Griffith University

The exegesis and co-authorship: collaboration between supervisors and research students

Nigel Krauth, Chris Bowman and Zoe Fraser

Abstract:

Issues associated with collaborative writing and publishing between supervisors and their students revolve around the equal, or unequal, participation of the co-authors in the conception, writing and funding of the work produced. Significant to candidature co-authorship are: co-writing in the academic context generally; co-writing as a social process; and co-writing in the postgraduate context specifically. This article examines co-writing in the supervisory space and in particular the doctoral exegesis as a site suitable for fostering co-writing between students and staff members. Many benefits derive from co-authoring, and especially for doctoral students after graduation: employability.

Bibliographical notes:

Professor Nigel Krauth is head of the writing program at Griffith University, Australia. He has published novels, stories, essays, articles and reviews. His research investigates creative writing processes and the teaching of creative writing. He is the General Editor of *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses*. His latest book is *Creative Writing and the Radical: Teaching and Learning the Fiction of the Future* (2016).

Dr Christopher Bowman has a PhD from Griffith University, Australia. He lectures and tutors undergraduate writing courses, and works as a freelance academic editor. His refereed publications have appeared in *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses* (2009, 2010) and *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing* (2017).

Dr Zoe Fraser has a PhD from Griffith University, Australia where she lectures and tutors undergraduate writing courses. Her publications include a refereed article in *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses* (2012) and a story paired with Frank Moorhouse in *Review of Australian Fiction* (2013).

Keywords:

Creative writing – Co-authorship – Academic collaboration – Student-supervisor co-writing – Employability

Introduction

In the school where the authors of this article work, the requirements for award of a creative writing PhD include 'at least one peer reviewed output accepted for publication' (Griffith University 2017, section 8.5). This output 'must be produced under supervision and during the period of candidature' and 'may be a journal article, conference publication, book or book chapter, original creative work, performance or exhibition' (Griffith Graduate Research School 2017). During supervision, where 'one of the objectives' of the milestones is 'to assist candidates to publish', the supervisor is expected to: provide 'advice on suitable publications specific to [the] research discipline'; be the main contact 'to assist candidates to publish their research'; and 'verify [to the University] that the publication meets the candidature requirement'. An area of advice particularly noted in these guidelines is the supervisor's ability to warn against 'predatory' publishers (Griffith Graduate Research School 2017). In the six years since this policy was introduced, the relationship between supervisor and candidate has changed subtly, due to the fact that supervision and candidature are no longer focused solely on producing a doctoral submission, they are also aimed at academic publishing training.

As part of the process of encouraging publishing at our university, a key idea has emerged: that supervisors in the Humanities will take seriously the option to co-publish with their doctoral candidates. This fits within a frame provided by other disciplines where co-publishing is an expected outcome among colleagues, and includes supervised students. Bruce Macfarlane, co-director of the Centre for Higher Education at the University of Southampton, reported in *Times Higher Education*: 'In education, for example, multiple authorship is now the norm. *Educational Studies*, a leading journal in the field, had an average of 1.13 authors per paper in 1975; by 2014, it was 2.76' (2015). In the sciences, the practice has long existed. As Glen Wright observes, also in *Times Higher Education*, a 2015 research project by CERN, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, resulted in a scientific paper with 5,154 authors – 'the first nine pages contain substantive discussion of the findings; the following 24 are dedicated to listing the authors and their affiliations' (2017).

A recent article by Mark Hayter and Roger Watson titled 'Supervisors are Morally Obliged to Publish with their PhD Students' addresses aspects of co-publication. The authors are professors in the Faculty of Health Science at the University of Hull. They write:

> We have worked in two universities where PhD supervisors publishing with their students has been a contentious issue. The arguments against are scrupulously ethical. They include the claim that PhD projects are the students' work, and that academics should not see their doctoral students as a production line for publications. (2017)

Hayter and Watson go on to discuss not the possibility of predatory publishers, but predatory supervisors, a topic regularly referred to in the sciences (see later discussion):

> But are PhD supervisors who want to publish with their students really predators? We contend that they are not. We believe that supervisors have a right to be included as co-authors on their students' publications. Moreover, they have a moral responsibility to

> help their students to publish, promote and defend their work. And if supervisors have made a substantial contribution to a project, then failure to acknowledge them as an author removes their obligation to stand by the work in the public domain. (2017)

These and other issues associated with collaborative publishing between supervisors and students revolve around the equal, or unequal, participation of the co-authors in the conception, writing and funding of the work involved. Our article examines in particular the doctoral exegesis as a site suitable for fostering and triggering co-writing between students and staff members.

