, hands and heart *in combination* was analysed in two case studies that closed this chapter. It was concluded that when history is taught with objects and artefacts, the synergy of the somatic, affective and cognitive domains opens to the door to the most sublime form of historical consciousness—the ‘historical sensation’.

Objects and artefacts engage students cognitively, affectively and somatically. It is argued that when the paths to the past are transversed in combination, the synergy of head, hands and heart enhances learning and engagement. However, in the absence of any coherent theory of haptic/materialist history pedagogy, this is largely done by teachers at the level of unconscious competence. Thus, the purpose of the final chapter is to fill this gap. It draws together the threads from the three strands of head, hand and heart history and combines the insights from both the teacher and re-enactor/living history arms of this study to construct an explanatory model of haptic/materialist history. This model is presented as a practical tool to further enrich the signature pedagogy of history.

Chapter 10: Learning Material—Towards a Pedagogy of Haptic History

10.1 Introduction

This thesis posed questions about how and why material culture is used by history teachers and living historians/historical re-enactors for historical consciousness and historical thinking. These two ‘public history’ groups (Clio’s underlabourers) construct historical knowledge by doing history with objects and artefacts. The research has analysed people, their ‘things’ and the stories of ‘powerful objects’, and investigated how materiality works in the complex and dynamic relationships people forge with the materiality of pastness.

Conclusions drawn from both arms of this study are used in this chapter to model a haptic history pedagogy. Whereas teacher praxis makes for ready transference into models of pedagogy, a case has been equally argued that the materialist praxis of living history/historical re-enactment has much in it to inform pedagogy. Teaching, learning and researching are central to the ‘serious leisure’ of living history and historical re-enactment. Although the materialist approaches taken in this field of public history might be regarded as an extreme praxis of materialist and embodied history, the insights are rich for the ways they may be translated into classroom and schoolyard practice, albeit in a modified form.

The chapter is structured so it cumulatively builds to a model of haptic history pedagogy, which has been constructed using insights from the data collected in response to the research questions:

1. What are the ways material culture gets used in history classroom pedagogy and in living history/historical re-enactment for the purpose of constructing historical knowledge?
2. Why do the teachers and historical re-enactors/living historian in this study use material culture in their praxis?
3. How do the participants in this study use material culture for ‘doing history’ (for ‘thinking historically’ and ‘historical consciousness’)?
4. What fresh insights for history and its pedagogy emerge from the ‘materialist’ experience of the past?

Although the key findings are arranged to address research questions in the numerical order listed, it is noted that Research Question 4 is addressed in two ways: first, through the key findings comments concerning *implications* for history and its pedagogy (see Section 10.2) and second, in its incorporation in the haptic history model of pedagogy (see Section 10.3). The insights the model provides for history and its pedagogy model is supported with ‘guideposts for praxis’. Guideposts are ‘the big ideas’, the ‘way in’ (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 8) and are employed with the purpose of assisting a theoretical model to translate into real-world practical application. Further, because guideposts are, by nature, not hard or proscriptive statements, they reflect the researcher’s view that there is no singular, ‘right’ or exclusive way to teach history. Guideposts are ‘there for the taking’, be added to, developed and adapted by teachers in their own mix of pedagogic practices that ‘work’.

10.2 Key Findings

The key findings of this study are presented by research question heading; however, since slippage and spillage has been a feature of the data and the multi-disciplinarity of this dissertation, it has not always been possible to keep these findings cleanly demarcated. Likewise, there are areas of overlap in the model of haptic history pedagogy that follows in Section 10.3.

10.2.1 Research Question 1

This question asked about the variety of ways material culture is used to construct historical knowledge within the different settings of the history classroom and historical re-enactment/living history. In these settings they are primarily used for connecting and engaging with the past as a source of evidence (for research and inquiry) and as a method for developing empathetic understanding of people in the past.

10.2.1.1 Objects and artefacts are valued sources for constructing historical knowledge

The variety of ways that material culture is used to create historical knowledge can be distilled to two (related) categories. First, material culture is a *source of evidence* about the past, an insight that is not in dispute by any history-related discipline. Objects and artefacts are favoured because teachers and re-enactors alike consider them to provide a ‘real’, ‘authentic’, direct and unmediated source of information about the past (Lowenthal, 2015; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998). Thus, when used for inquiry, artefacts provide a sense of authentic inquiry and the veracity of evidence created and verified by first-hand experience.

Second, the method for creating historical knowledge comes from objects and artefacts in their performative *use*. This refers to how they produce knowledge in experiential, embodied, multi-sensory, affective and somatic modes. It often takes the form of ‘serious play’. The knowledge derived needs to be tempered by reflexivity. It is the key method used by historical re-enactors and living historians to test their historical research and ‘fill in the gaps’ about everyday aspects of the past that have not been recorded. It is also a method used in the field of experimental archaeology.

Equally significant is that *application as a method* extends into the use of objects and artefacts to ‘tune into’ the mind of their makers and users. Therefore, it is a key methodology for attaining a sense of ‘historical otherness’, a support for perspective-taking and empathy, and an aid to ‘historical consciousness’.

The implication of this finding for history teaching is that objects and artefacts, as sources, are key *inputs* and, in the methodology of their use, form one of the *processes* in the haptic history model of pedagogy outlined in Section 10.3.

10.2.1.2 Objects and artefacts create historical knowledge: Haptic history aids the historical imagination, empathetic understanding and creativity

In the materialist/haptic approach to history the application of Collingwood’s notion of historical imagination—the essential ingredient for historical thinking—is enlivened and expanded. Historical imagination, hitherto conceived as a cognitive mode of knowing, is informed by the affective and embodied/somatic knowledge constructed via materialist experience. That which is ‘imagined’ can be tested against the material constraints and affordance of the physical properties of objects-in-use with bodies-in-action. This is history (re)performed and (re)enacted. The awareness that the past can never be recreated in the entirety of its authentic original form, and the realisation that all re-enactments fall short of their goal, are essential features of the way historical re-enactment constructs historical knowledge. It is in historical re-enactment’s failures and the ‘almost, not quite’ that the re-enactor discovers the habitus gap between themselves and their target persona of the historical ‘other’. That understanding is a source of fresh interpretations of the past and is, itself, a form of historical consciousness that is experienced in the first instance somatically, and then cognitively.

The materialist and embodied methodology of historical re-enactment/living history has been analysed using data from interviews, focus groups, survey and auto-ethnography. The dressing

of the body with, and use of, material culture is integral for accessing the minds and physical experiences of the historical target persona. Inherent in the methodology of living history is the belief that the past can be explored, unpacked, (re)experienced and (re)thought in the present. The methodology is grounded in the belief that the minds of people in the past are entombed in their material culture (as ‘minded-objects’) and may be accessed in their embodied use (using ‘minded-bodies’) under ‘Goldilocks’ conditions. The new knowledge that derives from these (re)performances and (re)iterations of the past, (re)played in the present for new audiences, is part of the creativity unlocked in the haptic/materialist approach to history. One of the attractions of historical re-enactment and (re)performativity of the past is that its interpretations of the past are open-ended, ‘unfinished business’ (Braedder et al., 2017, p. 173; Gapps, 2009, p. 407). It is inherently creative, imaginative and open to ‘possibility thinking’ (Cooper, 2013, p. 35) and ‘the poetic imagination’ (MacGregor, 2012, p. xviii).

Re-enactor methodology is also a materialist and experiential form of empathy that has been theorised using performance studies as ‘kinaesthetic empathy’ or ‘kinaesthetic imagination’. The concept of kinaesthetic empathy is important for history and its pedagogy. As shown in Table 10.1, kinaesthetic empathy broadens the understanding of historical empathy, hitherto limited to a ‘dance’ between cognition and affect.

Table 10.1: Kinaesthetic empathy, adapted from Davison’s model of empathy (2012, p.13)

Cognitive (thinking)	Affective (feeling)	Kinaesthetic (somatic)
Building historical contextual knowledge	Using imagination to recognise appropriate feelings	Using embodied experience of the past to access the perspective of others (since we experience bodily that which we see and do)
Being aware of the past as being different from the present	Listening to and entertaining other points of view	Being aware of how bodily experience connects to feelings (and thoughts). ‘The mind is in the skin’.
Tying interpretations of the past to evidence	Being caring, sensitive and tolerant towards other people	Bodies and sensations are shaped by culture and experience; historical consciousness can be experienced through the differences between bodies and senses in the past and present.

In including the somatic dimension, bodily knowledge becomes a source for empathetic thinking. This conclusion incorporates the notion of mirror neurons (that humans experience bodily what they see) and emphasises how thought patterns similar to those exercised by people

in the past can (re)created through physical mimesis (posture, movement and by ‘repeating’ task operations from the past using the material culture available to historical actors). In these embodied understandings and sensations material culture is central. Shared human physiology, shaped, guided and directed by objects-in-use, can offer insights into historical ‘otherness’. However, regardless of the attention to authenticity and accuracy, this experience will not be the same as that of people in the past because of the habitus gap and the manner that senses in the past (being products of culture) are different to modern sensibilities.

The physical alone is one dimension at work. Objects and artefacts support students to make the *imaginative* leap forwards of empathetic understanding and perspective-taking. The use of objects on, and with bodies, has been observed to aid historical re-enactors to ‘step outside of themselves’ (*ekstasis*) into the *mentalité* of their target persona through a process of dressing the outer-bodies and using objects to ‘tune into’ the minds and worldviews of their target historical persona. At a less intense level, teachers use objects and artefacts in school contexts such as living history ‘immersion’ days, roleplaying and simulations to give them a *sense* of the ‘otherness’ of the past in order to assist them to take on perspectives other than their own. This sense of otherness is used as an aid to historical imagination and confirms that students’ acquisition of formal, sophisticated and abstract historical thinking concepts, such as empathy, is aided by the first-hand, experiential use of objects and artefacts.

The implications of this finding for history pedagogy is a fresh perspective on empathy as threefold in nature: cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic. The addition of this empathetic mode provides another pathway for teachers to use in teaching the historical thinking concept of empathy which, as perspective-taking, is integral to the development of historical consciousness.

10.2.1.3 A materialist/haptic history approach accesses the ‘historical sensation’ through the triune synergy of head, hands and heart

Using an interdisciplinary conceptual framework that draws both methodologically and theoretically from a range of ‘umbrella’ sister disciplines of history (including material culture studies, anthropology, phenomenology, museology and archaeology) a triune model for accessing history holistically through ‘head, hands and heart’—cognitively, somatically and affectively—has been proposed. The choice of the term ‘triune’ in this context is intentional. ‘Triune’ has a religious meaning and refers to the inseparability of the elements of the holy trinity. I have argued throughout this dissertation that learning history needs to be holistic and

that the three elements of head, hands and hearts are deeply enmeshed. When they operate together, the experience that follows—variously called the ‘historical sensation’, *ekstasis*, ‘the magic moment’—has a quasi-religious euphoric and epiphanic quality that justifies the usage of the term ‘triune’ in this context. It has been clearly demonstrated that the materialist approach of haptic history essentially works separately in each of the three modes; however, when history is materially experienced through head, hands and heart *in combination*, the triune synergy proffers an extraordinary, sublime and transformative experience of *ekstasis* and ‘the historical sensation’.

Indeed, materiality is vital for triggering the holistic experience of the ‘historical sensation’. The ‘historical sensation’ is historical consciousness at its most engaging and exhilarating; it encompasses the experience of *ekstasis* and the ‘short ecstatic kiss’ of the present touching the past. The personal sense of connection with history when encountered in the fleeting experience of time folding in on itself (in re-enactor-speak, ‘time slip’, ‘the magic moment’, ‘period rush’) is deeply moving and transformative; it is historical consciousness at its most sublime and paradoxical—the ‘touching the void’ (Robinson, 2010)—in an experience of the past that is simultaneously intimate and remote, close yet distant. The classroom case studies feature exempla of best practice, and demonstrate that the ‘historical sensation’ can be experienced by teachers and students in school when material culture is used to ‘do’ history holistically through head, hands and hearts.

The implication of this finding for history pedagogy is that the successful praxis of haptic history offers a level of extraordinary engagement of students with history leading to lifelong love of history in post-school contexts.

10.2.2 Research Question 2

This question investigated the reasons why teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians make use of material culture in their history knowledge-making practices. The driving reason why the study participants use material culture in their praxis is because it is deeply connective and engaging. The urge for personal connection with a past that is perceived as palpable, present and real is a finding of public history research. This study has affirmed this insight with new data from the materialist praxis of history teachers and historical re-enactors/living historians.

10.2.2.1 Objects engage and connect people to history: Historical consciousness finds expression through materiality

This research contributes to the literature in the field of historical consciousness by demonstrating that history teachers in school settings and historical re-enactors/living historians in post-school contexts are very much part of the emergent trend in public history research that shows experiencing the past materially is an important way for ordinary people to connect and engage with the past.

Research in the field of public history (De Groot, 2009; Lowenthal, 1985; Samuel, 1994/2012) including large-scale Australian (Ashton & Hamilton, 2010; Clark, 2016b) and North American studies (Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998), have demonstrated that objects and artefacts are central to historical consciousness and explain why museums, whose *raison d'être* centres on materiality, feature among the most 'trusted' sources of knowledge about the past. It has been argued that the existential concreteness and diachronic continuity of artefacts and relics attests to the realness and 'presence' of the past (Lowenthal, 1985, 2015) in a manner that traditional written textual forms of history cannot. Ordinary people crave connection with the past in a form that is immediate, intimate and experiential; objects and artefacts by their very materiality proffer (seemingly) unmediated, multi-sensory and tangible access to the past where somatic, affective and cognitive modes of engagement combine to produce an experience of pastness that makes that which is absent and abstract, present, 'real' and 'authentic' (*praesentia*).

The current research has added to the field of public history and history pedagogy by illustrating how the materialism of the past is a driver of connection and engagement in both living history/historical re-enactment and classroom history pedagogy. Around one in three re-enactors in this study's survey nominated 'connection' as their prime motivator for doing historical re-enactment (see Section 4.12). Similarly, the quest to connect and engage students with history is a key motivation for teachers in their praxis of haptic history (see Section 7.3). This dissertation has highlighted the connective power of objects in the materialist practice of public history in haptic history classrooms and historical re-enactment. In the data from 25 in-depth interviews, two focus groups and auto-ethnographic field notes, I have observed and analysed the webs of entanglement and connection that objects weave through and between people in the present, and between people in the present and the past.

The integral role that objects play in connecting people to the past is an everyday form of historical consciousness and historical thinking that occurs in and outside history classrooms.

The implication for history teaching is to utilise this for classroom engagement, including considerations about the frequency in which objects are used, as well as considerations of how objects are selected. This is further examined in guideposts for the praxis of a haptic history pedagogy that follows.

10.2.2.2 Haptic history works for a broad and diverse range of students

Research into the problem of engagement in school history has returned a consistent message: students want interactive, immediate, ‘real’ and palpable modes of learning history beyond the traditional text-heavy and ocular approaches of traditional ‘head history’ (see Sections 1.2.4 and 2.8). Students connect to history when it is experienced as ‘real’ and ‘present’. Somatic and affective modes of knowing via embodied, multi-sensory and haptic experience with, and through, the materiality of the past are elements that have the potential to greatly enhance the learning of history.

Haptic history is a multimodal, multi-sensory, poly-vocal and holistic approach to learning about the past. As such, haptic history works for a broad and diverse range of students; the materialist approach has benefits too for improving access and equity for those (of all ages and abilities) who struggle to engage with traditional, text-heavy, history pedagogy (see Section 7.3).

The implication of this finding for history pedagogy is that haptic history offers extension and enrichment for gifted and talented students, but equally improves access and equity for students who find the dominant text-heavy and ocular modes barriers to learning history at school. Teacher praxis—driven by the practicality ethic—means that they use haptic history if they have the skills and confidence to do so.

10.2.3 Research Question 3

This research question investigated how participants in this study use material culture for ‘doing history’ (for ‘thinking historically’ and for ‘historical consciousness’). The findings for this research question—‘the *how*’ of material culture’s usage for historical thinking and consciousness—links to *why* it is used, especially key findings for Research Question 2 which explain how somatic, affective and cognitive modes are aids to historical imagination and empathic thinking. The key findings in this section ‘riff’, to some degree on the themes that have already emerged in the key findings and are extrapolated in detail in the haptic history model of pedagogy.

10.2.3.1 Haptic history expands on Collingwood's idea of history

Central to the praxis of re-enactment and living history is Collingwood's notion of historical imagination and history as 're-enacted thought'. However, haptic history expands Collingwood's notion of history as an exclusively intellectual activity by taking it beyond the head to give it material and embodied form. In the process, 'head history' remains central to the practice of history, but is enriched by the 'stickiness' of the affective, sensory and embodied materialist experience of (re)enacted pastness as a source of knowledge and historical consciousness.

The implications of this finding for history pedagogy is that teaching history through, and with, the materiality of the past does not supplant the centrality of the silver thread of Collingwood's idea of history as a cognitive process. The cognitive domain remains a constant partner of affective and somatic knowledge generated in the materialist approach. Reflexivity is central in haptic history.

10.2.3.2 Haptic History needs to be taught, not caught

While teachers reported that they 'caught' onto the idea of teaching through objects and artefacts via colleagues, or developed/invented it themselves drawing on their experiences and interdisciplinary knowledge, students need to be explicitly taught the skills of using material culture as both a source and method in the same systematic manner as other historical knowledge is taught.

The processes of teaching the elements of disciplined inquiry and literacies (including material literacy) using objects and artefacts is elaborated in the haptic history pedagogic model that follows.

The implication for history pedagogy is that time and space need be provided in the history curriculum to teach the skills of haptic history. These skills and knowledge complement and parallel the skills of inquiry using written sources. Equally, for teachers to confidently and competently teach with objects and artefacts, they need the knowledge and skills to do so. Teacher pre-service training and ongoing professional development is an important support and could include exposure to cross-disciplinary study in fields such as museum studies, archaeology and material culture studies.

10.2.4 Other key findings

How and why ‘powerful objects’ work in teaching and living history/re-enactment have been covered in the key findings above. On the issue of the ‘co-agency’ of things there was divergent views within the teacher group, and between the teacher and re-enactor arms of the study. Other key findings that emerged from the analysis of the data that were not envisaged by the original research questions are presented here.

10.2.4.1 Objects are recognised as powerful: Views diverge on issue of (co)agency

One of the questions in the individual and the focus group interviews probed participants to explain their choice of objects in their materialist practice of history. This discussion explored participants’ relationship with ‘things’ and this data lent itself to analysis using notions of co-agency from theorists such as Latour (2005) and Bennett (2009). There was no consensus among teachers concerning the issue of co-agency of things. For most, it was a concept they had not considered or encountered before and was outside their experience. Among the teachers with a formal archaeological background, there was a stronger view against the notion. Nonetheless, objects were considered to have powerful and affective impacts on students (and the teachers themselves) even if this fell short of attributing to things some form of shared agency.

The notion of the co-agency of things was more widely considered to have validity by the re-enactor/living history arm of the study. This may be explained by the fact that re-enactors and living historians immerse themselves in, and through, objects in a deeper and more sustained manner than the classroom history teacher. Their goal is different too; they are willing to ‘let themselves’ go and be guided by objects-in-use as part of their methodology of persona-taking (especially in the deep immersion of the first-persona). Another factor may be that, as people in engaged in ‘serious *play*’, they do not need to meet academic thresholds of verifiability in the knowledge they construct. They are more at liberty to rely on the ‘experiential episteme’ which has currency among hobby participants.

The implication for teaching is that teachers need to be aware of how objects may ‘move’ students affectively and bodily. This can be fertile ground for reflection. Equally, the vital materialist notion of object co-agency is an area that could be explored as an interdisciplinary perspective relevant to historiography.

10.2.4.2 Objects and artefacts are rich historical sources, but under-utilised in history teaching

Although materiality features prominently in historical consciousness, material culture does not find a corresponding profile as a source or method in classroom history pedagogy. Teachers practising haptic history are still in the minority and report that their methods and approaches through material culture are misunderstood, especially in a content-driven, exam-focused curriculum.

Despite of being the primary mode for ordinary people to make meaning and a dominant form of expressing historical consciousness, objects and artefacts are poorly represented in teaching praxis.

This disjunction between ‘everyday’ historical consciousness that finds its expression through the consumption and production of historical knowledge in material and embodied forms, has implications for history pedagogy. It goes some way to explain the disengagement with classroom history that has been reported in the research literature. History teaching needs to align and draw more deeply on the kinds of everyday historical consciousness that finds itself expressed, produced and consumed in material and embodied ways outside the classroom. Drawing more effectively on the materiality of history in its community, familial and collective memory knowledge-forms is a tool for student engagement. It is also and a rich resource for the carriage of teaching critical historical thinking and reflexive historical consciousness.

10.2.4.3 Museum history education’s success can be replicated outside museum contexts

Research demonstrates the remarkable success of museums in teaching through a materialist pedagogy. Whereas museums retain a unique role in the cultural and history education landscape, this research shows that a materialist pedagogy can be successfully enacted outside museum contexts. This is facilitated by museums themselves, with their use of re-enactors for museum displays and events via museum loan box services, in pre-service teacher education, and through their involvement in ongoing teacher professional learning. Training and supporting of teachers to do haptic history in classrooms and utilise objects and artefacts that are readily available outside museums, promises to enrich the material culture literacy of school and museum audiences alike.

Implications for history pedagogy of the expansion of the praxis of haptic history in classrooms supports a change from the learning of history through material culture from a ‘one-off’

museum excursion ‘novelty’ to an embedded heuristic that is developed in students by their classroom teachers. Further, building bridges between museum education and classroom history praxis brings benefit to both sectors.

10.3 A Pedagogic Model with Guideposts for Praxis

While it is unhelpful and counterproductive to assert that history should be taught in a formulaic or prescriptive manner, this chapter (in the tradition of Seixas and Morton’s ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts), presents a model for haptic history praxis. The model is analogous to a computer program model where there are input’s, processes and outputs. A series of guideposts are provided to support teacher praxis. Guideposts provide a pathway for implementation and/or refinement of haptic history classroom praxis. They are derived from the findings of this study.

The model follows Taylor and Young’s (2003) argument that there are three inputs in the pedagogic triangle of history: teacher, students and subject matter. Object and artefacts are the subject matter in the current focus. History is no different to other disciplines; its procedural and substantive knowledge are co-constructed in learning communities (Bain, 2005; Levstik & Barton, 2005; Taylor & Young, 2003) and teachers and students bring different capacities, knowledge and beliefs to the classroom (Taylor & Young, 2003). To this input mix is added the opportunity to investigate history via materialism (subject matter). These three inputs—teachers, objects and students—are the starting point for the haptic history pedagogic model that is visualised in Figure 10.1.

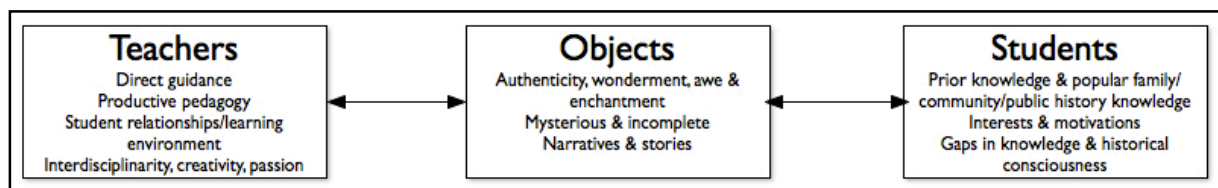


Figure 10.1: Three inputs into the haptic history model

The next stage of the model is the processes. The three guideposts for processes are inquiry, contextual information and objects-in-use. The processes are visualised in Figure 10.2 and discussed in Section 10.3.2.

