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## *Meditating on Maurice Blanchot and the 'leap' of inspiration that happens in PhD thesis writing*

*Abstract*
*This paper elucidates Maurice Blanchot's (1989; 1995a; 1995b) analysis of the role of inspiration when writing literature, and applies it to PhD thesis writing. It utilises a mixed method qualitative approach weaving interviews with PhD students, doctoral research, auto-ethnography and Blanchot's analysis. Blanchot (1989) has re-crafted Hegel's story of the modern subject into the story of the writing subject. He contends that in order to achieve the mastery of a finished 'work', a writer must firstly make a leap into the unknown. This can result in the experience of loss and anxiety. Such feelings are indeed common to the PhD experience. However in Blanchot's account, inspiration is tenacious and ubiquitous. If the writer persists with their writing, they will find a way out of their confusion. Blanchot's analysis provides encouragement to the PhD student to persist, even during the difficult and arid times of thesis writing. Moreover, because inspiration is tenacious, finishing a 'work' or thesis will inevitably result in a new form of beginning.*
*Keywords: inspiration, PhD writing, Blanchot*

### Introduction

> The leap is inspiration's form of movement. This form or this movement makes inspiration unjustifiable. But in this form or movement inspiration also comes into its own: its principal characteristic is affirmed in this inspiration which is at the same time and from the same point of view lack of inspiration – creative force and aridity intimately confounded. (Blanchot 1989: 177)

Maurice Blanchot (1907-2003) was a French novelist, political commentator and philosopher. He was fascinated by the dynamics of writing literature and explored these in depth, drawing on his own experiences, the diary accounts of other authors such as Kafka and philosophers including Hegel (Blanchot 1989) [1]. Blanchot (1989) re-crafted Hegel's story of the modern subject, a subject who perpetually seeks mastery through locating the truth and self-knowledge, into the story of the writing subject. As a result, Blanchot contends that the 'work' or finished product that we aim for when writing is part of a larger historical project: 'The work attains its ultimate and essential form not in the work of art, but in that work which is the gradual achievement of human mastery and freedom: history – history as a whole, the total realisation of that

liberating process' (Smock 1989: 6). Despite recognising the tenacious force of the dialectic, the force that seeks to master, Blanchot is also concerned to examine the ways that writing does not fit into a sense of culmination and arrival (Smock 1989: 6). For Blanchot, writing requires an inspired leap into the unknown. This leap involves an initial movement that aims to bring presence to absence and order to disorder. Through this leap, the writer comes into proximity with the antithesis of being, or what Blanchot calls 'the interminable and incessant' (Blanchot 1989: 37). Within this realm, the writer has lost all clarity. Any sense of mastery they enjoyed was only partial and temporary. Yet the writer must keep writing in order to save him or herself from the realm of dissolution, find a path forward and come to know themselves again. In Blanchot's (1989) account, the writer is inspired during moments of *clarity* and moments of *dissolution*. Given his philosophical heritage, Blanchot's writing is often dense and opaque. This paper works to clarify Maurice Blanchot's (1989; 1995a; 1995b) analysis of inspiration and then apply it to PhD thesis writing.

Maintenance of motivation and enthusiasm has been rated as one of the greatest problems encountered with the PhD process (West et al as cited in Morrison-Saunders et al 2003). Yet despite this, many students persist and complete a dissertation. It is possible to view the phenomenon of the PhD as exemplifying a unique and concentrated example of the processes of subjectivity, knowledge and desire that Hegel (1977 [1807]) describes. In Hegel's account, the modern subject operates through an endless sense of optimism in regard to his ability to achieve truth and self-knowledge [2]. Despite the many challenges he faces, he remains steadfast in his commitment to this goal. He aims above all else to achieve self-consciousness and to transcend his need for others and for the sensuous world. As Butler (1987: 43-44) explains, the goal here is 'the enhancement of human conceptual powers, the ever-expanding capacity to discern identity in difference.' In Hegel's story of the master and the slave (1977: 229-240) for instance, the master aims to present himself as a pure abstraction of self-consciousness and thus the manifestation of absolute knowledge, '*not* tied up with life' (232). In the process of seeking knowledge, the subject moves towards greater and greater levels of synthesis with the world through the negation of otherness and a movement towards an all-inclusive unity. Hegel's description strongly echoes the PhD student's journey (and requirement by the university) to: actively pursue truth and knowledge; complete a thesis which demonstrates mastery in a chosen topic; and subsequently achieve the title and acknowledged status of Doctor. Hegel also explains that despite the subject's desire to master the world, he is constantly forced to confront, rather than simply subsume the unknown world. Any sense of arrival or mastery is only ever contingent and temporary and he is forced back into a situation where he once again struggles to know himself. While the personal struggles inherent in writing a PhD may not have always been acknowledged by universities (Lee & Williams: 1999), they have been well documented through research over recent years. They can include anxiety and confusion (Kearns, Gardiner & Marshall 2007; Lee & Williams 1999; Morrison-Saunders et al 2003; Owler 2010), loneliness (Johnson, Lee & Green 2000; Owler 2010) and tussles with identity (Bansel 2011; McAlpine & Amundsen 2009; McAlpine et al 2012; Taylor 2008).

