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Featured section: Truth & Evidence

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Regimes of Truth and Other Revelations: Editorial, Volume 5, Part 2

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Introduction

Welcome to the tenth edition of *Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal*. As those of you who follow the Exchanges' blog will already be aware, my recent arrival as the new Senior Editor has heralded a few changes for the journal, not least of which being a revision to its full title. When it launched in 2013, *Exchanges* contained material sourced largely from the University of Warwick's early career researcher (ECR) community. However, over the years our contributors, reviewers and Editorial Board membership have increasingly trended towards embracing a greater internationalisation. This has served to benefit the journal's research community prestige, and in turn increasing the value to authors of choosing to publish with *Exchanges*.

Yet, while *Exchanges* continues to be managed by Warwick based scholars, increasingly the journal's subtitle no longer reflected the title's authentic scope and future direction as much as it once did. Hence, to reflect this evolution and growth, the time was ripe for a soft relaunch under a revised title. Naturally though, *Exchanges*' commitment to disseminating original, exciting and quality assured interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research, especially from emerging experts and ECR scholars, continues. We hope our readers feel the new title better represents the journal as it appears today.

Readers might also like to visit our twin new social media presences. Firstly, there's the editorial blog, where I'll be writing about various issues relating to our continued development. This is complimented, alongside regular tweets from our Twitter account. Please do come and join in the conversation.

Conversations

Now onto the main content of this issue, which opens with *Roca Lizarazu* and *Vince's* interview with *Stef Craps* of Ghent University. Craps, who directs the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative alongside his English literature academic role, talks extensively with them about the current and indeed future directions in memory and trauma studies, among other

engaging topics. The piece also provides a rather valuable reflection of the current state of the art within memory studies, which scholars new to this may well area find this a valuable source of literature and insight alike **(1)**.

Then *Georgia Wall* provides an elegant bridge to our themed section, with her interview with *Marion Demossier* and *Margaret Hills de Zárate*. In a topic close to the Editor's heart, Demossier and de Zárate offer some broad perspectives on how ethnography can expose underlying and contextualised meanings. Wall moves this enticing discussion on to explore some of the challenges faced in embracing ethnographic methods as a research tool **(16)**.

Featured Section: Truth & Evidence

> *'Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces, and which extend it. A 'regime' of truth.* **(*Foucault in* Rabinow, 1984: 74)**.

Following on this issue, we're delighted to present a selection of articles from authors who chose to engage with our themed topic of *Truth and Evidence*. Each of the authors have tackled this topic from within disparate disciplinary frameworks and epistemologies, making for a wonderful mélange of inspections and perceptions.

Our exploration begins with *Daisy Richards* tackling the idea of truth through introducing a fascinating discourse on the use of re-enacted sequences within the world of documentary filmmaking. Illustrated through Morley and Barnard's seminal works, *Dreams of a Life* and *The Arbor* respectively, the article examines how re-enactments within otherwise authentic film narratives effectively draw attention to these elements of artifice. Yet, seemingly such measures of artifice actually serve to enhance audiences' engagement, demonstrating the benefit through utilising these recreated forms within such works **(26)**.

Constance de Silva develops our theme in another direction, by tackling that often subtly deceptive media form: consumer advertising. Making using of the five social functions of language, along with Jakobson's communication language model, de Silva investigates the idea of meaning creation within press advertisements. This handsomely illustrated paper goes on to consider what these research tools can expose about the hidden and persuasive meanings within such pervasive and quotidian constructs **(44)**.

Then *Martine Barons* and *Rachel Wilkerson* take a refreshingly mathematical dive into the realm of truth, in their paper examining proof and uncertainty within causal claims. Adopting a social science perspective, they examine the role of mathematical proof, and particularly how important it is to account for uncertainty within observational data. Excitingly they challenge the predominant models in use to account for these issues, alongside reviewing some of disparate disciplinary techniques and methodologies in use for determining cause in three dissimilar scholarly fields **(72)**.

Subsequently, *Sara Marzana* continues our themed section by uniting a surprising trio of seekers after 'universal truths' as she brings Friedrich Nietzsche and William Blake to dine with Jane Austin. In a piece, which intriguingly resonates with de Silva's earlier article, Marzana takes a literary approach to considering what lessons fiction can lend in comprehending the role of truth and subjectivity within the perception of our everyday world **(90)**.

Finally, for this section, Brian O'Shea considers the contribution implicit social cogitation has made to psychological approaches to understanding individuals' attitudes. Examining its origins and subsequent development, the paper considers the relationship between implicit and explicit measures, and the differing values adopting these disparate approaches confers for researchers in seeking an authentic appreciation of attitudes **(106)**.

Critical Reflections

Rounding out the issue, *Sean Mulcahy* provides a critical reflection on the Conference of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia (2017). In a valuable critique, the piece explores the various panels as they unveil topics around the evolutionary progression of law as a mirror to societal developments (132).

Acknowledgements

As always, many thanks to our authors and reviewers for the vital and continued contribution of their intellectual labour in the creation of this latest issue. Without you, the ability to produce a quality, peer-reviewed, scholar-led publication such as this would, quite simply, not be possible. Thanks also to our reader community, who play a key role in developing the debates and insights raised in each issue. I hope you find this issue as stimulating, thought-provoking and perhaps challenging as previous volumes.

As incoming Senior Editor, I'd be remiss if I didn't extend my thanks to my predecessor, Dr Yuexi Liu, and highlight her many efforts in shepherding the title over the preceding few years. I look forward to building and expanding on your legacy. Thanks also to Kay Doncom, Daniel Silva and Farah Elahi, outgoing members of the Editorial Board, for their input to this volume and kind words of support.

Thanks also to Yvonne Budden and Rob Talbot from the University of Warwick's Library, for their continued invaluable advice, guidance and technological support for Exchanges. I look forward to our future interactions, as we move into a new phase for the journal.

Finally, my thanks to my Editorial Board, partly for their forbearance with my own learning curve and the advice they've each proffered, but also for their dedication, focus and commitment they each bring to producing a quality-assured, interdisciplinary research organ.

Next Issue

In another change to tradition, we've two future volumes of Exchanges currently at various stages of development for publication in 2018. For a start this summer will see the publication of Volume 6(1) which alongside a few items which didn't make the cut-off date for Volume 5(2), will include a special section around the theme of Narrating, Nation, Sovereignty and Territory. Articles here are drawn from an interdisciplinary research symposium hosted by the Institute of Advanced Study at Durham University. Following that, we reach Vol 6(2), which will include a themed section on Autonomy, along with our regular selection of conversations with key thinkers, critical reflections and original articles.

Finally, watch out for our call for papers for Volume 6(3), Spring 2019, on a topic that's still under discussion among the Editorial Board. It will however be, I strongly suspect, fairly topically coterminous.

Editorial Board

Community & Communications

Editorial Blog: https://blogs.warwick.ac.uk/exchangesias/

Twitter: @ExchangesIAS

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Memory Studies Goes Planetary: An Interview with Stef Craps

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Abstract

Stef Craps is Associate Professor of English Literature at Ghent University, where he directs the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative (CMSI). He is an internationally recognised scholar whose research focuses on postcolonial literatures, trauma theory, transcultural Holocaust memory, and, more recently, climate change fiction. He has published widely on these issues, including in the seminal Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). He visited Warwick to deliver a public lecture and graduate workshop for the Warwick Memory Group in October 2017. In a wide-ranging interview, Stef Craps spoke about present and future directions in memory and trauma studies, the differences between transnational and transcultural memories, the ethics and politics of memory (studies), and the challenges faced by the field looking to the future.

Keywords: memory studies; trauma studies; Holocaust memory; transnational and transcultural memory; climate change; digital memories

Peer review: This article has been subject to a double blind peer review process

Introduction

Whither memory studies? This question has been asked countless times since the advent of memory studies as an academic field in the 1980s—do we need to ask it again? Arguably, the field has arrived at an important juncture in recent years: the 'memory boom' of the 1990s and 2000s has paved the way for an unprecedented consolidation, exemplified by numerous memory-themed conferences, publications, research centres, and associations. At the same time, memory studies is confronted with significant changes which will potentially recalibrate the field. These include the end of living memories of the Holocaust, the large-scale digitisation of memory, and a shift in focus 'from the transnational, transcultural, or global to the planetary, from recorded to deep history, and from the human to the nonhuman' (see **p.13**).

We thus decided to take the opportunity to discuss present and future directions of memory studies, and their connection to contemporary political debates and broader socio-technological shifts, with Prof Stef Craps during his visit to the University of Warwick on 24th October 2017. He delivered a lecture and a graduate workshop for the Warwick Memory Group. His lecture 'Bearing Witness to the Anthropocene' explored recent cultural representations of climate change, while the graduate workshop engaged with postcolonial trauma theory and transcultural memories of the Holocaust.

Stef Craps is Associate Professor of English Literature at Ghent University, where he directs the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative (CMSI). He is an internationally recognised expert in the field, specialising in postcolonial literatures, trauma studies, transcultural Holocaust memory, and, more recently, climate change fiction or 'cli-fi'. He has published widely on these issues, including in the seminal *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds* (**Palgrave Macmillan, 2013**). Together with Lucy Bond and Pieter Vermeulen, he recently edited *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (**Berghahn, 2017**). He has also guest-edited special issues of *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* (**with Michael Rothberg, 2011**) and Studies in the Novel (**with Gert Buelens, 2008**).

The Warwick Memory Group, organised by Prof Mark Philp (History) and Dr Maria Roca Lizarazu (IAS/SMLC), is an interdisciplinary group of graduate students and faculty with research interests in memory and memorialisation. The group aims to meet termly with sessions involving discussion of published (both recent and older) and unpublished work alongside formal presentations from experts in the field. The group also organises the Annual Memory Lecture and Master Class, which brings renowned experts in the field to the University of Warwick to talk about their most recent research. Guests include Astrid Erll (2014/15), Aleida Assmann (2015/16), Ann Rigney (2016/17), and Andrew Hoskins (2017/18).

New Directions in Trauma Studies

Maria Roca Lizarazu: How do you think the field of trauma studies has changed? I would argue there has been a shift since the turn of the millennium. Do you see that as well? What are important changes in the field of trauma studies at the moment?

Stef Craps: Around the turn of the century, there was a sense that trauma studies had stagnated somewhat. It's not as if nothing was happening, but I wasn't seeing much in terms of theoretical breakthroughs or conceptual innovation. I would say that over the last decade or so, there have been various signs of renewal and continuing relevance for the field. There have

been quite a few people in recent years who have questioned the tenets laid down by the founders of the field in the mid-1990s, including Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, and Dominick LaCapra. As a result, the field is becoming a lot more flexible and pluralistic. Pluralisation and diversification are quite noticeable trends in trauma studies over the last five to ten years.

To begin with, there is a tendency to see trauma not just as a Western phenomenon but as a global one. I actually think that's a trend that is firmly established by now, though at the same time we're only at the beginning of that process. That's also where I would situate my own contribution to trauma studies. Looking back on my work in this area—mostly my book *Postcolonial Witnessing* and a few articles that preceded and followed it (**Craps, 2013**)—with the benefit of a couple of years' hindsight, it has occurred to me that I tend to focus on literary texts that are written by postcolonial writers, yes, but writers who are based in the West, who address a Western audience, and who are steeped in Western culture. They are often more concerned with critiquing Western ideas and the injustice and inappropriateness of imposing Western frameworks on postcolonial contexts than with laying out concrete alternatives. Once the critique is out of the way, as it were, we can start studying beliefs about suffering and recovery and the media and forms of expression that are used to bear witness to trauma in specific local contexts, unencumbered by the burden of this canonical Western trauma theory. I think that's the next step, and while some scholars have already started doing just that kind of work in recent years, it seems to me that we still have a long way to go.

Another, related tendency is to move beyond trauma aesthetics, by which I mean the idea that the only appropriate way to write about trauma is through the use of experimental, avant-garde textual strategies, such as can be found in high-brow modernist and postmodern art. The move beyond normative trauma aesthetics and towards an appreciation of realism and popular-cultural genres as equally valid modes of bearing witness to trauma was spearheaded by Roger Luckhurst in *The Trauma Question* (**Luckhurst, 2008**). There have been several other people who have elaborated on that critique since then, most notably perhaps Alan Gibbs. In *Contemporary American Trauma Narratives*, he drives a cart and horses through many trauma-theoretical orthodoxies, including this formalist axiom and the aesthetic elitism that goes hand in hand with it (**Gibbs, 2014**).

Thirdly, there is a clear shift or broadening of focus from victim to perpetrator trauma. The notion of perpetrator trauma is still controversial, though, because of the habitual conflation of trauma and victimhood. The

former is a clinical category; the latter a moral and legal one. However, as soon as you start talking about perpetrators who might have been traumatised by what they themselves did to others, you run the risk of being seen to be exculpating them, excusing their crimes, absolving them of responsibility, effectively turning them into victims. I don't think this is necessarily the case, but that conflation is deeply entrenched. And yet it is crucial to disentangle the two concepts, because there is a tendency in trauma studies to over-identify with victimhood, which leaves people blissfully unaware of their own complicity in traumatic abuses or their own potential for evil. It's very reassuring and comforting always to identify with innocent victims, as it confirms us in our belief that we're on the side of the angels. However, this risks rendering the figure of the perpetrator unknowable and prevents us from recognising ourselves in them. Theorists who have begun to explore the perpetrator experience lately—or the experience of various in-between groups or their descendants—include Joshua Pederson, Alan Gibbs, Sue Vice, and Michael Rothberg. I think this is vitally important work.

I've recently also come across two fascinating books about 'future-tense trauma' or 'pre-traumatic stress disorder'. Ann Kaplan and Paul Saint-Amour use these terms in their respective books *Climate Trauma* and *Tense Future*, which both came out in 2015 (**Kaplan, 2015; Saint-Amour, 2015**). They seem to have arrived independently at pretty much the same idea, without being aware of each other's work. Saint-Amour writes about how, in the interwar period, the prospect of a second world war that would be even more devastating than the first one haunted cultural production and had a very real psychological impact on modernist writers and artists. Kaplan studies literature and films about climate change, which is also the direction in which my own research is moving. Much climate fiction deals with very unsettling events and experiences, but these tend to be situated in the future. So it's not bad things that happened in the past that are having a traumatising effect in the present, which is how we usually think about trauma, but it's the anxious anticipation of a future catastrophe that is having such an impact. I'm not entirely sure I buy these notions of pre-trauma, pre-traumatic stress syndrome, future-tense trauma, or whatever you want to call it, but I'm intrigued by them, and I do think there is potential for more work along these lines.

MRL: Maybe I can be a bit provocative here. You said trauma studies is moving beyond Eurocentric frameworks, beyond a certain trauma aesthetics, beyond the victim-perpetrator divide. I sometimes wonder to what extent we might have to move beyond the concept of trauma as such, especially when we look at—as you did in your lecture here at Warwick University—large-scale effects of violence such as globalised

webs of exploitation or violence that takes place in huge temporal frameworks. How useful is the concept of trauma?

SC: I share your concern about the over-use of the term 'trauma'—in fact, I suspect that the notion of pre-traumatic stress disorder is a good example of that; hence also my reservations about it. I've been active in trauma studies for quite a while now, but I certainly don't see my role as promoting the random use of this term—quite the contrary even. I often get very uncomfortable when people apply it very loosely, to all sorts of phenomena that are far removed from the more clinical understanding of the concept. I think this eagerness to see trauma everywhere is due in part to an apparent tendency to believe that something is wrong and needs to be fixed only if it has a traumatising impact. In reality, though, there are many forms of injustice that are not necessarily traumatising, or whose traumatising impact is only a small part of the story, but which need to be addressed anyway. As Michael Rothberg argues in his preface to the collection *The Future of Trauma Theory*, it is questionable whether viewing complex issues such as exploitation in an age of globalised neoliberal capitalism or the devastations caused by human-induced climate change exclusively through the lens of trauma really helps us understand them better, let alone tackle them effectively (**Rothberg, 2013**). Trauma studies is but one mode of enquiry among others; it cannot and must not displace other approaches and methodologies. So I'm all for recognising limits to its usefulness and legitimacy.

Memory Studies: State of the Field

MRL: What is your understanding of memory studies, and what is the current state of the field?

SC: That's a big question! Memory emerged as an urgent topic of debate in the humanities and the social sciences in the 1980s. That's when it became a key concept and a specific context of interdisciplinary research. The last few decades have seen a profusion of important work on memory, leading some to speak of a 'memory boom'. I think it's fair to say that memory studies has consolidated into a thriving academic field by now. Just think of the ever-growing number of research centres, funded projects, and networks devoted to memory, the many specialist journals and book series that have been established, the various attempts that are being made to provide overviews of the state of the art in this field, and the numerous new university courses and programmes that deal with memory. The recent foundation of the Memory Studies Association (MSA) takes this process of institutionalisation even further. So I would say the field is very healthy indeed.

As it happens, I've just read an article on this topic by Anamaria Dutceac Segesten and Jenny Wüstenberg which concludes that memory studies is at 'a mid-level state of development' (**Dutceac Segestern et al., 2017**). One thing that struck me about this article is its teleological thrust. The authors seem to have in mind an end point that the field should ideally be moving towards. In their view, memory studies cannot be completely successful as an academic field until there are Master's and Ph.D. degrees in memory studies, jobs in memory studies, and memory studies departments. I'm not sure I agree that we can't really be satisfied with how things are going until—or unless—we arrive at that point where memory studies effectively becomes a discipline in its own right. I'm not sure we'll ever get there, and I'm not sure that's necessarily desirable either. Maybe that's in part because of my background in literary studies, where, at least since the advent of theory in the 1960s, it's been completely normal for scholars to borrow from all sorts of other disciplines, most prominently philosophy, psychology, history, and sociology. In fact, these kinds of interdisciplinary cross-fertilisations have led to some of the most exciting work in literary studies out there. I feel quite comfortable being a literary scholar as well as a memory scholar, so personally I'm not convinced there's much to be gained from getting to a stage where people self-identify as memory scholars only, at the exclusion of other professional identities.

Rebekah Vince: What are the differences between transcultural and transnational memory? Where do you think they fall short, and to what extent are they in dialogue with one another?

SC: Some scholars seem to prefer the one term, others the other. They're often used interchangeably, though—in fact, I've been guilty of that myself. However, I think it's worth pointing out that they're not actually synonymous. Within a single nation-state, for example, there can be different cultures, so there is such a thing as transcultural memory that is not necessarily transnational. Conversely, transnational phenomena are not always transcultural—think of the global reach of Hollywood films, for example. I'm under the impression that memory scholars who favour the term 'transnational' generally have a background in the social sciences and are concerned with the obstacles that prevent memory from circulating freely across boundaries. By contrast, people who prefer the term 'transcultural' tend to have a literary or cultural studies background and focus primarily on processes of border-crossing without paying as much attention to such impediments. This is perhaps in part because cultural boundaries tend to be less concrete and solid, more fluid and ephemeral, than boundaries between nation-states. So to some extent, at least, it seems to me to be a matter of different disciplinary affiliations and different emphases.

In my own work in this area, I have tended to dwell on the risks involved in remembering across cultural or national boundaries, in part because there are so many proponents of the transcultural or transnational turn in memory studies who seem to take for granted its beneficial effects, or at least to foreground these while overlooking or minimising more troubling manifestations of transcultural or transnational memory. The work of Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, Jeffrey Alexander, and Alison Landsberg comes to mind, as well as that of Cathy Caruth. Each in their own way, these theorists tend to highlight the cathartic, healing, emancipatory, pro-social potential of transcultural or transnational remembrance. I think that's an interesting idea that's definitely worth entertaining, but I would add that a healthy dose of scepticism is called for, as it clearly doesn't always work that way.

The Ethics and Politics of Memory (Studies)

RV: Do you see a political turn in memory studies? What can memory studies bring to political debates and what are the dangers? In what way is memory instrumentalised?

SC: In our present moment, I think memory studies definitely has a contribution to make to the ongoing debate over Confederate monuments and how to memorialise the Civil War in the US post-Charlottesville, as well as to similar debates elsewhere. There is a lot of soul-searching going on right now in many different places around the world about the ethics and politics of historical commemoration—the 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaigns in Cape Town and Oxford are another recent example. Just clarifying the terms of such debates would already be enormously helpful, it seems to me. It bothers me, for example, listening to advocates of leaving Confederate flags or statues of Confederate generals or British colonialists in place, to hear protestors being accused of trying to 'erase history', while what they're actually doing is opposing the glorification of hateful symbols and dubious historical figures, which is something completely different. By injecting some much-needed conceptual hygiene and adding context and nuance, memory studies can help raise the level of debates about how to handle controversial monuments and memorials.

I think it's important to stop thinking in simplistic terms about the ethics and politics of memory. There is a strong tendency to assume that remembering is inherently good and forgetting inherently bad. This popular notion underlies the 'never again' imperative of Holocaust remembrance, or the 'no more war' slogan inscribed on the Yser Tower, a famous First World War memorial in Flanders. The belief is that remembering will save us from repeating the horrors of the past; if we forget them, though, we are doomed to do just that. In reality, however, the situation is a lot murkier and less clear-cut. The distinction between

remembering and forgetting doesn't map neatly onto that between good and evil.

I'm sure we can all easily think of instances where remembering a painful history has not had a very salutary effect. To stay with the example of the Holocaust, the memory of the Nazi genocide of the European Jews is often invoked for immoral purposes. Think of George W. Bush using Nazi comparisons to rally support for his illegal pre-emptive war against Iraq in 2003. Bush compared Saddam to Hitler, and suggested that his gas attacks on the Kurds and Iranians during the Iran-Iraq war amounted to a holocaust. Or take the case of Israel, the society where the Holocaust is at the very centre of collective memory. Israel has frequently used the memory of the Holocaust to legitimise extreme violence against the Palestinians and neighbouring Arab countries. Visions of a 'second Holocaust' allegedly facing the Jewish people from the Palestinians resisting the occupation or from Arab states in the region have repeatedly been invoked by Zionists as part of a strategy to justify whatever Israel does as self-defence. Another example of collective memory producing further bloodshed instead of justice is that of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, where Serb leaders justified killing Bosniaks and Kosovars by conjuring up memories of the 1453 Fall of Constantinople and the 1389 Battle of Kosovo that fomented ancient hatreds.

Conversely, forgetting isn't inevitably harmful but can in fact be beneficial, as the journalist David Rieff has recently argued in his provocative book In *Praise of Forgetting* (**Rieff, 2016**). Memory scholars like Paul Connerton and Aleida Assmann have also taken issue with the tendency to see forgetting as this monolithic evil thing (**Connerton, 2008; Assmann, 2014**). They point out that there are different forms of forgetting, some destructive, others constructive. As an example of the latter, Assmann mentions Winston Churchill's plea for oblivion as a necessary condition for laying the foundations of a new Europe. Addressing a student audience in Zurich in 1946, Churchill said that in order for Europe to come together and begin anew after the devastations of the Second World War, it would have to forget the hatreds, crimes, and injuries of the past. The past's hold on the present had to be broken for Europe to be able to make a fresh start.

So while I welcome the increased attention given to the ethics and politics of memory, I think we need to question simplistic models where remembering is automatically seen as the ethical option and forgetting as what is to be avoided at all costs. In reality, things are a lot messier, a lot less straightforward, and you can't really make abstraction of the specific contexts in which remembering or forgetting takes place. I think it's

important for memory studies as a field to bring clarity, nuance, and historical depth to debates over such issues.

Something that got me thinking about all of this is the coincidence of the refugee crisis and the centenary of the First World War, which is being commemorated very intensely in Flanders, where I live. You could argue, though, that the war is simultaneously being forgotten very actively and successfully. You've got leading politicians in the province of West Flanders, which saw some of the worst fighting of the First World War, attending commemorative ceremonies one day, in which they speak lofty words about peace and about honouring victims, only to fulminate against refugees knocking on our door the next day, people fleeing war in Syria or Iraq in the present. There seems to be a disconnect, a form of cognitive dissonance, which led me to question the value and function of these commemorative events. In these ceremonies we profess to hold dear certain timeless values, which supposedly guide our behaviour, but that turns out not to be the case at all. There's a glaring contrast between our words about lessons learnt from history and all that, on the one hand, and our actions in the present, on the other. Historical commemorations seem to have become hollow rituals inducing moral complacency and self-congratulation. This made me wonder whether as memory scholars we're somehow complicit in this state of affairs, despite our best intentions; whether we may inadvertently be facilitating or legitimising this kind of empty virtue signalling; and, if so, what, if anything, is to be done about that.

MRL: I find that interesting because, for example in the case of Germany, Holocaust memory and the culture of Holocaust commemoration have led to a very different debate around the refugees, not to say that it has been led in an exemplary way throughout. The question that is implied in what you said is what makes certain constellations work and certain constellations not work? How can we ensure that we have this dialogic form of memory instead of one that closes down? Maybe that's where our responsibilities come in as memory scholars.

SC: Absolutely. Obviously, other factors are at play as well, including economic ones, but I think you're right: the memory of the Holocaust in Germany definitely informs the more welcoming reception that refugees have been given there compared to most other European countries. In Germany, which is often held up as a shining example of a country that is facing up to a difficult past, commemorative activity would appear to have had a more pro-social effect than has been the case in many other countries, including Belgium. It's as if extending hospitality to refugees is a way of atoning for the Holocaust. Then again, let's not forget the remarkable success of the far-right party Alternative für Deutschland in

the recent German parliamentary elections, which was fuelled in no small part by anti-immigrant, racist sentiments. In other words, the German case is complicated too.

RV: Can you talk more about the Belgian context in terms of memory wars and multidirectional memory?

SC: I'm an English literature scholar, so most of my research has tended to focus on the English-speaking world. Consequently, I haven't done much work on memory in Belgium, though I obviously take an interest in it. As my brief discussion of First World War commemoration just now indicated, I think there is a bit of a problem with multidirectionality in Belgian memory culture, in the sense that I don't see much evidence of forms of solidarity being achieved through the interaction of memories of different histories. I'm actually under the impression that the Holocaust, in particular, serves as something of a screen memory in Belgium, hiding from view the country's shameful colonial history, which we're still nowhere near coming to terms with. Until quite recently, the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, just outside Brussels, was known as the last unrepentant colonial museum in Europe, and for good reason. There are numerous statues of and streets named after King Leopold II throughout Belgium, while Patrice Lumumba is completely absent from public space, unlike in many other countries. Five years ago a high-profile Holocaust and Human Rights Museum opened in Mechelen, next to the site of the former transit camp from which Belgian Jews were deported during the Second World War. As its name suggests, the museum devotes attention not only to the Holocaust but also to other human-rights violations. However, it all but ignores the elephant in the room: the colonial atrocities in the Congo Free State, which Adam Hochschild and others have called 'the African Holocaust'.

Speaking of Hochschild, I still vividly remember the shock I felt upon reading King Leopold's Ghost when I was in my twenties, as I hadn't learnt anything about that darkest chapter of Belgian history in school—an experience that, I'm sorry to say, is widely shared by Belgian schoolchildren to this day (**Hochschild, 1998**). That's why, whenever I teach Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* to my students, I make a point of discussing the novella's historical context at some length. As director of the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative at Ghent, I also try to stimulate reflection on the legacies of our colonial history by giving a platform to people doing work that speaks to these issues. I'm thinking, for example, of a lecture we organised on 19th October 2017 in which an American art historian discussed 'the great forgetting' of Belgium's exploitation of Congo and showed how some of our most cherished cultural traditions are implicated in colonial violence, or of an interview we put on a couple of

years ago with the author of a children's book that challenges the Zwarte Piet stereotype, which is a colonial hangover.

RV: To what extent are the decisions you make as a memory studies scholar political? What is the political responsibility of the memory studies scholar, if there is one?

