THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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A CRITICAL SOCIOCULTURAL AUTOETHNOGRAPHY:

A Soldier, Here, There and Back Again

By: Derek Wesley Morris

Declaration

I declare that this thesis entitled "A Critical Socio-cultural Autoethnography: A Soldier Here, There and Back Again" has been composed by me, and has not been accepted in any previous form for a degree in any other institution or university. The work has been done solely by me, and all quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information have been acknowledged.

Signed

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Derek Wesley Morris
April 2023

Abstract

This thesis takes an unconventional approach to much of social science in developing the idea and practice of a critical social-cultural autoethnography. In bridging the social sciences and humanities, it cultivated a more thorough social version of autoethnographic research around the metaphor of its different components akin to a diamond's facets. The development of autoethnography has markedly changed the scene of ethnography, making reflexivity and the central researcher's role better developed. My thesis incorporates this by building on what others have done and adding a documents of life approach. It first considers the self as auto, juxtaposed against how much the other and society are incorporated. Next, it explores the slippery relationship between fact/fiction. Here, I have created an auto/biographical novella to investigate how autoethnographers navigate the interiority of fact, fiction, knowledge and truth. The next focus for discussion concerns the exteriority and how we craft narrative, myths and stories from these claims as a part of truth and knowledge systems through a dialogical voice/writer/reader motif and also considered the role of the hero in textual narratives. I will then chart how these associations between my novella, myself and relations to other people and their accounts were shaped by knowledge claims and how they fed through relations of ruling into a power/knowledge system by examining a copy of my military orders. I then autoethnographically look at two war memorials that help me better untangle all of this. The discussion here also examined how the self can become more constricted as it becomes more social, thereby further helping me explore the socially constructed character of self and society. However, it is also crucial to consider the individual and each stipulation in developing better knowledge claims through critical thinking and learning from our history and other lives. The conclusion considers the different facets of the diamond of methodological contributions to autoethnography and also explores what a future autoethnography built on these would comprise.

Lay Summary

This unconventional thesis advances the idea and practice of a critical socio-cultural autoethnography. Autoethnography is observed here as auto for the self, ethno for culture and graphy for writing, so writing through using the self about culture. I will develop a more social version of research concerning autoethnography that brings in both work from the social sciences and the humanities. It will revolve around a facet of the diamond idea, where different facets combine to form flashes of insight towards better research. Autoethnography's development has helped to centre the researcher's role in studies. My thesis builds on what others have done, along with adding an approach that brings in documents into the research. It first considers the self as auto, but my version is more open to others and society. Next, it explores the slippery relationship between fact/fiction. I created a novella that includes this self and its interiors of facts/fiction, knowledge and truth. The following section focuses on the exterior, how this self tells and crafts stories and myths. It investigates what we claim as truth and knowledge and how we often make ourselves the hero in these stories. The thesis then discusses how these claims affect my novella, me, and other people's stories. These claims feed how other people see their world and my own by looking at my military orders. I want to examine how power elites take up these assertions to affect us. I then do the same with two war memorials from my hometown and their myths and stories. It also looks at how the self can shrink in situations after noticing our social nature. However, we must also consider each individual's contribution and claims through critical thinking and learning of history: ours and others. The conclusion considers all the facets together of my critical socio-cultural autoethnography and also explores its future.

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Preference

This thesis concerns a practical and an intellectual enquiry, both starting with and running through the sociological. As a serving American soldier, and also both before this time and its immediate aftermath, I went through experiences which were perplexing, engrossing and sometimes terrifying. Afterwards, there was also a struggle to make sense of them all. This toiling, and with help from others, led me to autoethnography. I explore all this as a method/ology analytically and mindfully while expressing my appreciation of its considerable strength and, for my purposes, some limitations I endeavour to transcend. I prefer to do this while examining an evolving self through the places and times I encountered. I analyse my response and thoughts internally to this exterior of the social through relations to power, people and texts.

Chapter 1: Writing My Life and Thinking Things Out

"Only a schmuck studies his own life", Erving Goffman once told one of his students who did a self-ethnography (Shalin, 2013: 3). So, who studies their own life? Apparently, Goffman himself, for Shalin, makes a compelling case that Goffman's work drew on his own experience and key events that match the course of his academic career and social-cultural context (Shalin, 2013). Amanda Coffey (1999) has demonstrated how sociologists have always written themselves with their own autobiography in mind into their research accounts. Coffey calls for a more reflexive ethnographer by highlighting the subjectivity's role in the building of relations in the field and their maintenance of them. This is the type of reflexivity I have worked towards, beginning in my time on my MPhil course in 2012, where I noticed the careful comments of a professor in the margins of a draft advising me to move from being a 'reflexive military man' to a 'reflexive sociologist'. I had begun to progress from a 'reflexive military man', but my transition to a 'reflexive sociologist' was incomplete. Coupling autoethnography and reflexivity will also concern storytelling, for "the narrator and the central figure in the narrative are the same", and this "creates dilemmas" (Bruner, 2004: 693). Considering these dilemmas, my understanding of reflexivity has moved to notice that:

> analytical reflexivity is in fact not about 'subjectivity', about feelings and inner workings, but instead with accountable ways of knowing the social world, an immensely material matter concerned with grounded processes and activities and the explication of these (Stanley, 2018: 113).

Contemplating this MPhil, I considered my life as a soldier ten years before. Subsequently, I have deliberated considerably on those moments of 'then' and 'now', to understand how I imagined it at different points in time and how I was imagined. This chapter provides an overview of autoethnography, the documents of life approach and ethnographies on the edge of the auto to illustrate how my thesis will differ from the ones that follow. This chapter sets

the stage because its methodological focus is to propose an innovative variant of autoethnography. I will continue crafting this through the chapters in the thesis.

In much of autoethnography, there is a problem of presenting the self as unmediated, factual, monological, static and not one moving through time, place and power. This thesis has woven literature into a narrative to confront this view. It is a relatively unconventional approach often suited to humanities-oriented work. The form of autoethnography in this thesis will be dialogical, with a self that is porous to the social and moving through time, place, power and truths with documents of life in mind. It will bring in much of the humanities while having a sociological underpinning. This literature will often be read "against the grain" to critically analyse the times, places, power and truths, as well as the scepticism towards them (Mills and Pearce, 1996; Dampier, 2008). It has a Document of Life approach that adds to and builds it (Plummer, 1983; 2001; Stanley, 2013; Stanley and Sereva, 2019) while utilising the work of feminist epistemology (England, 1994; Enloe, 2007; Letherby, 2002; Smith, 1990; Stanley, 1997; Stanley and Wise, 1990; 1993).

My starting point in autoethnography will be the work of Chang and her examination of the cultural context of the self (Chang, 2008). I then add to what others have done in autoethnography to make it critical (Anderson, 2006; Boylorn and Orbe, 2014) and social scientists who sit on the threshold of autoethnography (Lensmire, 2017; Mckenzie, 2015; Thomson, 2013). This thesis pushes autoethnography towards the ethnographic side of the debate from a direction that has pushed more towards the auto. This push follows the debate that came to a head in the 2006 issue of 35 (4) *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography.* I wanted to stake my position in this debate and the importance of the work of past ethnographers and other social scientists but also fiction writers.

I did this through my own story of before and after a war. In doing this, I entered other debates, such as the work of fiction and biofiction writers interacting with the social

sciences and vice versa (Booth, 1983; Bulmer, 1986; Ackerman and Lutter, 1996; Gibson, 2007; Herbillon, 2020; Kenner, 2001; Lackey, 2015; 2017; Layne, 2018; Longo, 2015; Lukas, 1932; Searle, 1975; Stanley, 1993a; 2020; Walsh, 2007). This debate led to the work of power (Foucault, 1977; 1978;1980; 2003; Smith, 1990; 2002; 2005) and power's effect on all of us as well as collective memory in the same manner (Beiner, 2018; Brundage, 2005 Olick, Jeffrey, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, 2011; Godfrey and Lilley, 2009; Gordon, 1997; Halbwach, 1950; Nora, 1989; 1996; Renan, 1990; Stanley, 2006).

These insights were all part of the facets of the diamond structure, where one flash of insight leads to another (Mason, 2011). These new understandings led to entering the discourse on how some events are remembered, and some are forgotten (Bissett, 2002; Burbank, 1976; Bush, 1932; Hirsch, 2003; Hyland, 2017; Kennedy and Kennedy, 1991; Martyn, 2008; Rieff, 2016); Rancourt, 2013; Roper, 2000; Von Tunzelmann, 2021) and how all of this has evolved in my rural region(Campbell and Mayerfield, 2006 Bell, Hullinger and Brislen, 2015; Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006; Friedburger, 1988; Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005). These facets helped in forming my understanding on narrative, culture and story and the debates surrounding these (Dampier, 2008; Eco, 1979; Jackson, 2008; Jameson, 1992; Leibowitz, 1974; Lizardo, 2017; Mishler and Squire, 2021; O'Brien, 1990; Patterson, 2017; Prior, 2006; Ricœur, 1990; 2004; Smith, 2008; Somers, 1994; Sparkes and Smith, 2008; Squire, 2017; Stanley and Dampier, 2008; Swidler, 2001; Tamboukou, 2008; 2015; Vaisey, 2009; Willsey, 2014). These flashes of the diamond led to further insight into the debates of the effect and affect of race, gender, class and morality (Abbott, 2020; Dawson, 1994; Elias 1989; Gilligan, 1988; Hill Collins, 1990; 2005; Hochschild, 2016); Kimmel, 2017; Lentin, 2010; Luft, 2020; Massey, 1994; McWilliams, 2017; Messerschmidt, 2015; Murphy and Harris, 2018; Scott, 2008; 2010; Stanley, 1992; 1993b; 2002; 2010; Suitt, 2021; Yuval-Davis, 2015). With these considered, a more rounded, dialogical and sociological autoethnography is what I present.

In 2012, I was wrestling with understanding my reasons for joining the military and its consequences. It was suggested to me that an exploration of these reflections would make an interesting autoethnography. The method of autoethnography in research and writing is utilised to "describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience" (ethno) (Ellis, 2011: 1). The 'graphy' literally means writing, but the "describe and systematically analyse" serves to let the reader know of the evolution of the autoethnographic field, discussed later. Autoethnographies frequently result when a researcher "retrospectively and selectively write[s] about epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity" (Ellis et. al., 2011: 8). I began to explore my story through an epiphany. It occurred when I realised that this identity also involved my African-American friend and my Iraqi friends, as well as my Southern identity. They, too, were subjects. I then traced this 'vanishing' of them to the monomyth, the template for storytelling that is found across cultures, about a hero's journey of separation, initiation and return (Morris, 2013; Campbell, 1993). Now, I have realised that focusing on an epiphany and a moment of change is sometimes needed. However, there is also more than one event to a person's life and thinking. There are many reasons why I write about my moments of being a soldier, but many more additional reasons and motivations surround my soldiering. These are the flow of moments, interactions, people, places and things, recognising the non-static nature of life. I want to explore these by using documents of life (Plummer, 2000), building on my previous analysis of my MPhil autoethnography to provide a more complete picture of the stories and persons at work in our lives.

Autoethnography's Importance

The development of autoethnography has changed the scene of ethnography in a very tangible way. It has made known the absolutely central role of the researcher. It can provide a specialised lens that critically engages the researcher's emotions and cognition while acting as a mirror to explore the subjective experiences of the researcher in their social and cultural frames (Peterson, 2015). Autoethnography has also made significant positive contributions because it has put reflexivity, even if sometimes problematic ways, firmly on the map. It has positioned the researcher in such a way that made people much more aware of themselves as researchers than they were previously. It offers an insider's perspective for readers to obtain entry to normally inaccessible private experiences. As a research insider of soldiers, its reflexivity is a strategy valued in qualitative research to facilitate quality and validity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Holloway and Galvin, 2016; Houghton et al., 2013). It helps to make the researcher's stance known throughout the research process (Darawsheh and Stanley, 2014).

Autoethnography can often facilitate "our questioning and move us beyond our own taken-for-granted assumptions and sense-making of the social world, both professionally and personally" (Lazard and McAvoy, 2020: 173). Ultimately, it is an approach that "acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist" (Ellis, et al., 2011: para. 3). Autoethnography is:

> not simply a way of knowing about the world; it has become a way of being in the world, one that requires living consciously, emotionally, reflexively. It asks that we not only examine our lives but also consider how and why we think, act, and feel as we do (Holman-Jones et al., 2013: 10).

Sarah Wall (2006) observes autoethnography's primary intent as acknowledging "the inextricable link between the personal and the cultural", and through this link, there is "rich meaning, culturally relevant personal experience, and an intense motivation to know" (Wall, 2006). I want to build on this intention of autoethnography by critically augmenting this method. I will do this by understanding a particular type of autoethnography based on what others have done. My first chapter concerns the self as auto, how much the different styles of ethnography critically and reflexively include the self in the text. This juxtaposes how much the other and society are incorporated. This chapter considers the history of autoethnography and its forms, including those on the edge of auto when building towards the form my form would take. These aspects of autoethnography are there, but they are not universally accepted. There is not much writing on them, and even less on them being put together. As I have written, building my form pulls these little strands together, weaving them as one in order to produce something more.

I will use analytical reflexivity in my analysis, exploring how others portray themselves in autoethnographic text with different levels of the social in mind. This analytical reflexivity in autoethnography and on the edge of auto has been used in these varying degrees by (Anderson, 2006; Boylorn and Orbe, 2014; Chang, 2008) and others. I also will look at texts that centre the self by mentioning autoethnography to varying degrees (Lensmire, 2017; Mckenzie, 2015; Thomson, 2013; Vance, 2016). These texts taught me the many pitfalls that could arise and the importance of centring the self as I examined how each text added or subtracted to the self's inclusion. This understanding will be applied to this thesis and my style with the documents of life approach I examine later. With the documents of life approach, I will consider the texts the self encountered to understand better how this self includes the social beyond itself.

The Evolution of Autoethnography

The term 'autoethnography' originated in the 1970s, with David Hayano referring to *Facing Mount Kenya* as one of the first "auto-ethnographies", facilitating the initiation of a debate over what counts as autoethnography as it has evolved through the years (Hayano, 1979). Karl Heider provided the first description of the term, defining his work with the Grand Valley Dani people of Irian Jaya, Indonesia, with the "auto" being "for autochthonous, since it is the Dani's own account of 'what people do'; and 'auto' for automatic, since it is the simplest routine-eliciting technique imaginable", as Heider's example was more focused on cultural accounts of the Dani as informants, attempting to see their life from their perspective (Heider, 1975: 3). However, even in the 1970s this practice was not new to the social sciences, for 'telling lives' or 'what people do' has a long history in the field, with the most relevant early example from the 1900s being *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, a key sociological text, which uses many letters and also includes the 'life story' as told by a research subject, Wladek (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918). A few years later, Hayano looked at the meaning of the word from another perspective to indicate the examination of the culture of the ethnographer connecting their autobiography to their own culture when Hayano was analysing his own 'card-playing' culture (Hayano, 1979).

As autoethnography has moved more towards its current usage, it has been influenced by many of the "turns" in the social sciences, such as the "biographical" and the "narrative" turns (Plummer, 2001a). As observed by Paul Atkinson, "the biographical perspective had been all but excluded from the methodological canon" but "has enjoyed a significant revival in recent years" (1999: 191). Its influence, along with the narrative turn concern for "life as narrative" and storytelling, "storied lives", and narrative itself, have certainly helped guide autoethnography to where it is today (Bruner, 1987; Rosenwald and Ochberg, 1992;

Polkinghorne, 1988). These "turns" coupled with the "crisis of representation" critically responded to by Turner and Bruner (1986), Clifford and Marcus (1986), and Stoller and Olkes (1987) have acknowledged that there are different realities that are culturally, socially and politically positioned. This is instead of one unproblematic version of reality accepted by everyone while at the same time also noting the role of the researcher and how their body, race and gender are present and produced in their research. They have all helped Reed-Danahay to conceive of an autoethnography that:

> synthesizes both a postmodern ethnography, [with] the realist conventions and objective observer position of standard ethnography … and a postmodern autobiography, in which the notion of the coherent, individual self [has] been … called into question (1997: 2).

Documents of Life and Types of Autoethnography

'Documents of life' are not merely pieces of written or otherwise represented information but "texts which are everyday, representational and significant in organizing and shaping lives" (Stanley, 2013:4). These are the photos, diaries, artefacts, tattoos, letters, memoirs, and emails, documents of life produced in the course of social life. Life is not unknowable. However, there is so much to know that it may seem this way because every twist and turn cannot be accounted for. The best we can do is dive into the depths of it. By investigating those documents of life that surround stories and narratives, not only my own but those of others. I want to grasp the experiences of the individuals involved, how these social relationships developed over time and space on a micro-level and how this relates to the macro-level (Stanley, 2013; 2016; 2017). Moving between this macro and micro-level is "the search for 'understanding' and making sense of the self" that "has become a key feature of the modern world" (Plummer, 2001a:83). Reflecting on this move, Ken Plummer began to discuss how documents reflect and refract this life in his first *Documents of Life* book in

1983, a sequel in 2001 and a continuation by Liz Stanley in 2013 (Plummer, 1983; 2001; Stanley, 2013). The developed approach to research found in their pages includes a critical humanist view "which take the human being as an embodied, emotional, interactive self, striving for meaning in wider historically specific social worlds", while also listening "attentively to the stories people tell of their lives" (Plummer 2001: 255). In Chapter 2, I will assess one of my own documents of life as a starting point. My MPhil was written as an autoethnography and will be critically examined as a document of life. It explores a personal story that also reflects shared cultural conventions because of the generic properties it draws on (Plummer, 1995). Recognition of the constructiveness of accounts of life means foremost that the researcher needs "to search out ways for evaluating just what it is that is being constructed" (Plummer, 2001a: 238). Furthermore, in keeping with everyday lives being of a particular time and place, it also means recognising that "stories are told from different points of view which have their own truth at the time of telling" (Plummer 2001a: 239).

When C. Wright Mills wrote, "in Europe an American discovers America," he was writing about the need to leave one's country and look back at it to 'discover' it (Mills and Mills 2000: 208). This requires scrutinising how we are embedded in the socio-cultural landscape and how we navigate these vast terrains. Mills is asking us "to grasp the interplay of individuals and society, of biography and history, of self and world" (Mills, 2000: 4). This is part of the sociological imagination where Mills also calls us to notice, "what we experience in various and specific milieu…is often caused by structural changes. Accordingly, to understand the changes of many personal milieux we are required to look beyond them" (Mills, 2000: 10). It is an "intellectual experience" (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010: 8). And this is the sociological imagination I will utilise, one that works "between 'the personal troubles of milieu' and 'the public issues of social structure'" (Mills, 2000: 8). As a former soldier, Mills speaks directly to me when he asks his reader to "consider war," with

my own time and place being the Iraq War, where I had to act "according to [my] values, to find a set of milieux and within it to survive the war or make one's death in it meaningful" (Mills, 2000: 9). But at the same time, "the structural issues of war have to do with its causes; with what types of men it throws up into command; with its effects upon economic and political, family and religious institutions, with the unorganized irresponsibility of a world of nation-states" (Mills, 2000: 9).

The autoethnography I strive to practice is "inspired by feminist autobiography" and "embedded in intertextually socio-historical situations" (Chapman, 1999: 30). Reed-Danahay noted this styling as occurring from the blending of postmodern ethnography and autobiography and a revived interest in autobiography, personal narrative, and life history amongst social scientists (Reed-Danahay, 1997). There are many ways to evaluate this blending of postmodern ethnography and autobiography, such as my autoethnography of 2013. One is through the "continuum of objectivity and subjectivity" (Plummer, 2001b: 401). At the objectivity end of the continuum, there is a need to get to the historical truth, to get as close to the reality of life as possible. Somewhere near the middle of this range lies "narrative truth", and with this, "what matters is the way in which the story enables the reader to enter the subjective world of the teller to see the world from her or his point of view, even if this world does not 'match reality'" (Plummer, 2001b: 401). And at the other end of the range is "fictional biography," where the story is fabricated, and there the resolve is, more often than not, to spark insight and imagination. On this continuum, life stories are weighed based on "their uses, functions and the role they play in personal and cultural life" (Plummer, 2001b: 401).

As noted earlier about my step toward becoming a 'reflexive sociologist', it is difficult work and always 'in process'. My MPhil work was supposed to include reflexivity as a main component. However, it many times devolved into something that was all too often

"confession to salacious indiscretions" or "mere navel gazing", and I eventually identified the "narcissistic and egoistic" in the draft conclusion (Okely, 1992: 2). As Giddens notes, "the reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character" (Giddens, 1990: 38). The type of autoethnography and sociology I wish to practice must be aware of this constant in-motion action, where "actors' knowledge of them partly constitutes all forms of social life" and this is very different from studies in the natural sciences in that in the social sciences "the intervention of an observer changes what is being studied" (Giddens, 1990: 38, 43).

Along with reflexivity, attention should also be given to the ethics of the documents of life researchers. They should include the following:

> ensuring that appropriate and sufficient evidence is collected to enable research questions to be fully addressed, that interpretations are justifiable in the sense of clearly grounded in appropriate data, that arguments are defensible because each component build successively and logically on those before, and that only grounded and fully-accountable conclusions are drawn (Stanley, 2013: 14).

As Stanley notes, this may seem obvious to researchers, but it is rarely spelted out (Stanley, 2013). Along with documents of life ethics, my research will also include a critical humanist approach. It understand the subject as contingent: symbolic and material, along with embedded, dialogical, inter-subjective, universal and ethical (Plummer, 2001a). However, as Stanley observes, a "universal ethics" is problematic because humans are "still being modified in non-human directions" (Stanley, 2013: 9). Further accompanying this is the "refusing of binaries" and challenging "the dichotomy between fact and fiction by examining narrative and discursive forms and contexts," while not essentialising (Pleasance, 2013: 45).

It is a recognition of a "lived life in which people experience, feel, think suffer and enjoy" and which must be "approached with caution and humility" (Wise, 2013: 161).

Autoethnography and Ethics

Autoethnography developed out research of the intensified concern for the well-being of research participants; it also involved more concern for how participants are studied, initiated in part by the horrors of Stanley Milgram's behaviourist studies of obedience and the study of African Americans in Tuskegee Syphilis experiments (Holman-Jones, Adams and Ellis, 2013). Relational ethics grew alongside this in concert with autoethnography, with both emphasising the "mutual respect, dignity, and connectedness between researcher and researched, and between researchers and the communities in which they live and work" and that researchers should take "ethical responsibilities toward intimate others who are implicated in the stories we write about ourselves" (Ellis, 2007: 4-5). Thinking about the past mistakes of Tuskegee and Milgram, good autoethnography should necessitate honouring a person's right to choose. There should be a choice to participate in another person's autoethnography, and there is an assumption of "responsibility for our actions and consequences of our stories on those being researched" (Tullis, 2013; Chang, 2008; Chang et al., 2012; Rappert, 2010: 273).

The word autoethnography is also something of a conundrum because "the word auto is a misnomer. The self might be the focus of research, but the self is porous, leaking to the other without due ethical consideration" (Tullis, 2013: 1608). This porous character of the self requires a relational ethics that has a responsibility for and commitment to protecting the vulnerable, and it requires us to think critically before, during and after the course of the research about obtaining informed consent from those connected to the study (Hernandez and Ngunjiri, 2013). As Ellis notes:

it is easier to talk abstractly about ethics than it is to put an ethical stance into practice; it is easier doing a "mea culpa" about what one should have done in former studies than figuring out the right way to proceed in current ones; it's easier to instruct others who must make ethical decisions in their research than to follow one's own advice; it's easier to embrace relational ethics than it is to figure out whom we owe relational loyalty when our readers and participants differ in values, our hearts and minds are in conflict (2009: 23).

There is also a concern for the self in autoethnography research around the need to be aware of the harm that can come from writing and publishing as well as research. As it is "part of our job as scholarly storytellers to reveal both the good and bad—our conflicted selves in the context of conflicted others", so relational ethics again come into play because in dealing with other-selves, you have to have "an ever-vigilant and rigorous self-reflexivity and mindfulness of the everyday interaction and conversation as well as an ethical, relational engagement with the past, with memory and with the stories" (Tedlock, 2013: 207; Metta, 2010: 59).

Autoethnographers have devised many ways to protect the self (Hernandez, 2008; McMillan and Price, 2010 Carter, 2002; Hernandez and Ngunjiri, 2013). Moreover, it does not stop with relational ethics. For autoethnographers also need to consider moral ethics, ethical mindfulness, an ethic of trust, and especially an ethics of care that holds autoethnographers accountable for the consequences of their research for the participants, the readers and themselves (Adams, 2008; Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Ellis, 2009). These are all essential points that I will draw on in my work. I will deliberate on who and what to include, where and how to include others, how much of me is included and who else I involve. These are considerations about family, friends, acquaintances, and people that I may not care for, but all of whom require relational ethics and the ethics of care when writing any

ethnography (Ellis, 2007; 2009).

Considering the fact that the ethics surrounding autoethnography also leads one to ruminate on their values, researchers in this subject area "have emphasized aesthetic, cognitive, emotional, and relational values that have received less attention in traditional ethnographic research" (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013: 79). These values have led to the development of critical features in autoethnographic practice, some of which have already been discussed in this chapter, such as visibility of the self in the research process and strong reflexivity, but also the painstaking involvement with the social milieu or community that is often personal. There is often a vulnerability that follows: coming to terms with our own personal weaknesses as we examine our lives to achieve a more profound social understanding. And lastly, there is a rejection of conclusiveness and closure in the autoethnographic inquiry before, during and after the research process onwards to the publishing phase (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013).

Criteria for CSA

Along with deliberating these values concerning autoethnography, Cheryl Le Roux has developed five criteria to evaluate it as good, bad or indifferent of its kind, concerning subjectivity, self-reflexivity, resonance, credibility and contribution. By *subjectivity*, Le Roux means that "the self is primarily visible in the research" (Le Roux, 2016: 204). The researcher attempts to place themselves within the milieu of experience. They want to understand that experience by retelling the narrative while being conscious of its ongoing construction. *Self-reflexivity* means reflexively coming to know the interconnectedness between the researcher and the research and how researchers are positioned in socio-cultural and historical circumstances. *Resonance* concerns the ability of the research to speak to an audience and how the autoethnography connects with the audience on both an emotional and intellectual plane. *Credibility* in autoethnography is when the truth is seen in storytelling when honesty becomes the watchword. And finally, *contribution* has to do with how autoethnography contributes not only to the academy but how it might add to other arenas to "liberate,

empower, improve practice, or make a contribution to social change" (Le Roux, 2016: 204). However, even with all this taken together, these are merely aspirational. So what makes for credibility in autoethnography?

When discussing credibility, Andrew Sparkes argues for an "interpretivist framework", noting "a world of multiple realities" where "multiple truths can exist," which leads him to an approach that incorporates "a dialectical analysis in which the understandings from ethnography are analysed in relation to the social structures that shape the lives of people", and which moves readers to have "the ability to hear and understand different voices in a spirit of intellectual curiosity and respect" (Sparkes, 1992: 30, 36, 41, 49). My research aims to take up this mantle. It will present a dialogical form of autoethnographic that will centre the polyphonic nature of lives (Bakhtin, 1986).

Spectrum of Autoethnography

It is critical to locate these criteria within the spectrum of autoethnography, seeing it as a scale ranging from evocative to analytical autoethnography. Autoethnography underwent an evolution when a 2006 Special Issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* outlined these two different styles, which would challenge conventional thought in the field. Evocative autoethnography was a part of the development of an approach to autoethnography regarded by Ellis as a form that is "performative, artistic and poetic…helps undercut conventions of writing that foster hierarchy and division" and does not "sacrifice the story", by preserving the narrative (Ellis and Bochner, 2006: 435; 436; 444). However, I believe the story can be sociological. Evocative autoethnography provides a method that "bypass[es] the representational problem by invoking an epistemology of emotion, moving the reader to feel the feelings of the other" (Denzin, 1997: 228). This style of autoethnography focuses on emotional resonance and subjective emotional experience. Evocative autoethnography utilises emotion to express experience, often from those less well represented in academic

discourse, the oppressed and racialised (Anderson, 2006). It is related to performative autoethnography in that it employs performance while also utilising poetry, theatre and other performer-based mediums. Another characteristic attributed to performative autoethnography is that it often has utopian performances as a component, where the autoethnographer performs an imagining of a world to illustrate to others what they dream about and how they think a society should be (Spry, 2016). This brand of autoethnography also takes notice of the many different discourses, identities and experiences that form around us, endeavouring to incorporate and communicate them through the method.

These latter variants raise the existence of communicative autoethnography, which encompasses both evocative and performance autoethnography. It focuses on communicating to others the discourses, identities and experiences that matter to people in their lives. The autoethnographer feels a need to communicate a discourse, identity and/or experience into society at large in order to provoke understanding, acceptance and/or outrage. As noted above, communicative autoethnography includes performance and evocative autoethnography, frequently bringing elements of one or both into its presentation. It "adopt[s] a 'thick individual' and 'thin social relational' emphasis on selves and identities of a continuum with sociocultural at the other end" (Smith and Sparkes, 2008: 7). Here, communicating how the agentic self views society is crucial, and the struggles of the every day come into focus. It is where the autoethnographer provides a 'thick', close account of their own inner-workings. This shares something with romanticism and its perceived task of leading "to something like the melting away of the very notion of objective truth" (Berlin et al., 2013: 60). Incorporating this romantic thought, communicative autoethnography also often integrates Deleuzian thought about "how we might think about things in ways that would open up new regions for living" (May, 2005:3).

This style of autoethnography is vital to denote differences of experience across communities and societies and to provide understanding and support for that difference. However, Deleuze here was echoing and interpreting Spinozian thought.

Spinoza's *Ethics* works towards a peace of mind that gives a person a better awareness of their place in the world and achieves an "intuitive knowledge…whereby he is brought to the adequate conception of himself and of all things within the scope of his intelligence" (Spinoza, 2007: 105). It would seem Spinoza would rather approve of a style of autoethnography that is analytical in nature.

Crossing this divide and also discussed in the 2006 Special Issue, is analytical autoethnography. Leon Anderson described this as having the key features of being: "(1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher's self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis" (2006). Anderson moves away from these understandings of traditional ethnography by focusing on the importance of "heightened reflexivity and greater visibility of the self in ethnographic texts" (Anderson, 2006: 453). Adding further to the debate, Atkinson notes that "the kind of reflexivity implied by autoethnography has been recognised as central to the ethnographic enterprise for many years" (Atkinson, 2006: 400). Analytical autoethnography "points to a broad set of data-transcending practices that are directed toward theoretical development, refinement, and extension" (Anderson, 2006: 387). Drawing on understandings of symbolic interaction and Chicago School ethnography, and as the name implies, there is more analysis and interpretation of the autoethnographic account and more effort to place it within a theoretical discourse (Anderson, 2006).

In this connection, I intend to focus on analysing and theorising self within the social world and will lean towards the analytical side of the autoethnography scale (Le Roux, 2016). Much like how Pace (2012) considers that evocative autoethnography often overlooks

general issues and rationalities by favouring mainly emotions. A choice of analytical autoethnography over evocative autoethnography is also attractive because it proposes a "self-conscious introspection guided by a desire to better understand both self and others through examining one's actions and perceptions in reference to and dialogue with those of others" (Anderson, 2006: 382).

There is another style of autoethnography that is connected to the analytical: reflexive autoethnography. This shares the emphasis of other varieties in positioning the researcher as a substantial part of it. However, it also relates to analytical reflexivity and its "accountable ways of knowing the social world, an immensely material matter concerned with grounded processes and activities and the explication of these" (Stanley, 2018: 113). Reflexive autoethnography explores the everyday through autoethnographic accounts and how we come to know the social that surrounds us. Taking into account Mills' idea of public issues and private problems and their relationship, this autoethnography examines the documents of the life that surround us to draw closer to the everyday activities and experiences of people, thereby painting a larger picture of the institutions and relationships that shift and shape society and who we are.

This analytical and reflexive view of autoethnography can be further refined into a "critical and reflexive approach" that presents a move "toward a more vigorous reflection on the institutional practices and fields in which we operate" (Reed-Danahay, 2017: 152). This type of autoethnography is referred to as "critical autoethnography", and it most closely aligns with what I want to do: viewing autoethnography "as cultural analysis through personal narrative" while seeking to "encourage a critical lens, alongside an introspective and outward one, to make sense of who we are in the context of our cultural communities" (Boylorn and Orbe, 2016: 17). Boylorn and Orbe see critical autoethnography as an ethnography that provides a "voice" for communities and experiences that have been silenced

or oppressed. It explores the multitudes of identities in the social and encourages conversations around and across differences while expounding the contradictory cultural and personal perspectives that interchange and intersect (Boylorn and Orbe, 2016).

This vision is coupled with an aspiration "to combine narratives that encourage us to better understand and learn from each other while showing the interconnectedness of the human experience" (Boylorn and Orbe, 2016: 15). It is autoethnography that is 'critical' in that it integrates aspects of critical theory, "to understand the lived experiences of real people in context, to examine social conditions and uncover oppressive power arrangements, and to fuse theory and actions to challenge processes of domination" (Boylorn and Orbe, 2016: 20). Critical autoethnographers want to explore what Stuart Hall refers to as the "first position of cultural identity," one that "reflects the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us as 'one people'" (Hall, 2000: 223). It also includes Hall's second sense of cultural identity, which is "the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Hall, 2003: 225).

I utilise this approach to autoethnography because it also "takes into account the positions and positionings of its narrator within systems of inequality" (Reed-Danahay, 2017: 149). Critical autoethnography has been used, much as in my MPhil thesis, to explore 'intercultural communication' and to "interrogate the ways that difference influences our lives and how our relationships with intimate and unknown others serve as opportunities for communicative enlightenment" (Boylorn and Orbe, 2016: 20). Intercultural communication has become integral to my life, as I have moved through many socio-cultural milieus and encountered many different cultural identities. This has allowed me to build on my experience of the "world beyond" to make my own "familiar" or "ordinary" world "strange" (Reed-Danahay, 2017: 146; Mills, 2000; Bruner, 1983).

In my MPhil, much like Mills used his insider status to explore American culture when 'out of place' as an outsider in Europe, and similar to Simmel's "stranger" ([1908]1971), I wanted to investigate these relationships through story and remembering. I delved into narrative and memory to move past an insider/outsider dualism, observe how stories of experience are strategic, and probe the socio-cultural contexts that structure our lives and those of others (Reed-Danahay, 2017). All this comes with a responsibility that needs to be applied to autoethnography, one discussed by Sparkes addressing whether it is "self-indulgent" (Sparkes, 2002). Avoiding this requires recognising "our engagement in active, yet partial, meaning-making", which comes with knowing:

> that we will change others and our roles as change agents need to be considered with great intentionality and sincerity; we have to be open to change; we have to tell others about our experiences and perspectives; we have to listen to the interpretations of others about our experiences and perspectives; we have to listen to the interpretations of other witnesses; and finally, we have to explore multiple meanings of equity and care and act to promote our understandings of these concepts (Sparkes, 2002: 222).

Criticism of the "autoethnographic turn" notes that it often "either lacks scientific rigor (by ethnographic and social science standards) or is inadequate as a literary art (by autobiographic standards)" (Denejkina, 2017: 2).

In this thesis, I address this by applying both standards. One of the first lessons that Lindsay Prior imparts about analysing documents is that "documents serve to constitute the events of which they form a part" (Prior, 2003: 68). Thus, in order to understand events, we must study the documents. This involves learning to perceive how documents work in different contexts. A researcher should "investigate how documentation functions in situated contexts" (Prior, 2003: 87). Studying documents requires noticing how they "mark out spheres and boundaries of… influence" (Prior, 2003:79). The texts we encounter are linked to

"other forms of order in social practice", and these are "related to different ways of doing analysis, to different ways of observing the world, and to different sites of (social) practice" (Prior, 2003:79). And as these documents are being produced, so they introduce more facts into the world. Taking all this into account, it is also important to remember how a document is used in everyday action, who is using it, what rules guide them, and why the document is being used: "we need to study how people use text in action" (Prior, 2003: 123). In short, documents are "social facts" and "refer, however tangentially, or at one remove, to other realities and domains", while also referring to other documents (Atkinson and Coffey, 1997: 55).

This will also require treating my own autoethnography as an "active text" which is like a "crystal which bends the light as it passes through" (Smith, 2002: 121). It can be seen as "organizing a course of concerted social action", which is triggered by the reader as operating as a sum of a social relation, although "its structuring effect is its own" (Smith, 2002: 121). This interrelationship between text and user means that both are altered. The power of the text to transform has, in part, to do with the context of use: how to operate the text and what to expect of it and how it supports and affirms particular points of view (Smith, 2002). In summary, documents aid in ordering our lives and are ordered by our lives.

To accomplish much of this involves reading and ruminating over the literature "'against the grain'" in identifying the ideologies and discourse at work at the time of writing or "re-reading" the text (Mills and Pearce, 1996). In the same way, that "feminist literature theory and practice" notifies us of "patriarchy as the source of women's textual as well as material oppression" while also questioning the gender differentiations, ordering and "the language through which [they are] constructed and symbolized" (Mills and Pearce, 1996: 2, 4). Re-reading is a part of poststructuralist thinking that accentuates the multiple realities, meanings and even the multiple re/readings that can surface from reading contexts. It has

scepticism about claims of 'truth' in research and an approach to existing texts that is a critical revisionist one (Dampier, 2008).

Another type of autoethnography, socio-cultural autoethnography encompasses both reflexive and analytical autoethnography while bringing in the critical aspect of critical autoethnography while moving more towards "a 'thin individual' and 'thick social relational'" focus than most communicative variations (Smith and Sparkes, 2008: 7). Socio-cultural autoethnography locates how subjectivity is shaped in the socio-cultural world, working to understand the socio-cultural processes work on it. This type of autoethnography also tries to untangle the web of self, others and culture through analysis and interpretation. It is derived from Heewon Chang's work in autoethnography with an understanding of how autoethnographers should

> treat their autobiographical data with critical, analytical, and interpretive eyes to detect cultural understanding of what is recalled, observed, and told. At the end of a thorough self-examination in its cultural context, autoethnographers hope to gain a cultural understanding of self and others directly and indirectly connected to self (Chang 2008: 49).

Chang suggests various techniques to gather data on the self and its relation to the socio-cultural. From diaries to culture grams to interviews, Chang provides ideas about converting this data into autoethnography that explores the socio-cultural world, is sensitive to cultural identity and diversity, and is introspective and narratively sound (Chang, 2008).

This is a more grounded form of autoethnography, as opposed to one that relies solely on the memory and recall of the autoethnographer. Opposite this 'grounded' autoethnography is what has been termed 'recall autoethnography', which utilises the memory of the self as autoethnographer to recall events and experiences in their lives. Examples include "Walk, Walking, Talking, Home", where Chawla discusses her relationship with her family and

walks with her grandmother, based solely on her memory of these events (Chawla, 2016). In more grounded varieties, the researcher utilises more of the documents of life that surround us, producing theories based on the data rather than the overreliance on memory. Chang often brings these into her research by gathering data that are a part of finding a way to understand the character of everyday life (Chang, 2008).

A critical attribute of autoethnography is the inclusion of the self. However, much of it includes different ways in which how much of the self and the other is involved. In a solo autoethnography, the researcher only utilises themselves and their story. They do not consider the other's perspective and deliver a monological outlook to their autoethnography. As the researcher begins to take note of the other, genres such as "exo-Autoethnography" (Denejkina, 2017) take shape, incorporating someone (and their personal experience) who is close to the researcher and how their experience has affected the researcher. Moving further along the spectrum, and with more incorporation of the other, there is "duoethnography" (Sawyer and Norris, 2012), which brings in another researcher, mainly where two researchers cooperate to build an autoethnography together.

Further along still and building in more cooperation is collaborative autoethnography, where a collection of researchers work together to produce autoethnography. Like other styles, each researcher produces their own autoethnography, which they combine (Chang, 2013). A PhD thesis stipulates that it must be my own work and not others. I cannot utilise duoethnography or collaborative autoethnography. However, I note the advantages of using these forms over how I will use them in my thesis. However, I will incorporate some "exoautoethnography" elements in my work. These usages help guard against navel-gazing and the other hazards of autoethnography.

Ethnographies on the Edge of the Auto

Moving past sociocultural autoethnography to ethnographies on the edge of the auto, the auto element of autoethnography continues to shrink as the "thin individual" gets thinner and "thick social relational" becomes more a part of the analysis and interpretation (Smith and Sparkes, 2008: 7). Here, the self shrinks as autoethnography moves more closely to the traditional mode of ethnography. Books such as *White Folks* by Timothy Lensmire (2017), begins with the author's autoethnographic account. However, he builds on this account by examining the lives of others through in-depth interviews with eight participants from the American Midwest. He slowly weaves in their stories and thoughts, not to merely paint a picture of white people as the embodiment of privilege but to illustrate the complexities and conflicts within American society and its relationship to race. It will be crucial to note how Lensmire detects that "too much of writing on race and whiteness by white authors have these authors separating themselves from their subjects" (2017: 93).

This type of approach includes authors relaying that they are the 'good' white people as opposed to the 'bad' ones. Moreover, if these stories include the authors themselves, they are frequently redemptive: being lost like other 'bad' white people but finding how to become a 'good' white person. This thinking leaves the authors at a distance, often unable to understand their own self and others' interworkings. The melding of autoethnography with more traditional ethnography makes sure that the author does not make the mistake of "separating themselves from their subjects" (Lensmire, 2017: 93). Lensmire's autoethnographic use as a base leaves him better able to articulate a 'we' instead of emphasising his 'I', as most forms of autoethnography do. It allows Lensmire to make clear that he is "caught up in the same processes of white racial identity creation" as the other people he interviewed (Lensmire, 2017: 93).

Moving further towards traditional ethnography, *Getting By: Estates, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain* is about St Ann's estate in Nottingham, England (Mckenzie,

2015). Lisa McKenzie provides an "insider" account. It relates to autoethnography in painting a picture of a self who lives on an estate stigmatised as merely a place of gangs, guns, drugs and single mothers and racked by poverty. This autoethnographic self is never fully present, and autoethnography is never named in the text. The book is based on interviews taken from the inhabitants of St Ann's, then relating them to her own experience of the estate. She recounts how their stories related to her own self, coupled with St Ann's being her former home, giving it a particular autoethnographic character. McKenzie tells of people making their way in their world, finding meaning and doing the best of it by "getting by". The book does not overtly rely on academic parlance and is more open to those outside academia. It reminds us of the importance of making autoethnography readable for a larger audience to improve its resonance and spread its messages to more readers.

J.D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* presents his life in the Appalachia region of the United States as seen through his eyes (Vance, 2016). It is styled as Bildungsroman, in which he surmounts trials to join the Marines, graduating from Yale and starting a career as a politician. The story lies outside the auto and the ethnographic. However, it lends itself to autoethnography in being "valuable in learning about the self and others, particularly in the cultural sense," especially in my research, being from a very similar cultural context as the one in the *self-narrative* (Chang, 2008: 41, emphasis my own). The path Vance took has similarities to mine, growing up in Appalachian culture, going on to higher education and joining the military. However, the differences in life and opinion are also "valuable in learning about the self and others, particularly in the cultural sense" (Chang, 2008). Here, the self in the text is more closed to the social and those around him than in other examples, as he gives the typical 'American' Horatio Alger account of how he 'made' it, which will be discussed later in the thesis.

Autoethnography utilises narrating-the-self-in-research as an integral component. Alistair Thomson opted to do this by republishing his existing research in the second edition of *Anzac Memories: Living with Legend* (Thomson, 2013). A ground-breaking book in oral history, this tells of the Anzac soldiers of the First World War and their struggle with the 'myth' surrounding the memory of the war. Interviewing veterans, Thomson shows how they interacted with the public narratives of the Anzac 'legend'. Thomson utilised the work of the Popular Memory Group at the Birmingham centre. Here, he illustrated how these veterans adjusted and rewrote their story and memory in line with, and sometimes against, the Anzac identity in society. There are two editions of the book: the original (1994) with the new edition (2013) showing some elements of autoethnography, as Thomson weaves a bit of himself into some parts to give it a much more autoethnographic character. In this, he writes of his experience as a researcher of oral history, how the soldiers influenced his interview, and the time and place of his writing (Thomson, 2013).

Thomson also brings in a robust discussion of his own family, devoting a new chapter to discussing his grandfather, Hector Thomson, and how Hector struggled with "living with legend" (Thomson, 2013). As with the work of McKenzie, there is no mention of autoethnography. However, the book is clearly influenced by the aforementioned moves in the social sciences, by the "turns" and "crisis of representation" (Plummer, 2001a; Turner and Bruner, 1986; Clifford and Marcus, 1986; and Stoller and Olkes, 1987). The emotion conveyed, especially when writing about his father's relations with his grandfather and his memory of his grandmother, has many of the hallmarks of autoethnography. His discussion of his family and how wars and soldiering affected and effected it which will be important when my own family is considered later.

With the consideration of the forms of autoethnographies listed above, and also those ethnographies that are on the edge of auto, my own direction is deliberately geared towards

my own brand of critical socio-cultural autoethnography (CSA) that encompasses an autoethnography that includes analytical reflexivity, utilising aspects of Chang, Anderson and Stanley's thoughts, but also brings in the critical features that Boylorn and Orbe mention, while incorporating ideas from the ethnographies on the edge of auto (Chang, 2008; Anderson, 2006; Stanley, 2018; Thomson, 2013; Vance, 2016; Mckenzie, 2015; Lensmire, 2017). In these examples, the self is approached in different manners and degrees to the social. This is the autoethnography that will be practised throughout this thesis.

Conclusion

The cornerstone of this thesis is autoethnography, a critical socio-cultural autoethnography, as already mentioned. This will be augmented with the documents of life approach as a framework (Plummer, 2001a; Stanley, 2013). Its autoethnographic and narrative exploration, utilising relational ethics and including a critical humanist approach, will be in dialogue with other people and their accounts, both those who go to war and those who did so to fight other kinds of battles. It will have a 'facets of a diamond' character, where the light coming from the diamond is the un/becoming of a soldier (Mason, 2011). What is important, as Jennifer Mason notes, is that while "facets in a cut gemstone reflect, refract and intensify light, taking up the background, and creating flashes of depth and colour," these sets of facets need to be a "strategically illuminating…in relation to specific research concerns and questions: not a random set, or an eclectic set, or a representative set, or a total set" (Mason, 2011: 77). The purpose is to craft all the facets of the diamond to make a gem, with my autoethnography holding it all in place to obtain "flashes of insight" from looking through one facet to the next (Mason, 2011: 83).

Chapter 2 sets the tone for the coming chapters as I analyse a document that was a part of my life to add a facet to the diamond. In reflecting on how the enterprise of autoethnography has been mainly about the 'auto', I wanted to write a thesis considering the

methodology with elements beyond it, such as our voice and position, the intertextual world, the self and other and a sociogenetic dance. Here, looking at the facets begins as I observe the self as in motion, one changing and rearranging to the present. This chapter aims to deliberate a different me of a different time and place through the elements above and move from merely 'auto'. I learn the pitfalls of writing the hero to bring my thesis forward by moving towards more recognition of those around us, moreover, how certain attitudes and values are carried forward, mixing in the now/past and how to dissect this analytically. Rather than take my autoethnography as is, I will consider my MPhil as a document of life and analyse it with the analytical tools I developed of authorial voice, positionality, intertextuality, self and other, and sociogenesis, place and time. It will be a further facet of the diamond I am building in my innovative variety of autoethnography.

Chapter 3 uses the event of the Green Corn Rebellion, an uprising of poor farm labourers in Southern Oklahoma in 1917, to examine the interplay of structure and agency by conducting a 'conversation' about this. The chapter will be organised around *The Green Corn Rebellion* (Cunningham, 2010), a novel based on interviews with farm labourers and others who participated in or witnessed the uprising. I count this book as a hybridic document of life and begin a dialogue between my story and the stories in the novel-interviews to understand the workings of memory and history better. It will require recognising that "documentation encompasses an active construction of particular human subjectivities and power/knowledge" (Stanley, 2013: 48). It examines the evolving self and the facts and fictions encountered and how it shifts to them and explores the sociology used writing fiction and write a novella with this in mind and how this sociology can be used by fiction writers.

Chapter 4 notices "the complex relationship between documents and lives by examining their histories, their forms and the ways in which they are read and used culturally and socially to define and regulate lives and understanding" (Stanley, 2013: 48). I will

analyse my novella utilising the analytical tools of self and other, positionality and intertextuality from Chapter 1. This thinking acknowledges epistemological and ontological aspects, and the "history after the fact" of post/memory comes into view (Stanley, 2006: 4). The Green Corn Rebellion is a "socially constructed space" and has moved from memory to forgetting and the construction of truth systems (Winter, 2014: 4). Here, the interiority is observed and the knowledge and truth claims we select in the midst of fact and fiction.

Chapter 5 expands the toolkit of the CSA by adding the tools of the reader and writer to the previously-used authorial voice. It shifts the facet to the exterior. I start from what was originally understood as a feedback loop between the humanities and social sciences of fiction writers and social scientists to what becomes the dialogical voice/writer/reader I through reflexively considering my novella in this manner. This shift allows me to gain further insights into my reasoning for joining the military while simultaneously gaining a new understanding of the 'me' that returned from war. Hence, I examine my exteriority and how I attained "composure" in my present circumstances and situations to ultimately find the slippage between this interiority and exteriority.

Chapter 6 key concern is power and starts with the classic view of it as hierarchical and stationery, one that flows downhill. I began with this type of power in mind when examining a copy of my orders that sent me to Iraq. In analysing these orders and the people behind them, I found a power everywhere and nowhere through the associations between myself, my autoethnography and other people's accounts, given in and thereby impacted and shaped by particular contexts. I will look at the masculinities and other formations that develop from these power formations through the texts, positions, and voices we build and take and how this evolving self operates in power's dynamism.

Chapter 7, in a substantive sense, concerns how wars are memorialised and who gets commemorated. Through this understanding, I want to explore the emergent ways we

remember those who have passed, the importance of narrative, memory and forgetting to the claims made in autoethnography. In investigating this, I used the documents of life and the idea of the now/past to recognise the complex ways in which the past and present interlink. This is accomplished by looking at two war memorials in my hometown, what was written and how they arrived there. The emphasis will be on the role of silences and forgetting in what we call remembering and the necessity for an innovative autoethnography to develop suitably modest truth and knowledge claims from the fog of our surroundings.

The conclusion takes the form of tracing the autoethnographic journey of my PhD thesis, examining the flashes of insight and presenting this as a meta-autoethnography. In doing so, it will take a critical look at the thesis and its wording as a document of life, observing its turns and changing course, and considering the extent to which I think it has reached the aims developed in the opening chapter, of constructing an innovative form of autoethnography, by bringing the continually emergent, narratable former soldier-self through the past into present-day focus.

In summary, my thesis utilises the methodology of critical socio-cultural autoethnography coupled with a documents of life approach to explore a self and its becomings and unbecomings of militarisation, social interconnectedness, remembering and forgetting. It is worked out cumulatively from one chapter to another, exploring the different levels or facets involved and how they fit together.

Chapter 2: Understanding Me Then and Me Now

When working on the first draft of this chapter, my initial reaction to analysing the autoethnography embedded in my MPhil thesis (Link in Appendix 1) was to present another autoethnographic account, two to be exact. This quickly became apparent as problematic. In the end, it was a hermeneutical predicament where one would have to offer yet another autoethnographic text in an infinite regress. It reminds me of when a group of war veterans repeatedly tell their war stories. A mentor has often mentioned an experience to me of witnessing a war veteran relating his experience of storming a beach during a particular conflict as a conference paper. The veteran narrated his account – told the story – of his time at war, much like how I presented another autoethnographic account to answer my previous account: only the account. We both seem to want to answer stories with more stories. *Why?*

This chapter examines the multifaceted ways the self reads and writes the social. I have developed five analytical tools to aid my analysation of the past me. These tools are the authorial voice, positionality, intertextuality, self and other, and sociogenesis, place and time. I will use these tools to reflect on a former self in my MPhil thesis from some years ago. I will explore my motives and understandings from that time and place through the MPhil thesis as a document of life. In this exploration, I found how this document of life and others become factual and legitimate in our lives as I became a hero in my own story. This has been crucial concerning a thinking, moving self with the textual hero monomyth by having the researcher focus more on situations, people and text surrounding them in that place and time. This now/past region of activity of the evolving self within this chapter will be a part of my use of critical socio-cultural autoethnography coupled with a documents of life approach to better understand me through these tools I have created.

<u>Authorial Voice</u>

There may be many reasons why we answer stories with stories. Jerome Bruner suggests that "narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative" (Bruner, 2004: 692). By this, he means that the socio-culturally and linguistically shaped ideas of our particular society steer how we chronicle our lives and organize and mean-make the events that happen to us: so that "we become the autobiographical narratives by which we 'tell about' our lives" (Bruner, 2004: 694). We tell stories to tell our lives. Furthermore, these autobiographical accounts, even the ones we tell about ourselves, are unstable (Bruner, 2004). What is essential to my research is that "this very instability makes life stories highly susceptible to cultural, interpersonal, and linguistic influences" (Bruner, 2004: 694). Connected to this "instability" is how these "life stories" must be interconnected and intermeshed within each society of storytellers, whose listening and telling form a pervading structure surrounding the nature of life in that community. So, suppose the rules in this storytelling society are entirely random. In that case, these tellers and listeners will slowly become alienated from each other as communication breaks down, causing misunderstandings and confusion about the stories one is hearing or saying (Bruner, 2004). I will discuss these 'life stories' connections to society in more depth later. Here, I am interested in how I used narrative to tell my life and the voice I used to communicate it.

The difference between narratives and stories is that "stories direct us to what is told, narratives tell us *how* stories are told" (Plummer, 2013: 210). I want to begin to look at how a particular story of mine, my MPhil autoethnography, was told by looking at the authorial voice utilised to tell it. Voice is often construed as the "implied author" as one who "creates…an image of himself and another image of his reader; he makes his reader, as he makes his second self" (Booth, 1983). To give a more specific definition, authorial voice "is the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features that language

users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available, yet ever-changing repertoires" (Matsuda 2001: 40). The beginning of autoethnography in my MPhil, *in italics*, starts with:

> *Heroes. The men and women society is supposed to emulate. All of us spend our lives trying to match them; some of us spend our whole life chasing them. They embody who we want to be. They are who we commemorate. The stories, legends and myths are fed to us, the Medal of Honor, the brave soldier that gave his life for his unit. When I was a child standing across from my grandfather in a beat up red Chevy, I knew my hero, I was staring at him.*
>
> *"There is something beyond oneself."*
>
> *The quote flashes before me now was attributed to Robert McNamara as he stood glaring back at me with haunted eyes trying to explain himself and his involvement in Vietnam in the film 'Fog of War', and as I sat across from my grandfather, standing up in his red Chevy, I was trying to imitate this man and his deeds. My grandfather, Papaw, as he was called, did not know the quote but he wrote those words with his footsteps, in his actions. Whether it was helping feed a neighbor family in their time of need or bringing watermelons to everyone in the county (a prized possession in this time and place). I believe my Papaw felt this beyond entity. And I learned to feel, to strive for it too, and I carried it with me through my adulthood (Morris, 2013: 34).*

Using the word *heroes* in an "omniscient authorial voice" way initiates my autoethnography. This continues throughout the rest of the autoethnography. Here, an all-knowing voice focuses on the themes of heroes and the monomyth (a story template that centres on a hero's journey; see Bruner, 2004: 702; Campbell, 1993). In using it, I am grappling with my status as a veteran and the relationship to the hero status often provided by it, coupling it with the most prominent hero in my life: my grandfather. I note that "*the stories, legends and myths*

are fed to us" and stories "connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it" (Hinchman and Hinchman, 1997: xvi). Nevertheless, the question remains, why choose the "omniscient authorial voice", and why tell another story as an answer to the first story I told in my autoethnography?

Christian Smith describes storytelling as the "most elemental human genre of communication and meaning-making, an essential way of framing the order and purpose of reality" and central to our existence (Smith, 2003: 81). Almost a decade passed between my experience in the dissertation and the story I later constructed about it. The sentiment informing my autoethnography concerns a past self who believed in the "*legends and myths…the Medal of Honor, the brave soldier that gave his life for his unit"* and a present self, moving towards a different outlook. I had to acknowledge the old "me" as I moved towards the new. I built this story from "*my hero…my grandfather in a beat-up red Chevy",* returning to a childhood idea of my hero, and placed this next to "*the brave soldier"* conception during and around my time in the war. I then constructed narratively towards the "*haunted eyes"* of Robert McNamara, *"trying to explain himself and his involvement in Vietnam"* to build a tale of a fresh "purpose of reality" (Morris, 2004; Smith, 2003: 81). In doing so, I placed myself as a McNamaraian figure haunted by my involvement in the war and grappling with the consequences. I attempted to leave behind the hero trope and its worship of fighting and bravery to return to the purposefulness of my grandfather in "*helping feed a neighbor family in their time of need*," which is my storytelling of aiding Iraqis and an African-American friend in the unit.