Blanchot's (1989) re-reading of Hegel is specifically focused on writing literature, rather than academic writing. Nevertheless, as with Hegel's work, Blanchot's analysis is very relevant to understanding the experience of PhD thesis writing. This is because it attends to the complex operations of knowledge and subjectivity at work in the writing process. The PhD student must attempt through persistent effort to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in their chosen field and, in the process, shift subject position from student to academic. In revising Hegel's account, Blanchot's

(1989) analysis provides the anxious or confused PhD student with a reason to persevere through hard, uncertain or arid times in thesis writing. For Blanchot, there is no outside of inspiration, because writing and inspiration is tied up in the process of the writer (or subject's) becoming. Given that a student has the research and writing skills to complete a PhD (or can develop these during the process) and the time to write, persistence is worthwhile. If they keep at writing they will find a way through the difficult times and be able to write productively.

This paper draws on a number of qualitative sources, utilising a mixed method qualitative approach. The sources used relate predominantly to the process of writing a research based PhD thesis. They may also be relevant to other intensive kinds of doctoral writing such as the acquisition of a PhD by peer-reviewed papers (Butt 2013); or written Doctorates in Creative Arts, with or without an exegesis (Krauth 2011). Sources include several extracts from a series of fifteen qualitative interviews the author conducted with doctoral students as part of her PhD research on the thesis writing process, over a period of approximately eight months. The students attended four different Sydney universities and were studying in the Arts and Humanities (Owler 1999). The paper also uses published research and some auto-ethnographic content relating to the author's own experience of PhD thesis writing [3]. The sources are woven together with an explication of Blanchot's philosophical account.

## The first night – when everything seems possible

> The first night is welcoming … of it one can say, *In* the night,
> as if it had an intimacy. (Blanchot 1989: 163)

Blanchot (1989) uses the metaphor of 'night' to describe the leap of inspiration involved in writing. He views the writer's initial attempts as an investigation into what he calls 'the first night'. This is the preparation or initial stage, before writing begins in earnest. The writer is as yet reassured; meaning is still firmly in their sights: 'Here language completes and fulfils itself in the silent profundity which vouches for it as its meaning' (p.163). Morrison-Saunders et al (2003) provide an analysis of the early stages of writing a PhD based on their experience as supervisors and students. Their account seems to echo Blanchot's description:

> The beginning of a PhD appears to be generally characterised
> by positive emotions, influenced by factors such as elation at
> candidature and/or award of a scholarship; enthusiasm and
> anticipation associated with tackling an important and
> interesting problem; and a high level of motivation. (Morrison-
> Saunders et al 2003: 5)

At this point, during what Blanchot calls the first night, the PhD student might feel highly optimistic. Everything can seem possible. The student has a research question that they desire to grapple with. Yet, the current absence of an answer is reassuring in itself. It suggests that an answer and the completion of a question, a thesis and even perhaps of the self, is highly possible.

However, at some point after enrolment and initial investigations of a topic, the PhD student must start writing in earnest. At this point, they must leave the land of beginnings and enter what Blanchot refers to as the 'other night'.

