AN INTRODUCTION OF SORTS *OR* ALL SORTS OF INTRODUCTIONS

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Placing ourselves and this project

Sheridan

Art therapy – to borrow contributor Patricia Fenner’s perceptive remark about the emplacement of discourse (page 384) – always occurs some where. As to beginnings, the postcolonial theorist Edward Said (1975) suggests that it is only when we are well advanced in the journey that we can make a contingent decision about where we may have begun.

One such beginning, says John Henzell, was in the 1950s in a hospital for tuberculosis and psychiatric patients in Perth, Western Australia where Guy Grey-Smith initiated the use of ‘art therapy methods’ in Australia. Another was the founding of the Australian National Art Therapy Association (ANATA) in 1987, followed by the first Australian art therapy conference in Brisbane in 1989. Yet another was the establishment of Masters programmes in art therapy in Perth, Western Australia and Sydney, New South Wales in 1992 and 1993 respectively, along with Masters training in creative arts therapies at La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Another beginning was in 2003 in the Straw Bale House in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, home to the Darug and Gundungurra peoples, where a small group of wannabe art therapy researchers, including Jill Westwood and Sheridan Linnell, met for a residential workshop with Andy Gilroy and sowed the seeds for this book.

Keep going for another forty-one kilometres down that winding highway that connects the mountains to the plains and you will reach the Penrith Campus of what is now Western Sydney University. You may even discover the Art Therapy Cottage – the second of two early twentieth-century cottages that have successively housed the university's Master of Art Therapy training course during the last twenty-two years (see Figure 6.i). Travel further east and you will find, poised at the population centre of Sydney in South Parramatta, the curved edifice of the university's new Science Building. Half of its ground floor is dedicated to a huge state-of-the-art therapy studio teaching space, designed to project antipodean art therapy into an expanding future. (Meanwhile, Sheridan might be standing at the gleaming central bench, unpacking art supplies.)

We seem then to have travelled, in the space of two paragraphs, from a TB hospital in 1950s Perth to an ecologically sustainable and aesthetically enchanting space, graced with local contemporary art and traditional crafts in a native bushland setting, through cramped and hidden-away quasi-domestic, emotionally resonant and decomposing cottage rooms, into a cleanly defined public rectangle of space and light. From Medicine to Art to Science, or is it from 'art' to 'Art'? What undiscovered spaces will hold and give shelter to our memories and emotions within the smooth transparency and modernity of white studio walls and tall sheets of glass?

Figure 1 *It's been a long time* (detail: *The Straw Bale House*). Andy Gilroy, (2016/17). Collage, pencil, oil pastels and tissue paper on paper.

Figure 2 *It's been a long time* (detail: *We four*). Andy Gilroy (2016/17). Collage, pencil, oil pastels and tissue paper on paper.

Fly back over those mountains toward where we began and you will soon descend into an elegant, arty part of Melbourne, where Tarquam McKenna directs and teaches Indigenous Knowledges research for a regional university while keeping closely affectionate and strong scholarly ties with local arts therapies. Disappear like Alice down an endless rabbit hole, and you might emerge 'right side up' or topsy-turvy in the Victorian warrens of Goldsmiths, University of London, where the other two editors, Jill Westwood and Andy Gilroy, are now located, although Andy only notionally in these retiring and fruitful days spent writing and drawing.

How then are we four 'placed' to offer a commentary on the development of (visual) art therapy in Australia? What contingencies have drawn these authors and us together? We are far from representative but we wish to problematise the politics of representation in art therapy. We must situate ourselves, right here and now, stretched across two hemispheres and yet deeply connected to this drawn-out, complex project by the persistent ethical call of our relationships: to each other; to art therapy; to our colleagues and elders living and dead including our previous co-editor, Gomileroi woman, Koori urban artist and arts educator, the late Dr Pam Johnston Dahl Helm, so tragically killed during the making of this book (were we derailed? most certainly). We are indebted to the art therapy participants who are our teachers. Perhaps most of all, we are bound to the beauty, terror, pleasure and suffering of a land that claims all our hearts, even as those of us who came here uninvited would relinquish our claim – expressing sorrow, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation with the traditional custodians of country.

Figure 3 *It's been a long time* (detail: *An archaeology of shame*). Andy Gilroy (2016/17). Collage, pencil, oil pastels and tissue paper on paper.

A hauntology

Andy

A between space of ocean
and then the sound of border-crossers.
Borders and oceans and tents and the land:
alive, conscious, aware.

The voices, traces and imaginings of our ancestors:
when to welcome? when to resist?
Welcomes that go wrong.

The imported and the local,
fractious in the wide, brown land
of stolen children
and the big story.
Historical injury and present injustice meet
under soft leaves and flickering shadows.
Ignored. Silenced. Oppressed.

A land that has had to roar at us
of the beauty of tangled places
and the art of letting be.
A land that has taught us
the tyranny of distance.

We subalterns in the post colony,
what do we do?
We fly in and fly out,
draw a heart on its side
and sift through the sediment
of wounds and damage and murder that are
some where, some place
in oceans of knowing
where sharks and chickens and platypus play.
We do the donkey work
of yarning knowledge, big and small.

And all those pictures:
what would Mr Lee say?
What does he say about the incised imaginings,
those angry penguins,
and the arcadian dreams of the colonisers?
What does he say about paper-thin time
whispering across the terrible beauty of the land
where John King survived,
thanks to the locals.

A hauntology
that she remembers, she holds, she recalls
castles and buttercups,
my Daddy who died. A sacred penny
and a place set apart to pause,
to think, to make, to be.

Unfolding fields

Jill, Sheridan, Andy, Tarquam

The focus of this book is art therapy in Australia, exploring the themes of **aesthetics** and **postcolonialism**. It evolved through our unfolding relationships as art therapy educators in Australia and other parts of the world. It is a selective window, shaped by our partial and subjective viewpoints of what has become a diverse and changing field. It aims to embrace an ethics of difference that we consider central to the practice of art therapy in contemporary Australia. It weaves together various threads from **art and aesthetics, historical legacies, Indigenous perspectives, place and context.**

It aims to stir your interest, document practices, theories and histories and encourage further exploration of what this thing called art therapy is from another, Australian, perspective.