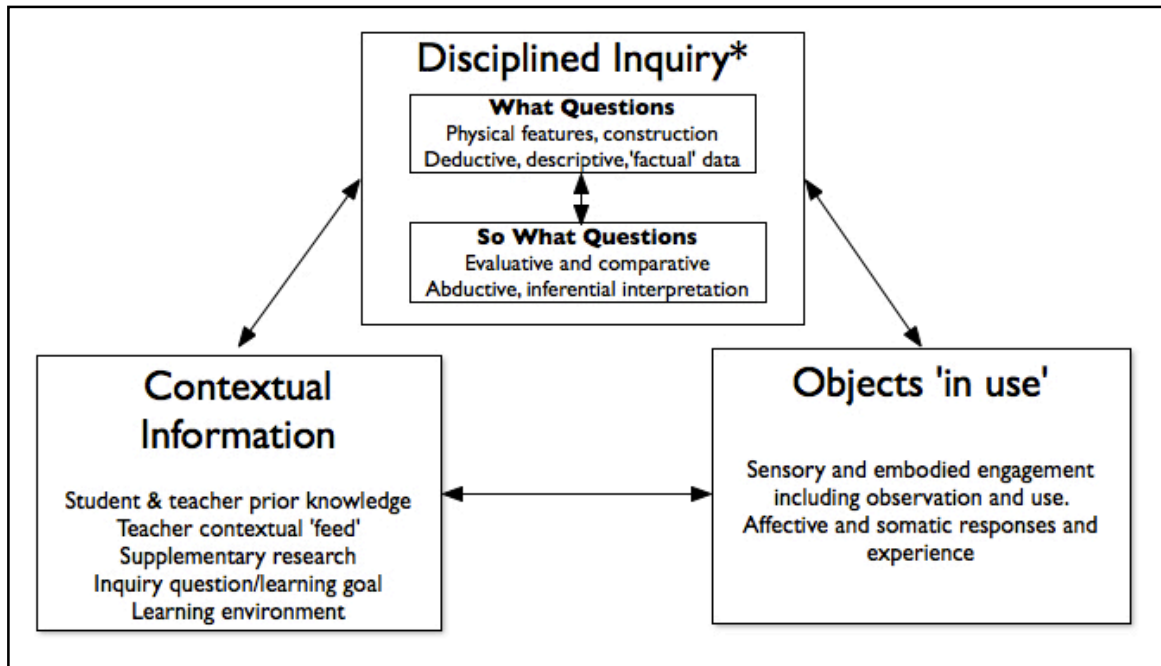


Figure 10.2: The processes in the haptic history model visualised

The last part of the model is the outputs. The output is substantive communication, and within this concept are nested two further guideposts: ‘wordless experience’ and ‘21st century learning’. The outputs are visualised in Figure 10.3 and discussed in Section 10.3.3.

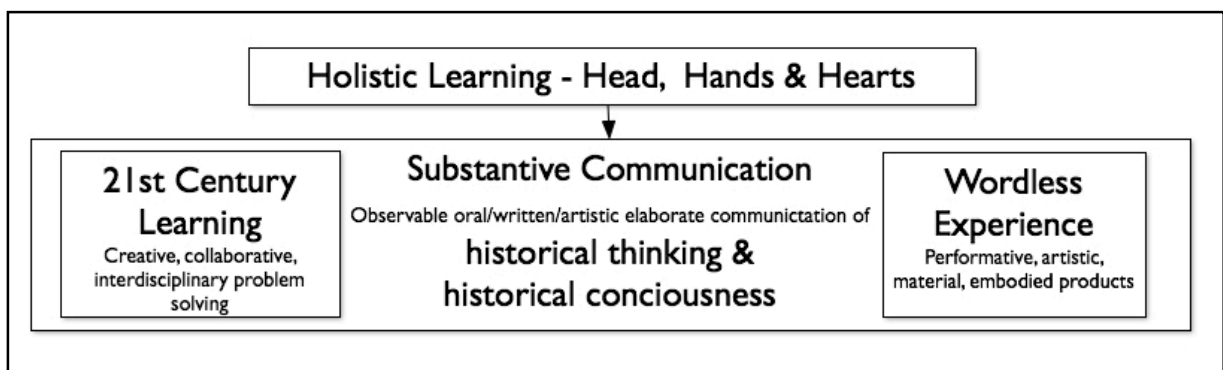


Figure 10.3: The outputs in the haptic history model visualised

The three sections of the model—inputs, processes and outputs—are assembled and shown in Figure 10.14.

10.3.1 Inputs

In a computer-style programming model, the inputs are a key determinant of the quality of the outcome. This section focusses on this important stage. It includes three guideposts for each of the three inputs of teachers, objects and students.

10.3.1.1 Inputs: Teachers

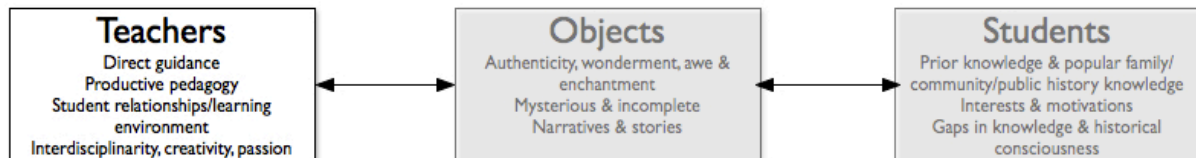


Figure 10.4: Teacher input

Effective pedagogy has its universals, yet to consider all the variables is beyond the scope of this research. Two modes of learning (teacher-directed guidance and student-centred learning) are considered here because they underpin all successful forms of history pedagogy, haptic or otherwise, and were evident in the praxis of educators in this study.

Teachers are the most powerful in-school influence on student achievement (Hattie, 2009). In classrooms, successful pedagogy is underpinned by educators *actively* teaching using the set of practices called ‘direct guidance’ or ‘explicit teaching’ in partnership with *active* student-centred learning.

Direct guidance or explicit instruction is a set of teaching practices recognised as having the most significant impact on student achievement (CESE, 2015; Hattie, 2009, 2012). In the haptic history praxis of educators in this study, the teacher is best characterised as the ‘activator’ of learning (Hattie, 2009, p. 25; Hattie & Yates, 2014, p. 72ff) and the ‘meddler-in-the middle’ (McWilliam, 2009, p. 290). Effective history teaching is a balance between teacher direct instruction and guided student-centred activities with the amount of teacher ‘meddling’ being responsive to student skill, confidence and competence in the process of inquiry (Bull & Anstey, 2013). Students need the time to practice the skills. Feedback-informed guided practice with ‘real sources’ allows students to get hands-on with the source material of history and, in the process of ‘doing it themselves’, develop the inquiry process heuristic (Mootz, 2014).

10.3.1.1.1 Teacher Input Guidepost 1: Begin with the end in mind—Productive pedagogy

The materialist approach can be used to successfully teach each and every historical thinking concept (see Chapters 7 and 8). This illustrates the flexibility and utility of objects and artefacts to teach concepts, skills, content and context. Teachers need to ‘begin with the end in mind’ and select the objects with a clear pedagogical purpose and product in mind; they also need to consider the cognitive needs, interests and backgrounds of students.

Teachers in this study favoured the use of objects and artefacts for teaching the skills of inquiry and evidence (see Sections 8.2, 10.2.1 and 10.3.2) as well as perspective-taking and empathy (see Sections 8.3, 9.2.4, 10.2.1.2 and 10.3.2.3). However, the breadth and range of teacher use of objects to teach all the ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts (see Chapter 8) and beyond (see Chapter 9), illustrates the boundless creative possibilities—including interdisciplinary/cross-faculty learning—of the materialist approach of haptic history.

10.3.1.1.2 Teacher Input Guidepost 2: Leverage teacher relationship with things

Objects and artefacts work through, and with, a human factor. They gain power when their own biography(ies) intersect with and tell a human story(ies). Teacher (and re-enactor) entanglement with their teaching objects was evident throughout this study, and teachers make effective pedagogic use of this phenomenon to weave their own, and their students’, biographies into lives of their teaching objects (see Section 7.4).

The teacher–student relationship is a significant factor in learning (Hattie, 2009; Hattie & Yates, 2014). Teachers in this study successfully leveraged this, and through them, the objects became vicarious vehicles through which students connected to the past. Teachers (and re-enactors) are sources of authority, and (in some cases) walking, talking, ‘authentic’ embodiments of history. As ‘mobile monuments’ (Gapps, 2009), teachers create a form of history that is readily accessible to students and the general public because it is present and tangible. In deploying objects for teaching, teachers ‘(re)make’ themselves as a part of history.

10.3.1.1.3 Teacher Input Guidepost 3: Opportunities for interdisciplinarity, creativity and passion

It has been observed how ‘teachers put something of themselves’ into haptic history. The teachers in this study illustrated how they have drawn on their diverse experience (in and out of classrooms), and interdisciplinary knowledge (across English, science, archaeology, museology, art, design and technology, and physical education) to inform and enrich their praxis of history taught through material culture. Their capacity to bring into history

interdisciplinary insights and competencies is a measure of their creativity, in the manner they combine knowledge in new ways that have value, using different disciplinary perspectives (Robinson, 2006, Yates et al., 2017).

A significant component of teacher (and re-enactor) success as educators is their passion and enthusiasm for history and learning. The ‘sheer thrill of being a learner or teacher’ is rarely talked about (or measured); yet, it is one of the defining factors in successful pedagogy (Hattie, 2009, pp. 238, 261). The teachers in this study made their enthusiasm, passion and craft visible to the students, just as students made their learning visible to the teacher. Teacher and students alike were absorbed and engulfed ‘in the flow’ of learning and this melded with the historical sensation of an experience of the past as real and palpable.

The key message of this guidepost is for teachers to display their passion, excitement and enthusiasm. Objects have the capacity to allow the user to ‘engage with the past on so direct and so immediate a level. It approaches something magical’ (Dannehl, 2009, p. 130). The magic of artefacts and the magic of teaching is a winning combination.

10.3.1.2 Inputs: Students

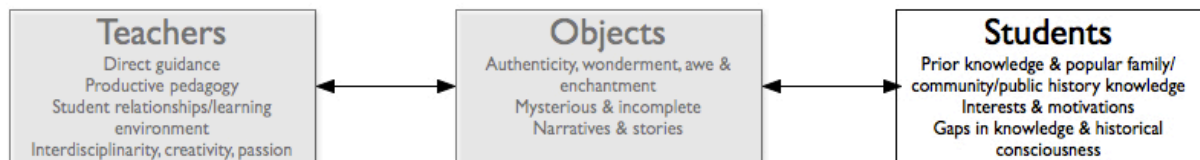


Figure 10.5: Student Input

Teacher-directed learning is not mutually exclusive to student-centred learning (Dinham, 2014). Student-centred, problem-based, active, inquiry learning operates successfully *in combination* with teacher-directed learning (Hattie, 2009) and is a key input into the haptic history model of pedagogy.

Haptic history, as practiced by teachers in this study, took the form of communities of historical inquiry where students, as proto-historians, were actively constructing historical knowledge with the support, direction and guidance of their teachers. A common element in the three student input guideposts is that for successful learning to occur, student prior knowledge must be engaged. This is a core principle in the constructivist theory of knowledge (Hein, 1991, 1995).

10.3.1.2.1 Students Input Guidepost 1: Leverage prior knowledge

Accessing student prior knowledge is the starting point for disciplined, reflective historical inquiry (Levstik & Barton, 2015). Linking the choice, use and narrative(s) of objects so that it accesses student prior knowledge is an essential element of successful haptic history pedagogy. Prior knowledge encompasses ‘public’, community and cultural knowledge that is shaped by collective memory, whereby objects, artefacts and places are accorded cultural meaning and significance. It also includes ‘private’ knowledge; material that has personal significance. Private knowledge is an important driver of historical consciousness. It is central to the way ordinary people (including students) connect their personal stories/private lives to the bigger narrative of history. As demonstrated in the literature (Ashton & Hamilton, 2003, 2009; Clark, 2012, 2016b; Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998) and revalidated by the haptic history teaching practices of teachers in this study, drawing on the familial connection—the DNA wormhole—is a rich material source for historical consciousness, connectivity and engagement with the past.⁷¹

Thus, teachers should encourage students to bring in objects of personal and familial significance—these objects allow students to make history ‘their story’. The depth and value of this approach for selecting objects for pedagogy has been richly demonstrated by George, Giles, Kerry, Linda, and Elise (see Section 7.4.3). It has added utility, considering the first understandings of history are formed outside the classroom by family and community (Ashton & Hamilton, 2003; Pace, 2004). Recognising that from a materialist perspective, each and every one of us are deeply caught in a web of entanglement with our ‘things’: they make us, as much as we make them (Miller, 2010).

Teachers in the study commented on locating a point of familiarity and connection with students’ own lives and experiences to make the past relatable (see Section 7.4.6). When objects are selected for what they reveal about the ‘enduring or emerging issues in history or contemporary life’ (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 19) they draw on students’ own experience as a point of familiarity and a source of prior (personal) knowledge. Objects that teachers and re-enactors select and use typically explore the (un)commonality in the ‘everyman’ dimension of social history and everyday life between their audiences and people from the past.

⁷¹ In the ‘Australians and Their Past’ survey, respondents indicated family as the most important source of their sense of connection to the past (Ashton & Hamilton, 2003).

However, even when the objects were recognisable and familiar, the points of difference are essential for promoting historical consciousness. George's use of Coca-Cola promotional objects (see Section 8.5) is an exemplum of how historical insight comes from moving out from what students know to the unfamiliar and strange (Wineburg, 2001).

10.3.1.2.2 Student Input Guidepost 2: Leverage student interests

Student interests and motivations are engagement factors to consider when doing haptic history. Teachers cannot directly control individual factors that determine student interest but can create situational interest by drawing on their knowledge of their students and their interests. In Chapter 7, it was observed how Giles strategically used his background knowledge of student talents and interests to inform his object choices and lesson focus. Where student background interests are not known, teachers can employ the 'magnetism' of objects to 'flush them out' as demonstrated in the teacher focus group object speed-dating exercise and Giles's 'object smorgasbord' activity (see Section 7.4.1).

Accessing student interest, and accompanying knowledge offers teachers a resource in the form of the 'expert' student. Creativity and fresh historical insights are facilitated when teachers integrate knowledge between history and other subject areas by drawing on student interests and expertise beyond the knowledge silo of disciplinary history.

10.3.1.2.3 Student Input Guidepost 3: Leverage what they do not know

Knowing what students do not know and cannot do also informs the design of haptic history lessons and their learning outcomes. The ubiquity of 'mystery objects' that are used by teachers and historical re-enactors in educator mode is an example of using gaps in student's knowledge to drive learning. 'Mystery objects'—things that are unfamiliar to the experiences of the audience—provoke curiosity and inquiry. Unfamiliar objects frame history as inquiry, a problem to be solved, an opportunity for discovery. Objects and material culture are ideal for generating the culture shock of the past as being different—'a foreign country'—and flushing out student historical unconsciousness. In classroom settings teachers strategically use gaps in students' knowledge as part of the technique of structured/staged 'slow' release of contextual information as 'breaking news' to manoeuvre student perceptions and interpretations. Identifying student knowledge gaps provides teachers with a starting point for discussions about differences between people in the past and present and thus historical consciousness. Similarly, student misconceptions and popular myths are rich starting points for object investigations that contest, myth-bust and change student (mis)conceptions about people in the past as 'dumb'.

All objects, by their nature are ambiguous and change their meaning with context (see Section 10.3.1.3.2). The absence of the original artefact’s context will always present itself as a gap in the knowledge of teachers and students alike and fuel the sense of the authenticity of the inquiry. This reinforces the notion of history as an open-ended project that involves interpretation and ‘historical imagination’.

10.3.1.3 Inputs: Objects

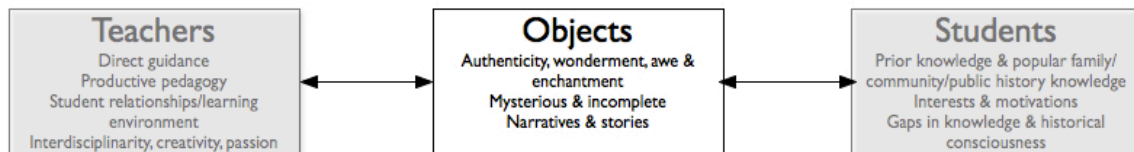


Figure 10.6: Objects input

Objects are rich and complex historical sources that can be analysed to reveal something about each and every society they encounter. They have biographies, life trajectories and have co-agency with their human producers and consumers. As such the selection and choice of objects and artefacts is an integral element of successful haptic history praxis. While there are numerous factors that should be taken into consideration in object choice (Durbin et al., 1990; Randall, 1996; Talboys, 2016), the guideposts presented here focus on the elements that emerged from this study as being important for building connection, engagement and historical consciousness.

10.3.1.3.1 Object Input Guidepost 1: Leverage authenticity—Wonderment, awe and enchantment

Materiality attests to the fact that *the past has actually existed* (Brædder et al., 2017, p. 187) and this drives engagement. The power of objects is that they trigger, in Liam’s words, ‘wonderment and awe’ (see Section 7.5). This phrase captures both the notion of the past ‘as real’ *and* that the past ‘matters’; it links to the idea that things can assert an aesthetic and affective ‘enchantment’ on people who encounter them (Gell, 1992). ‘Wonderment and awe’ does not happen in a vacuum; it is a social product grounded in contextualisation provided by collective memory and/or the work of the educator. Nonetheless, throughout this study, teachers have spoken about how ‘real’ objects serve to operate as ‘portkeys’ or ‘time machines’ that open for their students portals to the past where affect, the historical imagination and tangible sensory experience bring history alive and deliver historical sensation.

For historical re-enactors, issues of authenticity and realness take a different form. While they also experience wonderment and awe at the original/authentic museum object, their concern with authenticity is grounded in a personal experiential episteme that derives from the use of (typically) replica/historically accurate reproductions objects. The concern of authenticity is a matter of both look and functionality. If objects do not fit preconceived/research-based notions of accuracy, they are dismissed as ‘farby.’ Replica objects also need to *behave* like the original, so the embodied and experiential knowledge that derives from their use might inform interpretations of the past.

Both these aspects of authenticity (the real ‘relic’ and the simulation of an aspect of past experience through replica objects-in-use) are factors in the selection of objects, and the (substantive or procedural knowledge) learning goals they are directed to achieve. Authentic experience with an object means solving real historical problems in ways similar to those of professional historians for a real purpose and audience (Levstik & Barton, 2015; Taylor & Young, 2003). The authenticity of the object or artefact is important for their use as an historical *source*. Equally the authenticity of the experience gained through *objects-in-use* is significant in the way material culture can be used as a *method* of investigating the past. Thus, authenticity is at the heart of the notion that the materialist approach to history as both a *source and method* and as a form of ‘*authentic*’ learning.

10.3.1.3.2 Objects Input Guidepost 2: Objects are incomplete—Context shapes meaning

An object’s meaning is dynamic. It changes with context, the values and attitudes that the observer or user brings to it, its uses, and the fact that it is rarely encountered in its original context. Context is one of the shifting variables for studying objects and artefacts. An object can never be encountered in its original context; time has transformed it, use(s) has changed it and it may no longer be ‘complete’. The ‘incomplete’ nature of historical objects and artefacts is typically reflected in that it may (literally) be missing parts, but also in that its original assemblage of time, place and (other) objects is different or absent. This has already been noted as part of the student input of ‘knowledge gap’ and the value of the alluring and mysterious object, made more so by the impact of the passage of time on their very materiality.

The presence or absence of contextual information is one of the essential elements for working with objects and artefacts (Glassie, 1999). The amount of context a teacher provides when the object is selected is thus a key input factor. Contextualisation ‘inputs’ at the start of the lesson

may include background notes, inquiry questions, the presence of objects in assemblages and so forth. These contextual elements shape the inquiry direction and interpretation.

Equally—as noted above and discussed below in Section 10.3.2—‘new’ contextual information introduced by the teacher during the lesson shapes the learning and the interpretations that follow.

10.3.1.3.3 Objects Input Guidepost 3: Objects tell stories—Consider the narrative(s)

Storytelling is a potent form of discourse, and an effective element in pedagogy (Turner-Bisset, 2005). Narratives are core to history teaching and learning (Holt, 1990; Levstik & Barton, 2015; Bull & Anstey, 2013; Taylor & Young, 2003) and are the ‘fuel for the flame of human empathy and understanding’ (Allison, 2016, p. 24). Museums have long recognised this and have made telling stories through objects their core business (MacGregor, 2012). Disciplinary history is a synthesis of logico-scientific mode of evidence-based inquiry *together* with the construction and deconstruction of narratives (Bage, 2013; Holt, 1990; Cooper, 2013; Turner-Bisset, 2005).

When examining the ‘input’ of objects narrative(s) need be considered. Objects have a number of narrative dimensions. First, because things ensnare people, object-stories have an autobiographical element. They tell tales of intellect and emotion, agency and affect, through their human entanglements (Brown et al, 2015). Second, objects themselves have biographies, a social life and even personhood of their own (Appadurai, 1988; Brown et al., 2015; Kopytoff, 1988). These can be uncovered and (re)told with forensic examination, research, historical imagination and use. Another dimension of storytelling comes from the multi-temporal and multi-spatial nature of artefacts—they speak of then and now, the here and there. They also stimulate fictional narratives—flights of poetic imagination (Brown et al., 2015)—in the form of faction and fiction (Bull & Anstey, 2013).

As poly-vocal, multi-perspectival things, objects lend themselves to rich narrative possibilities (Bage 2013: 115ff). As minded-objects they can be abductively analysed to reveal not only personal narratives but technomic, sociotechnic and ideotechnic narratives of the societies and cultures that produced and used them. Thus, when selecting objects consideration needs to be made of whose narrative(s) is being told, whose narrative is hidden or obscured, what narrative(s) are being contested (or affirmed), and what yet-to-be-told narratives might an object’s analysis or use reveal.

10.3.2 Processes

Three guidepost principles are advocated for the processes involved in the haptic history model. The first, fundamental process guidepost is the centrality of *inquiry*, and with it, reflexivity. The second guidepost is the process(es) of *historical contextualisation*; the last guide post concerns the process(s) of experiencing the ‘*object-in-use*’ (see Figure 10.11).

10.3.2.1 Process Guidepost 1: Inquiry is central

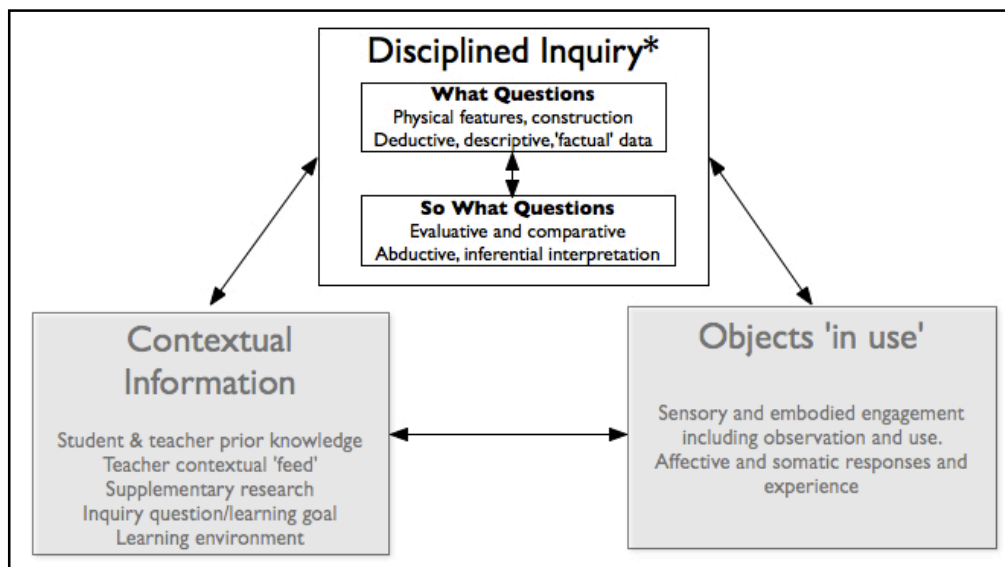


Figure 10.7: Inquiry processes

Disciplined inquiry is central for the practice of *all* history and its pedagogy (Levstik & Barton 2015; Bull & Anstey, 2013; Kitson et al., 2011; Mootz, 2014; Turner-Bisset, 2005) including history through material culture. Inquiry-based approaches are the most effective and exciting way of teaching history (Taylor & Young, 2003) and have already been discussed in Section 8.2.1. The teachers in this study universally applied the inquiry method to their history teaching and learning with artefact and objects.

