15.   Towards the re-construction of a clinical psychologist: a pause for reflection.

Introduction.

In this final chapter I will look back on my original broad research questions and reflect on the developments in my learning about them. I will do so from within the three domains of personal/professional, research, and developments within the work setting.

In writing this last chapter I was aware of a 'traditional researcher self' (still present) which was tempting me to go back to the original questions I was asking of the research, to tidy up the loose ends, collect together my findings, sum them together into some coherent conclusion, then look at what remaining or new questions there are to be asked of future research. I felt I ought to be able to do this. But more strongly there was a 'new paradigm researcher self' which asked "from within which of the many perspectives you have considered are you going to do this?"

In attempting to resolve this, I reflected back on the core questions I was asking of myself at the outset.

• "What is it I do as a clinical psychologist and how can I account for this?"

• "How is it I participate in multidisciplinary teams and can we learn together about what we do?"

• "Can this organisation be one which is 'alive' to itself and the world, and how can I contribute to its being one?"

• "If I am a clinical psychologist, how much can I belong in this professional body given that my world view is at odds with its publicly espoused world view?"

• "Can I find an alternative form of inquiry which answers these and other questions within my world view?"

In considering these questions, I believe I have learned much and I see myself as having commented on the learning throughout my writing so far. However, there are things which have been learned which are only implicitly contained in this account and to which I now wish to give more voice. To do this I am going to draw upon the metaphor of 'boundary rider'. I will sketch this metaphor and then use it as a position from which to make my learning more explicit.

Boundary Rider.

This metaphor was offered to me by a colleague who worked in another organisation, at a time shortly following the period I have reported in this research. She was a practising clinical psychologist and family therapist with a part-time university position as a teacher and researcher. We shared similar interests in this way and she had been a significant role model in being the first psychologist I had heard presenting qualitative research at a conference arranged for and by psychologists. The mental healthcare organisation in which she worked as a practitioner was planning the development of new services for which she would be responsible, and at her suggestion had asked me to be an external consultant to support this. The work involved my helping in the planning, marketing and implementation of new services,

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

to be followed by an on-going clinical consultation role. After my initial meeting with the people involved, I asked her why she had suggested me (I knew several others had been considered by the planning group). She replied that she was committed to having a psychologist because they were systematic and would provide the tools for basing the new developments on a sound empirical footing. She had suggested me in particular because I was a "boundary rider", someone she saw as being able to move between the different professional groups within mental health, and between the worlds of systemic family therapy and clinical psychology.

This metaphor 'sank home' and I dwelled with it for some time. I was surprised at how much it connected with how I saw myself, how it captured much of me as a person and as a professional, and how it offered a connecting metaphor for many experiences through the research. I saw myself as having been a boundary rider for much of my life, moving between different groups and perspectives, seeing each as offering partial but not whole 'answers'. I saw that I had 'ridden the boundaries' between cultures in New Zealand in a similar way that I had ridden the boundaries between different professional and functional groups in the research. Furthermore, it captured my experience of moving across and between differing bodies of ideas in grappling with research.

This metaphorical role or position has its strengths and weaknesses. The moving between and across perspectives had allowed me to see new possibilities and the freedom to seize new opportunities for change. On the other hand it had sometimes seemed a lonely and therefore vulnerable position. Sometimes spending more time in one territory than another resulted in me becoming 'swamped'. At other times I had kept one foot too much in a preferred terrain and had not therefore been able to step out of it sufficiently to gain a new vantage point from which to map it more extensively. This had been the case with respect to traditional research traditions, gender and power.

I do not see the boundary rider as offering the 'true' perspective, or better perspectives, just different ones. In 'riding the boundaries' one (and in using this term 'one', I am offering this notion to any person who relates to it or who wishes to adopt it) is in a position to make and hold connections between previously separate frames of meaning which provide new frames or vantage points for participants, including oneself. If these new frames offer participants the potential for mutuality, increased self awareness and reflexivity then the connections will hold, and the boundary rider can 'move on' without needing to reside permanently. The new frames will get picked up and established in that setting. Alternatively, if such attempts fail, then the act of 'moving on' in itself may release participants, including the 'boundary rider' to experience and 'see' things differently (for example, my 'moving on' in the Core Group in chapter fourteen).

I am not sure what answers this metaphor, which is implicitly connected to metaphors of landscape, provides to the ontological question posed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) of 'what is there to be known?' To some extent the metaphor, with its accompanying notion of territory or landscape, maps onto the critical tradition of implicitly accepting a 'reality out there' but one which can never be fully apprehended because of different value positions. If territory equates analogically with the social world or the world of meaning, then the metaphor is apt - we can never truly map the full nature and extent because it will appear differently according to our vantage point. At one level, I am comfortable with this experientially because, within the metaphor, one needs familiarity of place - to return to or depart from - in order to provide grounding and to prevent being lost in a world of multiple possibilities. Furthermore, one learns preferred pathways through the terrain, or has favourite spots because of the views offered. But like any pathway overly-trodden, it can become a rut. And any spot visited too frequently loses its 'difference' and appeal. I believe any experiential territory is bounded by notions of certain 'givens' of human existence such as birth, death, change, ageing, uncertainty, need for sustenance, shelter, belonging, and so on. To this extent, there can be seen to exist a universal set of 'realties', independent of our knowing.

