Post-material making:
explorations for a materially connected textile design practice

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Emma Lynas
Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) | RMIT University
Bachelor of Teaching | University of Tasmania

School of Fashion and Textiles
College of Design and Social Context
RMIT University

5th April 2019

Declaration | I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed. I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

5th April 2019, Emma Lynas.

Table of contents

List of figures

List of appendices

Appendix A

A.1 Plain language statement for interviews with commercial textile designers and textile designer makers regarding 'connection' undertaken in 2011.

A.2 Plain language statement for interviews with participants for the 'Love you or leave you' project undertaken in 2013.

A.3 Plain language statement for interviews with BA (Textile Design) students and alumni in reference to the Araluen projects undertaken in 2016.

A.4 Interview questions regarding 'connection' undertaken in with commercial textile designers and textile designer makers in 2011.

A.5 Questions and definition of terms used in the 'Love you or leave' you interviews undertaken in 2013.

A.6 Questions asked of BA (Textile Design) students and alumni in reference to the Araluen projects, 2016.

Appendix B

B.1 A brief overview of significant Australian textile and surface designers from the twentieth century to the present day.

Appendix C

C.1 'Love you' booklet, 2015.

C.2 'Leave you' booklet, 2015.

Appendix D

D.1 An example of a product pitch by RMIT University BA (Textile Design) and RMIT University BD (Communication Design) students. Concept taken through to production and renamed the Helping Hand Bag, Araluen project, 2015.

D.2 Page two of 'A catalogue of beautiful things by beautiful people' prepared by Lara Hynes at Araluen Art Connects, 2015 (Hynes 2015, p. 2) 2015.

D.3 Gabriele Draffen's concept for hyposensitivity—touch, sound and proprioception. Phase 2: the long-term need, Araluen project, 2015.

When the narrator is the investigator, to a certain extent she is always asking what it is right to do and good to be (Ellis & Bochner 2000, p. 747).

Creative design studies do not always flow linear pathways, often they do not even follow logical pathways, and they are neither abstract nor objective (Walker 2006, p. 4).

Abstract

The textile design profession currently exists within the textile clothing and footwear (TCF) sector amongst other materials-oriented industries including homewares (textiles and ceramics) and automotive. The core business of commercial textile design practice involves designing, decorative, and/or functional textiles and/or surfaces for the consumer market. The TCF and associated industries currently value the textile designers' design skills and abilities in the creations of visual and haptic material outcomes for the market. This narrow focus fails to recognise the extent of the designers' textile intelligence and the agency of textiles themselves.

Post-material making: explorations for a materially connected textile design practice explores methods of making that shift the emphasis to include a process or service orientated approach, geared towards connecting people, materials and place. This is in recognition that design without consideration of people, materials and place often renders textiles, and associated objects and things, as waste. Central to supporting this shift is the need to recognise, expand and better articulate what constitutes a textile designers' textile intelligence. This research explores the extent of this intelligence via a series of practice-led and action research projects informed by Slow, co-design and post-materialism. The methodology is autoethnographic and positioned within an Australian context.

The findings encourage textile designers to reflect upon the work they do, and have done, and for textile design educators and students to explore post-material making activities as part of the university curriculum. The findings provide an expanded understanding of what the discipline of textile design can contribute to the TCF industry and society more broadly. The research is situated within the broader (global) discussion around methods for sustainable textile design practice.

Prelude

I am walking steadily along, a secure bridge-like structure. It is just wide enough for me to step one foot in front of the other without losing my balance—but I must concentrate, and not become too self-assured as the drop down either side will leave me back in the swirling depths of possibility and choice. At the beginning of this research wandering, I was swimming in this very sea of possibility—grabbing hold of bits of theory, methodology and practice to keep afloat. Some provided short-term support—discarded when better-fitting, more suitable research materials crossed my path. This bridge-like structure is built from useful things I have gathered. From where I stand, I can look down and across at the many theories, methods and methodologies available to a textile design practice-led researcher.

Textile designers are collectors of bits and pieces—a shiny wrapper, a colourful ribbon, a contemplative image. The process of collecting things is introduced as a research method in undergraduate textile design education. After receiving a brief, students begin by surrounding themselves with visual and tactile reference material—things that are evocative of colour, texture, pattern, mood and feeling. This reference is interpreted in combination with materials, media and technique—to test and trial ideas for a finished piece of work. This process of testing and trialling is commonly known as the 'design development phase', a time when colour, texture, pattern, mood and feeling are combined to generate visual, tactile and material outcomes that meet the requirements of the brief. This phase is tacit, exploratory and messy—generating a range of outcomes that can be classified into one of the three categories listed below:

- Meet the requirements of the brief.
- Not appropriate to the brief but exhibit a quality that is interesting or desirable.
- Not appropriate to the brief; visually and haptically disappointing, but necessary to determine what doesn't work.

With the benefit of hindsight, I can see that this is indeed the process I have undertaken throughout this research wandering. I have collected bits of theory that 'felt' right, methods that were suited to the task at hand within a flexible methodology. The research is best described as a wandering, guided by intuition and feeling—by my discipline-specific preference for collecting, testing and trialling—working things out through trial and error.

The process of sustainability impels the fashion [and textiles] sector to change. To change towards something less polluting, more efficient and more respectful than exists today; to change the scale and speed of underpinning structures and to infuse them with a sense of interconnectedness (Fletcher & Grose 2012, p. 10).

Introducing the research

'Post-material making' is a method of making and way of thinking that supports a shift from being a 'material' to a 'post-material' way of working. The driver for this shift is to open up the profession[1] of textile design to become more process or service orientated, rather than centred around consumer goods, as has historically been the case. 'Post-material making' is geared towards connecting people, materials and place. This is in recognition that design without consideration of people, materials and place, often renders textiles, and associated objects and things as waste.

The research is situated within the broader (global) discussion around methods for sustainable textile design practice. Specifically, I draw on Freya Mathews's call for a post-materialist society, one where 'individuals discover for themselves eclectic frames of reference that reflect their own immediate experience of communicative engagement with the world ... using the aesthetic resource of their own lives and cultures' (2013, pp. 33–34). Like Mathews, I have sought to develop a more connected approach to ways of working with and respecting material resources in a discipline[2] specific context. The theme of connection—a process of building relationships, emerged as a valuable concept as I came to realise that textile designers, with their 'textile intelligence' are uniquely positioned to facilitate connections between materials, people and place. The importance of connection emerged through a process of 'thinking-sensing-acting-relating' (Pais & Strauss 2016, p. 10) informed by Slow.

To support this shift there is a need to recognise, expand, adapt and better articulate what constitutes a textile designer's 'textile intelligence', and to consider how this intelligence could be useful beyond the production of objects and things for the marketplace. I propose that textile designers use their textile intelligence to explore methods that promote connection. I have called this way of working 'post-material making'. 'Post-material making' facilitates connections between people, materials and place—connections that engage our cognitive

---

[1] In the context of the research 'profession' is defined as 'paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification' (Lexico.com 2019).
[2] In the context of the research 'discipline' is defined as 'a branch of knowledge, typically one studied in higher education' (Lexico.com 2019).

(intelligence/thinking), affective (emotional/feeling) and conative (instinctual/doing) abilities[3]. It is a highly interconnected trilogy of thinking, feeling and doing.

The themes of 'textile intelligence' and 'post-material making' are explored through a series of practice-led and action research projects informed by Slow, co-design and post-materialism theory. The methodology is autoethnographic and positioned within an Australian context. I draw upon stories relating to both my professional and amateur experience of working with textiles and associated techniques, as well as stories of other Australian textile designers practicing in commercial and designer-maker contexts. These projects and stories are supported by theories that open up the profession of textile design from being a material practice built upon the use and manipulation of fibre, colour, motif, pattern, craft and technical skill for the marketplace, to a practice focused on textiles as agents for making connections.

My research is informed by my lived experience of textile design as a discipline and profession in Melbourne, Australia. I began my formal learning some twenty years ago, firstly as an undergraduate textile design student then as an employee creating artwork for printed bedlinen. Some years later I began working as a lecturer on the Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) program at RMIT University. In 2010 I commenced my post-graduate study at the same Institution.[4] These various roles have enabled me to reflect upon textile design as a discipline and profession within an Australian context.

Throughout my research I oscillate between the words 'textiles' and 'materials' as a way to demonstrate the fluid nature of material exploration. Despite using both terms, my focus is on the use of textiles and textile design methods and techniques inherent to the discipline.

The broad contributions to research

The broad research contributions are:

- Proposes 'post-material making' as a method of making to connect people, materials and place.

---

[3] In reference to 'The Trilogy of Mind: Cognition, Affection, and Conation' (Hilgard 1980, p. 107).

[4] I began in 2010 with a Masters by research. In July 2012 I upgraded to a PhD. I have been studying part time over this ten-year period, taking twelve months leave of absence—six months in 2014 and six months in 2018.

- Provides insight into what constitutes a textile designer's 'textile intelligence' and how this intelligence can be used to facilitate connection.
- Provides locally specific examples of 'post-material making' design and pedagogic practice.
- Builds on the existing literature specific to sustainable textile design practice.

Issues associated with mass production and overconsumption of textiles

The problems associated with mass produced textiles—such as: energy use, pollution, textile waste and human exploitation—have been widely discussed and reported on over the past decade (Black 2008, 2012; Earley & Goldsworthy 2015; Ellen MacArthur Foundation 2017b; Fletcher 2007, 2008, 2013, 2016; Fletcher & Grose 2012; Fletcher & Tham 2015; Gardetti & Torres 2013; Gwilt & Rissanen 2011; Niinimäki 2013; Vuletich 2015). Much of the literature relating to sustainable fashion and textile alternatives is due to the dominance of Fast fashion. Fast fashion is a term used to describe the pace at which high-end fashion trends are appropriated, manufactured and sold to the general public via middle to low-end retailers. Fast fashion items are often poorly made, using inferior materials, and questionable labour practices. The consumer appeal of Fast fashion is primarily due to price point, garments are cheap, making in financially viable to discard existing garments, in favour of something new. The Fast model is not exclusive to clothing—it extends to textile homewares and accessories also. Fast fashion (and textiles) is a significant contributing factor in the growth of textile consumption, and the negatives associated with it (Fletcher 2008; Press 2016; Siegle 2011). The Fast model of production and consumption has led to a global glut of new and second-hand textiles:

> It is estimated that we make 400 billion m_2 of textiles annually (Fashion Revolution 2016, p. 8). Australians are the second largest consumers of new textiles after North America. We buy on average 27 kilogrammes per capita each year (Press 2017, para. 5).

Twenty-seven kilograms of textiles purchased per Australian per year—the sheer quantity is astounding. The growth of consumption is made possible by cheap, easily accessible cloth and clothing. The price of a pair of jeans from a Fast fashion outlet is comparable to a sit-down meal in a Melbourne café. If society measures the value of textiles based on economic value alone, there is little reason to deliberate on whether or not to purchase a cheap pair of jeans capable of bringing about a moment of delight. Fast fashion is built upon moments—speed and consumption are key contributors to the Fast fashion business model.

The Australian Productivity Commission's *Inquiry Report on Waste Management* defines waste as 'anything that is no longer privately valued by its owner for use or sale and which is, or will be, discarded' (Australian Government Productivity Commission 2006, p. xxii). Textile waste is categorised as: pre-consumer, post-consumer and industrial (Caulfield 2009, p. 4). Textiles have been highlighted as one of the fastest growing waste streams in Victoria, [5] with over ninety-five percent able to be recycled or reused, but just two percent recovered in Victoria[6] (Sustainability Victoria 2015). The Australian Bureau of Statistics released an information paper in 2013 detailing the type of waste generated by government, industry and households. The report classified textiles and leathers as 'inseparable/unknown waste' and therefore too difficult and costly to recover. As a result, between 2009 and 2010, 501,000 tonnes … of leather and textiles were sent to landfill (2017, section. waste management, use), chances are that figure is higher now (Press 2017, para. 14). Consumption and waste are critical issues for the TCF industries as indicated by the statistics below:

> Australians seem to live with a contradiction. They express concern about the environment yet live materialistic lifestyles that result in high levels of waste. When questioned in this study's survey, 60 per cent of Australians say they feel some guilt when they buy items that do not get used while 40 per cent say they do not feel guilty. Only 14 per cent of respondents say they are not much bothered or not bothered at all when they spend money unnecessarily (Hamilton et al. 2005, p. ix).

> Australians collectively dispose of six tonnes of clothing into landfill every ten minutes (War on waste 2017).

At present, I, like my fellow Victorians, do not have the opportunity to recycle textiles. Domestic kerbside recycling[7] is limited to paper, cardboard, glass, some plastics and some metals—all of which are listed on the *Get it Right on Bin Night* website[8] and council specific websites. Proactive individuals may elect to on-sell cloth and clothing via online classified sites such as eBay or Gumtree, participate in clothes-swap initiatives, or bundle their unwanted textiles and drop

---

[5] Victoria is a state of Australia.

[6] According to Sustainability Victoria's 2015 *Waste Material: Textiles Factsheet* the majority of textile waste sent to landfill comes from the pre-consumer sector.

[7] In 2017 Australia exported 29 percent of all paper, and 36 percent of all plastics to China (Downes 2018, para. 8). In 2018 China introduced import restrictions on waste materials causing much of Australia's curb side recycling to be temporarily disposed of in landfill (Downes 2018).

[8] *Get it Right on Bin Night* was a Victorian campaign aimed to increase household recycling rates.

them off at one of the many charity bins located in Victorian cities and towns. Individuals not bothered with any of the above are left to dispose of unwanted textiles in domestic rubbish bins, to be disposed of by council contractors at municipal landfill sites. Despite textiles being one of the fastest growing waste streams in Victoria, and one of the most recyclable (Sustainability Victoria 2015) there is currently no opportunity for Victorian residents to do so. The potential for textile recycling collection services[9] provides one avenue for dealing with the present-day issue of textile waste, but it should not be seen as a solution to maintain current consumption habits.

The process of turning a fibre into yarn and then fabric is labour and resource intensive. Pietra Rivoli, author of *The Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy,* devoted seven years to investigate the processes involved in creating the humble cotton t-shirt. The t-shirt, it turns out, is a well-travelled item, often covering thousands of kilometres from its initial life as a cotton boll to the retail store (Rivoli 2005, p. viii). In the revised edition Rivoli states 'my t-shirt's life is even more fantastically complex than it was earlier in the decade' (2009, p. xv). Cotton, first of all, has to be grown, requiring vast amounts of water—approximately 2,720 litres to make a single cotton t-shirt (Fashion Revolution 2016, p. 9)—alongside large quantities of pesticides (for conventional cotton). Cotton is then harvested, bailed and transported to a cotton gin for the first stage of processing to remove dirt and fibrous matter. Once free of contaminants the cotton lint is classed into quality grades and shipped to another factory to be combed, carded and spun into yarn. The yarn is then knitted into lengths of fabric, dyed (if required) and cut and sewn (Cotton Australia 2017) into t-shirts. At all stages of production, energy is required to facilitate transport and production, and people to operate trucks, trains, planes, ships, machinery and manage production lines. This example provides a summary of one fibre, one fabric and one garment. Each fibre has a unique set of growing and/or processing requirements, as does yarn and fabric—not to mention, distribution, retail and consumer use.

When textiles are disposed of in domestic rubbish bins, they join a medley of non-recyclable glass, paper, a multitude of plastics, metals, food waste, nappies, sanitary items, and other non-recyclable scraps. Waste is collected by garbage trucks, crushed, driven to landfill sites and dumped in large piles devoid of light and oxygen. It is here that our textile waste turns to toxic

---

[9] A more recent entrant into commercial textile recycling is BlockTexx. BlockTexx was established to divert post-consumer and industrial textile waste from landfill (BlockTexx 2018).

sludge, emitting poisonous leachate, methane gas and ammonia (Caulfield 2009, p.4). It is not only domestic textile waste that finds its way to the local tip. Opportunity shops [10] are overwhelmed with textiles that do not meet the requirements for sale or export and have no choice but to pay for them to be disposed of in landfill (Press 2017, para. 13). To follow are two examples of Australian charity stores having to pay for unwanted textiles to be disposed of in landfill:

> The Smith Family process approximately 13 million kilograms of donated clothing every year at one of the recycling facilities in NSW.[11] The top 3–4 per cent of good quality items are sold in their Smith Family retail stores. About 60 per cent are exported to other countries. Another 5–10 per cent are sold as industrial rags. The remaining 30 percent is disposed of in landfill at a cost of just under one million Australian dollars (War on waste 2017).
> [Salvos Stores national] annual waste collection and disposal bill is somewhere between $5 million and $6 million [Australian dollars][12] (Press 2017, para. 14).

When it is known how much time and energy goes into making a simple cotton t-shirt it seems counterproductive to dispose of any sort of textile in landfill. If waste is 'something that is no longer privately valued' (Australian Government Productivity Commission 2006, p. xxii) it is necessary to better understand why textiles are valued, and how people connect to them. It is not ethically responsible for textile designers to continue practicing in a Fast way that leads to such quantities of waste—therefore the discipline needs to consider what else it can do. Textile consumption is not the focus of this research; however, it is relevant. Valentine et al. emphasise the importance of understanding consumer engagement with textiles in order to be more mindful when making design decisions (2017, p. 972). For this reason, the thesis will touch upon consumption as a way to better understand potential methods for connection. Fletcher (2016), Niinimäki and Koskinen (2011) alongside my own study 'Love you or leave you' were critical in developing a better understanding of why and how people value textiles[13].

Post-material making: explorations for a materially-connected textile design practice seeks to find methods for sustainable textile design practices in an era of material abundance. This is in

---

[10] 'Opportunity shop' is an Australian term for 'charity store'.
[11] NSW is the abbreviation for the Australian state of New South Wales.
[12] Statistic supplied by Salvos Stores CEO Neville Barrett. This statistic includes other donations including household junk.
[13] Refer to Chapter 5.0.

recognition that the current economic system of consumption and growth is no longer a viable option (Fletcher 2016, Das 2015) and that a discipline and profession concerned with the design and making of product to service this economy needs to find something else to do, something that treads more gently and creates minimal waste, or better still, none at all.

To follow is a research proposition designed to explore methods for textile design practice outside the traditional industrial models highlighted above. The research proposition is in recognition that the current quantity of textiles being designed, produced and consumed is not sustainable and that the profession, therefore, needs to find another way to channel its expertise.

The research proposition

Textile designers have traditionally been employed or self-employed to design: textiles and/or surfaces, or to design and make textiles for fashion, homewares or similar industrial markets. In an era of global mass production and overconsumption, textile designers have the opportunity to use their textile intelligence to explore methods that disrupt current consumption patterns and promote connection.

Post-material making is a way of re-thinking and potentially repositioning textile design from being a material practice built upon the use and manipulation of fibre, colour, motif, pattern, craft and technical skill for the marketplace, to a practice focused on textiles as agents for making connections.

Why this proposition?

The proposition provides the opportunity to speculate on emerging/future professional roles that utilise textile intelligence to build connections.

Textiles designers have traditionally found employment in the textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) industries, either as commercial textile designers or textile designer-makers.[14] The TCF industries are diverse and cover a range of products including ready-for-use textiles, clothing, carpet, bedlinen, curtains, footwear and technical (non-aesthetic) textiles such as those used

---

[14] Definitions will be provided in Chapter 1.0.

for automotive applications. Many textile designers use their skills in illustration and surface design for non-TCF products such as ceramics, stationery and wallpaper. The TCF and related industries are very much geared towards an outcome—a textile, or product to be sold in the marketplace.

Many Australian textile designers work in the Fast commercial TCF and associated industries. The TCF sector is complex and adaptive to market desire; making more product, using more materials, more suppliers and demanding faster turnarounds. This cycle of continuous production and consumption is somewhat responsible for the immense quantities of waste discussed earlier.

RMIT University undergraduate textile design students are made aware [15] of the issues associated with the TCF industry, and often express feelings of unease when considering their career options post undergraduate study. The thought of entering the TCF and associated industries knowing that they will ultimately contribute to the cycle of consumption and waste is unsettling for many. There are many textile designers, and initiatives that are problem-solving consumption and waste—examples include those presented by The London-based Textiles Environment Design's[16] (TED) *The TEN*—strategies to 'navigate the complexity of sustainability issues and to offer real ways for designing "better"' (Textiles Environment Design 2017, para. 2). *The TEN* strategies evolved out of an iterative process of teaching and research beginning in 1996. In 2009 Rebecca Earley in collaboration with the Sustainable Fashion Academy in Stockholm, facilitated training workshops using *The Ten* with large fashion brands included Hennes & Mauritz (H&M). Industry representatives recognised the value of *The TEN* to initiate changes to the supply chain and fashion system (Vuletich 2015, p. 27; Earley et al. 2016b). Research into 'post-material making' adds to the existing research on sustainability and alternative applications for practice (Vuletich 2015) and presents an opportunity for textile designers to use their 'textile intelligence' to facilitate connection and mitigate waste. In 2017 TED transitioned into a new venture titled the Centre for Circular Design. This new approach channels existing TED knowledge to explore 'emerging technology, systems design, materials,

[15] In recent years students have entered the program with an established awareness and understanding of the issues.
[16] Textile Environment Design (TED) is a group within the London College of the Arts dedicated to developing sustainable design strategies that aid in the creation of textiles that have minimal impact on the environment.

tools, user behaviour and social innovation' (Centre for Circular Design n.d., para. 2) that facilitate a circular economy.

Valentine et al. reiterate the importance of re-thinking the purpose of, and for, textile design practice, stating that: 'design thinking is not a commodity, therefore the act of making textiles is more than a series of steps on the road to new product development and innovation' (2017, p. 973). My research uses materials, people and place as a trilogy of importance—crossovers between the three offer ways to develop more in-depth, meaningful connections in contrast to the Fast model described above. The trilogy will be presented and discussed in Chapter 3.0 and Phase two of the thesis.

The sustainability agenda has been a topic of discussion, debate and action for decades (Vuletich 2015, p. 45). Over the last ten years I have been active within the discourse on how the discipline of textile design can work towards mitigating some of the issues inherent to TCF and associated industries. Sustainability and its three pillars: environmental, social-cultural and economic—generate tension as the three are not treated equitably, with the economic often being privileged over the social-cultural and environmental (Vuletich 2015, p. 45). It has been said that the social-cultural pillar does not easily accommodate the human, personal or psychological aspects of people, and that a fourth pillar is necessary to provide a more holistic approach to the problems faced (Vuletich 2015, p. 45). Valuing the textile designer's textile intelligence (beyond compliance, efficiency, aesthetic and function) sits within this fourth pillar and provides a 'way in' to address issues affecting our future. This is where I see post-material making positioned—using connection to facilitate change.

Research approach and research audience

The research draws on my location-specific understanding of textile design. This is based on my lived experience; my childhood, education, work in industry, teaching, colleagues and peers who classify themselves as textile designers in a commercial or designer-maker sense. This autoethnographic approach to research and writing aims for 'clarity, creativity and accessibility' (Hemmings 2010, p. 3)—to be useful to others, including those engaged in education. The perspective shared is unique to Melbourne, Australia, however the stories told, theories explored, and the methodological approach undertaken is intended to be transferable to others who practice within the broad scope of international textile design. Although I may often talk

of, or reference art practice, craft practice, sociological or historical examples of how textiles are made and experienced, my focus is on textile design.

The intended audience includes:

- Textile design academics and educators seeking contemporary examples of textile design and pedagogic practice.
- Textile designers seeking to practice differently.

Thesis structure

The thesis structure is set up in 2 parts; phase one and phase two.

Phase one (chapters 1.0–3.0) outline the key concepts and themes responsible for shaping my research; and the context and theoretical positioning of the research.

1.0 Methodology: Details the process of searching for and building a suitable methodology. The methodology is autoethnographic and explores my lived experience of working with and living with textiles. The methodology draws on the practice-led methods of making and reflecting and the qualitative action research methods of interview and analysis.

2.0 Textile design: This chapter provides a discipline and professional context while identifying some of the tensions that exist between a discipline that values and fosters textile intelligence; and a profession that often prioritises skills. The chapter lays the foundation for my research and is presented in three parts: (1) Textile connections run deep—a brief historical overview of textiles and their practical and symbolic place in daily life; (2) Textile design—a summary of the discipline and profession from an Australian perspective; and (3) Where next for the textile design discipline—recognising that business as usual is no longer an option. This section taps into the complicated issues at the core of the industry and presents opportunities for textile design practice beyond product for the marketplace. Examples of product-service-design and co-design are presented and discussed.

3.0 Theory that feels right: This chapter sets out my theoretical positioning in establishing textile design as a 'post-material making' practice that focuses on connections between people, materials and place. Mathews's schema of pre, present and post-materialism (2013) encouraged

me to think about the practice of textile design differently. The research within material theory and phenomenology helped shape my ontological view of the discipline and profession. The literature on Slow encouraged me to take my time, and explore ways of working akin to good, clean and fair. The tripartite system of—thinking, feeling and doing (Hilgard 1980, p, 107) helped to strike a balance between theory and practice.

Phase two (chapters 4.0–7.0) provide examples of post-material making via a combination of practice-led and action research projects. Each chapter begins with a table adapted from Vuletich (2015, p. 121) as a way to communicate the activities and project specific research contributions. The tables can be read as an overview, separate to the text.

4.0 Grasslands | 2012–2013: connecting to place through natural dying and making by hand. This project was undertaken as part of a larger collaborative project that explored the relationship between place, ritual and textile making. The project was my first experience of working outside the commercial industry and provided the opportunity to put into practice ideas presented by Slow. 'Grasslands' presents an example of using textile intelligence to connect to place through a process of dematerialisation. The properties of the cloth and the processes of natural dying were used to embed molecules of location specific plant materials into a textile garment. The project is propositional, dematerialisation and material resourcefulness are discussed further in chapter 7.0: 'Home made'.

5.0 Love you or leave you | 2015: stories of attachment and detachment to/from clothing and cloth. This project involved a series of semi-structured interviews with textile designers/artists and users of textiles detailing their reasons for attachment, and detachment from cloth or clothing. This project was integral in developing a better understanding of the complex relationships between people and textile objects and things. The project is positioned within a similar context to Fletcher's international ethnographic Local Wisdom and Craft of Use projects undertaken from 2009–2013 (2015), and Niinimäki and Koskinen's study undertaken between 2009–2010 (2011). The 'Love you or leave you' project invited participants to consider their attachment and detachment to cloth and clothing. The project used similar methods to Fletcher's (interview and photography) within the general catchment of sustainable fashion and textile research.

6.0 Araluen | 2012 & 2015: a project with people for people. This case study reflects on two collaborative studios initiated by the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program with Araluen, a Melbourne-based not-for-profit organisation providing services for adults with intellectual disabilities. The two projects positioned the student as collaborator and co-designer and provided the opportunity to trial a different way of working with textiles and textile techniques to facilitate connection. The first project undertaken in 2012 involved a small cohort of BA (Textile Design) students. The students worked alongside Araluen artists to develop artwork to be digitally printed and made into apron and tea towel sets to be gifted to Araluen's sponsors. The second project undertaken in 2015 was much larger, involving RMIT University: textile design, business and communication design students alongside local digital fabric printing bureau Frankie & Swiss. The 2015 project included a workshop-based requirement for BA (Textile Design) students to design and make sensory textiles for people on the Autism spectrum. The case study provides a reflective account of the two studios while providing insights into how this type of collaborative studio/workshop could be adapted by others to better prepare textile designers for professional roles that do not directly relate to those offered in the TCF and relate industries.

7.0 Home made | 2017: a practice-led autoethnographic exercise in textile appreciation. It tells the story of transitioning an Ikea cotton bath mat into a series of objects and things. The work celebrates the patina of use while expanding on ideas gleaned from the earlier 'Grasslands' project. This project is a celebration of making by hand as a way to acknowledge relationships between people, materials and place. This project caused me to dig a little deeper into the connections made between Indigenous people and textile making. Place was identified as an opportunity for further investigation.

The conclusion provides a summary of the research findings.

Phase one

Not all those who wander are lost (Tolkien 1988, p. 182).

You'll get mixed up, of course,
As you already know.
You'll get mixed up with many strange birds as you go.
So be sure when you step.
Step with care and great tact
And remember that Life's
A Great Balancing Act.
Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.
And never mix up your right foot with your left (Seuss 1990).

1.0 Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual account of the methods used alongside an ontological and autoethnographical rationale for selecting a wandering methodology. The research draws on the practice-led methods of making and reflecting, and the action research methods of interview and analysis. Tying the thesis together is my pre-ontology [17] and relationship to the contemporary field of textile design. The themes of Slow (in all its guises)—time, conviviality and good, clean and fair—permeate the research. The diagram below (Figure 1.1) provides a visual guide to the process undertaken:
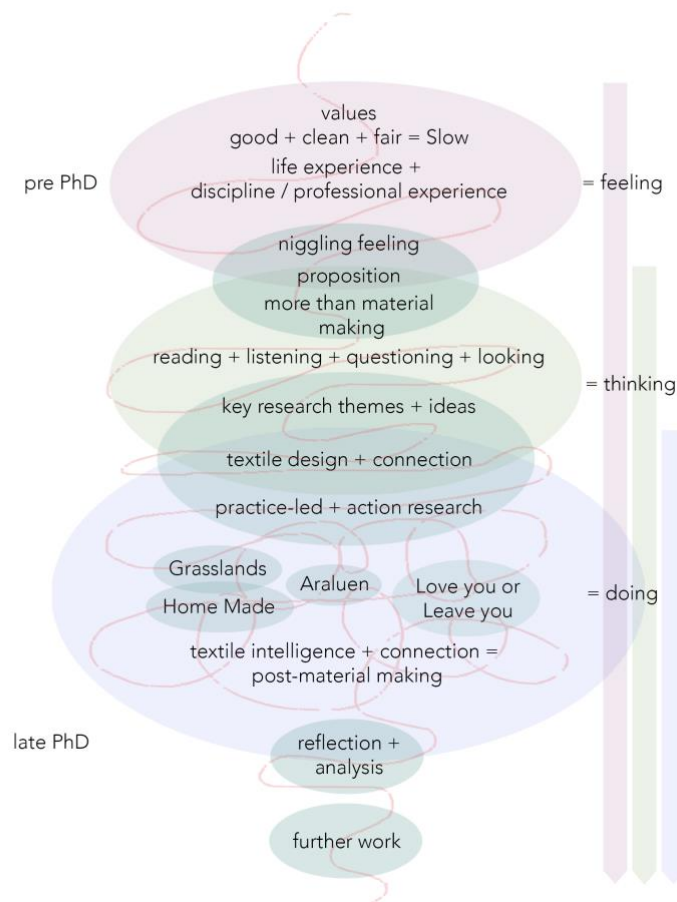
Figure 1.1 Wandering research methodology

The oval sitting at the top represents the period pre-PhD. This phase was very much about reflecting on my lived experience of working with and designing for textiles. This phase brought

---

[17] A pre-ontology is described as 'an implicit understanding of being. Whereas an ontology is explicitly developed (theoretical and conceptually articulated), a pre-ontology is merely implicit in the way in which we relate to entities' (Blattner 2011).

to front of mind the values of good, clean and fair inherent to Slow. In the early to mid-phase, the niggling feeling was explored via the literature on Slow, sustainability, textiles and design to develop the early working research proposition. At this stage, the concept of 'post-material making' had not been formalised, instead the loose concept of 'more-than-material making' was established and the need for connection strengthened.

I was invited to participate in both 'Grasslands', and 'Home made'—these two projects aligned with my own research. It is worth noting that due to being immersed in the happenings of the discipline and Academy many other practice and learning/teaching opportunities (some accepted) crossed my path during this time. 'Grasslands', 'Araluen' and 'Home made' were selected to include as part of the PhD thesis due to their research relevance. The 'Araluen' project was identified as a useful case study to unpack and explore as a way to better understand 'post-material making' in an undergraduate studio/workshop context. The 'Araluen' project identifies potential areas for the discipline to evolve into a service or process orientated profession. The idea behind the 'Love you or leave you' project was formed early on in my candidature and undertaken at the mid-way point. The three coloured arrows to the right of the diagram loosely represent the feeling, thinking and doing activities associated with the research. The wandering line represents the process undertaken. The coloured arrows and wandering line are indicative—not exact. The diagram represents the overlapping nature of feeling, thinking and doing and the wandering nature of the methodology undertaken.

Including the pre-PhD phase in the diagram is important, as my past provides a repository of experiences, good, bad and everything in between; it is an important source of data, my experiences of working with textiles—both as an amateur and professional. Tapping into this archive of memories and experiences is fully encouraged and supported by the research practice of autoethnography. Autoethnography has been critical in validating my intuitive leaning towards storytelling as a way to think, communicate and understand. Ellis articulates the process of autoethnography below:

> … autoethnography is not simply a way of knowing about the world; it has become a way of being in the world, one that requires living consciously, emotionally, reflexively. It asks that we not only examine our lives but also consider how and why we think, act, and feel as we do. Autoethnography requires that we observe ourselves observing, that we interrogate what we think and believe, and that we challenge our own assumptions, asking over and over if we have penetrated as many layers of our own defenses, fears, and insecurities as our project

requires. It asks that we rethink and revise our lives, making conscious decisions about who and how we want to be (2016, p. 10).

Autoethnography as a research method emerged in the 1970's (Douglas & Carless 2013, p. 91; Luvaas 2016, p. 89) and has been adapted by many disciplines (including design) as a way to interrogate a niggling feeling that cannot be reached using other channels. The practice of autoethnography—due to its interpretive and emotional nature is not always valued as a credible means to build knowledge. It has been described as self-indulgent and even narcissistic (Douglas & Carless 2013, p. 101) by some who see subjectivity as irrelevant to the business of research. Despite its divisiveness, I see it as having immense value in the sphere of textile design inquiry. Holman Jones (cited in Douglas & Carless 2013, p. 85) describe the activities of the methodology and method below:

> autoethnography is setting a scene, telling a story, weaving intricate connections among life and art, experience and theory, evocation and explanation… and then letting go, hoping for readers who will bring the same careful attention to your words in the context of their own lives.

In exploring what might constitute a 'post-material making' practice I have used the process of autoethnography to allow for 'self-introspection and emotional recall' (Douglas & Carless 2013, p. 98) to bring my life experience into the mix of research, education and practice. I have used a variety of methods to communicate my experiences; most notably storytelling and photography. Readability and accessibility are another advantage of adapting an autoethnographic leaning to my work, 'storytelling as a way of knowing, sharing, and relating' (Holman Jones et al. 2013, p. 37) is accessible to many rather than a few, while photography provides a visual means for interpretation and context.

The terms practice-based and practice-led are often used interchangeably in the literature related to art and design research. For the majority of my candidature I felt I belonged to the practice-led family based on the only source (Candy 2006) I could find that provided distinction between the two. Towards the end of my candidature I found an endnote by Nimkulrat that suggests the terminology is regionally, discipline and even institution specific rather than specific to practice (2012 p. 12), this was reinforced by Haseman and Mafe (2009, p. 213). I have maintained my position as being practice-led as this is the terminology, I feel most comfortable

with. Gray and Malins describe the impetus for research, and articulate the reason for undertaking a practice-led approach below:

> the starting points for research are issues arising from practice, usually the researcher's own practice (providing a personal rationale), but also issues that can be recognized as valid in the wider professional context (providing an external rationale). This practice-based approach to research naturally prompts us critically to consider and evaluate methods used in practice as to their appropriateness as robust and rigorous methods for accessible and disciplined inquiry, for:
>
> - experiencing/exploring, gathering, documenting information and generating data/evidence,
> - reflecting on and evaluating information, selecting the most relevant information,
> - analysing, interpreting and making sense of information,
> - synthesizing and communicating research findings, planning new research (2004, p.
> - 29-30).

A Venn diagram developed by Walker (Figure 1.2) visualises the interconnected nature of practice-led research:
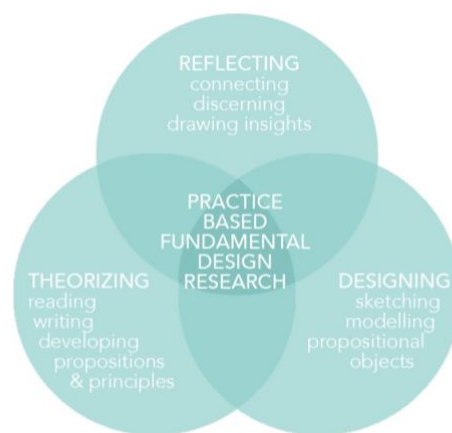
Figure 1.2 *Practice-based fundamental design research[18] (Walker 2013, p. 5)*

The process of theorizing, designing and reflecting in a cyclical iterative manner has been undertaken throughout my research wandering. Earley et al's. framework extends on Walker's and brings in the concept of valuing intuition or 'following hunches' (2016b, p. 36) as part of the:

---

[18] ©Stuart Walker 2013, 'Imagination's Promise: Practice-based Design Research for Sustainability', Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. The diagram has been re-drawn.

think (theory) / finding frameworks, make (practice) / following hunches, share (dissemination & collaboration) / building networks (2016b, p. 36) framework. This framework (attributed to the work of Goldsworthy 2013) positions intuition and 'gut feelings' as contributing factors in a practice-led research process. I have used this process also—but feel the interlocking circles (Figure 1.2) to be more indicative of the iterative process undertaken.

Action research originates from the social science and education sectors (McNiff & Whitehead 2011, p. 41) and 'involves learning in and through action and reflection' (McNiff 2013, p. 24) via a process of planning, acting, reflecting and sharing (Vuletich 2015, pp. 40–41). I have described the projects in phase two as being either practice-led research or action research due to the methods used—the practice-led methods of making and reflecting in Chapters 4.0 and 7.0, and the action research methods of interview and analysis in Chapters 5.0 and 6.0.

Practitioners working in the field of textile design research and textile craft research have combined qualitative methods alongside those akin to practice. The following practitioners have incorporated mixed methods within their respective PhD research. Emma Shercliff used a practice-led approach incorporating autoethnographic and ethnographic methods to explore the 'nature of embodied knowledge acquired and practised through the rhythms and patterns of hand stitching processes' undertaken independently and in groups (2014 p. 3). Anna Kouhia used participant observation, interviews and autoethnographic self-study-practice to draw out 'meanings of modern-day textile hobby crafts for makers who engage with crafts as a creative leisure outlet' (2016, abstract & p. 34). Linnéa Nilsson combined experimental practice-based projects, theoretical work and observation of design practice in her doctoral thesis exploring the relationship between products and textiles in the design process (2015). Clara Vuletich incorporated action research, collaborative practice projects, workshop facilitation, textile making and autoethnographic reflective writing to explore active roles for fashion textile designers in the transition towards a more sustainable fashion textile industry (2015, pp. 4, 21). The most closely aligned to my own research is that of Vuletich.

In the beginning
My amateur textile practice began as a small child growing up in central Victoria. One of my most vivid childhood memories is of visiting the haberdashery section of our local supermarket and buying two long stitch kits to make and give to each of my grandmothers for Christmas. Although this was a long time ago (1988), I can remember thinking long and hard about which

one to give to Nana and which one to give to Grandma. I preferred the softer tones of the house—and decided to give this one to my Nana as we had, (and still do), a close and special relationship (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3 Long stitch for Nana (front and back), 1998[19]

The other long stitch—the house with the bright rainbow—seemed more simplistic and beneath my aesthetic capability (Figure 1.4); at the age of twelve I was ready for a more sophisticated palette.

Figure 1.4 Long stitch for Grandma (front and back), 1998

My mother—a qualified graphic artist—taught me about colour, pattern and texture through the materials, colours and patterns she bought into our home. The bold Aztec-inspired curtains

---

[19] All photographs and examples of work are the property of Emma Lynas unless otherwise stated.

in the kitchen, the tapestry wall hanging above the kitchen table and many and varied pot plants made our home comfortable and also visually relevant to the styles of the time.

I can see now that even as a small child I had the qualities of a textile designer. I was interested in the way colour, motif, texture and scale worked together. I liked to work with my hands; I liked to craft things out of materials to give to friends and family. At high school, I did well in art and graphics, and better in woodwork. However, I had no clear vision of where I wanted to be—I wasn't interested in pre-empting my future, it all seemed so foreign and far away. I didn't feel ready to enter the world of work but was busting to get out of the country and move to the city. I wanted to leave, but didn't know how, or where to go.

My secondary school VCE[20] subjects were an odd combination: Information Technology, Home Economics, English and Geography—the subjects that posed the least threat from my disengaged peers, and the brain-melting effects of maths and science. I did study one unit of Art in year eleven but found the peer experience to be unbearably disabling. Art was timetabled at the same time as a science subject (probably biology). The disengaged male entourage did Art, and so did I. Art required expression and willingness to open up and expose weakness. Weakness was a target for teenage boys—and that's where it all went wrong. Perhaps I was too emotional, too easily intimidated, however, their presence was enough for me to drop Art in favour of something else.

After high school, I found myself in a year-thirteen art and design program in Melbourne, Australia. Surrounded by like-minded students, I felt I belonged. It was during this time I learned about textile design—it seemed like a good fit. It allowed for the creativity of art—using materials and techniques to create visual things, without the personal expression and subsequent vulnerability that comes with making art. It combined two areas of my personality: the precision of graphic design (rules and regulations, specifications and limitations), with the craft of art (working with materials and techniques).

---

[20] The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) recognizes satisfactory completion of secondary education in Victoria, Australia.

In 1996 I secured a place on the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program. I quickly immersed myself in the practical and theoretical activities inherent to the discipline. I enjoyed the hands-on making approach—particularly in the areas of knit and print. After some deliberation I elected to major in Design for Printed Textiles.

Thinking about my lifelong relationship to colour, texture, pattern, textiles and making is in keeping with the method of autoethnography articulated by Altheide and Johnson below:

> Autoethnography becomes a disciplined way to interrogate one's memory, to contextualize or re-contextualize empirical facts or memories within interpretations or perspectives that 'make sense' of them in new or newly appreciated ways (2011, p. 584).

While at work

After graduating from RMIT University in 1998 I secured a full-time position designing prints and patterns for a Melbourne-based commercial bed linen wholesaler. Both precision and craft were at the core of my daily activities. I was equally thrilled and terrified at the realisation that 'I' was responsible for the visual imagery to be printed on fabric, cut and sewn into bed linen and sold to the general public. People would literally be sleeping on and underneath artwork I created. My senior colleagues provided a constant supply of new visual references to interpret for seasonal bed linen collections. Sometimes I was privy to the buyer and brand, other times not. It was fast-paced, constant and a lot of the time, very enjoyable. However, there was something about it that didn't feel right.

Like many young Australians of this era, I put my career on hold in favour of a working holiday in the UK and Europe. Part of my working holiday involved working as a WWOOFer[21] on a farm in the Italian province of Umbria. I can remember sitting down at my host's large wooden dining table to listen to her explain the process of entropy. She expressed to us (in her strong Italian-English) the ridiculousness of using energy to compress minerals and nutrients into pills to be bottled, distributed and sold in chemists or health food stores when eating the right kinds of food could achieve the same objective. This was a little lecture—a lesson to support what we

---

[21] The Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) organisation describes itself as 'a worldwide movement linking volunteers with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchanges, to build a sustainable global community' (WWOOF in Australia, n.d.).

were learning practically together as we worked the soil, picked flowers and plants and exerted physical energy transforming her land into a permaculture garden.

During this time, I attempted to make sense of some of the uneasiness I felt as a commercial textile (surface[22]) designer. What I lacked was the language and literature to unpack and understand how I could negate this feeling of powerlessness within the large commercial mechanised industry. It was not until I started this research wandering in 2010 that I could contextualise this feeling through design and sustainability literature.

Reflecting on the past

My experience of working in the commercial sector[23] and of teaching emerging textile designers gives me the opportunity to think about the future of textile design education and where graduates may end up. The academy is where I currently reside; I am a lecturer and cannot ignore what I see, say or do on campus—all of this experience shapes the way I think about my place in the big picture of international textile design and the even bigger picture of shaping the way people see themselves in the world. This research is not situated within tertiary design education research but is informed by it. This research is concerned with social change, showcasing how a 'post-material making' practice can bring about connection.

You may think this wandering back into the recesses of memory a little self-indulgent, but this is what the past is for. It is a repository of experiences and knowledge. My career path has been long, tacit and guided by gut feeling, hunches and 'following my nose'. The autobiographical thread running through this thesis is integral to the research. My lived experience has shaped the methodology, my wandering nature—going away and coming back. Taking the time to stop, think and reflect has often led to new and enlightening territory. I have often wandered away to follow something new and interesting. I have used my research time to think about ideas and practices, and how they relate to the discipline and profession of textile design. Taking a Slow approach allows for, and encourages, this professional behaviour.

---

[22] This role would now be referred to as surface design. Surface design was not commonly used to define textile design practice in the 1990s.

[23] I secured a full-time position in 1999 and worked for one year. I returned to work for the same employer in 2002 and worked for another year. I worked for the same employer on a three-month contract between 2002 and 2003 and free-lanced for a number of years afterwards.

Gathering

English textile design academic Elaine Igoe's PhD thesis (2013) provides a strong theoretical base to build from. Igoe's work provides an in-depth analysis of the textile design process in reference to feminist theories and contemporary design theory. It is removed from commercial constraints and sits in-between textile design practice and theory. Her methodology, like mine, is a collection of methods that don't traditionally belong together. It is perhaps not so surprising that we have opted to use this approach, as it tends to be how textile designers undertake their practice. Textile designers rely heavily on intuition and feeling; we use a 'subjective process that involves sensual/tacit elements' (Earley et al. 2016a, p. 306), we know it is right when it 'feels right'. We are good at making things out of other things, combining and reworking while in a state of perpetual questioning: Does this work? Does this work for the brief? Like Igoe, I opted not to use my practice as the primary motive for research. Instead, using a practice-led, action-orientated, autoethnographic methodology to explore what a 'post-material making' textile design practice might look like. The methodology is best described as a research wandering. It has taken me on all sorts of adventures; some fruitful, some not.

Denzin and Lincoln speak of the 'qualitative-researcher–as-bricoleur or a maker of quilts' as one who gathers pieces of information and patches them together using the most appropriate method at hand to construct a story (2011, pp. 4–6); a story that is not linear, but instead made meaningful through the fragments gathered and sorted to create something whole[24]. Although I find the quilt-making analogy useful, I have never actually made a quilt. Both my mother and my nana have made numerous quilts over the years. Nana's quilts are made from pieces of fabric within her collection; odds and sods collected over the years, left over pieces of dress fabric and remnants[25] (Figure 1.5).

---

[24] Earley et al. describe the recent emergence of combining practice-based and social science methods within the context of sustainable textile design research. They use the bricolage analogy (attributed to Denzin and Lincoln) to convey the benefits of using varied methods (2016b, p. 35).

[25] My nana worked for many years as a dressmaker.

Figure 1.5 Quilt designed and made by my nana using fabric remnants, 2003

The quilts made by my mother, are more considered with respect to colour, balance, pattern and design. My mother is inclined to purchase fabrics to accompany those already in her collection (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6 Quilt designed and made by my mother using scraps in combination with new fabrics, 2010

There are many quilters in my circle of family friends. Some have followed methods provided in theme based quilting books. The quilt below (Figure 1.7) required a range of fabrics in various colours, textures and patterns to complete the impressionist painterly aesthetic. The quilt was partially pre-determined due to the visual and instructional information provided in the book.

Figure 1.7 Quilt made by a family friend inspired by a book on impressionist style quilting, 1998

I wonder which type of quilt maker I might be, one who uses scraps to the best effect, or one driven by instinct to create something unique, or set with a vision of what the project will produce? I think I combine elements of all three—keen to use what I have already, but willing to source the right pieces to complete the project using support material along the way. This is in keeping with Becker's description: 'The qualitative-researcher-as-bricoleur or a maker of quilts uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand' (cited in Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p. 4). This gathering and combining provides a more robust collection of vantage points known in the literature as triangulation [26]   (Bye 2010, p. 207). Left to my own devices, a purely autoethnographical account would be skewed to one experience. By deploying multiple methods and combining semi-structed interviews, a varied, multi-faceted research story can be told.

Unfamiliar territory

I am interested in telling stories about what it is to be a textile designer and devotee of cloth. This creates a level of anxiety around whether or not I have the skills to be an autoethnographer—after all I am a textile designer, not a social scientist. Our everyday

---

[26] Gray and Malins describe triangulation as the gathering of two or more methods on an issue. Triangulation enables researches to view an issue from multiple vantage points by 'generating data in different ways and by different methods' (2004, p. 31).

understanding of anxiety is to feel overly worried or nervous about something. Heidegger's definition is removed from fear; it is a feeling of being outside-of-the-world. An analogy given by Critchley paints a picture of what this might be like:

> Everyday life in the world is like being immersed in the sea and drowned by the world's suffocating banality. Anxiety is the experience of the tide going out, the seawater draining away, revealing a self stranded on the strand, as it were (2009a, para. 8).

Heidegger believed anxiety to be a feeling of self-awareness—an 'experience of detachment from things and from others' (Critchley 2009a para. 10)—to experience freedom and to think freely (Critchley 2009a). Being detached, not knowing which direction to take, or how to effectively communicate my tangled mess of thoughts and ideas caused me many an anxious moment. Critchley describes Heidegger's definition of anxiety—this inability to connect, this opportunity for self-reflection—as our conscience:

> Conscience is a call. It is something that calls one away from one's inauthentic immersion in the homely familiarity of everyday life. It is, Heidegger writes, that uncanny experience of something like an external voice in one's head that pulls one out of the hubbub and chatter of life in the world and arrests our ceaseless busyness (Critchley 2009b, para. 2).

Feelings of detachment were critical in the 'Love you or leave you' project—a collection of stories detailing people's attachment to and detachment from clothing and cloth.[27] Perhaps detachment is necessary in order to think freely about where textiles, objects and things sit in context—do they need to be close to hand in order to remind us of past experiences? Do they have relevance to the here and now? Could others appreciate them in the future, and should they be kept for this reason alone? Detachment is often seen to be negative, however, if it prompts us to ask questions about why we 'feel' the way we do—and give us the opportunity to 'think freely' (Critchley 2009a) detachment, to could be seen as an unfortunate opportunity.

Gaining traction

Successful research lies in the researcher's ability to reflect in action, to give thought and attention to the research being done (Hammersley 2011; Gray & Malins 2004; Schön 1991). This

---

[27] 'Love you or leave you' will be discussed in Chapter 5.0.

is where my skills as a textile designer can be used to full effect. Textile designers think in action, decisions are made while engaged in the process of design. We do not hypothesise or attempt to fully predict what our outcomes might be,[28] instead, we have an idea or goal in mind, but allow for the design process to configure the end point.

I am pleased to know that objectivity can step to one side, allowing my emotional self to permeate the research as, 'objective reality can never be captured. We know a thing only through its representations' (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p. 5). Action researcher and author Jean McNiff illustrates the importance of subjectivity when articulating the various ways of knowing[29] below:

> *relational forms of logic* refer to open, fluid forms of thinking when we recognise ourselves as in relation with our contexts, including the people and objects we are with … [and] *dialogical forms of logic* [that] emphasise the need for recognising that we are always in relation with other people, and seeing the relationships as forms of coming to know: we come to know and learn in and through community (2013, p. 42).

It was not until I came across Clara Vuletich's PhD thesis (2015) very late in the process of finishing off my own PhD that I felt I had someone close within my community of practice exploring the issues associated with the current fashion and textile industry. Although I had come across many other textile researchers and practitioners exploring similar themes, they were not formally embedded within the practice of textile design, but scattered around the edges dealing with craft, product design or fashion. Vuletich's research came to me during a time of self-doubt and insecurity, her methods for thinking about design from the perspective of the 'outer' (2015, p. 66) and 'inner' (2015, p. 99) as a way to improve practices within the fashion industry bolstered my argument for 'post-material making'. I hope that my position from within the academy adds to the puzzle and builds a foundation on which to grow the literature on sustainable textile design. An article published in 2010 in the *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* provides a summary of the limited published research specific to textile design (Bye 2010). In 2015 Vuletich suggests the literature on textile design process and knowledge is still limited (2015, p. 33). I have too found this to be true.

---

[28] However, this type of prescriptive design is often commonplace in low-to-middle end commercial textile design positions.

[29] McNiff (2013) includes Propositional (or formal or symbolic) forms of logic and Dialectical forms of logic also.

Working Fast

Before I started working in the textile industry, tariff reductions and labour costs made textile manufacturing in Australia cost-prohibitive, therefore, textile manufacturing had shifted offshore to countries such as China, Pakistan and India. As a consequence, local wholesalers began to emerge, acting as middlemen for large Australian retail stores, providing in-house design services with connections to cheap manufacturing in Asia (Fang 2012; Buxey 2005). My graduate position was with a Melbourne-based bed linen wholesaler. As a junior textile (surface) designer, I had the freedom to choose the tools and techniques learnt in my undergraduate studies to create hand-generated pattern and engineered prints[30] in response to the client's brief. This part of the job was satisfying; being able to paint and draw was one of the reasons I chose to study textile design in the first place. In the late 1990s it was still common practice to design using traditional media[31] rather than digital tools. Despite undertaking a slower analogue process, the turnaround from brief to artwork was fast. A steady stream of conversational, floral and geometric briefs came my way—each for a mid-to-low end Australian retailer. My understanding of the customer was sketchy, based on my perceived view of who might shop at the low-to-mid range retailers I designed for. My contact with the customer came via a store buyer, who met with one of my colleagues working in sales along with the design manager, who passed the brief onto me. That was as close as I got to the customer. The experience of working in the mid-to-lower end of the commercial bed linen industry was a disconnected one.

Working Slow

After twelve months of full-time work, I succumbed to the lure of travel. I resigned from my position and embarked upon a working holiday in Europe and the United Kingdom. During this time, I travelled to Italy and worked as a WWOOFer on a small farm in the Umbrian Hills outside the township of Orvieto.[32] Perched on Tufa cliffs with a rich history dating back to Etruscan times, Orvieto was as I imagined an Italian town to be—rustic, beautiful and somehow more authentic. My farmhand duties entailed establishing a permaculture garden, building stonewalls (for my host and her neighbours), mulching around newly planted trees and gathering plants and flowers to make herbal tinctures. My host, a well-educated Italian woman,

---

[30] An engineered print (or placement print) involves the specific placement of design information in reference to the intended product. An engineered print is not in repeat.

[31] 'Traditional media' is a term used to describe wet and dry media such as pencil, gouache, and watercolour on paper.

[32] Orvieto was one of the first towns to achieve Cittaslow accreditation. Cittaslow will be discussed in Chapter 3.0.

was well aware of her connection to place, food and culture; this was my first experience of Slow. These extremes of work experience allowed for countless hours of reflection.

While searching for a philosophical underpinning to support this research I was hoping to find something solid within the Slow movement. From my reading, it seems individuals engaged in Slow have identified aspects of the Slow approach and related academic theories to strengthen their focus and intent. Daisy Tam, a Hong Kong-based academic interested in ethical food practices uses the notions of pleasure and care 'to better understand the qualities that are imbued in a slow culture' (2008, p. 210). She uses the work of Foucault to rationalise the necessity to look after oneself first and foremost in order to take care of others: 'As a practice, it requires one to start with oneself but always with an eye for the other' (2008, p. 215). In her Master of Applied Art thesis 'Slow design and the lost art of shifting gears', Sarah Hay talks about 'temporal tunnel vision [or an] absence of the long view', which can lead to feelings of isolation and disconnection (2008, p. 6). Silvan Linn uses Slow design as a way to negate the experience of information overload in the area of fast technology (2011, p. i). The common element in all three examples is 'time'. This is not surprising as Slow is all about the temporal, of being in the moment, sharing, mindfulness and reflection, lending itself well to hermeneutic phenomenology as defined by Eatough and Smith below:

> Phenomenology is concerned with the way things appear to us in experience; the reality that we live is an experiential one, and it is experienced through practical engagements with things and others in the world, and it is inherently meaningful (2008, p. 4).

Martin Heidegger, one of the founders of phenomenology, states, 'we are ourselves the entities to be analysed' (1962, p. 42). This statement supports my decision to use both autobiographical and biographical methods in my research.

Following my nose

My formal candidature began in 2010 with a compulsory research methods course. One of the requirements involved developing a research question or proposition. What was I going to do? And how was I going to do it? To 'follow my nose' was not an accepted answer to either question. I had a feeling of what I wanted to do and what I wanted to explore but found it extremely difficult to put into words, let alone formulate a project plan. What I put together was a loose framework with projections of what I would do. Since then I have shifted about within this context, focusing on some areas, and leaving others idle. A thesis title was trialled for a short

period, approximately two-thirds of the way through my candidature. The working title 'More than material makers' gave me the opportunity to consider what textile designers could do beyond the industry norms discussed in the introduction. The descriptions (based on those of Gale and Kaur) listed below provide an insight into the common practices of contemporary textile designers:

> **The commercial textile designer** [Someone who works in a commercial design studio for a large company, or freelancing for a large company responsible for the] design and production of original woven, knitted or printed fabrics in the form of either flat paper designs or fabric swatches [which are translated and manufactured by an external party] (2002, p. 38).

> **The textile designer-maker** [Someone who] designs and produces items in small or batch quantities, usually operating as an independent or in a small business context. [They follow a similar approach to the craftsperson—but are more likely to use] pre-fabricated components or subcontracting aspects of manufacture and assembly (2002, pp. 49, 50).

Designer-makers are responsible for the creation of products using design: methods, techniques and fabric and/or yarn. Commercial designers, in contrast, do not necessarily create textiles, instead they use tools—digital and/or analogue—to create artwork to be translated into, or onto, cloth using technology and machinery. This non-textile making is still, however, a form of making—making digital patterns, making colour palettes, making something two dimensional rather than three dimensional. Considering the legacy of industrial manufacturing, the 'more' to be pursued needed to address some of the negatives associated with the industry. At my third and final candidate presentation one of the panellists questioned whether there was a need for more? Perhaps celebrating lesser-known aspects of textile design practice was of greater benefit. After much deliberation, the thesis title was changed to 'Post-material making' as the word 'post', and key texts by Mathews (2013) and Fletcher (2016) enabled me to stretch my thinking in ways that the previous title could not.[33]

In her PhD thesis Vuletich uses the phrase 'beyond the swatch' as a way to transition away from the disciple norm of designing and producing aesthetically appropriate pieces of cloth for industry (2015 p. 54). Vuletich does this by progressing through the lenses of the 'sustainable

---

[33] Texts by Mathews and Fletcher will be discussed in Chapter 3.0.

textile designer, to a design facilitator, to the highest level of the design steward' (2015 p. 19) using practice-based methods in a sustainable fashion industry context. Swatching is an important aspect of textile design learning, it enables students to put into practice the theoretical, practical and discipline specific skills and knowledge learnt in both studio and workshop environments. Much can be learned through swatching if the emphasis for making is expanded beyond visual aesthetics and utility required by industry.

The thesis title and research proposition have given purpose to the four projects detailed in Chapters 4.0, 5.0, 6.0 & 7.0. Each project uses appropriate methods to unpack and explore the research proposition. The order undertaken allowed for opportunities to be seized within the context of the research proposition.

Herding the research cats

Just prior to this formalised research wandering I wrote a paper for the 2010 *International Foundation of Fashion Technology Institute's* (IFFTI) conference held in Taipei, Taiwan titled 'Textiles, connection and meaning' (Lynas 2010). This paper was my initial gathering of thoughts and ideas on how to better connect with users of textiles. During the literature review I discovered that product design/industrial design were leading the discussion. The work of Jonathan Chapman, Alastair Fuad-Luke, Özlem Savaş, William McDonough and Michael Braungart, John Thakara, Stuart Walker and John Wood were critical in building an understanding of what could be done (in the broader discipline of design) to do our job better. The influence of Alastair Fuad-Luke, particularly his early work in Slow design resonated most strongly. A quote by Strauss and Fuad-Luke, has been a constant touchstone—the principles of Slow design, 'provide a lens through which to more intimately understand one's own identity as a designer' (2008, p. 3).