When the idea of capturing the space, place and time of art therapy in Australia comes to mind, you, our reader, might expect a chronology. However, time itself is emplaced and not necessarily linear:

[t]he place of time references difference, embodiment and the connections between time and situation. The place of time neither forgets the critical function of mapping temporal practices nor seeks to universalise or standardise this activity ... the place of time questions the role (place) of time within an aesthetics of difference operating against the conventions of representation.

Meskimmon, 2003: 168

We prefer to work with what Carmen Lawson describes (in Chapter 2) as the movement of art therapy in Australia across time. She draws our attention to *chairos*: the 'right time'. For Australian philosopher Moira Gatens (1996), *chairos* moves beyond the binary of historical time (*chronos*) and a rejection of history (*aeon*), suggesting how we "might select between a range of possible future becomings" (15). *Chairos* opens up possibilities for those who are marginalised in history to lead the way into possible futures (Gannon, 2016). This notion has a legitimacy and a place of being and belonging in the telling of art therapy in Australia. The threading together of the chapters of this book, the capturing of moments of being and belonging, move beyond the linearity of time. As per Said (1975), it is only through returning to the past, knowing where we were, that we know where we are now. But which past and whose story? The process of *chairos* is one of movement, not only back and forth but also criss-crossing the dominant and subjugated territories of art therapy, both reiterating and upending hierarchies of knowledge. It is a process of becoming, and yet we might know this 'right time' by pausing for a long moment, in the richness of a desert alive with wildflowers or on a city street where some tough, invading flower pushes its improbable green through the cracks in the concrete. Time makes itself known to us some where.

Art, aesthetics and art therapy

We have chosen to foreground the visual in this book. Why? Because in our view it embodies the potential of art therapy to open up alterity, illuminate possibilities and bear witness to the intra-psychic, relational and social realms.

It is part of the convention of our profession that the aesthetic experience of art-making in terms of both process and product is acknowledged to be fundamental to art therapy. This has been explored and discussed across the English-speaking world, beginning in the 1950s when the first accounts of art therapy were published (Naumburg, 1950, 1958; Kramer, 1958; Adamson, 1984; Hill, 1948). Since those early, pioneering days in the United States of America and Great Britain, art therapists have embraced the power of art as a way of knowing and transformation (e.g. Allen, 1992, 1995, 2001; Gilroy, 1992; Henley, 1992; Hyland-Moon, 2002; McNiff, 1981, 2009; Moon, 2006; MacLagan, 2001; Robbins, 1987; Schaverien, 1992).

Art therapy like other emerging disciplines establishes its credentials through reference to other fields of study, in particular by citing concepts from anthropology, aesthetics and psychoanalysis. Art and creativity have been explored by philosophers, psychoanalysts, psychologists, historians and artists and its value and power continues to fascinate. We have a canon of references that we draw on to support the centrality of art in human experience, some of which we reiterate and augment here. For example, Dissanayake, in *Homo Aestheticus* (1992), established how art-making is part of human evolutionary adaptation and showed how it has been used for expression, communication and rituals from the earliest civilisations. She shows how art is a way of 'making special' – an insight that makes art therapy special, too.

And so the account of our relevance continues, gathering force.

Thinkers such as Adorno (1997), a sociologist–philosopher, identified the critical role art plays in society; it allows the expression of difference and the formation of cultures counter to dominant ideologies. Psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1991) recognised the concept of *flow*, a highly focused mental state that can occur in the experience of creative occupation such as art-making, and explored how this is connected to the state of happiness. Art theorist Bourriaud (2002) conceptualised *relational aesthetics* in the field of contemporary art. This is an art practice that concerns human relations and their social context, using these as departure points for art-making and positioning artists as facilitators of relationships. These, amongst many other thinkers show how art and aesthetic experience are powerful, complex and irreducible. This lies at the heart of the work of art therapy.

It also lies, for all our twisting and turning, our tortuous reflexivity, at the heart of this book.

Since the emergence of art therapy as a profession, the relationship and tension between *art* and *therapy* has evolved. From the beginnings of this 'uneasy partnership' (Champernowne, 1971) art therapists have researched the role of art and aesthetics in art therapy. Schaverien's (1992) seminal text *The Revealing Image*, laid down a significant foundation for the theorising of art therapy. Drawing on philosophical aesthetics, psychoanalysis and analytical psychology and working in the UK, Schaverien focused on the role of art through an in-depth case study embodying an alchemical cycle of transformation. Around the same time in the USA, Robbins wrote *The Artist as Therapist* (1987), a classic text on integrating aesthetics and psychodynamics into the therapeutic process, and McNiff authored *The Arts and Psychotherapy* (1981), proposing an expressive arts perspective where all arts forms and therapies are in unity. Henley (1992) and Allen (1992, 1995) also highlighted the role of art and aesthetics in art therapy.

Then came Hyland-Moon's *Studio Art Therapy* (2002) which articulated an art-based theory and practice of art therapy, advocating a flexible approach and challenging the polarisation of the personal and the professional. Her stance encouraged the cultivation of an artistic perception of the world throughout the

entirety of the work of the art therapist. Across the other side of the Atlantic, British art therapist MacLagan wrote *Psychological Aesthetics* (2001), discussing philosophical and psychoanalytic approaches to aesthetic qualities and psychological meanings. This work heightened awareness of the experience and meaning of aesthetic responses embodied in the creation and reception of works of art.

Other authors making significant contributions to the consideration of art in art therapy include Kapitan (2010) who emphasised the use of art in the art therapy research process. McNiff (1992, 1998, 2009) continued to emphasise the power of art in the work of art therapy, including its consideration as a healing force connected to shamanism (McNiff, 1979). A Western anthropological term arising from North and Central Asia origins, *shamanism* relates to Indigenous, ethnic, religious and spiritual practices usually performed by a *shaman*. This person occupies a mediating role in society with the spirit world, reaching altered states of consciousness and channelling healing energies or insights for the community. Such practices bring different ontologies into the field of art therapy other than those of the Euro-American mainstream.

Figure 4 *It's been a long time* (detail: *A reparative conversation*). Andy Gilroy (2016/17). Collage, pencil, oil pastels and tissue paper on paper.