SC: I'm wary of making grandiose claims for the relevance and utility of our work. However, I do think memory and trauma scholars can, and maybe should, try to intervene in the pressing matters of the day, perhaps now more than ever. After all, the dire political situation we are in at the moment lends a sense of urgency to the calls for memory and trauma studies to become more future-oriented instead of merely backward-looking that have frequently been issued in recent years. Speaking for myself, I think a concern with ethics and politics is at the heart of much of my research on issues of trauma and memory. Take, for example, my book Postcolonial Witnessing. In a nutshell, the argument I make there is that trauma studies, for all the lip-service it pays to the promotion of cross-cultural solidarity, actually falls short in that regard, as it's marked by a Eurocentric, monocultural bias. Despite the omnipresence of violence and suffering in the world, most attention within classical or canonical trauma studies has been devoted to events that took place in Europe or the US, primarily the Holocaust and 9/11. The founding texts of the field marginalise or ignore the traumas suffered by members of non-Western and minority groups, such as racism, slavery, and colonialism. As a result, they risk perpetuating the very beliefs and structures that underlie existing inequalities and injustices instead of challenging them. I contend that, for trauma studies to realise its self-proclaimed ethical potential, it will among other things have to broaden its focus to encompass the suffering inflicted on non-Western and minority populations, and to revise and expand existing definitions of trauma and recovery that have developed out of the history of Western modernity. Again, I don't wish to overstate the book's likely impact, but I do believe that making these kinds of arguments amounts to a potentially worthwhile ethical or political intervention, not least also in the light of the global refugee crisis and the heartless response to it that we've been seeing in many parts of the world.

The Future of Memory Studies

MRL: Looking ahead, what would you identify as the most important and biggest trends in memory studies at the moment?

SC: Let me perhaps start by saying that I find it somewhat ironic that as memory scholars we are so obsessed with the future of our field. It's a question that comes up at pretty much every conference I attend or roundtable in which I participate: what is going to be the next big thing?

Memory studies is supposedly concerned with holding on to the past, yet it seems as if we are constantly trying to 'make it new', to coin yet another fancy concept to render obsolete and supersede the last one. To a large extent, of course, this insatiable hunger for novelty is driven by economic factors, such as the demands of the academic publishing industry and the tenure and promotion system. Books and articles that promise to revolutionise or transform a field are more likely to get published, get cited, and lead to career advancement than those making more modest claims. So I understand where the urge comes from, yet I can't help wondering whether it wouldn't be better if memory studies, of all fields, slowed down a little and took the trouble to look backwards and use existing theories, methodologies, and concepts to their full potential instead of frantically pursuing innovation.

Having said that, though, I'm happy, of course, to talk about what I see as some significant new developments. As I suggested in my talk for the Memory Group here at Warwick University, I think the notion of the Anthropocene, the idea that we have entered a new geological epoch defined by the actions of human beings, poses interesting challenges for memory studies, with which the field is only just beginning to grapple in earnest. I recently published a roundtable on this topic, which brought together the position papers presented in a panel that I chaired at the MLA convention in Philadelphia in January 2017 (**Craps et al., 2018**). It seems to me that there is a shift underway in the field from the transnational, transcultural, or global to the planetary, from recorded to deep history, and from the human to the non-human. There is a sense in which the gradual scalar expansion that underlies the previous phases of memory studies, identified by Astrid Erll in her influential essay on travelling memory from 2011 (**Erll, 2011**), is being taken to another level—I call it 'travelling memory on steroids'—while the humanist assumptions undergirding these phases are also being called into question. In order for memory studies to start thinking ecologically rather than merely socially, it may need to break with anthropocentric modes of cognition and representation. In the years ahead, I expect to see a lot more work on how the magnitude of our environmental predicament is affecting the objects, the scales, and indeed the very nature of memory.

The study of digital memory is another prominent trend. There have been some important books published about this recently, including Andrew Hoskins's edited collection *Digital Memory Studies* (**Hoskins, 2017**). A couple of years ago, Hoskins co-edited another seminal book, *Save as… Digital Memories*, with Joanne Garde-Hansen and Anna Reading (**Garde-Hansen et al., 2009**). However, I think there is a need for more research on the impact of the digital revolution on the production, circulation, preservation, and transmission of memories. I've been struck by

contemporary anxieties about digital memory, which sometimes seem quite contradictory to me. It's as if they go in opposite directions, which largely correspond to two different time frames. Much has been written about how our collective memory is expanding at an astonishing rate as a result of the rise of digital technology, leading to fears that our internal, individual memories are shrinking (because we increasingly outsource our memory to the web) as well as to calls to adopt legislation that would enshrine a 'right to be forgotten' (because the internet remembers everything, and hence photos and posts to social networking sites can return to haunt us when prospective employers, for example, have access to them). It seems to me that these anxieties are animated by a very presentist perspective; if you take a longer view—decades instead of years, centuries instead of decades—the problem we face is not so much how to cope with the abundance of memory as how to handle its fragility. By focusing on the proliferation of information in the digital age, we tend to overlook the instability and transience of this information. Our current media technologies privilege transmissibility over durability, much more so than the technologies that we used in the past, such as clay tablets, scrolls, and paper. As formats change, software is retired, and hardware becomes obsolete, information stored on computers can easily become inaccessible. Unless we begin to take digital preservation more seriously, there is a real risk that the twenty-first century will come to seem like what the internet pioneer Vint Cerf has recently called a 'digital Dark Age'. Whether we can trust commercial enterprises such as Google and Facebook, which manage much of our digital information for us, as guardians of digital memory is an open question. Frankly, I'm not too optimistic, as ensuring the long-term protection of our data runs counter to their short-term economic interests. Publicly funded, not-for-profit institutions such as libraries and archives are probably our best hope, but they will need far more resources to be able to cope with the data deluge that the digital revolution has unleashed, which will also involve developing filtering mechanisms and protocols to determine what data needs to be saved and what can be discarded.

MRL: What are the challenges for the future of memory studies?

SC: I'd say the main ones are probably interdisciplinarity and internationalisation. Interdisciplinarity is something everybody champions, but in reality it is quite rare. Memory studies is a multidisciplinary field, but I would hesitate to call it a genuinely interdisciplinary one. The challenge is how to get people from different walks of life to actually collaborate and exchange in a real sense. I'm thinking not only of people with different disciplinary backgrounds, but also of academics and practitioners, or of academics and policy-makers. Another challenge is how to internationalise memory studies in a

meaningful way beyond Europe and North America. There is a lot of talk about transnational, global, and planetary memory, but all too often we're actually just having a provincial conversation among like-minded Westerners; it rarely goes beyond that. We should really do something about that, though that's easier said than done, of course. After all, there is no quick fix for the inequalities in the world that account for the marginal role that perspectives of memory scholars from the Global South have tended to play. However, I have good hope that the MSA will help us confront both of these challenges, of which the association is well aware, in the years to come.

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Looking not for Truth, but Meaning: An introduction to ethnography with Professor Marion Demossier and Dr Margaret Hills de Zárate

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Abstract

Addressing scholars new to ethnography in an interdisciplinary perspective, Prof. Marion Demossier and Dr. Margaret Hills de Zárate offer some reflections on the broader opportunities and implications of ethnographic approaches as a search not for truth, or rules, but for meaning in context. The authors discuss the opportunities and challenges of ethnography as opposed to other forms of data collection, reflexivity, the relationship between ethnography and text, and provide a range of further references.

Keywords: ethnography; methodology; reflexivity; participant research

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Introduction

We can productively think of ethnography quite literally as 'people-writing' in two senses; as a writing of people, of human culture, but also as a necessarily subjective perspective, conditioned by the viewpoint of the person or people writing. It is therefore a search for meaning in context, rather than objective or generalizable 'truths'. Though ethnography is usually associated with anthropology or the social sciences, an ethnographic understanding of research as an inductive process, as a balance of meticulous planning and reflexivity – with an openness to chance and the coincidental – can be seen to echo the principles at the heart of many disciplines.

I was first introduced to Margaret Hills de Zárate as a PhD student on the 'Transnationalizing Modern Languages' project. Margaret's research, which draws on the parallels between ethnography and her experience as a psychotherapist, opened my eyes to the promise of participatory research and invited me to reconsider my understanding of what constitutes research 'findings'. More recently, at a workshop entitled

'Ethnography and Modern Languages: Critical Reflections' organized by the Translating Cultures theme and the Open World Research Initiative translingual strand, I was inspired by Marion Demossier's affirmation, as a trained anthropologist, of the resonance of ethnography within the field of Modern Languages. Following this workshop, I corresponded with Margaret and Marion via email and put to them some of the questions I had had as a newcomer to ethnography. Their answers, reproduced below, offer theoretical and practical reflections as well as a range of further reading pertinent to scholars concerned with culture, human practice and reflexivity in research more broadly.

Interview

Georgia Wall (GW): What do you see as the most significant advantage of ethnography compared to the sociological forms of data collection that are often the go-to for scholars new to participant research?

Marion Demossier (MD): The most significant advantage of ethnography compared to sociological forms of data collection used in isolation – such as questionnaires, surveys, etc. – is that it is first based upon an inductive approach rather than a social-constructivist one. It is interested in what people have in their minds and what they do as a holistic and dialectical way of understanding human beings, and it focuses on bringing back complexity and people into the equation. It has been described as the most humanistic of the social sciences and the most scientific of the humanities. Moreover, it relies on the study of other social groups – language being the key element in the cultural make-up. It is defined by a process of learning about the other; 'a dialectic relationship between intimacy and estrangement' **(Shah, 2017)**, a specific mode of enquiry and comparative dimension, long-term fieldwork, and a critical and holistic perspective.

Margaret Hills de Zárate (MHZ): Ethnography allows the researcher to be flexible and therefore able to respond to situations in the context in which the research is being undertaken. As there are many unknowns it is impossible to plan the research in detail from the outset. The researcher has to be responsive to what is being learnt as the research proceeds – and this necessarily involves an inductive approach. An inductive approach to research is one where the researcher begins with an open a mind and as few preconceptions as possible, allowing theory to emerge from the data as opposed to a deductive approach where the data collected in the field is collected in order to test hypotheses emerging from existing theory, informing the focus of the research and potentially forcing the data into preconceived *a priori* categories or relationships **(O'Reilly, 2009: 100)**. In reality, we all have preconceptions and enter the field having undertaken a preliminary review of the literature, which informs the focus of our

research, its boundaries and framework, the point, as O'Reilly **(ibid)** notes, is to acknowledge their role in the research.

It is important to emphasise that ethnography is a methodology, a theory, or set of ideas about research, rather than a single method of data collection. The ethnographer has a range of methods to draw upon, which might include using questionnaires or surveys but is not confined to a single method. It is the object of study, the 'thing' the ethnographer is trying 'to come to know' and understand, which suggests the method she should adopt, and this might involve multiple methods employed at different points in time throughout fieldwork, for example from observation, participant observation or interviewing. The ethnographers research design evolves throughout the study, draws on a wide-ranging variety of different methods of data collection usually over a fairly prolonged period of time *in situ* while undertaking fieldwork in a specific site involving sustained contact with its inhabitants within the context of their daily lives and culture.[i]

GW: What would you say are the main challenges of ethnographic approaches for scholars who are used to studying cultural products, such as texts or films, rather than people?

MD: The key challenges are attached to the fuzzy and messy dimension of the cultural encountering; you are dealing with people both in the research process and when you publish and write about them. This is also about going beyond preconceived ideas about what Anthropology should be about in the 21st century and how it has evolved as a discipline. However, both ethnography and anthropology more generally rely on the vast literature which has been published in the last three decades addressing the relationship between literature and anthropology.

MHZ: Ethnography is always involved with text. It involves studying texts and creating text, the fieldwork diary, transcribing interviews and the final ethnography is presented as text, illustrated or otherwise. Film is used extensively in ethnographic research, which is mostly referred to as visual anthropology that is concerned, in part, with the study and production of ethnographic photography, film and, since the mid-1990s, new media. Visual ethnography, a term sometimes used interchangeably with ethnographic film, also encompasses the anthropological study of visual representation, including areas such as performance, museums, art, and the production and reception of mass media (see http://www.visualanthropology.net/).

I think it is important to point out that most research projects actually begin with textual materials or secondary sources, with what Paul Thomson **(1988)** has called the 'general gathering stage'. The ethnographer studies the topic, collecting background information, reading up on theory and previous research undertaken or related to the field of study. This might involve collecting secondary data, background statistics, policy documents and so forth. As Schensul and LeCompte **(2013)** point out, 'the use of archival and secondary data sources can further the comprehensiveness of data collection, understanding of results, and the cross-cultural and cross-national comparability and generalizability of a specific study' **(Schensul and LeCompte, 2013, vol. 4: 907-908)**.

Both local (data gathered by other researchers on the population under study) and non-local (data obtained from related research conducted elsewhere on related topics/populations) can be useful. One may consult are maps, historical documents, newspapers, photographs, film or artifacts. Sources of historical data are classified as either primary sources such as the oral testimonies of eyewitnesses, documents, records, and relics, while reports of persons who relate the accounts of eyewitnesses and summaries, as in history books and encyclopedias, are secondary sources.

Marshall and Rossman **(2006)** and provide a useful list of what this might encompass:

> (a) contemporary records, including instructions, stenographic records, business and legal papers, and personal notes and memos; (b) confidential reports, including military records, journals and diaries, and personal letters; (c) public reports, including newspaper reports and memoirs or autobiographies; (d) questionnaires; (e) government documents, including archives and regulations; (f) opinions, including editorials, speeches, pamphlets, letters to the editor, and public opinion polls; (g) fiction, songs, and poetry; and (h) folklore (i) recipe books. **(Marshall and Rossman 2006: 119)**.

Primary and secondary data are integrated as the research develops in the field as one may inform the other. As one proceeds the data will raise questions resulting in an ongoing development of ideas. O'Reilly suggests that it is best to understand the ethnographer as progressing in a spiral, 'moving forward from idea to theory to design to data collection to findings, analysis, and back to theory, but where each two steps forward may involve one or two steps back (inductive and deductive)' (**2009: 110**). Thus, ethnographic analysis is not a stage in a linear process but rather a recurring phase in an iterative process of learning episodes, tangled up with every stage of the research process.

Ethnographies are usually written up and presented as texts. One is always engaged with text, in the form of pre-fieldwork background reading and theorizing, writing up or transcribing self-generated primary field data, all the way through to the post-fieldwork synthesis of primary and secondary forms of data **(Madden, 2017: 152)**.

GW: Marion, you have reflected recently that how ethnographic fieldwork is undertaken (as well as how it is understood) has changed a lot since you began your career. What would you say are some of the hazards and opportunities related to contemporary ethnographic research?

MD: In the digital era, the critical and reflective dimensions of ethnography need to be pushed further in analytical terms. We are just at the beginning of understanding what the digital revolution is doing to us as human beings. See Daniel Miller's recent global anthropological ERC-funded project, 'Why We Post', on the uses of the internet (forthcoming as a free pdf download). Speaking in disciplinary terms, Modern Languages is extremely well placed to define the agenda at a global level because of language based knowledge, which is a broad and as yet embryonic field where Modern Languages scholars need to be more active.

GW: Margaret, you have suggested that one of the most crucial aspects of ethnography is reflexivity. How would you define reflexivity, why is it important, and how can we bring it into our research and our reports?

MHZ: There is a need to account for the inevitability of the ethnographer's influence on the research process and to manage the tension between objectivity and subjectivity which makes dealing rigorously with reflexivity an important aspect of contemporary ethnography **(Madden, 2017: 2)**.

The concept of reflexivity in research therefore refers to the thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the inter-subjective dynamics between researcher and the researched **(Finlay and Gough, 2003)**. Practicing reflexivity requires an ongoing critical self-reflection of the ways in which the researcher's social background, personality, personal assumptions, position and behaviour can impact on the research process, particularly the collection and analysis of the data.

Reflexivity requires that researchers reflect upon the research process in order to assess the effect of their presence and their research techniques on the nature and extent of the data collected. This might involve considering to what extent respondents were telling the researcher what they thought she wanted to hear or reflecting on the form of the data collection which may have restricted the kind of data being collected or reflecting on what might have been lost in translation. The ethnographer should locate herself in the study honestly and openly, in an admission that her observations are filtered through her own experience, rather than

seeking to adopt a voice of authority. This does not mean the text becomes one about the researcher. It means confronting one's relationship with others, conveying the context and the researcher's place in it **(O'Reilly, 2009)**. Or as Madden **(2017)** puts it: 'reflexivity is not really about 'you, the ethnographer'; it's still about 'them, the participants'. The point of getting to know 'you, the ethnographer' better, getting to know the way you influence your research, is to create a more reliable portrait, argument or theory about 'them, the participants' **(Madden, 2017: 23)**.

Ethnographic reflexivity also requires researchers to critically reflect upon the theoretical structures they have drawn out of their ethnographic analysis. This involves making the process of collecting data and its analysis transparent and 'offer as full a description as possible of where the ethnography was done and how, with what misgivings, what mistakes, what expectations and disappointments, what revelations and what pleasures, to enable the reader not only to enjoy but also to evaluate the written product. Subjectivity is therefore not a problem for a putatively objective ethnography if it is dealt with rigorously' **(Madden, 2017: 23)**.

Here Madden **(2017)** adopts Bourdieu's **(1992)** construction of reflexivity that stresses its methodological value and the potential for such an approach to dissolve the putatively oppositional relationship between the subjective and the objective, the emic and the etic,[ii] the inductive and the deductive. In Madden's view, Bourdieu's argument conjures up the potential for reflexivity to help create a resolved ethnographic account **(Madden, 2017: 22)**.

Reflexivity is also a concept that appears in the literature on ethics in research, particularly relevant when confronting issues arising in the field. In what is now regarded as a classic article on reflexivity, Guillemin and Gillam **(2004)** distinguish two different dimensions of ethics in research, 1) procedural ethics, that usually involves seeking approval from a relevant ethics committee to undertake research involving humans; and 2) 'ethics in practice', for example during fieldwork, where 'ethically important moments' may arise and the researcher is forced to make immediate decisions about ethical concerns, or when information is revealed that suggests she or her participants are at risk **(Guillemin and Gillam, 2004: 273)**. Ethically important moments may for example arise with disclosure or coercion in a group situation.

Reflexivity is not prescriptive in the sense that it specifies in the abstract precisely what a researcher should do in response to any given situation. However, it does have a number of ethically important functions. In being reflexive, researchers both reflect about how their research intervention might affect the research participants before any actual research is conducted and consider how they would respond as a researcher in the sorts of situations that they can at this stage only envisage.

GW: Finally, I think it's easy to get excited about the promise of contemporary ethnography as 'new' approach and overlook the diverse range of decades of relevant critical writing. Could you recommend a methodological/theoretical text to scholars new to ethnography, and suggest why you think it useful for bear in mind?

MHZ: in terms of methodology I have referred to those texts which I think are accessible e.g. Raymond Madden's book, *Being Ethnographic: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography*, 2nd edition, (2017) Sage Publications. I think it's very good on many topics. Another useful introductory text is Karen O'Reilly's *Key Concepts in Ethnography* (2009) Sage Publications. It is well written and provides a good overview and useful definitions of terms and references for further reading. I recommend reading widely though and consulting different texts including ethnographies themselves including some of the classics such as William Whyte's *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, **(1943; 1981; 1993)**, 4th edition with appendices, or Anton Chekhov's *Sakhalin Island* **(1890)** Alma Classics, Bloomsbury Publishing. Sophie Woodward's work on material culture studies is very interesting and a pleasure to read as is Daniel Miller's work on 'Stuff' (2010) Polity Press. On writing ethnography, Van Maanen's (**2011)** *Tales from the Field* is an interesting text. In my own work I have drawn upon a wide variety of texts. Ethnography is never simply descriptive. Critical appraisal is always involved and the aim is to contribute to both the academic debate and the existing literature in the field.

MD: I agree. This is how I felt after the 'Ethnography and Modern Languages: Critical Reflections' workshop; we have so much to offer to our colleagues and we have not made ourselves heard as there are possibly political and legitimacy issues attached to the sector, which I feel has a tendency to be too conservative. It has taken me 20 years to become vocal about the fact that I am anthropologist and I am ready to help. In terms of key readings to start: the online journal of ethnographic theory, *HAU*, is a very useful platform with very accessible articles published on ethnography. We are using it with our students. We have also launched a Facebook account 'Debating Ethnography' open to all and especially we have a big group of Linguistics PhD students as well as archaeologists -

there are only fewer cultural and literary studies specialists. The 'Ethnographic Encounters' website provides some useful resources available for download for both students and teachers, including the LARA materials developed by Shirley Jordan and Celia Roberts. The LARA exercises and plans grew out of the pioneering ESRC funded project 'Language Learners as Ethnographers', whose findings are explored in the eponymous book by Celia Roberts, Michael Byram, Ana Barro and Shirley Jordan **(2001)** Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Speaker Biographies

Marion Demossier is Professor of French and European Studies and Head of the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics and at the University of Southampton. She holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the EHESS École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris and has published scholarly articles in leading academic journals in Britain, France and the United States, including the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *Cultural Analysis*, the *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* and *Modern and Contemporary France*. She has also written widely for a student audience, contributing chapters to prestigious series such as *A companion to the Anthropology of Europe* or *Culinary Taste*. She has been involved as an expert with the wine industry in France and New Zealand over a period of twenty years. She is a member of the ESRC Peer Review Panel 'Anthropology of Europe' (2010-2019), sits on the UNESCO *Climats de Bourgogne* scientific Committee and is a member of the UNESCO network Chair Culture of Wine, Dijon (2006-present). Her most recent book, *Burgundy: A Global Anthropology of Place and Taste* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2018) offers a long-term ethnographic analysis of the professional, social and cultural world of Burgundy wine production.

Margaret Hills de Zárate is a Senior Lecturer in the Division of Occupational Therapy and Arts Therapies at QMU, Edinburgh. After graduating in Fine Art from Grey's School of Art and training as an Art Therapist at Goldsmith's College, University of London, she worked as an art therapist in Scotland for the Department of Social Work and at Wellspring, a charitable trust offering psychotherapy and counselling. She later studied at the University of Havana, undertaking supervised postgraduate training in child and adolescent psychology and conducting fieldwork leading to the award of PhD. Alongside academic positions, she has worked in the Republic of Georgia with the Centre for the Psychosocial Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture, with a team of professionals in the refugee camp of Duisi, and subsequently with child ex-combatants in Colombia at the invitation of the Public Advocate of Bogotá. More recently, as part of the 'Transnationalizing Modern Languages' project

(TML), her research has focused on the experience and representation of Italian communities in Latin America. Findings and reflections on this research have been published as part of a co-edited volume with Ditty Dokter, *Intercultural Arts Therapies Research: Issues and methodologies* (Routledge: 2016) and in *Transnational Modern Languages: A Handbook*, ed. by Jennifer Burns and Derek Duncan (Liverpool University Press, forthcoming).

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[i] There are other models, such as multi-sited ethnography in which data collection follows a topic or social problem through different field sites geographically and/or socially (Marcus, 1995; Scheper-Hughes, 2010); and various time-limited models (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004: 538-540).
[ii] An emic perspective is one, which reflects the insiders' or research participants' point of view, whereas an etic perspective is one that echoes the outsiders' or researchers' point of view.

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Blurring the Boundaries between Life and Death: A search for the truth within documentary re-enactments

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Abstract

This article aims to engage with and problematise traditional ideas relating to re-enacted sequences within documentary films, and how these sequences might allow audiences a new and previously denied access to some level of so-called 'truth.' Positing that re-enactments essentially function as devices of distraction and fantasy, Bill Nichols (2008) sheds invaluable insight onto the nature of 'truth' in the use of re-enactments in documentary filmmaking. This article engages with, and attempts to build upon this existing scholarship, by performing a closer examination of the ways in which filmmakers deploy strategies of re-enactment in Carol Morley's Dreams of a Life (2011) and Clio Barnard's The Arbor (2010). Re-enactments are employed by their respective filmmakers not solely in order to present complete rejections of reality, but also to depict the filmmaking processes and the ways in which they have been 'worked through' to audiences in innovative and reflexive ways. Through the specific utilisation of stylistic features that directly and obtrusively call attention to a documentary's status as documentary, filmmakers do not wholeheartedly reject real-life events. Instead, they continually draw attention to the artifice of their artworks, reminding audiences that there can, indeed, only ever be 'a view from which the past yields up its truth', and that these views are completely and wholly unstable and elusive.

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Introduction

The deployment, manipulation and treatment of re-enacted sequences within documentary filmmaking has consistently proven to be a controversial and contentious practice, from the 'actuality' films of the Lumière brothers, to the 1922 release of Robert J. Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (a polemical film which utilised the approaches of salvage ethnography to depict the trials and tribulations of an Inuk man and his

family in the Canadian Arctic). Contemporary documentaries such as Andrew Jarecki's HBO mini-series *The Jinx* (**2015**) also recognise and struggle with the critical complexities of filmic re-enactments, as identified within a critical review written by Richard Brody, particularly when he lambasts the re-enactments within the series as nothing more than 'betrayals and debasements of the very stories their directors are trying to tell' (**2015**).

It is clear that re-enactments paradoxically garner huge amounts of both criticism *and* commendation in regard to the public reception of documentary films, and the academic discourses surrounding documentary filmmaking more widely.[i] These complexities must be explored in more depth in order for us to understand and make more sense of how re-enactments might allow audiences a new and previously denied access to some level of so-called 'truth.' Some critics posit that the use of filmic re-enactment within documentary is a tool of positive enhancement, used in order to accentuate and authenticate the reality represented by the film. Others, however, argue that re-enactment is used as an instrument by which to hyper-dramatise the events of a documentary in order to manipulate the emotions of viewers, and maintain the engagement of audiences, without the re-enacted sequences necessarily needing to bear any resemblance to actual events or occurrences.[ii] When Bill Nichols argues that re-enactments function as '*a* view, rather than *the* view, from which the past yields up its truth', he is attempting to engage with these complexities (**2008: 80**). Positing that re-enactments essentially function as devices of distraction and fantasy, Nichols sheds invaluable insight onto the nature of 'truth' in documentary filmmaking. This article engages with, and attempts to build upon this existing scholarship, by performing a closer examination of the ways in which a filmmaker deploys strategies of re-enactment. These re-enactments are used not solely in order to depict complete rejections of reality, but also to present their filmmaking processes and their ways of 'working through' to audiences in innovative and reflexive ways. Through the specific utilisation of stylistic features that directly and obtrusively call attention to a documentary's status *as* documentary, filmmakers do *not* wholeheartedly reject real-life events. Instead, they continually draw attention to the artifice of their artworks, reminding audiences that there can, indeed, only ever be *a* view from which the past yields up its truth.

In order to build upon Nichols' thesis, this article will engage with two particularly interesting and relatively contemporary documentaries which prominently feature the use of re-enacted sequences. Carol Morley's *Dreams of a Life* (**2011**) and Clio Barnard's *The Arbor* (**2010**) approach and engage with the concept of re-enactment in rather

different ways, arguably utilising their re-enacted sequences in order to suggest, provoke, reveal and uncover, with the re-enactments consistently alluding to the idea of a 'deeper' truth, or of a more 'authentic' version of events. The areas of the narrative and thematic impact of re-enactment sequences as contained within the films (in reference to the particular spatial and temporal filmic placement of these re-enacted scenes, and why they might have been arranged as such), alongside the examination of the stylistic and formal elements of the same re-enactments (in regards particularly to the construction of mise-en-scene, cinematography and framing) must be explored and investigated more thoroughly, in order for Nichols' argument to be expanded upon and legitimated further. Nichols, who argues that re-enactments function as a means by which audiences may encounter a 'version' of the truth, is valid. However, the limitations of this assertion must be recognised, because re-enactment itself must be figured not merely as the sole site from which a documentary 'yields' truth, but as the aesthetic and visual demonstration of the journey the filmmaker undertook to get to that particular 'version' of the truth. The re-enacted sequences within these two films arguably function as the imagined spaces in which the filmmakers (and their audiences) can reanimate the subjects of these documentaries, and tentatively explore areas of anxiety and of the unknown surrounding their investigations, an analytical tendency which can be directly related to Freud's psychological theory of 'working through' (**2003**). Freud's assessment that this 'working through' is a process by which an individual is able to recover by going over reclaimed material is critical to this discussion of re-enactment. I propose that this is the process that both Morley and Barnard undergo in order to create their own re-enactments. Each director uses the reclaimed material of the lives of their subjects in order to 'work through' anxieties relating to death, love, guilt, and blame. Nichols' stance, therefore, though undoubtedly insightful, does not grapple with many of the complexities it proceeds to unearth.