While asking questions is a constant presence in each the ‘big six’ historical thinking concepts, the inquiry process guideposts presented here focus on two particular areas: sourcing questions and questions used to support perspective-taking.

Setting an inquiry question frames and contextualises historical inquiry and is an ‘input’ in the model, along with the objects selected as relevant for investigation. In this study the sourcing questions applied to objects were typically teacher-guided and ‘Socratic’ and dialogic in style

(see Section 8.2.1). The teacher role is to guide, model and direct the inquiry, providing immediate feedback on the basis of student responses and strategically providing contextual information as required.

Sourcing questions are the tools for students to engage with the sources at hand. Entry-level questions are initially asked; the questions that follow respond to what has come before. Teacher questioning guides student answers back to the source so that their answers are grounded in evidence. To borrow George's 'mantra', the iterative question in response to student answers is, 'What's your evidence for that?' (see Section 8.2.1). Thus, in teacher-guided inquiry, the teacher is attentive and involved; their questioning needs to be creative, agile and responsive.

Although there are many models and scaffolds showing inquiry questions to be used for objects and artefacts, the questions can be categorised by what they *do*. The first (and introductory) set of sourcing questions with objects and artefacts are 'what' questions. These questions are designed to encourage forensic examination of the source and maximise the extraction of factual and descriptive data (what archaeology calls *processualist* data). This question set focuses on the physical features of the objects such as material composition and construction, as well as practical function, design and content (Andreotti, 1993; Durbin et al., 1990; Elliot, 1994; Fleming, 1974; Pearce, 1994; Prown, 1982; Mootz, 2014; SMC, 2007; Sieber & Hatcher, 2012). These are deductive questions in that they seek to extract factual data from the artefact. This data is acquired via the senses of which sight predominates. However, a multi-sensory approach is encouraged (Durbin et al., 1990; SMC, 2007).

At this 'descriptive' level of object inquiry it is vital that students spend time extracting this data and *avoid* pre-emptively naming or identifying the object or artefact (Turner-Bisset, 2005). To nominalise the object is to fix it and close down the inquiry; the goal of the inquiry process is to keep it open, to maximise and exhaust the collection of information about the object. Drawing the object at this stage is considered valuable for engaging students in close observation and recording of detail (Durbin et al., 1990). This step is frequently done in group work, supported by the use of worksheets and scaffolds to direct the inquiry and record data.

The second tier of questioning in object/artefact analysis moves from description and deduction (forensic observation and analysis)—'the what'—moving up a level of abstraction. Higher order questions can be categorised as 'so what' questions; they move students to abductive

thinking (in the tradition of post-processualist archaeology). ‘So what’ questions typically involve comparative analysis and classification (Andreotti, 1993; Elliot, 1994; Fleming, 1974; Pearce, 1994; SMC, 2007; Sieber & Hatcher, 2012), functional and design evaluation (Andreotti, 1993; Durbin, 1990; Elliot, 1994), interpretation and speculation (Mootz, 2014; Fleming; Pearce, 1994; Prown, 1982; Sieber & Hatcher, 2012) and research (Elliot, 1994; Prown, 1982). Abductive inquiry uses the descriptive observational data to make inferences. Inferential and abductive inquiry opens up the ‘minded’ objects and artefacts to reveal the technomic, sociotechnic and ideotechnic aspects of the societies that produced and used them.

Notably, both tiers of the object inquiry processes work hand-in-hand with processes of contextualisation and objects-in-use. Contextual knowledge, in the form of prior knowledge, is important for object description and identification (Andreotti, 1993; SMC, 2007). Likewise, thorough object examination may require the object to be ‘used’ and ‘experienced’—it is handled, smelled, touched and in some situations, worn, tasted and ‘tried out’ (Elliot 1994; Prown, 1982). The experiential process is further discussed in Section 10.3.2.3.

The interaction of the two tiers of object-based inquiry is shown in Figure 10.8. It is important to note how two other ‘processes’ in the model intersect with the inquiry process (see Figure 10.3): the ‘feed’ of *contextual information*, and the experiential data that comes from physically and affectively interacting with, and ‘using’ *the object* (Prown, 1982, p. 9).

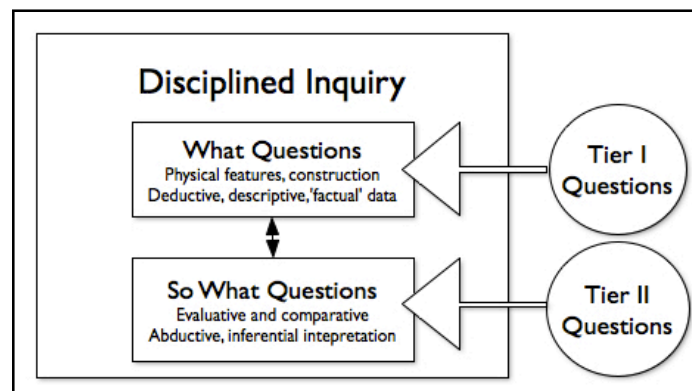


Figure 10.8: The two-tiered inquiry processes (informed by processes of contextual information and objects-in-use).

The second tier of questions elicits the historical thinking required to extrapolate from the specific and singular to the ‘bigger picture’ and combine data from a variety of sources to identify the trends and patterns that have explanatory power.

Inquiry questions and thinking scaffolds can be used to move students between Tier 1 (deductive) and Tier II (abductive) thinking (Staats 2018). This model/scaffold appears in Appendix J and is shown as an inset in the final haptic history pedagogic model (Figure 10.14).

Processes of inquiry are integral to all the components of the haptic history model, from the ‘sourcing’ questions used in object/artefact analysis, through to perspective-taking and empathy (see Section 10.4.3). Inquiry is an essential tool for reflexivity, and central to historical consciousness.

10.3.2.2 Processes Guidepost 2: Contextual information shapes inquiry

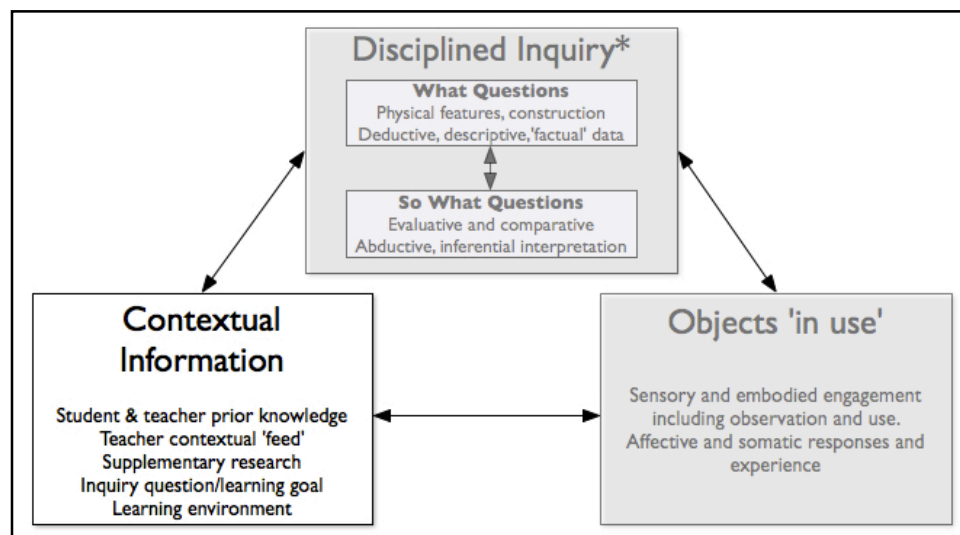


Figure 10.9: Contextual Information Processes

Contextual information has already featured as an input element in the haptic history pedagogic model. As a process it takes the form of any new information that is introduced or emerges during the object investigation. This will include teacher introduced material in the form of print resources, visual organisers, background notes, questions/inquiry scaffolds, recording sheets, metalanguage, and additional sources and/or objects. Information that students have discovered themselves also contextualises the inquiry process. This may include the fruits of student research, objects of their own that they have brought to the assemblage, and data they have acquired via cognitive, sensory, somatic, embodied and affective engagement with the object(s).

Teachers play the key role in orchestrating when, how, and what information is introduced in the learning process. There is simply too much history to teach and for students to know (Kitson

et al., 2011) so teachers must strategically introduce contextual material when, and as, it is needed to avoid overwhelming students with information overload. As illustrated in Section 8.2.6 and in the case studies in Section 9.4, teachers have a number of proven strategies to deliver this strategic ‘contextual feed’: slow/gradual release of new sources and information as ‘breaking news’ (Mootz, 2011, 2014; Tupper, 2005) or via the technique of the ‘perspective jolt’ (Mootz, 2014, 2015). Dialogic interactions and Socratic questioning can quickly be used as a form of contextual correction when presentism and anachronism threaten to derail student historical thinking.

The importance of language as a key contextualising element is emphasised. Students need language to think and communicate. Teachers can support students in working with objects by supporting them with appropriate vocabulary (Bage, 2013). This may be the language of material literacy (Andreotti, 1993) as well as specialist vocabulary pertinent to the object itself; for example, to speak about a shoe requires terms like sole, heel, toe, tongue (SMC, 2007), along with the metalanguage of history to facilitate discussion, argument and substantive communication with problematic knowledge (Bull & Anstey, 2013).

10.3.2.3 Processes Guidepost 3: *Objects-in-use reveal themselves from themselves*

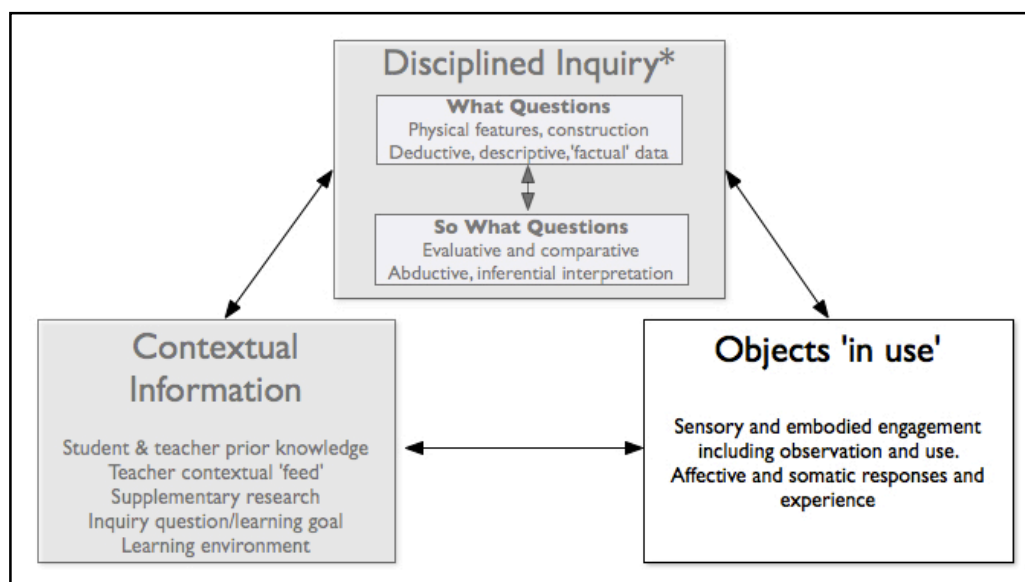


Figure 10.10: *Objects-in-use processes*

History is fundamentally performative (Denning, 1992). A strong case has been made through this dissertation that to ‘do’ history from a materialist approach necessitates a holistic experience of being in the world with objects and artefacts. It is when things are ‘in use’ that

their nature, and the full impact of the somatic and affective encounter with them, becomes apparent and a source of reflection and historical knowledge. It is ‘things-in-motion that illustrate their human and social context’ (Appadurai, 1988, p. 5); this understanding underpins why objects-in-use opens the door to an experience of pastness wider, and more comprehensively, than the use of historical imagination alone.

Historical re-enactors have led the way in moving Collingwood’s notion of ‘history as re-enactment’ beyond the intellect into minded-bodies through minded-objects. Historical re-enactment employs an experiential methodology of knowing through *doing* underpinned by the notion of kinaesthetic empathy (Foster, 1995, 2011). Kinesthetic empathy uses the principles of ‘reasonableness and common sense’ (Prown, 1982, p. 8) and the commonality of basic human physiology across time in its practice. In this, the very physicality of the material/structural affordances and constraints the objects themselves impose on bodies, feelings and thoughts is essential. The kinaesthetic empathy employed in re-enactor methodology can find transference to classroom settings, albeit in a less intense and comprehensive form.

Role-plays, simulations and living history incursions permit students the opportunity to use objects to (re)perform patterns of everyday behaviour and activity (such as an aspect of a craft or trade) and/or hold, move or press on their bodies in ways that allow them to do perspective-taking and empathy. In the 1980’s, Shemilt outlined various ‘enactive’ and ‘reactive’ teaching approaches — ‘onsite re-enactment’, ‘experimental re-enactment’ and ‘discomfort exercises’— that draw on student embodied experience as a source for empathetic understanding (Shemilt 1984, pp 66ff). In this, teacher-guided inquiry and Socratic dialogue is invaluable (and often necessary) to help students reflect on the differences between past and present. Perspective jolts and the interruptive effect of cognitive dissonance that a well-timed question can have are tools to promote reflexivity and historical consciousness.

Immersive and semi-immersive learning through objects-in-use however engaging, exciting or different, is not the only way to experience the past and ‘historical otherness’ via material culture. As concluded in Sections 10.2.1.3 and 10.3.1.3.1, the intimate encounter with original artefacts—to touch them or be in their presence—is enough to trigger awe, wonder and enchantment, and with it the ‘historical sensation’. Historical imagination and the kinaesthetic imagination work together and, when tempered by reflexivity, produces historical knowledge and historical consciousness.

10.3.3 Outputs

For teachers, the outputs of haptic history are measured by the intellectual quality of the historical knowledge and thinking it produces. As has been observed in the data, all six historical thinking concepts have been successfully taught through this materialist approach to history. Of equal significance to historical thinking (procedural knowledge) is the manner objects are used to teach the content (substantive knowledge) of history by giving the past material, existential and concrete form. Both of these outputs of haptic history are made observable in the form of substantive communication. A further significant output is less tangible, but no less important: the value and attitudinal outcomes of history that have an enduring legacy long after the classroom business of history is over. These three outputs of the haptic history model of pedagogy are visualised in Figure 10.3.

10.3.3.1 Outputs Guidepost 1: Outputs take the form of substantive communication

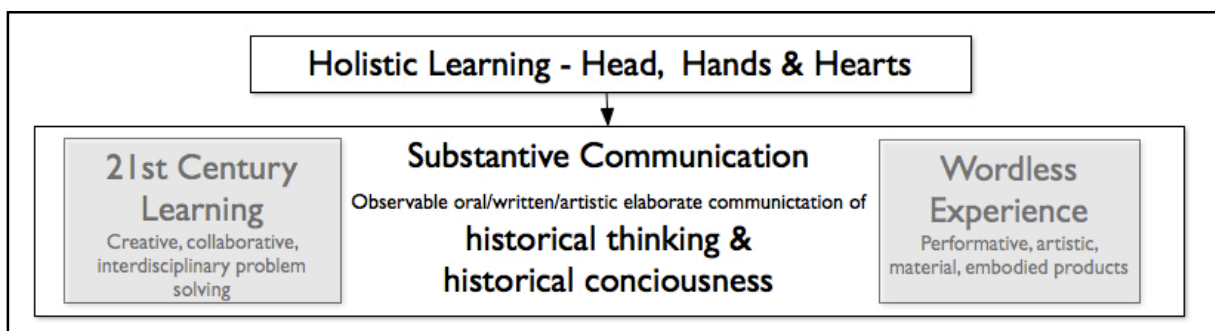


Figure 10.11: Substantive Communication output

Substantive communication is an element of intellectual quality where students communicate in an elaborate and substantive way their learned knowledge and high order thinking (Ladwig & King, 2003). It is a core output of the haptic history model of pedagogy and takes a variety of observable forms such as oral, written or artistic products. Disciplinary history, as a narrative literary form, has a bias towards elaborate and substantive communication in the form of written text types such as narratives, expositions, essays, notes and summaries. Haptic history produces rich and substantive written and oral communication in equal measure to traditional history pedagogy.

Additionally, haptic history lends itself to other non-verbal substantive communication outputs. As a materialist, performative, and embodied form of knowledge and thinking, it offers students the opportunity to create new, less text-centric types of historical knowledge that are equally

valid forms of substantive communication. A case has been made for ‘wordless experience’ as a central part of the holistic experiential episteme in the materialist approach to doing history through objects and artefacts with head, hands and heart. The challenge of accommodating awareness of ‘wordless products’ as an outcome of haptic history is the focus of the next guidepost.

10.3.3.2 Outputs Guidepost 2: Outputs can take the form of ‘wordless’ experience

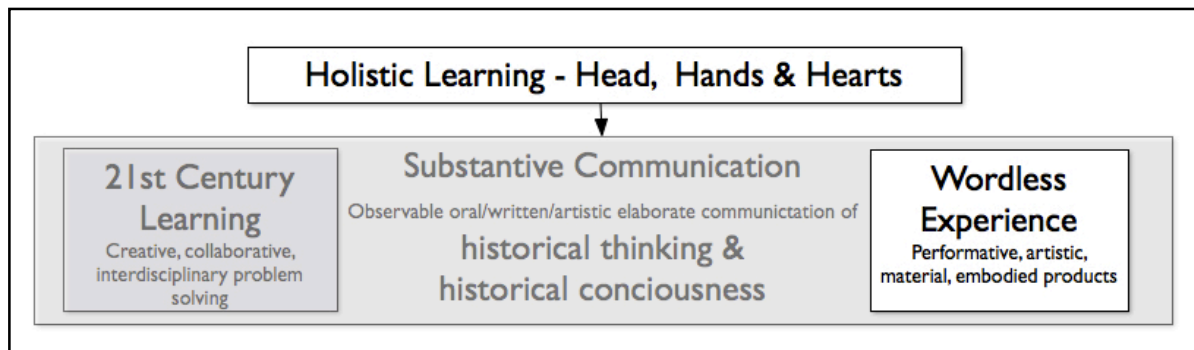


Figure 10.12: Output of wordless experience

In this study, ‘wordless experience’, the outputs of doing history haptically through materiality, have been amply illustrated. Aside from the whole range of living history and re-enactor activities, these have included the haptic history outputs of classroom and school history pedagogy. Lachlan and Michelle’s cross-curricular World War I immersion days, Giles’s Café Zimmerman, Liam’s Experimental Archaeology Club and Kerry’s Holocaust Museum Project are (among other examples in this study) exempla where the output of learning includes artistic material products that are themselves rich, concrete expressions of historical understanding and historical consciousness. In some instances, they are standalone ‘wordless’ outputs, but almost always they are complemented and enhanced by the written and verbal dimensions of substantive communication. Like the outputs of public history, the products of the haptic history model of pedagogy take history off ‘the page’ and ‘beyond the head’; they have the sense of ‘being in the world’ *with the past*.

Also significant are outputs that are less tangible, but nonetheless valuable in history pedagogy. These include a sense of connectedness with the past, the transformative encounter of the ‘historical sensation’ and the deep engagement that comes from being ‘in the flow’, where historical consciousness finds cognitive reflection but remains something fundamentally *experienced* somatic and affectively. It is also expressed in the value and attitudinal outcome so important for creating a lifelong love of learning history. These less tangible outputs are

infrequently measured or assessed, as are some of the learning outputs that haptic history shares as a form of 21st century learning. This is the subject of the next guidepost.

10.3.3.3 Outputs Guidepost 3: Haptic history as 21st century learning

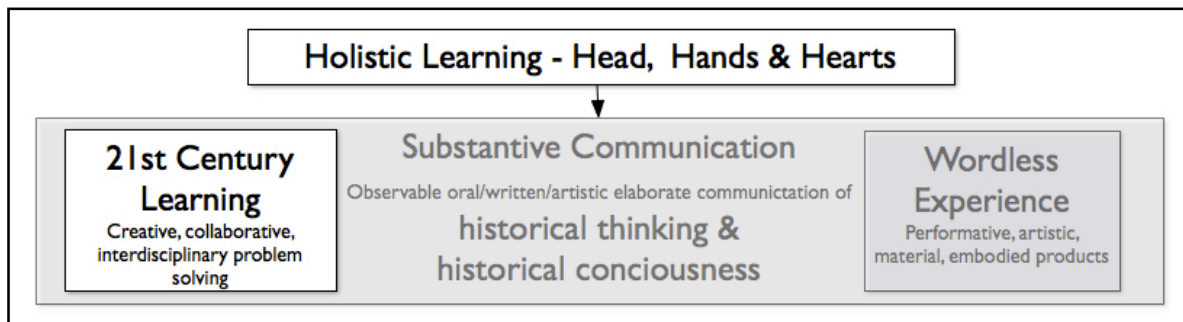


Figure 10.13: 21st century learning output

Defining what constitutes 21st century learning is problematic as evidenced by the proliferation of 21st century learning frameworks (Dede, 2010; Lamb, Maire & Doeck, 2017). As demonstrated by Yates et. al (2017), generic ‘21st Century skills’ are sometimes posited as a substitute for, rather than an addition to, subject-specific disciplinary knowledge. History, as an inquiry-based, student-centred, collaborative, problem-based and authentic form of learning, is a natural vehicle through which to teach, and learn, 21st century learning skills. However, as argued by Yates, the ‘powerful knowledge’ delivered via discipline specific forms of knowledge, such as history, derives from a strong sense of disciplinary identity with its distinctive disciplinary heuristics, methodologies and practices (Yates et. al., 2017, p.132). Haptic history, in drawing on the interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinary approaches, has the characteristics of ‘21st century learning’ (Barr et al., 2008; Dede, 2010; Lamb et al., 2017) and utility for teaching 21st century learning skills. However, in spite of its shared features with 21st century learning, haptic history’s disciplinary home is history and its core value is in the production of historical knowledge and historical consciousness.

In proposing a more expansive range of outputs, the haptic history model – along with/as 21st Century Learning, poses fresh challenges for history pedagogy. Assessment of/for learning needs to encompass a greater diversity and richness of ‘texts’ and forms beyond the written text that predominates in current history pedagogy. In broadening the range of outputs to assess, haptic history shares the issues facing assessment with transition to 21st century learning

frameworks with their emphasis on creativity, collaboration and new literacies (Dede, 2010; Kuhlthau et al., 2015).

10.3.4 The Haptic History Model

Figure 10.14 shows three parts of the Haptic History Model—inputs, processes and outputs—
assembled.