In order to establish a new preferred identity (Langellier, 2001), I chose a story that fits. I was in a different place from my upbringing, in Europe. I was an American from the South, grappling with the region's horrible past. I wanted to be seen as a moral person

conscious of issues there of race and racism and also aware of the United States'

shortcomings in relation to the Iraq War. I wanted to construct what I saw at that moment as

my identity forming in this exact time and place by offering experiences and telling stories as

the performance of my (preferred) identity (Langellier, 2001). The autoethnographic voice I

adopted allowed me to construct this new identity by disclosing specific relevant stories.

However, this autoethnographic authorial voice did not work well with the other

voices I mentioned. It strives to complete the monomyth and so has to ensure that others

remain excluded. This autoethnographic voice emphasises itself as a "dynamic form of logic

leading all apparent differences to be subsumed into identity in the form of a more complexly

integrated synthesis" (Wegerif, 2007: 36). This styling is to "take dialogue and remove the

voices, remove the intonations, carve out abstract concepts and judgements from living words

and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness and that's how you get

dialectics" (Bakhtin, 1986: 147). Dialectics extracted the dialogic from the dialogue and

established a monological view of the world, helping us to confirm our identities to ourselves

and others as more factual and legitimate.

This monological view characterises my MPhil autoethnography. The characters in

'My Book' only respond to me; my thoughts are the only thoughts, and others are utilised as

objects in rewriting my story to fashion a new plot and purpose. When my African-American

friend has a problem, I write about it as a story about me and how I saved him:

> *And no one would speak up to inform the chain of command because that was his*
>
> *problem and maybe he deserved it for his attitude. He thinks he is better than*
>
> *everyone else. He doesn't know his place. My mind raced back, I knew what they*
>
> *meant: a n-word has to know his place. I would not have it; I went straight to an old*
>
> *buddy in a high place.*
>
> *I told him,*

"You have to do something, this is not right"(Morris, 2013: 45).

However, where is my friend Burghardt's voice? Where are his thoughts and feelings? Similarly, with the Iraqis, I never considered their thoughts or feelings. Moreover, where are those who are being accused of racism?

We experience the world as taking place "between the chaotic and particular centrifugal forces of subjectivity and the rule-driven, generalizing centripetal forces of a [monologic] system" (Holquist, 2002: 27). As I wrote my MPhil autoethnography, my identity construction process began to remove many of the voices of mentoring experience in my life, but which had moulded the person I had become. A preferred authorial voice, I think now, would retain these many voices of the past. This understanding "values the process whereby human beings in open dialogue try to understand each other's viewpoints and submit their own viewpoint to the challenge presented by the encounter of others" (Steinby, 2013: 11).

As Mary Louise Pratt has commented, "the autoethnographic text" is one "in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them" in order to connect the method to resistance and critique (Pratt, 1991: 35). The autoethnographic text can be used to oppose hegemonic forces. However, it should also try to include the voices of experience that happen on the ground by "employing the surplus knowledge that the author has, that which the hero (and others) does not know or does not see" (Bakhtin, 1981: 32). The knowledge achieved will help do better research.

<u>Positionality</u>

Autoethnography entails confronting "the messiness" and also the "richness" of qualitative methods (Zholl, 2013: 1). Along with taking this into account, I have continued to shift the focus away from myself and to pay more attention to the people around me. When Kim England was dealing with a "'failed' research project," she decided to move to a more

"dialogical relationship between the researcher and the researched" (England, 1994: 251). Similarly, I take firmer notice of the "positionality (i.e. position based on class, gender, race, etc.), and of a biography of the researcher" that has "a central role in the research process" (England, 1994: 251-52); an identification of the "intersubjectivity" and "reflexivity" in the "role of the researcher" and the "power relations" when conducting my research (England, 1994: 248-49).

Positionality requires thinking through the socio-political events and happenings of my time and space, as well as those around me, including the "aspects of identity in terms of race, class, gender, caste, sexuality and other attributes that are markers of relational positions in society, rather than intrinsic qualities" (Chacko, 2004: 52). There also needs to be an acknowledgement of me as the one who is making this inquiry, who has the benefit of being "the-one-who-is" in opposition to the "the-one-who-was, and thus has the one-who-was at 'the present self's mercy'" (Gass, 1994: 45). My former self is a prisoner to the present one, who has the goals of today in mind. Furthermore, there is the particular "view of narrated subjects who are not constituted in language or discourse but are constituted in relation to other subjects and to the 'material reality of everyday life'" (Stanley, 1993b: 206). Living in many countries and social contexts during my lifetime– Iraq, Turkey, Ireland, different parts of the US, Scotland and now England – has taught me many things. In particular, this has led to revising my perspective and repositioning myself in different "markers of relational positions in society" (Chacko, 2004: 52).

When searching for the reason why military veterans find "*inspiration for beginning their service in the armed forces*", my mind settled at first on *"education, lack of direction or the search for the greater good"(Morris, 2013:27).* An aspect that may have had too much influence on of my MPhil thesis was being American. This is shown in repeating the words *America* or *Americans* repeated twenty-five times, and *The United States* repeated

thirteen times in my thesis. America was on my mind, and I was continually re/positioning myself as American. It became a "methodological nationalism" (Wimmer and Schiller, 2003). When I deliberated on the other veterans who fought in the same war, I assumed they were motivated by fighting for their country and that these soldiers fought for a "*regime of memory*" constructed around America's "*commemorations of World War II as a 'just' war, to further America's place as 'savior of the world'*" (Morris, 2013:ii). I did not consider the other things that may have motivated them. I referred in my MPhil thesis to the *"refusal of the call",* borrowed from Campbell's monomyth, one of *"walled in boredom, hard work, or 'culture', the subject loses the power of significant action and becomes a victim to be saved", (Campbell, 1993: 59) and thus my years of toiling away were spent before my 'call' to the army"(Morris, 2013:37).* I did not have enough consideration that the "*refusal of the call*" could be a need to escape or myriad other reasons the come at people in life.

Moving away from 'methodological nationalism' and more towards the study of intersectionality and black women's experience, I will discuss later in this thesis (Crenshaw, 1989) and practice a more intra-categorical approach (McCall, 2005). It lies between the anti-categorical and inter-categorical approaches (McCall, 2005). Anti-categorical thinking "interrogates the boundary-making and boundary-defining process itself". At the same time, it also "acknowledges the stable and even durable relationships that social categories represent at any given point in time" while also keeping a "critical stance" towards category-making (McCall, 2005: 1773-4). I categorised 'soldiers' as firmly tied to the notion of the nation during wartime as they prepared to possibly 'die for their country'. But do they? As Dalton Trumbo comments:

> if the thing they were fighting for was important enough to die for then it was also
>
> important enough for them to be thinking about it in the last minutes of their lives.
>
> That stood to reason. Life is awfully important so if you've given it away you'd ought

to think with all your mind in the last moments of your life about the thing you traded it for. So did all those kids die thinking of democracy and freedom and liberty and honor and the safety of the home and the stars and stripes forever? You're goddam right they didn't (Trumbo, 2007: 121).

Trying to recall my time in Iraq, I do not remember much invoking of the notions of America, "democracy and freedom and liberty". A few went on about "the stars and stripes forever", the all-embracing nationalism, but they were often laughed at. This is what Trumbo conveys as what is "important enough to die for" hits home hard for me. From what I recollect of other soldiers, they probably would have died "yearning for the face of a friend…whimpering for the voice of a mother a father a wife a child…their hearts sick for one more look at the place where they were born" (Trumbo, 2007: 121).

This home and the "safety of the home" were the things that veterans most considered. The people I knew thought about it. There was a hope we made it safer: honourably. However, often soldiers come home and become the "stars and stripes forever", nationalists, as many friends have become. This nationalistic soldier may not have been there in that earlier time and place. These notions of "democracy and freedom and liberty" and "the stars and stripes forever" often arise from the ruling class as a part of hegemony:

the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production (Gramsci, 1971: 12).

The hegemonic relationship of the "dominant group" or elites to the rest of society will be discussed later in the thesis. However, this observation of soldiers as often-fervent nationalists also illustrates something else.

It is a "*post hoc* construction of the past based on the understandings, assessments, conclusions and conjectures of 'now'" (Stanley, 1992: 47). This 'now' is a "kind of a prism through which… 'moments'" and the text of the MPhil thesis "are refracted" (Stanley, 1992: 47). Stanley considers this through three photographs and considers the memory that each one invokes as almost a different child: "child in the photograph by Long of Portsmouth", "the footballing girl", and "the model clean and feminine girl" (Stanley, 1992: 45, 47, 48). Stanley refers to them as different people, different selves because, in a sense, they are. They inhabit other times and places: then, now, and here and there. Stanley's development of the concept of the "now/past" is important in thinking through 'here and now', as it draws attention to the fact that a researcher's account of the past is strongly tied to present-day concerns: "it has aspects of both now and then" (Stanley, 2006: 39). I cannot assume that it is "straightforwardly representing the past and nothing but", instead that "meaning change[s] according to the concerns and ways of thinking that prevail in the present (Stanley, 2006: 39). Memory is but a memory and we construct whom we are in the present, and in the past, there was a dissimilar self to me today in the here and now.

Moreover, soldiers and their memories too shift to the 'now'. It helps explain the worries of the battlefield, the bombs and bullets. In this combat zone, soldiers are not absorbed by the "stars and stripes forever", not concentrating on "democracy, freedom and liberty". They instead look to their left and right "for the face of a friend" and wish for "the safety of the home" (Trumbo, 2007: 121). However, when they return home, they must feel proud of what has been accomplished and what they went through. The veterans position themselves within the local and global social relations, which interrelate with the history of the place. The soldier of 'then' shifts to the veteran of 'now' to find a path that affords them tremendous respect and standing within the community, summoning "stars and stripes forever" and thinking about "democracy and freedom and liberty". This need is to find a

"sense of place" as "intersections of particular bundles of activity space, of connections and inter-relations, of influences and movements" (Massey, 1994: 154). It is a need to be legitimate with the relations around you.

My positionality also concerns my race, class and gender. Being accepted onto an MPhil course on 'Race, Ethnicity, Conflict' in Europe at an elite university, my particular race and gender were amalgamated with being an American soldier, putting me under a sort of spotlight of intrigue and enquiry. Hall comments that "there's no enunciation without positionality. You have to position yourself somewhere in order to say anything at all" (Hall, 1990: 18). My status as a white male American soldier became that of a severe critic of the war, its masculinities and taking a firm position against the racism I had been raised.

This was a radical break from my upbringing, where mentioning the 'beginning of America' starts with "*the commencement of the idea of America…with Christopher Columbus, the hero of discovery, who emblazons our textbooks with the fateful date of 1492 and is pictured atop the deck of a mighty ship with the vision of the New World before him*" (Morris, 2013: 23). My altered perspective is described as shifting to a new vision of Christopher Columbus as "*destroyer of the Arawaks, who we associate with the date 1497 and the massacre of over 125,000 Arawaks leading up to that date, a picture of murder, rape and mutilation that followed in his wake*" (Zinn, 1980; Morris, 2013: 23). This also offered a new view of the war, unlike anything I conceived of in the past. My experience directly after the war involved a struggle with alcohol, "*the ever-increasing drunkenness*" and an increase in violence that included buying "*a pistol, then another gun. I started firing them leaving the bar in my vehicle, and then at random signs driving down the road. Then, it turned really ugly; a group of friends and I chased another group of men our age down a road, firing pistols*" (Morris, 2013: 49). I became a danger to myself and a real danger to those around me.

The MPhil course first afforded a different way of explaining my actions as "melancholia", a form of "*self-loathing*" that consumed and turned against my own self and to think of my position. My embrace of the monomyth, more specifically the hero myth, was shattered: "*the realization of this forfeiture as the monomyth is never understood, resulting in melancholia, which turns the mourning from the lost object to the grieving subject*" *(Morris, 2013: 25)*. The lost object required replacement and I moved towards another manifestation of the monomyth, by engaging in a new journey and a new battle against "*the racialized regime of representation*" (Hall, 2001: 249 quoted in Morris, 2013: 55). Here I surmised "*'the racial state' that produces a society where the racialized get buried under the fulfillers of moral order who are seen in a cultural act of domination, instead of a 'regime of memory,' we move to a 'racialized regime of representation'*" *(Morris, 2013: 55)*. I chose a new morality I saw as more factual and legitimate.

<u>Intertextuality</u>

If we consider the word intertextuality, the 'text' part is derived from the Latin *texere* meaning to weave; if we apply inter to the word, which means between, we are, in a way, 'weaving between'. And as we shall see, this is what a text does. This 'weaving between' brings the ideas of Derrida to the forefront of "*differance*", which is "the systematic play of differences, of the traces of differences, of the spacing by means of which elements are related to each other" (Derrida, 1981). Here, Derrida discusses how the world of meaning is not static but in constant production and reproduction of its meaning and values. There is a 'weaving between'. "*Différance*" is a part of Derrida's ideas on texts, writing and deconstruction, where he rejects the binary oppositions in society as a part of a hierarchical structure. For instance, when discussing the binaries natural/incest, he comments, "the incest prohibition is universal; in this sense, one could call it natural. But it is also a prohibition, a system of norms and interdicts; in this sense, one could call it cultural" (Derrida, 1978: 283).

Atkinson took up this mantle and observed in the early 1990s that "ethnographers are conscious of the cultural conventions that are their subject-matter but have all too often remained blissfully unaware of their own cultural conventions" (Atkinson, 1990: 178). Here, Atkinson discusses how authors unknowingly follow these cultural conventions when presenting their ethnographic accounts, which present their own social understandings and realities. Thus, in the ethnographic narrative, the ethnographer's interpretation and the facts are bundled together and presented as ethnography (Atkinson, 1990). Atkinson proposes that perceiving your own cultural conventions and their effect on research and combining 'personal' and 'ethnographic' in fieldwork by incorporating intertextuality strengthens the claim of authenticity instead of weakening it by creating more informed researchers (Atkinson, 1990).

Returning to issues of the author and relating them to texts and intertextuality, Barthes, in *The Death of the Author,* remarks on how "his only power is to mix writings" (Barthes, 1987: 146). He is commenting on the practice of including the distinct identity of the author (who is critically interpreting with their intentions and biography). Instead, the death observes literature as a place "where all identity is lost, beginning with the very identity of the body that writes" (Barthes, 1987: 142). To Barthes, "the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together, in a single field, all the traces by which the written text is constituted" (Barthes, 1987: 148). This 'weaving between' or interrelationship of texts helps better understand the ontological and epistemological concepts of how my autoethnography was formed. Intertextuality also involves another Bakhtian concept, heteroglossia, which is a blending of different kinds of speech or other signs to form a multifaceted union from these discourses (Bakhtin, 1981). Kristeva incorporated this into her definition of intertextuality as "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces

that of intersubjectivity" (Kristeva, 1980: 66). Fairclough also uses Bakhtin to illustrate the significance of the "dialogicality of a text" (Fairclough, 2003: 42). Fairclough sees intertextuality as dialogical because it "opens up difference by bringing other 'voices' into a text," while assumption "broadly reduces difference by assuming common ground" (Fairclough, 2003: 41).

Intertextuality adds up to "a matter of recontextualization, a movement from one context to another" (Fairclough, 2003: 51). When I began writing my MPhil thesis, a particular book weighed heavily on my mind; specifically, a passage that wrote of a mob of five hundred that had "lynched a bullet-ridden black man, carried his corpse to a vacant lot, and torched it on a pyre of lumber" (Hirsch, 2003: 37). This resonated with me because of its location: Durant, Oklahoma, my hometown. The lynching is also cited in *Without Sanctuary*, an online collection of photographs and postcards of brutal lynchings across America (Allen and Littlefield, 2005). This book tells of John Lee, a black man accused of harming a white woman, who was apprehended after a posse "calmly emptied their guns into his body" (Allen and Littlefield, 2005). He had been burned on this 'pyre of lumber' with the townsfolk surrounding him. Being from Durant and looking over the blur of faces, the mob of five hundred affected me. Relatives of people I know, or maybe even my own relations, could be staring coldly back at me.

When I saw those faces 'staring back', I was disturbed. The faces felt deeply personal, standing on a main street in the town where I was raised. These faraway faces were "a detail which fills the entire picture, which infuses everything else about it" (Stanley, 1992: 41). What I also learned from *Without Sanctuary* was that these photos of lynching were distributed throughout the United States as a sort of propaganda, a warning to other African-Americans, an act to terrorise potential victims across the country. There was a sense that I had to atone for what had happened, a sentiment that bore heavily on my MPhil

autoethnography. It involved me in "relating different specific texts, discourses and conversations, each anchored in its specific contexts, " attempting to find meaning as I blended and weaved them into the new context (Linell, 1998: 147). I began to weave between the traces to build a new identity. It was spurred by the guilt that weighed on my mind. But why did the guilt and the need for atonement affect me so much?

Before the turn of the millennium, I had been a proud Southerner, espousing the 'Lost Cause' myth and reading books that promoted it, like *The South Was Right!* (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1991). It contains deplorable neo-confederate views such as formerly enslaved people 'missing' slavery, relations between enslaved people and their enslavers as "very close and mutually respectful", and arguing for a second secession from the United States (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1991: 81). My feelings about this were mentioned in the autoethnography composing my MPhil. As previously noted, it contained a reflexivity that was not always very reflexive and was often "narcissistic and egoistic" (Okely, 1992: 2). I also had the anger and rage of returning from war, but not much appeared about the pain of others. The narrative I began to construct quite often mentioned my friend Burghardt. I wrote of a racist bar with its:

> *known 'quota' for the number of blacks allowed admittance into the bar itself. I was made aware of this policy on trips with 'Burghardt,' I would be admitted, along with some other of our friends, but Burghardt and our other black companions would be denied for no apparent reason* (*Morris, 2013: 48).*

I was escaping guilt. I did this by speaking of my actions to help these friends. I "*fir(ed) pistols in the air after they called someone in my circle a n-word*"*(Morris, 2013: 49)*, and that *I* had become angry. I placed myself in the fight for equality that I was reading and learning in my MPhil course. There was a need to confront the structural racism which confined Burghardt. I desired to be the hero. However, there was little room for the voice of

others and little intertextuality in the lived form as I worked towards my new identity, which needed legitimacy and, thus, a strong voice I will return to in this thesis.

Part of my past trace-of-self, the 'proud Southerner,' was largely lost in this new identity. There are slight hints of childhood: "*my youth, while no excuse, led me to be swept up in this prejudice that haunted this small town*" *(Morris, 2013: 36).* But this sentiment is swept away quickly with, "*while I was no stranger to this racism…I had remained separate from it*" *(Morris, 2013: 36).* The truth was closer to me. I swayed back and forth and tried to fit in. At the same time, I also needed to do what I thought was 'right.' I did touch on what I once could have been when by noting that "*it is ok to be a racist, just keep it to yourself and those close to you. And that is what I became*" *(Morris, 2013: 36).* But I shifted this onto a mentor, who had told me "*'it is ok to hate n-words, but you shouldn't get involved with the KKK, it isn't what respectable men do*" *(Morris, 2013: 36).*

The "*regime of memory*" concept became a cornerstone of the MPhil thesis. The MPhil allowed me to create a new life built within and on the text of the thesis. The production of my MPhil thesis also created a document seen as 'legitimate' because it went through "the procedure of being checked, assessed, and verified" (Smith, 2002: 104). It was graded by two different markers and awarded a high mark, thus giving it strong legitimacy in my eyes and many others. The actions that all of us performed, me writing the thesis with a supervisor, the first marker assessing it, and then the second marker, are "the actions of the individuals that 'perform' the organization" (Smith, 2002: 104). Working within these parameters, "the actions of individuals are appropriated as acts of the organization or of individuals as representative of the organization, rather than of individuals acting for themselves" (Smith, 2002: 104). Thus, I gained 'legitimate' public recognition based on the fact that I built a new identity for myself, one that was self against the other.

<u>Self and Other</u>

Intertextuality is part of a chorus of voices. Here, the texts reverberate from their respective zones and are consolidated, pushing into an arena where "to be mean(t) to be for another, and through the other for oneself. A person has no internal sovereign territory, (they are) wholly and always on the boundary, looking inside (themselves) into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another" (Bakhtin, 1984: 287). This is self-fashioned through a dialogue with others. This self is also "more aware of its internal fractures, is more knowingly a social self composed through many overlapping patterns of interrelationship" (Stanley, 1993b: 213). It is also "grounded in the material reality of everyday life; and a key part of this material reality is formed by the narrations of selves and others" (Stanley, 1993b: 206). All of these things play an essential role in the construction of the self, while here, I want to focus on "the writing of a narrative of a life as a means of constructing coherence and identity for self" (Stanley, 1993b: 205).

My MPhil autoethnography wrote of my encounters with individuals outside of my particular local culture and, in conclusion, resolved to take more notice of the other people who surrounded me. I centred much of my account on interactions with Iraqis during the Iraq War. These encounters often fell into what Edward Said has characterised as orientalism, for I frequently 'Othered' the Iraqis (Said, 1978). I regarded the Iraqis by dissolving them into binaries. John Hartigan describes this process in relation to black/white, where the "generic white subject" is "both privileged and unconscious of the extent or operation of the privilege", and the generic black subject is subordinated (Hartigan, 2000: 384). He comments that this discourse is so pervasive that it is reproduced in antiracism workshops. My first experiment with ethnography was my finding and use of autoethnography. When I wrote of my time in Iraq amongst the people there, I failed to note my privileged position. There was almost a sense of exalting myself in using the work of Joseph Campbell to describe myself as

a "*the hero is the one who comes to know (Campbell, 1993: 116);(Morris, 2013: 46).* When I faced the Other, I wrote that the place that I:

> *inhabited during my time in Iraq was one where I moved away from the world of the soldier and its trappings towards a connection with the other side, a link bonded with friendship and commerce and a new found knowledge (Morris, 2013: 46).*

The Iraqis were often, in fact, primarily tools of 'commerce', not individuals with their own lives, hopes and dreams. Furthermore, though I recorded that "we were all of the same flesh", I made no mention of what lay beyond (Morris, 2013: 46). When I wrote, it was in an 'authoritative voice' discussed earlier, which ignores other voices and the everyday life around it. I was the "man who got things" done in Iraq by bartering with the Iraqis. However, in my portrayals, I seemed to acquire objects from objects:

> *the convoys out into the Iraq desert left me wanting to allocate as many mementos of my experience there. In order to obtain those souvenirs, I needed to talk or to haggle with the Iraqis…If you needed it, I could bargain for it. Alcohol, magazines, a particular food and even drugs, nothing was out of bounds (Morris, 2013: 43).*

When writing the autoethnography, I wrote about defending 'the Other, ' whom many of my fellow soldiers considered less than them. Returning to the monomyth, I became the hero trope of the soldier story, from one who goes to war to one who bravely fights for the oppressed. I crafted this narrative considering the rise of "*a young senator from Illinois [who] rose to the podium to deliver his famous keynote speech at the 2004 Democratic convention, the words 'I am my brother's keeper'"(Morris, 2013: 52).* I tried to blend this into the then-now story mirroring Barack Obama's rise, for my thesis was produced around the U.S. Presidential election of 2012. I wanted to keep the monomyth and centre a hero without contemplating the 'Other' and practising 'the ontological ethics' that Stanley and de Beauvoir

write about (Stanley, 1996), in which "bad faith lies through their [people's] compliance with an unnecessary subjugation of Others to their selves" (Stanley, 1996: 440).

Reflecting on my positionality and time in Turkey, Iraq and Ireland, I grew close to lives quite different from mine. Clandinin, et al. comment on the significance of travelling in relating to other people's stories and that "becoming narrative inquirers…involves both unlearning and relearning" (Clandinin, et al., 2011: 4). This is a shift that involves an alteration from "arrogant to loving perception through 'world'-traveling" (Clandinin, et al., 2011: 4), quoting Lugones to say that "only when we have traveled to each other's 'worlds' are we fully subject to each other" (Lugones, 1987: 17). Encountering these other 'worlds' helped me reshape my own worldview and they continue to reshape me and my values and my perspective on the world.

Sociogenesis, Place and Time

Where I am from, Oklahoma, is known for the cowboy, the lonely man on the plains acting against the elements and the world, which will be discussed later. Similarities exist between Elias's writing on Imperial Germany and his examination of the evolution of the duelling culture. Here, those in this culture see themselves as "the warriors and the rulers…who uphold order in the state. We are the lords of the state. We live according to our own rules, which we impose upon ourselves. The laws of the state do not apply to us" (Elias, 2013: 58). This particular process of civilising described focuses on Europe. Steven Mennell applied this theorising to the US and noted that the "pacification of warriors including the transformation of elements of the old warrior nobility into courtiers" was a process that had taken place before the foundation of the United States (Mennell, 2007: 39). This led Mennell to question whether the Americans had been vigilant in the further "taming of their own warriors" (Mennell, 2007: 39).

My autoethnography records my experience as one of these American 'warriors' in Iraq. However, as I previously stated, discussing the supposedly typical American or soldier, or typical American soldier can ignore the messiness, which is also a richness of qualitative methodology (Zholl, 2013). There is an ease and danger of mobilising around a sole identity, for it ignores the various identity formations in play. So, this discussion will focus on a facet of my identity while also observing the "indomitable uniqueness of people who share social structure similarities" (Stanley, 1992: 242). In doing so, I draw on Elias's understanding of habitus as an enveloping 'air we breathe' thing that becomes "crystallised in institutions which are responsible for ensuring that the most different people of a society acquire the same characteristics, possess the same national habitus" (Elias, 2013: 23).

When writing my MPhil, I saw the Iraq war as driven by a "'*regime of memory' maintained through the commemorations of World War II as a 'just' war, to further America's place as 'savior of the world', with not only representations but also 'witnesses'*" (Morris, 2013: ii; Godfrey and Lilley, 2009; Connerton, 1989; Winter, 2006). I imagined images of men wading ashore on European beaches with bullets whizzing and bombs blasting, being used to bring others to later wars. I failed to truly consider all my reasons for choosing war. If this did not express my own motivations, why would it be integral for others?

I was born on the edge of Greater Appalachia, where the mountains and the hills meet the Southern Plain in Oklahoma. I am from an area called "Little Dixie" in its southeast corner. 'Little Dixie' is considered by most a section of the American South. This is partly due to its large-scale participation of soldiers in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy and the influx of Southern immigrants over the years (Franks and Lambert, 1997). Greater Appalachia has changed allegiances throughout its history to both the "Yankee" and the "Confederate" sides. Yet, in its recent history, it has made peace with the South (Fischer,

1989; Woodward, 2012). These regions had a hand in the presidential win of Donald Trump, as running through many of the swing states in this area, there was a switch from Obama to Trump. J.D. Vance was a soldier who grew up in the region and remarked when discussing soldiering and the vagaries of life that "a transformation is harder than a moment" (Vance, 2016: 173). Vance's book *Hillbilly Elegy* was at the top of the bestseller list at the time of this writing, partly through a wide fascination with this region after the 2016 US election. This was a part of Mennell's view of "the pacification of American territory" and "the warriors" within it (Mennell, 2007: 39).

There is a long tradition of the significance of the warrior, with Elias questioning "which structural characteristics of human societies are responsible for the long-lasting dominance in most state societies of the two groups of specialists, of warriors and priests" (Elias, 1998: 181). Vance notes both of these influences. There are regions less pacified, including the area of my upbringing: the home of the hillbilly. The 'hillbilly habitus' in my part of Oklahoma is reflected throughout my autoethnography. Nevertheless, the environment and the people that helped to shape this habitus were neglected in the analysis of my MPhil thesis. My autoethnography includes "*the 'jealous in honour' and 'sudden and quick to quarrel'…feelings… that played upon in this stage of life*". I found a correspondence between Southern and that strand of German culture *through understanding this.*

"*Sudden and quick to quarrel…feelings*" are something that most of my European friends find strange, as do American friends from different areas than my own. A few may not see the fighting portrayed in my autoethnography as quite surprising. However, they would be taken aback at the level of violence, dangerousness and gunplay. The two phrases "*sudden and quick to quarrel"* and *"jealous in honour"* are from Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* of 1599 (Shakespeare, 2000). I depict myself not how many soldiers are often represented in popular culture: calm and collected. Here, it is like how the Vietnam veteran

came to be characterised as an 'intoxicated killer' and out of control (Cobley, 1994). I am more familiar with this type of soldier, reflecting on my experience and the category of soldiers I have encountered most.

In considering veteran stories from the Veterans History Project, mentioned in my MPhil, I focused on "*their journey 'over there' and back''*, a requirement of "*the returning of a boon: a sacrifice for their country, a restoration of the American image: honor and victory"(Morris, 2013: 27)*. I wrote that for soldiers *"honor has always been their penultimate goal whether regarding reputation in society or the boon returned"(Morris, 2013:28)*. When Mennell writes of the American Civilising Process*,* he raises ideas about dignity and honour. Dignity lies in the Northern part of the US. Known in my region as the home of the Yankees, it invokes Northerner Roger Lane's "dignity" (Lane, 1997). It is "a matter of the soul; a person's worth cannot be judged from the outside, but only by the individual conscience" (Mennell, 2007: 91). However, in the South, it is the harbourer of sentiment about "honour" which is "a matter of reputation, as judged by the community; a person's worth is what it appears to be, to outside observers" (Mennell, 2007: 91).

Like Imperial Germany, the American South also had a duelling culture (Elias, 2013). This code echoed that "in order in life to be man, one had to be tough", something frequently heard in Southern Oklahoma (Elias, 2013: 126). Imperial Germany and its conception of honour had a hierarchy of subordination and dominance "which was almost Hobbesian in character" (Elias, 2013: 126). These mythologies are also associated with soldiers. The military offered exact solutions to this quandary in this period, where anyone who:

> showed any weakness…was lost. Therefore, it was a good thing to display one's strength. Anyone who showed weakness deserved to be expelled; anyone who was vulnerable deserved to have salt rubbed into his wounds (Elias, 2013: 126).

The military I would join thus provided a path where I could *return to (my) unit and the civilian world with a boon of discipline, pride and initiative" (Morris, 2013: 30).* And also purge myself of being vulnerable and weak.

Colin Woodard proposes that Southern political thought is settled "around the ancient Latin concept of 'Libertas,' or liberty… a fundamentally different notion from the Germanic concept of 'Freiheit,' or freedom", which has become prevalent in the North (Woodard, 2011: 95). Although Freiheit is Germanic in origin, the concept descended from Anglo-Saxon tribes in England, with this tradition carried across the Atlantic with the Puritans (Woodard, 2011: 96). These ideas spread from New England across the North. They juxtaposed with the South, "whose highborn families saw themselves as descendants" of the conquering aristocratic Normans (Woodard, 2011: 96). These ideas propagated across the US South with a similar Hobbesian character to duelling Germany and involved a belief that "most humans were born into bondage. Liberty was something that was granted and was thus a privilege, not a right" (Woodard, 2011: 96). It brought the hierarchical nature of liberty and its ideas on bondage echoing back from slavery. These notions were part of a philosophy of 'Libertas,' brought down from the Greco-Roman progenitors, with "no contradiction between republicanism and slavery, liberty and bondage" (Woodard, 2011: 96).

The disciplining nature of honour and sanctioned violence is also observed in the tradition of the aristocratic southern planter alongside the "bellicosity of the Scots-Irish hill country South", which was overrepresented in the US military and underrepresented in the diplomatic and intelligence agencies and produced a disdain for diplomacy and passionately backed military action (Lind, 2009: 278). The elites of Southern society utilised the military to legitimise a specific brand of violence within the military apparatus.

My MPhil thesis noted that my friend, a young black man, "*was handled differently than other members of the unit" (Morris, 2013:45).* Burghardt was made to work harder than

others in the unit, "*well beyond the normal allotted periods of a soldier*" (Morris, 2013:

45). We were told "*he deserved it for his attitude. He thinks he is better than everyone else.*

He doesn't know his place" (Morris, 2013: 45). His place in a hierarchy, where specific

individuals are placed above others. The racial categorisation of people had not begun for me

in the army. As commented earlier, in my youth, "*I was no stranger to racism and its*

prevalence amongst not only the townsfolk, but also my own family" (Morris, 2013:

36). People I knew and considered friends and family echoed these beliefs, which although "*I*

did not partake regularly in racist thoughts or activities, but I did not forsake those who

trumpeted them"(Morris, 2013: 36). When I became older, I often echoed this racist ideology

and occasionally "*espoused the belief that we were in the end different and better*" (Morris,

2013: 36). This was partly learned through my close relations, as with one loved one

saying, *"'it is ok to hate n-words, but you shouldn't get involved with the KKK, it isn't what*

respectable men do'" (Morris, 2013: 36). Respectable men were placed higher on a scale

than KKK members and certainly higher than black people. It was an endorsement of

'Libertas'. It was what I witnessed mirrored in the Jim Crow of the past. African Americans

are observed as a class below in what Michelle Alexander terms *the New Jim Crow,* a system

determined to keep them there (Alexander, 2010). Violence was used to keep the system in

place.

My home is not a place I think of with excessive amounts of violence. It was only

realised after I had lived in other areas and had read statistics. I learned that my locality was

much more vulnerable to violence than developed regions and countries. I had been raised to

fight in school, hunt wild animals and do other things that my European, Turkish and other

friends find frightening and sometimes repulsive, even to others 'up north' in the US. After

returning from the war, I wrote about my violence. The word that came to mind was

"*berserk*"*,* recorded *as "the Norse word 'for the frenzied warriors who went into battle*

naked, or at least without armor, in a godlike or god-possessed but also beastlike-fury" *(Shay, 1994: 77) (Morris, 2013:50).* One event, in particular, stands out. I had chased another car that I just crashed into with a gun in my hand. At that moment, "*my blood boiled with a fury unknown before, capturing every part of my being in a beastlike rage,* and eventually *rammed the truck as hard as my Jeep would allow" (Morris, 2013:50).* Miraculously, I did not hurt anyone and somehow did not go to jail that night. Violence was close at hand over this time, and earlier, I had "*chased another group of men our age down a road, firing pistols in the air after they called someone in my circle a n-word" (Morris, 2013: 49).* The code of honour had to be defended.

There are many accounts of soldiers returning from the war raging (Childers, 2010), even the 'good' war, World War II (Brokaw, 1998). There are tales of veterans going berserk. In my MPhil autoethnography, I painted a picture of a veteran returning from war full of rage. However, violence had always been a regular part of my life—nevertheless, this violence from before the war was omitted and silenced. I had been in several fights in local bars where guns were involved. I had watched many loved ones get into fights. I had seen rifles used in disputes. I became the focus of an intense family clash when I was younger. A shotgun was pulled on an officer of the court trying to serve divorce papers, and there were fistfights until the divorce and custody were finally settled in the courts. I have been a bystander and participated in vigilante forms of justice that sometimes sweep the region.

Vigilante justice is quite common in my area compared with other places I have lived. Mennell discusses Turner's 'Frontier Thesis,' with the frontier as out of reach of the law and its enforcement and influencing the 'civilising' of the rest of the United States (Turner, 1920). Turner will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. He also discusses "the extreme right-wing militias and the bombing of the Federal office building in Oklahoma City", informing the anti-government fervour that sweeps my state and the larger region (Mennell,

2007: 197). Mennell also remarks on religious fundamentalism in America and notes that long after the famous Scopes Trial in America in 1925, a "young schoolteacher was prosecuted for teaching the theory of evolution and those responsible were so ridiculed in the press as hillbillies and worse" (Mennell, 2007: 286). He utilises the pejorative term 'hillbilly' that people from my area are frequently called and often enrages them. For Armstrong, the result is that "their theology became more reactionary and excessively literal, and they turned from the left to the extreme right of the political spectrum" (Armstrong, 2000: 142). These reactionary political swings often characterise Oklahoma, as it went from having the most socialists per capita in the nation to being the only state with every county voting for John McCain in the 2008 election (Bissett, 2002).

There are always ways in which people feel discriminated against. The pejorative term hillbilly exists, but there are much more hurtful derogatory terms with a much more terrible history. When I wrote my MPhil autoethnography, I was attempting to show how I learned to accept another culture and the different people around me. It led to a refutation of some of my past values and may have removed some understanding of those who still hold those values. I detached from that time and place and wrote an MPhil thesis about the material reality of everyday life in that milieu to suit my new time and place, doing so through the lens of the now/past.

Conclusion

So here I am, the "schmuck [who] studies [his] own life" (Shalin, 2013: 3). Quite a bit has been forgotten, but as Sontag reminds her readers, "to make peace is to forget. To reconcile, it is necessary that memory be faulty and limited" (Sontag, 2003: 103). When considering this, it should also be remembered that:

> autobiographies are works of the imagination, of art and artifice, certainly predicated
>
> on what once (was said to have) happened, but in a creative way, one often shared by

or debated between former co-participants and present co-authors of such accounts (Stanley, 1993b: 213).

As I have explored, analysing what once (was said to have) happened shows that the past is a labyrinth, a now/past region of activity. Confronted with issues such as the malleability of the past and the fictive ways used in representing it in my MPhil autoethnography, I decided to examine, in my doctoral work, the methods by which the stories of lives are built.

As I have moved through the history of autoethnography, there has been a building of the 'auto' aspect. However, as the continual evolution of social sciences has taught us, there is the intertextual nature of lives to consider, as well as how we are embedded in the texts of the here and now. They shape us and how we influence them, moving across society's micro and macro levels. However, what are the means by which documents of life become legitimate and factual in our lives? Here, it is crucial to consider the formation of the self in how we become the hero of our own story. But importantly, we should not exclude how others help form our thinking and stories. Being the hero is not the most critical aspect of life, which is to recognise our relationship with those around us and consider ourselves.

Many people try to emulate the heroes of the nations that they inhabit. Anthony Smith comments that the "incommensurability of nations requires a distinctive culture, and this is best founded upon a heroic past" (Smith, 1986: 213). In order to make our way in the world, we often feel the need to be or to follow heroes and their tropes. It can be dangerous, making us forget or silence those around us. This thinking brings the discussion back to the search for reasons why soldiers want to go to war, which some might say is a desire to kill. Most of the soldiers I have been in contact with say they have no desire to do so. Killing is an awful deed that very few wish to do. Susan Sontag discusses the experience of those who have gone to war and emphasises that "we" who have never experienced war "don't get it", for "we truly can't imagine what it was like. We can't imagine how dreadful, how terrifying war is, and

how normal it becomes. Can't understand, can't imagine" (Sontag, 2003: 113). The soldiers who have gone to war need to try to make the other people understand. Or if not, some government, corporation, politician or executive will paint a picture that we (who have gone to war) do not recognise. The next chapter shifts the focus to an event long ago in the Green Corn Rebellion and how this is happening dialogues with today as I write a novella and provide a similar treatment to it as I did to my MPhil in this chapter.

Chapter 3: The Green Corn Rebellion Through Me and Me Through It

This chapter will concentrate considerably on the Green Corn Rebellion. In considering why it and autoethnography are important, I have written about how it relates to me, fact, fiction, narrative and storytelling. The chapter begins with how autoethnography relates to sociological imagination, novel writing, and fiction. Much of autoethnography tends to present the autoethnographic self as an unmediated fact. However, my presentation is different. This chapter will first review the reasons and process for creating a novella as part of CSA. I subsequently write on the GCR, how it connects to me, and the concept of narrative and stories. The auto/biographical and biofiction are then discussed, stating how reflecting on how each would further my CSA. I next review how war narratives had done much of my work. I will then introduce the novella.

Consequently, I aim to establish a feedback loop akin to how many novelists utilise the social sciences in fashioning stories and characters. Furthermore, I look at how social scientists study to understand their social reality better led me to choose the novella with elements of auto/biographical and biofictive within this feedback loop. In keeping with the facets of the diamond structure of the thesis, I write this auto/biographical novella with everything mentioned in this chapter in mind to examine the complex relationship between fiction and facts. In creating this auto/biographical novella in this manner, I plan to generate a document of life to gain more insight into my socio-cultural reality that I could critically analyse.

The Moon of the Green Corn

> The full moon of late July, early August it was, the Moon of the Green Corn. It was not easy to persuade our poor white and black brothers and sisters to rise up. We told them that rising up, standing up, whatever the consequences, would inspire future generations. Our courage, our bravery would be remembered and copied. That has

been the Indian way for centuries, since the invasions. Fight and tell the story so that

those who come after or their descendants will rise up once again. It may take a

thousand years, but that is how we continue and eventually prevail (Dunbar -Ortiz,

2006: 224).

"Fight and tell the story" are the words of an elderly Seminole-Muscogee Creek woman,

never given a name by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, a Native American activist and scholar. This

Native American woman told the story of the Green Corn Rebellion (GCR), a tale of an event

which has slowly 'disappeared' over the years, along with the stories its participants told.

These people had joined other African Americans and poor white people under the 'Moon of

the Green Corn', and some 500 to 1000 people gathered atop a hill in southeastern Oklahoma

—where I was born and raised. Underneath the hot Oklahoma sun, they prepared for a march

they dreamed would stretch across America, ending in Washington, D.C. Once there, they

would overthrow the government, stop the conscription for the First World War and initiate a

socialist revolution (Burbank, 1976; Sellars, 1998; Bissett, 2002; Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006).

The origin of the GCR nomenclature itself is ambiguous now. Nevertheless, whether

the participants were supposed to consume green corn from the fields on the trek to

Washington D.C. or because of the Native American Green Corn Moon does not matter.

What does is that something drove them together up the hill. This thesis is partly concerned

with why men and women join the military or a movement and why they put their lives on

the line. In the case of the GCR, they had a drive that led them to walk halfway across a vast

continent to try to overthrow the largest economy in the world, to eventually "fight and tell

the story."

Autoethnography and the Sociological Imagination

The happening around which these stories were told occurred in my region of Oklahoma. It is

crucial to the autoethnography I am crafting that a sociological imagination shapes it as

something that "enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals" (Mills, [1959] 2000: 5). This requires filtering through "the welter of … daily experience", which leads people to "become falsely conscious of their social positions", and:

> within that welter, the framework of modern society is sought, and within that framework, the psychologies of a variety of men and women are formulated. By such means, the personal uneasiness of individuals is focused upon explicit troubles, and the indifference of publics is transformed into involvement with public issues (Mills, [1959] 2000: 5).

Neither my life nor "the life of the individual nor the history of a society" can be understood without including both private and public aspects (Mills, [1959] 2000: 5). The sociological imagination is a call to scrutinise our own private troubles along with those of others in the context of the public issues of society. Relatedly, this requires switching registers from the "most intimate features of the human self" out to the immense scale of social life and society in general (Mills, [1959] 2000: 4). Shifting inward to the more intimate features is often very personal, especially when it concerns trauma. It can also entail the false consciousness about our own social position that Mills mentions, a crucial consideration when undertaking an autoethnography.

The issue of false consciousness, concerning both the past and present, makes it hard to critically evaluate and be analytically reflexive about oneself. Here, fact and fiction add and divide, conceal and reveal. Thinking with the sociological imagination is always a challenge, and thinking this way in conjunction with constructing an autoethnography, especially one that is critical and analytically reflexive. It can present even more challenges. Writing autoethnography of this kind needs a method to guide the practitioner in using the

sociological imagination in dealing with large-scale events while also incorporating the lessons of a personal take on this. So, to present the question, what would this look like?

I previously discussed my first attempt at autoethnography in my MPhil dissertation. In Chapter 2, I discuss how it had "removed the many voices from my past experience in my life" because it had a dominating voice. Rectifying the absence of other voices is part of developing a dialogical CSA. Dealing with "the intimate features of the human self" requires distancing from that self and the smaller and larger traumas of life. However, at the same time, I must think about the suffering of others and ask, "is the suffering of others also our own?" (Alexander, [2004]2011: 306). I have partly written about this in my aforementioned MPhil when utilising ideas from Ronit Lentin's (2010) book. This book explores how Israeli soldiers and society, navigating fact and fiction, cannot move between Freud's notions of melancholia and mourning because they are unable to own up to the events of the Nakba and instead choose to mourn the lost innocence of the soldier perpetrators (Lentin, 2010). Lentin relatedly provides an autoethnographic account of her father's participation, for he was a soldier in these Palestinian events. In my MPhil, I related these ideas to my own experience in the Iraq War.

Alexander thinks that when trauma like this occurs, often "societies expand the circle of the we", becoming more inclusive of others (Alexander, [2004]2011: 307). The other side of this is the refusal of social groups to acknowledge the existence of such trauma: "by denying the reality of others' suffering, people not only diffuse their own responsibility for the suffering but often project the responsibility for their own suffering on these others" (Alexander, 2004: 307). These views return us to "making the familiar strange", an expression often incorrectly attributed to C. Wright Mills but actually coined by poet Friedrich von Hardenberg (Certo, 2017). Nevertheless, the expression echoes Mills' ideas on how to "gain reflexivity, to move from the sense of something commonly experienced to the

sense of strangeness that allows us to think sociologically. For trauma is not something naturally existing; it is something constructed by society" (Alexander, [2004] 2011: 308). Likewise, Sontag also discussed the "we" when writing about Woolf's *Three Guineas* and Woolf responding to the question of a lawyer, "how in your opinion are we to prevent war?" (Sontag, 2003: 3). Woolf's interlocutor, a privileged male lawyer, assumed the "we" included her, "however the different education and traditions behind [them]" (Woolf, 1938: 10) say differently. Here, as Sontag says, Woolf is not allowing "her interlocutor to take 'we' for granted"; yet, as Sontag ultimately concedes, "'we' should be taken for granted when the subject is looking at other people's pain" (Sontag, 2003: 6).

For Sontag, Woolf's idea of war is too generic, and there is anonymity to it. The problem with this conception of war, claims Sontag, is that it dismisses the politics, circumstances and context surrounding it (Sontag, 2003). Considering the war I fought in, this chapter and this thesis concern how to approach this problem, including politics and context *and* the voices of others in my autoethnography. My version of CSA considered the forms of autoethnographies and those ethnographies that are on the edge of auto, drawing on the analytical reflexivity in work by Chang, Anderson and Stanley and having the critical features of Boylorn and Orbe while integrating the ethnographies on the edge of auto (Chang, 2008; Anderson, 2006; Stanley, 2018; Thomson, 2013; Vance, 2016; Mckenzie, 2015; Lensmire, 2017).

Novels and Fiction in Autoethnography

Addressing the context, voices of others, and politics (namely, my area of birth, the people, and the previous wars that have affected all of these), I want to examine the beneficial role of fictionalisation and the novel. Novel writing and autoethnography have gone together before, as with Carolyn Ellis's creation of an autoethnographic novel in the classroom. She advocates a specific type of "interpretive, narrative, autoethnographic project" in which

autoethnography and the novel combine, as "the text is presented as a story replete with a narrator, characterisation, and plot line, akin to forms of writing associated with the novel or biography" (Ellis, 2004: 30). Here, Ellis makes a case for the evocative approach to autoethnography. Yet, whereas she notes the "therapeutic value" of her research (Ellis, 2004: 136). My research has more of a sociological underpinning. This style of autoethnographic novel inspires the evocative elements I include as a means of looking into interiority. However, as explained in the previous chapter, I lean towards the more analytical and sociological approach.

'Fictionalising' communicates the idea of mimesis. My view of mimesis is in line with what Taussig (1993), Auerbach ([1946] 2003), and Stanley (2001) write on the mimetic nature of the myriad ways there are in which:

> to invoke or evoke 'a person who is not there', including people who are not there because theirs is a 'past life' (in the case of the 'gaze' of history and biography …) or an 'other life' (in the case of sociology, anthropology) (Stanley, 2001: 30).

Mimesis is the representation of this person or persons, "a nature that culture uses to create second nature", a 'portrait' of a person or these persons invoked or evoked by another or by the person who is being represented, producing them from a different time (Taussig, 1993: xiii-xiv).

Others too have included mimesis in autoethnography, with Holman-Jones, Adams and Ellis relating it to their ideas on poiesis and autoethnography as an act of creation of a performative nature (Holman-Jones, Adams, and Ellis, 2016), and some have expanded on Ellis's ideas on fiction (e.g. Wade, 2015). In the first chapter, I wrote about autoethnography's many forms. I note how it would be styled differently by being analytically reflexive, relational and critical. Practising this manner of approach does not mean I discount the importance of evocative autoethnography, nor can I not include elements

of the evocative as a part of CSA. Tyler deems evocation necessary in all forms of ethnography in that "the whole point of 'evoking' rather than 'representing' is that it frees ethnographic mimesis and the inappropriate mode of scientific rhetoric" (Tyler, 2010: 130).

In this way, evocation helps us remember that individual people are a part of ethnography; "there are no 'things' there to be objects of a description" (Tyler, 2010: 130). Writing ethnography from this standpoint means it ceases "to become a representation of 'reality' [and] instead analysis 'evokes' [an] image that free ethnographers from striving to adhere to outmoded scientific principles" (Pole and Morrison, 2003: 107). Recalling that social science works well when it does not think in strict binaries such as analytical/evocative, autoethnography is similarly situated along continuums, as mentioned. I realise the importance of the "perspective from the more evocative side…to mak[ing] a better-rounded autoethnography" in my thesis while leaning towards the analytical side overall in my research (Anderson, 2016: 64). I concur with Leon Anderson that one can be "committed to an analytic model of autoethnographic writing", and also have a "greater sense of blurred boundaries as opposed to clear distinctions" (Anderson, 2016: 64).

I have discussed my differing view of the situated character of reflexivity. A problem arises with mimesis when reflexivity is used in a "rather loose way merely to mean reflective, with connotations of self-awareness that resonate with the autoethnographic genre" (Atkinson, 2006: 402). Still, many aspects of autoethnography ignore the work of biography and fiction writers and present their work and their selves as plain fact. However, these biography and fiction writers use techniques that are often more reflexively aware and closer to this situated ideation.

The Green Corn Rebellion and Me

Within this mimetic understanding, I want to incorporate the *how* and *why* before I went to war and ultimately returned from it to fashion a new sense of "me". However, what does an

event over a hundred years old relate to an autoethnography of the military and me? What drove my initial interest here connects to my life history, one of growing up in a rural area and having parents and grandparents who made their living as farmers and ranchers. There is also an interest in my grandparent's ideas on socialism, juxtaposed to my region's perceived hard-right political turn. I have long had an interest in how Oklahoma, now a state that is primarily known in the national and international news for its perceived far-right positions (reactionary and or religious laws and politicians), once held a very different position politically (Fortin, 2018; Embury-Dennis, 2017; Walker, 2017; Monahan, 2012). Oklahoma formerly had the most prominent socialist party membership in the United States (Sellars, 1998; Bissett, 2002; Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006). I only learned the story of the rebellion a few years ago. It is a part of the past unbeknownst to most Oklahomans and the broader country. The uprising is a segment of memory, history, stories and narrative that is (as all these are) fact and fiction under contention in the present. However, these recollections are part of a story, history and people vilified and racialised by elites and the media in Oklahoma (Burbank, 1976; Bissett, 2002; Sellars, 1998; 2010; Bush, 1932).

My attempt to apprehend the GCR history led to the discovery of a problem in the historiography on the subject (Sellars, 1998; 2010; Bissett, 2002; Dunbar-Ortiz and Womack, 2010). In the early 1930s, William Cunningham, interested in socialism, interviewed participants in the rebellion for the novel he would eventually write. He questioned them in western Arkansas, where he taught at the nearby Commonwealth College. These accounts became the only known documented interviews of actual participants, other than recently uncovered Bureau of Investigation (forerunner of the FBI) interviews by Sellars (Sellars, 2010; Grant, 2019). Cunningham ultimately utilised these records and wrote the novel that would be the *Green Corn Rebellion.* Few, if any, participants were interviewed by the newspapers, which mostly took a hard line against the rebels, seeing them as anti-war

socialist agitators, much like the Bureau of Investigation (Sellars, 2010; Grant, 2019). This era experienced a pro-war fervour that preoccupied the nation's newspapers and contributed to the Sedition Act of 1918 (Kennedy, 2004; Stone, 2004; Mock, 1941). The government and newspapers also racialised participants to discredit it and the socialist movement (Sellars, 1998; 2010; Dunbar-Ortiz and Womack, 2010), making it exceedingly hard to separate fact from fiction. Similar to my own experience in the leadup to the war I participated in.

I became interested in how what I then thought were the only factual accounts of the survivors of the GCR were portrayed in the pages of the *Green Corn Rebellion* novel. However, I would later discover that there were accounts given to law enforcement (Grant, 2019). William's sister, Sis Cunningham, would later write an autobiography discussing Cunningham's work on the book (Cunningham and Friesen, 1999). In the book, Sis Cunningham presents her brother as someone interested in portraying history and people. He would explain his view of history, mimesis and people in literature via a quote from Aristotle, "the artistic representation of history is a more scientific and serious pursuit than the actual writing of history. For the art of letters goes to the heart of things, whereas the factual report merely collates details" (Cunningham and Friesen, 1999: 133). Understanding these relationships between social reality, mimesis, and narrative is essential to understanding these thoughts better.

<u>Narrative and Stories</u>

Returning to my idea of CSA as one that utilises the sociological imagination and includes context and politics, CSA also needs an awareness of how story and narrative are integral to the social. Storytelling and narration have been used to relate the social and the self for aeons. The stories we encounter shape our lives, including the tales we read about and those we hear, speak, or write. These stories for Mariano Longo are a part of "relevant components of the models of thought" as models we "adopt to approach reality" (Longo, 2015: 1). He states

that stories are "the concepts [we] use to categorise social facts and events, the typifications upon which [we] construct [our] explication of the social" (Longo, 2015:1). For Longo, "from a subjective and biographical perspective", they justify "his interest in the use of narratives (including literary ones) as a source for sociology" (Longo, 2015:1). Longo conveys his conviction regarding using literary narratives in sociology. However, looking at what he means by literary narrative and narrative itself is essential.

There also needs to be a recognition of the way narrative gives "order to that unimaginable overabundance of information…The process [of telling a story] begins with the exclusion of almost everything" (Jackson, 2011: 4). The need to narrate others is part of a longing to narrate ourselves, which is also to say that "when we write about others we also write about ourselves", and within "narrating other people's life stories, we search for ways to know more about our own narratives, and (maybe more) of the process of being narrated" (Leskelä-Kärki, 2008: 330). This thinking is fundamental to my version of CSA. Because of the complexity of people's lives, their interactions and how they understand their world, "narratives are particularly suitable for portraying how people experience their position in relation to a culture: whether on the margins, in the centre, or on becoming part of a new culture" (Etherington, 2004: 75). Understanding how we narrate our stories and lives will help me understand me better and what has happened around me. As Etherington continues, "embedded in people's stories we hear their feelings, thoughts, and attitudes, and the richness of the narrative helps us to understand how they understand themselves, their strategies for living and how they make theoretical sense of their lives" (Etherington, 2004: 75). Ricœur divided this notion of narrative into three, the first, *mimesis*1, is the preform of emplotment, preconfiguration, *mimesis*2 is configuration or emplotment, and *mimesis*3 is a stage of reconfiguration, where the story is completed in the reader's mind (Ricœur, 1984).

This is how people organise the vastness that is social reality. Cunningham wrote a fictionalised account of something that factually happened in order, I believe, to help him understand his own social reality, its past, present and future. Much of contemporary autoethnography is retrospective commentary, something I will later discuss. However, it is often not reflexivity, which is "where the scholar is studying a setting, a subculture, an activity or some actors *other than* herself, and is acutely sensitive to the interrelationship" (Delamont, 2009: 58). As a part of my CSA, I will fictionalise a story based on factual events similar to what Cunningham did. I will then analytically take apart this story with previously discussed ideas on reflexivity in mind. There will be fictionalisation to understand better the past that happened before and around me by distancing myself a bit from it. It is past I can control and shape. I want to explore how we tell stories and how there are facts and fiction in those stories.

Auto/biography

Autoethnography is a form of auto/biography that includes "the parallel histories" of sociological autobiography and the reflexivity that has characterised the feminist research process (Stanley, 1993a: 43). Auto/biography comprises the various means by which we write lives. It also muddles many of the binaries I have and will discuss: self/other, present/past, fact/fiction, reality/representation and autobiography/biography (Stanley, 1992; 1993a). The slash notes the slippage between all these notions. Analysing the autoethnography in my MPhil in Chapter 2, I realised the slippages between all these supposed binaries.

A significant source of inspiration here is Maya Angelou, who worked in these slippages in her writing in what she called "autobiographies, not novels. For her, autobiography is a special form, consciously chosen as her most effective genre" (Lupton, 2016: 83). When being interviewed, Angelou told the interviewer, "I think I am the only

serious writer who has chosen the autobiographical form as the main form to carry my work, my expression" (Angelou, 1994b: 195). Angelou liked to "(fiddle) with' the truth" (Angelou, 1994a: 18). I, like her, will be "combining several characters for literary effect or being considerate to people who are still alive" (Lupton, 2016: 94). Angelou used the slave narrative, which is structured in journey form, like the hero narrative (Lupton, 2016). Stephen Butterfield (1974) believes it provides the foundation for the genre of African-American autobiography, which Angelou incorporates into her writing. Each book (Angelou, 1969; 1974; 1976; 1981; 1986; 2002) "is designed to be a continuing journey of the self" (Lupton, 2016: 280). I will discuss Angelou's importance and inspiration later in my analysis, but I wanted to note her contribution to this writing and thesis.