Dreams of a Life

The idea for the documentary *Dreams of a Life* emerged after director Carol Morley encountered a news story which described the death of a 38-year-old woman named Joyce Carol Vincent, whose remains were discovered in her London flat an astonishing three years after her death (**Anon., 2006**; **Leith, 2006**). Vincent's television was still on, and her body, surrounded by wrapped Christmas presents, was decomposed to the extent that the cause of her death could not be suitably identified by forensic experts. Despite the presence of gifts, no institutional alarms had been raised regarding a missing woman, and no family members immediately stepped forward to claim Vincent as their own, leading

Morley to create *Dreams of a Life* as an investigation into Vincent's identity. Though inspired particularly by Vincent's death, Morley's film also examines and challenges more general notions of modern society and community, in order to scrutinise and probe the circumstances of Vincent's death, and the idea that the deceased body of a young woman (who at one point had family, friends, employment and presents to give) could lie overlooked and undiscovered in a Wood Green bedsit for almost three years.

It is crucial to firstly acknowledge that all of the re-enactments within Morley's film deploy the use of an actress in order to represent the deceased Joyce Vincent (with the older version of Joyce played by Zawe Ashton, and the younger by Alix Luka-Cain). Nichols explores the ways in which documentaries outside of the observational mode often use re-enactment in order to depict an absent subject, as an 'attempt to resurrect people and lives no longer available to the camera' (**2008: 74**). Of course, because Joyce Vincent is deceased, she cannot be called upon to play herself within Morley's film, so the employment of an actress *representing* Vincent is completely understandable. Nichols, however, continues by exemplifying some of the issues that occur when the subject of a documentary cannot represent itself due to this absence, arguing that 'the subject must be reconstituted from available resources; a lost object haunts the film, and the attempt to conjure that spectre, to make good that loss, signals the mark of desire (**ibid.: 75**). Within these suggestions, Nichols is building upon one of his earlier arguments, in which he dichotomises the documentary film as having 'a body too many' and the fiction film as having 'a body too few' (**1993: 177**). These binaries refer to the idea that re-enactment within documentary contains 'too many' bodies because in actuality 'the bodies of those in re-enactments are "extras" – never matching the historical bodies they represent' and documentary *without* re-enactment conversely, 'too few' bodies (**1994: 4**). Passé neatly summarises Nichols' view here by surmising that films which rely solely on archival footage *without* the use of re-enactment 'lack both actors *and* the historical figure' (**2013: 138**).

As asserted, the historical figure within Morley's *Dreams of a Life* cannot be accessed within the film because she is deceased. The idea of the absent subject, and the consequently haunted text, can be directly connected to Renov's own suggestion that re-enactments within documentary subsequently function as 'works of mourning' through which both filmmakers and audiences can 'make good' on the loss of the subject through the creation of the documentary itself, and the resurrection of the subject through re-enacted sequences (**2004: 121**). This idea can certainly be applied to *Dreams of a Life*, in which Morley perhaps attempts to 'make good' on the loss of Joyce Vincent, the

woman who, apparently, nobody claimed, and nobody mourned. However, this thesis can also be extended, as it is perhaps arguable that the inclusion of an actress playing Vincent within the re-enacted sequences of Morley's film is not concurrent to *either* the proposition of a 'body too few' *or* a 'body too many' because it is, paradoxically, both. Ashton's portrayal of Vincent cannot possibly be 'matched' to the body it is attempting to represent, but an interesting development can be noted within the fact that there is also very little available archive footage of the real Joyce Vincent. This duality of the 'body too many' and 'the body too few' may lead to an extension of Nichols' ideas, namely hypothesising 'the body displaced'.

This physical and bodily 'displacement' can be recognised within the opening sequences of *Dreams of a Life*, which depict Vincent's flat as it may have been when her body was stumbled upon by debt collectors. The camera, a ghostly presence itself inside Vincent's bedsit, twists and turns as it takes a macabre tour around the kitchen, showcasing the dirt, dust and filth that has built up on top of ordinary elements of daily life (**Fig. 1**). The camera tilts and pans at various Dutch angles as it snakes down the entrance hall (**Fig. 2**), pausing slowly on the stack of unopened bills and letters that were presumably posted by visitors, unbeknownst to the fact that Vincent lay dead in her living room, just a few feet away. Shadows can be seen through the frosted glass of the front door, and a disembodied man's voice shouts through the letterbox. Suddenly, the door is forced open, and a hand reaches inside in order to remove the door-chain, whilst the seemingly 'startled' camera darts rapidly backwards, in a ghostly fashion. Within the next shot of the flat, however, the camera has shaken this 'ghostly' movement, and has reverted to a standard mid-shot as two men enter the flat, and presumably find Joyce's body.

Morley's decision here to focus on the reaction of these men, and to subsequently refuse to depict the body of Vincent, is clearly a choice relating to taste and ethics, but is also crucial as it actively reinforces the idea of the absent subject within the film. The re-enactment of the discovery of Joyce's body is certainly, as Nichols argues, *a* view from which the past yields up its truth, because it is rooted in the factual depiction of bailiffs forcing their way into Vincent's bedsit and coming across her body (a sequence of events which actually took place). Morley, however, exploits artistic licence in order to *represent* Vincent's flat, down to the details of a coat hanging on the hook by the door, and an egg cup covered in dust on the table. These elements of the film are not, and cannot, be based on historical fact. Morley, with her film being made eight years after Vincent's death, did not have access to Vincent's flat in the state that it would have been when her body was found.

Morley herself stated in an interview at the South by Southwest Film Festival that 'there were no photographs, there was very little autobiographical information about Joyce Vincent' (**BYOD, 2016**). This accentuates the idea that there was no system of indexicality that Morley could have referred to when re-constructing Vincent's flat, again clearly supporting Nichols' argument that re-enactment is, therefore, not *the* view by which truth can be discovered, because there is simply no way of knowing how Vincent's bedsit may truly have looked when her body was found.

Figure 1 The grime and dirt of Vincent's bedsit in *Dreams of a Life*, reconstructed and re-inhabited by Morley

Figure 2 The camera snakes softly around the flat in *Dreams of a Life*, leaning, swerving, and ducking in a ghostly and ethereal manner.

In the following sequence, Morley specifically chooses to re-enact a scene in which the bailiffs discover that, despite Vincent's death, the television set in her flat was still on, and was still broadcasting to a non-existent audience after almost three years. However, it is not the focus on the television that is so interesting, but Morley's choice to show her own documentary broadcasting *on* the television set within Vincent's flat (**Fig. 3**). Silverstone, in his elemental and invaluable work *Television and Everyday Life*, asserts that 'television has become embedded in the complex cultures of our own domesticity; we can no more think of television as anything other than a necessary component of that domesticity than we can think of our domesticity without, both in the machine and the screen, a reflection and an expression of that domestic life' (**1994: 25**). Within this, Silverstone is clearly demonstrating the irrevocable connection between the television set and ideas of modern domesticity, and this concept can be subsequently extended in order to be applied to Morley's film. The image of the television set left on in Vincent's flat is one that is referred to and explicated many times in both the original news articles that were published when her body was discovered, and also in the later reviews of *Dreams of a Life*. It seems to be of focal concern to critics, and to the general public, that the television set in Vincent's flat had remained on. This is, perhaps, because of the idea that the television has been traditionally thought of as the very device which simultaneously offers to viewers a sense of intimacy and isolation alongside feelings of inclusion and unity. As Spigel efficiently summarises, 'the television was often figured as the ultimate expression of progress in utopian statements concerning man's ability to conquer and to domesticate space' (**1998: 13**). Yet Vincent had passed away with her set still on, seemingly disconnected and estranged from the community she occupied.

Figure 3 The television of the present moment ruptures the representation of the past in *Dreams of a Life*.

The linking of the ideas of the television set and domestic space uncovers clear suggestions regarding Morley's filmic commentary on modern society. Though *Dreams of a Life* does not (and could not, as will later be developed) blame any one individual or cause for the death of Joyce Vincent, it does suggest a critique of a contemporary society that offers more avenues of superficial, technological communication than any preceding generation, but that also 'allows' a young woman, portrayed as so vivacious, lively and warm, to die alone. Morley's decision to showcase *Dreams of a Life* on the television set in the re-enactment of the discovery of Joyce's body is utterly strange, and the text-within-a-text concept is completely jarring. The idea of Vincent's body, situated as being found in the *past*, watching a documentary about her own death which is taking place in the *present*, disturbs the idea of the objective documentary voice and disrupts the expectations of the relationship that 'must' exist between documentary and truth. Though debates on the nature of documentary filmmaking must be expanded upon (for instance, other authors[iii] have explored and will continue to explore the problematic idea that documentaries necessarily require any fragment of a relationship with the 'truth' to begin with) documentary films *have* traditionally been appreciated because of their ability to seemingly bring audiences closer to ideas of truth and authenticity in relation to their subjects. However, this sequence within *Dreams of a Life* clearly rejects this idea, and subsequently the idea of the objective documentary voice, as it makes no attempt to offer a realistic or 'authentic' view of the past. Instead, Morley chooses to represent a complex interplay of unstable temporality, which is itself inextricably linked to Freud's concept of the 'uncanny'. Within this sequence, Vincent's body exists as something specifically related to the home (the *heimlich*) and to the familiar (just like the television set itself) that is also altered or changed in some way so that it no longer quite represents the original object (the *un-heimlich*).

In relation to the uncanny, Wheatley argues that it is the 'blurred distinction between the real and the phantasmic [that] might also be read as the dissolution of boundaries between the familiar and strange, or the everyday and the disturbing' (**2006: 7**). Whilst Wheatley's argument refers to gothic television particularly, it also can be used to reflect upon Nichols' statement that re-enactments act 'partially as an awareness of the gap between that which was and the effort to return to it, whilst also affirming the presence of a gap between the objectivity/subjectivity binary and the workings of the fantasmatic' (**2008: 79**). The television set showcasing Morley's film *within* the film represents an uncanny engagement with the absent subject. Nichols' argument that the re-enactments presented within *Dreams of a Life* cannot be *the* view from which the past yields up its truth does hold true,

but this is precisely because of the instability created by these re-enacted sequences, which force the past into a permeable and transient state of being, connected and infiltrated by the ghostly presence of the present moment itself. In this way, Nichols' conjuring up of '*the* view' of the past cannot exist, and yet neither can his idea of '*a* view.' This is because these jarring re-enactments rupture the spatial and temporal site of the film in such a way that no definitive interpretations can be made. There are no views per se, there are just curiosities, feelings, conjectures, or suspicions.

Though the film does present some key moments in which archival footage of Joyce Vincent is unearthed and employed, the relative lack of this type of footage within *Dreams of a Life* also contributes to the idea that the re-enactments created do not allow the past to 'yield up its truth'. There is a particular scene, in which the young Joyce is shown to be singing a segment from the song 'Midnight Train to Georgia' in front of her mother (who died when she was 11) and sisters (who refused to participate in the making of the film). This scene is, of course, pure fantasy. Though the interviewees within the film state that Joyce did love to sing, and that she did have a mother of Indian descent, and two caring sisters, there is absolutely no reference to any memory or moment in which Joyce performs this particular song to her family as a child. There is an intriguing shot of Joyce's mother, played by actress Neelam Bakshi, that is pulled repeatedly in and out of focus within this sequence, which shows her picking up a camera and taking a photo of the young Joyce as she sings. This shot is significant, because it almost seems to deliberately draw attention to Morley's lack of directorial objectivity, whilst exaggerating the desire (as Nichols discusses [**ibid.: 75**]) of both the filmmaker and the audience, who understand that this fictional photograph can never be developed and subsequently never shown. This scene is pivotal in relation to the ways in which Morley can be read as 'working through' anxieties and desires relating to the making of her film. As discussed above, Nichols' theory of 'the body too few' must be examined, because it is clear that, within this sequence especially, bodies on screen are also able to act as 'bodies inhabited'. Bakshi, playing Joyce's mother, can be read as Morley's physical stand-in, her body the agent that the filmmaker cannot be, taking a first-hand photograph of a subject that Morley has found so elusive, so confusing, and intriguing. Bakshi's body, temporarily inhabited by Morley, and play-acting within a wholly imagined scene, is able to be there, in the same room as the living Joyce Vincent. Thus, Morley deftly weaves together her own desire for a more direct access to Joyce with the fabric of what she imagines of Vincent's actual childhood.

Photography, and the apparent lack of the film's access to any authentic footage of the subject, is a theme also identified and perpetuated within a sequence which *does* show real-life photographs of Joyce. These photographs are shown to be suspended, as if in mid-air, against a black background, whilst the song 'My Smile is Just a Frown' by Carolyn Crawford is overlaid, intermingling with the voice-over commentary of the interviewees, who comment predominantly on Joyce's physical beauty. The photographs, spatially suspended, also seem to temporally suspend the moments they depict (as all photographs do, being still image captures of any particular moment in time). Fradley, in his summary of Mulvey's *Death 24x A Second* (**2006**), assess this idea, as he argues that film itself is a medium which cannot be divorced from the idea that it freezes the subject, and therefore pronounces it deceased. He argues that 'cinema's embalming of time […] increasingly functions as a mausoleum of moving images, preserving them as undead phantasms doomed to an eternal repetition' (**2010: 70**). Within this, it may be argued that Morley's employment of the real photographs is not only an authentic reference to the real Joyce Vincent (thus, a representation of Nichols' 'truth') but an acknowledgement of the limitations of re-enactments in their efforts to depict an absent subject. Morley is perhaps acknowledging that the truth cannot be accessed within her re-enactments as they cannot feature the real Joyce. Thus, she suspends the few photographs of Joyce that she does have, in order to allow the audience more access to the real person, and perhaps subsequently, more access to the truth.

The most controversial sequence within Dreams of as Life also utilises 'My Smile is Just a Frown', which metamorphoses from a non-diegetic piece of music accompanying the photograph sequence, to a diegetic song within a re-enacted scene. The scene itself depicts Ashton as Joyce, singing the song into a hairbrush, just as Morley imagined the young Joyce doing many years before. This time, however, Joyce is presented as singing to her mirror whilst alone in her dark, dingy bedsit. Her glamour and beauty appear washed-out and inauthentic, and her facial expressions seem to contort between performative contentment and introverted depression, a reading emphasised by the fact that once the song ends, Ashton kneels, covers her eyes and appears to sob. This particular sequence garnered significant criticism because of the implications of the song in relation to Vincent's mental health and emotional state. Though Morley did assert that the creation of this particular fictional sequence was inspired by Agnes Varda's film *Cléo from 5 to 7* (**1962**), it undeniably accentuates the interpretation of Vincent as a woman with a troubled or traumatic past. It is particularly clear, within this sequence, that it is impossible for the re-enactment to

yield *any* truth, because in this case, it is entirely a work of hypothetical suggestion invented by the filmmaker, and engagingly performed by the relative 'body displaced' of Ashton.

The final sequence of Morley's film is perhaps the most significant in relation to the idea that re-enactments cannot offer up any fixed or stable 'views' of the past. Morley, up until this point in the film, has subtly showcased some of the 'solutions' to her own inquiry in regards to Vincent's death. It is delineated that Vincent had severe asthma, a peptic ulcer for which she was hospitalised, an isolated and perhaps lonely life, and a situation of domestic abuse from which she escaped. Ashton, as Vincent, is shown lying in front of the television (the way Joyce's body was found). She raises her arm into the air slowly, gazes despondently at the ceiling, and there is a sudden spark or rupture from the television as her arm drops back down. It is almost as if Morley represents a rupture in the television as a surrogate for the rupture in the collective knowledge offered herein, as there is no way of knowing what truly happened to Joyce in these final moments. This lack of knowledge contributes once again to the idea that re-enactment is not, in this case, *the* view from which the past yields up its truth, because that truth is, at this moment in time, inaccessible and incommunicable. The truth of Vincent's life is unknowable, and all Morley is able to do is hypothesise what might have happened to her.

The Arbor

Clio Barnard's *The Arbor* also similarly explores the relationship between the past and the present moment within documentary re-enactments. The film, which depicts the life of playwright Andrea Dunbar, focuses perhaps even more intently on the strained relationship between Dunbar and her daughter Lorraine. The opening sequence of the film shows Lorraine (played by actress Manjinder Virk) and her sister Lisa (played by Christine Bottomley) as adults, wandering around a house in which their mother Andrea is writing on the bed (**Fig. 4**). Just as *Dreams of a Life* blended the past and the present, *The Arbor* herein creates the same paradox, as the two women recall their experiences as little girls as they walk around the house which is evidently intended to be the house they actually grew up in.

Figure 4 Andrea Dunbar writes on her bed, a figure of the past, as her children wander around the house in the present day in *The Arbor*.

Again, the film invokes the idea of the haunted text, as Dunbar is present within this house, despite having died when Lorraine and Lisa were both young. The women talk particularly of a memory they both have of Lorraine accidentally setting fire to their childhood bedroom in order to keep them both warm, and the fire itself blazes on the bed in the background of the shot, unnoticed by the women, like a superimposition of the past onto the present moment. The actresses as adults, then bang on the windows and shout for help in a re-enactment of what actually happened when Lorraine and Lisa were children. However, in the subsequent shot, Lisa then contradicts herself by stating that she is no longer sure whether it was Lorraine that snapped the door handle, locking them inside the room, or whether she actually did it herself. This combination of temporal malleability and the idea that the subjects of the documentary cannot recall the actuality of the events that took place themselves raises questions about how a re-enactment can claim to offer the truth in relation to the past, if the past cannot be recalled truthfully by participants in the first place. As Morley 'worked through' the past trauma of Joyce Vincent's life, attempting to discover more about what had happened to her before her death, so Lorraine and Lisa herein 'work through' their own experiences of the past they shared, and the mother they once knew. Within this sequence, Barnard is attempting to grapple with the challenges that come with representing the past, in any format. The past is unknowable, and all that Barnard is able to offer is her own representation of Lorraine and Lisa's representation of *a* representation of the past, and the fire in the house.

The concept of a text-within-a-text is also again exemplified by the following sequence in *The Arbor* which depicts the re-enactment of the original play text by Dunbar, on the real-life space of the Brafferton Arbor, in front of the contemporary residents of the Buttershaw Estate. Natalie Gavin plays 'The Girl' who is also meant to allegorically stand in for Dunbar herself (considering that the play is a quasi-autobiographical account of Dunbar's own experiences growing up on the same estate). As discussed within Walker's article on *The Act of Killing*, the re-enactment of historical happenings taking place within the same spaces in which they originally occurred is significantly symbolic, and *The Arbor* explicates this significance, exploring the idea of change and modernity (the re-enactment is watched by real-life residents of the modern Buttershaw Estate) whilst preserving and retaining the space of *The Arbor* as the site of the original events.

It is also crucial to explore the stylistic conventions of Barnard's film in relation to her use of actors and actresses to play the roles of Dunbar (who, in re-enactments, does not speak), Lorraine, Lisa and their respective family members. Barnard chose to have the actors lip-synch over the top of the recorded voices of the real participants of the documentary, as they describe their feelings, experiences and memories. The voices heard within the documentary's re-enacted sequences are those of the people being interviewed, and the film establishes this creative system from the outset, using a title card to explain that 'this is a true story, filmed with actors lip-synching to the voices of the people whose story it tells.' The acknowledgement of this severing of the actor's bodies and the participant's voices heightens the focus on performance and accentuates the tension with which the delivery of the story is told.

Within the use of this lip-synching technique, Barnard clearly establishes a jarring, displaced mode of viewing, with Lanthier commenting in that 'the paradox of establishing distance in order to penetrate creates a wholly unique documentary experience […] the re-enactments are lip-synched to genuine audio interviews and photographed in meticulously staged environments […] the anecdotes included are mouthed to the audience by actors who hauntingly and relentlessly break the fourth wall' (**2016**). This statement supports the idea that, particularly for Barnard, the re-enactments are perhaps meant to signify something wholly other than the truth of past, as Nichols suggests. Barnard herself stated that the lip-synching technique was used specifically in order to 'raise questions about the relationship between fiction and documentary – to acknowledge that documentaries, more often than not, have the same narrative structure as fiction [and] for the audience to be made aware that they are watching material that has been mediated' (in **Falk, 2010**). Herein, *The Arbor* clearly emphasises the deliberate estrangement of the

ideas of truth and re-enactment, and again, there is something specifically uncanny about how Barnard animates the bodies of the actors and actresses within her film, whose mouths move, but whose voices are never heard. Barnard requests of her audience a kind of utopian 'double-think' in relation to both recognising the artifice of her retellings and suspending disbelief so that the retellings themselves can be appreciated and understood.

In addition, Barnard clearly further employs the practices of traditional narrative filmmaking in a subsequent sequence within the film, in which it is revealed that the character of Lorraine has actually been narrating her story whilst incarcerated. The moment of this narrative discovery is shown as an unexpected announcement, with Barnard choosing to withhold the information up until this point. The film has depicted the death of Andrea Dunbar, and Lorraine's voiceover asserts, 'I remember thinking, things can only get better.' In the following shot, however, the camera pulls away from Lorraine, to show a prison guard locking the door of her cell, and the bars then obscuring the lens of the camera, placing distance between the audience, Lorraine, and the idea of the objective truth of the documentary, as the film has clearly withheld information in order to construct a plot device keeping audiences entertained and engaged. Nichols writes that 'fake' documentaries, and documentaries which acknowledge their artifice prompt us to question the authenticity of the documentary in general. He asks, 'what truth do documentaries reveal about the self; how is it different from a staged or scripted performance; and how can this be productively subverted?' (**2001: 127**) This is then extended by Juhasz and Lerner who propose that 'fake documentaries can readily educate viewers about the uncertain links among objectivity, knowledge, and power' (**2006: 12**). Though *The Arbor* cannot readily be constituted as a 'fake' documentary as such, Barnard's inclusion of filmmaking devices more widely associated with fictional films, alongside lip-synching actors, accentuates the idea that audiences are *meant* to be questioning the artifice of the documentary mode of storytelling and re-enactments in general.

The final sequence of *The Arbor* is once again subversive with regards to the film's portrayal of the relationship between Dunbar and Lorraine, which is predominantly depicted by Lorraine as one of neglect, abuse and bitterness. The final sequence depicts Lorraine being released from prison, but for the first time within the film, Virk does not lip-synch to the voice-over of the real Lorraine. Barnard instead finally utilises the traditional expository mode of documentary filmmaking, perhaps adding a degree of authenticity to her film which, before to this moment, was so intently focused on drawing attention to the artifice of re-enactment. Following Lorraine's re-enacted release from prison, Barnard chooses to

input authentic archival footage of Andrea Dunbar with the real Lorraine as a small baby. Dunbar's voiceover describes her relatively normal experiences as a writer and a mother after the publication of her play, and states, 'maybe it's just because Lorraine is a good baby, I don't know.' This sequence is *not* a re-enactment, and the choice to place it at the end of the film once again thrusts the film itself into a state of ambiguity, as Lorraine has continually theorised that her mother hated her and treated her differently because of her race, yet these images (seen as more authentic and trustworthy precisely *because* they are not re-enacted) seem to show Dunbar as a loving, caring mother to Lorraine. Nichols' statement that re-enactments are '*a* view from which the past yields up its truth' seems to again be both supported and challenged by these explorations of Barnard's film, as the re-enactments shown are clearly *not* intended to be representative of the truth, countered as they are by the relative credibility and legitimacy of the archival footage shown at the close of *The Arbor*. Barnard's film is not a documentary concerned with the retrieval and presentation of the objective 'truth' of Andrea Dunbar's life as a playwright and mother. Instead, *The Arbor* is undeniably a film about Lorraine Dunbar's personal and completely *subjective* experiences living as Andrea Dunbar's daughter.

Conclusion

Nichols' argument, though evidently applicable in many different ways to both Morley's *Dreams of a Life* and Barnard's *The Arbor* is, undeniably, limited. In stating that 're-enactments are *a* view, rather than *the* view, from which the past yields up its truth', Nichols is acknowledging the complexities of re-enactment as a mode through which the truth of a documentary might be discovered. However, it is clear that re-enactments do not function solely to, or as the sole site from which, the past can be seen as 'truthful' or 'honest.' The intentions of the filmmaker in creating the documentary must be acknowledged, and the medium of film itself accepted as an ambiguous vehicle of expression. Re-enactments, as uncanny as they undoubtedly are in re-animating the bodies of absent subjects, represent a completely subjective 'working through' process personal to the filmmaker. The re-enactment itself is the journey the filmmaker has undertaken in order to reach whatever they present as their (extremely unstable, completely speculative) version of events. In the same way that children use role-play as a means by which they can imagine situations, events, and their consequences, without actually taking any risks, filmmakers do through the use of re-enacted sequences. Through a process of playing with, manipulating, and giving life on-screen to the bodies of actors and actresses, once filmmakers have presented their interpretations of events, the game is left there, and the metaphorical dolls are discarded. It is this atmosphere

of uncertainty and inconclusiveness which gives the documentary film the power to attract and engage audiences.

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[ii] An interesting example of this juxtaposition can be found within Jennifer Merin's (**2016**) acknowledgement of the controversy surrounding re-enactment in documentary. She goes on to counter that re-enacted sequences promote the best of documentary filmmaking 'without compromising the genre's standards of authenticity, transparency and journalistic ethics'.

[ii] This critical dichotomy (of understanding re-enactment within documentary as a negative and a positive addition) can be seen within two different discussions of Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing* (**2012**), both published in the Winter 2013 issue of *Film Quarterly*. Janet Walker argues that the re-enacted murders within Oppenheimer's film act as a more modern extension of Sigmund Freud's 1914 investigation 'Remembering, Repeating and Working Through' as they are 'painfully but productively creative of an expansive territory where survivors and others may yet find *new* bearings and make *new* impressions on the landscape' (**2013: 19**). On the other hand, Nick Fraser appears to view Oppenheimer's re-enactments as wholly offensive and insensitive, stating that he hopes audiences 'will look at less-hyped, more modestly conceived depictions of mass-murder' (**2013: 24**).

[iii] Stella Bruzzi, and Michael Renov for example, within their respective publications on documentary filmmaking theory and practices.

Where Truth Lies in Advertising: Collateral bundling of hidden meanings

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Abstract

Consumer advertising, characterised by its persuasive intent and attention value, is a form of propositional communication that contextually hinges on the psychology of human needs and desires. The advertiser's objective is to depict – with some poetic licence – commercially available items as beneficial and vital. Truthful depiction is not among the objectives of the marketing plan; however, persuasive effectiveness is contingent upon successful synthesis of fact and concoction. Thus, an essence of reality must be crafted into the text to induce target-market confidence. Another consideration is memorability of the advertisement experience, particularly the brand name and its associated positive qualities. Further, it must be readable and socially accessible to achieve receiver engagement. This article – using the five social functions of language and Jakobson's communication language model (Leech, 1981) – investigates the complex phenomenon of meaning-creation in press advertisements[i] *to discover their ecological infrastructure. What are the relationships between elements? And how do these render the potential to generate persuasive propositions that linger? Analysis shows that attention-getting features are primary carriers of hidden meanings; and, if realised, these create persuasive impressions of essential and/or urgently needed benefits available in the advertised item. Further investigation reveals that the hidden meanings are cached in a trifecta of thematic information, presupposition and implicature that renders a meaning-making vehicle to deliver advertiser propositions. This strategic apparatus – governed by a principle of semantic interdependency of linguistic, semiotic and intertextual elements – is terminologically labelled as* collateral bundling*.*

Keywords: advertisement, collateral bundling, implicature, intertextuality, persuasion, presupposition, social functions of language, thematic information.