Yet we have struggled, in this book, with the notion of shamanism that is taken away from its specific location and accountabilities and somehow segued into art therapy. With our postcolonial hats firmly in place we worried about this being another appropriation of the culture and practices of those whom our European ancestors had already dispossessed. We did not want to be censorious, and we also did not want to abandon our editorial responsibilities.

We remembered that many in Australia are interested in the work of Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, Ngangikurungkurr elder and school principal from the Daly River, and the adoption and adaptation of the practice of dadirri – “inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness” (Ungunmerr-Baumann, 2002: 1). Ungunmerr-Baumann also speaks of waiting for the “right time” (2). We wondered why this version of appropriation felt relatively OK, despite the convergence of Indigenous spirituality with Christianity being marked with a history of epistemological and physical violence. Perhaps it is because dadirri is about listening, including to the traditional custodians of country. Dadirri is located in the generous extension of knowledge from Indigenous to non-Indigenous community, whereas when shamanism is appropriated it might invest some ‘one’ with undue and unmediated power.

Some practices drawn from Indigenous epistemologies may be opaque to 'us' (*but who are 'we'?*) and/or challenge who we think we are because they are not just different ways of knowing the same reality but fundamentally different realities. Anthropologists such as Laidlaw (2012) discuss the idea of *ontological pluralism* and propose an openness to *thinking* with the materiality of the world rather than supposing that *we already know* or already have all the concepts we need with which to understand. This is not a multicultural approach but a multi-natural one that recognises alternative natural realities. Does this resonate with Deleuzian ideas concerning the relationship between identity and difference which suggest that all identities are effects of difference, and that difference cannot be reduced to difference from? These philosophical positions open up our awareness of the classifications that are used in art therapy's theory-making, leading us to a place where we wonder whether our theories and practices may not adequately address difference and might therefore create and perpetuate oppressions. This connects to us the other main theme of this book: postcolonialism.

Postcolonialism and art therapy

Colonised by the British as a penal colony in 1788 (*another beginning*), the theme of postcolonialism has, not surprisingly, a particular resonance for Australia. Postcolonialism is a theoretical approach concerned with the impact of colonisation and the human consequences of external control and exploitation of native peoples and their lands. It provides a way to study and analyse the politics of Western knowledge creation, control and distribution as these have been applied in order to subjugate non-Western peoples. The aim is to destabilise the cultural superiority of the colonisers and the ways that colonisers perceive, understand and know the world. Through this process it aims to establish intellectual spaces for *subaltern* peoples to speak for themselves, in their own voices and to produce cultural discourses that balance the imbalance. 'Subaltern' is a term used in critical and postcolonial theory meaning 'subordinate' or 'of lower status'. Key theorists include Bhabha (1994), Fanon (1952, 1961), Foucault (1990), Memmi (1965) and Said (1978, 1993) who, amongst many others, have led the development of postcolonial thinking and the struggle against oppressions.

Figure 5 *Art therapy has a black art history.*
Tarquam McKenna, (2016). Digital photomontage.

AUSTRALIA HAS A BLACK

**ART
BLACK
ART
ART**

ART THERAPY HISTORY

Andrea Gilroy, Sheridan Linnett, Tarquain McKenna, and Jill Westwood - 9789004368262

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Fanon (1925–1961), a psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary, analysed the nature of colonialism as essentially destructive and a process of dehumanisation. Said (1978) theorised the 'binary social relation' with which Western Europe intellectually divided the world into the 'Occident' and the 'Orient'. Along with Foucault, he established that power and knowledge are the inseparable components of the intellectual binary relationship with which Occidentals claim 'knowledge of the Orient' and thereby control of Oriental peoples, places and things. Foucault argued that these colonial discourses provide consistent gratification of superiority. Since these ground-breaking thinkers, many more have added to the development of postcolonialism in order to claim "the right of all people to the same material and cultural well-being" (Young, 2003: 2).

Turning our attention to the English-speaking art therapy literature it soon becomes apparent that Western (Euro-American) values are both embedded and dominant in the discourses of its theory and practice. Some write from and about different places and points of view and there is an emerging literature that is beginning to take up international and global perspectives. For example, Kalmanowitz and Lloyd's *Art Therapy and Political Violence* (2004) has offered critical views of place and context, addressing culturally sensitive practice in many parts of the world such as the Balkans, the 'Middle East', the Sudan, Northern Ireland, New York and South Africa.

Of particular, local significance to art therapy in Australia is *Art Therapy in Asia* (Kalmanowitz, Potash and Chan, 2012) that brings awareness of art therapy in this part of the world. It features art therapy practices that are informed by Asian philosophical approaches and traditions, exploring the particular issues encountered in therapeutic processes where the expression of personal conflicts and negative feelings is considered to be threatening to social harmony. Simultaneously local and not local, authors and editors from Britain and Australia have recently focused on *Art Therapy in the Early Years: Therapeutic Interventions with Infants, Toddlers and their Families* (Meyerowitz-Katz and Reddick, 2017). Here practices with particular client populations in different places continue to draw on Western psychoanalytic thinking about the role of art in art therapy, seeking to extend the foundational theoretical work of Joy Schaverien (1992) by shifting emphasis from the image to the art-making.

A number of authors have examined the influence of Western culture on art therapy practice, countering its dominance and offering critical perspectives on the themes of race, culture and gender (e.g. Campbell et al. 1999; Docktor, 1998; Gilroy, 1998; Gilroy and Hanna 1998; Hiscox and Calisch 1998; Hocoy 2002, 2006; Hogan 1997, 2002, 2012; Kalmanowitz, Potash and Chan, 2012; Kapitan 2015; Kaplan 2007, 2016; Lewis 1997; Linnell 2006, 2010; McNiff 1984; Moon 2006; Sajnani 2012; Sajnani, and Kaplan, 2012; Skaife 2001; Talwar, Iyer and Doby-Copeland 2004; Talwar 2010, 2015, 2016, 2017; Westwood and Linnell 2011). These art therapists question and challenge cultural assumptions, values and constructions. Drawing on *intersectionality*, they look at how oppressive structures operate unequal distributions of power across society.