A book by John Naish (2008) titled *Enough, Breaking Free from a World of More* encouraged me to think about my role in industry, and subsequent feelings of disconnection. Jonathan Chapman's *Emotionally Durable Design* (2005) provided insights into consumer psychology and reasons behind attachment and detachment to material possessions. Carl Honoré's *In Praise of Slow* (2004) brought the two themes of time and disconnection together—providing examples of how people are benefiting from slowing down and engaging in meaningful activities.

During this time, a wave of literature emerged to support a need for a more sustainable approach to design practice. This was interesting, difficult and complex terrain, so many scenarios to consider, so many wicked problems[34]. What could I do? I am not a scientist or engineer; I do not have the skills or the inclination to design and make systems or new improved eco yarns and fabrics. I felt slightly redundant and lost.

Developing a sense for qualitative research

In 2011, I worked alongside an RMIT University BA (Textile Design) colleague and an RMIT University Learning and Teaching officer to explore creativity and peer learning in undergraduate textile design.[35] Data was collected from RMIT University BA (Textile Design) undergraduate students using both focus groups and analogue surveys. The data was analysed using a comparative thematic approach to identify patterns and relationships of interest (Budge 2013, p. 150). This was my first experience of coding qualitative data. I found the process focused too intently on the minutiae of an idea, losing the broad-brush strokes of complete sentences and the overall narrative. Little by little, I was moving forward, following my nose and 'gut instincts' on what I would do—not knowing why in the objective sense, but letting my intuition guide me.

In the middle of 2011, I interviewed six textile designers to gain real-life insights into the role of connection in textile design practice. The decision to keep the data pool limited to six people was based on my preference for 'testing the water' so to speak—to get a feel for how textile designers engage with the people they design for. During my third and final candidate presentation, one of the panellists asked if I intended to undertake another round of interviews with a more substantial number of participants as my study could be seen as 'myopic'. This was a question I had indeed seen coming. The interviews were undertaken to provide an indication of how people felt; it was never intended to be a measure—a factual account of how the industry 'is' at a given point in time. A small data pool fits in neatly with an intuitive approach to design where decisions are made and approaches taken based on responsive making, rather than calculative problem solving (Teal 2010, p. 295). I was using my 'a-rational' (Teal 2010, p. 295) intuitive knowledge to guide my decision-making process.

---

[34] Wicked problems are characterised by being both complex and multidimensional (Bye 2010, p. 207).
[35] The research resulted in two journal articles Budge et al. (2013) and Lynas et al. (2013).

The data collected was used to write a paper presented at the *2012 International, Designa Un/Sustainability Design* research conference in Covilhã, Portugal. Coincidently, and to my delight, Alastair Fuad-Luke was announced as the keynote speaker. My decision to submit a paper (with small data pool) to a lesser-known conference on the other side of the world was rewarded with the opportunity to discuss first-hand the evolution of Slow design to co-design.

By the end of 2012, I had written and presented two papers exploring the role of connection in textile design practice. During this phase, my research was very much focused on collecting and analysing the sustainability literature and better understanding the relationship between textile designers and customers. In the years since, my understanding of connection has evolved due to undertaking the practice-led and action research projects presented and discussed in Phase two.

Introducing ethics

The action research projects[36] required ethics clearance from the RMIT University Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network. The ethics application clarified issues to do with participant identity and potential risks associated with his or her involvement. The projects involved audio recordings of conversations between the participants and myself. Project one[37] included sensitive information relating to the individual's place of employment; the participant's identities have been protected via an alias. Participation in project two[38] required individuals to have their photograph taken, for this reason their true identity has been disclosed. Participants in project three[39] were either students or alumni of the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program; their names have not been disclosed in the research. Participants in all three projects were provided with a plain language statement and asked to sign a consent form. It was made clear that participants could opt out of the project and have their associated

---

[36] Data used to write; Lynas (2013), Chapter 5.0: 'Love your or leave you' and Chapter 6.0: 'Araluen, a project with people for people'.

[37] Individual interviews undertaken in 2011 with Australian commercial textile designers and textile designer-makers. Data was used to write Lynas (2013).

[38] Individual interviews undertaken in 2013 with textile designers (textile design makers and commercial textile designers, academics, artists) and local consumers detailing their connection (or lack of) to clothing and cloth. The data was used to write the 'Love you or leave you' booklets, refer to Chapter 5.0 and appendix C.

[39] Focus group undertaken in 2016 with BA (Textile Design) students and alumni about their experience working on the 2012 and 2015 Araluen projects, refer to Chapter 6.0.

data deleted at any stage of the project. Copies of the plain language statements and interview questions can be found in <u>appendix A.</u>

Methods

Rather than following a direct line, and knowing the right path to take, the search for methods has been iterative. The project started with a feeling of unease, something that couldn't be captured, an irritation that kept me searching for reasons, if not answers. As a consequence, the methods are varied, using both reflective and reflexive ways of seeing, and shifting to suit the individual projects. The methods employed in practice include making, walking, visiting, talking, photographing, film making, exhibiting, writing, storytelling and reflection. The methods used in action research include face-to-face interviews, focus groups, talking, looking, listening, transcribing, thinking, writing, autobiography and biography.

The research is both autobiographical and biographical; telling my story and the stories of others. The stories swing from practical to emotional, from left to right, side to side, reflecting the need to consider 'cognition and emotion, information and observation, the proven and the intuitive' when thinking about design (Fuad-Luke 2004, section 2.3). For me, storytelling is a way of extracting the essence of the interview or personal experience within the bounds of the research proposition.

Knowing textile design

When I started my candidature, I was aged thirty-three. I had completed an undergraduate Bachelor of Arts in textile design, worked as a commercial textile designer, travelled, completed a postgraduate Bachelor of Teaching, and worked in both secondary and tertiary education. This collective experience provided a reference point, a source of stories and examples to support the reasons for undertaking this research, and most importantly, material to draw upon when engaging participants in conversation. My backstory, my childhood, experiences working on a permaculture farm in Italy, my experience teaching undergraduate students, my work with industry all enrich my idea of what a textile designer can be. The experience of others is critical to understanding my own experience; 'In caring about who I am, I care about who others are … I cannot disentangle who I am from who those around me are' (Blattner 2006, p. 39).

How do I interpret the stories of others to build an understanding of what textile design can be? What is it to 'be' a textile designer? What is 'being' a textile designer? People's understanding

of textile design is based on their learned idea of what textile designers do. This is frequently associated with making things using materials, tools and techniques. For example: a brush and gouache to paint a motif, a computer to generate pattern repeats, or a knitting machine to create swatches. If we are familiar with these activities and associate these activities with the discipline of textile design, we are likely to think the person engaged in these activities a textile designer. Our conception or understanding of textile design is standardised, a picture of a person who does things or makes things as described above. For those unfamiliar with textile design, people who paint motifs, create patterns on a computer or knit swatches may be thought of as illustrators, hobbyists or such the like. Gale and Kaur in *The Textile Book* (2002) differentiate textile practice using four categories: the textile designer, the designer-maker, the craftsperson and the textile artist. Bradley Quinn uses the broad themes of technology, sustainability and innovation (2013) to classify textile design practice. With regard to the ontology of textile design—what is 'being' a textile designer—we refer to our understanding of the profession, people we know, have known, stories we have read and the cloth and clothing we have in our homes. If we see a person painting a motif, are they a textile designer? Not necessarily, but maybe. The things we do and make with our hands are indicators of the profession, but what about the non-making indicators, what about the connections, the intangible occurrences between people, place and materials—can these be attributed to the discipline of textile design, can these become recognisable attributes of a textile designer?

I tend to have a feel for things, rather than a theoretical understanding of things. I feel my way around the world; I rely on intuition and 'gut feeling' to navigate—I wander my way through and around. I have a know-how competence; I have a sense for things. Heidegger refers to this as a pre-ontology rather than an ontology or theory for being (Blattner 2006, p. 18) as described by Blattner and D'Olimpio below:

> We understand being in much the same way that we 'have a sense for' things or 'get' them, without being able to spell out what we understand (Blattner 2006, p. 18).
> While the logical mind weighs up our options, it is our emotions that inspire us and motivate us to act[40] (D'Olimpio 2015, 2:20).

---

[40] D'Olimpio speaks of the influence of Nietzsche and Merleau-Ponty on recalibrating the scale and bringing the emotional self-equal to that of the rational mind.

Strauss & Fuad-Luke prepared the Slow Design Principles as a tool to help designers navigate the complexities of contemporary practice. They use the 'lens' as a metaphor:

> [The Slow Design Principles] provide a lens through which to more intimately understand one's own identity as a designer, to reflect upon the design processes one employs to evaluate tangible outcomes and to imagine new scenarios. This process of careful and continuous (self-) questioning challenges the designer to reach for the core of her/his roles as a designer (2008, p. 3).

When considering this figuratively, I imagine a large magnifying glass held up to bring to the fore the important things in life, to filter out the business of design, to pan for gold—to sift through the grit in search of treasure. This process of looking is equally reliant on the remaining senses—using multiple senses to filter requires confidence in intuition, feeling and 'gut' instinct. My interpretation of Slow involves both looking, listening, touching and feeling; this is my interpretation, my Slow pre-ontology. This research follows Heidegger's circular approach to ontology summarised by Blattner below:

> ... in doing ontology we move back and forth between articulating some specific mode of being and our own vision of the whole field of being. In the course of ontological inquiry a map or structure of the field of being in general will come into focus (2006, p.22).

Painting, designing with computers, and knitting are examples of practice that define the textile designer. If we were to view the textile designer over a lifetime, these identifiers would change, as would society more generally. To take a long view, to step outside the immediacy of the present is a way to sift through the detritus, to stand up and look across and down at the profession below. Heidegger's understanding of anxiety, and Critchley's analogy of the 'tide going out ... revealing a self stranded on the strand' (2009a, para. 8), provides a long view, an ability to sift and sort, to figure out the good bits, to provide perspective, context and clarity around the importance of practice. What are textile designers here for, what good can we serve? What does our conscience tell us to do?

My role as researcher

My role in this research has been both introspective and interpretive. I have adapted the social science method of autoethnography to tell my story and the story of others who work in the field of textile design along with users of textiles. The autoethnographic method seemed

appropriate as it is not concerned with objective answers and coded qualitative data, instead autoethnography 'seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience' (Ellis 2011, p. 1). My role as researcher has been to gather stories and re-tell them as honestly as possible without ignoring my own lived experience and understanding of the textile design industry and associated issues. My experience is important in contextualising the information gathered from others. The unearthing of this method was both a revelation and relief, as it is free from objective rules, codes and absolutes common to other forms of qualitative research.

In summary

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology and methods used in my research. The qualitative methods inherent to action research have allowed me to gather the thoughts and values of practising textile designers and undergraduate textile design students to better understand the discipline and profession. The practice-led methods provided the opportunity to explore and articulate the ability for textiles to connect. My habitus has been explored, and an autoethnographic approach adopted, to tell the story of one textile designer's wandering in search of change. My role in this research as both a participant and researcher ('Grasslands' and 'Home Made') and researcher ('Love you or leave you' and 'Araluen, a project with people for people') has given me the opportunity to contextualise my practice in reference to others. The Slow design premise developed by Fuad-Luke and Strauss[41] has guided the methodology and subsequent methods.

This research (in its entirety) is grounded in personal values and a belief that textile design and textile designers can illicit good, clean and fair change by repositioning textile design from being a material practice built upon the use and manipulation of fibre-based matter, colour, motif, pattern, craft and technical skill for the marketplace—to a practice focused on textiles as agents for human connection. The methodology has been drawn together based on what was needed to 'get to the core' of my role as a 'post-material making' textile designer.

---

[41] ['The Slow Design Principles] provide a lens through which to more intimately understand one's own identity as a designer, to reflect upon the design processes one employs to evaluate tangible outcomes and to imagine new scenarios. This process of careful and continuous (self-) questioning challenges the designer to reach for the core of her/his role as a designer' (2008, p. 3).

Textiles, as designed, made objects (of material culture) are all about structure, logic (/function) and so richly concerned with affect, aesthetics, sensation, communication and relationality (Igoe 2013, p. 37).

Textiles offer uniquely fluid, flexible and infinitely adaptable ways of questioning, examining and solving some of the societal challenges that face us. This powerful agency is more valuable and vital than ever before as these challenges become increasingly complex (Toomey 2017, para. 1).

2.0 Textile design

Introduction

This chapter focuses on my understanding of, and connection to, textile design with specific reference to commercial and designer-maker textile design in Australia. Through the lenses of my personal and professional experience within the Australian industry and the academy, I tease out the relationship between textile designers and textile materials. This relationship is complex, shifting, and at times contradictory. As society around us changes, old systems are breaking down before new ones are established. I see textile design as having a moment, or perhaps more aptly, being at a crossroad.

This chapter lays the foundation for my research and is presented in three parts: (1) Textile connections run deep; (2) Textile design; and (3) Where next for the textile design profession. It begins by reflecting on the deep, long-held connections between humans and textiles, and how over the course of the latter part of the twentieth century, and early twenty-first century these connections have been compromised. It then summarises the discipline of textile design based on the literature and autobiographical examples of study and practice in Melbourne, Australia. It highlights the contrast between undergraduate textile design (as an example of best practice) and the often-contrasting reality of the industry experience. The chapter concludes by speculating on how the textile design discipline might evolve to meet the broader needs of society.

(1) Textile connections run deep

Textiles as agents for connection and protection

People and textiles are intrinsically connected. Textiles have brought people together for many thousands of years. Whether it be in formalised craft circles (needlework, patchwork), children's games (soft toys, skipping ropes), or labour-intensive community activities (weaving, waulking wool).[42] Textiles are a material of connection—language is riddled with metaphors to support this claim— 'the fabric of society', 'cut from the same cloth', 'the thread that binds us together', to name a few.[43] These metaphors encapsulate the role of textiles in our daily experience.

---

[42] Waulking was a practice undertaken by women in the Hebridean islands off the coast of Scotland. Women would gather and sing while beating wet-woven wool with their hands and feet, causing it to shrink and soften (Gordon 2011, pp. 133–134).

[43] Beverly Gordon's *Textiles: The Whole Story* (2011) provides a comprehensive list.

Textiles are intensely personal; they sit close to the body, they provide shelter and comfort in our homes, and enable us to identify with culture and society. They surround us at birth and follow us to the grave—they are both spiritual and economic; they can be expressions of the divine or creators of wealth and are frequently imbued with nostalgia and emotion. Textiles are practical, sturdy and strong; some are used for wiping up mess while others are used to create garments to celebrate important occasions. They come in a myriad of choices enabling individuals to select based on the criteria of comfort, serviceability, affordability and aesthetics. They are used to make things, to pass the time and get lost in the flow[44] of working with our hands. Textiles carry so much practical, social and cultural baggage—however, it seems that present day Western society gives little value to textiles beyond their ability to sell in the marketplace, perform practical functions or facilitate dalliances with fleeting fashion trends. Indeed, our careless attitude to textiles today would be perplexing and abhorrent to our ancestors. The industrial revolution and market economy have rendered textiles in the Western world (in the commercial sense) a material of commodification.

Collaborations between science, technology, business and industry have generated new materials that perform extraordinary functions. One example is an intelligent fibre used in combat clothing that can sense the impact of a bullet and trigger a range of medical treatments. These military defence textiles are embedded with microbial protection and the ability to stem bleeding while simultaneously alerting the command base (Quinn 2010, p. 42). Developments in protective textiles have harnessed the potential of nanotechnology. One such project suspends iron particles in a liquid solution; the solution remains fluid until exposed to a magnetic field, causing it to harden. This technology has the potential to be used in defensive uniforms (such as bullet-proof vests) (Quinn 2010, p. 46) or industries where employees are exposed to potential physical harm. Textiles are used for medical applications, both inside the body (tendon implants) and external to the body (tissue engineering for burns reconstruction) alongside the more widely known applications such as wound dressings and bedding (Farrer & Finn 2015, p. 30). Signalling textiles provide opportunities for patient data to be recorded and shared to medical professionals via reflective textiles, thermo-chromic dyes and printed inks (Farrer & Finn 2015, p. 31). Developments in textiles for astronautical space suits utilise 'elastic

---

[44] Csikszentmihalyi describes flow as the 'state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it' (1990, p. 4).

fabrics reinforced with threads made from nickel-titanium alloys', or 'dyneema, a high-molecular-weight polyethylene that is stronger than nylon' to maintain the right pressure for the body to function in space (St Clair 2018, p. 244).

Textiles have played a significant role in determining human status and identity. Before the industrial revolution, fibres, cloth and dyes were traded along with gold and spices. Textiles were valued and revered for their rarity and exoticism. Indigenous cultures have long been using textiles to reflect cultural identity—using materials and decorative techniques to impart meaning and importance (Gale & Kaur 2002, p. 91). Symbolic patterning is used to tell stories, and to remind people of the importance of culture and place. In a more contemporary global context, the hipster movement is very much represented in textiles: denim, checks, tartans and plaids. Western society may not value cloth in the same way as previous generations, however, it remains one of the most influential mediums in present-day culture.

With such a broad reach spanning everyday domestic necessity to space travel and everything in between, it is hard to settle on a neat definition of what textiles are. Derived from the Latin word *texere,* meaning 'to weave', textiles can be thought of as anything consisting of, or created by, combining individual fibres, yarns or filaments (Anstey & Weston 2003, section. A1 fibres). When applied in the context of design, textiles find a place in all aspects of purpose: utilitarian, descriptive, narrative, emotive, activist and decorative. When consciously acknowledging how many textiles exist in many and varied forms, it is difficult to comprehend how society would function without them.

Making with textiles feels good

Making connects us to materials and ideas, and to people and place. David Gauntlett provides three key scenarios that demonstrate that working with materials, is in itself a form of connection:

- Making is connecting because you have to connect things together (materials, ideas, or both) to make something new
- Making is connecting because acts of creativity usually involve, at some point, a social dimension and connect us with other people
- And making is connecting because through making things and sharing them in the world, we increase our engagement and connection with our social and physical environments (2011, p. 2)

Textiles are materials for making; they are conduits for mindfulness and passing the time. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'one in every ten Australians over the age of fifteen years takes part in a classic craft activity, including textile crafts like sewing, knitting and felting … and this is on the increase' (Quibell 2016, p. 111). Most of us know people who like to participate in textile crafts such as knitting or crochet, making things for themselves or for other people, or for the sheer pleasure of working with their hands. My partner's mother is one such person. Joy is a prolific and very talented knitter—she knits garments for her grandchildren, choosing yarns and patterns to suit each grandchild's preference for colour and purpose. She also knits and donates jumpers, cardigans and beanies to her local Salvation Army charity store. Like Joy, I have been working with textiles for as long as I can remember. I taught myself how to crochet in my early thirties via a combination of books and YouTube tutorials. My early efforts were pretty ordinary—the wrong tension, hook size and yarn combination. But I enjoyed the activity—the process of focusing my attention on the task, the feeling of the cold smooth hook against the soft yarn. I began to read books on amigurumi[45] and committed to crocheting soft toys for new babies of friends and family (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 *Amigurumi, from left to right: Frog, 2008; Teddy, 2008; Rabbit, 2008; Bear, 2009*

Textile making such as embroidery, crochet, knitting and weaving feel good, their rhythm and repetition require focus and attention—but once the basics have been grasped, the mind is free to wander. Textile making has long been used as a form of physical and emotional therapy (Collier 2011; Kouhia 2016, pp. 26-28; Shercliff 2014, pp. 43-44)—whether it be through self-directed practice or due to evidence-based research. One example is the use of embroidery to assist Australian, British and New Zealand First World War soldiers recover from both physical injuries and post-traumatic stress. Stitching by hand (as a form of physiotherapy) aided in the

---

[45] Amigurumi is the Japanese name for crocheted or knitted animals and characters.

recovery of fine motor skills damaged in combat. Focusing the mind on the task at hand provided a distraction from the mental images of war (Brayshaw 2017, para. 6).

A study undertaken with female clients at a drug and alcohol recovery rehabilitation centre found knitting to be a contributing factor in their recovery. As part of the study, women would sit, knit and chat, share their work and help one another to problem-solve. The process of knitting was described as self-soothing, while the acquisition of skills contributed to their increased self-esteem (Duffy 2007, p. 68). Textile making is known for generating a 'relaxation response,[46] a scientifically measured physiological reaction that reduces muscle tension, heart rate and blood pressure' (Wellesley-Smith 2015, p. 88). Textile making 'offers a means of creativity, of confidence in one's own ability to "do", as well as occupying a space in which one can just "be"'[47] (Turney in Gauntlett 2011, p. 69). The British-based National Health Service (NHS) recently encouraged general practitioners to prescribe a social interaction (of some sort) to help people who are experiencing loneliness (NHS England n.d.). The example above of using social knitting as a form of recovery is in keeping with the NHS method of social prescribing. Working with textiles and textile techniques is a desirable activity, one that offers the potential to assist people who are experiencing trauma and/or looking for ways to remain level and calm.

Indigenous connections to material making and place in Australia

When considering the strong connection between people and textiles, Indigenous cultures have much to teach us. I am drawn to the cultural practices of Indigenous people, and how material making, and sense of place are inseparable from the materials themselves. Aboriginal people have a long history of working with fibres to make practical and ceremonial objects. Carmichael talks of the cultural significance of baskets and bags made using processes such as: twining, looping, knotting, coiling and string-making to the Quandamooka people of Southeast Queensland; 'these sacred objects reflect a deep connection between our people and specific places that has been central to Aboriginal identities for at least 60,000 years' (Carmichael 2017, p. 16). In other parts of Australia textile processes such as twining, coiling, plaiting, knotting and looping are used to transform native grasses and plants into intricate baskets (Bolton 2011, p. 10), bowls and dillybags. Protein fibres such as animal fur, hair and sinew are twisted to make

---

[46] Research into the relaxation response is attributed to Professor Herbert Benson (Wellesley-Smith 2015, p. 88).
[47] This is in reference to the practice of knitting.

string for flexible bags[48] (Bolton 2011, p. 61), while animal pelts are used for ceremonial purposes, comfort and warmth. Indigenous people use materials and decorative techniques to tell stories of culture and place. In the southern parts of Australia[49] where the temperatures are cooler, cloaks made from possum skins have (and still) perform multiple purposes as stated below by Vicki Couzens, A Gunditjmara Keerraywoorroong woman from the Western Districts of Victoria:

> As the land and language are inextricably linked, possum skin cloaks are inherently connected to and intrinsically part of ceremony, songs, dance and story. Cloaks are used in many varied ways, from day-to-day uses in warmth and bedding to ceremonies including initiation, musical accompaniment as the women would drum on the stretched skins, and in healing practices. They are worn at gatherings and celebrations and the markings display your clan and Country. The markings and designs on cloaks hold the stories of clan, Country and place, making the cloaks repositories of knowledge (Couzens 2017, p. 39).

Much can be learned from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their culture on the topic of material agency, care and craftsmanship, not to mention connection to, and engagement with country. Further reading on contemporary Indigenous textile design practice for fashion and homewares can be found in Williamson (2010, pp. 115–119) and the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (2013). Recent examples of Indigenous textile design collaborative practice include Lisa Waup x Verner x Craft Victoria[50]; NORTH[51]; Magpie Goose[52]; Mangkaja x Gorman[53]. Examples of Indigenous connection to place through making will be discussed further in Chapter 7.0.

---

[48] Bolton states that it is more common for Indigenous people from mainland Australia to use vegetable materials rather than animal when making string for bags (2011, p. 61).

[49] The southern parts of Australia are identified as starting 'from northern New South Wales down to Tasmania and across to the southern areas of South Australia and Western Australia' (Culture Victoria 2016, para. 6).

[50] This collaboration between: Gunditjmara and Torres Strait Islander artist Lisa Waup, Melbourne based fashion designer Ingrid Verner and Craft Victoria curator Sarah Weston was developed in 2017 and featured in the Virgin Melbourne Fashion Festival. 'At its core, this collection represents collaboration, respect and connection - our connection to country and family, and the connection between all of us' (Craft Victoria n.d.).

[51] NORTH is a not-for-profit organisation that 'exists as a vessel to celebrate, support and broaden the exposure of textile design by Indigenous artists living remotely on their country'. They contribute to the preservation of indigenous art while increasing exposure through the promotion and sale of textile: prints, garments and homewares (NORTH 2019, para. 1).

[52] Magpie Goose is a fashion social enterprise showcasing colourful hand screen printed textiles designed by Aboriginal artists (Magpie Goose 2019, para. 1).

[53] Australian fashion brand Gorman collaborated with artists from the Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency in Western Australia on a fashion collection shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in New South Wales, and at the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (Gorman 2019, para. 1). The collection was launched for sale online and instore in 2019.

(2) Textile design

Textile intelligence

The previous section highlighted the deep connection people have with textile materials and textile making. Over a relatively short period of time (since the mid-twentieth century) this connection and associated textile intelligence has gradually been eroded from the general population. Materials have become more numerous and complicated thanks to scientific research, while our domestic, everyday material intelligence has gradually shifted to specialists (Adamson 2018, p. 3). Material intelligence is defined by Adamson as 'a deep understanding of the material world around us, an ability to read that material environment, and the know-how required to give it new form' (2018, p. 4)— 'the type of knowledge that somebody has in their hands' (Adamson & Adamson 2018). Nimkulrat articulates the importance of working with materials by hand as a means to develop new knowledge:

> In textiles as well as other material-designated disciplines, craft is understood not only as a way of making things by hand, but also as a way of thinking through the hand manipulating a material ... craft is thus "a means for logically thinking through senses" (2012, p. 1).

Practice incorporates activities that involve the designer, their creation methods and processes, and the resultant artefact (Nimkulrat 2012, p. 1). Cross describes this interaction as 'a designerly way of knowing'— 'thinking and knowing are inseparable from making in any craft or designerly practices' (Nimkulrat 2012, p. 2). Vuletich (2015) adapted the 'designerly way of knowing' to articulate a 'textile/fashion designerly way of knowing' in her PhD research:

> it is important to identify that fashion designers ... demonstrate a particular way of 'thinking and doing' design, that works with fabric, colour, pattern, form and the human body. I will call this type of design practice here a 'textile/fashion designerly way of knowing' (Vuletich 2015, p. 204). [54]

Textile design is a discipline that prides itself on having specialist skills and knowledge and 'designerly ways of knowing'. Knowledge of man-made and natural fibres, filaments, yarn, cloth and material surfaces—of repeat systems, paints, inks, dyes and papers. Knowledge of the

---

[54] This quote was taken from: Appendix IV blog posts written for the Textile Toolbox.

historical, and cultural use and significance of textiles and design. Knowledge of agricultural practices and methods of hand mechanized and digital production—alongside the challenges they present. It includes tacit skills gained through using materials and making by hand or using digital software and tools to design and make with. This collective knowledge and skill base contribute to our professional and discipline 'textile intelligence'—our ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. This textile intelligence connects the textile designer to the materials they work via an iterative process of thinking, feeling and doing. Traditionally this intelligence was—and much of it still is—acquired through learning ones' craft (knitting, printing, weaving) during undergraduate education, learning how to feel and respond to the materials at hand through practice and repetition.

In order to better articulate and understand our collective intelligence beyond making as product, there needs to be more emphasis on building the discipline capacity to use this knowledge to facilitate connection. This may involve spending more time explicitly focusing on building soft skills, attitudes and mindsets within the curriculum— and to make these attributes more apparent to the industry and neighbouring design disciplines. The discipline is known for its creativity and craft skills, it is less well-known for its capacity to build human agency. Textile intelligence draws upon the cognitive (intelligence/thinking), affective (emotional/feeling) and conative (instinctual/doing) human ability. The ability to think, feel and do. The present-day commercial sector has relied too heavily on the disciplines 'doing' capability—producing product for the marketplace.

Textile design as a profession in Australia

While this subsection relates to the profession of textile design in Australia, I want to preface this by stating that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been working with textiles and associated techniques for at least sixty thousand years.

Prior to the industrial revolution design education did not exist as we understand it today. Instead, people would learn their trade while under the mentorship of a master craftsperson, through observation and copying (Cross 2006, p. 24). The *Design Dictionary: Perspectives on Design Terminology* (Erlhoff & Marshall 2008) provides an overview of the emergence of textile design as a profession. The first mention of 'design' occurs when discussing the addition of 'pattern designers' alongside weavers and printers during the industrial era (Erlhoff & Marshall 2008, p. 395). Industrial textile design (as we know it today) emerged as a profession via the

German Bauhaus School of Design. Despite the existence of 'pattern design'[55] as a profession, the Bauhaus did not offer schooling in printed textiles or figurative patterning, instead opting to use weave and coloured yarn as the primary source of patterning (Erlhoff & Marshall 2008, p. 396).

In Australia, textile design as a discipline evolved out of textile practices associated with the applied arts, and household economies. The Melbourne-based Working Men's College [56] provided adult education in plain needlework, freehand drawing, colour and design, wall decoration, lace and art needlework from as early as the 1890s (The Working Men's College 1891 p. 6; The Working Men's College 1900, p. 55; The Working Men's College Report 1903, p. 113). In 1919 the college introduced classes in decorative design including pattern design, described below:

> Pattern Design; the geometric basis; the arrangement of a simple unit of floral or animal form to make various repeating patterns; band designs; all-over patterns; designs formed by imposing one pattern upon another; designs formed by counter changing elements; interlacing band designs and knotwork (The Working Men's College Prospectus 1919, p. 146).

While searching through the prospectus in the RMIT University archives I found reference to 'textile design' as a course offering in the 1931 edition (The Working Men's College 1931, p. 33). Since this time many people have been trained in the activities associated with textile design. Frances Burke is perhaps the most notable Australian textile designer to graduate from the (now RMIT University) academy. In 1937, together with Morris Holloway, she established Burway Prints, becoming the first textile-printing firm to be registered in Australia (Oswald-Jacobs 1997). She was awarded an MBE[57] in 1970 (Carter 2007, p. 111) and received an honorary doctorate from RMIT University in 1987 for her services in design. The France Burke Textile Resource Centre was established at RMIT University in 1994 to further honour her significant contribution to local design. Refer to appendix B.1 for more information relating to the practice and achievements of Francis Burke.

---

[55] One of (if not the earliest) European training facilities for pattern designers was established at a silk factory in Lyon, France in the early nineteenth century (Erlhoff & Marshall 2008, p. 395).

[56] The Working Men's College was established in 1887. After many amalgamations and name changes it was granted University status and renamed RMIT University in 1992 (RMIT University 2017b).

[57] Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)—awarded for an outstanding achievement or service to the community (GOV.UK, n.d.).

The *Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations* (ANZSCO) [58] lists industrial, fashion and jewellery design under the one classification code. The three disciplines are then broken down into specialisations. Textile design along with ceramic, furniture and glass are listed under industrial design (also known as product design). The definition of industrial design (and the subsequent specialisations) is defined as follows:

> 232312 Industrial Designer (alternative title: Product Designer) Plans, designs, develops and documents industrial, commercial or consumer products for manufacture with particular emphasis on ergonomic (human) factors, marketing considerations and manufacturability, and prepares designs and specifications of products for mass or batch production. Specialisations: Ceramic Designer, Furniture Designer, Glass Designer, Textile Designer (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016).

This neat industry-oriented description exists as the Australian Federal Government [59] needs a way to classify, contrast and validate professions—there needs to be a reference, a baseline understanding to ensure everyone has a concrete, agreed-upon definition of what constitutes work for pay or profit, and how this work is supported and funded. It is interesting to note that Frances Burke introduced the discipline of industrial design to her peers in the Society of Designers for Industry after its formation in 1948. She did so via a document titled 'Introducing industrial design'. In it, she states:

> Industrial Design 'is more than applied design. In addition to visual appeal, Industrial Design embraces knowledge of means of manufacture, and of the needs of the consumer. It is the co-ordination of the aesthetic, technical, and commercial aspects of the machine-made article' (Burke cited in Oswald-Jacobs 1997, Appendix).

[58] The scope of ANZSCO is all occupations and jobs in the Australian and New Zealand labour market undertaken for pay or profit. Data is collected via national censuses/surveys. The data is indicative only (Australian Bureau of Statistics, overview 2016).

[59] 'ANZSCO provides a basis for the standardised collection, analysis and dissemination of occupation data for Australia and New Zealand (Australian Bureau of Statistics, overview 2016).

The description provided by Burke in 1949[60] and the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2016, demonstrates that the core business of textile design has not changed dramatically in sixty-seven years.

The Design Institute of Australia (DIA) is the peak body [61] for professional textile design accreditation in Australia. The DIA will only grant MDIA[62] membership to textile designers who have an advanced diploma (minimum qualification) or degree (preferred) and have worked for a recognised design individual, firm or business for a minimum of five years. MDIA membership grants the individual use of the MDIA post nominal after their name as a means of communicating professional recognition by industry (Design Institute of Australia, 2017a). The description below provides an agreed-upon, industry-oriented understanding of what textile designers do:

> Textile designers plan and develop patterns, knit and weave construction, prints, textures and illustrations for fabrics and other materials that require the development of patterned surfaces. They plan the way fabric looks and performs.
>
> They design the structure of the fabric and make decisions about appropriate yarns, colour use, surface patterning, texture and finishing.
>
> Textile designers develop fabrics used in furniture, soft furnishings, clothing, vehicles and products such as luggage. They can apply the same skills to the development of patterns for wallpapers, laminates and patterned plastics.
>
> They design fabrics to satisfy marketing and manufacturing requirements. They balance aesthetic and functional aspects; they consider the nature of yarn types, thicknesses, weights and textures to produce fabrics to cost and production constraints.
>
> They prepare design concepts and assess them for market viability. They resolve the concepts into artworks and instructions suitable for a variety of fabric production and printing techniques. They develop colour specifications and multiple colourways for ranges of fabrics. They communicate with manufacturing and production personnel to resolve details for manufacture.

[60] The document written by Burke is undated—however Oswald-Jacobs suggests it may have been written in 1949, one year after the Society of Designers for Industry's Australian Constitution was written (1997, p. 26).

[61] Another key national organisation is the Australian Fashion Council.

[62] Member of the DIA.

They advise and liaise with others who work in industries where it is necessary to predict future colour trends. They monitor trends in industries such as interior design, automotive design and fashion and progressively evolve fabric styles to meet these specific needs.

Textile design is a specialised form of industrial design ANZSCO 232312 (Design Institute of Australia, 2017b).

This is how the profession of textile design is defined at an advanced diploma and undergraduate level in Australia—there is a strong material focus with a pre-determined aesthetic and practical outcome.

Australia has a rich history of textile and surface designers. Refer to appendix B.1 for a brief overview of significant Australian textile and surface designers from the twentieth century to the present day.

Understanding contemporary textile design

Textile design is diverse and multi-faceted—beyond the commercial industry the discipline sits in the broader context of design, craftsmanship, art and innovation. To follow is a brief summary of key texts that have shaped my understanding of international contemporary textile design. This information provides a reference and comparison to my personal experience of working as a commercial textile (surface) designer and lecturer in Melbourne, Australia.

Textile design is a relatively young research discipline. In 2013 the first dedicated peer-reviewed international journal, the *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice* was published by Bloomsbury. The journal reflects the diverse range of approaches, disciplines and outcomes of 'research through textile design and making; research informed by textiles; and research for textile design education—encompassing pedagogic studies into the development of textile designers, practitioners and researchers' (Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice, 2018, para. 2). Much of the content is removed from commercial reality and industry specifics, instead it offers insight into how textiles and textile design methods are used and/or positioned in various fields of research.

In contrast, Gale and Kaur's *The Textile Book* (2002) provides examples of commercial designers, designer-makers, craftspeople and artists who sit within the broader textile discipline. This text has been useful in categorising practice within a cultural and historical context.

Textile Design (2011) by Simon Clarke is aimed specifically at textile design undergraduate, degree and pre-degree art foundation students interested in pursuing a career in textile design (2011, p. 7). It includes a brief cultural and technological history of textile design over a two-hundred-year period. It provides examples of printed, woven and mixed media textile design, and includes information relating to education, developing a collection, industry and employment. This text is very much concerned with textile design as a discipline responsible for the visual and tactile qualities of textiles from an undergraduate, and therefore industry-ready perspective. This book, alongside Jenny Udale's *Textiles and Fashion* (2008) and Josephine Steed and Frances Stevenson's *Basics Textile Design 01: Sourcing Ideas* (2012) have helped position my undergraduate teaching within an international context.

Bradley Quinn's *Textile Designers at The Cutting Edge* (2009) was written to elevate the profile of textile designers to the broader design community (2009, p. 6). It charts the work of textile designers across the globe and 'examines the changing face of textile design [charting the] furthermost boundaries of what a textile can be' (2009, p. 7). This book celebrates work across fashion and technology (Angel Chang), waste and up-cycling (Anita Ahuja, Becky Earley and Luisa Cevese), print design and pattern cutting for fashion (C. Neeon), cultural craft techniques and digital knitting technology (Clare Tough), material resourcefulness and working with community (Natalie Chanin), textiles and medical research (Shelley Fox), interior architecture (Anne Kyyrö Quinn and Camilla Diedrich), pattern and light (Astrid Krogh and Helena Hietanen) and material resourcefulness and technology (Kate Goldsworthy). This book celebrates the discipline's ability to combine design elements in aesthetic, functional and curious ways—thus celebrating the creative abilities of contemporary textile design practitioners. The designers featured in this book were (and many are still considered to be) the superstars of the day—recognised for their creativity and innovation.

Textile Visionaries: Innovation and Sustainability in Textile Design by Bradley Quinn (2013) provides examples of textile designers working in the areas of technology, sustainability and innovation. Those profiled in the technology section are described as practitioners, as their collective skills cover the areas of textile design, fashion design, art, engineering, science and research. Examples include textiles and textile techniques that integrate technology with fashion—wearables and tech-wear—that turn cloth and clothing into technological tools (2013, pp. 10–11). The sustainability section focuses on practitioners working with materials in careful balance with the environment. Examples include Carole Collet's biomimicry collaboration with

genomic science (2013, p. 112) and India Flint's methods for natural dying (2013, p. 132). Further examples include material resourcefulness, minimising waste, upcycling and small-scale production. The section on innovation covers advanced materials and new technologies such as: intelligent interfaces, sensory surfaces and smart substances (2013, p. 204). Examples include the 'no-contact jacket' by Adam Whiton and Yolita Nugent, designed to ward off attackers via an electrical charge (2013, p. 206) and Aurélie Mossé's light-induced shape-morphing materials (2013, p. 215). The book champions the discipline's ability to work collaboratively with others—to push the capability of textiles to do weird and wonderful things.

The summary above demonstrates the spectrum of roles within the field, spanning the length and breadth of possibility—from design for commercial sale through to design for innovation.

Textile design and me

I began my professional textile design career in 1996 with a Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) degree specialising in printed textiles from RMIT University. Since then I have worked in the commercial textile industry as a studio and freelance textile (surface) designer of domestic bedlinen, travelled, completed a Bachelor of Teaching at the University of Tasmania, taught in secondary schools, and lectured at RMIT University on the BA (Textile Design) program. During this time, I have seen the textile design discipline evolve to appropriate new technologies and adapt to meet the needs of a complex global supply chain.

When I began my undergraduate textile design education at RMIT University in 1996, we developed our discipline specific skills and knowledge by doing—it was an immersive experience where craft techniques and textile intelligence were highly valued. I was introduced to the practice of knitting on flatbed machines, weaving on eight-shaft looms and printing with screens, inks and dyes. Studio work consisted of many and varied drawing classes, design development and theory related to fibres, fabrics, history and the industry. The program was geared towards analogue design through making, and generating ideas and artwork using primary research methods. Although we participated in Work Integrated Learning projects[63], the activities were not specifically aligned with the needs of industry, rather, projects existed to

---

[63] Work Integrated Learning (WIL) includes internships (also known as placements) and course specific projects in collaboration with industry or community partners.

develop technical skills and promote creativity. In my second year of study I elected to major in printed textiles, spending many hours in the print room working with pigments, dyes and associated screen-printing tools and techniques. This immersive experience enabled me to test and trial techniques, honing my design, practical and technical skills to better understand the alchemic process of transforming cloth with colour, motif and pattern. Despite not printing as a part of my commercial practice designing artwork for bedlinen, these formative years in the print room provided a practical hands-on experience, giving me a different appreciation for cloth to my colleagues in management and sales.

In the mid 1990's digital textile design was a relatively new addition to the curriculum. We had courses in computer-aided textile design, however, they were clunky and not terribly well-aligned to the types of activities we were doing in our workshop areas. In year three we were given priority over the four computers installed with Adobe Photoshop. Photoshop was used primarily in the generation of storyboards and supportive visual communication tools, rather than designing pattern repeats as would be done today.

I secured my first role as a textile (surface) designer with a Melbourne-based wholesaler of domestic bedlinen the year following graduation. The design work undertaken during this phase of professional practice was vastly different to that undertaken as an undergraduate student. The work involved sourcing ideas from other brands via magazines and products sourced from stores, or via products and ephemera collected by the design manager and senior sales team while on buying trips overseas (we were operating pre-internet). The senior designers were using digital software such as NedGraphics Texcelle; the rest of us were working with traditional media to create artwork in repeat (gouache, pencil, ink on paper) to be sent overseas, colour separated, exposed on screen, and printed using rotary or flatbed methods by mills in (mostly) Pakistan. The customer was sketchy; not a priority for the design team who were given the sole responsibility of creating aesthetic, decorative designs to be printed onto fabric for domestic bedlinen. The connections were distant—designing for a local customer but manufacturing offshore—the supply chain was a mystery and not my concern. The connections within practice were loose—as an employee I did not feel rooted within the industry—I felt like a piece of a mysterious puzzle.

Although I did not screen print while employed, I did use wet and dry media, and would mix colours in a haptic subtractive manner to create artwork for screen. Making was still an element

of practice, but the textile material was absent. Material choices, mostly cotton and polyester cotton, were predetermined. I knew nothing of where the fabric was sourced, how the cotton was grown or how the cotton and polyester were processed. I did not witness production taking place as the manufacturing happened offshore. The status quo was unquestioned—socially, economically and environmentally—it was not my job to question or care. When I began my career, issues of sustainability—environmental and social—alongside production and consumption were not forefront in my mind. There was an awareness, a feeling of unease but it was not explicit at the time. The boundaries of responsibilities were conveniently opaque—whose problem was it? The customers? The manufactures? Or ours?

It has been almost twenty years since I began working as a textile (surface) designer for a Melbourne-based wholesaler of low-to-middle market domestic bedlinen. Many of the design practices are similar[64] but augmented with digital tools such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop for surface design, and the internet (alongside the methods used pre-internet) to collect secondary references for inspiration. Most of the printing and manufacturing still happens offshore but is more likely to happen in China due to political instability in Pakistan. Bed linen is now deemed a lifestyle product—to be accessorised like fashion; with cushions, throws and decorative pieces. It is heavily influenced by trends and is available seasonally, with summer and winter collections—marketed to customers via carefully-styled Instagram photographs and videos. There are more choices, and faster turnarounds. Gone are the days of recolouring a popular design from one year to the next. There is now an awareness of the negatives associated with mass manufacturing and a global supply chain that was not explicit in education, or the commercial industry, some twenty years ago. There is more accountability—labour laws are more stringent and production transparency is a concern to the customer. This is indeed a positive for the industry, however, there is still an enormous amount of product being designed, produced and sold.

In 2006 I returned to RMIT University as an associate lecturer on the BA (Textile Design) program. Since then I have taught computer-aided textile design and studio courses that incorporate traditional and digital methods, in line with current industry expectations. My teaching draws upon my traditional training in textile design, ongoing professional

---

[64] This is my assessment based on a comparable Australian bed linen company.

development, industry experience, industry connections and research undertaken as a part of this PhD.

In the beginning my teaching focused on delivering practical and commercially relevant skills and knowledge to prepare graduates for a career in the industry. Projects were geared towards designing (and sometimes making), artwork, fabric and objects for the marketplace—students were designing for a textile and or product. There was a niggling feeling that my delivery of knowledge and skills did little to question the status quo or address the uneasiness I had experienced in industry.

By the late 2000's projects informed by education for sustainable development,[65] alongside interdisciplinary collaborative studios, were embraced by the program. The teaching staff, (many of whom were embarking on postgraduate studies themselves) were realising that in order to stay relevant in an increasingly complex world, textile design needed to consider alternative ways of working, and to shift the focus from predominantly visual aesthetics and haptics for homewares and fashion applications. A number of collaborative projects were undertaken between RMIT University BA (Textile Design) and industrial design, architecture, communication design and business to facilitate this transformation.

In 2007 a trans-disciplinary project lead by textile design lecturer Jenny Underwood and architecture lecturer Leanne Zilka exposed third-year textile design and second- and third-year architecture students to composite materials and textiles for architectural applications. The studio emerged through the lecturer's mutual interest in the relationship between materials, structures, and disciplines, and the possibility of what might emerge when uniting undergraduate students in a collaborative, speculative environment. The students investigated and worked with new materials such as carbon and dyneema, and used their sampling skills in print, knit and weave to explore unusual combinations of materials and techniques. Studio leader Jenny Underwood summarised the studio experience below:

---

[65] The Bruntland Commission defines sustainable development as development that 'meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Sustainable Development 2015, para. 3).

The studios have challenged students to consider the potential of textiles beyond fashion and home wares. By taking a trans-disciplinary approach, textiles are being explored not just for aesthetic and tactile values, but for structural and performance qualities (Underwood 2009, p. 8).

A new set of challenges and materials would be introduced with each iteration, keeping the studio fresh and relevant to emerging material practice. This type of speculative work (imagining and making in a conceptual space) proved to be very challenging for the textile design students, who up until this point were used to working primarily in their discipline, on project briefs that by their nature were linear, with a defined outcome. The merging of aesthetic design (for the present) with speculative design (for the future) is one that the textile design staff are embracing, although it is not without its discipline challenges.

In 2010 the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program formally embedded sustainability concepts, technical knowledge and practice into the curriculum. While sustainability concepts had been delivered within some courses, it was an add-on and not well integrated. By restructuring the program, sustainability was placed as a key Program Learning Outcome. Facilitated by PhD candidate Fiona Wahr[66] and a core team of BA (Textile Design) academic staff, the program restructure involved a process of examining individual values and teaching styles, and program curriculum, syllabus and assessment. This critical self- and program-based evaluation required us to think quite hard about our collective and individual values around textiles and design. As an individual concerned about the negative impact of textiles and manufacturing on people and the environment, this was a much-welcomed conversation. As we worked on the project, staff became much closer and more inclined to share information and collaborate. We became connected in ways that before the restructure we were not. As a consequence, we began to dismantle the perceived barriers between the three primary areas of practice (print, knit and weave) and encourage a more curious learner-directed approach to textile design. This connection resulted in two peer-reviewed conference publications and earned us two significant awards: the 2011 Victorian Premier's Sustainability Award for tertiary education, and the 2012 Green Gown Award Australasia for learning and teaching. This recognition elevated the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program as a leading program in contemporary higher education learning and teaching, and design for sustainability.

---

[66] The program restructure informed Fiona Wahr's PhD thesis (Wahr 2015).

In the midst of the program restructure, I worked with first and second-year students on three separate industry projects: The Mattt Bags project,[67] Lifeline design and community,[68] and Aveda t-shirt design and communication.[69] These projects provided a different focus to previous years; not only were students working with industry partners much earlier in their degree, but the focus had shifted from purely market-specific, aesthetic-design solutions to solutions that met criteria inspired by Slow. The projects coincided with the beginning of my postgraduate studies. Good, clean and fair, co-design and community were key to my thinking, and thus filtered through into course development and project delivery.

In 2012 and 2015 I co-facilitated a collaborative project with RMIT University BA (Textile Design) second-year students and Araluen, a not-for-profit centre providing accommodation and day services to individuals with intellectual disabilities across Melbourne's north-eastern suburbs. Both projects were informed by the principles of co-design. The Araluen projects will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.0.

The workshop studio learning model used by the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program is similar to that described by Zehner et al. (2009) in the Australian Learning and Teaching Council's studio teaching report. Although the program incorporates aspects of most studio types,[70] the most appropriate to print, knit and weave is the workshop model defined below:

> The [worskshop] model advances the focus of both project and praxis by introducing, and emphasising skills as the primary characteristic of learning-by-making as both a learning objective and an outcome. It is hands-on by definition … Many of the projects undertaken are real projects responding to needs of identified user groups or clients (Zehner et al. 2009, p. 31).

---

[67] First-year computer-aided textile design project.
[68] Second-year studio and computer-aided textile design project.
[69] First-year computer-aided textile design project.
[70] The six models are listed as: the project model; the praxis model; the workshop model; the travel model; the cross disciplinary model; and the blended learning model (Zehner et al. 2009, p. 28).

At the time of writing, the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program[71] was the only stand-alone undergraduate textile design degree in Australia. Universities who once offered textile design have collapsed the discipline into a combined fashion and textile degree. As an educator, I walk a careful line between design for industry needs and design for future needs. I can see the need to shift the discipline and profession 'beyond the swatch' and to shift the industries expectations beyond beauty and decoration (Vuletich 2015, pp. 53–54) to a place where material expertise and textile intelligence is used differently. In his book *Designerly Ways of Knowing'* Cross states that:

> teachers of design have a responsibility to be as articulate as they possibly can about what it is they are trying to teach, or else they can have no basis for choosing the content and methods of their teaching' (2006, p. 9).

I have tried to balance the delivery of content to ensure students are ready to work in the commercial sector, whilst providing opportunities for students to develop their professional values; and consider different ways of working within the TCF (and associated industries) and beyond.

(3) Where next for the textile design discipline?

Standing at the crossroads

This chapter has outlined the deep connections between people and textiles and provided an overview of the textile design discipline and profession from an Australian (Melbourne), perspective. To follow, future opportunities for the discipline will be presented and discussed.

This chapter began by suggesting the discipline of textile design had arrived at a crossroad—the processes, systems and outcomes used to evaluate and define textile design need to be reassessed. If we are not charged with the role of designing (and possibly making), artwork, fabric, objects and things for the marketplace, what can we do instead?

The diagram below (Figure 2.2) situates people and textiles on a spectrum. To the left (1) deep connections are formed, to the right (2) connections are stressed and fragile.

---

[71] The BA (Textile Design) program is currently going through another restructure and will be renamed the Bachelor of Textiles (Design), due to be implemented in 2020.

1) textile connections run deep .... **textiles are disconnected (2**

Connections with: materials, making, the maker, place and people.
Making is: personal, focused, purposeful and somewhat necessary.

Establishing and maintaining connections is difficult due to: mass global production, offshore supply chains and a limited textile intelligence amongst the general population.
Making is: dictated by cost, mechanised, automated, invisible and impersonal.

Figure 2.2 People and textiles on a spectrum: expressed as (1) having deep connections, to (2) being disconnected

At one extreme, people and textiles are deeply connected (1), textile intelligence is high, material connections are strong, and textile making is a valued skill. The material and making is highly personal and individual—for example, a pair of hand knitted booties made from soft alpaca yarn for a friend's newborn child. The gift is cherished, it is functional, useful, beautiful and emotional. It is kept for a lifetime. These deep connections to textile objects rely on the maker and the receiver having some form of textile intelligence, something that is not as common as it once was. At the other extreme, people and textiles are disconnected (2). Mass production and the Fast model have generated an abundance of textiles for human consumption. These cheap, plentiful goods are produced and discarded at an extraordinary rate. Statistics from the introduction, and reiterated here are indicative of this:

> It is estimated that we make 400 billion m2 of textiles annually (Fashion Revolution 2016, p. 8).

> Australians are the second-largest consumers of new textiles after North America. We buy on average 27 kilograms per capita each year (Press 2017, para. 5).

> Australians seem to live with a contradiction. They express concern about the environment yet live materialistic lifestyles that result in high levels of waste. When questioned in this study's survey, 60 per cent of Australians say they feel some guilt when they buy items that do not get used while 40 per cent say they do not feel guilty. Only 14 per cent of respondents say they are not much bothered or not bothered at all when they spend money unnecessarily (Hamilton et al. 2005, p. ix).

People and textiles were once deeply connected, with everyone having some form of textile intelligence. Fewer people can claim to have textile intelligence today. Textile designers are one such group, however, the commercial industry does not value the full extent of this

intelligence—valuing certain skills and abilities above others. While interviewing a commercial textile designer working for a low-end clothing wholesaler, I was struck by the disconnect between the textile designer's love of the discipline and their experiences at work. An extract from the conversation can be seen below:

> It's very humbling to ... talk about my design process in this way because it's a ... far cry from what I thought I would end up doing ... it doesn't sit very well with the whole reason I started doing textile design (which was a very conscious decision in my life), so yeah, I'm well aware that no one else is going to be listening to this but you ... but if someone was looking at this I would want them to know that I'm well aware that it's not a very ethical way of earning your money actually, and doesn't have much integrity—it's all about spitting out stuff quickly that makes people buy things. It's a dirty industry environmentally, and then people have clothing that doesn't last very long, then they turf it, and that's the problem so it's definitely something I'm very aware of (CD3, 2011).

Textile designers (perhaps) float uncomfortably along the spectrum presented in Figure 2.2, transitioning between position (1) and (2), depending on who they work for, and what is required of them. Textile design graduates leave the academy with a level of textile intelligence[72]—however, the textile designer and or industry does not always value the extent of this intelligence or see its relevance in the commercial context as indicated by the commercial textile designer quoted above.

Textile designers are looking for opportunities to not only use their design skills to create alternative products, services and experiences, but to design by facilitating change, or to design through educating people (Valentine 2017, p. 965). As a consequence, textile design is shifting towards co-designing and collaborative methods of practice (Valentine 2017, pp. 965–966; Vuletich 2015). This chapter section looks at the future of the discipline for clues.

Key forces in textile design practice
When comparing my early textile design experience to the experience of graduates today the most obvious differences are due to:

---

[72] All new textile design graduates have a level of textile intelligence, whether they feel confident to exert this intelligence in the workplace comes down to the individual's sense of autonomy.

- Major developments in technology—the internet, digital: design, production, communication and automation.
- Production speeds and quantities produced.
- Material innovation.
- An awareness of the negative environmental and social impacts associated with the textile industry.

Contemporary undergraduate textile design education at RMIT University involves exploring the design elements and principles using textiles, materials, tools, and techniques in a range of industry and more conceptual projects. All of this 'hands-on' experimentation develops the undergraduate student's tacit knowledge by learning through doing—also known as 'student-centred or [the] constructivist space (learner-focused through practice, reflection and transformation)' (Horvat et al. 2009, p. 39). Tacit knowledge is attributed to the work of Michael Polanyi in the 1950s and 1960s and has been critical in articulating the difficult-to-measure practices undertaken in art and design practice. Tacit knowledge is best described 'as the kind of knowledge we have, but which we are not able to describe and communicate' (Hasling 2015, p. 91), it contributes greatly to the discipline's 'textile intelligence'. The reality for most Australian textile design graduates seeking work in the commercial sector is a career using digital tools rather than hands-on designing with textiles. With constant advances in digital software and output methods, it is easy to see a future where hands-on material making is no longer part of the textile design curriculum. Prominent trend forecaster, textile advocate and educator Li Edlelkoort has expressed concern for the knowledge and skills traditionally learned in undergraduate textile design education due to prioritising technology over making by hand: '[textile] educational institutions are downsizing their departments or replacing looms with computers' (Edelkoort, cited in Kane et al. 2016 p. 10). Kane et al. (2016) argue for a balanced approach between traditional hand skills, and knowledge of digital (textile) design and making technologies. Hands-on knowledge of textiles and making methods gives graduate textile designers an understanding that cannot be gleaned from purely digital work alone. For this reason, it is important for educational institutions to be proficient in both.

Providing students with hands-on experience, and a theoretical understanding of materials used in all forms of practice, is essential to ensure material choices are suited to purpose—and can be retired in a way that feed another system and avoid landfill. From my observation, there simply isn't time for undergraduate students to adequately engage with the complexities of

material selection. Van der Velden[73] supports this feeling and goes further to suggest that 'in general, designers lack the right data and information (about materials and production processes) to justify their decisions' (2016, p. 12). It takes time and information to make material choices removed from the usual hierarchy of aesthetics, haptics and function—and these material choices need to be reviewed from time to time as new materials and information on agricultural, manufacturing, distribution and of life practices come to hand. Balancing the delivery of traditional skills and content, digital and emerging technologies and material knowledge is a constant balancing act for textile design educators.

Fair and transparent supply chains such as: fair trade, the Better Cotton Initiative and farm-to-garment traceability programs provide opportunities for people to 'look' in on the supply chain and put their trust in auditing processes. Developments in new materials such as Piñatex®—a leather alternative made from pineapple-leaf fibre provides textile designers with alternatives[74] to traditional (natural and synthetic) materials used in the production of accessories for the body and the home.

Disasters such as the Rana Plaza collapse[75] caused the world to collectively gasp in horror. As a consequence, TCF brands have been more critical of the suppliers they use to ensure workers are safe and earning a living wage. External programs such as the Baptist World Aid Australia Ethical Fashion Report[76] enable consumers to align their personal values to purchases by vetting international and local brands based on their supply-chain activities (raw materials, inputs production and final manufacturing). This puts pressure on companies to address their supply-chain practices in order to maintain a trusted presence in a competitive marketplace.

Development in automation such as the Sewbo[77] may see manufacturing return to Australian shores—a much-welcomed addition to many who work in the Australian TCF industries. The

---

[73] This statement is about fashion design practice but also applies to textile design practice.

[74] Refer to the Global Change Awards for examples of new material initiates aiming to make fashion circular.

[75] Killing over 1,100 Bangladeshi garment workers in 2013.

[76] The methods for gathering and reporting data have come under question. Several brands received a negative report in 2018 for either failing to complete the survey or not making supply chain information available to the consumer (Singer 2019). Many brands expressed concern, believing the survey is not nuanced enough to capture the complexity of the fashion industry.

[77] The Sewbo is a robotic arm capable of performing tasks currently undertaken by garment workers. The robot guides chemically stiffened pieces of fabric through a commercial sewing machine (Brewster 2016, para. 1).

flip side of this gain is the loss of employment for thousands of garment workers in developing countries.

The challenges faced by the textile design sector and broader TCF industries are multi-faceted and complex. The industry is more accountable than it was in 1999; graduate textile designers are more aware of their place in the industry, and the challenges they face.

Future-proofing textile design: even, temporal and evolving—a process of reconnecting
Through my reading of textile history and theory (Gordon 2011; Hemmings 2012; Ingold 2009, 2010) and the *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice,* a broader more holistic transdisciplinary impression of textile design has emerged. Textile design academic Elaine Igoe referenced a set of 'Design Geographies' developed by Pastor and VanPatter to position textile design thinking and practice over time (2013, p. 25). The geographies are broken down into the following categories:

> **Design 1.0** is traditional [artifactual design].
>> (Design project team) with hidden magical process "wave the wand"
>> Outbound skills—form-giving, aesthetics
>> Starts with a brief
> **Design 2.0** is product/service design
>> (Multidisciplinary project team)
>> Outbound skills—observation of human behaviour
>> Framed by product and services
> **Design 3.0** is organisational transformation
>> (Multidisciplinary project team)
>> Outbound skills—observation of human behaviour and participatory co-creation.
>> Begins as a fuzzy situation
> **Design 4.0** is social transformation
>> (Multidisciplinary project team)
>> Outbound skills—observation of human behaviour and participation co-creation
>> Begins as a fuzzy situation (Pastor & VanPatter 2011, pp. 24–25).

When thinking about my early career in commercial (surface) textile design, I solely identify with the first category, Design 1.0. While in industry I worked alongside a team of textile and

graphic designers to create artwork for bed linen. We 'worked our magical powers' in isolation. Igoe believes textile design is still very much in this space: 'Textile design, in both educational and industrial contexts, is almost entirely focused on traditional, artifactual design [design 1.0]' (2013, p. 26). The profession of textile design has evolved to serve primarily the fashion and interior industries. Both our clients and the capabilities of industrial machines dictate our design output. Our briefs are, more often than not, directly inspired by market trends as described by Studd in 2002:

> Meetings are held with the head of the particular customer account to identify the key design requirements for the brief. Trend presentations follow, and mood boards are developed, which define the colour palettes and textural directions for the collection. The visualization of the project is important so that all the designers involved in the project follow the same path (2002, p. 40).