**The 'Other' Night – restless creativity and dissimulation**

> [T]he other night does not welcome, does not open. In it one is still outside. It does not close either; it is not the great Castle … impenetrable because the door is guarded… In the [first] night one can die; we reach oblivion. But this other night is the death no one dies, the forgetfulness which gets forgotten. In the heart of oblivion it is memory without rest. (Blanchot 1989: 163-164)

At some point in writing, a writer makes a leap into the unknown. This is what Blanchot calls 'the other night' (1989: 163). In this movement, the writer forgets their initial goal. To paraphrase Blanchot, they sacrifice everything in a sense, fantasies about a completed piece of work, the power of their art (that initially moved them), and the happy life of clarity. They make such sacrifices 'to look in the night at what night hides, the other night, the dissimulation that appears' (1989: 172). The writer becomes drawn into and immersed in the confusion of a darkness which murmurs to them and can render them inarticulate. At this point in writing, there is no certainty or sense of clarity or coherence. Rather, there is a restlessness, and perhaps confusion and anxiety; experiences identified above as central to the PhD experience for many students (Kearns, Gardiner & Marshall 2007; Lee & Williams 1999; Morrison-Saunders et al 2003; Owler 2010). For the PhD student, their project, and sense of identity, can become somewhat shaky during Blanchot's 'other night'. As one student explained: 'You're in a liminal zone [as a PhD candidate]. You're neither a student nor a teacher. You're in that in between and that's a very painful place to be' (Owler 1999). A student may wonder, particularly as a new researcher, if they will ever find a way out and move back to more sure footing; when they can make progress with research and writing. Morrison-Saunders et al (2003) found that 'the middle period of a PhD is often accompanied by a slump in enthusiasm and motivation associated with the realisation of the enormity of the project' (see also Phillips & Pugh 2010).

Blanchot recognises that the risk that the writer takes in following their inspiration is necessary for writing to take place. He explains that a writer seeks to 'find the work where he must expose himself to the essential lack of work, the essential inertia' (1989: 185). Writing *requires* a leap. The writer is *required* to abandon what they know and immerse themselves into the unknown. At this point of uncertainty, the writer can experience an arid period: 'standstill, this state of suspense when inspiration has the same countenance as sterility, when it is the enchantment that immobilizes words and banishes thoughts' (Blanchot 1989: 182). One student interviewed by Hockey (2006) discussed the initial weeks of thesis writing and their difficulty in defining their topic, boundaries, method and rationale:

> I mean it's like going into a white out situation where you just couldn't see where you're going and if you actually stepped off in one direction you would have to turn around and retrace your steps to go in the exact opposite direction, and that actually I found very difficult to cope with for a number of weeks. (Hockey 2006: 181)

For Blanchot, during this period, words are no longer signs; but words floating, giving the 'impression of a reality coming apart, of a thing rotting and crumbling into dust' (1989: 183). The PhD student may well wonder during this period if they will find a way out of their confusion.

In Blanchot's account however, these are never truly arid times. On the contrary, such aridity only has 'the same countenance as sterility' (1989: 182).

Creativity and progress are never absent from the writing process. Times of depression in writing, which are in Blanchot's account inevitable, are merely a phase or guise of inspiration and can ironically, be extremely productive. A student Salmon interviewed (1992) referred to her realization that the arid period she was experiencing was important for her thesis:

> I have slowly come to realize that I have a lot of sort of inner confidence in my knowledge and experience in the area of my study. Although I haven't spent much time in writing [lately] … in a way I have lived, slept and eaten it for what feels like forever. You see, I know that I know something. I don't know what it is, and I am looking forward to finding out what it is when I finally write about it! (Salmon 1992: 61)

Perhaps the proof that difficult times are part of inspiration is the fact that the PhD student often perseveres through them. They sense, intuit, apparently know, that the perseverance is worth it.

One of the common experiences of loss during the 'second night' for the PhD student can be the entangling of their inspiration with that of others' and a subsequent difficulty in knowing what it is that inspires them as a unique individual. Blanchot wrote about the need to find personal inspiration in a series of journalistic articles (1995a; 1995b). Creation and inspiration are conceived in these accounts as an inevitable movement, an 'inner demand' (1995b: 32), connected to one's 'reason for being', and 'reason to hope' (1995a: 28). Inspiration is what propels the writer forward. To repress this inner demand creates malaise, requiring the absence of that which would be created and repentance for that which one took pleasure in. This repression might occur when a writer is required to return to tradition, as opposed to an art of experiment, a mere 'refuge from risks' (1995a: 26). It involves a denial of the forces which drive the individual in a particular creative direction. There is a sense of alienation when separated from those 'dangerous and alluring ideas' which inspire them (1995a: 26). Antoniou and Moriarty (2008) have observed the discontentment amongst academic writers when they are forced to view academic writing as purely an intellectual and professional task, rather than one which involves the whole of the writer's self. Blanchot contends instead that one must create as oneself, by searching 'for a style of my own' (1995b: 32).