Wilde (1998) explored the spaces between these binaries by writing with them in mind when she wrote a fictional auto/biography. The draw of fiction for a writer of autobiography is because "fictions often enable more of 'truth' about a life to be written than a strictly 'factual' account, and this is particularly true of 'deviant' lives" (Stanley, 1992: 67). Soldiers' lives are often far from the norm, so fictionalising my experiences seemed an interesting way to explore the many truths. I have often been told that my life was also quite different from that of a typical soldier. It also seemed quite different from what I encountered in the military and the many representations of soldiers I have confronted in society. Wilde writes that, when analysing her experiences, fictionalising allowed her to discuss her experience with depression and infertility in a manner "that does not leave me exposed and vulnerable" (Wilde, 1998: 86). Wilde struggled with "questions about 'appropriate self disclosure', 'truth' and concerns about my own and other's vulnerabilities in the text" (Wilde, 1998: 396). Fictionalising allowed her "to experiment in a wider sphere of self exploration and disclosure" (Wilde, 1998: 86). I considered fictionalising my experience with this in mind.

When reading the GCR novel, I noticed how William Cunningham explored the evocative through fiction and how much evocation drove the movement of the GCR. These emotions conveyed how Jim could tell that a social meeting went well "because everybody was excited", how Jim's wife tempered his radicalism with her feelings about family, and that Jim's emotions towards his brother often drove his radicalism. Fear sometimes tempered it, and how love for Jim's children and Happy's death drove it again (Cunningham, [1935] 2010: 39; 73; 95; 118; 126; 185). However, emotions also helped to end the GCR (Cunningham, [1935] 2010): 191). Evocation is integral to social life.

Holmes (2010) has written on emotional reflexivity, difficulty choosing between competing knowledge claims, the vastness of social reality, and how we often operate based on feeling. I wrote earlier about the importance of including the evocative in my autoethnography. However, my CSA requires me to consider myself reflexively. This thinking requires me to look at the self and others in the past and present socio-cultural contexts throughout the research process. It also means considering my own knowledge claims, as Holmes (2010) mentions. Knowledge claims here are understood as socially constructed artefacts formed by the discipline's intellectual culture (Bruffee, 1986). They are accepted and thus made true through a community of readers (Myers, 1985; Hyland, 1998). I decided to devise an approach that would allow me to explore the evocative while incorporating reflexivity: I would accomplish this by creating a fictionalised version that would help me connect my understanding with other people's motivations and reasonings for why we had joined the military or a movement.

However, fictional narratives are differentiated by Ricœur from historical narratives in his notion of *mimesis*2, while noting their structural similarities (Ricœur, 1984). One way to distinguish them is by differentiating between the reality that is 'out there' and the human expression of this reality. There is a critical distinction here between "reality (what is really

out there, whatever that may be), experience (how that reality presents itself to consciousness), and expressions (how individual experience is framed and articulated)" (Turner and Bruner, 1986: 7). People proceed with what actually happens "out there" in the world: the particular reality we experience out in the world. We then move to how to express that reality experience through the myriad ways we communicate it with others. All this can be simply summed up as "life as lived (reality), life as experienced (experience), and life as told (expression)" (Turner and Bruner, 1986: 7). It is difficult to negotiate between "life as lived" and "life as told". Lukas wrote of this difficulty, which occurs because:

> reality as a whole is always richer and more varied than even the richest work of art,
>
> no detail, episode, etc., however exactly copied, however biographically authentic,
>
> however factual, can possibly compete with reality (Lukas, 1962[1937]: 302)

Reality is impossible to copy, but we try through narrative as a form of mimetic representation. Narrative is used to comprehend the vastness of the things that are and happen. Fiction is often the strategy for apprehending this.

Searle perceives narrative as a type of assertion or action that commits the speaker to the truth. At the same time, the frame of fiction asserts the untrue with no social consequences for the author, and this fictional assertion connects the intention to the author (Searle, 1975). It must also comply with coherence and fidelity (Fisher, 1987). Coherence requires that the actors in the story act predictably and believably, while fidelity refers to how the stories remain faithful to the audience. Hence, the experience of the story "rings true with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (Fisher, 1987: 64). Trueness, therefore, becomes a factor in describing narrative fiction as a "text that employs the character of assertiveness while overtly breaking the basic rule of veracity", with this rule broken intentionally by the author (Longo, 2015: 17).

Fictional narrative of the literary variety is closer to the focus of this chapter. Thinking about this along with Ricœur (1994) clarifies the writer and reader's standpoint rather than providing precise knowledge of what happened. Such narratives are "sustained dramatic gesture[s]" in that they are "a way not only of presenting some content or material but of responding to it" (Gibson, 2007: 117). Literary narratives accomplish this by taking this knowledge, the vastness of reality, and entwining it "into the fabric of the social, literature traces and giv[ing] testament to the bond between our words, our concepts, and the concrete body of our culture" (Gibson, 2007: 120). There is also a feedback loop between cultural production and narrative, for literary narratives "not only reconstruct reality on the basis of our common shared knowledge about it, but they may also contribute to modifying our culture" (Longo, 2015: 51). This loop is why I want to explore the creation of meaning in the feedback loop by conceiving my own literary narrative, drawn from my real life and the factual lives of others I had encountered in life and literature. It is also drawn from those people fictionalised in the GCR novel but who had factual lives.

Another distinction between literary narratives and the factual variety concerns how the writer situates the narrator and the author in the factual variety; "the author assumes full responsibility for the assertion of his narrative and, consequently, does not grant autonomy to any narrator" (Genette, 1990: 765). Thus, the author assumes absolute responsibility for both authorship and narration in a factual narrative, allowing for no independent narration (Genette, 1990). The opposite is true for literary narratives. The narrator can be separated and used as a narrative function in these places. There is no overlap with the author; the narrator is not held to the truth and can be written as unreliable. This separation allows the narrator to have the textual function of revealing aspects of the plot and characters' personalities, features which would generally remain unknown to the reader (Genette, 1990). When constructing a fictional narrative, it is essential to consider this.

It is also important to note the difference between the fiction genre and the fictionality notion. As Richard Walsh notes, "all narrative, fictional and nonfictional, is artifice", but "in a very restrictive sense fictive" (Walsh, 2007:14-15). Walsh maintains the importance of fictional narratives because they have a "coherently distinct cultural role", and to account for this, there needs to be a "distinct concept of fictionality" (Walsh, 2007:15). Fictionality should not be equated with fiction. It should instead be seen as a "communicative strategy" which has a "rhetorical nature" (Walsh, 2007: 7). It should be considered a rhetorical device. In contrast, a literary narrative can be judged as lying within the genre of fiction, "yet readers may justifiably assume the informative relevance of some parts of it (consider historical novels, novels set in identifiable places, novels drawing upon established discourses of knowledge" (Walsh, 2007: 7). For Walsh, fiction differs in that it is an "exercise of our narrative understanding, and fictionality is the regime that provides its cultural rationale" (Walsh, 2007: 8).

Biofiction

Another important aspect of literary narratives for my CSA concerns how to approach the "now". Previously I mentioned how the present or the 'now' we experience can be conceptualised as the "now/past" (Stanley, 1992; 2016: 39). Writers of fictional narrative in the past confronted this, as with well-known writers of historical novels in the late 1930s, whom Lukas sees as writing out of a desire "to confront the present with great model figures of humanist ideals as examples, as resuscitated forerunners of the great struggles of today" (Lukas, 1962 [1937]: 300-301). Later, writers of historical novels saw the need to bring to the fore, those who had yet to be adequately represented in these novels of yesteryear. Arising out of the effort of feminist biographers to bring attention to women's lives and their accomplishments in what once had been a 'men's club', these earlier writers are seen to have

"served as instruments of commemoration and canonisation, extending a woman's *'afterlife'* by adding her(s) to a society's cultural memory" (Novak, 2016: 84).

The groundwork for biofiction began with modernist English writers such as Lytton Strachey and Virginia Woolf (Lackey, 2017). Strachey and other contemporaries innovated the writing of biography by using creative fictional and imaginative techniques in their account of another person's life. At the same time, Woolf changed the biographer and biography through bionovels like *Flush* and *Orlando* (Lackey, 2017). These writers, working in the same way as Lukas, used fictional methods to alter reality. They drew on "the *'facts'* of a life in their accounts of the biography, sometimes adding to and confirming, sometimes contesting the image preserved of a subject in cultural memory" (Novak, 2016: 85).

Biofiction utilises the fictionalisation of historical characters such as Virginia Woolf and Henry James, among many others. However, these biographical novels, like Chase-Riboud's, wrote on the American Thomas Jefferson and his relationship with his slave Sally Hemmings (Chase-Riboud, 1979; Layne, 2018). Here, they discovered truths in life that were often never thought about by conventional historians. These rest on Chase-Riboud and others having "expertise in discerning and representing the strange logic of character, and thus…able to recover to some degree a cultural ethos" (Lackey, 2017: 345). What Chase-Riboud portrayed was something that "prominent historians once assured us was inconceivable [and] is now considered the most likely scenario" (Lackey, 2017: 345). The novelist imagined a world (disputed by historians) where one of the founding fathers of the US, Thomas Jefferson, had a complicated relationship, perhaps somewhat loving, with his slave Sally Hemming. This world led to an actual discovered 'truth' concerning their long-term relationship. It was not a historian's work that had significantly contributed to thinking but a novelist who had ignored the supposedly inconceivable (Lackey, 2017).

<u>War Stories and Narrative</u>

In writing on war in the 20th century, many writers blurred lines between fact and fiction while also looking at the interiority and exteriority of socio-cultural processes. This blurring began with *The Red Badge of Courage*, written by a civilian unsure of its anti-war message (Crane, 1895). There is an American body of literature surrounding realist fictionalised accounts of war that have this anti-war feel, with crucial references reoccurring in the academic literature. These accounts written by veterans became more known after World War I (WWI) with *A Farewell to Arms* and *Three Soldiers* (Hemingway, 1929; Dos Passos, 1921). These are part of a more extensive collection of novels and poems written on the First World War experience. Pat Barker created a novel on WWI in much the same vein as Cunningham, with soldiers' experiences being written into the story (Barker, 1991). These materials aid the world in knowing and living with the experience and aftermath of trauma, revealing the devastation of this trauma manifests in lives and daring us to create new attitudes, thereby generating the possibility of ways of healing (Etherington, 2003; Barker, 1991). The tradition was continued in *The Naked and The Dead, Slaughterhouse-Five, and Catch-22* (Mailer, 1948; Vonnegut, 1969; Heller, 1961). These authors wrote about their traumatic and personal experiences surrounding war: their enlistment, return, and relation to society.

Some chose to memorialise their accounts by locating them more on the factual side. This locating is the preferred form of former Vietnam soldier Tobias Wolff, who wrote of his time in Vietnam: before and after. *In Pharaoh's Army* chronicles the author's experience as a U.S. Army officer there (Wolff, 1994). In it, Wolff provides a harrowing account of his involvement in the Tet Offensive of 1968, describing in detail the horror of seeing the corpses of the Viet Cong dead and the atrocities he witnessed. He also writes of his time a few months before shipping off to war and his year after returning, providing a broader

picture of the soldier experience. George Orwell had much earlier explored his perspective on the Spanish Civil War in a memoir, *Homage to Catalonia* (Orwell, 1946). Orwell provides nuanced observations of the war, anarchism and communism in Spain at that time, namely Stalin's interpretation of communism, which was different from many on the British left at that time (Newsinger, 2005). He fought in this war with the Marxist party POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista) as a Republican. The memoir gives accounts of him as a volunteer soldier, his changing political views and his opinions on religion while also considering the different politics, the social situation and the media. The book ends as Orwell crosses into France.

Other accounts based on war have chosen a more fictional path that shares many similarities with biofiction. *All Quiet on the Western Front,* by Erich Maria Remarque, chronicles his experience in WWI, inspiring war narrative across Europe (Remarque, [1928]1987). Here, the former German soldier wrote of his relation to German society, the horrors of the battlefield and how soldiers felt detached from life back home (Eksteins, 1980). The book does not concentrate on soldiers' bravery, which is often fictionalised, as many books on past wars do. It instead focuses on the facts of war's mundaneness, the dangers, hunger, the lack of experience of recruits and the role of luck, a realism that led the Nazis to ban and burn it.

A book comparable to Remarque's, Bao Ninh's *The Sorrow of War*, concerns a North Vietnamese soldier collecting bodies in the aftermath of a battle who muses on his past (Ninh, 1994). Ninh writes of a brutal and cruel war in Vietnam, writing, again, a work not liked by his government (Sylvester, 2019). The main character, Kien, enlists at 17, and his childhood sweetheart, Phuong, accompanies him to the front on a train after his enlistment. When a bomb throws him from this train, they are separated. Phuong is then viciously raped by his fellow Vietnamese comrades. Ten years after the war, we find Kien drunken and

battling depression. Besides drinking, the only way for him to cope is to write a novel about his experience. The story is not chronological as Ninh flashes back to childhood and better days, the war and the present. He then attempts to burn the novel he has written. However, the book is saved by a mute girl he had been consorting and feeding his ideas. Towards the novel's end, the actual author enters as a new narrator, blurring the line between fact and fiction, telling the story of how he obtained the novel from the mute girl. These novels resonate "with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (Fisher, 1987: 64).

What is occurring in them is similar to Vietnam veteran Tim O'Brien's interpretation of storytelling that:

> by telling stories, you objectify your experience. You separate it from yourself. You pin down certain truth. You make up others. You start sometimes with an incident that truly happened…and you carry it forward by inventing incidents that did not in fact occur that nonetheless help to clarify and explain (O'Brien, [1990]2009: 152).

O'Brien's concept of "a true war story" is one that "is never moral", and "if there's a moral at all, it's like the thread that makes the cloth. You can't extract the meaning without unravelling the deeper meaning…true war stories do not generalise" (O'Brien, 2009: 75). O'Brien wrote of an American war that Robert Wright described as unique: "no other conflict in U.S. history has been burdened so overwhelmingly by the tension between fact and fiction, truth and deception" (Wright, 1986: 303).

O'Brien writes fiction that moves through short stories to represent his war experience. He records stories in his platoon during the war, one of a young woman from America visiting them in Vietnam and another of unseen sounds that haunt the soldiers. O'Brien also writes about a decision to visit a lake before the war. There he decided between being conscripted or fleeing to Canada. Finally, the author writes of after the war and a friend's suicide back home. O'Brien uses mimesis "to invoke or evoke 'a person who is not

there'" (Stanley, 2001: 30). He writes fiction that rings true to his experience. Yet, it may not match the facts. His "never moral" idea is later elucidated in an interview when he says, "fiction in general, and war stories in particular, serve a moral function, but not to give you lessons, not to tell you how to act. Rather, they present you with philosophical problems, then ask you to try to adjudicate in some way or another" (McNerney, 1994: 10). O'Brien is telling the reader to be sceptical.

After considering how to approach my Iraq War version, my experience, and its role in my thesis, I read many of the aforementioned "war narratives". These fictional memoirs and novels had me grappling with how most, except Orwell's. They do not tell of history as historians do. There is a tension about war stories between the "tellability" or "untellability", which is determined by "audience expectations, newsworthiness, uniqueness, relevance, importance, and humor but also—and perhaps just as centrally—appropriateness, contextualization, negotiation, mediation, and entitlement" (Goldstein and Shuman 2012: 119; Sacks, 1992; Labov and Waletzky, 1967). People who have not experienced war want to hear about alien and exotic differences. However, there also needs to be recognition of the stories and the wars as "some level of shared experience" (Willsey, 2014: 166). Veterans tell "of campaigns and battles, of the great victories and the disastrous defeats" (Hynes, 1997: 11). They are often, as Hynes observes in *The Soldier's Tale,* "unlocated narrative," remaining "in the individual's realm" (Hynes, 1997: 11). Soldiers, for Hynes, often write ahistorically. They write "experience books" that "are about what happened and how it felt" because "soldiers often do not worry about the why, in fact, they are taught this in training" (Hynes, 1997: 11).

However, I must worry about the why and share experience in my thesis and as a sociologist. Furthermore, as Sontag argued, this worrying includes the political realm (Sontag, 2003). This shifting between individual perspective and broader considerations is

part of why I contemplated writing fiction. I wrote fiction to capture this "individual realm" to amalgamate the evocative element. Here, there is a "rhetorical nature" to my "fictionalising", as mentioned earlier by Walsh (2007). This "fictionalising" will alternate with "factional devices" (Stanley and Dampier, 2008: 61). These devices are part of a 'factionalising' process, that is, "how facts are utilised in fictional narratives, through drawing on 'real life' story lines, characterisations and denouements to tell a fictional story" (Stanley and Dampier, 2008: 61). Recognising this interplay of these binaries of the auto/biographical and how narrative aids in organising social reality is crucial when building a fictional account but also vital to how I will eventually take apart my fictional narrative.

The Feedback Loop Between Social Reality and Fiction

These writers of war and biofiction have utilised the auto/biographical in ways that combined binaries, such as self/other, fact/fiction, real/representation and autobiography/biography. Blurring these binaries is necessary for my consideration of creating a fictional narrative: fiction utilising both fictive and factive devices to make sense of my social reality. This consideration led me to consider the labelling of my fiction as "autobiographical historical fiction" (Attwell, 2016). This fiction style strives to "achieve allegedly superior forms of truth–be they personal or cultural–through imaginative literature" (Herbillon, 2020: 393). However, I moved to the more preferred auto/biographical fiction, adding the slash here to illustrate the blurring understood in auto/biography when writing a life.

Fiction of this kind would explore the auto/biographical in a novella. The novella would include factive elements of the GCR and 1970s Oklahoma, known attributes and backgrounds of people from my area of the US, Oklahoma, such as Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Ralph Ellison, and devices taken from my own life. These factive devices would be amalgamated with fictionality to assert 'truths' about my experience that would be captured within the novella. After writing it, I decided to analyse this to understand better how

researchers construct meaning and knowledge rather than discover it, signalling it as an "auto/biographical I" (Stanley, 1992).

In addition to knowledge claims, there are truth claims related to these assertions of truth. John Hick established the notion of truth-claims when writing on theology and religion (Hick, 1983). I knew I had to be careful when deploying the self: myself. As a former soldier, research has revealed (Van Zoonen et al., 2007) that truth claims based on personal experience, however, (are) differently contested, especially if they came from *army personnel*" (Van Zoonen, 2012: 61, my emphasis). In America, my truth as a soldier in Iraq is less contested than others concerning Iraq and the war. My truth claim is perceived to carry more weight than others. These truths are claimed by veterans and in veterans' names with "confident assertions about the significance of the American effort", and their elevated truth "would follow" (Van Zoonen, 2012: 61). Truth claims such as these are often taken up as "political truths" contemporary political rhetoric to damaging results (Cloud, 2018)—these assertions of truth or truth claims needed to be analytically explored.

An example I had in mind here was how sociologists from the University of Chicago in the late 19th and early 20th century utilised novels of the time (Lutters and Ackerman, 1996; Blumer, 1986). These sociologists established a feedback loop between Chicago school sociology and novelists, as the contemporary novels provided case studies of urban social reality. Conversely, the novelists used thinking and techniques from the sociologists to help shape their novels (Longo, 2015). This thinking helped to further the understanding of social reality. I wanted to establish a similar dialogue in studying how a novelist creates characters and stories based on social reality, combining those to create the novella. I would then analyse what it produced to rewrite and contribute to a better understanding of specific social realities, knowledge and truth claims. This consideration was not a one-time undertaking. It is

a reoccurring process, permitting me to understand better how novelists build their worlds and structure their social reality through literary narrative and recreating it in their writing.

Angus Bancroft and Ralph Fevre wrote a sociology 'textbook' that similarly straddled the novel and the ideas of the social sciences (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010). It was written as a novel that follows the story of a sociology student, Mila. This character grappled with the big ideas of sociology and *Dead White Men & Other Important People.* In the novel-styled textbook, the authors use "fictional characters…to teach us something" as the protagonist, Mila, examines sociology's themes, theories and debates through discussions with her friends and family (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010: 256). This examination helps spark her "sociological imagination" and how it can be applied to her own experiences. However, she also notes how sociology takes from her own experience and others "by including more voices and experiences, particularly those from the bottom rungs of society, more accurate universal statements could be made, and sociology could come to reflect a truer version of reality" (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010: 234). This "truer version of reality" is what I want to pursue.

In the early 1930s, William Cunningham went through similar processes mentioned with the GCR and wrote his novel about an actual event with fictionalised but real characters. Cunningham later wrote on the importance of historical novelists and observed that they:

> dealt with the works of the great nineteenth-century historical novelists to illustrate the premise that a writer could best advance an understanding of history by dealing pictorially with people's reactions to events, and conversely by showing the way those reactions shape events to come (Cunningham and Friesen, 1999: 133).

Cunningham tried to express this view in being through his novel ([1935] 2010).

Ken Plummer suggested looking at these documents of life. Social scientists often neglect them. They are a mode of writing that "takes on the form of a fictional novel but which is dealing with true events fully researched by the author" (Plummer, 2001a: 56).

While it is unfortunate and undoubtedly curious as to why Cunningham did not preserve the actual interviews of the GCR participants, his use of the GCR insurgents in his novel was the motivation for me to research how mimesis, social reality and narrative are used in novels, and consequently, how this thinking relates to the study of narrative and sociology. People in Cunningham's novel were fictionalised characters based on real people interviewed, reflecting ideas about the historical novel at the time (Lukas, [1937] 1962). The characters he created are part of a novel about collective action, and for Sellars, "taking part in collective action can bring about personal redemption" (Sellars, 2010: xviii). However, I want to comprehend how Cunningham produced his novel and intermixed the auto/biographical in a literary narrative to create his own truth based on these ideas and his truth and knowledge claims. I intend to understand how he used this mixing to build my understanding of how novelists portray a particular social reality or facts in their works.

Choosing the Novella

When deciding to craft a fictional piece of writing that utilises the work done in war narratives, biofiction, and novels, the literary narrative I chose to produce was a short novella. When considering other related genres of the short story and the novel, Graham Good proposes two limits: introversion and extroversion. Good's idea of introversion in the novel deals more with the interiority of characters, a "high degree of psychological complexity", and "the almost eventless record of the feelings and impressions of a passive and easily moved sensibility" (Good, 1977: 209). In contrast, the short story concentrates on extroversion, emphasising suspense and brevity. This strategy means a "neatly and strongly plotted account of coarser motivations, combining trickery in the characters with sleight of hand in the narrative strategy" (Good, 1977: 209).

I originally planned on utilising a novel in my CSA as it allows readers to peer more into the characters' inner workings. This form would permit me to explore the evocative

more. It offered me the possibility "to describe someone else's inner processes (including decisions taken and motives to act), within a convention which allows the narrator to penetrate the black box of the character's individuality", thereby providing a more evocative and thus more robust viewing of the social (Longo, 2015: 21). As I wrote the piece of fiction, my supervisor noticed the characters lacked much of this interiority, forcing me to confront what type of fiction was, in fact, being written.

I accomplished this examination by deploying the feedback loop mentioned earlier. A loop of reading and writing within sociological and humanities literature helps me move beyond recognition of the self and other to what Oliver (2001) calls "witnessing". Oliver observes the other as a part of the self and ethically calls for "witnessing" of otherness through a self-reflection that "is not a turn inward but a turn toward otherness. . . . If the self is by virtue of a witnessing relation to another, then self-reflection is the reflection of that relationship" (Oliver, 2001: 219). My interpretation of this recognition is moving away from merely "descriptive reflexivity". It is a type geared toward "the confessional tendency to 'spill-the-beans' about oneself", more of a "description of one's reflection" (Wilder, 1998: 302; Letherby, 2002: 5.1). Descriptive reflexivity has its purpose in bringing forth the evocative. However, this specific writing style must be read and analysed as part of analytical reflexivity. Writing in this manner and then analysing it allows me to move back and forth between fact, fiction and reflexivity that is both descriptive and analytical. I would utilise what I learned from both fiction writers *and* academics.

Witnessing, though, fits more to the process of analytical reflexivity. According to Oliver (2001), witnessing is an interrogation of the self, which matches my styling of reflexivity that observes a relational and embedded subjectivity. This reflexive feedback loop between the self and others, notably, needs thinking on knowledge in how Stanley characterises it, drawing on Rich (1986) and Haraway (1988), as a material product, "something which is

specific to time and place and person, and so which is contextually, grounded and material, as well as being rooted in the 'point of view' of particular knowledge producers" (Stanley 1997: 204). This knowledge production is situated, local and generated in time, which Jennifer Peet noticed when studying the public history regarding Aboriginal Australian child separations in the 20th century (Peet, 2014). Peet observed how these people concerned had lived their lives "caught up in the social processes that their accounts are concerned with" (Peet, 2014: 245). They continue in these "processes that contemporary knowledge making produces about them, including my own" (Peet, 2014: 245). Knowledge production is continual: theirs and mine. An inspiration here was how David Hill situated "soldiers' writings within the broad approach of thematic narrative analysis as a method of examining historical sources" when doing my analysis (Hill, 2011: 62).

When deciding on a particular type of fiction, I chose a novella due to its specific connection to building a more powerful moral message. Selecting a short story, or what Clare Hanson called "short fiction", as in the work of Katherine Mansfield, would mean there is no or very little emplotment (Hanson, 1985; Pritchett, 2006; Éjxenbaum, 1994; Walsh and Murphy, 2017). Instead, there would be a focus on an overall feeling or mood. I wanted to move beyond this to build a collection of truths like those mentioned in war narratives. Progressing to what Lauren Cowdery said was Henry James's view of the novella as "intuition of romantic truth", as opposed to the "perception of truth" found in anecdotes that people tell one another (Cowdery, 1986: 21). As Schorer notes, while there is moral evolution in the novel, the short story is about moral revelation, and the novella "share[s] in the virtues of both" (Schorer, 1967: 331). This between-space of the novella expands the more intense revelation in the short story. Here, the situation and characters also evolve, with its aesthetic goal "to be both micro-and macrocosmic, to go beyond revelation to a testing out, to a novelistic treatment (in microcosm)" (Leibowitz, 1974: 78). This between-space allows me to

explore fact and fiction to test out my truth and knowledge claims, my experience, my selves against the others, for in the novella, "secondary characters appear in cameos to further plot or help understand their protagonist who often is not the novella's narrator" (Weldon, 2011: 566).

The novel form would allow for more evolution of many characters as it builds worlds in the form of a heterotopia (Foucault, 1971; Knight, 2017). The novella enables a collection of characters to be combined within an intertextual space that brings forth ideas in a heterotopia. It would mean less focus on the characters' interiority, their thinking and decisions and without the world-building and history of the characters and space of the novel (Éjxenbaum, 1994). On the other hand, a novella would focus more on moral issues and complications, letting me explore those ideas together. There is tidiness to a novella. It has secondary characters who are there merely to shape the protagonist, move the plot, and build the moral message of the novella. This "extraordinary and striking turning-point distinguishes it from every other narrative form" (Bennett, 1974: 11). The characters created within this heterotopic world carry moral messages more than interiority of personhood and become "a prism for the interrogation of self, other selves, and society beyond the text" (Longo, 2003: 153). When examining the auto/biographical novella analytically, its structure will make my certain truth claims more pronounced. I would be able to scrutinise how my literary narrative structured the social reality encompassing me while exploring how I use fictionality to assert specific versions of these 'truths'. Choosing the novella route as laid down by these literary theorists and novella writers would allow me to follow a well-worn path and use their techniques as I explore the feedback loop analytically in my CSA. I would better understand how faction and fiction are built and utilised.

Return to the GCR Novel and Introducing the Novella

Returning to the GCR novel and spoiling the plot (Cunningham, [1935]2010), the reader is told of Jim Tetley, the main protagonist. He is a farmer with leftist views who is raising a family and barely making ends meet in southern Oklahoma. The antagonist is Ted Tetley, Jim's brother, who writes for the town newspaper and has a more rightist outlook. Jim lives with his wife, Jeanie, two children, his father-in-law, Mack, who shares his leftist thinking, and his teenage sister-in-law, Gladys, who goes by the nickname of Happy. Jim and Ted's ideologies or systems of truth constantly clash throughout the novel. Ted represents a more urban, capitalistic perspective of the time, and Jim represents the rural, socialist one. The novel spends considerable time telling of a love triangle between Jim, Happy, and Jeanie. Jeanie never learns of the love affair mentioned above. Ted further adds to this triangle by having feelings for Happy. Happy ultimately ends her own life. The novel writes that it was spurred partly by an unplanned pregnancy that may or may not have been Jim's child, along with the social pressures of that place and time. Jim and Mack eventually join the GCR and are arrested in the aftermath. Mack perishes after its outcome. This is partly after learning of Happy's demise and rumours of Jim's involvement. These deaths leave Jim with overwhelming guilt. During these moments, Ted pushes Jim to join the war effort in WWI. This is shortly after being told by the local community never to return; the novel ends with Jim on a train ride to join the military.

In reporting these fictional stories, perhaps from his interviewees or his own life, stories many people deem uncomfortable, Cunningham gives accounts from a factual forgotten social event. Thus, he also uncovers stories that are often not written about or told in society. The novel's before and after the GCR are covered much more in-depth than the actual event. With my novella, it is also centred around the Tetley family. It covers the before and after of one event whose focus is another character outside but close to the Tetley family, Janet Miller. She is the daughter of two participants in the GCR: Samantha and Henry

Greene. Jim Tetley is now an older man, dealing with losing one son in the Second World War, Mack, and another troubled son who fought in Korea, Danny. With all these elements combined, and so through a combined descriptive and analytical reflexivity, I strive to understand better how stories surrounding war and rebellion are constructed. I want to know how some of these stories become established as public narrative. Yet, others are much less so, in becoming forgotten in the social's vastness or even purposefully expunged.

Moreover, the novella explores the facts of different truth claims of 'me' and of other people in "regimes of truth" through the literary fictionalised narrative of the novella, eliciting elements to reflexively examine an event that happened in my part of the world and how it became 'lost': its relation to me in the now. Returning to Sontag (2003), she proposes that we must question the 'we' and how 'we' contribute to others' pain with the weight of the politics and people we entangle ourselves in. This thinking relates to ourselves and how we are multifaceted. Here, I will make my certain 'truths' more pronounced, which then will be available for scrutinisation in how my literary narrative structured the social reality encompassing me. I do this while exploring my use of fictionality to assert specific versions of these truth and knowledge claims. Choosing the novella route as laid down by these literary theorists and novella writers would allow me to follow a well-worn path and use their techniques as I explore the feedback loop analytically. Examining this process will be furthered in the interlude of my novella, *The Many Moons of the Green Corn*, and the analytical reflexivity that follows it. Thenceforth, chapter 4 would build from the analytical tools already created in the last chapter to analyse the novella critically.

In this chapter, I have written about the Green Corn Rebellion event, its memories, narrative, and stories surrounding it, which I and others created. In considering it as a part of my CSA, what is known to me of the event through memories, narrative and stories: fact and fiction. Thinking with the sociological imagination relates to my own story and how I

conceive the self and myself. Many writers have discussed these issues when writing about wars, as I have. The auto/biographical and biofiction are then discussed, stating how reflecting on each would further my CSA. I next review how war narratives had done much of my work. In keeping with the facets of the diamond structure of the thesis, I write this auto/biographical novella with everything mentioned in this chapter in mind to examine the complex relationship between fiction and facts.

Consequently, I aim to establish a feedback loop akin to how many novelists utilise the social sciences in fashioning stories and characters, and social scientists study vice versa to understand their social reality better. Therefore, this led to choosing the novella with auto/biographical and biofictive elements within this dialogue. In creating this auto/biographical novella in this manner, I plan to generate a document of life to gain more insight into my socio-cultural reality. I could then critically analyse it and thus separate better faction and fiction in my life rather than just presenting my autoethnographic self as an unmitigated fact. This auto/biographical novella's font has been converted to `American Typewriter` to facilitate distancing from the descriptive reflexivity when doing the following analytical reflexivity, and can be found in Appendix 2.

Chapter 4: Stories from the Social: Unpacking the Novella and Fact, Fiction, Truth and Truth Systems

In the last chapter, I told of constructing a novella with many voices. This chapter is about discovering analytically what these voices say and do. Chapter 4 now takes the previous chapter's novella as a document of life to be analysed as I look at how it helped "to define and regulate [my life] and [my] understanding" (Stanley, 2013: 48). I will now utilise select analytical tools from Chapter 2 to analyse the novella to build a more "active understanding resulting from the juxtaposition and interanimation of many voices", voices that are shaping and shaped me (Castelló and Iñesta, 2012: 182; Dysthe, 2012). This chapter begins critically unpacking what I have learned from crafting the novella. It is about finding oneself in the social and how our interiority is positioned against others intertextually. The following two chapters take a critical, revisionist approach with the practice of re-reading the text of the novella 'slantwise' against the grain to accent the multiple realities, meaning and even re-readings we encounter from reading contexts while at the same time being sceptical about the 'truth' (Dampier, 2008). It helps me understand the interior of truths, the where, why, and how of other people's self and mine that suit our social and social-cultural worlds built of truth and knowledge systems. The chapter accomplishes this through three sections: self and other, positionality and intertextuality.

Self and Other

When formulating what a CSA might look like, my supervisor gave me a copy of *Autoethnography and the Other* by Tami Spry. At the time, the book seemed just what I needed as I grappled with notions of the self and the other. My particular form of autoethnography required including the other and a social-cultural contextualising of my life and military service. I set to work reading its ideas on "being a critically reflexive researcher" and questioning the 'we' and "hegemonic power structures" (Spry, 2016: 35-37). Spry writes

that this "activates the foundational sociocultural personally political reflexivity of that body/self" (Spry, 2016: 37). However, reading the book, I found an almost overwhelming auto. There was little in the way of the sociocultural or political. In Spivak's words, it seemed to be "constructing a homogeneous Other referring only to our own place in the seat of the Same or the Self" (Spivak, 1988: 84). Spry accents "the copresence of the Other" and how not to include the Other as merely a foil to the autoethnographer's representation of self (Spry, 2016: 53). This is supposed to be the stance throughout the book. The many 'others' mentioned interested me. However, there is not much practice of my understanding of reflexivity. In fact, there is one particularly unsettling episode on performative autoethnography. After the performance, the book writes of the comments that came afterwards from:

> five women of color and concentrated on the politics of hair. The prevailing theme of comments adamantly disagreed with a white woman (Spry) having dreads as dreadlocks are connected to hierarchies of race and beauty, as well as the fact that women of color engage dreadlocks as a form of resistance toward these hierarchies. They argued that a white woman having dreadlocks was seen as degrading to women of color as well as deep cultural cooptation (Spry, 2016: 135).

After this, there is no commentary on these five women's words nor broaching what is called "the politics of hair". There is abstraction, poetry about *the author*, and a short discussion about what the dreadlocks mean to *the author*. The other is a prisoner of the author's interior, along with all politics and *their* experience.

Atkinson refers to this style of autoethnography as "sentimental realism". It has two main aspects, "failure of textual nerve and the emphasis on the expression of experience" (Atkinson, 2015: 170). The "all-feeling auteur" has replaced the "all-knowing analyst" of past ethnography (Atkinson, 2015: 170). Atkinson explains how the modernist novel and

fiction have tackled exploring this experience and interiority in the same vein I am and have previously written. Atkinson believes that while this focus on feeling and interiority works well for art, it does not "do justice to the multiple modes of social action and social organisation that define any given social world" that the social sciences require (Atkinson, 2015: 170). Along a similar vein, Norbert Elias once commented on some in the social sciences using these "more or less private forms of behaviour and experience" as a "rather useless research tool" (Elias, [1989] 2013: 7). This research:

> leads to single situations being analysed in isolation, as if they existed in a social vacuum, and to losing oneself in endless arbitrary interpretations. One is then drifting without a compass in an episodic sea (Elias, [1989] 2013: 77).

Nonetheless, Elias knew when to "borrow the novelist's eye", as he did Walter Bloem's novel *Der krasse Fuchs*, to describe the structure of the social in a German university town around the beginning of the 20th century (Kuzmics, 2001: 132; Elias, [1989] 2013). Elias knew the importance of combining the macro-aspects and micro-aspects of society, as well as the feelings and emotions that understanding realist literature can bring (Kuzmics, 2001). However, this literature, like "single situations", must be nestled within the social, considered analytically, along with groups of people and social structure. Else, they drift along "without a compass".

My first analytical tool analytically examines the self/other. The auto/biographical novella is a part of the steps I have taken to develop this compass. It is about me creating moral messages in heterotopia, building from certain sets of truth claims, and then setting those truths against the social. I completed the novella in conjunction with exploring and understanding how novelists convert the social reality around them into a literary narrative and the feedback loop created as I read the sociological and humanities literature during its creation.

The novella begins with Wesley Stone on a porch swing, an 18-year-old teenager both sure and unsure of his place in the world. He waits for his grandfather to take him to see his prospective university. Jim, Wesley's grandfather, is the aforementioned Jim Tetley of the GRC novel. I was drawn to this novel and the GCR, mentioned previously, after thinking about my grandparents, their lives as farmers, and how their politics did not match my contemporary Oklahoma. They seemed like a haunting.

I read Avery Gordon (2008) at my supervisor's suggestion. It writes on Gordon's discussion of sociology's association with the real and the fictive. Sociology is "wedded to facticity as its special truth, it must continually police and expel its margin," which is the fictive (Gordon, 2008: 26). Gordon utilises "the marginal discourse" that helps to tell "the story of how the real story has emerged" and, drawing on Haug, how these marginal stories "mark a border between the remembered and the forgotten" (Gordon, 2008: 26; Haug et al., 1987: 68). Gordon uses fictionality to mark this boundary and call attention to remembering and forgetting. She does this by making "the fictional, the theoretical, and the factual speak to one another" (Gordon, 2008: 26). My grandparents were ghosts in Gordon's sense, making themselves known to me through a haunting and pulling me "affectively into the structure of feeling of reality we come to experience as a recognition" (Gordon, 2008: 63). The representation of my grandparents also signified my values and truths.

Reading the novel and learning more about the GCR, I felt the need to tell the story of this marginal discourse. These stories, their work and power:

> devolve from beginning with this asymmetry, beginning with a relationship whose evocation requires precisely refusing to reduce these two moments to cause and effect, as if this story or history could be told simply as a sequence of events (Gordon, 2008: 142).

During this period, I was unsure of exactly what to write, as I had the mind to write a novel initially. From this point, I will reference it as a fictional piece until the point where the decision to write it as the eventual auto/biographical novella. To begin this fictional piece, I moved the fiction's protagonist to a different time and gave him sons and grandsons who would consider joining the military. The 1960s in the US were a time of much political upheaval that would fit with my exploration of the aforementioned changing politics of Oklahoma. With this re-imagining, I began to think about how the participants in the GCR had been portrayed in accounts (Burbank, [1917] 1976; Bissett, 1999; Sellars, 1998; Bush, 1932; Cunningham, [1935] 2010; Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006). I conjectured that understanding their thinking would help me form a complete picture of my own thinking in joining the military, my own political changes and happenings in its aftermath.

I began to write Wesley as myself, how I would think and act in specific scenarios presented in the fictional piece. However, 'myself' also needed others to tell a story. So I added the character of Jim Tetley, based partly on my grandfather and some on the character of a much younger Jim. This addition of a particular type of mimesis quickly created problems. One was my grandfather, who, at that age, was mixed with a Jim Tetley, someone who had undergone the experience of the GCR and then lived with its memory and a different life from my grandfather's. The social and other truths and knowledges began to creep in. Exploring this led me to the author of the text of the GCR novel. I wanted to understand better why Cunningham chose to portray the characters of his novel in the ways he did, his motivations, his social-cultural time and place and how this affected the characterisation. Other people have written about Cunningham, the author (Sellars, 2010; Cunningham and Friesen, 1999). Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz has broadly covered him and the GCR in her work (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006; 2015; Dunbar-Ortiz and Womack, 2010). From this, I

decided to introduce Dunbar-Ortiz as a composite character of all these writings and based much of her character on her memoir, *Red Dirt: Growing Up Okie* (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2006).

Below is Dunbar-Ortiz speaking to William Cunningham, author of *the Green Corn Rebellion.* Based on these writings in early drafts, or "rehearsed texts" (Camps,1992), I wrote on Cunningham's own interpretation of the events in the GCR that he wrote in the novel. In these drafts, a few of the authors of the texts I had encountered in my life were included. I did this to mimic the texts we confront in the social. I had them argue over their interpretation of their texts in the 'real world' of the fictional piece. Here, Dunbar-Ortiz is voicing her concern about how Cunningham wrote the text of the GCR, which I provide using the *Lucida Handwriting* font to represent early drafts I quote from:

> *Well, William, I don't know if I quite agree with what Roxanne is saying, but it could be the way you wrote it, The Green Corn Rebellion novel, I mean. You based a lot of your characters on Clyde Washington, who was a deputy arresting the people of the GRC, and you didn't include any main characters of colour who made up the GRC too! You needed to talk to more participants. Jim is a lot of you. You wrote of him with a lot of yourself in mind. Your socialist viewing, the 1930s, the Depression, what you saw. Not someone who fought in the GRC, went to war, lived the 20s as a farmer in Southern Oklahoma, not someone who experienced what he experienced .*

This writing section reflected my belief that Cunningham created Jim based on himself. I researched his life and the few writings I could find on him (Sellars, 2010; Strauss, 1935; Dunbar-Ortiz and Womack, 2010; Cunningham and Friesen, 1999). However, there were still few clues about his life. I needed to know more about William Cunningham and the author's

life (*Jim is a lot of you*) to understand his character of Jim to recreate more true mimesis of him in my fictional piece.

This realisation led me to create Jim more and more based on the memory of my grandfather. However, memory can be foggy. Moreover, I base my memories on my own and my family's stories. These stories, in turn, were not based on exactly what actions my grandfather actually took but on the family stories told over and over. Thus, a particular idea of a person is built based on these stories. These stories from the social we tell in the present are not based on the concrete actions of my grandfather but on the possible fictitious memory of the last story we told of him. Stories told at family gatherings mostly placed him in a positive light. Thus, more and more of him in a negative, more authentic way faded. Family gatherings in my region are often gendered, meaning that the men and women would be separate for much of the time. The masculine character of the storytelling in these groups of men led us to often talk of my grandfather more than my grandmother, burning *his* stories more often into my mind. Thus, his actual reality faded, and something else was written in its place.

Realising this brought me back to William Cunningham and how I would be reading stories I encountered from the stories he faced. This realisation also returned me to Gordon's thinking, which Doucet utilised in describing "shadow others" in research (Doucet, 2008). This led her to use the metaphor of what she calls the first gossamer wall (Doucet, 2008: 80). I wanted to explore why I had such an intense interest in the ghosts surrounding the GCR, which led me to try to understand both the immediate history and the longue durée, as well as the people involved. My examination of Cunningham as an author would not help much in understanding the GCR, my motivations, or the GCR participants.

As I wrote fiction and entered the feedback loop of creating a fictional piece and reading literature, the literature and stories became voices, ones I could recover through

exploring the evocative. I could bring these "shadow others" closer and their social by recreating their voices to help me recuperate the 'truth' I desired, remembering the Bakhtinian polyphonic conception of the many voices that compose the self (Bakhtin, [1984]1989). Autoethnography has done something similar before combining the evocative in how Humphreys writes with autoethnographic vignettes (Humphreys, 2005). Humphreys combines the evocative in how he writes with autoethnographic vignettes. Mizzi (2010) has utilised Bakhtinian in the same way. Here, he used "multivocality" and the multitude of "narrative voices located within the researcher" (Mizzi, 2010: 2). He wrote vignettes illustrating the many voices within himself concerning his experience as a teacher/educator in Kosovo. These are used to explore the many voices that compose the interior of the self. Bakhtin calls this polyphony and observes the novel as polyphonic. These voices are observed from the social, and "every literary work is internally and immanently sociological" (Bakhtin, [1984]1989: 276).

Another approach to consider is how Milan Kundera sees the novel as a questioning of the "enigma of the self". The characters within cause the reader to be "automatically confronted by the question: What is the self? How can the self be grasped?" (Kundera, 2005: 13). Kundera instead thinks that novelists:

> draw up the map of existence by discovering this or that human possibility. But again, to exist means: 'being-in-the-world.' Thus, both the character and [their] world must be understood as possibilities (Kundera, 2005: 23).

I came to realise these possibilities through "the experimental self". It appears in my fictional piece as further ideation of the multivocal, polyphonic self, which illustrates the many voices and paths of the self. It helps me think about the different turns my life could have taken through societies. The characters are based partly on the novel *Green Corn Rebellion* but also on me as an experimental self of Jim Tetley, Danny Tetley, and Wesley Stone (Cunningham,

2010). I write these characters as different forms of me in different stages of life, how my interior may have considered situations in those moments and alternate directions taken in their lives, considering various wars and possibilities.

As I considered the polyphonic nature of the self, I returned to the character of Wesley. I realised that I required another version of the self to illustrate how "we divide ourselves up in all sorts of different selves with reference… to all sorts of different social reactions" (Mead, [1934] 1972: 142). Mead's self-concept fits with the version of the self as I conceived it, consisting of "various elementary selves". These are consolidated into a complete whole, "answering to the various aspects of the structure of the social process as a whole; the structure of the complete self is thus a reflection of the complete social process" (Mead, [1934] 1972: 145). I intended to craft selves that could better reflect this "complete social process" and how society is made "to happen again, and again, every moment of the day" (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010: 100). This process led me to think of Jim as more of my interiority. I built him and another character, Danny Tetley, who was close to my own age at the moment of writing, with the truth and knowledge claims I have encountered.

I rewrote the fictional piece with a new understanding concerning the three selves of Wesley Stone, Jim and Danny Tetley. In this, the new characters encountered others who were there to move the plot by impacting the three protagonists' selves. These characters, Dunbar-Ortiz and Cunningham, have already been mentioned. Another, Ralph Ellison, an Oklahoman and author of *Invisible Man* (Ellison, [1947] 1987), also represents the different texts I had come across. I also included a character with a small part, Patsy, whom I will discuss later. When I rewrote the novel, the characters seemed wooden and reactionary. In an episode in an earlier draft, Danny Tetley is escorted out of the diner by Jim Tetley, who is much more violent:

Danny, his mind a bit foggy and still in a bit of a shock, felt his dad push him towards the door, gently but forcefully. He was out the door before he realised what had happened when he turned towards his father and said "daddy what the hell are you pushing me for? I kinda knowed that fella" Danny pushed his father's hands off him, but before he could finish saying, "me and his boy were in the w..." he tripped and fell hard onto the ground. Danny felt the gravel slid across his backside and the dust envelop him before clearing to see his dad standing over him. Jim looked around the parking lot then set his eyes on his son on the ground said in a low rumble, "Get in that cotton-pickin' truck, sleep it off NOW!"

My supervisor noted how violent and angry the men generally were in her comments on the chapter. Violence not just between Danny and Jim Tetley but also between Wesley and Jim:

Jim grabbed Wesley by his collar and dragged him out the door too, throwing him a bit onto the sidewalk outside the diner.

The characters seemed to lack interiority as situations often escalated to violence and/or anger, not just between my three selves, but also characters like Ralph Ellison:

"Created in a book? What the fuck? Sorry for my language. All right, I tried to be patient with you all, but this is too much..." Waldo said as he stood up and turned towards the door.

The characters merely seemed to be reacting to each other for the most part. The voices were somewhat predictable, doing what you expected them to do. I wanted the characters that questioned their truths. However, they often reflect people who "revolve around (their) truth" and "feel threatened if that truth is questioned" and who "suffer from an absence of doubt" (Freire, 1996: 21).

They reflected an angry mood overall, more of a short story feel. I wanted to think of the characters more as more people collect stories and build with consideration to these stories to help author their lives. This thinking brought me back to Barthes's comments that the author's only power lies in his/her ability to mix texts (Barthes, 1987). The type of fiction I wished to create required more than a mood; it required people with their own stories who would do more than merely react to others. These characters needed to be more storytelling and narrative-making creatures. Doucet also writes about her struggle to know the subjectivities of the stay-at-home fathers she studied, concluding that she cannot "know these 'others' because the walls between [them] were more solid than … anticipated; [she] could only hear and know something about their stories as [she] listened on the other side" (Doucet, 2008: 80). This realisation led to a "critical epistemological shift", moving from focusing on subjects to concentrate on narratives as she "attempted to know something about their narratives or narrated subjectivities" (Doucet, 2008: 83).

I rewrote the fictional piece and the characters, connecting to "social becoming", a term derived from *The Polish Peasant in Europe and North America* (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918; 1919; 1920). They utilised letters between Polish immigrants in America and their family and friends back in Poland, as well as an autobiographical account of the "life history" of one of them. This work focused on one auto/biographical self, Wladek Wiszniewski, to analyse "social becoming" as a "continual interaction of individual consciousness and objective social reality" (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1919: 5). I had to reflect on how I positioned the three selves within the piece of fiction, including how they are placed within others' narratives. These characters had to react more internally in relation to other characters, which meant moving beyond the short story. They also had to reflect on "the mundane qualities of the moment-by-moment quality of what social change usually is at the level of persons and their lives" (Stanley, 2010: 148).

Mead's work was discussed by Stanley when formulating the idea of the "narratable self" and also drawing on Thomas and Znaniecki's work. She conceived of Mead's view of self as "inner reflecting", as opposed to Thomas and Znaniecki's view of self, where "attitudes, character and temperament, [are] seen as almost entirely porous to the social, to happenings, relationships, situations" (Stanley, 2010: 148). My characters would be an interpreted type of self that is "socially-embedded, relational, situational and temporally-located", a self that "absorbs the workings and happenings of humankind beyond itself, one that considers these happenings in order to engage over and over again with this social world" (Stanley, 2010). It is a self that relates to the other and utilises the thinking on narrative. I would recognise narration as a process that is both ontological, "constitutive of the self as narratable", and also political "in the Arendtian sense-exposing the vulnerability of the self and its dependence on others" (Tamboukou, 2008: 288). There is also narratability to this self, where connections are relational, political, and ontological (Tamboukou, 2008).

I rewrote the character(s) again with this in mind. However, they still lacked interiority, and many others merely moved the plot. As I worked, I realised that the ideas the characters reflected needed to be reworked to build more of an overall message. So, I moved towards creating a novella with its previously mentioned attributes. I wanted to focus more on moral issues I had encountered and their claims of truth and complications. The novella's turning points bring them further into relief and let me peer into the interior more than a short story. However, writing a novel requires me to live in other people's lives, diving deep into their stories to build their interiority and the novel's world. Nevertheless, I wanted to concentrate more on moral issues surrounding my particular situation. Therefore, the novella was the best choice.

Thus, recognising the practical inability to understand the subjectivities of people fully, only their narration behind the gossamer wall, I reverted to "narrative identity", which

relates to "ontological narratives", to ones "used to define who we are; this in turn can be a precondition for knowing what to do" (Somers, 1994: 618). This narrative identity is a part of our location in narratives. It is endowed with "social actors with identities - however multiple, ambiguous, ephemeral, or conflicting they may be" (Somers, 1994: 618). With narrative identity comes an approach to assuming "that social action can only be intelligible if we recognise that people are guided to act by the structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by the stories through which they constitute their identities" (Somers, 1994: 624). This approach meant merging the ideas of narrative location and the relationships surrounding us and interrogating the self's location, myself, with narratives: positionality. With an auto/biographical novella, I could bring more into focus the ideas and truths and knowledges I confronted and did not confront and deal with these moral and social issues more directly.

I would then be dealing with more of the social, but also these selves that are a part of the CSA. Earlier, I noted the author's presentation as an "all-knowing auteur" of "sentimental realism" and never explored the presented ideas, truth, and knowledge claims. As a result, we cannot connect with their understanding. Thus, sentimental realism, preoccupied with "personal experience and feelings", replaces "the single voice of the impersonal author [with that of] the single voice of the emotionally charged narrator" (Atkinson, 2013: 32). Atkinson notes that "we should avoid condensing the varieties of the social world into first-hand confessional modes, essentially realist in tone, based upon an unsociological view of the interiority of the individual subjective self" (Atkinson, 2013: 32). However, autoethnography often does not even engage with the multiple selves that encounter social lives, the many thoughts we reflexively consider, and does not seem to notice how the self can hide from itself.

More autoethnography should engage with the polyphonic nature of the narrative self by not focusing too much on "the single voice" of the self and exploring the "narrated subjectivities" around and in them. Consequently, autoethnography also needs to take into account how one's own actions and the stories one tells that were crafted with concern for others. Each individual is also the other to another, as I am "the white man, who had woven (others) out of a thousand details, anecdotes, stories" (Fanon, [1952] 2008: 84). I need to continually and reflexively consider myself as a white American man and my other identities throughout the production of my CSA. It connects with Atkinson's proposition that we need to investigate "analytically the variety of representational and formal modes of organisation…that inhabit the social worlds we engage with" (Atkinson, 2013: 33). This investigation means framing the following analytical tool: positionality.

Positionality

When writing the novella, how to position the self (myself) with others as a white, American, heterosexual man from a middle-class background often came to the forefront of my thoughts. These thoughts included how the other characters would be mimetically portrayed within the novel. Further consideration also needed to be given to utilising characters from marginalised groups in my novella. This application of using the other in fictional accounts has been discussed before by Edward Said in *Beginnings* (Said, [1974]1998). The Western novel's purpose, to Said, is to represent people in characters and societies under development. The novel is there to fill the gaps in a world that comes to us incomplete.

Homi Bhabha expanded on this concept, thinking of narrative as a process (Bhabha, 1984). He notes how the novelist borrows stereotypes from society in order to create literature, producing a particular problem within their creation. Bhabha thinks we should break this hierarchy of realism and these stereotypical images, which are regarded as authentic and categorically placed above the text. The text itself should be thought of as its

own narrative, generating meaning itself. As mentioned, I created characters drawing from specific texts that would follow Bhabha's ideation and aid in enriching it with meaning and reality rather than just creating stereotypical images. The texts I chose were of more marginalised groups in the US because:

> by minimising the experiences and creations of these different groups, we communicate that their work and creativity [are] less important and less central to the development of culture than is the history of White American men … Dominant narratives can try to justify the oppression of different groups, but the unwritten, untold subordinated truth can be a source of knowledge in pursuit of social justice (Anderson and Collins, 2015: 14-15).

I read the writings on the characters I intended to utilise with reading black feminist writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, bell hooks, and Maya Angelou in an attempt to add to Collins's ideas on *Black Feminist Thought.* I also selected these particular ones because they are from my region of the South, and many of them grew up poor. Related to the understanding of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), I desired to create these characters as texts against my three selves in order to give truth to the novella by helping to illustrate my position in the "matrix of domination", working against "White Male interpretations of the world" that generated stereotypes, ones that can build "controlling images" (Collins, [1990] 2000: 251; 84).

As much with the different selves, my characters would be "double-voiced"; as Bakhtin writes," two semantic intentions appear, two voices" (Bakhtin 1984: 189). As Bakhtin's colleague Valentin Voloshinov explained about this type of discourse, an author may utilize the speech act of another in pursuit of their own aims and in a manner to enforce novel intentionality on this utterance (Voloshinov, 1986). However, it still preserves its previous referencing and intention. And, in these occurrences and maintaining the authorial

reasoning, "such an utterance must be recognized as originating from another addresser. Thus, within a single utterance, there may occur two intentions, two voices" (Voloshinov, 1986: 97). I wanted "double voiced" characters "talking back" to me (hooks, 1986-1987). My writing needed to be more dialogical. However, the characters were still noticeably wooden. This, coupled with having the gossamer wall in mind, made me realise I needed to know more about their experiences to accomplish proper representation. More lessons on biofiction and war narratives needed to be applied.

Mary Lupton writes about how Angelou had difficulty writing her point of view (Lupton, 2016). Angelou felt she was fragmented, and to convey her truth, she would have to split herself into two separate women, one respectable, one improper, with herself being the hero. A relative eventually convinced her to drop this as they said that "the truth of her experience was real and whole" (Lupton, 2016: 164). Lupton traces this continued evolution through six of her autobiographies as a changing self of Angelou. Thus, we can see how *The Heart of a Woman* (1981) "depends far less on the strategies of fiction than *Caged Bird* (1969) did" (Lupton, 2016: 164). Here, there "is less use of dialogue and less reliance on dramatic episodes to convey action or emotion", and she "unfolds the events affecting her in a more confident, less troubled manner" (Lupton, 2016: 164). Dolly McPherson has argued that the resemblances between these writings and the previously-mentioned slave narratives are a consequence of sharing "a quest that will encourage the development of an authentic self" (McPherson, 1990: 121). I wanted to pursue this authentic self as authentic truth. However, in thinking with Angelou again and how she had in her writing "a deep identification with the victims of mid-passage. Remnants of that journey burn in her memory, shaping her identity with her ancestors and the structure of the autobiography itself" (Lupton, 2016: 317). I desired to hold to an authentic self as much as possible but also utilise others' authentic truths and understand them better.

I rewrote my auto/biographical novella with a distinctive biofiction in mind. This form of narrativity is one of the draws of biofiction, with its ability to rewrite the 'characters' in your story anew, its "necessary perversion of auto/biography aims to achieve allegedly superior forms of truth — be they personal or cultural — through imaginative literature" (Herbillon, 2020: 393). Postcolonial biographical fiction is a specific type of biofiction (Tunca and Ledent, 2020). I wrote an auto/biographical novella to blur the auto/biographical divide in an attempt to illustrate these authentic or "superior forms of truth". However, did the novella do this? Or is much of it just more of my truth? Lackey writes about how the biographical novel takes up the mantle of the postmodern, not by exposing there is no truth but by illustrating truth systems and people within these systems making truth claims within these systems (Lackey, 2016). Thus, a biofiction converts novel protagonists into literary symbols, like Chase-Riboud's (1979) novel, which confronts individual truth systems.