We are aware that, for a student, writing an article with a supervisor in the Creative Writing discipline can be inspiring, but it may involve compromises. The student might need to be willing to concur (or concede if at first of a different mind) with the supervisor; might need to have her/his own thinking and writing influenced by the supervisor's ideas; and might need to write *into* those ideas. Provided that the research each performs is not contradictory, this process lends to building on a notion and finding ways to explain it better and more authoritatively. The writing process becomes a conversation between people who speak with a similar voice (that legion voice of academic writing) in respect to an essay's effect as something heard.

Not all student/supervisor collaborations will straight away find a meeting of minds and a shared scholarly voice. The relationship between supervisor and student, and also between student and the discipline, can feel daunting for an emerging scholar. How can the student who hasn't yet been awarded their PhD think their ideas are unique enough to be considered for publication? Or are even worthwhile? Early career academics – even those with tenured positions – in our experience say the feeling of insignificance 'never goes away'. Doubting the value of one's academic writing, although such writing is imperative to maintaining an academic career, exists in the competitive world of university writing.

To co-write an article with a supervisor can alleviate some of this uncertainty for the student. A writing relationship can be developmental for both parties while maintaining the essence of the supervisory relationship: the sharing of ideas, the incorporation of different perspectives, the working to strengths, the creation of momentum in producing work, the debate and discourse between two scholars attempting to share and build a vision – all these can increase the trust and respect that in many candidates' cases is available, while also transitioning to a new space of two colleagues collaborating. There may be in the relationship the added benefit of the co-author / supervisor's experience and knowledge, but co-writing is of value to both parties, while particularly beneficial for the emerging scholar who gains thereby confidence in their ideas and their academic writing practice.

Results of an informal survey

The authors undertook an informal written survey[1] at the symposium of the Writers Research Network (WRN) held at the University of the Sunshine Coast in July 2017. (The WRN is a collective of creative writing staff and postgraduates from four universities in South East Queensland.) The survey was undertaken in a general session

of the symposium. The participants were not warned beforehand about taking part. Respondents comprised 19 participants from 4 universities – 6 were permanent staff (with a total of 39 current supervisions, mainly doctoral) and 13 were postgraduate students.[2]

The survey document asked 7 questions about the experience of collaborative writing in the context of university postgraduate degrees and the ways in which it was encouraged. 10 of the 19 respondents (53%) said yes to Question 1: they had been encouraged to write collaboratively. 5 of these were staff members, representing 83% of staff present. 5 were students, representing 38% of their cohort. These 5 students were all in the first year of their postgraduate study (representing 83% of first years). Not one of the remaining students (2 in their second year, 2 in third year and 3 just finished) said yes, they had been encouraged to collaborate. From these results, there is a strong and surprising suggestion that collaborative writing between supervisor and student is an idea only recently entering the ambit of the supervisory relationship in Creative Writing.

On the other hand, it was perhaps equally surprising that one of the staff had not been encouraged to write and publish collaboratively at all. Among the others, as per Question 2, the most likely person to encourage a staff member to collaborate was a colleague (3 said this), perhaps from another university. 2 said their principal supervisor had encouraged them when they were enrolled in their own doctorate. In answer to Question 3, 4 staff said they had co-authored more than 5 times. And Question 4 revealed that 100% of staff involved in co-authoring were doing so with a colleague/s in their own faculty. 60% of them had also co-authored with a colleague/s in another university. Only one said they co-authored with a student/s. The student responses to Question 4 reflected this: only 4 of the 13 students said they had co-authored, 3 of these (23%) with their principal supervisor.

Question 5 asked about the kind of work being co-authored. All 5 staff had co-authored both creative works and academic works. All 4 students had co-authored only academic works, with one of those students indicating creative work as well. For Question 6, which asked those who had not yet written collaboratively what kind of work they would like to co-author, students gave a range of responses, the most popular being that they wanted to collaborate on both creative and academic work (50% said this). 2 of the 10 indicated creative only, 2 indicated academic only, and 1 was unsure.