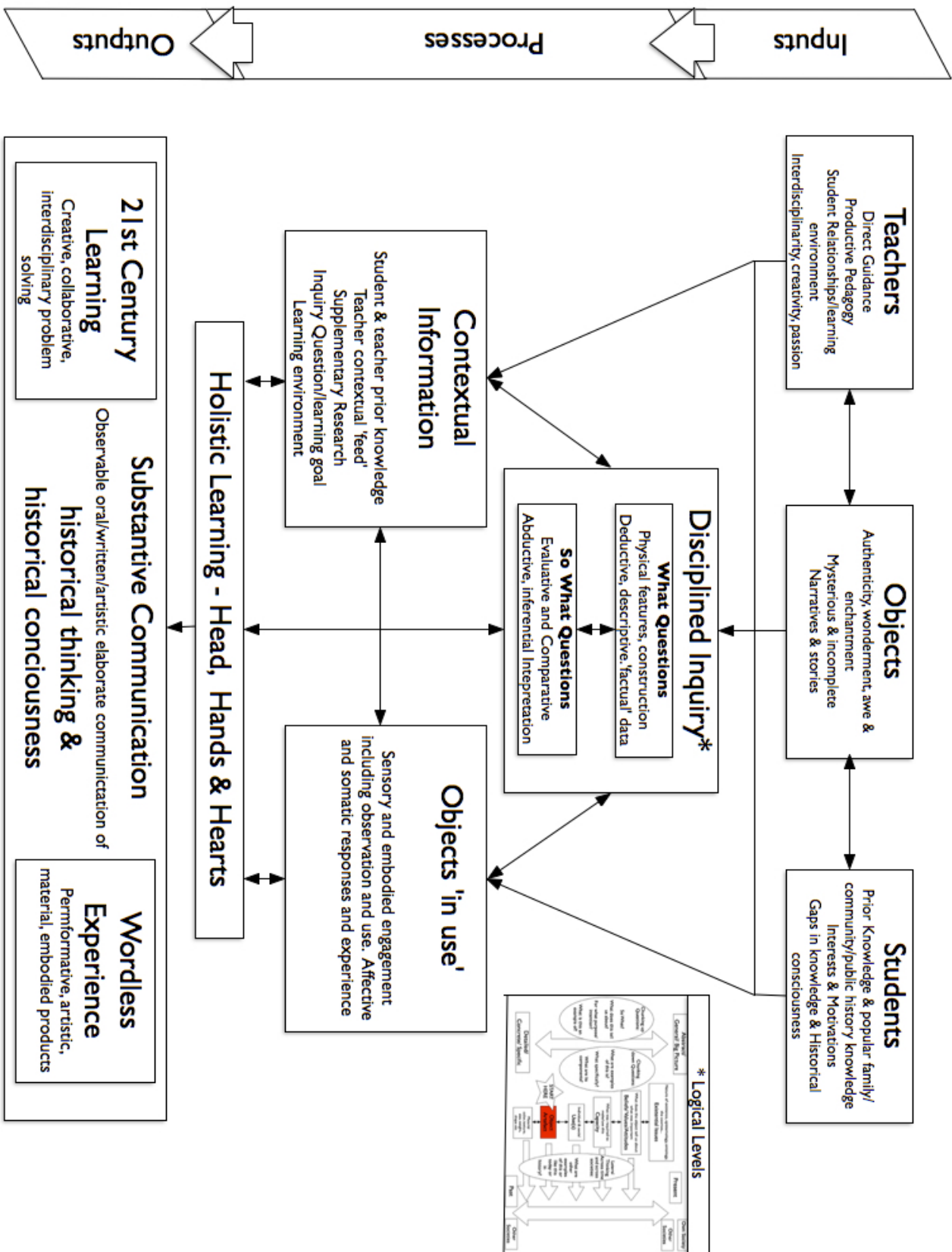


Figure 10.14: The haptic history model assembled⁷²

⁷² For inset 'Logical Levels' (Staats 2018) see Appendix J.

10.4 Implications for Further Research

This dissertation is only one step in broadening the signature pedagogy of history to encompass the materialist perspective. Its findings and proposed materialist pedagogic model raises fresh questions for further inquiry. These avenues for further research are presented in two parts: one with a specific focus on history pedagogy, the other on broader considerations for the disciplinary practice of history itself.

10.4.1 Further research: History pedagogy

This study gathered teachers' perspectives on the benefits of teaching history with and through material culture. Further research needs to add the student perspective on haptic history. Teachers have argued that haptic history improves access and equity for students and those with poor literacy and overall high levels of disengagement at school such as boys or those from low SES backgrounds. Equally, teachers claim haptic history approaches extend and enrich gifted and talented students. Assessment tools need to be developed to validate these teacher observations and measure the comparative performance of students who do history via materiality against those who do a traditional, text-heavy history pedagogy.

The 'wordless' experience and communication of 'things' (Glassie, 1999, p. 44; Tilley, 2001, p. 259) poses a further area of research around the need to teach new (material) literacies. What material culture literacy looks like and how it can be taught to students needs to be researched and further theorised. While Bull and Anstey provide a useful entry into multimodal literacy in history (and English), their five semiotic systems model (Anstey & Bull, 2010; Bull & Anstey, 2013) positions the reader as external to the text/object and does not account for the materialist entanglement of people and their things in embodied and affective modes. Current models of multimodal literacy provide a good starting point for further research to account for objects communicating in complex ways, including (but not limited to) form, function, design, material, metaphor, style and aesthetics.

In light of the significant role that interdisciplinary knowledge plays in the teaching praxis of educators in this study, another line of research emerges. This could investigate the role interdisciplinarity plays in pre-service history teacher education, and ongoing professional development, and its impact on effective history pedagogy.

Further research into developing assessment tools to measure and communicate learning outcomes from a 21st century learning framework perspective would be useful. Inquiry-based history is fundamentally a form of problem-based learning and appropriate tools need to be developed to assess the creative and collaborative processes that take multiple forms in various cognitive, somatic and affective modes.

Finally, although this study's re-enactor/living history arm drew its data from participants from both Australian and international contexts, the teacher research was drawn from a much narrower field of NSW secondary school history education. Further research into a broader range of teacher groups engaged in teaching haptic history would be valuable, including a timely focus, under the new Australian history syllabuses (ACARA, 2011; NSW BOS, 2012) on the use of objects and artefacts in the teaching of historical thinking in kindergarten and primary school settings.

10.4.2 Further research: Disciplinary history

Although this dissertation's focus was on history pedagogy, its findings are relevant to the vexed issue of disciplinary history's relationship with public history and her 'underlabourers'. A key issue identified by Giles was a question about the 'scope of history' (see Section 9.3.2). Public history pushes the boundaries of disciplinary history both in its methodologies and its focus. Clio's underlabourers seek to bring other disciplines and modes of knowing into the 'History House'. There is much room for further research on the breadth of history as a discipline and its consequences for both its pedagogy and practice.

Issues raised in this dissertation around the validity of the materialist and experiential episteme as both historical source and method are also ripe for further research. A body of research (Johnson, 2015b; McCalman & Pickering, 2010; Magelssen, 2014) is calling for a reconsideration of the place of non-standard methodologies and practices located outside of academic history and their contribution as part of an expanded archive of historical knowledge. Further research will inevitably follow, particularly in the response to the vitality of the public history challenge to traditional historiography.

A final, burning question to be addressed by future research has been posed by the material culture focus of this dissertation. It goes to the very heart of the practice of history. This dissertation has contested the view that objects are mute and inanimate. Throughout this study teachers and re-enactors have spoken about the 'presence' of objects and artefacts, their

‘minds’, their affective ‘push and pull’ and the affordances and restraints they put on human behaviour and thought. There are fruitful avenues of research into the psychological and cultural factors that belie the range of human sensitivities and embrangement with ‘things’.⁷³ An opportunity for further research arises from the challenge that a vital materialist (Bennett, 2009, 2011, 2012) perspective poses for traditional historical thinking. The notion of the (co)agency of material culture obliges a rethink to the dominant humanist paradigm of traditional disciplinary history with its anthropocentric understanding of causation and agency.

10.5 Closing Remarks

Although this study is about history pedagogy, it has been framed within the bigger picture of the disjunction between the practices and products of disciplinary history and the historical consciousness of ordinary people who seek, through public history, to connect to history at a personal level through objects and artefacts. The tensions and divisions between academic and public history have been felt in history education through widespread student disengagement with traditional history pedagogy. This disengagement is a legacy of academic history’s narrow disciplinary approaches that privilege the intellect and ocular over other ways of knowing the past, including ‘history all around us’ (Kitson et. al., 2011, p. 28) in the form of material culture.

This research supports the notion that personal encounters with material culture are the dominant mode of historical consciousness for ordinary people. Using an interdisciplinary approach featuring theories of materiality and history, I have made a case in favour of a holistic ‘head, hands and hearts’ materialist pedagogy of history. The haptic history approach broadens and enriches the pedagogy of history, engages students and teaches the historical consciousness and historical thinking.

History is, and will always remain, a process of the intellect. However, combining the cognitive with its affective and somatic dimensions through materiality expands the ‘mind’ of history, and opens up new and fresh possibilities for its study and pedagogic praxis. Embracing the notion of minded-objects and minded-bodies, with all of the affective elements that this entails, expands the archive of sources and methodologies available for the study of history and its teaching.

⁷³ One such avenue would be exploring the link between imagination and absorption using the Tellegen Absorption Scale as factors in individuals’ perspective-taking and empathetic understanding (Luhrmann, 2012).

I have always considered history to be a meta-discipline, a discipline through which each and every field of human endeavour can be studied. It is only appropriate then, that history practice and pedagogy embrace these interdisciplinary possibilities. In the context of history pedagogy, to do so through haptic history has some immediate benefits. First, it promises to help (re)align disciplinary history with its dominant public history material culture manifestations, and with it, brings pedagogic opportunities for engagement, connection and lifelong learning that are tempered by the explicit teaching of historical literacy and reflexive methodology. Second, the creative possibilities of an interdisciplinarity in collaboration with Clio and her underlabourers will serve to enliven, enrich and expand the signature pedagogy of history.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Contextualising the Author in the Research An Auto-ethnographic Statement

A.1 Implicated in the Past, Complicit in the Present

As a practising classroom history teacher of thirty-years in New South Wales schools, I am bodily, cognitively and affectively situated in the research as both a participant and observer of history education.

My disciplinary training as an ‘historian’ reminds me that, in recognising that I am a product of my cumulative experiences and my place in the present, the holy grail of ‘objectivity’, is precisely that – unattainable. In acknowledging and declaring my ‘backstory’ and role as researcher-participant in this study, I hope to loosen, a little, the bonds of subjectivity and provide myself, and the reader, choices in ‘focal length’ and ‘focus’ and ‘perspectives’ on doing history with and through ‘things’.

I was raised in a manner that made the past tangible and poignant.

I grew up in a dilapidated Federation two-bedroom workman’s semi-detached house; it smelt old, creaked and remained in a very ‘original’ state until, in my teen years I helped my mother ‘renovate’ it to the best of our means. It had remained ‘frozen’ in time because my mother, with three children under four years old, had been abandoned by my father and we lived at, or below, the poverty line for all of my formative years.

When opportunities for renovation came, wallpaper was the medium. It was a coverall for the decay that accompanies the march of time. With wallpaper and paint I was conscious that we were adding another ‘layer in time’. I recall, as a child, pencilling messages to ‘the future’ in hidden-away corners on the walls that were being covered up in a new wallpaper layer of the then present. When, years later I stripped away the paint and paper, the house became living

‘stratigraphy’. With the peel of layers I located the strata of my past, and with it memories and emotions. Below these were the layers and dust of people I never knew, and my imagination played with who they were and what their lives were like.

Place too was important for my mother. Having grown up in the house across the road, she bought our house so as to be close to her mother and sister. She was rooted to the place for all of her 86 years. This, I think was a very Irish thing to do. Both her parents were Irish and came to the street in the early 1920s and, culturally speaking, my mother was thoroughly Irish too. I believe my upbringing by an ‘Irish’ mother, aunt and grandmother played an important role connecting me to the past.

I am strongly attracted to the observation that the Irish appear to have a unique, culturally-mediated, concept of the past. This, combined with Irish cultural traditions of story-telling, means that they speak about the past with the immediacy of the present. As a child I would listen to my mother and grandmother tell stories about the past with such passion and verve that I would be convinced that an 800 year old event had occurred yesterday or last week. Stories of Cromwell, Hedge Schools, The Famine, Brian Boru, the Hill of Tara – reached out from the past and gripped me in the present. This capacity to bend, fold and conflate the sense of time was a feature of my childhood. Temporality was blurred for the purposes of immediacy and empathy. My mother was equally intoxicated with Australian History. One of our regular Sunday afternoon excursions as a child was to visit local cemeteries to ‘look at the poor dead souls’. In our graveyard ramblings we would read out headstone inscriptions, stories would be told and, we were encouraged to imagine sufferings of mothers and the terrors of infant mortality remembered and embodied in the fading and crumbling inscriptions. Tales of experiences of the Great Depression, Jack Lang and two World Wars were regaled with equal immediacy. Injustice and outrages. This was the past, tangible and poignant.

When my grandmother grew old she came and lived with us and, as a teenager, I had my first experience of some of the characteristics and behaviour of ‘memory’ with the onset of her dementia. We would sit together after school with a cup of tea; I had no unease in being with her in her past as it resurfaced in the present. She asked me about when her father would be home, she worried about the violin she had pawned, she would repeat, over and over in mid-

air, the spinning and tying motions that she had done on the machine she had worked as a child in a linen mill in Belfast, a (now invisible) machine from the past that she now operated in the present. There would also be flashes when I ‘heard’ the past – my grandmother would burst into a song or ditty, sometimes a little risqué (“Up came the Pope with a shovel up his coat...”) laugh and go onto the next thing. There would be objects too she would ask for – a 1922 rent book from the family home at 61 Stansfield Street Belfast – something which I still keep; it ties me to her, and our shared past.

There are other powerful ‘memory-objects’ that connect me and ground me in my own past and in History. Amongst the most powerful is a German crucifix recovered by my grandfather in the mud of the Somme in World War I. I barely knew my mother’s father (he died when I was three) but this object carries a connection to him and History. The cross has multiple biographies; that of the German chaplain who lost it in the mud, my grandfather who picked it up in the second week of the Battle of the Somme and went AWOL shortly after. The object hints at a state of mind, a moment of crisis that I can only imagine. My grandfather was listed as ‘deserting’ but was returned to his unit; post-war, he gave away his medals, refused a British War pension, never marched in an ANZAC Day – the only things he kept from the war (which he rarely spoke about) was the crucifix and two silver athletic medals he won as part of the heats to select participants for the 1919 Inter-Allied Games. The crucifix was kept for a reason – and reflected his state of mind in 1916 and in the years that followed. It is one of the powerful objects I use in teaching World War One – it has told multiple stories, and still has some left to tell.

As a boy I was obsessed with the Ancients Greeks, Romans and the Middle-Ages. The passion was fuelled by picture books and a mother who could draw anything, and happily constructed historical costumes from old dresses and scraps. ‘Historical dress’ was part of the imaginative ‘play’ of childhood with seemingly endless numbers of homemade swords and shields. Some of these costumes were to make their way as lesson props and costumes when I became a classroom history teacher. This kind of history ‘play’ was furthered when a high school friend introduced me to the world of table-top miniature wargaming, a place where historical battles could be simulated and hypotheses tested. Little was I to know that some forty-years later the experience was to transform into an ‘embodied’ mode when I took to the actual field of Waterloo in 2015 as an historical re-enactor. I remember as a teen studying the glossy pictures

in the Paul Hamlyn Book *The Life & Times of Napoleon* and being intrigued. At first I was confused by the anachronism of Roman imagery and symbolism being carefully revived, re-enacted and performed by the French Revolution and Napoleon. Now, as a re-enactor I understand, in a whole new way, the significance for historical consciousness of the power of blurring and employing multiple temporalities.

Another powerful encounter with history as (re)performance was the school excursion to Living History – at Old Sydney Town near Gosford. I recall the time-tunnel walk from present back into the past and emerging into a reconstructed Sydney Town, circa 1810, alive with costumed interpreters and street theatre performances. It was my first taste of ‘Living History’ and ‘Public History’. I was enthralled. When, in 2010, I joined a re-enactment group (NSW Corps of Marines) for the purposes of this study I was given unexpected privileged access to the Old Sydney Town site and objects once used by this open-air museum. When Old Sydney Town closed in 2003 many of the uniforms, muskets and other paraphernalia passed into the hands of historical re-enactors; indeed a number of the members who formed the NSW Corp of Marines had worked as staff at Old Sydney Town. The objects used at, and the performance and performative legacies of, Old Sydney Town linger yet and continue to exert agency and influence in current ‘living history’ assemblages.

With such an upbringing, it is hardly surprising that History was my favourite subject at school; it did not matter that this was ‘old style’ history with notes, document studies and essays and plenty of teacher ‘talk and chalk’. My experiences of iconic teachers like Bill McCallion were to influence my career choices and, ultimately, teaching practice. McCallion was both a piece of ‘living history’ and the master of the narrative. His distinctive turn of phrase, the use of 1940’s Australian vernacular and his whole physical hulk as a sixty-year old man made him, in the eyes of the boys, ‘history lived’. He thrived on questions and would bat away the banal and foolish with a “Nerrrrgh” and reward the serious query with a thoughtful answer that often included an anecdotal element from a first-hand experience of the ‘lived’ past. His historical narrative gave immediacy and impact. He could never be underestimated – on one occasion, having just covered the topic of the Nazi Holocaust, he looked us in the eye and made a summation that was both affectively and cognitively satisfying: “Let’s face it,” he said to us, “Hitler was a fuckwit.” This was in 1977 and, among the all-boy selective high school class of sixteen year olds, there was a shocked silence and then a genuine response. “Too right” rippled the murmur in reply. In Bill, history was real and palpable – he made it matter.

Another experience I see as relevant to the context of this study was the beginning of a life-long joy with role-playing and ‘personas’. Being introduced to the ‘Dungeons and Dragons’ phenomena in 1977 was significant in that it permitted the use of imagination to ‘play’ someone else. In the 21st century role-playing has morphed into a more embodied dimension, supported by objects in the form of LARP (Live Action Role Play). Other sorts of historically-conscious imaginative performance was to lead me, in my final university years, to dabble with the Society of Creative Anachronisms and much later again, in historical re-enactment per se.

I finished high school have done 2 and 3 unit history in the ‘documentary’ tradition of Ranke with a core set of “Select Documents”. University History was of a similar strain, but with tute papers, essays, footnotes and, in the honours stream, the seminar-method documentary history.

All these threads would find their way into my practice of haptic history.

A.2 Learning to Teach History – a journey to unconscious competence

On reflection, my pre-service teacher training barely prepared me for my entry into teaching. My own schooling, plus an extended practicum at an upper North Shore girls’ school did not prepare me for my first appointment with the NSW Department of Education at a dustbowl, demountable-littered overcrowded school in a housing-commission area in South-Western Sydney. I spend most of my inaugural year in culture shock and a state of exhaustion, the latter exacerbated by a public transport commute that necessitated a daily 5 am departure from home. Most of the year was a blur; a day-to-day survival exercise with an absolute ‘nightmare’ teaching load dominated by disaffected and disengaged junior classes who struggled with basic literacy and regulation.

Nonetheless, the school represented the best seven years of my teaching career – it taught me my craft: classroom management and what it takes to engage students and teach them historical thinking. I was far from being alone in my situation – about one-third of the staff (annually) were first-year out teachers and we were a young and vibrant staff willing to try new things; there was real camaraderie and mutual support.

Among the key learnings and insights I took from my pre-service teaching was a teaching approach and a resource that I have used and continue to return to, in various permutations, throughout my teaching career – The Schools Council History 13-16 Project (now known as the School's History Project) "What is History" Kit. Emerging out of the research of Hallam and Bruner, it was founded on the notion that students, with the right support and scaffolds, were capable of doing 'historical thinking'. Focussing on procedural knowledge, it framed history as inquiry, a problem to be solved, actively constructed, derived from (often problematic, incomplete and fragmentary) sources where the evidence is extracted and conclusions formed are debated and contested. In short, history is 'detective work'. The 'Mystery of Mark Pullen' component of the "What is History" kit was a lesson exemplum whose features I would recast in new forms using objects and artefacts; the Pullen mystery readily lends itself to this since it revolves around the use and interpretation of the detritus of an artefact – a wallet and its contents.

Another defining moment in my early teaching career that gave me an appreciation of the role that objects and artefacts could play in haptic learning came with exposure to a Vietnam veteran, turned historical re-enactor. His name was Peter Lee and throughout the 1980s and until his death in 1993 had a travelling school show that explored ancient and medieval history (and later World War I) through objects and artefacts. He engaged and captivated, through objects, touch, movement and narrative, students who were, in other learning settings, completely disengaged. There was plenty of 'yuck' in his tales; he told stories of how he had, in effect, employed the skills of experimental archaeology. The weapons he made and allowed students to hold had been tested for their effect on animal skulls and carcasses. It was a version of 'Myth-busters' and 'Horrible Histories' long before the popular science and history shows of these titles emerged.

Yet there was something else in Peter Lee's successful formula. In his school performances he wove through his narrative about arms and armour through time, his own story as a soldier. In a time before Vietnam and the veteran experience was in the syllabus, he permitted questions about his personal experience in Vietnam. This gave him authority, credibility and authenticity in a performance that explored the 'soldier experience through time'. It also made him an affective force – and this helped to connect students to history.

Peter's later show featured a World War One experience; I remember sitting with him afterwards and discussing the learning that had occurred. I was struck by how much the performance had drained him – emotionally as much as physically. Perhaps, as a Vietnam veteran, he was 'too close' to World War one. Shortly after I heard reports of this death; his van, fully laden with his teaching objects, most of which he had made himself by hand, had crashed. He was killed by the weight of his own objects, catapulted, by the force of the impact, from the rear of the van into the driver's cabin. I am told that much of his arms and armour live on; bought by fellow re-enactors.

Peter Lee's show proved to be a catalyst for change in my approach to teaching and it resonated with my other formative experiences and early encounters with historical re-enactment (mainly through the 'SCA' - Society for Creative Anachronisms). Mick Evans, an early-career teaching colleague, and I decided to emulate Peter Lee's success with our own version of a 'hands-on', object-oriented approach to engaging students in classroom history and spent many an hour after school and on weekends constructing objects and devising 'hands-on' lessons for students. One of our first exercises was in how to make chainmail. Before long we had students 'knitting' sheets of chainmail armour. Another early success was mummifying a rat – 'Rathotep'. It incorporated source analysis (Herodotus' account and experiments from Manchester University), lab coats, visceral yuck, home-made canopic jars, funerary furniture and student writing (procedure texts and creative writing). This century it takes the form of a fish mummy ('Troutenkhamun') and student-made films. In Year 9 Australian colonial history, we devised leg irons (combination of hardware from 'Magnet Mart' attached to a shot-puts borrowed from the PE department); students were dressed in homemade, hand printed, calico convict outfits and marched around the school in a chain gang before returning to class to write empathetic accounts of convict life. There was even the construction of a cat-of-nine tails. The finished article was used on a blackboard loaded with chalk dust to study the 'lash patterns' in conjunction with written eye-witness, primary source, accounts of convict floggings. A language lesson looking at idiom legacies ("let the cat out of the bag"... etc) followed. There were also gustatory experiments (Roman feasts with mystery dishes that had to be 'taste-tested' and tasting notes recorded), and lessons about the Dutch discovery of Australia experienced through the feel, taste and smell of East Indian spices. This lesson concluded with a slice of a Dutch (cinnamon) Spice cake made using a genuine 17th recipe. This is but to list a few of the catalogue of 'hands-on' history activities we developed in those days.

In the 1990's I changed schools to a comprehensive high school in the Southern Highlands. The methods developed in the 1980s worked equally well in a new school context. 'Hands on history', the inquiry approach, a 'horrible histories' style focus in conjunction with written sources made history in my new school a 'boom' subject. Appealing to academic and non-academic students alike, History entered a 'golden age' at the school with demand for elective history and senior history outstripping demand. HSC History results became the flagship of school HSC results.

A toxic culture at the school saw an end to that 'golden age' for history at the school. History as an independent faculty was too successful, especially in the drive to 'economies' which saw the move to mega-KLA faculties. The History Faculty at the school was 'HSIEfied' and its leadership handed to a lack-lustre geographer who had no interest in history. Disappointed and disillusioned, I resigned from teaching in 2000 and spent the next five years completing my Masters Degree whilst working for a pharmaceutical company. I soon took on the role as a trainer in the organisation, and this gave me a new teaching experience and perspective – that of adult education – with the autonomy and flexibility for the learner to choose the mode and medium of instruction.

A.3 Learning to Teach History with Objects – a journey to conscious competence

Thankfully, I was lured back into teaching by a colleague whom I had supervised as a practicum teacher in the 1980's. I returned to South-Western Sydney (my teaching alma mater) to be employed initially as a literacy specialist with a junior history teaching load. I employed the proven haptic history teaching methods with success and the new literacy-focus taught me the value of 'visible thinking'. As a result, graphic organisers became a key feature of the way I now taught 'hands-on history'. In my time away from schools, my attraction to artefacts and objects continued and my object teaching collection had grown to include both professionally made replicas and original artefacts.