Foucault wrote of systems of truth that truth within them links "in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which induce and which extend it — a 'regime' of truth'" (Foucault, 1980: 133). Foucault perceives knowledge and power as positioning intellectuals in society, but everyone participates in these systems. I took the first step by converting characters from the texts I had read into symbols, illuminating the ideas and experiences I wanted to portray. This configuration allowed me to explore these ideations within the narrative structure of a novella which, as written earlier, emphasises concepts and morals. Where I failed is how postcolonial biographical fiction writers must successfully explore their character's interiority. This exploration prevents typification and bestows individuality on their characters, which works against the sociological imagination's deterministic impulse (Tunca and Ledent, 2020; Chakrabarty, 2000).

My characters permitted me to explore certain morals and ideas. However, they accented a deterministic side of the sociological imagination coin, a side that did not permit me to explore this individuality as my story reflects it. It also allowed me to push the 'white saviour' trope into my writing (Hughey, 2010; Rodesiler and Garland, 2018; Murphy and Harris, 2018). This example from the novella's final version (`in American Typewriter`) is illustrated by Jim Tetley (a white man) saving Janet and Elizabeth (Native American women):

```
Janet didn't know what to think. It seemed too much what her daughter
was saying, what would the townspeople think? Janet had always been
headstrong but knew that
would only carry her so far. Things had got better for women over the
years, but there was still a ways to go. She turned to look at Jim
and then turned back to Elizabeth and started to warn her, but before
she could, Jim spoke.
"You know, you're right, Elizabeth?" Jim questioned.
"Yes, Elizabeth", she smiled.
"I got some people I can call. We were in a fight once, things didn't
go as planned, but, well. I figure the ones left will be more
interested in helping your mama out here than me, so…"
"Jim, are you sure?" but Janet already felt the fire.
```

The 'white saviour' is a stereotypical image that Bhabha warned against and could have been avoided by considering each character's interiority more deeply that "prevents any sort of typification" (Bhahba, 1984; Tunca and Ledent, 2020: 341). I could better explore each character's knowledge and truth claims and how they arrived at them. This exploration relates to what Collins has been writing about knowledge claims within a person's place in what would become a "matrix of domination" (Collins, 1986; 1989; [1990] 2000; 2005). The move from a novel's path of interiority and world-building to a novella may have been ill-advised. With a novel, I could have better explored the experiences of the people on whom

my characters are based. I would have dived more deeply into their experience through their documents of life.

Furthermore, I would also be able to write about their interiority in a feedback loop that included reading their lives and then writing about their experience and vice versa. This loop would help me better understand my place in this matrix. However, at the same time, the structure of an auto/biographical novella and its accenting of moral ideas has allowed me to access the truth and knowledge claims in my life that still thinks with the white saviour ideology in mind. The concept still sits in the recesses of my mind long after my knowledge of its ills and its hold on America and other societies. The novella has allowed me to find these morals as truths and knowledges. Now, the analytical aspects of the CSA will enable it to be confronted, and the humanities and fiction allow discovery.

Knowing my place better also means understanding my past and my part in it. Illuminating this past, not merely the preceding times, but the path to the present here and now, means being "consciously and strategically bi-temporal" (Lackey, 2017: 10). An auto/biographical novella allows me to interrogate how my interior self positioned myself against my grandfather and his past, which is a part of mine and my culture. It allows me to explore the social in those periods and places. To understand my present is to understand its past. Creating a character based partly on my grandfather allowed me to reconfigure our past racism and re-imagine him aiding the marginalised.

Marie Herbillon writes how J.W. Coetzee did the same in imposing his story on Dostoevsky's life (Herbillon, 2020). Coetzee used multiple authorial consciousnesses to rewrite his story and resurrect his son Nicholas by retelling the story of Dostoevsky's stepson Pavel (Coetzee, 2016). The novella has operated similarly in how a character, based partly on my grandfather's story, has been reconfigured and narrated with atypical encounters, positioning him down a new path. However, the novel may have been a superior tool for

exploring the social and its truth and knowledge systems, my grandfather's and my past and present. It would have allowed for spending more time on building the character of Jim Tetley (a conglomeration of my grandfather and me), and considering what Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) refer to as his "attitudes" and "values" as well as those attitudes positioned against the values of regimes of truth, which might have led to very different conclusions.

If I contemplate many of the people who knew my grandfather, his friends and neighbours, they were often less likely to move out of their system of truth. My grandfather could have remained like them, and if we look at his life, for instance, in 1970, when the novella took place, the preceding decade's civil rights movement seemed not to shake his beliefs. Or maybe it did? Maybe his racist beliefs evolved into a man who eventually hesitated to use racist language. I do not know, and thus, how my grandfather was before this time remains hidden behind the gossamer wall, where there are only stories from the social. However, stories from this time are slowly disappearing. I only have my family with their views tinged with rose-tinted glasses. I do not know anyone else alive and old enough to remember him clearly at this time. They may exist. However, moving away from that area, I lost these informants and many of their truth claims and realities to me. No novel is based on his exploits, as with the GCR. Tracing people back in time and understanding how they position themselves in society is essential, not only concerning my grandfather during this time but also for me. This process helps to understand better these "regimes of truth" that adhere together in the social and to understand better social processes across a country as large as the US while connecting me to the politics of place and time and what happened there (Sontag, 2003; Thomson, 2013; Mills, 1959).

<u>Intertextuality</u>

Intertextuality is a critical concept considered in this analysis section and the novella itself. I included texts from authors such as Oklahomans Ralph Ellison and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz as characters, along with texts from William Cunningham. This GCR novel's story was continued in the novella as a sequel. Again, I mirrored biofiction, which utilises historical figures and their social and truth systems. These characters remained on the fringe, serving the purpose of enhancing the fictional protagonist's symbolic function and locating the story in a specific historical context (Lackey, 2018). At the beginning of creating the novella, I had many historical characters. However, I slowly reduced the number, leaving only Dunbar-Ortiz and a composite of Ellison in the final version. Authors in biofiction have more freedom to change facts about these secondary characters based on actual people. However, only so long as those alterations elucidate "the socio-historical reality of the fictional protagonist" (Lackey, 2018: 13). I based Waldo on Ellison's character in *Invisible Man* than on Ellison himself, knowing more about the novel's unnamed character than about Ellison himself based on reading it.

As mentioned, biofiction turns these characters into symbols or metaphors. A biographical novel attempts to accurately represent an actual person within "the novelist's vision of life and the world" (Lackey, 2015: 7). I have auto/biographically represented the stories and social surrounding my life, noticing the operation of intertextuality. The unnamed character in *Invisible Man* became Waldo, a composite of the experiences of African-Americans in my area, namely, conveying the story of John Lee, the image of a photograph of the lynching that showed two thousand people present, nearly half the population at the time, mentioned in Chapter 1 as an epiphany. This epiphany made me begin to question more my racist upbringing:

> Waldo calmly interrupted "—Listen, I am sorry, son. Your papaw said
> you were from Durant? Have you ever heard of John Lee?" Waldo
> inquired.
>
> "Why would I give a shit about anyone you know!?!" Wes, now raging,
half-shouted.
>
> Jim stood up, "Now Wesley Stone! Have some respect and *language*,
> especially in fronta the ladies, I won't have it. I think you better
> go cool off," Jim ordered and pointed toward the door.
>
> "Wait one second, Jim, if I may…" Waldo's gaze fell from Jim to Wes
as he continued,
>
> "John Lee was a black man from your area. They filled' em full of
> bullet holes, dragged 'em up and down the main street, then put 'em
> on a pyre and lit 'em on fire. The townspeople all stood around the
> pyre and took a picture. He—" Waldo tried to continue.

Waldo became a way to explore my own moral evolution and movement through truth and knowledge claims in the novella.

Intertextuality and its use in the novella drew on Walter Benjamin's work, described as "an attempt to rescue a range of historical and cultural phenomena from obscurity, oblivion and false readings" (Beasley-Murray, 2007: 43). I intertextually utilised Benjamin's notion of storytelling when working on the novella as it "contains a highly critical element in conserving history's other side: those experiences history neglects in favour of the victor's narrative" (Vandevoordt, 2016: 5). This storytelling is also a work of biofiction (Clingman, 2020). This utilisation shaped the novella by illustrating the experience and tradition of my region from storytellers from the area, one that "conserves history's other side", drawing on the social of native Oklahomans from the area who have this gift of storytelling, working with what historiography fails to write. I want to bring the experiences, truths, and traditions they have learned and written into my novella and autoethnography.

As Benjamin imagined, long ago, the "resident master crafts[person]" and "the travelling journey[person] worked together in the same rooms" (Benjamin, [1936] 2015: 85). In these rooms, tales were exchanged for entertainment, as the travelling journey[person] worked for a period with the master crafts[person] who had once made their travels as travelling journey(person) before settling down. The crafts[person], after this, would then communicate these stories to the indigenous inhabitants as "the lore of faraway places, such as a much-travelled man brings homes, with the lore of the past, as it best reveals itself to natives of a place" (Benjamin, [1936] 2015: 85). These two storytellers would then combine their stories from the social in a process that builds traditions, experiences, knowledge and truth systems to remake society again: the social in action. The novella allowed me to combine the three selves of Wesley, Danny and Jim as travelling journeymen, with me 'travelling' to my area in another time to recover "the art of the storyteller" from the master crafts(people) of Ellison, Dunbar-Ortiz and Cunningham. This is an art Benjamin saw as "reaching its end because the epic side of truth, wisdom, is dying out" (Benjamin, [1936] 2015: 86).

As mentioned in *Black Feminist Thought*, it was not just Ellison I read but also the works of Angelou, Hurston and others (Angelou, 1969; 1974; 1976; 1981; 1986; 2002 (Hurston, [1942] 2006). Hurston, in particular, imagines a conversation about history with a grandson of enslavers and herself, a granddaughter of enslaved people. While I do not share Hurston's conclusion of the futility of looking back at this history, I felt the recreation of this idea in reverse with Ellison's character discussing the racial past with the Tetleys as a version of my self's interiority. I intertextually used these writers' texts to portray the social in my area better mimetically. It helped me move away from the "sentimental realism" of much of contemporary autoethnography. It is a separate form of storytelling in which people are "no longer able to express [themselves] by giving examples of [their] most important concerns,

[themselves] uncounselled, and cannot counsel others" (Benjamin, [1936] 2015: 87). This style of storytelling gives the Tetleys a full version of the story. It is an account more accurate as the wisdom of these others counselled them as my counterpart master crafts[person], able to move beyond the specific novel's pursuit of the "meaning of life" and receive the counsel of the "moral of the story" from these "natives of place" (Benjamin, [1936] 2015: 86).

The texts of these authors provided a level of experience, contemplation and wisdom that would work in concert with my travelling journey[people] of the experimental selves of Wesley, Danny and Jim. These master craftsmen had once been travelling journey[people], collecting their tales, gaining experience and learning tradition. They gave the Tetleys (myself) a much fuller picture of the social context. They were able to incorporate the truth and knowledge systems I had been born into, the places and times where I grew into an adult. This understanding has helped me understand better the motivations behind my and others' racism. Thus, I had not been able to or refused to access other systems of truth, unable or unwilling to analyse my own truths apart, living in their comfort. It was an understanding of how:

> nobody wants to hear anything about the side of the conquered. Any remarks from [him/her] are rebellion. This attitude does not arise out of a studied cruelty, but out of the human bent that makes us feel that the [person] who wants the same thing we want, must be a crook and needs a good killing (Hurston, [1942] 2006: 228).

Thinking with these texts helped me notice Hurston's way of speaking the truth to power.

These travelling journey[people] have their own tales, too, as stories from my life were woven with aspects from my life and my family, people whom war has touched. One of them is my uncle, a Vietnam veteran, who inspired the character of Danny Tetley. I initially based Danny on my grandfather, one I never knew, who was an alcoholic Korean War

veteran who abandoned my father at a very young age. This grandfather is someone I met once, maybe twice, and of whom I have no memory. I do not know his pain, hardships, and why these events happened. On the other hand, I have known my uncle for my whole life. Growing up, he never talked about his war, although after I returned from mine, he opened up somewhat over the years about what happened to him in Vietnam. This uncle became more representative of Danny Tetley. Thus, his place came more to the forefront in my mind behind my decision-making to join the military, something I had not considered before.

Each of these characters was rewritten in my mind into, at times, more idealised versions of the people who surrounded me in real life, including my own life history. I wrote the auto/biographical novella as a new experience. As Theodor Adorno wrote on experience, working with Benjamin's storyteller is "the union of tradition with a yearning for what is foreign" (Adorno, [1967]2011: 111). Characters in the guise of master crafts[people], such as Dunbar-Ortiz and Ellison, conveyed a tradition amalgamated with the experience of their travels, one where:

> having escaped and become emancipated, they could perceive the tradition as their
> equal instead of insisting on a distinction from tradition that only drowns one's
> bondage to history in the demand for a radical and natural, as it were, new beginning
> (Adorno, [1967] 2011: 11).

These experimental selves were part of a fiction strategy that explored interiority as I worked towards a better master craftsmanship of the self. Fiction was a strategy that allowed me to better examine my social reality intertextually, for the past is never really gone, as Stanley notes:

> then and now are locked together in a kind of perpetual motion machine with
> enormous consequences for how lives and relationships are understood and
> represented, and consequently the past is never quite past because of its

reverberations in the present (Stanley, 2020: 476).

How I got here entails a better picture of the memories, values and traditions not only passed to me in the form of my own family but also to others in society: a full viewing of the past and present. It is a break with tradition. It does not see tradition as higher on the hierarchy, a "timeless Now", one "that would be contemporary but a Now saturated with the force of the past and therefore not needing to idolise it" (Adorno, [1967] 2011: 112).

This social reverberation requires more than cultural recognition of this past being discussed. It also considers a need for redistribution (Fraser, 2003). Redistribution here refers to an "objective condition [which] precludes forms and levels of economic dependence and inequality that impede parity of participation" (Fraser, 2003: 36). There needs to be a reckoning of how my family, and thus me, acquired our wealth off the backs of others in the US. My family history on both sides, Morris and Stanley, can be traced back to North Alabama in the early 19th century. Before then, the trail is darker. During this period, the 'Alabama Fever' gripped the East Coast of the US (Oliver, 1995; Clark, 2006). Both of my families were part of this migration into Alabama. This explosion saw the population in Alabama increase from less than 10,0000 to a total of 964,201 people, of which 435,080 were enslaved African Americans (Oliver, 1995). Both of my families built wealth, however small, in that area and could have profited from the slave economy of that time. My past racism, coupled with that of my family, is not our only connection to white supremacy. This awareness does not only require me "witnessing" our lack of recognition of African-Americans' right to equal opportunity. It implicates our relation to the wealth that we have received through not only the aforementioned slave economy but also through the Jim Crow era with policies such as "redlining", "New Jim Crow", and "white flight" in a "racial caste system" that has caused immense economic inequality and exerted social control on African-Americans (Norton, 2013; Alexander, 2010: 30; Kruse, 2007) as part of the journey of

Wesley was told of his better understanding of many of these issues through his encounter with Waldo.

However, Wesley was not the only one with a change of heart. Jim Tetley's relationship with Janet helped alter his thinking. The novella intertextually includes the character of Janet (a Native American) to highlight white supremacy's relationship with Native Americans. The Dawes Act of 1887, by the US government, forced Native Americans to "assume a capitalist and proprietary relationship with property" that was not a part of their culture before (Blansett, 2015: 161). Before this time, Native Americans had held land amongst the tribe, meaning communally-held lands. This act forced the tribes to divide the land into allotments between the tribal members based on blood quantum (percentage 'blood' or lineage is Native American) (Grande, 2015; Bissett, 2002). The Curtis Act of 1898 applied this policy to Native Americans in Oklahoma, where the whites declared the land surplus and committed forced sales, killings, and other illegal methods. These atrocities meant that between 1887 and 1934, Native Americans "lost control of about 100 million acres of land" or about "two-thirds of the land base they held in 1887" as a result (d'Errico, 2000: 608).