At one point while writing her PhD, the author had come to a stand-still and felt unable to progress with her work, a situation that lasted for a number of months. This situation was depressing with no way to proceed on the horizon. Over time she became aware that the project she had wanted to write was not aligned with her supervisor's approach. She felt that she had become thoroughly caught up in someone else's inspiration. When she made the decision to choose a different supervisor and follow her own interests and style, she felt that she had once again found her inspiration and could write productively. Taking charge of her writing re-ignited her inspiration and made it possible for her to find her own unique 'academic voice' (Carter 2011). In their research, Wisker and Robertson found that a growing confidence in their own work and increased sense of ownership was a common theme for students who worked through similar issues with supervision and who then went on to successfully complete their doctorates. They found the 'students' motivation and determination to succeed was a major factor in successful completion' (Wisker & Robertson 2013: 309).

While inspiration is unique and personal, it also emerges in a social and cultural context, structured through a writers' relationship to the world. In their research, Hopwood (2010) found that for PhD students these relationships can

include the academic, personal and professional spheres. They can also include disembodied relationships:

> One student spoke of writing as involving a passion shared with artists over the ages who have felt the excitement and reward of creative achievement. He felt a sense of commonality with figures from the past that provided a crucial source of motivation and inspiration as he took on the challenge of writing a thesis. (Hopwood 2010: 109)

Inspiration can be 'found' in various ways through the writer's engagement with the world. Two students explained how inspiration emerged through texts they found, like missing pieces of a puzzle. In these contexts, inspiration seemed to draw them out of the depths of their confusion:

> I wasn't really quite sure what I wanted to do [my PhD on]. I was sort of trying to think of something, when, by chance and not really part of my thinking what I wanted to do I discovered this French Jewish poet who I never heard of and who I realized couldn't be more close to my heart. So you know I felt like I was sort of reading me almost, and in the very first line of the book I opened it says 'you are the one who writes and the one who is written', just on one page in French and I thought, mmm, yeah … So you know, feeling like that about the writer and reading lines like that … really made me think that I'd discovered something because I knew that other people hadn't heard of this writer either. (Owler 1999)

Another student explains how a passage in a particular book seemingly saved her and her thesis:

> [At one point] I thought I lost my inspiration and I was devastated. It was like a piece of my essence going, you know being destroyed and I cried and there were tears and depression and everything. It took me a while to get out of that. I don't know how eventually I did. I think one day I just, I don't know, sat down and read something that inspired me. Yes, it was a particular text that inspired me. Yes. And I saw things in a different way, in a different light. After I read the text the knot was dissolved and I could move on in a different direction. (Owler 1999)

In these examples, some external stimulus enabled the student to reconfigure their relationship to their topic, allowing them to move forward and write once again.

Inspiration can also be found through more immediate human connections. For the PhD student, supervision is an important potential source of inspiration (Johnson, Lee & Green 2000; McAlpine et al 2012). Scholarly communities can also potentially provide support and foster well-being (Stubb, Pyhältö & Lonka 2011). Writing groups in particular can provide useful mechanisms to engage with other PhD students, promoting enhanced confidence and motivation (Ferguson 2009; Larcombe, McCosker & O'Louglin 2007). Ferguson describes a thesis writing group of social science doctoral students that she was involved in. While this group served a 'practical' role, providing impetus for the consideration and production of different components of their theses, it also served 'psychological purposes' (Ferguson 2009: 285). One student explained that the opportunity to gain feedback from students from

other backgrounds provided a fresh perspective and motivated her to write: 'I think the benefit of the thesis writing group ... [was] talking to people who were more detached from your work and area and so came at things from fresh perspectives' (Ferguson 2009: 292).

The 'second night' that Blanchot describes can be a difficult place to inhabit, promoting a sense of dissolution and loss. However, over time, the doctoral student is able to identify a way forward. They are able to start to write their way out of the dark, and begin the affirmative project of the thesis and of self, making progress towards the goal of completing a finished 'work'.