At another level, I am wary of the metaphor because it can too easily overlook the extent to which the territory is also a constructed one. The meaning assigned to the above human

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

'givens' are constructed differently according to place in culture, age span, gender, social grouping and so on. To this extent the boundary rider must carry an awareness about the extent to which the notion of boundary itself is a socially constructed one and experienced personally as unique by each participant.

In his book 'Songlines', Chatwin (1987) describes his understandings of how the Australian Aboriginal people view themselves and the geographical territory as co-created. They bring the physical landscape 'alive' through song, imbuing it with life forms (including spirit) and giving it a presence with which they interact. Different parts of the geographical territory require different songs, and in moving about across vast distances, the Aboriginal people sing the land alive as they travel. They are required to keep the land alive by singing it and this seems to be one of the purposes of long 'walkabouts'. In this way, the songlines also act as maps which guide their progress and demarcate territory which is inhabited by both people and spirits. But equally, the giving life to landscape in turn gives life to them as it co-defines realities and nurtures and holds a mutual interdependence between people and the land. Bateson (1979) in his book 'Mind and Nature; a necessary unity.' in which he presents his concept of mind as 'pattern which connects', alludes to this in posing the conundrum of whether a tree falling in a forest makes a sound if there is no one there to hear it.

Conceiving of the Songlines process as a boundary riding of sorts (although this may be stretching it too far) gives rise to the idea that it is both life-giving as well as life-receiving Thus my concept of boundary riding contains a paradox or contradiction, that boundary riding can lead to new possibilities, but is also needed to ensure these new possibilities are maintained. As with the Aboriginal people, the role of boundary rider in other cultures and social groups needs to be continually peopled over time. Perhaps this is one of the roles of the agentic tradition, in the service of communion, structuring experience to avoid undifferentiated chaos.

Chatwin himself, as a non-Aboriginal, can be seen as a boundary rider, opening up visions of other realities. These themselves are partly of Chatwin's construction as an 'outsider', but the connection he provides is awe-inspiring. It may also pose risks to the Aboriginal people. Who knows what will happen to this sacred knowledge if it becomes public domain and is not afforded the reverence and ownership it is due? I am reminded of my involvement with the cross-cultural handbook in New Zealand where I was given a strong reminder of this possibility.

A boundary rider needs to respect that there will be sacred or private knowledge and be prepared to participate in the process of construction of boundaries which both protect and keep implicit as well as open up and make explicit. In this way the boundary rider will be reminded that such construction is social and will be guided by all participants - not only those immediately involved, but also wider 'audiences'. The boundary rider will always be faced with such contradictions and dilemmas.

Finally, the metaphor of boundary rider captures for me the notion of the 'reflexivity' - being able to locate, in so far as possible, that part of the terrain one is standing on in order to make observations about personal experience and the world as seen from that very vantage point. The identification of that vantage point relies on the existence of others from which alternative views can be taken and in so doing allows the mapping of the contours of the terrain under consideration. My experience over the course of this research has been that the identification and location of vantage points has arisen out of a dialogic process - between 'different selves' or between self and other/s. Therefore I see reflexivity as a concept which applies to acting systems, including but not exclusive to , the self. Whilst reflexivity can be experienced as a personally developed state of awareness, it is achieved inter-subjectively.

The seeing and the living of boundaries allows for a curiosity which fuels transformation. While this transformation is inter-subjectively constructed and lived, it is also personally experienced and it is this contradiction which a notion of reflexivity must hold. I prefer the term 'inter subjective' rather than 'social' because it allows for the idea of a reciprocal relationship with all living things.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

Within the concept of power as I have drawn it in this thesis, I see my role as boundary rider as the exercising of a relational form of power - providing, co-creating and holding 'frames' in which more transformative action can occur and out of which new meaning or stories can emerge. It also taps and requires other sources or forms of power, both personal and structural. It requires personal power in terms of autonomy, self esteem, expert knowledge and sensitivity to the issues at stake. It requires structural power in terms of handling uncertainty and risk and being central to organisational or group tasks. In other words, the exercising of power through boundary riding requires the holding of multiple perspectives on power.

Having sketched my conception of the boundary rider metaphor, I will now use it to provide some commentary about the extent to which the research answered my original questions, and the way in which it helped with this. I will turn first to the 'research' domain, reflecting on the strategies for inquiry which I used and what emerged from them, using the boundary rider metaphor to view this from different perspectives.

Reflections on strategies for inquiry.