Although the following situation would have taken place outside of this time, the effects of the policy would still be felt during this time. Many white landowners, such as Tom's father, could have gained tremendous wealth from this former Native American land. Here, Janet is explaining how her family had to surrender rights to their farm to Tom's father but kept it in the family by agreeing to marry his son Tom:

```
You know everyone tries to tell me he is a good man. Tom. He makes
good money and works. People tell me to be thankful. That can't be
all it? But mama and daddy sure hated him. But what could I do? What
could we do? They told Daddy he would lose the farm. Mama didn't know
what to do. She always knew what to do. Daddy was so angry, partly on
account I was marryin' an army man. Tom's dad was a big shot. "You
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          knew them when they were younger, Jim," Janet said, looking at Jim.
          "I sure wished you'd stayed around."
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The composite knowledge of the social, knowledge and truth systems of Native Americans was exemplified in Janet's character, along with the character of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, much like the character of Waldo. I attempted to include Janet's authentic self and its truth claims juxtaposition against "the tyranny of literacy" which is "the idea that the written word, by virtue of rendering information essentially static over long time periods, appears naturally superior to the dynamic stories told" outside of literature (Nunn, 2018: 33).

There also needs to be a reckoning with the wealth acquired through the years as both sides of my family moved into the area of Oklahoma after the Dawes and Curtis Acts, acquiring former Native American lands to farm, build capital, and acquire more land. This "witnessing" goes back further, as this concerns the land both sides of my family moved into in the early 19th century. These parcels of land were forcefully taken from Native American tribes' homelands in North Alabama over the years, culminating in the tribes' complete removal in the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the subsequent Trail of Tears (Howe, 2007). More people need to question themselves and their truths and society's past in order for conversations concerning redistribution in the US to start taking place. There needs to be a form of "witnessing" their truth and knowledge systems and the arc of their family's past. I provide the reader with my testimony (which will be discussed) to continue this conversation.

Conclusion

This chapter started with how I came to understand how I wrote the novella with the different versions of self and furthers my understanding of the moving picture me I am exploring as a part of my CSA. When writing about the self and other, I charted my move from crafting a novel based on the GCR to my final decision to write an auto/biographical novella that allows my interiority, truth and knowledge claims in my life to come to the forefront. After this, I could sociologically investigate these truth and knowledge claims to guard against

autoethnography's "sentimental realism" (Atkinson, 2015). This section aided in exploring how we approach social situations, what facts and fiction we hide, and what we show others and ourselves. The following passages on positionality further delved into fact, fiction bits of knowledge and the truths in our lives as they touched on our truth and knowledge systems. How particular narrative and stories are constructed and positioned in specific systems of truth and had relics of racism in how I tried to position myself as a "white saviour" in the novella. The last section discusses how narrative and story can be built on texts, intertextually, as stories and how they are narrativised from my past. Intertextuality has helped me to survey the texts that comprised my novella and enabled me to interrogate my interior self and the others around me. These mix with the ones I have read and heard to create new writings. This chapter has been more about how our interior responds to claims we encounter when creating story and narrative in others, positioning and texts. The facet it provided is investigating how we navigate our interiority of fact, fiction, knowledge and truth as a part of truth and knowledge systems when crafting narrative and stories. The next chapter will explore the exteriority of the authorial voice and its relationship to the writer, the reader and the self or "I". The next chapter takes up this "I" and moves more to the exteriority to explore.

Chapter 5: Uncovering the Dialogical Voice/Writer/Reader I

Chapter 5 will continue the analysis of the novella from the last chapter but move more to the exteriority as opposed to the previous interiority, continuing to build the facets of my overall diamond. This chapter further expands on the idea of an evolving me as I observe my texts as "artifacts-in-activity" (Prior, 2006). I will regard the text as a mediating tool and a developing artefact that permits the author to develop as well. This chapter will utilise three analytical tools, the authorial voice used before, and adding the writer and the reader, focusing more on the micro and my and others' relationships to the text. Like the last, this chapter will again include a re-reading of the text (Dampier, 2008) with the writer, reader and "I" in mind. There is a relationship between the authorial voice and the reader as one builds from the social, making the other and vice versa, with the writer building the between. There is also the "I" that mediates all the slashes. In the last few chapters, I have discussed the feedback loop created between reading and writing. It is with techniques from fiction and auto/biographical writers within the humanities. I then explored reading and writing from an analytical social science perspective. I now consider this not as a feedback loop but in dialogue with a dialogical voice/writer/reader I. This chapter will explore these three concepts, the slashes between them to an exteriority and the following I. This better explains my thinking as a part of moving to understand better the significant amount of reflexivity to this exterior and thus social that needs to be accomplished in a vision of my CSA.

Authorial Voice and the I

Before beginning on authorial voice, I want to consider the author of this novella and what that means. I am the author, the mixer of texts. However, in approaching the writing of the text, I chose fiction as a way to mimetically portray my life, to help make sense of my reality through narrative. Nevertheless, when selecting fiction, the author and narrator are kept

separate. If the narrator and the author are identical, this creates autobiography; if they are not, this produces fiction (Genette, 1993). I practised fictionality as a rhetorical device, where I could not be held accountable for whether the events I wrote about were fact or fiction (Walsh, 2007). This fashioning allowed me to craft scenarios and build on ideas unimpeded by facts if desired. Facts could be used at my leisure. As an actual event, I selected a Vietnam War protest in 1970 at the University of Oklahoma campus (Miller, 2009). Rather than foreground the event, it was relegated firmly in the background, barely mentioned, with few particularities. I avoided descriptions that offered "fine descriptive detail [that] seems to be that of stimulating a vivid visual representation" where the reader can reconstruct the event as real, or "hypotyposis" (Silver, 2012: 214). Here, the authorial voice is desubjectivised, and we are presented with a reality that speaks for itself. In describing detail, the protest would have diminished my authorial voice, which I intended to be strong.

Liz Stanley suggests we must avoid drawing this line between non-fiction and fiction and move towards a more multifaceted approach that aims at who produces the work: the writer or auto/biographer (Stanley, 1985). Here, it is important to consider the GCR novelist and his exteriority. The author could have adopted a strong voice to offer a different account of an event in the exteriority of the social of the GCR to further people and an effort he felt passionate about, a socialist movement that had been almost silenced and largely forgotten. Like the other tools mentioned, the authorial voice is influenced by power relations that permeate it, meaning Cunningham could have been affected by those around him (Atkinson, 2001). Cunningham's adoption of a strong authorial voice could have played a part in composing his identity if the voice is, as Matsuda and Tardy (2007: 237) assert, "the construction of an author's discursive identity". Then, writing in a "strong authorial voice" may have helped solidify this identity (Searle, 1975:16).

This strong authorial voice type is what Searle compared to playing a "piece of music from a written score, it is a good idea to play it loud so that mistake can be heard and corrected…you are then at least 'heard' by your potential critics, rather than hiding being the sounds made by others" (Searle, 1975:16). His authoritative authorial voice could have been adopted, geared to the exterior he had encountered "to centralize (this) life into regimes of truth" leading to the eventual "emergence of hegemony and monologicality" (Jungkunz, 2014: 36). The protagonist of his novel, Jim Tetley, helps to illustrate how this type of authoritative authorial voice can silence others. It is juxtaposed against the character of Ted Tetley. Here, in relation to Ted, the character of Jim can do no real 'wrong' for most of the novel. His social world is observed with all the 'goodness' against a character that can do no 'right', thus seemingly controlling the novel's moral message and its past exteriority, almost wholly on his own. Cunningham may have chosen the strong authorial voice to rewrite and rectify the mimetic way events and the people of the GCR. Exteriority, he felt wrongly represented. He might have chosen a strong authorial voice to push identities and ideologies he felt ardent about.

During the novel's conception and interviewing, Cunningham was also a part of the institution Commonwealth College in Mena, Arkansas (Sellars, 2010). When considering this, it is important to reconsider what we mean by text. For Dorothy Smith, we are constructing and interpreting "text", which does not include just written bodies of acknowledged knowledge but also verbal (Smith, 1987). These texts are organised within and by and are constituent of institutions that are textually mediated (Smith, 2002). There is both a "material" and "symbolic aspect" to them, and they "bridge between the everyday/everynight local actualities of our living and the ruling relations" (Smith, 1999: 7). Commonwealth College was the brainchild of Kate Richards O'Hare, Frank O'Hare and William Zeuch. Established in 1924, it stressed "theoretical labor education and communal

living rather than active participation in radical reform movements" (Cobbs and Grubbs, 1966: 294). The school had four hours of learning in the morning, followed by four or more hours of work for the college. The evenings could then be devoted to studying and recreation (Day, 2021). By the time Cunningham came to the college, it had moved towards a more bellicose involvement in the labour movement by sending "Commoners" (as those affiliated with the college came to be known) to every strike across the South and Midwest (Cobbs and Grubbs, 1966). The college was founded by political organisations and the trade union movement that desired to be independent of more formal educational institutions and endowments. This founding came about from mistrust of the "partnership between labor and capital", which sought to "forestall education of workers to pursue their own special interest- wherever such pursuit might lead" (Koch and Koch, 1972: 9).

Through interactional engaging reflexively with these surroundings, Cunningham would have developed his own voice with perspectives relating to all the diverse views that he encountered (Mead, 1934; Joas, 1997). This voice would have lent an exteriority of this life and politics to the book with vision and purpose that the GCR novelist could have felt quite strongly about, giving it his strong authorial voice. It is similar to how I gave my novella and this thesis my sometimes strong voice from my interactions with my friends, family and current and former institutions I feel strongly about. I also chose to recover and fictionalise members of the GCR and their families. I partly rewrote their situation to redraft and remedy an Oklahoma I now feel was politically wrong. I adopted a "strong authorial voice" of the three selves as a discursive identity in the auto/biographical novella to push the agenda from my "regime of truth" based on my experience (Foucault, 1980: 133).

Indeed, my novella frequently bears the characteristics of a morality play. Having origins in religious teachings and known for their potential to communicate historical events, Molly Andrews has recently shown evidence of its re-emergence in her case studies, not in

the theatre but within the realm of politics (Andrews, 2009). My novella's characters are often divided into "clear goodies and baddies" (Andrews, 2009: 108). In the character of Tom, there is all bad juxtaposed against Janet and her goodness, which plays out in the novella as "the unequivocal triumph of the unflinchingly good over the unregenerately evil" (Osiel, 1997: 286). My exposure to my exteriority of morality plays staged in the world of politics, specifically George W. Bush and his political affiliations, could have been reflected in how I styled my novella and presented my knowledge and truth claims, which, like him, often "divided the world into heroes and villains" (Andrews, 2009: 179). In the novella, Tom is portrayed as irredeemably evil without many nuances. The problem with this type of structuring is that it leaves little room for the truth and reality's complexity. For, if the narrative is shifted "to one which allows for a more diffuse sharing of responsibility or culpability," it may do "something which may threaten the well-established identity they have created for themselves" (Andrews, 2009: 186). My structuring of the novella helps to preserve parts of my identity and exteriority with its past values. This intersection of morality and its truth and knowledge systems may be something I wish to keep and explore in the coming chapters.

My authorial voice not only reflects this need to be strong but also individualised, with a tendency to fall into a monological voice that could reflect my class background, a voice between working and middle-class. As Kalantzis and Cope (1993) show, the middle class tends to adopt a monological, individualistic voice when writing. My parents are both working-class, but during my primary and secondary education, my family made enough money to move into an area with the best public schooling. This move allowed me to receive a more middle-class education, if somewhat at the lower end. My novella became my authorial vision and a place to shape my truth and knowledge system. My strong, individualised, authorial voice came through these three selves, as they dictated my vision of

the world through their actions and thoughts. This authorial voice is not just reflected in the three selves but also in the character of Patsy, who speaks, again in `American Typewriter`, of:

> `Truths in life. The uncomfortable ones. Uncomfortable truths.`

These truths are what the novella tries to partly render to the reader: racism, the patriarchy, domestic violence, substance abuse, discrimination based on class and accent, and overlooking veterans. Yet, what seems most important to represent is how we:

> `relate to each other and how they need each other, like, solidarity`
> `with each other. I also thought about how this relates, people`
> `working together, how we all need something and someone to believe`
> `in, how this drives peace but also conflict.`

These thoughts seem to be something, I believe, lost in contemporary Oklahoma, much like Cunningham did in his.

I have utilised a strong authorial voice to relay this message through the three selves and Patsy. The novella has also allowed me to utilise expert voices of past and present combined with the notion of fictionality to embed my strong authorial voice in other voices in the text. This method makes it easier for me "to make strong knowledge or truth claims without necessarily being perceived as having played the dominant role in the story's construction" (Silver, 2012: 215). The mask of the novella permits me to conceal my strong authorial voice somewhat. The novella's structure facilitates this type of authorial voice, stifling the interiority of other characters and thus their past exteriority and its problematics. It let me tell my tale with an overriding voice. In the novella, the protagonists of Jim, Wesley and Patsy drown out the other characters' voices. This authorial voice "isolates…from personal experience, from any new insights, from any personal initiative in understanding and interpreting, from new points of view and evaluations" (Bakhtin, 1994: 17). A more

inclusive type of authorial voice when writing would enable me to incorporate more different points of view and evaluations from the social world.

There is a sense, with constructing an auto/biographical novella and also this use of the analytical tools, of utilising 'public' narratives in concert with my 'private' memory, as "remembering always entails the working of past experience into available cultural scripts" (Dawson, 1994; Roper, 2000: 183). The construction of my authorial voice is an exercise in "composure", where I draw from the exterior of public narratives intertextually in the manner of writing life and in another sense of using these narratives to recreate a past that I can live with in relative comfort (Dawson, 1994; Roper, 2000; Thomson, [1994]2013). In his book *Anzac Memories*, Thomson describes how Anzac soldiers of the First World War drew from the available cultural scripts in Australian society against their past and memory to fashion composure (Thomson, [1994] 2013). Similarly, Michael Roper (2000) wrote about Lyndall Urwick, an English soldier who fought in the same war. Retelling the story of his life as a former soldier, he re-remembered three different periods to attain composure on the interior to this exterior of the social in each of those particular periods and their truth and knowledge systems.

This thinking relates to how Kim Etherington writes about storytelling, warning us of the danger of untold stories and how they remain in our minds without receiving new stimulation and input (Etherington, 2003). These stories get stuck in neutral and unchanged. They rob us of "the opportunity to update ourselves in the light of our here-and-now experience of ourselves" (Etherington, 2003: 180). The novella is part of a process of me "updating" myself and attaining this composure through thinking through the analytical tools I am using as I intertextually position my interior self against exterior others to write an authorial voice that I can live with. This also begins to illustrate the slippage between interiority and exteriority.

This composure and focus on self relates to what Ronit Lentin writes on Israel's commemoration of the Nakba (the Palestinian exodus that over 700,000 expelled or fled from their homes in the 1948 Palestine War) (Lentin, 2010). Here, the Israelis are not so much commemorating and owning their crimes as they are mourning the innocence lost by the perpetrators of this crime. Soldiers are captured in the process, too, as the mourning of their losses in the war and their lost innocence may be part of the process of coming to terms with what happened – but as Lentin theorises, shifting the lost object to the interior self and its past and ignoring the exterior of Palestinian suffering. This sends them from mourning to melancholia. The novella has a sense of this, representing the interiority of the three selves and Patsy. There is a drive to play the hero as the white saviour and their suffering— however, not much from those who suffer from racism and the patriarchy: their voices. The novella has a melancholic feel, in the end, one that needs more voices of the exterior and less interiority of the strong authorial voice drowning them out. This better understanding through this analytical ethnographic process led me to reevaluate the previously mentioned feedback loop between humanities and fiction.

I now see this writing and analysis between humanities and the social sciences and, along with it, this exterior and interior, as not one feeds back into the other, but more as if they are in dialogue with these stories: public and private. A dialogical authorial voice is created in conjunction with what follows. This dialogical voice also links to "the auto/biographical I"(Stanley, 1992). This 'I' is included with auto/biographical mentioned in previous chapters and how the slash notes the slippage between the notions. However, the 'I' also denotes an agent involved with constructing sociological knowledge and social reality rather than 'discovering' it (Stanley, 1993a). This agent must, therefore, observe "that such knowledge is contextual, situational, and specific, and that it will differ systematically according to the social location (as a gendered, raced, classed, sexualized person) of the

particular knowledge-producer" (Stanley, 1993a: 49). The 'I' mediates the slashes that will follow constructing and ordering. In adding the 'I', I want to provide recognition that when we include others in our stories. We write to reflect on our socio-cultural backgrounds and histories with our values and subjectivities (Stanley, 1992). The following section looks at how this voice can lose more of its origin so that "the author enters his own death, writing begins" (Barthes, 1987: 2).

The Writer: Between Authorial Voice and the Reader

I now regard it as a part of the process of observing writing and voice as an "artifacts-in-activity", where "inscription of linguistic signs in some medium(s) are parts of streams of mediated, distributed, and multimodal activity" (Prior, 2006: 58). In Castelló, Bañales, and Vega (2010), the authors evaluated various methods to understanding control and directivity or "regulation" in writing in academia. Reading the literature, they moved from seeing regulation as an interior cognitive process to more recognition of it featuring socially-situated, dialogic, co-regulated activity in the exterior. Later, the authors and others (Castelló and Iñesta, 2012; Prior and Bilbro, 2012) attribute these developments to an academic identity and voice in academic writing. This means identifying writing as "collaborative, involving divisions of labor and forms of coauthorship" (Prior, 2006: 58). In considering texts in the previously mentioned manner, my academic voice appears as a "trace-in-activity" of my social identity as an academic (Prior, 2006). It is fashioned skilfully in exteriority through socially-situated, intentional, and dialogic utilisation of my surroundings dictated to my particular writing situation and goals.

Roz Ivanič is interested in a similar conception of this identity at the end of a stroke of the pen or "more realistically these days, at the touch of the keyboard" (Ivanič, 2005: 391). This conception is a "writer identity", which refers to the totalling effect of the individual

component of our writing; the entirety of an author's writing summing up to the reader might be characterised as an authorial voice in the text (Ivanič, 1998; Ivanič and Weldon, 1999). This writing voice is articulated from "socially available possibilities for self-hood, the fabric of which is highly dependent on the writer's 'autobiographical self'" (Hashimoto, 1987; Ivanič, 1998: 331). When exploring individual writers' experience of labouring to mould their ideas and themselves through the backdrop of discoursal and social change, Roz Ivanić has also noted how it "contributes to an understanding of discoursal and social change by suggesting how person-by-person processes of alignment with particular subject positions contribute to collective action" (Ivanić, 1998: 332). This standpoint sees the act of writing bringing forth the autobiographical self and "throws into question which subject positions they might want to occupy, and which they might choose to resist" (Ivanić, 1998: 333). However, I must distinguish myself as the "self as author" and "the discoursal self" when discussing the authorial voice and the writer. While there are many interfaces, it is hard to divide the two. What I want to present as a writer, comprising how we authoritatively say something, is "self as author". At the same time, the kind of words we are comfortable utilising is a part of the "discoursal self" (Ivanić, 1998). This view matches the idea of writing as a battle site where identity is negotiated to the social and the self.

However, the writer and voice cannot be discussed without including the reader, as it is dependent upon the identity (re)construction into "a composite subjective entity, or voice, by the reader" (Matsuda and Tardy, 2007: 237). As mentioned in the first chapter, I observed this voice often as "an image of [themselves] and another image of [their] reader; [they] make [their] reader, as [they] make [their] second self" (Booth, 1983). Exploring how my text is read, not just my novella but what I write here distances me from myself and my interiority. It opens Elias's compass and allows me to move in the direction of the social and exteriority of different truth and knowledge systems.

While some researchers see the authorial voice as divided into the individual and the social voice, Prior (2001) does not. Drawing on Bakhtin's work, he argues that these types of voices should not be seen as distinct but between in dialogue. He describes language as "streams that are always simultaneously social and personal…neither inside nor outside, but between people" (Prior: 2001: 59). There is a dialogical component to voice, as the readers' experiences and values become constructed together. A reader's distinctive experiences are predominant in how an author is 'read' (Burgess and Ivanič, 2010; Matsuda and Tardy, 2007). It is crucial to note that authorial voice is not in the language of the text but is deduced from the textual cues read by the reader and established between this reader and writer in their social relations and contexts. (Castelló and Nelson, 2012; Castelló and Iñesta (2012) utilise a Bakhtinian orientation of voice (1981, 1986) in that there is no realisation of the authorial voice until perceived by the reader. This may alter this interpretation of voice as we read the text, or as it is discussed or remembered. In crafting this text, they also note the dynamic process of voicing done by the writer. This action comprises the writer selecting discursive and nondiscursive elements grounded not only on personal knowledge but also on their relative intentionality to the discourse community (Castelló and Iñesta, 2012). The writer and reader are in dialogue.

When writing, we construct texts by anticipating the positions of the reader: real or imagined. We interweave their envisaged views within the text to establish a "virtual dialogue" with the reader as a part of an exterior of metadiscourse (Hyland, 2009: 111). The concept of metadiscourse goes back to Crismore (1983) and her colleagues, who defined metadiscourse as linguistic content that is not the whole sum of what the text proposes. Metadiscourse intended /to help the listener or reader organize, interpret, and evaluate the information given" (Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen, 1993: 40). This metadiscourse helps us make sense of our and others' worlds.

Writing the novella and this thesis with this metadiscourse, or any writing, could be considered, utilising Benjamin's conception of experience as "a metonym for experience" (Tsuji, 2014: 110). Considering it in this fashion uses Benjamin's "laws of remembrance" (Benjamin, [1932-1938]2002) from his study of Proust's conception of involuntary memory. Writing is more than:

> a mere recording of what we experienced but an actualisation of what we cannot remember voluntarily—which is to say that in our writing there is a moment when the boundary between the self and the world are blurred; and hence, autonomy comes to be questioned (Tsuji, 2010: 127).

The me of this moment, the then and now, are "locked together in a kind of perpetual motion machine" (Stanley, 2020: 476). Memories of texts are typed down for remembrance and made to endure, with a keyboard, to make meaning in our lives. There is also a continual shift to reading and producing text through these memories. Markers within a text, Foucault noticed, appear to reference an author. However, referring back to the difference between author and narrator, this narrator can:

> stand for a 'second self' whose similarity to the author is never fixed and undergoes considerable alteration within the course of a single book. It would be as false to seek the author in relation to the actual writer as to the fictional narrator; the 'author-function' (Foucault, [1969]2016): 308).

According to Foucault ([1969]2016), the author's name has three functions. It classifies by arranging specific texts under different names. It creates recognition of the relationship between these texts that are composed by the same author. Finally, it characterises a particular "singular mode of existence" as long as this manner of discourse survives: the author lives. Consequently, "the author function is characteristic of the mode of existence,

circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society" (Foucault, [1969]2016): 305).

This thesis has questioned authorship before. Moreover, one of the overarching questions of this thesis is why I would choose to join the military. Once again, I must revisit why I would choose to write about the GCR, the fictional characters based on it, and a time and place in Oklahoma in the early 1970s. Additionally, there are those whom the self has in mind when writing, my friends and family back home, but also those I have met over the years being abroad, friends and friends who have become like family now. Along with the previously mentioned ethical considerations, these are a part of my world of reference, a part of my actual world, one that Umberto Eco discerns as a "possible world", worlds constructed in an individual's mind. They are built on the social around us "as a cultural construct" (Eco, 1979: 222). These "possible worlds" layer me. This layering is a part of situated learning. Here, meanings change as relative novices involve themselves in this social (re)production. They engage with this exteriority more profoundly and are altered by it. In contrast, the relative experts and the practice itself are also involved in the change that flows in both directions (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Nonetheless, my more than a decade abroad has made me an exile and recorded in my homeland as my original sin of leaving it, "in light of which all that the sinners later may do would be taken down and used against them as the evidence of rule-breaking" (Bauman, 2000: 83). This rule-breaking has its drawbacks but also merits. This "refusal to be integrated" allows one to conjure up a place of one's own. It is akin to an exterior "different from the place in which those around are settled, a place unlike the places left behind and unlike the place of arrival" (Bauman, 2000: 84). It is a specific kind of world of the migrant, my writing records this authorial figure, writing down my ideas and ideologies to text, creating discourse and metadiscourse from my "singular mode of existence" on the exterior

of my past social milieus. I am better able to understand my past interior self as something different. With this in mind, there are more than academic affairs and somewhat ethical ones, with Mark Twain said of being abroad and becoming a "consummate ass" (Twain, [1869]2002: 139).

Much of this chapter has made the same narrative argument that Eco makes of possible worlds and also worlds of fiction, blending with the real one to construct both. Eco thinks of these "possible worlds" as "ideological", and an understanding of this world depends on "one's own encyclopedia" of it (Eco, 1979: 223). Text to Eco also relates to this chapter because he sees them intertextually. The textual narrative is not the single projection of a solitary vision of the world but a bracketing of "possible worlds" based on their encyclopaedia (Eco, 1979). These worlds are constructed into text and read, as "no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill the gaps in [their] own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities" (Iser, 1972: 285). Linking back to the last chapter of the problem of interpretation and also connected to Barthes's concept of readerly and writerly texts (Barthes, [1970]2009), Eco has his ideal type of text. This is the "open text" that produces "unforeseen interpretation" against the reader's "possible worlds" (Eco, 1979). The "open text" is juxtaposed against the "closed text", one that asserts a "range of rigidly pre-established and ordained interpretive solutions" (Eco, 1979: 51). In "open texts", the active writer has the active reader in mind who can reconsider, recombine, and elucidate what the author wrote. The reader is permitted multiple or mediated interpretations. In closed ones, there is a restriction, prior knowledge is reinforced and confirmed, and ideology is maintained (Eco, 1979; Luke, 1989).

My novella fits more of the closed than "open text", which allows the reader freewill to make their own choices and reconsider the entirety of the text from their point of view, enhancing the "possible worlds" (Eco, 1979). It has been styled more as a "closed text",

closed to much of the exteriority. Although it permits some freedom and "forecasting" of events in the text, I continually exert control and "at each further step [I] reassert, so to speak, the rights of [my] own text, saying without ambiguity what has to be taken as 'true' in [my] fictional world" (Eco, 1979: 34). This control extends to previously mentioned characters who, for the most part, lack interiority and not filled with their past exteriors. They are often presented as 'closed' in their one-dimensionality (Eco, 1979). There is a 'preachiness' to my characters in the novella. They explain their side of the story without much inner thought or input from other characters and their past exteriorities, truths and knowledges. It reaffirms their 'true' or 'correct' position (Luke, 1988). This structuring of the novella as a non-active writer situates the reader as a non-active reader, restricting the ability of the reader to include their own "possible worlds".

Authors use specific language genres narratively to close the text to their ideas, thoughts and feelings, shutting out the reader. This passive reader confronts the ideologies in which I have been embedded, exemplified by the ideological force of the three selves of Wesley, Danny and Jim. This links back to how Barthes expanded on readerly and writerly texts (Barthes, [1970]2009); much like an open text, a writerly text would be a vertical text in which the plot is the sole driver of action. It would be one layered with meaning that plays with language. This type of reading gives the reader "jouissance", a state of ecstasy, converting them from passive consumers to a scribe full of pleasure.

My text is a more readerly-closed variety. It reflects the mode of the aforementioned conservative culture I was raised in, which is more authoritarian. However, there is also the military culture in which I have spent much time. Growing up and being a part of these types of cultures affect how I still try to structure my narrative. Its residual effects are still making themselves known in much of my styling, being the readerly, closed form in opposition to the open-type structuring. This style of narrative is often "created in cultures allowing for a range

of dynamic relations, not only oppressive functions of master narratives but also counter-narratives and complex interactions in daily life" (Daiute et al., 2015: 46). If we write narratively in this manner, with an openness and creativity to structure knowledge, then it can be transformed into a method of inquiry into ways of discovery (Richardson 1994).

There is also the consideration of being "exiled" and surrounded by another culture that is not my own. I notice many similarities between British culture and the US. There are myriad cultural ties, histories and similarities. These ties are more robust than in the Turkish culture in which I lived. Still, this is part of this ever-present exteriority of cultural changes that cloud memories of my former home in Oklahoma and the US. These changes are coupled with Oklahoma's and the US's changing and moving in their own right, much like Halbwachs's description of the Holy Land (Halbwachs, [1941]1992). The novella's structure permitted me to construct a re-imagining and recreate a former world of knowledge and truth claims, however flawed and layered it might be. The ideological force of constructing the novella in this fashion allowed me to reconstruct and reexplore the place and culture I was raised in, providing me with a document of life, "a cultural construct" of my former home (Eco, 1979: 222). This document of life was written for me as much as it was for others. The "closed text" of the novella was a cultural reconstruction of my former worlds with a passive reader, unable to input their own truths and knowledges. They were made to read without any input.

Writing a novella in this manner and its structure also had other consequences. In the process of writing it, my supervisor, based on the shape of my novella at that point, suggested I look at the play *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, a metatheatrical absurdist play written by Luigi Pirandello and first performed in 1921 (Pirandello, [1921] 2014). Pirandello writes of a world where the characters from an unfinished novel are in search of an author. In one sense, his play investigates narrative and the social world that, to Pirandello, is constantly

moving and changing and "which we seek in vain to halt by imposing on it the 'stable and determinate form' constructed by the intellect" (Mortimer, 2014: 29). In another sense, he explores the "author function", exemplified in the play, most strikingly, by the characters of the Father and the Step-daughter. The father and, in some sense, the Director try to establish order and control throughout the play. This signifies the patriarchal order of "male dominance within family, state, religion, capitalism, education, and other social structures" (Ferguson, 1999: 1049). Alberica Bazzoni writes that the Step-daughter talks back, similar to hook's "talking back" (Bazzoni, 2019; hooks, Fall-Winter, 1986-1987). The Step-daughter "enacts the progressive deconstruction of the paternal text, performing, little by little, a true parricide" (Bini, 1999: 170). I ignored this critical lesson of the play as I wrote my novella, initially imitating the Pirandellian way of exploring narrative and author function. Then, when reading late drafts of this chapter, my supervisor commented that "it would seem [I] was given birth to by men" in my mentioning my grandfather, uncle and father, leaving women, their exteriorities, truth and knowledge claims in my life unmentioned. In the coming chapters, I will explore this exclusion and the patriarchy and masculinity.

When considering art concerning the self, Tamboukou contends we need to strategise analytically and pay particular "attention to the historical, social and cultural contexts that condition the emergence of the work of art under consideration" (Tamboukou, 2015: 78). One writing form to consider is situated writing which "takes issues around power seriously and works in the intersections of privilege and marginalisation" (Livholts, 2020: 43). Situated writing takes into account situated practice and theory for ways of seeing (Berger 1972; Haraway 1988). Haraway critiques the idea that seeing from nowhere is not ethically responsible. Yuval-Davis utilises it in situated intersectionality analysis, which is extremely sensitive to the positioning of specific individuals or collections of individuals socially, temporally, and geographically (Yuval-Davis, 2015). These are both used in situated writing,

as this type of writer speaks from somewhere. It needs to be writing that utilises textual and visual shaping to acknowledge and confront inequality—moreover, the intricate relations encompassing private troubles and politics connected to history and the wider world (Livholts, 2020). These reasons are why Livholts created an *Untimely Academic Novella* to "develop the contribution of narrative life writing genres to promote situated writing as a framework for creative, critical, and reflexive practices in research and education" (Livholts, 2020: xx).

It is important to note how the structuring of stories reproduced and remade a document of life, one embedded with my past exteriorities and ideologies. This process of writing must be kept in mind. It created a document of life I could then explore with the sociological imaginative dialogical voice I of the CSA and the documents of life approach. It must also include the voice-slash-writer that blurs the perceived boundaries of voice and writer, recognising the writer process. This section establishes the dialogical voice/writer I, with the 'I' mediating between the voice and the writer. The 'I' of the previous section notices the processes between the voice and the writer. It recognises not only questioning the writing of the novella but also the writing in this academic space/system composed of exteriority and interiority of truth and knowledge claims.

The Reader

To consider and hone this notion of the reader and its structuring more carefully, from a different angle and with more voices from the exteriority, I had another person read the novella's text and give their thoughts. This consideration helps bring forth more of the notion of the reader. Ideally, it would be good to have myriad views from all stations. However, convincing someone to read a 50-page novella can be tricky, so I had a close friend read it. After reading, we had a meeting, and both wrote our thoughts down. He immediately mentioned that it seemed autobiographical to him: taking place in Oklahoma, around my

undergraduate university, knowing my middle name (Wesley). This realisation created a specific authorial voice for him as the reader, with "the author's extra-textual identity" available "is likely to blend into a reader's voice construction in ways that are unique to each reader" (Tardy, 2012: 94). This reader questioned identity and positioning. He also noted my hometown (Durant) and the three characters having a similar life trajectory, with two of the three selves joining the army and the third considering it. I will be utilising the font Papyrus for this reader's quotes:

> The story does seem to carry a message that could be viewed as analogous with a positionality. About the struggle for identity in a subjective world? How one man is not an island? How our identities contain our values which we inherit, deviation from the norms of those further defining our identity.

This message carried in the story is part of a process of composing an identity my interior self could live with through "composure". I could have been writing identities that helped to create narratives through mimesis from the community I knew, one that Oklahomans and I could live with. Fiction offers a window to write stories that aid in achieving this "composure". As a migrant far from home, watching events unfold back home, I observe my home's cultural values and attitudes, wondering what has changed. Is it me, or has my home changed, or both? There is freedom here in this writing:

> one of the great freedoms possible for the individual to exercise. But it is not absolute. Thus, one, without hedging his bets, has to be aware that he does operate within an area dense with prior assumptions (Ellison, 1969: 74).

These assumptions are those of others with which CSA attempts to grapple. The reader thought that maybe the novella was meant to be alienating to an outsider. The reader, a cisgender, straight, white male from England, found it hard to connect to the metadiscourse.

It also could be the novella's structure that did not universalise the narrative. Whatever it was, the reader:

did not see "my" self in the characters, though, as Oklahoman country folk from some time ago

Time and place differences made identifying with the characters difficult for the reader. This type of selection is part of my thinking of readers back home when I should concentrate more on a variety of readers. There is also an overabundance of metadiscourse I know of from my region that wants to find its way into the novella's pages, which may not need to be understood by the reader or most other readers.

As mentioned, this structuring did reproduce an American cultural imagining as the reader mentioned that the novella was replete with:

lots of smiles and winks, unsaid things that only a native Oklahoman might understand.

This imagining is a part of my metadiscourse, which "refers to how we use language out of consideration for our readers or hearers based on our estimation of how best we can help them process and comprehend what we are saying" (Hyland, 2017: 17). As mentioned earlier about Hyland, this connects to voice, and voice and metadiscourse are in a relationship that suits the argument and readership (Hyland, 2009). For Hyland, metadiscourse is "a cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular discourse community" (Hyland, 2005: 37). The reader had not heard of the GCR and had to research it. When reading the auto/biographical novella, he commented that it reads as esoteric to non-Oklahomans. This reading left the reader unable to connect to my personal judgement as something that could convince him, or be meaningful, as they are only as such "when they contribute to and connect with a communal ideology or value system concerning what is taken to be interesting, relevant, novel, useful, good and so on" (Hyland & Jiang, 2016: 254). There needs to be more attentiveness to the reader from the writer and a specified

scope and a requirement for specific amplification, explanation, direction and interface (Hyland, 2017). I need to pay better attention to my possible readers. This is in order to address them successfully with the use of "local rhetorical resources" that help me "achieve immediate social and communicative objectives; such reader assessments also reveal something of how the writer/speaker understands the community being addressed" (Hyland, 2017: 17; Hyland, 2005).

Returning to the dialogical voice/writer I, I created reading the sociological and humanities literature during the novella's creation. I can utilise a particular strategy noticed by (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987) when writing academic texts. Knowledge-telling strategy is when the writer selects or is given a genre and topic. They then search their memory to generate a collection of assertions about this area and its exteriority of happenings. This approach centres on displaying the writer's knowledge of a particular area, not about adjusting or defining the own needs of the reader or writer. As opposed to the knowledge-telling strategy, knowledge-transforming employs a different approach to problem-solving. I would be better equipped to answer these puzzles by adjusting my knowledge to meet my writing needs and those of a specific reader. This way enables "the individual to accomplish alone what is normally accomplished only through social interaction-namely, the reprocessing of knowledge" (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987: 6-7). My authorial voice needs to be more balanced with other voices and their pieces of knowledge. Thinking with knowledge-transforming means seeing the whole picture. In the novella, I write of a discussion between Danny and Wesley:

> "Afraid, it's okay, you can be scared. Just don't let it overtake you," Danny said   solemnly.
> "Huh?" Wes asked. In his mind he thought what the fuck?
> "You can be scared. You can talk about it. Just don't let it overtake you and come out other ways. Silly ways," Danny said.

In this section, I convey how norms in male socialisation teach males that 'proper' men do not admit being afraid and that being a man means being in control and dependable (Etherington, 2000). This understanding needs to be taken further as knowledge-transforming recognises how my strong authorial voice is a part of my male voice that wants to exert control. Learning to write more profound texts requires more complexity, which necessitates adjusting my rhetorical and discursive objectives to generate complex and multifaceted texts (Castelló, 2000; Castelló, et al., 2007). I would need to attune my voice to be more complex and manifold to include more of the knowledge and truths encountered in the world. Here, it provides hope for "a rebellion of the active reader" and moving toward "a common reader who disputes academic insistence upon how texts 'ought' to be read and interpreted" (Stanley, 1992: 91).

This reader had a specific image of me that clouded the authorial voice with visions of my "second self", shaded by my actual version. He further noted that:

> it invokes coming-of-age-type stories, and Wesley is enduring a coming-of-age struggle involving racist attitudes.

The coming-of-age-tale, or the bildungsroman, is usually associated with what has been a historical "male, indeed distinctly masculine, genre" (McWilliams, 2017: 18). This is because most books written in the bildungsroman form follow the development of male protagonists (McWilliams, 2017), from Dickens to Dostoevsky. The novella could have been a novel, as previously mentioned, and mimicked the theme of the bildungsroman where "the education of the hero who is brought to a high level of consciousness through a series of experiences that lead to his development", mimicking previously mentioned the master craftsmen's education (Baruch, 1981: 335). The structure of bildungsroman is more than familiar to me, with being steeped in these novelists and their stories styled in this fashion throughout American literature. In particular, Horatio Alger's tales, such as *Ragged Dick* and their

descendants, ones about boys who learn the merits of hard work, being honest, and maintaining a positive attitude in the face of adversity to become successful (Alger, 1868; Bode, 1985; Alger and Hoeller, 2008; Scharnhorst, 1980).

This closed structure was framed in my mind and written on the novella's pages. However, the novella does not qualify as a full bildungsroman as it only gives a snapshot of one focused period in the life of the characters. The three selves combined are bildungsroman-like, as the three represent something of a life cycle. However, in other ways, the novella portrays an event, owing to its structure as a novella. I could attempt to write about the values I know well, which the reader shares with me as he notes:

> Those I know share my values, which coincides for me in some ways with a dominant demographic (straight white males).

And for the most part, I did, as the three selves, but also in the war narratives in this chapter. These narratives are all of men, again reproducing the male narrative.

Conversely, Baruch writes of the "feminine bildungsroman" and the many novels that deal with women who incorporate this aspect (Baruch, 1981: 335). Using these as examples to shape a different kind of novella might build a complete picture of war and its effects. For example, Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm* (Schreiner, [1883] 1989), a feminine bildungsroman, an example of an auto/biographical novel where war (First Boer War) is alluded could have been examined more closely. Also, the two characters of Waldo and Lyndall have compelling similarities to Schreiner's life. Another bildungsroman example is *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf, a novel depicting the First World War's influence as a "late age of the world's experience had bred in them all, all men and women, a well of tears" (Woolf, [1925] 1996: 8). Choosing the "feminine bildungsroman" with "open text" structuring would have provided a complete version of war. It would be different from one

focused merely on men, masculinity and the patriarchy, along with connecting with a more active reader.

It could also be in how the reader perceived the facts. This difference in viewpoint is discussed with Stanley's look at *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* and how "what was read, in one way, by reviewers in metropolitan London was read very differently in the Cape Colony" (Schreiner, [1897]2009; Stanley, 2000: 207). Here, as a writer, the reader tries to rewrite as an active reader with his own interiority of the author function; this reader of the text is rebutted with a closed text, thus seemingly alienating to an outsider. The facts about Oklahoma are unknown, and the reader does not seem to identify with the characters. This styling could be reflected in what may have been my target reader: other people from my area and me. As previously mentioned, Oklahoma has long been on a rightward turn, and it is essential to explore its leftist part. In this explanation, I chose unsaid things that only a native Oklahoman might understand.

However, there are other goals besides this. Like Schreiner, I have "feminist analytical concerns" underpinning the CSA. These concerns need feminist accounts and theorising, which are:

• theory derived from experience analytically entered into by enquiring feminists;

• continually subject to revision in the light of that experience;

• thus reflexive and self-reflexive and accessible to everyone (not just to theoreticians as a 'special' kind of person); and

• certainly not to be treated as sacrosanct and enshrined in 'texts' to be endlessly pored over like chicken entrails (Stanley and Wise, 1990: 24).

Returning to the importance of positionality and including the other, shifting some of the novella's protagonists to women, African Americans or other marginalised groups would create a piece of literature that is more dialogical and representational of those societies. I

could also discuss my characters with these groups for more inclusion. The point is that examples must be considered when shaping literature and considering your reader.

Additionally, there are concerns about this thesis's focus on the importance of the political, which includes the "relationship between capital and imperialism", precisely the American variety that I will broach in coming chapters, and also the ever-present matter of "aggression and warfare" (Stanley, 2000: 208). Schreiner identified universal themes in the Western canon to appeal to London and Cape Town to discuss these issues, one example being her use of Christ in *Trooper Peter Halket*. This use of allegorical devices encourages the active reader, and the "allusions, interruptions, descriptions, trigger a more active grasping after the meaning of these, a meaning which then allows the reader to read the narrative in a different, more active and ironic way" (Stanley, 2000: 206). This approach would more match my desired outcome of Bakhtin's ideas on the dialogical as well. As noted before, there is also an attempted form of Schreiner's use of "stories of different kinds each shift(s) the point of view, and thus the reader's position changes sometimes starkly in relation to the unfolding moral twists and turns so related" (Stanley, 2000: 211). However, the structuring of the text was often suffocatingly closed to the exteriority of others' lives.

My novella was written like much moral theory, from a masculine point of view and claiming universality. However, in reality, it privileges and reflects the learning of morality that men are often socialised into, which frequently ignores, overlooks or sees as inferior to the views of women (Gilligan, 1988). Owen Abbott argues this is because Gilligan's theorising is built out of empirical interest in the engagement of individuals in questions of morality in the day-to-day (Abbott, 2020). This more active understanding puts her at odds with the more prevailing methods of accrediting moral thought, "not so much because they took the perspectives of women seriously (important though this is), but because they were concerned with providing an account of how morality was done in the messiness of

relationally entangled practice" (Abbott, 2020: 73). This moralising will be discussed in later chapters.

This relational thinking with fiction relates to what Thumala Olave (2018) writes on reading it. Here, Thumala Olave sees fiction as providing readers with a device to refashion and configure their subjectivity and understand and care for others. It has value and meaning "because it enables self-understanding, ethical reflection, and selfcare" (Thumala Olave, 2018: 448). I did not challenge the reader to reflect more ethically. I reproduced many of the dominant narratives of society, then poorly utilised them by allowing them to control the narrative far too much, reproducing masculine views. I need to leave behind more culture models with a closed type of structuring. These are "dominated by implicit colonial hierarchies, racialized identities, and reified notions of culture as homeostatic or steadystate systems" (Kirmayer, 2018: 9). My dialogical voice/writer I loop needs to be more open towards "'postcolonial' models of cultures as open, dynamic, heterogeneous, and hybrid social systems that offer individuals resources for self-fashioning and positioning" (Kirmayer, 2018: 9). This constructing and positioning in the final section leads to the addition the reader to dialogical voice/writer slashes that circulate sociology and literature: a dialogical voice/writer/reader I. It would keep the reader in mind and create a more rounded piece of literature. By entering into these circulating sociological and literature narratives through the dialogical voice/writer/reader I, you may "find new questions and hypotheses that lead you to further enquiries of your own" (Etherington, 2003: 19). This better understanding of narrative helps generate more openness to others' past exteriorities. It is the sociological imagining that Atkinson desired and Elias imagined (Atkinson, 2015; Elias, 2013).

Conclusion

The experience of writing a novella has taught me that I am not a fiction writer. However, the experience of the dialogical voice/writer/reader I in writing fiction and sociologically has

hopefully made me a better sociologist. To explore Mills's sociological imagination in a CSA, I wrote a literary narrative with an understanding of narrative and storytelling to help me mimic reality. This has allowed me to touch on my exteriority while beginning to look at the exterior of politics and public narratives that Sontag and Thomson write about (Mills, [1959]; Sontag, 2003; Thomson, [1991]2013). I entered a dialogical voice/writer/reader I between literature, humanities and the social sciences. I moved from a novel to a novella to an auto/biographical novella that uses ideas of postcolonial biographical fiction. After analysing the novella analytically, I noticed the dialogical voice/writer/reader I segment and how I often fell short of their utilisation in the novella and during the academic writing process. This process relates to unbecomings and becomings of patriarchy, militarisation, social interconnectedness, remembering and forgetting that is evocatively and analytically constructed instead of discovered (Stanley, 1992; 1993a) through a CSA located within a documents of life approach. The novella's structure permitted me to create an authorial voice that illustrated how I utilised a strong variety to help achieve "composure" to an exteriority of truth and knowledge systems surrounding the self. However, focusing too much on myself made observing the social around me more challenging. As Leskelä-Kärki (2008) notes, when we write about others, we write about ourselves, and this understanding aids in our perception of our own lives. This chapter has also further taught me about the slippage of the interior and exterior. In treating my writing as an "artifact-in-activity" and better moving between the exterior and interior and their claims by thinking with the dialogical voice/writer/reader I tool, I better understand these lives and myself. I now see a slash between the interior/exterior as well.

In Chapter 3, as a part of crafting facets of my diamond, I produced a novella exploring different truths of 'me' and of other people then and now through the literary narrative of the novella to reflexively explore an event near my home and heart. This mimetic

understanding allowed me to explore its creation through tools of the self and other, positionality, and intertextuality to explore the interior I constructed. In this chapter, the facet shifted back to the exterior but also the slash of the interior that helps build the dialogical voice/reader/writer I. This shift allowed me to gain a further sociological understanding of the hows and whys of joining the military and the ones that helped me fashion a new sense of 'me' when I returned from war, hopefully assisting others to understand better. After drafting the novella with many guidelines in chapter 3 and critical analysis in chapters 4 and 5, I am left with how challenging the un/becoming of a soldier is to chart through the stories and ways we obscure ourselves in the social as is the different selves. Chapter 6 continues illuminating this diamond by gauging the matrices of power and how this understanding of self relates to them.

Chapter 6: Tracing Truth and Truths through Power: Power Elites and Me

Much contemporary autoethnography has at its core a view of the individual as static, viewing the self and society through a snapshot in time and seeing the self as unchanging in autoethnographic accounts. My CSA was conceived by reference to a different understanding, where the apparently unchanging self is inquiring and so in motion, moving through time and the knowledge process. Past chapters have looked at both ontological and epistemological consequences of this change and development over time as a way of proceeding within an autoethnographic approach. They had been concerned with truth and knowledge claims and the systems developed around them. Chapter 6 was initially developed while thinking about the self in relation to considering power in a stationary and hierarchical way in the production of these systems. It is a kind vested in particular individuals at the apex of power structures and formed in conjunction with the military-industrial complex, with the work of Mills on the power elite being one specific influence (Mills, 1956). I would start with the texts that led to my deployment and my orders to Iraq. I would trace the power and decision-making ladder up the chain of command in the US military, positioned along levels of hierarchy against my lower position through my autoethnography, and positioned against me, who was very much outside this inner (I thought at the time) dominating network. I would consider this concerning my respective positions in the military decision-making process (my autoethnography). I thought it would end with the statements of power elite men (Donald Rumsfeld, George W. Bush and Colin Powell).

When I first began work on chapter 6, I started by attempting to trace these decisions made through my military orders. When researching this by approaching a range of relevant

organisations requesting information from them, however, I embarked on an investigative process that led me to see decisions and the factors behind them as both obfuscated and diffuse. The location of individual decision-making in the power hierarchy was unclear-unclear to those directly involved as well as to me as I investigated this. Moreover, the sources of power were difficult to pin down and had an indeterminate quality as well. These figureheads, in a sense, were everywhere and frequently referred to, yet could be found nowhere where particular decisions were concerned. I concentrated on these specific power elite, Rumsfeld the most, as head of defence. Bush had been previously written about extensively, and Powell's lack of influence from his silence in the final lead-up to the war.

This process led to a turning point or minor epiphany (Denzin, 1989; 2001a) in understanding that power was not a thing with particular fixed qualities but, instead, a process that was in flux, with the matrices of power being more dispersed and discursive: a broadly Foucauldian view. From Foucault, I read my way to Dorothy Smith for a greater understanding and another epiphany. This chapter will explore these shifts in how I conceived and came to understand the construction and utilisation of power differently than most autoethnographies through a series of epiphanies. Its central concern is to discern the part played by these power dynamics and the associations between myself, my autoethnography and other people's accounts, given in and thereby impacted and shaped by particular contexts. It will focus on my local area, the masculinities and truth and knowledge claims constructed there and high in the seat of power. I will analyse the discourses and metadiscourses utilised by these power elites to construct truth and use this truth to build a system of power, as well as how I also aided in creating this system.

Consequently, I found a power built of the social I captured in the last chapters and provided a road map to examine how power is constructed. I did this through a progression of turning points to a new conception of power different from most autoethnographies. These

changing understandings of power, more precisely the how and in what way places of power influenced decision-making on the ground and eventuated in deploying other men and me in a war in Iraq, have both had consequences in terms of how I conceived the becoming and unbecoming of powers that make war and thus a soldier. Ontologically, what makes power was conceived differently in these different instantiations of my thought processes. Moreover, epistemologically, how I understood and came to know of this was shaped and then reshaped. This consideration means going back to trace the orders I was once given for deployment to the 2003 Iraq War.

My Orders

I start with the official document of life that I possess: the original order that mobilised us in preparation for the eventual war. The document is under Appendix 3. It denotes it is from the "Departments of the Army, the Air Force and the Oklahoma Army and Air National Guard", recorded at the top of the document. The document is dated "13 February 2003". My name is on it as "Morris Derek W". It classifies me as an "SPC," or Specialist US Army rank, in the "1245 Trans Co", or my unit name transportation company to which I am assigned. On 10 February 2003, I was a part of the Oklahoma Army National Guard. The National Guard consists of institutions controlled by each US state: Oklahoma, in my case. The orders also note that I am "ordered to Active Duty with the consent of The Governor of The State of Oklahoma". The top of the chain of command in the Oklahoma National Guard is the governor, or in this case, the ultimate authority (Brad Henry at that time). The document informs me that I am "ordered to active duty as a member of your Reserve Component Unit for the period indicated", which is "11 February 2003 to 14 February 2003". This means I will become a full-time soldier for the Oklahoma National Guard for that period, also noted as the mobilisation category code of G. Therein, when the above time ends, I will have to report to the "Mob Station" in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Then, I will move from the Oklahoma

National Guard to the United States Regular Army. I will no longer be under the Governor of Oklahoma's control but in the regular army chain of command that terminates with the President of the United States (George Bush, Jr. at that time). It informs me that the period of active duty is "Not to exceed 365 days". This time will be extended during my tour into April of 2004.

I used this document as a starting point to research where these orders originated and the decision-making process behind them. When researching this chapter, my supervisor recommended that I start a research diary. It is attached in Appendix 4. This document of life will also serve an autoethnographic purpose for analysis. It was created in February 2021. From here on, I will begin to discuss and analyse it. I started with researching my unit, noted "1245", along with the Iraq War and my deployment year. I found the *2003 The Adjutant General* (the senior military officer of the National Guard) *of Oklahoma Governor's Report* (Gebard, 2003). I read through this report, leading me to the National Guard Bureau after defining the term 'Adjutant General.' I then researched the history of the National Guard and how it led to the formation of this bureau (Bradford, 2010; Brown, 2015). I began to trace the people who might have been the ones behind the order in the chain of command. This chain of command seemed quite simple when I was in the army, E-1 up to the President. However, the actual chain of responsibility sharing is much more opaque. There is more detail in the research diary, but I read into how Vietnam changed the command structure leading to the eventual 1986 Goldwater/Nichols Act (Bourne, 1998; Kamarck, 2016; Lederman, 1999; Locher, 2017; Locher, 2002; McInnis, 2016; Wills, 2012). During this time, the National Guard Bureau Chief was Raymond Rees. Russell Davis was the Chief preceding Rees and could have been involved in decision-making concerning the orders (National Guard.mil, n.d.). I retained the names to help me track any decision-making.

My Past Conception of Power from the Military

In considering these orders and the command structure, I analysed how I conceived power and decision-making in the manner C. Wright Mills once did, which was the same as top-down in nature. To Mills, there is a "gradation of power" in that those at the bottom of the hierarchy do "not have as much power in any area of social or economic or political decision" as those at the top (Mills, 1956: 18). Mills wanted to move away from the term "ruling class", to a more straightforward view of economic determinism and to expand it to include 'political determinism' and 'military determinism'. He noticed "that the higher agents of each of these three domains now often have a noticeable degree of autonomy" (Mills, 1956: 277). For Mills, this is not merely the ruling class of the corporate elite. There are also military and political elites. Mills wrote of power being interwoven between the interests of these "big three". These are places where "the typical institutional unit has become enlarged" and "administrative, and, in the power of its decisions, has become centralised" (Mills, 1956: 7). It is "a triangle of power" from which is sourced an "interlocking directorate" (Mills, 1956: 8). I want to look at three people that define each of these elites: Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell and George Bush. Rumsfeld comprises the corporate elite, Powell the military and Bush the political elite. Each shaded into other elite areas. For example, Rumsfeld got his start in the military before moving into politics, then found a place in the corporate before moving back into politics.

According to Mills, they dominate modern society because they command decision-making power with social institutions while holding fundamental leadership positions (Mills, 1956). Furthermore, this social phenomenon does not involve "evil rulers" conspiring. It is the consequence of the expansion and centralisation of the decisions that were made in the increasingly bureaucratic social structure in the United States of the 1950s (Mills, 1956). Through a process of rationalisation at work in advanced economies, control of this decision-

making process is funnelled into the hands of a limited number of people with related

backgrounds, social status and worldviews (Mills, 1956).

There is "a respect for the specialised concerns of each member as a top man, a

policy-maker in his own particular area of power and decision", and they "spread into various

commanding circles of the institutions of power" (Mills, 1956: 69). This power elite, to Mills,

has made "families and churches and schools adapt to modern life; governments and armies

and corporations shape it; and, as they do so, they turn these lesser institutions into means for

their ends" (Mills, 1956:6). Mills felt that the 1950s environment after World War II (WWII)

had left America under perpetual military threat and placed its military at an advantage over

other spheres. All control over economic and political actions was being "judged in terms of

military definitions of reality: the higher warlords have ascended to a firm position within the

power elite" (Mills, 1956: 275). Mills's conception of power, a stationary and hierarchical

kind, functions by shaping these terms in which people think while endowing certain groups

at the peak of power pyramids. It aided in forming the newly constructed military-industrial

complex. Here, there is a notion of power where mass society is rendered virtually ineffective

because power operates by controlling the top positions of the influential organisations that

command its vital resources. This conception of power was my understanding before this

research endeavour. I viewed these three men as the pinnacles of this controlling power.

In my research diary, I connected to how I was a part of a vast war game right before

the Iraq War in 2002 when I was part of the 90th troop command. It was related to Central

Command and Forscom. Many of those involved soldiers knew they were going to Kuwait

and Sinai, including those from my hometown (Wyke, 2002; Wells, 2002). These entities

were created from The Goldwater/Nichols Act of 1986 (Kamarck, 2016; Lederman, 1999).

This act made the most sweeping changes to the command structure since the National

Security Act of 1947, which created the Department of Defense (DoD). It supposedly created

more civilian control over the military and simplified the chain of command. The service chiefs were also centralised under the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Each armed service is still organised, trained, and equipped with its own forces; the act alters the manner of interaction of the services (Kamarck, 2016; Lederman, 1999). With the service chiefs removed from operational control, each branch reported to a combatant commander (CCDRs) for support. This CCDR, in turn, was responsible for either a geographic region of the globe (Northern, *Central*, European, Pacific, Southern, and African Commands) or for a specific function (special operations, strategic, transportation, cyber) (Locher, 1999; 2017; McInnis, 2016; Wills, 2012). The National Guard fell under the First Army in this command structure. Central Command would be in charge of me during my time in Iraq. Power seemed to be redirected or reformulated everywhere I looked as the command systems were altered, and the power structure seemingly changed.

Still, trying to undercover how this power permeated down from the top, I continued to research this command structure. After the Vietnam War, General Creighton Abrams realised that the US military would be unable to win an extended war without the support of the American people. In order to garner this support, he implemented the "Total Army" policy, a mobilisation policy that rectified problems in the war caused by the failure to mobilise the reserves (Goodale, 1999). Previously, issues of policy created an "atmosphere of – distrust, frustration, and dispirits amongst the trained and dedicated Guardsmen", men and women, "who had spent their careers preparing for mobilization" and "became a safe-haven for 'Draft Dodgers'" (Goodale, 1999:5), such as George W. Bush.

This total army concept had two main objectives in mind. First was the "reestablishment of the army's capability to deter war, especially in areas critical to United States national security" and to restore "the traditional linkage between the army and the American people…the citizen-soldier-the centrepiece of American military history, could

once again act as a bridge between the active army and the American people" (Summers Jr, 1986: 363). It was worth noting now if power functions by pushing down, how much the military elite needed a "bridge to the American people". These policies became known as the Abrams Doctrine and Total Force Policy (Goodale, 1999; Lore, 2015). Later, these policies would also lead to an extra-Constitutional constraint on using presidential power, leading to the War Powers Act of 1973 (Carafano, 2005; Lore, 2015). My understanding of power began to shift from how I had previously conceived it as top-down.

I began extensive research into the websites concerning the US Central Command, attempting to locate a line of communication to obtain access to documents encompassing my orders to active duty with the 1245 unit. I first researched the US National Archives. I discovered that the records would not be declassified until 25 years after their publication, in this instance, until 2028 (US Department of Justice, 2020). The US National Archives referred to the Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) to obtain records before 25 years (US National Archives, 2021). At first, I could only find the Air Force's MDR requests, but I needed more information about the army. However, I finally found a Public Affairs email address and sent an email. I received a reply from the email, and a worker there redirected me back to the National Archives. I researched the military records classification under each President, the classification of which the US Congress had left the executive branch in charge. There, I mainly found alternating stances and executive orders between Democratic and Republican presidents, with Democratic ones pushing for less classification, shorter times, and openness while Republicans pressing for the opposite (Kosar, 2010; O'Keefe, 2009). Based on continued research and the previous email, I found an email address from which to send an email based on Executive Order 13526 that created the National Declassification Center and sent another email (US National Archives, 2021). I received a reply saying they needed clarification on the records I requested. However, they could send

the records related to the 90th Troop Command during the period. I received the records. Yet, I was still looking for something specifically with the 1245 unit, continuing my problems with locating authentic sources of directives. This research left me with a perception of power that seems more dispersed and obscured, somewhat different from Mills's impression.

I decided to shift focus and look behind the construction of these command structures by moving to the background of two political power elite sponsors of the most recent main bill behind the changing command structure and the politics behind it. I recognised Barry Goldwater for his role in the rise of the radical right in America and his connection to Reagan. Reagan had made the 'Time for Choosing' speech on his behalf (Kruse, 2007; Cunningham, 2010). He was also the heir to a prominent chain of department stores, Goldwater's, and later served in the US Air Force and the Reserves (Shermer, 2013). Goldwater, a highly conservative senator of his era, was dubbed 'Mr Conservative' (Bell, 1962). Yet, reading about his past, you find much more of a libertarian conservative than the traditional one (Goldberg, 1995; Edwards, 1995). Before his political career, Nichols was President of the Parker Gin Company (Hunter, 1983). Later, he became a prominent supporter of George Wallace, who famously stood at the schoolhouse door in an attempt to preserve segregation in the American South (Schmidt, 2013; Associated Press, 1988). Both came from business backgrounds; both played their parts in the evolution of conservatism in America and predominantly in the US South. The men also had military backgrounds and peak political careers during the Vietnam War era.

Thinking again on *The Power Elite*, it ignited a firestorm of research and critique during its time, with Herbert Aptheker (1960) noting how Mills never found a substitute political economy to position his cultural and sociological analysis of the power elite. Furthermore, Mills could not identify the financial overlords of the power elite because he did not include this analysis, "he saw corporations, but not capitalism; corporate elites, but

not a capitalist class" (Barrow, 2012: 412). In another critique, G. William Domhoff illustrated how power structure researchers responded to various criticisms with new empirical studies after Mills. Here, they made it feasible to investigate these decision-making processes within a larger sociological framework, utilising (Miliband 1964; Miliband 1968). They came to believe that the corporate elite was a part of the capitalist class, which was at the power elite's core (Domhoff, 1967; 2007). Two of the three, discounting Powell, spent considerable time in and consistently liaising with the corporate elite, with Rumsfeld spending the most, which I note for later analysis. I decided to research Rumsfeld the most for these reasons, but also because of the massive amount of research done on Bush in this manner. Furthermore, how Powell's thinking, in the end, was railroaded by Rumsfeld's and Bush's.

My thinking on power also shifted further, where Mills's model might have shortcomings. By scrutinising those behind the command structure, I hope to see how they have shaped power systems and, thus, truth and knowledge ones as well. I began with Rumsfeld, and understanding how he functioned as a critical cog in this corporate-run "interlocking elite" seemed vital to understanding how it operated. I would look retrospectively at the path he took in his high place in the US Executive Branch by looking at his evolution. With an interlocking elite, this form of power fused business with military interests and then utilised the Executive Branch to push power down (Mills, 1956). A young Rumsfeld and his others imagined a world where institutions would produce order. Rumsfeld and Powell, compared to their other Republican colleagues, came from somewhat modest backgrounds. Rumsfeld had a father who was a real estate broker and gave his son a background in business (Rumsfeld, 2012). Again, compared with many of his colleagues, it was modest. He also had the help of being white, male and Protestant. Still, he had to forge much of his own path into the corporate elite compared to others in the administration.

One of the ways was through his prolific use of memos. They were produced prodigiously, as much as 60 daily (Wright, 2007). Rumsfeld mentions how he got into the habit "of dictating things that were important" (Morris et al., 2013). Others characterised them as "a simple, efficient way for him to keep track of what he had asked for and what he wanted to get done" (Woodward, 2006: 24). As an incredible amount of his "snowflakes" fell across Washington DC and further afield. They landed on desks and computers alike and endeavoured to ensure that these memos represented the thoughts and wishes of one man: Donald Rumsfeld. In 2017, the DoD commenced reviewing and making public these "snowflakes" on a rolling basis (Whitlock, 2019). One of the documents is dated around the time of planning for the war I would participate in, 17 April 2002, and is concerned about "plans for Afghanistan". It discusses the DoD's role, then asks:

> What do you propose we do? How do we get control of the levers so that we can influence what's going on? How do we decide what ought to happen, and then get all the military, diplomatic, humanitarian threats coming through the needle-head? (Whitlock, 2019).

Rumsfeld then adds that "we are never going to get the U.S. military out of Afghanistan" unless "we" establish stability there. In another memo dated October 16th, 2003, when I was deployed to Iraq, he again questioned the DoD's role. Through them, we can gain insight into how Rumsfeld straddled these senses of power:

> The questions I posed to combatant commanders this week were: Are we winning or losing the Global War on Terror? Is DoD changing fast enough to deal with the new 21st century security environment? Can a big institution change fast enough? Is the USG changing fast enough? (Garfinkle, 2013: 9).

On the one hand, he speaks of institutions. On the other, he mentions change and relays massive amounts of "snowflakes" to express his opinions. There are mentions of "winning or

losing", "changing fast", and "control of the levers". Then, in November 2001, this discourse and snowflakes were turned firmly towards war in Iraq as "on the edge of achieving initial military success in Afghanistan, President Bush again asked Secretary Rumsfeld to begin planning in secret for potential military operations against Iraq" (Collins, 2015: 46). Here, Rumsfeld used these truth and knowledge claims to shape the system within it through mountains of snowflakes, relations and capital.