*"Postcolonialism is a
theoretical approach
concerned with the impact
of colonisation and the
human consequences
of external control and
exploitation of native
people and their lands"*

Intersectionality is a sociological theory about how an individual can face threats of discrimination when their identities overlap a number of areas such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, disability etc. An intersectional approach considers social, cultural and historic frameworks in order to examine how power and privilege interact in our relationships. Through the theorisation of intersectionality, these multiple intersecting sites of oppression also become the ground for critique and resistance. A prominent author in this field is Talwar who, together with others, advocates the adoption of an intersectional perspective which challenges monolithic and unitary narratives and locates difference within the specific social and cultural experiences of individuals. As Talwar says, this is in order to “empower clients rather than pathologise the realities they cannot escape” (2015: 101). Echoing this view, Hocoy (2006) discusses an ‘invisible veil’ that art therapists may carry in their practices which prevents them from realising how they may perpetuate oppressions. Similarly Kapitan (2015) considers *ethnorelativism* as a critical, self-reflexive approach that enables art therapists to understand and work with cultural difference and guard against collusion in oppressive practices.

Segueing now towards the specificities of art therapy in Australia, it seems wrong to put aside the persistent fact of the dispossession of Aboriginal people and the ethical call this exerts for Australian art therapists.

Sheridan remembers how she turned to postcolonial theorist Couze Venn’s (2002) metaphor of ‘apprenticeship to the other’ to inform a collaborative approach to art therapy with Australian Aboriginal children who have been removed from their families as a consequence of transgenerational trauma. Her co-author and guide Galiindurra (Auntie Glendra) puts it this way:

You know, Sheridan, we’re working with third generation removed people. You look at the little faces of the little ones, say, in my care, and you think, “Oh God, her grandmother was in an institution, and she didn’t get to parent her children, and now the third generation of these kids are in care”... I mean, what do you say to an eight year old? Can you say, “It’s transgenerational grief and separation?” There isn’t one person in that family who hasn’t been affected, who isn’t grieving. Yeah, it makes you sad.

Galiindurra in Linnell, 2010: 156

[Sheridan tried to shorten this quotation but what can you take out without detracting from the enormity of the injustice?]

When we set out to explore the themes of aesthetics and postcolonialism in Australian art therapy we scarcely realised how closely this act of going out to find new intellectual and practice-led riches might mirror the colonising processes we sought to critique. How we might have mapped our desire for difference homogeneously across a complex landscape. How we might want the locals to dance their dance for us – to satisfy our yearning for the exotic. How loathe we might be to acknowledge that many of the fruits of transported art therapy might taste familiar to us after all. We would proffer the bright beads of publication while swaddling our reluctant discoveries in the infected blanket of Eurocentric theory.

But now, to the Australian literature ...

Partial perspectives on Australian art therapy

Gilroy and Hanna (1998) noted a peculiarity of Australian art therapy compared to other English speaking countries, in that the Australian profession appears to have had forerunners in the mid-twentieth century who did not in any obvious sense have followers. As noted earlier, John Henzell has described how the artist Guy Grey-Smith worked as an art therapist in a Perth hospital during the 1950s. Grey-Smith had contracted tuberculosis as a soldier during WWII and had subsequently engaged in art-making as part of his treatment under the guidance of the first, self-identified British art therapist, Adrian Hill (Henzell, 1997). Australian psychiatrist, Ainslie Meares (1957, 1958, 1960), who made extensive use of painting and modelling in his clinical work and theorised visual symbolisation as an expression of unconscious conflicts, has also been identified as a forerunner of art therapy in Australia (Junge, 1994; Henzell, this volume). However there is a relatively small body of published literature about art therapy in Australia and as yet no book-length account of its history. Perhaps there are legacies and trajectories yet to be uncovered.

Of the earlier literature, two pieces in particular, both by overseas art therapists who have taught in Australia, seek to provide an overview of the history, status and potential of Australian art therapy. There have clearly been developments in Australian art therapy in the eight to ten years since these papers were written, but they nevertheless offer a perspective both on Australian art therapy and how it is perceived by senior art therapists from countries with well-established professional and pedagogical institutions and substantial bodies of professional literature. The first was written by Michael Campanelli and Frances Kaplan (1996), both art therapy educators from the USA who taught on the Master of Art Therapy programme at Edith Cowan University in Perth, WA. The second was written by Andrea Gilroy, a British art therapist, and Margarete Hanna, a Canadian art therapist (1998), both of whom taught on the Master of Art Therapy at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) Nepean. Their chapter is based on a paper they presented at the ANATA conference in Perth in 1994, prior to the publication of Campanelli and Kaplan's article and, despite a two year gap in publication, there is a sense of dialogue and reciprocity between the two pieces. They also have in common a sensitivity to the authors' positions as influential 'outsiders' attempting to offer an overview and recommendations about Australian art therapy.

In 'Conflict and Culture in Australian Art Therapy', Gilroy and Hanna discuss Australian art therapy in the context of their knowledge of the histories of art therapy in the UK, Europe, USA and Canada. From this they conclude that art therapy, while manifesting differently in different cultures, survives and flourishes as a profession to the extent that it is able to recognise and tolerate conflict within its own ranks. Campanelli and Kaplan focus more on how Australian art therapy might challenge what the authors identify as the dominant Eurocentric tendencies of English and North American art therapies, by cultivating relationships with the diverse cultural traditions that are present in Australia

by virtue of its Indigenous population and its location in Asia. They note a potential in the critical perspectives that students bring with them to their art therapy education, attributing these to both the maturity and life experience of students, and to Australian cultural scepticism about the influence of more powerful Western nations. More recently, Jill Westwood and Sheridan Linnell who, respectively, have taught and continue to teach on the Master of Art Therapy at the University of Western Sydney, have offered an historical and current perspective on Australian art therapy as a rich hybridisation of influences and practices within a postcolonial context (Westwood and Linnell, 2011).

Meanwhile Australians, both local and expatriate, have made and continue to make a vigorous contribution to the international literature, beyond the scope of what can be discussed here. (Think Susan Hogan, Annette Coulter and Julia Meyerowitz-Katz to start with, as well as some of the contributors to the current book.) There are texts released by local and international publishers that describe art therapy work that has arisen from the particularities of our local systems and context, written by authors who do not wish to limit their relevance or appeal to that context. Marilyn Dennes and Sue Gilchrist's (2005) book on art therapy with people in aged care is an early example; more recently Sonia Stace (e.g. Stace, 2016) exemplifies an Australian art therapy practitioner making a vigorous contribution to the international literature from outside academia.