Time away from history teaching had given me the opportunity to reflect on my teaching practice. I knew from pragmatic experience that teaching with and through objects and artefacts

‘worked’. But conscious competency was no longer enough. I needed to know ‘why’ the method worked if I were to refine and share the approach with colleagues in the profession.

The opportunity to take the next step came with the opportunity to attend, as a delegate, the 2008 Australian History Summer School. The research component of the school allowed me to make my first forays into the museum education sector and examine their use of objects for learning. I had access to the Australian War Memorial ‘Memorial Boxes’ and teacher evaluations, and the opportunity to speak with museum curators and experts at the National Museum of Australia. I was introduced to material culture theory and constructive approaches in Museums. Especially enlightening were the works of Hein, Falk and Dierking. In this early research I discovered that the UK museum sector were among the world leaders in museum education.

My research endeavours were furthered by a Westfield NSW Premier’s History Teachers’ Scholarship that allowed me to travel, in 2009, to visit more than thirty object-based museum learning programs in institutions across the United Kingdom and Ireland. The goal of this research was to investigate how best practice in object-based learning in the museum sector could be transferred to Australian schoolrooms.

The product of the research was published and presented between 2010 and 2011 in the form of a report to the NSW Government, two articles for the NSW HTA and a paper delivered at *Building Bridges for Historical Learning: Connecting Teacher Education and Museum Education” Symposium, at Canberra University*. This preliminary research became the springboard for the current study.

Appendix B: Participant Information

School of Education
University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751
Australia
Telephone :02 9852 5222



Participant Information Sheet (General)

Project Title: Hands, heads and hearts: Haptic History. Student, teacher and 'life-long learner, perspectives on haptic history in non-museum contexts.

Project Summary: The purpose is to investigate and understand the nexus between the haptic ('hands'/touch), cognitive ('head'/thinking) and affective ('hearts'/emotive) dimensions of learning about, and experiencing, history through objects in non museum settings. The study aims to draw together understandings about the learning utility of objects/artefacts/relics from a multi-disciplinary practice for the purposes of enriching the practice of history teaching.

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by John Staats, PhD Candidate, School of Education, Faculty of Arts under the Supervision of Dr. Susanne Gannon, Associate Professor and School of Education.

How is this study being paid for?

This is not a funded project but is being undertaken for doctoral study.

What will I be asked to do?

Participate in an interview where you will be asked about your experiences and perspectives about 'doing' history through the use of objects and artefacts.

How much of my time will I need to give?

Approximately 60 minutes.

What specific benefits will I receive for participating?

Possible benefits include:

1. An opportunity to reflect on your practice of 'hands-on' haptic history.
2. Sharing your perspectives to help others better understand this approach to learning about history (including classroom teachers, with the aim of enriching the practice of history teaching in schools).

Will the study involve any discomfort for me? If so, what will you do to rectify it.

No

How do you intend on publishing the results.

Please be assured that only the researchers will have access to the raw data you provide.

The findings of the research will be published in [Insert publication details].

*Please note that the minimum retention period for data collection is five years.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation is entirely voluntary: and you are not obliged to be involved. If you do participate, you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

If you do choose to withdraw, any information that you have supplied [Enter text].

Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?

Please contact John Staats should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether or not to participate.

John Staats
13221544@uws.student.edu.au or
john.staats@det.nsw.edu.au
0434 274093

What if I have a complaint?

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is [enter approval number]

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.

Participant Information Sheet (Teacher)

Project Title: Hands, heads and hearts: Haptic History. Student, teacher and 'life-long learner; perspectives on haptic history in non-museum contexts.

Project Summary:

The purpose is to investigate and understand the connection between touch, thinking and emotional engagement when teaming about, and experiencing, history through objects and artefacts in settings outside of museums (schools). The study's aim is to understand the value and place of the use objects/artefacts/relics in history teaching, and draws on insights from other areas of learning such as anthropology, archaeology, museum and material culture studies.

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by John Staats, PhD Candidate School of Education, Faculty of Arts under the Supervision of Associate Professor, Dr. Susanne Gannon, School of Education, Faculty of Arts.

How is this study being paid for?

This is not a funded project but being undertaken for doctoral study.

What will I be asked to do?

Conduct an observed (and videotaped) classroom history lesson that has a focus on the use of historical object and artefacts to teach history. After the observed lesson, at a mutually convenient time, you will be interviewed by the researcher and asked about your experiences and perspectives on teaching history and why and how you use objects and artefacts to teach history.

How much of my time will I need to give?

One history lesson (40-60 minutes) and an interview (up to 60 minutes)

What specific benefits will I receive for participating?

Possible benefits include:

1. An opportunity to reflect and discuss your professional practices as a history teacher.
2. To share, through the research, your perspectives, methods and skills to enrich the practice of history teaching in schools.
3. Feedback, via the research, on students perspectives about learning history using objects and artefacts.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me? If so, what will you do to rectify it?

The study involves no discomfort.

How do you intend on publishing the results?

Please be assured that only the researchers will have access to the raw data you provide. The findings of the research will be published in a PhD Thesis.

*Please note that the minimum retention period for data collection is five years.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation is entirely voluntary: and you are not obliged to be involved. If you do participate, you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

If you do choose to withdraw, any information that you have supplied will be destroyed.

Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?

Please contact John Staats should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether or not to participate.

John Staats
13221544@usw.student.edu.au or
john.staats@det.nsw.edu.au or by phone,
0434274093

What if I have a complaint?

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H10758.

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.

Appendix C: Consent Form

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services



Participant Consent Form

Project Title: Hands, heads and hearts: Haptic History. Student, teacher and 'life-long learner' perspectives on haptic history in non-museum contexts.

I,....., consent to participate in the research project entitled: Hands, heads and hearts: Haptic History. Student, teacher and 'life-long learner' perspectives on haptic history in non-museum contexts.

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to:

Being interviewed
The audio recording of the interview

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Return Address:


This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.

The Approval number is:

Appendix D: Re-enactor/Living Historian Survey and Report

D.1 Survey

Historical Re-enactor/Living History Survey

1. What is your age and gender? 

I am male

I am female


15-19 years

20-30 years

31-40 years

41-50 years

51+ years

*** 2. How many years have you been involved in historical re-enactment/living history scene?** 


1-5 years

6-10 years

11-20 years

21+ years

Other (please specify)

*** 3. What historical periods do you/have you re-enact(ed)? (tick as many as apply)** 

Ancient


Medieval


Early Modern

Colonial (18th/19th century)

Modern


Other (please specify)

4. What is your usual occupation? 


* 5. How often do you do living history/ historical re-enactment activities? 


- Weekly
- Monthly
- Bi-annually
- Once a year

Other (please specify)

6. What were your experiences of school history? How does your experience of doing history through re-enactment compare? 

7. Why do you use objects and artefacts to explore history? What roles do objects play in your interpretation of history as an historical re-enactor/living history enthusiast? 

8. Have you ever experienced as a reenactor what is termed 'period rush', 'seeing the elephant' or 'the magic/golden moment'? If so, could you please briefly recount how it happened. 

* 9. Would you be interested in being further involved in this research into the role that objects play in people's understanding and interpretation of history? If so, please provide your contact details. 

- Yes
- No

D.2 Survey Report

Emerging Themes, Haptic History Re-enactor Survey A Comparison of School History Experience with Historical Re-enactment/Living History

John Staats, PhD Candidate, Western Sydney University

The Survey Sample

This electronic survey posted via a Survey Monkey Questionnaire returned 349 responses. The questionnaire opened November 18, 2015 and closed January 23, 2016.

The question was promoted to the ‘world’ re-enactment community via a number of Living History/Re-enactor Facebook sites. These were:

1. On 18 November, 2015:

- *Author’s own facebook page:*
<https://www.facebook.com/john.staats.102/posts/10204008797899956>
- *Waterloo 200 :*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/waterloo200/>
- *21 eme Regiment de Ligne*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/29802563009/>
- *La Brigade Francais*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/346411382085061/>
- *Living History Forum*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/202525346458555/>
- *Living History - Show Your Impressions*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/276536462442923/>

2. 19 November, 2015:

- *Re-enactment Today NZ/Australia*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/285240561590840/>
- *Napoleonic Re-enactment*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2259248979/>
- *Australian Living History & Historical Reenactment Groups/Clubs/Associations*
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/190426904424502/>

Most of the responses (337) were collected between 16th and 23rd of November.

Survey Design

The survey was an online instrument of 10 questions (with questions 9 & 10 being the offer of further involvement in the study and contact details, respectively). The survey gathered data on demographics (age, gender, occupation and location), years involved in historical re-enactment/the living history movement, historical periods re-enacted or 'lived', and the frequency of participation in historical re-enactment/living history activities. Three questions (6, 7 & 8) were open field responses and provided the opportunity to apply grounded theory to identify emerging themes and prospective interviewees.

Respondents' Demographics

The majority of the respondents were from North America (238), Europe (70) and Australia (38) (see Figure 1). This data suggests that historical re-enactment and living history are a phenomena of the affluent West (participation in this hobby is expensive and is predominately a leisure pastime). Equally the bias of the survey instrument (posted in English and via the internet) may equally account for the demographics of the respondents.



Figure 1 Respondent World Location

The majority of the respondents were male (56.73%) and adults (20 -51+ years); the largest age group were those aged fifty years and over (31.52%); see Figure 2. The survey sample reflected, in equal proportions, the experiences of a wide range of re-enactment and living history experience from 1-5 years to 21 years or more (Figure 3).

Q1 What is your age and gender?

Answered: 349 Skipped: 0

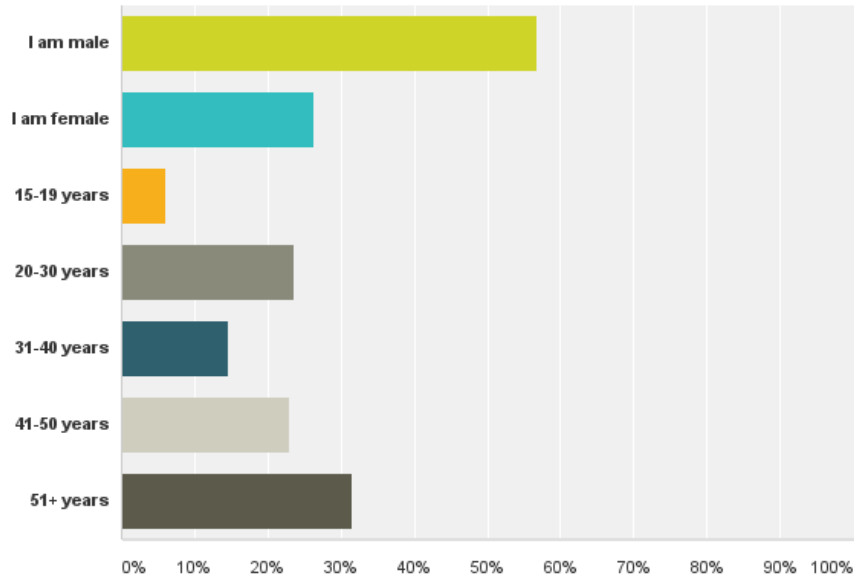


Figure 2 Respondent Age and Gender

Q2 How many years have you been involved in historical re-enactment/living history scene?

Answered: 349 Skipped: 0

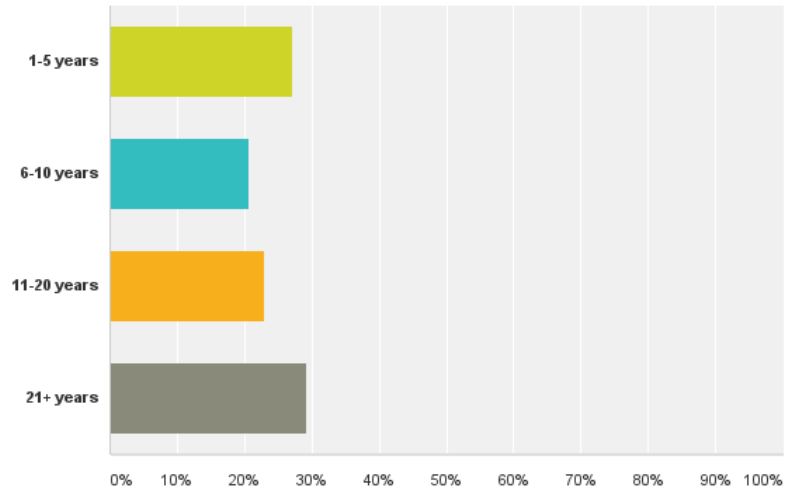


Figure 3 Years Involvement in Re-enactment/Living History

A wide-range of occupations (Figure 4) were reported; these were, in the main, from the professional, semi-professional or 'white collar' sectors. The top ten occupations reported (a total of 331/349) in order of magnitude were 'student' (46), 'retired' (29), 'manager' (17),

‘teacher’ (16), ‘museum worker’ (10) ‘administration/sales assistant’ (9), ‘nurse’ (8), ‘business owner/analyst’ (6), ‘sales’ and ‘historical’ (including museum interpreters, writers and tailors).



Figure 4 Respondent Occupation

What was your experience of school history? How does your experience of ‘doing’ history compare? Emerging themes

Respondents’ experience can be grouped into three major themes; dominant is the view that their school history experience was ‘terrible’ and their experience of living history/re-enactment is ‘better’; the second theme reflects those who had positive experiences of school history and living history represents an extension of their ‘learning’ in a post-school context. The third theme is that ‘doing’ history through re-enactment and living history is neither ‘better’ nor ‘worse’ than school history, it’s just *different*.

School History was Terrible

Nearly a third (103) of respondents reported a negative experience of ‘school history’; of these around a quarter used the word ‘boring’ to describe their experience. For some (11) the intensity of their negative experience was demonstrated by the sentiment that they ‘hated history’ at school or that it was ‘woeful’ or ‘deplorable’. One respondent described his experience as:

Miserable. I did not know I loved history until I had an amazing college professor who told real individual stories of lives and material culture in an interesting way...

Another respondent was equally passionate:

I loathed history as a child... There was no connection to apply history to my world.

A recurring sentiment was that

School history was lame and woefully inadequate.

and that:

High school history was awful-- dry, boring and repetitive.

Indeed, for some the experience was so negative that they are still completely dismissive of the history that they were taught at school:

... history was rubbish at school lol

School was a waste

School history was a joke

School history=crap

A number of respondents volunteered reasons for their negative perceptions of history as taught in schools. Six respondents complained specifically about the quality of the history teacher as a factor in their dissatisfaction:

School teachers know bugger all, they are not worth even considering, total idiots

History was taught by coaches posing as teachers-- who put no effort into their lectures and exhibited zero enthusiasm for history.

Others perceived their negative experiences of school history as deriving from the prescriptive nature of the syllabus (covering only certain periods and/or being insufficient in depth):

The history taught in the schools I went to was pretty watered down and uninformative

Shoddy and dumbed down

School history sucked for the most part. The curriculum was limited and uninviting

I loved history as a child until I got to school. Then the syllabus was designed to prevent anyone enjoying history.

School History was vague, at times incorrect, and incredibly incomplete.

School History is often lacking the true details of history that cannot be covered in a short amount of time

A number (10) identified a teaching approach focussing too much on content - 'names and dates' and tests – as opposed to skills as a factor in their negative experience:

Grade Nine history - English kings and queens - sucked big time.

Most of the text books and teachers talked about history as names, dates, and places.

School history was uninteresting and regurgitated dates and facts.

List of dead kings and queens, and the battle of Hastings.

School History was Good but Re-enactment/Living History is 'better'

Sixty-eight respondents reported a positive experience of school history and acknowledge this experience as the foundations of a path that led to involvement in historical re-enactment and living history:

School history created / inspired / informed interest in living history

I would say school history influenced me to get into living history

School history was engaging and the reason why I wanted to re-enact, history was fun growing up.

For a couple of respondents, the connection between school history and involvement in re-enactment and living history was direct and explicit:

I believe I had a unique experience in terms of the way I was taught history in school. I attended private school from 4th through 8th grade. Much of the instruction included living history. For example, in 4th grade we recreated the Oregon trail with wagon trains and dressed in bonnets and dresses and walked the trails on the vast 100 acre campus. In 8th grade we recreated the sinking of the Titanic in a student's swimming pool to conclude our section on the book " A Night To Remember". We also visited Colonial Williamsburg.

Teachers appear to be influential in encouraging lifelong learning of history beyond the classroom (14):

I love history and I had great teachers who taught me history. My history teacher actually is the one who brought me into re-enactment.

I was fortunate enough to have teachers who loved history, and one in particular who was a collector and brought items in. It stoked a passion in me for history that has never faded.

... a teacher called Roger Milton when I was 10. An Englishman that dressed in tweed and smoked a pipe. He inspired and lit the fuse.

Notwithstanding the positive experience of school history, a number (21) reported that whilst school history was good, re-enactment and living history is 'better' for a variety of reasons. It is 'fun':

School history led me to a love of history, re-enactment lets me indulge in it

Loved school, but bringing it to life is much more fun and interesting

I enjoyed my school history classes, but history is far more interesting with swords and explosions.

Part of the appeal of historical re-enactment and living history derives from the fact that it is an active, participant-centred and directed form of learning:

Better to live it than read it.

Re-enactment is hands-on, fun

School was good but I have learned more through doing re-enactment than I have in any classroom

I really feel that people learn more through their hands-on interactions in a re-enactment than they could hope to in a classroom

Learning in School is very hands off, whereas living history is a much more hands-on approach.

Through re-enactment, learning is more what I want to know, always doing research on what interests me the most.

Furthermore, a number of participants identified that living history and re-enactment catered for their 'learning style':

I learn better through doing and I find it gets a better response from people who are learning to show them rather than tell them.

A hands-on lesson is much better than just reading. Learning the trades and crafts as well as swordplay has been amazing and it sticks in my mind better

"Hands-on" is the best way to learn.

For many, the appeal of living history and historical re-enactment is the social opportunity it provides; companionship in a community of like-minded individuals:

Through re-enactment I discovered the broader discussions happening around campfires shed light upon context, practicalities of everyday life, and provided access to a wide range of knowledge and expertise.

I started doing my own research and that got me into living history as a way to share it with others

I have learned more being involved in historical re-enactments than I did in school. Partly from my own research and partly from others in the living history community.

Another appealing aspect of historical re-enactment and living history is that it provides the opportunity for rigorous research in order to locate, interrogate and engage with primary sources:

when I started to do living history I realized that my history classes only had taught me to recite facts but not how to research and understand history

School involved very little work with primary documents, re-enacting is all about primary sources.

School history was limited to what we read in a textbook. I've done far more research, and found a love of history through re-enacting

Re-enactment has given me the opportunity to research and learn so much more. It has been an extension of my early learning.

I have learned much more by doing research for impressions.

Through re-enactment, I have become curious, and spend much of my spare time researching, in order to make my experiences more authentic and educational for others.

Re-enacting is far superior. Mostly due to the freedom to research whatever you want instead of being limited like in school.

I find that I learn the most doing the research prior to putting together an impression for an event, but the events do provide some unique insights and "a ha!" moments.

Re-enactment can be very serious on the hardcore LH level with a huge amount of research and analysis going into it. It can also be relatively light touch and a fun camping weekend. I engage on both levels.

I have a degree in history and the classes were nothing compared to the research I need to prepare for a living history event.

School History and Re-enactment/Living History are ‘different’

Regardless of school history experience, positive or negative, sixty-eight respondents expressed a view that acknowledged that historical re-enactment and living history is not necessarily ‘better’ or ‘worse’ than the classroom/school history; it is simply *different*.

Its non-textual, experiential and practical approach can make it more accessible and provides fresh insights: it provides new ways for people to connect with, and experience the past.

Re-enactment, along with many years of study for pleasure, allows for a richer and more nuanced approach to history.

School history = books. Re-enactment = doing history.

Re-enacting grants a more visceral understanding of the circumstance and condition of the person on the field. It in no way captures exactly the conditions, but I have a better understanding when reading first person accounts and looking at combat chronicles.

I had interactive history as I went to a visual and performing arts magnet school till high school. In high school I had excellent teachers who engaged us in the culture not just dates.

School established an interest, re-enacting gave me a huge amount of knowledge and an entirely new perspective on the history I recreate.

Re-enactment/Living history gives you an in-depth, hands-on approach. You get to learn the WHO, WHERE, WHAT, WHEN, and WHY... sometimes even HOW. You are able to become one-on-one with history by looking at it through a viewpoint different from a book.

Doing living history, in garb with period tools helps to create the connection with the past.

Living history is another level of understanding of history beyond academic study.

Furthermore, living history is regarded as a more appropriate vehicle through which to explore social history and the experience of the 'common man':

I went to school back in the days of Big Man and Wars history, and it never satisfied me, I always wanted to know how ordinary folks lived. Living history was the answer to that yearning.

School history was uninteresting as it came from books. Living history puts us in their shoes to grasp a better understanding of what they went through.

School history focuses much more on the political view of war. You learn much more about the daily life of a soldier through re-enacting.

Loved history but it was about those in power, re-enacting is about ordinary people

only by living the period can you truly begin to understand what life was like and how people actually coped

School history was memorising facts/dates/events and understanding historical themes. Re-enactment is social history the lives of people of those times

Social History is more vivid through re-enactment

Compared with living history and historical re-enactment, 'History' has a different focal length. Traditional 'History' takes a wide angle view of the past (big picture, grand and sweeping narratives) whilst living history has a narrower angle of view with its focus on the everyday minutiae of life in the past:

A total difference. School painted in broad strokes, re-enacting gives the details

Can't compare them - school was more big picture, in re-enacting I've learned more small picture/subaltern/etc. history.

Re-enacting makes no comparison - the interactivity and depth is really engaging. While there are so many little details that may seem unnecessary to the average student, it makes an experience more memorable.

Re-enacting made me learn to research specifics. School taught generalities.

The ability (to) completely focus on one area with attention (to) the most minute details are what I've experienced in this hobby.

Re-enactment goes into the finer details

School history teaches the broad, re-enacting we can be specific

History in school was a very broad subject about overall trends, measured in years, decades, centuries. Re-enactment is much more focused on the day-to-day experiences of individuals. I don't think they are very similar.

Another feature of re-enactment/living history is the opportunity to explore an area of personal interest and to do so in greater depth that was allowed for in school history.

Also if you choose to re-enact a period it's because you're personally interested in it. School history didn't go in depth into the areas I'm passionate about.

living history conveys a richer, more in-depth and contextual understanding.

School history was much broader whereas re-enacting can be focused on a particular interest in depth

School history was abbreviated for the masses... re-enactments let me get in depth view of the parts that I wanted to see most.

In participating in living history, I get to focus in on the cultures and history that interests me the most.

I spent a lot of time in school learning history that didn't interest me. As a hobby, I only have to focus on the stuff I find interesting.

Through re-enactment, learning is more what I want to know, always doing research on what interests me the most.

There is also a perception that historical re-enactment and living history 'brings the past alive' in a way that is different to book or school history. Both the historian and the living historian attempt to recreate the past; the book or document-based historian, according to the philosopher-historian Collingwood uses 'historical imagination', based on evidence from sources, to achieve this.

The living history historian and re-enactor employ a physical approach – the reconstruction of the past is built around objects, people, places and occasions. The different methodologies complement each other and enrich the study of history by generating new perspectives that provide the opportunity to contest dominant historical narratives and interpretations.

The materiality and physicality of living history and historical re-enactment has provided a platform for an emerging popular form of ‘experimental archaeology’.

History was always interesting but re-enactments bring it to life

It is one thing to read about it in a book, it is another thing to live it (As best we can).

Through re-enactment, one has gotten the personal perspective through reading veteran interviews and wearing the same uniform and equipment as the veterans did. It becomes a lot more real and palpable, relatable, every soldier becomes a real person rather than numbers in some history book.

I have a BA in History and a lot of follow on education in the area. I find that re-enacting and experimental archaeology inform much of my reading and work.

I currently am working on my masters in history. Re-enacting has expanded my knowledge of micro and social history.

I have a MA in History. Living history is a complement to books, films, etc.

Living history has been a great way to absorb certain tactile experiences to complement "big picture" understanding and research.