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Introduction

Advertisements, a form of persuasive communication, warrant a holistic multi-functional approach to discover the mechanics of meaning-making. This article offers a framework of thematic information, implicature and presupposition to deliver a grounded exposition of the persuasive apparatus at work. First, analytical approaches of the field and key concepts are introduced. Following this, a baby-shop advertisement is analysed to exemplify hidden-meaning collateral bundling, and to expose how natural-language social functions are exploited to draw in the receiver. The article then examines nine health-and-beauty (H&B) advertisements from the 1940s to deconstruct the operative meaning-making devices. Each advertisement analysis is annotated with a meaning-making summary.

Analytical Approaches

Advertisements have increasingly engaged researchers from the humanities, and the social and medical sciences, resulting in a flow of cross-disciplinary publications that offer different analytical approaches. Despite the various approaches and research foci, a common interest is the meaning-making ecology of advertisements as persuasive texts. The wider literature around advertising has three principal trajectories:

- Historical and economic perspectives **(e.g. Myers, 1994**; **Nevett, 1982**; **Presbrey, 1929**; **Sampson, 1874)**
- Consumer culture, media and society; and marketing and the advertising agency **(Barthes, 1977**; **Berger, 2015**; **Crawford, 2008**; **Godin, 2005**; **Goffman, 1976**; **McLuhan, 1964**; **Myers, 1998**; **Packard, 1957 – among others)**
- Linguistic and socio-semiotic perspectives, constituting the studies most pertinent here – in particular pragmatically oriented approaches.

The most noteworthy for the linguist is the seminal work of **Leech (1966)**, which provided the fundamentals for several exemplary book-length publications **(e.g. Bruthiaux, 1996**; **Cook, 2001**; **Dyer, 1982**; **Geis, 1982**; **Hermerén, 1999**; **Myers, 1994**, **1998**; **Schmidt and Kess, 1986**; **Tanaka, 1994**; **Vestergaard and Schrøder, 1985)**. Leech identified the internal structure and communicative facets of advertisements, establishing advertising language as a unique text type. He flagged the abstract features that distinguish this genre: it has a well-defined social purpose; it is frequently disjunctive (truncated and ungrammatical), yet pragmatically skilful; it operates at a psychological level; and it is colloquial, not formal. Leech **(1966)** also pointed out the four cornerstones of advertiser ambition: Attention Value, Memorability, Readability, and Selling Power.

The first three of these are the crucial tools that determine the effectiveness of the last.

With regards to denotative and connotative meanings in advertising language, Leech highlights how linguistic forms function in unconventional ways to refer to 'entities and events in the world' **(ibid: 9)**. He contends that receivers interpret the 'seeming incompatibility of meaning' in advertisements by finding a tie that will reconcile the infringement with something in 'the normal communicative function' **(ibid: 178)** – which then renders the advertisement message meaningful. The idea of cohesive ties is an underpinning of pragmatics, which focuses on correspondences between pragmatics elements and the social functions of language (table 1).

This research adopts a pragmatically oriented approach. It uses the idea of social functions and Jakobson's communication model (fig. 1) to illustrate how meanings are rendered by attention-getters – both at the linguistic (expressive) plane and in pictures (iconic elements). Attention-getters are the standout features: these include words, phrases, full sentences; and visuals (graphetics,[ii] pictures, white space). The pragmatic psychological and emotional underpinnings of marketing strategy – which, in the words of Packard **(1957)**, are configured to appeal to our 'hidden needs' – are important determinants. In brief, hidden needs are the wants and desires of humans: they include the need to achieve, to be creative, to belong, to look attractive and youthful, to be loved, and to be praised.

SOCIAL FUNCTION	ORIENTATION TOWARDS
Expressive (attitudes/feelings)	Addressor
Informative (informational)	Subject-matter (new information)
Phatic (socially oriented/ interpersonal)	Channel of communication
Aesthetic (artistic value/ status)	Message in socio-cultural setting
Directive (socially controlling/ aims to influence)	Addressee

Table 1 The five social functions of language. Source: Leech, 1981, pp. 40-42.

Speaker Writer Addressor	**CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION** [medium] **MESSAGE** [text] **SUBJECT-MATTER** [information]	Listener Reader Addressee

Figure 1 Jakobson's communication model. Source: Adapted from Leech, 1981, pp. 40-42.

The Advertising-Text Selling Mechanism

Copywriters and graphic designers produce artfully crafted texts to convey persuasive messages **(Aitchison, 2008**; **Berger, 2015**; **Cook, 2001**; **Geis, 1982**; **Leech, 1966**; **Packard, 1957).** The addressor goal is to stimulate buying behaviour by creating texts of strong Selling Power. The text-creation process relies on the fundamentals of natural-language communication – which is powered by the precept of language as an organic socio-cultural edifice **(Bolinger, 1980**; **Halliday and Hasan, 1976**, **1985**; **Leech, 1981)**. The socio-cultural relationships contextually situated in everyday exchanges critically influence receiver interpretation of denotative and connotative meanings **(Bolinger and Sears, 1981**; **Leech, 1983**; **Yule, 2017)**. Principally, the following cohesive devices are important in advertisement construction:

- **Information structure**, or organisation of text – the way information is organised by the addressor, and reveals addressor stance (position) or emotion
- **Implicature** – a cognitive trajectory of possible meaning-making, whereby receivers can infer meanings, based on a cooperative principle (even where an assertion is illogical).
- **Presupposition** (also known as implication) – the knowledge assumed as known to the receiver (presumably shared by addressor and receiver)
- **Reference** – a relationship between two entities, where an addressor uses discourse elements (e.g. pronouns) to enable receiver identification of something. Copywriters can effect reference ambiguity by employing ellipsis
- **Thematic information** (something known) – the socio-cultural accepted knowledge that situates the communication within the scope

of reality, such as a human condition (e.g. emotion, illness) or need (e.g. clothing, food safety) or desire (e.g. career success, romantic love)

- **Turn-taking** (mimicked by conversational advertisements) – a conductor of politeness and face-to-face involvement.

Exploitation of cohesive devices maximises persuasive strength of propositions **(Fuertes-Olivera *et al*., 2001**; **Leech, 1966)**. In particular, three elements are essential to create Selling Power: thematic information, presupposition and implicature (fig. 2). These are hidden meanings that form a collateral bundle of potential interpretations, configured to promote presumable benefits and positive qualities of consumer items. They are cached primarily in attention-getters, configured to generate propositions that urge buying behaviour.

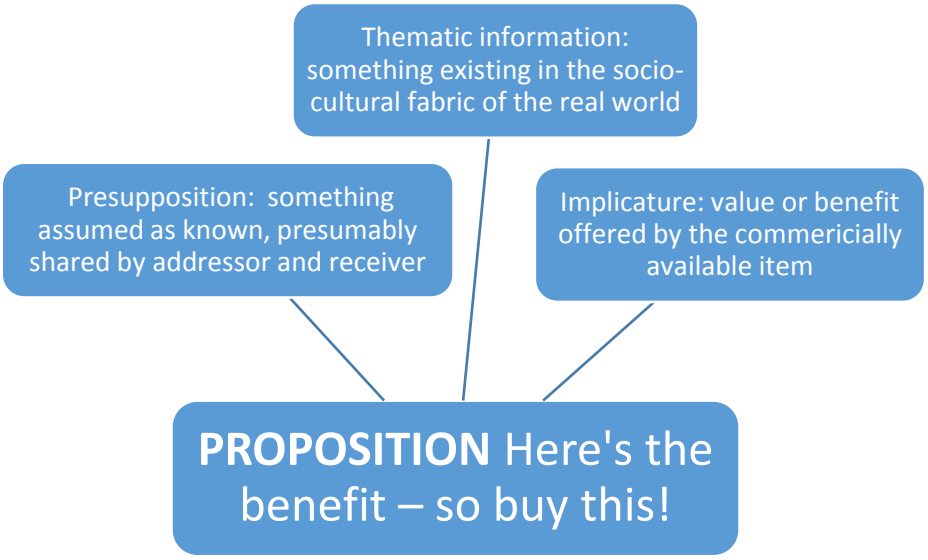


Figure 2 Propositions are formed by collateral bundling of hidden meanings.

The Roles of Hidden Meanings and Social Functions in Advertisements

To illustrate the idea of hidden-meaning collateral bundling, an analytic example of a baby-product advertisement is provided below: 'The Baby Shop: Newborn to 24 Months' (**fig. 3**).[iii] Here, two noun phrases (NPs) – in declarative mood[iv] – accompany a smiling healthy-looking toddler, safely anchored in a baby chair. The NPs are disjunctive in that they are verbless:

Disjunctive NP	**THE BABY SHOP**
Disjunctive NP	NEWBORN TO 24 MONTHS

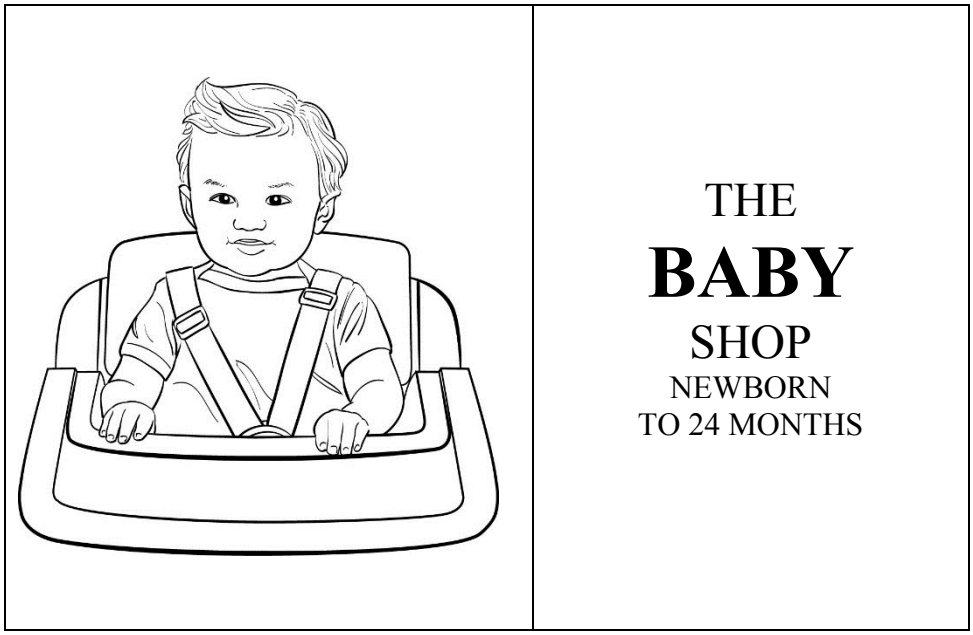


Figure 3 Advertisement: The Baby Shop: Newborn to 24 Months. Line-drawing artwork by Bruce Rankin, Melbourne, Australia.

Ungrammaticality and incomplete phrases are a common feature of advertisement copywriting **(Leech, 1966; Rush, 1998)**. However, despite the disjunctive NPs, by virtue of real-world knowledge (thematic information relating to the need for clothing), the receiver understands that the commercially available item is clothing – not babies for sale. The advertiser is calling to satisfy the presupposed need for baby and toddler apparel. Ostensibly, the toddler is attired in items available at The Baby Shop (which is the brand name); and a link is thus established between product brand and implied positive ideas of comfort, happiness and safety. The visual reception of the baby holding on to the baby-chair tray with both hands potentially signifies an indexical of support and security **(Goddard, 2015**; **Williamson 1978)**. Thus, the brand name by pictorial association is potentially laden with positive values:

Thematic information + Presupposition + Implicature → Proposition

Theme	Clothing
Presupposition	Babies and toddlers need clothes
Implicature	Clothing determines comfort, happiness and security
Proposition	The Baby Shop has baby and toddler clothing that brings comfort, joy and safety! So, buy this benefit!

In addition to hidden-meaning collateral bundling designed to communicate meanings, an important step is to render the text socially accessible, which facilitates transformation of receivers into participants **(Bruthiaux, 2000)**. The strategy of receiver socialisation helps simulate a real-world experience, and can increase memorability of the item **(Maxwell and Dickman, 2007)**. This is achievable by incorporating the Expressive, Informative, Phatic, Aesthetic and Directive functions into the text:

- Expressives communicate the attitude of the addressor
- Informatives contain new information (such as brand name or value)
- the Phatic is an interpersonal channel of communication (such as greetings) that establishes a socially oriented connection between addressor and receiver
- the Aesthetic holds a socio-cultural value (artistic or literary)
- Directives aim to influence the receiver's behaviour.

These functions, as found in the data at hand, are often covert; for example, explicit Directives (like 'buy now!') are absent – but are recoverable by the semantic circuit of the bundled hidden meanings. In relation to The-Baby-Shop (fig. 3), the Informative, Expressive and covert Directive functions are recoverable from the NPs in apposition:

Informative	The Baby Shop
Expressive	These clothes are suitable for babies and toddlers!
covert Directive	Buy clothing from The Baby Shop!

Investigative Methodology

The research aim is to practically demonstrate how hidden-meaning collateral bundling incorporates social functions to create Selling Power. The early-twentieth century decades of industrialisation and mass production yield advertisements containing a variety of linguistic and pictorial devices; thus this era offers an appropriate data source. The 1940s is a period of heightened marketplace competition, where advertisers focused on creating an image to drive consumption **(Myers, 1994: 22-24).** Accordingly, nine artefacts from this brand-building era are presented here as an ideal set to illustrate how persuasive devices are employed to enable advertiser ambition.

The analytical taxonomy (fig. 2) comprises a formulation of thematic information, presupposition and implicature. This is a hidden-meaning trifecta designed to deliver the advertiser's proposition. The analysis here is primarily linguistic; however, emotive and socio-psychological devices are acknowledged as critical co-contributors to meaning-creation. The following discussion is in two sections: first, text-only artefacts; then text-and-image configurations.

Discussion and Findings

Text-only advertisements

Six text-only artefacts are discussed here: Klexema, Hayfix, Deaf, Goitre, Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune and Are-You-Nervy. These display:

- a simple NP (the headline) as attention-getter
- followed by body-text block/s and standing details (utilitarian information, like proprietor and address).

The standout NPs, although verbless, aptly function as independent clauses, and contain the power of suggestion. Klexema (treating baby eczema) and Hayfix (treating hayfever) – use the most basic of attention-getting devices, namely bold type in full capitals (fig. 4). The white space around the bolded words is typical, creating a prosodic-like effect that emphasises standout elements.

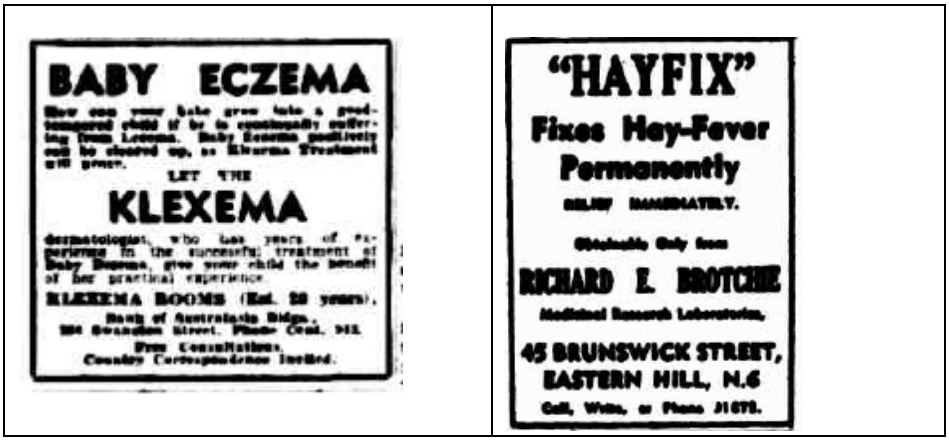


Figure 4 Two advertisements: Klexema and Hayfix.[v] Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 2, p. 31.

The Klexema attention-getters are a declarative headline 'Baby Eczema'; and a command clause 'Let the Klexema':

NP	**BABY ECZEMA**
Disjunctive clause	**LET THE KLEXEMA**

The disjunctive NP headline 'Baby Eczema' names the problem: it carries the real-world theme of skin affliction, and couches the presupposition of baby-associated eczema. The imperative 'Let the Klexema' – formatively Verb + Object (akin to 'Let the specialist') – is contextually a covert first-person imperative that hides the advertiser agency:

Let [me] **the Klexema** [specialist help you]

The skin specialist is the advertiser (intent upon building a clientele). The ellipted agency effectively creates an illusion of recommendation, thus distancing the reality of overt self-promotion. This illustrates how ellipsis, which in natural language usefully eliminates repetition (ideally without confusion), is applied to introduce reference ambiguity:

Compare	I am the Klexema specialist. Let me help you.
with	Let the Klexema specialist help you.

In terms of social functions, the Informative (product name) and covert Directive ('Buy this product') are recoverable from connecting 'Baby Eczema' with 'Let the Klexema': this implicitly offers a remedy, and directs the addressee to purchase the service:

Baby Eczema – Klexema offers a remedy. So, buy this benefit!

Klexema employs also the social device of Phatic communion. The attention-getters work together like a conversation between two people. In a real-world situation where we know someone requires assistance, we may offer to help, uttering the words:

'Mate! Let me help you!'

which parallels:

'**Baby** with **eczema**! **Let** me **the Klexema** specialist help you!

Further, the NP 'Baby Eczema' can be likened to a proper name (like Baby Susie or Baby Johnny), thus simulating an interpersonal conduit that reinforces the idea of having a conversation. Additionally, the device of covert Aesthetic also is recoverable in the similarity between the Klexema disjunctive clause and the command found in the biblical creation story:

Klexema disjunctive clause Let the Klexema

Biblical creation story 'Let there be light' (**Genesis 1.3**)

This kind of tie, which has potential to connect the receiver with an external text, is an example of intertextuality; and frequently it is culture-specific. Intertextual references of biblical nature, as recoverable here, surface both in the Australian context and other cultures with a history of Christianity **(Berger, 2016)**. The idea of intertextuality is that interpretation of a textual element depends on knowledge of an element of an external specific text. External connections may link 'to whole subject matters of language […] we could not make sense of ads unless we came to them with experiences of different discourses' **(Myers, 1994: 5)**. These different discourses may be from any of the worlds of human engagement – fictional and non-fictional; and they populate the semantic pathways of advertisement communicative devices **(Cook, 2001**; **Kuppens, 2010**; **Regev, 2007)**.

To sum up, the Klexema analysis reveals how attention-getting linguistic features operate to convey meanings, and to submerge agency (the role of the advertiser). Despite the absent words 'Buy this product', hidden meanings enact such a directive. Of significance is the tie between implicature and consumer benefit (value), which forms a collateral bundle that crystallises the gist of the advertiser persuasive intent:

Implicature: There is a cure for this condition

Benefit: Klexema relieves eczema

Leading to the proposition:

Proposition: Klexema offers a remedy - So, buy this benefit!

Klexema: meaning-making summary
Theme: The problem of skin affliction
Presupposition: There is eczema associated with babies
Implicature: There is a cure for this condition
Benefit: Klexema relieves eczema in babies
Social Function: covert Directive, Informative, Phatic, covert Aesthetic

Similar to Klexema, Hayfix employs declarative mood; and bold capitals are used to attract the reader. The headline 'Hayfix' declares product name and function, couching the presupposition of a cure for hayfever. The covert Directive and Informative (product name) are evident; and the Expressive is reasoned from the disjunctive complements 'Fixes hayfever permanently' and 'Relief immediately':

NP	**HAYFIX**
Disjunctive Complement	**Fixes Hay-Fever permanently**
Disjunctive Complement	**Relief Immediately**

The Hayfix implicature segues to the product value to form a collateral bundle that communicates the advertiser message.

Hayfix: meaning-making summary
Theme: Hayfever causes respiratory discomfort
Presupposition: There is a cure for hayfever
Implicature: Hayfix relieves hayfever suffering
Benefit: Hayfix provides immediate and permanent relief for hayfever
Social Function: Expressive, covert Directive, Informative

Given that hayfever suffering is known to cause ongoing respiratory distress, the disjunctive complements respectively imply Hayfix will effectively end this catarrhal condition; and that it meets an urgent need. The product value is that it offers a quick and lasting fix:

> Hayfix offers a permanent, immediate remedy for hayfever. So, buy this benefit!

Two further examples of text-only advertisements are 'Deaf' and 'Home Treatment for Goitre' (fig. 5). The disjunctive NP appears as headline, naming the problem; and the advertiser implies that their commercially available items provide the solutions. Both employ declarative mood; and the covert Expressive, covert Directive and Informative functions are recoverable.

Figure 5 Two advertisements: Deaf, Goitre. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 2, p. 31.

'Deaf' and 'Goitre' are thematically similar as (if unassisted) both are disabling and socially isolating. Deafness may adversely affect memory and learning ability; and goitre, a disfiguring condition, causes difficulty in breathing and swallowing **(Papadakis, 2014)**. The difference between these conditions is that the physical manifestation of goitre is visible and socially sensitive; thus, the Goitre advertiser assures privacy (Expressive function) by delivering 'home treatment'. The trajectory of discussion above for Klexema and Hayfix applies to the linguistic elements of Deaf and Goitre, clinching the propositions:

> We offer a remedy for deafness. So, buy this service!
>
> We offer a remedy for goitre in the privacy of your home. So, buy this service!

Again, implicature segues to product value, forming a collateral bundle that communicates the benefit. The analyses for 'Deaf' and 'Goitre' are presented below:

Deaf: meaning-making summary
Theme: Unassisted deafness is disabling
Presupposition: There is a cure for deafness
Implicature: Deafness can be remedied
Benefit: This service provider offers a remedy for deafness
Social Function: covert Expressive, covert Directive, Informative

Goitre: meaning-making summary
Theme: Unassisted goitre is disabling and disfiguring
Presupposition: There is a cure for goitre
Implicature: Goitre can be remedied
Benefit: This service provider offers a remedy in the privacy of your home
Social Function: covert Expressive, covert Directive, Informative

Another text-only artefact 'Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune' – for the facial cosmetic product *Makeups* (fig. 6) – offers attainment of social and emotional wellbeing. Thematically, it evokes the idea of feminine beauty (which is the creative impetus of make-up). Unlike the disjunctive examples above, the declarative headline is a complete sentence: 'Your Face Is Your Fortune'. This construction fulfils two functions. First, it establishes an immediate personal touch by employing the possessive *your* (strengthened by repetition); and then the (simple present) verb *is* adds emphasis and finality to the semantic equivalence of the two nouns 'face' and 'fortune'.


Your Face is Your Fortune
Give It Every Care
MAKE-UPS

Figure 6 Advertisement: Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

The declarative simple present renders a sense of something that is always true (an unchanging, indisputable situation) – akin to 'Frogs croak'. The catchline 'Give It Every Care', again a complete sentence, is in imperative mood. The ideas of 'face' and 'fortune' are presented as interdependent variables, where beautiful skin will ensure positive outcome. The equivalence of 'face' with 'fortune' is reinforced by the pronoun 'it' which could refer to either noun:

Declarative:	**Your Face is Your Fortune**
Imperative:	**Give It Every Care**

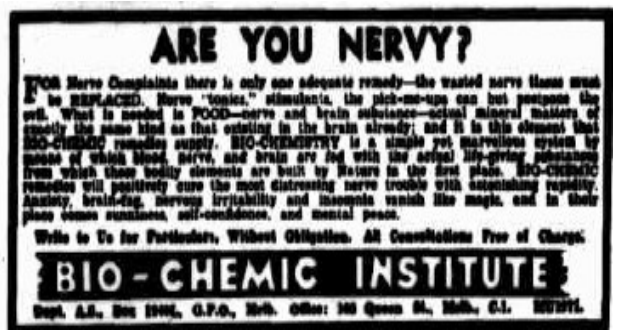
Each attention-getter has its presupposition: first, the headline 'Your Face Is Your Fortune' establishes a correlation between looks (face) and success (fortune); and then the imperative 'Give It Every Care' suggests that skin is being neglected. Together, the two statements are expressively authoritative, grave and admonishing, akin to 'Your health is your responsibility; so give it every care' – simulating medical advice. Simulation of real-life situations to approximate overtures of giving professional or friendly advice is an advertiser technique that is used across cultures **(Hiramoto, 2011: 251)**.

Undertones of command, concern and warning are recoverable in Your-Face-Is-Your Fortune, and collectively form the Expressive. The implicature is that care of skin will engender positive change, while neglect of skin will result in misfortune. The benefit of *Makeups* is that it provides the means to create a lovely face and bring success. The advertiser's proposition is:

> Makeups offers the necessary tool to create a beautiful face and ensure success. So, buy this product!

Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune: meaning-making summary
Theme: Facial beauty is socially desirable
Presupposition 1: There is a correlation between looks and success
Presupposition 2: You are not giving your skin adequate care
Implicature: Improving looks secures success: neglect will have opposite effect
Benefit: Makeups offers the necessary tool to create a beautiful face and ensure success
Social Function: Expressive, Directive, Informative

The 'Are-You-Nervy' advertisement (like Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune) opens with a personal touch (fig. 7). As headline, the interrogative – common in everyday greetings (like 'How are you?') – solicits the addressee; and simulates an intimacy normally reserved for friends or doctor–patient relationship. It also thematically engages with the social reality of psychological discomfort (feeling nervous). This is a mental-health-related product, and is likely to involve medication. The choice of the interrogative is significant as a device in the promotion of this product type because interrogatives (like imperatives) have no entailment: they 'do not depend for their validity on listener beliefs' **(Geis, 1982: 29)**. This attribute assists the advertiser to avoid taking responsibility for addressee interpretations of stimuli; and thus diminishes the possibility that an advertiser be accused of misleading the receiver.


ARE YOU NERVY?

BIO-CHEMIC INSTITUTE

Figure 7 Advertisement: Are-You-Nervy? Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

The other Are-You-Nervy attention-getter is the service-provider name 'Bio-Chemic Institute'. As an attention-getter, the brand name 'Bio-Chemic Institute' plays a significant persuasive role. Typographically, it is set in full capitals on a sombre white-on-black panel. The word 'Institute' evokes the idea of a lawful organisation; and then 'bio-chemic' suggests scientific research-based solutions.

The prefix 'bio-' denotes scientific specialisation of living systems; while 'chemic' could be a play on alchemy or chemistry, suggesting knowledge of transformative chemical substances. Further, the suffix '-ic' – which is used to form adjectives like 'acidic', 'atomic' and 'bionic' – denotes chemical compounding, and scientific engineering processes. Semantically, '-ic' is similar to prefixes like 'bio-'. Such affixes facilitate positively connoted ties to scientific and medical discourses. The affixation gives the impression of something bio-medical or scientific; yet is 'sufficiently understood by virtue of being used in many everyday contexts' **(Janich, 2017: 210)**. In this way, the affixation is capable of generating associations advantageous to the advertised item.

The phenomenon of meanings evoked by a name, as in the case of Are-You-Nervy, delivers a platform to argue for covert Expressive function couched in branding – where the advertiser equates certain attributes with a name and creates a unique identity **(Beasley and Danesi, 2002)**. The name 'Bio-Chemic Institute', which inducts a scientific connection, gives credence to the claim that brand names contain social functions, linking to attributes and feelings. As Geis **(1982: 111)** points out: 'Certainly, proper names have reference' and 'In this respect, proper names are like definite descriptions'.

The individual attention-getters of Are-You-Nervy do not contain propositional content, but together – when the hidden meanings satisfy the Phatic, covert Directive, Informative and covert Expressive functions – then the product benefit is invoked:

> The Bio-Chemic Institute can provide a scientific cure for nervous conditions. So, buy this benefit!

Are-You-Nervy?: meaning-making summary
Theme: Unwellness is undesirable
Presupposition: Psychological conditions are a social reality
Implicature: There is a remedy for nervous condition
Benefit: The Bio-Chemic Institute can provide a scientific cure for nervous conditions
Social Function: Phatic, covert Directive, Informative, covert Expressive

To sum up, the text-only artefacts discussed above show how meanings are recoverable from attention-getters, and illustrate copywriter dependency on social-function elements to enable advertiser propositions. Despite the absent words 'Buy this product', hidden meanings coalesce to communicate such a persuasive command.