In written answers to Question 7 – 'Do you think co-authorship is or would be useful to you? Why?' – students who had been positively encouraged to write collaboratively, and had subsequently engaged in it (33% of the cohort), said for example:

- [It allows us to] learn from each other's writing / creative process.
- [It gives us] better chances of getting published (if the co-author has already been published several times).
- [It is] a way to position and give a context to your ideas and work.
- [With it] you not only get a different perspective on a subject, but you learn from others' experience and insight. I love coming at something from two points of view.

Also in reply to this question, students who had not been positively encouraged to write collaboratively, and had not engaged in it (67% of the cohort), said for example:

- Yes – [it would provide] more publishing opportunities to build up publication record before graduation. And possibly greater guidance in putting together an academic article for the first time.
- Perhaps collaboration would allow further learning and observation of another's process and extension of understanding how publication works.
- Yes, because it would give me the opportunity to work with others and benefit from shared knowledge.
- [There are] multiple reasons: 1. to [avoid] insular writing – improvement for all parties and the writing itself; 2. the social and idea-sharing aspect; [and] 3. a foot-in-the-door for understanding publishing processes.

In our survey, approximately one-third of students had engaged in collaborative academic writing, and two-thirds had not. But all said they favoured the collaborative process as a means to develop their academic careers. While not surprising, it is notable that all present saw the benefits of co-authoring, and could list (at short notice) several ideas where collaborative writing would be an advantage, both in the immediate candidature situation and after graduation.

We stress again the smallness of the sample and the fact that participants from just four universities were involved. Nevertheless, the survey provided us with insights into what our colleagues and peers are doing as supervisors and candidates in nearby Creative Writing schools.

The view from the sciences: 'different norms'

The informal survey confirmed for us the thinking across our own school where the ready answer to the question about perceived value of co-authorship is always positive, even if as colleagues we don't often follow through with collaborative writing. The recent history of co-writing in the sciences provides more nuanced responses. On the negative side, it is noted that the situation can be exploited. The opportunity for the supervisor to profit from the student's research indicates the vulnerability of research students and their projects to rapacious, publication-hungry supervisors, and the extent to which exploitation is built into the system (see e.g. Reis 2000, Woolston 2002, Musoba 2008, Birkhead 2008, Martin 2013, Stearns 2017). A selection of titles of articles on the topic indicates the problems: 'Countering Supervisor Exploitation' (Martin 2013), 'Writing Across Power Lines: Authorship in Scholarly Collaborations' (Musoba 2008); 'When a Mentor Becomes a Thief' (Woolston 2002).

In their classic work *Effective Teaching in Higher Education* (1988) Brown and Atkins characterised the supervisor-student relationship in a number of ways – including 'Colleague [to] Colleague' and 'Friend [to] Friend'. But more significantly they placed supervisor and student in the roles of 'Director [to] Follower / Master [to] Servant / Guru [to] Disciple / [and] Expert [to] Novice' (2005: 121). In spite of the 'colleague' and 'friend' equalities mentioned, the key point for us in this 30-year-old schematic is

the *separation* of roles which reflects hierarchies and power relationships still prevalent in the university system, particularly in the sciences. In 2000 Richard Reis (a Stanford engineering professor) gave the following advice to science students:

> Most graduate students who publish do so as co-authors on articles with more senior researchers and faculty members. This is fine. Be open to sharing credit with others, even if you feel you have made a disproportionate contribution to the research. Contributions can be made in different ways and at different levels. (2000)

The veiling of the power differential and its consequences in the language of this paragraph is instructive (if not alarming). Reis goes on to say:

> Since PhD dissertations, by definition, represent an original contribution to the field by the student, it stands that most papers resulting from such dissertations should have the graduate student as the first author. / However, different norms do exist within different disciplines with respect to whose names appear as authors and in what order. In some cases, the lab director's name goes on every paper, says Donald Kennedy, editor of *Science*. "In genetics and microbiology, for example, things tend to be 'shared' and the director of the laboratory is almost always on the list of authors even if he or she did no direct work on the project," he says. (2000)

Co-authorship in these cases takes on a new dimension: it involves one 'co-author' not writing anything at all. More recently, Stephen C Stearns (a Yale professor of ecology and evolutionary biology) gives the following advice:

> Co-author a paper with someone who has more experience. Approach a professor who is working on an interesting project and offer your services in return for a junior authorship. He'll [sic] appreciate the help and will give you lots of good comments on the paper because his [sic] name will be on it. (2017)

The situation described here (by deceptive and heavily-loaded language) involves, at best, a supervisor giving editorial advice but getting first authorship. At worst, it reveals the continuing rampant patriarchy in parts of the university system. In some science departments, doctoral students are expected to publish every chapter of their dissertation as a refereed article as they go, each carrying their supervisor's name as first author. 'Slave' status is a recognised concept for science PhD students (Martin 2013, Wilhite 2014) – which makes the 'Master [to] Servant' line in Brown and Atkins' 30-year-old list still relevant. Tim Birkhead, professor of behavioural ecology at Sheffield University, states:

> As science becomes more competitive and the rewards from cheating increase, the risks of having ideas stolen increase. Certain disciplines are notorious: my medical colleagues tell me that no one in their field ever discusses an idea in public unless it has been accepted for publication, or is published. (2008)

In Creative Writing, things are more rational, it seems, and better based on ideas of equality. We do not have institutionalised exploitation of doctoral students' research. But, with supervisors now urged to change how they treat their candidates' writing-in-progress – asked to intervene more seriously on the university's behalf in the student's publishing output – will things change? Supervisor and student co-writing (it is

purported in our school, at least) increases the likelihood that the student will deliver the mandatory refereed work. But will it also increase the risk of 'routine theft' and 'disputes over authorship' which in the sciences can result in litigation (Woolston 2002)?

Strategies for co-authorship

Collaborative writing has been studied across a range of academic disciplines (see e.g. Lunsford and Ede 1992, Lowry et al. 2004, Ritchie and Rigano 2007, Lassig et al. 2009, Onrubia and Engel 2009, Speedy and Wyatt 2014). There is not space here to provide a full account of discoveries made, so we will be selective. Most pertinent to candidature co-authorship are, we suggest: co-writing in the academic context generally; co-writing as a social process; and co-writing in the postgraduate context specifically.

Co-writing in the academic context

Lunsford and Ede, in the early 1990s, considered academic collaborative writing newly important in the context of technological change and multidisciplinary diversity. In suggesting that the nature of research practices would be defined by new forms of communication, they stated: 'we must find ways of describing – and valuing – forms of collective or collaboratively generated and electronically disseminated knowledge, knowledge that will not easily fit into our old forms of individual intellectual property' (1992: ix). They predicted: 'We urgently need to find ways to acknowledge diversity and draw on its strengths in building models of collaboration' (1992: viii). The shift required 'a multivocal, multiplicitous, collaborative writer/text' (1992: 143).

Lowry et al., in a 2004 study that included business, government, engineering, military and computer studies, found that academic co-writing

> is a critical form of communication … despite its complexities … If properly performed, [it] can be more effective than single-author writing, and this explains its heavy use in education and industry … [Its] focus on teamwork around a common objective is a critical definitional point [especially in interdisciplinary contexts]. (95)

More recently, having reviewed the 'how to' literature for academic writers, Badenhorst and Xu concluded that academic writing and publishing

> is tied to subject-positions within the discourses we write, to publishing access and inequities and to the way we, and the disciplines we write for, view knowledge … [In this context] we need literacy brokers, mentors, colleagues and writing partners to help us negotiate a successful path. Successful writing is not done alone. (2016: 13)

Co-writing as a social process

Lowry et al. emphasised the importance of social activity and collegiality as requirements for, and outcomes of, co-authorship:

> [Collaborative writing] is an iterative and social process that involves a team … that negotiates, coordinates, and communicates during the creation of a common document. The potential scope of [collaborative writing] goes beyond the more basic act of joint composition to include the likelihood of pre- and post-task activities, team formation, and planning. Furthermore, based on the desired writing task, [it] includes the possibility of many different writing strategies, activities, document control approaches, team roles, and work modes. (2004: 72, 74)

This analysis shows how the document production phase – the putting of words onto screen – is but one step in a broad constellation of activities. 'Document production' is not described here solely in terms of drafting, editing and joint writing strategies, as might be expected, but rather in terms of the activities that support them: 'Researching, Socializing, Communicating, Negotiating, Coordinating, Monitoring, Rewarding … [and] Recording' (Lowry et al. 2004: 73). The writing process breaks down to: 'Brainstorming ideas, Converging on brainstorming, Outlining, Drafting, Reviewing, Revising [and] Copy editing' (2004: 84).