I see the research as having developed two methodological strands: an action research or action inquiry strand which paid attention primarily to knowledge gained in and for action; and an interpretive strand which paid attention primarily to knowledge about action and about 'being' in the world. Each fed the other, but I will deal with them separately in turn.

The Action Inquiry strand.

I began the research with some of Torbert's earlier work which he termed Collaborative Inquiry, but which in his later work on the power of balance in organisations he termed Action Inquiry. I think this framing had an interesting effect for me. Part of my unease with myself as an investigator using Collaborative Inquiry - the four territories of experience and experiments in practice - was that I felt I had failed to gain 'collaboration' from others in the terms Torbert defined it, namely, that others in the field come to explicitly share the model. While William had read about the model, it was not something which he talked about in relation to himself and so it did not provide a language for commenting on or explicitly inquiring into our relationship. While there were many ways in which we collaborated, I did not see the two of us as being engaged in a Collaborative Inquiry. The effects of this framing maintained a continuing edge of anxiety on my part about the extent to which I was 'doing research'. I see in retrospect that it was this which 'turned' me towards writing as a means of having a dialogue about experience.

In his work on the power of balance, Torbert nests this form of inquiry within a wider notion of the workplace as a potential community of inquiry dedicated to continuing quality improvement. His model of power and leadership is intended to provide guidelines for leaders on how to promote such a vision. The notion of Collaborative Inquiry is replaced with that of Action Inquiry, a means of working towards mutuality in relationships and of empowering self and others. This recognises that others may not share the same frames or, in Torbert's terms, be at the same level of leadership development. Despite the limitations of this which I encountered and described in chapter fourteen, the term Action Inquiry better suits and frames how I used his ideas in practice.

It was only in a later re-reading of Torbert that this distinction became clear to me. Reason (1994) reviews a range of what he calls 'Participative Inquiry' approaches, Torbert's Action Inquiry among them. He notes that it is only when individuals are at the strategist stage of development that collaborative inquiry becomes possible. I remain unclear as to whether all participants in a Collaborative Inquiry need to be at this level of development for it to be an effective interpersonal strategy for inquiry. Certainly, my experience was that it requires participants to share a willingness to explicitly investigate their personal experience and a set of beliefs that worthwhile knowledge will emerge from such a venture.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

My own sense of how action inquiry helped my research and the learning from it is as follows, and these comments address issues of rigour of knowing as I see them:

• It kept my focus on moment to moment experience as the primary source of data and also as a source of knowledge. In Heron's terms, I learned to trust the experiential, presentational and practical forms of knowledge equally as much as the propositional, the latter previously having more 'weight' with me. I learned how direct experience could lead to theory, and back again. But more importantly, I learned to look for the grounding of any theory in my own experience, to test out how it worked for me in my circumstances and to trust more my own sense making than the theory. Theory is only useful to the extent it serves experience. I feel I understand more the feminist critique of social science. I do not lay this outcome wholly at the feet of Action Inquiry by any means, but for me it provided a framework which kept my 'nose to the grindstone' of immediate experience.

• The interpenetrating attention span acted as a framework for paying attention to incongruities, within myself, between myself and others and between groups. I think I came into the research being able to pay attention to interpersonal process, to pay close attention to feedback and to think about what was happening in the moment within a number of contexts. Family therapy training had taught me this. However, I think the structuring of the interpenetrating attention span helped me include my own self more in the frame, to the extent that it kept holding up incongruities for me. It was an awareness of incongruities and the importance for learning which action inquiry places on them which led to personal 'breakthrough' learning about gender and life-scripts. I am now more comfortable across a range of practice situations in allowing 'the moment' to give rise to what might usefully happen next.

• I am less clear about the concept of experiments-in-practice and how they might usefully be defined. The deliberate and clumsy use of these, as in Eddie's story in chapter eight, lead to a sense of inauthenticity, both as a practitioner and as a researcher. However, I consider in retrospect that my actions in the marketing meeting in chapter thirteen can be seen as an experiment-in-practice. In this case it was spontaneous and was driven by a need to behave authentically, rather than by a pre-planned strategy to achieve a certain outcome. Nonetheless, both efforts produced personal learning, although the outcome in the marketing meeting was more in my hoped-for direction.

I recently ran a workshop for psychologists on the concept of reflexivity and how it applied to the process of supervision, and I used some of Schön's (1983) notions of experiments in problem solving from his concept of the 'Reflective Practitioner'. He sees experienced professionals drawing on three different types of experimental approaches in confronting unique and complex situations: the *controlled* experiment, using inductive reasoning, in which hypotheses are selected to the degree that they 'fit' with the data encountered in the situation; the *exploratory* experiment, a 'probing' activity to get the feel of things; and the *move-testing* experiment, acting to produce an intended change. The Reflective Practitioner engages in all three at any one time. This more multiple description allows me to see that some experiments-in-practice in Torbert's sense may have differences in emphasis to which the practitioner needs to be finely attuned.

