

PRANEE LIAMPUTTONG

JEAN RUMBOLD

EDITORS



KNOWING  
DIFFERENTLY

*Arts-Based and Collaborative Research Methods*

NOVA

# **KNOWING DIFFERENTLY: ARTS-BASED AND COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

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ARTS-BASED AND COLLABORATIVE  
RESEARCH METHODS**

**PRANEE LIAMPUTTONG  
AND  
JEAN RUMBOLD  
EDITORS**

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## **DEDICATION**

Pranee dedicates this book to her two daughters:  
Zoe Sanipreeya Rice & Emma Inturatana Rice, who play an important part in Pranee's  
life as an immigrant mother

Jean dedicates it to Bruce and David who prefer music  
as a way of knowing but humour her obsession with images.



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## PROLOGUE

This book began in the back seat of a car headed for Daylesford in country Victoria, Australia, on a golden Spring day. We (Pranee and Jean) were travelling together to a staff development day for La Trobe's School of Public Health, along with Bruce Rumbold who was driving. We were neighbours at home and at work, but it was only in this liminal space of the back seat as we travelled that we were able to have the kind of conversation seldom possible in the pressures of the university context – a conversation about our current interests and enthusiasms.

Pranee was working on a new book on research with vulnerable people, and was interested in including innovative research methods and different ways of representing the voices of vulnerable research participants. Jean had been continuing postcard conversations with peer researchers about the arts-based research methodology used in her thesis, and now employed in teaching and supervision and consulting. We discovered a common interest in arts-based, experiential and collaborative research methods. Each of us knew of different sets of researchers exploring these methods in exciting ways, and both of us were keen to provide further support and connections for students of ours venturing into this territory. It was Bruce from the driver's seat who threw over his shoulder the comment “you two should get together a book on these methods”. And that was the beginning of this collection.

We see this is as a book for honours and postgraduate students, their supervisors, and fellow researchers and reflective practitioners in the health and social sciences. It is likely to be of interest to those who work with vulnerable and marginalized people. We also believe that the book will have value for those who teach research methods as it offers some innovative ways of doing research which may interest many students. This, at least, has been our experience in teaching at La Trobe University and elsewhere.

Our contributors are diverse in terms of disciplines (amongst them public health, sociology, education, nursing, psychology, art and music therapy) and are drawn from Australia, UK, Europe, USA and Canada. Despite the diversity there are many significant gaps in this collection – of which we are well aware – but we hope that by adding this mix of perspectives to the rapidly expanding literature on experiential and arts based methods we can further international and interdisciplinary conversations and connections between researchers and practitioners interested in these forms of inquiry.

We are grateful to many people for their help with this book. We thank Bruce Rumbold for the original idea and for ongoing support, Peter Reason for challenging us to include livelier presentational forms, and Maya Columbus of Nova Science Publishers for offering us

a contract. Most of all, we are grateful to all the contributors in this volume. Without them, there would be no book.

Pranee Liamputtong & Jean Rumbold  
August 2007

## ABOUT THE EDITORS

**Pranee Liamputtong** is a Professor at the School of Public Health, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. Pranee has previously taught in the School of Sociology and Anthropology and worked as a public health research fellow at the Mother and Child Health Research Centre, La Trobe University.

Pranee's book *Qualitative research methods: A health focus* (with Douglas Ezzy, Oxford University Press, 1999) has been reprinted in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and the second edition of this book is titled *Qualitative research methods* (2005). Pranee's new focus is on the use of the Internet in qualitative research and she has recently completed an edited book on *Health research in cyberspace: Methodological, practical and personal issues of Researching Online*, which was published by Nova Science Publishers, New York in 2006. Her most recent method books include: *Researching the vulnerable: A guide to sensitive research methods* (Sage, 2007); *Undertaking sensitive research: Managing boundaries, emotions and risk* (with Virginia Dickson-Swift and Erica James, Cambridge University Press, in press). She is now working on *Doing cross-cultural research* (Springer), and *Performing qualitative cross-cultural research* (Cambridge University Press), and about to embark on *Focus group methodology: Principle and practice* (which will be published by Sage, London).