In 2013 Igoe expanded on Studd's 2002 diagram to generate a more contemporary representation of textile design activity (Figure 2.3). The third column from the left relates to applications for textile design practice: apparel, furnishings, architecture and interiors, for retail or contract purposes. This section of the diagram allows for speculation and growth. The work of Earley et al. (2016a; 2016b; 2017); Hackney et al. (2016); Jakob & Collier (2017); Vuletich (2015) add to this ongoing discussion by proposing textile designers as design facilitators and stewards, while Nilsson (2015) and Townsend et al. (2017) are exploring alternative roles in the field of smart textiles and technology.

Figure 2.3 *Igoe's representation of contemporary textile design (2013, p. 28)*

Designing for the Fast industry in the category of Design 1.0 can bring about compromise and feelings of unease—practices may not sit well with designers as stated below:

> [The] modern concept of the 'freelance' designer or consultant ... is expected to deny his/her own views, ideologies and immediate well-being in the quest for his/her client's cause or satisfaction (Wood 2000, p. 48).

> Designers so often see their job as value-free, or ethically neutral. All they have to do to keep it that way is follow the rules and do the best job possible regardless of beliefs and values (Moura 2010, p. 93).

Sue Thomas believes there is a notable lack of corporate ethical responsibility in the fashion industry (2011). Appropriating a popular garment style or fashion print is common in the Fast fashion and textile sector. Over the years, I have had numerous conversations with textile

(surface) designers working in the commercial sector who have confessed to being asked to 'knock off' an existing design. A commercial textile designer interviewed in 2011 admitted to this being part of her practice:

> We'll raise complaints or the design manager will raise complaints about the amount of copying that's going on, they'll sort of agree in theory that yeah, it's not good, it's not what we want to stand for—it's not great, it still continues to just still go on, and they're certainly not standing up to the buyer and saying this is what we're offering you, we're not offering you that, because the sales will stop .... and for them the dollar is definitely more important that the design integrity (CD3, 2011).

RMIT University undergraduate textile design students are made aware of the implications for intellectual copyright infringement. Design projects include time to create original artwork from collected references—often referencing themes common in the marketplace. Creating original artwork takes time—something many commercial textile designers believe is lacking in the workplace.

An established criterion for corporate responsibility that is transparent and acted upon gives employees something to measure their work against—if this is missing, employees are left to balance their sense of right and wrong with the demands of the job. Ethics enable us to make value-based decisions—connecting our actions to our moral sense of right and wrong. Paulins and Hillery believe that:

> Career satisfaction will be influenced by the fit between your values and those of your corporate work environment. Furthermore, the beliefs and values that shape your decisions, in both your personal life and workplace, should mesh or else you will experience a great deal of conflict between the two (2009, p. 5).

A fit between personal values— 'moral codes, ethics and standards of behaviour' (Boradkar 2010, p. 73)—and the values of the commercial work environment is important for many. Associate Professor Karl Moore believes that millennials[78] are looking for work that has purpose and meaning (Aedy 2016)—beyond remuneration and climbing the managerial ladder. Anecdotally

---

[78] 'Millennial' is a term given to people born from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s.

I believe this to be true of undergraduate students, however they are also anxious about their employment prospects and the ability to earn a wage that allows for a certain lifestyle and ability to plan for a secure future.

As part of the 2012 Araluen project[79] I presented a PowerPoint lecture to second year BA (Textile Design) students on the role of work. The lecture was broken down into paid work, voluntary work and neither remunerated nor voluntary work, such as looking after children, housework or taking care of those who are unable to care for themselves. Slide number three was titled 'Work & your values'. Melbourne-based philosopher Damon Young suggests that aligning personal values with paid work is unattainable for many:

> Employment offers a promise of human fulfilment that is rarely attained. For many of us it
> is a barrier to health and happiness instead of a path to achievement and contentment (2008,
> p. 52).

This is true for many already in the workforce. However, students within the harbour of education have the opportunity to seek out work opportunities that align with their values. RMIT University's Strategic Plan (2015–2020) lists the following values as core to its vision:

> Passion, Impact, Inclusion, Agility, Courage and Imagination … [RMIT University] respect
> the rights of others and our obligations to the health of the planet … [RMIT University is]
> dedicated to serving the needs of the whole community (RMIT University 2018a).

RMIT University's students reside within this value system—therefore, as an educator within the academy, I have a responsibility to ensure students are given the opportunity to articulate and interrogate their values in reference to those of the University, and to reference these values when making career decisions. Part of my role as an educator is to explore what the TCF industry and emerging yet to be defined spaces can and could offer graduates and society more generally. In her PhD findings Vuletich states 'engagement with sustainable design requires an understanding of both 'outer' dimensions (materials/suppliers/lifecycle thinking) and 'inner' dimensions (values)' (2015, p. 110). Vuletich' findings include the 'importance of values in a sustainable design practice' (2015, p. 136).

---

[79] Discussed in Chapter 6.0.

Staff on the BA (Textile Design) program have been working towards broadening our graduates' experience of textiles and design more generally, shifting away from the market-driven briefs identified above. This has to be managed quite carefully, as the program is bound by guidelines and is limited to specific contact hours, semesters and three years of study. Figuring out what to let go and what to bring in has caused much discussion and debate. What is at the core of our purpose, how do we ensure graduates meet the RMIT University graduate attributes,[80] stay relevant to the current industry, and are prepared for fuzzy situations beyond Paster and VanPatter's Design 1.0? Textiles have the ability to bring people together: to design, make, talk and produce stories of connection and meaning. I am concerned that the industry[81] description of textile design limits the professional scope to design for consumer goods.

Textile designers are not the only ones who are capable of designing and producing textiles and patterned surfaces. Neighbouring disciplines such as graphic design and fashion design are working in spaces traditionally seen as the territory of textile design. The rise of do-it-yourself pattern design and digital textile printing bureaus—Spoonflower,[82] Frankie and Swiss[83] and Next State[84]—has seen both amateurs and designers alike realise their creative efforts in material form. A more recent entry into design-it-yourself fabric generation is Wovns,[85] an online jacquard-weaving bureau. This do-it-yourself textile design practice does not require textile design discipline-specific knowledge of fabrics, fibres, dyes, repeat structures or weave structures. The technology enables anyone to make decisions around colour, motif, pattern, texture and structure—the building blocks of our discipline. This do-it-yourself (and professional dabbling) in textile design, printing and construction have caused me to rethink the purpose of textile design as a discipline, to shake up some of the mystique and protectionism

---

[80] RMIT University graduate attributes: Work-ready, Global in outlook and competence, Environmentally aware and responsible, Culturally and socially aware, Active and lifelong learners, Innovative (RMIT University 2017a).

[81] Design Institute of Australia and ANZSCO.

[82] Spoonflower is an American-based digital print bureau specialising in digital-dye and pigment-fabric printing. Spoonflower pioneered the use of online technology, enabling individuals to upload digital files to be printed onto a range of textile substrates. Spoonflower were a popular choice for RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students before the emergence of local bureaus.

[83] Frankie and Swiss are a Melbourne-based digital print bureau specialising in digital pigment printing onto a range of natural fabrics.

[84] Next State is a Melbourne-based digital print bureau specialising in digital pigment printing for natural fabrics and dye-sublimation printing for synthetics.

[85] Wovns is an American-based digital-weave bureau specialising in small-scale jacquard production.

that occurs when others start to use tools and methods traditionally associated with textile design.

The uptake of do-it-yourself textile design, digital textile printing and digital weaving evidenced by the emergence of digital fabric printing and weaving bureaus alongside design and craft blogs, demonstrates that people are interested in designing for textiles. Learning via digital social platforms such as YouTube and Ravelry[86] has made it easier for people to pick up both basic, and more advanced skills. Online market platforms such as Etsy and Madeit[87] have enabled people interested in making to sell their wares to an international audience, either as a means of generating income, or as a reason to make, and make more. These individuals have a level of textile intelligence gleaned through means other than sanctioned university learning, with many competing in the designer-maker space for sales.

The decision to focus on connection within the discipline of textile design was triggered in part by the realisation that our umbrella discipline—industrial/product design—evolved its material orientated activities to something less tangible, that of service design. Service design is positioned within the post-industrial economy aligned with services as opposed to the industrial economy concerned with manufacturing. As technology advanced with the transition to a post-industrial economy at the turn of the century, industrial/product designers began to switch their focus to the service, interaction and experience of the physical and digital products created—thus creating a new suite of design disciplines (Prendiville 2016, p, 62). 'Service design places itself as a unifying form of design that uses both material practices alongside strategic and systems-orientated approaches (Penin 2018, p. 147). I became interested in service design in the mid-2000s and attended many talks and events organised by Service Design Melbourne,[88] as I was curious to learn how design could be used to develop systems and services that focused on people rather than product. This interest was piqued further by an RMIT University undergraduate industrial design studio offered in 2009 titled Common Bike. The Common Bike studio posed the question, 'can a public collection of bicycles be a form of public transport?'

---

[86] Ravelry is a user-driven platform and forum for knitters, crocheters, designers, spinners, weavers and dyers (Ravelry n.d.).

[87] Madeit is an Australian online buying and selling platform for handmade and independently created items (Madeit 2018).

[88] Service Design Melbourne is a non-commercial network supporting knowledge sharing on human-centred design approaches and outcomes (Service Design Melbourne 2018).

(Bike Sharing Solutions n.d., Common Bike Melbourne Design Studio para. 1). The studio required students to consider infrastructure, patterns of human behaviour, safety and feasibility in order to move people around the city safely and efficiently using bicycles. The studio included eight small businesses acting as bike hubs, and 250 registered Common Bike member/commuters (Bike Sharing Solutions n.d. Common Bike Melbourne Design Pilot para. 2). The studio was a practical exercise in testing a bike sharing model, one soon to be implemented by Melbourne City Council known as Melbourne Bike Share. This shift from a product focus to a product-service-system was both exciting and challenging and opened my mind to the potential within my discipline. This moment of realisation has been a constant reference point when thinking about how textile design can grow its offerings from a purely aesthetic and functional material-oriented pursuit.

Textile design has been actively working in this space at a discipline level, examples include Ballie's co-design research project (2012) and the Co-Creating CARE research project (Hackney et al. 2016). Ballie's co-design project invited undergraduate textile design students and graduate textile designers to participate in a co-design project using digital web-based technologies and domestic hardware as a way to explore how designers can be taught to practice co-design. Her rationale for doing so is articulated below:

> 'Designers are moving beyond designing solely a product but tailoring a range of touch points[89] into designed services and experiences. These approaches are moving beyond 'stuff', and towards inspiring and empowering change' (Ballie 2012, p. 222)

The 'Co-Producing CARE: Community Asset-based Research & Enterprise' research project undertaken in the UK worked with amateur and professional textile makers as a way to explore and test the ability of craft making to build 'community assets and agencies' (Hackney et al. 2016, p. 34). The project worked with Sennett's proposition that through cooperative making we build trust and social connectedness (Hackney et al. 2016, p. 35). The study provides some useful insights into the challenges faced by placing experts and amateurs into a making space and identifies that using craft as a conduit to community mindedness is not without its challenges.

---

[89] Service design uses the term 'touch point' to describe applications for material and non-material interactions with the user. 'Touchpoints are the material face of services and comprise the artifacts that support the service's interactions. They not only physically enable the interactions but also are key to make them better, more efficient, more meaningful, and more desirable' (Penin 2018, p. 24).

Craft is measured against individual ideas around; aesthetics, and technique, and for this reason can be contentious as reported by the researchers involved in the project (Hackney et al. 2016, pp. 42, 58). The discipline of service design acknowledges the unpredictability of human actions and relationships, and therefore recognises that guaranteed outcomes are not possible (Penin 2018, p. 24). Elevating the importance soft skills: listening well, behaving tactfully, negotiating, avoiding frustration (Hackney 2016 p. 51; Sennett 2012, p. 6) resilience and flexibility in textile design education is key to preparing graduates for future (yet to be established) career opportunities that operate 'beyond the swatch'.

In summary

The professions of textile design and industrial design were born out of the industrial revolution. Both disciplines have evolved to design product to satiate a Western desire for new things, whether they be technological, functional, decorative or the like. In Australia they share a history of being connected as demonstrated by the ANZSCO number 232312[90]. Industrial design has extended its offerings to service and systems design while textile design has remained focused on aesthetic and/or functional and haptic material outcomes. At a time when existing institutionalised mechanisms are being disrupted and traditional economic systems questioned by those who once championed them, alternatives need to be considered. Textile designers are looking for opportunities not only to use their design skills to create alternative products through new technologies, closed loop systems and material innovations, but to address the disconnection people have with textiles due to mass manufacturing and globalisation. My research addresses this disconnection and offers methods of reconnecting through practice, which, it is argued, might ensure products are better aligned with the goals of sustainable development.[91]

---

[90] Australian and New Zealand standard classification of occupations (ANZSCO) number 232312 is specific to industrial design (glass, furniture, textile and ceramic). This number was referenced when discussing the relationship between textile design and industrial design earlier in the chapter.

[91] There are seventeen sustainable development goals set by the UN, they fall into the following categories: poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice. (United Nations, n.d. para. 1).

I think what I love most is feeling that I belong to a whole new breed of textile designers, who are thinking, theorizing and researching just as much as they are dreaming, imagining and creating (Earley, cited in Quinn 2009, p. 34).

Practitioners, I contend, are wanderers, wayfarers, whose skill lies in their ability to find the grain of the world's becoming and to follow its course while bending it to their evolving purpose (Ingold 2009, p. 92).

Locating objects within theory will advance design's understanding of the material world and also galvanize its self-reflexivity by urging designers to think of things as both material and social entities. Design practitioners often tiptoe around the edge of theory, but rarely take the plunge (Atzmon & Boradkar 2014, p. 146)

3.0 Theory that feels right

Taking the plunge

This chapter sets out my theoretical positioning when establishing textile design as a 'post-material making' practice. The chapter is broken down into two parts: (1) Learning from Slow; and (2) A bit on 'post'. The chapter includes key texts, theoretical views and approaches informed by co-design, Slow and post materialism that have shaped my research. Much of the theory emerged parallel to working with the concept of connection, established as an important theme while writing a conference paper titled 'Textiles, connection and meaning' in 2009 (Lynas 2010). Since then, all working thesis titles and research propositions have included the word 'connection'. This need for connection stems from a feeling of disconnection—a sense of unease, and detachment—experienced while working in industry.

Contemporary TCF and associated industries provide employment opportunities for textile design graduates, but often these positions require designers to operate in limited ways—with little opportunity to put their extended textile intelligence to use. Leveraging the ability of textiles to connect gives the discipline the opportunity to carve a new professional niche, one that is removed from designing textiles, objects and things for the marketplace. Connection has been identified as a way forward for the discipline, although it has always been present, it has not been explicitly identified as core to professional practice—this is evident in the statements provided by government and the DIA in Chapter 2.0.

I have referenced the principles of co-production and co-design when exploring the purpose of, and place for, connection within textile design practice. Co-production and co-design have strength and relevance to their respective areas of Slow food and Slow design. They are well researched and represented in the literature and are essentially how I see textile design evolving as a post-material making practice. However, the word 'connection' holds something that the above two 'co's do not—that is, a feeling of togetherness. The word connection makes me feel more at ease somehow. The word 'co' is a prefix, an addition to an existing word to make a new word. Connection is a complete word; it has a list of agreed definitions and is regularly used in daily conversation. It is a non-academic word, a non-design word.

Co-production and co-producer are Slow food terms defined by Slow Food below:

> [A co-producer is] a conscious consumer who goes beyond the passive role of consuming and takes an interest in those who produce our food, how they produce it and the problems they face in doing so. In actively supporting food producers, we become part of the

production process. The term co-producer was coined by Slow Food to highlight how collectively our consumer choices can bring great change to how food is cultivated, produced and distributed (2015a, p. 1).

Co-producers are the end users of Slow food; they are the buyers and eaters of the food grown, prepared and presented by the producers. 'Customer' and 'consumer' are words associated with business transactions. The Slow food term 'co-producer' moves beyond the economics of trade to one that includes human relationships and knowledge. '[Slow food] is a philosophy that reconnects the alienated individual to a wider community' (Tam 2008, p. 215).

Co-design falls into the realm of participatory design, meta-design, social design and other design approaches that encourage participation (Fuad-Luke 2009a, p. 147). Co-design explores alternative methods for design practice outside the normal linear process between client and designer. It is situated in the broad field of design for sustainability and is looking to adjust the way design is approached and for what purpose design serves. Co-design acknowledges that 'the inherent nature of design as a human activity is that it is, in general, deeply socially orientated' (Fuad Luke 2009, p. 146), for this reason co-design is premised on the importance of 'designing with (others)' particularly the intended users of the designed object (Fuad-Luke 2009a, p. 147). Fletcher paints a picture of what this looks like in the context of fashion and textiles:

> In co-design practices, the designer begins to inhabit roles outside of the traditional private
> and product-based routes and contribute instead to the public, social and ecological good—
> as facilitator, intensifier and educator (2013, p. 327).

Connection sits within the general realm of co-design, so why not simply call it co-design? Because the word 'connection' brings the research into a more comfortable space—co-design is a designer's word, whereas connection belongs to everyone. By opting to use the word 'connection' in a practice-led, action-orientated research project, I am marking territory that is vernacular and accessible to all—much like textiles themselves.

(1) Learning from Slow

The origins of Slow

The post-war years in Italy saw a shift in traditional food practices; the production and preparation of food was becoming less about culture and everyday life, and more about industrial-economic efficiency. The traditional Italian way of working with the seasons to grow

and prepare food was under threat due to industrial farming techniques and mechanical food production. Food is an inherent part of Italian culture, and to replace traditional food practices with mechanised systems was deemed by many to interfere with the Italian way of being (Petrini 2007b, p. 139). During the 1970s a group of left-leaning Italians based in the Piedmontese town of Bra would routinely meet to discuss the decline in traditional Italian food practices. Calling themselves Arcigola,[92] the group had a political agenda: to invigorate economic opportunities for farmers, winemakers, food producers and restaurateurs (Chrzan 2004, p. 118). Arcigola championed the rights of both individuals and communities to play a part in where and how their food was produced (Chrzan 2004, p. 118). Over time Slow has permeated all aspects of life—a quick Wikipedia search cites Slow being applied to the following: ageing, cinema, cities and towns, counselling, education, fashion, food, gardening, goods, living, marketing, media, medicine, money, parenting, photography, religion, scholarship,[93] sex, science, technology, travel and time poverty (Wikipedia 2018).

Slow food

On 22 March 1986, the US based fast food corporation McDonald's opened a restaurant in the Piazza di Spagna in Rome, Italy (Petrini 2001, p. 26-27 & Petrini 2007b, p. 138). Arcigola's response to this imposition was to initiate a protest. Lead by Carlo Petrini, Arcigola encouraged the nation to voice their objection by gathering on the Spanish Steps, to eat pasta in an act of defiance. Fast food was not in itself objected to, as the Italian osteria[94] provided the cultural equivalent of a simple, affordable meal. Menus in the north of the country would differ to the south, reflecting the country, climate, and traditions of the region. The arrival of McDonald's symbolised all of the wrongs associated with industrial food—global homogeneity, standardisation and lack of transparency in sourcing and production. In essence, McDonald's was deemed an insult to the Italian way of life. By December 1989, the international Slow movement was made official with the signing of the Slow Food Manifesto (Parkins & Craig 2006, p. 19; Petrini 2001, p. 16). Divided into regionally based convivia,[95] Slow food draws on the ancient Greek and Roman traditions of the symposium and convivium; to gather like-minded

---

[92] The name Arcigola references many political and cultural groups. The first part of the name 'Arci' pays tribute to the Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana—a leftist group of activists concerned with maintaining Italian cultural practices. Gola is translated as 'enjoyment of food or gluttony' (Petrini 2001, pp. 1, 6).

[93] A recent example (of relevance to academic life) is a book titled *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy* (Berg & Seeber 2016).

[94] The osterie source local ingredients and prepare food known to the region (Parkins & Craig, 2006, p. 19).

[95] From the Latin word convivial, meaning banquet.

people to eat, drink, and discuss food and culture (Chrzan 2004, p. 118). There are currently 1,500 operational convivium across the globe (Slow Food 2015b). The *Slow Food Manifesto for Quality* provides the following terms of reference:

> The consumer orients the market and production with his or her choices and, growing aware of these processes, he or she assumes a new role. Consumption becomes part of the productive act and the consumer thus becomes a co-producer. The producer plays a key role in this process, working to achieve quality, making his or her experience available and welcoming the knowledge and know-how of others. The effort must be a common one and must be made in the same aware, shared and interdisciplinary spirit as the science of gastronomy. Each of us is called upon to practice and disseminate a new, more precise and, at the same time, broader concept of food quality based on three basic, interconnected prerequisites. Quality food must be good, clean and fair[96] (Slow Food 2015a).

Good, clean and fair are subjective in their interpretation; what is good for one person may not be for another. In response and defence of the manifesto, Petrini argues a need for context;[97] for a set of criteria that can be used as reference, not a rule (2007a, p. 97).

Slow food supports the principles of organic farming but does not expect growers to undertake the rigorous process of organic accreditation. In fact, Slow encourages people not to place too much trust in accreditations. Instead, it promotes buying local from the grower, who, in their way, are doing their best to care for the land they manage (Slow Food in Australia n.d). To support this view Slow Food International launched Terra Madre, a global network and central voice for small-scale producers wanting to protect and celebrate foods particular to a

---

[96] The themes of good, clean and fair are defined as follows 'GOOD: A food's flavour and aroma, recognizable to educated, well-trained senses, is the fruit of the competence of the producer and of choice of raw materials and production methods, which should in no way alter its naturalness. CLEAN: The environment has to be respected and sustainable practices of farming, animal husbandry, processing, marketing and consumption should be taken into serious consideration. Every stage in the agro-industrial production chain, consumption included, should protect ecosystems and biodiversity, safeguarding the health of the consumer and the producer. FAIR: Social justice should be pursued through the creation of conditions of labour respectful of man and his rights and capable of generating adequate rewards; through the pursuit of balanced global economies; through the practice of sympathy and solidarity; through respect for cultural diversities and traditions' (Slow Food 2015a).

[97] 'In defining what is good, two kinds of subjective factors are crucial: *taste*—which is personal and linked to the sensorial sphere of each one of us—and *knowledge*—which is cultural and linked to the environment and to the history of communities, techniques, and places' (Petrini 2007a, p. 97).

geographical area (Slow Food 2015c). The Ark of Taste is another initiative aimed to celebrate stories about food, and methods of production at risk of extinction (Slow Food 2015d).

Slow food advocates are known as 'gastronome' as their interest in food extends beyond taste and sustenance. The act of preparing a meal and sitting down to eat with friends and family is part of the food experience, a feeling of conviviality, allowing for sensory pleasures in the company of others. The gastronome is driven to learn about the agriculture, ecology, sociology and economics of food (Weaver 2012, p. 7), it is a commitment to a certain way of being that revolves around food.

Slow living

With constant advances in technology, many of us are able to deal with both work and personal matters as they arise. Email, voicemail, shared digital archives, and text messaging services make us accessible to others day and night. This pressure (and perceived need) to respond can eat into blocks of time allocated for simple things, things common to everyday living, or with the absence of purpose—leaving the mind free to daydream. Slow living is a pushback against the business of contemporary life, it is a lifestyle adopted by those wanting to simplify the way they live and work. Slow living draws on the Slow themes of care, pleasure, time, and space (Tam 2008, p. 210), mindfulness[98] and purpose (Parkins & Craig 2006, p. 3), and provides a treatment for 'temporal exhaustion' (Boulding, cited in Tam 2008, p. 209) or a feeling of mental breathlessness (Tam 2008, p. 209). Slow living requires a sense of self-awareness both as an individual, and within a broader social context. It requires empathy, and consideration of the consequences of our actions on others.

Slow cities, or Cittaslow was established in Italy in 1999 and shares the values of Slow food and Slow living. Cittaslow differs to Slow living, as it relates to a geographical location and its community rather than individuals. Cittaslow provides a set of criteria to facilitate the protection of people and place (Cittaslow Katoomba Blue Mountains 2015). There are currently three Slow towns in Australia: Katoomba, Goolwa and Yea; each going through the process of accreditation, requiring the support and cooperation of local community and government. Design ethnographer Professor Sarah Pink and media and cultural studies Professor Tania

---

[98] Mindfulness involves settling the mind and remaining present in the moment.

Lewis, share their experience of sitting in on a Cittaslow application meeting with members of the Dandenong Ranges group east of Melbourne, Australia:

> While seeking a fit between locality and the criteria, the discussion turned to the group's biographical and everyday sensory, embodied and affective experiences of the area. Participants recounted how when you arrive in the Dandenongs the first thing you see and smell is the forest … They emphasised the importance of the *feeling* of living in the Dandenongs, the way it 'gets into your blood', that they *knew* it was a unique place to live, the importance of being able to express what this means to them, to be able to celebrate that feeling and to be able to 'conserve and protect' what they have (Pink & Lewis 2014, p. 699).

In essence, Cittaslow seeks to bring people and place together and to articulate what makes a place unique, special, and worthy of protection. Context is again important here, as the criteria used to measure the suitability of Orvieto in the Umbrian hills of Italy does not translate to the river's edge of Goolwa in South Australia. Population size is another consideration; Cittaslow recognises that Slow has a tipping point and stipulates that only towns with less than fifty thousand people can sustain Slow values (Cittaslow, cited in Pink 2007, pp. 63–64).

Slow design

Caroline Strauss and Alastair Fuad-Luke were early advocates for undertaking a Slow approach to design practice. In 2002 Fuad-Luke presented a paper titled 'Slow Design, a paradigm shift in design philosophy' at a conference in Bangalore, India. In 2003 Strauss developed the SlowLab[99] website, a research platform for design thinking and practice (Slow Research Lab 2015). Slow in this context was used to address the fast pace of contemporary profit-driven design (Fuad-Luke 2009a, p. 157) and to find ways to refocus on individual, community and environmental well-being. In 2006 an international seminar combining Slow and design was held in Milan, Italy. The seminar included a manifesto and collection of abstracts written by academics, designers and members of the Slow food community (Capatti et al. 2006). On page two of the manifesto, Manzini and Mojoli define Slow as an approach; 'it is not possible to produce and appreciate quality if we do not allow ourselves the time to do so' (Capatti et al. 2006, p. 2). Rather than a

---

[99] Carolyn Strauss is the director of the Slow Research Lab (previously known as SlowLab). The Slow Research Lab includes a core team of thinkers and creative practitioners, both local and international. The Slow Research Lab is based in Amsterdam.

prefix added to an existing discipline, Manzini sees Slow as an approach to be used as a guide for living. In 2008 Strauss and Fuad-Luke developed the Slow design principles or guidelines, described as 'a new interrogative and reflexive tool for design research and practice' (p. 1). The principles are defined using six themes: reveal, expand, reflect, engage, participate and evolve (Strauss & Fuad-Luke 2008). The principles were developed to 'consider, critique and improve best practices in design, while simultaneously putting forward new ones' (Strauss & Fuad-Luke 2008, p. 2).

Strauss talks about Slow knowledge being integral to design, a process of 'thinking-sensing-acting-relating' to truly experience the here and now while speculating on what the future might hold (Pais & Strauss 2016, p. 10). Slow in this context has little to do with the temporal; it is not about taking longer to do things (although this may happen), but to be present in the process and consider the future impact of decisions made. Slow is not an easy alternative to mainstream design, it is complex and requires the designer to consider all stakeholders, not just their immediate client and his or her requests. Slow design provides a different way to view a contribution to society through product and services, one that is more holistic and not driven by financial gain. Slow in all its variations has a strong grounding in human relationships; the co-producer is not a consumer, but an integral part of the cycle of production and consumption. For this reason, networking and relationships is key to the method of slow design (Hay 2008, p. 22).

In his paper 'Slow theory: a paradigm for living sustainably?' (2004), Fuad-Luke discusses the role of anthropocentric and environmental well-being in design. He posits that positioning human beings at the centre of design helps to negate the often-overwhelming sense that financial profit is the reason for design's existence. The design outcome, in product form, is coveted as something to have or to own, to be in possession of. If the design outcome is something to be, do, or interact with, it repositions the designer from creator of desired objects to someone designing experiences and opportunities for well-being (Fuad-Luke 2004). By placing people at the centre of the issue and addressing human need, the balance can be shifted to address well-being rather than desire. Fuad-Luke advocates the benefits of Slow design below:

> Slow design should not be the sole preserve of professional designers, rather it should emerge as a more democratic process that involves cognition and emotion, information and observation, the proven and the intuitive. It should encourage a re-kindling of individual

and socio-cultural imagination that has atrophied with ready-made materialism (Fuad-Luke 2004, section 2.3).

Slow design is defined by principles and guidelines developed by Fuad-Luke, Strauss and those involved in the creation of the Slow design manifesto. A comprehensive overview of Slow design can be found in Fuad-Luke (2010).

Slow textiles and fashion

The Slow Textiles Group was established in London in 2009 by Dr Emma Neuberg. It is both a website providing the general public with useful information and a portal to bookable master classes allowing people from all walks of life to learn skills aligned with textile design. The Slow Textiles Group operates as a way for people to upskill and serves as a platform for activist discussion about the wrongs associated with contemporary Fast mass-market fashion and textile production. It exists in recognition that textiles (as a subject) is no longer taught in British schools, and the cost of tertiary education is prohibitive for many people. The group is returning the practice of textile design to the commons as a place for people to meet, work and talk. This return to the commons is in recognition that much of contemporary commercial textile design practice is linked to Fast fashion and subsequent textile waste. The Slow Textiles Group ethos is underpinned by sustainable development models that invest in 'social, cultural, health and resource capital' (Slow Textiles Group 2017).

Jane Milburn, an Australian agricultural scientist and rural advocate for change, encourages people who fall outside the typical fashion system to think about textile consumption. Her website *Textile Beat* (2018) encourages people to ask questions about the origin of materials, manufacturing and labour while offering suggestions for repurposing textiles to maintain longevity and avoid landfill.

The literature on Slow fashion exists in quantities that far exceed textiles. Kate Fletcher was one of, if not the, earliest advocate for adopting Slow methods and attitudes to fashion and textiles. Two book chapters and a paper by Fletcher (2009, 2010, 2013), a book by Fletcher and Grose (2012), books by Wanders (2009) and Minney (2016), a paper by Clark (2008), chapters by Strauss (2015) and a thesis and book chapter by Cataldi et al. (2010, 2013) are recognised as being key resources for discussion.

A set of values[100] established by Cataldi et al. offers useful guidelines for practice. There are many more designers and practitioners who work with, or are guided by, Slow, but do not claim Slow to be at the core of their practice. The examples above highlight some of the academic and non-academic textile practices informed by Slow.

The summary of Slow provides an insight into the rationale for selecting a Slow approach when looking for a way to work with textiles and textile techniques differently. The experience of working on a farm outside the slow town of Orvieto, Italy proved to be a pivotal moment in questioning my place in the discipline, and how I can work and assist others to work differently.

(2) A bit on 'post'

Looking to the theorists

An essay by Freya Mathews in *The Handbook of Design for Sustainability* (2013) provided the impetus for my thesis title *Post-material making: explorations for a materially connected textile design practice*. Mathews's piece sits alongside papers by well-known fashion and textile sustainability advocate Kate Fletcher, and design and sustainability activists: Stuart Walker, Jonathan Chapman and Alastair Fuad-Luke. 'Post-materialism' is the title of Mathews's essay, and in it she argues for a more connected approach to the way people work with and respect material resources. Mathews's contribution to *The Handbook of Design for Sustainability* provides an insight into design for sustainability via a very different lens—one of environmental philosophy [101] and metaphysics [102]. In 'Post-materialism', Mathews posits that state-based societies[103] develop and sustain foundational belief systems that affect the way individuals (within societies) treat their world (2013, p. 27). Based on this premise an 'interpretive schema' or classification system was developed consisting of three broad metaphysical premises: pre-

---

[100] Cataldi et al. describe Slow fashion as follows: 'Slow Fashion encourages a systems-thinking approach because it recognizes that the impacts of our collective choices can affect the environment and people' (2010, p. 44). Cataldi et al. propose the following Slow fashion principles: 1. Seeing the big picture; 2. Slowing down consumption; 3. Diversity; 4. Respecting people; 5. Acknowledging human needs; 6. Building relationships; 7. Resourcefulness; 8. Maintaining quality and beauty; 9. Profitability; 10. Practicing consciousness.' (2010, pp. 44–49).

[101] Environmental philosophy is also known as environmental ethics. Environmental ethics is defined as 'the discipline in philosophy that studies the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its non-human contents' (Brennan & Lo 2016, para. 1).

[102] Metaphysics is described as the 'study of the basic structure of reality, of what there is and what it is like' (Haslanger & Ásta 2017, para. 1).

[103] Mathews describes state-based societies as those 'that have institutionalised systems of governance'—the schema excludes Indigenous societies and their governance (2013, p 27).

materialist (religious, traditional, historical), materialist (instrumentalist,[104] secular, modern or present day) and post-materialist (prospective or future) to unpack how societies have, do and might interact with and value material objects and things of which she defines as 'matter' (2013, pp. 27–28). Mathews defines materialism as the act of valuing matter purely for its observable or physical capability. An example would be to value Australia's natural environment as a physical commodity to be harvested or mined to make money. This instrumentalist valuing of matter overrides the gentler forms of value, including emotional value—valuing matter for the way it can make us feel, of having 'meaning, purpose, intrinsic value and communicative capability' (Mathews 2013, p. 28), value that is hard to quantify or measure. In contrast, the materialist value criteria are concerned with short-term monetary reward.

Pre, present and post

Mathews defines pre-materialist Western societies as religious societies, those guided by and accountable to the Church (2013, p. 28). This period allowed for little in the way of individual freedom or self-expression (due to the authority of the religious state) but there was, however, a general feeling of being part of something bigger—something intangible—of being connected to one another due to a shared belief in a universal God (2013, pp. 28–29). In contrast, present day economic liberal[105] materialists are free from religious oppression and enjoy many of the life-affecting benefits resulting from individual freedom, science and a more secular society. Materialists are people free to make their own choices—to use the world's resources to make money and build comfortable lives. This shift to individual freedom has brought many benefits but has also placed great pressure on our planet and left many feeling bereft of purpose and questioning the very point of what it means to live a life (2013, pp. 32–33).

My proposition for a 'post-material making' textile design practice situates itself within Mathews's call for 'individuals in post-materialist societies [to] discover for themselves eclectic frames of reference that reflect their own immediate experience of communicative engagement with the world ... using the aesthetic resource of their own lives and cultures' (2013, pp. 33–34). Mathews's essay 'Post-materialism' offers a different way to think about materials in practice.

---

[104] Mathews' describes instrumentalism as valuing 'things merely as means to our ends rather than as ends in themselves' (2013, p. 29).
[105] Economic liberalism is a term used to describe the 'classical theories of economics emphasizing the concept of the free market and laissez-faire policies, with the government's role limited to providing support services' (Financial Times n.d.).

In the beginning of my research process this thinking was no more than a glimmer of light and possibility, shrouded by unusual words and philosophical phrasing. Some quick definitional research answered my most immediate questions, providing enough context to build an understanding of what this complex thinking could do to support my case for a 'post-material making' textile design practice. Much of this research wandering has involved getting to know the meaning of words and what they mean in the context of my research.

What is matter?

Matter

The thing that forms physical objects and occupies space[106]

What is material?

Material

Relating to, or derived from, or consisting of matter[107]

Relating to or concerned with physical rather than spiritual or intellectual things[108]

Having real importance or great consequences[109]

What is textile?

Textile

Cloth; especially a woven or knit cloth. A fibre, filament, or yarn used in making cloth[110]

Materials and textiles consist of matter. 'Material' is commonly used in everyday language in place of 'textile'—textile being a word used more in industrial situations or practice-based contexts such as textile, fashion and interior design. For a textile designer, the material was once core to our practice; we still work with a range of materials, such as fibre, fabrics, pigments, dyes, plastic, paint, yarn and paper as undergraduates, but are often removed from hands-on material-making during commercial practice. The textile design discipline evolved to make fabrics to satisfy society's most basic needs and fulfil each person's individual stylistic preference. Unfortunately, all of this design has led to a plethora of stuff that nobody in the

---

106 Definition of 'matter' (noun) (Merriam-webster.com 2017).

107 Definition of 'material' (adjective) (Merriam-webster.com 2017).

108 Definition of 'material' (adjective) (Merriam-webster.com 2017). A post-material definition would include the ability for materials to have agency—to engage our cognitive, affective and conative abilities, to move beyond purely the physical.

109 Definition of 'material' (adjective) (Merriam-webster.com 2017).

110 Definition of 'textile' (noun) (Merriam-webster.com 2017).

Western world really wants or needs. The term 'peak stuff' became a theme for discussion in 2017 when Ikea's chief sustainability officer Steve Howard declared that Ikea's customers were drowning in 'stuff', and that we had reached the point of 'peak curtains' (Farrell 2016, para. 3). Boscagli defines the term 'stuff' in context below:

> Stuff refers to those objects that have enjoyed their moment of consumer allure but have now shed their commodity glamour—without yet being quite cast aside. They exist brazenly as neither one thing nor the other: not quite saleable, and certainly not garbage, not monumental or important objects, but still bearing traces of a past, of desire, of life, and of the interactions between subject and object that formed them and wore them out. Not particularly useful but not useless enough to cast off, these are objects that we are not quite ready to let go of—or that are not ready to let go of us (2014, p. 6).

Textile designers (of all persuasions) contribute to the amount of stuff clogging up wardrobes, garages and storage facilities. The very nature of the liberal economic system relies upon material objects transitioning to stuff to bring people back into the retail space to purchase newer, more on-trend versions of objects relegated to the back of the wardrobe. Mathews's definition below paints a bleak picture of our present-day materialistic value system:

> **The Materialist**
> Matter, from the materialist perspective, is sheer externality—there is nothing more to it than meets the eye ... Hence, in itself, it is devoid of the value-conferring attributes that accompany mind: meaning, purpose, intrinsic value and communicative capability. It is just stuff, brute and blind ... such societies assume control of nature, progressively recalibrating it to serve human purposes ... materialism, as we have seen, is conducive to humanism: since the universe appoints no meanings and values for us, we are obliged to invent contingent meanings and deeper life-values for ourselves (2013, pp. 28, 31–32).

This harsh assessment of the way many people view and value designed objects in contemporary Western society is at the core of why research into the material activities of textile design matters. Textiles have become an undervalued commodity in Western life;[111] they are cheap and plentiful, purchased due to impulsive urges initiated by global trends, celebrities and a market-driven culture—or without any emotional expression or feeling because the price point is so

---

[111] Refer to the 'issues associated with mass production and over consumption' discussed in the introduction.

low, the object does not warrant a second thought. The ABC's[112] 2017 production, *War on Waste* describes fashion as one of the fastest-growing waste problems in Australia. In season one, episode three, four young Australian women were interviewed on their fashion habits.[113] Each admitted to shopping for Fast fashion weekly, even daily. When asked if they could go without shopping for an entire month they collectively gasped in horror.

Commercial textile designers in the Fast fashion and lifestyle sectors are caught up in this cycle of design-make-purchase-discard. They are responsible for designing on-trend visually enticing/functional fabrics (and surfaces) with the primary aim of ensuring they sell in the marketplace—with little responsibility beyond this point. Their role in the commercial industry places them as mere cogs, a part of the industrial machine necessary to get the product to market—this has been the textile designer's role in a materialist era. However, if textile designers are no longer required to design in the materialist sense, what could they do instead? Mathews's definition of the Post-materialist provides some guidance:

> **The Post-materialist**
>
> By post-materialism, I mean a view of reality that ascribes to it a more-than-material or mind-like dimension. In post-materialist societies, we will thus not be entitled simply to do as we please with the world—to treat it in the purely instrumental way that materialist societies do. We will be required rather to engage with it responsibly, decoding its normativity afresh in every situation and adapting creatively to it (2013, pp. 33–34).

Some Westerners who have reached the perceived pinnacle of success—health, wealth and security—often feel empty and bereft of meaning (Fletcher 2016, p. 33). These people sometimes find respite in acts of mindfulness, (often Eastern in origin) such as yoga and meditation (Mathews 2013, p. 32 Vuletich 2015), that require us to stop, rest and reflect on the most immediate aspects of being such as the breath and the body. The ability to disengage in this manner requires individuals to slow down and think about their individual and collective actions. It requires individuals to follow their intuition and values rather than submitting to the temptation of global trends, marketing manipulation and nutritionally deficient material offerings. In essence, Mathews is in favour of a more mindful approach to valuing materials—

---

[112] Australian Broadcasting Commission.
[113] Season 1, episode 3 focused on fashion and textile waste and disposable coffee cups.

one that engages our cognitive, affective and conative abilities. All of this is supported by the underlying ethos of Slow, defined and discussed earlier in the chapter.

The textile designer and post

There has been much written in recent times about the capability of materials in art and design practice; materiality (Lange-Berndt ed. 2015) and material agency (Ingold 2008, 2009) alongside theoretical studies of materials and matter—vital materialism [114] (Bennett 2010), new materialism[115] (van der Tuin & Dolphijn 2012) and post-materialism (Mathews 2003, 2005, 2013). The above-mentioned literature provided a window into material theory, and to see how the nuances of language are used to delineate ideas and to better explain the post-materialist premise that humans are not 'entitled simply to do as we please with the world—to treat it in the purely instrumental way that materialist societies do' (Mathews 2013, p. 34).

In 2011, I conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with textile design practitioners located in Australia. The purpose behind the interviews was to better understand the designer/customer relationship in textile design practice. The data was used to write 'Designer-customer relationships: what role do they play in contemporary Australian textile design?' (Lynas 2013). Textile design practice was divided into two categories. Firstly, the 'commercial textile designer'—someone who works in a commercial design studio for a large company, or freelancing for a large company responsible for the 'design and production of original woven, knitted or printed fabrics in the form of either flat paper designs or fabric swatches' (Gale and Kaur 2002, p. 38) which are translated and manufactured by an external party. Secondly, the 'textile designer-maker'—someone who produces items in small or batch quantities, usually operating as an independent or in a small business context (Gale and Kaur 2002, pp. 49). Designer-makers follow a similar approach to the craftsperson—but are more likely to use 'pre-fabricated components or subcontracting aspects of manufacture and assembly' (Gale and Kaur 2002, p. 50). The decision to revisit the conversations was born out of curiosity—could I find examples of post-material making within the data collected?

---

[114] 'Vibrant materiality … runs alongside and inside humans' (Bennett 2010, p. vii). Vibrant materiality operates parallel to Mathews's (2013) idea of what a post-materialist society might look like.

[115] 'Braidotti introduced new materialism or 'a more radical sense of materialism' by framing it as '[r]ethinking the embodied structure of human subjectivity after Foucault' (cited in van der Tuin & Dolphijn 2012, p. 96).

Designers who are empathetic to the cognitive, affective and conative needs of individuals have more chance of bringing meaning and purpose to their material offerings. Small to medium scale textile designer-makers are active in this space—sharing stories about where materials come from, and how objects are made. The textile designer-makers interviewed expressed the importance of sharing their making stories—this storytelling benefited both the textile designer-maker and the purchaser in the following ways:

- The purchaser benefited by understanding the object beyond its immediate visual, tactile and functional properties
- The textile designer-maker benefited due to a deeper, more nuanced connection to the customer. This connection allowed for an exchange of stories and ideas and the potential for more sales in the future

Below is an extract of an interview with a print-based textile designer-maker maker located in New South Wales:

> I mean I've been telling my customers for a long time the story behind [my design work] and I know everyone does that now, we all realise the importance of that, especially designer-makers … If you take … an inner-city child to a farm they will see … they will get that sense, the story will be part of their experience and I realised that that was an invaluable bit of information that people can engage in and turn it into their own story as much as anything else (DM1, 2011, pers. conv, 28 July).

And another from a print-based textile designer-maker located in Victoria:

> The thing about [the shop] is we don't really sell product, we sell product, but it's not that 'hard sell' sort of environment … and I think that's why people like our store, because they come in and always say how comfortable they feel in it and people hang out in there for ages, sometimes too long, but they want to talk and sort of build up a relationship and then that leads to sales that way rather than you know, trying to force them into buying something that they don't necessarily need … It's the story, yeah, because people always say they want to buy local but they don't want to pay the extra price … so … if you can actually explain where it's come from and talk about the artist or the creative and make them understand that, that person has actually spent their time doing this so you have this beautiful product— at the end they are much more willing to spend that extra money for a locally made product (DM3, 2011, pers. conv, 20 July).

And another from a Victorian[116] knit-based textile designer-maker:

> I think through … workshops—it's really nice to be able to engage with the customer direct … [to] show them exactly what was behind my thought process, so having that direct connection with the customers through the workshops … otherwise I use the blog a lot to reveal the process and personalise the product … you know, talking about the ideas behind something or the way something was made … I think they [the customer] recognise the amount of work that goes into a piece and they can see that it's made by hand … they remark on how in this day and age it's still possible that someone can actually sit down and make a piece that takes many hours … you know that's—it's rare, that's what our grandmothers used to do, so that's that reference back to the nostalgia which I think people kind of love, but … it can be a little bit regressive in a way too … you know, you can kind of be perceived [as] not really … a business or a serious … well designed piece, it could just be [perceived as] 'oh my grandmother could whip that up' (DM2, 2011, pers. conv, 29 July).

The question of price and design legitimacy is a legacy to our materialist conceptions of what textiles are and what design is. De-valuing the hand made as being a hobby or the activity of people who can't contribute in a more mainstream way is a materialist mindset. In contrast, a post-materialist looking to buy a textile product would value the opportunity to talk to the person responsible for the product in question—to learn about the origin of the materials used, where the maker learnt their craft, and share their own stories of textiles and making if they wish. Glen Adamson believes that material intelligence has a social imprint that includes the where, how, whom and what—and consists of environmental and ethical elements (Adamson & Adamson 2018). This reconnecting to materials and making is a precursor to the success of post-material making. The textile designer-maker quoted above is in complete control of the materials used in practice:

> The business aspirations are about maintaining a sustainable product through being creative, so it's about process essentially, and keeping creative within that process, so it's about creating something from the very start, the raw materials to the absolute finish and controlling all aspects of that in between, so I suppose cutting out any sort of unnecessary

---

116 This designer-maker had relocated to New Zealand; they were interviewed while in Melbourne facilitating a knitting workshop.

production waste, yeah sustainable both in the environmental level and in an economic level, yeah (DM2, 2011, pers. conv, 29 July).

The designer-maker is in control of material choices and manufacturing processes; similar to a product developer, buyer or salesperson in a large-scale commercial context. The difference being the designer-maker is the one making material decisions based on his or her personal and professional values.

Storytelling between the commercial textile designer and customer did not emerge as a theme during the interviews. However, the creation of storyboards and mood-boards are (still) used when developing textile ranges and collections. To follow are extracts from conversations with three commercial textile designers on the topic of product and material selection:

> '… We do quilt covers, coverlets, cushions, wall art, surface pattern on crockery, vases …' (CD2, 2011, pers. conv, 27 July).

The materials discussed in this context are objects. Objects in material theory are material solutions—objects that provide a function or service described by De Michelis:

> When we put a letter in a mailbox, the mailbox is the object we use for sending letters, and we are confident that it will do its job: the postal service will take our letter from the mailbox and help it reach its destination (2014, p. 188).

An object, from this viewpoint, has a clear and precise role in human life. The commercial textile designer (in this scenario) is not designing the object; they are designing the visual information to be transferred to the object's soft or hard surface. This visual information is designed according to a set of industry specifications relating to the capabilities of the machinery and strict budgetary limitations. The design brief dictates the parameters when designing the visual information in reference to the brand, market segment, colour palette, design style and theme. The object is decorated with this information using the most appropriate combination of pigments, dyes, and fixing methods in accordance with the manufacturing methods and the objects intended use and purpose. The objects described here are domestic; they are both utilitarian and decorative. There is no mention of the object's materiality—material origins or complex manufacturing processes. The commercial textile designer goes on to talk about the

company's middle position in the hierarchy of low–medium–high and states that a middle position affords the design team greater access to materials:

> I love doing all the initial design and colour trends that are coming up, so I love all that research and sort of forecasting what's going to come up and I love putting the stories together, the whole concept and especially for the kids … it's a bit more upper end so we can do some more trims, we can afford to do more creative stuff with it (CD2, 2011, pers. conv, 27 July).

In this scenario, the commercial textile designer is working primarily with design software to generate artwork for hard (ceramics, stickers) and soft surfaces (bed linen). A larger budget allows for more material choice (such as trims) in the products they co-create with product developers. In a bed linen context, this might be a ribbon or a piece of cotton ric rac. A material theorist might refer to a piece of ric rac as a 'thing'—an element of an object or an object without a prescribed function or purpose as explained by De Michelis:

> The things gathered in an assembly during the design process constitute the design object … When we put a letter in a mailbox, the mailbox is the object we use for sending letters, and we are confident that it will do its job: the postal service will take our letter from the mailbox and help it reach its destination. The very same mailbox is a thing if we consider it beyond its functional role (2014, pp. 188, 194).

A piece of cotton ric rac added to a pillowcase or flat sheet is a tactile and decorative element that makes the product different to others in the collection—and the broader marketplace. In the commercial industry, the addition of trims is commonly referred to as value-adding—as the customer feels they are getting more for their money. In a commercial wholesale situation, the cotton ric rac is a material thing, it will be included as an aesthetic feature if it comes in under budget and the salesperson can convince the buyer that the customer will appreciate and ultimately buy this product over another in a competitive marketplace. When viewing the cotton ric rac from a post-material making lens, key questions need to be asked: Where was the cotton grown? What human, natural, mechanical or chemical methods were used to grow and harvest the cotton? How and by who was the cotton processed? How and where was the ric rac made?

These kinds of questions have the potential to slow down the production process to a snail's pace. Tracing the origin of materials (fibres, dyes) and the place of manufacture (multiple contractors and subcontractors) is not impossible, but not something a large commercial company is going to commit to unless their core values are underpinned by social and environmental concerns.

The quilt cover's object purpose is to protect the quilt. For some, it may also perform an aesthetic purpose—to create a desirable visual and/or tactile effect. A quilt cover that fails to perform its object or aesthetic purpose might be used for something else, if so, the quilt cover could be considered a 'thing'. If not, the cover might be stored away (stuff) donated to charity (an object to be reused or, down-cycled to rags—a thing) or disposed of in landfill (waste).

The materials used to make the quilt cover can extend its object life. A polyester-cotton-blend fabric will wash and wear longer than cotton fabric. However, longevity should be cross-referenced against the end-of-life opportunities for a blended fibre—separating polyester fibre from cotton fibre is difficult and expensive.[117] If the visual quality—the colour, motif and pattern—are destined to go out of fashion, there is little need for the object to maintain a long life, therefore cotton may be a better material choice. However, regular cotton is a resource-hungry plant requiring vast amounts of water and chemicals during the agricultural phase. Poly-cotton is cheaper than cotton, therefore making it a financially desirable choice if the colour, motif and pattern are likely to lose favour in a relatively short period. However, polyester is a petroleum-based derivative responsible for the present-day microfibre dilemma.[118] It is tricky.

When working as a junior commercial textile (surface) designer for a Melbourne-based bed linen company almost twenty years ago, material knowledge (or material theory for that matter) was not a requirement of the job. I remember being told that a printed ground texture was favourable when designing for low-quality poly-cotton products, as it would help to disguise imperfections in the cloth. The material itself was a passive surface to decorate. Materials were

---

[117] Despite the difficulties of separating cotton and polyester, inroads are being made into blended fibre separation and reuse (Hou 2018).

[118] When textiles are washed in domestic washing machines, tiny fibres pass through the filtration system finding their way to wastewater treatment plants and finally the ocean. Once in the ocean, these synthetic microfibres have the potential to attract other synthetic chemicals before being consumed by fish and potentially us. 'A study published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources estimates that 0.6–1.7 million tonnes of microfibers are released into the ocean every year' (The Story of Stuff Project 2018, para. 3).

classified based on cost, quality and subsequent selling point. Cotton was more expensive and superior to poly-cotton and therefore afforded a higher price point.

Another commercial textile designer interviewed in 2011 spoke of their time working for a large Australian retailer, initially designing home wares (which covered everything from soft to hard home), then working as head of colour forecasting. During our conversation, materials were mentioned as a carrier for colour and pattern:

> For example, we used to do a range of melamine for Christmas, for barbeques and stuff, we did it every year for the tableware buyer. We'd do like three of four designs and it would be rolled out in plastic glasses and stuff like that ... the quality could have been better, it was melamine but there are different degrees of melamine, but the quality could have been better but that was geared to a price point with the buyer. I think it sold well because there was a need for it because of lifestyle, a lifestyle product in the summer. I also think the prints and the colours were correct (in most cases you know, not one-hundred percent) but I think the prints and the colours were correct and I think it was interesting and I think it did hit that thirty-nine-year-old and slightly younger mother-with-children (CD1. 2011, pers. conv, 1 July).

In this example, the material discussed is melamine. Not a textile, but a chemical used to make plastics amongst other things. Melamine is a term commonly used to describe plastic tableware, the type you might find in a picnic basket or caravan. It is light, tough and easy to decorate— making it a perfect surface for colour and pattern. Although the commercial textile designer mentions the quality of material (of which is a concern given the potential for melamine to leach into foodstuffs) the colour and prints on the surface were the primary concern for the commercial textile designer in this instance.

Another commercial textile designer interviewed in 2011 describes their role and the role of the fashion designer for a low-end wholesaler of clothing:

> I'm one of two graphic artists (what they call graphic artists) so a lot of what I do is straight textile design, but a lot of it is also graphic design. Our job is to design any kind of surface pattern, print that will appear on garments ... the main garments ... are underwear so, bras, undies, sleepwear, babies wear, and that's about it at the moment. So anything that is going to be printed on fabric we need to design, so a lot of the time it's yardage prints, placement prints. Occasionally we get involved in embellishments, so choosing a lace, or choosing a

trinket or whatever ... but most of the time it's taken care of by the designers ... the fashion designers who design the shapes and liaise with the buyers (CD3, 2011, pers. conv, 27 June).

In this example the commercial textile designer is solely focused on the visual aesthetic of the cloth, the material (base cloth) is unlikely to be of concern for the textile designer in question. The commercial textile designer mentions both lace and trinkets as materials for embellishment—again for decoration.

It is interesting to consider the role of textiles in a print-based commercial textile design practice. Very little time is actually devoted to the cloth—instead, time is used to decorate and embellish surfaces, some being textiles and others not. The commercial textile designers interviewed are best described as print or surface designers—a conversation with knit or weave-based commercial textile designers might be very different.

When considering the commercial textile designers' reference to materials, in practice the materialist premise applies— 'it is just stuff, brute and blind' (Mathews 2013, p. 28). This is not to say that the individual commercial textile designers working for a commercial studio, wholesaler or retailer are not interested in materials, their provenance or manufacturing process—what it says is that materials in the grand scheme of mass production are often not considered through a post-materialist lens.

Post-growth

Another critical text in support of 'post-material making' is Fletcher's *Craft of Use Post-Growth Fashion* (2016). This ethnographic study saw Fletcher travel across the globe collecting stories of how people use their clothes in practical and idiosyncratic ways. These stories are examples of individuals choosing not to participate in the contemporary materialist growth-based economic model of buying more clothing; instead focusing on clothing already in existence. These people are post-material makers, working with materials to memorialise human connection—connection that engages their cognitive, affective and conative sensibilities. *Craft of Use Post-Growth Fashion* celebrates our essential human connection to textiles. The stories and images express what ordinary everyday people do with textiles and clothing. When referencing Mathews's vision for a post-materialist society we can see that the participants in Fletcher's study are indeed 'discover[ing] for themselves eclectic frames of reference that reflect their own immediate experience of communicative engagement with the world ... using the aesthetic resource of their own lives and cultures' (2013, pp. 33–34). Positioning textiles directly

into the hands of people (defined as consumers in the materialist sense) defies mainstream commercial fashion and textile industry norms. Fletcher's study is situated within the fashion context and is primarily concerned with clothing. Textile design academic Elaine Igoe took issue with the lack of reference to textile design and textile techniques while reviewing the *Craft of use* website (the precursor to the book) for the *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice:*

> The website makes no attempt to address the cross-disciplinarity of its data. Within the accompanying academic summaries, the absence of the word 'textile' denies the contribution that the original textile design or the textile practices utilized have made in the extended use of the garment; this is despite the visual presence that textile techniques have across the examples. This omission reiterates the traditionally unequal relationship between fashion and textile designs. It is so often the fabric of a garment that urges people to choose or keep hold of a garment. The body shape of the wearer may change, but an attraction to a print or a texture—a designed textile—may endure (2014, p. 216).

After reading the one hundred and thirty-two stories featured in Fletcher's book (not the website), it seems the majority of participants value their garments or accessories based on the ability for these garments and accessories to connect with family, friends and particular moments in time—the objects act as conduits to other people. The lack of reference to textile design or textile techniques in the *Craft of Use* website has given rise to Igoe's frustration. Despite this frustration Igoe has gone on to ask:

> Thoughtfully designed textiles can take a leading role in instigating resourceful, satisfying, and long-lasting relationships with the material products in which we clothe our bodies and spaces. What questions can be asked of textile designers as they confront issues of sustainability, not only regarding developing better manufacturing processes or material innovations but also the aesthetics of their designs when applied to clothing or other designed objects? Furthermore, what impact would a broader context of sustainability and design process within textile design have on the same agenda in the field of fashion design? (2014, pp. 217–218).

The question of aesthetics is an interesting one—as it is one of the key criteria in establishing the success of a textile design outcome. There are numerous ways to measure aesthetics. In commercial textile design practice aesthetics are informed by trend-based colours, motifs and design styles for established markets. Aesthetics are relevant to this research but not a critical focus. Aesthetics will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.0.

Within *Craft of Use Post-Growth Fashion*, there is a subsection titled 'Post-Growth Economics'. Here, Fletcher makes a strong statement in support of alternatives to the current model of continuous economic growth:

> An economic conversation dominated by continuous growth fails to take account of our understanding of what motivates and enriches people, and the 'safe operating space for humanity' [Rockström et al.] that we might carefully carve out within planetary boundaries. A different vision of economics is called for, where economies grow less or very differently, one that develops a more integrated picture of social and material aspects to facilitate holistic health. Such a shift is also essential for human well-being (Fletcher 2016, p. 33).

Western economic systems are showing signs of fatigue. Former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating (holding office from 1991 to 1996) recently 'launched a surprise critique of the liberal economic philosophy (he once championed), declaring it has "run into a dead end"' (Snow 2017, para. 1). Similarly, Satyajit Das, a former banker and global financial consultant shared his concerns in a book titled *A Banquet of Consequences: Have We Consumed Our Own Future?* Business, economics and finance are not my areas of expertise—but I cannot argue for a post-material making practice without acknowledging that there is a problem with the contemporary economic system.

Craft of Use: Post Growth Fashion is a critique of contemporary consumer fashion (and textile) practice. Although textile design is not explicitly stated—it is easy (for me) to see where textile design fits into the overall picture. Many of the stories are creative accounts of what can be done with, or to, textiles (if minds are put to the task) and the pressures of fashion marketing ignored. Fletcher's project (2016), and Niinimäki and Koskinen's study (2011) plus my own research ('Love you or leave you'[119]) provide insights into how people connect with and through textiles. This awareness of connection is necessary in order to practice in a post-material way.

---

[119] Refer to Chapter 5.0 for further information.

Connection, post-material making and textile design

I have used five dictionary definitions (listed below) as a starting point to provide a baseline understanding of 'connection'. The definitions are then unpacked and overlaid with methods of practice inherent to the textile design discipline.

Connection[120]

1. Something that joins or connects two or more things.
2. The act of connecting two or more things, or the state of being connected.
3. A situation in which two or more things have the same cause, origin, goal, etc.
4. A relationship in which a person or thing is linked or associated with something else.
5. The action of linking one thing with another.

