

CHAPTER TWO

UISGE BEATHA: THE EBB AND FLOW OF FOUR TIDES

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Abstract

Life-stories explore who we are and how others view us, allowing critical insights into the nature of belonging and place, acceptance and othering in the development of a hybrid and postcolonial identity. Drawing upon the seminal works of autoethnographers Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner, the identity and border theories of Homi Bhabha and the phenomenological inquiry of Max Van Manen the authors as migrants, educators and researchers create a 4 dimensional framework across which the trajectory of one researcher's life from foundling child to mature adult is explored. Interweaving autobiographic narratives, transcripts of oral history, and symbolic representations of displacement and disempowerment from one author's life, the researchers subject that thick data to critical conversations. This critical exploration of narratives of displacement, labelling and othering creates a space out of which counter narratives of agency, resilience and transformation emerge, suggesting the subtlety and power of storytelling and writing for professionals in diasporic and transnational contexts of education.

Uisge Beatha: This final destination is both an end and a beginning. The wind whispers and sighs across the waters. The surface is disturbed and tiny droplets are sucked into the air to become moisture soaked clouds which deposit their water on the land. The water that began its life seeping through the moss of a highland plateau now brings new life to areas far from Cairngorm. The cycle of life has no beginning and no end but is transmuted into a fresh form in a different environment.

The water seeps from the earth and begins its journey...

There is a tide in the affairs of men.
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Julius Caesar Act 4, scene 3, 218-224

Yvonne speaks:

I am currently a Doctor of Education student exploring phenomenology through the medium of narrative inquiry. My topic is the lived experience of experienced teacher educators. Early in my research journey, I wrote a brief autobiography, 'My story'. This experience helped me to understand the nature of the task which I am inviting participants to undertake in telling their personal and professional stories: as a phenomenologist, it is important for me to reflect on my own experience before starting data collection from participants. The reflection is important because it helps the researcher "enter the world of their participants and become more aware of their own biases and assumptions" (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2010, p. 149). In this chapter, I interweave that autoethnographic text with reference to underpinning theories of phenomenology (van Manen, 1995) and narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991; Foucault, 1983). My personal voice and those of experts in the field are interspersed with excerpts from a meditation on the mystery of my origins and the turbulent tides of life as I have experienced it. This chapter is couched in the form of an extended metaphor, reflecting my Celtic heritage and love of the highlands, the burns and the mists of my country of origin. The water of life, or *Uisge Beatha* in Scottish Gaelic, has no absolute beginnings or endings: it is cyclic in nature. Figure 2-1 encapsulates that metaphor.

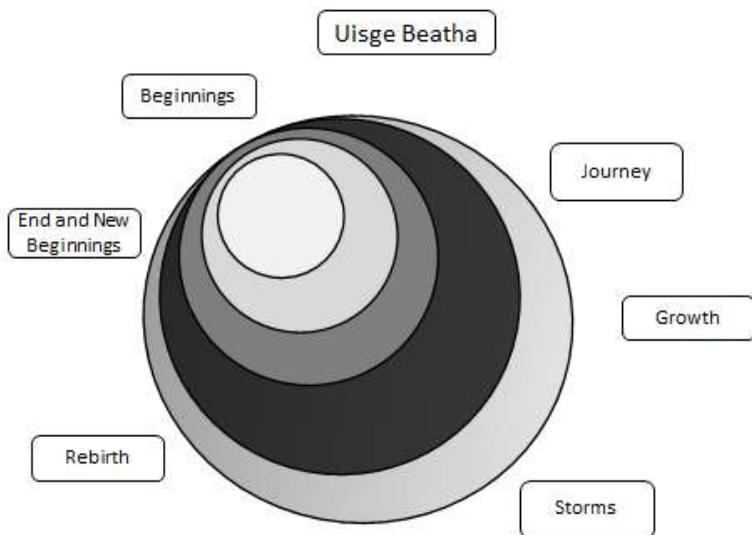


Figure: 2-1: Uisge Beatha as metaphor: the water of life

Cohler (1982) contends that personal narratives are “the most internally consistent interpretation of presently constructed past, experienced present, and anticipated future” (p. 207). Phenomenologists consider that experiences are “situated in a particular social, historical and cultural context” (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2010, p. 150). In accord with this understanding, Mishler (1986) refers to the telling of experiences through narrative as having “context-bound shades of meaning” (p. 53). These writers are in assent that temporality of experience, the social and cultural environment in which it happens, and our interpretation of that experience are interwoven within narratives of experience.