In her own research, Pranee has a particular interest in issues related to cultural and social influences on childbearing, childrearing and women's reproductive and sexual health. She has published a large number of papers in these areas, and her three books on these issues have been used widely in the health field: *My 40 days: A cross-cultural resource book for health care professionals in birthing services* (The Vietnamese Antenatal/Postnatal Support Project, 1993); *Asian mothers, Australian birth* (editor, Ausmed Publications, 1994); *Maternity and reproductive health in Asian societies* (editor, with Lenore Manderson, Harwood Academic Press, 1996). Other recent books include: *Asian mothers, Western birth* (new edition of *Asian mothers, Australian birth*, Ausmed Publications, 1999); *Living in a new country: Understanding migrants' health* (editor, Ausmed Publications, 1999); *Hmong women and reproduction* (Bergin & Garvey, 2000); *Coming of age in South and Southeast Asia: Youth, courtship and sexuality* (editor, with Lenore Manderson, Curzon Press and Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), 2002); and *Health, social change and communities* (editor, with Heather Gardner, Oxford University Press, 2003). She has just published two books for Nova Science Publishers in 2007: *Reproduction, childbearing and motherhood: A*

*cross-cultural perspective*, and *Childrearing and infant care issues: A cross-cultural perspective*. Her most recent book is *The journey of becoming a mother amongst Thai women in northern Thailand* (Lexington Books, 2007). She has just finished her new book on *Population health, communities and health promotion: Assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation* (with Sansnee Jirojwong, Oxford University Press, in press).

**Jean Rumbold** is a counselling psychologist, and a lecturer in the School of Public Health at LaTrobe University. She currently supervises doctoral research students in the Department of Counselling and Psychological Health at LaTrobe, and at the Melbourne Institute of Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy (MIECAT). Until recently she coordinated the Graduate Diploma of Counselling and Human Services at LaTrobe, and she has worked in private practice as a counsellor, and in consultancy with a range of business, educational and welfare groups. Jean's professional doctorate was on *The art of reflective practice* (2003 EdD thesis, Institute of Education, La Trobe University). Her research interest in reflective practice derives in part from her teaching and supervision of counsellors and psychologists, and in part from her leadership development and team building work with university, government and welfare agencies.

Jean helped establish MIECAT (Melbourne Institute for Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy) and also teaches in its programs, and her work with colleagues there has developed her interest in arts-based research. Aspects of this interest are outlined in a recent article: Jan Allen and Jean Rumbold (2004) Postcard conversations: a dialogue about methodology. *Qualitative Research Journal* Vol. 4, No. 2, 2004, pp. 100-129

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Loris Alexander** is a counselling and clinical psychologist whose PhD. investigated the use of creative art in personal psychological learning. She trained as an artist, an occupational therapist and a clinical psychologist and has lifelong interests in many creative arts, human behaviour and psychological therapies and theories. She has worked in mental health as a Senior Therapist, in tertiary education as an Associate Professor, and in state government health policy as a Joint Director of a Quality Assurance Programme. She has written papers and books in life cycle psychology (child development, family formation and function, attachment theory, gerontology), therapeutic systems, health education, health policy and qualitative research.

**David Aldridge** specializes in developing research methods suitable for various therapeutic initiatives, including the creative arts therapies, complementary medicine and nursing. In teaching and supervising research in medicine, music therapy, the creative arts and nursing, (previously at the Chair for Qualitative Research in Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine, Universität Witten Herdecke) he developed a doctoral program for interdisciplinary research in these areas where practitioners are encouraged to become researchers. This has meant that he has had to find a way of encouraging research questioning that respects expert clinical experience but encourages novice researchers. To do this, the tacit research stance of qualitative research challenges the researcher to find her own understandings but also to question those understandings – to literally RE-search by making explicit and looking again.

**Jan Allen** is the Deputy Director at MIECAT (the Melbourne Institute for Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy), Australia. Her PhD explored *The Art of Intersubjectivity* and she is interested in collaborative arts-based education, research and therapy. Jan has a professional background in arts education in secondary schools, in groupwork and assertiveness training with community services in prisons, youth training centres and children's residential services. She previously lectured at Latrobe University's Health Sciences, in Occupational Therapy, with a focus on the principles and practices of experiential learning as they relate to working with people who have disabilities.