In a textile design context, the 'something' might be a person, a machine or implement. The 'things' could be materials. The activity of joining these things happens through the process of designing and/or making. The second definition expands on the first definition of a 'something' to include the plural definition the 'act'. The 'act' of connecting implies the possibility for a collective, a gathering of people together with things. The word 'state' is defined as a 'mode or condition of being.'[121] Here we are beginning to see an expanded definition of connection that suggests more than one entity, more than one person working with materials, more than just the textile designer. Definition number three introduces the situation[122]—the way in which the textile designer is placed in relation to their surroundings—where they reside, their relationship to place. The fourth definition introduces the idea of relationships and the relationships between people and things or materials. The final definition introduces the idea of agency, getting things done, accomplishment. For the purpose of this research, connection is defined as the following: a process of building relationships. Relationships between people, materials and place that involve thinking, feeling and doing. This connection underpins post-material making (Figure 3.1):

---

[120] Definitions 1–3 for 'connection' (noun) (Merriam-Webster 2016) and definitions 4–5 (Oxford Living Dictionaries 2017).
[121] Definition of 'state' (Merriam-Webster 2016).
[122] 'The way in which something is placed in relation to its surroundings'. Definition of 'situation' (Merriam-Webster 2016).
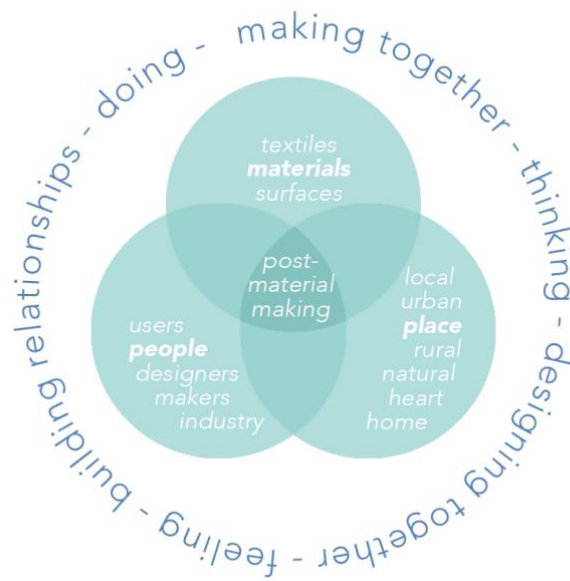
Figure 3.1 Diagram representing the process for post-material making—connecting people, materials and place

In summary

This chapter has provided a brief historical overview of Slow. Key texts have been identified and referenced in order to position my ideas within the context of sustainability and material theory. Post-material making is introduced as a way to provide the discipline with a future where textiles are not produced only to satisfy the insatiable or make money for companies and their investors. This quest for a new modality is in keeping with Fletcher's call for a post-growth approach to fashion (and consequently textiles) and Mathews's view of a post-materialist society. This word 'post'[123] provides a leap of faith into territory familiar but not fully acknowledged or celebrated as key to the textile design profession.

[123] I have deliberately limited the reference to two key texts (Mathews 2013 & Fletcher 2016) that use the word 'post' in the context of materials and textiles.

Introduction to research projects

The previous three chapters (Phase one) outline the key concepts and themes responsible for shaping my research. The next four chapters (Phase two) explore the application and findings of post-material making via a series of practice-led and action research projects. The chapters are written in an autoethnographic style and include extracts of conversations with textile designers and artists, undergraduate textile design students, and users of cloth and clothing—alongside photographs and a collection of stills from two films.

The four projects undertaken within this PhD have allowed me to work with, and think about, connection, textiles and materials differently. Vuletich believes to reach the highest level of practice, that of the design steward 'designers will need an understanding of their own values and the self, so they can support others in the transition towards sustainability' (2015, p. 19). Vuletich defines the role of the design steward below:

> Here, the notion of *activism* is re-defined as *stewardship*. Stewardship refers to a guardian or a ward of valuable resources, and the designer uses a facilitation role to act as a guardian of sustainability and well-being. This requires a practitioner that understands values, mind-sets and what motivates and inspires people to change towards sustainability. Where activism connotes force and intervention, here fashion textile design stewardship is a gentle approach of craft processes, mindfulness, listening, and empathy for others (2015, p. 145-146).

Through the following four projects I have built a better understanding of my own practice and how this can be used to develop a more holistic understanding of the discipline's textile intelligence. The projects are presented in chronological order of completion—reflecting the evolution of ideas and my wandering extensions of interest, all related to textiles and material connection. The ideas behind the various Slow movements have been critical in developing my thinking. My role as both a participant and researcher ('Grasslands', 'Home made') and researcher ('Love you or leave you' and 'Araluen, a project with people for people') have given me the opportunity to contextualise my textile design material practice in reference to others.

The conclusion will discuss the findings and relevance of the research to the discipline of textile design, in particular, undergraduate students considering postgraduate study, academics

working in the undergraduate and postgraduate space, and graduate textile designers working to address the negatives associated with the Fast industry.

Phase two

To undertake Slow learning, we need to feel comfortable being at sea for a while (Claxton, cited in Strauss 2015, p. 96).

When reason is satisfied, I would ask the reader to step back and drop the specifics of the exposition, and retain only its intuitive gist (Mathews 2003, p. 45).

4.0 Grasslands: *connecting to place*

'Grasslands' is an auto-ethnographic study of connecting to place through natural dyeing and making by hand. This was my first inquiry-based project removed from commercial restraints, to require my full cognitive, affective and conative attention. This project afforded me the space and time to contemplate what might constitute a 'post-material making' practice.

My tentative interest in accepting an invitation to participate in this collaborative project was initially questioned by my supervisor. Her advice was to say 'yes' *only*, if there was relevance to my own research. I could see the relevance; and the opportunity to participate provided the chance to break out of my industry ways in the company and safety of others. There were obvious synergies between this project and my own research such as: working within material limits, and sustainable fashion and textile methods and themes. My most immediate reason for saying 'yes', was to make a start, to jump in and see what happened.

I have a adapted a table (Figure 4.1; Figure 5.1; Figure 6.1; Figure; 7.1) used by Vuletich in her PhD thesis (2015, p. 121) as a way to communicate the activities specific to each individual project. Refer to the table below (Figure 4.1) for the key focus (feeling, thinking and doing) specific to the 'Grasslands' project.

Initial intent:	To allow the process of collaboration to guide my practice, let go of pre-conceived ideas, work within the parameters of Slow, explore methods for connecting to place.
Approach:	Dematerialisation, zero-waste, natural dying, autoethnography.
People:	Me, project collaborators (Melbourne based textile & fashion practitioners).
Materials:	Hemp, plant materials collected from Wooroonook, Australia.
Place:	Wooroonook and Royal Park in Victoria, Australia.
Skill:	Embroidery techniques, basic sewing skills and pattern interpretation.
Tools	Embroidery hoop, darning needle, chop sticks, saucepan, scissors, pins, sewing pattern.
Key methods:	Unravelling, embroidery, sewing, harvesting/gathering, natural dying, photography, note-taking, reflective writing, walking.
Actors:	Project collaborators, project organiser.
Pivotal moments:	Natural dying success while on holidays, revisiting my childhood home and the Wooroonook lakes, rituals in Portugal and Thailand.
Lack:	Advanced sewing and pattern making skills, professional photography skills, self-consciousness in collaborative situations, experience with natural dying, understanding of deep ecology and a theoretical knowledge of the seasons, limited design experience outside of industry and teaching.
Transformation of materials or self:	Using individual threads as a means to embellish and construct a garment, using plant material to embed molecules of place into a garment, transition from commercial designer (focus on market

	appropriate aesthetics) to post-material maker (focus on materials and place).
Feelings and outcomes:	Relief, satisfying to produce something with care and attention to detail, rewarding to produce something personal rather than commercial.
Connections made:	Practice to place, materials to place, people to place.
Limitations:	The project does not address the issues associated with scaling up natural dying—these include colour variability, colour fastness and land use (fibre vs food).

Contributions made:	• Provided the opportunity to use existing textile skills and knowledge to create a garment based on the principles of dematerialisation, Slow and deep localization.
	• Explored the use of location-specific plant materials and natural dying to create a tangible material connection to place and memories of place.
	• Provided the space and time to explore and articulate what might constitute 'textile intelligence' in the context of the project:
	   ○ knowledge of fibres, fabrics, agricultural practices, mechanised/chemical production, textile properties and natural dying techniques;
	   ○ tacit/making skills including embroidery, fabric manipulation, stitching and applying the visual design elements and principles;
	   ○ an explicit and tacit awareness of the agency of textiles; working with the properties of the fibre and cloth;
	   ○ the application of skills, knowledge and awareness via an iterative process of thinking (dematerialisation, good, clean and fair, making connections), feeling (life experiences alongside the tactility of the material and making process) and doing (dying and making by hand).
	• Brought to front of mind the importance of place in 'post-material making'—place has been identified as an area for further exploration.

Figure 4.1 Key focus (feeling/thinking/doing) specific to the 'Grasslands' project

The invitation

'In our frivolous attachment to the next fix, our clothes and body adornment objects have been stripped of meaning', wrote Patricia Brien (2012, para. 1) in her informal brief, inviting colleagues and friends to participate in her 'Spiritus loci' master's by research project. 'Spiritus loci' called upon eight female designers/artists working with textiles to commit to the project's time frame—three months from the spring equinox to the summer solstice in 2012. All eight participants had an interest in alternative pathways for their respective disciplines—

underpinned by a need to do things better, to reduce the negative impact on people and the planet. Methods for doing so spanned the length and breadth of possibility, with some participants aligning their values with the Deep Ecology movement.[124]

My initial reaction to the invitation was one of confusion and anxiety; the project seemed vague, filled with unfamiliar language and philosophies. My anxiety was further heightened due to a full-time teaching load[125] on top of other work/life responsibilities. Despite my anxiety and apprehension, I made the decision to participate, believing the project's extended time frame would provide opportunities for a new way of working in keeping with the ideas explored in my own research. I put to one side my commercial clock and prepared myself to use the minutes, hours, days, weeks and months to work on *one* project.

Time and ritual

I was unable to attend the first two sessions—organised so that participants could get know one another and discuss project logistics before the project commenced. As a consequence, I felt slightly out of the loop and unsure of where and when to begin. To combat this uncertainty, I requested a written brief complete with objectives, timeframes and deadlines. Patricia kindly provided a loose framework or 'informal brief' [126], a section of which can be seen below:

> [The] Nature's House Muse Project[127] is about working together with a group of voluntary creators (in this case an all-female collective) to creatively explore place-sensitivity, ritual and material diversity over a season in relation to issues around sustainability in our particular design industries and on a larger scale earth (and perhaps self) awareness (Brien 2012, para. 3).

The project description and intent were riddled with ambiguity and possibilities—my heart began to beat a little faster. Was this fear due to my need to objectify, and pre-determine outcomes on behalf of my client? Had time in industry and years of working in undergraduate

---

[124] Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess introduced the concept of Deep Ecology in 1973. Deep Ecology is defined as follows: 'supporters of the deep ecology movement emphasise place-specific, ecological wisdom, and vernacular technology practices ... The word "deep" in part referred to the level of questioning of our purposes and values when arguing in environmental conflicts' (Drengson 2012).

[125] At this point in time I was working full time on the RMIT BA (Textile Design) program.

[126] The official project brief was provided at the beginning of the project coinciding with the spring equinox.

[127] 'Nature's house muse' was the original (working) title given to the 'Spiritus loci' project.

education conditioned me to work in exact times, methods and outcomes? The thought of this bothered me immensely, as I wanted to embrace the unknown and explore the possibilities within this vague, 'open to interpretation' brief. I turned to Google and tapped in the following questions: What is a ritual? What is the summer solstice? What is the spring equinox?

The simple non-academic Google and Wikipedia definitions gave me some traction, and a baseline premise to build on. At the third group meeting we each shared our interpretation of ritual and how, or if, it was used in our day-to-day lives. For some participants, it was shrouded in religious obligation—two of the women were raised Catholic. For others, it was more spiritual and guided by personal need and fulfilment. For me, it was a Google/Wikipedia definition.

My secular upbringing was devoid of religious ritual, with little structure or routine beyond what was imposed by school and the family farm, where seasons dictated routine rather than ritual. We, of course, would celebrate special occasions with family and friends such as Christmas, Easter and birthdays, but I had never considered these celebrations to be rituals. There were no harvest festivals or celebratory feasts. Unlike other families with cultural or religious ties, our meals were varied and lacked any significance to ritual—except Friday night fish and chips; could this be a ritual of sorts? Perhaps this is due to the loss of tradition through migration and mixed ancestry—with no particular ties to culture or country. My Grandfather on my father's side—a third generation farmer from Wooroonook—was Anglican and would attend church each Sunday morning. My parents, both baby boomers and beneficiaries of the revolution of the 1960s, opposed any enforced religious obligation. I did attend Sunday school at the Uniting Church from time to time—tagging along with my neighbour—and Catholic mass with a high school friend, but, religious ritual was not part of my life.

In defence of our non-religious participation in the Sabbath, my parents would claim Sunday to be a family day, for sleeping in and staying home—although my father always worked on a Sunday.

What is a ritual?

Ritual

> A religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a
> prescribed order (Google n.d.).

A ritual is a set of actions performed mainly for their symbolic value. It may be prescribed by the traditions of a community, including a religious community. The term usually refers to actions, which are stylised, excluding actions, which are arbitrarily chosen by the performers ... It may be performed by a single individual, by a group, or by the entire community. In arbitrary places, or in places especially reserved for it either in public or in private, or before specific people ... strengthening social bonds, social or moral education or just for the pleasure of the ritual itself (Wikipedia 2015).

This became my baseline understanding of ritual. The other gap in knowledge was to do with the seasons; my understanding of spring was through lived experience. Spring was the interim between winter and summer, the birth of baby lambs, the smell of cut grass, yellow carpets of capeweed and athletic carnivals. Spring equinox and summer solstice were familiar terms—but not occasions I had explicitly observed in the past. What is the equinox? What is the solstice?

Spring equinox 2012: 23rd September 00.49am[128]
The equinox (equal). The earth is neither tilting away from or towards the sun.

Summer solstice 2012: 21st December 10.11pm[129]
Solstice—twice a year when the sun reaches its highest or lowest excursion relative to the celestial equator.

My awareness and observation of the seasons were tacit. For others, the cycle of the seasons was more integrated into their everyday lives. The solstice and equinox were celebrated—often with family and friends—in organised or spontaneous ways. Patricia reflected on our varied experience of ritual in her thesis stating, 'for some participants the notion of "ritual" was a little daunting, a bit awkward, while for others, this was a key factor in connecting to human and non-human networks' (Brien 2015, p. 34). Despite our varied experiences, ritual, season and place provided a central point for us to meet and consider our respective textile practices.

---

[128] This information was taken from the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, Australia (Lomb 2012a).
[129] This information was taken from the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, Australia (Lomb 2012b).

Positioning my thinking

Upon reflection, I could identify with the mindset of the materialists defined by Mathews (2013, pp. 29–32), devoid of religious influence, and separate from cultural traditions. Mathews' observation of modernity resonated with me; 'modernity is a restless condition, a condition of disconnection from the past' (2013, p. 31), my sense of being in the world had lay dormant. Could this project provide the time and opportunity to extend my creative practice beyond utilitarian and decorative commodification?

At work with materials

Patricia selected a bolt of unbleached, roughly processed hemp cloth for us to use. It was chosen for its low environmental impact and cultural importance. Hemp has been cultivated by humans for an estimated six thousand years and is possibly one of the oldest crops grown for fibre rather than food (Horne 2012, p. 114–115). Patricia provided a rationale for selecting hemp in her informal brief:

> Hemp is chosen for its sustainable properties and 'sack' image. Eighty percent of the fibres used today are cotton and polyester—this needs to change for global environmental health reasons (Brien 2012, material diversity section).

Hemp is a strong, durable fibre belonging to the bast family along with flax and linen. The fibre is extracted from the plant (using natural methods: biological enzymes or water—or synthetic chemicals) via a process known as retting (Horne, 2012, p. 126.) Retting melts away the pectins that bind the inner core to the outer bast. The multiple processes used to transition the plant into fibre affect the finish and quality of the fibre, yarn and fabric. The fabric we were given to work with was rough and awkward—there was nothing delicate, gentle or user-friendly about it.

I considered what I could possibly do with this rough, raw fabric. The coarse open weave was similar to Aida cloth, an even-weave fabric used for cross-stitch embroidery. I decided to explore the idea of dematerialisation, or 'doing more with less'. Due to the openness of the weave, I was able to remove individual weft threads to embroider with. Pulling the weft yarns, threading them through the eye of a needle and stitching at random created a subtle texture and surface profile to the cloth. Although the technique was effective, the visual result was too subtle. Another avenue of interest was natural dyeing using plant matter. After some initial experimentation (while spending a wintry weekend on a property at the base of Mt. Bulla in

Victoria) I discovered that eucalyptus leaves turned the straw-coloured hemp a beautiful bronze. I borrowed a book by India Flint (2008) on natural dyeing. Here I learned the intricacies of water and mordants, metals and fabric types and the alchemical magic of dyeing cloth. Natural dyeing requires little in the way of equipment and prior knowledge. What it requires in vast quantities is patience, time and meticulous documentation. Fortunately for me, all I required was a subtle range of yellows and browns to represent the broad-acre crops located in the region where I grew up. When I think of the farm it is invariably in summer—hot sun, dry air, golden crops and an endless sky (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 One of the many paddocks at the family farm in Wooroonook, Victoria, c. 1980s/1990s

Nature as muse

During this time, I was living in Maidstone, a suburb of Melbourne wedged between the Maribyrnong River to the north and east, Braybrook to the west, and West Footscray to the south. It wasn't a place I felt connected to. After years of moving from house-to-house, suburb-to-suburb, I settled on a nature place I often passed through in transit—the grassy dome at Royal Park in Parkville. The grassy dome is a place I discovered by chance on a bike ride home from the city in 2007; I remember being overwhelmed by the open expanse of nothing—a scruffy paddock only a few kilometres from the central business district (Figures 4.3 & 4.4).

The number 55 tram skirts the edge of the grassy dome; ferrying people from West Coburg to the Domain interchange and back again. Before white settlement, this well-worn path was used by the Wurundjeri people making their way to Mt William in the west of the state (Birch, cited in Instone 2010, p. 96). For me, it was also a place experienced while in transit.

Figure 4.3 The grassy dome at Royal Park, Melbourne, winter 2012
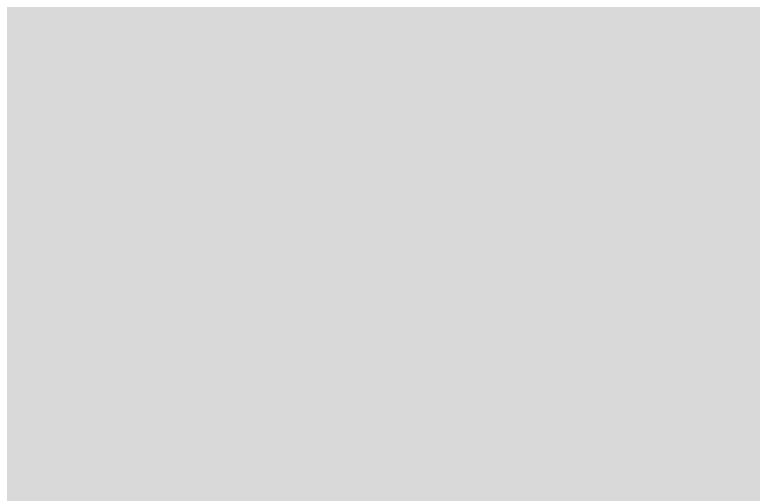
Figure 4.4 Aerial view of the grassy dome at Royal Park, Melbourne, 2018[130]

Governor Latrobe sanctioned the 240 hectares of land in the 1830s to create parkland for rest and recreation. In the time since, the park has reduced in size but maintained its purpose. In 1984 the Melbourne City Council and the Australian Landscape Design Institute initiated a competition to develop a master plan for the precinct. The intent behind the winning entry (by Melbourne-based practice Laceworks) was 'to create a coherent informal pattern of dominant

---

[130] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.

eucalypts in a naturalistic woodland, crowned with the hill covered in native grasses'. Laceworks proposed to create a place that seemed natural and referenced the indigenous grasslands that covered west and north Melbourne before white settlement. The jewel in the crown for the architect's vision involved clearing the hilltop (dome) to create a 'spacious quality' and 'reveal … a vast sky' (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects cited in Instone 2010, pp.93, 101). The hill was to be delineated by a circular path and planted 'as a sea of grass" (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects cited in Instone 2010, p. 101). The grassy dome provides respite from the visual clutter common to city skylines. Not to everyone's taste, the dome has come under scrutiny from many. Anecdotally it has been called messy, under-utilised, unkempt—while the native grass seeds play havoc with dogs and their owners. For me, the grassy dome allows for an uninterrupted view of the sky, a place to stop and simply be. A quote from Dyson conveys the impact experienced when arriving at the dome, 'the larger scaled spaces (the Grassland, for instance), accentuate the natural landform and convey a sense of the power, vastness, spareness, and the openness of the Australian landscape' (2013, p. 13).

Why did I choose this place as my nature muse— 'an iconic treeless feature' (Instone 2010, p. 93)? Because it reminded me of where I grew up, the flat open country—the wheat belt of northwest Victoria. The grassy dome acted as a muse of memory. It was relatively close to where I lived, and closer to where I worked—unlike the family farm located two hundred and fifty-six kilometres to the northwest.

I left the family farm in 1995, aged eighteen, to study in Melbourne. My parents sold the farm six years later. I rarely had reason to return to Wooroonook; this project gave me the opportunity to do so.

A visit was organised by phone. The new owners were warm and welcoming, and encouraged my partner and I to wander the garden and adjoining paddocks as required. I declined the offer to go inside the house, as the point of our visit was to collect plant-based materials for natural dying (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 *Plants collected from Wooroonook, Victoria, 2012*

It was a strange feeling being back after so long. It was early October and already twenty-six degrees Celsius, hot by Melbourne standards. The sky was vast and milky blue. Casualties of the long drought were notably absent in the garden; the replacement shrubs provided a silvery texture mixing and messing with my memory. It was very dry, despite the horrendous floods thirteen months earlier. Our visit to the Wooroonook swimming lake was a pleasant surprise— it was full, clear and clean (Figure 4.6). The swimming lake is the preferred destination for locals wanting to swim, water-ski or fish. The two lakes to the east are ill-suited to these activities.

Figure 4.6 *Wooroonook swimming lake, 2012*

The Wooroonook lakes are situated on Dja Dja Warrung country. The Dja Dja Warrung, or Jaara people occupied this area for many thousands of years prior to white settlement. I learned nothing of the Jaara people while at kindergarten, primary school or high school in the 1980's and 1990's. Local Aboriginal culture and land stewardship was not part of the curriculum, nor was it a topic of general conversation. I did not know that places on Jaara country had a song, as well as a name (Dja Dja Wurrung Country Aboriginal Corporation n.d. p. 6) until I was in my early forties, a long time after leaving Wooroonok as an eighteen-year-old to study in Melbourne.

Together my partner and I walked the perimeter (Figure 4.7), while I shared stories from my childhood. When I was young, our family had leased the land surrounding the lakes from the State Government for grazing. My brother and I would often visit on weekends to check the sheep with my grandfather or father. Sometimes Dad would cook a camp oven stew—and we would sit amongst the trees eating piping-hot food in the dead of winter. In the warmer weather when the farm allowed, my parents would take us to the swimming lake with our moppet, a small wooden sailboat big enough to for one adult and one child (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.7 My partner walking the perimeter of the Wooroonook swimming lake, 2012

Figure 4.8 My Dad and I in the moppet on the Wooroonook swimming lake, photograph by Merrin Lynas, 1980

I never really took to sailing; too many variables to consider—the wind, staying out of the way of speedboats and a constant fear of falling into the middle of the lake where the reeds grew thick and tall. My brother and I enjoyed fishing on the lake with our grandparents. The four of us would sit in the tinny and bob or spin for Redfin, Yellow Belly or reluctantly—the orange-eyed Tench (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9 A post-fishing photo. From left to right: me, Grandpa and my brother Josef, photograph by Merrin Lynas, 1989

I remember playing on the muddy, sandy banks, paddling in the warm shallow water, and walking bare foot along the length of a huge fallen river red gum to fish in deeper water.

Upon our return to Melbourne, I felt reassured. The visit to Wooroonook had reinforced my preference for open space—this is what the grassy dome at Royal Park provides.

Material agency

I had earlier established that working with the fabric's inherent material properties was the best course of action. This initial play opened the door to working with the premise of design for dematerialisation. Design for dematerialisation and mono, or single material use are both eco-design strategies listed by Fuad-Luke in the material selection pre-production phase[131] (Fuad-Luke 2009b, p. 324). Fuad-Luke describes eco-design as a process that incorporates life cycle thinking to ensure all materials and techniques used in the creation of material outcomes cause minimal harm to people and the planet (2009b, p. 15). On a larger, more industrial scale the United Nations Environment Program defines dematerialisation as follows:

> Dematerialization ultimately describes decreasing the material requirements of whole economies. It requires (a) reducing the material-intensity of products and services, i.e. by increasing material efficiency, and (b) especially reducing the use of primary material resources (such as ores, coal, minerals, metals, etc.) by improving recycling and re-use of secondary materials (i.e. shifting to a circular economy). It is frequently regarded as a necessary condition for the sustainable development of economies and is synonymous with absolute resource decoupling (UNEP International Resource Panel, n.d.).

This large-scale industrial definition by The United Nations Environment Program rendered my simple little dematerialisation project into (almost) insignificance. However, the premise is the same—to decrease material requirements. There was no need for any other materials to be involved in this project—except the plant matter used to dye the cloth. The method also sits in neatly with TED's: *The Ten:* 2. Design for Cyclability 'design for mono materiality' (Textiles Environment Design n.d.) and design for a circular economy. The circular economy is defined below:

---

[131] The five life cycle stages: 1. Pre-production; 2. Manufacturing, making and fabrication; 3. Distribution and transportation; 4. Functionality and use; 5. Disposal, end of life and new life (Fuad-Luke 2009b, p. 324).

Looking beyond the current 'take, make and dispose' extractive industrial model, the circular economy is restorative and regenerative by design. Relying on system-wide innovation, it aims to redefine products and services to design waste out, while minimising negative impacts. Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural and social capital (Ellen MacArthur Foundation 2017a, para. 1).

Although this project is small (a one-off, time-consuming project) the decision to keep the project to a single fibre type is significant. Designers are spoiled for choice when it comes to making. Materials are in abundance and selected based on aesthetic properties, performance characteristics, availability and cost (Fuad-Luke 2009b, p. 278). Over the last one hundred-and-fifty-years Western industrialization has shifted designing, making and consuming to become linear. The linear economy emerged due to increased individual wealth and material abundance. The linear economy places emphasis on production and consumption with minimal consideration to waste generated at either end (Chapman 2017, p. 162):

Today you can expect nearly 90% of the raw materials used in manufacturing to become waste before the product leaves the factory, while 80% of products get thrown away within the first six months of their life (Girling cited in Baker-Brown 2017, p. 11).

Designing for the circular economy [132] encourages designers to consider materials that are capable of performing long-term—or can be retired in a way that benefits another system. The present-day circular economy is responding to a twenty-first century dilemma—that of material abundance and overly-saturated markets (Stahel 2017, p, xiv)—it is a process of designing out waste both at an industrial and domestic level (Twigger Holroyd 2018, p 92).

My project started with a manufactured material—a section of raw hemp cut from a bolt of fabric. The cloth is open, porous, cellulosic and easily dyed using simple natural dyeing techniques. The material is incredibly raw—I do not know the processes involved in production, but the handle and appearance suggest there was minimal intervention—allowing it to return to the earth within a relatively short time frame. Hemp is susceptible to bacteria and will break down quickly when composted with other organic matter. Fashion designer and funeral

---

[132] It is important to remember that approaches now championed by the circular economy have been practiced by previous generations, and developing nations out of necessity, material scarcity and or poverty for generations.

celebrant Pia Interlandi dressed twenty-one dispatched pigs in hemp, silk and polyester and buried them approximately one-metre underground (2012, pp. 245–247, 260, 273) as part of her 2012 practice-based PhD project '[A]Dressing death: fashioning garments for the grave'. Interlandi periodically exhumed a body to determine how long it took for the textiles to decompose. It took three hundred days for the hemp to break down— 'the hemp was only visible in small pieces and would break into dust if over-handled' (Interlandi 2012, pp. 285–286). Hemp was the fastest to decompose, followed by silk. The polyester was still one hundred percent intact at the three-hundred-and-fifty-day mark (Interlandi 2012, p. 291). Hemp is a versatile fibre that is welcomed back into the earth via a process of bacterial decomposition.

Mass-produced textile products made from natural fibres (such as hemp and silk) are stitched using polyester, cotton or a corespun[133] thread. Sewing threads are selected based on tensile strength, bending properties, dimensional stability, and fibre friction (Mandal & Abraham 2010) rather than material likeness. When looking at the potential for textiles to be returned to the earth, a revised criterion for material selection needs to be established. This would help to ensure that cloth and clothing can be retired in a way that feeds another system.

Despite the coarse handle of the raw hemp, I decided to make a simple garment using myself as the fit model. The garment shape was inspired by a sleeveless top I purchased from an independent clothing store located on the Victorian Great Ocean Road. The business is owned and operated by two sisters, one a dressmaker. She makes simple clothes from unique and beautiful fabrics—her attention to detail is impressive; not many labels sew French seams anymore. I managed to find a similar commercial dressmaking pattern. I cut out the pattern pieces and lay them flat on the fabric. The project did produce a small amount of waste[134]—in hindsight, I should have perhaps investigated an approach to zero waste pattern cutting such as those developed by Holly McQuillan,[135] but I do not have a pattern-cutting background, and would most likely have struggled to make sense of the process. The pattern pieces were cut and assembled using pulled threads from the larger offcuts. This took time; decisions were made as

[133] Wrapping cotton or polyester around a continuous fibre filament. The wrapped filaments are plied to create corespun sewing thread.

[134] The irregular pieces of fabric (left behind during the cutting process) were too small to pull apart and use as threads for stitching.

[135] Holly McQuillan developed the Make/use website to disseminate information relating to zero waste pattern making.

I worked. Although the garment itself is quite simple, the construction required careful consideration of how best to use the material. My chosen construction and embellishment methods made use of the fibre, yarn and fabric. Re-threading the needle provided an opportunity to stop and revisit the work completed. The repetitive process of threading and rethreading was methodical and reassuring. To neatly finish the neck and armholes, a length of bias binding was cut from the hemp and secured flat with a running stitch (Figure 4.10). French seams were used for the side seams, the rest finished with a blanket stitch.

Figure 4.10 Stitching the bias binding to the neck opening, 2012

Strips of cloth were dyed in simmering pots on my kitchen stove (Figure 4.11). Once dried, individual threads, approximately thirty centimetres in length, were carefully pulled and wound around wooden chopsticks—one chopstick for each plant/colour (Figures 4.12 and 4.13). The lengths of thread showed no sign of twist and were consequently prone to breaking—thick and fluffy in places and dangerously thin in others. The process of stitching was slow (Figure 4.14). Fuad-Luke uses the term '*deep' localization* to describe the approach taken, one where local materials are sourced to make something for oneself. He lists this approach as a strategy for extending product-user relationships (2010, pp. 145–147). I made this top for myself; the narrative underpinning the finished garment is deeply personal. Fletcher in *Craft of Use Post-Growth Fashion* states 'Emma Lynas of RMIT has literally connected garment to place through extracting colour from her agricultural grassland' (2016, p. 273). Molecules of plant material collected from Wooroonook are embedded in the fibres of the garment. The conscious decision to minimise waste and focus on mono materials is in keeping with my vision for a cleaner, more material-focused textile design practice.

Figure 4.11 *Plant materials simmered in water before adding cloth for natural dyeing, 2012*

Figure 4.12 *Strips of cloth dyed using collected plant materials, 2012*

Figure 4.13 Individual threads pulled and wound around a chopstick in preparation for stitching, 2012

Figure 4.14 Embroidery in progress, 2012

Ritual

Patricia provided us with a paper to read prior to the first ritual taking place—'Ritual theory and the environment', by Ronald L Grimes (2003). Grimes acknowledges the significance of ritual in Indigenous cultures and the equity nature has in relationship to people—there is no hierarchy, no nature/culture divide. The text offered examples of the depths to which ritual is explored in theoretical academic circles. Glimmers of relevance were gleaned: 'ritual participants believe ritual activity enables them to cultivate a bond with animals and plants, even rocks, mountains, bodies of water, and specific places' (Grimes 2003, p. 32).

Our interpretation and practice of ritual depended on our commitment to embracing this part of the project. As someone who is not used to performing or looking at place in this divine manner it was difficult not to feel self-conscious and a bit silly. During some of the rituals I felt like a fish out of water—however, I could see the potential of ritual as a method for connection. What would or could my ritual be? Mine was the last in a sequence spanning almost three months.

Four weeks before my scheduled (yet to be determined) ritual, I attended a design conference in Covilhã, in central Portugal. In this fascinating small city with a rich textile history, I learned of many Portuguese cultural rituals and symbolic events. One such event is the *Festa de São João do Porto*, the Festival of St John of Porto. The festival is a Christian adaptation of the pagan summer solstice celebration, renamed the Festival of St John of Porto in recognition of Saint John the Baptist (Visitar Porto 2017, para. 3).

One of the many rituals undertaken as part of the Festival of St John of Porto involves releasing small paper hot-air balloons into the night sky. The ritual takes place on 23 June, just shy of the Northern Hemisphere's summer solstice (Visitar Porto 2017, para. 8). The ritual involves many other peculiar activities, but the release of paper lanterns was of particular interest to me.

On my way home, I stopped in Bangkok, Thailand to catch up with a very good friend. I was fortunate enough to be present for the Loi Krathong festival in Bangkok—and to hear stories of the Yee Peng festival held in the north of Thailand. Both festivals are part of the Buddhist culture and take place on the evening of the full moon—the twelfth month in the traditional Thai lunar calendar (early November). Yee Peng is celebrated by making lanterns as a sign of respect for the Buddha. The lanterns are illuminated via candlelight and carried, displayed in houses and

temples, or released into the night sky as a means to rid oneself of bad luck and misfortune (Chiang Mai Best 2013, Yee Peng section).

The similarities between the two rituals in two geographically distant countries, just shy of my scheduled ritual, was opportune to say the least. On my return to Melbourne, email invitations were promptly sent to all participants:

18/12/12

Hi everyone,

Looking forward to seeing you all this Friday for the summer solstice ritual. We will be meeting at Royal Park, if you enter via the Bayles Street pathway (off Gatehouse drive) you will see a bench seat underneath a tree, let's meet there at 6 pm.

The weather is looking good, showers in the morning so the grass may be a little damp. Probably a good idea to bring something to sit on. If you have a smartphone with 3G data connectivity, please bring along, I have a video I would like to share with you all.

Drinks and tasty treats provided,

Should be all done by 7ish.

See you then,

Emma

We met at the entrance to the grassy dome near Bayles Street on the day of the summer solstice. I arrived by bike with a trailer full of food and refreshments purchased from the Queen Victoria Market early that morning. Together we walked through the middle of the dome, along a desire line created by council vehicles, people and dogs, flanked by walls of shimmering wild oats (Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15 '*Spiritus Loci' participants walking the desire line at the grassy dome prior to my ritual. Still taken from the Spiritus Loci film, directed and produced by Jones and Magnano, 2012, for Patricia Brien's 'Spiritus loci' project*

We set up our picnic on the north side of the dome. I presented each participant with a bottle of bubble mixture, and together we blew bubbles into the wind, in homage to the lantern festivals of Portugal and Thailand. Participants laughed and made jokes while interacting with others walking the perimeter of the grassy dome. After we had finished, we sat down to a picnic. While seated, I read passages from Instone's paper on Royal Park and shared a video of the Yee Peng festival filmed by my friend. Participants were relaxed and at ease. Sennett talks about the role of ritual in all-human culture as an exercise in relieving anxiety (2012, p. 280). Fuad-Luke (2004, section 2.4) believes that ritual allows for the visual sense to sit to one side elevating the remaining senses of touch, smell and taste. Both claims were confirmed in this instance.

In 2017, I re-read my initial Grasslands journal entry. Time had provided perspective and allowed some of the theory to settle, meld and permeate my practice. My ritual was very much informed by the practices of others, those in Portugal and Thailand. My ritual was based on the religious traditions of other cultures. The opportunity to participate in the ritual aspect of the collaboration allowed me to engage with complex ideas around culture, and to reflect on my own lived experience that felt removed from explicit cultural traditions. If I were to do it again, I would look closer to home and reflect back on the ritualistic activities performed as a child. Perhaps simulating fishing expeditions by walking along a fallen tree in homage to the natural red gum pier I fished from as a child at the Wooronook swimming lake.

Visual storytelling

The finished hemp garment achieved my objective—to design and make something using a process of dematerialisation that reflected my chosen nature place. However, the garment itself

wasn't enough to communicate this. After some deliberation, I decided to hire a photographer to capture the essence of the project in situ. I met with Mardiana Sani (at her request) over a cup of tea at a café in North Melbourne. Together we discussed the purpose of the photographs, the desired tone and sentiment of the images while getting to know one another before committing to the photo shoot. We agreed to meet at the grassy dome around dusk the following week. When the time arrived, I felt awkward and uncomfortable. I was ill at ease in front of the camera and proved to be a difficult subject to direct. I needed to relax. Mardiana was very gentle and patient, and with only three rolls of film managed to capture and convey the sense of space and stillness that the grassy dome at Royal Park provides (Figures 4.16 and 4.17).
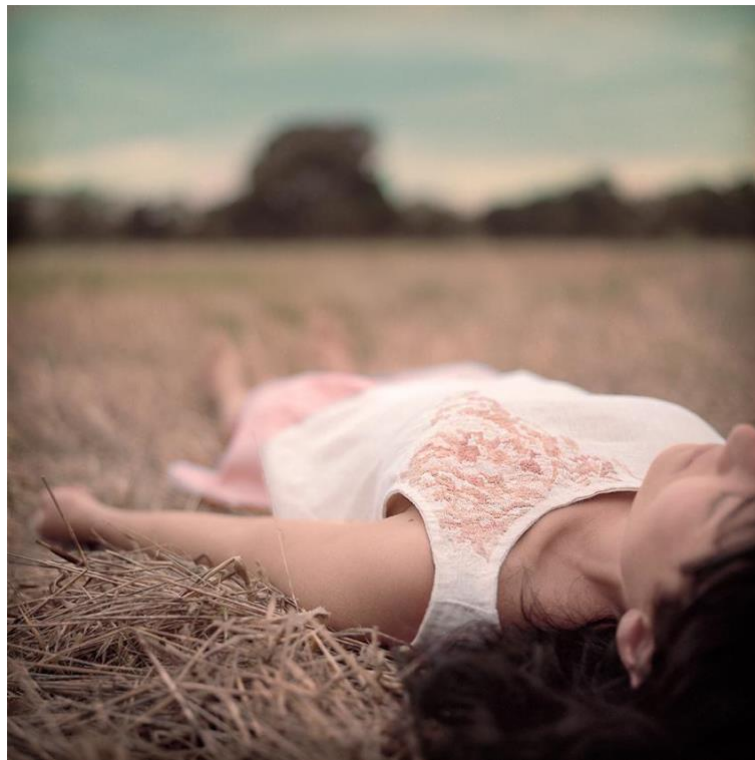
Figure 4.16 Me wearing the embroidered top made for the 'Spritus loci' project at the grassy dome at Royal Park, Parkville, photograph by Mardiana Sani, 2013

Figure 4.17 Me wearing the embroidered top made for the 'Spritus loci' project at the grassy dome, Parkville, photograph by Mardiana Sani, 2013

The inclusion of the photographs in the subsequent exhibition at Prana House, Thornbury in 2013 (Figure 4.18), made the work all the more poignant. Jessica Hemmings talks about the importance of Slow looking (2014). This work requires Slow looking, both at the photographs and the garment itself. The photographs capture the feeling of place, the garment the process of making. Together with a short project description, my story could be told without my presence. The exhibition at Prana house was a celebration of our collective achievements. We each learned something about ritual, making and place. For me, I learned that making does not have to happen in a hurry and working with others can often provide ways to illuminate or expand internal ways of seeing and thinking. 'Grasslands' was selected by Kate Fletcher to include in the Craft of Use Symposium held at the London College of Fashion in March 2014 and features in her 2016 book, *Craft of Use Post-Growth Fashion.*

Figure 4.18 '*Grasslands' exhibited as part of 'Spiritus loci', Prana House, Thornbury, 2013*

In summary

'Grasslands' follows a process of design for dematerialisation using location-specific plant matter to create a garment representative of place. Using location-based plant materials in textile design practice provides a tangible material connection to place and memories of place. Sally Blake's eucalyptus dye database (n.d.) provides a visual reference for the colours unique to individual species; this resource provides a clue to colour—for me, the colour was secondary, for others, colour[136] may be of greater importance.

Earlier on I pose the question; could this project provide the time and opportunity to extend my creative practice beyond utilitarian and decorative commodification? The answer is yes. This project was my first exploration of the theories and methods posed by Slow. It allowed the time and creative space to work intuitively—to be guided by my feelings and preference for shape, pattern and rhythm of practice, similar to my time working in the permaculture garden in Italy. This shift in practice relaxed some of the commercial habits acquired during my earlier days of designing for commercial bed linen.

---

[136] Colour was identified as a reason for attachment in the 'Love you' project. Refer to chapter 5.0.

The ritual requirement pushed me to develop an activity that would bring people together. This can be identified as a post-materialist act—one where 'individuals in post-materialist societies will discover for themselves eclectic frames of reference that reflect their own immediate experience of communicative engagement with the world … using the aesthetic resources of their own lives and cultures' (Mathews 2013, pp. 33–34). The act of gathering to blow bubbles engaged a small group of women in an activity usually reserved for children. Overall the collaboration and making practices provided a significant shift in my thinking, and purpose for making.

In the context of connection, this project provides an example of using textile intelligence to connect to place. The properties of the cloth and the knowledge and processes of natural dying allowed molecules of location specific plant materials to become embedded in the garment. This project is limited in its scope, it does not address the issues associated with natural dying on a large scale, nor does it address the ethical questions posed when agricultural land is used for fibre/dyestuffs rather than food.[137] The project is therefore propositional. In *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*, Tyson Yunkaporta shares a story of drawing a symbol over and over again while engaged in conversations with others. After many months he makes a stone axe to store his understanding (2019, p. 30). Making with materials via 'Grasslands' was a way of exploring difficult concepts, my understanding is captured in the garment, however for others to engage additional communication tools are required.

---

[137] These issues were discussed as a part of the 2018 Natural Dye Conference a two-day event for industry held in Melbourne, Australia on the creation and use of Australian botanical colour in textiles.

Our own relationship with the things that surround us is transformed when those things are allowed to endure. Beings and objects become dear to us, acquire an irreplaceable significance for us, they become woven into the fabric of our lives (Mathews 2005, p. 32)

//

Physical objects are not the focus of our deep desires; they are merely tangible entities that transport, package and render various meanings perceivable (Chapman 2015b, p. 74).

5.0 Love you or leave you: *connecting to people and materials*

This action research project removed me from the traditional textile design practice of making, and/or designing for textiles and/or surfaces—either as a designer-maker (working alone or with a small group of people) or as a commercial designer (working as part of a team)—to an interviewer and active listener.

The chapter refers to a collection of biographical stories relating to attachment and detachment to cloth and clothing. The stories are based on conversations recorded during semi-structured interviews with ten Victorian textile designers: commercial, designer-maker and artist, and consumers of cloth and clothing in 2013. The stories are informed by categories developed by Özlem Savaş, in reference to the triggers for both attachment and detachment to industrially produced products[138] that serve a functional purpose (Savaş 2004, p. 318). The project is positioned within a similar context to Niinimäki and Koskinen's product attachment and long-term use of textiles and clothing research project based in Finland (2011), and Fletcher's international ethnographic Local Wisdom and Craft of Use projects undertaken from 2009–2013 (2016). Niinimäki and Koskinen's research project used online questionnaires to collect data using two catchments. The first, undertaken in 2009 on product attachment targeted design: students, staff and individuals interested in ethical clothing. The second undertaken in 2010 on long-term use and product satisfaction was randomly sent to 30 people, who then forwarded the questionnaire onto friends and acquaintances. Overall the two projects resulted in 450 respondents. The Local Wisdom project invited people to share stories of how they use their clothes. The participants were interviewed and photographed, the stories and photographs were shared via the Local Wisdom website and published in *Craft of Use: Post Growth Fashion* (2016). The 'Love you or leave you' project invited participants to consider their attachment and *detachment* to cloth and clothing. The projects used similar methods to Fletcher (interview and photography) within the general catchment of sustainable fashion and textiles research.

The underlying objective of this research project was to better understand the relationship people have to cloth and clothing as a way to mitigate waste. Refer to the table[139] below (Figure 5.1) for the key focus (feeling, thinking and doing) specific to the 'Love you or leave you' project.

---

[138] Industrially produced products in Savaş's study include: 'cars, furniture, stereos, TVs, computers, home appliances, kitchen appliances, washing machines, other home appliances, plates, personal goods, sports equipment and professional equipment' (Savaş 2004, p. 319).
[139] Adapted from Vuletich (2015, p. 121).

Initial intent:	To better understand the relationship between people and cloth and clothing as a way to mitigate waste.
Theoretical / visual themes:	Attachment, detachment, emotionally durable design.
People:	Project participants: textile designers (commercial, designer-maker and artist) and consumers of cloth and clothing in Melbourne, Australia.
Materials:	Textiles (cloth and or clothing) belonging to participants.
Place:	Participant connections: Africa, Australia, India, Europe, UK.
Skill:	Conversation, advanced Adobe PhotoShop specific to textile design, transcribing audio interview recordings.
Tools	iPhone with audio recording software, laptop, Adobe Photoshop and InDesign.
Key methods:	Face-to-face interviews, transcribing, reflecting, narrative writing, creating booklets in Adobe CS.
Actors:	Participants.
Pivotal moments:	Colour has the ability to maintain a connection between people and cloth and or clothing.
Lack:	Limited experience with unpacking qualitative data, limited experience with Adobe InDesign, professional photography skills.
Transformation of materials or self:	Conversing with people and preparing the 'Love you or leave you' booklets provided a greater appreciation for the power of textiles to initiate visceral experiences, and to embody memories and therefore connections to people, place and periods in time.
Feelings and outcomes:	Booklets: rewarding to synthesise transcripts into stories. Chapter: rewarding to weave the literature into the analysis of data.
Connections made:	people to materials, people to people via materials.
Contributions made:	• Follows on from Fletcher's (2015), and Niinimäki and Koskinen's (2011) research to include reasons for attachment and detachment to cloth and clothing as a way to better understand how and why people connect to textile objects and things. • Induced a greater appreciation for the power of textiles to initiate visceral experiences, and to embody memories and therefore connections between people and place. • Reaffirmed the role of colour in maintaining connections between people and cloth/ clothing. The process of selecting colour when 'post-material making' may entail a more local or personal (rather than trend-based) approach, one informed by personal experience, relationships, memories—connections to people and/or place.

Figure 5.1 *Key focus (feeling/thinking/doing) specific to the 'Love you or leave you' project*

The decision to narrate the stories of others was not always the intention of this project. After much deliberation, the story was selected as the most appropriate method to share the research. The aim of the research was not to present data or statistical findings, but to offer another person's perspective, and for the stories to prompt others to think about their own consumption

of cloth and clothing. Stories can be interpreted in any which way. The biography of a person is idiosyncratic—some things can be generalised; however, the individual is bound up in history and lived experience, therefore, a codified qualitative generalisation does not necessarily provide answers to our own questions of attachment to, and detachment from, cloth and clothing. What we can do as textile designers and users of cloth and clothing is contextualize our feelings and use the stories as a reference point for critiquing our own attachment to, and detachment from, cloth and clothing.

What is attachment?

Attachment

Strong feelings of affection or loyalty for someone or something.[140]

The idea behind 'Love you or leave you' was formed early on in my candidature. I was curious to learn more about how and why people connect to some products and not others. At the time I was reading the work of Stuart Walker (1995, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2009a, 2009b) and Jonathan Chapman (2005, 2007, 2009) and became interested in the concept of design and emotional connection (McDonagh et al. 2004 and Turkle 2007). This interest was born out of a concern for the quantity of textile waste generated from the post-consumer domestic market. Waste is defined as 'something that is no longer privately valued' (Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2006, p. xxii) therefore, it is necessary for the textile design community to better understand how textiles are valued, and what constitutes attachment and contributes to detachment.

A quote by Sawyer captures a typical human response to viewing a desirable object or thing for the first time 'I like it. I want it. What is it?' (cited in Walker 2009a, p. 30). The desire to possess beautiful, interesting or functional objects is part and parcel of human behaviour; 'to create, to produce and to consume' (Chapman & Gant 2007, p. 6) are instinctual. Problematic consumption occurs when individuals do not critique their initial desire instinct.

---

[140] Definition of 'attachment' (noun) from (Merriam-Webster.com 2018).

In response to the 2007 global financial crisis (GFC), our then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gifted every Australian 950 dollars to stimulate the Australian economy. This cash stimulus provided many Australians with an opportunity to buy luxury or non-essential items [141] based on desire, or for aspirational reasons. Twelve years have passed since the GFC and Australian consumers are now more tentative. This curb in spending can be attributed to two factors: an awareness of the environmental and social consequences associated with the production and consumption of product; and job insecurity, wage stagnation and the rising cost of living.

Consumers concerned about the consequences of their buying choices may find assistance through online product transparency tools. I have been using an application (app) on my iPhone for some years now called Shop Ethical! The app was established by an Australian not-for-profit organisation to 'educate and empower people to make shopping choices that better reflect their values and to use their consumer power to create a better world' (Shop Ethical! n.d., para. 2). The app lists supermarket products and rates them based on the parent company's social and environmental track record. One of the most interesting aspects of the app is the complex ownership structure of well-known brands—information not available to consumers at the bricks and mortar point of sale. Shop Ethical! have since extended their offering to include guides on electronics and clothing. Another entrant in the fashion and clothing ethical ranking sector is Good On You—an app that allows individuals to shop for clothing and fashion using social and environmental values as criteria for purchase. Mobile device technology such as Shop Ethical! and Good On You provide additional information relating to the ethics and production methods undertaken by the brands and companies we buy from. This knowledge creates a pre-connection, an appreciation for the effort, labour, and environmental responsibility inherent in the product that is yet to be purchased. Heiskanen and Pantzar refer to this practice as 'self-reflective consumption' (cited in Fuad-Luke 2010, p. 143). Does this knowledge ensure a longer-lasting relationship between the person and the item of cloth or clothing? I do not have the answer to that, however, from a personal perspective I can say that knowing the origin story of cloth and clothing provides a stronger historical product narrative, one that can help to balance values with the inherent human 'please and delight' instinct.

---

[141] There was a spike in large flat-screen television sales due to the Rudd government's stimulus bonus (Kelly 2015, para. 2).

Design and attachment

Jonathan Chapman's *Emotionally Durable Design* (2005) provided an early insight into the psychology of human/product connection. He addresses the importance of strengthening the relationships between people and products and selecting materials that are akin to the product's perceived lifespan. He uses the minidisc player[142]—a personal music device—as an example of poor material choice. The plastic shell protecting the inner workings of the machine is estimated to take 500 years to fully degrade (Chapman 2005, p. 8). The personal minidisc player superseded the Discman in the late 1990s, becoming somewhat redundant with the arrival of the MP3 player, followed by the iPod, the iPhone and other smartphone equivalents. Each time the technology evolves, and a new product emerges, the existing hardware is left vulnerable to detachment (Mugge et al. 2005, p. 39).

I have a Walkman, a minidisc player, an iPod and have owned three iPhones in my lifetime. I still have my Walkman, minidisc player and iPod—I have kept them for sentimental reasons. The Walkman was a gift from my parents in the 1980s—the mini disk player I purchased in Edinburgh in the early 2000s, and the iPod was a gift from my partner. My iPhones (models 3, 4 and 5s) were given to my mother with each upgrade—the two older models were given to my daughter to play with when my mother announced the batteries as being well and truly dead[143]. The portable music devices are no longer used for their intended purpose, but are reminders of times past, such as musical taste in my teens, twenties, and thirties. Schifferstein et al. suggest that memories aid in the attachment we have to products (2004, p. 331). Our brains link ideas together in memory and are therefore hardwired to feel emotion when thinking about or engaging with material objects (Ratey, cited in Newitz 2007, p. 90). My decision to keep the Walkman, minidisc player and iPod are deeply personal. I value these products as aids to memory—this may not be the case for those destined to inherit them. My collection of portable music devices will long outlive my family, and many generations to come—what will become of them, I do not know.

---

[142] In the second edition of *Emotionally Durable Design: Objects, Experiences & Empathy,* Chapman uses the iPod as an example (2015, p. 10).

[143] The two older iPhones were disposed of in an e-waste recycling facility due to one of the lithium ion batteries expanding and cracking the plastic casing. The iPhones were deemed no longer safe to play with.

My 'too expensive to be repaired'[144] washing machine tells a different emotional story. The washing machine was removed (free of charge) when the new one was delivered and installed (free of charge). I asked the delivery men if the old machine would be repaired and sold as a reconditioned model? Their answer was no; it would be discarded. I thought it best to confirm if this were true and sent an email to the brand's customer service email address.

> Hi there,
>
> I recently purchased an *** washing machine after my repairman advised that our *** would be too expensive to fix. I was wondering what typically happens to machines that are collected and taken away by your delivery people—are they reconditioned and sold second hand or disposed of?
>
> Thanks in advance,
>
> Emma

And the reply:

> Dear Emma,
>
> Thank you for your email. We recycle the appliances; strip all the metal so that they do not go to the landfill.
>
> Thanking you, Kindest Regards

This information made me feel slightly less guilty about disposing of a machine that could be fixed (if prepared to spend a considerable amount of money)—however, it still bothered me that the end-of-life strategy for collected appliances was not known by the people responsible for doing so. Chapman believes that many of today's mass-produced products are soulless, making it easy for us to discard them when a 'newer' version comes onto the market (2005, p. 67). Chapman has posited that empathy plays a significant role in maintaining a meaningful relationship with objects (2005)—however, empathy, like all emotions, ebbs and flows over time and will (understandably) be balanced alongside the financial cost of replacement versus repair. I am appreciative of our since-departed washing machine—it routinely washed our clothing and household linen for a good ten years. I too can appreciate the significance of the washing

---

[144] The washing machine was repaired in 2017, costing 280 Australian dollars for labour and parts. The washing machine broke down again—when the problem was described to the repairman over the phone, he felt that the cost of repair outweighed the monetary value of the machine.

machine in emancipating women from the chores of domestic labour. My partner and I did not grow bored with our washing machine, newer models on the market did not tempt us. I did feel a degree of empathy for our washing machine but could not rationalise the expense involved in getting it repaired.

Our departed washing machine falls neatly into Walker's 'characteristic' category of function—social/positional and inspirational/spiritual do not apply[145] (2006b, p. 20). In reference to Savaş's criteria for attachment, the washing machine meets the utility criteria. Of Battarbee and Mattelmäki's meaningful product relationship categories (meaningful tool, meaningful association and living object) meaningful tool is appropriate (2004, p. 338). Chapman's experiential themes[146] narrative, surface, detachment, attachment, fiction, and consciousness do not resonate (2009, p. 32). Overall the washing machine was appreciated for its utilitarian function.

Material objects have aided in sociological exchanges throughout history, and using organic matter as a 'signifier of meaning' is inherent to human nature (Chapman 2015b, p. 68). Consumption in the materialist sense defined by Mathews (2013, pp. 29–33) demonstrates that changes in culture have led to different patterns of consumption. Pre-materialists shared communal, spiritual or religious values whereas materialist values are individualistic, signifying 'financial success, desirable status and power' (Chapman 2015b, p. 68). People have held intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships with and through objects. A more recent phenomenon is extropersonal: a relationship that is 'outwardly personal … denot[ing] a relatedness with the surface or exterior, as distinguished from the mind or spirit' (Brunner, cited in Chapman 2015b, p. 68). This is true of many materialist attachments.

Evocative Objects: Things We Think With, edited by Sherry Turkle (2007) provided a first-hand account of how materially diverse objects and things are used by individuals as aids to memory. Memory and emotion are at the core of Turkle's text—themes range from objects of design and

---

[145] Walker's categories were not created for mass-produced electronic goods such as washing machines. However, they are a useful reference point for critiquing connection' (Walker 2006b, p. 22).

[146] An empirical study undertaken to determine the relational behaviours between people and domestic electronic products (DEP), i.e. laptops, mobile phones, digital cameras etc. during the use phase. The washing machine does not fit the DEP criteria, nor does it correlate to any of the proposed themes. Savaş's categories were developed in reference to industrial goods—despite this, the categories prove to be useful when discussion attachment to cloth and clothing.

play to objects of mourning and memory. Objects span a range of categories, from utilitarian (vacuum cleaner and rolling pin) to health (a single antidepressant tablet) to biological (slime mould). This book provided insights into how others attach to seemingly un-attachable objects and things—reinforcing my view that the criteria for human/object attachment is deeply personal and difficult to generalise. The slipperiness of attachment suggests that designing for long-term human/object attachment (especially in the commercial mass market) is near impossible. Turkle's book provided an example of a broad autobiographical narrative approach, telling stories of how ordinary and extraordinary objects connect to people and ideas (Turkle 2007, p. 5). In the time since collecting the data and preparing the 'Love you' and 'Leave you' booklets, I have read two books that have reaffirmed my decision to use the qualitative biographical narrative method for research. *An Extraordinary Theory of Objects* by Stephanie LaCava (2013) and *The Promise of Things* by Ruth Quibell (2016). Quibell's book provided a sociologist's insight into the power of objects; the irrational hold they have over us, and why we keep them beyond their useful lives. LaCava's book provided an autobiographical account of how objects can provide comfort and support in times of difficulty.

'Love you or leave you' provided the opportunity to talk to people about their connection to material objects. The project has given me a greater appreciation for the power of textiles, through colour, texture and function—and their ability to embody memories and therefore connections to people and periods in time. Rebecca Solnit suggests, 'there might be another type of materialism that is simply a deep pleasure in materials, in the gleam of water as well as silver, the sparkle of dew as well as diamonds' (cited in Quibell 2016, p. 17). This is an example of post-materialism[147]—being able to experience material objects for their ability to make us think, feel and do. The transition to a 'post-material making' practice requires determination and the space to engage with materials and objects from multiple vantage points. Too much of contemporary design practice is linear, a race to retail. Post-material making takes the time to stop, think, reflect then do.

In my early literature review, I stumbled across a book titled *Design and Emotion* (McDonagh et al. 2004), an edited collection of proceedings from the 2002 Design and Emotion Society's international conference. A small paper by Özlem Savaş (2004) under the subheading

---

[147] In reference to Mathews (2013 pp. 33–34).

'Attachment' caught my attention. Savaş used a mixture of open-ended and closed-ended questions to determine how people living in Ankara, Turkey, feel attached to or detached from functional products such as cars, furniture, computers, sporting equipment, white goods and televisions.

Collecting stories from others

In 2013 I adapted Savaş's categories and prepared a list of questions for a series of semi-structured interviews with textile designers (commercial, designer-maker and artists) and consumers of cloth and clothing, about their attachment and detachment to cloth and clothing. The questions were asked in chronological order[148]. If appropriate, new questions were posed to clarify or expand on the initial questions asked. People from my professional network and friendship group were invited to take part. The decision to work with peers and friends allowed for a more relaxed interview. Fragments of prior conversations and a mutual awareness of ideas and events permeated the interviews. The study was limited to five textile designers and five non-textile designers. The decision to explicitly target both designers and non-designers was to see if the language used in conversation varied, or if one particular group used emotional terminology more so than the other. The textile designers and non-textile designers were all Melbourne-based, except Andrea Shaw who at the time was living in Bendigo, a regional city in the state of Victoria. At the initial planning stage, participants were shortlisted to ensure a balance of age, gender, and varied occupation. The ethics-approved plain-language statement[149] made it clear that participants could opt out of the project at any time.