My view is that experiments in practice need to be conducted in the context of a vision about what is possible and preferable, what is personally authentic, what is inclusive of others and allows for the possibility of meaningful participation, and what allows for the honouring of multiple

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

perspectives. This can have different implications according to the time frame in which the relevance and timeliness of any action is judged. Sometimes short term hoped-for outcomes can be held lightly and forgone in the pursuit of those which are longer term and more tightly held. This acknowledges the role that anticipation about future states of affairs has in guiding human behaviour. I am not sure this equates with 'purpose'. The conducting of experiments in practice must occur in a context of values which behoves the practitioner to be able to be explicit about those which matter to them.

Torbert (1991) sketches his vision of a living inquiry which extends the principles of action inquiry into all areas of life towards justice and mutuality, and a spiritual dimension of self-renewal and openness to "eternal questions"(266). He sees the acquisition of this quality of awareness as needing a life-time commitment, as being facilitated by 'near death' experiences (including the symbolic) and as needing a life-time circle of friends willing to accompany this development. He likens progress to a "stumbling gait", only occasionally having moments of experience in which one feels congruence across all domains.

I see contradictions within his model between the vision on the one hand, and some of the theoretical models underpinning it which in my experience tilted me away from the feminine/communion domains towards those of the masculine/agentic. I have mentioned these in chapter fourteen in writing about power. I see Action Inquiry as working for agency, as potentially being in the service of communion but with this being implicit and unvoiced. I see Torbert as seeking this intuitively but unawarely. Hence action inquiry could be seen to be gender-blind.

Taking a 'weaving' metaphor to describe the research process, I see Action Inquiry as providing an open intersecting weft and warp webbing or structure for paying attention to experience in the midst of action, and for testing out knowledge as to its relevance and utility in any particular situation. However, it does not suggest what experience it is important to notice and in what way to assign meaning. In addition I see it as being predicated on valuing action over being (as reflected in its language) and so potentially missing important dimensions of human experience. This structure or 'webbing' requires material to be woven into it in order to give texture and richer meaning, and it is the interpretive strand which provided this for me.

The interpretive inquiry strand.

Within this strand I will include both Naturalistic Inquiry and Narrative Inquiry.

• Naturalistic Inquiry.

Here I will reflect on quality and rigour of knowing from the perspective of Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criteria for Authenticity, namely:

> • *Fairness* - the extent to which the different constructions and their underlying value structures are honoured.

> • *Ontological* authenticity - the extent to which the participants' own constructions are improved, matured, extended and elaborated over the course of the inquiry, to the extent that they have more information and are more sophisticated in its use.

> • *Educative* authenticity - the extent to which individual participant's understanding of and appreciation for the construction of others outside their stake-holding group is enhanced.

> • *Catalytic* authenticity - the extent to which action is stimulated and facilitated by the evaluation process.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

- *Tactical authenticity* - the extent to which the stakeholders and participants are empowered to act.

I see these criteria as being interpretive in the sense that they are concerned primarily with epistemological issues. Although they are concerned with 'acting in the world', their primary emphasis is on the degree to which any evaluative process honours and develops the constructions of the participants.

There is a tension for me in using these criteria at this stage in reflecting on the research as it has emerged. As I had originally envisaged a more explicitly shared research venture, these criteria seemed relevant. However these criteria are now harder to apply in that they presume the explicit involvement of others in an inquiry process, even though that process is conceived of by Guba and Lincoln as one of programme evaluation. Also, they are predicated on the assumption that more sophisticated and elaborated constructions of the issues at stake lead to action which is more empowering and emmancipatory. They do not lend themselves easily to action inquiry which has its focus on knowledge in and for action, and in which the initiating researcher is an active participant and 'stakeholder'. In the day to day social setting of my organisation, knowing who to involve and how in advance is difficult to predict. This is in contrast to the selection process for respondents advocated in Naturalistic Inquiry and the Hermeneutic Dialectic Process.

I also found them difficult to map onto Action Inquiry because of the changing and emergent nature of the research focus and process. To the extent that 'complex cases' provided a useful focus for holding my research questions, the Hermeneutic Dialectic Process provided an heuristic map to guide the construction of good practice guidelines. However, it became clear that this focus could not hold all my questions, and in my pursuit of them through Action Inquiry strategies I moved over a range of issues in the pursuit of mutuality and collaboration. There was no 'final product' or case report to which the set of authenticity could be applied, and no bounded inquiry process which enabled the degree of triangulation and cross checking implied by the process.

On the other hand, the set of authenticity criteria contain a set of values with which I strongly agree and the holding of them requires a continued questioning of the nature and direction of any research venture. They provided a useful heuristic for me at the level of reflecting about the overall nature of the research process and in representing action and experience in writing

With these caveats in mind I will reflect on the degree to which my research met my understanding of these criteria. I will return to these again later when I reflect upon the research within the Narrative Inquiry perspective and consider some contradictions thrown up by the use of these criteria. At the outset I considered that Fairness, Catalytic and Tactical authenticity were the criteria most applicable to action research. As the latter two are dealt with more directly and extensively by Action Inquiry, and as I have commented on these aspects already, I will dwell with Fairness. This criterion is the one I feel most personally challenged by.