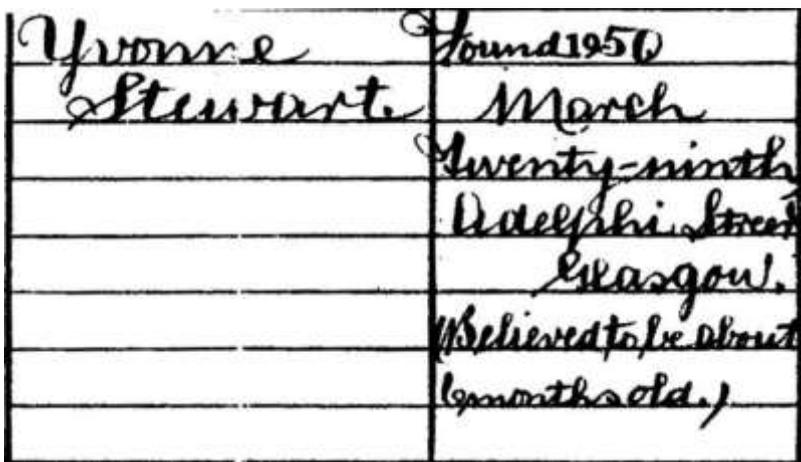
The process of writing my autobiography started with my thinking about the key memories I have of my earlier years in particular. Thinking turned into writing: the “lived throughness” (van Manen, 2011, para.1) of the revocative turn; and then thinking-as-writing, an epistemology of practice where the researcher creates “knowledge as text” (van Manen, 2011, para.3). I found myself deconstructing parts of my life and interpreting them in the narrative that is my story. The end result surprised me: it included strong emotions about labelling and the effect of labelling on individuals. Thus, I experienced “knowledge as being” (van Manen,

2011, para. 3), moving beyond the informational aspect of text to a new understanding of self and history. I was also surprised to find that although I had spent 43 years in the education workforce, this rated little or no mention in my narrative. The why of this point is explored later in the chapter.

The water of the burn begins its visible life as it seeps from the moss covered earth on a high plateau of the Cairngorm. Its actual beginnings are unknown but the trickle makes its way through indentations in the soggy earth and meanders down the gentle slope of the hillside, swelling with moisture gathered from the earth, rain and snow on its way.

My story:

Where and when does my story start? At the beginning I suppose. But when was that beginning? That is a mystery. I was born sometime in the second half of 1949. My birth certificate (Figure 2-2) states the date as 29 October but further reading reveals this as a guesstimate. And here is the mystery:



Yvonne	Found 1950
Stewart	March
	Twenty-ninth
	Dalrymple Street
	Glasgow.
	Believed to be about
	(6 months old.)

Figure 2-2: Extract from original birth certificate



Figure 2-3: Extract from the front page of ‘Bulletin’

As recorded in my first birth certificate and in the ‘Bulletin’ newspaper (Figure 2-3), I was found on the first floor of a tenement block at 24 Adelphi Street, Glasgow. No one knew who I was and so I spent the next year in Castlemilk Children’s Home – an experience of which I have little or no memory, although to this day the sound of a screaming infant causes a deep reflex action in my innermost being, a memory perhaps. I was thought to have been about six months old and my date of birth was set at 29 October, 1949. However, as I had been found on 29 March, 1950 the numeracy of the person who worked this out might be challenged! On 28 March, 1951, I was taken into the care of Peter and Agnes Findlay of Motherwell and was formally adopted by them on 20 February, 1952. This event is the first major ‘tide’ in my life.