The interviews were recorded on my iPhone 5s and transcribed without software. The transcript is punctuated with laughter, pauses and broken sentences in an attempt to capture the tone of the conversations as accurately as possible. It was always my intention to include photographs of the participants as part of the research. Viewing the participant with his or her loved textile item helps to extend the conversational narrative, providing the reader with a visual representation of a sensory object. In 'A visual methodology: toward a more seeing research' the author reinforces the power of images by stating, 'pictures can offer us ideas and an irreducible experience that cannot be restated or translated into linguistic terms (Schwartz, cited in Prosser 2011, p. 481). The photographs help to answer any additional questions the reader may have

---

[148] Refer to appendix A.5 for complete list of questions.
[149] Refer to appendix A.2.

about the participant and their textile item. The first question, 'What do you do for a living?' provides background into the individual's life, their place of work and routine. The interviews were summarised and written up as two separate booklets. 'Love you' details the attachment experience with cloth or clothing, whereas 'Leave you' details detachment. The attachment and detachment criteria, along with a definition of haptics[150] were provided during the interview process. The criteria provided a reference for participants to consider when articulating their reasons for feeling attached to and detached from their cloth or clothing. Participants were able to refer to this document at any stage during the interview.

At the end of 2013, Mardiana Sani was employed (once again) to take portrait photographs of the participants engaging with their loved textile item. Initially, I was planning to up-cycle the unwanted items—some participants were happy for me to do so, others not. After reading the literature and reflecting on the interview conversations, I decided that making with textiles was not critical to the research. Instead, I decided to take photographs of the unloved items and include them as part of the 'Leave you' narrative. The booklets were put together using Adobe Photoshop and InDesign and were printed by a bureau in Brunswick, Melbourne.

The books were available to read at Clever Polly's, a natural wine bar located on Victoria Street in West Melbourne as part of the 2015 Melbourne Spring Fashion Week curated program (Figure 5.2).

---

[150] Refer to appendix A.5.
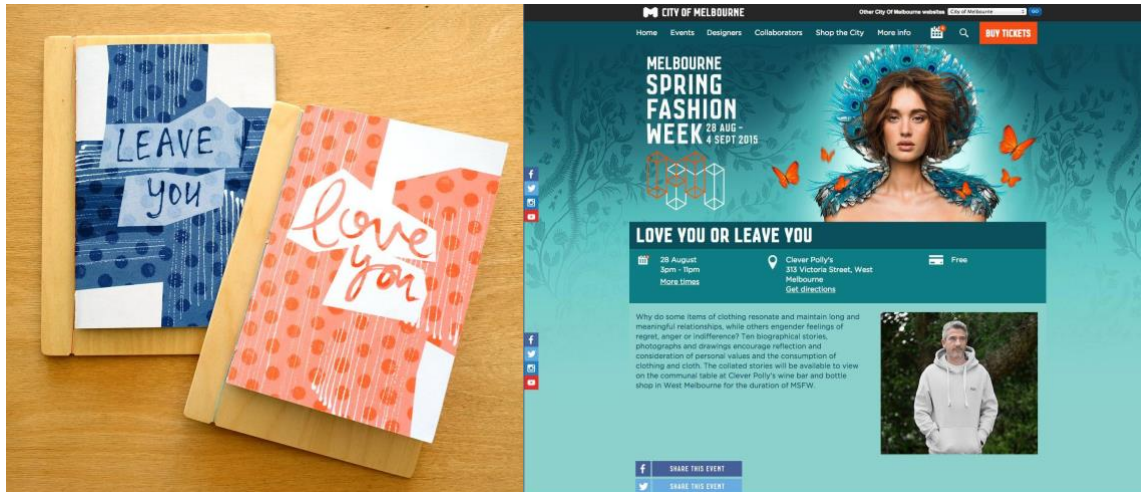
Figure 5.2 *The booklets (left) were available to read at Clever Polly's in West Melbourne as part of Melbourne Spring Fashion Week, 2015. (Right) screen grab of the Melbourne Spring Fashion Festival website, 20 August 2015*

Love you findings

The 'Love you' booklets (appendix C.1) detail each participants attachment to textile items based on the criteria adapted from Savaş (2004). To follow is a summary of the participants reasons for attachment in reference to the criteria, followed by an analysis on product attachment informed by the literature.

Attachment

The past: family heirloom, gift from a family member, memories of people and past events, habitual ownership

Experience: enjoyment, generates desirable feelings, independence, confidence, release

Utilitarian: usefulness, tool of trade, performance

Personal being: reflection of self, symbolises values

Social being: social status, brand standing, social identifier—group or culture

Form: style, colour, visual quality, ambience created

The stories have been analysed to determine their hierarchy of attachment relevance:

Form = 8 responses

The form; the orange contrasted with the black and the slim fit (Smith 2013).

The colour and texture of the embroidery combined with the shape and scale of the bag ...

the embroidery and the colour are both intrinsically related to who she is (Thorne 2013).

The form too plays a part in the transition to rest; the light grey fabric and slim fit make it easy to wear (Miller 2013).

The style, the neutral colour and slim fit (Dryne 2013).

The colour and visual quality, the ambience it creates (White 2013).

Form, style and visual quality—'its sense of materiality...quality... it's been invested with something right from the beginning' (Snelling 2013).

The form; the colour of the lining—the intense hot pink against the black wool crepe is striking and delicious. The tailoring is flattering and fits Assimina like a glove. The cut is unusual—slightly theatrical without being over the top (Semertjis 2013).

The colours, textures and handmade style (Newton 2013).

Experience = 8 responses

The experience also rings true, as there is a slight feeling of independence associated with wearing the jacket (Semertjis 2013).

A treasure to be admired and a touchstone for contemplation (Thorne 2013).

The hoody plays in the ritualistic process of unwinding after work (Miller 2013).

The act of snuggling into the thick quilted fabric is comforting both physically and emotionally (Shaw 2013).

The enjoyment it gives her and the comfort it provided during a time of convalescence (White 2013).

At the time it instilled a sense of independence and confidence, wearing it now does the same (Semertjis 2013).

Its ability to generate desirable feelings ... acquired independence (Paolacci 2013).

A ... comforting friend (Newton 2013).

The past = 6 responses

Its ability to remind him of his mother (Smith 2013).

The colours, patterns and textures are reminiscent of childhood (White 2013).

A blanket that originally belonged to her grandmother (Shaw 2013).

But also the fact that it's a sort of historical signature for me being in textiles, from one place to another ... 1998 was also a happy time in Patrick's life; the jacket, therefore, acts as an aid to memory (Snelling 2013).

Reminds her of her parents ... her unorthodox childhood, being the different kid at primary school, and embracing this difference as a teenager (Paolacci 2013).

Makes her feel close to her family when they are rarely close by ... The cushion is part of their collective history ... It's a reminder of our travels together (Newton 2013).Personal being = 3 responses

Appreciation for textiles and artisan techniques ... traceability and transparency of the making process... there is more to working as a textile designer than profit margins, trends and moving stock (Thorne 2013).

Symbolising the values Ilka lives by—thrift, resourcefulness, handmade, vernacular design, saving and storing (White 2013).

Its sense of materiality ... quality... it's been invested with something right from the beginning ... quality and ... craftsmanship (Snelling 2013).

Utilitarian = 3 responses

Adaptable ... practical (Dryne 2013).

Versatility (Paolacci 2013).

Functional; it's malleable (Newton 2013).

Social being = 1 response

Family, friends and peers could also appreciate the labour and skill involved (White 2013).

Love you analysis

It is not surprising that 'Form' came in at number one (equal with 'Experience') and 'Utilitarian' number five. Jordan notes 'functionality, usability and pleasure' (2000, p. 6) as the order of consumer product need. Living in a developed country enables people to seek pleasure in objects that once may have been valued for utility alone—perhaps utility is now an expected norm. Western consumers have been conditioned to experience, and therefore expect, all three performance aspects in their material purchases. Niinimäki and Koskinen identify intrinsic quality, aesthetical dimensions and functionality as being key to establishing long-term use of textiles and clothing (2011, p. 173, 182).

It is well known within textile design that colour is a powerful design element—it has the ability to persuade our rational selves to make a less objective purchase. We feel colour, it resonates with something deep in our subconscious and has the ability to relegate the more objective 'function' to a position lower on the ladder of importance. Colour preferences are deeply personal and bound up in culture and personal experience. However, the power of trends and marketing can influence our subconscious to choose one colour over another. The latest colour trends in fashion and homewares are presented to us via beautifully styled photographs and videos. This form of aspirational persuasion plays on our vulnerability with respect to personal and social being. Colour has the ability to maintain a connection as seen in the 'Love you'

examples above. 'Beauty, style, colour, fit and positive tactile experience' were listed as key aesthetic reasons for long term use in Niinimäki and Koskinen's 2010 study (2011, p. 173).

It is interesting to note that three of the men interviewed were appreciative of the 'slim fit' associated with their respective garments. In this context, form was understood as comfort alongside the visual quality of the garment as identified in the criterion descriptor.

The categories of 'Experience', 'The past' and 'Personal' relate to subjective experiences. The textile items are signifiers of memorable or desirable times in the participant's life, mirroring the findings in Niinimäki and Koskinen's 2009 study:

> Emotional value also emerges through memories that are linked to particular places, situations or life stages such as one's own childhood or even life achievements (2011, p. 169).

The textile items are agents of transition enabling the individual to shift from one mental/physical state to another. They are conduits to people—both alive and deceased. Niinimäki and Koskinen's 2009 study suggests this also:

> The oldest garments or textiles carried a strong connection to a particular person: they could be inherited, a present or simply represent a memory of someone close, be they mother, grandmother, father, another relative or a friend (2011, p. 169).

Fletcher's *Craft of Use: Post Growth Fashion* (2016) also suggests the power of textiles to connect to people. The majority of participants featured in Fletchers' book value their garments/accessories based on their ability to connect with family, friends and particular moments in time. McDonagh-Philp and Lebbon refer to this form of attachment as soft functionality; 'emotional needs and other intangible, qualitative aspects that affect the relationship of the user with the product' (cited in McDonagh et al. 2002, p. 231). Chapman's study into the 'behaviours of 2,154 respondents with their [domestic electronic products] during the use phase' (2009, p. 32) established that narrative is an important role in establishing a connection; 'narrative: users share a unique personal history with the product; this often relates to when, how, and from whom the object was acquired' (Chapman 2009, p. 33). Janet Hoskins suggests, 'some objects attain an intimacy in our lives whereby they become "biographical objects" through which we "develop … [our] personalities and reflect on them"' (cited in Quibell

2016, p. 86). Schifferstein et al. suggest products that evoke enjoyment, sensory and aesthetic pleasures are more likely to resonate long-term with users (2004, p. 331).

Two textile designers and one-textile artist selected 'Personal being' as a reason for attachment. The textile items were reflective of personal and professional values, traditional techniques, resourcefulness, quality and craftsmanship. Ilka White, a textile artist, was the only participant to nominate social being as a reason for attachment. Ilka lives by her values, and those values are very much shared by those in her friendship group—therefore it is not surprising that the textile be considered a social identifier.

Leave you findings

The 'Leave you' booklets (appendix C.2) detail each participants detachment from textile items based on the criteria adapted from Savaş (2004). To follow is a summary of the participants reasons for detachment in reference to the criteria, followed by an analysis on product detachment informed by the literature.

> **Detachment**
>
> **Utilitarian**: poor quality and or performance, inadequate operation
>
> **Personal being**: dislike or boredom, poor reflection of self
>
> **Social being**: shows individual belongs to an undesirable class or represents previous identity
>
> **Form**: physical element and style
>
> **Purchase:** superfluous products purchased without need, feelings of disappointment when using product
>
> **Environmental**: living conditions, changes in individual's life

The stories have been analysed to determine the hierarchy of detachment relevance.

> **Personal being** = 8 responses
>
> Tas isn't interested in sport, and the suggestion that he might be due to the styling of the jacket makes him feel uncomfortable and not himself (Smith 2013).
>
> I'm not fully detached from it, but I'm detached from that process of fast fashion (Thorne 2013).
>
> He is not someone that likes to be the centre of attention ... 'it's whiter than paper!' ... He feels too visible (Dryne 2013).

Chain stores and commercial overproduction, and exploitation, and environmental irresponsibility … this garment … speaks of all those things really loud and clear to me (White 2013).

It's not offensive but it's not lovable, it actually has no meaning to me whatsoever … This cushion represents an unconsidered choice, and therefore a poor reflection of self (Shaw 2013).

It is not something she would wear. What puzzles Assimina more than the headband itself is why her friend gave it to her in the first place; what was she thinking? (Semertjis 2013).

It initially made me cringe a bit because it reminded me of some of the excesses in behaviour … it's not about ignoring that part of my life, but it's about being at peace with it … sort of, almost, symbolically letting go of some of the objects of that time (Paolacci 2013).

It is poorly made and does nothing to reflect Julie's values or taste (Newton 2013).

Form = 5 responses

Dislikes the branding on the front and back, as well as the colour, 'it's whiter than paper!' (Dryne 2013).

The gathering at the shoulder and centre front, refer back to fashion eras that just don't apply to jersey … I don't like that clash of design elements (White 2013).

The style and fit are no longer suitable (Snelling 2013).

It is not something she would wear (Semertjis 2013).

The graphic looks like it was created with an Adobe Illustrator distress effect—easily done, with no design input required. The print is rough and heavy to the touch suggesting the wrong type of ink was used. The black overlocked seams and hacked off sleeves are ill-conceived and badly finished (Newton 2013).

Utilitarian = 4 responses

The porous texture of the fabric attracts dirt and concrete dust; unable to breathe, the shirt becomes hot, sweaty, sticky and itchy (Miller 2013).

Poor serviceability, essentially a blank canvas just waiting to showcase spills and stains (Dryne 2013).

The cuffs are too tight, threatening to cut off her circulation (White 2013).

I like to be able to put my hands straight into the pockets; it always bugged me that I could feel the zipper against my hand while I walked (Smith 2013).

Purchase = 2 responses

He doesn't feel himself and can never seem to settle into it (Smith 2013).

He admits that it was a spontaneous purchase despite three years of looking (Dryne 2013).

Social Being = 1 response

This is a classic example of fast fashion—manufactured on the cheap with no respect to quality, materiality or attention to detail (Newton 2013).

Environmental = 0 responses

Leave you analysis

Reasons to do with 'Personal being' and poor reflection of self were the most common cause for detachment. One textile designer and one textile artist expressed detachment due to undesirable manufacturing processes inherent to the Fast fashion model. Two participants expressed an overwhelming sense of exasperation as to why they were given their respective gifts. Sherry separates the process of gift-giving into three categories 'Gestation, Prestation, and Reformulation' (1983, P. 162). The reformulation stage is defined below:

> During [the reformulation] time, attention is focused on the disposition of the gift, which is subject to consumption, display, or storage. It may also be exchanged (i.e., returned or redistributed) or rejected. In the process of disposition, the gift becomes a vehicle by which the relationship of the donor and the recipient is realigned. The social bond may be strengthened, affirmed, attenuated, or severed in accordance with the partners' assessments of reciprocal balance (Sherry 1983, p. 165).

In the case of the headband (a gift from a friend), the relationship may have been attenuated. The sleeveless top (a gift from a retailer) was unwelcome and therefore severed an already troubled transactional relationship. Sherry et al. describe the emotions associated with receiving an unwanted or inappropriate gift below:

> The wrong gift may be a 'waste': it 'disappoints', 'frustrates', 'annoys', 'upsets', 'embarrasses', 'disheartens', and 'hurts'. Even worse, it is 'impersonal' or 'thoughtless'. Recipients may feel that 'it makes me feel unknown' or 'does not contain caring' (1993, p. 229).

The research suggests that objects can provide an emotional link to people and place. However, for gifts to develop a strong attachment with their owner they must reflect the owner's personal identity (Schifferstein 2004, p. 331) and/or values.

With regard to 'Form', colour is stated only once as a reason for detachment. This could be partly due to colour not being listed as a reason for detachment (it was listed as a reason for attachment in the attachment criteria). Discomfort and a dislike of the physical elements and style were the primary reasons given. Disconnection due to utility ('Utilitarian') relates to discomfort and serviceability—sitting higher on the detachment criteria than attachment. Low-durability and poor quality were reasons for detachment resulting in short term use of clothing according to Niinimäki and Koskinen's 2009 study (2010, p.174).

I was surprised to find none of the participants selected 'Environmental' as a reason for detachment. Perhaps this is due to having available storage to accommodate unloved textile items, and therefore the pressure to move them on is negated. Our homes are typically larger than they used to be[151], therefore individuals are storing rather than discarding, as suggested by three of the participants to follow:

> With the space to store things, Patrick has never had any cause to part with the jeans (Snelling 2013).
> Ben has the room to store it, so store it he will (Dryne 2013).
> Prior to the interview, the jacket was in a bag with other textile items too precious and personal to take to the op shop (Paolacci 2013).

Storing extends to loved items also—Evans and Cooper suggest that being attached to objects does not necessitate use, 'attachment merely [leads] to accumulation and storage of seldom-used items' (cited in Fletcher 2016, p. 211). An extract from the 'Leave you' booklet illustrates this well:

> Well, I don't need them but I don't want to throw them away, I'm caught in a quandary between the two things (Snelling 2013).

Despite the participants being detached from the objects discussed, the detachment did not equate to a need to be physically separated from the items in question. Seven of the participants suggested they would keep their items. When pressed, three stated they would donate to

---

[151] According to Hamilton et al. 'during a time when the average number of people in each [Australian] household has been shrinking, the average size of new houses has been expanding from 40 square metres per person in 1970 to 85 square metres per person today' (2005, p. 5).

charity. Two participants intended to keep their respective items in the hope that one day they would be desirable again. One participant intended to use the textile item as an ingredient in a craft project, and another suggested she would pass it onto someone else or donate to charity. One participant felt she needed to give her textile item to someone via a face-to-face transaction—she needed to tell the item's story. One participant was committed to wearing the item despite being disconnected from its manufacturing process, and another felt the only feasible option for her gifted t-shirt was to donate it to charity. It is unclear as to where the items donated to charity will end up—statistics shared in the introduction identified that charity organisations are burdened with second-hand items that are unsuitable for resale. Donating to charity is a charitable act—but one that should not be devoid of responsibility on behalf of all involved in the production and use of textiles, cloth and clothing. Greg's polyester polo top was the only item destined for landfill. Its material makeup and embroidered company logo rendered it unsuitable for alternative uses.

In summary

The examples in 'Love you or leave you' illustrate how textiles can act as conduits to people past and present, or as aids to memory—triggering desirable moments in one's past. The language used by participants varied, based on individual personality. Emotional terminology was used by both groups (textile designers/artists and consumers of cloth and clothing), however, I would say that three of the textile specialists and one of the textile users engaged with the subject matter more deeply than the other participants.

Designers cannot design to ensure products maintain long and meaningful relationships as stated by Chapman below[152]:

> Although a designer can certainly elicit within users an emotional response to a given object, the explicit nature of the response is beyond the designer's control; the unique assemblage of past experiences that is particular to each user, their cultural background and life journey determines this. Designers cannot craft an experience but only the conditions or levers that might lead to an intended experience. What those required conditions are, however, is still unclear to design (cited in Fletcher 2016, p. 211).

---

[152] This viewpoint is reiterated by Mugge et al. (2005, p. 42).

Niinimäki and Koskinen suggest another way to strengthen product attachment and defer product replacement is through customer interaction using design strategies such as 'half way products, modular structures, customization, co-creation, and design services' (2011, p. 177).

There is immense benefit in the act of talking to people about how they connect with and use textiles in their daily lives. This interaction takes the designer out of their traditional practice of making and/or designing—either as a designer-maker (working alone or with a small group of people) or as a commercial designer (working as part of a team) to a place where people are using textiles. The 'Love you or leave you' project captured first-hand accounts, of how, and why people value textiles—proving that textiles are indeed agents for human connection.

The research suggests that 'visual appeal' is a strong contributing factor to connection. Much of the textile designer's time is devoted to form: style, colour, visual quality, ambience created as defined in the 'Love you' category definitions. One of the participants expressed detachment due to colour—however, this detachment related to serviceability and personal being. A 'post-material making' approach to colour may entail a more local, personal approach to colour, one informed by experience and relationships, memories and connections to people and place.

Conversing with people and preparing the 'Love you or leave you' booklets has given me a greater appreciation for the power of textiles to initiate visceral experiences, and to embody memories and therefore connections to people, place and periods in time. This research proved to be an invaluable stepping-stone for the next phase of the research: 'Araluen, working with people for people'.

The world has great and increasing expectations of design and its capacity to mould how we live, work, play and survive into the future. Of course design continues to be an aesthetic and material domain of concerns, but it is also more (Vaughan 2017, p. 1).

6.0 Araluen, a project with people for people:
connecting with people through materials

'Araluen, a project with people for people' tells the story of two RMIT University BA (Textile Design) collaborations with Araluen, a Melbourne-based not-for-profit support service for adults with intellectual disabilities. Both projects were run as undergraduate studios and were not designed and implemented as research projects. Instead, I have used the two projects as a case study to unpack. The chapter charts the inception and execution of the first project undertaken in 2012 and the expansion and growth of the second in 2015. Both projects were guided by co-design practices and include many sustainability-minded design principles such as zero waste design and local production. The two projects provide a useful reference when exploring the potential for textile design to use the principles of connection to shift emphasis from lonely design for unknown markets to face-to-face design for local markets. The chapter includes my reflections on the success and challenges of the projects alongside those of BA (Textile Design) students who participated in both the 2012 and 2015 projects. Refer to the table[153] below (Figure 6.1) for the: key focus (feeling, thinking and doing) specific to the 'Araluen' project.

Initial intent:	To reflect on the two Araluen projects as a way to articulate the merits of co-design practice using textiles as a conduit for connection.
Theoretical / visual themes:	Co-design, Heidegger's understanding of anxiety, and Critchley's analogy of the 'tide going out … revealing a self stranded on the strand' (2009a, para. 8) to provide perspective, context and clarity around reasons for practice.
People:	Project participants: RMIT University BA (Textile Design) undergraduates and alumni, Araluen artists and staff, RMIT University undergraduate business and communication design students and staff.
Materials:	Used by students: textiles, plastics, pigments, binders, wood, metal.
Place:	Melbourne, Australia.
Skill:	Reflective practice, interviewing participants, transcribing conversations, positioning the projects within the literature.
Tools	iPhone with audio recording software, laptop.
Key methods:	Talking, transcribing, writing, reflecting, gathering.
Actors:	RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students and alumni.
Pivotal moments:	Conversing with participants during small group interviews about their experiences of working on the projects.
Lack:	This project was written as a reflective account using participant interviews to supplement my own records: project documents, emails, reflections, photographs and notes. Data was not explicitly collected during the 2012 and 2015 projects for the specific purpose of research.

---

[153] Adapted from Vuletich (2015, p. 121).

Transformation of materials or self:	Acknowledging the limitations or weak points in the projects as areas for closer observation and attention. Reflecting on teaching as a way to assess the benefits of 'post-material making' in undergraduate education.
Feelings and outcomes:	Hesitation in exposing flaws in teaching practice.
Connections made:	People to materials, people to people, people to people via materials.
Contributions made:	• Provides an example of 'post-material making' in an undergraduate studio and workshop context that connects people through materials. • Highlights the importance of fostering undergraduate emotional and 'textile intelligence' in 'post-material making' pedagogical contexts. • Identifies potential process or service orientated roles for textile designers in professional contexts that address connection rather than design for consumption.

Figure 6.1 *Key focus (feeling/thinking/doing) specific to the 'Araluen' project*

2012

In 2012, Luise Adams (BA (Textile Design) lecturer), Lara Hynes (the manager of the Araluen Art Connects program) and I developed a collaborative learning studio for second year RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students and Araluen artists[154]. The project brief required students to develop artwork with an Araluen artist and develop an apron and tea towel set to be gifted to financial supporters of the Araluen Art Connects program.

The premise behind the studio was to design with people, for people—to relax the traditional order of textile design practice and to be guided by intuition and play while employing materials and design techniques inherent to the discipline. The outcome for Araluen was a limited edition of zero waste, digitally printed, handmade kitchen gift sets consisting of apron and tea towel, featuring artwork developed by Araluen Artists and BA (Textile Design) students.

The Araluen project appealed to me for reasons that were not terribly explicit at the time. I liked the idea of being free from market segmentation and design trends and prioritising free play as part of the design process. I liked the idea of working with the Araluen artists, and providing

---

[154] The Araluen artists were active participants in Araluen's Art Connects program. Refer to the following link for more information <https://www.araluen.org/supports/art-connects/>.

students with the opportunity to work collaboratively and intuitively. The collaboration provided an opportunity to extend some of the ideas and methods of practice trialled and developed in an early community-based project with Lifeline[155].

The studio project commenced in the latter half of the second semester, with approximately twenty-six BA (Textile Design) students over a seven-week teaching period. The project ran across two courses: Textile Studio 2B (six teacher-directed hours[156] per week, led by me) and Computer-aided Textile Design 2B (three teacher-directed hours per week, led by Luise Adams).

Luise and I knew the twenty-six students well; I had taught them in their first year and we had both taught them in first semester of their second year. Likewise, the students knew each other—we shared a history, working together on design projects throughout the whole of first year and the first half of second year.

To commence the project, the BA (Textile Design) students visited the Araluen art studio to undertake a collaborative art-making activity titled 'Meet me in the middle'. Students received information about their artist[157] to help them prepare for their collaborative art-making session. This seemed to me to be a critical aspect of the activity—by learning a little about the artist (example of artwork, personal interests, preferred subject matter, mediums and ice-breaker topics) students could prepare themselves to make the most of the two-hour creative session. During the 'Meet me in the middle' activity, Araluen artists were positioned on one side of the table and BA (Textile Design) students on the other (Figure 6.2 and 6.3). Together they drew, painted, chatted and created with little-to-no idea of the outcome. The process was very loose and spontaneous, entirely different to the usual process of designing with a theme, colour palette and real or fictitious client. The artwork generated by the artist (as a part of their

---

[155] Lifeline is a national charity providing Australians with access to a 24-hour crisis support, and a suicide prevention service. Lifeline operates a number of charity stores across Australia—the money raised from the sale of goods supports the service. The 2010 collaboration required BA (Textile Design) students to develop making kits using textiles from the Morwell store in Victoria. The central aim of the project was to develop a system utilising textile making as a way to facilitate community engagement.

[156] RMIT University denotes study time as teacher-directed hours (class time), and learner-directed hours (self-directed learning).

[157] The artists who participated in the 'Meet me in the middle' activity had already established a regular practice at Araluen and had exhibited their work as part of the Araluen Art Connects program.

practice) along with the 'Meet me in the middle' artwork formed the basis for a series of engineered prints, and pattern repeats.

The 'Meet me in the middle' activity forced many students to confront some of their insecurities around mark-making using traditional media. The BA (Textile Design) curriculum encourages design process: primary and secondary research, understanding the market and precepts, developing colour palettes, testing and trialling for aesthetics and market appropriateness. The 'Meet me in the middle' activity required students to disengage this part of their process, to go with the flow, be free and open to unpredictable outcomes.

Figure 6.2 *Araluen artist (left) and RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student (right) working intuitively, 2012*

Some students were engaged from the beginning—whether due to a natural 'click' between artist and student, or a preference for a more intuitive mark-making process. Others required a gentle nudge of encouragement from RMIT University lecturers or Araluen staff. The activity was significant for two key reasons:

- It brought people together. It provided BA (Textile Design) students and Araluen artists the opportunity to work together, to chat if they desired, or to practice quietly in creative company.
- It resulted in the production of artwork using traditional media that could be scanned, engineered, digitally printed, cut and sewn into limited edition apron and tea towel sets.

In 2016 I conducted a group discussion with student participants from the 2012 and 2015 projects. Participants were invited to take part due to their observed engagement in the collaboration. To follow are two student reflections on the 2012 'Meet me in the middle' experience:

I remember being really scared … [people were saying] like, 'Oh-oh, you're you with her?' … I felt like if I moved the wrong way something might kick off you know, so I was a bit 'is she going to be alright? Is she going to be mean to me?' She was totally fine … like an angel … maybe I didn't need the warning … I know people were just trying to help and prepare me … in case she wasn't super friendly or something, but she was fine … I felt like I got heaps out of that project … I guess … [I] can be a little stiff in my handwriting (or I was), and it really loosened me up … it really, like, got me involved in watercolours cos she was using her hands, and just really super tactile and just pouring this and that, and no rules at all and it was really nice to let go in that way, so I really enjoyed it … I did bring some inks and salt and stuff like that to play with, and I got told that the … artist liked … animals so I brought some … encyclopedias … kid's encyclopedias with animal pictures in them and I remember asking her what her favourite animals were and she said 'Birds' … so I was … looking at all the birds, and that was our inspiration … I don't know if she actually, used it in the way that I did— cos I was looking at the colours … to guide me … I think it was just a way to talk to her … maybe she was looking at it in her own way; I don't know.… I could see her trying to imitate little different things I was doing, so we were working on one piece of paper at different ends … I could feel … she just wanted to fill, she was like, filling things in, painting things in and … [and] I might do an inky [mark], like put the salt on and, and, she would have a go, she'd have a go, but then she'd go back to the way she was doing stuff (A2012_1, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

I just remembered the person mainly, um because he was really enthusiastic and chatty … he just loved doing lots of drawing and painting, so it was easy, we just talked about stuff … I remember the colours because he was a little bit particular about the colours that he wanted to use … I don't mean this to be in a condescending way, but it was, it was like, sort of being like a child again, you get a big piece of paper, and you share it, and the paints, and that kind of thing … it was freeing … I was told that he loved trucks, so I took pictures of trucks and tea cups and pots…but I don't think I really needed it once I got there, he was naturally already talking about trucks, rubbish trucks … and the night before there was a storm so everything was windy and he was talking about leaves … that seemed the obvious place to start, and I think he was instructing me a little bit he'd say, 'draw some leaves', and he'd say 'I like leaves' so we kept drawing leaves … so I'd draw leaves with my textas, and then he'd paint over them and at first, I was like 'aghh' … you have to get used to people

actually drawing on your stuff ... but then he had a little section, and I had a section and then sometimes it crossed over (Figure 6.3) (A2012_2, 2016, pers .conv., 28 October).

Figure 6.3 RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student (left) and Araluen artist (right) engaged in 'Meet me in the middle'. Araluen artist painting over the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student's drawing, 2012

One of my fondest memories was watching a student in conversation with her fellow artist. The artist told stories of her time as a little girl visiting the elephant at the zoo; the student listened and followed by sharing her memories of visiting the zoo. Together they chatted and painted elephants (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 *RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student (left) and Araluen artist (right) engaged in the 'Meet me in the middle' activity, 2012*

One of the requirements of the project was for BA (Textile Design) students to develop a series of croquis[158] in reference to the experience of working with their artist—the actual process of making work (working intuitively, going with the flow)—or their choice of materials/mark-making techniques, or motif/visual reference. The above-mentioned BA (Textile Design) student's croquis were soft, hand-painted illustrations of zoo animals—gentle, quiet and washy—in pastel colours. The croquis conveyed a sense of innocence and freedom of spirit, not directly related to any secondary visual reference that is usually collected, studied and interpreted. The work was fresh, and due to my role as facilitator, I could see the influence of the 'Meet me in the middle' experience in the work. The BA (Textile Design) student's engineered artwork was selected by Araluen to take through to production (Figure 6.5).

---

[158] Croquis is a term used to describe a paper-based design idea for a print outcome. It is derived from the French word meaning 'to sketch'.

Figure 6.5 Artwork digitally engineered into tea towel and apron templates and digitally printed at RMIT University, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

As part of the BA (textile design) project, students were required to work in small groups to develop a tea towel and apron pattern template with the aim of minimising fabric waste[159]. The students were given a template— one and a half metres by twenty metres—to fit twenty aprons and twenty tea towels. Each group pitched their concept, the class voted, and one concept was selected. The concept was fine-tuned and used as the master template for engineering design work in Adobe Illustrator. The files were uploaded and digitally printed using water-based pigment onto one hundred percent linen fabric at RMIT University (Figures 6.5–6.7). The printed lengths were cut and sewn by BA (Textile Design) students using the RMIT University fashion facilities (Figures 6.8–6.9).
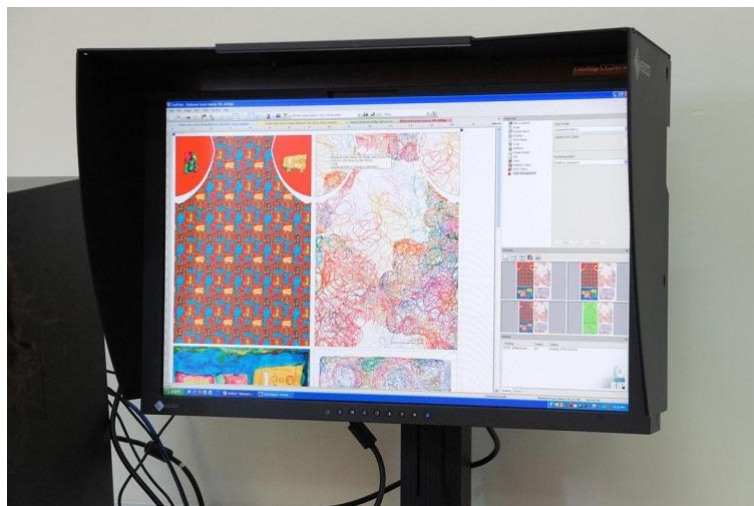
Figure 6.6 Files placed in the queue ready for digital printing, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

[159] The final production run produced some waste during the cut and sew phase.

Figure 6.7 *Apron components being printed, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012*
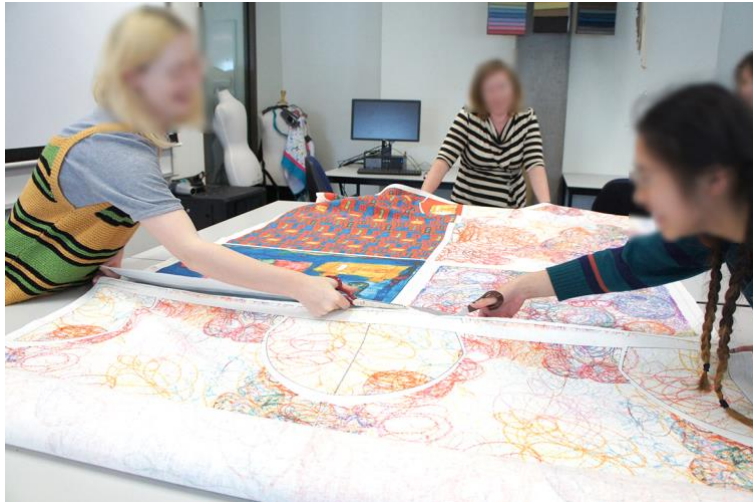
Figure 6.8 *RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students cutting out the pattern pieces ready for assembly, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012*

Figure 6.9 RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student production team assembling the tea towels and aprons in the RMIT University fashion workshop. The apron straps were made from cotton tape. The aprons and tea towels were sewn using polyester/cotton thread, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

The packaging team developed the artwork and protective cardboard sleeves for the aprons and tea towels, and carefully folded the textile items ready for assembly (Figures 6.10 and 6.11). The final collection (Figure 6.12 and 6.13) was well received by Araluen staff and artists.

Figure 6.10 RMIT University BA (Textile Design) packaging team printing and cutting out packaging in preparation for assembly, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

Figure 6.11 Tea towels and aprons folded ready to be packaged, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

Figure 6.12 Completed apron and tea towel, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

Figure 6.13 Packaged gift sets, photograph by Amanda Magnano, 2012

The BA (Textile Design) students delivered the gift sets on time with outstanding results. They worked as a team, although not always cooperatively, nor did each member contribute equally. However, those in leadership positions and those who took on additional responsibility helped steer the project in the right direction.

2013-2014

In the years to follow, Luise and I would often talk about the Araluen project with fondness. The project was challenging from a financial perspective—there was a lot of pro bono work on behalf of staff, technicians and key students to get the product into the hands of Araluen. We both agreed that if we were to do it again, we would need some financial backing. In 2014 Luise applied for funding from the Victorian government[160] to initiate another collaboration with Araluen. A requirement of the grant was to engage with other disciplines and local businesses. Luise successfully secured partnerships with RMIT University Bachelor of Design (Communication Design) and Bachelor of Business programs alongside local digital fabric printing bureau Frankie and Swiss. Luise's proposal secured the ten-thousand-dollar government grant we felt necessary to run the project again.

2015

I joined the conversation in March 2015 after returning from twelve-months maternity leave. My role was to bring the project together in a way that allowed each program the opportunity to deliver what needed to be delivered (with respect to course guides) and to meet Araluen's requirements, within Frankie and Swiss's busy schedule. To make things a little more complicated, the second year BA (Textile Design) course had changed since 2012. It had grown from a twelve-credit point course to a twenty-four-credit point course incorporating a four-hour teacher directed studio and a four-hour teacher directed workshop comprised of print, knit and weave delivery and practice. The project was scheduled to begin at the beginning of second semester, with approximately twenty-seven BA (Textile Design) students over a period of seven teaching weeks. Since returning from maternity leave, my teaching responsibilities had shifted solely to first year—therefore my involvement in second year was minimal—to facilitate and teach Phase 1 of the Araluen studio project.

---

[160] The application was made to the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, as part of the Future Designers program.

The 2012 project model was adapted to accommodate the three undergraduate programs. The collaborative elements were scheduled to take place in the allocated studio hours of the twenty-four-credit point course. We titled this part of the project 'Phase 1: the immediate need'. The challenge was to develop a meaningful project for students to extend their practical designing and making skills in their respective workshop areas, we titled this 'Phase 2: the long-term need'.

BA (Textile Design) students were essentially working on two projects within one course. Phase 1 (collaboration with Araluen, Frankie and Swiss, RMIT University Business and Communication Design students, plus independent studio practice) and Phase 2 (collaboration with BA [Textile Design] peers and independent workshop practice).

This was quite a lot to accommodate in one seven-week project. Not only was there an increase in stakeholders (Frankie and Swiss, RMIT University: Communication Design and Business, and the Victorian state Government), but there was also an inconsistency with the timeline. BA (Textile Design) were committed for seven weeks only—another industry project was scheduled for the second half of the semester. RMIT University Communication Design and Business were able to commit to the full twelve-week semester. Time became an issue of sorts.

The money secured from government was supposed to make things easier, not harder and more complicated. What were we doing? We were growing the project but diluting the connection—I hadn't even gotten to know my students, and I was endeavouring to encourage them to work with a whole bunch of people they didn't know, and engage with concepts that were foreign.

Phase 1: the immediate need
I met the BA (Textile Design) students for the first time on the morning of the collaborative briefing. BA (Textile Design) students met their Communication Design (CD) peers for the first time also. BA (Textile Design) students and CD students had been organised into collaborative working groups. There had been much deliberation about the benefits and challenges of letting students form their groups versus imposed groupings by staff. Staff decided that the latter was preferable as time was limited—we needed the BA (Textile Design) and CD students to start working together quickly. My BA (Textile Design) colleagues (who knew the BA [Textile Design] students well) formed student groups to ensure an even mix of skills. CD staff added their students to generate a reasonably-balanced group of students with mixed abilities. Once the students had introduced themselves to one another, they were asked to reflect on their own

professional strengths and weaknesses. They were given information how on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and the Belbin team role descriptors[161] to help align their capabilities with the project deliverables and collaborative approach. Students were asked to discuss and agree upon suitable communication methods outside of teacher-directed hours.

The information encouraged students to think about their skill sets—and to take responsibility for aspects of the collaborative activity. However, some students did not pull their weight, transferring the burden to others in the group. In contrast, some students had high expectations and took on more than their allocated workload to ensure the outcomes met their exacting standards. This observation is not uncommon and is recognised in education literature (Tucker 2017). Reflections from three BA (Textile Design) students can be seen below:

> The Araluen project was a lot of collaboration which I think really threw people off ... that's what industry is, that's what life is—you're always going to have somebody else to talk to and to work with, whether that's a client or somebody else on your team or a director or even somebody who you have to tell what to do, so yeah, it's interesting that we don't do a lot of group work ... trust is a really big thing though ... I read one [Belbin team role descriptor that said] generally there's a person that tells everybody what to do but they don't actually do a lot of work themselves—and I was like, oh shit that's me! ... So it made me really conscious of ... not only assigning tasks but also ... when you are in a bit of a leadership position, and you're rallying the troops and getting everybody to do everything, that is your work ... that [takes] a lot of effort ... so much organisation and staying on top of people ... That was really interesting, kind of making people more aware of the role that they played in a group ... and spelling it out to them, which I, I think a lot of people don't realise that maybe they can be quite passive, or quite aggressive—well they do know that, but like actually reading it makes a really big difference (A2015_3, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

> There is something a bit special doing a collaboration especially the way that we did in Araluen ... as hard as industry briefs ... and our own projects can be, I think the extra

---

[161] Research suggests that evaluating learning styles does not lead to more collaborative behaviour, but it can help students reflect and align their perceived skills and abilities to the task at hand (Tucker 2017, p. 17). Tools like 'Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences' can help students who are not traditionally academic, align their ways of working with alternative definitions. This, in turn, improves their sense of self-worth and ability to contribute in meaningful ways. The Belbin team role descriptors help individuals better understand their strength within a team dynamic. This is in recognition that successful teamwork requires mixed abilities and behaviours.

challenge of working with somebody else and not relying on yourself entirely just to do what you want, or you think looks pretty ... even though it is was challenging I reckon it was really great ... it's a good way to push yourself and learn more about ... your capabilities and other people's capabilities, the capabilities that come together and what they can create ... I think that it's important to learn how to collaborate with all kinds of different people, like Araluen, Business, Comm Design, teachers, knit, weave, print (A2015_2, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

I don't know if I've always been like this or—probably not, I think maybe I learnt to let go during that process—especially in second year—all the group projects and ... this one in particular; you have to just, be like, trust that other people will do their bit, and if they don't, oh well, like you can't control ... it ... and I think I've done some really good collaborations ... since then ... most of the time it works. There's been elements that haven't worked so well, and you just learn from them, and maybe you picked the wrong person, and that's ok ... some personality types can't let go (A2012_1, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

As lecturers we know that team projects can be problematic; we do our best to equip teams with information and resources to make them work. On reflection, the 2015 collaborative activity was more troublesome than 2012. The students in 2012 were well-known to me. I had worked with them in first year, and also in second year. I knew their personality traits, their strengths and their weaknesses. In 2012 students were working with their BA (Textile Design) peers in pairs or groups of three. Students were able to select their collaborators. Friends worked together; focused, high-achieving students sought out others they knew would commit and deliver to a high standard [162]. There was an existing relationship—the anxiety of not knowing the capabilities of another was removed from the collaborative activity. The studio was the last for the year—disengaged students had long since left—removing the disruption caused by students leaving part-way into the semester. Another commonality within the group was language; students were familiar with the textile design vocabulary—they spoke the same design language. The collaborative teams in 2015 were established by staff, rather than evolving through self-selection. The first collaborative activity scheduled directly after the project briefing required teams to brainstorm textile product ideas. The activity was supposed to be light-hearted and fun. 'Anything goes', shouted staff from opposite ends of the studio. Students

---

[162] Tucker (2017, p. 9) suggests that self-selecting methods can be problematic. They can result in teams of like-minded people with similar ideas and abilities and therefore homogenous outcomes.

looked at staff with confusion—some felt they didn't know enough about the project's broader objectives to be able to suggest suitable product outcomes. Others were reserved and didn't want to appear silly in front of their teammates. Another issue was that of design terminology—although both cohorts were from design disciplines, students used slightly different language and a different design process to that of their peers. The subtle differences in language and design approach required more time, thus slowing down the brainstorming process. We did (after a significant push from lecturers) get students to jot down ideas. The suggestions were fun and spontaneous, some were silly (in a good way) while others held real potential.

One BA (Textile Design) student wrote about the early product idea brainstorming activity in her final project reflection. She questioned the efficacy of asking a group of strangers to brainstorm creative solutions for a product outcome while quoting the literature to support her concern. We had created a collaborative environment best suited to extroverts and ignored the introverts need to think through ideas before sharing. I felt reasonably comfortable with the approach taken in 2012. We were familiar with one another's strengths and weaknesses; the project had set limitations; was confined to in-house resources and the deadlines were demanding but achievable. The same approach taken in 2015 was less comfortable; the energy was different and the connections loose. I sensed a greater level of anxiety and stress amongst the 2015 student participants.

We needed more time to allow students to get to know one another before embarking on a project with the premise of 'designing with people for people'. Perhaps a show-and-tell type activity could have provided a window into potential collaborators skills and work ethic. Students could have selected one project (complete with support material) to communicate their skill sets, then wandered around and viewed one another's work while initiating conversations with students whose work they admired. This would have enabled students to build a collaborative team and ultimately take ownership of their collective skill set. Tucker suggests there are pros and cons associated with the three-team formation methods: self-selection, random assignment, and teacher assignment (2017, p. 9). The literature suggests we adopted the best method for a cohort with varying skills and knowledge (Tucker 2017, p. 14). This may have been the best method in theory but did not appear so in practice. Despite the inner turmoil of the collaborative process, all groups met the week-three deadline and presented a range of possibilities for product development. Refer to appendix D.1 for examples of student work.

What is a Relationship?

Relationship

The way in which two or more people or things are connected, or the state of being connected[163]

The project was challenging for students. Some connected strongly with the intent and community focus, while others disliked working with the artist's motifs, thinking it was, in fact, the textile designer's role to generate artwork to be engineered and put into repeat. Some students were also challenged by not knowing the product outcomes they were working with at the start of the project. These anecdotal reflections are a symptom of the Design 1.0 (Pastor & VanPatter 2011) approach to textile design. When approaching design from a Design 3.0 or 4.0 (Pastor & VanPatter 2011) position, not knowing the outcome is part and parcel of the process. Projects such as 'Araluen, a project with people for people' steer away from the traditional textile design 1.0 approach and begin to stretch the discipline to explore other ways of working. BA (Textile Design) student Gabriela Draffen enjoyed the approach and provided the following feedback in a news story prepared by RMIT University marketing:

> Attending the art class at Araluen was great, and getting to know the people and organisation that would benefit from our work gave it so much more meaning … This project really challenged my niggling, sometimes guilty feelings about being a part of one of the most polluting and damaging industries in the world. It reminded me that creating textiles can have a positive impact and purpose, aside from being beautiful to look at (2016, para. 7–9).

Each group built on the initial brainstorming activity, agreed on a design concept and developed a prototype. Tasks were divided up amongst team members to ensure the group was ready to pitch their idea to a panel of judges from RMIT University, Frankie and Swiss and Araluen in week three of the project. Once the products had been selected by the judges, and fine-tuned, students were able to engineer the 'Meet me in the middle' artwork (Figure 6.14), plus additional artist's work for the product outcomes. The selected designs were printed and assembled at Frankie and Swiss (Figure 6.15).

---

[163] Definition of 'relationship' (noun) (Oxford Living Dictionaries 2017).

Figure 6.14 *RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students working with Araluen Artists on the 'Meet me in the middle' activity, photograph by Lara Hynes, 2015*

Figure 6.15 *Engineered artwork being digitally printed onto 100% cotton fabric for the Helping Hand Bag at Frankie and Swiss, 2015*

Unlike the 2012 project, students were not required to participate in the printing and construction phase of the fabric and products. We did have a team of students representing the three disciplines to oversee the project, bearing in mind that the printing, making and marketing material was being prepared post week seven. However, much of this work fell on the shoulders of staff to manage. CD students developed the Bright Sparks brand, social media

presence and associated packaging. The products were displayed at the Bright Sparks launch held at Frankie and Swiss on the 3 December 2015 (Figures 6.16–6.19).
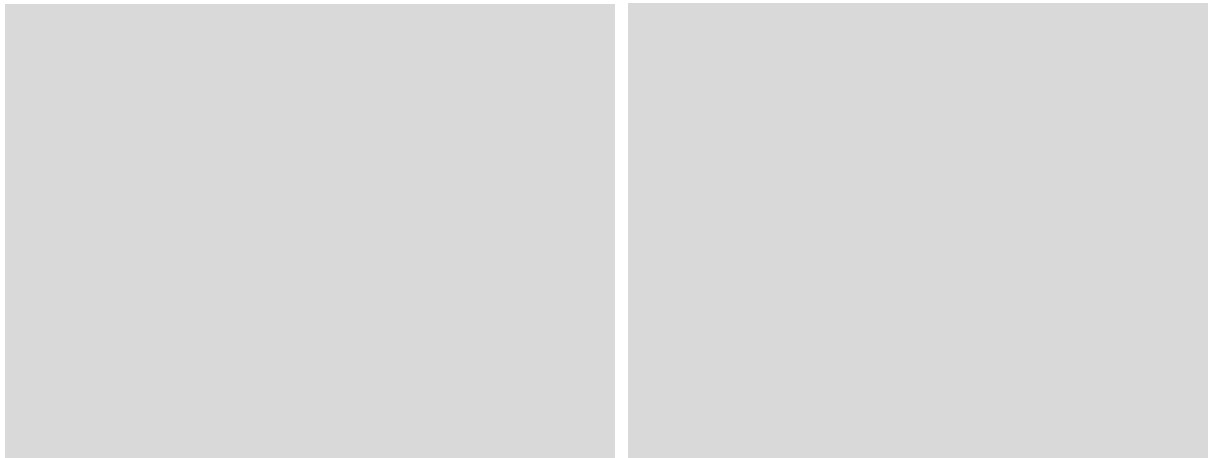
Figure 6.16 *The completed Helping Hand Bags (left) and packaged (right). Printed on 100 percent cotton, sewn with polyester/cotton thread. Polyester shoelace drawstring. On display at the Bright Sparks launch, 3 December 2015[164]*

---

[164] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.
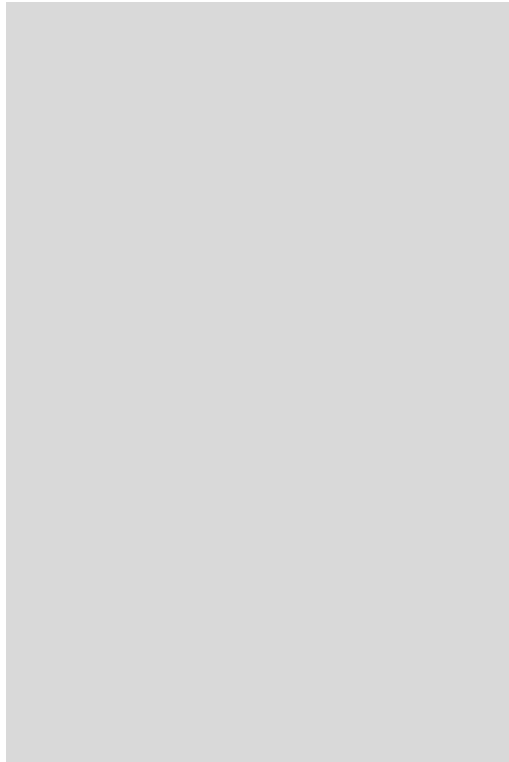
Figure 6.17 *Happy Moment Bag on display at the Bright Sparks launch. Printed onto Belgian Cotton Linen, sewn with polyester/cotton thread. Strap: cotton sash cord, grommets: nondescript plastic, 3 December 2015[165]*
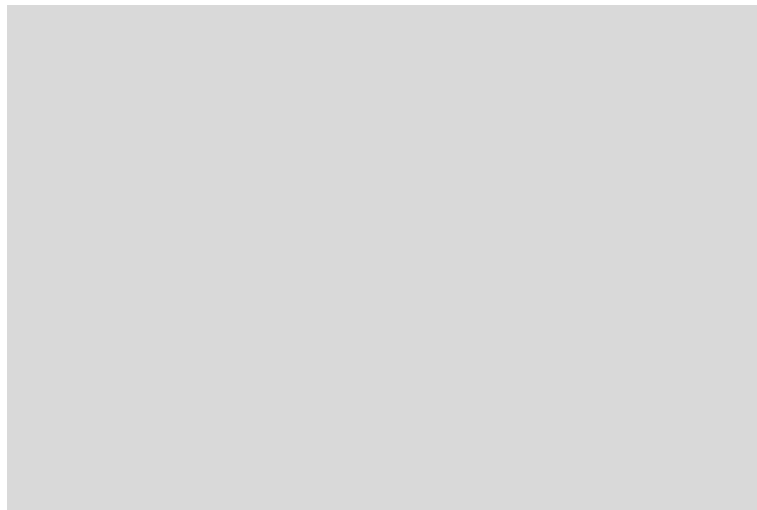
Figure 6.18 *Happy Moment Bag on display at the Bright Sparks launch, 3 December 2015[166]*

[165] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.
[166] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.
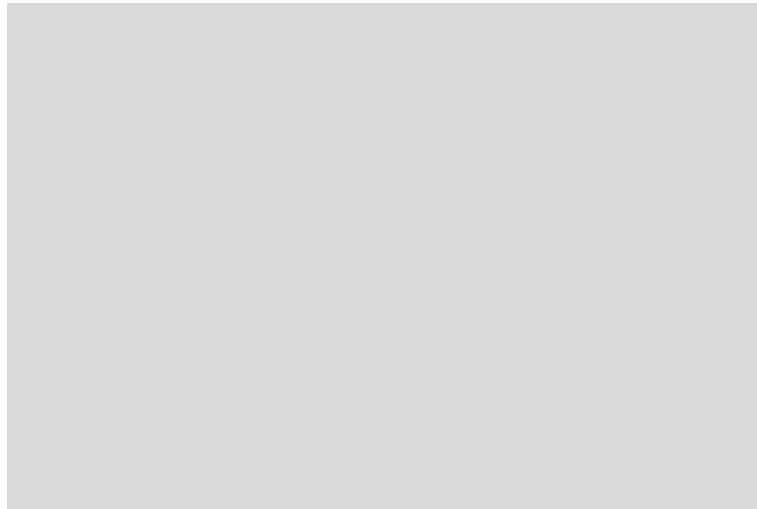
Figure 6.19 *Araluen artist Kylie Gentle proudly displaying a Furoshiki she co-created during the 'Meet me in the middle' activity with an RMIT University BA (Textile Design) student. Bright Sparks launch, 3 December 2015*[167]

Phase 2: long-term need

After scouring the literature, I came across an article by Gaudion et al. (2015) titled 'A designer's approach: how can autistic adults with learning disabilities be involved in the design process?', published in *CoDesign: International Journal of CoCreation in Design and the Arts*. This article caused me to reflect on the designer's role in designing and making product and directly influenced the planning for 'Phase 2: the long-term need'. My colleagues Verity Prideaux and Esther Paleologos facilitated this phase of the project. It was reserved for BA (Textile Design) students and required them to design and make in the print, knit and weave workshops both independently and in collaboration with their peers. Students used their textile design skills to explore the six sensory systems of touch, sight, sound, smell, vestibulation and proprioception specific to hyper-sensitivity (i.e. being overly sensitive) and hypo-sensitivity (i.e. a lack of sensitivity). The project encouraged students to experiment with materials and techniques, and to speculate on how they could be used to stimulate or calm individuals on the autism spectrum. A representative from Amaze[168] generously provided her time and expertise, giving students an indication of what it might be like for people who experience hyper- or hypo-sensitivity to

[167] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.
[168] Amaze is 'the peak body for people on the autism spectrum and their supporters in Victoria [Australia]' (Amaze 2011).

stimulus. She shared a very moving documentary titled *Spectrospective: stories of autism* (2015) to provide first- and second-hand accounts of what it was like to live with autism.

Students worked independently and collaboratively across the three workshop areas (print, knit and weave) to develop a materials-based sensory library that could be used by Araluen's clients to explore their sensory preferences:

> Potential uses for the sensory croquis library exist in enabling Araluen's clients and adults with autism to identify materials that enhance and promote 'positive' experiences within the interior environments in which they live, work and learn. The library could be used as a starting point for designing larger 'things' like pods, curtaining, quiet spaces, flooring or products that would require material specification (Prideaux 2015).

Many of the students enjoyed the creative freedom associated with this phase of the project while others lacked confidence in their ability to match material outcomes with the many and varied sensory needs of people on the autism spectrum. Student experiences have been transcribed and included below:

> That project totally changed everything for me—like so momentous, just in terms of connecting so many of the things that I'm interested in design with this skill that I've chosen to follow … [it] has influenced all of my work from here on out and has even influenced the way that I think about making even quite commercial pieces … working in a sensory space, understanding colour … a lot of my work is now based around colour theory and perception and form and things like that and it's all credit to that—it took a little bit to get the ball rolling and to change the way that you think about textiles especially because we had come off the back of … an industry-based project … shifting your thinking from fulfilling a brief in quite a standardised way to being able to follow your own path in terms of the textures that you like and not really having to justify them … We did quite a few collaborative pieces as well which was a strong theme throughout the whole project, not only 'Meet me in the middle' but also the sensory side of workshop … we [had] to do five samples with a partner and that was really cool as well, it was interesting seeing how everything crossed over as well and just feeding off somebody else … I think we were all paired … I don't know if it was on purpose, but people who were quite different to us and mixing that was really cool … I think it was pretty frightening for a lot of people … especially for people who like commercial … you could hear a lot of people being like 'aahh I don't know what to do, I don't know what to do' (A2015_2, 2016 pers. conv., 28 October).

I have a child with autism so … I was already sort of aware of the connection between texture and the senses—especially since my son has a mild sensory processing disorder, so things like tags on clothes or even just how things feel when they're on are so important … so I had an opportunity to test things out, I guess, on him … some of the other students got some information from me on autism because I probably had some kind of personal connection … with what autism was, and I guess that was the framework we were kind of working with as a guide to … what intellectual disability sort of fell into sensory-wise … but definitely, life-changing for me as well … a different viewpoint, different application, a whole lot of, spectrum of new ideas, and of, of ways to apply textile design, so I would say … for me it has really changed my direction (A2015_1, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

It is a really good video [*Spectrospective: stories of autism*]. I remember watching it and being quite … you know, a little bit overwhelmed by … the impact that being on the spectrum would have for people and their families as well, and I think that's what sort of threw me off for the whole project. I had a really fun time on the laser cutter … cutting out my wood and making everything bright and fluoro like I like to do anyways, but … like you said, we got this paper [Gaudian et al.] we read and I found that really interesting as well but I started, I might have been thinking about it too much cos I tend to overthink as well, but I was getting worried that I was just making things that would jingle or make things that were bright without proper knowledge … I think what I lacked in the project was the confidence with what I was doing and how much it actually related to people on the spectrum and if they were going to benefit from what I was making … working with Kate [on the 'Meet me in the middle' activity] was fine—that was really fun like, you seeing her artwork and like making collage off of that … but the workshop bit for me was a bit more difficult … I wasn't really grasping what my textiles had to do (A2015_3, 2016, pers. conv., 28 October).

This phase of the project required BA (Textile Design) students to use their material expertise and textile intelligence to explore methods that disrupt passive consumption and promote connection. Students were not required to investigate the origin or environmental credentials of materials used, instead, they were asked to consider the experiential qualities of materials, techniques and surface treatments used (Figure 6.20).

Figure 6.20 *Gabriele Draffen's woven concept for hyposensitivity—touch, sound and proprioception, 2015 (refer to appendix D3 for further information)*

The project was free from **imposed** trend-based influences and market-appropriate palettes and themes. The work was informed by the seven senses and individual responses to stimulus informed the work. Not all students felt comfortable working in this way, as expressed in the above reflection by A2015_3: 'I was getting worried that I was just making things that would jingle or ... were bright, without proper knowledge'. This is a valid concern, and one that represents the uncertainty experienced when trying something new for the first time. It also suggests a level of empathy—the student wanted to make work that was useful to people, rather than making work purely for her own enjoyment or for aesthetic pleasure. In hindsight it would have been useful to hold an empathy workshop[169] at the beginning of the project. This may have also helped team members get to know one another a little better before embarking on project deliverables. Empathy is an important design consideration, especially in a design studio such as the Araluen project. Being sensitive to; listening to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others; followed by reflecting and applying this to practice requires practice—in much the same way we practice skills in working with materials and textiles in the studio and workshop.