• *Fairness*.   This was useful to apply to myself and my sense making and this criterion has had a primary organising influence over my own actions and reflection. However, I find it difficult to attest to the degree to which I have honoured those of others who people this research account. It was a case of doing 'the best I could under the circumstances', given the limits of the relationships between myself and others and their willingness to inquire with me. I have been motivated to honour this criterion, but given the 'hurly burly' of day to day life and the close engagement required of the action inquirer, my own values and prejudices will have prevented me from doing full justice. I have felt anxious at times in writing the research that I have presented others in a negative light in relation to the action and I wonder if I am too judgmental and 'holier that thou' (an echo of feedback from others in my teenage years). On the other hand, I rationalise that I have been focusing more on difference than similarity in what I see as the constructions held by the actors, and that this has been within one overarching context, that of creating change in providing an improved service for clients. This

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

is a position which invites strong feelings in me and I cannot let matters rest easily if I see possibilities for a more liberating state of affairs. So there is often a contradiction among my own set of criteria for personal authenticity - respecting that each is trying to do their best given their life history and current circumstances, versus feeling strongly that I must participate in creating more liberating structures and in so doing challenge attitudes and behaviour which seem counter to this.

Keeney and Ross (1985) in writing about social constructionism in family therapies observes that there are two domains in which the therapist constructs meaning. One is the domain of the 'semantic' in which the therapist inquires directly through conversation with the families about the meanings they attach to events. The other is the domain of interpersonal behaviour which he calls the 'political'. Through close observation of the sequences of action, the therapist also constructs meaning about the construction of meaning in the family. In other words, the family can be seen to behave 'as if' they held certain beliefs. This, perhaps contradictory, frame can be offered to the family as a new context in which to consider the issues at hand.

It is this latter domain which is often more available in a moving world to the action inquirer, and one on which I often relied in order to construct meaning. In writing this now, I reflect that I perhaps too hastily relied on the 'political' and the metaphorical, and not sufficiently on creating space to inquire more conversationally into the constructions held by others.

A recent event highlighted this for me. A member of the community team (a social worker/counsellor) left after ten years in the job to take another which represented for her a growth in her professional development. I had been her clinical supervisor for the past five years, but this was a relationship which had matured to include mentoring and peer reflection as well as focused supervision about aspects of her work in which she felt 'stuck'. She wrote to me after leaving, thanking me for my "support and advice over the years". The sentences which I felt most affirming of our relationship read: "The really important thing you did for me was to treat me as an equal colleague capable of doing good work. I think that gave me the confidence to take risks and grow professionally". Leaving aside the differing natures of people's professional roles, skills, abilities and competencies, and leaving aside the hierarchy of expertise implied in a supervisory relationship, I need to consider how to import a more conversational form of inquiry from a supervisory context into daily dialogue around work issues. (Not that I wish to give up strong opinions.)

The remaining two Authenticity criteria, Ontological and Educative, require a different process than the action inquiry/ story-telling methodology I have used. Although these are two hoped-for outcomes in any inquiry which seeks to generate more liberating structures, it requires the voices of the other participants to be directly heard in a way which I am not able to provide here.

In relation to myself, I believe my inquiry into my own practice substantially met ontological authenticity and this has been a core component of the research. As for Educative authenticity, my thoughts in relation to Fairness apply here - I wish to be more rigorous about this in the future.

From the position of the Boundary Rider, I see this set of criteria as locating me as an individual participant researcher at a distance from events, and as loading onto proposititional knowledge. While this is extremely important in terms of reflecting about action and arriving at an informed analysis, it presumes much about the process of how the researcher/participants arrive there. The process of writing and story-telling is the other strand which tells of this 'arriving'.

It is to Narrative Inquiry that I now turn in order to review the research process, and in so doing put a different slant on issues of quality and rigour of knowing.

• Narrative Inquiry.

Link to:

Ironically, it is in some way because of the difficulties I experienced with initiating both cooperative and collaborative inquiry that I moved to story telling as a way of both recording and communicating about experience in the research field. Because I did not see myself as having a group of collaborative co-researchers with whom to dialogue about the experiences I was having, I turned inadvertently and intuitively to dialoguing with an imagined audience, and then to a limited actual audience of readers, through writing.

It was only after the four year period of field work and creating field texts, when I had reached the phase of having to make broader sense of all the data I had collected for producing this research text in its final form, that I arrived at Narrative Inquiry as a more embracing interpretive framework for doing this. It is this framework that has influenced the final form of this thesis and which has helped resolve some of the tensions I had experienced about representing other people in text.