**Carl Bagley** is Professor of Educational Sociology at Durham University in the United Kingdom. His methodological interest is in exploring the (re) presentational embrace between educational research and the arts and the ways in which such a sensuous encounter may evoke meaning with feeling and engender new ways of knowing. On this theme he co-edited (with M.B.Cancienne) the book *Dancing the Data* (Peter Lang) and its interrelated CD-ROM *Dancing the Data Too*.

**Gail Campbell** is Assistant Professor in Drama in Education and Community at the School of Dramatic Art, University of Windsor, Ontario. She has an MFA in Theatre for Youth from North Carolina and is working on her PhD in Drama Education from the University of Alberta. Her dissertation, *Arresting Change*, deals with participatory drama with young offenders. Currently, her research is with disadvantaged populations including at-risk youth, immigrants and refugees and LGBT young people using drama to explore issues and perspectives. She is a Playback Theatre practitioner and artistic director of Random Acts, whose mandate is to give marginalized groups a place to tell their stories. She organized the first academic playback conference in Windsor, Ontario in June, 2007.

**Mary Beth Cancienne** PhD is an assistant professor of Secondary Education in the College of Education at James Madison University. She explores movement and dance as a method for theorizing, researching, and teaching. Her publications can be found in *Qualitative Inquiry*, the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* and *Sex Education*. She also co-edited a book and CD ROM titled *Dancing the data* and *Dancing the data too* (Peter Lang, 2002).

**Darrel Caulley** retired from the Institute of Education, La Trobe University, Melbourne, in 2001. He has published over 140 papers and a book, and has been awarded “Supervisor of the Year” by the Latrobe University Postgraduate Association, and “Supervisor of the Exemplary Doctoral Thesis” on four occasions. Involved in the establishment of Evaluation as a recognized discipline in Australia, Darrel has been President of the Australasian Evaluation Society, received the Award for the Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation in Australasia, and been founding Editor of *Evaluation News and Comment*. Founder and founding President of the (International) Association for Qualitative Research, Darrel is currently serving as an executive committee member and as founding and continuing Editor of the refereed *Qualitative Research Journal*. In 2004 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his contribution to research and evaluation methodology.

**Diane Conrad** is Assistant Professor of Drama/Theatre Education in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. Her research uses participatory arts-based methods, specifically Popular Theatre, in working with youth commonly deemed at-risk inner-city youth, Aboriginal youth, and incarcerated youth. Popular Theatre provides a forum for youth to represent their perspectives. Recent publications include: Rethinking “At-risk” in Drama Education: Beyond Prescribed Roles in Research in Drama Education; Exploring Risky Youth Experiences: Popular Theatre as a Participatory, Performative Research Method

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in the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*; Entangled in the Sticks: Ethical Conundrums of Popular Theatre as Pedagogy and Research in *Qualitative Inquiry*.

**Christine Davis** is Assistant Professor in the Communication Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She has 25 years of research experience, four years of graduate and undergraduate teaching experience, and eight years of corporate consulting experience. For the past three years, as a researcher at the Florida Mental Health Institute at the University of South Florida, she has been involved in numerous projects that evaluate the communication process involved in system of care and wraparound child and family team meetings. She has also conducted dozens of training sessions in Hillsborough County, Florida, on wraparound team meeting facilitation. Her research interests are in the intersection of family, health, disability, interpersonal, and group communication.

**Norma Daykin** is Professor of Arts in Health at UWE, Bristol. A social scientist with multidisciplinary interests in music and arts, she has undertaken research and published on a wide range of issues including public health, user involvement and patient experiences of health care. Recent studies include an exploration of musicians' accounts of identity and illness; participants' experiences of music therapy; evaluation of the role of arts in mental healthcare settings and of the impact of participatory arts in primary care.

**Marcelo Diversi** is Assistant Professor of Human Development at Washington State University at the lovely Vancouver campus. He has been trying to learn and write about how humans develop at the intersections of nature and nurture, of self and culture, and how these intersections produce ideologies of domination across and within societies. He is attempting to do so in ways that acknowledge the inherent differences between experience as lived, interpreted, and represented. It is in the mind's ability to reflect upon these differences that, he believes, lies the hope for more inclusive rings of social justice.