The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Arts Therapy (ANZJAT) was first published at the end of 2006. The first issue contains Annette Coulter's historical account of Australian art therapy, a detailed and 'eye-witness' view (Coulter, 2006). Coulter, one of the first professional art therapists to have worked in Australia (having trained in the UK), has been a central figure in the establishment and development of the local art therapy association and domestic training programs. Coulter's paper responded to a need for art therapists who live and work in Australia to reflect on the profession themselves. According to Coulter, the first Australian art therapists, who were generally trained in either the US or the UK "were caught up in a silent war between their parent nations" (8). Coulter (a family art therapist) maps the dynamics of family relationships onto the early days of art therapy in Australia, suggesting through her language and guiding metaphor that Australia was positioned in a similar way to a child in a family where the parents are in conflict. Coulter describes Australia prior to the inaugural ANATA conference in 1989 as an "art therapy desert".

The metaphor of a 'desert' is compelling. One of Sheridan's memories from her training is the suggestion that Freud would not have invented psychoanalysis if he had bicycled across the Simpson Desert. Perhaps, though, he would have invented a more horizontal, less individualising, de-territorialised – dare we say 'Deleuzian'? – account of the psyche and its relations. Nonetheless desert, as a parched, inhospitable place, sits in tension with Indigenous relations to country, even with European spiritual preoccupations with deserts as places of self-testing and discovery, as in Josephine Pretorius' chapter in this book.

Figure 6 *Multibake*. Sheridan Linnell (2017). Charcoal and ink sketch, torn and mounted on found baking paper.

Sheridan remembers drawing and painting with Josephine Pretorius and Suzanne Perry while on retreat at the Benedictine Abbey in Jamberoo. She couldn't take Mass because she was never confirmed. Raised by agnostics she remains a disbeliever, albeit one who engages in Buddhist meditation, but somehow she prayed. White hands reaching (praying?) toward the Antipodean sun...

Desert as emptiness is perhaps the metaphorical ghost of Terra Nullius played out in the difficulty of seeing what is t/here through a Euro-centric lens.

ANZJAT is a repository of accounts of art (and more recently arts) therapy work not only from Australia but from the wider region. The editors of ANZJAT, it is true, have so far all been Australians, but the geographical scope of the journal is wider than that of this book. *This begs a question: is an 'Australian art therapy' already an anachronism, too singular in its location and focus?* ANZJAT editors have shared a vision of the journal as innovative, arts-based, diverse and inclusive. This is partly echoed in a recent contribution by Annette Coulter to a handbook of art therapy, where art therapy 'down-under' in Australia and New Zealand is figured as "a tale of collaborative necessity, integrative orientation, and adaptation to local culture, as art therapists promote, expand, and apply their art therapy knowledge to local networks, systems, and culture", as well as a story of struggle for professional recognition (Coulter, 2016: 710).

Yet when Nadia Balatti and Patricia Fenner (2012) conducted a systematic review of the content of ANZJAT 2006–2011, they found a predominance of theory-driven single case studies, with a relative absence of rigorous research methodology on the one hand and client perspectives/voices on the other. Arguably the single case study is so naturalised in the art therapy literature that it is a primary instrument of reproducing the dominant assumptions of the field (Linnell, 2010). For Balatti and Fenner, a way forward would be for Australian and New Zealand art(s) therapists (noting that ANZJAT has, like ANZATA, recently expanded to include Singapore and Hong Kong) to more systematically adopt mixed method research. This is indeed necessary, although not the focus of the current book. Here we are more interested in what else is marginalised when universalist assumptions prevail within largely globalised accounts and even critiques of clinical art therapy practice. Although ANZJAT claims to be interested in this too, it is unclear whether a systemic review of the journal 2012–2016 would reveal anything different. Perhaps we need to pay attention to the ‘how’ as well the ‘what’ – to bring those elements of publication often relegated to the category of ‘production values’ to the fore – an emphasis that ANZJAT shares with this book.

This then, is a central paradox of this book, and possibly of art therapy in Australia and perhaps in many other places too. How do we as art therapists do ‘difference’ as well as talk about it? Or rather, how do we notice and account in detail for the difference that we already do? How do we do this when our underlying frameworks and theoretical antecedents continue to dominate and reconstitute us as ‘the same’? Not only this, but the systems and daily practices of knowledge and power, systems and practices in which professional art therapy ambivalently desires to become more embedded, require us to become more like, and prove ourselves in the same terms as, other health-related disciplines.

Meanwhile, the recent politics of art therapy in Australia circulate around a heated discussion as to whether the Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association (ANZATA) should merge with the Australian Creative Arts Therapy Association (ACATA). The most heated aspect of the debate is about something that ANZATA has already decided to adopt but which is still fiercely contested by some visual art therapists. This is a membership structure for ANZATA that mirrors the structure of ACATA by including and regulating a tiered membership system, with levels of membership beginning at baseline for those with associate diplomas taught at technical colleges (short courses with no prerequisite for an undergraduate degree) and progressing through to registered professional members with accredited Masters degrees who will exclusively be entitled to use the post-nominal AThR. At the point of writing, the sheer diversity of what is known as art therapy and art therapy education in Australia has become as much a battleground as a cause for celebration. Old and new worlds collide. Meanwhile Gilroy and Hanna’s (1998) warning resonates still: art therapy succeeds around the world to the extent that it can acknowledge and resolve its domestic conflicts.

This brief overview of some of the relevant art therapy literature underlines the significance and difficulty of shifting our gaze from the dominant discourses to a different place, one of mutual influence and infinite affirmation of differences. It shows the recursive relationship between difference and the reconstitution of the same, driven in both instances by necessity and desire. It shows how the struggle we have experienced as editors to compose the motley and precious assemblage that is this book is echoed elsewhere. It shows how art therapy in Australia, but not only in Australia, might open onto a number of possible futures.

One of the readers of this manuscript asked us: 'Why are you putting so much emphasis on Aboriginal Australian issues? If this is so important, you need to tell your readers why.'