Rumsfeld had used many of these tactics before, during the Vietnam era, his first political appointment by President Nixon in 1969 to Director of the OEO (Office of Economic Opportunity). It was a program created under the Kennedy administration and expanded under President Johnson as a part of the Great Society programs (Faux, 1971). What was essential to Rumsfeld was that these programs be "consistent with the Protestant ethic and run by reliable white businessmen" (Faux, 1971: 293). Rumsfeld feared the possibility of Black Panthers becoming shareholders. With this reading, Rumsfeld may have felt it was better to remove any opportunities that might sway power outside of people of his affiliated groups, primarily white, male and Republican. With their help and a flurry of memos and documents, there was a "final shove that pushed the Special Impact Program into the bureaucratic quicksand", further weakening the efforts of the OEO and providing more distance between Americans and the dreams of the Great Society, leaving a large majority of these Americans abandoned (Faux, 1971: 292).

Rumsfeld's rules dictate that business, and thus capitalism, must be the guiding and grinding principle when he says we need "more business leaders defend(ing) capitalism" (Rumsfeld, 2013: 253). His perception of power is different, unlike the one I previously conceived, where the top-down power structure can be undermined from below. The hope of this program was a tradition of power as unilateral domination spoken of by Foucault, where power is in the hands of those deemed sovereign and extends downward into social spaces

only by being brandished over individuals through commands emanating from the sovereign (Foucault, 1980). If a person can become out of reach of the said sovereign, the person is free from power or, in Marxian terms, also reduced power to economic terms. Rumsfeld saw power differently. He understood that power could also flow upwards, politically and culturally, and had to be crushed from its organic origins below.

Here is where I had my first epiphany which is the idea that "biographical texts will typically be structured by the significant turning-point moments in a subject's life" (Denzin, 2017: 13). Denzin sees the focus of "critical interpretive inquiry" should be on these epiphanies and how they are experienced, defined, and "woven through the multiple strands of a person's life" (Denzin, 2001a: 29). These turning points are "more authentic" and akin to Victor Turner's "liminal phase of experience" where a person is in a "no-man's land betwixt and between…the past and the…future" (Denzin, 2001b: 28; Turner, 1986: 41). Here, there is recognition for "experience-centred narrative research" in which the personal narrative is defined differently from other signs or symbols. It involves "movement, succession, progress or sequence – usually, temporal sequences – and the articulation or development of meaning" (Squire, 2017: 48). It is different from much event-centred research that has been done in this thesis, where the personal narrative is text, and its function is "to represent past events in the form of a story" (Patterson, 2017: 28). It is vital to make the connection between (auto)biographies and these lived experiences. These epiphanies of lives must "connect to the groups and social relationships that surround and shape persons", for "as we write about lives, we bring the world of others into our texts" (Denzin, 2017: 7).

Turning Point 1

This epiphany moved me into other Foucauldian conceptions of power beyond Mills and Marx. They had come from a tradition where "any adequately trained social scientist as well as of any properly educated person" would see Marx's work as "essential equipment", and

Mills said, "those who say they hear Marxian echoes in my work are saying that I have trained myself well" (Mills, 1957: 581). Foucault writes against this continual use of Marx, and thus, against Mills's background knowledge claims, that by identifying a mode of production and the dominant class in a society, one can infer all one wants to understand about how power operates in it. When analysing power, I have to move beyond merely studying the power elite as "domination does not radiate from the peak to the depths" (Foucault, [1984]1997; Philip, 1983: 36). With Foucault:

> power is exercised through networks, and individuals do not simply circulate in those networks; they are in a position to both submit to and exercise this power. They are never the inert or consenting targets of power; they are always its relays. In other words, power passes through individuals. It is not applied to them (Foucault, [1975-76]2003: 29).

The discourse of power/knowledge relates to "the way we [talk] about and [categorise] things [tends] to frame how we [do] things" (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010: 142). This view of power notices its microphysical relations and emphasises how, amongst the socio-economic plight of societies, 'truths' are exerted as strategic weapons in legitimating power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980). To understand the operation of power as part of a power/knowledge and truth system, I have to write about how Rumsfeld utilised his snowflakes as a truth and knowledge claims to achieve this power/knowledge and truth.

Corresponding with Mills's thinking, these systems still produce states of domination in Foucault's ideas on power relation, where they are "fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and allow an extremely limited margin of freedom" (Foucault, [1984]1997: 292). However, Foucault's power network differs from Mills's power pyramid (Fevre and Bancroft, 2010). Foucault provides the example of the "conventional marital structure of the 18th and 19th centuries", where it is often thought only men wielded power;

women still had a few options where they could "deceive their husbands, pilfer money from them, refuse them sex. Yet they were still in a state of domination insofar as these options were only ultimately stratagems that never succeeded in reversing the situation" (Foucault, [1984]1997: 293). Power is everywhere due to these "multiplicity of force relations" and "not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault, 1978: 92). These "relations of force" are exercised through a process understood as "ceaseless struggles and confrontations" which strengthen, reverse and transform them:

> as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallisation is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formation of the law, in the various social hegemonies (Foucault, 1978: 93-94).

Foucault illustrates how patterns are laid and incorporated into schemes, which provide the façade of dominant power; alterations to these "multiplicity of force relations" can alter or modify this illusion of central power. It is "because sets of relations of force feed back to condition their members and inhibit change, stable patterns can emerge. Power, then, is based on this field of relations of force" (Philip, 1983: 37).

This understanding concerns this chapter in that its operation is due to "already existing power relations" and "is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth" (Foucault, 1979: 122). These power relations are based on a discourse of truth and cannot be dissociated from it. These relations cannot be founded nor function "unless a true discourse is produced, accumulated, put into circulation, and set to work. Power cannot be exercised unless a certain economy of discourses of truth functions in, on the basis of, and thanks to, that power" (Foucault, [1975-76]2003: 24). Power is tied to the truth. Truth is tied

to power. This truth is only produced through "multiple forms of constraint", as I have previously written, and every society has a "regime of truth", a "general politics of truth" with different categories of discourse which it is made to be true and accepted (Foucault, 1980). There are:

> the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault, 1980: 131).

Foucault encourages us not to see this all in negative terms: how "it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'", when "in fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault, 1977: 194). The literature led me to a new understanding of power, not as a thing with a certain fixed quality. It is instead procedural and in constant flux, with the matrices of power being more diffuse and in discourse, again, a more Foucauldian view formed from my reading. As the snowflakes fell, Rumsfeld, through "ceaseless struggles and confrontations", could utilise these truth and knowledge claims, building towards a "regime of truth", manipulating his position to project his thoughts to many others consistently. He did this at a high rate from an elevated station to push himself further upwards into truth systems and subdue and suppress the ones below him.

Turning Point 2

Dorothy Smith, similar to Foucault, also believes power exists across various locations in "a complex of organized practices, including government, law, business and financial management, professional organization, educational institutions as well as the discourses in texts that interpenetrate the multiple sites of power" (Smith, 1988: 3). However, unlike Foucault, she does not see power and knowledge "linked in some mystical conjunction"

(Smith, 1990: 79). Instead, Smith observes ruling relations that transverse and organise to construct institutions, not merely physical places, but relations of ruling that maintain organising practices and textually-mediated discourse (Smith, 2002; 2005). She also criticises Foucault's idea of discourse as overwhelming and confining in its role while displacing an individual's knowledge basis, locating it to the outside of subjectivities as an ordering that is forced on them and constitutes them as they are subdued to the procedures of power (Smith, 1999; 2005; Satka and Skehill, 2011). While rejecting some of Foucault's thinking on the discourse, Smith adopts others, improving upon his ideas by utilising Bakhtinian speech genres (1981) to examine the discourse as organising the social (Satka and Skehill, 2011). These genres are "different ways of (inter)acting discoursally" (Fairclough, 2003: 26).

Smith's conception of this "two-voiced" discourse as relations that are between locals "coordinating the practices of definite individuals talking, writing, reading, watching, and so forth, in certain localities at certain times" (Smith, 2005: 224). Using Bakhtin again, Smith relates how these genres are constructed in "spheres of activity" (Bakhtin, 1986: 60; Smith, 2014: 227). Individuals participate in discourse, and their contributions are duplicated while at the same time constraining what people can speak or write. It "is regulated in various ways, each moment of discourse in action both reproduces and remakes it" (Smith, 2005: 224). As we shall see, I was not merely observing these discourses but also taking part in them. The text of this textually-mediated discourse is a "material object that can be reproduced in multiple different situations and can be therefore entered into a generalised and standardising organisation of what people do" (Smith, 2018: 4). What is also important to remember is that these texts are "to be seen as organizing a course of concerted social action. As an operative part of a social relation it is activated, of course, by the reader but its structuring effect is its own" (Smith, 2002: 121). To Smith (1999), the social and the agentic subject are not separate entities. Society and its people form together in "relational activities"

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and sense-making coordinated daily by practical, nonvoluntaristic actors encompassed in these relational undertakings that are both historically and locally situated.

More importantly, for this research, they often react to nonlocal textual relations of ruling. I want to continue to look at these texts that provide a material version of ideologies and ideas, as Smith argues. By working with them, I can "directly access the discourses that organise social relations" (Stanley, 2018: 52). I intend to consider how these nonlocal textual relations of ruling affected me and others in our local situation. I will continue this by examining these texts' proliferation and how they could have affected my local positioning previously mentioned as a before-soldier. For instance, how much the Southern and Southwestern cultures played a role in shaping the command structure, the military force, and truth itself through the previously mentioned men of Goldberg and Nichols. I had previously read about this regional cultural influence in *The American Civilizing Process,* along with metadiscourse as "local rhetorical resources" (Mennell, 2007; Hyland, 2017). I will explore more how culture influences policy later in the chapter when discussing cowboy and countryboy culture.

I began to consider how these relations of ruling affected my local situation with their use of texts. Owen Abbott uses James (1907), Mead (1934), and Dewey (1922), Husserl (1913) and Heidegger (1962) to portray how understanding of how human agency has moved away from considering our "primary mode of being in the world is not principally oriented in reasoned judgement and deliberative intentionality of action" (Abbott, 2019: 31). It is instead focused on our ability to act practically or pragmatically in the situations habitually or setting we find ourselves. There is a particular type of pragmatism (Dewey, 1922) that teaches us, as humans, that we usually "engage in a relatively unreflective form of action" (Emirbayer and Maynard, 2010: 227). Similar to Smith's (1999) description of "relational activities", Abbott (2019) sees interactions as relationally oriented between actors who are reliant on each other.

They create, alter and maintain social phenomena and "relational sociology must endeavour to capture and analyse the social world in interaction, which is to say as a process arising between social actors" (Crossley, 2011: 21). The next section will consider this new understanding of power and how power elites utilise their positions to propagate texts and discourse that relate interactionally to others. Furthermore, how individuals, including myself, take up these texts, as Smith says knowledge and power are not outside them and how these amalgamate to create the power systems that utilise them.

Turning Point 3

Rumsfeld had myriad ties to business, and much of his life was spent in or around the business world. When speaking of this life, one of his main fears is that the American people and Congress will remove one of the mechanisms he draws his power from and not increase defence spending (Morris et al., 2013). Suppose we replace Smith's discussion of theory's influence on sociology with the same understanding of how "economic man" influences social and truth systems. Here, these social scientists found an "economic man" with rationality, commitment to laissez-faire individualism, competitiveness and centring of the market (Marianne Ferber and Julie Nelson 1993; Nancy Folbre 1994). We observe how Rumsfeld's speech genre through the sphere of activity includes coordinating "the local practices of discourse, aligning the practical exercise of consciousnesses of participants. Perspectives and voices presenting alternative standpoints are subdued to the status of expressions or examples" from this corporate elite (Smith, 2014: 247). Rumsfeld's snowflakes always dictate this subduing and suppressive authoritative corporate voice. It is steeped in "economic man" (Beneria, 1999). This discourse is where "economic rationality is assumed to be the norm in human behaviour, and the way to ensure the healthy functioning of the competitive market" and is not selfless (Beneria, 1999: 64-65). These texts he proliferated

helped to author who I am and my story. The previous chapters have partly concerned how the self writes its own stories relationally to an ordering narrative.

With this in mind and my new grasp of power, we can understand how Rumsfeld's genres, snowflakes, and power reached and shaped me as I shaped myself. Rumsfeld endeavours for monologue, a person who has barred "polyphony" in favour of his own voice consistently being heard; it is a magisterial authorial voice, mentioned in the last chapters, that "strive[s] to centralize life into regimes of truth", leading to the "emergence of hegemony and monologicality" (Jungkunz, 2014: 36). Rumsfeld projects his truths and knowledge monologically across to many locations and into many minds. They aided him up the career ladder while further centralising life into a regime of truth that fit his corporate thinking. He knows the potential for power to flow upwards, and his response is to stamp it out.

Rumsfeld's speech is monologic to his own. The dialectic encompassing his sphere is dominated by what he calls "*Rumsfeld's Rules*", part of an actual title to one of his books (Rumsfeld, 2013). Politics, war, and business are the attributes that ruled his life, and they fit Mills's three. With his monologic approach, these are hard-wired for frames of capital and against others (Smith, 2003; Ferber and Nelson, 1993; Folbre, 1994). This controlled and controlling belief system can be located in his discussion of capital's importance in the film, his portrayal of the 'winning' of the Cold War, in which "the credit goes to the investment of billions of dollars over a long, sustained period of time by people who were carped at and criticized and said, 'oh, my goodness, you're warmongers'" (Morris et al., 2013). Rumsfeld utilised business and capitalist discourses *intertextually* to deliver an ideology as truth to the military, facilitating the shipment of myself and others across an ocean to fight in a war.

Rumsfeld has been characterised in this chapter as using this snowflakes of truth system, replete with the spheres of activity and speech genres of the corporate elite, along with other methods of coercion to overrule military professionals at the Pentagon relationally.

This overruling includes such things as armed services reorganisation, procurement of weapons, war intelligence and strategy procedure. His administration bypassed "military and CIA intelligence sources" to create "their own' inner circles' in order to impose their own highly politicized 'intelligence' to justify military conquest" (Petras, 2005; 83). Much of the power elite, particularly the multinational corporations (MNCs), powerfully backed Bush and Rumsfeld's empire-building (Petras, 2005). Rumsfeld helped further to accelerate the process of war into a business. President Eisenhower once warned against the "conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry" and its "potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power" that would "endanger our liberties or democratic processes" (Eisenhower, 1961).

However, I also have to consider how this discourse and its speech genres/spheres of activity are "activated by a particular reader, the text provides a set of instructions organizing the reader's selections from other texts and even from the local relevances of [their] life" (Smith, 2014: 240). These discourses had resonance in my own life, as mentioned in the research diary, where economic freedom was also my watchword. I dreamt of running my father's ranch like a business or leaving it all behind to become an international businessman. Here, we can observe how I am partly the author of my own life, and I can choose. There is a modicum of power in my decision-making, in what text or discourse I decide to take up.

In her well-known article on gender and history, Joan Scott discussed how "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes" and the "primary way of' signifying relationships of power" (Scott, 1986: 1067). If there is an alteration in the organisation of social relations, this always corresponds to a modification of societal representations. This relates to how "politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics" (Scott, 1986: 1070). It is important to remember that, to Scott, politics means more than power relations. It references "the 'external' influences on

conceptions of women and men that apparently have nothing to do with them universal or the human, for example, or of reason" (Scott, 2008: 1425). Its language cannot be reduced "to some known quantity of masculine or feminine, male or female" (Scott, 2010: 13). Rumsfeld built a truth of business masculinity out of his snowflakes, politics and position. He is aware of the potential for others to use power to counter his measures. Rumsfeld used this gendering to further construct from his *positionality*, mentioned previously in my thesis, to politics. He created a blizzard of his own truth across the US government and military.

Raewyn Connell and Julian Wood recognise a particular type of "transnational business masculinity" (Connell and Wood, 2005). Connell and Wood employ Roper's argument that "managerial masculinity has been superseded by professionalized finance-oriented management" (Roper, 1994; Connell and Wood, 2005: 351). This masculinity is where labour is not performed but "directed to other managers" who, in concert, use the power of the MNC that "deploy huge assets and affect large numbers of people" to "produce pressure on the local competitors" (Connell and Wood, 2005: 352; 358-59). This masculinity is observed as in a "strong position to claim hegemony in the gender order of the societies they dominate" (Connell and Wood, 2005: 362). Juanita Elias and Christine Beasley (2009) criticise this view as an essentially different conception of the "economic man" mentioned previously. They mention (Beneria, 1999: 68), who refers to Davos man as the "rational economic man gone global". More importantly to them, while acknowledging how transnational business masculinity operated "at a discursive level as a powerful ideal that has played an important role in shaping material processes associated with globalization" (Connell and Wood, 2005: 363). They and others see it as "more useful to focus on the discourses and ideas that have enabled the MNC to be viewed and constructed as the primary agent of neoliberal globalization" (Elias and Beaseley, 2009: 19). Rumsfeld and people like

him echoed much of these truths and knowledge claims through his snowflakes, truth and power system, which relationally ruled my life.

Michael Kimmel writes about how this globalisation has resulted in the steady proletarianisation of the local peasantries (Kimmel, 2010). This process happened as small skilled workers, farmers with small farms and other independent small producers transferred from survival and subsistence to more market criteria. During this development, they moved their conceptions of masculinity away from land ownership and economic independence, which are "increasingly transferred upward in the class hierarchy and outward to transnational corporations" (Kimmel, 2010: 143). In the West, this traditional farming masculinity is symbolised by "physical strength, control of nature, tenacity, hardship, toughness, independence and individualism" (Pini, 2017: 34). The notions of rural masculine, imagery of the farmer or the cowboy became the social norm. It ordered men how to do gender. There were "implications for the concrete practices of the masculine rural, by providing widely recognized cultural categories of appropriate masculinity" (Bell and Campbell, 2000: 541).

My grandparents farmed more traditionally, while my father has moved to business. What happened? American farmers have continued, to this day, to model themselves on this masculine ideal of self-employed agrarian. However, they also have added this entrepreneurial businessman, who has mobility with eyes toward getting ahead (Friedburger, 1988; 1989; Salamon, 1992; Walter, 1997). More contemporary studies have also added a new type of farmer: the sustainable one (Peter et al., 2000; Barlett, 2006; Coldwell, 2007). More recent scholarship presents these masculinities changing as farming welcomes collaboration and cooperation with particular experts in their decision-making. This is against the 'lone wolf' farmer who is self-sustaining and has independence, who in the past relied on their grit and physical strength (Bell et al., 2015). While this masculinity might seem more

amenable, these new masculinities seek to "more deeply entrench conventional farmers' dependence on chemical inputs and agribusiness products by promoting a process of deskilling, effectively alienating the farmer from the land" (Bell et al., 2015: 310). The land is then reimagined from "the source of sustenance, a power that demands respect and needs to be placated" to "a resource to be controlled and exploited" (Delaney, 1991: 267). This situation left me looking for a new life and somewhat different regimes of truth that are relationally ruled.

Eric Ramirez-Ferrero observes much of this situation in Oklahoma, where these industrial values and the growing use of technology in cultivating profoundly impact agriculture communities. My home state has "witnessed the disintegration of social relations and communities and a crisis of faith in institutions and values among rural residents…paying a high price for 'progress'" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005: 5). He argues for sympathy in how farmers respond to these crises and their actions as responses to the many cultural discourses at play. Because of this transformation to business, many males are experiencing their cultural ideas and practices being devalued, particularly their emotion of *pride*, often leading to destructive, harmful or disastrous consequences (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005). Seeing these emotions as culturally mediated by these discourses, he employed Rosaldo's "embodied thoughts" (Rosaldo, 1984: 143) to illustrate how the social, not just the individual differences and power, do not allow us the same freedom in our decision-making.

Ramirez-Ferrero includes family as traditional against the new business or industrial aspect. Yet, he sees both aspects in men's and women's thinking during times of financial crisis on their farm. They struggle for solutions and meaning from a system whose fundamental values, guidelines, and, thus, truth and knowledge claims they consider altered. Studying these farmers, Ramirez-Ferrero contends that this pride is partially connected to the community's "evaluative criteria of individualism that have come to prominence with

industrial agriculture—and to the particular positioning of farmers at this historic moment regarding American notions about manhood" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005: 120). There is now freedom to have individual success or failure based on their own capabilities and resolve. Farmers carry the business label of "bad manager" if they have struggled with their finances.

These values attached to the industrial were maintained by "beliefs and practices whose development were founded and predicated on a marked separation between the public and private spheres of influence and, thus, gender roles" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005: 114). This large-scale agriculture is run now by MNCs that have displaced the independent farmer, something not being felt by most older generations. Their sons worked hard their whole lives, hoping to pass on the family farm or ranch and retire with their legacy secured, but now leave "little but a legacy of foreclosures, economic insecurity, and debt" (Kimmel, 2017: 245). These situations mirrored my own experience. During this time, I was "not principally oriented in reasoned judgement and deliberative intentionality of action" (Abbott, 2019: 31). I did not use critical thinking to discover alternative truth and power/knowledge systems to connect. My response to the political discourse and relations of ruling at play was to find one of the strongest. This perceived lack of power I felt is where I felt unable to author or control much of my situation, and is how I found myself as the before-soldier joining the military.

Turning Point 4

In 2000, Bush walked onto the US national stage and captured much attention in my region:

wearing his boots and Stetson, posing with his horses, leaning on the rail of his cattle yards, clearing brush, and striding out across his land, Bush uses the imagery of rural life to portray not just a persona of authority and control but masculine persona of authority and control (Campbell, Bell and Finney, 2006: 1).

During this time, a famous cartoon series called *Doonesbury* depicted Bush "solely with a cowboy hat, bodiless, floating in the air, reducing Bush to this icon of rural masculinity"

(Campbell, Bell and Finney, 2006: 6). These symbols of power, be they urban or rural, feminine or masculine, are often contentious, for contention is nearly always what power is all about (Campbell, Bell and Finney, 2006). Wendy Christensen and Myra Ferree write on how Bush used this binary gendered imagery in the run-up to the Iraq war and how these images were contested between pro-war and anti-war factions (Christensen and Ferree, 2008).

Furthermore, I located myself within his stories when Bush came along, displaying this political imagery. I was acting relationally and narratively to his perceived truth of "country masculinity", as my peers did. It helped me with "belonging" (Desmond, 2007: 88). This imagining is a metadiscourse, mentioned in the previous chapter (Hyland, 2005; 2009; 2017). It is for a readership in how we use a language for our readers, relating to *the reader* in my thesis, founded on estimating the best way to help them understand what is being said (Hyland, 2009; 2017). For Hyland, it covers our expressions in self-reflection utilised in negotiating meaning between action in a text and assisting us in expressing "a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular discourse community" (Hyland, 2005: 37). Bush tapped into this "country masculinity" in his portrayal of the "American Cowboy", one who operates as his own "moral compass" rather than being answerable to any official institution. It is a place where the open prairie is home rather than any city or town, in mythical opposition to the urban, "the European, the woman, and the gentleman, as well as to the dangerous 'Indians' and other threats against which he was made their rude but effective protector" (Christensen and Ferree, 2008: 292).

With its truth and knowledge claims, this metadiscourse captured me in concert with those around me, as I revered Bush and *prided* myself on performing like my admired peers. Referring back to how I continually told stories of my grandfather, thus reproducing male dominance within the family, this patriarchal ordering in my mind went to Bush (Ferguson,

1999). I judged him to be like the trusted mentor close to my own family. The "cowboy masculinity" statured national news with gendered discourse in the prelude to the war and its debate, with it being the "most common gendered image" (Christensen and Ferree, 2008). It evoked meanings of "lawlessness, crudeness, and isolation" to the anti-war speakers while having connotations of "being a plainspoken American, enforcing the law, and spreading civilization" to the pro-war types (Christensen and Ferree, 2008: 298). The authors predicted that these binaries would correlate to the utilisation of metaphors of gender since they representatively dichotomise the field of politics. They found that these gendered images were "more likely to be used in articles that present primarily one side of the argument" rather than a debate that contains both anti-war and pro-war discourse and actors (Christensen and Ferree, 2008: 302).

Bush was not himself born into much of these discourses, as he was raised in Connecticut to a family with deep roots in the northeastern US and attended boarding school and university there (Bush, 2010). Bush, a political elite, was conceived into the political dynasty of his father, a US president and grandfather congressman. He spent part of his childhood in Texas, where his father launched the career he would eventually have. There, he had a *Cowboy Conservativism* influence with its roots in Texas and its politicians, partially built and utilised by Ronald Reagan and his father, Bush Senior (Cunningham, 2010). Reagan connected with audiences in Texas by exploiting the cowboy persona with its mentioned individualism and juxtaposition against the urban East. Cunningham writes about the history of conservatism in my region (I was born in Texas and lived right across the border in Oklahoma). It traces conservativism in the area through Republican politicians such as Reagan and Bush Senior, as well as the members of the Democratic party and their failures in Jimmy Carter and his presidency, as well as other local figures who helped shape the movement (Cunningham, 2010). It tells of how Texas moved from a strongly Democratic

state to a strong Republican one, much like my neighbouring home state, Oklahoma. It discusses how Republicans used symbols potent in American culture, such as the cowboy, to attract votes (Cunningham, 2010).

Leigh Clemons refers to this as "performing culture" (Clemons, 2008). Bush captured many in my area with his class of conservativism that mixed a business brand with rural cowboys, including myself. Clemons writes about how we can learn from Texas the "importance of performance in creating and maintaining a cultural identity that, both powerful and fragile, constantly repeats and changes our understanding of history, myth, and memory—and of identity itself" (Clemons, 2008: 123). Texans built a political connection between cowboys and Reagan. However, the frontier also "indicates the extent to which iconography shaped the relationship that developed between Reagan and conservatives" where he became a "disgruntled maverick…citizen-candidate, angry about government corruption and incompetence, nostalgic for frontier and free-market individualism, a champion of strength in the face of liberal weaknesses, and an advocate for traditional values" (Cunningham, 2010: 211, 161).

The frontier and its history did not 'give' Reagan and later politicians a script they followed. However, what happens with any user of cultural mythology is that they carefully select what to read and then rewrite the myth, conferring to "their own needs, desires, and political projects" (Slotkin, 1998: 658). For Bush, in a sort of previously mentioned "morality play" (Andrews, 2009), Bin Laden replaced "the frontier's weathered parchment paper reward notices for Billy the Kid or Jesse James" (Melzer, 2012: 43). He used discourses from frontier masculinity, one that is fought for and revered "as the bedrock of the American frontier—individual rights and responsibilities" (Melzer, 2012: 28). Frontier masculinity links to the current American gun culture (Spitzer, 2021)—past US presidents, such as Theodore Roosevelt, had embraced it, with his frail upbringing making him insecure,

perceiving threats to America and his manhood (Melzer, 2012). A frontier is a place of restorative violence, even healing (Kimmel, 2017: 178). It includes Frederick Turner's "Frontier thesis", where out of Jeffersonian democracy, farmer pioneers on the American frontier formed a new Jacksonian democracy (Turner, 1920).

This thesis also deals with American people and their everyday lives, particularly our lives in Oklahoma and Texas. The stereotype of the "middle-class American is a hardworking, gun-owning handyman living in a large wooden house in a far-flung suburb, driving a four-ton SUV" along with Bush and his teams' "use of such expressions as 'dead or alive' and 'smoking out of holes' resonates in the US…and helped the President achieve dizzying heights in the polls" (Byers, 2002). This frontier masculinity ties in with the frontier thesis of how these pioneers escaped "Eastern control" or the government to develop a distinctively individualistic and risk-taking character fostered by Ayn Rand. They were made American by settling on this frontier. The history of foreign policy in America might be seen as an unending struggle to secure different frontiers (Byers, 2002).

This frontier imagining "erases the presence of anyone but white Americans on the frontier", such as "African American cowboys, soldiers, and homesteaders, as well as many other groups comprising a sizable portion of the population in western states and territories" both historical and today (Melzer, 2012: 33, 43). Bush utilised this metadiscourse of masculinities as "local rhetorical resources" to construct a local political relationship with US citizens in my region and others (Hyland, 2017). It was comparable to being a masculine protector towards their partner and everyone in their household, not superior, not merely acts of repression and domination, but how they will sacrifice for us and others (Messerschmidt, 2015). These metadiscourses were used as political propaganda. Jason Stanley observes political propaganda as having a structure that selects a political ideal and utilises it in manipulating backing for a different political ideal (Stanley, 2016). This political propaganda

led me and many others to perceive Bush as "the morally superior and culturally ideal global patriarchal hegemonic masculine individual who would lead the international effort to protect the world" (Messerschmidt, 2015: 112). This position is what James Messerschmidt observed from analysing Bush's speeches, and also, a "white man saving brown men, women, and children from brown men" (Messerschmidt, 2015: 118).

Like Rumsfeld, Bush monologically portrayed themselves as *selves and the other*, mentioned in previous chapters, as a self against the other in dialectics to deaden dialogue and "erase the division between voices". This erasure of "voices" causes "deep-seated (infinite) contextual meanings to disappear" (Bakhtin, 1986: 162). These cultural mythologies and masculinities help to foster an "aggrieved entitlement" in the US (Kimmel, 2017). They justified "revenge against those who have wronged you; it is compensation for humiliation"; it is "a gendered emotion, a fusion of that humiliating loss of manhood and the moral obligation and entitlement to get it back" (Kimmel, 2017: 76). Returning to the notion of *pride* being restored, Bush used these gendered emotions and these masculinities to act out the rural cowboy on the frontier protecting us all. This imagery helped him 'win' the White House in the 2000 election. It won my own vote that year with the hope of restoring this pride to the area. Being a part of a political dynasty, Bush could use his position. This utilisation of power is somewhat different from Rumsfeld, who subdued and suppressed. Bush selected certain metadiscourses and combined them in political propaganda to connect to certain localities to create truth and knowledge claims that feed into a regime of truth and build ruling relations while drawing from and adding his ideas to this truth and knowledge/power system. There was not so much proliferation but the connection to individual claims. I drew on these discourses as a before-soldier and after, even in this thesis, adopting the "white saviour" much like Bush did.

In the 2000 US Presidential election, when Bush was the Republican nominee, he assembled a foreign policy advisory panel that included three groups (LaFeber, 2009). The first was the neoconservatives led by Paul Wolfowitz, the second was the realists, and the third was a group of one: Colin Powell. These realists were primarily in agreement on the significance of Israel, investing in technology in the military, and "having regimes that were stable and pro-American", having little interest in the idea of expanding democracy" (LaFeber, 2009: 80). The business, rural and cowboy masculinities and discourse were utilised in relations of ruling to build their truth power/knowledge systems and fed their political propaganda (Byers, 2002; Turner, 1920). The rest of the world usually held little interest as they built their power systems with their truths, apart from when it threatened the US or could be opened for business, letting CEOs or soldiers become the new pioneers. The globe was remade into a place more welcoming to these new people of the frontier with the formation of the World Trade Organisation, an institution based around the free-market principles of the 'Washington Consensus' (Byers, 2002).

All these truth and knowledge claims led to a power, which helped bring about January 2002, when Bush defined Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as the 'axis of evil'. Later, in June of that year, he issued what would become known as the Bush Doctrine (Bush, 2002; Jervis, 2003). From the beginning of the administration, these realists had been trying to remove Saddam Hussein from Iraq. They used 9/11 to "take advantage of the opportunity offered by the terrorist attack to go after Saddam immediately" (Messerschmidt, 2015; Woodward, 2002: 49). The Bush doctrine had four pillars: maintaining a superpower status, using pre-emptive war to stop a possible attack, building 'coalitions of the willing', and promoting democracy when doing all of the above (LaFeber, 2009; Rhodes, 2003). Bush pushed these discourses, metanarratives, masculinities, and his worldview of good and evil; this was coupled with his father's (Bush Senior) jilted place in the story, all the while being pushed

along to war by the other realists to create this doctrine (Messerschmidt, 2015; Bush, 2010). Only one power elite in the administration had a difference of opinion to push back.

Only one of three men I have looked at and discussed served during Vietnam or any war as a soldier: Colin Powell (Edwards and King, 2007; Dyson, 2014; Preston, 2014). Of the other three, President George W. Bush served in the reserves. Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense, served in the Navy before the Vietnam era and never in a war. The Vietnam War's influence continually surfaced in my research for this chapter, namely the Vietnam syndrome. In the period after the war, this syndrome became more known. There was a shift in public opinion against interventions or hostilities, especially against the people in developing countries (Klare, 1981). Over time, the term evolved into a shorthand for the Americans, who worried about a nation in sharp decline that would never win a war again (Buley, 2007). I will look at this war in more detail in the next chapter.

Vietnam syndrome hung over much decision-making in the US military with the repeated mantra: no more Vietnams. Powell served in Vietnam and adopted a somewhat different type of masculinity in his thinking on the coming war. This thinking also shaded Reagan's Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, when he developed "six major tests should be applied before civilian officials blithely deployed men and women into battle" (LaFeber, 2009: 73). Firstly, the "engagement" needs to be "deemed vital to our national interest or that of our allies", secondly, the US military should only engage "with the clear intention of winning", thirdly, if American lives are at stake, "we should have clearly defined political and military obligations", fourthly, the number of forces and their purpose of fighting ought to be "continually reassessed and adjusted if necessary" fifthly, soldiers should have national support when they go overseas to fight, having "the support of the American people and... Congress", and finally, and perhaps most importantly, "the commitment of US forces to combat should be a last resort" (Weinberger, 1984). Colin Powell would adapt

Weinberger's doctrine and add another point: "before troops were committed to battle, US officials must have worked out an 'exit strategy', in a definite time frame, so the soldiers would not be expected to stay anywhere and fight indefinitely" (LaFeber, 2009: 76).

These guidelines would become the famous Powell Doctrine that represents what Peter et al. refer to as Powell's "dialogic masculinity" as opposed to a monologic one of the realists (Peter, et al., 2000). Dialogic masculinity is "open to talking about making mistakes…expressing emotions…change and criticism…less controlling attitude toward machines and the environment, and…different measures of work and success" (Peter, et al., 2000: 216). Powell could have been thinking with previously mentioned "possible worlds" to a more "open text" (Eco, 1979). He could have utilised a thinking power derived from consensus and hearing the room, working with others to get their insight and understanding to work towards more critical goals together. He could have called on truth and knowledge claims from his past truth and power/knowledge systems maintained through their relations of ruling. Powell worked in this manner and voiced concerns early but, in the end, fell silent and stayed that way for the most part. He ceased advocating the doctrine or was unable to. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Powell was also outside the corporate elite or capitalist class (Domhoff, 1967; 2007). Powell and I stayed silent and followed Bush and Rumsfeld's masculinities, discourse, politics, capital, and truth, helping them build their power and letting them lead us to war.

Zygmunt Bauman observed this new age as "liquid modernity" from the modernity before these institutions and order (Bauman, 2007; 2013). In this form of modernity, there are no reference points for individuals nor codes, either cultural or social. As this chapter illustrates, there are some codes, but they can lead us astray. This capitalist class and their truths and knowledge claims pushed the transformation of a society of producers into a society of consumers. They now have little that would aid them in building their lives to any

standard, allowing them to insert themselves into the ready-built narratives of citizens and class (Bauman, 2007; 2013).

Carol Taylor offers theoretical ideas from those who aspire to cultivate educational practices to dispute or supplement how market and economic imperatives are privileged in higher education (Taylor, 2017). In addition to the critical humanism considered in this thesis, there is posthumanism that breaks down much of the "malestream" of knowledge that discipline knowing and opens a vast range of resources offered to us in social science pedagogy, practice and research, unlocking new, varied and multifaceted pathways to knowledge (Taylor, 2016). Combine with a formulation of a posthumanist *Bildung* and its:

> notions of care for the 'world' as a separate other available to 'us' (humans) for 'our' benefit with an embodied practice of accountability which registers a continual awareness of our relational becoming-with human and nonhuman others with whom we share this world (Taylor, 2017: 431).

This "posthuman educational frame" does away with the many binaries mentioned in this thesis as it is about "rethinking agency beyond the individual, such that agency is enlarged, shared and confederate" (Taylor, 2017: 433). These educational and pedagogical practices need to be taken on board in education and life to help move beyond the society that has trapped us in chaos and consumerism.

What these men did was the opposite. With their constellations of truth and power, they created disorder. Fast forward to the war in Iraq, Rumsfeld said it was security he was seeking that compelled him to declare "the war (Iraq) will be won when Americans feel secure" (Rumsfeld as quoted in Bauman, 2007: 8). It was security never reached on many levels thanks in part to this administration's efforts. Ultimately, these three, coupled with war and capital, liquified solutions. The Bush administration left the world with "deregulation, resulting in planetary lawlessness, and armed violence" that fed "each other, mutually

reinforce and reinvigorate one another; as another ancient wisdom warns, *inter arma silent leges* (when arms speak, laws keep silent)" (Bauman, 2007: 8). The world after the Bush presidency is told in his own words:

> I reflected on everything we were facing. Over the past few weeks, we had seen the failure of America's two largest mortgage entities, the bankruptcy of a major investment bank, the sale of another, the nationalization of the world's largest insurance company, and now the most drastic intervention in the free market since the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt. At the same time, Russia had invaded and occupied Georgia, Hurricane Ike had hit Texas, and America was fighting a two-front war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This was one ugly way to end the presidency (Bush, 2010: 843).

Conclusion

This thesis has written considerably on the whys and hows of my going to war, my decisions, and the structure around those decisions. In this chapter, I considered how power influenced those decisions. I traced the choices made through commands and looked at the people who made them. This meant focusing on power and how it has structured these decisions, which initially meant analysing top-down with Mills's understanding. I found a different type of power in analysing my orders, the command structure and the people behind both. At first Foucauldian, a place where power is multifaceted and emanates from nowhere and everywhere into regimes of truth, I incorporated a power in the manner Dorothy Smith conceived. In this ideation of power, relations of the ruling are sustained by organising praxes and textually-mediated discourse. The reader activates these relations in relational undertakings that are both locally and historically situated, but there are also nonlocal textual relations of ruling. These local and nonlocal textual relations of ruling were looked at in the final sections as the truths, discourse and metadiscourse were analysed around Rumsfeld, Bush, and Powell.

The facet of the diamond I discovered was the social captured previously throughout my thesis. Here, I found how it constructed power. In this chapter, I provided a road map to determine how it accomplished it. Firstly, power elites rule relationally through their *positionality* or, in this case, gendered positions in society. Rumsfeld monologically ruled through the proliferation of an *intertextual* blizzard of his own truth and knowledge claims and an authorial voice built from the truth and power/knowledge system built of relations of ruling of business, politics and war-making. Rumsfeld and Bush both monologically ruled through an intertextually constructed *self and other*, which to them was more often than not an *authorial voice* of self against others. However, Bush started from a higher relative political position in the system, based on his political connections with both his family and his own. He also used an intertextually targeted metadiscourse to build truth and knowledge claims to connect to constituents in how they became *readers* of his texts to many Americans on his rise to one of the highest offices of power. Powell's power came from a rise up the military ladder. It was more dialogical with political machinations that were much more closed-door and did not survive the realists' power system onslaught in the administration when it came time to stop a war. These applications of power are more straightforward when you do not have to take others into account when it is streamlined to specified monological thinking. Powell's take on a dialogical power may have got him far, but his masculinity deferred to another type. Much of this masculinity must be dropped, and femininities and their truth and knowledge claims adopted. The final chapter will look at what we call memory and remembrance, not reliving the past but conceiving it through present-day understandings. This understanding will be accomplished by looking at other forms of remembrance, such as public memorials.

Chapter 7: Stipulation of Memories and Me: Local Place and Time Through Two War Memorials

In this chapter, I explore the final facet of my CSA. Although I have touched on remembrance earlier, I examine in detail here the ways we remember in the present and its implications for the kind of autoethnography I am promoting. The chapter starts with different societies remembering differently, then moves from an understanding of memory as personal to understanding it as a collective matter, around Sontag's idea that "collective memory is not a remembering but a stipulating" (Sontag, 2003: 85). This understanding is different from most autoethnography, which as I discussed in earlier chapters understands remembering primarily as reliving the past, seeing it as configuring the past through present-time concerns and understandings. First, I focus on private remembrance by considering a country's wars, what Pierre Nora writes on how each society remembers its wars and soldiers differently, and the distinctions he draws between private and public forms of remembrance in the French context. I will then look at some war memorials in my hometown. The first was dedicated after what was supposed to be the conclusion of my own war, and the other has the look of a historical memorial that was actually dedicated considerably afterwards. I examine what is written on them and survey how the image of the soldier has been mimetically portrayed in American society. Examining them in this manner helps me understand how these monuments arrived there in that time and place in their current form by exploring what is written on them and when it was written. Along the way, I include how other people see war, recognising that my understanding of this takes place through the mediation of my own memories. The emphasis will be on how these people and their wars are remembered privately versus publicly and the truths and knowledges they construct. I then discuss the

affect and effect of these relationships on me privately, including the role of silence and forgetting in what we call remembering.

In the next section, I scrutinise, in the same manner, the other war memorial, that of a Confederate soldier located near the first and significantly pre-dating it. Here, I move to public remembrance and how these facts, stories, and narratives are interpreted, combined and disseminated in a collective public sphere to stipulate remembrance, knowledge and truth. This section looks at how *war* becomes *our wars* through public remembrance and how all of the above gets 'written down' publicly on memorials and in other public ways of commemorating and memorialising, juxtaposed against how actual memories are much more complicated and specific. This type of remembering represents a particular point of view, while others are forgotten and lost. I consider my wartime African-American friend Burghardt, who died young in an accident after the war we shared had ended. This will include what is absent from the commemorative landscape through a process of social forgetting. I will draw on how the American South dealt with the remembering and forgetting landscape, whom they chose to exalt and whom they chose to bury. The conclusion draws ideas in the chapter together to explore how, in what ways, we construct our truth and knowledge claims systemically in the present, taking remembrance fully into consideration adds to the CSA through a documents of life approach. Recognising the complexities will also foreground forgetting as the companion to remembering. Finally, it also notices how the self shrunk in this chapter and its implications.

Nora's *Les Lieux de Mémoire* and Their Time and Place

Having previously discussed the analytical turns of social science, Pierre Nora noticed such a turn in his own discipline of history. Here, the subject began "questioning its own traditional structure, its own conceptual and material resources, its operating procedures and social means of distribution" (Nora, 1989: 10). This questioning initiated a lively debate in the

social sciences that has lasted for thirty years, for what Nora referred to as a "historiographical movement" became the broader historiographical turn (Nora, 1989; Yanhong, 2020). This turn also coincided with the "memory boom", which Nora believed had considerable influence from Holocaust research, as he quipped, "whoever says memory, says Shoah". However, Jay Winter had other ideas about its roots, which I share, deeming its beginnings much more multifaceted (Winter, 2001).

Drawing from the work of Maurice Halbwachs, who coined the term collective memory, Nora compares and contrasts history to memory, as distinct from Halbwachs, who saw no reason for comparison as he thinks history is static and collective memory as evolving (Nosova, 2021). Halbwachs felt that not enough attention was being given to what he referred to as "social frames": the social milieux we remember. The private individual and their public social contexts were not separate, working apart from each other; instead, the individual's memory "could not function without words and ideas, instruments the individual has not himself invented but appropriated from his milieu" (Halbwachs, [1941]1992: 51). Nora developed this further with ideas on two competing remembrances of the past: history and memory. Traditionally, there is the memory. This understanding is how societies have conceived themselves for centuries to transmit their values down through the generations from one to the next to preserve some of themselves and their groups' identity, helping them to ultimately understand each other as individuals and as societies (Nora, 1989). On the other hand, history is a more modern phenomenon, "an intellectual and secular production, [which] calls for analysis and criticism" and reconstructs the natural memory process under the watchful eye of academic and state institutions (Nora, 1989: 9). It is how Nora conceived nations remembering in the late twentieth century.

Nora began writing *Les Lieux de Mémoire* as France felt the effects of what he and others (Mendras, 1988) refer to as the Second French Revolution in 1965 (Nora, 1996). This

came about at the end of the Third Republic period of France (1870-1940). *Le Petit Lavisse*, based on Renan's *What is a Nation?* became the gospel of the republic, contributing considerably to the forming of French collective memory for many subsequent generations (Ho Tai, 2001; Renan, [1882]1990; Nora, 1989; Provencher and Eilderts, 2016; Yanhong, 2020). In this era, school textbooks and academic research became interrelated, with the former, particularly *Le Petit Lavisse,* tasked with training "the memory of millions of French boys and girls" (Nora, 1989: 20).

The Second Revolution is associated with the end of the Second World War. It was when the French colonial empire was being dismantled, and the nation experienced a loss in status as a world power (Joutard, 1996). This process of decolonisation profoundly shook the nation, transforming its place in world affairs and dispatching the monarchical idea with de Gaulle (Nora, 1996). In this manner, the "French Revolution and its traditions" became "the determining element in the construction of national identity through references to narratives of the past" (Nora, 1996: xiii). Nora writes about how this national identity became a consciousness "based on a teleological view of the nation as a pedagogical authority in the representation of its values" (Nora, 1996: xiii).

What did Nora think replaced this collective identity? He felt it was substituted with a "loosely organized system of disparate commemorative languages, which assume a different kind of relationship with the past: one that is more elective than imperative and that is plastic, alive, and subject to perpetual elaboration" (Nora, 1998: 614). A growing emphasis on the cultural and local standpoints destabilised this past collective identity, creating a new type of commemoration, a novel *lieu de mémoire* (Nora, 1984). This place of memory was not controlled by state interests and was based on patriotic and national values in the past. It came from below, reflecting "special regional, corporative, or institutional interests that

transformed the old artisanal approach to commemoration into a veritable industry" (Nora, 1998: 617).

Nora writes on *lieu de mémoire* being pieces of history torn away from its movement, "like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded" (Nora, 1989:12). The collective identity of "memory-nation" has moved to an "era of commemoration", where collective groups are "scattered threads…everywhere and nowhere" (Nora, 1998: 627). This atomisation of general memory into a more private one with obligations to remember indicates that there is less memory "experienced collectively" and "the more it will require individuals to undertake to become themselves memory-individuals" (Nora, 1989: 16). This "psychologization of memory" means every individual in a group or the much larger nation feels the need to pay a debt in memory. This conception of memory and history is essential to how I conceive my area and nation in my CSA.

Les lieux de mémoire concern how groups of people consider moving through these ideas of identity, *patrimoine,* and memory; it is how they exploit and employ a symbol and how time reconfigures them to make them disappear and appear again in different political circumstances. François Hartog concentrates on the *lieu* to note that it is a rhetorical usage of "locus" (Hartog, 1995). Nora's idea is similar in that "*lieu*" "is not simply a 'place,' but is constructed and continually reconstructed again" (Yanhong, 2020: 157). These *les lieux de mémoire* have three roles: material, symbolic, and functional (Nora, 1989). Although the construction of the sites of memory seems to be a universal social act, they have a transitory nature. Moreover, so are the groups of people who build and maintain these sites; over and over, these individuals have congregated at specific places "in front of particular sites of memory, to seek meaning in vast events in the past and try to relate them to their own smaller networks of social life" (Winter, 2001: 324). This chapter considers *les lieux de mémoire* of my locality and how I connect with them through identity, patrimony, and memory.

Halbwachs, like Nora, also believed memory is continually reconstructed. One of these customs is how people gather with each other to remember together members of their group who passed long ago. In this instance, "the past is stored and interpreted by social institutions", be they family, local or state (Coser, 1992: 24). Such groups must congregate to keep these memories alive or risk extinction. Halbwachs remarks on how our autobiographical memories fade over long periods and might be lost altogether without encountering these previous relations that help us remember (Halbwachs, [1941]1992).

Halbwachs also asks, "how can currents of collective thought whose impetus lies in the past be re-created, when we can grasp only the present?" (Halbwachs, [1950]1980: 80). Nora, like Halbwachs, held that present generations only become conscious of themselves when they counterweigh their present to their own constructed past. The past is constantly reconceived and reconfigured in present circumstances to become "a sort of recycled, up-dated past, realized as the present through such welding and anchoring" (Nora, 1989: 9). These national histories from the past are written with an outlook to the future, with hope both hidden and visible. This futurist perspective includes three primary characteristics: the promise of the Enlightenment of the never-ending march of progress, a glorious revolution leading to an even greater society and the restoration of a glorious past (Nora, 1998). These histories are written for what a group or a nation wants to be. Nora estimates it is historiography down to the historian's level and above to the nation. We more than often choose a past that looks forward to the present and the future.

Nora notes that whatever past is chosen, "the present selection makes sense only for the present moment" (Nora, 1998: 637). Although he felt local interests pushed us to this new type of commemoration, it is also important to emphasise who is selected. This is, more often than not, the current societal elites. Nora borrows from Hobsbawm in discussing how politicians use present moments of commemoration to establish legitimacy in their rule

(Hobsbawm, [1983] 2012; Nora, 1998). It is a "top-down approach" that "proclaims the significance of sites of memory as a materialization of national, imperial, or political identity" (Winter, 2001: 316). Besides establishing legitimacy or authority, these "invented traditions" have two other purposes: to indoctrinate values, beliefs, and behavioural practices and institute or symbolise social cohesion (Hobsbawm, [1983] 2012; Connerton, 1989). As Barry Schwartz has shown, for instance, Abraham Lincoln as a figure in America has undergone many changes through the ages, building with each generation selecting distinctive versions of him in different ways, minor and major, noting it "as a constructive process as opposed to a retrieval process" (Schwartz, 1990: 105).

Like *les lieux de mémoire,* these invented traditions are always made in the present, relationally ruling to the current political climate and circumstances, with an outlook to the future. These three perspectives of histories are written relationally to a place and people who selected their own truths from the past in the present for the future. This understanding is integral to this chapter. However, Nora has been criticised for not paying enough attention to the local and colonial, which this chapter will endeavour to do (Ho Tai, 2001). Therefore, I begin by remembering the 2003 Iraq War, with an understanding of it as relational and, in the present, from a particular American perspective.

Bryan County War Memorial

In the town I was raised in, Durant, Oklahoma, the Bryan County courthouse sits imposingly over the city centre area. On its grounds, it has two war memorials. The oldest is a Confederate soldier statue, the only soldier statue in Oklahoma, erected in 1917 (Felder, 2017). The other was built more recently, dedicated in 2005 and done in a black granite wall that lists locals killed or missing in action (KIA or MIA). I will comment on the details written on these *lieux de mémoire* within a documents of life approach to understand how and when these monuments arrived in this present location and period. I begin with the more

recent memorial with the roll call of names. The message or sign is presented here in the **Book Antiqua** font. Before this list, it reads:

> **Killed or Missing in Action / "Lest we forget, freedom is not free.**
>
> **Remember our Bryan County veterans for the sacrifice they made."**
>
> **Below this are engraved those veterans killed in World War I, World War**
>
> **II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Operation Iraqi Freedom**

I will consider the other signage throughout the chapter as I unpack the meaning conveyed and the history of these specific monuments that came to be in their present place and time. I will be referring to the monument with the names as the Bryan County War Memorials or BCWM (link in Appendix 5) and the Confederate Soldier Memorial as Bryan County Civil War Memorial or BCCWM (link in Appendix 6).

In the last chapter, I wrote about how I positioned my story relationally within narratives of masculinities of place and time and others, moving me to join the military. These also aided in shaping the soldier I would eventually become. The operation of these narratives and others reflect Cynthia Enloe's militarisation work and how the military exploits existing cultural forms, morphing them to meet their current requirements (Enloe, 2007). The Bryant County monument's message includes the words **freedom** twice, along with **sacrifice**. In the latter case, the war, most often called the Iraq War, was deemed **Operation Iraqi Freedom** when Bush authorised it. This was done at the end of a meeting with his commanders in the White House situation room. From there, he called on these cultural formations and pronounced, "For the peace of the world and benefit and freedom of the Iraqi people, I hereby give the order to execute **Operation Iraqi Freedom**. May God Bless the troops" (Tyler, 2003). Here, the words of freedom are intermixed with others of God, peace of the world. These words flow not only from Bush but also the military and back into it, something Samuel Huntington noticed of its influences in the same period as Mills

(1956) did when he noted how "military men, (women), and institutions continued to wield significant influence and authority" (Huntington, 1957: 456). However, Huntington saw a struggle between conservatism, liberalism and civilian control over the military differently than Mills, as he wrote of the importance of the culture and values of the military in American society.

These ideas feed into what Ebel writes, amalgamating from Bellah and Huntington (1967) on an American civil religion. The term "civil religion" couples the forging of a community with the "orienting ethic of collectivism, order, and **sacrifice** for a higher good" from the morality of the military (Ebel, 2012: 228). Here, there is an interrelationship between this morality and a roadmap of ritual in ideas (**freedom**), mythic figures (Lincoln), symbols (the flag), and events (the Boston Tea Party). Like the American Experiment narrative (see Appendix 7), it runs as part of an undercurrent of much military thought, which feeds into an American imagination. This civil religion provides a path that would "include and exclude communities, reflect and distort histories and captures truth or lets it escape" (Ebel, 2012: 226). Ebel applied the stories of former soldiers Charles Whittlesey and Gary Powers to affirm persuasively that the soldier represents the "fullest embodiment of American civil religion" (Ebel, 2012: 227). Here is where **freedom is not free**. **Lest we forget sacrifice**d for by "brave and visionary men and women" from all classes, creeds and races and created equally (Ebel, 2012). This soldier stands at the centre of an American civil religion. As Catherine Lutz observes, the soldier is highly featured in American culture as:

> emotionally disciplined, vigorous, and hardworking. By definition, then, the civilian is weak, cowardly, self-centered, materialistic, and wealthy. The civilian is soft, lacking experience with both physical discipline that hardens muscles and with the hard facts of death and evil that the soldier faces down (Lutz, 2001: 228-229).

Like Beauvoir once noted about the metanarrative of woman, that it "is thoroughly indoctrinated with common notions that endow masculine passion with splendour and make a shameful abdication of feminine sex feeling", the soldier is endowed with what it is not (Beauvoir, [1949]1956: 378).

From my particular perspective as a former American soldier, I perceive another undercurrent to this American mythmaking. When Bush blessed the troops with his authorisation, it flowed from ideas from the nineteenth century from missionaries, artists, academics, and tourists who flocked to the biblical Holy Land. They returned with a vision of the United States as Israel born anew: a new promised land for a chosen people (Davis, 1996). These Americans came home to construct a national identity from the actual landscape of Palestine and Syria, appropriating this "sacred terrain" to build such spectacles as Palestine Park in Chautauqua, New York, a scale model of Palestine with all the sights of the Holy Land. This holy topography became a place where the ideological debates of the day were often resolved (Davis, 1996). This mythmaking is part of America's foundational myths (Hughes, 2004).

These myths helped to forge a Protestantism as "the religion of the state" with all the rituals, language and culture of a nation (Mueller-Fahrenholz, 2007: 20). This Christian culture has led many in the United States to believe that "God has chosen the American people for special blessings and privileges in the world; or for a special and redeeming role on the stage of world history" (Hughes, 2004: 6). These are the myths created in American society. Barthes observes myth as "a system of communication, that it is a message…a mode of signification" (Barthes, [1957]1972: 107). For Barthes, myth appropriates, from which a wealth of history provides story elements. However, generally, "myth prefers to work with poor, incomplete images" (Barthes, [1957]1972: 125). It empties previous meanings from these signs.

Americans in that then-present moment were able to transport Palestine, the actual place, to a park, emptying its history and culture, giving birth to its version of the Holy Land, and projecting their own meanings onto it, much like Halbwachs wrote (Halbwachs, 1950). This understanding relates to how Keith Basso writes on how Native Americans (Western Apache) in the American Southwest use the landscape to tell their stories and truths: how their history, culture and ancestors sit in places (Basso, 1996). The crucial thing to remember about this mythmaking is that it is done with "the present difficulties" in mind (Barthes, [1957]1972: 76). Representations such as the soldier and others are thereby fed into political myths that have fostered an American Exceptionalism where the binaries of "right against wrong, virtue against vice, and democracy against tyranny" are called upon in the battle that substantiates the US in the fight of "Civilization v. Barbarism" (Hughes, 2004: 153).

Political myths are similar to Barthes's concept of them as "self-fulfilling prophecy". However, (Bottici and Challand, 2006: 322) argue that he "reduced the work on myth to a phenomenon limited to bourgeois society and argued, in fact, that proletarians have no myths". These authors consider political myth to work "in different contexts, each time assuming different connotations and providing significance to very different political conditions" (Bottici and Challand, 2006: 329). They do not answer why and how but "whence" (Bottici, 2007). There is a cycle of production, where myths are incorporated relationally and dialectally to and from the public, who reproduce them repeatedly. This circular relationship between the US public and its past wars led to the present moment when Bush declared the war I would become a part of "for the peace of the world and benefit and freedom of the Iraqi people".

To Barthes, expecting is essential, as truth is not the concern but the expectation and impact on the collective's experience and conditions (Bottici, 2007). Myth legitimises the current political discourse (Esch, 2010). Like *les lieux de mémoire*, they are conceived in the

present and relationally to contemporary political situations and settings. Joanne Esch writes that they drive two American myths of Barbarism vs Civilization and American Exceptionalism, helping "define American national identity and have been prominent elements of war discourse throughout the country's history" (Esch, 2010: 365). Many of these aforementioned authors (Bottici, 2007; Bottici and Challand, 2006; Esch, 2010; Hughes, 2003) believe these myths of the US as a Christian nation, chosen by a higher power, and driven by the American civil religion amalgamated to be deployed in 9/11 and the later Iraq War/Operation Iraqi Freedom.

When interviewing fellow Iraq War veterans, Pamela Creed (2009) observed that these underlying cultural constructs in the United States and its people were utilised to provide moral legitimacy and establish a moral order by constructing many of the previously mentioned positions, something I can recognise from my *own* experience. In some circumstances and situations, there is a local moral order that "includes the rights and duties inherent in an actor's potential to act – their capabilities and their constraints", and actors within it often challenge the cultural norm by closing the gap between what is possible and permitted (Creed, 2009: 110). Indeed, Masson and Bancroft look at this line of possibility and permission (2018) in illustrating how even monetary transactions are culturally constructed and negotiated in "a morality of exchange". Here, when looking at cryptomarkets where there is circulation, exchange and consumption, there might be an assumption of impersonality in these anonymous and impersonal platforms. However, despite the belief that money and anonymity on the internet depersonalise, it does not unavoidably precede depersonalisation (Bancroft and Scott Reid, 2017). Moreover, in these illicit transactions, there is "in fact a re-emergence of cultural relations" (Masson and Bancroft, 2018: 79). These relations are based on reciprocity which is based on balance, "a moral sense of balancing preexisting relationships, the justificatory rebalance of 'this is dark but other activities are dark dark' and

also the more abstract sense of rebalancing perceptions of the darknet" (Masson and Bancroft, 2018: 84). This leads the authors to the conception of "'nice people doing shady things'".

When thinking about how this moral ordering, culture and memory mix, producing myth, my primary concern is the soldier: the American one. The soldier has created many myths and representations since time immemorial. As a former soldier, and thinking with the dialogical voice/writer/reader I in mind, I was and still am a "'knowing subject'" that "has some degree of reflexivity about [myself] and [my] desires, and that [I] have some 'penetration' into the ways in which [I am] formed by [my] circumstances" (Ortner, 2005: 34). It is also important to regard soldiers on the collective level "as the collective sensibility of some set of socially interrelated actors" (Ortner, 2005: 34). The way the soldier reflects upon themselves is a collection of these considerations: of "people's personal subjectivities" and "public culture" that produce the subjectivities that materialise an "identity" of a "culture" (Ortner, 2005). These moralities, truths and practices work in a specific manner, as the cultural forms of the military, its discourse and practices "produce a certain kind of cultural mind-set-towards holding people at a distance, towards the ceremonialization of social intercourse" (Ortner, 2005: 38). Thus in my basic training experience, I had to perform everything "together", ritualisation was required as I donned my "uniform clothing, alter [my] grooming, [took my] place in the ranks, add[ed] titles to [my] given name…signify new identities moored to a metacommunity (the military), [my] community…and, eventually, several nested or overlapping subcommunities" (Ebel, 2012: 228). This ritualisation is a "saturation of everyday life, culture, and politics with the military values and norms, values and norms that support and uphold the political projects and success of the state and those in power" (Bickford, 2011: 218). Soldiering builds truths that become a part of my morality.

In keeping with the longue durée approach taken in this thesis, I want to understand how **'Below this are engraved those veterans killed'** came to be etched with those individual names below it. This etching is a part of the "ultimate Myth of War", which, for Hynes, meant "not a falsification of reality, but an imaginative version of it, the story of the war that has evolved, and has come to be accepted as true" (Hynes, 1990: ix). I want to highlight how the mythologised soldiering and this mythology was narrated for decades to create the soldier ideal at home repeatedly mimetically. It has antecedents in the past.

Soldiering through Time and Place

Citizens and soldiers have been separated since at least Roman times. It was often the model for commemorating soldiers to keep them separate from the population (Hope, 2003) until the war to end all wars: the Great War. This war brings a different conception. With the image of the "conscious citizen-patriot" soldier, conceived out of France's late 18th-century Revolution, there is no longer a complete separation between soldier and citizen (Dimitrova, 2005: 183). This representation led to the "moral individual" beseeched to perform their sacrificial duty for the nation (Dimitrova, 2005: 184). It was also part of the first major "memory boom" of the modern area, which concerned the formation of national identities. It began in the 1890s through the 1920s, playing a significant role in memorialising victims of WWI (Winter, 2006). In the aftermath of this war, masculinity was also redefined and thus soldier representation, as research into war neurosis such as shellshock entered popular discourse (Smith, 1995).

This redefinition of masculinity relates to the work of the Popular Memory Group. I have previously discussed how Thomson used their work to explore the interaction of the Anzac 'legend' public narratives with Australian societies where dominant ideals of national gender and character shift, shape and structure war memory. In not conforming to this society's ideation of the soldier hero, their private memory becomes "displaced or

marginalised within individual memory", leaving alienation and silence (Thomson, 2013: 249). The "popular memory" approach observes this public culture derived from "public narratives" in generalised or shared images such as the soldier hero or imagery of a nation (Dawson, 1994). These representations are distributed broadly within it in forms such as famous films, television, comics and fiction. This produces "composure" in how personal accounts work within cultural scripts, as the past is never remembered in isolation. It is framed within these scripts. As mentioned before, (Roper, 2000) employs this thinking in considering how a former soldier remembered his according to these cultural scripts by examining texts written by him through the years and decades. Here, Urwick re-remembered the war to present circumstances and discourse as he "could locate his own reactions" to wartime trauma "within a public history, seeing intolerable fear as part of the condition of modern warfare, rather than an individual failing" (Roper, 2000: 197). Soldiers like me often have to search hard or cannot find themselves in the representations made of them in the present.

Evelyn Cobley read narratives from WWI soldiers, in which many constructed themselves as an "innocent sacrificial victim" as they tried to rationalise "the contradiction of legalized murder" (Cobley, 1994: 89). Therefore, a soldier evolves to see themselves not only as a victim embodying human suffering but also as a killer, another cog in a soulless machine which they cannot control (Cobley, 1994). As the nation-state grew the soldier learnt of the other side through the newly invented ways of delivering information. As the soldiers gazed from the trenches of the Great War at the enemy, they gained knowledge from this information and constructed new understandings. They also internalised the sorrow and pain of their victims, one of 'brothers caught in the same nightmare' (Cobley, 1994). Those standing across opposing sides imagined the enemy's position while also mourning themselves for being selected to take another's life. These soldiers saw this violence as not

commensurate with society's values. It was violence that was supposed to be short-lived, culminating in social order and a better future. Here, they also wrapped themselves in these same Christian notions, one of self-sacrifice in this time and place.

As these citizen/soldier lines blurred even further and globalisation crept worldwide, wars became much closer to home. These developments were part of the second "memory" boom from commemorations of the Shoah and WWII in the 1960s-70s, continuing into the present day. It helped in creating the "witness" (Winter, 2006). A soldier's death still delivered this sacrifice. However, the witnesses supplied memory and a continual return to the WWII site by relaying their stories repeatedly. Thus, these remembrances built a culture of "witnesses" whose commemorative practices incorporated the use of film, (archive) footage, and oral testimony (Winter, 2006). Here, the sacrificial death repositioned from amongst themselves or their other brethren, to their deaths being disseminated by these witnesses as making the "ultimate sacrifice" (Purcell, 2010; Kershaw, 2003). Relating back to the previously mentioned heterotopias, this situation puts still-living soldiers/veterans like me in peculiar circumstances, "for not only have they not (yet) realized that ultimate sacrifice, but they also breach the boundary between the living community and the death heterotopia that is the military" (Shields et al., 2014: 430).

In the Vietnam War, however, this violence was situated within the soldier and of 'brothers caught in the same nightmare' to the war firmly against the "Other" (Said, 1978; Cobley, 1994). This time, the enemies across the other side were the Vietnamese, seen differently than the First World War opposition, as "objects of hatred, fear, and derision…", a "gook" that deserves to be "wasted"' (Cobley, 1994: 90). It was a war where victims were mourned on both sides turned, as the violence escalated against the Other to where such atrocities as the My Lai Massacre were committed. The all-righteous fight of WWII transformed into a Vietnam War all wrong. This feeling was eventually reflected in the

media, as televisions beam the conversion into American living rooms, where *Combat*! (a mid-1960s series that offered a whitewashed visualisation of WWII films) gives way to *M*A*S*H* (The 1970s-1980s tele series that presented a dim view of the Korean War, but the subtext was Vietnam), and in a film where *Green Berets* (a 1968 movie starring John Wayne providing the same clean image and funded by the US DoD) turned to *Full Metal Jacket* (a dark film about the horror of military life and Vietnam) (Hallin, 1991). These visuals began to spawn "derision" and "Otherin, which were utilised against the veteran.

As the media started to return with images of the horrific conflict, a shift occurred from those conducting the war to the "intoxicated killer" out of control (Cobley, 1994). These circumstances observed the assemblage of a new discourse in the construction of the lost soldiers who never returned from war and facilitated the turning of "the tragedy of the MIAs into a subculture with near-religious overtones" (Keating, 1994: 245). These individuals endeavoured to tie themselves to a different discourse of lost brothers and sisters to accentuate their comrades who were never allowed to die the sacrificial death or come home, even in a war gone wrong (Keating, 1994). This particular subculture is recorded on BCWM in **Killed or Missing in Action** being displayed. This reconfiguration would have to perform two roles: firstly, by repairing "a damaged national image" and secondly, by altering the othering of the veteran into a remystification of war-making by America, which led onward to the next war (Keating, 1994).