**Carolyn Ellis** is Professor of Communication and Sociology at the University of South Florida. She is interested in interpretive and artistic representations of qualitative research, in particular, autoethnographic narratives. She is the author of *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography* (2004), and *Final Negotiations: A Story of Love, Loss, and Chronic Illness* (1995), and *Fisher Folk: Two Communities on Chesapeake Bay*. With Arthur P. Bochner, she is the co-editor of *Composing Ethnography: Alternative Forms of Qualitative Writing* (1996) and *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature, and Aesthetics* (2002). In her methodological work on narrative, ethics, and autoethnographic inquiry, she seeks to connect method with lived experience, and social science with humanities; in her current work on illness, relationships, and emotions, she seeks to write evocative texts that remind readers of the complexity of their social worlds.

**Marilyn Guillemin** is Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre for the Study of Health and Society at the University of Melbourne. Marilyn teaches postgraduate courses in qualitative research design and research methods, social health and health ethics. Her research areas are in sociology of health and illness, particularly in the areas of women's

health, understandings of illness, and health and technology studies. She has completed research into the management of menopause within specialised clinic settings, looking at the needs and practices of both women seeking help and medical practitioners, as well as major research projects examining mid-age women and heart disease particularly focusing on women's understanding of risk and prevention of heart disease, and research on deafness and genetic testing. She is currently undertaking research on the ethical decision-making process of health researchers and ethics committee members. Marilys has published widely in the areas of sociology of health, illness and technology, research practice and more recently, ethical practice in research and in health care. Marilys's publications encompass academic journal articles, books and book chapters, as well as community and government research reports.

**Sarva Hibbard** works as a creative arts therapist and consultant for Community, Local and State government specializing in 'at risk' young people. Her doctoral research interest lies in representing components of intersubjectivity in the therapeutic space using dramatic arts. Sarva teaches for the Melbourne Institute for Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy (MIECAT) in Brisbane, Australia.

**Christine Morley** currently works as a Senior Lecturer in Social Work within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. She has a keen interest in critical practice and critical reflection, and has been practicing, teaching and researching in these areas over the past 10 years. Her PhD focuses on critical reflection as a means of promoting opportunities to enhance critical practice and she has a number of publications in this area.

**Caroline Park** is a Registered Nurse who holds a doctorate in Educational Administration from the University of Alberta, Canada. She has held practice and teaching positions in nursing in Canada, the U.S. and England. Since 1999, while living in the province of Manitoba, she has been developing and teaching in a multidisciplinary Masters of Health Studies degree program at Athabasca University, Canada's Open University. The program is totally on-line and prepares students from all health professional practice groups for leadership positions. This endeavour has spawned an interest in multidisciplinary health education and research. Dr. Park currently leads a collaborative research group within the Centre for Nursing and Health Studies and is studying the process of a multidisciplinary health bioethics team as it develops into a network of researchers from around the world.

**Peter Reason** is Professor of Action Research/Practice and Director of the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice in the School of Management at the University of Bath, which has pioneered graduate education based on collaborative, experiential and action oriented forms of inquiry through the Postgraduate Programme in Action Research and the MSc in Responsibility and Business Practice. His major academic work has been to contribute to the development of a participatory worldview and associated approaches to inquiry; and in particular to the theory and practice of co-operative inquiry. *The Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice* (co-edited with Hilary Bradbury; Sage

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2001; a second edition will be published in 2008) has made a significant contribution to the field as has the international and interdisciplinary journal *Action Research*. He is currently leading a large scale inquiry into the possibilities of carbon reduction in industry. Peter's major concern is with the devastating and unsustainable impact of human activities on the biosphere which, he believes, is grounded in our failure to recognize the participatory nature of our relationship with the planet and the cosmos.

**Chris Seeley** started life with drawing, painting, sewing, making – a childhood informed by creating – before studying graphic design, moving into corporate identity, typography and then industrial market research and new business development. She broadened her horizons at the turn of the century to encompass wider global issues and has sought to re-integrate her expressive creative life into her work as a response to sustainability and the current world climate. Now, Chris is a consultant and Visiting Teaching Fellow at the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice, researching and working in the public, private and educational sectors with many different ways of knowing ranging from poetry to image to theatre to collective art-making.

**Kay Thorburn** has worked with 'at risk' young people for twenty years. Currently Kay consults for the private and community sector, local and State Government bodies and teaches for MIECAT (Melbourne Institute for Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy) in Brisbane. Kay's current doctoral research is focused on the creation of visual texts of experiencing in the intersubjective two therapist space with vulnerable young people.