Advertisements of linguistic and pictorial content

Pictures, such as line drawings and photographs, first began to appear in press advertisements in the 1930s. Today, visuals are a primary tool of contemporary marketing campaigns. Their function is to evoke feelings **(Berger, 2016; Messaris, 1997)**; and by reflecting social practices, they prompt a social relationship between advertiser and individual **(Lick, 2015: 222)**. This section discusses three text-and-image advertisements, namely Cuticura Talcum Powder, Longmores Hair Restorer, and Horlicks. These artefacts incorporate attention-getting line artwork; speech bubbles; and storytelling cartoon strips (as narrative) that work with linguistic standout features to create meanings.

'Cuticura-Talcum-Powder' (fig. 8) below exemplifies the idea of images as attention getters. The headline 'Your Baby's Best Friend' sits adjacent to the product flask – which displays the brand name, and pictures a toddler. The brand name appears again at baseline. The prosodic-like effect of the white spaces emphasises these features.

Figure 8 Advertisement: Cuticura-Talcum-Powder. Source: The Argus 26 September 1940, p. 2.

The Cuticura-Talcum-Powder linguistic attention-getters are a simple NP as headline, and a possessive complement. These are phrases in apposition, as they both refer to the same thing (the product). They also are an instance of repetition, which is a prosaic reinforcement device of the copywriter.

NP **Cuticura Talcum Powder**

Complement **Your Baby's Best Friend**

The function of the Cuticura NP is to declare the product and brand name, which is market information for the receiver. The complement identifies the product as a trustworthy friend of baby; and personalises this identification with the possessive *your*. The direct address in *your* implicitly calls the absent referent (parent or carer): this implies responsibility to provide for baby.

The idea that baby has needs is presupposed, and dovetails with already available product knowledge: talcum powder, sometimes 'baby powder', is a moisture-absorbing preparation purportedly with function to keep skin dry and help protect from rash. Parents and carers are aware that babies need empathy and goodwill assistance to prevent or alleviate rash. The value of this item is that it provides comfort to ensure baby's wellbeing and (emotional) security – just as a caring friend would. Thus, facts mingle with emotive appeals to create an atmosphere of 'poetic truth' **(Simpson 2001: 591)**.

The Phatic also is recoverable from the Cuticura graphic design. There are visually two portrait-like images that tie to everyday social setting. First, the oval holding the infant, mimicking a framed photograph; and then the mirror-like frame displaying the words 'Your Baby's Best Friend' – which offers the parent/carer opportunity to see themselves reflected as baby's best friend. This receiver interpretation, if achieved, reinforces the idea of parent/carer responsibility; and assists advertiser-urging to buy the product.

Cuticura-Talcum-Powder: meaning-making summary
Theme: Babies need care
Presupposition: Baby has needs to be satisfied
Implicature: Responsibility to provide for baby
Benefit: Cuticura talcum powder provides comfort to ensure baby's wellbeing and emotional security.
Social function: Expressive, covert Directive. Informative, covert Phatic

In terms of social functionality, three attributes evident in the Cuticura artefact – namely, the Expressive, covert Directive and Informative – emerge as common in advertisements. With respect to the Expressive, advertisers consistently imbue their items with positive connotations **(Gardner and Luchtenberg, 2000; Williamson, 1978)**: the positive values, by implication, will satisfy a human, want, need or desire.

The product 'Longmores-Hair-Restorer' (fig. 9) offers to bring back a previous hair colour condition; that is, to transform grey hair. Thematically, the advertisement rests on the idea of grey hair as undesirable (negative value); and presupposes that it needs to undergo a restoration process (positive value). It suggests that hair restoration is socially desirable; and, conversely, grey hair (as an indicator of aging) attenuates social status. Hair restoration will reinstate the social status associated with looking young.

The headline 'Defy time' and catchline 'Be young again' – in imperative mood – together suggest that the product on offer is a forceful agent with power to counteract (defy) the effect of aging, which in truth is a natural (normally irreversible) outcome of getting old. Typographically, the brand name (at base) is graphetically emphasised **(Fischer, 1999)**, and functions to suggest that Longmores carries an upwardly mobile quality.

Imperative	**Defy time**
Imperative	**Be young again**
NP	**Longmores sulphur hair restorer**
NP	**Longmores**

The Expressive, Informative and Directive functions are recoverable, as annotated in the summary.

Longmores-Hair-Restorer: meaning-making summary
Theme: Grey hair is undesirable
Presupposition 1: Grey hair needs restoring
Presupposition 2: Grey hair diminishes social status
Implicature 1: Hair restoration is socially desirable
Implicature 2: Hair restoration will reinstate social status.
Benefit: Longmores will restore youthful looks and social status by restoring hair colour
Social Function: Expressive, Directive, Informative

Figure 9 Advertisement: Longmores-Hair-Restorer. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

Both Cuticura-Talcum-Powder and Longmores-Hair-Restorer are graphically basic and functional. Complex advertisements, however, combine words with pictures in elaborate ways, such as 'Horlicks' (fig. 10). The literature **(Geis, 1982**; **Myers, 1994)** shows that this class of advertisement operates at two levels:

1. linguistic attention-getters carry meanings
2. real-world mimicked elements functionally symbolise veracity (e.g. presence of a product authority or celebrity; or graphs and testimonials) and meld with other elements (like body text and utterances of fictional characters) to reinforce or extend implicit messages.

Horlicks is a powder-based beverage, purportedly of a rejuvenative nerve-tonic type that restores physical and mental fitness. The device of storytelling cartoon is used to help relay advertiser meanings. There are meanings potentially retrievable from both the words and the pictures – and these are designed to be understood based partly on what is actually said and partly on receiver belief or knowledge **(Geis, 1982: 41-56)**. The Horlicks' pictures enact a family mini-drama. They are positioned between the linguistic attention-getters, namely two NPs and a complex clause:

Disjunctive NP	**MY BOY A COWARD?**
Disjunctive NP	**HORLICKS**
Complex clause	**GUARDS CHILDREN AGAINST NIGHT STARVATION**

The negative trait of cowardice constitutes the problem. The product name 'Horlicks' is the solution (positive value). The complex clause comprises the verb phrase (VP) 'guards children' and the complement 'against night starvation'. It suggests existence of a nocturnal agent with intent to attack children in sleep. Horlicks, however, offers the security of effective protection: 'Horlicks guards children from night starvation'. There is an implied mysterious connection between cowardice and the obscure night starvation.

The emotive interrogative headline 'My boy a coward?' – with the possessive 'my', uttered by the mother – employs the convention of direct speech in conversation. It has three functions:

- Socially engages the target audience (parents)
- Expressively establishes the mother's distress that her son is associated with the negative trait of cowardice (fear of challenge, weakness of character)
- Presupposes that boys should be fearless.

Thematically, the advertisement rests on the idea that timid behaviour in boys is inappropriate. The Phatic and the Expressive are recoverable from the headline 'My boy a coward?'; and the covert Directive and Informative are recoverable from the collective stimuli of the linguistic attention-getters that relay the idea of Horlicks offering both night protection to children, and a remedy for weakness and timidity:

> Horlicks supplies night protection, and the energy needed to achieve your child's desirable health and social outcomes. So, buy this product!

Figure 10 Advertisement: Horlicks. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 39.

While linguistic forms and social functions are explainable, the obscure idea of protection 'against night starvation' is peculiar. It violates the conversational cooperative principle of Maxim of Manner, which states that obscurity should be avoided **(Grice, 1975)**. This peculiarity raises the puzzle of 'what is night starvation?'; and suggests that the violation is a strategy to intrigue the addressee. In this case, ostensibly, the intention is to absorb the reader in the Horlicks four-frame cartoon story.

Picture-wise, in the first Horlicks frame, we see a distressed mother (head and shoulders). She is holding onto a horizontal bar (symbolically representing a barrier, and/or a support offering security). The two next frames visually communicate father-mother concern for their boy child, who appears socially isolated and troubled. Then, mother and child are pictured in consultation with a male adult, presumably a doctor. The final frame shows the boy performing a diving stunt, being watched by three boys. It is apparent that something triggered a dramatic change – from negative condition (withdrawn, listless) to positive condition (confident, energetic). The line drawings tell a story of emotional and physical transformation. Thus, seemingly, pictures have the power to generate intended meanings **(Messaris, 1997)**. Together with the standout words, the comic strip may adequately relay the idea of Horlicks as a remedy for physical weakness and timidity.

However, the full meanings of the advertisement are gleaned only by reading the cartoon storytelling words, which reveal that the boy is being taunted by peers and name-called 'Cowardy Custard Johnnie'. His father, Fred, is disappointed in him, but the mother is determined to get help for the child. Thematically, the advertisement rests on the idea that timid behaviour in boys is inappropriate; and, from the cartoon story, we learn that it attracts bullying and social isolation.

We also learn – from the doctor, who is the product authority – the meaning of 'night starvation'. The idea underpinning nocturnal starvation is that children grow while they sleep; and even their breathing and heartbeat are depleting essential resources that need replenishment. The medical diagnosis is that the boy is 'a nervous type'. 'Put Johnnie on to Horlicks', orders the doctor. Horlicks supplies the energy needed to achieve health (and popularity). The final words uttered are by the father: 'Darling, it's amazing. He's a regular tiger!' These words show that the father's confidence in his son has been restored by the positive action of Horlicks. This example illustrates how everyday conversation is used as an identity-building device to involve viewers **(Berger, 2016)**.

Horlicks: meaning-making summary

Theme: Timid behaviour in boys is inappropriate, and attracts bullying and social isolation

Presupposition: Boys should present as fearless and energetic

Implicature: There is a remedy for physical weakness and timidity

Benefit: Horlicks supplies the energy needed to achieve your child's desirable health and social outcomes.

Social Function: Phatic, Expressive, covert Directive, Informative

Summary and Conclusions

Advertisers harness a range of linguistic and semiotic devices to design advertisements that maximise Selling Power. To illustrate the meaning-making phenomena at work, nine press advertisements from the 1940s brand-building era have been investigated. Analysis shows exploitation of the natural-language reference system to relay persuasive propositions via collateral bundling of thematic information, presupposition and implicature. The primary carriers of meanings are the eye-catching attributes; however, meanings can be reinforced and extended by other features (like dialogue between fictional characters, ellipsis and intertextuality). Integration of the social functions of language to engage viewers as participants emerges as a staple of advertisement design.

Of linguistic interest is that advertisements are characterised by both disjunctive syntax and full sentences – variously in declarative, imperative and interrogative structures. Given the pre-meditated nature of advertisement design, it is predictable that choice of grammatical structure is linked to target audience (children, women, men, adult). Thus, a further direction of this research is to study the syntax and grammatical mood of standout features in relation to market segmentation.

Acknowledgements

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Fig. 8. Advertisement: Cuticura-Talcum-Powder. Source: The Argus 26 September 1940, p. 2. Reproduction of The Trade Mark of Cuticura is Authorised by Management, Cuticura Labs, Sales and Marketing, USA.

Fig. 10. Advertisement: Horlicks. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 39. Reproduction is authorised by GSK Consumer Healthcare Australia.

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Fig. 4. Two advertisements: Klexema and Hayfix. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p.2, p. 31.

Fig. 5. Two advertisements: Deaf, Goitre. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 2, p. 31.

Fig. 6. Advertisement: Your-Face-Is-Your-Fortune. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

Fig. 7. Advertisement: Are-You-Nervy? Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

Fig. 9. Advertisement: Longmores-Hair-Restorer. Source: The Argus 16 November 1940, p. 11.

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[i] This research is part of a greater study of 250 Australian press advertisements for personal products and services over some 100 years, from the mid-1800s to the late 1950s.

[ii] Graphetics is the creative violation of normative typography (such as manipulation of fonts) that render eye-catching deviations from standard formats (see **Fischer, 1999**).

[iii] For copyright reasons, the original advertisement is not reproduced here. The original was accessed 25 May 2016 at shop.nordstrom.com/c/baby

[iv] In simple terms, 'mood' refers to three grammatical forms: declarative (expressing fact), interrogative (expressing a question), imperative (expressing a command).

[v] Bold emphasis on the Hayfix standing details (proprietor name and address) is likely due to the competitive atmosphere of the 1940s era, characterised by shift from the individual supplier to chain stores (including chemist franchises) and multinationals (see **Myers, 1994**).

Proof and Uncertainty in Causal Claims

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Abstract *Causal questions drive scientific enquiry. From Hume to Granger, and Rubin to Pearl the history of science is full of examples of scientists testing new theories in an effort to uncover causal mechanisms. The difficulty of drawing causal conclusions from observational data has prompted developments in new methodologies, most notably in the area of graphical models. We explore the relationship between existing theories about causal mechanisms in a social science domain, new mathematical and statistical modelling methods, the role of mathematical proof and the importance of accounting for uncertainty. We show that, while the mathematical sciences rely on their modelling assumptions, dialogue with the social sciences calls for continual extension of these models. We show how changing model assumptions lead to innovative causal structures and more nuanced casual explanations. We review differing techniques for determining cause in different disciplines using causal theories from psychology, medicine, and economics.*

Keywords: causality; Bradford Hill criteria; instrumental variables; causal algebras; graphical models; Bayesian Networks; mental models; uncertainty; proof.

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Introduction

When can we say that one thing is the cause of another? In common parlance, we usually intend to convey that cause is a necessary and sufficient precursor of an effect. While this question motivates much of scientific research, causality may not be immediately amenable to the rigour and certainty of mathematical proof. Rather, some probabilistic, interventionist notion of causality is required to model the observations and uncertainty in the system.

In the search for truth and evidence, typically, we want to understand the real world and so we build a model that captures the entities, stimuli, relationships, and behaviours we observe (**French, 2015**). This can be a simulation or a mathematical model that describes the observed elements of interest. However, uncertainties arise because the model can only ever be an approximate representation of the world. There may be uncertainty about scientific theory, the strength of the effect, randomness, unknown

future values, and calculation accuracy. Additionally, all models incorporate subjective uncertainties, degrees of belief and preferences automatically built in by the choices and assumptions of the modellers. This leads to uncertainty about the descriptive model's ability to capture all the salient features of the world, uncertainty pertaining to the beliefs and values encoded within the model and uncertainty about how many analyses to perform to be sure of the model.

The lack of uncertainty in mathematical proofs, and their enduring nature is what attracts some to the field (**Barons and Chleboun, 2015**). Woodward, in his account of interventionist causation states that, 'genuinely explanatory proofs are those that show us how the truth of some theorem depends on the assumptions from which the theorem is proved.' Thus, 'when a theory tells us how Y would change under interventions on X, we have (or have material for constructing) a causal explanation' (**Woodward, 2003**). Proofs that are truly explanatory characterise a property about a structure in a theorem such that it is evident that the result depends on the property. Proofs of this nature allow us to see how the effect changes in response. Essentially, proofs are an immutable tool to aid research in its search for causal relationships.

We begin with a history of causal understanding then describe current tools for causal analysis, and move on to recent developments in causal analysis and how the dialogue between mathematical, medical and social sciences are pushing the boundaries of knowledge.

A brief, interdisciplinary history of causation

The tension between existing coherent causal theories (understanding of biological mechanism, domain expertise, etc.) and the results of models, built from observational data has a rich history. Understanding the nature of the current dialogue between theory and practice requires knowledge of the history of causal understanding as well as the state of existing methodologies. This knowledge base prompts discussion about pivotal new modelling techniques that allow for more nuanced representations of causal mechanisms.

The complexities of statistical models may sometimes obscure what scientists actually mean by cause. Helpfully, Cox and Wermuth identify three broad types of causality (**Cox and Wermuth, 1996**):

A. Causality as a statistical dependence which cannot be removed by alternative acceptable explanatory variables

B. Causality as inferred consequence of some intervention in the system

C. Causality as inferred consequence of some intervention in the system augmented by some understanding of a process or mechanism accounting for what is observed.

Questions of life and death prompted the earliest causal investigations. Several disciplines point to John Snow as one of the first scientists to frame causal questions systematically. John Snow was a medical doctor with an aptitude for mathematics. In the 1830s, Snow worked to understand what caused a devastating outbreak of cholera (**Snow, 1855**). At the time, the causal mechanism for cholera was unknown and Snow was sceptical about the prevailing miasma theory. After plotting on a map the number of outbreaks on each street and examining the counts, Snow noticed that the deaths clustered around the Broad Street water pump. However, no one working at the nearby brewery was getting ill. Further enquiry revealed that brewery workers drank beer during the lunch hour and not water from the Broad Street pump. His findings helped to prove that water contamination was a cause of cholera, drawing a causal conclusion from observational data. This is type B causality in the Cox and Wermuth framework.

Around the same time, Semmelweis investigated deaths in a hospital where he observed a decline in childbed fevers when doctors washed their hands with chlorinated lime after working on cadavers and before attending the maternity unit. His careful charting looks convincing today, but without the relevant germ theory developed and proved a few decades later through experimentation by scientists like Pasteur and Koch, Semmelweis's findings failed to find an audience. This unfortunate failure to communicate convincingly an unexpected causal link, type B causality in the Cox and Wermuth framework, underlines the fact that researchers expect to find explanations that cohere with their existing causal theories. The opposition Semmelweis met with after uncovering a new biological mechanism highlights just how difficult causal questions are to answer, particularly when the only information at our disposal is observational.

A few years later, economist George Yule began asking causal questions as he investigated the relationship between the changes in poverty rate with the proportion of public benefits (**Yule, 1895**). Controlling for confounders and multiple variables (Type A causality) proved pivotal to a multiple linear regression model, laying the foundation for much of the regression tools that proliferated among economists.

Phillip Wright sought to investigate the relationship between tax policy and demand and supply elasticity (**Wright, 1928**). His work on this subject introduced the concept of instrumental variables (IVs). In cases where a correlation exists between the explanatory variable of interest and the error term in the model, a variable that is correlated with the explanatory variable of interest, but independent the error term or outcome, may be added to the model. Then, by holding one variable constant and varying another, how the other changes can be used to infer relationships. For example, tobacco tax affects tobacco use but not health making it a candidate IV to investigate the causal link between smoking and health. Instrumental variables, another example of type A causality, have been a formative tool for addressing questions of causation in economics. Later developments in statistical theory would further augment the importance of IVs.

As causal questions gathered momentum in the medical, social, and mathematical sciences, psychologists questioned how humans understand cause. Kenneth Craik, pioneer of mental models, maintained that, 'If the organism carries a 'small-scale model' of external reality and of its own possible actions within its head, it is able to try out various alternatives, conclude which is the best of them, react to future situations before they arise, utilize the knowledge of past events in dealing with the present and the future, and in every way react in a much fuller, safer, and more competent manner to the emergencies which face it' (**Craik, 1944**). People construct internal models to represent the causal texture of the environment (**Tolman and Brunswik, 1935**). Understanding the nature of how humans comprehend cause is crucial to avoiding fallacies in the development of causal models and introducing error and uncertainty.

A critical advancement in causal thinking occurred in 1965, when epidemiologist Sir Austin Bradford Hill proposed a set of criteria for determining causal relationships from observational studies. Working together with physician Richard Doll, they had uncovered the causal link between smoking and lung cancer from observational data. Since a randomised controlled trial would be both unethical and infeasible, Bradford Hill and Doll instead had interviewed lung cancer patients about their smoking habits and exposure to other postulated causes (exposure to car fumes, tarmac dust and coal fire dust). In one of the earliest case-control studies, they matched the lung cancer patients to patients with carcinomas of the stomach or colon by age, sex, social class, and place of residence. The risk of developing lung cancer proved to be 50 times greater among patients who smoked 25 or more cigarettes a day when compared with non-smokers. This established a strong correlation, but in order to definitively establish the causal link, they undertook a prospective study of over 24,000 smokers and non-smokers among male medical

professionals aged over 35 (who smoked at the same rates as other occupations at the time). The causal link (type A and C causality) was demonstrated by a clear dose-response among smokers and a clear difference in rates of lung cancer between smokers and non-smokers. Causality was accepted when they published these preliminary findings three years later (**Doll and Bradford Hill, 1950**).

From these observational studies, Bradford Hill went on to establish a set of criteria for determining cause from observational data. The criteria require that a causal effect should demonstrate:

- Strength, a large effect size
- Consistency (reproducibility)
- Specificity to a particular population, site, disease
- Temporality, cause happens before effects,
- Appropriate biological gradient, dose response
- Plausible mechanism between cause and effect
- Coherence, agreement between observations and laboratory results
- Experimental evidence, where practicable
- Analogy, similarity to the effect of similar factors.

Since their development in 1965, the criteria have provided a hallmarks of causal links for medicine, epidemiology, and public health.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the next important advance was the development of new types of graphical models, probabilistic models in which a graph expresses a conditional dependence structure between variables, and probability captures uncertainty by using appropriate distributions of values rather than point estimates. These uncover type A and C causality. Clive Granger proposed econometric time series models that defined a Granger cause (**Granger, 1988**) when the cause occurs prior to the effect and the cause has unique information about the future values of its effect. Rubin developed a potential outcomes framework, posing counterfactual questions about what would have been observed had different conditions prevailed. Judea Pearl and other statisticians and computer scientists explored the rich space of probabilistic graphical models that have been successfully applied to a vast array of applications, specifically Bayesian networks (BNs, see Figs. 1 and 2). Graphical models have now become ubiquitous and are typically one of the first tools used to address causal questions.

As network data becomes more readily available in the medical and social sciences, enabling the use of probabilistic graphical models, the debate about the importance of theory versus methodology is more pressing than ever. We will review these methods below before posing interdisciplinary questions at the boundary of current causal theory and methodology in the subsequent section.

Current tools of causal analysis

Current practices for determining causation vary across disciplines, in line with the history of each discipline. Randomised control trials remain the gold standard, especially in medicine, but where this is infeasible, scientists turn to discipline-specific tools to analyse observational data. Medical scientists tend to place particular importance on existing theories about causal pathways, in preference to allowing causal discovery algorithms to guide their experiment design. Since it is usually infeasible to measure every possible variable, current understanding about plausible causal explanations tend to drive experimental design.

Bradford Hill criteria for study design

Epidemiology uses the Bradford Hill criteria to synthesise results from observational studies. For example, the Bradford Hill criteria have been used to make the case that sleep deprivation is a cause of obesity and of several chronic diseases, each criterion satisfied by different study designs (**Cappuccio *et al*., 2010**). In the USA, as the average number of hours adults reported sleeping declined from 9.0 in 1910 to 6.8 in 2005, average BMI in the same population rose from 23.0 in 1910 to 26.9 in 2005, suggesting an association. A cross-sectional meta-analysis (**Cappuccio *et al*., 2008**) showed an association between short duration of sleep and obesity prevalence (the proportion of cases in the population at a time point) in both children and adults, demonstrating the strength, specificity and consistency of association. A prospective study to see if exposure precedes outcome then determines the directionality. Recent work measured obesity incidence and showed that both children and adults with short sleep had an increased risk of developing obesity over time with the same order of magnitude. Carefully designed, short term randomised controlled trials of short and disturbed sleep determined a dose-response in key hormonal changes which replicated across people and reversed when sleep returned to normal. Observed changes in the levels of two hormones, leptin and ghrelin, which regulate appetite provide a plausible biological mechanisms for sleep deprivation causing obesity. Analogous results found plausible mechanisms for sleep deprivation causing diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease. (**Spiegel *et al*., 2009, Broussard *et al*., 2012; Cappuccio *et al*., 2011; Leng *et al*., 2015**).

In all of these studies, the effects are strong (large relative risks), consistent, show a temporal sequence, a dose – response, have biological plausibility and reversibility in controlled trial conditions (at least short-term), so under the Bradford Hill criteria we accept that poor sleep causes obesity and causes these chronic diseases. These criteria continue to guide study design in epidemiological research today. Understanding how these criteria are implemented is crucial for appropriate extra-disciplinary applications of statistical methods. This represents an area of growth for interdisciplinary work between statisticians and epidemiologists.

Causation as invariant statistical dependence in graphical models

Whilst the medical sciences are focused on uncovering the biological mechanism responsible for cause in a system in order to provide appropriate interventions, the mathematical sciences offer a powerful alternative to the traditional way of addressing this problem. Probabilistic graphical models offer a tremendous opportunity to inform experimental design alongside the qualitative considerations outlined above.

To address the questions of statistical dependence and consequences of interventions, scientists across disciplinary boundaries often use graphical models. Partially inspired by Wright's work on path diagrams (**Wright, 1934**), researchers began to use graphical models to depict the relationships between elements of a system. One of the most pervasive types of graphical model is the Bayesian network. These structures model problems as sets of nodes and directed edges without cycles. For instance, our system might be represented by the Bayesian network in Figure 1.

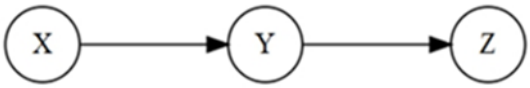

Figure 1: A sample Bayesian network. In this graph, X, Y and Z are random variables and the directed edges (arrows) represent the dependencies between the variables. This is a directed acyclic graph (DAG), since it is not possible to return to any node by following the directed edges. Formally, a BN is a directed acyclic graph and a set of independence statements.

Whilst it is tempting to interpret the arrows here as strictly causal, the mathematical interpretation of this graph is rather less strong. Under the critical Markov assumptions, it tells us that X and Z are independent given Y (**Markov, 1954**). Missing edges in graphs (such as that between X and Z) demonstrate independences in the graph—our starting point for determining what doesn't cause what in a graph. In fact, each graph belongs to a class of equivalent graphs that encode the same conditional independence relationships.

In our example, the Bayesian networks in Figure 2 are all equivalent because they all represent X and Z as conditionally independent. Bayesian networks also fulfil the Faithfulness Assumption, which means that all of the necessary conditional independence statements are encoded by the network. That is, there are no additional, context-specific independences necessary to model the system (**Meek, 1995**; **Spirtes *et al*., 2000**).

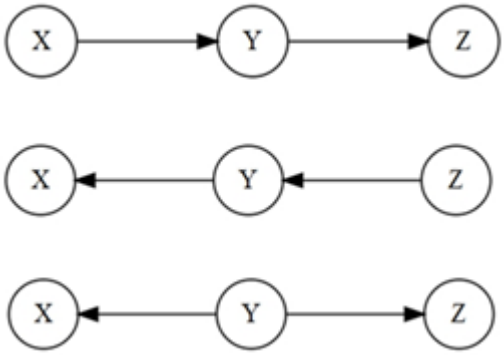

Figure 2: Equivalent Bayesian networks, all encoding that X is independent of Z given Y.

To determine what Pearl terms 'genuine cause' our model must admit an instrumental variable (Figure 3) to identify which causes are invariant across the class of equivalent graphs. A Bayesian network is truly causal when each of the nodes is invariant to marginalisation. That is, forcing a variable node to take a particular value has the same effect on the other nodes as if the variable had taken that value naturally.

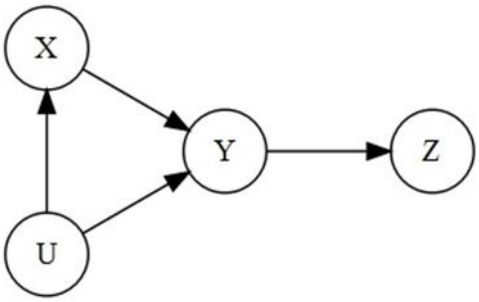

Figure 3: Bayesian network encoding that Z is independent of both X and U, given Y. Z is an instrumental variable. i) Z is associated with the treatment X. ii) Z is independent of the unobserved confounding factors affecting our treatment and outcome (X and Y, respectively). iii) Z is independent of Y given X and the unobserved confounders.

Using these fundamental assumptions, Bayesian networks that are invariant to marginalisation can be used to determine mathematically causal relationships within a system. These networks can then be used to estimate the effect of proposed interventions using Pearl's Do-Calculus (**Pearl, 2009**), and so can form the basis of policy decision support.