One of the tensions I have carried is about not having given this writing to others who are in my stories to read. On the one hand, I was writing about them and surely they ought to have a voice about my representation of them. On the other hand, my accounts were also personal and inward looking, directed more at examining my own professional life than that of others. As these stories became more personal, moving outside the immediate professional setting, in both time and place, they became more an inquiry into how I accounted for my own actions and theorising. I have felt self-protective about this as well as other-protective, slightly vulnerable and unsure about how others would read such stories, and aware that the stories take life as much from the writing as from the prior intentions or 'actions in the world' which they represent.

As it became clearer that I was 're-constructing' an account about myself and my life through the research, this thesis has become an 'autobiographical' representation of my journey. The imagined audience for whom I have written has shifted from those who people my stories to those who similarly wish to travel their own version of the same journey as researchers, who similarly wish to develop a more encompassing self-and-other-awareness, who wish to participate in co-creating a more reflexive social world. I feel able to give this thesis to those who wish to be 'fellow travellers'.

Weaving the strands together.

Finally, I wish to comment on the relationship I see between the different strands of inquiry strategy, starting with Narrative Inquiry in relation with Action Inquiry. Narrative Inquiry as I have used it, as writing about experience, complements the 'on-line' knowledge-in-action generated by Action Inquiry through providing 'off-line' knowledge generated by an inward dwelling reflection about the events under consideration. Considering all representation of experience as storied allows the writing about experience to be done within narrative criteria about what constitute 'good stories'. In this way a multi-dimensional reflection about the immediate events in question becomes possible and a richer giving and taking of meaning can occur. This process allows the narrative written by the researcher to be held alongside other narratives as potential contexts for ascribing meaning. These can be cultural myths (e.g. widely held and/or deeply embedded 'stories' about how men and women should behave), organisational and professional myths, family myths, individual life scripts, and so on - all can be seen as narratives which are inter-subjectively constructed.

In turn, the story once written informs the story lived. The role of action inquiry can then be to 'live' or test out the utility and efficacy of new stories in relation to others. Action Inquiry can also be seen in narrative terms, as the co-authoring of new stories with other participants. Each participant in this co-authoring will embroider their own personal meaning upon such stories in their own unique way. Action Inquiry can also structure experience in such a way as to give voice to previously silenced stories, giving them a 'space' in which they can be voiced and heard, allowing them to take their place alongside other stories. In this way more life-giving stories may be supported in challenging or replacing previously oppressive or life-sapping stories. Equally, the process of transformation may need to begin by hearing stories of oppression first.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

My own experience of writing stories was that it connected me with a far wider range of experience than the immediate events which seeded the story. It facilitated my reflecting upon other stories, from the literature, from friends and colleagues, from my own store of stories about the past, and this process allowed the construction of richer stories about myself and the world. Narrative inquiry for me became the softer, richer fabric with which to embroider the web of action inquiry.

I see Narrative Inquiry as resolving some of the 'truth' concerns I had in relation to Naturalistic Inquiry's Authenticity criteria. This was the case in my particular use of Narrative Inquiry. But in weaving authenticity criteria into the research fabric, I see it as providing a stronger, more tensile thread, woven in sparsely with Narrative Inquiry and holding important questions about epistemology and about values in case they risk being obscured. The more an inquiry explicitly invites others to become co-researchers/co-subjects, and the more a research text seeks to represent the voice of others (even though it is the researcher's story about their story), the more visible will need to become the Authenticity thread.

Having reflected on the process of conducting the research, I will now turn to where this has taken me in practical term as a psychologist and what lies ahead in the future

Implications for practice as a psychologist.

Current.

It is at this point, in thinking about my current practice and in thinking about Torbert's notion of community of inquiry, that I become aware of a 'circle of friends' which has developed for me over the past six years. My relationships within this circle have been influenced by my research experiences, and reciprocally these relationships influenced my research. Yet they have not been mentioned in this account as the focus has been on a particular set of relationships within my work setting which claimed much of my attention on a day to day basis.

This circle is a loose network of like-minded mental health professionals who see the world in pluralistic ways, who are vitally interested in the interconnections between individual and social practices, who care about the quality of organisational life and change, and who hold similar values. They, like me, often feel lone voices in their own settings, but feel strengthened by the connections we have with each other. It is this which gives me hope.

Developments in the work setting.

At the time of writing, the department has many of the same members still working there, with a small number of changes and additions. The department now acts as 'host' for the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) which took over part of our building for that purpose. The ICU is a nurse-led service to the whole trust, with its own nursing team. It is supported by myself, William, the occupational therapist and the physiotherapist. I consult to the nursing team within the ICU and increasingly across the Trust in helping referring teams to manage the 'patient journey' in and out of the ICU. There are many problems to be resolved and I am now working with many of the individuals who attended my first meeting on Cooperative Inquiry. In the process of developing the ICU before it opened we used features of both Cooperative and Action Inquiry strategies in working together. These are stories which are untold in this research account.