Aesthetics are a measurement commonly used in textile design practice. BA (textile design) students explore aesthetics via a process of trial and error—engaging with the design elements and principles through the use of media and materials for a nominated group of people in reference to a theme and appropriate colour palette. Aesthetics within the BA (Textile Design)

---

[169] Refer to Thomas (2009, pp. 18-22) for ways to explore and promote empathy in studio contexts.

program is informed by, but does not adhere to, the general academic understanding of aesthetics, the philosophy of art and beauty (Shusterman[170], cited in King 2017, p. 7). Instead, aesthetics is best described as a feeling—a way of working with visual and tactile elements that create a resolved outcome that generates a sense of fulfilment, delight and pleasure as articulated by Homlong: 'Aesthetic judgements are based on impressions given by our senses and filtered through our experience' (2013, p. 732) to generate 'sensory pleasure and delight' (Hekkert & Leder 2008, p. 260).

The design elements and principles are an established organisational system used by designers to generate visual aesthetic pleasure (Hekkert & Leder 2008, pp. 261–266). Hekkert & Leder believe 'it makes sense to speak of auditory aesthetics, tactual aesthetics, and olfactory and gustatory aesthetics, next to the traditional domain of visual aesthetics' (2008, p. 276). However, we do not have references such as the visual organisational system (design elements and principles) to guide us when working with these senses. Tactility, haptics and texture are extremely important sensory considerations for textile design practice. BA (Textile Design) students are introduced to these concepts early in their education and encouraged to integrate them into their respective practice. Touch and sight are entrenched within textile design education—the remaining senses: sound, smell, taste vestibulation and proprioception are given less attention. Hekkert and Leder express a need for greater sensory awareness in the design process as stated below:

> All of our senses can play a role in the identification of objects. When it comes to this primary function, aesthetic principles should therefore hold cross-sensory. Just as people like to see patterns that allow them to detect relationships, people like to detect organization in sounds and feel structure in a surface. Moreover, people like these various sensory messages to be mutually consistent and appropriate for the product conveying them. The product may display such an 'optimal match' with respect to its utilitarian function, its intended experience, and/or the associations it evokes (2008, p. 276).

Exploring the potential for textile design practice to connect to people beyond the visual and tactile realm pushes the discipline into different territory. A project undertaken by UK based research-practitioners in the fields of textile design and occupational therapy explored 'the role

---

[170] Shusterman describes the concept of aesthetics as being 'deeply ambiguous, complex and essentially contested'.

of textiles in facilitating sensory enriched environments and meaningful occupation for people living with dementia' (Jakob & Collier 2018, p. 232). The combination of textiles, light and digital media within the context of improving occupational performance and well-being proved that textiles, and textile intelligence are well suited to this type of inquiry.

The material play undertaken in Phase 2 of the Araluen project focused on materials as agents for sensory connection (Figure 6.21). The outcomes had nothing to do with market segmentation, colour trends or rules established by mechanised textile design manufacturing such as rotary repeat systems. The project allowed students to explore materials via a new lens for a different audience.
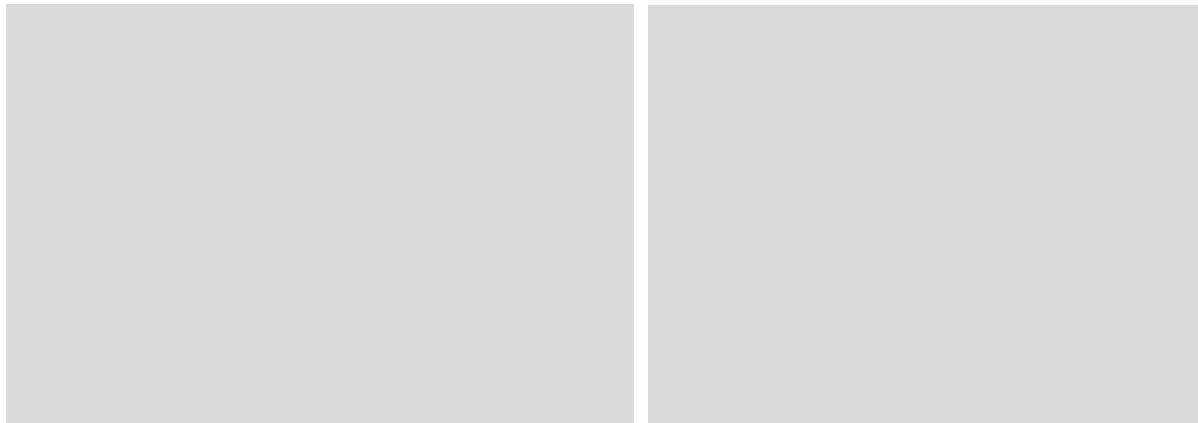
Figure 6.21 Sensory croquis on display at the Bright Sparks Launch, photograph, 3 December 2015[171]

In summary

The RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program is the only stand-alone textile design degree in Australia. Many of the universities once offering textile design have collapsed the discipline into a fashion design offering. This puts the RMIT University BA (Textile Design) program and graduate textile designers in a unique position to really think about what it is to be a textile designer; in essence 'What to do? How to act? Who to be?' (Giddens, cited in Crouch & Pearce 2012, p. 5). Projects such as 'Araluen, a project with people for people', the Co-Creating CARE project[172] and Jakob & Collier's sensory design for dementia care project[173] (2018) allow the

---

[171] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.

[172] The aim of the UK based program is to 'test and develop a methodology for co-produced community learning through creative practice, skill-sharing and storytelling that builds confidence and promotes self-reflection and reflexivity' (Co-Creating CARE n.d., para. 1). See Hackney et al. (2016) for specifics.

[173] This project explored the capacity for textiles to facilitate sensory wellbeing in dementia patients. This project was supported by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, UK.

discipline to stretch its purpose and consider the application of textile: materials, skills, techniques and intelligence for a different audience and purpose.

The 2015 collaboration between RMIT University, Araluen and Frankie and Swiss was a pilot of sorts—and staff acknowledge that if we were to do it again, we would do it differently. However, in terms of providing a different type of learning experience for BA (Textile Design) students and getting students to think about their role in design (and as designers)—it was an overwhelming success. The project was modelled on the principles of co-design—with the main difference being the Araluen artists were not the end users of the product, they were the inspiration for the product. The project provides an example of post-material making, a way of working with materials to facilitate human connection—connection that engages cognitive, affective and conative abilities. In addition, it promotes investigation of the lesser-utilised senses in textile design practice, and to consider touch and sight beyond the limits of aesthetic visual pleasure and tactile comfort or utility. Knowing the object-owner value/attachment placed on the 2012, and Phase 1 (2015) textile objects is beyond the scope of the research. It would be interesting to do a follow up study with people (most likely friends and family of the Araluen artists, and friends and family of RMIT University undergraduate students) as to how the objects were used and for how long.

There are interventions and skill building activities that can be implemented to make sure students are well equipped to get the most out of learning opportunities embedded in projects such as this. Namely preparing students for ambiguity and unknowns; and building an understanding of empathy and its role in design practice. From my experience of working in both the small intimate studio undertaken in 2012 and the large chaotic complex studio undertaken in 2015, I can say there were benefits inherent to both. Both studios gave students the opportunity to work with their textile: skills, knowledge and intelligence differently. However, for undergraduate students in their second year of a three-year degree, I can see the benefit of learning in a more secure comfortable environment such as the one provided in 2012. Getting to know my students and building rapport in the classroom prior to launching into project specifics was lacking in 2015; building rapport with students is critical in fostering student participation and engagement in collaborative settings (Frisby & Martin 2010). In addition to having greater rapport with students, the 2012 project provided the opportunity for students to realise the production and packaging of the outcomes—as a collective they had responsibility for the delivery of the product to the client. The 2015 project's strengths lay in its

collaboration with CD students; and the application of knowledge, skills and textile intelligence to develop sensory textiles and material objects and things via Phase 2.

Earley and Hornbuckle state that 'traditionally, textile designers have been a silent link in the industry supply chain, but with the new challenges that collaboration brings that role is expanding' (2017 p. 85). The 'Araluen' projects are an example of extending beyond the traditional model of design practice. Both projects (2012 and 2015) were still very much concerned with artefactual design, form giving and aesthetics—however, the design process was fuzzier than Paster and VanPatter's design 1.0 (2011) due to the collaborations involved. The BA (Textile Design) student cohort (in both iterations) was almost entirely female. Early et al. speculate that the majority of textile designers are, indeed, female, and that there is a quality that women bring to their practice may be of value when problem-solving in sustainability contexts (Early et al. 2016a, p. 317). Igoe supports this theory by claiming 'textile designers, more than other design disciplines, are involved in a design process that draws upon subjective and emotional aspects of the designer' (Earley et al. 2016a, p. 317)—these 'soft skills' such as empathy and listening are associated with the emotional intelligence (Earley et al. 2016a, p. 317) required for the type of collaboration undertaken in the 'Araluen' projects. Earley et al. describe textile designers as having a preliminary set of qualities and attributes, listed as follows:

> Material experimentation; subjective process that involves sensual/tacit elements; light focus on customer profiling; reliance on 'paraphernalia' to feed inspiration; a 'whole life practice' that covers professional/personal realms; motivation by the pleasure in designing rather than external accolades; and as the majority of textile designers are female, an emphasis on 'feminine' qualities and 'ways of knowing' (2016a, pp. 306–307).

This assessment provided by Earley et al. could be interpreted as being 'light' and/or un-academic. I can relate to the qualities and attributes listed above and have often felt to be un-academic due to my loose, non-theoretical whimsical approach to design development. During my time working as a commercial textile (surface) designer, this whimsy was useful in generating artwork for print-based bed linen. The work undertaken by students in the Araluen projects relied too, on whimsy. However, the process and outcomes have a depth and substance that transcends the visual interest generated by a mass-produced quilt cover. The textile intelligence we bring to collaborative situations (such as the Araluen projects identified above) are academic contributions, and something we as textile designers should celebrate rather than shy away from. Academic methods such as autoethnography give our textile intelligence a voice,

often not heard because we have struggled to find a suitable method to communicate our work to a broader academic audience.

Textile design process thinking is distinctive in so far that it is guided by emotive, haptic, sensorial and tactile qualities (Valentine et al. 2017, p. 971).

7.0 Home made: *textiles as agents for connection*

'Home made' extends upon the ideas of Slow and dematerialisation explored in my earlier project, 'Grasslands'. It begins in 2006 with the purchase of an Ikea bath mat. The domestic rituals of use transition the bath mat from a utilitarian object to a series of gentler offerings, some practical, others not. This project draws attention to the sometimes-overlooked beauty in everyday household objects while celebrating the patina of use generated by those who share a home together. The project touches on examples of Indigenous methods of making and connections to people, materials and place. Refer to the table[174] below (Figure 7.1) for the: key focus (feeling, thinking and doing) specific to the 'Home made' project.

Initial intent:	To use the process of dematerialisation as a way to upcycle materials. To use video as a method for storytelling.
Theoretical / visual themes:	Dematerialisation, autoenthography, Slow, material theory, thinking-through-making, Aboriginal material culture.
People:	Me, my partner, my daughter.
Materials:	Cotton bath mats.
Place:	Melbourne, Australia.
Skill:	Craft skills: crochet, macramé, weaving, wrapping; and reflective writing.
Tools	Crochet hook, pin loom, leatherworking tool, darning needle, video camera, editing software.
Key methods:	Textile craft (crochet, macramé, weaving, wrapping), note-taking, reflecting, video, writing.
Actors:	Me, my partner, my daughter.
Pivotal moments:	Reading the importance of making with materials to Indigenous Australians, visiting the *Who's Afraid of Colour?* Exhibition held at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.
Lack:	Media skills (filming and editing).
Transformation of materials or self:	Materials: transforming an object (destined for waste) to a series of objects and things. Self: engaging with Indigenous ideas around making.
Feelings and outcomes:	A sense of achievement in working on something collaboratively.
Connections made:	People to people via materials, people to place via materials.
Contributions made:	• Provides an example of 'post-material making' that connects people to people via materials and people to place via materials. • Presented the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous methods of making and connections to, and between people, materials and place. • Extends upon the activities undertaken in the 'Grassland's project to explore what might constitute 'textile intelligence' in the context of the project:

---

174 Adapted from Vuletich (2015, p. 121).

Figure 7.1 Key focus (feeling/thinking/doing) specific to the 'Home made' project

Decluttering

We (myself, my partner and daughter) live in a smallish two-bedroom apartment on the outskirts of the central business district in Melbourne, Australia. Periodically I go through cupboards, drawers, and boxes in search of items we no longer use or need. This process of removal is necessary to accommodate the arrival of different items such as gifts, clothes, manchester[175], toys and ephemera. Sometime in late 2016, I sorted our collection of household textiles to make room for a new bath mat. Two (of three) existing mats were removed from their nesting place, wedged in a cupboard with towels, bedding, tools and bathroom paraphernalia. While walking the short distance from the bathroom to the kitchen bench, I noticed the variegated colour on the reverse of one of the mats (Figure 7.2).

---

[175] Manchester is an Australian term to describe household linens such as bedding and towels.
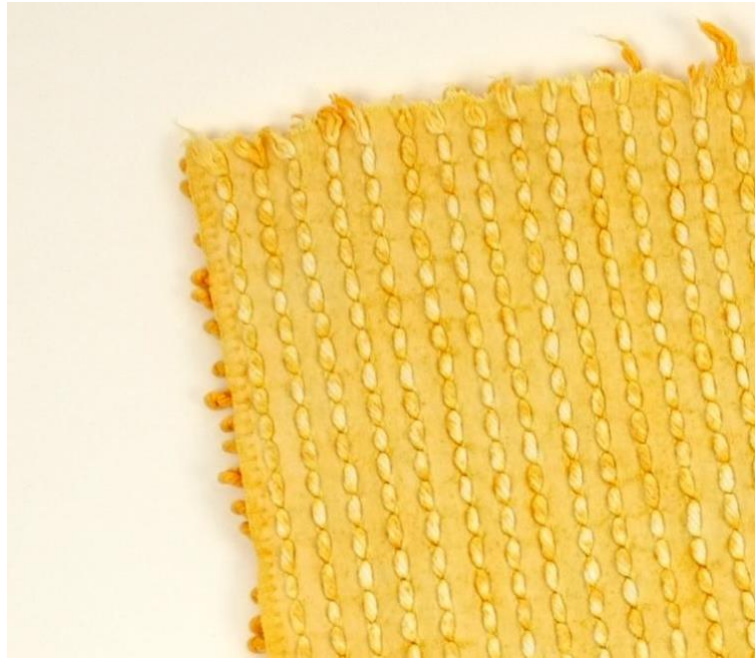
Figure 7.2 *The reverse side of bath mat, 2017*

There was something about these weathered pieces of cotton cloth that prevented me from evicting them from our home. Instead, I put it them in another pile—a pile of stuff, Boscagli's statement below articulates what I could not at the time:

> Stuff ... exist[s] brazenly as neither one thing nor the other: not quite saleable, and certainly not garbage, not monumental or important objects, but still bearing traces of a past, of desire, of life, and of the interactions between subject and object that formed them and wore them out. Not particularly useful but not useless enough to cast off, these are objects that we are not quite ready to let go of—or that are not ready to let go of us (2014, p. 6).

The bath mats were designed and made for a specific purpose. They are objects—material solutions with a particular utility. When I removed both mats from the linen press, they were still very much capable of mopping up water from the bathroom floor. However, they were faded and frayed and looked out of place in our modern apartment with its neutral tones and modern fittings. Their visual aesthetic was their failing. The tension between practical purpose and aesthetic appeal troubled me. I was reminded of a quote from one of the participants in my 2015 study 'Love you or leave you'. Andrea Shaw described her neutrality towards a black and white Ikea cushion; 'I feel like I want to get rid of it, but I shouldn't because it's wasteful and goes

against a lot of what I think[176]. Like Andrea, I struggle with the process of discarding things—especially if they are destined for landfill. So, they sat in limbo waiting for an opportunity to work again.

In 2017 I was invited to participate in the RMIT University's *Slow Fashion Studio: Alternative Approaches to Fashion*—an exhibition curated by Dr Jenny Underwood to accompany the travelling exhibition *Fast Fashion: The Dark Side of Fashion*[177]. The exhibition called for postgraduate fashion and textile students and staff to investigate alternative approaches to fashion production, consumption and experience.

The bath mats emerged as a potential material resource to explore and ultimately transform from being utilitarian objects into something else.

The bath mats

In 2006 my partner and I made our way to Ikea to buy a few essentials to furnish our newly rented two-bedroom apartment in Moonee Ponds, Melbourne. Winding our way through the store, we were tempted by the many and varied brightly coloured products on offer. A large orange cotton loop-pile bath mat with non-slip latex backing met the criteria of functionality and affordability. The large mat it turned out was far too large and with a snip of the scissors, soon became two.

The orange mats moved house with us three times in ten years—taking it in turns absorbing water and keeping our feet from touching icy-cold tiles in lean-to bathrooms. The mats followed a ritualistic cycle of use, wash and dry. The latex backing slowly wore away revealing a shibori-like textile consisting of two parts—pile cord and base cloth (Figure 7.3).

---

[176] Featured in the 'Leave you' booklet appendix C.2.
[177] *Fast Fashion: The Dark Side of Fashion* curated by Dr Claudia Banz, Museum of Arts and Crafts, Hamburg in collaboration with Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) and the Goethe-Institut, exhibited at RMIT Gallery 21 July–9 September 2017.

Figure 7.3 *Wrong side (left) and right side (right) of bath mat, 2017*

Pulling apart/piecing together/making connections

In the centre of one mat, a piece of pile cord had wriggled free (Figure 7.3) leaving small holes delicately frayed around the edges. The pile cord mimicked that of space-dyed yarn—shifting from bright orange to cream. I sat down and proceeded to remove another pile cord. As I picked and pulled, I was reminded of time spent as a child untangling fishing line. The process of unmaking can be as cathartic as making. It took around thirty minutes to unpick one row. A quick calculation concluded it would take approximately thirty-seven hours to unpick one mat. My mother produced a metal leatherworking tool shaped like a ballpoint pen to help tease the cord from the base cloth. In the beginning, I was tentative, concerned that if I pulled too hard, the base cloth would tear. Over time I realised that I could exert more pressure without fear of damaging the fabric. While working, I was thinking about what I could do with the materials gleaned from this exercise in deconstruction.

Much of our attention and appreciation is given to completed work; in recent times greater consideration has been placed on the process of making. Many designer-makers are providing opportunities for the general public to witness the design and making process (Lynas 2013). Similarly, larger commercial-style studios are using social media as a window into the design process[178]. I was interested in using film to tell the story of how we (my partner and I) had contributed to the making of the materials used to create the final collection of textile items. I drafted a rough script in my notebook (Figure 7.4).

---

[178] Sydney-based commercial textile design studio Longina Phillips Designs uses Instagram to communicate how textile designers generate artwork for the fashion market.
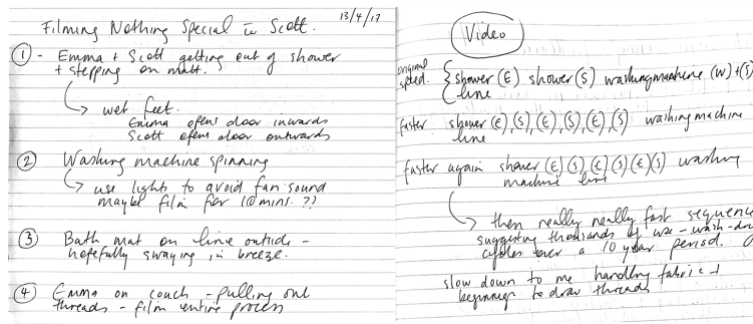
***Figure 7.4** Planning in notebook[179], 2017*

Together, my partner and I recorded the first phase of the video—the mats in use; wash; dry; repeat. I wanted to capture the domesticity of the process. The video provides an insight into the behind-the-scenes activities responsible for preparing the materials for a new purpose. Stills from the video can be seen below[180] (Figure 7.5).

---

[179] The working title for this project was *Nothing special.*
[180] To watch the video, click on: https://vimeo.com/313731632 it will take you to Vimeo.com; the password is: Lynas2017.

Figure 7.5 *Stills from the video,' 'Home made (digital)', 2017*

I removed seventy-three individual pile cords from one mat (Figure 7.6). The remaining mat was left intact and exhibited alongside the objects and things at RMIT University Gallery. A very small amount of sewing thread was removed during deconstruction. The thread proved to be too fragile to work with and was therefore disposed of in landfill.

Figure 7.6 *Pile cords removed from one bath mat, 2017*

The aim was to use the pile cord and base cloth to create a collection of objects and things. My key objectives were to:

- Use the basic principles of dematerialisation.
- Utilise methods that would enhance the visual quality of the pile cords and base cloth.

I started by exploring methods of construction using crochet. I had previously used crochet to make soft toys for friends and family (Figure 2.1). In addition to crochet (Figures 7.7–7.12), I used a small square pin loom to create a woven swatch (Figure 7.13) and explored the potential of macramé (Figure 7.14).

Figure 7.7 Flat crochet in the round, 2017

Figure 7.8 Flat crochet lace effects, 2017

Figure 7.9 *Crochet in flat rows, 2017*

Figure 7.10 *Crochet cone form with spiral effect, 2017*

Figure 7.11 *Crochet dome form, 2017*

Figure 7.12 *Crochet i-cord, 2017*

Figure 7.13 *Pin-loom weaving, 2017*

Figure 7.14 *Macramé exploration, 2017*

Based on this early exploration I could identify techniques that suited the material I was working with. Most of the crochet techniques caused the eye to focus on the overall technique rather than the intricate patterning of the cord. Two methods were selected based on their visual aesthetics: the cone-shaped form and the i-cord (Figures 7.10 and 7.12). The i-cord mimics a knit structure; the soft, smooth surface allowed for the material rather than the technique to dominate. The cone and dome are similar in shape; the cone features a horizontal dashed line that spirals down and around the form (Figure 7.10). This linear quality reflects the material used to create the structure. Both techniques were adapted and used to create elements for the final collection.

After undertaking this phase of exploration, I became increasingly aware of the inherent qualities of the cord itself. At this point I became more conscious of the material's agency. The

pile cords were resistant to some techniques and accommodating of others. I commenced a process of wrapping the cord around different forms to gauge the visual effect. Wrapping the cord around a two-and-a-half-centimetre diameter cardboard tube created an interesting colour effect (Figure 7.15).

Figure 7.15 Pile cord wrapped around a reclaimed cardboard tube, 2017

The lighter patches of colour aligned to create an almost ikat-style appearance. I sourced the cardboard tube from my daughter's toy basket and the balsa wood blocks (Figure 7.16) from a local art store. The balsa wood blocks were the only materials sourced externally—I wanted to work with something substantial but soft. I carved small grooves into the balsa wood and pressed the pile cords gently into the grooves to secure the ends fast.

Figure 7.16 Pile cord wrapped around balsa wood blocks, photograph by Jenny Underwood, 2017

The first object was inspired by a collection of bags created by Indigenous women artists exhibited as part of the 2016–2017 exhibition, *Who's Afraid of Colour?*[181] held at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV, Australia, in Melbourne (Figure 7.17).
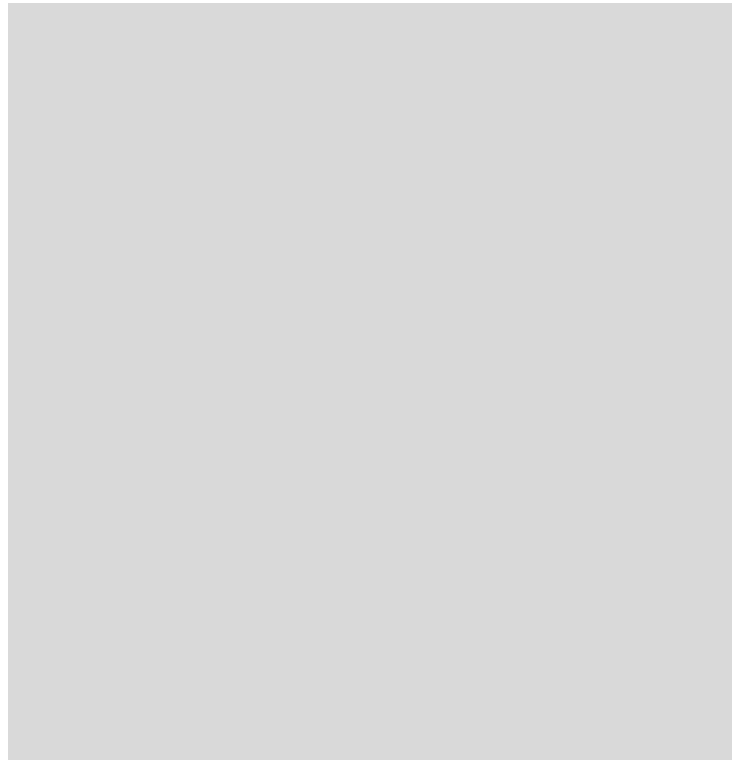
Figure 7.17 Photograph of woven dilly bags featured in the Who's Afraid of Colour? exhibition held at NGV Australia, Melbourne, 2017[182]

These bags, commonly referred to as dilly bags, were constructed by hand using naturally dyed plant fibre. In Arnhem Land[183] dilly bags are known as burlupurr, galaburdok, mun-bolo and wonggurr—depending on the functional or ceremonial purpose they serve (Maningrida Arts & Culture 1995, p. 23). In the Jandai language of The Quandamooka people of south-eastern Queensland dilly bags are called Bunbi (Carmichael 2017, p. 16). I was drawn to the dilly bags exhibited as part of *Who's Afraid of Colour?* due to the material resourcefulness and

---

[181] The NGV exhibition *Who's Afraid of Colour?* 'looks at a number of senior and emerging artists from both city and bush studios, including Nonggirrnga Marawili, Queenie McKenzie, Nyapanyapa Yunupingu, Claudia Moodoonuthi and Jenny Crompton, and features large bodies of work from the NGV Collection that have never been shown together before' (NGV 2017).

[182] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.

[183] Arnhem Land is a remote area located in the north-eastern corner of the Northern Territory, Australia. Arnhem Land is home to traditional owners, the Yolngu people. People wishing to visit must seek permission from the Northern Land Council before entering.

craftsmanship involved. In early 2018 (long after the *Slow Fashion Studio: Alternative Approaches to Fashion* exhibition had finished) I spent a little more time investigating the relationship Indigenous women have to the objects they make. Indigenous makers [184] acknowledge Ancestral Beings as the true creators of material objects in lieu of themselves. Each object comes with a story explaining its link to ancestors and country (Maningrida Arts & Culture 1995, p. 6). The women who make dilly bags for commercial sale often experience a sense of loss and sadness when the objects leave their possession. Laurie Guraylayla talks about this angst when relaying a story about her two aunts, Mary Mirdaburrwa and Mabel Mayangal:

> These two old ladies whenever their works are sent to big cities they get worried because part of this weaving is in their hearts and in their country … before sending their weaving [away] they talk to it first like, 'You will be leaving me and I will be going somewhere else and we will be thinking of you (Maningrida Arts & Culture 1995, p. 7).

This connection provides an example of how makers connect through and to the materials and objects they create. I am not in any way encouraging non-Indigenous people to appropriate Indigenous culture as a means to facilitate connection. What I am suggesting is that there is room for textile designers to question the relationship they have with the materials and techniques they work with and to fully engage their cognitive, affective and conative selves. This rounding out of practice allows for a richer story to be told, one that involves more than visual aesthetics and function. That being said, it is hard to know if the people who purchase these objects (including the handwoven dilly bags) appreciate them for the same reasons as their makers.

The value placed on an object often mirrors personal values; 'while value refers to what something is worth (in financial and other terms), values refer to moral codes, ethics and standards of behaviour adopted by individuals or groups' (Boradkar 2010, p. 73). In *Designing Things: A Critical Introduction to the Culture of Objects*, the idea of value is deconstructed into eleven categories: 'economic, functional, cultural, social, aesthetic, brand, emotional, historical, environmental, political and symbolic' (Boradkar 2010, 46), which suggests that an individual's method of assessing value is personal and changeable depending on circumstance. In contrast, business value is most commonly associated with economic value, whether it be shareholder,

---

[184] This may not be true of all Indigenous makers.

market or consumer (Boradkar 2010, p. 46). 'Value exists because it is generated by a relational act between an object (a thing) that is being evaluated, and a subject (a person) engaged in the process of evaluation' (Boradkar 2010, p. 49). Individuals have unique and elusory methods for appreciating their objects and things as illustrated in the 'Love you or leave you' project[185]. Despite the ambiguity associated with human-object connection, it can be said that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material culture is inherently built upon value, values and connection—connection to materials, place, and people.

Elisa Carmichael, a descendent of the Quandamooka people, explored the potential of applying traditional weaving techniques to a fashion practice that acknowledges the strength and structure of indigenous weaving practices in her Masters thesis (2017, p. 3). Carmichael's thesis provides insights into the knowledge and skills of Indigenous makers and how this material and textile intelligence is passed down from one generation to the next. Carmichael's thesis provides many insights into fashion and textile practice from an Indigenous perspective, while critiquing the use of Aboriginal stories and motifs by well-known and celebrated Australian fashion and textile identities.

To make the crochet bag (Figure 7.18) I used the dome form (Figure 7.11) with the linear spiral effect (Figure 7.10). The strap was created using the I-cord technique (Figure 7.12).
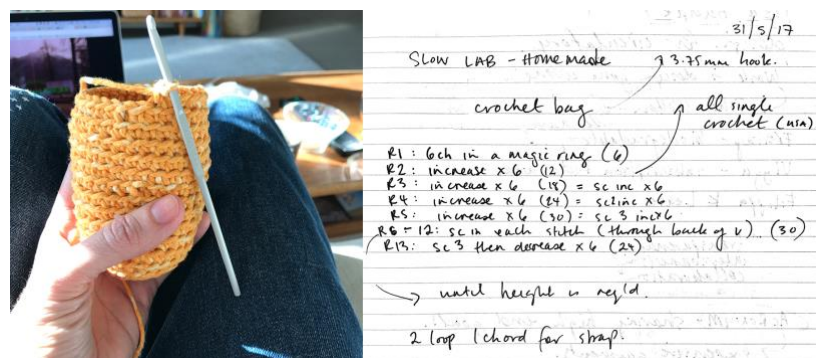
Figure 7.18 Crochet bag work in progress (left) and making notes (right), 2017.

The techniques were chosen based on their ability to maximise the visual effect inherent to the pile chord. I acknowledge that prioritising the visual aesthetic of the bag is in keeping with much of what I've been trying to disrupt throughout this thesis, our professional focus on visual

---

[185] Refer to Chapter 5.0.

aesthetics. This troubled me for a while, to be reconciled by the fact that the visual appeal of the material itself is what is being celebrated, not the addition of other elements, whether it be colour or trims (as discussed in chapter 3.0 on the topic of design for bed linen). While reading Carmichael's thesis I was reassured by an extract of conversation with Uncle Bob Anderson, a Quandamooka Elder:

> Dillybags were made out of the reeds that grow by the side of the freshwater creek. They were collected by the women. They were processed and how they used to process them, they would lay out sheets of bark from the Oodgeroo tree and they'd lay the reeds out everyday in the sunshine to dry them. And when they were dry, they'd note some of them had a particular pink touch towards the end of them. So when they women were weaving the dillybags they'd be able to place that red so its a nice fine line with the distinguishing colours. The dexterous fingers showed the creative minds of the aboriginal women making all these things out of natural fibres (2017, p. 11).

Another niggling feeling came from the observable similarities between the crochet bag I was working on and the shape of the dilly bags exhibited in the *Who's afraid of colour?* exhibition. Was the bag too similar in shape? I was using a different technique and materials, but the shape was very similar. Dilly bags are sacred objects they 'reflect a deep connection between … people and specific places that has been central to Aboriginal identities for at least 60,000 years' (Carmichael 2017, p. 16). I was conscious of my position as a white Australian taking inspiration from a cultural object. The crochet bag has become a catalyst of sorts; a material trigger; a signpost signifying a shift in thinking; a focus for future research. Rather than shying away from Indigenous objects and artworks (in case I do something wrong), I will engage with these ideas and means for making as a way to bring connection back to textiles and textile design.

My original intent was to take photographs of the base cloth on the body—early ideas can be seen below (Figure 7.19 and 7.20):

Figure 7.19 Mock sleeve secured using pile cord, 2017

Figure 7.20 Neck scarf, 2017

The holes in the base cloth enabled me to explore ruching effects (Figures 7.16 and 7.17). After some deliberation I decided not to rely on the body as a reference for the material objects—instead opting to make another bag.

The bag is neutral territory, it does not belong to fashion; textile; industrial, design or any discipline for that matter—it is a product that engages with the body but does not require the same level of 'fit' associated with garments. The 'bag' as Carmichael states:

> provide[s] sustenance, supporting everyday activities, and are an accessory worn every day, all around the world made from various materials, most of which are harsh on the environment such as plastic bags (2017, p. 43).

The material used to create the bag was already in existence, it had already performed its original duty as a bath mat. The material did not pose a threat—although I'm sure many found it not to their aesthetic liking.

While exploring the drape of the base cloth on the body (Figures 7.19 and 7.20) I used a ruching method to join the ends of the fabric together. This technique made use of the existing holes in the base cloth, allowing the pile cord to be threaded through. While playing with the technique I discovered that by folding the fabric in half and ruching the two ends, a natural bag shape emerged. The remaining drawn thread was used to neaten and finish the raw edges. The strap was made using the i-cord technique, this time with three loops rather than two, to create a thicker strap. The bag was constructed without the use of additional fixing materials. The bag emerged through a process of trial and error, craft techniques and resourcefulness (Figure 7.21). The process is an example of 'thinking through making' (Ingold 2013 p. i), figuring things out while engaged with materials—also referred to as the art of inquiry; 'the conduct of thought goes along with, and continually answers to, the fluxes and flows of the materials with which we work' (Ingold 2013 p. 6). Photographs of the bag in situ at RMIT University gallery can be seen below (Figure 7.22 and 7.23).

Figure 7.21 Bag made from bath mat base cloth, pile cord i-cord strap, ruched edges and pile cord decorative edge, 2017

Figure 7.22 '*Home made' (analogue)' exhibited at RMIT University Gallery, photograph by Mark Ashkanasy, 2017*

Figure 7.23 '*Home made' (digital)' and 'Home made' (analogue)', exhibited at RMIT University Gallery, photograph by Mark Ashkanasy, 2017*

In summary

'Home made' is a practice-led project that uses the principles of dematerialisation, Slow approaches to making and 'thinking through making' (Ingold 2013 p. i). The work acknowledges the routine domesticity of two people sharing a home together; and is an example of post-material making. It elevates the gentler forms of value including emotional value—valuing matter for the way it can make us feel, of having 'meaning, purpose, intrinsic value and communicative capability' (Mathews 2013, p. 28), value that is hard to quantify or measure. The crochet bag provided a way into Indigenous making that uses techniques and materials similar

to the discipline of textile design. The crochet bag has become a material trigger; a signpost signifying a shift in thinking; a focus for future research that prioritises place—a tangent presented and accepted as a way to learn more about the cultural significance of Indigenous making.

I am aware that this type of work does not rest neatly within the two descriptions of textile design practice used throughout this thesis—those of the commercial textile designer and textile designer-maker. However, projects such as this allow designers within these two categories to relax into making, and to explore their textile intelligence in ways that are not always possible when designing for the marketplace. The project brought to front of mind the importance of place in post-material making. Place has been discussed throughout the thesis, most noticeably in 'Grasslands' and to a lesser extent 'Home made'. Place has relevance to textile design, as a way of building individual and personal connections. Place also has relevance in the larger sustainability agenda, particularly when considering clothes miles[186] and the global supply chain. Vuletich states 'the closest geographic realm to the designer is their local community or neighbourhood' (2015, p. 186). Localism[187] is one way of viewing the importance of place when considering manufacturing, connection to place is an important consideration when designing for emotional attachment.

While finishing off the thesis just prior to submission I still hadn't used the bag, nor had I worn the embroidered top developed as part of the 'Grasslands' project. For some reason I am waiting until the thesis is safely housed in the RMIT University research repository before I can take the objects out of storage and put them to use.

---

[186] Clothes miles refers to the distance a garment has travelled from fibre to consumer.
[187] Localism refers to living within the limits of a community and sourcing products, where possible, within a limited geographical distance from home. Refer to Fletcher (2008, pp. 139-149) for further information.

Conclusion

There are voices within the discipline[188] of textile design advocating for the need to establish new practices that are better aligned with the goals of sustainable development (Earley et al. 2016; Earley & Hornbuckle 2017; Kane et al. 2016; Valentine 2017; Vuletich 2015). In order to better value our natural resources, ensure ethical practices, and shift away from an era of overconsumption and waste; textile design must re-think how it practices (within the TCF and associated industries) and consider what it can offer society more broadly.

My research is positioned within this call for action. It is best described as a wandering—it has traversed through theory, designing, making, listening, looking, culture and history using my conative, affective and cognitive abilities. By exploring my personal and professional[189] experience within the Australian textile industry and academy, I have proposed and explored a 'post-material making' practice for textile design.

The broad research contributions are:

- Proposes 'post-material making' as a method of making to connect people, materials and place.
- Provides insight into what constitutes a textile designer's 'textile intelligence' and how this intelligence can be used to facilitate connection.
- Provides locally specific examples of 'post-material making' design and pedagogic practice.
- Builds on the existing literature specific to sustainable textile design practice.

'Post-material making' shifts the professional emphasis from design for consumer goods, to a process or service orientated discipline, geared towards connecting people, materials and place. Central to supporting this shift is the need to recognise, expand and better articulate what constitutes a textile designers' textile intelligence.

---

[188] In the context of the research 'discipline' is defined as 'a branch of knowledge, typically one studied in higher education' (Lexico.com 2019).
[189] In the context of the research 'profession' is defined as 'paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification' (Lexico.com 2019).

Textile intelligence is multi-tiered and more than the sum of its parts. It covers knowledge of materials known and used within the textile design discipline. Knowledge of man-made and natural: fibres, filaments, yarn, cloth and material surfaces—of repeat systems, paints, inks, dyes and papers. Knowledge of the historical and cultural use, and significance of textiles and design. Knowledge of agricultural practices and methods of hand, mechanized, digital and automated production—alongside the challenges they present. It includes tacit knowledge gained through using materials and making by hand 'thinking through making' (Ingold 2013, p. i), and using digital software and tools to design and make with. This mix of skill and knowledge is fostered during undergraduate textile design education. In order to better articulate and understand our collective intelligence beyond making as product, there needs to be more emphasis on building the discipline capacity to use this knowledge to facilitate connection in a professional context. This may involve spending more time explicitly focusing on building soft skills, attitudes and mindsets within the curriculum—to make these attributes more apparent to textile designers, the industry and neighbouring design disciplines. The discipline is known for its creativity and craft skills, it is less well-known for its capacity to build human agency. Textile intelligence draws upon the cognitive (intelligence/thinking), affective (emotional/feeling) and conative (instinctual/doing) human ability. The ability to think, feel and do. The present-day commercial sector has relied too heavily on the disciplines 'doing' capability—designing and making for the marketplace.

Post-material making makes textile intelligence explicit, and encourages textile designers, makers, educators and students to think carefully about material choices—to ask questions about materials; where they have come from and how and by whom they were processed. It recognises that in order for textile designers to have the confidence to select textiles beyond the commercial criteria of price, aesthetics, function and haptics they have to engage with textiles beyond what is dictated by visual global trends, and to consider the agency[190] of textiles, their ability to produce an affect, either through being imbued with memories of people and/or place, or by being the materials of activity or exchange. Textile intelligence is necessary to ensure textiles are akin to their required purpose and can be retired in a way that benefits another system.

---

[190] Refer to Chapter 2.0: textiles as agents for connection for further discussion.

Industry is well aware of the harm caused to both people and place [191] through the mass production of textiles and clothing. These issues are due (in some part) to the absence of the long view. Textile designers within the Fast sector play a fragmented bit-part role in the production of textiles for fashion, clothing and homewares, amongst other objects and things. The cycle of design-manufacture-discard has resulted in a culture of disconnection and waste. 'Post-material making' prioritizes other qualities of textiles or materials equal to that of surface appeal, texture and function.

Textile designers should not fully disconnect their practice from the marketplace. Instead they should look to the capacity for textiles to connect differently. This way of thinking supports a broader more holistic transdisciplinary industry that places textile designers as a conjugant for improved interdisciplinary work practices. Textile designers operate across multiple discipline sets and are well placed to bring people together, for example; the textile material engineer, technologist, fashion designer and marketing teams into a holistic interconnected service system. The textile designer as 'facilitator' or 'steward' (Vuletich 2015) is a useful way to support industry as it moves towards a more circular economy, requiring increased transparency and awareness around sourcing and manufacturing.

In chapter 2.0 I suggest the discipline of textile design to be at a crossroad. A diagram (Figure 2.2) situates people and textiles on a spectrum. To the left (1) deep connections are formed, to the right (2) connections are stressed and fragile. Mass production and the global-supply chain have pushed our collective textile intelligence and making skills out of sight. I suggest that textile designers (perhaps) float uncomfortably along the spectrum, transitioning between position (1) and (2), depending on who we work for, and what is required of us. While undertaking this research, I have come to realise that textile designers have an opportunity to better capitalise on their textile intelligence and leverage the capability for textiles to connect to people, materials and place. By recognising, understanding and better articulating the benefits of (1) and applying to the context of (2) the textile designer becomes a facilitator of connection—to people, material and place.

---

[191] See Introduction: Issues associated with mass production and overconsumption.

The four projects undertaken within this PhD provide a bridge between theory and practice. They have been presented in chronological order of completion—reflecting the evolution of ideas and extensions of interest. All projects focus on making connections between people, materials and place.

Grasslands

This project provided an entry point into design for making outside of the usual constraints imposed by the commercial industry. The Slow process of 'thinking-sensing-acting-relating' (Pais & Strauss 2016, p.10) was used to connect to place using plant materials collected from my childhood home. The project gave me the space and time to consider more than aesthetics and practical applications for the piece of hemp cloth I was given to work with. This small project helped me to think about textile making within the context of the circular economy. Not only was I working within the limits of one material, I was also cognisant of the restorative activity of making by hand. The project felt good and reminded me of what drew me to working with textiles as a child.

For the older generation—and perhaps younger generation in other parts of the world—it may not seem unusual to know of the origin of materials used in their garments. As someone who began working in the bed linen industry just before the Australian Government abolished import quotas and relaxed import tariffs on woven fabrics (from 88 per cent in 1985 to just 15 per cent in 2000) (Buxey 2005, p. 100)—knowing the origin of materials is special. When I discover something is connected to me and my life, I take interest for reasons outside of aesthetics and style. Knowing the origin of materials, and the methods and motives undertaken by makers provides the potential for deeper relationships with materials and material products to occur. Fuad-Luke uses the term 'deep localization' to describe the approach taken in 'Grasslands'—one where local material is sourced to make something for oneself. He lists this approach as a strategy for extending product-user relationships (2010, pp. 145–147).

A number of contemporary textile and apparel companies have leveraged place as a vehicle for connection. New Zealand clothing and apparel brand Icebreaker developed Baacode—a traceability initiative linking merino sheep to individual articles of clothing, while Australian knitwear label McIntyre are using 'Glenoe' the family merino sheep farm based in Victoria. It is important to note that ventures such as these are not without complications and challenges. The Baacode initiative is no longer in practice as it became difficult to implement as the business

grew, as a consequence Icebreaker are now tracing wool back to farms rather than individual sheep (Terkelsen 2016). McIntyre were faced with the issue of limited local processing options and are temporarily sourcing Australian merino wool from a Chinese supplier while undertaking research and development using 'Glenoe' wool and local scourers, spinners, knitters and dyers[192] (N Scholfield 2019, email conv., 8 March 2019).

In 'Grasslands', I connect textiles to place, and connect to textiles through place using one textile, plant matter and copious amounts of time to undertake the iterative process of thinking and making, undoing, and remaking. The project is a reminder that working small—and working alongside others—can help to tease out ideas that may affect something bigger. This project caused me to reflect on the importance of place, and to question more deeply how place can be used to connect people to textiles and cloth. Place has been explored within the context of the research proposition and identified as an area for further investigation.

'Grasslands' is both an outcome (a garment made using a Slow approach) and a process, informed by ritual, collaboration and considered material choices. The project provided the space and time to consider the multi-dimensional nature of my own textile intelligence—tacit knowledge gained through a life or working with textiles and textile techniques, emotional ties to people, place and moments in time, the knowledge of hemp fibre and yarn, my instinct for Slow and my proclivity towards storytelling as a means to communicate. 'Grasslands' allowed this textile intelligence to rise to the surface, and to sit alongside the more commonly noted professional attributes of function and aesthetics.

The project specific contributions are:

- Provided the opportunity to use existing textile skills and knowledge to create a garment based on the principles of dematerialisation, Slow and deep localization.
- Explored the use of location-specific plant materials and natural dying to create a tangible material connection to place and memories of place.
- Provided the space and time to explore and articulate what might constitute 'textile intelligence' in the context of the project:

---

[192] McIntyre hope to have a collection of locally produced garments using 'Glenoe' wool available to purchase in 2020.

- knowledge of fibres, fabrics, agricultural practices, mechanised/chemical production, textile properties and natural dying techniques;
- tacit/making skills including embroidery, fabric manipulation, stitching and applying the visual design elements and principles;
- an explicit and tacit awareness of the agency of textiles; working with the properties of the fibre and cloth;
- the application of skills, knowledge and awareness via an iterative process of thinking (dematerialisation, good, clean and fair, making connections), feeling (life experiences alongside the tactility of the material and making process) and doing (dying and making by hand).

- Brought to front of mind the importance of place in 'post-material making'—place has been identified as an area for further exploration.

Love you or leave you

This project is positioned within a similar context to Fletcher's international ethnographic Local Wisdom and Craft of Use projects (2016), and Niinimäki and Koskinen's study (2011). 'Love you or leave you' provided the opportunity to talk to people about their relationships to cloth and clothing. Conversing with people enabled a deeper appreciation for the power of textiles to attach due to colour, texture, function and/or the ability to trigger memories of people and/or periods in time.

Despite the ability for textiles to connect, I agree with Chapman (cited in Fletcher 2016, p. 211) and Mugge et al. (2005, p. 42) who believe it is difficult for the designer to design attachment into a material offering. Designers can do their best to design in a way that may facilitate attachment, but they cannot guarantee it. Attachment is ambiguous, slippery and difficult to replicate for multiple audiences—however, it is a necessary consideration if the product is made from materials that are designed to last.

Many of the participants expressed attachment due to the colour of the textile in question. Textile designers are trained to incorporate colour as a critical element for success. Trend forecasting services such as WGSN[193] are often used in commercial contexts to justify palette

---

[193] WGSN is a subscription-based online trend forecasting service.

choices. Working with trend and colour forecasting services provides an industry-recognised measure for market appropriateness. It is important for textile designers to be aware of forecasting services, how they work, and how trends are established and rolled out across numerous industries. However, it is equally important for textile designers to consider their immediate community, and to design with people and place in mind, rather than adhering to trends that may only offer short-term attachment. Long-term colour attachment is visceral and complex, it is informed by reasons to do with personality, practicality and/or emotional connections to do with people and/or moments in time. For this reason, looking closer to home for colour inspiration may be beneficial in securing long-term attachment.

The project specific contributions are:

- Follows on from Fletcher's (2015), and Niinimäki and Koskinen's (2011) research to include reasons for attachment and detachment to cloth and clothing as a way to better understand how and why people connect to textile objects and things.
- Induced a greater appreciation for the power of textiles to initiate visceral experiences, and to embody memories and therefore connections between people and place.
- Reaffirmed the role of colour in maintaining connections between people and cloth/ clothing. The process of selecting colour when 'post-material making' may entail a more local or personal (rather than trend-based) approach, one informed by personal experience, relationships, memories—connections to people and or place.

Araluen, a project with people for people
The 'Araluen' case study provided the opportunity to reflect upon two studio projects (2012 and 2015) delivered to RMIT University BA (Textile Design) students. The first project undertaken in 2012 involved a small cohort of BA (Textile Design) students. The students worked alongside Araluen artists to develop artwork to be digitally printed and made into apron and tea towel sets to be gifted to Araluen's sponsors. The second project was much larger, involving RMIT: BA (Textile Design) students, business and communication design students alongside local digital fabric printing bureau Frankie & Swiss. The 2015 iteration consisted of two phases. Phase one involved BA (Textile Design) and communication design students collaborating to co-create artwork with Araluen artists. It required students to consider zero-waste patternmaking, and material and manufacturing resourcefulness. Phase two required BA (Textile Design) students to consider the experiential qualities of materials, techniques and surface treatments, while

creating objects and things as agents for sensory connection. Exploring the potential for textile design practice to connect to people beyond the visual, provided the opportunity to consider alternative professional roles for textile designers beyond the TCF and associated industries. The projects positioned the textile design student as co-creator, facilitator and collaborator, as well as designers of surfaces and textile objects and things. This shift provides an example of how a textile designer might use their textile intelligence as a process for enhanced collaboration and exchange.

Earley et al. note that the role of design is expanding, 'from the creation of artefacts through to services and social innovations' (2016a, p. 307). With this expansion, they predict that new 'yet to be defined' opportunities will emerge. Earley et al. suggest that the 'designer as facilitator' is an appropriate, alternative practice for the discipline. However, there is still no clear role description to clarify what this actually entails (2016a, pp. 307–308). This study builds on the work of Tan (2012) who identified potential new design roles as a way to address and respond to social issues such as education, energy, health, mobility and food under the banner of 'design for social good'[194]. It seems that establishing these roles within a professional context is still a work in progress.

The two Araluen projects situate the textile design student as co-creator, facilitator and collaborator in this 'yet to be defined' space. Projects such as 'Araluen, a project with people, for people' consider opportunities for the profession beyond Pastor and VanPatter's Design 1.0: artifactual design, to 4.0: design for social transformation[195]. The case study contributes to the work of Hackney et al. (2016) and Jakob & Collier (2018) who have explored the potential for textile intelligence to build human agency and care. The projects link local people with local resources, while opening up potential employment opportunities for textile designers beyond those traditionally offered in the TCF and associated industries.

[194] Tan proposed the following roles under the banner of 'design for social good'. The designer as: co-creator, researcher, facilitator, capability builder, social entrepreneur, provocateur and strategist (2012, p. 299). The study is not specific to textile design.
[195] Refer to Pastor and VanPatter's 'Design Geographies' included in Chapter 2.0.

The project specific contributions are:

- Provides an example of 'post-material making' in an undergraduate studio and workshop context that connects people through materials.
- Highlights the importance of fostering undergraduate emotional and 'textile intelligence' in 'post-material making' pedagogical contexts.
- Identifies potential process or service orientated roles for textile designers in professional contexts that address connection rather than design for consumption.

Home made

The final project, 'Home made' charts the process of transitioning an ordinary domestic bath mat into a series of textile objects and things capable of triggering memories of people and place. The project provided the opportunity to explore the principles of dematerialisation and a Slow approach to making while relating elements of material theory to practice. The research into Indigenous culture and connection to material objects and things provided another layer of appreciation for the power of textiles to connect.

'Grasslands' and 'Home made' provided the opportunity to explore, understand and better articulate my textile intelligence. The two projects provide examples of; reasons for, and experiences of making. Making that is considerate of the cultural and social dimensions of textiles/techniques, while recognising the value of autoethnography as a way to reflect, analyse and communicate. The adaptation of projects such as 'Grasslands' and 'Home made' in undergraduate learning and teaching require sensitivity to location, and the educators/students lived experience in order for the experience to have meaning.

The project specific contributions are:

- Provides an example of 'post-material making' that connects people to people via materials and people to place via materials.
- Presented the opportunity to learn more about Indigenous methods of making and connections to, and between people, materials and place.
- Extends upon the activities undertaken in the 'Grassland's project to explore what might constitute 'textile intelligence' in the context of the project:
  - knowledge of fibres and fabrics;

- tacit/making skills including, fabric manipulation, stitching, macramé, weaving crochet and wrapping;
- an explicit and tacit awareness of the agency of textiles; working with the properties of the fibre and cloth;
- the application of skills, knowledge and awareness via an iterative process of thinking (dematerialisation, good, clean and fair, making connections), feeling (memories of place and moments in time; alongside the tactility of the materials and making processes) and doing (deconstructing and reconstructing/upcycling by hand).

In summary

'Post-material making' as a method of making, and way of thinking has been proposed and explored to support textile design shift from a primarily 'material', to 'post-material' process, or service-oriented profession. This is in recognition that design without consideration of people, materials and place often renders textiles and associated objects and things as waste. Through this research wandering I have come to realise that working with textile materials and techniques, coupled with an expanded notion of textile intelligence enables deep connections to occur—connections between people, materials and place.

Kane et al. (2016) believe textile design to be in a state of transition and advocate for a balance between traditional hand skills and knowledge of digital design and making technologies. 'Post-material making' is inclusive of analogue and digital technologies but holds connection key to their use. The TCF industry is fully aware that change is inevitable (Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017 & 2018). Given the majority of textile design employment opportunities are currently situated within this industry, it makes sense for the discipline to assist with this change while creating itself a new professional role. A role that facilitates a circular economy, and or positions textiles as a conduit for bringing about connection.

The work of Earley et al. (2016a, 2016b, 2017); Hackney et al. (2016); Igoe (2013); Jakob & Collier (2017) and Vuletich (2015) are recent contributions to the field on emergent professional roles for textile designers. It is my hope that *Post-material making: explorations for a materially connected textile design practice* adds to the mix by making explicit the skills, knowledge and textile intelligence inherent to the discipline while offering methods of, and ways to practice in a professional context that facilitate connection.

Reference list

Adamson, G 2018, *Fewer better things: the hidden wisdom of objects*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London.

Adamson, P & Adamson, G 2018, *Glenn Adamson on material intelligence,* podcast, 11 August, viewed 17 March 2019, <https://historyofphilosophy.net/glenn-adamson-material-intelligence>.

Aedy, R 2016, *Managing generational difference: the millennials,* radio podcast, This Working Life, RN, 27 August, viewed 18 May 2017, <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/this-working-life/stop-living-in-the-70s-and-hire-a-millennial/7787328>.

Altheide, DL & Johnson, JM 2011, 'Reflections on interpretive adequacy in qualitative research' in NK Denzin and YS Lincoln (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th edn, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, USA, pp. 581–594.

Amaze 2011, *About us*, Amaze, viewed 10 December 2017, <http://www.amaze.org.au/about-us/>.

Anstey, H & Weston, T 2003, *The Anstey Weston guide to textile terms*, Weston Publishing Limited, London.

Association of Northern Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists, 2013, *Talking up textiles, community fabric and indigenous industry,* Association of Northern Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists, viewed 16 May 2018, <http://3hs05h2u030x3s8ltz25s0gf.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Talking-up-Textiles-2013.pdf>.

Atzmon, L & Boradkar, P, 2014, 'Introduction: a design encounter with thing theory', in *Design and Culture*, vol. 6, no. 2, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection, pp, 141–152.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, *Information paper: towards the Australian environmental-economic accounts*, cat.no. 4655.0.55.002, ABS, Canberra, viewed 16 May 2017, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/4655.0.55.002~2013~Main+Features~Chapter+4+Waste?OpenDocument#footnote2back>.

—— 2016, *Australian and New Zealand standard classification of occupations: fashion, industrial and jewellery designers,* version 1.2, unit group 2323, viewed 3 October 2018, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/868506E0047884AACA257B9D0009B7C2?opendocument>.

Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2006, *Waste management productivity commission inquiry report No. 38*, viewed 10 March 2015, <https://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/21614/waste.pdf>.

Australian Qualifications Framework 2013, *AQF levels summaries and learning outcomes criteria*, Australian Qualifications Framework, 2nd edn, viewed 5 February 2019, <https://www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/aqf-2nd-edition-january-2013.pdf>.

Baker-Brown, D 2017, 'Resource matters', in D Baker-Brown (ed.), *The re-use atlas: a designer's guide towards a circular economy*, RIBA Publishing, London, pp. 7–15.

Ballie, J 2012, 'e-co-textile design: constructing a community of practice for textile design education', *The Design Journal*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 219-236, viewed 13 September 2019, Taylor & Francis online.

Bancroft, B 2019, *Bronwyn Bancroft*, viewed 19 September 2019, <https://www.bronwynbancroft.com>.

Battarbee, K & Mattelmäki, T 2004, 'Meaningful product relationships', in D McDonagh, P Hekkert, J van Erp and D Gyi (eds.), *Design and emotion,* Taylor & Francis, London, pp. 337–341.

Bennett, J 2010, *Vibrant matter: a political ecology of things*, Duke University Press, USA.

Bike Sharing Solutions n.d., Common Bike Melbourne, Bike Sharing Solutions, viewed 3 October 2018, <http://www.bikesharing.eu/common-bike-melbourne>.

Black, S 2008, *Eco-chic: the fashion paradox,* Blackdog Publishing, London.

—— 2012, *The sustainable fashion handbook*, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London.

Blake, S n.d., *Eucalyptus dye database*, Sally Blake, viewed 12 September 2017, <https://sallyblake.com/eucalyptus-dyes-1/>.

Blattner, W 2006, *Heidegger's being and time: a reader's guide*, Continuum International Publishing Group, London.

—— 2011, *Some terminology in being and time*, Georgetown University Philosophy Department, viewed 19 April 2018, <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/blattnew/heid/terms.htm>.

BlockTexx 2018, *Unlocking the value of textile waste*, BlockTexx Pty Ltd, viewed 3 October 2018, <https://www.blocktexx.com/>.

Bond, C (writer of added text.) & Rowe, M (curator.) & Bendigo Art Gallery (issuing body.) 2003, *Un wrapped: Australian fashion & textile design*, Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo, Australia.

Boradkar, P 2010, *Designing things: a critical introduction to the culture of objects*, Berg, Oxford, UK.

Boscagli, M 2014, *Stuff theory: everyday objects, radical materialism,* Bloomsbury Academic, New York, USA.

Brayshaw, E 2017, 'Stitching lives back together: men's rehabilitation embroidery in WWI', *The Conversation,* 25 August, viewed 5 November 2018, <https://theconversation.com/stitching-lives-back-together-mens-rehabilitation-embroidery-in-wwi-76326>.

Brennan, A, & Lo, YS 2016, 'Environmental Ethics' in EN Zalta (ed.)*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive*, viewed 22 May 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/ethics-environmental/>.

Brewster, S 2016, 'A robot that sews could take the sweat out of sweatshops', *MIT Technology Review,* 22 September, viewed 15 November 2018, <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/602423/a-robot-that-sews-could-take-the-sweat-out-of-sweatshops/>.

Brien, P 2012, '"Nature's house muse" project, an informal description before our informal meeting', project brief, RMIT University.

—— 2015, 'Re-enchanting fashion, an ecocentric approach', Master's thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, RMIT University research repository.

Britt, H 2013, 'Practice what you teach? Examining the significance and complexities of textile designer educator creative practice', *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 49–64.

Budge, K, Beale, C & Lynas, E 2013, 'A chaotic intervention: creativity and peer learning in design education', International Journal of Art and Design Education, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 146–156.

Buxey, G 2005, 'Globalisation and manufacturing strategy in the TCF industry', *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 100–113.

Bye, E, 2010 'A Direction for Clothing and Textile Design Research', *Clothing & Textiles Research Journal*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp 205–217.

Candy, L 2006, *Practice based research: a guide*, Creativity & Cognition Studios, University of Technology Sydney, viewed 1 May 2018, <https://www.creativityandcognition.com/resources/PBR%20Guide-1.1-2006.pdf>.

Carmichael, E 2017, 'How is weaving past, present, futures?' Masters thesis, Queensland University of Technology, Australia, <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/108051/>.

Carter, N & Heide Museum of Modern Art 2007, *Savage luxury: modernist design in Melbourne 1930–1939*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen, Victoria.

Cataldi, C, Dickson, M & Grover, C 2010, 'Slow Fashion: tailoring a strategic approach towards sustainability' PhD thesis, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona, Sweden.