It lets me experiment-if GI Joe says he did this, I treat Living History as a form of experimental archaeology to recreate exactly what was done THEN.

Because living history is a ‘different’ way of doing history it provides new and additional avenues – cognitive, affective and haptic - for individuals to understand, and connect with, the past. This facilitates new perspectives and understandings that ‘book history’ alone cannot provide.

Concluding Thoughts

This report is an analysis of only part of the data from the survey.

Some other findings to note, in passing, is that fifty-eight respondents (rough 1 in 6) reported that they have experienced the phenomenon called, variously, ‘period rush’, ‘seeing the elephant’, ‘the golden moment’; of these 1 in 4 nominated Waterloo 2015 as an episode when they experienced ‘period rush’.

There were a wide variety of thoughts and responses to the question on the role that objects play in living history/historical re-enactment. Some viewed the role of artefacts and objects from a functional perspective (‘without objects I cannot re-enact or do living history’) and others reported that the objects and settings they use variously influence and control what they do in a re-enactment/living history context. Indeed, a number of respondents said that objects and settings in living history/re-enactment contexts compel them to ‘think’ and feel differently to the way that they think and behave in the present. Objects play an important role in assisting re-enactors and living historians feel connected (cognitively, affectively and haptically) to the past.

Over a third (more than one-hundred) of respondents very generously indicated that they would like to be further involved in the author's research. From these I will randomly select a number, make contact by email and set up, by mutual convenience, a time and means for a follow-up interview by phone (voip) or video conference ('Skype' 'Google Hangouts' or 'Zoom').

What is also evident is that historical re-enactors and living history participants are reflective and more than capable of critiquing their own reconstructions of history. This acumen goes beyond the 'farb' and 'stitch-nazi' disputes concerned with degrees of 'accuracy' or 'authenticity' and encompasses a level of intellectual rigor that has, in recent years, forced academic historians to positively re-evaluate historical re-enactment and living history's contribution to the 'serious' study of history. Some interesting critiques from participants in the living history and historical re-enactment scene emerged:

Re-enacting, while not always a great exercise in learning history, is always enjoyable.

Re-enacting is VERY specific, but also imprecise when diluted to groupthink with other amateur historians.

History through re-enactment while it does have a great hands-on component often lacks the intellectual rigor I've experienced in my academic school history. Most re-enactors don't know how to evaluate and use primary sources and don't do their own research and instead often rely on poorly written and sourced secondary sources. Hence why me and others in my unit focus on bringing academic history standards to our re-enacting, spending days at the National Archives and other archives pouring over original documents, interviewing veterans, and the like

I thank everyone who has taken part in the survey; your experiences and insights are invaluable.

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February 2016

Appendix E: Re-enactor/Living Historian Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Hands, Heads & Hearts: Haptic History

Semi-structured Interview Questions for Re-enactors/Living History Participants

A number of these questions have been answered via the survey questionnaire.

1. How did you come to do historical re-enactment?
2. What were your experiences of school history? How does your experience of doing history through re-enactment compare?
3. When you do historical re-enactment; what role do objects play in your practice of living history/historical impressions/ re-enactment?
4. Why does the use of objects appeal to you and others?
5. How do the objects you use influence, direct or shape the things you do and how you 'do' history? How do they affect the way you think, feel and behave?
6. What qualities must an object have to be useful in your recreation of past life (authenticity?)
7. When doing a re-enactment display or demonstration what, in your experience, attracts and interests members of the public? Why do you think that is so?
8. In what ways have the objects you use in re-enactment influenced your (or other people's) understanding or interpretation of history?
9. Name one object that you consider especially significant in your experience as an historical re-enactor. What is its story? Why is it so significant for you?
10. What do you consider to be the main benefits of using objects and artefacts to explore history?
11. What does the use of objects/artefacts in re-enactment/living history allow you to be, to do or to have?
12. What advice, based on your experience as a re-enactor, would you give to classroom teachers about how to teach history to students?
13. Is there anything you would like to add or comment on?

Appendix F: Teacher Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Hands, Heads & Hearts: Haptic History

Semi-structured Interview Questions for Teachers

Questions are open-ended and iterative in nature and will develop in conversation.

1. How did you come to use objects/artefacts to teach history in the classroom?
 - a. Teacher training?
 - b. Undergrad studies
 - c. On the job learning
 - d. Influence of peers
2. Describe how you use objects to teach history in the classroom.
3. How do you prepare students for lessons with objects or artefacts?
4. What, if any, are the resources that you use in association with the object?
5. What kind of post-lesson experiences or learning, if any, follows on from a haptic history lesson?
6. How do the objects use/shape/influence what and how you teach or do in the classroom?
7. How do the objects use/shape/influence what and how students learn or do in the classroom?
8. What objects do you find the most useful for teaching history in the classroom?
9. Are there any particular student groups (by age/gender/ability) age groups for whom would you use haptic approaches to teaching history? Why?
10. Are there any particular topics or areas of the curriculum to which object-based learning is particularly suited?
11. Why does the use of objects appeal to you?
12. Name one object that you consider especially powerful in teaching history. What is its story? Why does it work?
13. What are do you consider to be the main benefits of using objects and artefacts to teach history to students?
14. Tell me about the most successful lesson using objects? Why was it so special?
15. What are some of the obstacles to doing 'haptic history in the classroom'? What are the solutions?
16. What does the use of objects/artefacts in teaching history allow you to be, to do and to have?

Appendix G: Haptic History in Schools: Additional Case Studies

Additional Teacher Case Studies

The length of each of the case studies varies; in some cases there are mini-vignettes, others are sustained narratives.

G.1 Giles and The Lithgow Slag



Figure G1: Lump of slag from iron smelting

Giles is a remarkable practitioner of haptic history who brings his background and passion for archaeology into his history teaching practice. When asked about his most powerful teaching object, Giles could not choose any one object from his extensive collection of teaching artefacts; each, and every, object and artefact was prized for what it could do.

However, it was a lump of slag from the Lithgow Blast Furnace, that Giles nominated as ‘fantastic’. Part of its attraction is that it looks so unappealing and otherworldly, yet has been useful to Giles in so many teaching contexts. He identifies its paradox:

Its such an inconsequential object, and yet it has been so useful in class.

To understand the power of this object one needs to appreciate Giles’s teaching priorities. Fundamental to doing history is the skill of inquiry and the lump of slag – as the ultimate ‘mystery object’ – is perfect for that task. At first glance, and to the uninquiring mind, the slag looks like a rock, the product of nature, not man. The process of inquiry uncovers it as ‘an artefact’ – an object made or modified by humankind.

Thus for Giles the lump of slag is the perfect tool for teaching the ‘head history’ of inquiry. As noted in Chapter 7, Giles attributes to the slag a kind of agency that drives inquiry:

Here's an object that the analysis is driven by the object, and there are other objects where we're doing the driving.

The slag facilitates forensic analysis and Giles aids the process by providing contextual information in ‘slow release’, whilst employing Socratic style questioning:

... and the kids say, ‘What on earth is that?’ There it is. This has been fantastic, once again, with the stage 3 and stage 4 kids. They are so much adept at being able to read that object. Take it into a year 11 class and they say it's a rock, full stop. But the younger ones are saying, ‘Oh, it looks volcanic.’ I'm saying, ‘Well if it had something to do with being man made.’ Here's an object that I don't give them any information about, and the process is ... They're asking me questions as they go through the analysis process, and I slowly trickle out [the information]...

Moving beyond forensics – the ‘content’ of the object - the slag’s next utility is for revealing its functionality and, beyond that, enables ‘probing’ questions for what it reveals about the society it came from. This process too is ‘head history’; inquiry using adductive thinking:

What I'm aiming for is functionality, because functionality is then going to be able to provide information as to how it was used and why it was used, which is the more probing question of the artefact. Then from functionality, how do I then apply that object to reconstructing the past? If the object has had an evolving function, then that's something that also needs to be taken into consideration... When the students start to grapple with functionality, it then becomes useful in a critical reconstruction of the past.

The slag, a by-product of an industrial process, lends itself readily to discussions about technology and society:

The functionality also relates to how it was manufactured and then we're getting into levels of value and expertise, so it's the consumer as well as the producer that the functionality is relating to. Possibly to the intermediary, if it's an object that has come from one place, then found in another place, then it asks questions about transportation and function. Do we have the transference of a function out of its place of origin, or do we have the re-usage of something according to function?

For Giles the chunk of slag is a very flexible tool for teaching inquiry and ‘thinking’ functionality. It has other attractive qualities too – weight, colour, texture – that all add to its appeal as a ‘mystery object’ whose secrets are unlocked by inquiry. However, it is its human dimension that makes it an engaging tool:

The object is also something that has been used ... Archaeology is the study of material that has been used by humanity, and so it immediately has a tangible engagement...

G.2. Liam, the World War I trench whistle and watch



Figure G2: World War trench watch (L) and whistle (R).

Students in Liam's Archaeology Club create objects and artefacts in order to explore history.⁷⁴ However, when asked to nominate his most powerful object/lesson, he chose an assemblage of items from his grandfather's World War I collection. Liam's grandfather, a widely published battlefield archaeologist, had personally excavated these items. Like other teachers in this study, Liam, has a degree of personal 'entanglement' with his teaching artefacts; an additional layer of significance of the trench whistle and watch is evidenced by the fact that Liam and his family chose to retain these items whilst the vast bulk of their World War I collection was donated to the Army Museum in Wodonga.

The trench whistle and watch, as 'ANZAC' items, carry also the culturally encoded 'mystique' as memorial items and, with it, the 'reverence' that we have noted in Chapter 8.

Unlike Giles's Lithgow Slag, the objects are not a 'mystery' and can be readily identified by students from similar items in current usage. The power of these items comes from the manner in which they leverage the memorialisation of ANZAC and the way they weave together contextual understanding, narrative, historical imagination and empathy.

Australian historians have commented on the power of the 'ANZAC' in Australian history (Clark 2016b; Reynolds, Lake, McKenna, & Damousi, 2010). Clark observes how ANZAC serves as a commemorative vehicle with 'some sort of powerful and unregulated emotional register that connects the collective sorrow and gravitas of the moment' with the individual (Clark 2016b, p.38). She notes that fundamentally, the 'experience of commemoration is

⁷⁴ Cf. with Kerry Holocaust Museum Case Study, Chapter 9.

emotive' and, as others have argued, the phenomenon of the popular attachment to the legend of ANZAC has affective power and is a 'powerful entry point to the past' (Clark 2016b, *ibid.*). These are factors at work for making Liam's trench whistle and watch powerful objects for teaching.

Megan, in the Gallipoli Diary (see Sections 7.7 and 9.2.3), has made the case for a 'personal connection' to an 'actual person' with a known name as a factor for student engagement; however, the name of the officer who owned the trench whistle and watch is not known. The ANZAC tradition of the 'Unknown Soldier' works to the object's advantage. The concept of the 'Unknown Soldier' is, in itself, a call to the collective imagination; his 'unknown-ness' adds pathos to the affective clout of these items. The 'Unknown Soldier' has experienced some kind of externally, and culturally, imposed *ekstasis* – he has been moved 'outside of himself' to memorialise 'all soldiers' killed in war.

Whilst the latent potential of the 'ANZAC' power of these items are factors at work, what transforms them into extraordinary objects for teaching are the skilful way Liam employs context, assemblage and imagination.

The first contextual element is the frame of 'significance' that is applied in the object handling session. The students get an understanding that what they are about to handle is special, fragile and precious. There is almost a sense of religious ritual in this encounter with ANZAC:

... sometimes I get them to wear the cotton gloves and handle it really carefully. If it's a small thing the class will all go and wash their hands properly first and then handle them just by fingers...

The next piece of contextualisation comes with the reveal that the objects are an 'assemblage':

... there's two artefacts that actually go together... particularly the coincidence of the watch and the whistle being found in the same shovel full of soil on the trench line. All of it together...

Whether the assemblage of whistle and watch truly fits Deleuze and Guattari's notion of assemblage as 'ad hoc groupings of diverse elements' (Bennet 2009, p. 23) is a moot point. In Liam's thinking there is clearly some human agency – a 'central head' that brought the objects together as part of an officer's kit for a military operation. However, what is fascinating is, as Bennet (2009) would put it, the sense of the objects' 'conative' and 'associative' power beyond their original purpose. In other words, their associative persistence into the present, for purposes

beyond that which they were intended, together with the manner that they continue to affect other bodies (human and material), gives them ‘vitality’. The assemblage continues to evolve and exert influence in fresh contexts (as classroom teaching object, memorial artefact, affective provocateur et cetera).

The actual location of the finds in relationship to the trench is a further piece of context that allows Liam to set the scene for the way he will weave the assemblage into a powerful narrative:

... so often we sort of tell that ... Tell the little part of the story of where it was found, the circumstances et cetera and where in the line it was... these things were found about six feet outside an Australian trench.

Next, forensic analysis of the objects extracts data that is important for interpreting the event it testifies to:

the watch is stopped a couple of seconds past five o'clock... the watch is shattered... it's even got a date on the whistle...

Liam delivers the *coup de grâce* by using historical imagination to thread the elements together into a compelling narrative:

They obviously both belong to an Australian junior officer, and so one is his whistle complete with the leather tab that would have attached it to his shirt pocket or jacket pocket, and the other is a watch, well, what remains of the watch.

The really interesting thing is, the watch is stopped a couple of seconds past five o'clock in the morning and the history that goes with it is that these things were found about six feet outside an Australian trench.

Basically from the fact that the watch is shattered and stopped at that moment, and given the position that it was found, it's reasonable to suppose that this young Australian officer would have blown his whistle, gone up over the top, a shell burst or shot, you know, by the time he basically got his feet up on the parapet.

The tableau painted by Liam has echoes of the whistle in Peter Weir's attack on *The Nek in Gallipoli* and the use of the watch ‘freezes’ a moment in time with powerful effect for students – a ‘tempus moriendi’; the handling of the artefacts brings them close to the past and makes it vividly real:

... something about real artefacts... this wonderment and awe ... ‘Oh, this is real and this was there when it happened, someone actually wore this’ For kids it gives them this real emotional connection, because obviously we don't know who owned it, but it's a real emotional connection to a real young man, if that makes sense? ... As I said, it's just a slightly different emotional response. So you get to history and so you see kids handling these things, there's no other word really than reverently, than carefully...

Head and hands have been used together to elicit an affective experience of history and a connection to the past that is palpable and poignant:

I think that emotional response, that emotional reaction that you get can be an important difference.

... it combines so much of a story and tells such a vivid story of, I suppose the pointlessness, the sadness of war, the futility of it. That's always been a very powerful one to use with kids. Probably the most powerful of all the things I've used over the time.

G.3 Phillip, Cook's Cannon and the Surgeon's Saw

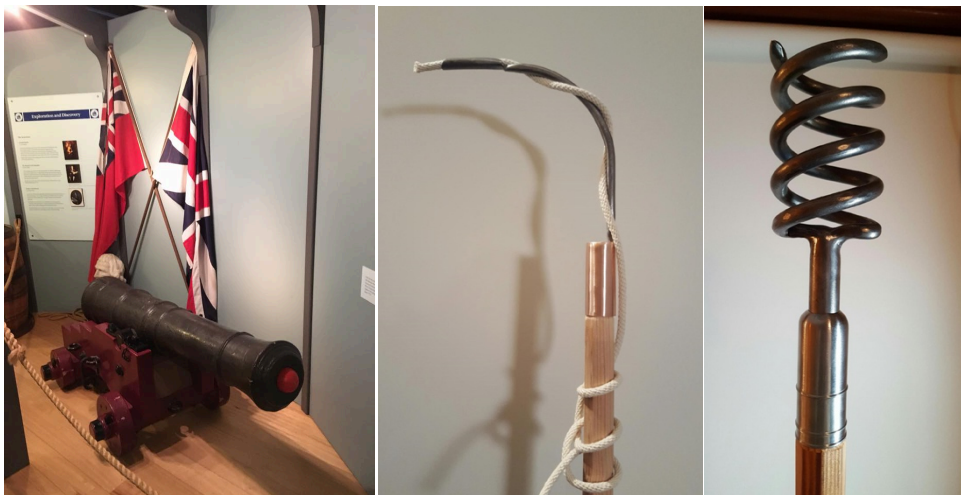


Figure G.3: (a) Cook's cannon (L), (b) slow match (C) and worm (R), Kamay EEC

Phillip uses one of Cook's cannon's from the Endeavour to create a history learning experience that uses a hands-on approach to think and problem solve with an added dimension of perspective-taking and empathy. Phillip's goal is engagement; he realises that students have seen cannon before so, for it to have impact, he must do something different:

We've got Cook's four-pounder there ... We're trying to increase the engagement...they go, 'Okay. Cook's cannon, so what? I've seen a cannon before.' What we've done, we've actually got a blacksmith ... to actually make the tools. We've got the swabber and the worm and rather than having kids behind the rope, we'll take the rope down. We'll say, 'Okay. We're going to step back in time because you know the story of Cook's cannon, but do you know how to fire a cannon?' Straight away, we have shifted the learning narrative to one of inquiry and problem solving.

... 'You've got this, you've got a charge, you've got a pricker, there's a lintstock that fires it. Where do you think you're going to stand? What are you actually going to do?' It becomes a problem. It shifts the ownership of learning from the teacher to the student. They own the learning...

Through touch, feel and movement the students discover aspects that are not visible and do not appear in written sources:

When the kids are actually handling the worm that cleans out the barrel, ... (they) say, 'You know what? It's not a straight barrel. It actually tapers in towards the end there.' That kind of understanding is not something they can actually get from reading books. It's those learning insights they can actually gain by doing (history) with artefacts ... that has the greatest merit...

It's more of a holistic experience, rather than a static one where we're just dictating content to students. We want to immerse them in their learning. We use objects to do that.

The cannon is also used to explore changing worldviews and perspectives overtime. Phillip employs an inquiry method together with touch to explore history:

'Do you actually think boys and girls your age would actually be working these guns on these similar vessels back in the days?' They say, 'No. No. No. That's not safe for children.' We say, 'Yes, it is. You most definitely would have been there in this very hot dangerous work.' They can't fathom that. They can't fathom a world where children aren't safe from industrial accidents in just a very adult world working inside an 18th century wooden sailing vessel. Again, trying to make connections between their sheltered lives today living in Australia ... and what life was like for them back then and how these famous people in history actually began as children in these ships actually, like Lord Nelson. It's unfathomable to them.

It is also a window to view broader investigation of past societies:

... it actually helps them understand that history is not a linear process. It's not a straight line. It is not, 'This is a cannon that was thrown overboard in June the 12th, 1770'. There is more to the story than just that. It's actually the object can actually paint a picture of an entire period for many different facets of life for a range of different people in those communities from the past. It's a powerful vehicle for exploring different perspectives, different understandings and empathetic understandings as well.

Phillip also uses the artefact to teach change and continuity and the concept of the object's biography:

... we pose a provocation to them and say, 'If we fire this today, what do you think would happen?' They say, 'Well, I think it might explode.' 'Why? Because it was made in the year 1700s.' 'Okay. What's wrong with that?' 'Well, the middle, the cannon forging process back then wouldn't have been as robust as what it is today.'

... We pose the question, 'If this was in the ocean for a very long time, what would have happened to this?' 'It would have been encrusted with coral and shells'. Then we say, 'Well, you're right. It's true. They had to strip away all the crustaceans. There was actually some damage to the bottom of it. It had to be repaired.' Students are very interested in things like this.

The cannon lends itself to exploring ‘historical significance’:

Learning too that these cannons are scattered in different places around the world. There is another cannon in Philadelphia as well. Again, the story of the cannon, and how it came to be where it is, is another vehicle for learning and understanding about the significance of the object on that ship with Captain Cook and his crew.

Coming out of the reef ... why did people today bring those cannons from the Endeavour Reef in 1969? We say to the kids, ‘What was happening in 1970? Do the maths.’ ‘Oh, 200 years. Okay. Bicentennial of Captain Cook travelling in the east coast of Australia’. ‘... Why would you actually commemorate the landing of Captain Cook?’ ‘Well, people thought it was important because ...’

Along with thinking and touching, affect is an important dimension Phillip deploys in the learning. He recognises the affective impact the object has on him. When he first had the worming tool made:

I said to the staff, ‘Listen this is handmade. The last time a handmade worming tool was used on Cook's cannon was 246 years ago. Who would like to have the honour of actually going and worming it?’ They said, ‘Phillip, you can do it.’ (I had) goosebumps, actually putting this worm down the cannon. Again, pulling it out. We actually filmed it. We filmed it, this worming of the cannon ... 246 years ... Goosebumps.

Students too are asked to reflect on how interacting with the object has made them feel:

We say to students after they've done it, ‘Well, how did that make you feel?’ They say, ‘Well, I was quite intimidated by it,’ or ‘I think that would have been quite loud enough,’ ‘I could do this job if I was actually on the Endeavour.’ It's just that shift in perspective by using the objects and actually putting them back in time is a very, very powerful vehicle.

Depending on the class there are further mysteries to uncover in the markings and symbols on the cannon itself:

Some students, they look at the markings in the cannons and would like to know why there are markings there. We say, ‘Well, it refers to the weight and the badge number ‘ and all the rest of it. Also, to look at the cannon and some of the markings on it and try to again, make connections. It's got the broad arrow and the kids have all seen the broad arrow on the convict shirts. Say, ‘I've seen that at the Hyde Park Barracks‘ or I've seen that elsewhere. ‘What is that? What's the board of ordinance?’ ‘It means the army owns it.’ ‘What's that crown there?’ ‘Well, okay. Who did Captain Cook come out for? He didn't come out on his own accord. He came out for King George III.’ ‘King George the who? I never heard of him.’ Sometimes I think that the finer details and *object can* actually tell a story within itself. Then again, it all depends on the learner and their level of interest.

In Phillip’s final analysis of why the student interaction with Cook’s cannon is so impactful, he returns to the theme that haptic history makes history ‘real’, immediate and personal:

I think most of the students ... are still grappling with the idea that this object was actually on the ship. Captain Cook would have touched it. They can't get around that from an experiential point of view. They can't get beyond that. The markings on it, they're blind to it. They can't believe that Cook's cannon is here in the museum and they can reach out and touch the object, and touch history. I think they're overwhelmed by the experience of that. It's a powerful thing. 'I put my hand on Captain Cook's cannon today. I learnt about it.'

Again, making those really strong connections between the past and the present, and using the object as the vehicle to make that connection in a very experiential way. It's a very powerful thing.

Although one artefact from Phillip's praxis of haptic history has been featured, another is presented in vignette because it is a study into the affective power of an object. The artefact is an original 1790's capital amputation saw. Like Lachlan (see Chapter 9), Phillip is also an historical re-enactor and in his use of the 'surgeon's saw' sees a conflation (to borrow a concept from Bourdieu) of two habitus – that of the school teacher and that of the living historian/re-enactor. He says that the surgeon's saw is without doubt his most powerful artefact.



Figure G.3: Phillip's 18th century surgeon's kit

In Chapter 7 and 8, Phillip's sensitivity to objects was noted. He talks about the 'tension' and 'energy' behind them, and how he gets a 'sense' of the original person behind the artefact. With a surgeon's saw, an object used to remove a human limb in a time before anaesthetics, Phillip is encountering something dangerously affective.

G.4 Lachlan & Michelle's World War I Immersion Days



Figure G.4: 'Enlisting', World War Immersion Days

The WWI Immersion Days that Lachlan & Michelle run in their comprehensive high school in South-western Sydney is different for a number of reasons. Firstly, unlike many object-handling sessions which are about an hour in duration, this is a sustained cross-curricular haptic approach to teaching over a ten-week period with three full immersion days:

...this, is cross curricular. So, there's the history, there's the technology, there's the food, there's the science ... You know, gassing and all that kind of stuff, and new technologies coming out because of that. And also geography, because the nature of the land⁷⁵ ...

The unit was structured as an 'accelerated narrative' through time:

So throughout the term, we ... take them through the wartime, starting our very first immersion day. In Week two, [it] was all about recruitment. Then the next one we had, about three weeks later, was focusing on training camp. And then the last one was being at war. So all of the source material that we were doing, all the activities we were engaging in, was relevant to that time. So in that space of a term, we kind of sped them through the four years [of the war].