Another way that this remystification was accomplished is in how Jerry Lembcke presents the argument that the Vietnam vets' persona was spat upon and insulted by anti-war protestors during their return from the war (Lembcke, 1998). This urban myth was conceived to discredit the anti-war movement. Originating in the Nixon administration, this image of Vietnam veterans began to slowly circulate in popular culture, with films such as *First Blood,* where the protagonist Rambo echoes how much his homecoming from war hurt and

espouses the spitting myth. This myth, again a sort of "morality play", helped to "galvanize the sentiments of the American people sufficiently to discredit peace activists and give the senior Bush his war" in the Gulf (Andrews, 2009; Lembcke, 1998: 17).

A burst of white flashes from television meets eyes across America. Millions are tuned in from the comfort of their home to watch a war thousands of miles away, steadily streamed into American homes in real time. If Vietnam had been the "dirty *Living Room War*" that offered a sobering view of war punctuated with graphic scenes, then the Gulf War became a "clean *Living Room War*" (Arlen, 1997). It was a war choreographed. There was a stage where generals and other military brass sanitised soldiers and war using technical terms. It was where a few journalists were herded around under carefully controlled conditions to allow the military to paint a picture of their own "clean little war" (Hallin, 1991).

Each of these wars has painted its own picture of the soldier. Groups of people remember each war differently. I have written previously in this thesis of Godfrey and Lilley's conception of WWII as aiding in correcting and erasing a Vietnam syndrome by elevating the US role in WWII at the expense of other allies (Godfrey and Lilley, 2009). This rendering is partly done through these "witnesses" through film and other media and helps to reiterate its military and political dominance in the present day. This memory of the Second World War adds a shine to the moral ambivalence of the present day (Godfrey and Lilley, 2009). As WWII provided the grammar and vocabulary for the next war, so did Vietnam, with its Vietnam Syndrome that needed to be defeated by the Gulf War. The Iraq Syndrome once again tried to challenge Vietnam with its own cleansing images of the Second World War (Mueller, 2005). This was all part of the conservative political movement to remake the America they thought was being destroyed. This restoration played a vital role in the "rightward movement of American culture and politics in the decades after" (Appy, 2015:

xv). The most obvious place to reform was "by reversing the image of Vietnam veterans as baby killers and hapless drug addicts and lauding them as brave patriots" (Sylvester, 2019: 104).

This clean little war approach was tried again in Iraq. This Gulf War blueprint succeeded with me and my nation for a time, leading to a remark in 2004, that "the war we are seeing is bowdlerized, PG-rated…the media should be an irritant-shocking us, shaking us, making sure that we're as alert and uncomfortable as possible in the comfort of our living rooms" (Robertson, 2004: 46). However, this war was different. In the passing years, images of the bodies of American contractors, the American flag-wrapped coffins, and images of Abu Ghraib added to a complete change in tenor. As a *Washington Post* journalist wrote, "the gloves have come off, and the war seems less sanitized, more personally intrusive" (Robertson, 2004: 46). It is something I can relate to my *own* experience before and after the war.

Moreover, the abuse of Abu Ghraib transported the American nation back to the My Lai and other massacres in Vietnam. The American press differed from their foreign media counterparts, as Al Jazeera were more willing to display specific images. The speculation behind this "sanitized" American account of this latest war was manifold, such as Americans were "more squeamish" and had no idea what it was like to live through war. Many in the American press noted, "it is easier for some foreign press to show casualties if it's not their troops being killed or doing the killing" (Robertson, 2004: 51). (Shields et al., 2014: 434) discusses how "soldier bodies make life and death, move about the living and dead, and as those movements are framed in broader nation-building discourses, these bodies come to produce a living body politic". However, people were fighting against this notion.

This changing situation leads to the "most infamous mourner for the war in Iraq" (Norris, 2007: 286). The bereaved person, Cindy Sheehan, became infamous after she made

the decision not to "honor her son's right to a warrior's burial" (Norris, 2007: 286). Her son, Casey, to Cindy, was needlessly killed in Iraq, fighting "George Bush's war of choice for oil and profit", and "every soldier's gravestone represents the waste of human life" (Norris, 2007: 288). Sheehan eventually did erect a memorial on her son's gravesite but with this inscription:

> Our Casey. Ever faithful, kind and gentle, good son, beloved brother, brave soldier, dear friend, you loved your family and lived your life serving others to the end (Norris, 2007: 288).

Sheehan contested the notion of Casey, the soldier, and embraced Casey, her son. She labelled him a "brave soldier" and the military insignia. However, she then overwhelmed them with these discourses and others composed of "emblems of Casey's civilian characteristics, roles and interest" (Norris, 2007: 288). This positions soldiers as individuals with personal memories and their own particular knowledge and truth claims, not just what political groups and movements want them to be. There is the every day with their hopes and dreams, one of a gentle son and brother named Casey, not an object of veneration.

Understanding how soldiering and war have been represented brings me back to the BCWM in my hometown and its fashioning. The memorial was dedicated in 2005 after the Iraqi war was supposed to be over, close to Casey's passing and when I more firmly started to see my war differently from when it began. It is styled like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. Each soldier's name is listed from America's modern wars, memorialising individually. It is illustrated in how the BCWM's styling arrived in Durant, Oklahoma, in 2005. This rendition of soldier and war representation led to a situation where "from then on, anyone who had endured hardship in the service of the United States could qualify for automatic hero status" (Appy, 2015: 236). However, it can also be observed in what Christine Sylvester calls the "curating" of that war focuses "more on the price of human

loss than the price of freedom—loss not of the war but of beloved individuals that composed it" (Sylvester, 2019: 103). Sylvester is referring here to how the memorial makers want the focus removed from the actual war and its many real-world problems and centred on these beloved lost individuals.

James Young asserts that the Shoah became a well-defined point in commemorating the war dead, from symbolic memorials such as obelisks or statues to more abstract ones that speak to the notion that memorials do not remember (Young, 2016). People do. Memory exists in each of us. When being engaged architecturally, war memorials should share the burden of remembering with us, the visitors, instead of telling us what truth and knowledge claims and how to remember them. However, the BCWM in my hometown does not give visitors a chance. It is the previously mentioned "metadiscourse" (Crismore, 1983) or stipulation that is assertive as it orders us to remember, **"Lest we forget, freedom is not free. Remember our Bryan County veterans for the sacrifice they made".** Visitors are constrained to remember in any other way, which calls attention to the phrase **Lest we forget** and the location of the other memorial on its grounds.

Bryan County Civil War Memorial

The phrase is formally attributed to the Rudyard Kipling poem *Recessional* (1897) and is often associated with war remembrance in the UK, Australia and New Zealand (Fallon and Robinson, 2016). The poem was written for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and he received inspiration from passages from the Bible book Deuteronomy. Kipling chose the words **lest we forget** and then crafted the poem around it (Yeats, 1952). In calling on the poem's words, those who erected these monuments could be referencing two scenarios. One is the previously mentioned Christian nation, and the other is the same popular culture that was made of much older truth and power/knowledge systems built of relations of ruling in gender formulations of hegemonic masculinity, ideas from the 19[th] century that drew on

advanced civilisation and a heroic Anglo-Saxon history (Bederman, 1996). In America, these social formations reached their high point around the exact moment the BCCWM was being erected, as "the 1920s marked the high tide of WASP control" (Kaufmann, 2004: 66). This public commemoration is "a form of history-making, yet it can also be a contested form of remembrance in which cultural memories slide through and into each other, merging and then disengaging in a tangle of narratives" (Sturken, 1991: 118). The BCCWM is no different.

The BCCWM sits about 30 metres northeast of the other memorial. In between, there is a gazebo and three flags. The tallest one is an American flag that calls to the American civil religion as it towers over the three-story courthouse. The monument was built in 1917, the same year as the courthouse. It was built under the Julia Jackson Charter (U.D.C) United Daughters of the Confederacy's supervision, named after famed Confederate General Stonewall Jackson's daughter, all noted on the memorial. It is the culmination of the movement that had origins in 1866 after a Confederate "soldier's widow circulated an open letter to southern women calling on them to decorate the humble graves of the Confederate dead at least once a year" (Brundage: 2005: 26). The letter found broad support—by the end of the century, Confederate Memorial Day had become the most significant event on a Southern white woman's calendar. Their official publication, *The Confederate Veteran*, "was from 1893 until 1932…a magazine with a message: the 'Myth of the Lost Cause'" and only survived because the UDC adopted it (Hattaway, 1971: 213). It is a myth generated after Edward Pollard and others published literature that the war of succession had not been about slavery (Pollard, 1866; Von Tunzelmann, 2021). Later, Confederate Memorial Day became the American Memorial Day for the entire nation, and it was celebrated as a national holiday, signifying the start of summer.

A few miles to the south, in the adjoining Grayson County and place of my birth, another Confederate memorial of a soldier stands. This was the first memorial in the state of

Texas in 1894. This constellation of memorials across Oklahoma, Texas and the South were based on the rapidly growing number of Southern women's literary associations and social reform groups. They became "ideally positioned to become crafters of public culture, and of collective memory in particular", with those with a keen interest in history joining "hereditary" or "patriotic" societies (Brundage: 2005: 23). The UDC was at the epicentre of women who crafted literature in *The Confederate Veteran* and other works that contributed to an imagined Old South and its Lost Cause and rehabilitating the white South's wounded pride (Blight, 2001; Censer, 2003; Gardner, 2003; Brundage: 2005). It continued to be methodically exclusionary. As more white men from all walks of life were gradually allowed into Southern public culture, white women struggled to define and secure their own roles. However, more white women were welcomed in working to open these spaces, blurring white female and male public spaces. Their work also shifted Confederate monuments from cemeteries by the end of the 19th century to more central locations in the public sphere, such as outside a courthouse (Brundage: 2005).

In many of these monuments, we can observe the "debt" in memory these women or "daughters" may have felt or the need to massage the egos of these men, noted in the use of '**gallant',** which both Merriam-Webster and Oxford dictionaries define as "to pay court to (a lady)" (Merriam-Webster, 2023; Oxford, 2022). The monument, on the surface seems to be honouring these men as heroes. At the same time, the push for WWI was underway. As the GCR taught, the area was still virulently anti-war as a popular Democratic congressman would lose his seat for supporting it the year before (Bissett, 2002). The BCCWM appeared to convey: remember these men and forget about the next war. However, the BCCWM and others like it do not commemorate soldiers as much as they convey the political. They are primarily for the "Lost Cause". There is no accurate version of history communicated "or the true sacrifice of individuals who joined a cause that time and reason has shown to be

unworthy; in fact, Lost Cause monuments validate the righteousness of the Confederacy, whose cause was rooted in the preservation of slavery" (Lees, 2021: 1012).

Conversely, these public spaces excluded African Americans or many of the other racialised, not allowing any recognition of their recalled past. These changes in the social and political conditions of people act as a propellant to the evolution of this recalled past, "because power is central to the propagation of a version of history, changes in the relative power that groups enjoy invariably have consequences for what and how they remember" (Brundage: 2005: 9). Statues, like BCCWM, do not represent history, but the opposite as "history is argument; statues brook none…by lording it over civic space" and "shut off debate through their invitation to reverence" (Schama, 2020). They matter. The BCCWM is part of a material of monuments:

> to a particular version of the past told by those who seized, wielded and abused power, who used their privilege to legitimize their rule, establish their 'civilising' schools and universities, and institute their laws, culture and norms—all of which cast long shadows (Taylor, 2019: 13).

Cultural memory studies often assume that any past representation, in writing or monuments, indicates memory. However, memory is not held in these cold relics. This "particular version of the past" is part of a remembering that is "generated by the interactions of readerships and audiences with such representations, so that an examination of a memorial that is disregarded can tell us more about forgetting than about remembering" (Beiner, 2018: 20).

Morality and Public Culture

In my previously discussed MPhil, I discuss how moral injury affected me after the war, drawing from Shay (1994). Relatedly, Thomas Suitt interviewed veterans to identify the social processes used to "navigate the experience of moral trauma as it tests deeply held cultural beliefs and interrupted habits developed before and during military service" (Suitt,

2021: 181). The moral injury I incurred related to my feeling of the unjustness of that war and also the unjust way my friend Burghardt was treated before, during and after the war and where this all fit in the life/death line veterans both living and gone negotiate (Shields et al., 2014; Morris, 2013). Ideas on justice come from morality. Social scientists working with previous ideas on moral and culture repertoires (Mills, 1940; Scott and Lyman, 1968; Swidler, 2001) and Type I and II cognition (Lizardo et al. 2016; Luft, 2020) utilise the dual process model of culture (Lizardo et al, 2016) to demonstrate how these moralities are formed. Type I is associated with nondeclarative culture in its slow learning through habituation and enskillment through a "(relatively) large number of repeated encodings" while being linked to the body being "stored in the form of a complex multimodal and multidimensional network of associations between a large number of subsymbolic elements, each of which has a close link to experience" (Lizardo, 2017: 92-93; Strauss and Quinn, 1997). This manner of enculturation is contrasted to type II, which is declarative and characterised as being deliberate and working in "linear fashion (as in the construction of life narratives or motivational justifications), and…used for such tasks as reasoning, evaluation, judgment, and categorization" (Lizardo, 2017: 92). Declarative culture is "offline". It is used in the "processes of reasoning, planning, imagining, anticipating, remembering, justifying, and narrating", while nondeclarative is "online", working "in real time, as a result of perceiving an environmental prompt or opening that requires a response" (Lizardo, 2017: 93).

This thesis and this chapter have been concerned with this relational process, often focusing more on public and declarative culture. However, Lizardo warns against this thinking, conceiving the relationship between these kinds of culture as a three-way cultural triangle between the non-declarative and declarative types and public culture (Lizardo, 2017). Recent scholarship, however, has envisaged this process as cultural schema as "socially shared representations deployable in automatic cognition" (Boutyline and Soter, 2021: 730).

There is a path of the previously mentioned implicit and explicit that adds the "cultural triangle's" public culture that forms a public-to-explicit-to-implicit (PEI) pathway (Lizardo, 2017; Boutyline and Soter, 2021). The representational contents of these cultural schemas "can be externalized into public expression and internalized into personal culture—although, in their public form, they would be public representations rather than schemas" (Lizardo 2017; Sperber 1996; Boutyline and Soter, 2021: 750). I would pass BCCWM every day, going to and from primary and secondary school. I continued seeing it, passing it frequently in my early university years. It was ubiquitous to me. This process concerns narrative because stories we initially learn explicitly in declarative culture can be transformed implicitly into nondeclarative with how they are repeatedly "replayed" in our minds (Foster, 2018). This process combines with how people often "trim their philosophy to fit their action commitments" (Swidler, 2001: 148). The statue was not the source of the problem: its physicality. It was the stories, truth, and power/knowledge claims and their relations of ruling that flowed as long as they were still there. What we are allowed to tell in them is derived from what that particular part of society thinks that war was about.

This type of culture relates to Arlie Hochschild's ideas about the deep story that resonates in the South. A deep story is a story that "feelings tell, in the language of symbols", removing judgment and fact, "a feels-as-if story" (Hochschild, 2016: 135). For Hochschild, the South's deep story is one of the American Dream as a line where people wait patiently for their turn, working hard their whole lives for a piece of it. Then, one day, people cut into your line, "you're following the rules. They aren't. As they cut in, it feels like you are being moved back. How can they just do that? Who are they? Some are black" (Hochschild, 2016: 137). After interviewing many Southerners, Hochschild thinks there are two eras with special meaning in the South: the 1860s and the 1960s. The BCCWM notes this first era with its 1861 ‑ 65 inscription. After the American Civil War in this era, Reconstruction across the

South meant the North hand-picked state governments there. Also, it brought profiteering carpetbaggers as a part of an oppressive North. Then, in the 1960s, the dominating came again with a moralising North began sending civil rights activists and its Freedom riders who pressed for new federal laws that dismantled Jim Crow, bringing their own ideas and truth claims (Hochschild, 2016). This decade is noted in my novella.

In each of these eras, many Southerners felt that after losing the war, they were being left out of the American Dream and civil religion, and I was no different before the war. As many more well-off liberals across the US "took great pride in liberal causes—human rights, racial equality, and the fight against global warming", they did not realise what was being displaced (Hochschild, 2016: 218). This situation, combined with the many blue-collar jobs lost, involved losing a way of life, "and with it, the honor attached to a rooted self and pride in endurance—the deep story self" (Hochschild, 2016: 218). This relates to previously discussed issues of honour and pride in the South. As the queue moved forward, working-class whites were often vilified in society and "all these social movements left one group standing in line: the older, white male", leaving a Southerner to quip, "we didn't do those bad things" (Hochschild, 2016: 213). But someone did.

Two Events

The BCCWM in my hometown was built and stood in time between two events. The first one, mentioned in the second chapter of this thesis, concerns a lynching that weighed heavily on my mind, that of John Lee, who had been killed by the bullets of a posse sent to apprehend him on August 13th, 1911. My hometownsfolk of Durant then dragged his body up and down the high street. He was then burned on a pyre with more than 500 people surrounding it. This horrific spectacle was captured in a postcard and distributed across the South, a practice common at that time (Hirsch, 2003; Allen and Littlefield, 2005).

In the same year, many of the same people raised the Confederate statue, and the fear of returning black soldiers was felt across the South as a threat to this maintained racial hierarchy. It was even a matter of public record in the highest of offices. On August 16th, 1917, Mississippi Senator James Vardaman gave a speech where he warned of the inevitable "disaster" of a black veteran returning. He warned, "impress the negro with the fact that he is defending the flag, inflate his untutored soul with military airs, teach him that it is his duty to keep the emblem of the Nation flying triumphantly in the air", and, the senator cautioned, "it is but a short step to the conclusion that his political rights must be respected" (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017: 25). Then, predictably, two years later in 1919, following African-American soldier Wilbur Little's return home to Blakely, Georgia, from combat in the terrifying trenches of Northern France during the First World War was met by a gang of whites at the railway station. They stripped him of his uniform and made him walk through town to his home. The soldier would not be discouraged and defied the mob's warning against wearing it. He once again donned the uniform he had fought so bravely in across a great ocean. The gang of whites found him and beat him to death (Dray, 2007; Du Bois, 1919). These events surround the BCCWM and its memorialisation. They are two events locals in my former area, and their deep story selves would choose to ignore.

This situation repeatedly happened across the South and around the erecting of the BCCWM. When asked about BCCWM, a local resident whose great-grandfather was once a Confederate soldier who aided in his connection to BCCWM and was opposed to its removal, said "we don't want Confederate symbols used by people trying to promote racism, but we can't just remove history" (Felder, 2017). He further laments, "but they are treating us and our monuments, which are symbols of our heroes and our heritage, like we are evil" (Felder, 2017). This is a "psychologization of memory" of this *lieu de mémoire* (Nora, 1984; 1989). His ancestors and many of mine were memorialised in an American public holiday as the one

celebrating Confederate soldiers became one honouring all American soldiers. The soldier has a certain "sign value" as it is converted to an object for mythmaking (Baudrillard, 1970). These celebrations, mythmaking, sign value and symbols represent contestation between myth, collective memory and history, which needs informed debate, which means:

> shifting away from those binaries that are about our feelings today: pride and shame, good and bad, heroes and villains. It means teaching history through argument and critical thinking. It means trying to understand history rather than use it. Informing the debate opens up a thrilling panorama of history that is not about us, but about them – the complicated, messy, fascinating human beings who lived through it (Von Tunzelmann, 2021: 413).

Two Heroes

Speaking on this and returning to the war I participated in, during my time in Iraq, there came tales of a daring liberation of a heroic woman soldier from the clutches of evil torturers and killers: a "classic American war fantasy: the captivity narrative" (McAlister, 2003). This invention of Jessica Lynch as a heroine would offer the American war effort a symbol of its and other Western powers' own 'enlightened' viewpoint towards women, justifying the moral argument that the United States was granting the Iraqis the gift of freedom and democracy (Martyn, 2008; Kumar, 2004). The US claimed Lynch had fought against the Iraqi forces, was shot and captured, tortured and interrogated. The media slowly peppered holes in the story until a magazine story blew it apart. This piece, coupled with pressure from Lynch, succeeded in the story's demise (Martyn, 2008). It was supposed to be a simple story that fit a straightforward narrative that made people like me and others from my region feel good.

Another soldier was captured in Iraq on that very same day. Shoshana Johnson was a soldier deployed to Iraq and quickly captured. There, she was "shot in both legs and spent 22

days as a prisoner of war (POW) in Iraq" (Helfing, 2010). The media circus did not follow

her. As Johnson opines, "if I'd been a petite, cutesy thing, it would've been different"

(Hefling, 2010). Johnson was the first female African-American prisoner of war. However,

the nomenclature of POW was not enough, as female and African-American overrode in

American society, leaving her deemed "ungrievable". Johnson is a part of humanity whose

entire shared condition is of "precariousness," which implies a dependency on "what is

outside ourselves, on others, on institutions, and on sustained and sustainable environments,

and so are, in this sense, precarious" (Butler, 2009: 23). This "precariousness" means lives

can move between "grievable" and "ungrievable," the latter insinuating the belief that some

"lives that are not quite lives and…can be at once "cast as 'destructible' and 'ungrievable'"

(Butler, 2009: 31). Even with her eminently "grievable" status as a soldier, she cannot escape

the overarching truth of an ungrievable existence that this society observes. Johnson's view

of American society is through the frame of the African-American experience, through

Dubois's double-consciousness, that often measures "one's soul by the tape a world that

looks on in amused contempt and pity" (Dubois, [1903]1994: 3). As someone who is outside

a dominant narrative, she is seen outside the truth frames by "which we apprehend or, indeed,

fail to apprehend the lives of others as lost or injured (lose-able or injurable)" (Butler, 2009:

1). These bodies survive on social interaction. There needs to be recognition of their

interdependence with "the social and political networks in which the body lives" (Butler,

2009: 53). We need others to survive in our social world and are at will to this

interdependency that "implies living socially, that is, the fact that one's life is always in some

sense in the hands of the other" (Butler, 2009: 14). But both Johnson and Lynch are

American truths and histories.

Public Memory, Remembering and Forgetting

There are two useful ways to consider these public memories of events and heroes. The first is "the public-ness of memory". It reflects a remembering "in view of others" (Phillips, 2004: 6). The second is "the memory of publics", and it involves the imagined public sphere "composed of multiple groups vying for influence in a terrain of shifting identities, competing within the realm of public discourse and memory" (Rancourt, 2013: 6). These publics are self-organised through "the reflexive circulation of discourse" and constituted through relations amongst strangers, being both personal and impersonal (Warner, 2002: 90). Michael Rancourt uses Warner's and others' research on public memory to illustrates how a dominant public memory of the Iraq War was formed "but also how it is subject to change as competing publics rise in prominence and gain legitimacy for their counter-framing of the past" (Rancourt, 2013: iv). No single text can produce a public, nor a single truth, voice, genre, or medium. These are all insufficient. It is "not texts themselves create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time" (Warner, 2002: 90). As this thesis has shown, heroes and events are under constant contestation.

In considering this interaction, Guy Beiner writes of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, drawing the relations of memory in a different triangle, much like those mentioned above: cultural, folk, public and social amnesia. The folk memory moves more towards local agency and remembering local traditions. At the same time, the public fits much of what has been written in this thesis on elites in power and the "centrality of the (public) and the marginalization of the (folk) from a national perspective" (Beiner, 2011: 76). Beiner sketches social amnesia as "a form of remembrance that can mediate transitions between the more intimate spheres of folk memory and commemorative expressions of public memory" (Beiner, 2011: 82-83). Indeed, as Assman argues that, "when thinking about memory, we must start with forgetting" (Assman, 2010: 97). What is forgotten needs the same treatment as what is studied in recollection, "there is an evident need for major historical studies of

lieux d'oubli to counterbalance the studies of *lieux de mémoire*" (Beiner, 2018: 30). Decisions are made on who is remembered as a part of a truth system built of relations of ruling who construct a morality that decides who is "grievable". We can see in the ways communities "seemingly suppress public remembrance of historical episodes that do not correspond to present interests, and yet tenaciously find subtle ways to continue to remember these discomforting memories" (Beiner, 2018: 17). Across all levels, memory is demarked by the complex relationship between remembrance and forgetting.

Returning to an earlier chapter, in order to tell a true war story, this "requires the right kind of panoramic optics, an ethical one and an aesthetic one that allows us to see everyone and everything involved in war" (Nguyen, 2016: 227). As Bancroft writes on the advantages of ethnography and its analytical process when well conducted, "it cuts through that public story. The public story is not in itself untrue but separated from the context of people's lives it becomes misleading" (Bancroft, 2020: 59). Utilising the analytical, ethnographic process, I perceived how the BCCWM tells us how and who to grieve for in these long-lost soldiers of the Confederacy. The American Memorial Holiday tells us how to grieve again. We learn what deep stories to follow. The BCWM tells us to grieve for these particular soldiers written in name. However, it leaves out the friend I lost *because* of Iraq, but not for *their* reasons. It does not correctly memorialise Burghardt, other soldiers in my unit and me, nor the loved ones that lost him. Their definition of a hero or an important event differs.

Habermas (2006) works with notions of "postconventional" German identity where there is a requirement of ongoing debate in the public eye concerning German history: all of it. Here, there is a model of memory that is more than merely expressions of duty-bound memory to victims. Noting how collective memory has been employed "by communities, peoples and nations …led to war rather than peace, rancour rather than reconciliation, revenge rather than forgiveness", some commentators, including David Rieff, call for

forgetting over remembering, "whereas forgetting does an injustice to the past, remembering does an injustice to the present" (Reiff, 2016: 23;121). In considering my past as a soldier and "memory-individuals" (Nora, 1989), there should be a cost-benefit kind of analysis of forgetting versus commemorating (Reiff, 2016). This is instead of strict moral absolutism about remembering as always necessary.

It is also important to remember that ethical memory is "oriented toward justice and the other, rather than the self" (Ricœur, 2004: 89). There is unjust and just memory, as well as forgetting. Nguyen calls for a just memory that proceeds from three things. Firstly, there needs to be an ethical awareness of our coinciding humanity and our inhumanity. This leads to a complete understanding of who we are as humans "and to be complicit in the deeds that our side, our kin, and even we ourselves commit" (Nguyen, 2016: 283). Secondly, there needs to be equal access to the industries of memory, simultaneously within and between countries, with an understanding that this would be radical, even revolutionary, in redistributing power and wealth. Finally, there needs to be "the ability to imagine a world where no one will be exiled from what we think of as the near and the dear to those distant realms of the far and the feared" (Nguyen, 2016: 283).

There can be a "productive relation" between this just memory and social justice (Mishler and Squire, 2021). As Mishler and Squire illustrate, there are many ways we can include this narrative in our social research related to social justice. They may be derived from past narrative "capitals" that relate to the equity struggles of every day "or at least redress and then further contribute to them— to representational processes that also inform practices" (Mishler and Squire, 2021: 15). Or they may be initiated in a strategy of pursuing justice at socio-political levels such as the above ones mentioned or "to speak of present injurious conditions of life as they occur" (Mishler and Squire, 2021: 15). These are all strategies that go beyond social change to social justice and just memory.

Moral injury and unjust memories have been mentioned in many ways and flow from me to my culture. This Southern culture, like many others, has problems with the forgiveness of others, but often themselves. Looking at myself, as a Southerner but also a soldier and American, I have looked at these truth and power/knowledge systems that have constructed truth and knowledge claims through relations of ruling in our lives. Others like me must discover which debt is owed and to whom (Nora, 1989). As Angelou teaches me, "one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is to forgive. Forgive everybody" (Angelou, 2000). There is forgiveness and a path from this cultural triangle to a different PEI pathway in learning our truths, but also others and their history, thinking critically, and knowing others ethically and better deep stories.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored two *lieux de mémoire,* the memories connected to them, and what has been forgotten and remembered. I began with discussing Nora and his take on remembering in context, in the present and for the future. I then looked at and contextualised the BCWM built after my war, what was supposed to be done, what was on it, and what was forgotten. I examined the mimetic image of the soldier and how it has been shaped by the social. I have fed into the image of the soldier has the image fed into me; these documents and people shaped my life through mythmaking, storytelling and those who remember me and others, further shaping me, through mythmaking, storytelling and how I remembered and was remembered, so forth and so on (Roper, 2000; Ortner, 2005; Creed, 2009; Bickford, 2011; Thomson, 2011; Rancourt, 2013; Suitt, 2021). This remembering, however, crucially includes forgetting (Beiner, 2011; 2018; Assman, 2010). I then focused on how they tell us truths and knowledge to remember in each present time. I discussed the BCCWM and how my region of the South writes down what it remembers, what is forgotten, what the nation remembered in my war and what it forgot in the present of that moment. I then end with how

this relates socially and morally to me, my region, and my nation and how we might make it right by learning history, critical thinking, and knowing others in the present and for the future. I am doing all of this, contributing a further dimension to my critical social-cultural autoethnography.

What I have done here is different from most autoethnographic accounts. I have mentioned previously that in these accounts, there is a static self and society in which past meanings, pieces of knowledge and truths are stationary and not in a dynamics of constant production and reproduction (Derrida, 1978). Autoethnographers often select or merge two observances, and according to Atkinson, remaining unaware of their own cultural conventions and producing an "all-knowing analyst" combined with the "all-feeling auteur" in focusing on their feelings and interiority; thereby not doing "justice to the multiple modes of social action and social organisation that define any given social world" that is required by social science (Atkinson, 2015: 170). This is further augmented by people's tendency to adjust their own philosophy to their action commitments (Swidler, 2001). This style of autoethnography conceives the individual as static, observing the self and society as a portrait in time and viewing a self that is fixed in such accounts. My understanding is different. Here, the seemingly unmovable self is inquisitive and moving, in motion through time and knowledge processes and knowledge and truth claims. Through understanding the process of forming public memory and its stipulation of what is remembered and what is forgotten, I observe the moving self, open to the social. It happens not only in my memory but also in individuals surrounding me and what is chosen to remember or to forget. This memory is augmented into how societies forget and remember, progressing and regressing memory as a part of moving selves and helping to create the social through remembrance and forgetting.

Autoethnographers do not often consider this version of self or society. Nevertheless, people remember with present concerns in mind, and we forget with present concerns in mind

too - and often with a fondness for the past, with knowledge and truth claims that shine a good light on us. However, there is no ethical requirement to remember or merely forget. We also have to consider such notions as justice and equality. Consequently, I now understand this process better, and I am now able to be a better autoethnographer.

Overall, this chapter and my thesis construct a critical socio-cultural autoethnography, and its use of the documents of life approach has strengthened. Earlier chapters unravelled the fact and fiction of truth, power/knowledge systems and their relations of ruling, formations I experienced over my life, and the form and dynamics behind those systems. I have continually made use of these ideas, methods and approaches. Through the CSA, I have examined two monuments in my hometown as documents in my life and other lives. I wanted to understand what gets written down and how these texts have affected me and those around me. I examined how the texts of those monuments build truth and knowledge systems and the power behind them, and how people in that area interact with those texts and truths in the then-present, moving through time to now and the moment of writing. In the last section, I explored ways to question these truth and knowledge claims through using a sense of justice coupled with learning history outside our own assumptions about facts and truth with ideas on tracing power through critical thinking, understanding this moving self and society, and better knowing the other.

What I also found is how the autoethnographic self has shrunk in this chapter as opposed to the previous ones. I will concentrate more on this in the conclusion. However, it is essential in this chapter to remember the "social frames" as a part of the social milieux we remember in. Here, our memories cannot function without this social as we cannot invent them but can appropriate them from our milieu (Halbwachs, [1941]1992). In considering autoethnography and my thesis, we recall this social when we recall ourselves and past life. This thesis stresses the importance of keeping the focus on others and thus this social: the

relations there, the truths and knowledge we obtain from it, and how this is utilised to build regimes of truth and memory through relations of ruling. In taking this all into account and thoughtfully in this chapter, the self shrunk in noticing this social. Furthermore, for this chapter I am a part of this stipulating.

What follows is the conclusion, where I will further explain what my CSA is, the approaches I used to achieve it and how this has added to the framework of autoethnography.

Conclusion: Facets of the Diamond of a CSA and its Flashes of Insights

The development of autoethnography has changed the scene of ethnography in a very tangible way, as I demonstrated right at the start of this thesis. It has made the absolute central role of the researcher more widely known. It can provide a specialised lens that critically engages the researcher's emotions and cognition while acting as a mirror to explore the subjective experiences of the researcher within their social and cultural frames (Peterson, 2015). Autoethnography has also made significant positive contributions because it has put reflexivity, even if in sometimes problematic ways, firmly on the map. It has positioned the researcher in such a way that has made people much more aware of themselves as researchers than previously. There is an offering of an insider's perspective to enable readers to obtain entry to normally inaccessible 'private' experiences.

Regarding researching myself as a soldier, its emphasis on reflexivity has provided a strategy valued in qualitative research in facilitating quality and validity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Holloway and Galvin, 2016; Houghton et al., 2013). It helps to make the researcher's stance known throughout the research process (Darawsheh and Stanley, 2014). Autoethnography can also facilitate questioning of the social world to help move us beyond our own assumptions, both professionally and personally (Lazard and McAvoy, 2020).

Ultimately, it is an approach that, rather than assuming that subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's role do not exist, autoethnography accommodates and acknowledges it (Ellis et al., 2011). It is not simply a method but a pathway to knowing the world and a means of being in the world. Autoethnography requires us to live more consciously, emotionally and reflexively. It obliges us to examine ourselves and consider why and how we feel, act and think as we do (Holman-Jones et al., 2013). In this respect, Sarah Wall (2006) observes autoethnography's primary intent as acknowledging the inseparable connection between

culture and the personal. Through this connection, there is intense meaning, culturally-relevant personal experience, and a decisive motivating factor to know (Wall, 2006).

Across the different chapters of my thesis, I have built on these valued aspects of autoethnography by critically augmenting its method/ology through developing the components of my understanding of critical socio-cultural autoethnography (CSA). The first chapter concerned the self as auto and how the different styles of ethnography critically and reflexively include the self in the text. This is juxtaposed against how much – or how little – the other and society are incorporated. This chapter considers the history of autoethnography and its forms, including those on the edges of auto in ethnography, in sketching out the form my CSA would take. This aspect of autoethnography exists but is not universally accepted. There is not much writing on it and even less on it being put together with its other elements. As I have shown across the thesis chapters, building my CSA has pulled all these strands together, weaving them as one in order to produce something more: a newly invigorated and more complex understanding of self in relation to society.

In setting out on this project, I have developed an analytical reflexivity, exploring how others portray selves in autoethnographic texts with different levels of the social in mind. This analytical reflexivity in autoethnography sits on the edge of auto and has been used in varying degrees by other autoethnographers (Anderson, 2006; Boylorn and Orbe, 2014; Chang, 2008). I also wanted to look at texts that centre the self as interiority engaging with the exterior world in autoethnography (Lensmire, 2017; Mckenzie, 2015; Thomson, 2013; Vance, 2016). These texts have taught me the many potential pitfalls as well as the importance of centring the social self. I also examine how each approach added or subtracted to the self's inclusion in ways that did not diminish the importance of the social. This understanding laid the groundwork that appears throughout my CSA and around the

documents of life approach. It offers some valuable considerations of how to understand better how this self includes the social beyond itself.

Facets of the Diamond

The first facet of my analytical diamond towards developing a CSA focuses on the idea that the self is a product of the present moment. Therefore, rather than a fully actualised self that enters the world at birth, the self develops and changes over time. This chapter considers how lives are intertextual and that we are entrenched in texts of the then-present moment of their writing. These texts help shift and shape us as we form them, progressing across society's micro and macro levels in producing them. In this chapter, I analyse a document of my past life: my MPhil dissertation. I do this by developing the analytical toolkit components of authorial voice, positionality, intertextuality, self and other, and sociogenesis, place and time. In doing so, I came to see how this and other documents of life become legitimate and factual in my life as I become the hero of my own story. It has been essential to think about this self-thinking about the textual hero monomyth by turning more of the researcher's gaze towards texts, situations and people who are around them during that place and time. We need to be in dialogue with how others aid in the autoethnographer's forming of stories. I do not need to be the hero. I need to recognise the relationships that compose my life and how they form me as a moving, changing self.

The second facet of the diamond of my CSA concerns the complex, slippery relationship of fiction and fact, but which many other versions of autoethnography tend to simplify and present its research as providing unmediated fact. However, the overlap between fact and fiction is considerable. People shift backwards and forward between faction and fiction. It is not that people are not telling the truth, but that telling what is seen to be valid requires the use of metaphors, stories, tropes, and other kinds of devices in order to put this across. In discussing these matters, I explore an event in my area's past that has been

forgotten from much of the history: the Green Corn Rebellion. This considers how fact, fiction, and these other devices were deployed around this event and how they came to be portrayed, drawing a line between my own story and blurring the line between faction and fiction. I then move to how I produced a particular type of novella, an auto/biographical one, in relation to which I disentangle these devices while also bringing forth the truths and knowledge in my life. Unravelling fact from fiction is by no means an easy task. Presenting a solid factual argument relies to an extent on fictionality, assertion and other mechanisms mentioned in this chapter. These assertions are part of the truth and knowledge claims based on personal experience that can be converted to political truths in society. I bore all this in mind when writing my auto/biographical novella as a part of my CSA. It provides a suitable means of examining this fact and fiction line in-depth, how people crisscross it and how they build their claims in dialogue with the social.

Having achieved a deeper understanding of these tools and the ideas behind them, in further developing my CSA, I analyse this auto/biographical novella by looking at the interiority of the self within it. I created the novella to explore the truth and knowledge claims fashioned in its making. I analytically take apart these claims as a part of exploring the interiority aspects of self that we often hide from others and even ourselves. This portrayal of my life's factions, fiction, truth and knowledge may have allowed the "white saviour" hero trope and other devices buried in my interior self to come to the forefront. This facet of the CSA methodological diamond investigates how we, as autoethnographers, navigate the interiority of fact, fiction, knowledge and truth. It looks at the claims we select from the social and some of the consequences of these claims for our body of research on the self and its culture and society.

In the next chapter, I return to exploring the exteriority of the authorial voice and its relationship to the writer, the reader and the self or "I" when crafting narrative and stories as

a part of truth and knowledge systems. In noting the dialogue motif repeated in previous chapters, I craft what I came to call the dialogical voice/writer/reader that works in between interiority, exteriority, literature, humanities and the social sciences and the truth and knowledge systems they produce. Using ideas from postcolonial biographical fiction and others to craft an auto/biographical novella, I then realised I often fall short of the exteriorities they utilise in this writing and research. I only realised this after the analytical and dialogical process that looks at the claims of these myths, truth and knowledge systems, including that it relates to unbecomings and becomings of patriarchy, militarisation, social interconnectedness, remembering and forgetting that is evocatively and analytically constructed instead of discovered (Stanley, 1992; 1993a). This structuring of the novella allows me to fashion a strong authorial voice that aids in my attaining "composure" in my present exteriority of situations and circumstances.

However, at this point in producing the thesis in writing its component chapters, I came to appreciate that there was still too much monologue and focus on the interior self and my past exteriorities, making incorporating other people and their stories even more challenging. In thinking with the dialogical voice/writer/reader tool in mind and regarding my writing as an "artifact-in-activity", I eventually realised the importance of the slippage between interiority and exteriority through observing the stories from the exterior social setting that I have selected and also those I kept out of the auto/biographical novella.

The penultimate facet of the CSA diamond is concerned with power. Not power as materiality invested straightforwardly in social class and other forms of hierarchy, but as something that is diffused and multidirectional, spanning micro-political and macro-politics. The learning process here was part of a turning point or minor epiphany for me (Denzin, 1989; 2001a). This understanding of power as not a thing with particular fixed qualities but as a process that was in flux was the first changing thinking of power in a broadly

Foucauldian way. From here, Dorothy Smith provided relations of ruling and other sources of ideas that became assimilated into my understanding of power. I now better appreciate how power is built and utilised differently from much autoethnography through these turning points. My CSA's concern is to differentiate the parts played by the dynamics of power and their associations between my autoethnography, myself and my relationship to other people and their accounts, how they were shaped and affected by certain truths and knowledge claims, and how these claims fed into a truth and power/knowledge system through relations of ruling. In exploring this, I focus on my locality and the gender and truth and knowledge formations existing there.

In doing so, I have learnt of the metadiscourses and myths utilised by these power elites and how these truth and knowledge claims were taken up by local people in my region, furthering these power elites and their systems of truth and knowledge, thus power. These power elites rule relationally through their positionality and, in this case, gendered societal positions. Rumsfeld monologically ruled through relations through a proliferation of an intertextual blizzard of his own claims and an authorial voice built from the truth and power/knowledge system of myths, war-making and business. The Bush administration ruled monologically through this constructed self and other, which was more often than not an authorial voice of self against others. This led to rethinking the individual as not an individual against others but one where the agency is enlarged, shared and confederate (Taylor, 2017). The Bush administration helped convince me to join the military. It took the US to its wars through these monological but also dialogical when needed formations of truth, knowledge and power.

In presenting the final facet of the CSA methodological diamond, I centre two *lieux de mémoire* and connect these to memories and those that had been forgotten. This starts by discussing Nora and others and their ideas on remembrance with a place, time, present and

future in keeping. I then consider the Bryan County War Memorial (BCWM) in this manner: how it was built after my war was supposed to be completed, what was written on it, and what was not. Thus, it encompassed some practices that led to such material evidence of forgetting. I then observe the mimetic imagery of the soldier in public space. This relates texts and people who relationally affect me through storytelling and mythmaking and how I remember, thus further shaping and shifting this culture and society by means of who is remembered and who is forgotten. The discussion here then directs attention to how this shaping of truth and knowledge claims are done in the present and how this all connects socially and thus morally to me, my area, and the nation through examining the Bryan County Confederate War Memorial (BCCWM). This facet of the CSA diamond also considers how this relationship might be encompassed more correctly through critical thinking, learning history, knowing the other in the present, and thinking for the future.

The CSA I have developed and presented in the successive chapters of this thesis differs in some important respects from many other autoethnographic accounts. In them, there is often an unmoving self and society where meaning, knowledge and truth claims are static and do not undergo vibrant and constant production and reproduction. There is often a selecting or even merging of two observances, writes Atkinson (2015), being ignorant of our cultural practices that generate the "all-knowing analyst" augmenting with an "all-feeling auteur" in concentrating on feeling and interiority and not doing justice to the social world and the work of past social scientists. It is further complicated in how we adjust our philosophies to our actions (Swidler, 2001). The portraiture of self and also society conveyed in much autoethnography is one of moving through these truth and power/knowledge systems and relations, remaining unchanged. This is not my understanding, as it will now be fully apparent. My CSA presents an entirely social account of the self through apprehending the formation of public culture and thus memory, its stipulating of remembering and forgetting,

and the location within this of a moving and consequently socially constructed self. Remembering and even more so forgetting is vital in this, through the complex processes of culture and relations that we remain in dialogue with and instruct us in what is important to remember and what to forget. These become part of our regime of truth and memory. To combat this, we need to be considerate of equity and justice. This has become an essential component of my CSA in helping me untangle fact from fiction and select better knowledge and truth claims. It can be done through critical thinking and learning of history and other people's lives (Von Tunzelmann, 2021).

Having completed the draft of the final chapter, it became apparent to me that the autoethnographic version of self had shrunk in my CSA, meaning that the self, myself, was not as central as in my discussion of the other facets of the diamond. We remember in social frames in our social milieux. This understanding connects to how we consider autoethnography, the CSA methodology and my overall thesis. In earlier chapters of the thesis, I stress the significance of focusing on the other. In taking this seriously, this self contracts under the weight of the social. Much like the memorials in my hometown, this does not appear out of the blue, erected in place and time fully formed, nor did some cabal of elites put it there without any force of history and social, without regimes of truth and memory. This contraction helps to illustrate the socially constructed self and that society and its culture must be kept in mind. It also shows the importance of dialogic and the ethnographic and sociological methods that have been researched and maintained herein with this in mind.

However, in relation to the monuments discussed, consent and stipulations were needed to build and enact them. They need truth and power/knowledge systems through ruling relations constructed and maintained by my ancestors' truth and knowledge claims and my, our, interiorities and exteriorities of culture and politics. The BCWM relies partly on my self-stipulating to be built, and the BCCWM depends partly on my stipulation to remain. I am

a part of this stipulation. It is also crucial to consider this individual, this dialogical voice/writer/reader and all of the above as it relationally builds its interior with the exterior and vice versa. Each stipulation needs to be kept in mind. It demonstrates the importance of the autoethnographic method and, in particular, brings together the different facets of the methodological diamond that I have carried out in developing my CSA in this thesis.

Flashes of Insight

Turning to the title of this thesis, I have explained what critical socio-cultural autoethnography is. I now turn to its subtitle. Here, I have written a soldier as the auto, but it also considers the variations of the auto on how I have constructed this self in different places and times. The subtitle starts with a former soldier who is here now. It signifies where this thesis emanates from at the moment of writing, of putting fingers to keys and writing the words in front of you, the reader, now. However, as this thesis has illustrated, a dialogical voice/writer/reader accompanies this individual as I move from here to there.

Moreover, the back again takes into account our personal and public histories over the *longue durée*. These five words of here, there and back again also draw on how these work in concert, how I retroactively use narrative to create a story through truth and knowledge claims surrounding soldiers and other mythologies and discourse while remembering my past when I lived a soldier's life. I form these truths and bits of knowledge to make a continual me through storytelling and narrative with composure to the place and time of the present and truth and power/knowledge systems and their relations of ruling in dialogue with culture and politics. But also how analytically looking at how we do this, and thus, as a society, stipulating a viewing that is often rosy: here, there and back again.

When thinking of this newly conceived style of autoethnography and its future, it is important to look at the methodological approach underpinning much of it. In discussing the facets method utilised here, Jennifer Mason writes of the 'politics of method'. Therefore, she

writes of how (Savage and Burrows 2007; 2009) have warned against ignoring the transactional data that lets capitalists and capitalism know themselves, itself and others. Savage and Burrows comment on how social scientists need to engage this data critically in a process. Mason observes this principally as a call to merely "*describe better*, or to out-describe the faulty or crass descriptions used in routine transactional analyses" (Mason, 2011: 86, original emphasis). Mason feels we need to move beyond to *"focus on and value the idea of flashes of insight*, and especially insights into the kinds of entwinements and multi-dimensionalities" discussed in her article (Mason, 2011: 86, original emphasis). There is a warning against thinking with this data in a "relatively unthinking way" and how "the facet methodology approach is not settled, and hopefully will continue to evolve" (Mason, 2011: 87). This is also how I envision the future of my CSA coupled with the documents of life approach, much like the self in this thesis: undergoing constant evolution through continual flashes of insight.

Consequently, I want to consider how my brand of autoethnographic research might be utilised. However, before moving on from Mason, I consider how methodology should be a "kind of *dialogic* and collaborative process" as "the best way for [it] to develop" (Mason, 2011: 87). Autoethnography is already doing much collaborating, mentioned in the first chapter. I hope to continue this tradition with the CSA. I also want it to be responsive. *Dialogic*, to me, includes this collaboration but also a continuing of noticing the dialogical voice/writer/reader, which places the evolving self in place and time. The self and its dialogue with culture and society are crucial things to consider in autoethnography. This self is in a dialogical and collaborative process with its exteriority and interiority, and understanding what happens to it should be the key to the future of my methodological approach.

In considering its use, a CSA could be employed by any group wanting to understand this moving self better. I came to autoethnography partly because my group affiliation, war veterans, was seen as vulnerable with many ethical and moral questions concerning interviewing and research. Similar vulnerable groups could use the CSA to explore themselves in this manner. This thesis has noticed the importance of learning and understanding truth and knowledge claims across levels of societies, but also how understanding the most exposed is an asset. However, there must also be attention to how this could be harmful through consideration into the ethics researched and built into autoethnography and social sciences mentioned in this thesis.

Furthermore, as the CSA has looked at power dynamics, it is important to consider all levels of power and vulnerability to achieve a complete picture through a dialogical process. So, it is not only the vulnerable that can utilise it and better understand their affect and effect and/or privilege. In considering exteriority, interiority and many other things considered and explored in this thesis in the research process, the CSA could be utilised by researchers outside of the ethnographic and qualitative universe to better understand the self, themselves and their social and culture in their research process. Researchers need to know more about their exteriorities and interiorities, along with a deep and critical understanding of this and their history and the socio-cultural surrounding them. It would make them better scholars.

In looking back at some of the themes raised, along with new ones, I want to examine the words 'critical socio-cultural autoethnography' closer. Firstly, I want to begin with autoethnography and its association with art and the evocative. Autoethnography does something vital. There is a centring of the self in research and, thus, the individual. While much of social science is concerned with statistics, society, and groups of people, autoethnography allows for a more complete exploration of the individual. It does something very different in that you can trace how a self finds its meaning, attaches itself to those

meanings, and defines it. You can explore the autoethnographic self's truth and knowledge that is generated. Again, crucial work. However, much autoethnography relates to the artwork of a postmodern kind that Frederic Jameson warns against (Jameson, 1992). Comparing works depicting the shoes of Van Gogh and one of Andy Warhol to Jameson, there is a "depthlessness" to Warhol's, relating to Walter Benjamin's "aura" (Benjamin, [1935] 2015). There is superficiality. Jameson suggests that the postmodern has converted art into commodities that produce this superficiality with little depth. There is much repetition and the previously mentioned the signifier over the signified where the sign value has been lost (Jameson, 1992).

How this relates to autoethnography is often works lack this "depthlessness" as their subjects lack much of the "aura" and are often fragmented. There can be "private opulence", ignoring the exteriority that can lead to a "public squalor" (Galbraith, 1958). This detachment brings the first word of critical into view, in whether this fragmentation allows the possibility of critique or being critical. There is a need to explore the depths of self that autoethnography can provide, but it needs to be situated. We need to do more than skim the surface. There is a considerable amount of autoethnography that wants to keep to the imaginary. It disregards the real and does not connect to what is out there. However, to know who we are, we must know where we came from and where we have been. We need to listen to those other voices. The soldier's "unlocated narrative" needs to be located (Hynes, 1997). We need to connect *auto* more to the *ethno* in autoethnography. While it is important to imagine a better world, as autoethnographers often write, caution must be taken into becoming otherworldly and ignoring the world in front of us and the here and now.

By not placing the self into the social or socio-cultural and critiquing, this self is, in my view, adrift without an Eliasian compass (Elias, [1989] 2013). There is often a fashionability to a lot of autoethnography where there is a turning away from one style and

adopting another, "which in its turn differentiates them from the masses; and thus the game goes merrily on" (Simmel, [1904]1957: 545). Yet, as Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood write that, "the main problem of social life is to pin down meanings so that they stay still for a little time" (Douglas and Isherwood 1996: 43). There needs to be "some conventional ways of selecting and fixing agreed meanings" or else "the minimum consensual basis of society is missing" (Douglas and Isherwood 1996: 43). We need to be able to understand these meanings we pin down as deeply as we can as we are connected to them. It is appreciating the lives lived around us and our similarities, differences and connections. We need to know more genuinely about those others' understandings (Spry, 2016). The CSA links the auto to the socio-cultural of the autoethnographic ethno and explores the linkage. So, we know the rhythm and rhyming in an active understanding of ourselves and our world.

Critical Socio-cultural Autoethnography

This is not to say that this is a problem for autoethnography, but across social science. I recall being at a well-regarded sociological conference in Chicago at an upscale hotel. A young black music artist had been invited and was asked to speak, stood up, and mentioned how disconnected all this felt to the broader world, "how we sat there eating our fancy dinner in our fancy surroundings and people, when the world we should be studying is out there". These problems are not autoethnography's only. As this thesis has illustrated, these discovered truth and knowledge claims must be connected to the socio-cultural and analysed in order to achieve this depth and understand these connections better. This self, this individual, "is defined only by [their] relationship to the world and to other individuals; [they] exists only by transcending [themselves], and [their] freedom can be achieved only through the freedom of others" (Beauvoir, 1948: 156). These relationships to the world must be kept in mind in a critical socio-cultural autoethnography.

Critical socio-cultural autoethnography means working between the master craft[person] and travelling journey[person] previously mentioned, but the journey or the craftsmanship never stops (Benjamin, [1936] 2015). It is a journey and place of the evolving self that must be placed critically and analytically against the socio-cultural to unravel the fact and fiction of its life, plumb the depths of its interiority and exteriority, and examine the truth and power/knowledge systems and their relations of ruling through politics and culture: all done dialogically. It is something different from analytical autoethnographic forms similar to those that have been tried before in taking this self and all this into account (Anderson, 2006), it also differs in how the CSA considers all forms that came after this debate. In combination with its documents of life approach, with its critical humanist stance of "underpinning conception of 'the human,' the subject or person, as embedded, dialogic and inter-subjective, contingent, both material and symbolic, universal and ethical" (Stanley, 2013: 9). This combines in how all this connects to our origins and local area in the selection of better knowledge and truth claims through critical thinking, and learning of history and enlarging our agency to include and share other people's lives. This must augment "ontological ethics, an ethics grounded in a highly distinct notion of being and the relationship between self and Other" (Stanley, 1996: 441). However, it needs an autoethnographic understanding of the self that autoethnography has begun and its relational ethics and other ethical understandings (Ellis, 2007; 2009).

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Appendices

<u>Appendix 1: Link to MPhil Thesis: Of Monomyth and Melancholia: Reflections on Regimes through the Journey of Autoethnography and Veterans' Narratives</u>

Link to my 2013 Trinity College Dublin MPhil Thesis:

https://www.academia.edu/25061061/Of_Monomyth_and_Melancholia_Reflections_on_Regimes_through_the_Journey_of_Autoethnography_and_Veterans_Narratives

I would have included the MPhil thesis in its entirety here in the appendices. However, in the interest of word count and plagiarism, I have included this link to academia.edu to a pdf of the MPhil to allow the reader access to it. Emailing derekwesleymorris@gmail.com or contacting Trinity College Dublin can also provide a copy.

Appendix 2: The Many Moons of the Green Corn: An Auto/biographical Novella

The Many Moons of the Green Corn

Chapter 1

 Wesley shifted in his seat on the front porch swing. Anxiously, he peered up the street for any sign of his grandfather as the paperboy landed the paper at his feet. Little late. The mid-morning sun had already begun to heat the day, quickly drying the grass of its dew. His mother had just left for work and his father had long since left, so he resigned himself to wait alone on the porch. His papaw said he would be there at 8:30 a.m. sharp. Wesley didn't know why he had to go do this with him. He knew he would bring up working with him again. And he wanted to meet some buddies later that day. But his mom forced him.

  Wesley picked up the paper, wiping off the damp grass attached from the recent mowing. He opened it to read another headline about the war in Vietnam. Protests were spreading all around the US and now…*Oklahoma!* As he finished reading, he looked up to see his papaw's green Chevy pull into the drive. 8:30 a.m. sharp. Wesley got up and ran as quickly as he could to the truck. He knew not to keep his papaw waiting.

 "Howdy Papaw," Wesley pronounced opening the truck door.

 "Move that shit out of the way, throw that feed bag in the back. Hurry it up now, I want to get on the road," his papaw said.

 Wesley could tell he was nervous about the trip. They were going to visit Norman where Wesley would probably to go to college in the fall. He had received the acceptance letter but had yet to decide. It was far from home. His papaw was both proud and a bit disappointed. He still had hope that Wesley would take over the farm. Also his papaw hated leaving very far from the farm. His grandfather's orders were quickly followed, moving the stuff, and they were off.

A little way into the trip, Wesley produced the newspaper for discussion. He opened it and started looking through it like he had just started reading it. Then he turned towards his papaw,

"Crazy all this stuff about the war…" he said hesitantly.

"mmmhmm…" his papaw replied keeping his eyes on the road.

"What's with the protestin' too? Why do people do that?" Wes asked.

"It's complicated," he replied again.

"…says they are reducin' the number of troops in Vietnam. Why? Aren't we supposed to be fightin' communism and such?" Wesley asked.

"Well, that's complicated too, Wes," his papaw replied as he shot a glance at him.

"Well, you fought in a war", Wes said.

"I did," his papaw replied.

"And Uncle Danny," Wes continued.

"He did", he replied again.

"And we lost Uncle Mack before I was born…in…World War II," Wesley said cautiously.

Wes's papaw, Jim, went silent. Wes knew not to continue. He knew he shouldn't have brought Uncle Mack up. Wes felt the guilt.

Jim's thoughts somehow wandered to a protest long ago, one he was directly involved in that became more than a protest: the Green Corn Rebellion. Strange. Then his thoughts drifted again. To Mack. How he missed him: a good son. He would've been the one to take over the farm. These two thoughts then made him think of Henry Greene. How the mind wanders to long ago places when we are older. Henry. Shit. It had been awhile since he had thought of him. His thoughts turned his stomach turned when he remembered a promise he had made. A promise he hadn't kept.

Wes turned to look out the window. He spotted a red-tailed hawk hungrily watching a flock of turkeys. Wes was watching the hawk's poor attempt at catching a turkey when his papaw finally spoke.

"Well," he started then paused, "sometimes men have to do what they have to do," he said, turning to look at Wes intently. He tried to keep his intensity but also felt on the inside this unkept promise. Wes almost spoke again but thought better.

Hours passed and they eventually started talking as they crossed from the red oak and hickory forested hills to the plains of Eastern Oklahoma. These hills faded into the remnants of the Cross Timbers region, a place once known to be thick with blackjack, post oaks and briars with long thorns. Ones which once severely impeded settlers on the journey westward. However, now you merely drive on through. Finally, as the talk turned to family, the truck hit the black top and the prairie, opening up to flat plain, and offered a vision of forever.

The drive seemed forever too, if only for a few hours. When not talking, Wes thought of their conversation earlier and the paper. He always wanted to make his papaw proud. He knew his papaw's intent desire for him take over the farm, he just didn't think he could do it his whole life. *Maybe he could serve like his grandfather did in the First World War?* He'd often thought about it. *Plus, they pay for school. His parents would be against it and probably his papaw too, but they would get over it and surely be proud of him.*

Jim was discussing Mack when they pulled into the diner to see Mack's brother standing in the middle of its parking lot. The smell of burgers grilling from the diner made hunger quickly overtake all of the trip. He ran up to his uncle Danny, a Korean veteran himself, quickly shook his hand, then hurried toward the diner door. He turned only in the last minute before his hand caught the door handle to ask if his uncle wanted anything. He shook his head no.

As he pulled the diner door open, Wes's thoughts flashed to this uncle. He, in a way, always admired him a bit, even if others often didn't. *Quite the character, Danny always made people laugh.* He looked out for Wes too. His parents had somewhat reluctantly let him stay with him a couple of

times now in Oklahoma City, known simply as 'the City' to Okies. Danny had

shown him a different life than his small town of Durant. He knew much of

the world. Grabbing a bag of chips, he paused and briefly ruminated over

whether or not he caught the faint, rather sweet smell of moonshine

emanating from his uncle at their greeting.

Jim walked along with his son. As he did, he caught the same whiff of

alcohol as Wes did before. His heart sank. Not even supper time. Danny

slightly staggered and gazed off. When he did, as he'd done many times

before, Jim could see it in his eyes, and in his sluggish mannerisms. His

son had been hitting the bottle. Jim's mind thought of all the trouble,

Danny going to the pen, the fear of those moments. He took a long sigh,

"You been drinkin' hard again, Daniel?! God damn it".

Jim felt lost. Adrift. He clung to the thoughts of Mack again that he

felt centred him. He would have set Daniel right. Long ago Jim ran out of

what-to-dos. He turned to look Daniel in the eye. "Just go sit back in the

truck".

"I may have had just a lil 'shine this mornin' from some boys I know…

made outside the City. Needed it to take the edge…" Danny said, trailing

off as he suddenly felt a little sick.

"What about the night before and the night before that and—" Jim began

questioning before Danny cut him short.

"—Let me grab a bite, I gotta eat. I ain't had a good meal in while,"

Danny interrupted. Danny had been on a bender in the City for a few days

now, a wild couple of days with his old Korean War buddies. Though he

couldn't admit it outright, he needed a bit of 'shine in the morning to

face his old man.

"You, *Daniel* ain't embarrassin' Wesley. Ain't gonna have it. What about a

job? Got one? I bet not." Jim then felt the fatherly urge soften him.

"Here's some money, go across the street and get something," Jim said as he

tried to remain stern.

"I don't want your money and no, I ain't gotta job. It's tough Daddy. Some old boy made fun of my accent, and I clocked him. Poof. No job. Just been with my buddies from the war for the last couple of days. Catchin' up. _You_ of all people should understand!" Danny pleaded.

Wes looked outside the diner. He could see his papaw and uncle, both in tense stances, mutedly quarrelling.

Jim's blood pressure rose, and he forgot himself, "maybe you need to steer clear of all them coloure—well, listen here, Danny. You think of your family. You think of your sister and Wesley," Jim replied as he jabbed his index finger into Danny's direction. He was long past knowing what to do anymore. His son used to have so much promise. It might have been the wrong decision for him to go to Korea. But he answered the call. That made Jim proud. Then he came home and got into trouble…

Jim knew war. He knew what it did. At least _his_ war. He hated to get this way about his son and his friends, but it made him so angry. On the farm he could set him straight,

Jim said the only thing he knew to say, "Maybe you need to come home".

Danny heard the word home and knew. His guard dropped along with his shoulders and said,

"Alright, Daddy," with resignation. "Let me go inside real quick. But, you know I ain't coming home", Danny said.

Jim just nodded and turned. Then Danny took off into the diner, almost tripping over a faded red chair on his way to the bathroom. Jim took another big sigh as he watched his son through the big diner windows until he disappeared from view. Jim made a promise to his wife that he would talk to Danny, now that was done. He thought for a minute about the other promise earlier. Wesley watched as well, and waited by a booth, eventually sliding slowly into it. Noticing a woman in blue jeans and short hair come in, he thought, _what is going on?_

The bell of the diner door clanged against the glass as the Roxanne
waited. She placed her hand in the back pocket of her Levis. She leaned
against the counter, taking in the smell and sound of burgers on the grill
and noticing the two men outside arguing. She looked closer and thought the
older one looked like her of Daddy a bit. How he used to dress up, standing
tall in his blue-jean overalls; ones a bit stained with dirt, sometimes
covering a nice dress shirt. As she reminisced, the woman behind the
counter walked up and without looking up from scribbling on her notepad
asked her, "What can I get ya?"

"Oh… let's see…umm…about ten burgers… and some fries…"

As her order hung in the air, Roxanne perused the menu hanging above the
counter to confirm her decision, then gave a nod. Oddly, Roxanne noticed
the waitress kept writing in the pad. *Unusual*.

"For here or to go?"

"To go. We're getting pretty hungry by now, me and my friends over there"
Roxanne looked at the waitress for a reaction. She hesitated for a second
before continuing, "occupying part of the library on campus. For the
protest".

"Oh! Gee…" The girl paused, suddenly looking a bit uncomfortable. "Um, I
am afraid our boss…well he says we can't serve y'all… on account…on account
he says we don't serve, um, you know…" as the waitress avoided Roxanne's
eyes

"What?" Roxanne asked.

"You know, what y'all are, what did he say?" she continued.

"Sorry honey, what are we?" Roxanne asked.

"Commies!, he said, you know communists", the waitress said a bit unsure.

This made Roxanne's face light up with a grin. She could feel the lack of
conviction in her voice. She asked, "What's your name, hon?"

"Patsy", the girl replied, still looking downward.

Roxanne continued, "Patsy, what does the word communist mean to you?"

"I don…" she was in mid-reply as they both turned to the sound of a crash.

Danny had now made it out of the bathroom. He promptly tripped over a chair leg, which caused the whole table set to slide and knock together. The whole of the diner turned and looked. His dad, now standing next to Wesley, looked on in horror with them as Danny indignantly pulled his foot out from under the chair and said,

"Whatchay'all lookin' at? Ever seen a veteran stumble? Chairs more dangerous than the K-P-A!"

Wes ducked down low in the booth. Watching his uncle, he went as low as he could go.

Roxanne and Patsy tried to ignore the commotion; a lot of Vietnam vets had come to the protest. It seemed to bring to the forefront their troubles. It felt best to ignore them.

"And what do you think of this war in Vietnam?" Roxanne turned back towards Patsy and continued.

"My brother is thinking about joining… " her voice broke and cracked towards the end.

Roxanne, trying to re-focus from the distraction, crossed her face with concern as she pried further, "What's your brother's name then?"

Patsy's head still hung as her eyes gradually swelled with tears like a dam that might burst, but she kept scribbling on the pad. She grabbed the counter with her other arm to steady herself, looked up and said, "Tim. He just turned 18, I've been raising him over the last few years."

Roxanne fixed her eyes on Patsy. Now they were firm with determination as she said,

"We doing what we can to stop this war, hopefully before your brother gets over there."

Pulling up near them and overhearing their conversation, Danny awkwardly tried to join the conversation,

"So y'all protestin'? Hell, some of my buddies are. Might join 'em. Fuck Vietnam. Everyone is always goin' on and on about it. Nobody ever talks about Korea. Why y'all talking about war anyways? Y'all got someone over there? Vietnam …" But before Danny finished, he felt the hard stare of someone behind him. He turned to see a familiar-looking black man keeping an eye on him.

This man knew to keep an eye on white men with Southern accents that may have had a little too much to drink. Things often get bad quick.

Danny gave the hard stare back at the man, walking somewhat towards him. As he did, his bearing suddenly changed, his eyes softened, and he asked softly,

"Do you know… Will Ellison?"

The man's demeanour instantly dropped too, and his face broke across in a smile. He said, "That's my boy Burghardt! He always went by Will, he never liked Burghardt," as he reminisced.

Danny took a long step back and placed his hand on the back of his head in disbelief,

"Well, I'll be… I…I served with Will. He was my battle buddy in Korea. I remember you now from the funeral. Sorry again for your loss. We hung out a ton… here in the City after the war, and your son, Will, was a good man. He sure did help change me…"

Danny choked up and looked off for a second. Then he started again,

"I never got to thank him before he passed…"

He walked a bit towards the door then gazed off into the distance. He turned and walked back towards the table and said,

"We somehow survived over there… for him to die back here…"

Danny then felt his dad's hand on his shoulder, and his voice said, "best to leave this man alone" as Jim ushered him towards the door.

"Now, we don't want no trouble from y'all now," Jim said looking at Will's dad. Danny, his mind a bit foggy and still in a bit of a shock felt his dad push him towards the door, gently but forcefully. He was out the

door before he realised what had happened. Still in shock, he turned towards his father,