**Carla van Laar** has trained in painting and sculpture, and Creative Arts Therapy. She is currently a Doctoral researcher with the Melbourne Institute of Experiential and Creative Arts Therapy where she is investigating the roles of art in sharing women's stories. Carla's interest in utilising the arts for wellness has led her to work in schools, hospitals, detention centres and community services, and she is presently Creative Arts Therapist within the Adolescent Forensic Health Service at the Royal Children's Hospital. Her first book entitled, *Bereaved Mother's Heart* will be published in 2007. Carla's artwork is always intertwined with her experiences of art as a vehicle for transformation, and she is interested in images of journeying, connection and transformation.

**Carolyn Westall** is a PhD student at the University of Melbourne in the School of Nursing and the School of Population Health. In her study, Carolyn interviewed 33 women and 18 partners to identify how women and their partners understand and resolve postnatal depression. Carolyn is a registered nurse, midwife, and maternal and child health nurse who is supporting vulnerable families suffering from postnatal depression. She has pioneered and continues to run support groups for women with postnatal depression and their families. Carolyn is setting up a foundation to prevent postnatal depression and to assist women and their families in their recovery from the illness. Carolyn has published articles about the impact of childhood sexual abuse on women's emotional well-being before and after the birth.

**Antony Williams** is the author of three books on psychodrama and action methods. They have been translated into languages such as Portuguese and Finnish which he cannot read. One of them ended up in Russian, which he also cannot read. He spent 25 years as an academic teaching counselling psychology before setting up on his own as a psychologist in private practice, and as an organisational consultant. After a year or so he found that these two forms of work were not meshing, and he dropped the psychology practice altogether. He now works only with organisations, consulting and teaching in that context. He is a partner in Santo & Williams P/L, a small consulting firm in Melbourne, Australia.

**Peter Willis** is a senior lecturer at the University of South Australia in adult, vocational and workplace learning. He previously spent more than a decade as a missionary and community development worker with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Kimberley area of North Western Australia and in Central Australia. His main research areas concern transformative and 'second chance' learning among adults and the relationship between religion, spiritual practice and civil society. He pioneered the use of phenomenological approaches in Arts based research in his book *Inviting Learning: an exhibition of risk and enrichment in Adult Education practice* (NIACE, London 2002) and in an edited collection entitled *Being, seeking telling: Expressive approaches to qualitative adult education research* (Post Pressed: Brisbane)

## *Chapter 1*

# **KNOWING DIFFERENTLY: SETTING THE SCENE**

*Pranee Liamputtong and Jean Rumbold*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*Knowing Differently* is a bold title for a book on research methodology. It seems to suggest something quite new, whereas we are conscious that the methods presented here have been in use by researchers for decades now. It does, however, point to less dominant ways of knowing that are emerging as increasingly relevant for researchers in the health and social sciences. In this opening chapter, we want to set this book in its context, introduce its theoretical underpinnings, and explain the reasons for its content, style and structure.

Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln suggest that we are in the eighth moment of qualitative research (2005: 20). They point out that as far back as the third and fourth moments of the 1970s and 1980s the development of blurred genres and the crisis of representation meant some researchers gravitated to forms of inquiry that were diverse, arts-based, reflexive, and “called into question the issues of gender, class, and race” (2005: 18). Now, despite what Denzin and Lincoln name the “methodological backlash” (2005: 20), they claim:

We are in a new age where messy, uncertain, multivoiced texts, cultural criticism, and new experimental works will become more common, as will more reflexive forms of fieldwork, analysis and intertextual representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 26).

In this new age, an interest in arts-based and collaborative research methods has bubbled up in many disciplines and many countries. And these interests, originally at the margins, are moving into the mainstream, as is evidenced by their publication in handbook and textbook forms (see for arts-based research Finley, 2005; Irwin & Cosson, 2004; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Knowles & Cole, 2008, and for forms of collaborative and participatory research Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Minkler & Wallestein, 2003; Reason & Bradbury, 2006).