One compelling reason is that we would have hoped for things to change since the late Pam Johnston wrote her paper, now a chapter in this book, but instead the gaps in the lives of the first people of Australia continue to be vast. In fact, recent statistics tell a story of largely worsening inequities. The inequalities of health and wellbeing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians have not reduced; this includes shorter life expectancy, higher rates of infant mortality, poorer health and lower levels of education and employment. To put it bluntly, Aboriginal people continue to die earlier and to be significantly poorer, sicker, less educated, more frequently arrested and imprisoned, more often subjected to violence and systematically less powerful than their non-Indigenous counterparts. This is so despite the status of Aboriginal people as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of country and their extraordinary resilience, generosity and contribution to national life, including the arts. As recently as 2016, we read how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are massively overrepresented in the criminal justice system of Australia. Aboriginal people represent only three per cent of the total population and yet:

- 28 per cent of all prisoners in Australia in 2015 were Aboriginal;
- 30 per cent of all incarcerated women in Australia in 2010 were Aboriginal; of incarcerated men, 24 per cent were Aboriginal;
- 48 per cent of juveniles in custody are Aboriginal;
- the imprisonment rates of Aboriginal women increased by 58.6 per cent between 2000 and 2010; for Aboriginal men, by 35.2 per cent.¹

These stark figures bring to the fore the gaps in the lives of the First People of Australia. We choose to again draw your attention to the life worlds of these Indigenous women and men as we struggle to respond to intrapsychic and social questions about how we can enable access to the healing arts in Australia. Key here is the concept of the relational. We offer this book in the hope that our readers will consider its relational ethic of care and our complicity in advancing, or not, the healing that we all aspire to.

¹ <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/law/aboriginal-prison-rates>, retrieved 1 November 2016)

"What's Indigenous petroglyphing doing in my life?"

Carving or Engraving My Self into This Story

Tarquam

I had never intended to come out as having any Indigenous heritage and maybe I never will accept this possibility but there is a chance it still might happen for me. In early 2000s in an Art Therapy supervision session with Carmen Lawson – a joint author to the chapter in this collection – I had an awakening which changed my way of being. Carmen was around 61 when she began the Art Therapy course and always struck me as a loving and gentle kind of person. Her life had been hard and she is Murri (Queensland regional area) woman. I also taught her daughter Rihi at the same time in Perth. The family became important to me.

The boundaries are blurred as the multiple meanings coalesced in our work together. Two or three hours a fortnight we would 'yarn' about her work. It was one on one and group art therapy supervision, as mandated in the then ANATA code of supervision. I loved working with Carmen and my supervision group of eight art therapists in the Edith Cowan program. Carmen was alive and her vibrancy held the space in our one on one and in the group work and her presence made the work enriching, exciting and buoyant. We stumbled as she at times naively wove the fabric of her identity, debriefing on the art works she had brought from her clinical placements. These were around dispossession, alienation and Indigenous young people being incarcerated in WA far more than the white population. On more than one occasion there was a level of sophistication that I stumbled to accommodate. I knew she was talking an epistemology that belonged elsewhere. Then in a moment in a clinical one-on-one supervision mid-session she announced: "Nerreman knows your mother's people in Tasmania." This sentence was to change my way of knowing and the beginning of a self-discovery journey that is still being continued.

At this juncture of my life I had been living in Perth for ten or more years but was born in Tasmania. It was literally and metaphorically as far away from Tassie as was possible but it is still Australia. I was stunned by Carmen's pronouncement: "Nerreman knows your mother's people in Tasmania." The knowing of my mother's 'people' was to be my own realisation of a sort. But I was in a clinical supervision session with Carmen as she valiantly pronounced this unknown meaningfulness. We were working with her clients' needs from the Aboriginal Counselling Centre where she was undertaking her clinical placements and I had been taught to 'hold the hermetic space' – the temenos; vase bene clausum.

"Carmen, we are here to talk about the work of you with your art therapy clients," I directed in a focused and defensive manner. Again, she went off supervision: "Yes, I sent Nerreman a picture of you and she knows your people ... Nerreman is in Launceston and she is an artist." Befuddled and now feeling uncomfortable I said something like, "Let's talk about this later ... when the session is over ..."

That session ended and I was stunned. In a dazed manner I wandered into the tunnels of my own memories. I could not believe what I had heard. I knew the matriarchal connections between Indigenous Australian women were very rich and they shared so many stories. Davina Woods (another co-author of the chapter in this collection) and I talked a lot around that too. Yarning. I saw the picture that Carmen had shared and it was from the 'net'; and subsequently I went on to meet Nerreman and discuss this process of unfolding one's sense of who you are.

It so happened my father's cousin was living in Perth and she was from Papua New Guinea. On the first time of meeting her in forty years we went to the Queen's Hotel in Beaufort Street, Mt Lawley and over lunch Margaret Dwyer and another distant cousin were talking. Margaret was born to my father's side – she was what we irreverently called half-caste, being Papuan and having a white father and a Papuan mother. I first met her as a twelve year old in Tasmania. Sitting calmly over lunch she asked me in an assured but unannounced manner: "Did you know your mother was Indigenous?" Again I was stunned. I said I did not. She stated that when she first met my mother she knew this instantly. She was recounting her physical features and impassively asked me had I considered this? Beyond any doubt I was now seriously bewildered. My mother had died a year or two before this so I had only my father to ask. Sure enough his response was: "Yes, there is some story about your mother's heritage"

Genealogical web-based processes came to the fore and I worked with family historians but we always came up to the same end of the road. Mary Brown, five generations ago was my great great grandmother and yes she was in all probability an Indigenous woman. But who am I? Who are the people that inform our world and work as art therapists in Australia? I am still to fully claim the space of belonging as a person with researchers taking the lead in the field of 'how' one is identified in Australia as Indigenous.

Her/his/storical legacies

Jill

Trust is at the heart of the therapeutic encounter. Trust in the relationship; trust in the process; and for art psychotherapists, trust in the art.

The evolution of this book has been complex, layered and relatively lengthy. We have followed a trail over time and at various stages have made art work in order to progress our thinking. Edging towards completion, one day in the summer of 2016 I visited Andy in her new home. I found these flints and bricks, displaced in the renovations to her house and studio and used them to grapple with the themes and content of the book. The use of text and object, construction, geology and territory became connected in this exploration in ways that resonate with the histories and legacies of art therapy in Australia.