"Daddy what the hell are you pushin' me for? I.. I kinda knowed that fella." Danny pushed his father's hands off him, and in pushing off, he lost his balance, falling backward onto the ground. Danny then felt the hard gravel slide across his backside as the dust enveloped him. When the dust cleared, he could slowly make out his dad standing over him. Jim surveyed the parking lot. He then set his eyes dead on his son. In a low rumble he growled, "Now git to that cotton-pickin' truck and sleep it off!"

Danny tried to plead, "But dad, you don't understand, his son and I, we fought, were in the war together!"

"Damn it, Daniel! I don't want you startin' no trouble. I am tryin' to teach Wesley, and I don't need you screwin' the shit up! I already helped you raise your kid right. Remember? When you couldn't? Wesley don't need to be seein' you chattin' with *his* type—" Jim said before he was interrupted.

"—Damn it, Daddy, first off you shouldn't be that way, *his* type? Second understand…" Danny felt foggy again; then the world started to spin a little. He was getting too old to drink like this, for these many days, and this situation was too much. Jim looked at his son on the ground then offered him a hand, which Danny took, hoisting himself up off the ground. Danny knew it was no use arguing. Relenting, he then set himself on course for the truck with a weary resignation.

Chapter 3

Many of the diner patrons watched the old man's resolute demeanour *and* his gentle, steady hand in helping his son to his feet. They sat in silence for a while, not knowing what to say. Roxanne had the thought again, even if his reaction seemed a little unfair. And maybe it was a bit wrong, but she couldn't help but think: *Just like daddy, sometimes hard, but firm and understanding.*

Patsy's eyes widened at the incident. She couldn't help but see her
brother's future in the former soldier. It gave her such a fright. Now,
both of the women did not want to talk about the situation or the war. It
was Patsy who moved the conversation by saying, "Tell you what, I will get
you some burgers and fries to go, but if the boss comes in…I don't know
nothin' about what you're doin', okay?"

Roxanne replied, "Okay." Roxanne felt something. All these thoughts of
her father also made her think of her mother, the situation with her
family, and how her husband Jimmy never accepted them. She couldn't figure
out why, but she sensed a familiar fright from the woman and pushed for a
small connection in that moment. She felt herself say,

"Hey! You wanna get some a coffee sometime?"

Patsy, shocked, looked around just as the cook in the back called. She
quickly replied with a yes, but then had to make her way to the back,
writing along as she went. She yelled on her way to Roxanne to come by
later to set something up. Roxanne looked down at the red, faded upholstery
of the diner booth. She ran her hand over the silver inlay as she glanced
towards the middle-aged black man that was a part of the commotion before.
As she did, she accidently flicked a bit of the silver casing. *This diner
is disintegrating*, she thought to herself. She self-consciously continued
when, noticing her glances, the man said,

"Nicely handled."

Roxanne was a bit perturbed and somehow felt weirdly defensive. *What
might the man be insinuating? That she had bad intentions?.* She couldn't
help though but soften at the sad smile of Will's dad. His eyes were still
fighting back tears from his previous conversation and his hands were
folded neatly on white table of the booth.

"How's the protest going?" Will's dad quipped.

Roxanne hesitated for a moment, thinking about the occupation and also
his comment earlier.

"Fine," she replied simply.

Roxanne surveyed the gentleman who was wearing a bright blue satin shirt with no tie, white trousers and matching blue Cuban-heeled shoes, definitely in style. She noticed a man a little older from her first glance. A nice, kind-looking man, despite her preconceived notions of a flashy dresser.

"Good luck. It's a good cause," Will's dad opined as his eyes gave a certain spark.

Roxanne quickly reminded herself of the reasons she had become an activist three years ago. Partly because her experiences had taught her of the complexity of life, the other part was that she never wanted to stop learning more of its complexity. This meant talking to others. From every place and age. If she only paid attention to certain issues and people, then what was she fighting for? She looked towards the back of the diner to check on the progress of the burgers and shifted her thinking.

"Why thank you, sir. Sorry to hear about your loss, your boy must've been somethin', made quite the impression," she said facing him, "mind if I sit with you while I wait?"

"No trouble t'all Miss," the man gestured for her to sit, "yeah Burghardt was…"

He paused for a moment. "He…"

He looked down in his lap. Then looked up with his eyes welled up, "I don't mean to be rude, but might we talk about something else, it is just…," letting the "just' float languidly in the air.

Roxanne carefully slid into the booth across from the man with a concerned look in her eyes.

"Okay," pausing for a moment, "my name is Roxanne. What's yours?"

"Waldo," he said unsurely, finding his thoughts on his son again.

Roxanne let the moments pass without saying a word.

Waldo slowly returned then said "Yeah," he grinned uncomfortably. Then, quickly changing the subject said, "Yeahh…I've been in a few protests myself, my first was in Harlem in the 1930s…"

"1930s!" she exclaimed. "I am sorry, you don't *look* and don't *dress* old enough for that," Roxanne continued.

"Well," with his sparkling eyes returning, "I don't know if that is a compliment or what but, I've learned we often don't fit into the roles society has for us."

Roxanne turned a little red, but continued, "—a protest in the 1930s, what about?"

Waldo leaned back and began to recount, "A friend of mine got shot by the police, and the community didn't take kindly to it, let's just say…"

Over Waldo's shoulder near their booth, Jim had come back in and sat down with Wes. Jim had begun to eavesdrop, with his arm slung over the dulled, and cracked red leather furnishings made smooth from years of wear. As he listened, he dug his finger in a hole in the leather, pushing against the foam. Jim felt a little regret now, thinking on what Daniel had said about the man's son. He hated to act that way, but he learnt from experience. Wes looked away in embarrassment at his grandfather. He also thought of Henry and the guilt.

"So, it was a protest against the police?" Roxanne asked quizzically.

"Bit more than just that, although the news called it a 'riot'," he replied.

"Yeah, we know those, Tulsa Race Riot for one…My father used to talk a lot about what they called the Green Corn Rebellion… it's been called a 'riot' too," she stated, half in thought and half aloud.

"-The Green Corn Rebellion, you know about that?!" Jim interjected from the behind table.

"Yes, I do!" a surprised Roxanne answered the eavesdropper.

"Well, hell…" Jim thought for a moment on whether to reveal something so personal, then did, "I was in it."

Jim's mouth was taut and his eyes showed kindness but with some intensity as he rose from the booth. Wes looked shocked and more embarrassed.

Roxanne was a little taken aback, remembering the man's involvement in events earlier, but again moved toward the memory of her father to recover enough to mutter,

"Would you like to join us?" She then quickly recalled that it was initially Waldo's table and tactfully added, "If this gentleman does not mind, of course…" as she gestured toward her newfound companion.

"Not at all," Waldo replied as he waved the inhabitants of the other booth over.

"Well…" Jim let the well hang for a moment, as he hadn't considered getting involved with any city folk, but eager for some reason to talk about the rebellion for the first time he could remember, he ignored the hesitation and said, "mind if my grandson joins too?"

But then Jim felt a tug at his shirtsleeve and looked to see his grandson. Hunkered down in the seat across, he whispered,

"We ain't gonna sit with the likes of *him*…are we?"

Jim looked uncomfortably as his grandson as he continued, "…a coloured fellow and whatever *she* is? It don't seem right."

Waldo recognized the kind of conversation from the hushed voices behind him. 56 years he had overheard the conversations that often slowly descended into inaudible whispers. Roxanne shifted anxiously.

"But of course, your grandson can join," Waldo broke the hushed tones.

Jim wavered again but then turned with stern eyes towards the kid.

"Now listen, there might be somethin', and I ain't sayin' he's not different, but it don't mean we can't be civil," as he pressed his index finger into the table.

The teenager looked sullen. He slowly raised up and kind of forced-marched himself towards the booth, sliding in without saying a word.

Jim stood up, a bit perturbed at his grandson's manners, but recovered to offer his hand.

"Name is Jim Tetley, and this is my grandson, Wesley Stone."

 "I go by Wes," Wes corrected sullenly.

 "Well howdy Wes and Jim. This here is Waldo and my name is Roxanne."

 "Nice to meet y'all, and sorry if you had to see all that trouble
earlier, y'all from around here?" Jim asked.

 "Well! I am from Piedmont," Roxanne begin," and Waldo, well I am sorry I
don't kn—""

 "—Originally from the City." Waldo chimed in.

 "Well I'm from down south, Pontotoc county now, south of Ada, not so far
from where the rebellion happened. My grandson lives down Durant way. In
fact, we are up here lookin' at the university n'case old Wes here might
wanna come" Jim replied.

 Wes sullenly ducked his head down into the booth more. *Men like his
father and his papaw and him didn't consort with their types.* Then he
continued to himself, *and what the hell was this Green Rebellion stuff!?*

 "So what's this I hear about the Green Corn Rebellion? My daddy used to
go on and on about it. And you were in it? Fascinating!" Roxanne exclaimed
in awe, then continued,

 "I'm an activist helpin' with the occupation and protests against the
War!" Roxanne couldn't contain her conviction.

 "Well," Jim countered, turning the moment a tad sour "if you don't mind
me sayin', sounds like a damn foolish thing! What's a nice girl like you
doin'…?" he shook his head but then hesitated, softening a bit when he saw
Roxanne's face fall.

 Roxanne was unperturbed, if a little disappointed, "we believe in freedom
of expression and not sending young people off to die in a useless rich
man's war!" she interjected.

 Jim could see her changed expression and felt her hurt. But over 50 years
of burying the rebellion. Mack, Henry and Samantha and all those people.
What he replaced it with just welled up from a place. He couldn't control

it. "Pardon my French, ma'am, that puttin' up a fuss, that stuff is for the birds, luckily my brother talked some sense into me afterwards."

 For a brief moment the thought of his brother brought him back to that time. For an even briefer moment, he was caught seeing a lot of himself and his friends from back in the rebellion in the folks across the booth. Wesley would've been about their age. But then the *fear* came from the period afterwards and years that followed and he pushed down those long ago happy moments. The fear won over and he continued,

 "ruined a lot of people's lives. Those agitators...and protestin' the war?!" he felt his blood pressure going up. And with that, those thoughts were buried. Then there were the experiences after the war, the years after welled up. He steadied himself again. He did what he had to do.

 "Should'da have known not ta mess around with those damn commies in the rebellion," Jim continued, "Listening to Indians, damn it and them n—….," suddenly catching himself, he looked across the booth and remembered his bearings,

 "No offence, Mr. ...? Sorry I didn't catch your last name?" Jim asked.

 Waldo shifted uneasily in his chair, "Doesn't matter."

 Wes looked up quizzically and thought to himself, *Who does this n***** think he is? And a fuckin' protestor?*

 He reflected quickly back to his thoughts earlier on the military. He would be doing his part, for his community, as his papaw did in World War I. Like his uncle did in Korea. Americans fight when it is right. These people didn't seem to understand. *Why?* He wanted to help people here and around the world. *Why would you protest that?* He would be respected if he joined! His thoughts were kept to himself now.

 Roxanne looked flushed. She felt the blood almost run out of her. She had always wanted to talk to a participant in the rebellion. Now, the man sitting across from her was saying these awful things. She felt almost kicked right in the stomach as she glanced at Waldo.

Waldo calmly leaned back in the booth and looked sternly at Jim.

"Have you ever heard of the Tulsa Race Riots?" he asked, holding his gaze on Jim.

"You mean when *your* people tried to burn down Tulsa in the 20s?" Jim replied, feeling suddenly attacked.

"*Your* people? No, I mean the massacre, where *many* people burned down what they called Black Wall Street, an affluent neighbourhood there, where they put 300 people in mass graves after they murdered them, where—" Waldo tried to continue, but just in that moment, Waldo noticed the waitress staring at them, strangely writing something down.

Wes had stood up in the booth, anger flushed across his face "—Now wait a cotton pickin' minute, mister! I don't know where you get off talkin' to my papaw that way, especially *your* kind, I won't have it—" Wes started just before he was interrupted.

Waldo calmly interrupted "—Listen, I am sorry, son. Your papaw said you were from Durant? Have you ever heard of John Lee?" Waldo inquired.

"Why would I give a shit about anyone you know!?!" Wes, now raging, half-shouted.

Jim stood up, "Now Wesley Stone! Show some respect and *language*, especially in fronta the ladies, I won't have it. I think you better go cool off," Jim ordered and pointed toward the door.

"Wait one second, Jim, if I may…" Waldo's gaze fell from Jim to Wes as he continued,

"John Lee was a black man from your area. They filled' em full of bullet holes, dragged'em up and down the main street, then put'em on a pyre and lit'em on fire. The townspeople all stood around the pyre and took a picture. He—" Waldo tried to continue.

"—Probably deserved it," Wes retorted curtly.

"I am sorry," Jim said to Waldo then looking at Wesley he pointed towards the door as anger flashed in his eyes, "Get outside!"

"But Papaw..." Wes replied with his eyes wide in disbelief, knowing his papaw's anger.

"Out," Jim said as Wes dropped his shoulders and headed for the door. Jim followed. What had he taught Wes? He again thought back to his friends in the rebellion. What would they think of him now?

Out the door, Jim started. "Goddamnit, Wesley! What did I tell you about bein' civil?! I've gotta go back inside. Apologise again. You sit down on that there curb and you think. Then, I want you to come back in and do the same. And I am too damn old for this," Jim exasperated, sweating bullets at this point. *What the hell is with these boys!?* he thought to himself.

Chapter 4

Danny shook awake to see his dad and Wes arguing outside the diner. He laughed a little and thought to himself, *we're going to kill the old man.* Seeing his dad that angry made him think it had been ten years today since Danny had left the Pen for letting his anger take hold of him. Shooting that guy; lucky he didn't kill him. He surely would still be there. Nobody gave a shit. After Will was killed, he didn't either and just kinda...lost it.

Danny considered leaving now. That's what he'd always done. Or he could just stay in the truck and do what his dad said too. Leaving always seemed like the right decision. He thought to himself, *aaah, fuck it.* And got out of the truck and started walking.

"But Papaw! I was just taking up...but he is a n—, I mean, how can I let him talk to me, I mean, you like that?!" Wes sputtered.

"Wesley, you may think they are...I mean, they may be different than us, but...," Jim felt exhausted. He felt a little too old for this. For a moment, he flashed back to that hill in 1917 with his friends in the rebellion, "I used to have lots of friends who were...damnit! I said civil, that's what I mean!" Jim said, emphatically. Jim then stopped. He looked off and when he turned back towards Wesley, a tear trickled down his cheek. "What's wrong

Papaw?" Wes asked confusedly. He looked at Wes. It reminded him again of himself at that age. His mind drifted. Back there in 1917.

  "What in the shit is goin' on? Am I goin' to have to sort y'all out?!" Danny hollered then giggled. Danny had made up his mind to do something instead of just leaving. But Jim just ignored Danny and he turned to go back inside. From the interaction he just witnessed, Danny thought about how Wes thought the way he used to. He had war buddies like him. They'd say, "these damn c--ns thinkin' they have more rights than us now," and then they would complaing about how it was harder for them to find work thanks to all these civil rights. And then there was this damn *new* war, but what about *their* war? Why doesn't anybody give a shit about them? All these wars seem fucking useless anyways. He thought about Will again and how he helped change his thinking. He also thought on how war changes people the other way, how boys he knew came back hating anyone of Asian descent. It's hard. Where do you put the anger of losing a friend or friends to war? Where do you put that love? Love that has been taken from you? Life is confusing. Danny himself had found it hard to hold down a job for a while now, and places were wary of his job record in conjunction with his prison time and veteran status. Right now though, he needed to talk to Wes.

  Wes looked at his uncle laughing, and thought, *Great, what does he got to say?* He had had enough today. He wasn't going back in to apologise. His papaw seemed agitated. A bit weird. He might leave soon anyways, he was still starving though. It wasn't that Wesley wasn't interested though. He hated to admit it, but he enjoyed the learning. It all fascinated him. Lost in thought, his uncle sat down beside him.

  "How you doin'?" Danny asked.

  "Fine," he replied.

  "How's Daddy?" Danny asked.

  "He's put up a fuss, that n—," but Wes was cut short.

  "—Watch it Wes," Danny said with the Tetley look.

"I mean, that coloured guy was mouthin', talkin' about riots in Tulsa or somewhere," Wes started again indignantly.

"Now, I know it might be hard to listen to your old uncle right now, but it might do you good to listen to those fellows. At least hear them out. I heard some of that stuff from some of the guys up here. When we go out drinkin'. Something about how their kinfolks' whole town burned to the ground near Tulsa or something. Lotta lives lost. Lotta heartache. That guy's son…" Danny voice cracked ever so slightly, "Will was one of the best guys I knew in the service, hell anywhere. We made friends on account of Oklahoma. It was hard at first. Learnin' new people and things. Some things make you feel wrong, like your people might've done somethin' bad." Danny paused.

Wes continued to look at his uncle. He couldn't help but be captivated by his earnestness.

Danny continued, "I miss the hell out of Will," stopping and looking down.

There was a silence for a bit. Then Danny continued, "I was taught most things you've been taught. I thought many of the things you thought. I just met people different than me that taught me different things."

He put his arm around Wes,

"But you should also listen to your papaw. He comes from a long line of good men,"

Danny paused again. A group of protestors passed. Danny now noticed the waitress out in front of the diner: having a smoke, looking at them and writing. They watched the people, some veterans, carrying signs that read: Law & Order= Racism, Avenge the Kent State Four and My Son Was Killed In Vietnam! What For? Danny resumed,

"but there ain't nothing wrong listening to people you see different than you. Often you find there isn't a lot of difference. You find they might've had a rough life that wasn't their own makin'…"

Unfamiliar thoughts started to churn in Wes's head. He felt a connection between him and his uncle. *Maybe there was something to what Danny said. And look at how passionate and strong all these people felt. People in the diner might not be so bad, the protestor lady, all these people now, Waldo.* But what would his dad think? And his papaw? He had been taught and lived one way it seemed. This was different. Wes looked at his uncle looking at the protestors.

"You know, Wes, your papaw was in a protest, well it became more a rebellion. People lost their lives for somethin'. Somethin' they strongly believed in. There were people involved, just like Will's dad. People, you see, different than us. I like to think they tried to work together to make a better life for themselves. They called it the Green Corn Rebellion. I heard my papaw…your mamaw's dad was in it too. They say it kinda broke my papaw and he passed before I remember him. Then your papaw went to war, came back and changed… Well as I said, you should listen to your papaw, but don't ignore these other people. Or vice versa. I don't know if I am makin' a lick of sense. Hopefully I am finally soberin' up. Your uncle did have a bit too much moonshine lately," Danny said as he gave Wes a hard slug.

The Green Corn Rebellion. And his great-grandfather died because of it? Mamaw's dad? He'd heard his papaw mention him. He hadn't been thinking what his mamaw thought or even his own mother. Better if he did. He always listened to his mamaw. Wesley would go home and find out more about this rebellion. Seemed exciting. Waldo also talked about some interesting things that made him want to find out about that too. Things he never knew or thought about. Wes wanted to see what was true, and maybe dig deeper into this Vietnam thing too. He looked over at his uncle whose face had suddenly gone grave.

"Wesley," his uncle said earnestly.

"Yes, Uncle Danny?" Wes replied, noticing his uncle's quick change of demeanour.

"It's okay to be afraid too," Danny said.

"What," Wes replied.

"Afraid, it's okay, you can be scared. Just don't let it overtake you," Danny said solemnly.

"Huh?" Wes asked. In his mind he thought what the fuck?

"You can be scared. You can talk about it. Just don't let it overtake you and come out other ways. Silly ways," Danny said.

"Oh," Wes responded.

"I was scared over there. Hell we all were. We talked about it in our own ways. We tried to not let it overtake us. Then we were scared when we came back and there wasn't all the people to talk to about it. It messed with a lot of us. Some more than others. Fear makes people fucking stupid sometimes," Danny declared.

Wes looked at his uncle without saying a word.

"But love makes us do stupid thing too. Or sometimes smart things. You want to go in there and try to talk to these people," he turned to Wes, "help your 'ole Papaw?"

"You sure he needs help?" Wes replied.

"Sure, I bet we all do," Danny said as he rose, dusted off his jeans and offered his hand to Wes.

Wes and Danny entered the diner together and both smiled at the writing waitress on the way in. Jim had made his way to the counter to talk to her. When Jim looked up to see the two of them, something was off and a change had come over him. He seemed to also be avoiding going back to the table.

He walked towards the two, "I told you to wait in the pickup Danny," Jim said but his face and body language gave a sign of relief, even if he said otherwise.

"Come on Dad," Danny motioned. "Let's go talk to them," and with that Jim turned and walked back towards the table.

Roxanne and Waldo were deep in conversation when the threesome arrived back at the table. Roxanne noticed Patsy still strangely writing intensely,

but turned her attention towards the table, "Howdy boys!" Roxanne said. "Pull up a chair."

"I think Wesley has something to say…" Jim spoke up quickly and gave Wes a nudge. There was silence for a moment then Danny gave him a hard kick.

"Ouuch, alright. I am sorry about my behaviour earlier," Wes said somewhat reluctantly.

"And…" Danny said.

"And?" Wes replied quizzically.

"Disre…" Danny said.

"Ahh, and I am sorry about being disrespectful," Wes replied.

"Good, now I can talk to ya'll about the Green Corn Rebellion, and what was this about those riots?" Jim said as the two other Tetley boys looked on as astonishment spread throughout the table.

Chapter 5

A few months had passed and Wesley was getting ready to go to the University of Oklahoma when his papaw has swung by the house. He hurriedly told Wesley to get in the truck. Wesley abided.

The Green Chevy hit a pothole and lurched towards the ditch before Jim grabbed the wheel to steer it back on the dirt road. Wes had never been this way before. Things seemed a little strange. They had stopped by the store and bought a few things before getting back on the road.

"Where are we going, papaw? Wesley asked.

"A trip to a place should've went years ago," Jim replied.

"What in the heck did we buy all these Dr Peppers and candy bars for?" Wes asked.

"You'll see…" Jim responded.

Wesley had had time to process now all the events of that day in the City. All that had happened. He felt changed. He was thinking about

Roxanne, Waldo and his uncle had said when they pulled into a drive he did

not recognise.

 "Are we going to someone's house, Papaw?"

 "I had an old friend in that rebellion we were talkin' about earlier.

After it, we didn't talk much to each other no more. Especially after your

great-grandfather passed. Many reasons. Mostly folks in the rebellion

didn't come around me and to be honest I didn't exactly go around them. Lot

of silence. Nobody talked much about it. I didn't even tell my kids. I

think your mamaw finally must've," Jim said as he eyed the potholes.

 "So we are going to see your friend?" Wes inquired.

 "No, his daughter," Jim stated as he swerved to miss another. "He's

passed."

 The road to the house was a bit long so Wesley remained silent for a

minute. Shortly, he gave it another go,

 "So, this is your friend's daughter from the rebellion?" Wes inquired

again.

 "Yep, I made a promise," then Jim paused for a moment, "a promise to the

man's daughter, him and couple of other buddies years ago. We were to watch

over each other's kids if something happened… to any of us. And I let him

down. Now, I am going to make it right," Jim declared as they pulled near

to where the house stood.

 A nicely dressed man quickly came out and made for the barn. Odd he

didn't greet them. He got about halfway then turned to yell something at

the woman coming out now. Wes noticed she didn't exactly dress as nice. She

smiled when she recognised Jim and was soon followed by quite a few curious

kids not exactly dressed well either.

 Jim got out of the truck carrying all the candy bars and Dr Peppers.

Quickly, the children surrounded him.

 Wes found nostalgia looking at his papaw and in a deep breath in that

moment, took in the musty smell of his papaw's old green Chevy. A Chevy,

which to him, represented backwoods and backroads, good times with his cousins. He recalled trips to the store to get those same Dr Peppers and candy bars. Long drives where they talked along the dusty red dirt roads. He took a long exhale and peered out the window at his smiling grandfather who was surrounded like a giant by the kids of all ages. Papaw cracked pecans as an extra treat. He remembered him that way. Now, he recognised: things were changing, and they had changed.

 "Wesley get out of that truck and come say hello!" his grandfather yelled.

 Wes sank in his seat then shrugged as he opened the truck door, rolling out. His feet hit the dirt and rocks of the gravelled road. The sunset shown across the sky, painting countless hues of gold, oranges, pinks and reds. As he walked, he kicked multi-coloured ground composed of the local granite that seemed to match the sky's golden and red shades. He sure wanted to be home at this point. He looked at the nice house to see an even nicer pickup in the drive, next to an unbelievably awesome red Ford Mustang, next to a hunk of junk barely fit for the road. The kids had decent enough clothes, but they didn't quite match the picture of the Mustang, the nicely-dressed man or even his pickup. He couldn't take his eyes off the Mustang though.

 "How fast can you run in those shoes?" a kid asked.

 "Fast enough," Wesley retorted, feeling playful again.

 Wes wore the new tennis shoes his mother had bought him, and he could see envy in their eyes. Wes noticed a toy or two, here and there, that were once his. He had forgotten about them or thought they disappeared. His papaw must have snuck them away to here, much to his chagrin. Sneaky. Years ago, Wes remembered his mama and daddy having a heated argument about his papaw going over to a woman's house. Wes's father didn't like it. It made him more than uncomfortable, after all, Tom Miller was a well-to-do man. It made his mother somewhat uncomfortable too, but she always knew her daddy to do the right thing. He had to be going over there to help.

"What did they need help for?" Wes's dad had replied, "Tom has plenty of money."

He then recalled his mother mentioning something about a bruising on the mother, Janet, a few townspeople caught sight of…

"Wes! Go get that stuff out of the back of the truck!" His papaw yelled again.

Shit. Wesley thought. Almost made it. About halfway. Wesley turned back towards the truck and gave the gold, brown and red granite pebbles another kick. Just then the springtime air picked up, blowing sand across his face and the smell of wildflowers: buttercups, Indian paintbrushes and Indian blankets. The wind finished with a fresh hint of a far-off rain shower. He turned towards the smell to watch a flash of lighting and to hear distant thunder rumble follow. Wes didn't understand. After all that had happened today, why was his papaw being so gruff now?

"Go on, git! Get your head out the clouds!" his papaw yelled again.

Wesley started to pick up the pace.

"Wesley, I am counting to ten in my head. If I get there and you don't have that stuff out the back, we ain't going out to eat afterwards!" Jim said sternly. He didn't mean to be so hard on the boy, but he needed to learn to respect everyone until they gave you a reason not to. Jim worried. *Wes wasn't respectful enough*. *Maybe because of Janet's situation?* Jim knew what everyone said about him coming over here. It had stopped him before. He had brought along the rest of his pecans Wes and he had gathered last year. He hoped she could use them to make pies to sell to make extra money. That way if she needed a way out, it would help. He had to do something. *Damn the people talking, that's all they do sometimes.* Thinking of helping Janet, Jim recalled what he told his friend. He recalled the emotions of those moments. He recalled the guilt he felt once he joined the war…

Janet walked up next to Jim. "You art not be so hard on the boy. Don't you remember that age?" she asked. Janet's mind flooded. It did every time

she saw Jim. With each year, it got harder and harder to remember her parents, but Jim brought it all back. Proud Choctaws. Her mama hung in her mind, it was now around this time every year of the Green Corn ceremony, the Moon of the Green Corn. Her mother would be preparing the feast. Her father would be preparing to tend the fire of the ceremony. Janet looked away for a moment to let a tear flow down her cheek..

Jim saw Janet turn away with a tear, he knew these moments now at this age. Seeing someone would bring back someone gone, it made him reminisce about her father Henry in the rebellion. A strong and proud Native American, Choctaw, very active in the Green Corn Rebellion (GCR) who turned quiet and somewhat broken after its events. It was his wife that kept things somewhat together. *What was her name?* Jim felt guilt again. *Samantha Greene!* She had tried to repair the relationships between their families. But they slowly lost contact when Jim got back from the war. Or maybe it was Jim who knew not to associate with the GCR members anymore. And many weren't associating with him after what he did to Happy. There were also the hard feelings of him *choosing* to go to that war…

"And, listen, I know what you might be thinkin', but you got, you got to let me do this shit myself. And you don't have to bring us this crap. These kids are fine. WE don't need your charity," the words belied a kindness to Jim in her eyes, "You men, especially the white ones, y'all are all the same in the different ways you patronize," Janet was proud of her word there.

In between the raising all these fucking kids pretty much by herself, she had been reading, looking over the Reader's Digest too with its 'word power' section. Reader's Digest was one of her few luxuries. That piece of shit husband never gave her or the kids anything. And even though it might have felt patronising, it seemed to give Janet a certain strength to have Jim come back again. It's almost like she sense her parents' presence. She softened a little more, "It is nice you came, though."

Just then, they all saw Tom, Janet's husband, leave the barn and break

for his truck. Jim and Janet kept their eyes locked on him as the kids all

looked to their mother. Wes, for some reason, thought it all seemed

strange.

"Worthless piece of shit…" Janet muttered under her breathe. Tom and her

had always had a volatile relationship. A gentleman in the beginning, then

one day, almost out of nowhere, he had grabbed her and choked her. From

there it seemed to get progressively worse. She often wondered if it was

her fault, but then she would hear her mama's voice: *don't be a fucking*

idiot. One of her kids had been out in the barn, snooping, not too long ago

and found a white, crystal looking substance there and brought it to her.

She had asked her friend about it and it probably was what she suspected:

drugs. Tom, the big man of the town. *Piece of shit really*.

Tom, in his fancy shirt and pants, moved swift but with a bit of a wobble

now, hunched over and not bothering to look up or around. When he got to

the truck, he rummaged quickly for something in the back. He then took a

quick glance at the proceedings, then quickly hopped in the truck. He

started the truck, gunning on the motor. Tom then slammed it into drive,

throwing up dust and exhaust as he peeled down the drive.

Wes had by then climbed over the tailgate of the pickup to see all the

pecans they had gathered last year. He looked up to see Tom driving down

the lane. *Was his papaw going to give all these pecans they picked to the*

Millers? What the holy hell? Wesley then took a glance at his papaw and

noticed a look of concern.

"What a piece of work," Janet said as her and Jim continued to watch Tom

drive down the road. "How are you Janet?" Jim asked, but Janet remained

silent with her eyes fixed on Tom as he drove down the drive.

A few years ago, Tom had hit her oldest, Elizabeth, in a fit of rage.

Janet had gone into shock when it'd happened. Just froze up. He swore he

would never do it again. Janet promised herself that would be it, if he

ever did *that* again. The things we do for security. But earlier in the day,

through the door, Janet had seen bruising down Elizabeth's back when she was taking off her dress to change. She knew it had to be Tom again. He's always careful to hit in a place not visible…She had been quietly seething all day, unsure of what to do, feeling her parents' disappointment if they knew. Her mama was such a strong woman, held their family together for all them years. Put up with her father's many moods. Her daddy was moody, but he never hit her mama. He would get a little testy after fasting and drinking the White Drink of the Green Corn times. Her parents always talked fondly Jim and his family. Despite what Jim did, he was here again. She somehow felt her parents' courage.

 Just then Janet's expression suddenly changed to a look of horror as Tom's truck proceeded to turn back up the drive. She knew he was up to no good. She had always had a sixth sense to his stupidity. "Go take those young-uns inside, Elizabeth!" Janet motioned to her oldest. "Maybe you should leave Jim…"

 Sensing Janet, Jim said, "I am not goin' anywhere Janet…" as Tom drove towards the two of them, "unless you want me to."

 Janet let out a heavy sigh. "No…you can stay," she replied.

 Tom pulled the truck up right beside them. He parked then just stared for a moment.

 Wesley, detecting something wrong, jumped down from the back of the truck and made his way towards his papaw, ignoring his earlier orders to bring the stuff. Tom eyed him as he walked towards them.

 Jim tried to break the tension by saying, "Howdy Tom," but Tom turned his stare on him then started slowly, "You know… I know you're a part of the outfit of commies that my damn Injun wife's family consorted with, ain't ya?"

 Surprised he started there, but Jim had heard this before, "well that might be right Tom, but that was a long time ago," he said as he returned the long stare.

Tom looked ahead as he said, "I think it best you move on along." He spat at the ground out of the side of his mouth then turned to stare again. "I don't like your kind comin' round my house, on my property, associatin' with my wife and family"

"Tom, now, he ain't hurtin' nothin'," Janet injected.

"Hush up now Janet, let the me, the man, talk," Tom said sullenly. Just then Jim noticed the shotgun laying across the seat. Wes noticed his papaw's eyes raise. Janet somehow remained cool as Tom's hand moved over it then back and said,

"Now… I really think y'all need to get back down south where you belong," pausing for a moment to move his hands again over the shotgun, "I sure hate for somethin' to happen to y'all." He then pointed his finger in the direction of the gated entrance, "leavin's that way."

Suddenly Tom's head slammed in to the steering wheel. Janet. Before he could say or do anything and before he could recover, she jumped through the window and across Tom in the truck. Janet grabbed the shotgun and pitched it to Wes all in one fluid motion. Jim and Wes were with shock and astonishment.

Only Elizabeth gave a knowing smirk of determination from the front door. She motioned at the children and then ran to Wes, taking the shotgun out of his hands before he could think. Elizabeth then looked hard at Tom, as the tip of the barrel waved from side to side.

Tom first raised up angrily out of his truck. He then caught Elizabeth's eyes, noticed the odds, and quickly thought better of it. He faced forward, fear in his eyes and pressed on the gas leaving a cloud of dust. He peppered the bystanders with gravel and dirt, as he left.

Janet picked up a rock to throw, but seeing Tom already too far gone, she stopped. She looked at Elizabeth then she looked at the kids peering out of the windows of the house and sighed for a moment, looking a little lost…

Jim was silent for a moment then chose his words carefully, "this weather has been something hasn't it?"

"Huh?" Janet looked up from the ground, a bit disoriented.

"This weather, pretty normal for this time of year. Speakin' of good weather, you know, I think Hall will be a good man". Steering the conversation to politics. "And them Kennedys are all good men I think. I don't believe all that mess from Chappa-whatever," Jim opined.

Janet knew what Jim was trying to do. Politics and weather. She didn't let him change the subject, not just yet and thought aloud,

"All them years picking cotton. Could do it with both hands. Guess that came in handy, Tom didn't know what hit 'em," she said with chuckle.

Then, the anxiety of the moment slowly started to subside. She wiped the tears from her eyes and snickered again. Then she looked over at Elizabeth and back to the house.

"You know everyone tries to tell me he is a good man. Tom. He makes good money and works. People tell me to be thankful. That can't be all it? But mama and daddy sure hated him. But what could I do? What could we do? They told Daddy he would lose the farm. Mama didn't know what to do. She always knew what to do. Daddy was so angry, partly on account I was marryin' an army man. Tom's dad was a big shot. You knew them when they were younger, Jim," Janet said looking at Jim. "I sure wished you'd stayed around."

Wes looked over at Elizabeth with the shotgun. The shotgun reminded Elizabeth of good times for some reason. The Stomp Dance of the Green Corn ceremony came to mind. She gave a wink to Wes.

"Yeah, but we do what we have to do. I..." Jim tried to explain.

"Do we?" questioned Janet as she turned towards the house.

"Well, I had to go to war once when I was younger. We…" Jim continued to try to explain himself.

"Did you?" Janet turned back towards him, now aggravated.

"I mean, we helped a lot of people over there. There was a lot of devastation caused." Jim said affirmatively.

"Yeah, that may be, but you know what happened here. Mama and Daddy told me. Your war might've been right, but we had ours issues *here*. There was who sent you and how they did it. *Here*. You should've fought that. And now that silly man I am married to is goin' around, tryin' to recruit kids to this new war. That man hasn't even *been* to war. He goes around talkin' about Vietnam like it's the Second World War, just skips over the last one, fails to tell them he never went himself, plays the hero in his shiny uniform," Janet continued as she bent down to pick up a couple more rocks.

"Now Janet…you know my boy passed in the Second World War," Jim's eyes started to fill a bit with tears.

"I know. I know. I've heard of you talk of your son Mack. I'm sorry. Wars are not the same. The men who profit from them often are though. Then there are men like my husband. They only give a shit about *numero uno*. They don't give a shit about the people doin' the fightin' or who or what's wrong or right," Janet said.

Janet stopped and looked at Jim,

"…sometimes you don't do what you have to do. You do what is right," Janet asserted. She looked at Elizabeth on the front porch running the kids all in the back of the house and shook her head, "if anyone knows what right is…"

Jim had now gone to stand by the truck. Too overcome with emotion. Wes listened with attentive ears.

Janet walked over by the red Mustang. She looked at it then looked back at her house with her children in it. Emotionless, she started throwing the rocks at the car. First one at the door, then more. Windows cracked and doors dented from the onslaught.

Jim tried to control himself. But he couldn't help thinking of his son. These thoughts kept shifting to his son's namesake, Mack, his father-in-law, the one who had died after the rebellion. He wished they were both here. Would Mack his son even like his father-in-law? Strange to think.

Then with thinking of his father-in-law, his mind drifted to Happy, Mack's daughter, and the guilt of what Jim had did….

Jim looked over at the car then and thought *should this be happening*? But remembering the time before he came, seeing the bruises just below Janet's neck, how Tom treated her. The kids. Tom getting everything and keeping most of it. He returned back to his life again. How Jeanie, his wife might've felt. He never hurt her physically, but…

He picked up a rock and threw it at the Mustang too. Wes looked at his papaw in shock. His papaw made his way back to the truck after that. After a minute or two, Janet turned to Wes and asked, "got a lighter?"

With that Wes pulled a lighter out of his pocket and walked towards the bright red Mustang. "Now wait a damn minute kid," Janet said, "that's the problem with you men. Always rushin' into trouble without thinkin'. Now, we got to make this look right. Go get some hay from the barn. We'll run it from the barn and then to the trashcan. The one I burn trash in. I'll get the tractor and place a bale of hay next to the car. We can say it rolled out of the barn onto it as we tried to save the barn."

Elizabeth returned to watching from the window but was keeping the other kids from seeing. She yelled from the front door of the house. "I want to help, Mama!"

"You are helpin' with the kids, keepin' them from seeing all this mess. You can help later, now git back inside."

Elizabeth flashed a quick smile at Wes then went back inside. She knew to mind her mama.

"You know she ain't Tom's?" Then Janet let out a big laugh.

Wes a bit shocked finally asked, "You don't think he'll come back when we are doin' this?"

"All hell Wes, Tom is off drinkin' now, lickin' his wounds. He's gone for the night. Maybe two. That silly fucker is talkin' up a big game with the boys," she sneered, flashing a smile and a wink.

With that Janet took off to the tractor. Wes continued with the hay. Jim

had re-joined at that point. Their faces both looking unsure.

"We can't tell nobody about this Wes. I mean nobody," as Jim distributed

the hay, running it occasionally through some of the oil and petrol from

spots left from previous car work. "This might not be the right way, but it

is her way."

"Okay, Papaw," Wes replied.

"You know, Wes. Years ago, I should've helped out your great-aunt too,"

Jim noted as he looked back towards Janet on the tractor. "Instead I hurt

her…" Jim revealed.

"Who?" Wes responded.

"Your great-aunt. Happy we called her. Gladys was her name. Maybe I can

tell you more about her later" Jim said.

Before Wes could reply, Janet was standing in front of them. It was the

kind of planning her parents were famous for, for all the great Choctaw

ceremonies. She remembered how all the other American Indians had thanked

her parents on the last day of the Green Corn ceremony. "Alright, that hay

is pretty good. I got the bale ready and there is enough oil and gas around

that car from all the years that dumbass has been workin' on all those cars

and shit to help 'our' cause. I think we just need to light it here for it

to start. Wes, you got that lighter?"

Wes walked to the spot where she said to light it when Janet put out a

hand to stop him, "Damn, you men still don't get it, let me do it," Janet

chided. He handed the lighter to Janet. Janet hesitated. Her life was going

to change drastically with one flick of the lighter. She looked over at Jim

who sat in the truck now. Tears welled up in her eyes.

While Janet wavered, Wes had an idea. He didn't know why but, *Elizabeth?*

Then he said it out loud, "What about Elizabeth?"

Janet looked up and said, "What about her?"

"Well, she could, she could maybe do it?" Wes replied.

"*Her* light it?" Janet asked.

"Yeah…I could watch the kids," Wes replied.

Janet reflected for a second, then nodded and Wes ran to the house. When Wes got to the door, he said her mama needed her. Elizabeth ran quickly to her.

When Elizabeth got there, she looked around at the hay, the trashcan, the barn and the car. She looked at her mama, noticing the lighter. Elizabeth instantly knew her mother's thought. She stepped forward, and then stepped back for a minute, then tears started streaming down her face.

"I can't Mama I'm scared, I don't…" Elizabeth replied.

"Now there is nothing to be—" Janet said through the tears.

"—But there is. I don't think…I don't think I can do it," Elizabeth answered her eyes completely filled with tears.

"You..somebody has to, Lizzy," Janet pleaded.

"Mama...I" Lizzy replied. She looked down. She then looked her mama in eyes, wiping the tears from her eyes. "I…I can't, *I just can't,"* and with that she turned and ran back inside.

Janet look back towards the house as Lizzy slammed the screen door shut. Lost. Eventually settling her eyes on the drive. Her head dropped. The lighter dropped to the ground.

Janet then looked up towards the moon to notice something. The moon shown bright and full in early August, as full as she had seen it in a while. Feeling eerie, she hollered at Jim, "look, Jim, the Moon of the Green Corn. It's time." Jim turned and looked. Wesley too. Janet continued, "the Moon of the Green Corn!"

Elizabeth rushed out at the commotion, heard her mama and looked up too.

Jim has now looked up too, seeing it brought him back to the moment, but at the same time strangely back in 1917. He looked over the scene then rushed to Janet who still had an eerie feeling from the moon. "Janet, I got an idea, if you do what you are doing then everyone will not know. You got to let them know" Jim pleaded. "You got to".

"Whaat", Janet replied, still in a bit of a haze.

Elizabeth stepped forward, wiping tears from her eyes she started, "he's right, mama, we got to let the world know, we can't hide it anymore"

The haze lifted and Janet's conviction came flooding back with Elizabeth's words. "What do we do?" she looked at Elizabeth then back at Jim.

Jim was a bit unsure. He didn't know quite what to do. He could stay here, stand up to Tom with Wes, but he was in his 70s now and Wes a teenager still. What might happen? He wished Mack were still alive…

Before he could think anymore Elizabeth spoke up, "I can call some people, Tom isn't as popular as he thinks and I got some friends, we get some people over, it might put a fright in him. And, you know what, I ain't hiding these bruises anymore" She flipped down her collar for everyone to see.

Janet didn't know what to think. It seemed too much what her daughter was saying, what would the townspeople think? Janet had always been headstrong, but knew that could only carry her so far. Things had got better for women over the years, but there was still a ways to go. She turned to look at Jim and then turned back to Elizabeth and started to warn her, but before she could Jim spoke.

"You know, you're right, Elizabeth?" Jim questioned.

"Yes, Elizabeth", she smiled.

"I got some people I can call, we were in a fight once, things didn't go as planned, but, well. I figure the ones left will be more interested in helping your mama out here than me, so…"

"Jim, are you sure?" but Janet already felt the fire.

Wes stood back a little astounded. He thought back to that other day in Norman and to now. He looked over at where Elizabeth was. She was already gone, back in the house on the phone.

Jim replied, "I am sure of it as anything in a long time. I think I will get ahold of my boy too. Danny".

 Patsy waited nervously in the Spoonholder, a bizarre sculpture that
doubled as round seating area on the University of Oklahoma (OU) campus.
She had asked a patron of the diner what it was called, and the girl had
given the name. Patsy had then told Roxanne to meet her there.

 "What the heck is that?!" Roxanne had replied. Patsy had assumed Roxanne
knew everything, with her worldliness. Moving out to California, a place in
Patsy dreams.

 "It's on the North Oval," Patsy had replied.

 "Oh, yeah, I've heard of that," she smiled. "Suppose I can just follow it
around till I find you," Roxanne replied with a wink. Patsy returned a
self-conscious smile. Roxanne always seemed so down to earth, despite her
knowing ways.

 As she waited in the Spoonholder, a girl passed close by, smiled and
exclaimed,

 "Don't kiss him unless you are ready!,"

 "What?" Patsy replied in confusion.

 "Kiss him, in the Spoonholder, you know? You will get married?" The girl
retorted. Patsy looked more confused. The girl asked, "you know the
superstition?"

 "Not really," Patsy replied.

 "You not a student here?" she asked.

 "No…," Patsy responded with a blush.

 "You got nothing to do with OU?" she asked.

 "No," retorted Patsy again as she hung her head.

 "Oh, well then maaaybe you should find somewheeere else to sit then," she
replied, drawing out her vowels and mocking Patsy's accent. The girl then
walked away, flipping her hair as she went.

 Patsy felt awful. And somehow more exhausted than normal. She had always
wanted to attend college, especially OU. But it always felt out of reach.
After all, she had William to think about. It had been some years now since

she left home with him. Patsy couldn't keep up the lie at home. Even though it was tough, she had to do it. She couldn't hide from the truth any longer, uncomfortable as it was. She sighed and looked towards where the protestors had worn soil patches in the grass from a couple of months ago. They seemed to be exposing an uncomfortable truth too.

The protestors had been what set off her most recent writing. Or maybe it was mostly William, her brother, and this Army-recruiting business. Who knows? Thinking on it again, and on all that had happened seemed to darken her mood even more. She couldn't believe William could be so convinced by a God-damned army recruiter.

A mid-summer breeze blew, and the warm sun shone down. She looked over at the nearby Crape Myrtles in bloom. It was unseasonably cool for July in Oklahoma and the good weather slowly seemed to lift her spirits a bit. Just then she saw Roxanne walking around the oval. She waved a big wave at her. Roxanne returned it with a big smile. Patsy felt the lift more. They were soon sat down close to each other, where the spoon would go, so to speak, and began the discussion.

"I don't know, it is, um, it feels weird," Roxanne replied. They were now both draped across the Spoonholder, deep in discussion on the writing Patsy had given to Roxanne to read.

"What feels weird?" Patsy asked.

"Being…in it. I mean, ahhh, why me?" Roxanne answered.

"Well—," Patsy tried to reply.

"—All those other guys, characters in books, related to you and famous people…," Roxanne interrupted.

"Yeah, but you encouraged me. That day. Our conversation after you bought the burgers during the protest. It really changed my writing annnd I've never shown my writing to anyone," Patsy countered and continued, "not even mama, but I had to write about her, Janet and also Jim…I don't know if I ever would've shown it to anyone. I still can't believe I'm showing it to you," she said as her cheeks grew warm, "and all those books you told me to

read and the ones you gave me, *Invisible Man*, *The Mandarins*, those ones by Camus and, of course *The Green Corn Rebellion.* It reminds me so much of home. They all opened worlds!"

"Well, I am happy to help. All those characters are great, Jim, Wesley, Danny, Janet. I loved Janet. Oh! And Elizabeth and Ralph Ellison, of course. And my favourite, Roxanne," she said with a wink.

"Anyways, we need to stick together, we women writers, especially after what happened to Sonora," Roxanne said.

"Wait, what…who's that?" Patsy replied.

"Sonora…Sonora Babb. Amazing writer. Have you ever heard of *the Grapes of Wrath*?" Roxanne asked.

"OH! Yeah! I read it. Great book. About our home, Oklahoma. Written by, um, what's his name, um…Steinbeck!," Patsy shouted as she snapped her fingers.

"Well, yeah, it is, but there is a problem. He wrote it from Sonora's notes. She spent a long time with the Dust Bowl immigrants who went from Oklahoma to California, helping them out and writing extensive notes about them and their experiences. Wrote a novel based on these. Kinda like *the Green Corn Rebellion*. Steinbeck got a copy of her notes from her old supervisor and wrote a book too: *The Grapes of Wrath.* Then, when Sonora tried to publish her novel, Steinbeck had already published his. Random House withdrew their offer on account of the similarities! Of course. I mean…after all they were written off the same notes! Babb's notes!," Roxanne exclaimed.

"That's just…awful…" Patsy replied.

"Anyways, what I am saying is we got to help each other out," Roxanne said.

"Right, I agree. I think that's what I meant, how my mama needed help. Ok then, what else?" Patsy was excited. She had never talked about her writing. She hadn't even really talked with anyone else about what went on

in her mind much. Sometimes mama, but she couldn't tell her everything. And now she couldn't talk to her…

"Yes, right, well what I want to know is why'd you shape it, your novel, around the Green Corn Rebellion? It's kinda like a sequel…I don't know…to *the Green Corn Rebellion* novel I lent you. Why'd you latch on to that?" Roxanne asked.

"I guess it's just the characters in that novel. Seemed a lot like people I know, then I kinda imagined those characters, like my family, then moved them to my time…if that makes any sense," Patsy said unsurely, "I mean, I read the books and, for some reason, I couldn't help but put myself there. You know, try to shape it to *my* world. All those books you lent, they introduced me to stuff. Well, I never knew. Worlds I've never thought about. It made me think what other people thought. I thought about Janet and who she was when I started writing, then I wanted to build her. Make her different. Stronger. These people I thought were different than me…" Patsy paused, then continued, "I thought of my brother when I wrote Wesley and of course my papaw when thinking of Jim…"

This let her think about the events of the last couple of months. William, her brother, coming home from the Army recruiter. All the things he said. Reading Roxanne's books. Seeing the protestors. Hard to make sense of it all. She tried to talk to others, even Roxanne. But it didn't work, so she made sense of it all another way, in her writing.

Patsy carried on, "but the characters just weren't those people, they were other people, then there is a ton I could relate to in the books too, kinda wanted to make…I don't know…a bridge, a bridge to me!" Patsy chuckled to herself, "then when I wrote, what I read just kinda, well…bled on to the pages?" Patsy said with even more uncertainty, "I mean, I thought about how some people can live comfortable lies, things don't touch them, those…I don't know…truths in life. The uncomfortable ones. Uncomfortable truths. They seem to ignore everyone and everybody. Others can live with some and ignore others. And still others have to live with far too many…"

"Well, yes. I guess sometimes those lies are how we cope, but truths are important. Serious stuff in your novel. The ending for instance, how you did it. It's…well…uncomfortable. However, I don't know if there are these clear categories of comfortable and uncomfortable, but I…"

Roxanne took a long pause. Her mind wandered, settling on her own mama. She thought of her troubles. How her ex-husband's Jimmy's family treated it all. How they treated her. Once saying she would either bring Jimmy down to her level or he would bring her up to his. Such horseshit. *What did they know? What did they know of life? They ignored so much.*

Roxanne looked at Patsy. She was lost. Patsy saw William's face. She thought of home, her family and her mother. Just then, she thought of her character, Wesley, then Elizabeth. She turned to Roxanne and started, "Truth. Hmmmm. I've been thinking about how people find meaning in all this truth and I…well, I don't know…," with that Patsy stopped. The warm summer wind blew again causing a small dust devil in the Spoonholder.

Roxanne drew closer to her. "I guess my question is then, what does it mean to you? Janet and all that? What you wrote? Your interpretation?" Roxanne asked quizzically.

Patsy thought for a moment, looked ahead. "Well, I mean, I guess I would have to talk about something else first. You see, I can't get my brother out of my mind right now. And all that is happening. It is hard to make sense of it all. What happened at home. Leaving home. Now, the war and all that. Everything just seems…well…crazy. Now my brother wants to join it. The fucking military. All that mess. It doesn't seem right and then, I guess I wanted to make some…you know… try to understand it all. Am I making any sense?" Patsy turned to look Roxanne in the eye.

Roxanne had to laugh. She then put her hand on Patsy's and said, "Perfect sense! It is perfectly all right to think of your brother and worry about him joining. You're protective and, I mean, after how y'all were treated. I know a little about that myself. It's all…well…complicated—"

"Exactly! Things are crazy. You want to help the people you love—" Patsy said.

"—But sometimes you can't," Roxanne interrupted.

"Yeahh. I guess." Patsy looked at the ground. "I guess I just thought how people relate to each other and how they need each other, like, solidarity with each other. I also thought about how this relates, people working together, how we all need something and someone to believe in, how this drives peace but also conflict". Thinking of home. It seemed so far away. The farm. Her family. Her mama. Where everything once made sense then didn't. "Am I making any sense", she asked Roxanne, then hung her head.

Just then she felt something in her hand. She looked down to see a dirt clod in her hand. Oklahoma red dirt. Roxanne had put it there. She looked over at Roxanne. She had one too, a small piece of Oklahoma's red clay soil. Thoughts of home. Tears started to stream down Patsy's face. Roxanne's too. Roxanne looked Patsy in the eye then crumbled the clump of dirt, letting the red dust blow soft in the wind. Patsy did the same to hers

They sat for a while in silence. Then Patsy started again. "Well then to answer your question. I don't really quite…I mean…I guess, it's like what I said earlier or…well…I think everyone makes sense of their own world, that's why it is important to see others. All these books and movies come at us. Dirt." They both laughed. Patsy continued, "Stories. Maybe it's why we read and tell stories. Make them up. Write. I don't know."

"YES!" Roxanne exclaimed. Patsy smiled and quickly continued.
"I mean how do *you* account for all of it? Life? It seems to me that we are told the comfortable stories. The ones that seem to somehow, I don't know, 'fit'."
"But who is telling the ones that don't fit?!" Roxanne exclaimed.
"Yes, maybe it is good to tell the uncomfortable ones. We mix things up. I am unsure." Patsy looked down at the ground for a moment. "To answer your question, I don't know," she dusted her jeans for a minute then continued

"I don't know if my interpretation…" Patsy turned to looked straight at Roxanne, "…I guess, I would think," she gave a thoughtful face. "Maybe the question is…I mean…," as Patsy struggled for the words, " I guess I would have to ask," Making the thoughtful face again. "Well…what's yours?"

"Huh," Roxanne said and sat in thought. While waiting for an answer, Patsy picked up and handed another clod of Oklahoma red dirt to Roxanne. Then picked up her own piece crumbled it, letting the pieces blow in the wind. The dust slowly settled as Roxanne and Patsy talked. They continued as night slowly fell and stars started to pepper the darkness. The moon eventually shone bright and full in the August air. Roxanne looked hard at its red colour then turned to Patsy and asked her, "have you ever heard of the Green Corn Ceremony?"

<div align="center">The End</div>

Appendix 3: My Military Orders

ORDERS 044-076

DEPARTMENTS,,THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE OKLAHOMA   Y AND AIR

NATIONAL GUARD

3 01 MILITARY CIRCLE OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73111-4398

13 February 2003

MORRIS DEREK W 441-92-8222 SPC 1245 TRANS CO (-) (XB2AA-364) 2015

VETERANS BLVD   ARDMORE OK 73401

You are ordered to active duty as a member of your Reserve Component Unit for the period

indicated unless sooner released or unless extended. Proceed from your current location in

sufficient time to report by the date specified.

You enter active duty upon reporting to unit home station.

REPORT TO HOME STATION: 11 February 2003 , HQ 1245 TC CO (Med Trk), SA

(WXB2AA), Ardmore, OK 73401-9568

REPORT TO MOB STATION: 14 February 2003 , Fort Sill, Oklahoma Period of active

duty: Not to exceed 365 days

Purpose: Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Mobilization Category Code: G Additional

instructions:

(a)   You are ordered to Active Duty with the consent of The Governor of The State of

Oklahoma. Early reporting is NOT authorized. This is NOT a Permanent Change of Station

(PCS). Security Clearance verified by Personnel Security Manager, 1LT Carrie L. Wilson,

Commercial (405) 228-5365.

Sure Pay is MANDATORY. Soldier must bring the appropriate documentation to support the

requirement to authorize Sure Pay to the Bank.

(b)   Movement of household goods and dependents is NOT authorized. You ARE

authorized temporary storage of household goods, IAW Joint Federal Travel Regulation

{JFTR), Paragraph U4770-8. ALL actions MUST be approved by The USPFO of Oklahoma OR an Installation Transportation Officer prior to entering into a contract.

(c)   You ARE authorized storage of Privately Owned Conveyance (POC) at Government expense IAW JFTR, Paragraph U5800. ALL actions MUST be approved by The USPFO for Oklahoma OR an Installation Transportation Officer prior to entering into a· contract.

(d)   Commander may authorize travel by Privately Owned Conveyance (POC) at NO expense to the Government. You are required to provide a valid Drivers License and proof of Insurance. Rental Vehicle and transportation of personal weapon(s) and ammunition are NOT authorized. Excess accompanied baggage is NOT to exceed 120 pounds. Shipment of Unaccompanied baggage is NOT authorized.

(e)   You WILL deploy with complete Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment (OCIE).

(f)   Soldier's complete MPRJ, Health and Dental, Training and Clothing records will be hand carried to the Mobilization Station. Records will NOT be moved in the same conveyance as soldiers, when they move as a group, IAW AR 600-8-101, Chapter 5.

Appendix 4: My Research Diary

Research Diary

Feb 2nd

Started with googling my unit 1245 and the Iraq War in 2003 the year of my deployment to Iraq. Found the 2003 The Adjutant General (the senior military officer of a US state's National Guard) of Oklahoma Governor's report. Read through the report.

https://ok.ng.mil/Portals/56/Documents/Governor's%20Reports/2003%20GOV%20RE PORT.pdf

Lead me to National Guard Bureau after defining term Adjutant general. This led to a look at the National Guard's history to the formation of the bureau:

Guarding the memory of the National Guard: Strategies of avoidance in official historiography (Brown, 2015)

A companion to American military history (Bradford, 2010)

Root, Elihu (1916). "The beginning of the new militia system". In Bacon, Robert; Scott, James Brown (eds.). *The Military and Colonial Policy of the United States – Addresses and Reports*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. pp. 441–442. Retrieved 2012-01-09. The need for some well defined scheme for the coordination and cooperation of the regular army with the state militia and volunteers in case of war had been demonstrated both in the Civil War and in the war with Spain. Secretary Root called attention to this subject in his annual report for 1899, and urged the necessity of legislation under which in such an emergency the regulars and volunteers should constitute "a homogeneous body, using the same arms, familiar with the same drill, answering the same same ideas of discipline, inspired by the same spirit, and capable of an

I then began a search into the creation of the National Guard Bureau:

Militia Act of 1903

Following the Goldwater–Nichols Act in 1986, the Joint Chiefs of Staff do not have operational command authority, either individually or collectively, as the chain of command goes from the president to the secretary of defense, and from the secretary to the regional combatant commanders.[7] Goldwater–Nichols also created the office of vice chairman, and the chairman is now designated as the principal military adviser to the secretary of defense, the Homeland Security Council, the National Security Council and the president.[8]

After the 1986 reorganization of the Armed Forces undertaken by the Goldwater–Nichols Act, the Joint Chiefs of Staff does not possess operational authority over troops or other units. Responsibility for conducting military operations goes from the president to the secretary of defense directly to the commanders of the unified combatant commands and thus bypasses the Joint Chiefs of Staff completely.

Today, their primary responsibility is to ensure personnel readiness, policy, planning and training of their respective services for the combatant commanders to utilize. The Joint Chiefs of Staff also act in an advisory capacity for the president of the United States and the secretary of defense. In addition, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff acts as the chief military advisor to the president and the secretary of defense. In this strictly advisory role, the Joint Chiefs constitute the third-highest deliberatory body for military policy, after the National Security

Council and the [Homeland Security Council](#), which includes the president and other officials besides the chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

While serving as the chairman or vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, chief of staff of the Army, commandant of the Marine Corps, Chief of Naval Operations, chief of staff of the Air Force, or commandant of the Coast Guard, the salary is $15,583.20 a month,[10] regardless of cumulative years of service completed under section 205 of [title 37](#), [United States Code](#).

- Bourne, Chistopher. ["Unintended Consequences of the Goldwater–Nichols Act"](#). *JFQ* (Spring 1998) 99–108. Argues it gives too much power to the Chairman.
- Kamarck, Kristy N. [Goldwater-Nichols and the Evolution of Officer Joint Professional Military Education (JPME)](#). [Congressional Research Service](#). 2016.
- Lederman, Gordon Nathaniel; *Reorganizing the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Goldwater–Nichols Act of 1986* (Greenwood Press, 1999) [online](#).
- Locher, James R. "Transformative Leadership on Capitol Hill: The Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act," in Bradley Lynn Coleman, Kyle Longley , eds. *Reagan and the World: Leadership and National Security* (2017) ch 4.
- Locher, James R.; *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater–Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon*. Texas A & M University Press, 2002. 524 pp. [ISBN](#) [1-58544-187-2](#) [excerpt and text search](#)
- McInnis, Kathleen J. [Goldwater-Nichols at 30: Defense Reform and Issues for Congress](#). [Congressional Research Service](#). 2016.
- Wills, Steven T. ["Navy and Marine Corps Opposition to the Goldwater Nichols Act of 1986"](#), Ohio University, 2012

The [National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008](#), elevated the National Guard to a joint function of the [Department of Defense](#). This act also elevated the Chief of the National Guard Bureau from [Lieutenant General](#) (Three Stars) to [General](#) (Four Stars) with the appointment of General [Craig R. McKinley](#), [U.S. Air Force](#). The National Guard Bureau holds a unique status as both a [staff](#) and [operation](#) agency.

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Found
Reserve Forces: Observations on Recent National Guard Use in
Overseas and Homeland Missions and Future Challenges (29-APR-04,
GAO-04-670T).
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ar. Both the Regular Army and the Army Reserve are organized under [Title 10](#) of the [United States Code](#). The National Guard is organized under [Title 32](#). While the [Army National Guard](#) is organized, trained, and equipped as a component of the U.S. Army, individual units are under the command of individual states' governors. However, units of the [National Guard](#) can be federalized by presidential order and against the governor's wishes.[3]

I also noted the National Guard chief in charge during my service:

https://www.nationalguard.mil/Leadership/CNGB.aspx

Reflection: After the first day, still a bit confused about how chain of command works. It is a very opaque process. I am also interested in how I really knew nothing of it but vaguely knew the terms when I was in the army with the exception of the National Guard bureau. I also knew nothing of the acts of congress over the years.

Feb 3-4th.

I started out looking at the Goldwater/Nichols Act in more in depth. This led me to learning that it had been the originator the US dividing of the world into sectors. I also did a bit of a background on the two senators. I knew Barry Goldwater from before as his role in the rise of the radical right in America. I noted during this time his connection to Reagan and his making the Time for Choosing speech. I wanted to know more about Nichols. It was interesting to note these were two very conservative senators, noted above in Goldwater's past and Nichols was once a supporter of George Wallace. Reading into Nichols's life, I also noted George Wallace's wife Lurleen Wallace won the governorship at the same time as him and how Lurleen was secretly diagnosed with cancer in 1961 without her knowledge and would later find out about it in 1965 while running. The cancer was hidden from the public during campaigning and Lurleen later died in the second year of her office. I then returned to command structure, trying to figure out how Forscom fits into all of this. I also researched how the National Guard is divided into the First Army. I researched how further into the command structure and noted how Creighton Abrams began many of these military reforms to make the National Guard after reading Goodale, 1999:

After Vietnam, General Creighton Abrams realized the importance of the National Guard - and implemented the Total Force Policy. General Abrams realized that the United States Army could not win an extended war without the support of the people. His strategy to create a total Army force was an attempt to insure that the Army was connected to the people

I then read further into how Vietnam changed the command structure leading to the eventual 1986 Goldwater/Nichols Act

Reflection:

After the second day, I had more firm understanding of how the chain of command. I also had more understanding of how my particular Southern culture influenced army policy through the senators Goldwater and Nichols and their connection to it. I had a good background that drew the line to command structure's history up till present day.

Feb 5th

I started off looking at my time before the war and my participation in a massive military game in 2002:

https://www.newson6.com/story/5e3682782f69d76f620970b9/oklahomas-national-guard-war-games

https://tulsaworld.com/archive/oklahoma-troops-endure-intensities-of-simulation/article_79c7b3a0-fee6-5e7b-ac9a-5c3e4591ac9c.html

I wanted to understand how this related to central command, Forscom, and the command structure and see if this personal experience could lead me into a more deeper understanding of the decision making that lead to my deployment. It only lead me to how I was a part of 90th troop command and the Oklahoma National Guard training there. I then decided to look at my time in Iraq and the Regular Army unit I was attached to during that time. If I could look retroactively and trace back the decisions made to deploy me. I had to research the camps in Iraq I was in namely Camp

Dogwood to determine the army unit we were attached. It was another dead end. I then decided to look at decision making in Iraq war 2003, Found Pandora's Trap : Presidential Decision Making and Blame Avoidance in Vietnam and Iraq.

Reflection:

It was a little frustrating not being able to track or to have any trace of the decision made around my unit even with my personal knowledge. I know it was only a one day search, but I thought it might put me down a trail to find.

Feb. 6th-7th

I decided go the National Archives directly to see what came up. I researched the terms I had previously looked at. I found that the records would not be declassified until 25 years after the happening for what the archive showed. I researched classification and military records, finding out that there is a push/pull between Democratic and Republican presidents with Dems pushing for less classification and shorter times and openness and Republicans the opposite. After researching, I found an address to send a letter based on Obama directive to allow declassification of recent documents with a Mandatory Declassification Review request based off his Executive Order 1392. I found it interesting but not surprising that Trump's admin did not continue his Republicans predecessor legacy. I also had a look through Bush's and Rumsfeld archive.

Reflection:
I had a small hope that looking through the National Archives might be fruitful based on my personal experience. Finding out that they were behind a classification wall was disappointing. Tracing the push/pull between Dem and Repub admin's was interesting and reaffirmed previous bias. I also did not find much information through a cursory look through Bush's and Rumsfeld's extensive archive researching certain terms. Reading through them did start to shift my opinion a bit.

Feb. 8-11th

I decided to research what happened at the top of the command structure (President and Secretary of Defense) to get a firmer idea of how these ideas rolled down it. I started with a read through Bush's book *Decision Points*. After reading through it, I moved to Rumsfeld and his books. This took up most of the day.

Reflection: After reading Bush's book, I became more sympathetic to him. After reading Rumsfeld, I liked him somehow less which I though not possible.

Feb. 12th

After a push from my supervisor, I did extensive research into the central command website trying to find an email to get access to documents surrounding the orders to my 1245 unit. I found information only on the Air Force's MDR requests, but nothing about the army at first. I also noted how it was impossible or very difficult to run military sites like .mil. I took screenshots. I finally found a Public Affairs email address and sent an email. I later found the army one through the US archives and sent the email there. I decided to read the academic analysis of these two figures of Bush and

Rumsfeld in the interim. I read through *Leaders in Conflict, The Polarized Presidency of George Bush and Pandora's Trap.* **I also read a couple of articles on Rumsfeld. These were done over a three day period.**

In another memo dated October 16th, 2003, when I was in Iraq

Reflection: I came to understand and hate Rumsfeld a little less and returned to a more firmer hating of Bush. I understood Rumsfeld actually did a decent job of planning the war with Tommy Franks but did not do much planning for the aftermath. This was based on Bush's non-interest and also Rumsfeld's approach to other countries which was very hands off. Bush, on the other hand, was more into pushing the larger narratives and his own personal worldview of good/evil/evangelical. This was coupled with his dad's place in the story while also being pushed along by Cheney and Rumsfeld while Colin Powell pushed back.

Feb. 15-18th

I read the academic literature of Bush and Rumsfeld mentioned until I received a reply halfway through the 11th. The public affairs office pointed me to a website. I spent the 11th, trying to access this site's email link, having the same trouble as before. These are some of the troubles I encountered below. I also have screenshots previously mentioned.

www.dtic.mil could not get through the sources for some reason

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I had to switch browsers as Google Chrome was not working access the email link. I kept a copy of the email also. The freedom of information request as it was called made no mention of a MDR request. I noted mine as a MDR based off previous readings telling me to request in this fashion along with saying I am requesting "all reasonably segregable material" concerning my unit. I also had to keep trying on the Safari browser as it did not work the first couple of times. It also mentioned how I needed to specify how much I was willing to pay for the requested copies of the documents. It also had me choose a purpose for these documents which I chose educational. I have a screenshot of the page. Here are the links to the website along with the Air Force one mentioned.

https://www.afcent.af.mil/Contact-Us/FOIA-Request/

https://www.centcom.mil/Home/FOIA/

Reflection:

With how hard it was to try to chase down any decision-making or pretty much impossible with how the command structure made a firmly-tiered ladder of decision-making hard to pin down, I started looking for different thinkings on power. I returned to the work of Foucault for a better understanding of what might be going on.

Feb. 19th-22nd

I continue to read academic literature on Rumsfeld and Bush. I also begin to read more into the literature around Robert Mcnamara. I watch again the documentary Fog of War. I spend the next couple of days reading In Retrospect by McNamara.

Reflection: I have spent a lot of time over the years ruminating over McNamara and how he dealt with the guilt of his role in Vietnam and other conflicts. It has always fascinated me, in part due to my own guilt. His thinking and habitus always fascinated me as well, giving off this straight-shooting, business, "I-have-all-the-answers McNamara as he was called in *Fog of War*

Feb. 23rd-25th

I continue to study Vietnam and the decisions made there in conjunction with McNamara. I read Debrohah Shapley's Book on McNamara *titled Promise and Power: The Life and Times of Robert McNamara.* Over the next couple of days look at the decisions made by McNamara as a part of the Power Elite that were American focused.

Reflection: I continued to think on McNamara and how he compares to later leaders of the military power elite. McNamara was such a complicated figure as well as a man who most would consider well-accomplished with what he did in WWII, leading Ford motor company to what he did, being Secretary of Defense, then President of the World Bank. Many people would have just lived in those achievements, but McNamara chose to look back and perhaps regret.

Feb. 26th-March 2nd

I return to George Bush and his decision-making. I read of his *Cowboy Conservativatism by* Sean Cunningham and its roots in Reagan and his father Bush Senior. This book traces the history of Conservatism in my region of Texas (I was born in Texas and lived right across the border in Oklahoma). The book traces conservativism in the region through presidential figures previously mentioned in Reagan and Bush Senior, but also the members of the Democratic party and their failures in Carter. It also looks at local figures who helped shape the movement. It basically traces Texas move from a strong Democratic state to a strong Republican one, much like Oklahoma did. It also discusses how Republicans used symbols strong in American culture, such as the cowboy and country life with Bush working on his ranch, cowboywear and actions, etc to attract votes.

Reflection: Bush has always been a subject of conversation in my area. When my father met my in-laws for the first time, for instance, he wore the Bush Country hat. He seemed to be everywhere for a bit, then, towards the end of his presidency, he wasn't. I connected to this messaging of countryness before the war and voted for the Bush the first time. It also helped that most people around me connected to this messaging as well. These understandings led me to see that power was not a thing with particular fixed quality but instead a process that was always flux, with the matrices of power being more disperse and discursive. This was more a Foucault's view of power I formed from his literature which led on to also how Dorothy Smith understood power. This led me to literature surrounding hegemonic masculinity.

March 3rd-10th

The previously mentioned shift in voters in my region lead me to consider looking at how later politicians and presidents manipulated/curried favour with voters in my

region using Cowboy iconography. I start reading about *Cowboy of the World? Gender Discourse and the Iraq War Debate* by Wendy M. Christensen and Myra Marx Ferree. It discusses how Bush used the gendered imagery of the cowboy in the Iraq debate. The authors illustrate how both pro-war and anti-war speakers used binary images of gender to build their cases both for and against the Iraq War. This led me down a rabbit hole of information on how Bush utilised gendered imagery with other articles I read.

Reflection: This led to a consideration in the shift in thinking of power and how masculinity is constructed in society. I began to read the literature on masculinity and how it can be hegemonic. I considered how Gramsci discusses power and hegemony as well and how power had an indeterminate quality and is difficult to pin down. This led to more literature on hegemonic masculinity.

Mar. 11th-16th

I researched the literature of hegemonic masculinity along with how this relates to my particular area and time with such types of masculinity as frontier, country-boy, cowboy and rural. This also led to seeing how Bush and other politicians utilised these masculinities in their political games and machinations. Bush in particular drew from gendered imagery that utilised these masculinities of frontier, country-boy, cowboy and rural.

Reflection:

IN the process of trying to figure out all these white men it made me question why?

Appendix 5 Bryan Country War Memorial-Durant, Oklahoma

https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMW23Y_Bryan_County_War_Memorial_Durant_OK

Appendix 6 Bryan County Civil War Memorial-Durant, Oklahoma

https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMW23V_Civil_War_Memorial_Durant_OK

Appendix 7: the American Experiment Narrative

Once upon a time, our ancestors lived in an Old World where they were persecuted for religious beliefs and oppressed by established aristocracies. Land was scarce, freedoms denied, and futures bleak. But then brave and visionary men like Columbus opened up a New World, and our freedom-loving forefathers crossed the ocean to carve out of a wilderness a new civilization. Through bravery, ingenuity, determination, and goodwill, our forebears forged a way of life where men govern themselves, believers worship in freedom, and where anyone can grow rich and become president. This America is genuinely new, a clean break from the past, a historic experiment in freedom and democracy standing as a city on a hill shining a beacon of hope to guide a dark world into a future of prosperity and liberty. It deserves our honor, our devotion, and possibly the commitment of our very lives for its defense (Smith, 2003: 67-68).