Nevertheless, it is clear that, of the various ways of knowing identified in Heron's and Reason's (1997) extended epistemology, it is still *propositional* ("conceptual") knowing that dominates research in the health and social sciences. Academic writing is recognized as a style laden with abstract conceptualization. Propositional knowing is of course built on other ways of knowing, as the models of Heron (1992, 1999) and Kolb (1984) make clear. However, much academic research only samples *experiential* ("felt") knowing in precisely defined and narrow terms, in order to explain phenomena, so that "the data are secondhand, and the people who provided these are kept, apparently, at a distance" (Oakley, 2000: 11). Because propositional knowing is so dominant, other ways to knowing, that access experience more immediately and richly or that translate it into action and practice, tend to receive less attention.

*Presentation* ("symbolized") knowing which represents experiential knowing in expressive forms is relatively underdeveloped in academic research. In this arena, participants have more often been invited to represent their experience by selecting pre-formed written descriptions in surveys, or by expressing it verbally in focus groups and interviews. Nevertheless, there is a growing interest from researchers in the use of other forms of representation. In many disciplines, narrative has an increasing appeal as a research method, opening up possibilities for participants and even researchers to use story forms (Riessman, 1990; Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992; Frank, 1995; Hyden, 1997; Richardson, 1997; Gimlin, 2000). And the reflexive turn in methodology means the presentation of self, first person, personal stories has become important (Denzin, 2003). We have begun to witness more of the researcher's "autoethnographical self" in such first person narratives (see Ronai, 1995; Ellis, 1995; Ellis & Bochner, 1996; Richardson, 1997; Holt, 2003; Ellis, 2004; Richardson & Lockridge, 2004; Richardson, 2007).

Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner (2000) provide an overview of the astounding size and diversity of the field they would now gather under the term autoethnography, and most of these writers make use of some form of the arts in their research. Visual and performative arts-based research methods are less prominent than research using the literary arts, but have also been appearing in a variety of contexts – especially within education and sociology (Barone & Eisner, 1997; Eisner, 1997; Diamond & Mullen, 1999; McLaren, 2000; Scott-Hoy, 2000; Rose 2001; Harper, 2005; Stanczak, 2007).

The fourth form of knowing in Heron and Reason's extended epistemology (1997) is *Practical* ("how to") knowing. This is a goal encouraged in the current political climate by funding arrangements that require research outcomes to include "impact", and given urgency by the global environmental challenges facing us all. It is a goal pursued by researchers employing the many types of Action Research (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2006). Despite this, gulfs between researchers and practitioners continue to yawn wide, and in popular use the phrase "it is purely academic" still means "it makes no practical difference".

The title of this book *Knowing differently* might seem to beg the question "knowing differently from what?" However, it references ways to knowing (presentational and practical) that are, although increasingly of interest to many students and researchers, still marginalized by the dominance of propositional knowing in research.

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## TWIN THEMES OF THIS BOOK: ARTS-BASED AND COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY

Our interest here is in effective and creative ways to access the experiential knowing of participants and co-researchers, as well as researchers' own experiential knowing, in order to serve good practice. In Heron's and Reason's (1997) terms, we are interested first in *presentational knowing* – the representation of this experiential knowing in a variety of arts-based and literary forms. This research involves critical reflection on experience, and tends to be both reflexive and collaborative, easily translating to *practical knowing*.

The title names the twin themes of this book as arts-based inquiry and collaborative forms of inquiry. Naming the book and the themes has not been straightforward. The methodological territory that interests us has been given many different names, and is being explored by well-equipped parties from many different disciplines who are busy marking trails and mapping it. "Autoethnography" is one term that gathers together many people working reflexively, collaboratively, heuristically – and often using forms of the arts as modes of inquiry (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). While our interests lie with this broad group, we have chosen "arts-based research", favoured by education (see Eisner, 1997), as a more transparent naming and one that may better reflect the interdisciplinary nature of this territory. We acknowledge, however, that this name can be a deterrent for those who think they must be artists to use the expressive modes the arts supply. We use "arts-based" and "presentational" knowing interchangeably in this book. Presentational knowing may be a better description of the book's scope, since this term more easily encompasses descriptions of experiencing (even the "reflective observations" of Kolb's model, 1984). Casting such descriptions as varieties of narrative and story, however, lets us see them as arts-based forms as well. Our other theme of collaborative inquiry takes us into the very broad landscape of Action research, opening up alternative descriptions such as participatory or co-operative inquiry. However, since these have been identified with particular practices (see Heron, 1996: Greenwood & Levin, 2007), we have stayed with the more general term "collaborative inquiry."