Thus a study that ranges across a variety of academic disciplines very different from Creative Writing ends up in territory familiar to us. Writing is writing, no matter where it is done. The production of research documents in fields as diverse as computer studies, business, government, engineering, the military – and Creative Writing – boils down to writing processes which involve sharing of activities that are themselves significantly shared across disciplines.

Co-writing in the postgraduate context

While studies of academic co-writing have focused on staff (faculty) writing together, less research has targeted research students writing collaboratively, or writing with their supervisors. A useful paper by students titled 'Writing Together, Learning Together: The Value and Effectiveness of a Research Writing Group for Doctoral Students' (Lassig et al. 2009), is based on a Research Writers Group (RWG) at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) comprising PhD students supervised by a single staff member. Among its concluding comments, the paper says:

> A major constraint to successful production of a doctoral dissertation is *being a novice scholarly writer*. Overall, the value and effectiveness of the RWG lies in its potential to improve students' writing knowledge, strategic processing, and address individual interests. By complementing existing supervision processes and other research training processes, it can contribute to a more successful doctoral experience through the development of capable scholarly writers. (Lassig et al. 2009)

Supervisors can easily forget how 'novice' emerging researchers are. Research students today move swiftly from the relatively innocuous world of honours or masters to the dramatic world of the doctorate. Supervisory attitudes tend to the idea that new researchers have been accepted on merit and should not need their hands held. Anecdotal evidence suggests otherwise. Lassig et al. go on to analyse the importance of the supervisor to the RWG:

> the group facilitator should be experienced and proficient in the domain (writing), have the relevant knowledge, processing strategies and motivational characteristics, and be able to provide a range of explorative opportunities that are personally interesting and stimulating for students… It may be that these criteria can be met by one person (as in our case), or by a "community of experts". (2009)

These suggestions place a considerable burden of responsibility on supervisors, although in the RWG the students too are responsible for 'a supportive climate' created between themselves and with their supervisor: 'Our group developed a trusting, confidential and respectful forum where we engaged in creative, collaborative process of "writing to learn" and "learning to write"' (Lassig et al. 2009). While co-writing among research students, or with their supervisors, involves ideas attached to Group Dynamics and Communities of Practice too complex for us to elaborate upon in this article, the outcome of the QUT students' experience and *growth* was clear:

> The doctoral journey offers many opportunities for academic and personal development, but as one group member captured succinctly in her reflections, "I don't think this growth would have come as quickly without the RWG." Members of our doctoral group certainly would not claim to be writing experts yet, but the RWG is helping us to work towards this goal. (Lassig et al. 2009)

The article you are now reading is written by three academics previously involved as postgraduate students and supervisor. Two of them (ex-supervisor and ex-student) have collaborated on a published refereed article (Krauth and Bowman 2017). In reflecting on the past, one of us (ex-student) said to the other (ex-supervisor): 'Well, of course I can work collaboratively with you. *You created me*'. Although highly contested by the ex-supervisor (who considers that doctoral students 'create' themselves) this is a revealing statement. It goes to the heart of the relationship between student and supervisor: while the supervisor might readily recognise themself as a lifeline for the student in terms of surviving in the system and completing successfully, they may not consider the lifeline to be an umbilical cord. A greater sense of identity is created between student and supervisor than supervisors (or the academic system) may be willing to concede. Supervisors are reluctant to admit that taking on a new student is a Pygmalion exercise. The QUT experiment suggests students can go only so far in supporting each other, and the supervisor remains a key factor for writing success.

Our discussions in forming this paper have thrown up the following. We think supervisor good practice gives a candidate enough space and respect for them to develop their own thinking and writing without unnecessary intervention. Writing is not only a collaborative endeavour; the student's development of their writing capacity occurs outside co-writing activity as much as it is enhanced by involvement in it. The supervisor who keeps a cool and calm aura in all situations assuages student doubt or panic and encourages in them a sense of belief in the worth of their project and their skills – as much as might be gained also from a group writing pursuit. In our school's writing research culture, the supervisor's confidence in not being afraid to buck trends or challenge bureaucratic (and other) 'rules' is valuable when often an 'apprentice' PhD student might be too willing to please systems and accommodate, at the expense of the work and its innovation. Conversely, the supervisor may have to rein in an overly

ambitious project, or convince the student that certain academic parameters really do exist. This sort of cautioning can hamper the student's trajectory, leading to delays, serious emotional impact, even the potential for implosion of the project. In these situations, the supervisor has to be a good leader, to inspire and motivate the student through at least the three to four years of a full-time candidature. The supervisor also may have to negotiate the student's expectations during candidature and for the future, and help them learn the nuances of a university environment at a professional level – which is, after all, the potential next step in their academic career.