## Betraying inspiration to complete 'the work'

> This is the magic torment which is linked to the call of inspiration. One necessarily betrays it: and not because books are only the degraded echo of a sublime word, but because one only writes them by silencing what inspires them, by failing the movement they claim to recall, by interrupting "the murmur". (Blanchot 1989: 184)

The need to actually get something written means, for Blanchot, that the writer must necessarily betray their own inspiration to an extent. Blanchot acknowledges the need to ultimately betray the 'interminable and incessant' (1989: 37) in order to move forward and complete a work. In Blanchot's reworking of Hegel, it is the dialectic, the driving force of knowledge and identity, that motivates the writer to complete a work of art. At some stage the student needs to decide that they know enough, at least for now, to construct some kind of an argument.

One way writers 'betray' inspiration, in Blanchot's account, is the use of 'images' in writing. For Blanchot (1989: 78-80), it is the image in writing which is humanity's attempt, via impatience, to apprehend a goal, before it is reached. It is an attempt to capture, within some kind of unity, the confusion and dispersion that is part of 'the other night'. Blanchot argues that because the writer can never really grasp an image, it also hides the absolute unity which they seek. As the writer of literature, or the PhD student, works on a book or a thesis, they constantly have images at their disposal. The image is a kind of imagining of a completed product, which the writer then tries to work towards. This is not to be confused with an image that might be deliberately discussed when writing an art history, fine art or creative thesis for instance. The images of completion Blanchot refers to are personal images for the writer. These images are not 'seductive', not totally satisfying, because they remind the writer that they are not the true goal. The true goal is the completion of a paper, book or thesis, when an image is turned into reality. These are images of the goal, therefore 'they partake of its glow'. The writer nevertheless needs to attach him or herself to such images, if they are to move towards and not 'turn away from the essential' goal (Blanchot 1989: 80). Throughout the research or writing process, a student writer will constantly need the kind of images Blanchot refers to. They help to fix inspiration into a kind of moment and assist the student to give form to thinking as they work towards constructing a coherent argument. One simple example of an image is the mapping of a thesis structure with chapter titles, well before they have written the final thesis content.

Another part of 'betraying' inspiration in thesis writing could be said to be engaging in the process of creating order out of uncertainty and confusion. One

student described the pleasure she found in this process through writing and editing:

> I think that the sort of perverse pleasure [I get from research] comes basically at the end when you're doing it [writing and editing]… I really like the challenge of trying to read difficult theorists, even though they drive me spare and I don't know that I actually get pleasure out of reading them so much but in then being able to do something with them… It's the pleasure of mastery I suppose … you know mastering the text. (Owler 1999)

Inspiration is sometimes conceived of as a kind of formless and endlessly creative force. However, discipline also plays a role in inspiration. Inspiration is not only about new ideas and moments of creative delight; it is also involved in the process of shaping a work.

For the PhD student, inspiration is contained within an institutional setting as they need to complete within a certain time-frame (generally four years). One student explained how inspiration took form for her in this institutional context: 'I was genuinely really intoxicated [when I began my PhD] and still am intoxicated with certain lines of thought, so the PhD seems to provide an institutional format for that' (Owler 1999). Another student spoke about the kind of structure, which the PhD thesis offered, that assisted her to channel her inspiration:

> Whether or not I was doing a PhD I would have got into this writer and you know, the PhD gave me some structure in that sense because I mean in the past … I did a lot of reading but it was all unstructured and I couldn't really write because who was it for? Whereas, at least in the university you can write things and show them and there's someone there who has to read them … you know that after a certain period you have to show somebody something and you're made accountable, there's some responsibility. (Owler 1999)

In these examples, the institutional context of the university and the constraints of the thesis genre, make it possible for the fruits of inspiration to take shape in a tangible, and, institutionally codified way.

At some stage, the PhD student's desire for mastery seems to take over and he or she completes at first a series of chapters and then a whole dissertation. At this point the student can feel 'done' with the project. As Morrison-Saunders et al (2003) explain:

> The end of the PhD process seems to be characterised by stronger and diametrically opposed emotions. There is the satisfaction and elation associated with completing final drafts of thesis chapters and then the entire full draft of the thesis. Although during the writing up stage, there often comes a point at which the candidate becomes thoroughly sick and tired of writing and constantly thinking about the project. Hence the satisfaction of completing chapters and thesis drafts is tempered by these feelings. (5)

Phillips and Pugh highlight the psychology of the PhD at this stage, explaining that from the 'period of self-doubt and questioning, the successful postgraduates emerge with a new identity, as competent professionals' (Phillips & Pugh 2010: 5). However, in reality while a student might feel 'done' with the

project, in Blanchot's understanding, as writers they are never done with inspiration.