Both arts-based and collaborative forms of research we see as particularly rich ways to access experiential knowing. Both of these modes of research, we believe, are also effective ways to blur researcher/practitioner boundaries, whether the practitioners are therapists, teachers, community development workers, artists, nurses, or other health and welfare professionals. In an environment where there are still distances to bridge between researchers and practitioners, and where experienced professionals look for ways to renew themselves and stave off burnout, there seems value in exploring methods that may assist in these endeavours. Our contributors, though all engaged in research, come from both sides of this divide and their interest in reflective practice helps to bridge the gap.

Arts-based and collaborative are particularly suited to working with participants who may not respond to the more verbal research methods of survey forms, interviews and focus groups. While working with arts-based/collaborative inquiry does not necessarily change the power differentials between researchers and participants, many observers have noted the potential of these methods for ethical relationships and social change. Yvonna Lincoln (1995) sees art-based inquiry as situated within a tradition of participatory action research in social

science. Norman Denzin argues that in fact arts-based research is essentially “a radical ethical aesthetic” (2000: 261). One way in which this might operate is suggested by Tom Barone who claims that arts-based research methods are valuable for “recasting the contents of experience into a form with the potential for challenging (sometimes deeply held) beliefs and values” (2001: 26).

Recently, Susan Finley has claimed that arts-based research methods are becoming “socially responsible, politically activist, and locally useful research methodologies” (2005: 681; see also 2008). She provides as “an example of radical, ethical, and revolutionary arts-based inquiry” (2005: 689) an account of an American project that has been carried out within different communities of low-income children and their families (both sheltered and unsheltered), street youths, and people living in tents. Starting with “artful ways of seeing and knowing ourselves and the world in which we live”, (Finley 2005: 692) in this project aims to prepare the children to “become lifelong activists who are equipped for guerrilla warfare against oppression.”

The concerns of much arts-based inquiry and of the many forms of collaborative and participatory research seem to converge on action and practical knowing. Action Research has been in widespread use for long enough for its handbooks and texts to be entering revised editions (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2006). We will not review its history here, except to note that it offers a great variety of models directed to pragmatic action, social reform, educational action, participatory evaluation, rural appraisal, human inquiry (collaborative, self-reflective and co-operative), action science and organizational learning (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Greenwood and Levin (2007) also offer an understanding of research that seems more congruent with arts-based inquiry than the common idea that research is “systematic” inquiry. They state:

We define *scientific research* as investigative activity capable of discovering that the world is or is not organized as our preconceptions lead us to expect and suggesting grounded ways of understanding and acting on it (Greenwood & Levin, 2007: 55-56).

This seems a definition that, if accepted, could provide some common ground for researchers operating from different worldviews to meet and even co-operate.

The collaborations of interest to our contributors here include those with research participants, those with reflective practitioners and organisational clients, those amongst interdisciplinary teams of researchers, and those between supervisors and students. And although some of our writers focus more on one theme than the other, in general, the themes of arts-based or presentational knowing and collaborative research or knowing together are twined together in these chapters. Our attempt to allocate them to particular sections is not to be taken too categorically.

## THE BROADER CONTEXT

Our research is shaped of course by the times we live in. For years now, some have claimed we have been living in a postmodern world, pointing to the loss of belief in progress,

the evaporation of “grand narratives”, a plurality of discourses, and an end to the privileging of positivist science as the dominant discourse (Gergen, 1991; Grbich, 2004). While recognising similar conditions of uncertainty, Anthony Giddens has seen a world where the institutions have not yet taken on post-modern forms, and so described these times as “high modernity” In an increasingly menacing world, he imagines us attempting to “ride the juggernaut of modernity” (1990: 151), and for him “the minimising of high-consequence risks transcends all values” (1990: 154).

Whether or not we think our social conditions are best described as postmodern, and whether or not we are attracted to postmodernism as intellectual theory, the conditions of risk, uncertainty, diversity seem even more obvious now, as is the co-existence of both modern and postmodern paradigms. Ours is a world in crisis, facing huge challenges in international relations and public health, and the threat of looming ecological disaster. As Yvonna Lincoln and Norman Denzin say, it “is not that we might elect to engage in work that is postmodern. Rather, it is that we have inherited a postmodern world, and there is no going back” (2000: 1059).