Becoming part of the landscape the burn is now able to provide life by giving hydration to the flora and fauna, and the immediate area, of which it is a part, begins to change. The moss carpet gradually gives way to reveal underlying rocks and the ground becomes precipitous. Now three or four feet wide and ankle deep, the water is cleansed as it tumbles over rocks and stones to become a moderate waterfall and can provide fresh, clear spring water to weary hill walkers making their way to the summit.

One can speculate on many ways in which my life would have been different had I not been abandoned or adopted. Speculation, however, is not fact and tide certainly came at the flood and led me, if not to fortune in the monetary sense, most certainly to fortune in the life sense.

The use of narrative as a form of data collection is considered problematic in the scientific paradigm where data is quantifiable and easily presented in numeric form. However, although the “study of the realm of meaning requires the use of linguistic data” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p.7) the value of narrative methods for exploring and articulating the complexity of lived experience has been presented as a means by which researchers may explore what is said, but also what is unsaid. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991; Schon, 1991; van Maanen, 1990). Increasingly, narrative theory now focuses not only upon what is written or spoken in participants’ life narratives, but also upon the spaces between. Narrative research has become a powerful means by which individuals in postcolonial, personal and professional contexts grapple with the gaps and the silences in their own and others’ stories, so that shared understandings of personal and cultural identity become liquid (Dervin, 2011, 2013; Dervin & Layne, 2013). Making meaning of my personal life experience necessitated that I find words to express recollections and reflection on past events.

However, mapping those events was a challenge. Research into the National Archives of Scotland before my migration to Australia in 2001 was helpful in that process: in early 2001 I managed to obtain a copy of my original birth certificate and some copy from local newspapers in which I figured: until then I had not been aware of the existence of these documents. It was quite a revelation, and I have wondered since who gave me my name, and why the surname of Stewart. I was finding my way through processes that Polkinghorne (1988) expresses as making “an integrated ensemble of connections among images and ideas that appear in various modes of presentation, such as perception, remembrance, and imagination” (p.8). The interesting synergy of my first given last name and the family who adopted me is that Stewart was the middle name of my adopted father and some other members of the wider Findlay family. Ancestors of the family had been Stewarts.

The second major tide in my life was an inundation. Life seemed normal in my world: Agnes and Peter Findlay were my mum and dad, as I knew no other. My dad was full of life; an impish spirit, a scratch golfer and prize winning amateur photographer. An extremely fit man, he could run cross country races with ease and put many hours of effort into his ‘wee girl’ whom he dubbed ‘the best boy in Motherwell’. From him, I

inherited a love of golf and photography – the latter of which is still a passion for me to this day.

Continuing its journey across a meadow, the burn settles into a quieter phase and trees, bushes and animals take up residence by its banks which become overgrown with accumulated growth from seeds that birds have dropped. Some tree branches stretch across to meet their counterparts on the other side. The burn is truly “uisge beatha” (water of life).

Life was simple until in March 1959, my mum died from tuberculosis. It was a rocky time for a nine year old but life picked up again with the arrival of a house keeper who, in 1960, married my dad so that our shared lives were full of fun and vigour again. Thus began the best two years of my young life. This happy period was brought to a shuddering and life-changing stop when my father suddenly took ill and died just three weeks later from an inoperable brain tumour. I had never known him to be ill except for a cold one winter. The same week, a cousin was killed in a car accident in North Africa. Within another six weeks, two very close uncles died in quick succession; one of those uncles lived in our home. He died in my arms.

As is the way with nature, storms sweep across the landscape signalling both destruction and rebirth. Plants and trees with shallow root systems lose vigour and health over the years, and are swept away by strong winds and flood waters. The same destructive forces however, bring new life as seeds, borne by the winds, are deposited on soggy banks. The sun bringing heat replaces the wind and wet and new life begins. Fresh, green shoots appear and the burn, now cleansed by the rains, breathes new life and continues on its course towards its final destination.