—— Dickson, M & Grover, C 2013, 'Slow Fashion: tailoring a strategic approach for sustainability' in AL Torres & MA Gardetti (eds.), *Sustainability in fashion and textiles: values, design, production and consumption*, Routledge, Sheffield, UK, EBSCOHost Ebooks, pp. 22–46.

Cassie Byrnes, 2017, *About*, Cassie Byrnes, viewed 4 October 2018, <http://www.cassiebyrnes.com/about/>.

Caulfield, K 2009, *Discussion paper: sources of textile waste in Australia*, Apical International Pty Ltd, viewed 20 September 2018, <https://studylib.net/doc/18791293/sources-of-textile-waste-in-australia>.

Centre for Circular Design n.d., *About Us*, viewed 25 August 2019, <https://www.circulardesign.org.uk/>.

Cittàslow Katoomba Blue Mountains 2015, *Home,* Cittàslow Katoomba Blue Mountains, viewed 8 August 2017, <http://Cittàslow.org.au/>.

Chapman, J 2005, *Emotionally durable design: objects, experiences and empathy*. Earthscan, London.

—— & Gant, N (eds) 2007, *Designers, visionaries and other stories: a collection of sustainable design essays*, Earthscan, London.

—— 2009, 'Design for (emotional) durability', *Design Issues*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 29–35.

—— 2015a, 'Prospect, seed and activate: advancing design for sustainability in fashion', in M Tham and K Fletcher (eds), *Routledge handbook of sustainability and fashion,* Routledge International Handbooks, EBSCO Publishing, eBook collection, pp. 84–90.

—— 2015b, *Emotionally durable design: objects, experiences & empathy*, 2nd edn, Routledge, Abingdon, UK.

—— 2017, 'Product moments, material eternities', in D Baker-Brown (ed.), *The re-use* atlas: a designer's guide towards a circular economy, RIBA Publishing, London, pp. 161–165.

Clark, H 2008, 'Slow + fashion—an oxymoron—or a promise for the future?', *Fashion Theory*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 427–446.

Clarke, S 2011, *Textile design*, Laurence King Publishing, London.

Chiang Mai Best 2013, *Loy Krathong, Yee Peng, Festival of lights,* Chiang Mai Best, 3 November, viewed 18 September 2018, <http://chiangmaibest.com/loy-krathong-yee-peng/>.

ClothFabric n.d, *About,* ClothFabric, viewed 5 February 2019, http://clothfabric.com/about/.

Co-Creating CARE: community learning through collaborative making, n.d., *About,* Co-Creating CARE: community learning through collaborative making, viewed 8 September 2019, <https://cocreatingcare.wordpress.com/the-project/>.

Collier, A 2011, 'The well-being of women who create with textiles: implications for art therapy', *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 104-112, viewed 26 September 2019, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

Cotton Australia 2017, *Cotton library fact sheet: processing, exporting and marketing*, Cotton Australia, viewed 16 May 2017, <http://cottonaustralia.com.au/cotton-library/factsheets/processing-exporting-and-marketing>.

Couzens, V 2017, 'Possum skin cloak story reconnecting communities and culture: telling the story of possum skin cloaks Kooramookyan-an Yakeeneeyt-an Kooweekoowee-yan', PhD thesis, RMIT University, RMIT University research repository.

Craft Victoria 2017, *Lisa Waup X Verner at Craft,* Craft Victoria, viewed 25 August 2019, <https://www.craft.org.au/lisa-waup-x-verner>.

Critchley, S 2009a, 'Being and time, part 5: anxiety', *The Guardian,* 6 July 2009, viewed 17 July 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jul/06/heidegger-philosophy-being>.

—— 2009b, 'Being and time, part 7: conscience, *The Guardian,* 20 July 2009, viewed 17 July 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jul/20/heidegger-being-time-critchley>.

Cross, N 2006, *Designerly ways of knowing,* Springer, London.

Crouch, C & Pearce, J 2012, *Doing research in design*, Berg, London.

Csikszentmihalyi, M 1990, *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience*, Harper Perennial Modern Classics, New York.

Culture Victoria 2016, *Possum skin cloaks*, Culture Victoria, viewed 10 October 2018, <https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/aboriginal-culture/possum-skin-cloaks/>.

Das, S 2015, *A banquet of consequences: have we consumed our own future?,* Penguin Viking, Melbourne, Australia.

De Michelis, G 2014, 'What design tells us about objects and things', *Design and Culture*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 187–202.

Design Institute of Australia 2017a, *MDIA membership*, Design Institute of Australia, viewed 1 August 2017, <https://www.design.org.au/membershipinformation/mdiamembership/mdia->.

—— 2017b, *Design disciplines,* Design Institute of Australia, viewed 1 August 2017, <https://www.design.org.au/designindustry/design-disciplines>.

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation n.d., Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014–2034, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, viewed 8 September 2019, <http://www.djadjawurrung.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Dja-Dja-Wurrung-Country-Plan.pdf>.

D'Olimpio, L 2015, *Unleashing the creative: Nietzsche, the phenomenologists and the good life*, radio program, ABC Radio National, 29 May, accessed 31 May 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/philosopherszone/unleashing-the-creative-nietzsche-the-phenomenologists/6504578>.

Douglas, K, & Carless, D 2013, 'A History of Autoethnographic Inquiry' in S Holman Jones, T Adams, C Ellis (Eds), *Handbook of Autoethnography*, Routledge, Oxon, UK, pp. 84–106.

Downes, J 2018, 'China's recycling 'ban' throws Australia into a very messy waste crisis', *The Conversation,* 27 April, viewed 19 March 2019, <http://theconversation.com/chinas-recycling-ban-throws-australia-into-a-very-messy-waste-crisis-95522>.

Drengson, A 2012, *Some thought on the deep ecology movement*, Foundation for Deep Ecology, viewed 29 August 2017, <http://www.deepecology.org/deepecology.htm>.

Duffy, K 2007, 'Knitting through recovery one stitch at a time', *Journal of Groups in Addiction & Recovery*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 67–83, viewed 3 October 2018, Taylor & Francis online.

Dyson, C 2013, *Cultural and historic significance of Royal Park*, Statement of significance prepared for the City of Melbourne, Melbourne.

Earley, R, & Goldsworthy, K 2015, 'Designing for fast and slow circular fashion systems: exploring strategies for multiple and extended product cycles, in *PLATE conference 2015 proceedings,* Nottingham Trent University, 17-19 June, viewed 4 September 2017, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279190953_Designing_for_Fast_and_Slow_Circular_Fashion_Systems_Exploring_Strategies_for_Multiple_and_Extended_Product_Cycles>.

——, Vuletich, C, Hadridge, P & Anderson, KR 2016a, 'A new "t" for textiles: training design researchers to inspire buying office staff towards sustainability at Hennes and Mauritz (H&M)', *The Design Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 301–321, viewed 5 September 2018, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

——, Vuletich, C, Goldsworthy, K, Politowicz, MR, 2016b, The Textile Toolbox; new design thinking, materials & processes for sustainable fashion and textiles, full research report, MISTRA, Sweden, viewed 28 August 2019, <http://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/11281/>.

—— & Hornbuckle, R 2017 'Face-ing collaboration: a meditation on the faces of circular textile research', *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 85–109.

Eatough, V & Smith, J 2008, 'Interpretative phenomenological analysis' in C Willig and W Stainton-Rogers (eds), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, SAGE Publications Inc., London, pp. 179–195.

Edquist, H 2011, *Michael O'Connell: the lost modernist*, Melbourne Books, Melbourne, Australia.

Ellen MacArthur Foundation 2017a, *What is a circular economy?,* Ellen MacArthur Foundation, viewed 31 August 2017, <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>.

—— 2017b, *A new textiles economy: redesigning fashion's future, viewed 11 September 2019,* <http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications>.

Ellis, C & Bochner, AP 2000, 'Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: researcher as subject', in N Denzin and Y Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd edn, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, pp. 733–68.

——, Adams, TE & Bochner, AP 2011, 'Autoethnography: an overview', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1–12.

—— 2016, 'Carrying the torch for autoethnography' in S Holman Jones, TE Adams and C Ellis (eds) *Handbook of Autoethnography,* Routledge, London, pp. 9–12.

Erlhoff, M, & Marshall, T (eds) 2008, *Design dictionary: perspectives on design terminology,* Birkhäuser, Basel, Switzerland.

Fang, G 2012, *Australia's declining textile industry*, radio program, ABC Radio Australia, accessed 17 July 2017, <http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/onairhighlights/australias-declining-textile-industry>.

Farrell, S 2016, 'We've hit peak home furnishings, says Ikea boss', *The Guardian*, 18 January, viewed 28 May 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/jan/18/weve-hit-peak-home-furnishings-says-ikea-boss-consumerism>.

Farrer, J, & Finn, A 2015, 'Fashion and textiles design for wellbeing', in A Gwilt (ed.), *Fashion design for living*, Routledge, Oxon, Uk, pp. 25–39.

Revolution 2016, *How to be a fashion revolutionary*, Fashion Revolution, viewed 16 May 2016, <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/wcontent/uploads/2015/11/HowToBeAFashionRevolutionary.pdf>.

Feagins, L 2012, 'Rae Ganim studio visit', *The design files,* blog post, 16 March, viewed 5 May 2018, <https://thedesignfiles.net/2012/03/interview-rae-ganim/>.

Fletcher, K 2007, 'Clothes that connect', in J Chapman and N Gant (eds) *Designers, visionaries and other stories*, Earthscan, London, pp. 94–103.

—— 2008, *Sustainable fashion and textiles design journeys*, Earthscan, London.

—— 2009, 'Slow fashion' in L Parker, M Dickson, Fashioning an Ethical Industry and Educators for Socially Responsible Apparel Business, (eds), *Sustainable fashion: a handbook for educators,* Labour Behind the Label, pp. 23–25.

—— 2010, 'Slow fashion: an invitation for systems change', *Fashion Practice: The Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion Industry*, vol. 2, no. 2, viewed 18, November 2018, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection, pp. 259–266.

—— & Grose, L 2012, *Fashion & sustainability design for change*, Laurence King Publishing, London.

—— 2013, 'Sustainable Fashion', in S Walker, J Giard, and H Walker (eds), *The handbook of design for sustainability,* Bloomsbury Academic, London, pp. 318-333.

—— & Tham, M (eds) 2015, *Routledge handbook of sustainability and fashion*, Routledge, Oxford, UK.

—— 2016, *Craft of use post-growth fashion*, Routledge, Oxford, UK.

Flint, I 2008, *Eco colour*, Murdoch Books, Sydney.

Frisby, B & Martin, M 2010, 'Instructor–student and student–student rapport in the classroom', *Communication Education*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp. 146-164, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03634520903564362>.

Fuad-Luke, A 2002, "slow design' – a paradigm shift in design philosophy?' *Development by Design*, Bangalore, India 1 November, viewed 6 January 2017, < https://carlosfiorentino.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/slow-des.pdf>.

—— 2004, Slow theory: a paradigm for living sustainably? Viewed 6 January 2017, *https://fluido.files.wordpress.com/2006/07/slow-design.pdf.*

—— 2009a, *Design activism: beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world*, Earthscan, London.

—— 2009b, *The eco-design handbook: a complete sourcebook for the home and office*, 3rd edn, Thames & Hudson, London.

—— 2010, 'Adjusting our metabolism: slowness and nourishing rituals of delay in anticipation of a post-consumer age', in T Cooper (ed.), *Longer lasting products: alternatives to the throwaway society*, Gower Publishing Limited, Farnham, UK, pp. 133–156.

Gale, C & Kaur, J 2002, *The textile book*, Bloomsbury, London.

Gaudion, K, Hall, A, Myerson, J & Pellicano, L 2015, 'A designer's approach: how can autistic adults with learning disabilities be involved in the design process?', *CoDesign: International Journal of CoCreation in Design and the Arts*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 49–69, 18 November, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

Gauntlett, D, 2011, *Making is connecting, the social meaning of creativity, from DIY and knitting to YouTube and web 2.0*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.

Glasgow School of Art n.d., *Textile design*, Glasgow School of Art, viewed 4 October 2018, <http://www.gsa.ac.uk/study/undergraduate-degrees/textile-design/>.

Goldsworthy, K 2012, 'Laser-finishing: a new process for designing recyclability in synthetic textiles', PhD thesis, University of the Arts London, <http://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/11638/8/THESIS_Jun2013_grad%20copy_final.pdf>.

Gordon, B 2011, *Textiles: the whole story,* Thames & Hudson, New York.

Gov.uk (n.d.), *Types of honours and awards,* Gov.uk, viewed 5 May 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/honours/types-of-honours-and-awards>.

Gorman 2019, *Mangkaja x Gorman: An Indigenous Australian Artist Collaboration*, Gorman, viewed 25 August 2019, <https://www.gormanshop.com.au/mangkaja-x-gorman-lookbook>.

Gray, C & Malins, J 2004, *Visualizing research: a guide to the research process in art and design*, Routledge, London.

Grimes, RL 2003, 'Ritual theory and the environment', *The Sociological Review*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 31–45.

Gwilt, A & Rissanen, T (eds) 2011, *Shaping sustainable fashion: changing the way we make and use clothes*, Earthscan, London.

Hackney, F, Maughan, H & Desmarais, S 2016, 'The power of quiet: re-making affective amateur and professional textiles agencies, *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol 4, no. 1, pp. 33–62, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

Hamilton, C, Denniss, R & Baker, D 2005, *Wasteful consumption in Australia report*, The Australia Institute, viewed 20 May 2015, <http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/DP77_8.pdf>.

Hammersley, M 2011, 'Methodology: who needs it?' *SAGE Publications*, viewed 15 May 2017, <http://methods.sagepub.com/book/methodology-who-needs-it>.

Haseman, B & Mafe, D 2009, 'Acquiring know-how: research training for practice-led researchers', in H Smith & RT Dean (eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, ProQuest Ebook Central.

Haslanger, S & Ásta 2017, 'Feminist metaphysics', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 27 February, viewed 15 October 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-metaphysics/>.

Hasling, KM 2015, 'Learning through materials—developing materials teaching in design education', PhD thesis, Kolding School of Design, Denmark.

Hay, SC 2008, 'Slow design and the lost art of shifting gears', Master's thesis, Emily Carr University, Ottawa, <https://ecuad.arcabc.ca/islandora/object/ecuad%3A2680/datastream/PDF/view>.

Healy, P 2018, Royal Park is now an area of green spaces and open grassland nestled on the edge of the city, photograph, 17 August, viewed 20 August 2018, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-17/royal-park/10126232>.

Heidegger, M 1962, *Being and time*, trans. J Macquarrie and E Robinson, Harper & Row, New York.

Hekkert, P & Leder, H 2008, 'Product aesthetics', in H Schifferstein and P Hekkert (eds), *Product experience,* Elsevier, San Diego, USA, pp. 259–285.

Hemmings, J 2010, *Textile theory: do we need it?* Academia, viewed 20 November 2018, <http://www.academia.edu/1886887/Textile_Theory_do_we_need_it>.

—— (ed.) 2012, *The textile reader*, Bloomsbury Academic, London.

—— 2014, *Slow looking*, Jessica Hemmings: textile writer, 1 September, viewed 18 September 2017, <https://www.jessicahemmings.com/slow-looking/>.

Hilgard, ER 1980, 'The trilogy of mind: cognition, affection, and conation', *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 107–17, viewed 28 September 2018, Wiley Online Library Psychology Backfiles.

Hobson, F 2015, 'Fabric designer in-profile: Julie Paterson, owner of ClothFabric', *The carousel*, 7 March, viewed 4 October 2018, <https://thecarousel.com/living/homes/fabric-designer-profile-julie-paterson-owner-clothfabric/>.

Homlong, S 2013, 'Like or dislike: aesthetic judgments on textile patterns', in *DRS//Cumulus: International Conference for Design Education Researchers,* Oslo, Norway, 14–17 May, pp. 731–742.

Holman Jones, S, Adams, T & Ellis, C 2013, 'Coming to know autoethnography as more than a method' in S Holman Jones, T Adams, C Ellis (Eds), *Handbook of Autoethnography*, Routledge, Oxon, UK, pp. 17–49.

Honoré, C 2004, *In praise of Slow*, Orion Books, London.

Horne, MRL 2012, 'Bast fibres: hemp cultivation and production', in RM Kozłowski (ed.), Handbook of natural fibres types, properties and factors affecting breeding and cultivation, volume 1 in Woodhead publishing series in textiles, Woodhead Publishing Ltd, Cambridge, pp. 114–145.

Horvat, L, Peterson, F & Smith, D 2009, 'Leaving a mark: identity and the creative studio', *Second Nature: International Journal of Creative Media*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 36–61.

Hou, W, Ling, C, Shi, S, Yan, Z, Zhang, M, Zhang, B & Dai, J 2018, 'Separation and characterization of waste cotton/polyester blend fabric with hydrothermal method', in *Fibers and Polymers*, vol. 19, no. 4, SpringerLink Journals, pp. 742–750.

Hynes, L 2015, 'A catalogue of beautiful things by beautiful people', Araluen Art Connects, Melbourne, Australia, 2015.

Igoe, E 2013, 'In textasis: matrixial narratives of textile design', PhD thesis, Royal College of Art, London, <http://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/1646/1/IGOE%20Digital%20Thesis.pdf>.

—— 2014, 'Website review: craft of use', *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 215–220.

—— 2018, 'Change matters: theories of postdigital textiles and material design' in C Storni, K Leahy, M McMahon, P Lloyd & E Bohemia (eds), Proceedings of DRS 2018 international conference: catalyst, Limerick, Ireland, 25 June, DRS International Conference Series, vol. 4, Design Research Society, pp. 1787-1799, <http://www.drs2018limerick.org/participation/proceedings>.

Ingold, T 2008, 'When ant meets spider: social theory for arthropods', in C Knappet and L Malafouris (eds), *Material agency: towards a non-anthropocentric approach*, Springer, Boston, USA, pp. 209–215.

—— 2009, 'The textility of making', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 91–102.

—— 2010, 'Ways of mind-walking: reading, writing, painting', *Visual Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 15–23.

—— 2013, *Making: anthropology, archaeology, art and architecture*, Routledge, Oxford, UK.

Instone, L 2010, 'Encountering native grasslands: matters of concern in an urban park', *Australian Humanities Review*, vol. 49, pp. 91–117.

Interlandi, P 2012, '[A]Dressing death: fashioning garments for the grave', PhD thesis, RMIT University, RMIT University research repository.

Jakob, A, & Collier, L 2017,' Sensory design for dementia care – the benefits of textiles', *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 232–250, viewed 8 September 2019, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

Jordan, P 2000, *Designing pleasurable products: an introduction to the new human factors*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice, 2018, *Aims and scope*, Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice, viewed 1 December 2018, <https://tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=rftd20>.

Kane, F, Nimkulrat, N, & Walton, K (eds) 2016, 'Introduction', in N Nimkulrat, F Kane & K Walton (eds.) *Crafting Textiles in the Digital Age*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, London, pp. 1–13.

Kelly, P 2015, 'Initiatives boost large-format retailers', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 July, viewed 2 November 2017, <http://www.smh.com.au/business/property/hot-property-20150702-gi38jp.html>.

Kennedy, E 2014, 'Creative couples: Sophie Tatlow and Bruce Slorach', *Broadsheet Melbourne*, 10 November, viewed 4 October 2018, <https://www.broadsheet.com.au/melbourne/art-and-design/article/creative-couples-sophie-tatlow-and-bruce-slorach>.

Kennedy, E 2016, 'Bruce Slorach and Sophie Tatlow of Utopia Goods', *The design files*, 14 October, viewed 4 October 2018, <https://thedesignfiles.net/2016/10/bruce-slorach-and-sophie-tatlow-of-utopia-goods/>.

Kouhia, A 2016, 'Unraveling the meanings of textile hobby crafts', PhD thesis, University of Helsinki, <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/167969/Unraveli.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

Kovacic, L 2013, *Bancroft, Bronwyn (1958-)*, The Australian Women's Register, viewed 14 September 2019, <http://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0981b.htm>.

LaCava, S 2013, *An extraordinary theory of objects: a memoir of an outsider in Paris*, Harper Perenial, New York.

Lange-Berndt P (ed) 2015, *Materiality*, Whitechapel Gallery and The MIT Press, London.

Leong, R & Somerville, K 2010, 'Beyond the boundaries, Australian fashion from the 1960s to the 1980s', in B English and L Pomazan (eds), *Australian fashion unstitched: the last 60 years*. Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, pp. 175–189.

Linn, S 2011, 'Slow design through fast technology: the application of socially reflective design principles to modern medicated technologies', Master's thesis, Arizona State University, <https://repository.asu.edu/attachments/56626/content/Linn_asu_0010N_10673.pdf>.

Lomb, N 2012a, *Spring equinox 2012 and the basics of the seasons*, The Australian Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, 20 September, viewed 7 February 2019, <https://maas.museum/observations/2012/09/20/spring-equinox-2012-and-the-basics-of-the-seasons/>.

—— 2012b, *Daily cosmobite: Midsummer's day*, The Australian Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, 21 December, viewed 7 February 2019, <https://maas.museum/observations/2012/12/21/daily-cosmobite-midsummers-day/>.

Luvaas, B, 2016, 'Urban fieldnotes: an auto-ethnography of street style blogging', in H Jenss (ed.), *Fashion Studies: Research Methods, Sites and Practices*, edited by Heike Jenss, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, Proquest Ebook Central.

Lynas, E 2010, 'Textiles connection and meaning', in CV Chaturvedi (ed.) Proceedings of *Fashion: Sustainability and Creativity Conference, IFFTI 2010*, Taipei, Taiwan, 23-26 March 2010, pp. 61–70.

—— 2013, 'Designer-customer relationships: what role do they play in contemporary Australian textile design?', in F Paiva (ed.), *International Conference on Research in Design—Designa Un/Sustainability 2012*, Portugal, 22–23 November 2012, pp. 203–211.

—— Budge, K & Beale, C 2013, 'Hands on: the importance of studio learning in design education', *Visual Inquiry: Learning and Teaching Art*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 127–138.

Madeit 2018, *About*, Madeit: Australian makers' village, viewed 20 November 2018, <https://madeit.com.au/Main/About>.

Magpie Goose 2019, *Home*, Magpie Goose, viewed 25 August 2015, <https://magpiegoose.com/>.

Mandal, S & Abraham, N 2010, 'An overview of sewing thread's mechanical properties on seam quality', *Pakistan Textile Journal*, vol. 59, no. 1, viewed 5 September 2017, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286134984_An_overview_of_sewing_threads_mechanical_properties_on_seam_quality>.

Maningrida Arts & Culture, 1995, *Maningrida—the language of weaving*, Australian Exhibitions Touring Agency Ltd, South Melbourne, Australia.

Manyung Gallery Group 2014, 'Artists Gavin Brown and Meredith Earls join Manyung Gallery Group', *Manyung Gallery Group*, 4 July, viewed 11 May 2018, <http://www.manyunggallery.com.au/News-Detail.cfm?NewsID=79>.

Mathews, F 2003, *For love of matter a contemporary panpsychism*, State University of New York Press, Albany, USA.

—— 2005, *Reinhabiting reality towards a recovery of culture*, State University of New York Press, Albany, USA.

—— 2013, 'Post-materialism', in S Walker, J Giard, and H Walker (eds), *The handbook of design for sustainability,* Bloomsbury Academic, London, pp. 27–42.

McDonagh, D, Bruseberg, A & Haslam, C 2002, 'Visual product evaluation: exploring users' emotional relationships with products', *Applied Ergonomics*, vol. 33, pp. 231–240, viewed 10 October 2013, Elsevier ScienceDirect.

McNiff, J & Whitehead, J 2011, *All you need to know about action research*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London.

—— 2013, *Action research: principles and practice*, 3rd edn, Routledge, Abingdon, UK.

Moura, M 2010, 'Work ethics', in C Davies and M Parrinder (eds), *Limited language: rewriting design: responding to a feedback culture,* Birkhäuser, Basel, pp. 93–98.

Minney, S 2016, *Slow fashion: aesthetics meets ethics*, New Internationalist Publications Ltd, Oxford, UK.

Mugge, R, Schoormans, JPL & Schifferstein, HNJ 2005, 'Design strategies to postpone consumers' product replacement: the value of a strong person-product relationship', *Design Journal*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 38–48.

Naish, J 2008, *Enough: breaking free from the world of more*, Hodder & Stoughton, London.

Newitz, A 2007, 'My laptop', in S Turkle (ed.), *Evocative objects: things we think with,* MIT Press, Cambridge, USA, pp. 88–91.

Niinimäki, K & Koskinen, I 2011, 'I love this dress, it makes me feel beautiful! empathic knowledge in sustainable design, *The Design Journal*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 165-186, viewed 14 September 2019, Taylor & Francis Onlin Journals Collection.

—— (ed.) 2013, *Sustainable fashion: new approaches*, Aalto ARTS Books, Helsinki.

Nimkulrat, N 2012, 'Hands-on intellect: integrating craft practice into design research. *International Journal of Design*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 1-14, viewed 13 September 2019, <http://www.ijdesign.org/index.php/IJDesign/article/viewFile/1228/520>.

NGV 2012, *Linda Jackson: bush couture*, NGV, 3 January, viewed 5 February 2019, <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/media_release/linda-jackson-bush-couture/>.

NHS England n.d., *social prescribing,* NHS England, viewed 5 February 2019, <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/>.

Nilsson, L 2015, 'Textile influence: exploring the relationship between textiles and products in the design process', Doctoral thesis, University of Borås, Sweden, viewed 8 September 2019, <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:868073/FULLTEXT02.pdf>.

NORTH 2019, *Our driving force*, NORTH, viewed 25 August 2019, <https://northhome.org/pages/ethos>.

O'Neill, H 2011, *Florence Broadhurst: her secret & extraordinary lives*, Hardie Grant Books, Prahran, Australia.

Oswald-Jacobs, R 1997, 'A study of the work of Dr Frances Mary Burke MBE, textile designer, with particular reference to the development of printed textile design in Australia', Master's thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, RMIT University research repository.

Pais, AP & Strauss CF 2015, 'Foreword' in AP Pais & CF Strauss (eds.) *Slow Reader: a resource for design thinking and practice*, Valiz, Amsterdam.

Pastor, E & VanPatter, G 2011, *Next design geographies: understanding design thinking 1,2,3,4*, issuu, viewed 7 August 2017, <https://issuu.com/nextd/docs/nextdfutures2011_v02/6>.

Paulins, A & Hillery, J 2009, *Ethics in the fashion industry*, Fairchild Books, New York.

Paterson, J 2015, *Clothbound: iconic fabric designs; stories of a handmade process*, Murdoch Books, Crows Nest, Australia.

Penin, L 2018, *An introduction to service design: designing the invisible*, Bloomsbury Publishing USA, ProQuest Ebook Central.

Prendiville, A 2016, 'Connectivity through service design', in F Fisher and P Sparke (eds), *The Routledge companion to design studies*, Routledge, Oxon, UK, pp, 62–75.

Press, C 2016 *Wardrobe crisis, how we went from Sunday best to fast fashion*, Nero, Carlton, Australia.

Press, C 2017, 'Sustainable style: what happens to the clothes you donate to op shops?' *The Sydney Morning Herald,* 30 March 2017, viewed 16 May 2017, <http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/fashion/sustainable-style-what-happens-to-the-clothes-you-donate-to-opshops-20170328-gv8hgl.html>.

Prideaux, V 2010, 'Technique, motif, repetition: traditional resist uses for contemporary textile practice, part 1', Master's thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, RMIT University research repository.

—— 2015, 'Araluen: a project with people for people', workshop project brief, GRAP2560, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

Prosser, J 2011, 'Visual methodology: toward a more seeing research', in N Denzin and Y Lincoln (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th edn, SAGE Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, USA, pp. 479–495.

Pulse of the Fashion Industry, 2017, *Executive summary*, Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group, viewed 1 February 2019, <https://www.globalfashionagenda.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Pulse-of-the-Fashion-Industry_Executive-summary.pdf>.

—— 2018, *Executive summary*, Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group, viewed 1 February 2019, <https://www.globalfashionagenda.com/publications/#pulseofthefashionindustryreport>.

Quibell, R 2016, *The promise of things*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Quinn, B 2009, *Textile designers at the cutting edge*, Laurence King Publishing, London.

—— 2010, *Textile futures, fashion, design and technology*, Berg, Oxford, UK.

—— 2013, *Textile visionaries*, Laurence King Publishing, London.

Ravelry n.d., *About us*, Ravelry, viewed 10 October 2018, <https://www.ravelry.com/about>.

Reason, M 2005, 'Prue Acton, fashion designer (1943–)', *Museums Victoria Collections*, viewed 5 May 2018, <https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/articles/2377>.

Rivoli, P 2005, *The travels of a t-shirt in the global economy: an economist examines the markets, power and politics of the world trade, John Wiley & Sons*, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey, USA.

—— 2009, *The travels of a t-shirt in the global economy: an economist examines the markets, power and politics of the world trade*, 2nd edn, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey, USA.

RMIT University, 2017a, *Graduate attributes—RMIT University*, RMIT University, viewed 27 August 2017, <http://www1.rmit.edu.au/teaching/graduateattributes>.

—— 2017b, *History of RMIT*, RMIT University, viewed 28 August 2017, <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage/history-of-rmit>.

—— 2018a, *Values,* RMIT University, viewed 5 June 2018, <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-strategy/values>.

Savaş, O 2004, 'A perspective on the person-product relationship: attachment and detachment', in D McDonagh, P Hekkert, van Erp, J & D Gyi (eds.), *Design and Emotion*, Taylor & Francis, London, pp. 317–321.

Schifferstein, HNJ, Mugge, R & Hekkert, P 2004, 'Designing consumer-product attachment', in D McDonagh, P Hekkert, J van Erp and D Gyi (eds.), *Design and emotion,* Taylor & Francis, London, pp. 327–331.

Schön, DA 1991, *The reflective practitioner*, Avebury, London.

Sennett, R 2012*, Together: the rituals, pleasures and politics of cooperation*, Allen Lane, London.

Service Design Melbourne 2018, *About,* Service Design Melbourne, viewed 3 May 2018, <http://servicedesign.net.au/>.

Seuss, Dr, 1990, *Oh, the places you'll go!* Random House, New York.

Shercliff, E 2014, 'Articulating stitch: skilful hand-stitching as personal, social and cultural experience', PhD thesis, The Royal College of Art, UK, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5d62/00820a6b97c03ba8f5b41a3f778343297c80.pdf>.

Sherry, JF 1983, 'Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 157–168, viewed 8 January 2017, JSTOR.

——, McGrath, MA & Levy, SJ 1993, 'The Dark Side of the Gift', *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 225–244, viewed 8 January 2017, Elsevier ScienceDirect Journals.

Shop ethical! n.d., *About*, Shop ethical!, viewed 16 October 2017, <http://www.ethical.org.au/about/>.

Siegle, L 2011, *To die for: is fashion wearing out the world?,* Harper Collins, London.

Singer, M 2019, 'From A+ to F, this is how Australian fashion brands rate on ethics', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 April 2019, viewed 11 September 2019, <https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/fashion/from-a-to-f-this-is-how-australian-fashion-brands-rate-on-ethics-20190408-p51bwk.html>.

Slow Food 2015a, Good, Clean and Fair: The Slow Food Manifesto for Quality, Slow Food, viewed 27 February 2015, <https://www.slowfood.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Manifesto_Quality_ENG.pdf>.

—— 2015b, *About Us: Where We Are*, Slow Food, viewed 19 May 2018, <https://www.slowfood.com/about-us/where-we-are/>.

—— 2015c, *Our network: Terra Madre network*, Slow Food, viewed 14 October 2018, <https://www.slowfood.com/our-network/terra-madre-network/>.

—— 2015d, *New Momentum for the Ark of Taste*, Slow Food, 17 February, viewed 14 October 2018, <https://www.slowfood.com/new-momentum-for-the-ark-of-taste/>.

Slow Food in Australia, n.d., *Does slow food have to be (certified) organic food?* Slow Food in Australia, viewed 8 September 2018, <http://slowfoodaustralia.com.au/about-us/faqs/>. Slow textiles groups

Slow Textiles Group 2017, *About,* viewed 1 March 2017, <https://slowtextilesgroup.com/aboutslowtextilesgroup/>.

Snow, D 2017, 'Paul Keating says neo-liberalism is at "a dead end" after Sally McManus speech', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 March, viewed 6 June 2017, <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/paul-keating-says-neoliberalism-is-at-a-dead-end-after-sally-mcmanus-speech-20170329-gv9cto.html>.

Spectrospective: stories of autism 2015, film, Amaze, viewed 10 December 2017, <http://spectrospective.com.au/2015/index.html>.

Spiritus loci 2012, video, Vimeo, viewed 3 November 2018, created by K Jones and A Magnano, <https://vimeo.com/66608153>.

Stahel, WR 2017, 'Preface', in D Baker-Brown (ed.), *The re-use atlas: a designer's guide towards a circular economy,* RIBA Publishing, London, pp. xiii–xviii.

St Clair, K 2018, *The golden thread: how fabric changed history*, John Murray, London.

Steed, J & Stevenson, F 2012, *Sourcing ideas*, Basics Textile Design 01, AVA Publishing, Lausanne, Switzerland.

Strauss, C & Fuad-Luke, A 2008, 'The slow design principles: a new interrogative and reflexive tool for design research and practice', in *Changing the Change: an international conference on the role and potential of design research in the transition towards sustainability,* Torino, 10–12 July, Viewed 5 September 2018, <http://raaf.org/pdfs/Slow_Design_Principles.pdf>.

Studd, R 2002, 'The textile design process', *The Design Journal*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 35–49.

Sustainable Development 2015, 2015, *The Bruntland Commission*, Sustainable Development 2015, viewed 20 November 2018, <https://www.sustainabledevelopment2015.org/AdvocacyToolkit/index.php/earth-summit-history/past-earth-summits/58-the-brundtland-commission>.

Sustainability Victoria, 2015, *Waste material factsheets: textiles*, viewed 23 September 2018, <https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/Business/Investment-facilitation/Invest-in-resource-recovery/Waste-material-factsheets>.

Tam, D 2008, 'Slow journeys: what does it mean to go slow?' *Food, Culture and Society*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 207–218.

Tan, L 2012, 'Roles for designers in design for social change', PhD thesis, Northumbria University, UK, <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/8454/1/tan.lauren_phd.pdf>.

Terkelsen, C 2016, *Interview with Icebreaker CEO Rob Fyfe,* Bergzeit, 7 November, viewed 18 November 2018, <https://www.bergzeit.co.uk/journal/interview-icebreaker-ceo-rob-fyfe/>.

Textile Beat 2018, *About,* Textile Beat, viewed 6 November 2018, <https://textilebeat.com/about/>.

Textiles Environment Design 2017, *The Ten aims*, viewed 16 May 2017, <http://www.tedresearch.net/teds-ten-aims/>.

—— n.d., *TED's 10: 2—design for cyclability,* Textiles Environment Design, viewed 18 August 2017, <http://www.tedresearch.net/2-design-recycling-upcycling/>.

The Story of Stuff Project, 2018, *The story of microfibers—FAQs,* The Story of Stuff Project, viewed 16 October 2018, <https://storyofstuff.org/uncategorized/the-story-of-microfibers-faqs/>.

The Working Men's College, 1891, *Report*, RMIT University archives, Bundoora, Australia.

—— 1900, *Report*, RMIT University archives, Bundoora, Australia.

—— 1903, *Report*, RMIT University archives, Bundoora, Australia.

—— 1919, *Prospectus*, RMIT University archives, Bundoora, Australia.

—— 1931, *Prospectus*, RMIT University archives, Bundoora, Australia.

Thomas, S 2009, 'On teaching empathy' in P Parker & MA Dickson (eds.), *Sustainable Fashion: a handbook for educators, viewed 1 October 2011,* <https://issuu.com/schoneklerencampagne/docs/sustainable_fashion_a_handbook_for_educators>.

—— 2011, 'Situated empathy: constructed theoretical discourse addressing the empathetic motivations shared by fashion design for sustainability, and the potential of socially engaged Buddhist ethics to inform design practice', PhD thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, RMIT University research repository.

Tolkien, JR 1988, *The fellowship of the ring,* Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.

Toomey, A 2017, *Textiles,* Royal College of Art, viewed 31 July 2017, <https://www.rca.ac.uk/schools/school-of-design/textiles/>.

Torres & MA Gardetti (eds.), *Sustainability in fashion and textiles: values, design, production and consumption*, Routledge, Sheffield, UK, EBSCOHost Ebooks, pp. 22–46.

Townsend, R, Karttunen, A, Karppinen, M & Mikkonen, J 2017, 'The cross-section of a multi-disciplinary project in view of smart textile design practice', *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 175–207, viewed 8 September 2019, Taylor & Francis Online Journals Collection.

Tucker, R 2017, 'Teaching teamwork in design: a framework for understanding effectiveness in student teams', in R Tucker (ed.), *Collaboration and student engagement in design education*, IGI Global eBooks, pp. 1–27.

Turkle, S (ed.) 2007, *Evocative objects: things we think with,* MIT Press, Cambridge, USA.

Twigger Holroyd, A 2018, 'Reknit Revolution: Knitwear Design for the Domestic Circular Economy', *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*, vol.6, no. 1, pp. 89–111.

Udale, J 2008, *Textiles and Fashion,* Basics Fashion Design 02, AVA Publishing, Lausanne, Switzerland.

Underwood, J 2009, 'The design of 3d shape knitted preforms', PhD thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, RMIT University research repository.

UNEP International Resource Panel n.d., *Glossary*, United Nations Environment Programme, International Resource Panel, viewed 18 August 2017, <http://www.resourcepanel.org/glossary>.

United Nations n.d. *About the sustainable development goals*, United Nations, viewed 5 February 2019, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

Valentine, L, Baille, J, Bletcher, J, Robertson, S & Stevenson, F 2017, 'Design thinking for textiles: let's make it meaningful', *The Design Journal*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 964–976.

van der Tuin, I & Dolphijn, R 2012, *New materialism: interviews & cartographies*, Open Humanities Press & M Publishing, Utrecht University Repository, USA.

van der Velden NM 2016, 'Making fashion sustainable, the role of designers', PhD thesis, Delft, University of Technology, the Netherlands.

Vaughan, L (ed) 2017, *Practice based design research*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, London.

Visitar Porto 2017, *Festival of São João do Porto, Portugal*, Visitar Porto, viewed 1 September 2017, <http://www.visitar-porto.com/en/whats-on/porto-events/festa-de-sao-joao.html>.

Vuletich, C 2015, 'Transitionary textiles: a craft-based journey of textile design practice towards new values and roles for a sustainable fashion industry', PhD thesis, University of the Arts London, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, UK.

Wahr, F 2015, 'Embedded: the contribution of a facilitated action research curriculum change project to sustainability learning in an Australian university context', PhD thesis, RMIT University research repository.

Walker, S 1995, 'The environment, product aesthetics and surface', *Design Issues*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 15–27.

—— 2005, 'After the end-game: creating objects in a saturated culture', *The Design Journal*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 3–13.

—— 2006a, *Sustainable by design: explorations in theory and practice*, Earthscan, London.

—— 2006b, 'Object lessons: enduring artefacts and sustainable solutions', *Design Issues*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 20–31.

—— 2009a, 'After taste—the power and prejudice of product appearance', *The Design Journal*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 25–40.

—— 2009b, 'The spirit of design: notes from the shakuhachi flute', *International Journal of Sustainable Design*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 130–144.

—— 2013, 'Imagination's promise practice-based design research for sustainability' in S Walker, J Giard, and H Walker (eds), *The handbook of design for sustainability,* Bloomsbury Academic, London, pp. 446-465.

Wanders, AT 2009, *Slow fashion volume 3*, Niggli, Sulgen, Switzerland

War on waste, season 1, episode 3, 2017, television program, ABC Television, [Australia], 30 May, viewed 5 June 2017, Informit EduTV database.

Weaver, J 2012, *Locavore adventures: one chef's slow food journey*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, USA.

Wellesley-Smith, C 2015, *Slowstitch: mindful and contemplative textile art*, Batsford, London.

Whitfield, D 2016, 'Independence 1970s–1990s', in P Di Trocchio (ed.) *200 Years of Australian fashion*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, pp. 82–135.

Williamson, L 2010, 'Interlaced, textiles for fashion', in B English and L Pomazan (eds), *Australian fashion unstitched, the last 60 years,* Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, Australia, pp. 103–125.

Wood, J 2010, 'The culture of academic rigour: does design research really need it?' *The Design Journal*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 44–57.

WWOOF in Australia n.d., *Volunteer in Australia*, WWOOF in Australia, viewed 1 May 2018, <http://www.wwoof.com.au/>.

Young, D 2008, *Distraction: a philosopher's guide to being free*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Yunkaporta, T 2019, *Sand talk: how indigenous thinking can save the world*, Text Publishing, Melbourne, Australia.

Zehner, R, Forsyth, G, Musgrave, E, Neale, D, Harpe B, Frankham, F & Peterson, N 2009, *Curriculum development volume one: STP final report*, Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd, Strawberry Hills, NSW, Australia.

Appendices

Appendix A

A.1 *Plain language statement for interviews with commercial textile designers and textile designer makers regarding 'connection' undertaken in 2011.*

Invitation to participate in a research project

Project information statement

Project Title:
Slow design in a material world: In what ways can Textile Designers foster deeper connections between people and material possessions?[196]

Investigators:

Emma Lynas - Textile Design Masters[197] degree student, School of Fashion & Textiles, BA Textile Design, RMIT University.

Email: ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇
Ph: ▇▇▇▇▇▇

Dr Juliette Peers - Project Supervisor, Lecturer, School of Architecture & Design, RMIT University.

Email: ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇
Ph: ▇▇▇▇▇

Dear

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by RMIT University. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language, or 'plain English'. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask one of the investigators.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

My name is Emma Lynas, I am a lecturer on the BA textile design program at RMIT with a background in design for commercial bed linen. I am currently undertaking a Masters by research degree looking at the relationship designers have with their customers, and the relationship people develop with material possessions. The rationale for doing so stems from the 'slow design' movement and a call for designers to a build stronger relationship between the designed artefact and the customer they design for. To begin this research I will be conducting a series of interviews with both Textile Designer-makers, and commercial Textile Designers to better understand the designer / customer relationship, along with the designers concern for the life of the designed artefact post sale.

---

[196] Working thesis title.

[197] I began in 2010 with a Masters by research. In July 2012 I upgraded to a PhD. I have been studying part time over this ten-year period, taking twelve months leave of absence—six months in 2014 and six months in 2018.

My Masters by research project consists of three key questions; this survey will provide the data necessary to respond to the first research question below;

1. How are designers connecting with consumers? What are the differences between the approach of the Textile Designer - maker and that of the Textile Designer working in a commercial design studio?

The RMIT Human Ethics Committee has approved the survey questions.

Why have you been approached?

I am interested to find out more about your design practice and the ways in which you connect to your clientele. I am aware of your design practice through my involvement with the BA Textile Design program. I will be surveying designers who fall into the following two categories;

The Textile Designer - maker: someone who 'designs and produces items in small or batch quantities, usually operating as an independent or in a small business context' (Gale & Kaur 2002, *The textile book*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 49,50).

The commercial Textile Designer: someone who works in a commercial design studio for a large company, or freelancing for a large company responsible for the 'design and production of original woven, knitted or printed fabrics in the form of either flat paper designs or fabric swatches'. (Gale & Kaur 2002, *The textile book*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 38) of which are translated and manufactured by an external party.

What is the project about? What are the questions being addressed?

The underlying objective of this research project is to explore ways in which designers can encourage consumers to engage with textiles and clothing on a deeper level. Jonathan Chapman has identified that a lack of connection to material possessions can be attributed to an enormous amount of material waste. I am interested in exploring the connection designers have with their customers, and whether or not designers are concerned for the customer / product relationship post sale.

Three Textile Designer - makers and three commercial Textile Designers will be interviewed to gauge their ideas on both research questions.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

A semi-structured interview based on the above two research questions will be conducted. The interview will be recorded using a digital audio device. The interview will be carried out in a non-threatening environment and will take approximates 90 minutes of your time. The interview will take place at your preferred location, date and time.

What are the risks or disadvantages associated with participation?

There are minimal risks associated with participating in the project. Your identity will be kept anonymous, and the data will be kept secure. Any electronic data I collate will be stored in a password-protected folder at RMIT University for 5 years. Hard copy data will be stored under lock and key. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially, and accessible only to my supervisor and myself. Your identity will not be revealed in publications arising from this project.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

There will be no immediate direct benefit to the people interviewed, however participation in this study will add to the literature on design connectivity and emotionally durable design with specific reference to Textile Design. Participants will be contacted after the Masters has been accepted and offered a digital copy of the exegesis for their reference, along with a plain language summary.

What will happen to the information I provide?

The information provided will remain anonymous; you will not be identified at any stage of the research project. Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) a court order is produced, or (3) you provide the researcher with written permission.

The results of the survey will be used to complete the exegesis requirement for the project, along with a conference or journal paper. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity, your place of work will not be identified, instead a generic description of the design practice / company will be given. The research data will be securely kept at RMIT for a period of 5 years before being destroyed.

What are my rights as a participant?

You reserve the right to:

The right to withdraw your participation at any time, without prejudice.

- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Having read the Plain Language Statement, and if in agreement to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study, please sign the participant consent form attached and return to the address provided.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about this project, please contact the researcher:

Emma Lynas: ████████

Or the project supervisor
Juliette Peers: ████████

Yours sincerely,

Emma Lynas

BA Textile Design RMIT, BTeach University of Tasmania.

Plain language statement for interviews with participants of the 'Love you or leave you' project undertaken in 2013.

Invitation to participate in a research project

Project information statement

Project Title:
Slow design in a material world: In what ways can Textile Designers foster deeper connections between people and material possessions?

Investigators:

Emma Lynas   Textile Design PhD student, School of Fashion & Textiles, RMIT University
Email   ████████████████
Phone   ██████

Dr Juliette Peers   Project Supervisor, Lecturer, School of Architecture & Design, RMIT
University
Email   ██████████████████
Phone

Dr Jenny Underwood Second Project Supervisor, Lecturer, BA Textile Design, RMIT University
Email   ████████████████████
Phone

Dear

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by RMIT University. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language, or 'plain English'. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask one of the investigators.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

My name is Emma Lynas, I am a lecturer on the BA Textile Design program at RMIT with a background in design for commercial bed linen. I am currently undertaking a PhD by research degree looking at the relationship designers have with their customers, and the relationship people develop with material possessions. The rationale for doing so stems from the 'slow design' movement and a call for designers to a build stronger relationship between the designed artefact and the customer they design for.

My PhD by research project consists of three key questions; this survey will provide the data necessary to respond to the second research question below;

2. What is valued? What is kept? What is disposed of thoughtfully? What is thrown away?
My supervisor Dr Juliette Peers, second supervisor Dr Jenny Underwood and the RMIT Human Ethics Committee have approved this research activity.

Why have you been approached?

I am interested to find out why you (a Textile Designer or textile consumer) feel connected to some

textile items (clothing or cloth) and not others. Designers and consumers have been targeted to try and capture a variety of reasons for product attachment and detachment.

What is the project about? What are the questions being addressed?

The underlying objective of this research project is to explore ways in which designers can encourage consumers to engage with textiles and clothing on a deeper level. Jonathan Chapman has identified that a lack of connection to material possessions can be attributed to an enormous amount of material waste. I am interested in exploring the reasons why people form attachments to textile items (clothing or cloth) and what causes detachment.

5 Textile Designs and 5 textile consumers will be interviewed to gain a better understand of textile attachment and detachment.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

A semi-structured interview based on the above research question will be conducted. The interview will be recorded using a digital audio device. The interview will be carried out in a non-threatening environment and will take approximates 45 minutes of your time. The interview will take place at your preferred location, date and time. You and your textile items (clothing or cloth) will be photographed.

What are the risks or disadvantages associated with participation?

There are minimal risks associated with participating in the project. Your name and photograph will accompany your responses to the questions asked. Any electronic data I collate will be stored in a password-protected folder at RMIT University for 5 years. Hard copy data will be stored under lock and key. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially, and accessible only to my supervisor and myself. Your name and photograph may appear in publications arising from this project.

If after the interview you are unduly concerned about your responses to any of the questionnaire items or if you find participation in the project distressing, you should contact Emma Lynas as soon as convenient. Emma will discuss your concerns with you confidentially and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

There will be no immediate direct benefit to the people interviewed, however participation in this study will add to the literature on design connectivity and emotionally durable design with specific reference to Textile Design. You will be contacted after the PhD has been accepted and offered a digital copy of the exegesis for your reference, along with a plain language summary.

What will happen to the information I provide?

Your photograph will be taken, along with photographs of your textile items (cloth or clothing), both will be used in a static exhibition; excerpts from your responses to the questions asked will accompany the photographs in the exhibition. The objective is to encourage others to think about how and why they connect to some textiles (cloth and clothing) and not others. The results of the interviews will transcribed and used to write a conference or journal paper and form part of the final thesis. The research data will be securely kept at RMIT for a period of 5 years before being destroyed. Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) a court order is produced, or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission.

What are my rights as a participant?

You reserve the right to:

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time
- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Having read the Plain Language Statement, and if in agreement to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study, please sign the participant consent form attached and return to the address provided.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about this project, please contact the researcher:

Emma Lynas:

Or the project supervisors

Dr Juliette Peers:

Dr Jenny Underwood:

Yours sincerely,

Emma Lynas

BA Textile Design RMIT, BTeach University of Tasmania.

If you have any complaints about your participation in this project please see the complaints procedure on the [Complaints with respect to participation in research at RMIT](#) page

A.3 Plain language statement for interviews with BA (Textile Design) students and alumni in reference to the Araluen projects undertaken in 2016.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: More than material makers, connecting through textile design[198]

Investigators:

Emma Lynas	| research candidate	| ███████████████████████
Dr Jenny Underwood	| supervisor	| ███████████████████████
Dr Suzette Worden	| supervisor	| █████████████

Dear ………….,

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by RMIT University. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask one of the investigators.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

Emma Lynas is a lecturer in textile design, and research candidate at the RMIT School of fashion and textiles.   Dr Jenny Underwood and Dr Suzette Worden are Emma's supervisors.

This study forms part her PhD research – exploring the role of connection in textile design. The study has been approved The RMIT college of Design and Social Context Human Research Ethics Committee

Why have you been approached?

You have been approached to participate in this study due to your involvement in the BA textile design second year Araluen project. If you participated in the 2012 project, your contact details were obtained from the BA textile design degree show catalogue. You have been approached along with a select group of your peers (from 2012 and 2015) to provide a reflective account of your experiences as a student in the collaborative studio. You have been selected over other students due to your observed engagement in the ideas and activities undertaken in the project.

What is the project about? What are the questions being addressed?

The objective of this study and my PhD more broadly is to unpack and explore how textile design as a discipline can shift its focus from a primarily material-oriented activity to one that places people at

---

[198] Working thesis title.

the centre. Your experience as a student in the Araluen project will provide a unique insight into the thoughts of emerging textile designers on connection, in textile design

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

A focus group consisting of three 2012 participants and three 2015 participants will form a focus group. You will be given a series of questions that will prompt you to think about the studio and reflect upon your ideas prior to the studio-taking place, and your thoughts post studio. The focus group discussion will be recorded using a digital audio device. The interview will be carried out in a non-threatening environment and will take approximates 60 minutes of your time. The focus group will take place at RMIT Swanston street library or the RMIT Brunswick library – whichever is convenient. Together we will agree on a location, date and time.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no perceived risks associated with participating in the project. Any electronic data collected will be stored in a password-protected folder at RMIT University for 5 years. Hard copy data will be stored under lock and key. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially, and accessible only to my supervisor and myself. Your name will not be disclosed in publications arising from this research.

If after the interview you are unduly concerned about your responses to any of the questions or if you find participation in the project distressing, you should contact Emma Lynas as soon as convenient. Emma will discuss your concerns with you confidentially and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

There will be no immediate direct benefit to the people interviewed, however participation in this study will add to the literature on textile design.

What will happen to the information I provide?

Your identity will be disclosed as part of the study, specifically your name and workshop preference (print, knit, weave). Other personal details will not be disclosed. The decision to include your name and workshop practice is to reinforce the importance of connection. During this research project I have conducted another two separate studies. The first study withheld the identity of participants, as they were encouraged to talk openly about their place of employment. The identities of participants in the second study were disclosed, as their personal stories and portrait photographs were required to complete the study. This project would benefit from knowing your identity and your individual perspectives on the role of connection and the role of making in textile design.

The results of the interviews will be transcribed and used to write a conference or journal paper and form part of the final thesis. The research data will be securely kept at RMIT for a period of 5 years before being destroyed. The final thesis will be lodged in the RMIT repository, this is a publicly accessible online library of research papers.   Include a reference to publication as an Appropriate Durable Record (ADR) or thesis in the RMIT Repository explaining that this is a publicly accessible online library of research papers. Identify

Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) if specifically required or allowed by law, or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time
- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions about this project please contact the researcher:

Emma Lynas: ██████████
████████████████

Or the project supervisor

Dr Jenny Underwood: ██████████
████████████████

Participant's consent

Participant: _____   Date: _____

If you have any concerns about your participation in this project, which you do not wish to discuss with the researchers, then you can contact the Ethics Officer, Research Integrity, Governance and Systems, RMIT University, GPO Box 2476V VIC 3001. Tel: (03) 9925 2251 or email human.ethics@rmit.edu.au

---

.

A.4 *Interview questions regarding 'connection' asked of commercial textile designers and textile designer-makers in 2011.*

Small / Medium size enterprise (SME) interview questions (Textile Designer-makers)

1. Would you classify your business as?
    a. Textiles for the home
    b. Textiles for the body
    c. Textiles for accessories
2. What are your design aspirations? What do you want to achieve through your practice as a Textile Designer?
3. What are your business aspirations? What does the business stand for?
4. Describe your customer: age, gender, social economic group, and geographic location.
5. In what ways do you (the designer maker) connect with your customer?
6. In what ways does this connection benefit your business?
7. In what ways does this connection benefit your practice as a Textile Designer?
8. If you do not have a connection with your customer, please explain the reasons why?
9. In what ways do your customers develop a connection to the products you design? Do people maintain a relationship with the product? Or does it fade?
10. Are you aware of the slow design movement? If yes, what does slow design mean to you?
11. What would you like to say?

Commercial design studio questions (Textile Designers)

1. What category best describes the company you work for
    a. Textiles for the home
    b. Textiles for the body
    c. Textiles for accessories
2. Describe your role within the company, what do you do?
3. What are your design aspirations? What do you personally want to achieve through your practice as a Textile Designer?
4. What are the business' design aspirations? What does the business stand for?
5. Describe the company's customer: age, gender, social economic group and geographic location.
6. In what ways do you (the designer) connect with your customer?
7. In what ways does this connection benefit the business?
8. In what ways does this connection benefit your practice as a Textile Designer?
9. If you do not have a connection with your customer, please explain the reasons why?
10. In what ways do your customers develop a connection to the products you design? Do people maintain a relationship with the product? Or does it fade?
11. Are you aware of the slow design movement? If yes, what does slow design mean to you?
12. What would you like to say?

Definitions for clarification

Practice: the exercise or pursuit of a profession or occupation.

Business: a person, partnership, or corporation engaged in commerce, manufacturing, or a service; profit-seeking enterprise or concern.

Customer: a person who purchases goods or services from another; buyer; patron.

Connection: association; relationship.

"The textile designer – textile designers have to comprehend the requirements of the textile manufacturer and the intricacies of the marketplace. Starting with a consideration of the eventual use of a fabric, they develop ideas and realize their concepts. Marketable fabrics are created on the basis of informed decisions about colour, construction, composition, surface, pattern and yarn structure. Company environments are typically described as a 'design studio'. There are various level of entry into the world of textile design, and the idea of market segmentation, of a high, middle and low, is shared with other sectors of the textile industry. Distinctions between these levels are based on issues of creative quality, exclusivity and costs. Traditionally, the role of the textile designer has involved the design and production of original woven, knitted or printed fabrics in the form of either flat paper designs or fabric swatches" (Gale & Kaur 2002, *The textile book*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 38).

"The designer maker – Designer maker is a title or term recently used in some countries to describe someone who designs and produces items in small or batch quantities, usually operating as an independent or in a small business context. The term itself seems to be gaining a growing international acceptance and is applicable to a range of design disciplines including, textiles, furniture, ceramic and product design. For textile designers and craftspeople the designer maker model of practice represents a new and emergent career opportunity. Textile designer makers produce items across the range of home, lifestyle and fashion goods. The term is a useful one allowing some distinctions between different types of business, and also helps to highlight the often complex relationship between designing, making and manufacturing in very small or 'micro' businesses based around one or two creative makers" (Gale & Kaur 2002, *The textile book*, Berg, Oxford, pp. 49, 50).

A.5 Questions and definition of terms used in the 'Love you or leave you' project undertaken in 2013.

Questions

12. What do you do for a living?
13. What textile item (clothing or cloth) have you selected that **you feel a strong connection** to. Please describe it in: clothing, material and haptic terms?
14. How did you acquire this item?
15. Please refer to the list below and if applicable choose one or more of the reasons for attachment, if none are relevant please suggest reasons for attachment.
    - "The past (family heirloom, gift from family member, memories of people and past events, habitual ownership)
    - Experience (enjoyment - generates desirable feelings, independence, confidence, release)
    - Utilitarian (usefulness, tool of trade, performance)
    - Personal being (reflection of self, symbolises values)
    - Social being (social status [or group / culture], brand standing, social identifier)
    - Form (style, colour, visual quality or ambience created)" (Savaş 2004, pp. 319, 320)
16. Does this textile item make you feel a certain way? Please explain.
17. Do you think you will ever part with this textile item? If yes, please suggest which method you will use e.g. swap, give away, eBay or gumtree, charity organisation, other.
18. What textile item (clothing or cloth) have you selected that **you do not feel connected to**. Please describe it in: clothing, material and haptic terms?
19. How did you acquire this item?
20. Please refer to the list below and if applicable choose one or more of the reasons for detachment, if none are relevant please suggest reasons for detachment.
    - "Utilitarian (poor quality and or performance, inadequate operation)
    - Personal being (dislike or boredom, poor reflection of self)
    - Social being (shows individual belongs to an undesirable class [or represents previous identity])
    - Form (physical element and style)
    - Purchase (superfluous products purchased without need, feelings of disappointment whilst using product)
    - Environmental (living conditions, changes in individual's life)" (Savaş 2004, pp. 319, 320)
10 a. Were you once connected to this item in some way?
21. Does this textile item make you feel a certain way? Please explain.
22. Do you think you will ever part with this textile item? If yes, please suggest which method you will use i.e. swap, give away, eBay or gumtree, charity organisation, domestic rubbish bin, other. Would you be happy for me to keep this item?
23. Are you aware of the slow design movement? If yes, what does slow design mean to you?
24. Is there anything you would like to add?
25. Would you be interested to see what I do with this unwanted textile item? Are you happy for me to contact you in the future to undertake another short interview regarding the modification of your unwanted textile item?

Terms and Definitions

Attachment

Please refer to the list below and if applicable choose one or more of the reasons for **attachment**, if none are relevant please suggest reasons for attachment.

- "The past (family heirloom, gift from family member, memories of people and past events, habitual ownership)
- Experience (enjoyment - generates desirable feelings, independence, confidence, release)
- Utilitarian (usefulness, tool of trade, performance)
- Personal being (reflection of self, symbolises values)
- Social being (social status [or group / culture], brand standing, social identifier)
- Form (style, colour, visual quality or ambience created)" (Savaş 2004, pp. 319, 320)

Detachment

Please refer to the list below and if applicable choose one or more of the reasons for **detachment**, if none are relevant please suggest reasons for detachment.

- "Utilitarian (poor quality and or performance, inadequate operation)
- Personal being (dislike or boredom, poor reflection of self)
- Social being (shows individual belongs to an undesirable class [or represents previous identity])
- Form (physical element and style)
- Purchase (superfluous products purchased without need, feelings of disappointment whilst using product)
- Environmental (living conditions, changes in individual's life)" (Savaş 2004, pp. 319, 320)

Definitions

Haptics – How does it feel and make you feel?