For students and researchers in the health and social sciences, the social and intellectual context of their work includes the privileging by their colleagues, institutions, and societies of quantitative evidence and the prioritizing of experimental research methods (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006: 379; Lincoln, 2005). Indeed, Yvonna Lincoln and Norman Denzin describe the current moment in research as “the methodologically contested present” (2005: 1123). They consider that the next, the ninth, moment of qualitative research is likely to be a fractured future of researchers lining up “on two opposing sides of a great divide”: those using randomized field trials on the one hand, and those pursuing “a socially and cultural responsive, communitarian, justice-oriented set of studies” on the other. We, like Lincoln and Denzin, would rather “both sides might be heard”, and that peace break out in the paradigm wars. While that does not seem likely just now, we have chosen in this collection to move away from defending the borders in order to explore the territory of presentational knowing, seeking out those who are genuinely interested in dialogue.

## **DIVERSITY AND SCOPE OF THIS BOOK**

We have described this collection as exploring the research methods (arts-based, reflexive, collaborative) that allow researchers to access their own and their participants’ experiential knowing in richer ways. *Knowing differently* as a title also hints at the diversity of this collection. The book consists of chapters from different writers on a range of innovative methods of research and analysis that use literary forms, performance and visual arts, action methods, collaborative and interdisciplinary inquiry. Writers are drawn from various disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas in the health and social sciences, including sociology, psychology, education, public health, nursing, education, social work, creative arts therapy, and management. The methodologies they discuss can be applied across all these fields.

This book also brings together researchers from different parts of the world to demonstrate these alternative methods of research. We have deliberately included people at

different stages in their research careers to reflect on the experience of undertaking such projects. There is a gender imbalance in the book, with many more women contributing than men, in part a result of the nature of our networks. We notice that more of the women have chosen to write collaboratively. While we should not over-interpret this difference, it is true that feminist researchers have contributed significantly to these emergent methods (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2005, 2006; Grbich, 2007; Liamputtong, 2007) and it is interesting to speculate that women might be at home with methods grounded in physical images and bodily knowing. Further diversity is seen in the worldviews included here. Although arts-based and collaborative methods seem particularly congruent with the constructionist and participatory inquiry paradigms (Guba & Lincoln 2005), our contributors are embedded in different paradigms – compare Caulley’s chapter with that of Davis and Ellis, or Guillemin and Westall’s chapter with Thorburn and Hibbard’s.

Our aim in gathering this collection is not to produce a methods “recipe book”. We want to avoid the trap of instructing in creative methods. So, although there is some attention to how to use these methods, there is much more focus on showing people adapting the methods to their own research and professional practice. We recognize the fact that some readers can extrapolate from accounts of others’ work and see the implications for their own more readily than others, but we have asked for methodological discussions and first-person accounts of using these methods in order to fire the imagination of students and researchers. In this way, we hope to stimulate and encourage others to pursue their own different ways of knowing.

To some, this collection will seem too broad, with a scope that speaks of trying to do too much. To others, it will not seem comprehensive enough. Certainly, every reader will know of some forms of arts-based and collaborative methods we have not sampled here. The linear form of a book has made it easier to include literary and visual forms, so that forms involving movement, sound and voice are under-represented here. We have not been able to include, for example, animation and film, installation, sound sculpture, playback theatre and reflexive drama as research methods. We are conscious too of neglecting presentational forms accessed through electronic networked communication systems, such forms as blogs and digital video, and web-based games. For these, we must direct you to another book Pranee has edited (Liamputtong, 2006), and one by Chris Mann and Fiona Stewart (2000).

## ETHICS AND VALUES

Some of our writers themselves come from marginalized and vulnerable peoples, and many of our contributors write of working and researching with such groups (with prisoners, homeless and ‘at risk’ youth, Latino youth, victims of domestic violence, the chronically ill and the dying). We do not have a chapter directed specifically at ‘researching the vulnerable’ since this is the title and focus of a recent book by Pranee (Liamputtong, 2007), but the relevance of arts-based and collaborative methods for such work, along with the values and ethical and respectful relationships required, are exemplified throughout these contributions.

Nor do we have a separate chapter on the ethics of arts-based and collaborative approaches, largely because we see ethical concerns as needing to be part of all these discussions of research methods. While ethics committees and review boards have usefully