The exegesis and co-authorship

The required postgraduate output in our university is 'a journal article, conference publication, book or book chapter, original creative work, performance or exhibition' (Griffith Graduate Research School 2017). For creative writing scholars, the most likely of these – the journal article, book chapter and the original creative work – correlate with the forms presented in non-traditional submissions: exegesis and written artefact. Depending on the proclivities of the individuals involved, staff and students can choose which form to co-author in. Our survey reveals that students and staff alike are interested in collaboration on both creative and academic outputs.

The argument expressed so far in our school is that exegetical writing can be more approachable as a collaborative task than trying to co-write a story or poem, let alone a large project such as a novel. In poetry we have individuals with different strategies and different areas of interest. In fiction writing, we each have our own ideas and motivations for telling a story. Overall in writing creatively, it can be said that we strive to take images and characters from our heads, and produce them on the page, not only so that a reader can see what we see, and hear what we hear, but so that they can see it *through our eyes, with our voice in their ears.* That is the individuality of creative writing. That is why as readers we love certain authors and reject others. In the teaching of creative writing at undergraduate level, we encourage students to develop their own voice – their own style – and we tend to mark them on how *individual* that voice is.

The idea of sharing that voice – sharing the way we *personally* tell or feel – with another writer, or having our words shaped and influenced by another writer's desire to tell it their way, can be incapacitating in the co-authorship situation. In workshops, we don't invite others to write the poem or story for us, or to accept *their* changes to *our* work – although we do value their opinion. At the same time, we are aware that this view of collaborative writing should be challenged. In the new age of the 'multivocal, multiplicitous, collaborative writer/text' (Lunsford and Ede 1992: 143), we recognise that a burgeoning list of collaborations utilise new technologies and multimodality with great success (see among the many, for example, Abrams and Dorst 2013, Green and Levithan 2010, Pullinger and Joseph 2012). Collaborative creative writing has forged a new way forward for the industry and the discipline.

Aside from this, we think the exegesis provides a fertile ground for collaboration. Its voice has developed in a different way. The basic principles of academic writing could be described as *informed clarity* and *objectivity of thought*. Academic writers are not

encouraged to put time into developing a personal voice: an article can have several authors, and the reader is hard-pressed to decipher any one author's particular voice or influence. Individuality of style is absent. This kind of writing lends itself to group work and co-authorship.

In our school, the exegesis is seen as a way to plug the creative work into the surrounding industry and academic discourses. The exegesis is not seen as *an intimate engagement with the singularly produced creative work*, but as a forum for engagement between the author and the world of ideas and influences pertaining to it. Here the exegesis is naturally thought of as an academic publication in process. If it is to be written in a style other than that expected by an academic journal, it will in fact be a research exercise in itself, claiming new territory for academic writing. We don't see that the exegesis has a fixed form, nor that it should be undertaken in a conventional manner prescribed by Humanities or Science paradigms. It is a privilege, we feel, to write academically in the Creative Writing discipline: this gives us the license to examine, investigate and influence the way new knowledge writing gets done.

So, when our university suggests research students produce a peer-reviewed outcome, in the context of student-supervisor collaboration we tend to think first along the lines of an extension to the territory of the exegesis. This has been successful in the past, with several academic works published by Brady and Krauth, Sheahan-Bright and Krauth, Baranay and Krauth, and Bowman and Krauth, most often after the supervision has finished. The negotiations and strategies undertaken in each instance were different. Sometimes the idea for collaboration came from the student, sometimes from the supervisor. Sometimes the first to draft was the student, sometimes the supervisor. Sometimes the one to manage publication was the student, sometimes the supervisor. But always there was the sharing of interest in a territory of academic exploration and the realisation that we could work respectfully together.