Touch is an extremely important sense for humans; as well as providing information about surfaces and textures it is a component of nonverbal communication.

1. Of or relating to the sense of touch; tactile
2. Of or relating to or proceeding from the sense of touch; 'haptic data'; a tactile reflex a sensation localized on the skin

Emotional, comfortable, feel, nostalgic, silky, rough, grainy, smooth, hard, soft, course, bumpy, velvety, spongy, springy, cushiony, delicate, fragile, fluffy, gentle, snug, soothing, squishy, supple, sympathetic, temperate, tender etc.

Reference

Savaş Ö, 2004, 'A perspective on the person – Product relationship: attachment and detachment', in *Design and emotion: the experience of everyday things,* Eds. McDonagh D, Hekkert P, Van Erp J & Gyi D, Taylor & Francis, London.

www.dictionary.com

A.6 *Questions asked of BA (Textile Design) students and alumni in reference to the Araluen projects, 2016.*

Araluen Discussion Questions | Friday 28ᵗʰ October 2016 | 6.30 – 7.30pm | RMIT Brunswick 513.1.3

Questions

1. What do you remember from the 'meet me in the middle' activity?

2. How did you prepare for the 'meet me in the middle activity'?

3. How did you and your collaborator go about making work in the 'meet me in the middle' activity?

4. The Araluen project provided an opportunity to approach textile design differently, would you agree or disagree?

5. Do you think connection played a role in the Araluen project?

6. Do you think the discipline of textile design has the potential to develop greater connections between people and or people and cloth?

Academic and author Kate Fletcher's most recent book – Craft of Use, Post-Growth Fashion, promotes fashion's (and textiles) use, as much as its creation. Kate's book "offers a diversified view of fashion provision and expression beyond the market and the market's purpose and reveals fashion provision and expression in a world not dependant on continuous consumption" (Fletcher 2016, introduction).

7. I wonder what you make of this, and how you feel about textiles as a material for connection rather than a material for commodification?

Appendix B

B.1 *A brief overview of significant Australian textile and surface designers from the twentieth century to the present day.*

Introduction

It is not common for textile designers to be acknowledged in the creation of fashion or textile objects for the commercial market—the exception being the textile designer as sole creator, or the textile designer as creative partner or collaborator. For this reason, it is difficult to celebrate the success of individual textile designers who work freelance, as part of an in-house brand, for a wholesaler, or a commercial studio. The following Australian designers have been selected due to their fundamental training as textile practitioners, and/or their significant contribution to the profession of textile design through knitting, weaving and design and practice for printed textiles and surfaces.

Michael O'Connell

British-born Michael O'Connell immigrated to Melbourne, Australia in 1920 with the idea of becoming a farmer (Carter 2007, p. 113). Instead, he painted, worked as a landscape gardener and made concrete garden ornaments, popular with the middle-class members of the Arts and Crafts Society (Carter 2007, p. 113; Edquist 2011, p. 26). In 1929, he spent six months travelling through Europe and the UK (Edquist 2011, p. 27-29). Upon his return to Melbourne, he began experimenting with lino printing on fabric. He found success with block printing using synthetic dyes on cotton, wool and silk, and subsequently ended up teaching the technique at the Melbourne Technical College[199] (Edquist 2011, p. 35). He married Ella Moody in 1931 and together they designed furnishing fabrics to be sold through interior design consultancies (Carter 2007, p. 113). O'Connell's work was characterised by 'maximising the effect of minimal materials, and abstraction' (Carter 2007. p, 14), often employing simple methods such as lino printing. Despite his position within the modernist movement, he was not anti-decoration—enjoying patterning and domestic traditions (Carter 2007, p. 22). O'Connell returned to Britain in 1937, where he continued working in both a freelance capacity and as a designer-maker of hand-printed textiles (Carter 2007, p. 113). A retrospective in 2011 titled *The Lost Modernist* celebrated the significance of O'Connell's practice to the Australian modernist era of design.

---

[199] The Melbourne Technical College was renamed the Royal Melbourne Technical College in 1954. In 1960, it was renamed the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. In 1992, it was granted University status and renamed RMIT University (RMIT University 2017b).

Frances Mary Burke

Frances Mary Burke is perhaps the most notable Australian textile designer within the academy. Burke started her career as a nurse in the mid-1920s. In her spare time she attended art and design classes at the Gallery School of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Technical College (under Michael O'Connell) (Carter 2007, p. 111) and The George Bell School (Oswald-Jacobs 1997, p. 38). During this time, she developed an interest in the design and practice of printed textiles. In 1937 Frances Burke and Morris Holloway established Burway Prints, becoming the first textile-printing firm to be registered in Australia (Oswald-Jacobs 1997, p. 80). The October 1960 edition of *Housewife Home and Family* features a photograph of Frances Burke painting a stylised leaf motif. The caption reads 'Miss Frances Burke brilliant Australian Textile Designer' (cited in Oswald-Jacobs 1997, p. 55). Burke maintained a successful career as a print-based designer for interior fabrics[200]. She was awarded an MBE[201] in 1970 (Carter 2007, p. 111) and received an honorary doctorate from RMIT University in 1987 for her services in design. The France Burke Textile Resource Centre was established at RMIT University in 1994 to further honour her significant contribution to local design.

Edith (Mollie) Grove and Catherine Hardress

During the post-war years, the Australian textile industry grew to become an integral part of the country's identity; 'riding on the sheep's back' was a common phrase used to describe Australia's economic reliance on the wool industry (Australian National Dictionary Centre 2017). The 1950s saw the peak of the boom, with wool being used to make uniforms for soldiers in the Korean War and providing fibre for the burgeoning international fashion markets (Williamson 2010, p. 106). Around this time Australian artists and craftspeople began to work with Australian wool. Edith (Mollie) Grove and Catherine Hardress were two such artists, who upon their return from London—working in weaving mills and the theatre—established Eclarte, a hand-weaving studio. The pair had a highly successful practice—developing their own colour palettes and designing and making woven fabrics for the Australian fashion and homewares market (Williamson 2010, p. 111). The company collapsed in the early 1960s due to competition

---

[200] Burke also designed fashion prints but is better known for her interior fabrics (Oswald-Jacobs 1997, p. 85).
[201] 'Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) Awarded for an outstanding achievement or service to the community. This will have had a long-term, significant impact and stand out as an example to others' (GOV.UK, n.d.).

from industrial producers—the duo was clear on their position, claiming to be 'artists, not traders' (Bogle cited in Williamson 2010, p. 111).

Florence Broadhurst

Florence Broadhurst was born in rural Queensland, Australia in 1899 (O'Neill 2011, p. 18). As a child, she learnt how to make her own clothes, and showed a talent for singing and entertaining (O'Neil 2011, p. 23). In 1922, she joined an all-male touring theatre group consisting of musicians, singers, comedians and female impersonators. Under the moniker Bobby Broadhurst she embarked on a fifteen-week tour of Asia with the group (O'Neil 2011, p. 27). After touring Asia, she settled in Shanghai, China where she continued to perform before hatching her own business venture (O'Neil 2011, p. 37). In 1926 she opened the Broadhurst Academy Incorporated School of the Arts finishing school in Shanghai and proceeded to teach 'the daughters of rich British and American expatriates the sophisticated ins and outs of social life' (O'Neil 2011, p. 37–38). After five years in Asia, Broadhurst briefly returned to Queensland before travelling to London and working in fashion (O'Neil 2011, p. 40–53). She returned to Australia with her partner and son—her next artistic pursuit was painting. She did not receive the acclaim she felt she deserved and subsequently started a transport business with her son (O'Neil 2011, p. 83), soon to be followed by a hand-printed wallpaper business. O'Neil summarises Broadhurst's achievements in the area of surface design below:

> Between 1961 and 1977, Broadhurst released a kaleidoscope of imagery with an international edge into an isolated continent hungry for visual stimulation. Everywhere she had been, everything she had seen would come to find a reflection in her sensual, funky, impulsive design range (O'Neil 2011, p. 86).

Broadhurst had no formal training in printed textiles or design. Instead, she had an entrepreneurial streak and a trend forecaster's eye for colour, texture and pattern. It is questionable as to whether or not Broadhurst is responsible for the artwork that is now synonymous with her name (O'Neil 2011, pp. 13, 14, 265). Despite the ambiguity around authorship, Florence Broadhurst—through sheer determination and self-belief—established a surface pattern brand that has stood the test of time.

Linda Jackson and Jenny Kee

Linda Jackson studied dressmaking at the Emily McPherson College[202] and photography at Prahran Technical college before leaving the to travel through Europe via Asia and the Pacific in the late 1960's (NGV 2012, para. 11). When she returned to Australia, she met Jenny Kee—a likeminded creative—and together they developed a collection of uniquely Australian textiles and fashion pieces. In 1973, they started the fashion house Flamingo Park in Sydney, Australia. Taking inspiration from Australian iconography, they became well known for their brightly coloured kitsch and craft approach to fashion (Whitfield, 2016, p. 82). Jackson took an experimental approach to screen printing while Kee became well known for her colourful art knits. Kee's first collection of zippered cardigans (knitted by Jan Ayres) 'took two weeks to make and five minutes to sell' (Kee, cited in Whitfield, 2016, p. 82).

Bronwyn Bancroft

Bronwyn Bancroft is a Bunjulung woman from northern New South Wales. She completed a Diploma in Visual Arts at the Canberra School of Arts in 1980, has two Masters degrees, one in Studio Practice and the other in Visual Art from the University of Sydney and was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy in 2018. In 1985 she founded the fashion label and store Designer Aboriginals in Sydney. The shop stocked garments, textiles and jewellery designed by Bancroft alongside work by other Indigenous designers (Carmichael 2017, p. 37). The shop also provided education and training for young Aboriginal women, from: sales to creating handmade jewellery, sewing and silk screen printing (Bancroft 2019, Fashion para. 1). In 1990 she closed the store to concentrate on wholesale design and production. Her work was shown in Paris at the Printemps Fashion Parade in 1987, and also in London in 1989 (Kovacic 2013). Bancroft's artist practice continues to this day having illustrated and/or written 40 children's books. Her work has been collected nationally and internationally and she has been a director of a number of Australian creative councils and organisations (Bancroft 2019, about para. 4).

---

[202] The Emily McPherson College merged with RMIT in 1979.

Rae Ganim

Rae Ganim grew up in a textile family and went on to study textile design at the technical college in Geelong, Australia (Feagins 2012). After studying she worked for Prue Acton[203], within the central design team working specifically on textiles. She left Prue Acton after two years and started her own self-titled fashion label in 1978—over time it grew to include childrenswear and homewares. In an interview with Lucy Feagins, Ganim states: 'Our niche brand was always based on my printed, woven and knitted textiles, with a strong colour statement' (2012). Ganim had three retail stores in Melbourne and wholesaled to numerous stores nationally (Feagins 2012). Since closing the business, she has freelanced, worked as a trend consultant and opened a niche design store in inner-city Melbourne. Ganim was inducted into the DIA hall of fame in 1998 (Feagins 2012) in recognition of her achievements in design.

Printintin Design Studio

The Printintin Design Studio consisting of Matthew Flinn, Andrea McNamara, Douglas McManus and Lynda Britten were part of the textile screen-printing renaissance of the 1980s (Leong & Somerville 2010, p. 186; Whitfield, 2016, p. 90; McNamara 2018, email conv., 4 Oct 2018). The Printintin Design Studio was established in 1986 with the assistance of a ten-thousand-dollar grant from the Australia Council. The four members had various creative backgrounds with Flynn and McNamara studying textiles as part of their Bachelor of Education Degrees (A McNamara 2018, email conv., 5 Oct 2018). The studio was located in what was the Guest Biscuit factory in West Melbourne—a huge space that easily accommodated a thirty-metre print table (A McNamara 2018, email conv., 4 Oct 2018). While they were establishing their own labels, the team at Printintin printed fabrics for independent fashion designers including Bruce Thorach and Sara Thorn from the popular fashion label Galaxy, and took one-off commissions (McNamara 2018, email conv., 4 Oct). This bread-and-butter business, along with screen-printing workshops, allowed the designers to pursue their own art and design interests. Popular Printintin products included tea towels, ironing board covers and aprons, sold in large Australian retailers such as David Jones. They also designed and printed furnishing and fashion fabrics. McManus and Britten left within three years, and the studio disbanded in 1995 (McNamara 2018, email conv., 4 Oct).

---

[203] Prue Acton was a prominent Australian fashion designer (with a textile background) in the 1960's.

Gavin Brown

Gavin Brown studied fine art and printmaking at RMIT before starting his own fashion and textile label Plain Jane in 1984 (Manyung Gallery Group 2014). In addition to his fashion and textile practice he worked as an artist and club promoter. His textiles and paintings involved 'complex visual narratives' (Leong & Somerville 2010, p. 186); his label Plain Jane was a favourite with extroverted clubbers and fans of irreverent fashion during the latter half of the 1980s (Whitfield, 2016, p. 90).

Georgia Chapman and Meredith Rowe

Georgia Chapman and Meredith Rowe met while studying the Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) at RMIT in the early 1990s. In 1993, they started Vixen Australia—producing hand-printed silk scarves and designing prints for Australian fashion labels (Williamson 2010, p. 122; Bond et al. 2003). By the late 1990s they had made a name for themselves as artisanal designers—creating luxurious hand-printed textiles inspired by classic themes, motifs and cultural patterning (Bond et al. 2003). In 2000 Rowe left the partnership and Maureen Sohn joined not long after, bringing her fashion expertise to the brand (Bond et al. 2003). The Vixen style was classic, rich and luxurious with a focus on the textile rather than the garment shape or structure.

Julie Paterson

Julie Paterson was born and raised in the United Kingdom. In the early 1980s she pursued a general design degree and majored in printed textile design for furnishing fabrics (Paterson 2015, p. 14; Hobson 2015). She moved to London and studied to be a teacher. Once the course ended, she decided to pursue her design career and found a job working as a textile designer for a furnishing fabric company (Paterson, 2015, p. 14). Despite enjoying her job, she resigned in 1989 and embarked on a working holiday in Australia with a group of friends. Paterson and travelling companion Penny Simons remained in Australia and started a textile design consultancy titled Print House Furnishings (Paterson 2015, p. 17). After three- or four-years Paterson and Simons took their practice in a new direction with the creation of Cloth—a hand-printed textile business (Paterson 2015, p. 18). Simons left the partnership in the late 1990s, leaving Paterson as the sole creative (Paterson 2015, pp. 84–86). Paterson uses her art practice as a design reference and is continually inspired by 'the strength and diversity of the Australian landscape' (ClothFabric n.d, para. 2.). Cloth is well known for its contemporary and natural furnishing fabrics that are still hand printed in Sydney, Australia.

Bruce Slorach

Not traditionally trained in textile design, Bruce Slorach honed his creative ability via a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne (Kennedy 2016). In the 1980s Slorach and Sarah Thorn started Galaxy, a popular Melbourne fashion label. After Galaxy, Slorach operated as a self-employed artist and designer before spending five years as the creative director at Mambo (Kennedy 2016, Kennedy 2014). In 2012, he established Utopia Goods, a handcrafted textile business based in Sydney with his partner Sophie Tatlow (Kennedy 2016). Slorach's intricate hand-illustrated designs of Australian flora and fauna (taking up to eight weeks to complete) are the force behind Utopia Goods collection of linens, hand printed in India (Kennedy 2016). Products include cushions, tablecloths and bedlinen.

Cassie Byrnes

Cassie Byrnes, originally from Mackay in far north Queensland, is a Melbourne-based textile and surface designer. She graduated from the RMIT BA (Textile Design) program in 2014 with a design for printed textiles specialisation. Since graduating Cassie has worked as a freelance designer (for packaging and textiles), for a commercial bed linen company, collaborated with Anthropologie for a tableware collection (textiles, crockery) and stationary, bedlinen and wallpaper, and most recently with Melbourne-based fashion label Gorman (Cassie Byrnes 2017). In addition to her freelance practice Cassie is the designer-maker behind the lifestyle label Variety Hour. Unlike many in her field, Cassie's name is credited against much of the work she does as a freelance designer and collaborator. Cassie is a great example of a local creative working across multiple mediums.

The examples above are a few of the many successful small to medium sized textile practices established by creative people wanting to inject an Australian design aesthetic into the marketplace; designing for, and/or with textiles, or designing patterns and prints for hard surfaces.

Appendix C

C. 1 *'Love you' booklet, 2015.*

C. 1 *'Love you' booklet, 2015.*

Love you
or leave you

Love you or leave you began with a series of interviews with ten Melbournians, both professional textile designers and the general public – all consumers of cloth and clothing.

The interviews were conducted to find out why some textile items resonate and maintain long and meaningful relationships while others engender feelings of regret, anger or indifference. A criteria adapted from the work of Özlem Savaş was referenced by participants to provide structure and consistency. The stories encourage reflection and an awareness of values and reasons behind our individual consumption of clothing and cloth.

Attachment;
The past; family heirloom, gift from a family member, memories of people and past events, habitual ownership
Experience; enjoyment, generates desirable feelings, independence, confidence, release
Utilitarian; usefulness, tool of trade, performance
Personal being; reflection of self, symbolises values
Social being; social status, brand standing, social identifier – group or culture
Form; style, colour, visual quality, ambience created

Happy reading,
Emma Lynas

Thank-you to Mardiana Sani for the beautiful photographs

Savaş, Ö., 2004. A perspective on the person - Product relationship: attachment and detachment. In D. McDonagh et al., eds. Design and emotion: the experience of everyday things. London: Taylor & Francis.

Tasman Smith

I love my American football band jacket

Tas is a Bachelor of Animation and Interactive Media student at RMIT. When asked what that involves, he grins and says "a lot of work!" He uses primarily digital tools, Adobe Flash, a bit of Photoshop and After Effects. This qualification will lead to work in app design, 2D/3D animation, film or TV.

The textile item he has selected to discuss as part of the attachment project is a black woollen jacket. It originally belonged to his mother, who purchased it from one of the iconic second hand stores on Greville Street Prahran in the 1980s. He had no interest in the jacket as a kid; he didn't play dress ups or dream of being old enough to wear it. He simply took a liking to it one day, and with his mother's blessing adopted it into his collection.

It is made from thick black worsted wool with a quilted lining making it perfect for winter. It has a 1950s style logo on the front, with a machine embroidered, faux Astrakhan appliquéd emblem on the back. It also features a little loop at the back of the neck for easy hanging.

The jacket is typical of the American sports scene, and reminiscent of TV shows like *Happy Days* and the cult movie *Grease*.

Tas is attached to the jacket for a number or reasons, the strongest being the past, and its ability to remind him of his mother. He also likes the form; the orange contrasted with the black and the slim fit. The experience also rings true, as there is a slight feeling of independence associated with wearing the jacket.

We talk a little about American sports, and the reach they have into education and public life. Tas was curious about Fort Lee, and did Google it at one point and can tell me that it's an American high school football team. He assumes members of the marching band would have worn the jacket as part of their uniform while entertaining the fans at half time.

Tas retells the story of the time his mother was approached by a complete stranger who recognised the jacket.

"Some guy that obviously went to the high school went up to ask Mum about it, he knew more about it than her, which was kind of weird, to just randomly bump into someone."

People often ask him where the jacket came from; Tas enjoys retelling its story. He doesn't think he will ever part with the jacket.

"I think it's mine now."

Gilly Thorne
I love my hand embroidered, hand beaded bag

Gilly is a textile designer currently working for a local retailer specialising in bed linen and soft furnishings for the home. After studying in the UK, Gilly made her way to Australia on a working holiday visa. Six years later she is still here, designing prints and embroideries using both analogue (painting and drawing) and digital tools. After five years of commercial work, Gilly made the conscious decision to allow more time for creative pursuits, and reduced her commercial work to four days a week.

Gilly's most treasured item is a hand made silk bag purchased from a design market about three years ago. Gilly was initially attracted to the vivid turquoise embroidery thread and tiny glass beads used to embellish the bag. When Gilly approached the stall to look more closely, she engaged in conversation with the vendor. Through this dialogue, she learned the bag was made in India. The vendor showed pictures of the artisans working and was able to talk at length about the craft skills employed to make the work. The story, history and traceability combined with the handwork appealed to Gilly's innate appreciation for textiles and artisan techniques.

When prompted as to whether or not she would have purchased the bag without the back-story, Gilly believes she would have felt the same level of admiration for the craftswomen, and been drawn to the colour and textile techniques, but may not have exchanged money in order to own the bag.

Her attachment lies in experience, form and personal being. The colour and texture of the embroidery combined with the shape and scale of the bag. In respect to personal being, Gilly notes that the traceability and transparency of the making process is quite different to that of the commercial textile industry. Her decision to split her time between paid commercial work and unpaid creative pursuits is grounded in personal values, those of which are captured in the hand made bag. By keeping it close, she is reminded that there is more to working as a textile designer than profit margins, trends and moving stock. Gilly doesn't use the bag often; it spends most of its time displayed in her bedroom, a treasure to be admired and a touchstone for contemplation.

Gilly says she will keep the bag forever. Playing devil's advocate I ask how she can possibly know this? She replies that she doesn't often throw things away, and with this particular item there is little to fall out of love with; the embroidery and the colour are both intrinsically related to who she is.

I push a little harder and suggest that people go through phases in life and surround themselves with objects accordingly. Gilly reflects on her buying habits and personal style and believes it not to have changed too much in her adult years.

Greg Miller
I love my grey hoody

Greg is a carpenter by trade, working on large commercial projects including new apartment buildings and office interior fit-outs. This type of work requires an OH&S approved uniform consisting of high visibility clothing, steel capped boots and hard-hat. He starts early and finishes before the afternoon peak hour rush. Greg transitions from the dust and grit of the work site to the comfort of home with a shower and change of clothes.

Greg's wife works for a large global producer and distributer of fashion street wear. As a consequence, Greg has a steady stream of samples coming his way. He can pick and choose his wardrobe without leaving the house or launching an Internet browser.

Greg doesn't usually get attached to his clothes; they come and go without too much emotion, the exception has been this grey hoody.

It's fleecy lined with a fibre content of 28 per cent cotton and 20 per cent polyester; the remaining 52 per cent is a mystery. The lining is still quite soft considering it has been worn almost daily for four years now. It has a small amount of embroidery on the front, when prompted Greg couldn't tell me anything about the brand.

Greg's attachment lies in experience, and the role the hoody plays in the ritualistic process of unwinding after work. The form too plays a part in the transition to rest; the light grey fabric and slim fit make it easy to wear. Shedding the work uniform, taking a hot shower, dressing in clean clothes and putting on the comfortable warm hoody mark the end of the working day.

"When I put it on I know it is downtime."

Ben Dryne
I love my grey t-shirt

Ben is a civil engineer currently working in risk assessment. His work involves quantifying natural hazards such as fire, flood and earthquake for large commercial operations, to help them determine appropriate insurance limits. In the office Ben wears a suit, on site he wears a hi-vis vest and hard-hat. When not at work, Ben likes to keep it casual.

Ben's favourite item of clothing is a grey t-shirt purchased while living in London four years ago. Ben can remember making a conscious decision to go shopping for new clothes, not something he or his partner Anna do for fun. Together they went to a DFO style outlet in London, making their way through numerous stores before coming across this particular t-shirt. It appealed to him primarily due to the price point, only 8 pounds.

He's not sure of the fibre content, so together we search for the label. All of the information is in Chinese, we can see that it is 100 per cent something, and assume it to be cotton as it feels like a natural fibre. The t-shirt is relatively unobtrusive; with a dark grey stencil style print on the front. At the time bold t-shirt graphics were on trend, this one seemed relatively tame and appealed to Ben's preference for plain t-shirts.

Ben favours t-shirts over collared shirts for their adaptability over time. Starting as casual basics, teamed with jeans or shorts. When signs of wear and tear begin to show these basics are downgraded to running tops. At the end of this phase, when no longer suitable to wear they become household cleaning cloths. This cycle of function has seen some t-shirts remain in use for ten years or more.

When looking at the attachment theory Ben points to usefulness. The t-shirt is utilitarian and adaptable, it can be layered underneath a jumper, or worn on its own depending on the weather. He likes the style, the neutral colour and slim fit. Overall the t-shirt appeals to Ben for practical reasons; it fits well and will serve a utilitarian function over time. In the years since, Ben has returned to French Connection to buy his clothes. Although not interested in brands or labels, the quality of this t-shirt has given him reason to preference this brand over others.

Ilka White

I love this unfinished hand made bedspread

Ilka is a "weaver, artist and teacher of all those things". She has been practising for more than seventeen years, has exhibited nationally and internationally drawing on place and nature as inspiration. Her work is represented in the public collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and has been included alongside internationally acclaimed textile artists and designers in the 2012 tome *Textiles: The Art of Mankind*.

Every aspect of Ilka's life is considered and measured against her strong personal values. When we meet to discuss her attachment and detachment to material possessions, she is able to talk at length about the reasons why she feels immense attachment to things.

"I'm someone that attaches very easily and deeply to objects, and feel a slight discomfort with that fact. Part of me feels like I oughtn't be attached to objects."

Ilka struggled to choose just one item to discuss as part of the attachment project. After much deliberation she settles on a bedspread, an incomplete quilt made from hundreds of small hexagonal pieces of fabric. Ilka purchased the quilt in 2009 from an op shop on Sydney Road in Brunswick, only days prior to leaving for an extended stay in India. It was displayed right side facing out and although the colours and patterns didn't appeal on first sight, the workmanship did. At 35 dollars the price did little to reflect the countless hours spent selecting fabrics, cutting templates and tacking together. Ilka didn't need another quilt, but felt a responsibility to buy this one, if only to honour the labour involved.

Upon returning to Melbourne Ilka was reunited with the bedspread. Having totally forgotten about it, she viewed the piece with a new appreciation. Throwing it on her bed, wrong side up she saw a "beautiful raw joy, a choppy sea, a lawn full of flowers." In its unfinished state, clues to its construction were revealed. Some of the small cardboard shapes used to make the individual hexagonal patches had wriggled free of the tacking stitches. It seems the unknown quilter shared Ilka's own values of thrift and resourcefulness, as the cardboard templates were cut from cereal packets. The patterns and colours of both the printed fabrics and cereal packets were reminiscent of the 1970s;

this combined with the incomplete patchwork caused Ilka to think it part of a deceased estate.

The quilt is not something Ilka would make, nor are the colours and patterns the type she would previously have chosen to live with. But the cloth's freshness and vitality, the eclectic mix of colour, texture and print provided a reference point for a new home and phase in Ilka's life.

"The quilt became the decider, the aesthetic goal, sort of yard stick…everything had to agree with that quilt or it wasn't coming in…In the time when you start something new your aesthetic antennae is very sharp and everything has to be right…so the space was very much dictated by that quilt."

Shortly after Ilka set up her new home she fell very ill and after time spent in hospital was told to go home and rest.

"I was in bed, under that quilt for about three or four months. During that time my analytical mind kind of shut down, and I went into a state of grace where I existed pretty much in the present tense…it was quite a privileged time for an adult in this culture, to be able to completely stop and simply be in the present."

Her bed was positioned on the floor next to large glass north facing doors. When the mid winter sun rose each morning it would fall directly onto the quilt and as the sun shifted across the sky Ilka would move with it until it passed beyond the timber frame around midday. When we look at the attachment criteria, everything rings true for Ilka. It reminds her of her past; the colours, patterns and textures are reminiscent of childhood. Experience; the enjoyment it gives her and the comfort it provided during a time of convalescence. It is a reflection of self, symbolising the values Ilka lives by – thrift, resourcefulness, handmade, vernacular design, saving and storing. It is also representative of social being, as family, friends and peers could also appreciate the labour and skill involved. The colour and visual quality, the ambience it creates – all these things are true of this item. When asked how it makes her feel, Ilka can identify three separate states of being: "free of past grief – snug and cosy – fresh and airy." Ilka can't imagine parting ways with the quilt, although if she did she would most likely give it to someone who shared her love of hand crafted textiles.

Andrea Shaw
I love my gran's blanket

Andrea is a textile designer who worked for Nancy Bird accessories in its infancy before starting her own label Stampel in 2011. Stampel began as a way to use off-cuts from the furniture industry to create functional objects with a unique colour aesthetic. Since then the business has extended its offering to include textiles, jewellery and art works utilising both reclaimed and natural materials. Stampel has a grounded identity removed from trends, seasons and market segments. The business has been intentionally kept to a manageable size to allow Andrea control over the design process and direction. She stocks around twenty stores nationally and makes to order through her online shop. With an Instagram following of more than 40,000 people, Stampel has retained its integrity as a designer-maker business representative of Andrea's personal values and ethics.

Andrea's most loved textile item is a blanket that originally belonged to her grandmother. When small, Andrea would spend time at her grandparent's house with her sisters and cousins. She remembers staying up late, eating sugary snacks and generally doing all the things she wasn't allowed to do at home. When her grandmother passed away, Andrea and her sisters each inherited one of the treasured vintage eiderdowns. Andrea's features a soft-pink stylised floral pattern and is filled with shoddy – recycled textiles – to create a warm cosy blanket. Andrea is indifferent to the form; it means more to her than colour, pattern and aesthetics. The act of snuggling into the thick quilted fabric is comforting both physically and emotionally. Memories of people and past events form the basis for attachment. When asked how it makes her feel, Andrea pauses a moment to think.

"Maybe a bit humbled, and grounded."

Andrea's grandparents didn't have a lot of money; thinking of them brings her back down to earth. The thought of parting with the blanket hasn't entered her mind. It's showing signs of wear and tear – Tilly the Jack-Russell has nibbled one corner – when it gets beyond repair Andrea will most definitely up-cycle it into something else.

Patrick Snelling

I love my Paul Smith jacket

Patrick wears many hats; at the time of interview he was Program Manager for the RMIT BA Textile Design program, curator of the first Tamworth Textile Triennial, PhD student and copyright witness for the textile industry. He has been practising for over thirty years, has exhibited nationally and internationally, curated numerous exhibitions, co-written a book on printed textiles and is represented in the National Gallery of Victoria's fashion and textiles collection.

Patrick selected two items to discuss as part of the attachment project, a Paul Smith jacket and pair of Replay shoes. Having recently completed a project titled 'Location', looking at the role of clothing as a representation of past experience, the story of these two items was at the forefront of his mind.

Patrick studied at the then Nottingham Trent Polytechnic at the same time Paul Smith launched his first store – a "tiny little shop in Byard Lane…in the lace district of Nottingham." Paul Smith wasn't trained in fashion or textiles, however his partner was a fashion lecturer at the Polytechnic. Smith learned his trade informally, through hard work and face-to-face interaction with his clients. Patrick can remember buying his first jacket from the man himself.

> **"At the time he sold suits, jackets and shirts,
> all hand tailored and hand made…as a student
> the quality of workmanship impressed me."**

The second Paul Smith jacket was purchased in 1998 from David Jones in Melbourne. It is made from a linen/polyester fabric and cut with subtle reference to Japanese tailoring. Patrick went shopping with the intention of buying a Paul Smith jacket, based on the values of the brand and man – the quality, workmanship and approach to business.

"The associations and memories of that first jacket I bought in 1975 – I think it was, is quite a strong sort of metaphor I suppose, not only the longevity of his fashion, but also the fact that it's a sort of historical signature for me being in textiles, from one place to another."

Patrick is attached to the jacket due to its form, style and visual quality – "its sense of materiality…quality… it's been invested with something right from the beginning."

By wearing it Patrick is making a statement in support of quality and good craftsmanship.

1998 was also a happy time in Patrick's life; the jacket therefore acts as an aid to memory.

Having lost or misplaced the original jacket; Patrick has no intention of parting with this one. He did consider giving it to his nephew but figured him too young to appreciate it just yet. If he were forced to part with it he would probably sell it online.

Assimina Semertjis
I love my Christopher Graf blazer

Assimina is a Learning Leader at PCW Melbourne, a Catholic girls school in Windsor. She teaches general science and VCE chemistry.

Assimina's favourite, most loved garment is a black tailored Christopher Graf blazer with hot pink lining. She bought it in the early 1990s from Graf's flagship store on Chapel Street Prahran, back in the day when this part of Melbourne was south-side's answer to Brunswick Street Fitzroy. As a graduate teacher Assimina made a special trip to Christopher Graf with the intention of buying something to herald the start of her career.

She can remember liking a different jacket made from 100 per cent wool that felt beautiful to the touch, however the hot pink lining of this one was enough to lure her away. Up until our conversation Assimina believed the outer fabric to be synthetic due to the look and feel. After reading the label together we are pleasantly surprised to learn that it is 100 per cent wool.

Assimina was quite clear and direct on the reasons why she is attached to this blazer, even after twenty or more years. Primarily the form; the colour of the lining – the intense hot pink against the black wool crepe is striking and delicious. The tailoring is flattering and fits Assimina like a glove. The cut is unusual – slightly theatrical without being over the top.

At the time it instilled a sense of independence and confidence, wearing it now does the same. The blazer is representative of a time in Assimina's life; the style speaks of the mid 1990s, of Chapel Street and movies at the Astor theatre. It signifies a short period in Melbourne's fashion history, a piece that Assimina is happy to keep in her collection.

Liz Paolacci
I love my Indian block printed fabric

Prior to her current role as Education and Development manager for Girl Guides Victoria, Liz studied and worked in the creative sector. She studied Furniture Design at Box Hill TAFE, and later completed a Bach. Fine Art – Sculpture at RMIT. This was followed by a Diploma of Education majoring in visual art and a teaching position at a secondary school in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

Liz selected a length of block printed cotton fabric to discuss as part of the attachment project. It is quite large, large enough to drape across a single bed, or cover a couch or table. It is Indian in appearance, featuring a tonal brown paisley pattern surrounded by a border of Indian elephants and stylised flowers. The design is reminiscent of stores such as Ishka, and the retro hippy revival popular in the 1990s, and has been in Liz's possession since about this time. Liz doesn't remember exactly when, or how it entered her life, and thinks her aunty may have given it to her. Despite its hazy provenance it was a key ingredient in Liz's teenage quest for identity. This piece of fabric was amongst many other collected items used to furnish her "huge nest" of a bedroom.

When we look at the attachment criteria the second point rings true for Liz; experience, enjoyment and its ability to generate desirable feelings. Although this fabric has been in Liz's collection for a number of years, it hasn't always been on display. It was boxed up with other bits and pieces while Liz went through another phase in life. When it resurfaced a few years ago, it was given pride of place on the living room couch, becoming a touchstone, a reminder of her earlier life. It symbolises her values, identity and acquired independence. It reminds her of her parents both involved in the folk music scene of the 70s and 80s, her unorthodox childhood, being the different kid at primary school, and embracing this difference as a teenager. The combination of family, independence, acceptance, colour, texture, sheer versatility and function are all reasons behind her attachment to this piece of cloth. When asked how it makes her feel, Liz replies, "It makes me feel calm, there's a real sense of peace."

She has no intention of ever parting with the fabric, and if she did it would have to go to someone who could appreciate it for the same reasons she does.

"This piece epitomised a certain sense of style that I was into…those were formative years for me."

Julie Newton

I love my hakuna matata cushion

Julie is a textile/graphic designer for a Melbourne based children's wear label. Her analogue painting and drawing skills are rarely called upon in this job; instead she uses digital design tools such as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to prepare artwork, product templates and engineered prints for production.

Julie's most cherished possession is a cushion made from hand printed silk satin and an old holey t-shirt. Julie created the cushion in a spontaneous burst of creativity and necessity. Her much loved hakuna matata t-shirt was no longer wearable and her beautiful floral hand printed fabric was folded and stored away out of sight. Julie being a resourceful and creative soul gathered her fabrics recalled her remedial sewing skills and set out to make a cushion.

It might seem a little strange to pair an old holey t-shirt with an exquisite piece of hand printed silk, however for Julie the marriage of the two fabrics are what makes the cushion so special. The t-shirt was a gift from Julie's mum, to Julie's dad when the young family were living in Nairobi, Africa. Julie's mum purchased the t-shirt for its light-hearted message and genial colour. Hakuna matata as most of us know, means 'no worries for the rest of your days' as sung by Simba and friends in Disney's *The Lion King*. This t-shirt pre-dates the film, and has remained in the Newton family for over twenty years. Julie feels she has taken a special garment and created her own unique heirloom; keeping it near makes her feel close to her family when they are rarely close by.

There are numerous family photos of individuals wearing the t-shirt, first her dad, then her sister and finally Julie. The cushion is part of their collective history. It is also very functional; it's malleable and soft – "a lovely squishy, cuddly, comforting friend." Julie is also fond of the form – the colours, textures and hand made style. She can't ever imagine parting ways with the cushion, and when it no longer performs its current function, she will turn it into something else.

"It's a reminder of our travels together."

This work was developed in a Creative Spaces managed studio.
Creative Spaces is a program of Arts Melbourne at the City of Melbourne.

Thank-you to Clever Polly's for hosting and Code Black for the menu boards.

CITY OF MELBOURNE   CREATIVE SPACES

emma.lynas@rmit.edu.au

C.2 *'Leave you' booklet, 2015.*

love you or
Leave you

Love you or leave you began with a series of interviews with ten Melbournians, both professional textile designers and the general public – all consumers of cloth and clothing.

The interviews were conducted to find out why some textile items resonate and maintain long and meaningful relationships while others engender feelings of regret, anger or indifference. A criteria adapted from the work of Özlem Savaş was referenced by participants to provide structure and consistency. The stories encourage reflection and an awareness of values and reasons behind our individual consumption of clothing and cloth.

Detachment;
Utilitarian; poor quality and or performance, inadequate operation
Personal being; dislike or boredom, poor reflection of self
Social being; shows individual belongs to an undesirable class or represents previous identity
Form; physical element and style
Purchase; superfluous products purchased without need, feelings of disappointment when using product
Environmental; living conditions, changes in individual's life

Happy reading,
Emma Lynas

Savaş, Ö., 2004. A perspective on the person - Product relationship: attachment and detachment. In D. McDonagh et al., eds. Design and emotion: the experience of everyday things. London: Taylor & Francis.

Tasman Smith
This track style jacket has never been my favourite thing

Tas is a student of Animation and Interactive Media at RMIT. He works primarily with digital tools, using Adobe Flash, Photoshop and After Effects to create short films and animations. The bachelor degree will provide him with the skills and experience to move into app design, 2D or 3D animation, film, TV or advertising.

Tas's most unloved item of clothing is a polyester cotton sports look zip up jacket purchased about three years ago. Tas doesn't enjoy shopping for clothes, and usually waits until he needs a few things before venturing out. This particular retail mission took him to an independent store not too far from home selling locally designed clothing and accessories. He purchased two jackets, this one and a denim-blue linen jacket that he wore to death. Tas can remember liking this one due to the combination of colours used – dull cherry red, soft grey blue and white.

When we look at the criteria he highlights social being, personal being, form and purchase as key reasons for detachment. Tas isn't interested in sport, and the suggestion that he might be due to the styling of the jacket makes him feel uncomfortable and not himself. The impracticality of the pockets is also an issue.

"I like to be able to put my hands straight into the pockets, it always bugged me that I could feel the zipper against my hand while I walked."

Considering the amount of wear and satisfaction he got from the linen jacket, he feels a high degree of disappointment with this one. When I ask how it makes him feel, he says "uncomfortable", he doesn't feel himself and can never seem to settle into it.

Based on our conversation, I'm surprised to learn that Tas plans to keep it. He lives in hope that one day he will find another item of clothing that somehow negates its sportiness. He is however open to the idea of giving it away. "I'd probably pass it onto someone I knew, who needed a jacket…it's never really been worn, and I feel that someone could definitely get some use out of it."

Gilly Thorne

I still wear this cardigan but I don't like what it represents

Gilly works in the commercial homewares sector designing embroideries and prints for bed linen, cushions and associated accessories. She completed her undergraduate textile design degree in England in 2005. Not long after she packed her bags and travelled to Australia on a working holiday visa. Since then she has worked for Melbourne's most prominent bed linen wholesalers and retailers. Two years ago Gilly decided to reduce her workload to allow more time for creative pursuits. She now works a four-day week leaving one day free to explore ideas, materials and techniques separate to her commercial work.

Gilly selected a deep sage-green cardigan to discuss as part of the detachment project. It has been in her possession since her final year of university. She vaguely recollects purchasing it from a chain store, but can't remember which one. What she does remember is that it was the colour than caught her attention, a particularly English green – a colour she hasn't been able to find in Australia. Gilly suspects she didn't look at the fibre content, or give too much attention to anything beyond the colour and shape; it fit well, the colour suited her, as did the price.

Together we locate the care label. Being from the UK it has one of those extremely long labels with an overwhelming amount of information provided in different languages. It is made from 55 per cent viscose – extruded wood pulp – and 45 per cent cotton. We find the brand – Primark, together we grimace. The brand has had some bad PR in recent times due to unethical labour practices and connections to the 2010 Rana Plaza collapse. Our initial grimace turns to a smirk when we read *atmosphere 69, made with love* randomly included amongst other information.

Gilly makes it quite clear that the garment is still functional; it has held its shape, the colour is trend neutral, all the buttons are intact and there are no holes or stains. Gilly doesn't dislike it, she isn't bored by it, what makes her uneasy is what the garment symbolises.

"I'm not fully detached from it, but I'm detached from that process of fast fashion."

Gilly remembers back to her uni days when high street shopping and fast fashion suited her student budget and lifestyle. If she was to buy a cardigan now she would be less influenced by price and give much more thought to the materials, processes and people involved.

Gilly believes the cardigan is still with her due to its colour and ability to remind her of home. The industry in which it was created forms the basis for detachment. It was designed to have a limited life. A short stay in someone's wardrobe – followed by the op shop and finally landfill. What Gilly can do to prevent its early demise, is keep it and wear it. Together we bemoan the state of the op shop, once a treasure trove of randomness, now a dumping ground for poor quality off-trend garments. In an act of defiance she plans to keep wearing her English green cardigan until it wears out.

Greg Miller

I hate this hi-vis polo shirt with a passion

Greg is a carpenter – working on large commercial projects ranging from multi-storey apartment buildings to office fit-outs. Carpentry in this day and age requires all of the tools and skills you associate with the trade; saws, hammers, nails etc. plus new materials and methods for site specific installations. It's a physical job, working both indoors and out, requiring appropriate OH&S approved work wear – high visibility clothing, work boots and a hard-hat.

Each year his employer issues a uniform consisting of six hi-vis polo shirts with the company logo embroidered above the pocket. The shirts are 40-50 per cent UV resistant and made from a 65 per cent polyester and 35 per cent cotton – we suspect the collar contains the entire cotton content. Greg describes the fabric as 'porous'. On close inspection it looks like a knitted pique interlock, durable and resistant to rips and tears. The knit structure and polyester fabric were most likely chosen for reasons of durability and colour retention. In essence the shirts are stain and tear resistant, easy to wash and fast to dry.

The porous texture of the fabric attracts dirt and concrete dust; unable to breath the shirt becomes hot, sweaty, sticky and itchy. Greg describes the utilitarian performance as shocking – particularly in hot weather when he is guaranteed to experience a day of intense discomfort. Greg wishes there was something else on offer – a 100 per cent cotton hi-vis t-shirt perhaps, something that breathes and provides protection against external factors but is also comfortable to wear. Health and safety are important, but so is usability and comfort.

After twelve months and a complete new uniform, I wonder if Greg's employer takes responsibility for the old uniform – "no" was his answer. This poses another issue – the shirts are embroidered with the company name, making them unsuitable for charity or resale. The polyester hydrophobic fabric makes them unfit for rags; therefore they are destined for landfill.

Greg has never been connected to his work shirts; they engender feelings of unease and discomfort. They provide a level of protection from external risks, but fail to provide an adequate level of comfort while working on site.

→ such a teeny-tiny button

E - Does anyone actually use the pocket on the front?

G - No, most tradies wear a tool belt

Ben Dryne
This white jacket makes me feel self-conscious

Ben is a qualified civil engineer, specialising in natural hazard risk assessment for large commercial operations all over the world. Ben is required to wear a suit and tie to work – when assisting clients on site he wears appropriate OH&S protective clothing. At home he prefers to keep it comfortable and casual.

Ben's least favourite item of clothing is a white zip-up jacket, a hoody without the hood. There is a long story attached to this jacket, going back three or four years to a time when Ben was working on a job in the USA. He can remember borrowing a colleague's white jacket and feeling good – and looking good in it. He remembers it being white, more of an off-white than white-white, and more like a jacket than a windcheater-jacket, possibly made from a synthetic material. From that point onwards Ben had it in his mind to buy something similar, two or three years had passed and he found himself in a shop on the Amalfi Coast trying on a white zip-up windcheater. In the change room he felt ok about it, but not 100 per cent convinced that it was exactly what he was looking for. Bolstered by his partner's nod of approval he bought the jacket for around 70 or 80 Euros. He wore it once in Italy, and despite the amount of other people wearing white, he felt too self-conscious.

When looking at the detachment theories, Ben points to poor reflection of self – as he is not someone that likes to be the centre of attention. He doesn't mind the cut of the jacket, but dislikes the branding on the front and back, as well as the colour, "it's whiter than paper!" He is also well aware of its poor serviceability, essentially a blank canvas just waiting to showcase spills and stains. He admits that it was a spontaneous purchase despite three years of looking.

The jacket is made from 95 per cent cotton and 5 per cent elastane. It drapes nicely due to the heavy fabric and metal zip, but lacks that nice snuggly lining common to windcheater material. The logo is printed with a gloss paste, making the brand visible but not overtly so. Ben can't tell me anything about the brand – it having no relevance to the purchase, nor did he have any curiosity post purchase.

Since wearing it that one time in Italy, Ben has tried it on in the UK and back home in Melbourne. It doesn't work in either setting; he feels too visible. Up until now it has lived in the wardrobe in the spare room. He has no plan to move it on, and believes that if ever optical-white zip-up windcheaters become fashionable he will once again attempt to wear it. The idea of giving it away, or selling on eBay requires time and effort. Ben has the room to store it, so store it he will.

Ilka White

This jersey top served a one-off functional purpose; it now holds no value for me

Ilka is an artist and teacher working primarily with textiles in the creation of beautiful hand woven cloth or place inspired sculptures and installations. Her work is informed by nature, either her immediate home close to the Merri Creek, or further afield. Ilka has been weaving for over seventeen years, travelling to Indonesia, India, Nepal and Bhutan to hone her skills and contextualise her art practice. Her work is represented in the public collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and has been included alongside internationally acclaimed textile artists and designers in the 2012 publication, *Textiles: The Art of Mankind*.

Ilka made it clear from the beginning of the interview that she is not a willing participant in mass consumption, nor is she quick to discard her possessions. Everything that comes into her home is considered in terms of need and purpose. Her most unloved textile item is a melon-orange, grey-marle three quarter length striped jersey top purchased in Ballarat on the way to the Grampians not that long ago. Ilka had packed her bag expecting cool weather, but was surprised by unexpected warmth. While waiting for the next leg of her journey, Ilka left the train station in search of an op shop. She found one not too far away, although not the type she was used to, it was one of those curated stores, where staff cherry-pick the best buys and mark up the price accordingly. Ilka was after a simple grey t-shirt, but couldn't find what she was looking for, and subsequently settled for this top due to the appealing colour combination. It is not a top Ilka would ever buy new, or even from a garage sale but it was the most suitable on offer and served an immediate need.

When we look at the detachment criteria Ilka is able to cite a number of reasons why this top will not to secure a place in her wardrobe. For a start, it fails the utilitarian criterion – the cuffs are too tight, threatening to cut off her circulation. The form – construction and style – are also problematic.

"The gathering at the shoulder and centre front, refer back to fashion eras that just don't apply to jersey…I don't like that clash of design elements."

The jersey top also signals participation in the fast fashion machine Ilka has issue with. Manufactured for a chain store, it belongs to a cycle of trends, seasons and markets with often-negative social and environmental consequences. If she were to continue wearing it, she would feel awkward and self-conscious, and might be queried by friends and peers.

"Chain stores and commercial overproduction, and exploitation, and environmental irresponsibility… this garment…speaks of all those things really loud and clear to me."

On a more practical level, Ilka believes she has more than enough clothing. Pieces that reflect who she is – purchased for utilitarian integrity or inherent beauty and workmanship, with some pieces having been mended over and over again. This process of careful selection, thrift and renewal is part of Ilka's art practice and way of living.

When we discuss how Ilka intends to part ways with the top, she is overwhelmed with the urge to keep it. The colours would work perfectly in an up-cycling project. All of a sudden the unloved top becomes an ingredient in a creative project providing a whole new opportunity for attachment. Despite this renewed connection, Ilka still struggles with her decision. The top is practically brand new, no holes, still in good shape, and she is going to cut it up to use in a rag-rug! She questions how this relates to her values but reconciles, wondering if "perhaps it is a fitting subversion of the manufacturer's intentions". Together we chuckle at this subtle act of rebellion.

Image credit (left) Kirsty Argyle

Andrea Shaw

I don't particularly dislike this cushion, but it holds nothing for me

Andrea owns and operates Stampel, a successful designer-maker business creating functional objects from reclaimed and natural materials. She began by up-cycling timber off-cuts from the furniture industry into jewellery storage devices decorated with fun, colourful geometric patterns. Since then, the business has grown to include textiles, jewellery and art pieces all reflecting Andrea's playful approach to colour and commitment to using either reclaimed or natural materials.

After graduating from textile design at RMIT – Andrea worked for Nancy Bird – a Melbourne based label designing and printing bags and accessories. Inspired by Yvon Chouinard, the founder of Patagonia – Andrea started her own business as a way to own the process and work around her active lifestyle. With around twenty stockists and an online store, she is able to make to order at any time of the day or night. This flexibility gives her the freedom to go surfing when the conditions are right.

> **"People say to me, why don't you grow things…I don't really aspire to have my two seasons a year… you're basically designing for two weeks of the year, and then you're just managing the factory, and that doesn't really excite me."**

Andrea selected a square cushion made from Ikea fabric to discuss as part of the detachment project. Andrea made this cushion when she and her partner returned to Melbourne after living in the UK together. With no furniture, they went to Ikea and bought the essentials for their new home. On reflection Andrea acknowledges that Ikea do have some genuinely good products on offer, but the whole "home in a hurry" is not something she would do now. When looking to the detachment theories Andrea states:

> **"It's not offensive but it's not lovable, it actually has no meaning to me whatsoever."**

At this stage in her life Andrea is more inclined to make considered choices. This cushion represents an unconsidered choice, and therefore a poor reflection of self and personal being. The reason she hasn't parted company with the cushion is because it's "just so inoffensive" – it is still functional, and represents a part of Andrea and Duncan's collective history; they created their first home in Australia with this cushion. When asked how it makes her feel, she states, "I feel like I want to get rid of it, but I shouldn't because it's wasteful and goes against a lot of what I think, but in terms of emotion, it doesn't have any emotional connection whatsoever." If she were to part with it, she would most likely give it to charity.

Patrick Snelling
I have no emotional attachment to these jeans

Patrick is a creative practitioner working primarily with textiles and printed surface design. He has worked for over twenty-five years at RMIT, most recently as manager of the BA Textile Design program. His other roles include curator of the first Tamworth Textile Triennial, author and textile design copyright witness. He has exhibited nationally and internationally and is represented in the National Gallery of Victoria's fashion and textile collection.

Patrick found it difficult to select a textile item to discuss as part of the detachment project; he is a self-proclaimed collector of things – with an amazing shirt collection dating back thirty years. When pushed to select something he settles on a pair of Maddox denim jeans purchased from a Melbourne high street store in the 1990s. The jeans are big and baggy, a style made fashionable by American hip-hop artists of the time. Most of Patrick's jeans are either worn out or covered in ink and dye making him wonder if perhaps he didn't love this pair as much as others he has owned.

> **"Well, I don't need them but I don't want to throw them away, I'm caught in a quandary between the two things."**

He goes on to quote Aristotle, "*Nature abhors a vacuum*… once you create space you want to fill it." With the space to store things, Patrick has never had any cause to part with the jeans. When we look at the criteria, form is the primary reason for detachment; the style and fit are no longer suitable. We discuss the probability of them coming back into fashion.

"This is tricky, this is the question about fashion… they either become historically interesting or interesting right now, there is not a period in between."

Patrick isn't swayed by fashion trends; he is wise to the tricks of the industry, instead choosing to dress according to his own values of style and quality. If Patrick were to part ways with the jeans, he would most likely donate them to charity for resale.

Assimina Semertjis
This headband says nothing about who I am

Assimina is a Learning Leader at PCW Melbourne, a Catholic girls school in Windsor. She teaches general science and VCE chemistry.

The item she has absolutely no connection to, and never has done is a headband she received as a Christmas gift. To get to the core of why she is so vexed by something so innocuous we have to go back to her childhood. Assimina's mother, like many mothers, opted to buy the same outfit for her two girls, but in different colours. On top of this, Mrs Semertjis would make clothes for her daughters, modifying dress patterns to make them loose rather than fitted. The girls relished the day they were old enough to buy their own clothes and were free from the shackles of Mum's practical fashion sense.

Assimina has long been responsible for buying her own clothes, and dressing in a way that reflects her personality and style, however when she is given an item of clothing or accessory, she is reminded of what it is like to be told what to wear.

When we refer to the detachment criteria, Assimina is quick to identify two key reasons why she dislikes the headband: personal being and form – it is not something she would wear. What puzzles Assimina more than the headband itself is why her friend gave it to her in the first place; what was she thinking?

Gift giving and receiving is often fraught with tension, diplomacy is the best course of action, and is essentially the reason why this item remains in Assimina's possession; she is worried that her friend will someday ask her about it.

Together we laugh at the absurdity of keeping something so trivial on the off chance its existence is raised in casual conversation between friends. If or when Assimina decides to part ways with the headband, she will most likely give it to someone (who expressed an interest in it) or donate it to charity.

Liz Paolacci

I'm ready to let go of this green jacket

Prior to her current role as Education and Development manager for Girl Guides Victoria, Liz studied and worked in the creative sector. She studied Furniture Design at Box Hill TAFE and later completed Bach. Fine Art – Sculpture at RMIT, followed by a Diploma of Education majoring in visual art. This lead to a teaching position at a secondary school in Melbourne's northern suburbs then to managing art camps for Girl Guides Victoria.

Liz selected a bright green nylon Fiorucci jacket to discuss as part of the detachment project. She purchased it from an op shop at a time that marked a dramatic shift in Liz's style, from hippy to punk. Gone were the soft floaty fabrics and folk music of her teenage years, to be replaced by the bright green jacket, short red hair, punk music and hard living. Liz describes her twenties as a decade of excess, extremes, and trauma.

Liz is usually inclined to hold onto items of clothing, rotating pieces in and out of storage – using them as markers of time and place. Liz is very philosophical about her past, and can see that this jacket has no role to play in her future. When asked if it makes her feel a certain way, she states:

> **"It initially made me cringe a bit because it reminded me of some of the excesses in behaviour… it's not about ignoring that part of my life, but it's about being at peace with it…sort of, almost, symbolically letting go of some of the objects of that time."**

Prior to the interview the jacket was in a bag with other textile items too precious and personal to take to the op shop. On first glance its visual aesthetic is amusing; the mix of implied tailoring, vivid green and plastic fantastic. There is "a sort of irony or a satirical element", but there is also a story that goes with it. Parting with the jacket needs to involve a face-to-face personal transaction, Liz feels compelled to explain its provenance and history. Therefore giving to an op shop or selling online is out of the question.

Julie Newton
I actually hate this thing

Julie works as a textile/graphic designer for a children's wear company – she uses digital design tools to create colour palettes, pattern repeats and placement designs for kids clothing.

Julie's most unloved textile item is a sleeveless t-shirt she was given by an online clothing store. Julie doesn't just dislike this item of clothing – it riles her. Frustration, disappointment and disbelief are all emotions that rise to the surface when discussing this garment. In order to understand why she feels this way we need to go back to where the saga began.

Some time ago Julie decided to purchase a few articles of clothing from a well-known online store. A couple of weeks passed, then another, motivating Julie to email the store to find out what was causing the delay. The customer service officer replied to say that one of the items purchased was no longer in stock. From here a long game of cat and mouse ensued, all the while Julie's money resided in the online store's account. By the six-week mark, Julie was well and truly over it and politely asked for her money back. Quite conveniently the store all of a sudden had the products ready to despatch, and "as promised we've included your free item". This was news to Julie, as she could not recall ever being promised anything for free. When the parcel finally arrived nine weeks after the initial order was placed, she couldn't believe what was inside – a generic poor quality cotton jersey t-shirt.

The graphic looks like it was created with an Adobe Illustrator distress effect – easily done, with no design input required. The print is rough and heavy to the touch suggesting the wrong type of ink was used. The black over-locked seams and hacked off sleeves are ill conceived and badly finished. To Julie, this is a classic example of fast fashion – manufactured on the cheap with no respect to quality, materiality or attention to detail. Julie assumes the store couldn't sell the t-shirt, so rather than take responsibility for it decided to 'gift' it to her. This riled Julie even more.

"You can't give someone a terrible object and presume they are going to be grateful...this t-shirt is the perfect symbol of bad customer service."

The gift did not act as a conciliatory device, instead doing the exact opposite. When we look at the detachment list it qualifies all criteria except environment. It is poorly made and does nothing to reflect Julie's values or taste.

"I'm probably too unconnected to this thing."

Julie questions her own reasons for keeping the item this long – perhaps she is doing it as a subconscious reminder not to go on spontaneous online shopping sprees.

She is also at a loss as to what to do with it, and questions whether or not a charity store would be able to on-sell, however, this is the only way Julie can feasibly see this garment finding another home as eBay, Gumtree and swapping are all out of the question.

In a last ditch attempt to find some use for it, she wore it to bed one night, but slept so badly she is reluctant to give it another chance. This t-shirt is nothing but trouble.

This work was developed in a Creative Spaces managed studio.
Creative Spaces is a program of Arts Melbourne at the City of Melbourne.

Thank-you to Clever Polly's for hosting and Code Black for the menu boards.

emma.lynas@rmit.edu.au

Appendix D

D.1 *An example of a product pitch by RMIT University BA (Textile Design) and RMIT University BD (Communication Design) students for the 2015 Araluen project. Concept taken through to production and renamed the 'Helping Hand' Bag, 2015[204].*

[204] Do not have permission to use beyond examination.

D.2 *Page two of* 'A catalogue of beautiful things by beautiful people' *prepared by Lara Hynes at Araluen Art Connects, 2015 (Hynes 2015, p. 2) 2015.*

Partners - Ruby Whiting & James Barden

A Reflection:

James' work is structured, purposeful and particular. As he works in a slow and precise manner, our main objective as a team was to complete a piece of artwork within the given timeframe. James took the reigns and drew the outline of the house including the details such as the windows and and doors and I helped with the linework on the right side of the fence whilst James worked on the left.

James indicated what colours he'd like to work with and then I selected the colours from the paints available at Araluen, taking advice from his mentors about his preference for bright colours and glitter. We coloured the artwork together, continuously conversing about which colours to use in which section as we made our way across the entire drawing. It was a rewarding experience, both in watching the relationship grow with jokes and laughter, and to see at the end of the session, we had completed a bright and beautiful picture of a house, reflective of James' personal style.

We did not name the painting, but if I were to, I would call it "Home of a happy meeting".

Ruby Whiting
RMIT Textile Design Student

D.3 *Gabriele Draffen's concept for hyposensitivity—touch, sound and proprioception. Phase 2: the long-term need, Araluen project, 2015.*

ARALUEN SENSORY LIBRARY

Swatch No:

APPLICABLE SENSES

SENSITIVITY

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Size: 21x22cm

Materials: Cotton yarn, aluminium, balsa, pebbles

Production methods: Square aluminium rods filled with small pebbles and corked with balsa wood, repp woven and tied off with cord to prevent sliding

DESIGN INFORMATION

Designer: Gabriela Draffen

Date of production: 31.08.2015

Intended application: Fidget, rugs, soft furnishings

Storage details: Lay flat and unrolled

FRONT

BACK

NOTES:

Tied off cords have been glued at the knot to prevent them from becoming untied, slightly hardening the cotton cord. If they are a little sharp, they can be snipped down further.