The Core Group is now in regular dialogue with the Trust executive group and interested clinicians from other departments about forming a Trust-wide network of tertiary specialist services which collaborate with each other in working with clients who have special needs. The majority of these needs will be met by psychological treatments and interventions. We are at the early stages of this dialogue but already there are the signs of new patterns of relationship developing in which there is increasing inquiry and willingness to move toward collaboration. Needless to say, the old patterns which I have observed and commented on throughout are still present and 'have their way' periodically.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

As a department the 'management of complex cases' forms a significant part of our tertiary specialist addiction services to our local district and the surrounding region. The second psychologist and the nurse/counsellor whom I eventually appointed to support my work are taking on the key worker role for 'complex cases' with increasing confidence. Our conversations together have informed my research journey and have in turn been informed by my research experiences. William now also 'key works' complex cases. As a department we have adopted the key worker protocol developed by the day care team and it is continually reviewed and refined in the light of experience. As a result of our dialogue with other departments about a combined tertiary service we have been inviting interested clinicians to refer their clients to us who have complex needs and where drugs and/or alcohol complicate their treatment and care. We have been inviting them to remain key worker and have coached and supported them in trying it 'our way'. The feedback has been very encouraging and both clinicians and clients enjoy the degree of participation and the collaborative involvement.

I measure the success of the key worker role to the extent that individuals who occupy it are able to work between 'upstairs' and 'downstairs' patterns of interaction. There are increasing numbers who can do so. However, I find myself still 'riding' this boundary, coming in and out as needed to interrupt old patterns of rigidity and to support new patterns of flexibility. But whether I am less available now to do this or whether the frames implicit in the key worker role have become more established, I am less active in doing this and find myself less often 'invited' in to this position.

Occasionally I see and hear things which make me wonder if anything has changed. Occasionally I see and hear things which pleasantly surprise me. I called into the nurses office on the ward several weeks ago to hear William coaching a junior nurse in how to handle a difficult relationship with a patient for whom he was the key worker. He looked up as I entered. "There is a name for this series of steps, David can you remind me?" I asked if he meant framing, advocating, illustrating and inquiring. He proceeded to explain how she might implement such a strategy, modelling as he went.

Rosemary was finally discharged from our service after a two year period of working with us. She is working, divorced from her husband, and living apart from her parents. She went on from us to spend several months in a therapeutic community to work on her interpersonal relationships and while she was there I worked with her parents on issues from their own lives. I hear from both Rosemary and her parents from time to time. Rosemary is not drinking and has more control over her eating. She and her parents still have episodes of conflict, and Rosemary is still making "disastrous" choices about her relationships with men. However, she and her family manage their lives now without professional help and without recourse to extremes of risk-taking or risk-making behaviour.

The department continues to face both challenges and opportunities and its continued survival in its current form is not guaranteed. However, I see the boundaries between the department and its wider environment as less closed and rigid, more open and flexible, and therefore more adaptive to change. It is this which keeps me hopeful.

Personal/ Professional Development.

I started the research with questions about multi-disciplinary teams and these changed as the research progressed. The issues of power, gender, difference of professional and personal perspectives, and constructs about health, illness and social control are deeply structured. Each 'team' must find its own way of working 'around' these issues. I see more clearly than before that the training, professional world views and body of practice associated with the various disciplines does not equip its members to work collaboratively together in the best interests of clients, or of the teams and organisations of which they are a part. My experience is that it is only when individuals develop, both separately and together, the ability to notice and inquire into their own and others' assumptions, beliefs and practices can effective collaboration work. This has little to do with their expert knowledge which arises from their

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

particular discipline. It is more to do with another 'discipline' altogether which is that of interpersonal competence and the development of a reflexive self-and-other awareness.

With regard to my own development over the course of the research I see two processes at play. The first was a process of 'de-construction', in terms of becoming aware of how the two themes of gender and power wove through my experience, or were 'meta-narratives' unawarely structuring my being and doing - these 'stories' living me and me living them. The second process was one of 're-construction', deriving a new set of constructs which led to a greater degree of congruence across the different domains of my experience. This 're-construction' is a continually emergent process, but the immediate effects for me were to place me more fully at the centre of my own sense-making and theorising about the world. The boundary rider metaphor encapsulates this for me. The 'key' learning theme for me throughout this research has been taking risks and listening to myself with a greater degree of trust than before. I have learned to 'listen' more carefully to my own experience and act on it.

So, where has this left me in relation to clinical psychology. I am still faced with contradictions. On the one hand the research has taken me even further beyond my immediate discipline into other areas of theory and practice. I have glimpsed what other writers are doing in their own fields and see that the boundaries are becoming increasingly open and there is much lending and borrowing of ideas. There are wonderful dialogues being held and to be held within the emerging new paradigm and clinical psychology is largely absent from these at present.

On the other hand I feel more connected with clinical psychology than before my research. In learning to listen more carefully to myself and my own experience, I have learned to listen more carefully and to inquire more thoroughly of other clinical psychologists. I have discovered a 'secret world' of experience with which I can resonate. Many clinical psychologists are privately asking themselves similar questions and having similar internal dialogues. They are living similar stories to the ones I was living as I came into the research. They have been silenced until recent times by the dominant 'story' in clinical psychology of the 'scientist practitioner' which honours objectivity at the expense of subjectivity.