After graduation: a conclusion

It is fitting to address another benefit of co-authoring, and one that follows naturally for doctoral students after graduation: employability. A post-doctorate, or other early career research position, would be a logical next step for graduates. Creative Writing PhD projects typically produce a substantial work geared for publication outside of an academic framework. The exegetical part of the project is the academic work, and this is usually shorter in length, and in many cases, more an accessory to the creative work than a stand-alone complete oeuvre; i.e. it might not survive when chopped away from the novel or book of poems. A creative work, while potentially ready for submission to publishers or agents, is certainly not the key to an immediate pay cheque. If the exegetical part of the project refers heavily to the creative work, and doesn't show potential as an independent academic book or number of essays, then the newly graduated doctor doesn't hold much in hand to offer the world. This is where things get tricky for the PhD candidate walking out the front gates and stepping onto the bus into town. Where to next?

One of the respondents to our survey, a university staff member who has supervised twelve doctoral and honours students, ticked 'More than 5 times' in response to the question: 'Have you actually co-authored a piece of writing?' In response to 'What kind of work/s have you co-authored?' this respondent ticked both 'Creative work' and 'Academic work'. This would indicate a believer in co-authorship in university Creative Writing. In reply to Question 7: 'Do you think co-authorship is or would be useful to you? Why?', the respondent listed several very helpful answers: 'grows areas of interest & publication, increases outcomes, grows awareness of markets/journals/processes'. The words 'outcomes' and 'markets', we feel, refer to the working world. This is an important answer, as the respondent is experienced as a co-author, supervisor and academic, and would have postgraduate students asking them, 'Where to next?'. Again, in reply to Question 7, one of the student respondents answered, 'Yes – to boost my academic publishing credentials', while another wrote, 'Yes – more publishing opportunities to build up publication record before graduation'. Yet another wrote simply, 'More useful for academic work at the moment'. These responses, all in the affirmative, show an awareness not only that publication is integral, but so too is co-authoring, for any academic future, whether it be for supervisors or their supervised students.

Recently graduated PhD students in Creative Writing will typically find themselves applying for post-docs or other early career research employment in competition with Humanities PhD graduates from disciplines such as Sociology or Education, where co-authoring can be called the norm. An author of this article had an interview for a post-doctoral research position … and felt that the panel interview, which was rigorous, went very well. The author left the interview feeling like a shoo-in, to be informed later that it was *only* a lack of substantial co-authoring which saw them passed up for the position. The succinct answer to Question 7 that we just mentioned – 'More useful for academic work at the moment' – could have been written by another unsuccessful applicant for that post-doc, all too aware after the fact that indeed, co-authoring is becoming necessary for finding academic employment.

PhD candidature is in some ways the last safe-zone of student life. After graduation, there is nowhere to go as a perpetual student. Graduates need to emerge employable, in some capacity at least. Perhaps co-authoring needs to be added to the candidature checklist, along with the 'at least one peer reviewed output', so that graduates emerge with a better chance of competing for actual academic work.

Endnote

1. WRN questionnaire about collaboration
   Name…….. **OR** □ Anonymous
   Degree you are studying for……**OR** □ Staff
   Your university…….....
   Your stage of study: □Year 1 □Year 2 □Year3 □Other
   OR Number of students you supervise……..

   Question 1:
   Have you been encouraged to write and publish collaboratively? □Yes □No □Maybe □Don't know

Question 2:
Who encouraged you to write and publish collaboratively?
□Principal supervisor □Associate Supervisor □Another student □Administrator
□The University generally □Someone else ……

Question 3:
Have you actually co-authored a piece of writing? □Yes □No
And how often? □Once □Twice □More than 5 times

Question 4 (If YES in Question 3):
Who did you / are you co-authoring with?
□Principal supervisor □Associate Supervisor □A student □A colleague in your faculty
□A colleague in another university □A group comprising …….

Question 5 (If YES in Question 3):
What kind of work/s have you co-authored?
□Creative work □Academic work □Both □Other, i.e …….