The promise of Bayesian networks has catalysed research into algorithms to find network structure from data and causal relationships within a network (**Entner, 2013**). Causal discovery algorithms have expedited the disciplinary reach of these methods, and as more and more data becomes available, the social sciences are beginning to leverage these methods. However, their usefulness is limited unless used alongside domain expertise and qualitative considerations, such as that used in the Bradford Hill criteria.

Recent advancement in causal analysis

The collaboration between quantitative and qualitative approaches to causation represents a key area for research growth, providing methods to combine data, expert knowledge and plausible assumptions to reach causal conclusions. Mathematicians are working to refine the assumptions of graphical models, remedy limitations of scope in existing methodology and define new classes of models that may be better suited to specific causal questions raised in an array of disciplines.

Refining model assumptions

When using observational data the question arises how we can compute the causal effect of one variable on another from data obtained from passive observation without interventions? By using a graph to represent the problem, this becomes a graph-theoretic problem. Pearl (**2016**) introduced a back-door criterion, identifying which variables should be conditioned on when investigating a causal relationship between other variables.

Bayesian networks can legitimately be used as long as the model meets the Markov and faithfulness assumptions. The faithfulness assumption strengthens the inferences we can draw in some practical applications (e.g. **Chen *et al*., 2007**). A live area of research seeks to relax these and other assumptions in robust ways to obtain more flexible notions of causal inference.

One recent example of a method for relaxing the faithfulness assumption for when treatment and outcome are confounded is the witness protection program protocol developed by Silva and Evans (**2016**). This provides ways to find a set of variables that allow a witness variable to be used as an instrumental variable to give bounds on the average causal effect. This also allows us to differentiate between strong directed effects and strong active paths and thus more nuanced definitions of causation. In this way, the new witness variable bridges back-door adjustment and the IV adjustment via the faithfulness assumption.

The importance of assumptions in mathematical and modelling cannot be overstated: the real purpose of causal discovery methods is not to provide neat answers, but rather to demonstrate that observational data is compatible with more tentative answers. For this it may be necessary to devise new models

Defining new models: the chain graph

The complex, rich and diverse tasks of the statistician include understanding research questions in other fields, designing empirical studies, evaluating models and methods of analysis, and interpreting evidence in data and results of statistical analyses. Understanding a problem statistically requires thorough investigation of the context, response variables of interest, regressors, and intermediate or mediating variables.

However, naïve or inappropriate use of statistical methodology can lead to indefensible conclusions and studies which fail to replicate the same results with appropriate alternate data sets. Failure to replicate a studied effect calls into question the hypothesised causal relationships. From a statistical perspective, some methods may not permit replication. Consequently, some measures of dependence are inappropriate if replication under stated conditions is a purpose of the research, such as in medical applications. For example, applying multivariate methods to several binary variables will not give replication when the context conditions of studies differ strongly. To address this, Wermuth and Marchetti (**2017**) demonstrate that replicable results are permitted by well-fitting, mean zero Ising models (**Ising, 1925**).

Another difficulty is that, in a given study, joint responses may be needed to properly capture effects of interventions. For instance, a medication to treat high blood pressure affects both systolic and diastolic blood pressure simultaneously, so it is not appropriate to model them as occurring sequentially. Hence, models should include joint responses whenever no order is plausible for several responses which remain related after their regressions on important explanatory variables.

To circumvent the limitations of the DAG models (Figure 1) to capture joint responses, Wermuth and Cox (**2013**) suggest regression graphs, a chain graph structure that encodes the ordering of joint responses by blocking together variables of the same type (response, intermediate, explanatory, background) and that represent conditional independences between them. These graphs are particularly adept at representing joint responses, (**Cox and Wermuth, 1993; Drton, 2009; Fallat *et al*., 2017**).

Interdisciplinary efforts towards careful definition of the problem context, possible regressors, and joint responses motivates advancements in probabilistic graphical models.

Defining new classes of models as series of events

While the Bayesian network is a powerful tool for causal models, it is not always appropriate. Often, causal claims may be presented as a narrative of sequential events which can be described mathematically by an event tree. These can be transformed to a new class of graphical model, the chain event graph (CEG) which admits a unique causal algebra. Using algebraic statistics, we can extend the machinery of Bayesian networks to other classes of graphical mode in the following way.

In an undirected graph, the directionality of the relationships between variables represented by an undirected edge is ambiguous, so no causal structure can be inferred. In a directed graph, such as a Bayesian network (BN), we have potential causal relationships given by the set of possible collections of conditional independence statements that describe the data. Causal discovery algorithms score possible BNs according to how well they fit the data. Often, these discovered graphs are then reverse-engineered to infer causal implications and estimate causal effects, assuming graph is the truth. Although the output of the causal discovery algorithms is often taken to be causal, Spirtes and Pearl argue that such output alone is not sufficient to deduce a cause (**Spirtes, 2000**; **Pearl, 2009**) since there is an entire class of statistically equivalent graphs which can be represented by the same essential graph, having only the directed edges common to all graphs in the class. These are all candidates for truly causal relationships. Pearl further defines a genuine cause in a graph as a random variable that has an associated instrumental parent within its essential graph.

This idea can be expanded beyond BNs to other classes of graphical models. In particular, we now have a suite of tools that allow us to fully explore chain event graphs (CEGs). Cowell and Smith (**2014**) develop causal discovery techniques to find the best fitting CEG from data. Thwaites *et al.* (**2010**) demonstrated how the causal hypotheses of a CEG offer a profound flexibility. These classes have been extended even further using computer algebras (**Görgen, 2017**). Görgen and Smith (**2017**) define the statistical equivalence classes of staged trees, identifying the set of possible representations. Potential causal directionality on variables deduced from quaternion relationships can be found from algebraic features shared by all elements in an equivalence class. This is analogous to essential graphs. As shown by Collazo *et al.* (**2018**), this new class of graphs accommodates a much richer space of causal hypotheses.

Impact on the social sciences

Joint responses, asymmetric and sequential relationships seen in the medical and social sciences have driven the development of new mathematical models to explore them. Mathematical models are also used to explore mental models.

For psychologists, one open question regarding causation is how do people update their mental models of cognition? Causal judgements help us learn to predict and control our world, build causal models, to reason about evidence, and to determine how we attribute responsibilities to ourselves or others, especially with respect to legal or medical evidence. Causal judgements also affect our temporal beliefs; it has been shown that these mental models can even override our perception of the order in which things happen (**Bechlivanidis and Lagnado, 2016**). When learning about a system, we may choose interventions to target local uncertainty in a model (**Bramley *et al*., 2015; 2017**). The metaphor of Neurath's ship describes how experience is believed to update mental causal models. 'We are like sailors who on the open sea must reconstruct their ship but are never able to start afresh from the bottom. Where a beam is taken away a new one must at once be put there, and for this the rest of the ship is used as support. In this way … the ship can be shaped entirely anew, but only by gradual reconstruction' (**Quine, 1960**). In the absence of knowing all possible models, a current mental model shifts slowly in the light of evidence, adapting with local changes.

Current studies are underway to investigate how people learn graphical models. While the development and proliferation of Bayesian network methods proved a useful tool for psychologists to articulate new models of cognition, their work in turn has profound insight for how statisticians communicate their results to convey understanding to non-specialists. This is particularly important when probabilistic graphical models are used to underpin decision support mechanisms designed to evaluate alternate courses of action (**Smith, 2010**; **Smith *et al*., 2015**; **Barons *et al*., 2018**).

Economists and medical researchers share a common interest in determining the role and importance of theory in these new causal experiments. Some economists (**Deaton and Cartwright, 2016**; **Heckerman *et al*., 1995**) advocate that there can be no causation without theory. This ties in to the Bradford Hill criterion—that we expect any potentially valid causal explanation not to contradict known theories. Medical professionals are concerned about the increasing reach of causal discovery algorithms to suggest new biological mechanism. For example, in Hill *et al*. (**2012**), dynamic Bayesian networks were used to infer the protein signalling network structure in a breast cancer cell line. This

generated testable hypotheses, which were then independently validated using targeted inhibition, improving knowledge about breast cancer.

The debate about the importance of theory is a rich opportunity for computational scientists to develop models more attune to relevant theories. Discovering reproducible, robust causal results demands working alongside other disciplines to further the symbiotic relationship between the mathematical and social sciences.

Discussion

Causal theory and techniques to determine causation from observational data have an uneasy alliance. The mathematical sciences have produced powerful statistical models and machine learning techniques that have rendered causal discovery techniques accessible to a new range of social sciences. Economists and psychologists are using these new methods to ask more in-depth questions about drivers in economics and cognition. Causal discovery techniques discover plausible biological mechanisms with increasing rapidity.

Mathematical methods are inevitably subject to the underlying mathematical assumptions on which their foundational proofs rely. Ideally, causal analysis across disciplines works in tandem, with model results guiding further discovery in the medical or social sciences. In turn, practitioners in medical and social sciences may expose the limitation of current methodology, which in turn prompts mathematical developments to create bespoke models. The tension between existing theories about causal mechanisms can be a productive conversation rife with new research opportunities.

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One and Many Truths Artistically Acknowledged

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Abstract

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice and William Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell both question, criticise and reinterpret the concept of 'truth universally acknowledged'. From the intrinsic relation between the particular and the universal, to the scission between impressions and ideas, Pride and Prejudice concerns some elements of the entire dispute of knowledge. Moreover, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell urges us to reconsider any truth that we recognise as legitimately established, in the attempt to convey that it is our right and duty to determine what we believe – according to our senses, perceptions and feelings. In the eighteenth century, the philosophers of the Enlightenment were indeed disputing the origins of truth and more importantly the ways through which truth is uncovered. In a postmodern world, when, as John D. Caputo remarks, the only universality we acknowledge is diversity, fiction can lead us toward a more profound comprehension of reality – while enriching the flux of our imagination as we perceive the infinite possibilities inherent in human life. This literary approach to the world and its truth prompts us to contemplate existence from a different perspective, to find new meanings presumably hidden beneath the subjectivity of our judgement – to separate specific from universal knowledge. For, even if the prospect of formulating a commonly accepted norm of truth will always endure as humanity's major interest, the real nature of our beliefs is inseparable from our ability to endlessly create, envision and conceive the unrevealed.

Keywords: Truth, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

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Exploring the Concept of 'Truth Universally Acknowledged' in Pride and Prejudice and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Truth does not exist. According to Friedrich Nietzsche, if we will not accept the truth in the form of tautology – if we will not be satisfied with hollow shells – we will forever exchange truth for mere illusions. The constant drive for truth has been leading mankind since the beginning of time; but it is not yet understood where it comes from. The human intellect seems to have no other aim beyond the preservation of human life. The unawareness of this purpose – which is interpreted by Nietzsche as a lack of purpose – prompts individuals to nurture themselves with illusions, while their gaze can only capture the surface of reality. They become masters at the art of dissimulation. Their intention to be truthful, by adopting generally accepted metaphors, emerges de facto as an obligation to lie in accordance with an established convention – states Nietzsche in his essay *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense* – written in 1873. Despite their attempt to formulate a universally acknowledged principle of truth, men are constantly immersed in deception. They deceive themselves from dawn to dusk; when they can fall asleep and harbour the sweetest deception of all: the surreal reality of their dreams. While trying to conform to a society that imposes a specific set of rules, individuals are inclined to renounce an essential part of who they are; in exchange for acceptance, recognition and status. Nietzsche writes:

> In man this art of dissimulation reaches its peak: among men deception, flattery, lying and cheating, backbiting, posturing, living in borrowed splendour, wearing a mask, hiding convention, play-acting in front of others and oneself, in short, constantly fluttering around the single flame of vanity, is so much the rule and law that there is hardly anything more incomprehensible than how an honest and pure drive for truth could have arisen among them **(Nietzsche, 2009: 254)**.

This infinite search for truth could thus be a representation of an endless need to find a motive to the uncertainty of life – a plausible sense in our *much to do about nothing* – rather than an actual quest for the principle itself. It may symbolise the effort to apply logic to something dramatically absurd, overly distressing to accept. Nevertheless, truth is intrinsically related to ethics, to practical and theoretical values without which humanity cannot survive and most all cannot progress. Hence, the road to this principle – despite being exceedingly difficult and intricate – will always be crossed.

Our knowledge of the world that assures us that some of the things we are aware of are true: we are in a building with doors and windows, we make conversation with people like ourselves – the sun is going to rise tomorrow. It is exactly through these assumptions of what is true and what is not, that our mind relates with the external reality, notes Simon Blackburn **(Blackburn, 1999: 3)**. However, this external reality has been logically constructed by mankind in the attempt to make it determinable, coherent and explainable. According to Nietzsche, for this reason, it must be deemed as another 'piece of fiction' **(Nietzsche, 1910: 36)**. If we assume that the world as we know it consists in the most logical interpretation that humanity has found to acknowledge it, the fictional interpretation of reality can represent another approach to the world and its truth. Even if it is only a representation of life, the literary work enables the individual to look at existence with different eyes, to reflect on the meaning of experience from a new perspective. In a literary text, the truth is decidedly contextualised – remarks Vittorio Hösle – for the story is written in a specific time and culture, with a certain intention, or a set of intentions and it is usually characterised by semantic, realistic and aesthetic purposes by its author **(Hösle, 2017: 227)**. Nevertheless, readers of all times have had and continue to have the chance to comprehend their surrounding environment and themselves through the pages of a novel, the lines of a poem, or the acts of a play. This constitutes the inner potential of the written matter, both fictional and non-fictional.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice,* published in 1813, and William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, composed between 1790 and 1793, both offer illuminating and endlessly relevant views on the question of truth. The opening line of *Pride and Prejudice* states: 'It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife' **(Austen, 1956: 5)**. The ironic tone of this assertion constitutes a purposeful guide to the entire novel, notes Ian Littlewood **(Littlewood, 1993: 3)**. In *Pride and Prejudice,* the truth – or *something like the truth* – is not revealed by what the narrator announces or by what the characters say – it is depicted by the events that occur in the story. While Austen warns us about the importance of mistrusting any rushed assumption, she offers us insights into the real without seeking to reveal any truth. It is the very idea that truth cannot be found at all, that our judgements rely on the most subjective premises, and that the right interpretation could eventually emerge as a tragic misreading that characterises Austen's novel. According to Felicia Bonaparte, in her lucid approach to the fleeting nature of reality, Austen anticipates problems that will later become central to both modernism and postmodernism.

> The narrative is thus a quest for an epistemological principle on which a suitable hypothesis of reality can rest. And while there is never any question that we are looking at a work rooted in its time and place, in the process of this quest Austen foreshadows many issues central to modernism and postmodernism, even to current critical theory-all rooted, if we look back far enough, in that very empiricism Austen was one of the first to embrace **(Bonaparte, 2005: 143)**.

The constitution of the chronotope in *Pride and Prejudice* is highly dependent on the temporal dimension, which allows the characters to evolve while becoming crucial to their understanding of the essence of things, and to the making of their most important decisions. Time is thus significant to the unfolding of reality, which is never thoroughly unfolded. The story, told by a third person omniscient narrator, revolves around the author's major theme: the disposition of young women in marriage; where the significance of this legal union is given by the assurance of a status, notes Littlewood **(Littlewood, 1993: vii)**. The singular path that will bring Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy together for life becomes a universal recognition of the absence of logic characterising human behaviour, a declaration of how the simple act of changing one's mind could lead to a remarkable personal growth: 'And I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry', says Elizabeth **(Austen, 1956: 188)**.

When reading *Pride and Prejudice*, Claudia Brodsky Lacour observes, it is natural to accept several concepts as already established; because the writer has remarkably outlined that fiction, like history, relies only in the representation of the particular. The relation between this particular and the universal truth is absolutely arguable and inevitable – it cannot be taken for granted – which is something that people often forget or ignore. The story line of the book fulfils the author's aim of validating that universal truth by presenting it to the flow of experience – to turn it into the history of a notion that its first sentence originally declares. The essential significance of the opening is not related to the view about marriage that it sets out, but to the life, the personal behaviour and the involvement of those who genuinely believe in it. 'The first persons to be represented in this novel, or rather, to represent themselves in their own words, are cogent arguments against the truth that the novel proposes' **(Lacour, 1992: 612)**. The marriage between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet is portrayed as a long-lasting devotional divorce – an accomplished dissolution of opposite beings. Even though it cannot be entirely deemed as an argument against the opening of the novel, this matrimony is a declaration that what is universally considered a well-known truth – a rich man must desire to marry an admirable woman – might turn into a permanent error. The truth that *Pride and Prejudice* legitimises at the end

of novel as story, is that it is important to separate specific from universal knowledge – writes Lacour – opinion from pride and from prejudice **(ibid: 609-619)**. Austen does not deny the responsibility implicated in the depiction of her ideas in the text, although it is noticeable from the beginning that her reflections are probably going to suggest an ironic affinity to the characters' views.

One of the key passages of the narrative is represented by Elizabeth's reading of Darcy's letter. In the attempt to understand the nature of his intentions – as well as the essence of Darcy's character – Elizabeth is caught in a whirl of emotions. She reads it not only once, but twice; for her confused state of mind is preventing her from seeing things *clearly.* 'She read, with an eagerness which hardly left her power of comprehension, and from impatience of knowing what the next sentence might bring, was incapable of attending to the sense of the one before her eyes' **(Austen, 1956: 198)**. Still, Elizabeth is determined to uncover the truth. Even though Austen is highly philosophical – attentive both to concepts in general and to the philosophical debate of her time – she hardly expresses these theoretically, argues Bonaparte. 'Mostly her conceptual world is so fully dramatized in her characters and her plots that it can only be inferred from the nature of the action and the language of the narrative' **(Bonaparte, 2005: 142)**. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the epistemological questions concerning the existence of truth (whether it can be known, its meaning, and the degree of certainty of its meaning) are central to the novel. Austen uses several lexical devices such as 'guess', 'perceive', 'construe', 'presume', 'believe', 'suspect', to advise readers on the indeterminateness of the words lying in front of them. It is rare to find a character asserting 'I know', without being proved wrong **(ibid: 142)**. When Lady Catherine arrives to the Bennet's house, deeply outraged, looking for an explanation of the rumour of his nephew marrying Elizabeth, she *knows* that it must be a falsehood.

> A report of a most alarming nature, reached me two days ago. I was told, that not only your sister was on the point of being most advantageously married, but that *you,* that Miss Elizabeth Bennet, would, in all likelihood, be soon afterwards united to my nephew, my own nephew, Mr. Darcy. Though I *know* it must be a scandalous falsehood [...] **(Austen, 1996: 198)**.

On the other hand, the phrase 'I know not' – indicating how little the characters know of the world around them, appears numerous times in the novel. Austen, states Bonaparte, openly distrust the idea that human knowledge can ever be certain and definite. Her modernism consists in her recognition that her characters' thoughts, feelings, decisions and actions are deeply immersed and significantly influenced by the temporal context.

Just as in life, we are only able to grasp the essence of a moment after its passing. In *Pride and Prejudice,* every realization ultimately leading to a definitive choice, is determined by the passage of time – along with the drastic changes that it brings into being.

Austen is suggesting that there is always time to change one's mind – to observe the world from a unique point of view: a more cultivated, better structured and conscientious perspective. To this end, fiction is a never-ending collection of insights into the real. While consciously representing reality, it uncovers truths without ever presenting them as such. In *Pride and Prejudice*, among all the characters, Elizabeth is the only one that will learn – as she learns to read Darcy's letter – how the read the world. According to Bonaparte, the development of this skill is the *bildung* of the novel, and what Elizabeth develops throughout the story is a practical empiricism. Her 'quickness of observation' **(Austen, 1956: 17)** is the first quality attributed to her, which is the principal characteristic of an empiricist. The development of this character is primarily philosophic, and each one of Elizabeth's recognitions leads to this end. In the course of her learning the protagonist will realise that everything supposed to be rational may also be deceitful. This is how Austen shows the defects of rationalism, while indicating that even empiricism cannot convey how things *are* – it can only contemplate how they appear **(Bonaparte, 2005: 145-148)**. Hence, the characters in the novel are always mentioned by their 'appearance', rather than by their 'presence'. Bingley, for instance, 'was sure of being liked whenever he appeared' **(Austen, 1956: 18)**. Elizabeth and Mr. Collins met for breakfast 'a few minutes before the others appeared' **(ibid: 208)**. Elizabeth herself affirms: 'The more I see the world, the more I am dissatisfied with it; and every day confirms my belief of the inconsistency of all human characters and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of merit and sense' **(ibid: 133)**. Austen, while demonstrating her awareness of the void between perception and reality, is further suggesting that we can never really know what is front of our eyes; we can only rely on its fleeting impression.

The initial title of *Pride and Prejudice* was *First Impressions,* as Jasmine Gooneratne points out – a great concern of David Hume's philosophy reported in his *Treatise of Human Nature*. In this essay – written in 1738 – Hume identifies pre-eminence as the origin of our knowledge. He affirms that in order to comprehend our opinions we ought to return to our impressions **(Gooneratne, 1970: 106-08)**. According to the philosopher, all the perceptions of the human mind are divided in two specific types: impressions and ideas. The ones that insinuate strongly in our conscience are defined as impressions – they include all sensations, passions and feelings – whereas the impressions that are modified through our thinking and reasoning are identified as ideas. These are furthermore divided into

simple and complex **(Hume, 2009: 16-18)**. Given that Elizabeth has an active mind, her impressions and her ideas are of the second kind; but why are 'first impressions' so important? **(Gooneratne, 1970: 109)**. As Hume suggests, because they embody the beginning of our experience: without impressions there is no experience, and without experience there is no reasoning. Hume states: 'Since it appears, that our simple impressions are prior to their correspondent ideas, and that the exceptions are very rare, method seems to require we should examine our impressions, before we consider our ideas' **(Hume, 2009: 26)**. The human being should therefore be somebody who experiences reality as well as somebody who thinks and reasons about reality – this is what we learn from Hume and Austen, states Gooneratne **(Gooneratne, 1970: 110)**. From the renowned and provocative pronouncement that opens *Pride and Prejudice* to the rest of the story, we can find perpetual reminders of the fluctuating nature of people's truth; for what is 'universally acknowledged' can modify not only according to the changes of society, but also from person to person and within the person's mind from time to time. Austen emphasises how precarious and miscellaneous are people's judgements, ideas and interpretations of any circumstance they find themselves involved in: '"But people themselves alter so much, that there is something new to be observed in them forever"' **(Austen, 1956: 43)**, says Elizabeth.

When the protagonist meets Darcy, she's utterly convinced that he is 'the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world' **(ibid: 13)** – while by the end of the novel he becomes her loving husband. She is convinced of Darcy's unfavourable disposition and enjoys the company of Mr. Wickham who is provisionally liked by everyone. In the novel, just as in life, people's opinions of whoever is around them are strictly connected to the fact that other people's behaviours emerge each time in a new and different light. For instance, Elizabeth's sister, Jane, is the only one that does not judge malevolently Darcy when all the others are submitted to their first impression of him. Elizabeth criticises Darcy in an extremely short period of time, while the proof upon which she builds her judgement is too little. Later on, as the perceptions and ideas change, Mr. Wickham becomes 'the wickedest young man in the world' **(Austen, 1956: 280)**. Similarly, the reputation of the Bennet's family alters completely over a few weeks: 'The Bennets were speedily pronounced to be the luckiest family in the world, though only a few weeks before, when Lydia had first run away, they had been generally proved to be marked out for misfortune' **(Ibid: 331)**. This process of recognition is universal and well established in the literary world:

> There is much in our literature as well as our experience to suggest that the person who never comes to the point of saying 'I never knew myself', will indeed remain for ever cut off from any self-knowledge –

> what possible effect there is on his or her vision and conduct need not here be spelt out. If we don't know ourselves, we don't know our world **(Gooneratne, 1970: 113)**.

Austen's greatest accomplishment is to reveal us through the story something about ourselves: we often forget to question our deepest beliefs, we run into conclusions when it is too soon to judge, and we minimise that the positions we take in life create the real source of our happiness. This is the power of narrative, to make people aware of feelings and behaviours that they do not identify, to prompt them to discover a new meaning that is not hidden between their deepest doubts. Andrew H. Wright observes:

> Fiction has an advantage over life in being more completely revealing: truer, as poetry is truer than history. In the novel, we see people's thoughts and imaginings without the colorations of fear, reserve and diffidence, which in life constitute effective barriers against the disclosure of personality **(Wright, 1954: 76)**.

The greatest gift that Elizabeth receives, writes Gooneratne, is to genuinely realise that there is an enormous difference between essence and appearance **(Gooneratne, 1970: 114)**. With its own interpretation of reality fiction does not aim at depicting a singular, predominant truth. This premise, lying behind any remarkable fictional work, is what makes literature an interminable source of truthfulness, from which we can all learn to deepen our understanding of life and the meaning of our own experience. For – as Erich Auerbach states – in *Mimesis:*

> (…) there is always going on within us a process of formulation and interpretation whose subject matter is our own self. We are constantly endeavouring to give meaning and order to our lives in the past, the present, and the future, to our surroundings, the world in which we live; with the result that our lives appear in our own conception as total entities – which to be sure are always changing, more or less radically, more or less rapidly, depending on the extent to which we are obliged, inclined, and able to assimilate the onrush of new experience **(Auerbach, 2003: 549)**.

Austen's epistemological language demonstrates that she knows that the right picture, if there is one, is beyond our reach, and that different pictures are possible, while the ones we create in our minds rest on the patterns we make of our data, as Bonaparte remarks **(Bonaparte, 2005: 149)**. If it is possible to uncover reality after unveiling our first impressions – which could always be shaped by prejudice, it becomes crucial to cautiously analyse the presumably convincing evidence that has been provided before the actual evaluation takes place.

In this novel Austen also radically reject the concept of authority; the idea that there are some truths that we inherit from our ancestors, from the past, from religion. She consistently criticises every conventional social standing, parental figure and representative of the clergy as the main embodiments of authority. As Bonaparte points out, the majority of those who claim authority or on whose behalf it is claimed are derided. Even when the former does not appear as an object of derision, it is still not possible to depend on its truth, Austen proves **(ibid: 146)**. The author's reflection on the implications of the words 'truth' and 'universal', suggests Gooneratne, has been prompt by the eighteenth-century discussion on knowledge, and what John Locke indicated as 'the discerning faculties of man' **(Gooneratne, 1970: 105)**. It entails studying not merely the problem of what we know, but also the query of *how* we know what we know, as well as analysing the restraints set on knowledge by the procedures and means of cognition. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* – first appeared in 1689 – Locke states:

> On this faculty of distinguishing one thing from another depends the evidence and certainty of several, even very general, propositions, which have passed for innate truths; – because men, overlooking the true cause why those propositions find universal assent, impute it wholly to native uniform impressions; whereas it in truth depends upon this clear discerning faculty of the mind, whereby it perceives two ideas to be the same, or different **(Locke, 2000: 117)**.

Locke believed that it is essential to discover and establish the limits between opinion and knowledge. He believed in the urge to distinguish – as Nietzsche will define it – a long-lasting metaphor turned into a fixed and binding truth, while recognising to what extent it could completely revolutionise our thought. In Pride and Prejudice, Mary is the emblem of this issue: the opinions she expresses in the text are not wrong in themselves, but they are postulated a *priori*, without ever being questioned or verified, as Bonaparte points out **(Bonaparte, 2005: 147)**. When she comments on pride – and how it affects people – Mary does not rely on her own past experience, or her own power of observation; she reaches a banal conclusion based on everything she consulted on the subject.

> "Pride," observed Mary, who picked herself upon the solidity of her reflections, "is a very common failing I believe. By all that I have ever read, I am convinced that it is very common indeed, that human nature is particularly prone to it, and that there are very few of us who do not cherish a feeling of self-complacency on the score of some quality or other, real or imaginary. Vanity and pride are very different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person might be

> proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us" **(Austen, 1996: 21)**.