## Completion or Starting Again – inspiration as a Perpetual Question

> A sound response puts down roots in the question. The question is its sustenance. Common sense believes that it does away with the question. Indeed, in the so-called happy eras, only the answers seem alive. But this affirmative contentment soon dies off. The authentic answer is always the question's validity. It can close in around the question, but it does so in order to preserve the question by keeping it open. (Blanchot 1989: 211)

In Blanchot's (1989) work, there is an insistent and never ending demand that writing makes upon the writer. In the extract above, Blanchot suggests that we might think of this demand as a question that is perpetually being both asked and answered. In order to illustrate his point he starts with a question which he identifies as typical of the post-war era: 'What is art, and what can be said of literature?' (1989: 211). He claims that during this period, this question was constantly being asked and answered in numerous contexts, as if the question was indifferent to the answers which had occurred so far. Through use of this example, Blanchot draws our attention to themes that recur in our writing, because there is something about them that continues to fascinate and inspire us.

In Blanchot's account, an answer does not exist to close off a question. Rather, the completion offered by an answer is at the same time an opening up to new beginnings, refiguring the question in a new way. When writing a PhD, the completion offered by an answer might be said to occur in the process of drafting and redrafting a thesis which closes off a certain exploration, opening up new and related questions. One student spoke about the usefulness of the drafting process: 'Although the drafting process is kind of a painful one, at least when you have a draft you can do something with it' (Owler 1999; see also Badley 2009).

Following Blanchot's understanding, the student is not finished with a question, even when they have finished with a PhD. As with Hegel's subject, arrival (at knowledge and identity) is only ever temporary and partial. The closure made possible by a finished work also makes it possible to refigure the original question in a different way or open up new questions. As a result, the individual is never done with inspiration. The successful PhD candidate continues to live and write and make inspired leaps into the unknown. Perhaps they will find their life's work is a repetition of a theme, or several themes. Currently, there is no published research examining the persistence of research themes and interests over an academic's career. However, the possibility of such persistence makes sense both intuitively and anecdotally. For instance, even though the author began her research on the PhD experience some years ago, the themes that originally inspired her remain persistent in her work many years on. In Blanchot's perspective, inspiration does not abandon the writer, because it is part of them. It is the force of the self in the process of the selves becoming.

## Conclusion – inspiration as resource

There are a number of writing skills that are required to complete a PhD and it could be argued that learning to understand and manage inspiration is one of

them. Perhaps this paper will help PhD students to remain both hopeful and somewhat realistic during the writing process. Firstly, understanding that inspiration is tenacious should encourage the student to persist throughout the most difficult and seemingly arid periods of dissertation writing. Secondly, knowing that any work they complete can only ever represent a temporary and contingent moment of truth may encourage PhD students to view their thesis as a discrete project, rather than an overwhelming endeavour that must answer all their questions. In the process of learning to manage inspiration, students might come to view inspiration as a precious, yet abundant resource. As academic sociologist Metcalffe explains, inspiration is not an 'intuitive flash, God's discrete gift of knowledge. Nor is it a simple point of origin. It is an ongoing ethics. If writers are to find – produce, pursue – the full implications of the intuition that moves them, they must maintain a fearless openness to the world and the text with which they are working. Inspiration has its rigour, its method' (Metcalffe 1999: 230). Writing requires that the writer continue to take inspired leaps into the unknown, yet in the process, continue to be challenged, learn and grow.

## Notes

[1] Smock argues that Blanchot's reading of Hegel 'bears the distinct mark of Bataille's' (1989: 6). return to text

[2] The masculine pronoun is used in this explication of Hegel. This is appropriate given Hegel's own conception of the subject as male. return to text

[3] Autoethnography is a form of writing that explores and reflects on the researcher's personal experience and connects this through different forms of analysis to wider cultural, political or social meanings and understandings (Doloriert & Sambrook 2011; Taylor 2008; Wall 2006). return to text

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