Question 6 (If NO in Question 3):
If you haven't written collaboratively, what kind of work would you like to co-author?
□Creative work □Academic work □Both □None □Other, i.e ……

Question 7:
Do you think co-authorship is or would be useful to you? Why? Please comment:
……

Question 8:
Any other comments: ……

2. We are aware that this survey is merely a guide; we do not claim for it statistical rigour.

Works cited

Abrams, JJ and Doug Dorst 2013 *S.* New York: Mulholland Books/Little Brown

Badenhorst, Cecile and Xiaolin Xu 2016 'Academic publishing: making the implicit explicit' *MDPI* (22 July), at http://www.mdpi.com/2304-6775/4/3/24/pdf (accessed 11 August 2017)

Birkhead, Tim 2008 'Rules of the game' *The Times Higher Education Supplement* (7 February), 29, at http://search.proquest.com.libraryproxy.griffith.edu.au/docview/761034046?accountid=14543 (accessed 2 April 2017)

Brown, George and Madeleine Atkins 2005 [1988] *Effective Teaching in Higher Education* London: Routledge

Green, John and David Levithan 2010 *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* Melbourne, Text

Griffith Graduate Research School 2017 'Objectives and requirements for publishing during candidature' *Publishing* Griffith University, at https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing (accessed 6 June 2017)

Griffith University 2017 *Higher Degree Research Policy* TRIM document 2017/8006049, at http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Higher Degree Research Policy.pdf (accessed 6 June 2017)

Hayter Mark and Roger Watson 2017 'Supervisors are morally obliged to publish with their PhD students' *Times Higher Education* (May 18), at https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/supervisors-are-morally-obliged-to-publish-with-their-phd-students (accessed 27 June 2017)

Krauth, Nigel and Christopher Bowman 2017 'Ekphrasis and the writing process' *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing* 14, 3 (2 May), at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14790726.2017.131727 (accessed 22 March 2017)

Lassig, Carly et al. 2009 'Writing together, learning together: the value and effectiveness of a research writing group for doctoral students' *AARE Conference papers* (Australian Association for Research in Education), at http://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2009/las091458.pdf (accessed 24 March 2017)

Lowry, Paul Benjamin, Aaron Curtis and Michelle Rene Lowry 2004 'Building a taxonomy and nomenclature of collaborative writing to improve interdisciplinary research and practice' *Journal of Business Communication* 41 (1), 66-99

Lunsford, Andrea and Lisa Ede 1992 [1990] *Singular texts/plural authors: perspectives in collaborative writing* Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois UP

Macfarlane, Bruce 2015 'Authorship abuse is the dark side of collaboration' *Times Higher Education* (10 December), at https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/authorship-abuse-is-the-dark-side-of-collaboration (accessed 6 August 2017)

Martin, Brian 2013 'Countering supervisor exploitation' *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 45 (1), 74-86, at http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/13jsp.html (accessed 9 March 2017)

Musoba, Glenda Droogsma 2008 'Writing across power lines: authorship in scholarly collaborations' *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* 22 (3/4), 60-7

Onrubia, Javier and Anna Engel 2009 'Strategies for collaborative writing and phases of knowledge construction in CSCL environments' *Computers & Education* 53 (4), 1256-65

Pullinger, Kate and Chris Joseph 2012 *Flight paths: a networked novel*, at http://www.flightpaths.net (accessed 15 August 2017)

Reis, Richard 2000 'Getting published as a graduate student in the sciences' *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (24 November), at http://www.chronicle.com/article/getting-published-as-a/46335 (accessed 19 April 2017)

Ritchie, Stephen M and Donna L Rigano 2007 'Writing together metaphorically and bodily side-by-side: an inquiry into collaborative academic writing' *Reflective Practice* 8 (1), 123-35

Speedy, Jane and Jonathan Wyatt (eds) 2014 *Collaborative writing as inquiry* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars

Stearns, Stephen C 2017 'Some modest advice for graduate students' *Stearns Lab*, at http://stearnslab.yale.edu/some-modest-advice-graduate-students (accessed 2 April 2017)

Wilhite, John F 2014 'Should professors jointly publish papers with students?' *Researchgate*, at https://www.researchgate.net/post/Should_professors_jointly_publish_papers_with_students (accessed 9 March 2017)

Woolston, Chris 2002 'When a mentor becomes a thief' *Science* (24 May), at http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2002/05/when-mentor-becomes-thief (accessed 2 April 2017)

Wright, Glen 2017 'The conundrums of academic co-authorship: cats, credit and croquet' *Times Higher Education* (4 June), at https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/conundrums-academic-co-authorship-cats-credit-and-croquet (accessed 6 August 2017)