According to Mary, the notions provided by her readings are a source of knowledge to be accepted with no further inquiry, becoming a form of *authority* on her considerations regarding pride. While letting the events of the story speak for themselves, Austen proves that general truths are merely empty clichés, lacking any substantial meaning – as they are always with Mary. Tradition might be wise or not, but the only way to recognise it is to test it ourselves **(Bonaparte, 2005: 145)**.

The radical unwillingness to conform to the patterns already established by society is a position that Austen, Blake and Nietzsche felt very comfortable in. Their rejection to settle for what is universally acknowledged and their openness to the unlimited interpretations of reality makes their work significantly relevant to the search for truth. From Locke's philosophy, notes Gooneratne **(1970: 140)**, Blake took the word 'horizon' and turned it into 'Urizen', a symbolic figure that represents every limited and self-restrained man. Urizen's character is entrapped by the net that he spun with his own assumptions. His fate appears to depend on his capacity to point with both hands at the same time while concurrently revealing and parodying his own theories, affirms Stephen D. Cox **(1992: 16)**. Blake, who did not agree with Locke's rational view of human nature, chose to delight himself with his visions and his wide imagination – instead of conforming to the norm and adhering to the limits imposed by the society of his time. Blake affirms: 'Energy is the only life and is from the Body and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy. Energy is Eternal Delight' **(Blake, 2011: 63)**. According to the poet we are composed by opposite forces in never-ending conflict; reason is right, but merely in its role of containing the energy of an individual. Both Blake and Nietzsche, while reacting against the fierce success of Western civilization, questioned on the one side its conventions and beliefs and on the other its notions about intelligible thinking and representation of existence, states Harvey Birenbaum in his study *Between Blake and Nietzsche*. They both engaged in what Nietzsche called 'the revaluation of all values', both prompt by a will to reconceive the nature of human reality **(Birenbaum, 1992: 4)**. 'This meant the energetic exploration of the nonrational and the affirmation of life in a spirit free of the mind's usual, familiar and secure habits of logic' (**ibid: 4**).

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is a structurally and ideologically subversive text that, according to Steve Vine, eagerly intervenes in the energies of political uprising that unsettled Europe with the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789. In Blake's depiction of the religious mind-

set the Priests are the 'Angels' of morality – citizens of 'Heaven' – while the artists are the 'Devils' of dissension, imagination, revolt and insurrection: citizens of 'Hell'. His radical project in the *Marriage* is to renew the importance of thinking 'from impulse. not from rules' **(Blake, 2011: 82)**, affirming that it is the unstoppable and diabolic source of imaginary vision that nourishes the 'fires' **(ibid: 61)** and 'enjoyment of Genius' **(ibid: 65)**. The proverbs presented by Blake in the central section of the text, entitled 'Proverbs of Hell', are in fact *anti*-proverbs, or *parodies* of proverbs that ridicule the main principle of proverbial, generalizing, conventional wisdom **(Vine, 2007: 40-43)**. The most revealing line of the section is: 'Truth can never be told as to be understood, and not be believ'd' **(Blake, 2011: 69)**. It openly clashes with the essential meaning of a proverb, which is to convey a basic truth. Blake does not believe in the possibility that truth can be expressed in a way that imparts actual understanding, much less wisdom. Truth can only be envisioned; in an act of vivacious linguistic freedom from all the constraints of tradition, society and thought. He considers both science and theology as threatening menaces to the free and unrestrained evolution of the self. The truth of his work lies in its potentially inexhaustible capacity to uncover its errors and restraints, writes D. Cox. Blake does not believe that truth exists objectively. As it appears, the one objective truth is the idea that there is no objective truth **(Cox, 1992: 4)**. Nonetheless, even readers most influenced by *a priori* conviction of the ironic tone characterising Blake's aphorisms 'are expected to grow increasingly hard-pressed to imagine how his text could possibly have been generated by anything less than an obsession with truth, unqualified and authoritative truth' **(ibid: 5)**, argues Cox. His provocative, disturbing, ironic statements cannot be rationalised in any scheme, principle or system; they can rather be interpreted as embodiment of the whole miscellaneous and unsystematic style of *The Marriage* itself, which constitutes a heterogeneous ensemble of linguistic forms – none of which is predominant on the others but all of which participate to the dialectic carnival of the text **(Vine, 2007: 43)**. 'The *Marriage* is a radical verbal democracy, a theatre of symbolic or formal 'revolution' in which hierarchies and authorities are dethroned in a celebration of multiplicity, contrariety, contest' **(ibid: 43)**, states Vine.

To create, for Blake, is to feel with the utmost intensity the flow of life – and while deeply immersed in this sentiment, to fill the blank page with something *imaginatively* significant. It entails perceiving with sympathy, understanding the truth about existence by conceiving states of mind – by recognising them in ourselves, writes Birenbaum. In this sense, the language and the experience of life are inseparable, particularly when at the heart of the matter lies the question of truth and how to express it. The main word 'truth' communicates different meanings: it can signify the

knowledge of reality, reality itself, or the emphasis on a given notion of truth. These are not different opinions on the matter, but merely three uses of the word labelling three different concepts **(Birenbaum, 1992: 97-109)**. For this reason, Blake, an intellectual who believed unconditionally in the power of imagination, did not want to be entrapped in a vocabulary that would influence and direct the thought. He radically refused to accept linguistic conventions as the most adequate mirror to reflect moments of the real. This is a view that Blake and Nietzsche shared with the utmost artistic and philosophical fervour. 'Is language the adequate expression of all realities?' asks Nietzsche **(2009: 255)**.[i] 'If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite', suggests Blake **(2011: 73)**. They both strongly believe that, as Birenbaum puts it, language sets its limitations on thinking, which sets its limitations on the comprehension of our experience. It is indeed by narrating our experiences in terms that our peers can understand – and therefore accept – that we deprive them of their unique essence **(Birenbaum, 1992: 113-114)**. Our own distinctive experience becomes another universally familiar diapositive in the human collection of memories, because to make it understandable, recognisable to others – in other words to simplify it – we lessened its unique value. It is perhaps for this motive, that Blake rose up against a particular type of rationalism, which used words such as 'memory' and 'abstraction' with a significance he did not approve, for he consider it a materialistic terminology, notes Hazard Adams **(1954: 234)**. Words are, for Blake and Nietzsche, mainly 'opportunities to play meanings on – and the meanings are metaphors', suggests Birenbaum **(1992: 80)**.

Literature is the boundless playground for this occupation – it allows words to infinitively connect on the page, creating each time a different meaning and multiple meanings at once. It opens the doors to reality – while never attempting to enclose it in a specific frame – allowing us to grasp one and many truths, without them being truths themselves. In its vivid repertoire of life-like representations, fiction produces meaning by its interaction with the reader's imagination. The purity of truth relies only in the mental image – Blake believes – which is not merely seen by the artist, but by all individuals – for the imagination gives them the opportunity to transcend nature. 'Every thing possible to be believ'd is an image of truth' **(Blake, 2011: 67)**. Forasmuch as every single person can envision, create and profess its own truth, the idea of a universal conception of truth seems unattainable – because human knowledge can hardly transcend the limits of perspective. It is by asserting that all knowledge is particular that Blake clearly anticipates Nietzsche's perspectivism. In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche will argue: 'To the extent to which knowledge has any sense at all, the world is knowable: but it may

be interpreted differently, it has not one sense behind it, but hundreds of senses. – 'Perspectivity'' **(Nietzsche, 1910: 13)**.[ii] A century later, the philosopher will continue the path undertaken by the poet in his attempt to free the thought from every restraint preventing it from being the most *imaginatively* truthful it can possibly be. Besides being an ironic attack to the authoritarian and dogmatic approach of religion and to a society that stands on its own hypocrisy, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* invites us to reconsider any truth deemed as *universally acknowledged* in a conscious effort to evaluate reality within our own perceptions and feelings, to independently conceive our own beliefs, notes Stephen C. Behrendt **(1992: 94-100)**.

Nevertheless, what happens if everybody starts to believe a different truth? Could we ever find be a generally accepted principle of this matter? Yes, according to Blake – the commencement of this journey towards a 'central form' consists in the urge for each individual to come to terms with the deceptive nature of substance, language, projection, and every other deceit of reality. Only through art there is a revelation of truth – the model of human life. In this sense Blake considers his work prophetic, states Adams **(Adams, 1954: 243-48)**. However, the real issue with *The Marriage* is succeeding in the subtle art of finding the poet's authentic voice among the ever-present irony and provocative tone of the page. To this regard, with his theory of contraries, stated in his renowned passage – 'Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence' **(Miller, 1985: 505)**[iii] – Blake seems to convey that the very possibility of expressing truth is negated unless it is represented in an opposition of terms, suggests Dan Miller **(ibid)**. Interestingly, Birenbaum remarks that both Nietzsche and Blake write not only with the anger of men whose voice cannot be heard, but also with the knowledge that they cannot speak their truth without contradicting themselves **(Birenbaum, 1992: 87)**. Furthermore, centuries ago, Plato argued that truth cannot be permanently declared in a methodical or phrasal form; while Aristotle affirmed that our fundamental principles are not observable in their totality, but merely in a constant association and confrontation with one another. While the philosophical debate continues, and knowledge formidably advances, the human intellect becomes increasingly aware of how difficult and complex is the path towards truth. The only certainty seems to be the fact that there is no certainty. Hence, the sole possible way of conceiving *truth* is to accept the idea that it cannot be permanent, steady or universally established. It is rather variable, erratic and always questionable. Indeed, Blake's complete body of work is indeterminate, writes Cox, because he seeks to keep his meanings from becoming so **(Cox, 1992: 23)**.

In a postmodern world, when, as John D. Caputo points out – 'our first thought is that everyone's truth is entitled to its fifteen minutes in the sun' **(Caputo, 2013: 9)** – recognising what 'truth' means becomes even more crucial. To this end, it is the dedication and eagerness to create, that will continue to guide mankind in its philosophical quest, as Frederick Sontag remarks, and Blake should be our allied and teacher in this sense. He understood that the infinity of the imaginable worlds, which we are able to encounter through our creative thought, are unbelievably more imminent to us than we can possibly imagine **(Sontag, 1998: 57-63)**. While the potential of narrative prompts us to acknowledge truths regarding the unlimited possibilities intrinsic in human life, our task is to allow its suggestions to enrich the flux of our imagination and lead us to a more profound comprehension of reality. By all means, fiction can support us in our attempt to confront what we fail to understand, it can prompt us to reconsider what is not yet conclusively proved; while granting us a chance to revaluate not only our truths, but also ourselves.

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[i] Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: Writings from the Early Notebooks*, 255.
[ii] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 13.
[iii] Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, 62.

Can Implicit Measures Contribute to a *True* Understanding of People's Attitudes and Stereotypes?

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Abstract

Traditionally psychologists used explicit self-reports to better understand individuals' attitudes but influences such as social desirability and impression management often made this method of data collection unreliable. This article describes the origins and the advancements of one of the most studied topics in social psychology - Implicit Social Cognition. Unobtrusive/indirect research methods were initially used to overcome the problems of using self-reports. Subsequently, reaction time tasks such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT) were developed to enable researchers to measure response biases, at the individual level, in socially sensitive domains such as prejudice towards minority groups. Automaticity is a core requirement for a measure to be described as implicit and therefore, fast reaction times (< 2,000 milliseconds) are needed. This article will describe under what conditions implicit and explicit measures are and are not related, including the theoretical basis for these relations. The value of using both implicit and explicit measures to predict behaviour will be explained, along with a discussion on what implicit measure are detecting. In certain domains or under specific conditions, implicit measures can contribute to providing a true understanding of attitudes and stereotypes.

Keywords:
Social Psychology, Implicit Social Cognition, Implicit Association Test, Attitudes, Stereotypes, Predicting Behaviour.

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Origins of research into implicit social cognition

Most psychologists agree that to gain a comprehensive understanding of an individual's behaviour one needs knowledge not only of the external contexts in which an individual is situated but also of their internal psychological attributes (i.e., attitudes, stereotypes and personality traits). The cognitive revolution of the 1960s and 70s challenged behaviourism's grip on psychology and restored the scientific respectability of the study

of internal psychological processes **(Miller, 2003)**. Without this impetus, the study of implicit cognition and investigations into the importance of unconscious/unexpressed biases influencing behaviour could have been further delayed. The term *implicit* is often used as a synonym for other labels such as unconscious, unaware, intuitive, indirect and automatic. Likewise, *explicit* often overlaps with the terms conscious, aware, analytic, direct and controlled. The implicit-explicit distinction will be used throughout this article.

The prominence in social psychology of the study of individuals' attitudes was apparent as far back as the 1930s, when George Allport **(1935: 198)**, described attitudes as the 'most distinctive and indispensable concept' in the discipline. In the 1940s the behaviourist Leonard Doob **(1947: 136)** defined an attitude as 'an implicit, drive-producing response considered socially significant in the individual's society'. It was generally accepted, albeit implicitly, that attitudes were influenced by unconscious mechanisms **(Greenwald & Banaji, 1995)**. This (implicit) acceptance was likely due to psychoanalytic theory according to which attitudes could be influenced by unconscious processes. Although psychologists often want to dissociate themselves from Sigmund Freud's controversial and often unfalsifiable ideas, he was one of the first individuals to bring the idea of the unconscious to the mainstream **(Freud, 1915, 2005)**.

Researchers aimed to measure attitudes using more objective methods such as questionnaires. Nevertheless, the near-universal use of self-report questionnaires throughout social psychology's past has led to numerous problems. One of the major problems was construct validity weaknesses, as seen by the lack of correspondence between attitudes and behaviour **(Greenwald, 1990, see also Nisbett & Wilson, 1977)**. For example, LaPiere **(1934)** reported that when he visited 251 accommodation venues with a Chinese couple, only one venue refused them admission. Following these visits, letters were sent to all 251 venues asking for a response to the question 'Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?' and over 90% responded that they would not. Regardless of the limitations of the study, (e.g., the Chinese couple was accompanied by an individual in a high-status profession; the person rejecting the letter request may have been different from the person who accepted their face to face request), LaPiere's study emphasises the values of using unobtrusive/indirect research methods instead of confining oneself to explicit self-reports (direct measures). To clarify, the terms *indirect* and *direct* are often used to describe the procedural characteristics of a measurement procedure, while the terms *implicit* and *explicit* are often used to describe the psychological features or attributes assessed by measurement procedures **(De Houwer, Teige-Mocigemba, Spruyt, & Moors, 2009; see also De Houwer & Moors, 2010)**.[i]

Unobtrusive and indirect research methods

Unobtrusive refers to methods in which participants are generally unaware that their behavioural responses are under investigation, while the term indirect refers to when participants are aware their responses are being monitored but it is unclear exactly which aspect of their behaviour is being assessed **(Banaji & Greenwald, 2016)**. In the 1970's, two social forces made unobtrusive research methods both more appealing and more popular: (1) The rise in the scientific study of prejudice across the US due to racial tensions, and (2) the growing realisations that participants often respond in a socially desirable manner when making explicit self-reports **(Banaji & Greenwald, 2016; Jones & Sigall, 1971)**. The first two successful uses of unobtrusive methods relating to racial prejudice showed that (1) when black and white research assistants (RAs) separately called looking for help through the telephone, the white RAs were more likely to receive assistance **(Gaertner & Bickman, 1971)**. The black and white RAs were distinguished from each other by varying their speech characteristics such as the pronunciation of words. (2) When an open unsent student application with a portrait photograph attached was left at an airport telephone booth, participants were more likely to voluntarily submit applications for the white rather than the black students **(Benson et al., 1976)**.[ii]

Crosby and colleagues **(1980)** indicated that discrimination is more prevalent than explicit self-reports would lead us to believe, and that remote (not face to face) interactions were more likely to give rise to stronger racial prejudice when unobtrusive methods were used. Unobtrusive methods reduce the Hawthorne effect. This effect occurs when participants' knowledge of being in an experiment modifies their behaviour from how they would have responded without that knowledge **(Adair, 1984)**. Importantly, unobtrusive methods can be ethically problematic, require more resources to run than simple questionnaires, and the context is more difficult to control **(Blackstone, 2017)**. Of most relevance, they do not provide an adequate opportunity to measure individual differences because asking participants to fill out questionnaires or demographic information would rouse suspicions. Indirect measures, such as implicit measures, were developed to overcome the limitation of unobtrusive methods not assessing individual differences.

Selective attention and implicit memory

Research relating to both selective attention and implicit memory greatly influenced the development of research into implicit social cognition **(Payne & Gawronski, 2010)**. With respect to selective attention, a key distinction was one between controlled and automatic/involuntary modes

of information processing **(e.g., Shiffrin & Schneider, 1977)**. For example, our attention will be instantly drawn if we detect words of importance originating from unattended sources, such as hearing one's name. Research on implicit memory pioneered by Jacoby and colleagues **(e.g. Jacoby, Toth, Lindsay, & Debner, 1992)**[iii] strongly influenced Greenwald and Banaji's **(1995)** seminal paper on implicit cognition **(see also Banaji, 2001)**. Essentially, studies of implicit memory showed that participants found it easier to perceive stimuli that they had previously seen (perceptual fluency) but attributed this ease to characteristics of the stimulus, rather than to the recent past encounter. These ideas led Greenwald and Banaji **(1995: 5)** to coin the term *implicit cognition* and define it as '*An implicit **C** is the introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) trace of past-experience that mediates **R**. In this template, **C** is the label for a construct (such as attitudes), and **R** names the category of responses (such as object evaluative judgements) assumed to be influenced by that construct*' Their review focused on how implicit cognition was specifically related to attitudes, stereotypes and the self.

In implicit memory research, experimenters normally have perfect control over the stimuli previously presented, while in implicit cognition, experimenters generally have little control over previously presented stimuli (e.g., an individual's life history) and therefore, require more mentalistic explanations for behavioural responses such as mental associations, particularly evaluative and semantic associations **(Greenwald et al., 2002; Hahn & Gawronski, 2015)**. An exception is when participants are exposed to completely new stimuli. Any attitude (both implicit and explicit) that subsequently develops following a positive or negative induction to novel stimuli (e.g., an unknown group or tribe), is most likely due to the controlled exposure rather than prior experiences **(e.g., Gregg, Seibt, & Banaji, 2006; Olson & Fazio, 2001)**. This experimental set up has been said to involve attitude formation and refers to the initial change from having no attitude towards an object to having some attitude, either positive or negative, towards it **(Oskamp & Schultz, 2005)**.

The development of implicit measures

Greenwald and Banaji **(1995)** asserted that the measurement of individual differences in implicit cognition is likely to be possible and described judgement latency (i.e., reaction time (RT)) measures as a potentially fruitful avenue to pursue this goal. They predicted that 'when such measures become available, there should follow the rapid development of a new industry of research on implicit cognitive aspects of personality and social behaviour' **(ibid, p. 20)**. Within three years, the same authors developed and published the first and still most popular RT task that aims

to measure implicit attitudes, stereotypes and self-concept at the individual level. The measure was called the Implicit Association Test (IAT) **(Greenwald et al., 1998)** and precisely as they predicted, this task led to an acceleration in research into implicit cognition, with the area being described as 'one of the liveliest and most active research areas in social psychology' (Payne & Gawronski, 2010).

The initial IAT publication has to date (March 2018) been cited over 9,700 times. Development of the IAT to run online through Project Implicit (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/), the world's largest online virtual laboratory, greatly accelerated the speed at which the IAT could be validated **(Greenwald et al., 2003; Greenwald & Nosek, 2001; Nosek et al., 2007; Nosek et al., 2002, 2007)**. Millions of people from all over the world have completed various versions of the IAT through Project Implicit (e.g., Old-Young IAT, Fat-Thin IAT, European American-African American IAT). Participants are incentivised to complete IATs because after completing the task they are given their implicit bias score towards the categories to which they were responding. Additionally, teachers and lecturers often ask their students to complete IATs on Project Implicit for course credits and to teach them about implicit biases.

In a typical IAT, such as the Young–Old IAT, participants are presented successively with various pictures of young and old individuals as well as positively (e.g., cheerful, joy, love) and negatively (e.g., evil, hurt, sick) valenced words. Only one picture or word item is presented at the centre of the computer screen at any point and using the appropriate key press, it must be sorted into the correct category (i.e., Young, Old, Good, Bad) which appear at the top of the screen (see Figure 1). The first three blocks in the IAT are practice blocks to ensure the participants can respond fast and accurately to the stimuli presented. In block 4, one of the two critical blocks, participants should press the E key on a computer keyboard if a negative word or a picture of an old person appears and press the I key if a positive word or a picture of a young person appears (congruent block, see Figure 1 Left).

Figure 1: (Left) Screen shot example of the congruent block in the Young-Old Implicit Association Test (IAT). (Right) Screen shot example of the incongruent block in the Young-Old IAT. Copyright Project Implicit

Next participants complete two more practice blocks due to the Old and Young word categories at the top of the screen switching location. In the other and final critical block (block 7), participants should press E if a negative word or a picture of a young person is shown and they must press the I key for a positive word or a picture of an old person (incongruent block, see Figure 1 Right). To reduce order effects, participants randomly complete either the congruent or incongruent critical block first, followed by the other critical block. This task aims to measure biases participants have in associating concepts (old and young) with valenced words. The stronger the association, the more natural the sorting task will feel and hence, result in faster responses (congruent block), while weaker associations will result in a slowing down of processing, due to the need to make use of unaccustomed pairings in memory (incongruent block) **(Greenwald et al., 2002)**. Generally, both young and old participants have quicker reaction times when Young is paired with Good and Old is paired with Bad (hence the name congruent block) then when Old is paired with Good and Young is paired with Bad (hence the name incongruent block). These results have been interpreted as participants having a pro-young or anti-old implicit bias. Lastly, rather than using positive and negative valenced words to measure attitudes, stereotypical words could be used instead (e.g., healthy, lively, frail, slow, etc.) to measure stereotypes that individuals have.

What is an implicit measure?

Currently, the term *implicit social cognition* is generally used to refer to research in social psychology that uses computerised RT measurement instruments to infer an individual's psychological attributes (i.e., attitudes, stereotypes, self-esteem, etc.) without asking an individual to report their psychological attributes directly **(Hahn & Gawronski, 2015)**. Implicit

measures have been defined as 'the outcome of a measurement procedure that results from automatic processes by which the to-be-measured attribute causally determines the outcome' **(De Houwer et al., 2009: 363)**. Automaticity has been argued to be one of the core features of an implicit measure and occurs when the impact of the *to be measured* attribute on an individual's responses is uninfluenced by certain goals, substantial cognitive resources, awareness or substantial time **(Bargh, 1994; De Houwer, 2006; De Houwer & Moors, 2012)**. Therefore, quick and accurate reactions to stimuli are necessary (< 2,000 milliseconds) to limit an individual's ability to exercise strategic control over their responses. This automaticity aspect or feature distinguishes implicit measures from traditional instruments that rely on explicit self-reports **(Gawronski & De Houwer, 2014)**. Consequently, the speed or accuracy with which an individual responds to or associates stimuli in implicit measures is used to infer their psychological attributes **(De Houwer, 2009; De Houwer, 2003; Nosek & Banaji, 2001)**. With implicit measures (and also explicit measures), an inference must inevitably be used because it is not possible to directly observe psychological attributes.

An ideal measure of implicit attitudes would provide an accurate index of the extent to which an individual possesses the psychological attributes that the measure was designed to capture **(De Houwer et al., 2009)**. To validate an implicit measure, there must be evidence that variation in the *to be measured* attribute (e.g. racial bias), causes variations in the measurement outcome (i.e., the measure's score), but an understanding of how the measurement outcome is detecting variations in the psychological attribute is also necessary **(Borsboom et al., 2004; Wentura & Rothermund, 2007)**. Both correlations and experimental approaches are useful when validating implicit measures. But collecting correlational data is the most time and cost effective way to validate an implicit measure **(De Houwer et al., 2009)**. The more evidence that is accumulated showing that the implicit measure correlates in the expected manner with other measures of psychological attitudes (e.g., explicit self-reports), the more the likelihood that the correlations are due to a third factor is reduced **(Nosek & Smyth, 2007)**.

What are implicit measures detecting?

Early theorising around implicit measures assumed that they provide direct access to stable evaluative representations that have their roots in long-term socialisation experiences **(Greenwald & Banaji, 1995)**. However, new evidence has shown that implicit attitudes are highly susceptible to contextual influence.[iv] Furthermore, the debate surrounding whether implicit biases represent person-based (e.g., personal attitudes **(Fazio et al., 1995)** or situational-based approaches

(e.g., awareness of cultural stereotypes **(Devine, 1989)** has been going on for some time. More recently, this debate has re-emerged in the form of personal versus extra-personal associations in the IAT **(Nosek & Hansen, 2008; Olson et al., 2009)**. However, it has been argued that making a distinction between situational and personal views is not warranted due to the automatic effects of implicit biases **(Banaji, 2001; Gawronski & LeBel, 2008; Nosek & Hansen, 2008)**. It has also been stated that few arguments remain supporting the claim that IAT effects are causally influenced by extra-personal views **(De Houwer et al., 2009)**.

The term implicit has often been used synonymously with unconscious but one must ask the question: Are implicit measures uncovering unconscious representations? The available evidence challenges the notion that implicit measures offer a window into people's unconscious processes **(Gawronski et al., 2006; Hahn & Gawronski, 2014)**. To clarify, the majority of participants in Monteith, Voils, and Ashburn-Nardo's (2001) study expressed that they found the incongruent block on the Race IAT (Black-Positive) more challenging, and they felt guilty about it to the extent that they attributed the bias to racial prejudice. Therefore, individuals appear to have much greater introspective access to their mental representation than was originally assumed **(Payne & Gawronski, 2010)**. For example, across five different social groups, participants were surprisingly accurate when predicting their implicit biases **(Hahn et al., 2014)**, emphasising that participants can have introspective awareness of their implicit bias. Of note, the mental processes that result in conscious experience for introspection to occur are largely a mystery, and similarly, our knowledge of what implicit measures are detecting is less mature than our knowledge about what implicit measures do **(Nosek et al., 2011)**.

Refining and expanding the use of implicit measures

The period following the IAT's first publication has been described as the *age of measurement* in social psychology, due to the development of various implicit measures each of which aimed to measure psychological attributes accurately **(Nosek et al., 2011)**. New implicit measures were developed mainly because of limitations in the IAT. But these new measures were further challenged by the need to preserve the strong psychometric properties that the IAT achieves. The brief IAT (BIAT) was developed to give researchers a tool that could be used to measure implicit bias in a shorter amount of time. However, like the IAT, the BIAT only measures implicit biases relatively (e.g., attitudes to fat people relative to attitudes to thin people). It is therefore impossible to determine using these IATs whether this bias is the result of a strong/weak pro-thin bias, a strong/weak anti-fat bias, or some combination of the two **(Blanton & Jaccard, 2006; Roddy et al., 2010, 2011)**. Likewise, the IAT cannot be

used to determine how interventions that aim to increase or reduce implicit biases have their effect (e.g., a difference in implicit attitudes could be reduced by acting on the Thin Person category, the Fat Person category, or both **(Lai et al., 2014)**.

Another limitation of the IAT arises because some categories do not have an obvious comparison group. For example, when assessing implicit self-esteem, researchers can use the IAT to measure the positive and negative associations a person has with the self in comparison to a specified/unspecified other (or with me in comparison to not me). The type of comparison category (i.e., specified vs. unspecified other) used affects implicit self-esteem results **(Karpinski, 2004)**. Therefore, a more appropriate approach would measure only evaluative associations with the self, without the need to use a complementary category.