Following an immersion day, planning went into maximising the learning opportunities provided by the immersive experience and to prepare students for the next immersion day:

So we literally get one [Immersion Day] done; the next day, we'd meet, we'd debrief, we'd set up the next one, within 48 hours the teachers would have the map for the next fortnight: four hours delivery, and things you could do before and post-lesson...

Lachlan's Immersion Days stand out as different for another reason. Like Phillip, he shares a dual habitus as a passionate re-enactor and committed industrial arts/history teacher. Lachlan is a conduit for bringing the knowledge, expertise and, importantly, the objects and

⁷⁵ Link to digging trenches, water tables, lie of the ground etc)

artefacts from the world of re-enactment into the classroom. It is a history teaching model where re-enactors and history teachers meet, collaborate and pool their skills and talents in order to facilitate an extraordinary learning experience for students:

... before we do one of these days ... I'll sit down with the coordinator and say, 'What is it you're learning in the classroom? What is it you want to achieve?' So Michelle and I have done that, and I [as a re-enactor and IA teacher] do the support to teachers.

The Immersion Days are different in a third way; the teaching unit involves not only object-handling, but also embodied, experiential learning. The structure of the delivery of the learning is via small groups in 'workstations'. It is geared to be student-centred and feature active interaction with objects ⁷⁶:

We'd have stations. I don't think having 140 kids, like the old pre-way format, in front of one bloke talking for two hours, is an effective way of delivering it. [Students] ... physically handling of artefacts... Not just watching.

A vibe of immediacy, 'being part of the story' is cultivated. This also creates a 'disorientation', a sense that, in encountering history this way, students are going to experience the past as being different to the present:

Our introduction was, throw them into it, basically like a news report, we're at war, how do you feel, get them thinking straight away.

Contextualisation is embedded before, between, and in the Immersion Days by the transformation of the structure of the classes and the appearance of the school itself:

Each of the 5 Year 9 classes were named after the major powers of the European conflict; English block was 'The Entente' and the HSIE building the Central Powers. We have five classes in Year 9 ... we named them based on major stakeholders involved in WWI ... because it's an English/HSIE mix as well, we had then two different parties, two different groups, two different buildings. So on this side was Germany ... and Austria. And on the other side we had (the Entente Powers).

So during the time [the term the Word War I unit was taught] we had bunting up, we had German military flags on this side, we had German propaganda posters. The students made their own German propaganda posters using German language. And then over in English, we had royal pictures, same again, bunting, etc. So it was a really strong tie between what group you were in, and started to really develop that level of competitiveness and almost animosity between each of the groups, which was really good.

Each Immersion day involved the students rotating through four workshops, some with a 'hands-on' focus, other not. The theme of Immersion Day 1 was 'Enlistment'. Senior Modern History students helped to facilitate the workshops. In the enlistment station:

⁷⁶ To put the 'I' into 'hIstory'. See Chapter 6

... we engaged ... our modern history students, our senior students were then able to be a part of it, and really team-teach and peer lead the junior students. So they were kind of dressed up in our lab coats, and they were the ones that were being ...the officials... doing all the tests and then measuring...

The affective response of students who failed to meet the evolving enlistment standards has been explored (Chapter 8). 'Little things', attention to detail with the artefact such as inkwells and nib pens, are physical reminders for the students 'to feel' the difference of the past to the present. Indeed, Lachlan and Michelle observed that the cognitive effort students expended to 'make sense' of this simulated world from the past, was visible:

... here they're being [enlisted], hang on, this is different, this doesn't make sense; there's a whole lot of processing power that's having to go on just to cope.

The cognitive discomfort (or 'distracted engagement') provided opportunities for historical consciousness; students need to think through the differences between past and present:

And even something so simple as ... the Union Jack everywhere ... Yeah. And even though that would be something that in the past we've taught them, until it's literally in your face, they couldn't [process it]. That made the kids really think about, 'What flag do we fight under? Who [sic] is our flag? Where do we fit?' Then questioning about Australian history, about 'How British are we? When do we become who we recognise' ... There's always the kid that goes, 'Where's the Aussie flag?' Well, sorry guys.

In each Immersion Day film was used to provide context for the activities and objects that the students would encounter in other workshops/stations. The power of the diegetic world of film – and the concept of 'spectatorship' - the capacity of the realism of film to engage the spectator in a bodily way (Landsberg 2015, pp.30-31) – runs parallel to, mimics and supports the embodied learning that unfolded in the workshop rotations. It is also an opportunity for students to write and reflect:

... then we had the film station where we showed a little bit of the movie Gallipoli, a little bit of Frontline Experience, and I think at times we were embedding All Quiet on the Western Front as well. So ... And literally five, ten minute snippets. They watch that, they reflect on that, they write their letter...

The final two workshops of Immersion Day 1 were on the 'Homefront' (making care packages) and students delivering patriotic speeches; Lachlan & Michelle acknowledge they were:

... less hands on, but it was just one we had to put in to move through it...

Two weeks later, Immersion Day 2 focussed on 'training' and ramped up the hands-on component. The film station provided filmic versions of the training experience and then, in

the other three rotations students got to physically experience aspects of what they had seen. The first rotation was about soldiers' equipment, drill and marching. Students were introduced to (and had a chance to be dressed in) World War I uniforms. Given mock up rifles, they were surprised by a 'real' taste of the military that came embodied in the form of a re-enactor brought into play. This historical re-enactor (a retired ex-serviceman and sergeant) brought his bearing, manner of speech and attitude to provide an experiential dynamic:

... he was fantastic. Because the kids ... because you've always got those, you know those ones that go, blah blah blah, he goes, 'Right. Keep your mouth shut.'

[Students go] 'Oh God'!

He's like a wall, goes, 'You're on my time now.' And this was literally ... where they... joined up; two weeks of a lull, and then walking out the back [to the training camp], 'Oh this looks all cool, blah blah blah.' They're into it.

In one of the rotations they had the chance to handle and interrogate authentic World War I artefacts. Their grisly nature surprised and shocked the students and elicited an affective response. The re-enactor:

... was pulling out trench raid clubs, and all sorts of bits and pieces to hold and play with. They found that a bit shocking. Just something simple like that, 'What's that for?' 'Well, brain one, drag one off'. They're going, 'Alright?' Well, that's a trench raid. They go, 'Okay.'

Another rotation involved bayonet practice against stuffed hessian sacks dangling from a bayonet stand. It was followed by a grenade throwing exercise. In Chapter 8⁷⁷ the affective, involuntary, visceral response of students to a (fake) grenade being dropped in their hands has been noted as an example of a cognitive 'override'. The students know it is a fake, but their response to the pin being pulled has affect momentarily trumping the intellect; they jump. The grenade commands their 'full attention' makes them 'fully present in the moment'. Recovering from the shock, student cognition is re-engaged; they process the nature of the grenade, what it does, what it was used for. Next the physical and bio-mechanic are brought into play; they explore how grenades worked through handling, 'hefting' and imagination. It's engaging and compelling:

⁷⁷ Note the affective response of being handed a grenade. Lachlan discusses this – see above in 8.2.2 – under the importance of touch, weight and 'hefting' and object. See also Chapter 6, 6.2.3: and compare with Liam's observation on engagement: '*When you put a grenade in a boy's hand, you hold all of his attention... they're fully present in the moment in a way that often written sources would fail to do for some of these kids.*'

... saying to the kids ... 'now we're going to do grenade throwing.' Say, 'And we're going to do it behind a wall as if we're inside a trench' ... Here's the object, this is what it looks like, touch it, feel it, have a look, here's a comparative German one, let's talk about how they work, and now let's go throw some ... It's a different kind of learning, and the fact that they're getting up there, time and again wanting to have another go...

In the final station, students dig, and sandbag a section of World War I trench. The exercise requires hard physical effort, and with it comes thinking about landscape and the way it shapes the human experience of the war. Lachlan recounts the discussion and thinking done with the students. To the physical, the teacher brings thinking and imagination:

'Well, this isn't exactly the Somme Salient. However, there's a slight slope to this ground. Imagine the river's behind.' And we're cutting into the ground. And the river's on the ... X amount that way. And so we've got the land table, 'The deeper we cut, what's going to happen?' They go, 'You're going to be walking in mud.' 'That's exactly right. So we can't dig too far down.'

Lachlan notes that the temptation for the teacher in these learning situations is to rush in and 'provide' the answer to the question posed. Students need thinking time to cognitively work through the problem:

... the trick is not to say too much, which is always hard. You get them thinking.

In Immersion Day 3 students experience life in the trenches. Three of the rotations were designed to be 'hands-on' and covered the themes of trench warfare, medical support and food. Powerful and poignant film snippets provided students with background context; the letter writing provides a further opportunity to reflect.

Comment has been made about the role food can play as a component of recreating the sensory experience, and a snippet of the immersion day has already featured in the discussion (Chapter 8). Added to this was the interesting unfolding of how students made 'historical' sense of an accident, an unintended consequence of the hardtack that students had made that had gone mouldy:

... two weeks before... they'd been working on the hardtack. So the hardtack was brought out to eat. And what was great was, some moisture got in, so some of them had gone mouldy. Which, as bad as it was, to be honest, it was perfect.

The teacher took the opportunity that the 'reality' of the present provided to tell a story about the past to do with conditions and diet on the front. The students took it from there, and applied their contextual knowledge with emerging historical consciousness to make sense of it:

'...that's disgusting, you can't eat that!'. And some kids are going, 'Well, you did what you could.' And so they're all starting to make these connections with the poor quality

food that could sometimes turn up. So, that was fantastic. We did that at the food station. [The re-enactor] ... had brought in all these labels, and... [another teacher] is just reading labels off. One of them was a rabbit stew, best served cold, but can be warmed up. So the kids are going, 'Oh, that's disgusting.' So the conversation is, how our tastes have changed...

One of the highlights of 'Trench Life' was the platoon attack. This episode has been used in Chapter 7 to illustrate how contextual understanding, as an embodied physical experience, can be 'quite powerful' and explode student misconceptions about the past. This platoon attack simulation has also been used to explore the sense of 'realism' and connection – the 'wonderment and awe' – that embodied experience can bring as a source of student engagement (Chapter 6). What startled Lachlan was how close the simulation came to accurately replicating the 'look' of a trench raid preserved in the primary sources (film, photographs and written accounts). Sight remains the primary human sense and the 'look' as much the feel is an essential part of the immersive experience. Lachlan talks about how the line of the German attack quickly disintegrated into a 'snake' as the ground, vegetation and simulated barbed wire obstacles and casualties dictated what happened next:

Best images, as we launched our attack, our attack was in a snake, to fight our way through the hole... And they (the students) would just ... they would die. In the snake.

The simulation had been set up using a mechanism borrowed from Civil War re-enactment:

... we did what they do in the Civil War [re-enactment]. They are issued with fake guns. So basically, you're going to have a number of fake rounds, for a 3-O and a starter gun. And so every time he clicks, if you're number one, you fall...

There was the sense of how mounting casualties sucked the momentum out of an attack across No-Man's Land:

Every time we'd go under the wire to cut, they'd be like this going, 'What number are you? 'I'm four.' 'You're already dead. Lie down. Where's the number six?' And number six would come running up. 'Quick, cut it.' ... 'You cut the wire.' They go, 'Cool.' Cut. 'Six ...you're dead.' And we'll say, 'Is anyone left? It looks like it's just me then.'

Students experienced 'sensory over-ride' (Luhmann 2012) which causes a kind of cognitive dissonance; the students *know* that this is a stimulation and 'not real', but the intrusion of 'ambiguous stimulus, emotional arousal and cognitive expectation'. (Luhmann 2012, p. 219), triggers an affective and visceral response:

Every time the blanks go, the kids would scream and lose it. And they'd get that bit of adrenaline, even if they're not taking the activity seriously, just being engrossed in those sounds, and walking through long grass and being in that environment, those that didn't

even want to engage became soldiers... the kids were all 'head(s) spinning', that they just didn't make it to that machine gun nest.



Figure G.5: Student built World War I trench, World War I Immersion Days

'Full' immersion in the World War I battle experiences – with all of the physical and psychological dangers that that incurs – is not possible (or desirable)⁷⁸. The experiential is mediated by the visible intrusion of the present – the McDonald's Sign beyond the school fence, the school uniforms, passing cars, the voice of the teacher giving instructions et cetera. These visual/auditory intrusions of the present serve as cognitive interrupts that anchor the students in the present and remind them that this is 'pretend', and not real. This is what Benjamin calls a 'distracted mode of engagement' (Landsberg 2015, p.36⁷⁹); it is an important component because it is a mechanism that supports reflexive thought and historical consciousness.

The final rotation – medical support and the experience of the stretcher-bearer– was an opportunity to put context around, and explode, the myth of 'Simpson and his Donkey'. The problem posed by this simulation – how to get a wounded soldier out of the trenches and back to the First Aid station - was one that needs to be solved cognitively, with the solution enacted physically. The experience also is an opportunity to explore the perspectives of both the casualty and the stretcher-bearers:

... they immerse themselves in the practise of, 'Would I want to be a stretcher bearer?' And we're talking about it ... how would it have been to actually have the casualty in the trench. They've got to come get him out.

'Get the guy out, bug him back to the first aid station,' and see what it's really like then. It's great. Stuff's coming out of it.

⁷⁸ For the dangers of full immersion see the experience of re-enactors in the section on 'Seeing the Elephant' and the 'Waterloo Auto-ethnographic Case Study' in Chapter 4.

⁷⁹ Walter Benjamin's 'Theory of Distraction'

... they physically had to run kids up and down a hill (on a stretcher) ... 'Let's four of us take this kid up the hill. All right, two of you drop out. Two of you take them up the hill'. ... we talked about the story of Simpson, and how he was not a good guy. Kids are going, 'Yeah, but he's a hero.' Well, let's talk about heroes. '...[does] a hero ... Walk off and leave his stretcher-bearer buddies and get a donkey?' And they go, 'Oh, that's pretty slick.'

The World War One Immersion Days brought all three elements: 'head, heart and hands' into play. There is narrative, context, perspective-taking, problem solving and research. Students' first hand-experience becomes a starting point and springboard for historical thinking and consciousness. The process of 'doing' triggers inquiry and reflection. Student-embodied experience is used by the teachers to explore an understanding of the past that engages students cognitively, affectively and haptically. In colliding the worlds of historical re-enactor and living history with school classroom history, Lachlan and Michelle provide their students with a memorable and profound personalised experience of the past that is engaging and a source of insights beyond the scope of 'book history'.

Appendix H: Re-enactor Additional Case Studies

Additional Re-enactor Case Studies

The length of each of the case studies varies; some are mini-vignettes, others are sustained narratives.

H.1 Tom and The Periscope Rifle



Figure H.1: World War I periscope trench rifle

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/17/8d/6c/178d6c2b9048199a587d31617ddc0e9e--history-online-smiley.jpg>

Whereas academic historians baulk at the affective dimension of historical re-enactment and living history, there is qualified support for physical investigative re-enactment. An illustration of how objects-in-use can challenge or confirm historical interpretation is provided by the case study of ‘The Periscope Rifle’. Tom explains how the construction and use of a reproduction object tested the accuracy, and the interpretations of a documented episode in history – the periscope rifle and the ANZAC retreat from Gallipoli. The context for the experiment was the popular history ABCTV ‘edutainment’ program, *The Boffin, The Builder & the Bombardier*, of which Tom was a part. The premise of the show was essentially borrowed from the science program ‘Mythbusters’ and applied, using experimental archaeology, to history.

An essential part of the learning about the object was the ‘reverse-engineering’ of the artefact (using photos and museum pieces), its use (testing) and then an evaluation of the accuracy of the written accounts of the object-in-use:

Everything that was used, we actually built. Will, the builder, actually built all the gear. Right from the start, we knew how it was built because we built it. We then used it, so we knew how to use it. We sat back and observed the effects. Then we could go back and look at those, the [written] accounts and say, 'Yes, yes, no,' or, 'He was off his game and this guy's got it nailed about what things could and couldn't do.'

Tom gives agency to the object and see his role as part of the Boffin, Builder and Bombardier team as 'support crew' for the 'thing':

... each, the episode was based around a major object. We were only effectively, a support crew to get it to work and to function. Then to learn from [it]...

The value of this kind of investigative re-enactment is that it can fill the lacunae in the written sources, provide contextualisation for the interpretation of written sources and serve as a means for evaluating the accuracy and reliability of historical interpretations. In the case of the periscope rifle, the experimental archaeology shed light on the meaning of Bean's comment about 'sore noses' at Gallipoli:

Charles [Bean] then was writing about the Kiwis using the periscope rifle. He writes along the lines as, 'And, a lot of Kiwis got sore noses that day.' People think, 'Yeah, okay great.' Now, when you fire the periscope rifle, unless you hold it properly, the wooden supports come back and it smacks you in a line in the nose and in your forehead. You soon learn how to adjust your aim on it. In fact, it [the bruise] was a badge of honour on the test firing. You had this great big black bruise down your forehead or a bleeding nose to prove you'd actually fired it, ... we understood, now, what they were writing about when that expression or description came up... it also proved to us that we had made the object correctly because we were experiencing exactly the same issues as they were in 1915. Which of course we didn't know about, until we actually, ... physically used the item.

H.2 Brad and The Sutton Hoo Hammer Axe



Figure H.2: The British Museum's Sutton Hoo Hammer Axe

Brad provides a compelling case study vignette that illustrates how the different kind of knowledge re-enactors and living historians have of 'things' are useful in challenging, testing and changing historical interpretations. He explains how, in 1984, he visited The British Museum to inspect, close up, the Sutton Hoo collection. His interest was piqued as a toolmaker as much as re-enactor:

I was particularly interested with the phenomenal quality of gear in the Sutton-Hoo collection. Just the thought of being able to make it is beyond my comprehension. One of the items that struck my fancy in particular was an axe. It's a one-handed axe, but it's got an iron shaft, and at the bottom it's got a swivel. I looked at this and I thought, 'Aw, what a great weapon. In actual fact, in the original book it actually classifies it as a tool.

When I was in at London, I went to the British Museum. I went up and I said, 'Look, can I talk to somebody about this? Because, you know, I think you're wrong.'

Much to Brad's surprise, when he makes his case, he is given access to the inner sanctum of the museum and to the curators. Brad recounts what he said to her:

'Look, I don't understand why you [are] classifying this as a tool and not a weapon, because it is the perfect left-handed weapon.' She said, 'Why?' I explained ... She's going, 'Aw, yeah.' Then I said, '...It's not a tool, because it's got an iron shaft.' She said, 'Well, what's that got to do with it?' I was trying to explain the fact that an iron

shaft will produce the vibration where a wood shaft won't. She didn't really understand that, and we were having a bit of communication problem.

Putting the object (in this case, an equivalent) into use was the means to unlock the understanding. The curator realised that the knowledge she needed was not that of the theoretical, but the practical – and in this case that knowledge resided outside academic circles in the form of the ‘navvy’ (a hands-on labourer) in front of her who had a knowledge of ‘things in use-in-the-world’ that she did not possess and in a surrogate object for the axe (a metal bar):

Finally she went, "Oh, I know what the problem is. Because I'm an archaeologist, you think I dig.' I went, 'Well, yeah.' She said, 'No. I use a toothbrush. I hire navvies like you to dig'. The way she said it was actually complementary, it wasn't a derogatory ...

Brad and the curator then engaged in a bit of impromptu experimental archaeology in the basement of the British Museum:

She said, 'Aw look, hop over the counter. I hopped over the counter.... We found an iron bar and a wooden pole, and we went up to this nice, thick oaken pillar. You can imagine British Museum, huge oak pillars. I gave her the iron bar, and I said, 'Okay, hit that.' She went, 'Whack', and after she put her teeth back in place, I said, 'Now try the wooden one.' She tried the wooden one, and I had to explain to her the fact that an iron-shafted striking tool is essentially not useful. Somebody else was walking along, and she said, 'Aw, John, come over and try this.' We ended up with about half a dozen people beating this poor oaken pillar.

...one of the security guards came down and said, "Ah, excuse me, madam." Big, very English. 'Excuse me, madam. Um, uh, What are you doing?' She said, 'Oh, we're doing some experimental archaeology.' He went, 'Oh, will you be doing it for much longer madam?' She said, 'No, we're just about finished. Is there a problem?' He said, 'Yes, madam. The vibrations are traveling up to the public area.' That was funny enough, but she looked up and she went, 'Oh, we're below the mummy room, aren't we?'

Just as an aside on the book, when they republished the book a few *years after I'd been* there, they actually changed it. They actually said that ... it was a weapon, not a tool, and that they changed their opinion because of the influence of re-enactors and other people who actually said, 'You were wrong.'

H.3 Walter's Civil War Surgeon Assemblage



Figure H.3: Walter's Civil War Surgeon Object Assemblage; note the cannon ball (front left) and the fractured femur (back right)

This case study vignette examines the use of sustained narrative through an assemblage of objects delivered by Walter, an American Civil War Re-enactor, who does an impression of a field surgeon. He weaves a narrative by calling on an assemblage of objects – each with their own individual story – to weave a narrative around the ‘first prosthetic’ that serves to link the present-day with the past.

Narrative is fundamental to history (Holt, 1995; Barton & Levstik, 2015; Clark, 2016b; Cooper, 2013; Lowenthal, 1985; Taylor & Young, 2003; Wineburg, 2001) and central to the way we make sense of the world, our identities and the past; as such it underpins historical consciousness (Polkinghorne, 2005). Seeded in the production of narrative are historical thinking skills of chronology and sequence, significance, cause and consequence, change and continuity (Siexas & Morton, 2013).

Re-enactors and living historians are both consumers and producers of narratives when constructing personae or enacting the past in persona (be it first or third person interpretation). Walter in his third person interpretation presentation tells the story of the ‘first prosthetic’. His choice reflects his background and interests (he is a trained nurse and paramedic) and his desire to demonstrate the connectedness of the present to the past through a narrative (‘my presentation is a combination of past and present. I try to make it so that I can explain what the items were back then, and how they relate to what they do today’). It draws its power by weaving a storyline through tangible objects which involve audiences on cognitive, affective and embodied levels.

Walter opens his presentation by addressing the issue of historical consciousness and empathy up front. He points out a lot of things have changed in medicine in the 150 years since the American Civil War, and a lot have not. Next he demonstrates, from his collection of artefacts, ways that medicine has changed little (from surgical tools to medicines) and highlights major differences too (the arrival of penicillin etc.). His purpose is to challenge the position commonly taken by people who lack historical consciousness and historical empathy and believe that people from the past were, compared to us, stupid or thick (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Barton & Levstik, 2008; Davison, 2012; Shemilt, 1984; Wineburg, 2001). Walter's challenge to the audience gets interactive questions happening.

Walter in raising the historical consciousness of his audience consolidates and builds on it. In this he uses narrative with objects. In addition to cognitively engaging his audience, he moves to elicit affective and embodied understanding too. He describes an emotional response that his object elicit from his audience (compare this to the 'The Surgeon's Saw', Chapter 9). Authenticity – the 'real'- matters ('usually it's [a sense of] awe. You know, the exclamation, then they look at it, up close and personal'). There is a dimension of kinaesthetic empathy (Foster, 2011) won in spectating, watching a demonstration of the thing in use, and imagining our own bodies as being subject to the procedure. The audience sees the object, understands, and almost 'feels the pain'.

Walter builds on this kinaesthetic empathy by handing round a cannon ball (see 'hefting' Chapter 9). He explains what it is, how it works, what it does to humans. This is made vivid and tangible by presenting for viewing a human femur, (illegally) excavated from a Civil War battlefield, that has been shattered by the impact of ordinance. The assemblage of objects – inanimate ball with the human impact – is an embodied 'ouch' moment for the audience.

Walter, having contextualised the past with objects, handling, inquiry and placed it all in a 'historical consciousness' frame, then weaves a narrative that connects past and present. It begins with

... this six pound, solid shot cannonball. I have a story behind it that relates directly to the present.