Foucault (1986, in Foucault and Miskowiec) has influenced my thinking here when, in his work, *Heterotopia* – an exploration of space and time – he spoke of nets and muddles. This project has been like a well-used fishing net with all its web-like connections and entangled links that gathers together and catches materials and debris from the deep in order to develop our thinking, making and writing.

Figure 7 *Power – Territory: Art Therapy*. Jill Westwood (2016).
Assemblage of flints, net and found objects on floor tiles.

Figure 8 Art therapy: taking a postcolonial, aesthetic turn. Jill Westwood (2016). Assemblage of flints, bricks and paint on floor tiles.

Art therapy's histories and legacies, internationally and locally, flow and meander throughout this book but one particular thread can be found in the chapters by Henzell, Edwards, Eisdell, Thomson and by me, Jill (Westwood). These five chapters' address, in their different ways, aspects of her/hi/historical relevance and weave distinctive personal threads in the 'heterotopic net' of Australian art therapy. They reveal a genealogical flow which enables consideration of the interplay of the different discourses within Australian art therapy: the dominant ones and the other, subaltern ones that are making their rhizomatic way through the concrete.

Above: Figure 9 *Heterotopic net 1*. Jill Westwood (2016). Assemblage of flints, net and found objects on floor tiles. Below: Figure 10 *Heterotopic net 2*. Jill Westwood (2016). Assemblage of flints, net and found objects on floor tiles.

POWER

ART

FRIEND

Unfolding fields continued

Jill, Sheridan, Andy, Tarquam

Reading this book is not meant to be arduous; rather, we would like it to be akin to walking into a gallery and experiencing a space – a space where your desire is awoken.

An immersion in the visual occurs not only in a gallery but also in an art therapy encounter where participants respond as images and words resonate with knowledge and experience, both personal and professional. This is the nature of the encounter we have in mind for you, our reader, as you make your way through this book – one that foregrounds the visual, one that does not always privilege text.

During our editing, writing and art-making we have taken a great deal of time and traversed many landscapes, each with its own valency that will be experienced differently by fellow itinerants travelling through these pages. We have tried to capture multiple perspectives so that the palette is neither

pale nor bland, invoking a spectrum of colour and a play with and between texts and images. Tenses change, voices morph and formality gives way to informality. This bricolage or melange in a narrative style is intentional. We ask that you gambol with the pictures, savour them, and wander through the text in any way you please – knowing that you may have the whole book or merely a chapter or two in your hands – letting the voice, art and self-hoods of the writers emerge. This is a big ask of you and somewhat of a risk for us editors. Indeed, the circumscribed knowing that a more definitive, chronological account provides would be easier to navigate, and simpler to write.

This book offers a partial assemblage of perspectives and voices from Australia. It documents some home-grown theories and practices and demonstrates the assimilation of approaches developed in other places. We hope it will assist the exploration of what constitutes art therapy in Australia as it emerges from a melee of received ideas and local developments, all within the context of the deep heritage of country. We hope it also speaks to a wider, international conversation, writing and image-making as we are both with and against prevailing discourses.

At this point we feel compelled to respectfully acknowledge that the cultures, values, attitudes and stories in these chapters are located in histories that were harmful and disrespectful. Similarly, terms used to refer to Indigenous Australian People(s) or Australia's First People – our preferred terms that refer to Australia's pre-invasion history and recognise the colonising language that was and remains a vehicle for the expression of discrimination and prejudice – while they may not be appropriate now are of their time. Given that this book has been some fifteen years in the making, we have decided to retain the terms 'black', 'white' or 'aborigine' only as they serve to show the diminishing of identity that prevailed.

Many of these chapters attempt to disturb the relationship between the written and the visual in an art therapy book by overlaying words and images, foregrounding visuality in a manner that is surprisingly absent from the art therapy canon. The materiality of this book – whether digital or printed – the book as something that *matters*, is brought into focus. This is how text and image relate in contemporary art – and contemporary art, so alive in Australia, alongside and informed by Aboriginal practices of mark-making and ceremony, is for the editors of this book a central inspiration. For us, a book about Australian art therapy *matters* – not only as a reflection of the field but as a refractive apparatus through which we create new lines of flight for art therapy, both in Australia and elsewhere. We can only do this by approaching the book as material and emplaced; we cannot deterritorialise that which is not located anywhere to begin with.

As suggested earlier, our profession has talked endlessly and interestingly about the relationship between therapy and art – variously hierarchising that relationship, celebrating it, theorising it, even deconstructing it. The art therapy literature is richly discursive. All that is left to do, it would seem, is to produce a book that *does something different*. A book that decolonises the empire of the illustrated text, that does not proceed in an orderly fashion, and

which releases the 'list of illustrations' from their subaltern status so that they can dance with the words in both material and virtual domains. We do this kind of thing at conferences, in galleries, studios and even in our art therapy rooms. Is there something (beyond the undoubted constraints of including multiple colour images in print media) that holds authors of art therapy books in thrall to the conventions of representation?

If a gaol break from behind the bars of the captivating discourses of realism, representation, professionalisation and the like has to come from some *where* then Australia seems well placed to do so by virtue not only of its colonial heritage but also of its strange situation of having a vibrant art therapy community that operates diffusely and almost undercover. We thought back to 2007 when Andy presented a talk – or was it a performance? – to the art therapy community in Sydney and the Master of Art Therapy students at what was then the UWS. Taking passages from Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* that were immersed in a blue wash, Andy messed with our fantasies of becoming a state-registered profession as we, a group of Australian art therapists, grew from childhood into adolescence and adulthood, warning us to be careful what we wished for. Meanwhile Jill, Sheridan, Suzanne and Josephine – editors and/or authors of the current text – drew and sculpted in response. Images of people in boats and of Josephine kissing an Australian art therapist made of chicken wire, inhabit this book and indeed have introduced you to it (the cover and pages 1, 12–13). In the background, Suzanne's unwitting choice of music added to the undercurrent of anxiety as it was brought into consciousness through a cover version of Split Enz's '*Six months in a leaky boat*'.