This story is becoming more openly questioned and voice is given to other stories. This can be seen in the monthly clinical psychologists journal 'Forum' as practitioners write increasingly about exploring systemic therapies, experiment with qualitative research approaches, and occasionally reflect on some of the assumptions underlying their practice. This 'voice' is small but nonetheless present. Within my own network I have experienced the 'voicing' of alternative stories in exciting ways and it is with several brief stories about this that I wish to finish.

In giving a workshop to supervisors in which we explored the concept of reflexivity, I used an experiential exercise in which participants were asked to reconstruct an incident in clinical practice where they had an unexpected failure or success. The outcome of the exercise was for the participants to be able to share with each other all the different theories, models, and constructs which they had used to make sense of the incidents. We filled six large sheets of paper with the findings. The variety was both bewildering and exciting. Some participants had no formal names for the theories which informed their practice, and in describing them to the group gave them names, such as "my" theory, or the "muddle" theory. This gave rise to very interesting dialogue, as some of the participants were teachers and trainers of clinical psychology. There was much confusion and pockets of revelation as we tried to explain these in relation to the scientist practitioner model.

Following this workshop, some months later, I was approached by the director of the local clinical psychology training course (to which I contribute) to contribute to the learning of the course tutors. They for some time had recognised the need to understand more about qualitative research and were setting up a series of seminars for themselves and would like me to run one on the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings. I was both delighted and flattered to accept.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html

Over the last year, as I have voiced more strongly my interests within the teaching and supervision I provide to the training course as a practitioner, I have had increasing interest shown in return by the trainees in doing qualitative research for their projects. I realise I am riding a boundary between the thirst of the trainees to find a form of research which fits better their experience, and the tensions of the trainers who both wish to meet that need but also feel responsible to the wider domain of clinical psychology as it is still practised, with its public adherence to the scientist practitioner model. There are interesting times ahead.

Lastly, I would like to recount a brief encounter with a clinical psychologist colleague which illustrated for me, on reflection, much of where the research had brought me to in my continuing journey. This colleague found out about my interest in qualitative research through a trainee she was supervising who had consulted me about her research project. The clinical psychologist , together with two colleagues, had carried out a piece of research into the setting in which they worked, They had written it up for publication but were very unhappy with the draft which moved uneasily between the qualitative and the quantitative aspects of the research, doing justice to neither. I was asked to read the draft and to help with their difficulties. On receiving the draft, and feeling very pressured for time (writing this thesis) I noted a tension between two opposing tendencies. One tendency was to put the draft aside until I could give it the time I felt it deserved, so that I could think long and hard and 'get it right' for them. The other tendency was to do it 'now ', recognising that I would never have 'enough time' and trust that I would have at least something to offer, and that immediate feedback would probably be more helpful than delayed feedback. I read it over lunch, scribbled notes on one side of A4 paper, called my colleague and made a time to meet over lunch the following week.

We went through the draft together in half an hour, and I gave feedback about the implicit and explicit themes I saw in the report which could be elaborated on, I inquired into and commented on the implicit models and assumptions carried by the researchers but not made explicit in the draft, and I referred them to literature I knew of which related to their interests. This feedback confirmed what my colleague had been feeling about the research and named and elaborated what her confusion had been about. We then went on to discuss qualitative research and clinical psychology. She had originally trained as a sociologist but went into clinical psychology because it offered more certain and secure employment. She felt she had 'sealed off ' this whole body of knowledge and the perspectives it offered to her work. Our conversation had re-affirmed the importance of taking a wider perspective and of using all the knowledge available to her. She talked about how her sociological knowledge could help with making sense of her research. We then shared several stories of our own experiences of seeking a form of research and a way of 'knowing about things' which fitted with the complexity of our professional and personal experiences. We parted agreeing to meet again and invite others to join us in exploring how we could use qualitative research in our work.

What the encounter meant to me was that I was prepared to trust my instincts and intuition and move in a timely way to take 'advantage of the moment'. This for me was a risk because in the past I have tended to be much more circumspect about giving advice, feeling that I would have had to put in considerable effort to 'get it right' and give a thorough, 'expert' and considered opinion. In this situation I trusted much more that I had 'something' to offer without extensive prior preparation, that it would be the dialogue which was important, that my colleague would take her own meaning from what I had to offer and map it onto her own experience, and that it was the connecting with each other and the participation in sharing and creating 'new stories' which was the essence. It was the quality of the interaction and the co-creating of new or elaborated understanding which was important and I am much more trusting of this.

So, I am both more 'of ' clinical psychology at this stage of my journey, and more 'outside'. The two core themes of my 're-constructed' sense of myself as a clinical psychologist are those of *participation* and *connection*, both internally and externally, and across the past and the future.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_quinlan.html