The first land battle that occurred in the 1860s, after Fort Sumter, happened on June 3, 1861, in a little town called Philippi. That was in West Virginia, western Virginia. I

didn't say West Virginia, because it wasn't a state until 1863. There was a young man involved in battle. He was 18 years old. He was already a second year college student on his way to becoming an engineer. The war broke out, Virginia seceded, he wanted to join the Confederate infantry. His mother found out about it, smacked him upside the head, and said, 'No, dummy. You'll be joining the cavalry like your two brothers.' So he did. [Note the use of humour]

He had to enlist, he had to go to Philippi to do it because he lived in the eastern part of Virginia. There he was, the first night in the army, sleeping in a barn with his horse, when one of two of these solid shot cannonballs came through the barn and hit him in the leg.

At that point, I usually pass it around so you can see how heavy this is. [At this point the haptics experience of the cannon ball adds to the (embodied) impact of the narrative]. So he had the dubious honour of becoming the first amputation of the Civil War.

His buddies, you know, they didn't have the theory of leave no man behind, right. Back then, just leave him. We're gone. They thought he was going to bleed to death, so they left him in the barn. [Walter contrasts differing values between people of the past and present]

A couple hours later, he was found by a federal trooper who took him over to the surgeon, and he had the, like I said, dubious honour of becoming the first amputation.

Now to make a good thing out of a bad situation, he was exchanged for a Federal prisoner in August, and being an engineering student, he asked his family and friends for barrel staves, the size of the barrel, leather fastening devices, and willow wood. (He) invented an artificial leg that articulated at the knee and the ankle. Back then, (if) they had one articulation, they were lucky. Most of them were more stiff and peg leg.

He got Confederate patents for the leg, and the Confederate government hired him to make prosthetics for their amputees. After the war, he got Federal patents for it, and the company he had started, Hanger Orthopaedic, is still in business today. One of the largest firms in the world for making artificial limbs.

Walter has made the link between past and present, but he takes a further step to make this personally relevant to the experience of his audience by accessing popular culture:

Have you ever seen the movie Dolphin Tale?... a lot of kids have, and it's about a young dolphin [called Winter] that was rescued on the east coast of Florida. It had its tail wrapped around with a crab trap rope so tightly that it eroded the tail and made it necrotic. They rushed it (the dolphin) over to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium... The veterinarians there had no choice. They had to amputate the tail.

This went out on the radio and the TV, and there was a man down there named Kevin Carroll, who happened to be the vice president of Hanger, and he thought to himself, 'You know, we make artificial limbs for people, for humans. Why can't we make an artificial tail for a dolphin?' Now I know he said that because I called him up and asked

him. [Here Walter becomes a further living vicarious link to the Dolphin Tale (he is already in period clothing) and the first amputee of the Civil War].

He got permission from the aquarium to try with the resources of Hanger, and he and a friend of his, a colleague of his, Dan Strezempka... started working on this tail. They put together a tail assembly, and normally when a person has a boot that will fit in the orthotic, you know, to cushion it, and they would put that in there, and that way it wouldn't move, however, the type of material that they use, like for orthotics, got slippery when it got wet, so the dolphin kept flipping it off. She didn't like it. It twisted, it shifted, and it wouldn't stay on properly. Back to the drawing board

Kevin and Dan got together, and they were working again and a new tail assembly, make it look better, make it more streamline. With their colleagues at the ALPS Corporation, (ALPS, make the orthotic cushions) ... they made a new product. I got these from Kevin. [Walter introduces a new object connected to the story, at a presentation he hands them round]...

I pass that around the room. I let them see it. Let them talk about it... They put it on the dolphin. It worked, and the ALPS Corporation made it, see the logo... What did they call it? WintersGel

Walter makes the causal link between past and present:

If it wasn't for Hanger getting his leg cutoff, pretty much, back in 1861 he would not have started the company that became the largest firm in the world for making artificial limbs. Kevin Carroll would not have been the vice president, and ... Winter would still be swimming like a fish instead of like a dolphin.

To make the story tangible and memorable, Walter presents a piece of Wintergel

for the children, I give them a piece of history. A piece of WintersGel that they can take home with them.

Walter is not a trained history teacher. He has, however, developed a haptic approach to teaching history that combines historical thinking and consciousness with the power of objects. It involves inquiry, contextualisation, handling and 'hefting' objects and using narrative to give the past coherence and relevance to a modern audience. This is a re-enactor who has used 'things' in his role as a third person interpreter to *translate* the past in a meaningful way for the comprehension of a modern audience. His use of objects in his presentation illustrates how 'stories sit in things'.

H.4 Jerry, Dan Kelly and Period Rush



Figure H.4: The Ned Kelly Re-enactment, Beechwood NSW

In this vignette, Jerry's experience of the 'period rush' is analysed using Luhmann's theory of 'sensory override' (Chapter 6). Jerry is re-enacting the Ned Kelly siege at Glenrowan in the 2015 annual Ned Kelly Re-enactment event/festival at Beechworth in Northern Victoria. Jerry takes the role of Dan Kelly. The re-enactment takes place on the historic site of the Glenrowan Inn in the early hours of the morning and Jerry is kitted out in a replica version of the body armour worn by Dan Kelly together with period firearms.

In this vignette Jerry experiences a form of sensory override. It feeds off cognitive expectation (Jerry 'is' Dan Kelly, and there is a 'script' to follow), emotional arousal (the stress of being 'shot at') and ambiguous stimulus (surroundings, noise, darkness and smoke). Jerry explains how he slipped into the 'zone' of 'period rush' and recounts the 'historical sensation' that followed.

First there is the cognitive expectation – the 'role of Dan Kelly at the *Glenrowan Inn*:

This year I was asked to step into Dan Kelly's role So for the burning of the Annie's inn, the Glenrowan, I got to play Dan Kelly. I got to put - this is where we come to the objects - I put the armour on, the metal armour, it's a replica of the original, but it was metal armour, same weight, same grade, same style, as the original armour, and I'm armed with a shotgun.

Next there is ambiguous stimulus ('pitch back') and emotional arousal ('these guys are out to kill me', 'It became desperate') and Jerry goes 'back in time':

I've gone through the door, it's pitch black, and we're being fired at by police all around. I went back in time. I thought to myself, I thought, these guys are out to kill me. It

became desperate, it became frantic. I was loading that shotgun, without even seeing it, in this armour, which was very difficult to do...

Jerry experiences *ekstasis* – he loses himself:

... loading it and firing it, you know, into that abyss, and I lost myself in the moment.

The state is interrupted and Jerry recovers himself in the present:

And then I heard Ned say “Back, get back inside, come back inside”, and I felt someone pull me back inside the inn. I go back inside the inn and I snapped out of it. But for that brief...twenty seconds, thirty seconds, whatever it was, minute-and-a-half, I was out there, I was in the zone.

The recovery of self provides the space for reflection. Jerry attempts to rationally explain the contradictory state he experienced as being both embodied and disembodied in time:

... I know a lot of re-enactors that that’s happened to ... from medieval right the way through to modern. They do something and it’s like having an out-of-body experience, except you’re not out of your body, but you, in some ways you are, because you’re seeing it from a different level. You’re standing there, looking at the cops firing their guns at you, you’re firing back, but you’re not seeing it front on, you’re seeing it from above.

Finally, Jerry evaluates the role that the objects played – they have a kind of agency the objects ‘brought it out’:

And that’s happened to me on two or three occasions in my...sixteen years of doing historical re-enactment. The objects made it, the objects were the things that actually brought it out.

At the centre of the phenomenon of ‘the magic moment’ are things. Material objects, artefacts and the bodies that engage them haptically and kinaesthetically externalize imaginative thought, make it concrete and apprehendable to the senses. Cognition is shared between the intellect and the whole body; it is experienced sensually, affectively as well as intellectually. In another context, Tom observes that the thing-power of objects in living history is in:

... activating the senses. I think it's all the senses that suddenly... stimulates the mind then to think differently and probably react differently...

‘Period rush’ is a rare and far from a universal experience. Some re-enactors dismiss it as ‘bloody nonsense’ but for those who claim to have encountered it, it is an experience of ecstasy and is highly addictive (‘like crack without the dangerous side effects’ a ‘sugar rush’). Whether the living historian ever experiences the ‘historical sensation’ of ‘time slip’ is open to variables: – environmental (such as the absence of anachronistic intrusion, ambiguous stimulus); personal

propensity or trait (like imaginative capacity or absorption); and 'learned' behaviours (like cognitive expectation and personal association). When all the elements align, the experience of connectedness and oneness with the past and the 'historical other' is complete and the encounter of the 'historical sensation', however brief, leaves the subject transformed.

Appendix I: Object Analysis Question Bank - Descriptive ‘WHAT’ Questions

Forensic, deductive, ‘What’ or Descriptive Data Questions

Andreetti (1993, p. 11ff.)

1. *What is it made of and how was it made? (Technology):* Test for materials. What is its temperature, texture, weight, colour, sound, flexibility? What is the inner fabric like? Is there an outer coating?
2. *What is the condition of the object? (Condition):* Does it still ‘work’/function? Is it new or old?
3. *What is the Style of the Object? (Style)* Is it similar to anything we use today?
4. *Inscriptions? (Content)* Has it got writing or marks on it

Durbin et. al (1990, p. 12)

1. *What is its physical features? (Material):* What does it look and feel like? What colour is it? What does it smell like? What does it sound like? What is it made of? Is it a natural or manufactured substance? Is the object complete? Has it been altered, mended, adapted? Is it worn?
2. *What is its construction? (Construction):* Is it handmade or machine made? Was it made in a mould or in pieces? How has it been fixed together?

Elliot (1994/1982, pp. 117 ff.)

1. *Description.* Observable data gained via sensory engagement with the artefact
 - (a) **material** composition: What materials were used to produce the artefact and complete its appearance? (Quality of materials used?)
 - (b) **construction:** Did the materials used influence the object’s final form? How was the artefact fabricated and finished? (A detailed examination including texture, size, etc.) What construction methods (and tools) would be required to produce this artefact? (Handmade/ machine-made? Quality and complexity of construction?) How was the object’s appearance affected or influenced by the construction techniques employed? Is any form of ornamentation/decoration present? If so, what type? How does this ornamentation/decoration affect the artefacts appearance? Are there any markings or inscriptions present? Are there any signs of wear or repair?
 - (c) **function:** What function did this artefact perform? How well did the artefact perform its intended function? Was the object’s functional performance affected by its design, materials used, construction methods employed or the ornamentation applied? (Do any of these hinder or reduce the artefact’s effectiveness?)
 - (d) **provenance:** Is there any observable data concerning the date, place of making and manufacturer? How it was used? Who its original owner was?
 - (e) **value:** Is there any observable data to indicate its value or its original owner?

Fleming (1974, p. 156)

1. *Describe (Material & Construction)*
 - (a) *physical aspects?* What is its size, dimension, weight? (b) *What is its made of?* Woods, fibres, ceramic bodies, metals, glass etc? (c) *How it constructed?* What techniques were used in its manufacture? What is its workmanship? How does its parts relate to its function? (d) *What is its design?* What is its structure, form, style, ornament and iconography?
2. *Its authentic?* Is it a fake or replica or reproduction?

Pearce (1994, p. 129)

1. *Description:*
 - (a) **(Material)** What is its material construction and ornament? What is its design (of itself and ornament)? What evidence the object provide evidence regarding its provenance?
 - (b) **Construction and Design:** What were the industrial techniques of its making? What evidence the object provide evidence regarding its practical function?

Prown (1982, pp. 2ff.)

1. *What is made from/How is it made (Material and Construction)* (Substantive description): What are the physical dimensions, material and articulation of the object? How big and how heavy is it? What materials is

it made from? What is the pattern of their distribution? How is the object constructed? How are the materials put together and articulated in the object?

2. *What is on it?* (**Content** description) Are there any decorative designs or motifs, inscriptions, coats of arms, or diagrams, engraved or embossed on metal, carved or painted on wood or stone, woven in textiles, moulded or etched in glass ?

3. *What does it look like?* (**Record** form, configuration visual character). What is its two dimensional organisation? What is its three-dimensional organisation of form in space? (Draw, record)

4. Are there any other formal elements? What is its colour, light and texture?

Mootz (2014, pp. 143ff, p. 156)

1. *What is this artefact made from?* (**Material**) Is it a natural material or fabric? Is it a metal? Is it ceramic? Is it a 'plastic' material?

2. *How was this artefact made?* (**Construction**) Is it naturally occurring? Is it human made? Was it hand made? Was it machine made? Was it mass-produced? Does it have any distinguishing 'markings' or decorations?

SMC (2007, p.57)

1. *What are the physical features* of the object? (**Material and Construction**) What you can see, feel, hear and smell? What is the object's shape, colour, pattern, texture, weight, size, material? Are there any chips, bumps, holes? What is its smell, sound, function, construction, design?)

2. *Deduce:* What clues that might show *where it came from or how it is used?* (Make decisions about the object based on observation and prior knowledge): who made it and used it?, how it is used and where it did it come from? who used it? made it? wore it? played with it? worked with it? loved it? cared for it? built it? broke it? mended it?) Do additional research for answers

Seiber (2012, p. 30)

1. *Describe.* (**Material and Construction**) What is this object? Use the evidence of your **senses** and the **knowledge** you already have of similar items to describe the object). What is its material, size, shape, color, weight, and decoration? What do your senses reveal about: How was it made and used? Where its from? Who could have made it? Who could have used it?

Appendix J: Object Analysis Question Bank - Evaluative ‘SO WHAT’ Questions

Abductive, ‘So What’ Questions

Andreetti (1993, pp. 11ff).

1. **Compare:** How does the object compare with things you are familiar with?
2. **Evaluate Functions** (social and practical): What does the object tell us about the society and individuals that used it? What does the technology of it making say about the technology, commerce or aesthetic values of its makers or users? What does the object’s material, manufacture, wear, decoration say about its practical uses and its social uses and status?

Durbin et. al (1990, p. 12)

1. **Function:** *What was the purpose for which the object was made? How has that object been used? Has the use changed?*
2. **Design Evaluation:** Is it well designed? Does it do the job it was intended to do efficiently? Is it aesthetically pleasing? Why is it decorated?
3. **Value Evaluation:** What is the object worth in monetary, symbolic, social economic and historical terms? What is it worth to the people who made it, used it, kept it, to you, to a bank to a museum?

Elliot (1994/1982, pp. 117 ff.)

1. **Comparative Analysis:** Use observation, prior knowledge, object use and research to compare and contrast artefact with others similar ones from its time or in subsequent ages in the categories of
 - (a) material composition: Are these materials used in similar artefacts?
 - (b) Construction: Does the construction of this artefact differ greatly from similar objects? (Objects by the same maker and others?) Is its design comparable to like objects? (Is the overall design a set style?) What stage of development or evolution does this artefact represent when compared with both older and more recent objects of a similar type? (Does the design aid in dating?) What degree of sophistication is represented by the artefact? (Style, method of construction, etc.) Is the artefact a reproduction?
 - (c) Function: Does the artefact’s function reveal anything about its maker/owner? What is its function today and has its function changed?
 - (d) Provenance: When and where did the original owner live and what was his social status, trade, etc.? Who were the subsequent owners and where? Any other information on the object’s history, owners and maker(s), etc.
 - (e) Value: Did ownership of this type of artefact reflect the social or economic status of the original owner? What value was placed on the object by society? What cultural values does it reveal? What value does the object have to the society in which it was produced? (extrinsic/ monetary)
2. **Supplementary Data:** Research. Sources outside of the artefact itself and other like it (or dissimilar) that are useful in supplying additional data.

Fleming (1974, p.156)

1. **What is its function and uses?** What was its intended function? Does it have an unintended function? (What cultural roles has it played?)
2. **What is its history?** Where and when was it made. For whom? By whom? Why? What were its successive changes in ownership, condition and function?
3. **Evaluation** (Judgments) – (a) Subjective comparison with other objects according to aesthetic quality/workmanship: how appropriate is the use do material and texture? How tasteful the craftsmanship? How effective the design? How expressive in form, style and ornament? and factual comparisons with other objects of its kind: (b) factual comparison of object with others of its kind: what is its relative size, cost, rarity temporal primacy?
3. **Cultural Analysis:** (Judgments – how does its reflect the society of which it is a product ?) What does its tell us about the nature of the society that produced or used it? What was its intended uses? What was unintended roles? What was its utility was a tool? How did it shape or change human behaviour? How did it operate to communicate ideas, values, feelings and meanings? What value did it have in the society of its

making.

4. **Interpretation:** (Judgement - how does it reveal aspects of ourselves and our own culture?) – What is the relation of the artefact to our culture? How does information from the artefact relate to our current values? What is its significance or relevance to our culture?

Pearce (1994, p. 129)

1. **Comparison:** How does the artefact compare in material composition, provenance, industrial techniques to other artefacts?

2. **Research:** What can research reveal regarding the object's history and contexts

3. **Interpretation** (Significance): What is the significance of the objects in perceiver's philosophical and psychological systems? What is the role(s) of the artefact in the social organisation?

Prown (1982, pp. 2 ff.)

1. **Deduction** (Evaluating the relationship between the object and its perceiver – empathetic understanding through *interaction* with the object). What can be learnt about the society that made the object from engaging with the object via the senses, the intellect, the emotion? What is learnt through touch, feel, weight, configuration, texture? What does the object do? How does it do it? What feelings does it provoke or engender? Joy, fright, awe, perturbation, revulsions, indifference, curiosity?

2. **Speculation.** (Create, Apply). Use information gained from the descriptive and deductive stages to formulate hypotheses: What insights does the object provide into the difference and similarities of culture values between the fabricating society and our own? What is revealed about ourselves? What insight is gained about the cultural values of the other society? R

3. **Research.** (Research plan for validation of speculation/interpretation). Engage interdisciplinary perspectives.

Mootz (2014, pp. 145, 156)

1. **Function:** What might this artefact have been used for?

2. **Evaluation:** So what? What does it reveal? What does all this mean? 'What have we learned?' 'Has our view of the people of the past changed?'

SMC (2007, p.57)

1. **Interpret** (What the object tells us by making comparison and using prior knowledge): What would you be doing if you were using this object? Why is it made of these materials? Could it have more than one use?

Have you seen anything else made of the same material? Have you ever seen this before or something like it?

2. **Classify:** How would you categorise your object? How can colour, size, function, origin be used to classify the object? Think about its energy source, material, function, age. Anything else?

Seiber (2012, pp. 12, 30)

1. **Function:** How was it used? Who could have used it?

2. **Classify:** (Evaluate): How does this object relate to others? How is the object similar or different to other objects? Are some similarities and differences more important than others? Which traits are most important when relating the object to others? What value is placed on this object? Is its value due to materials, function, date, rarity, ownership history, place of origin, or religious associations? Does the object mean different things to different people?

3. **Interpretation:** What stories does this object tell? What does the object tell us about how its makers relate to the natural environment? What does it tell us about how the people who use it organize their lives? Does the object have a story to tell about the beliefs of the people who make or use it?

Appendix K: Logical Levels/Hierarchy of ideas

Figure K.1 is a scaffold for thinking with, and asking questions of, artefacts and objects so as to move thinking between Tier I ('what') questions and Tier II ('so what') questions.

The choice of questioning moves thinking up, down or laterally across the ladder of abstraction. Tier I questions move thinking down the 'ladder of abstraction' (deductive thinking with objects), while Tier II questions move thinking up levels of abstraction (for abductive thinking). Lateral thinking (moving across the ladder of abstraction) facilitates historical consciousness through the contrast and comparison of material culture across time, place and culture.

The entry point for object interrogation on the scaffold is indicated by the (red) star. The kind of information extracted from an object or artefact is determined by chunking up or down the 'logical levels' of abstraction. The utility of the scaffold is that, at any point, a change of questioning moves thinking 'up', 'down' or across the ladder. The evidence for conclusions, hypotheses and explanations can be checked by drilling down the ladder to test that they are supported by, and grounded in, the object/material source (Staats, 2018).

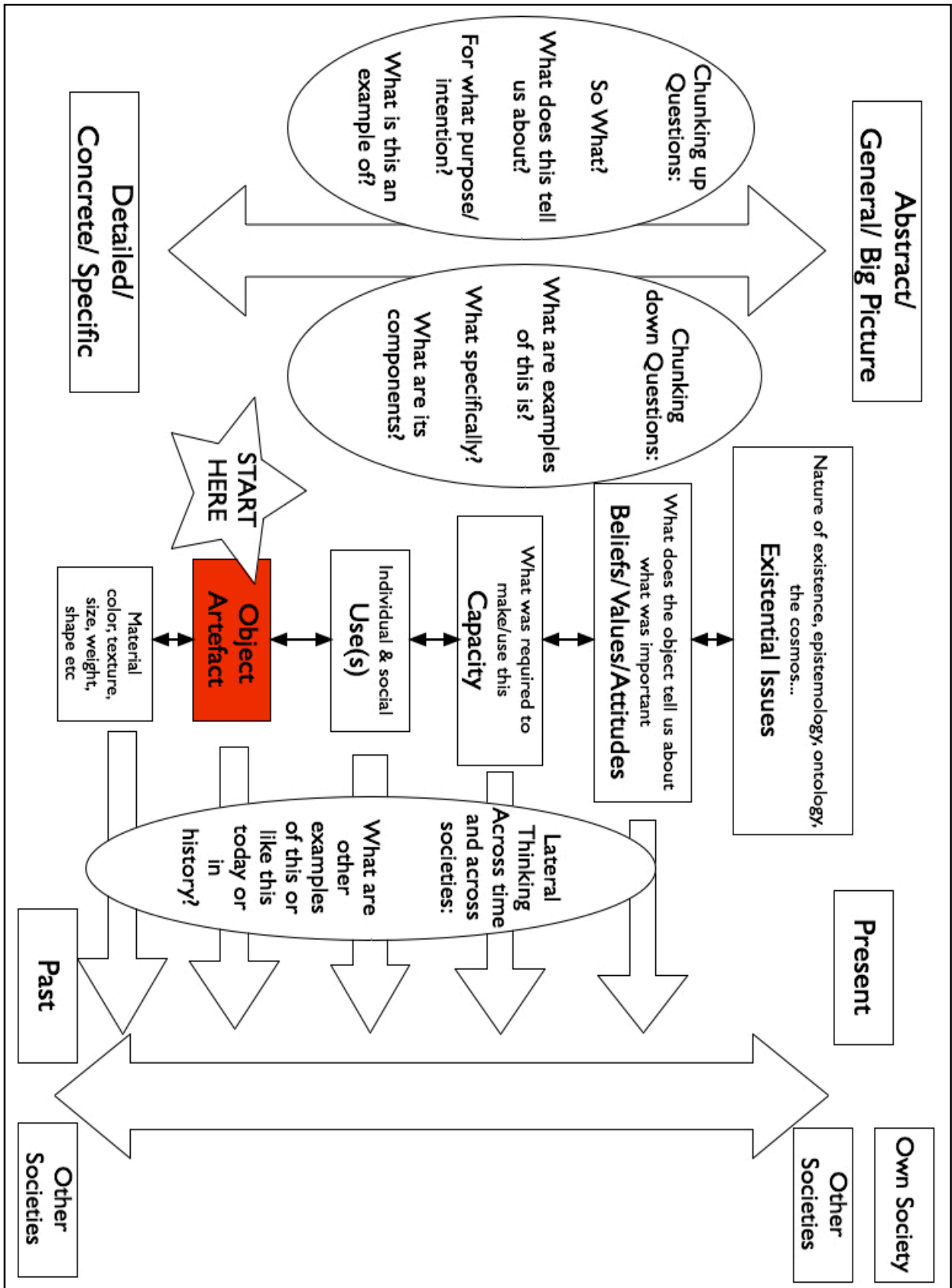


Figure K.1: Logical Levels/ Hierarchy of Ideas, Adapted for Artefact Analysis (Staats 2018)⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Logical levels/Hierarchy of Ideas was formalised into a model by Robert Dilts in the 1980s. It is based on earlier work by anthropologist Gregory Bateson (Dilts, 2003, pp. 300ff). I have adapted it for teaching object analysis (Staats, 2018).