Yet Australian art therapy has stayed afloat without making it to, or even any longer aiming for, that shoreline (sure-line) of state registration. We do not wish to romanticise the seemingly endless emergent and uncertain condition of art therapy in Australia, where there is a nationally endorsed Framework for the Arts in Health that includes art therapy and you can find an art therapist in almost every nook and cranny across a wide range of fields, but there are still very few named and stable positions as art therapists. Yet it seems to us that this very uncertainty and lack of regulation has allowed for a rhizomatic spread of ideas and a productive diversity of practice that is under-represented in the literature to date.

We hope that you will discover some of that vigour in the pages of this book, illuminating its contents and its discontents, and animating its materiality and its flights of imagination.

We also hope – having moved beyond a desire for regulation but not for recognition – not only to put Australian art therapy on the map but to be map-makers, and even to navigate by the stars.

Figure 11 *Where knowing and not knowing touch.* Sheridan Linnell, Suzanne Perry, Josephine Pretorius and Westwood, (2007). Installation (light-box and mixed media, ink, watercolour and collage).

The chapters

Andy

We begin in Chapter 1 with boats and crossings, borders and welcomes, colonisers and refugees. Allen, Rumbold, Schnaedelbach, Woodford and Tann encounter each other in a visual conversation that asks who is, and who is not, an art therapist in the places of contemporary Australia.

This is wrong. So begins a yarn about art and the First Peoples of Australia, told by three therapists/artists/educators who share an Indigeneity. In Chapter 2, Lawson, Woods and McKenna wonder where and how the dispossession, loss and grief of First Peoples' separation from country and culture will be addressed. Can art (therapy?) be a de-colonising force?

The desert. The land is alive but it's a thin place where boundaries dissolve. One can be still, one can wait, but there's the call of the wild, a far horizon and being emptied out, all in Pretorius, Chapter 3.

A personal memoir and the beginnings of a profession are described by Henzell in Chapter 4. He explores the many imaginings of Australia, from their earliest incised manifestations and an immigrant's Arcadian dream to boisterous larrikinism and vivid modernism. So many stories and pictures, some in a fragile collection constrained by the clinical gloss that has colonised the psychological terra nullius of the Great Southern Land.

Bridges between some where and some place are negotiated in a journey towards a profession and becoming an Australian, so writes Edwards in Chapter 5. Take something local and something imported and mix them together; add pragmatism and a healthy dose of resilience; season with conflict; sprinkle with scepticism and add a dash of iconoclasm and you may make something uniquely Australian.

Trees and maps and creatures combine in Westwood's visual, autoethnographic account of migration in Chapter 6. Mapping art therapy education in Australia lays bare the bones of its becoming. Flesh grows on the bones but skeletons rattle in the cupboard.

Perry paints her way into the heart of theory, feeling and making in Chapter 7, encountering hybrid creatures who witness horror and do impossible things. A fairytale about nameless dread and Abject Art.

The dominant discourse of Evidence-Based Practice remains in the contemporary sites of art therapy in Australian cancer care, explored in Chapter 8. Nuanced, visual, relational and emotional, Thomson immerses her self in an airless space where time is marked and trauma is honoured.

Four white women perform and make themselves in the intersections of childhood memory and imagination. In Chapter 9, art therapy educators Linnell, Perry, Pretorius and Westwood become themselves, remembering delicate, precious things.

Broken circles and broken children. Spirit? Culture? Country? Lost. All lost. This, says Moss in Chapter 10, is what happens when Western developmental discourse dominates the care of Aboriginal children and Indigenous beliefs and practices are ignored. Extended family and community can connect and protect from the likes of Erikson but "Holy hell! Someone should probe him and tell him a different story."

Talking (about) you, (not) talking (to) me: Chapter 11 and Johnston on the dispossession and trauma of people and country by observing others who construct the history, culture and education of Aboriginal people according to another time and place. The ongoing effects of colonisation are made visible through statistics and stories of incarceration whilst imagery from some where confirms living Aboriginal identity and contemporary Aboriginal society.

In Chapter 12, Linnell bathes us in an ethnodrama of burgundy, yellow and green. This is a play within an organisation about the work of team-building: a drama and a painting that is not full of noise.

Back and forth between phantasy and reality, aliveness and deadness, father and son, painter and sitter/s, Britain and Australia: such is the route travelled by Eisdell in Chapter 13. Conversations over time are developed and drawn into a visual language of the heart. They go to prison and liberate an incarcerated man.

We end in the spaces and places of art therapy. Fenner, in Chapter 14, researches a place-attentive practice that takes account of the material and expressive assemblage that is an art therapy room. Here the lifelong search for objects and places to love is embraced through an emplaced discourse where the triangular relationship is not the only therapeutic relationship in the room.

And finally

Tarquam, Andy

How do these trajectories of belonging, space and time intersect? What do you hope to learn by reading this Introduction, these chapters and our subsequent reflections? Stop. Think awhile before you read on.

The boat that sits on the cover of this book is a metaphor. It drifts until it is sailed. It waits at the whim of the weather; it waits for your hand on the tiller. Then it can be read purposefully and meaningfully and can take you from one place to another by whatever route you choose.

In the period of making this book we, in accordance with the metaphor at the heart of our art, have moved from one form of knowing to another. We have tried to capture the sense of space, place and belonging that is central to art therapy, and to the human conditions with which we work, in the particular context that is Australia. It is our hope that you are able to reach into the world of this work, in its place, and see it for yourself, threading your meaning and your yarn into its big story.

There are no certainties here and the lack of assuredness in these accounts may leave you wanting more. Some will be satisfied with an image or an allusion – as we have been – others will not. The book aims to be an evocation, one that will lead you to wonder about what we did in Australia when and as the world of art therapy emerged here and elsewhere. Not unlike the looking and listening work of the therapist, deep listening – or *dadirri*, as the First People of Australia would say – requires that we readers, viewers and editors wait, sit, hold, wonder. There may then be an insight; your insight; your meaning. The book you are reading on a screen or holding in your hands is a transitional artefact made by us but the captain of this vessel is now you. As it leaves our care it sails away with you to other places and may move you through the rabbit hole to another world view.

This work and your world coalesce here. We offer the compass, the terrain and the ocean for you to traverse, together with images and narratives that evoke then and now. It was, and is, like this for the people you are reading about. We wonder, and hope you will too, what will art therapy be like next, in this place and space that is Australia?

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