To address these problems, RT tools that attempt to measure absolute attitudes and do not require a relative comparison to another group have been developed. For example, the go/no-go **(Nosek & Banaji, 2001)** and the extrinsic affective Simon task **(De Houwer, 2003b)** both claim to measure implicit attitudes non-relatively/absolutely. However, both suffer from problems ranging from a high level of task difficulty to low reliability **(Bar-Anan & Nosek, 2014; De Houwer & De Bruycker, 2007)**. Variations of the IAT that could be described as single concept IATs, such as the Single Target/Category IAT **(Bluemke & Friese, 2008; Karpinski & Steinman, 2006)** have, however, shown promise for measuring absolute implicit attitudes. The Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure (IRAP) **(Barnes-Holmes et al., 2006)** is another absolute implicit measures, but recent evidence has indicated that the IRAP cannot accurately measures absolute biases only relative bias like the IAT **(O'Shea et al, 2016).**[v]

The Single-Block IAT **(Sarah Teige-Mocigemba et al., 2008)**, the Recoding Free IAT **(Klaus Rothermund et al., 2009)** and the Sorting Paired Features Task **(Bar-Anan et al, 2009)** were developed to overcome the problem of block structure influencing the accurate measurement of implicit biases. For example, the order in which a participant completes the congruent and incongruent blocks can influence the IAT score **(Nosek, et al., 2007; Teige-Mocigemba et al., 2010)**. Efforts have been made to reduce the order effect in the IAT **(Nosek et al., 2005)** but it is nevertheless difficult to determine the magnitude of order effects at the individual level and hence it is not possible to fully remove effects of this confound **(De Houwer et al., 2009).** Another reason for removing the block structure in the IAT was that the salience of the items within a block, not the associations between the items, can lead to an IAT effect **(Rothermund & Wentura, 2001, 2004)**.

Several authors have identified unwanted factors **(Friese & Fiedler, 2009)** or nonassociative influences **(Rothermund & Wentura, 2010)** that influence the magnitude of IAT effects. If IAT effects can be caused by processes other than just mental associations in memory, and if it is not clear which processes influence the IAT effect, then the meaning of the effect becomes ambiguous **(Fiedler et al., 2006)**. There is increasing evidence that findings relating to implicit measures can reflect several processes, such as salience of the stimuli **(Houben & Wiers, 2006; Rothermund et al., 2005)**, similarity between the stimuli **(De Houwer, et al., 2005)** and cognitive ability of participants **(Back et al., 2005; McFarland & Crouch, 2002)**. Greenwald's **(et al., 2003)** D-algorithm has greatly reduced the problem relating to cognitive ability because it accounts for an individual's variation in responding across the IAT. More research is needed to explain the relative impact that salience and similarity can have on IAT scores **(De Houwer et al., 2009; Conrey et al., 2005; Klauer et al., 2007)**. IAT researchers have acknowledged these problems, emphasising that no measure is perfect but yet the measure can still be useful **(Greenwald & Sriram, 2010)**.[vi]

Implicit and explicit correlations

Correlations between implicit and explicit measures of attitudes vary widely, from weakly positive (r = .250; e.g. thin people-fat people) to strongly positive (r = .780; democrats-republicans) with a median correlation of .48 found for 56 domains across 6000 participants **(Nosek, 2007)**. There are a number of possible reasons for this disparity, with the most obvious being self-presentation/socially desirable responding. This is especially true for socially sensitive topics, where demand characteristics (i.e., similar to the Hawthorne effect described above) and/or impression management may distort self-report responses **(e.g. Fazio, 2007; Holtgraves, 2004)**. Implicit and explicit correlations have been shown to be higher for affective responses (emotions and feelings about the attitude object) on explicit measures compared to more cognitive responses (thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object) on explicit measure **(Smith & Nosek, 2011)**, for a review see Spence and Townsend **(2008)**.

Reducing the time allocated for a participant to think about their response on the explicit measures produces higher correlations between implicit and explicit measures **(Ranganath et al., 2008)**. Another crucial aspect to consider is that implicit and explicit correlations will be stronger for attitudes that are more familiar or beliefs that are important or well elaborated in memory, as opposed to ones that are rarely thought about or believed to be irrelevant **(Nosek, 2007)**. Conceptual correspondence and structural fit between implicit and explicit measures increases the

correlations between these two measures. Additionally, due to averaging out noise and the inclusion of more trials, relative scores (e.g., IAT scores) rather than absolute scores (e.g., SC-IAT scores) show stronger implicit and explicit correlations **(Hofmann et al., 2005; Payne et al., 2008)**.

Lack of a perfect correlation between implicit and explicit measures has been cited as evidence for the distinct constructs that these measures assess **(Greenwald & Nosek, 2008; Nosek & Smyth, 2007)**. Yet the divergence could also be due to a number of other factors (e.g., awareness, need for cognition, structural features)[vii] Importantly, much research demonstrates the practical value of implicit measures for predicting human behaviour **(Friese et al., 2009; Perugini et al., 2010)**, especially spontaneous behaviours[viii] and shows that implicit measures can provide information that is distinct from explicit measures **(Nosek et al., 2011)**.

The two most prominent theories aiming to explain correlations between implicit and explicit measures are the *motivations and opportunity as determinants* (MODE) model **(Fazio & Olson, 2014; Fazio, 1990)** and the *Associative Propositional Evaluation* (APE) model **(Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006, 2011)**. Both these models make similar predictions but differ in a few subtle ways. Motivation (e.g., social desirability) **(Devine et al., 2002; Dunton & Fazio, 1997)** and the opportunity (e.g., self-regulation resources) **(Hofmann et al., 2007)** are the primary determinates explaining implicit and explicit correlations in the MODE model. In the APE model, however, cognitive consistency (i.e., rejecting affective racial biases in favour of more explicit egalitarian values) is an important factor in explaining implicit and explicit correlations **(Brochu et al., 2011; Gawronski et al., 2008)**.

The MODE model assumes that the same underlying representations are measured using direct and indirect methods, while the APE model assumes they are part of a distinct but mutually reinforcing processes (i.e., associative and propositional processes). The MODE model also assumes that deliberate processing reduces implicit and explicit correlations, while in the APE model deliberating on information that is consistent with an activated association (i.e., implicit bias) will increase implicit and explicit correlations **(Galdi, Gawronski, Arcuri, & Friese, 2012; Peters & Gawronski, 2011)**. For a full review of the numerous dual process theories of human cognition see Chaiken and Trope **(1999)** and Strack and Deutsch **(2004)**.

Using implicit measures to predict behaviour

Perugini, Richetin, and Zogmaister **(2010)** described how implicit measures could contribute to predicting behaviour over and above explicit measures. These include: (1) separate patterns with implicit measures, but not explicit measures uniquely predicting behaviour (2) additive patterns in which both implicit and explicit measures contribute to predicting behaviour, (3) double dislocation patterns where both measures uniquely predict different types of behaviour (4) moderation patterns where both measures predict behaviour under different conditions, (5) multiplicative patterns where both measures interactively predict behaviour. All these patterns have been shown in the literature. However, the boundary conditions specifying when each will occur are not thoroughly understood, making it difficult to make a priori predictions **(Gawronski & De Houwer, 2014)**.

The most thorough evidence emphasising the value of implicit measures was provided by a meta-analysis of studies using the IAT, which showed it to predict stereotyping or racially prejudicial behaviour better (average r = .236) than did explicit self-report measures (average r = .118) **(Greenwald et al., 2009; Cameron et al., 2012)**. However, see Oswald, Mitchell, Blanton, Jaccard, and Tetlock **(2013: 188)**, for a more critical view of the predictive validity of the IAT. They showed that that IAT only weakly predicted racial attitudes and stereotypes (r = .148) and stated that 'the IAT provides little insight into who will discriminate against whom'. For a recent defence of the IAT's predictive abilities see Greenwald, Banaji, and Nosek **(2015)**.

If participants are tired, distracted or rushed, they are more likely to respond based on implicit biases than when they have energy, are concentrating, focused or unhurried **(Strack & Deutsch, 2004)**. For example, Friese, Hofmann, and Wänke **(2008)** found that when participants' self-regulation resources were reduced, they were more likely to respond behaviourally (eating or drinking) in accordance with their implicit attitudes. In contrast, when participants maintained these control resources, their behavioural responses were better predicted by their explicit attitudes. Furthermore, implicit measures have been shown to be better at predicting behaviours of individuals with a preference for intuitive thinking styles, while explicit measures are better for those with a preference for rational thinking styles **(Richetin et al., 2007)**.

Other examples of the usefulness of implicit measures for predicting behaviour include: (1) countries with stronger implicit biases of associating males rather than females with science and maths, predict larger performance gaps between males and females in these disciplines **(Nosek et al., 2009)**, (2) those with low self-esteem on implicit measures exhibit

various defensive behaviours **(Jordan et al., 2003)** (3) more strongly associating the self with death prospectively predicted suicide ideation as well as suicide attempts **(Nock et al., 2010; Nock & Banaji, 2007)** and (4) higher implicit racial biases predicted increased job interview invitations to racial in-group members **(Rooth, 2010)**. Importantly, neither implicit and explicit measures can be described as a *truer* measure of one's beliefs, because both predict unique aspects of behaviour **(Banaji, Nosek, & Greenwald, 2004)**. To clarify, explicit measures are generally better at predicting political preferences **(Friese et al., 2016)** and consumer behaviour **(Friese et al., 2006)**, while implicit measures are particularly suited when addressing more social sensitive topics such as intergroup attitudes/interactions **(Greenwald et al., 2009)**.

Conclusion

This article has highlighted some of the most relevant information related to implicit cognition (i.e., correlations between implicit and explicit measures and the ability of implicit measures to predict behaviour). RT computer-based tasks such as the IAT have been crucial to the area's success. Based on the accumulation of evidence described above, it is recommended that implicit measures should be used to complement other methods (e.g., explicit self-reports) used to address attitudes and stereotypes. Almost every intellectual question in social psychology, and some outside it, has been shaped in some way by the methods and theories related to implicit social cognition **(Payne & Gawronski, 2010)**. New implicit measures, such as the Relational Responding Task **De Houwer, Heider, Spruyt, Roets, & Hughes, 2015)** and the SIP **(O'Shea et al., 2016)** have the strong potential of building on the success of the IAT and continuing the research momentum the IAT has generated in implicit cognition throughout the past twenty years.

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[i] For a more recent review of the relationship between attitudes (intentions) and behaviour see Sheeran (2002).
[ii] For a review of unobtrusive methods see Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980 and for a recent example of the unobtrusive technique showing that white people offer less help to black individuals relative to white individuals in an emergency situation, see Kunstman & Plant, 2008.
[iii] For a review see Schacter, Chiu, & Ochsner, 1993.
[iv] For a review see Blair, 2002.
[v] O'Shea et al. (2016) also introduced a new implicit measure called the Simple Implicit Procedure (SIP) to overcome the limitations in the IRAP.
[vi] See Fazio and Olson (2003), Gawronski (2009), Gawronski and De Houwer (2014), and Nosek et al. (2011), for reviews and lists of other implicit measures that have received less attention.
[vii] For a review see Hofmann, Gschwendner, Nosek, & Schmitt, 2005.
[viii] For review of this topic, see Friese, et al., 2009.

Dissents and Dispositions: Reflections on the Conference of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia

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Abstract

This article provides critical reflections on the Conference of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia, held on 12-14 December 2017 at La Trobe University and the University of Melbourne, Australia. The conference theme of dissents and dispositions 'invited consideration of the arrangements and rearrangements of the conduct of law and life; of the dispositions of law and jurisprudence, and how these relate to dissents, resistance and transformation.' Speakers discussed law, literature, public art, visuality, media, gender and sexuality. The various papers collectively raised questions of how the law is, through art and other mediums, arranged and subsequently – sometimes violently and sometimes politely – rearranged, constantly in a process of developing, evolving, never finishing, and always applying its words and touch to new circumstances.

Keywords: law; justice; literature; humanities; pubic art; visuality

Article Text

Tom Nicholson's *Towards a Monument to Batman's Treaty* was the artwork for the Conference of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia held in Melbourne in December 2017, if a conference can have an artwork. The installation, which comprised strewn chimney bricks collected from citizens in and around the town of Healesville some 50 kilometres north-east from Melbourne surrounded by possible memorial plaques, seemed (strangely, perhaps) fitting. It recalled the conference's situation on the land of the Wurundjeri peoples exploited by but not ceded to colonisers. The as-yet-unrealised nature of the artwork/monument, with its strewn materials and multiple possible plaques, seemed too to reflect the theme of law, literature and the humanities as constantly in a process of developing, never finishing. All are disciplines open to differing creative interpretations; all are inherently creative. To quote, as one of the speakers did, from the West

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Australian *Interpretation Act 1984*, 'a written law shall be considered as always speaking' (s 8), always applying its words and touch to new circumstances, constantly evolving. Similarly, the papers at the conference flowed into discussions and conversations that tested disciplinary boundaries and reshaped the original work in different ways.

Perhaps fittingly, Marianne Constable (*California Berkeley*) started the conference with a keynote address on repetition in legal speech and action and how it produces and interrupts rhythms. Constable argued that repetition leads to a certain kind of senselessness in that it can desensitise or disorientate, allowing one to not think or decide how or what to do next to such an extent that something becomes second nature or habit. She posed precedent as a system of repetition, and that the repetitive nature of precedent does not allow space for questioning except in interruption; it is only interruption that breaks habit. The discussion that followed introduced the idea of the law as automaton. However, against this thesis, Constable suggested that repetition could actually sensitise us. In this respect, there are phases of response to repetition. It may emphasise at first, but then desensitise; possibly, we tune in and out. She concluded with a discussion of what the difference is between repetition and interruption that (de)sensitises and (de)emphasises.

In a panel on 'Crossings', Olivia Barr and Laura Peterson (*Melbourne*) explored public art as public law, drawing on the idea of the artist and jurist as crafters or creators. Despite the move to transient or pop-up public art, Barr and Peterson posed the notion of public art as solid versus public law as transient. Drawing on Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' notion of 'lawscape' (**2015**), the two argued that public art produces legal relations in a city. Public art provides an opportunity to slow, pause, engage and remember and the act of viewing of public art and law draws bodies in space. The paper raised interesting questions of how we interpret public art and the role of commissioning in public art. During the discussion that followed, they suggested that, in the case of certain public art such as Laurel Nannup's *First Contact*, through the commissioning process the state owns up to its mistakes to some extent. The exploration of public art continued in Ross Gibson's (*Canberra*) paper on his artwork, *Bluster Town*. The artwork, which had resonances with Julius Popp's *bit.fall* and the 'word wall' in Melbourne Theatre Company's Sumner Theatre, explored the transience of common words as against the permanence of legal word. Gibson suggested that art always happens in a joint, a turning point; that art causes a turn, impels, jostles and moves. He conceived of public art as a 'conviviality enhancement system' and argued that there is a possibility of relationship and connectivity when people are put together in public art and public law. Finally, Dave

McDonald (*Melbourne*) spoke on the ribbons tied around fences to mark clergy abuse in the town of Ballarat in an artistic-legal phenomenon referred to as 'loud fence'; the term being a reference to both the colourful ribbons and the noise they made when blowing in the wind. McDonald argued that the ribbons were a powerful visual testimony similar to crime scene tape – a closing off or border that draws attention to the space by passers-by. His paper explored the practices, possibilities and limitations of visual memorialisation. To encounter public art is affective, but people can simply walk by.

In another panel on 'Border crossings', Maria Elander (*La Trobe*) explored images as evidence, and suggested that there are other means of ascertaining facts beyond law, including through art. Elander argued that there is a need to treat images critically not as a repository for truth and that images are not facts but rather pose questions of belief; it is questionable whether we are able to draw a 'correct' reading of a photograph. In this sense, images have an evidentiary role and an imaginary role. Victims sometimes testify using images of loved ones; for example, during the Luke Batty coronial inquest, a framed photograph of Luke sat near the coroner's bench. There is thus an affective dimension to images. Images can be, like victim impact statements, a form of therapeutic justice. Law, however, has a tendency to ignore scholarship of the visual, and images seldom find their way into judgments. This idea continued in Sarah Hook's (*Western Sydney*) paper on legal responses to parody. The legal regulation of parody and satire contained in section 41A of the Australian *Copyright Act* is only fairly new, introduced in 2006. Hook questioned the role of the judiciary as artistic interpreters and the idea of judges determining artistic measure, instead suggesting that art practitioners and lawmakers need to talk to each other. Hook argued that parody relies on distance just as much as similarity and that critical distance is essential. There is, in parody, an oscillation between empathy or nearness and distance or opposition. Courts, however, rely too readily on dictionaries to define what parody is, ignoring complex meanings; dictionaries cannot define complex phenomena. A clash seemed to emerge over whether interpretation of parody is dependent on authorial intentionality or whether the work can speak for itself, that is, whether it is defined by the interpretation of its audience. Further interesting questions were raised by Hook over whether one can have parody without humour, whether humour is in the eye of the beholder, what is a 'fair motive' for parody, whether scathing parody is fair, and the literary versus legal takes on these questions.

Another panel on 'Evidence of things seen' opened with Penny Crofts (*Technology Sydney*) who explored corporations personalised through art and film with a focus on the television series, *Stranger Things*. Ashley

Pearson's (*Griffith*) paper that followed examined (legal) persona in video games and other media, describing persona as something of a contest between self and a legal mask that shrouds the self as a reasonable, rational, agentic subject. One particularly interesting element of this paper was the discussion on the experience of the player's body in game-play and its relation to the avatar, which raised interesting questions regarding the role of the player. Is an avatar's selfhood negotiated and defined through the interactivity with the human player that controls and plays with the avatar? What are the impacts of immediacy and the speed of fighting in game-play on the creation of the avatar's self? The discussion recalled the sex surrogate scene in *Her* wherein the lead character attempts to manifest his beloved operating system in human form but ultimately fails.

Finally, for this panel, Carolyn McKay's (*Sydney*) paper on her recent work *Model Prison* explored visual art as a research methodology drawing from the 'visual turn' in humanities and social sciences. McKay's work was a video installation that depicted a 'virtual prison' with an actor inside who paced, bent, stretched and crouched. The work sat next to Lucas Davidson's durational performance, *Black Cell*, wherein the artist was buried under a pile of gravel and, in so doing, created a visceral experience of audience anxiety. McKay's work explored not so much the textual but rather the material and sensorial dimensions of incarceration, decorporealised and dematerialised through video link. Through the medium of video, there was a removal of bodily presence, with the body digitally encased and hermetically sealed, like that of Davidson's. The work was accompanied by a striking audioscape of ambient noise and strange sounds picked up on location at The Lock-Up, an arts space and former police station in Newcastle. The audio in McKay's work became irritating, repetitive and looped, like the movement. The audio, to some degree, created the space. The placement of the screens in the art space that forced the audience to bend down to see created a different experience than if the audience was to view the work on a flat screen and again emulated the contortions of the body in the film. McKay's piece was reminiscent of works of audioscapes installed in padded cells, like Love Without Sound's *Reasons for Admission*. Her work also had resonances with Lawrence Abu Hamdan's *Model Court* and Judy Radul's *World Rehearsal Court*. McKay also spoke of the role of gut instincts in artistic creation and the importance of openness to creative thought and then deploying the artist's critical gaze; all of relevance to practice-led or -based research. For those that want to continue the viewing and exploring these questions in greater depth, McKay's latest project is *justiceINjustice*, a collaborative work at The Lock-Up exploring injustice and marginalisation.

During the discussion that followed into lunch, a question arose as to who the audience was to these television programs, video games and artworks. This in turn raised a problem of art: that it often speaks merely to the converted. Can art transform the viewer if it is not viewed? Can the same question be asked of law or, indeed, the legal academic conference? Are we simply speaking to our peers or ourselves? What was striking about this panel and born out over the conference was the engagement with contemporary popular cultural forms that have resonance beyond the law.

A post-lunch panel on 'Visible addresses' commenced with Katherine Biber (*Technology Sydney*) who discussed the cultural response to the infamous Lindy Chamberlain trial and subsequent appeals and acquittal that have spawned a number of artistic responses, including theatre productions and an opera, *Lindy*. The paper focused on the Lindy Chamberlain collection at the National Museum of Australia and raised interesting questions about restoring evidence, evidence as art and how evidence/art is described; for example, to describe an object/artwork as 'cut' has a very different resonance to 'torn'. Les Moran (*Birkbeck*) discussed the idea of performing one's (legal) self through a case study on reality television judge Robert Rinder. The paper described how the impact of digital media has reshaped the idea of audience as consumer. Audience is now a major player in the production of a performance and operates as a quasi-jury with the judge as conductor of the proceedings. This framing of the audience is reminiscent of Jack Tan's work, *Karaoke Court*, wherein the audience were jury to litigation undertaken through the medium of karaoke. Judicial character is created through different media genres. Judge Rinder appeared on *Strictly Come Dancing*, which Moran said was not about his capacity to perform the role of judge, but I wonder whether there is an element of dancing in the production of judgment and judicial character. Judge Rinder lip syncs have also appeared on YouTube. Moran described Judge Rinder as a camp gay figure of authority and raised the question of whether dandyism or camp is compatible with the construction of judicial authority, particularly in an era of bourgeois acceptability of same-sex marriage. Alison Young and Peter Rush (*Melbourne*) concluded the panel with an exploration of lives lived with law in the Japanese criminal justice system. In Japan, police now use street art, small neighbourhood police stations called 'koban', and mascots as a reminder, particularly to young people, that the neighbourhood is under governance.

Karen Crawley's (*Griffith*) powerful keynote address focused on the implausible post-racial politics of the recent television production of *The Handmaid's Tale*. Crawley noted that the production had been lauded for its inclusivity in terms of casting, but had no critical reflection on race,

which she argued highlighted the limits of liberal inclusivity. Perhaps, she suggested, the slow endemic violence experienced by people of colour does not lend itself to visual narrative. In a close reading of one scene in which a black character escaped the Republic of Gilead, an authoritarian regime which took over the United States of America (and ironically the name of a pharmaceutical company that has been accused of preventing access to anti-HIV drugs in Australia due to over-pricing, as was pointed out in the discussion that followed), and was accepted as a refugee in Canada, Crawley noted how the character was depersonalised and cast as an 'empty neutral vessel to receive the help of the state'; the character was never so dehumanised as when they were being treated humanely. Her triumphant escape was recast as a rescue, and she was depicted as an object of humanitarian pity. Her being believed as a refugee is a stark contrast to present-day Australia, yet the creation of Gilead has resonances to early Aboriginal Australia and the homogenous racial formation of the Australian state. The darkened lighting of the scenes broadcast during the paper seemed to exemplify just how colour was seeped out of the production. There was an implication of the (predominantly white) audience in Crawley's critique, which demanded a radical rethinking of this feminist production.

In another panel, Marco Wan (*Hong Kong*) opened with a paper on dispositions of LGBTQ rights in Hong Kong through the prism of the *Gay Lovers* television program that was censored by the decision of *Cho Man Kit v Broadcasting Authority*. Despite small advances, Wan argued that there is a paradoxical nature to queer visibility in Hong Kong in that heterosexuals are desexualised whereas gay and lesbian people tend to be sexualised. For gay people in Hong Kong, talking about themselves is a kind of nudity, and visibility can increase homophobia. In the second paper, Jan Mihal (*Melbourne*) explored notions of loyalty and dissent, observed how the interpretation of laws is akin to that of musical scores and raised questions of whether the judge/player must be loyal to the composer's/legislator's intention. Finally, Henry Kha (*Auckland*) discussed transgender marriage cases in the Asia-Pacific. Whilst the UK case of *Corbett v Corbett* that annulled a transgender marriage still dominates legal conceptions of sex and gender, it has been widely rejected in Asia-Pacific. There is, however, still a focus on surgery in these cases and laws. This provides a sense of clarity in the judicial and legislative mind and a 'bright line' on the recognition of gender. However, it goes against the wishes of transgender people who want to move from the dominance of the state and state instruments (doctors, judges) in determining gender and sex to a system of self-declaration.

In a later panel on 'Art, culture and the vivid imagination', Des Manderson (*Australian National*) opened with a discussion on temporalities of law in the visual arts. He discussed the here and now moment of viewing an image and opined that, to quote Georges Didi-Huberman, 'we are before the image as before the law' (**2003: 31**). Manderson built on this idea of the temporal moment of viewing to argue that 'the power of law is the power over time.' In the second paper, Nikos Papastergiadis (*Melbourne*) considered art as events with particular attention to digital public art. He argued that there is no sociality or aesthetic appreciation or popular culture experience without mediation. It could be said that when we are on a phone, we are therefore alone, but it is really a mediated social interaction. Papastergiadis described how the experience of public artwork and its ambience often creates not focus but dispersal and distraction. Finally, Peter Rush (*Melbourne*) spoke on the audio-visual rhetoric of criminal confessions. He raised concerns with the location of confessions, with the closed and secluded room of a police station where most confessions take place being likened to a confessional. He also raised concerns around what was called in *Arthurs v Western Australia* 'the "atmospherics" of the interview': the tone of the voices, the movement of the body, and the idea of a rapt audience. In the discussion that followed, Rush drew from the idea of bodily confessions and discussed 'the event of the confession' and how to make sense of the audio-visual montage.

In a final panel on 'Dispositions of the other', Julen Etxabe (*Helsinki*) spoke on dialogues, in particular metaphors, and how we become captive to the metaphor or visual image we deploy. He also spoke of how judicial language speaks back, often – as was raised in the discussion that followed – in appeal. In a fascinating paper, Marett Leiboff (*Wollongong*) refigured *Brown v Tasmania*, which concerned former Green Party leader Bob Brown's challenge to Tasmania's anti-protest laws, as an embodied theatrical response to the idea of protest. In a close reading of the case, Leiboff posited that the High Court justices had lived through times of great protest – for example, Justice Virginia Bell was an actor who become a lawyer and represented Mardi Gras protestors who were engaged in a form of agitprop theatre – and an echo or memory of protest sat in the judgments. She suggested that exposure to protests can create an image in the mind's eye and that this image can become a memory embedded in the (judicial) body. It is almost as if judgment is a mode of method acting, where the judge draws from emotional memory to perform the act of judgment. Leiboff's mode of presentation was also striking. She moved about the conference stage as if driven by a Grotowskian impulse and, in so doing, reminded us her audience of the

connection between legal thought and the body. Finally, Laura-Jane Maher (*Deakin*) provided a close reading of the opening of a medical treatment case, *Re Lucas*, as an example of narrative judgment that positions the reader to empathise with the parties by drawing on their own lived experiences. The opening paragraphs of the judgment, which concerned access to hormone treatment for a transgender teenager, described how 'the tension in the courtroom was palpable', focussed on the facial and other expressions of the audience in the courtroom such as weeping and hugging, and explored the material impact on bodies in court and how Lucas and his family experienced the courtroom. Maher advanced the idea of judgments as autobiography, with judges using judgments to articulate their experiences as readers. However, this thesis was disputed during the discussion that followed. Perhaps what was happening in the opening lines of *Re Lucas* was the not the judge engaging in an autobiography but rather attempting a biography – perhaps even a pointing – of Lucas or even the courtroom itself.

In this sense, what the court in *Re Lucas* was doing was exploring the disposition of the applicant and the courtroom that he (temporarily) inhabited, the character, arrangement and temperament of this young person and their space. The court also issued also a powerful dissent against a decision that it could not overrule, *Re Jamie*, which held that access to hormone treatment required court approval, concluding, in its final sentence that 'the sooner that children such as Lucas and their families do not have to endure the ordeal of litigation to get on with their lives, the better.' This decision, like Nicholson's artwork, recalls the theme of the conference, dissents and dispositions, and how the law is arranged and subsequently – sometimes violently, as at the moment of colonisation, and sometimes through tempered judicial language – rearranged.

Yet, unlike Nicholson's artwork, the decision was bound to words, performed first in the stage of the courtroom and then transcribed for posterity in printed books or online databases. What it was to be in the courtroom during *Re Lucas* – the tears, the touch, the tension – can now only be felt through words. As Thom Giddens writes, 'in reducing artistic and creative works into textual accounts, encoding cultural experiences and ontologies into sentences and paragraphs, something is lost' (**2017: 377**). Yet most papers in this conference moved beyond the paper to read images, films and art and, in this final panel, to perform. There was a real, sustained and exciting engagement with different cultural and artistic forms; not simply looking at the place of law in society but rather exploring its inseparable connection with culture and, in so doing, collapsing false distinctions between law and culture. Nicholson's

artwork that reads as a collapsed wall seems especially relevant for this boundary-breaking interdisciplinary conference.

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