In the space of two months, the people with whom I had grown up and been close to as a young child were swept away from my life: I was left in the care of my second mum. We were both numb in our own ways. The same year I started secondary school and, for the first time in my life, I buried myself in school work. This brought its own rewards in the form of school prizes. I had spent almost all of my primary schooling battling for the bottom place in class with another girl whose name I cannot remember.

My mum died in 1991 after a twenty year battle with a rare form of blood cancer. Those years were spent with many months in hospital and regular visits for treatment in between. We had to stay within easy reach of the hospital and moving house was not an option for someone in my mum's condition. At the time I didn't think anything of it: that was just the

way our lives were. It was only after mum died that I realised I could move about. I no longer needed to rely on long school holidays and short working days as a teacher to be her carer. This point in time coincided with the fall of communism and the dismantling of the European Eastern Bloc. Access to countries previously behind the 'Iron Curtain' became much freer. The needs of the populace in countries such as Romania became painfully obvious to me. Along with some church community friends, I became involved with relief work taking much needed medical, clothing, educational and other supplies to Cluj Napocca, a university town about two hundred kilometres east of the Hungarian border.

Eventually reaching the loch, the burn will meld with all the other burns which have taken their own journeys towards the same destination. Together they settle as part of the deeper waters reaching out to the sea and the rest of the world.

The third tide was my appointment as adviser with Glasgow department of education in 1994. In this capacity, I also had pastoral/support responsibility for forty-five primary schools. One particular school was in Drumchapel, at that time having the reputation of having the lowest socio-economic grading in Europe. The school had a very poor inspectorate report and I was charged with working alongside the head teacher and staff to bring the school up to an acceptable standard in areas of curriculum planning, learning and teaching and whole school management. I became a frequent visitor to the school. In January, 1995, an Australian teacher arrived on exchange. I did not believe that anyone could have allowed that to happen. I am very glad they did. The Australian teacher has become my life partner. Thus the tide turned and opened the path to Australia. My emigration to Australia with Eleanor opened the path to a family life which I would otherwise not have experienced. I have become a presence in the lives of Eleanor's three adult children to whom I relate in various ways – not quite pseudo parent but at least another senior adult family member. The eldest of the three shares our home and has an eleven year old boy to whom I am simply 'Grumps'. I was present at his birth and watching him grow into the boy he is at this point in time has been a great privilege. Quite a tide.

Reflecting on the first 30 years or so of my life experience has brought home to me why I have a deep loathing of labelling, and the labelling of children in particular. For most of my earlier life I had lived with the labels of 'foundling' and 'adoptee'. These titles gave adults the opportunity to comment on me without thought as to the person. I was a label and I was categorised by a label and not by my name. Even as an

adult, gaining my first passport as a marker of identity and being, and as a right to travel was extremely difficult: there was extra paperwork to complete and specific evidence to be provided to verify my identity. Once an individual is categorised as disabled, socially disadvantaged (Hollomotz, 2013; Smyth & McInerney, 2011), or as presenting behavioural challenges the labelled individual is more likely to be subject to pharmaceutical or other forms of violence (Mercogliano, 1998; Timimi, 2010) with the aim of ensuring compliance. The ultimate outcome of that dehumanising process can be found in places such as Auschwitz, which Eleanor and I visited in 2006.



Figure 2-4: Labels used in Auschwitz



Figure 2-5: Tattoos used to label prisoners, Auschwitz

When a person is labelled subaltern this opens the space in which binary positions of power and powerlessness may operate: others can do what they like to the othered without burden of conscience: the person is no longer ‘like me’, but other. When schools label students as ADHD, physically disabled or a slow learner, there is danger of forgetting that the student is a real person, albeit with some specific needs, but a *person* with a name and a unique personality and a future.

There are still times when I wonder who I really am and from what patch in Scotland I sprang to life in 1949. About one year ago, I had a DNA sample for ethnicity. The sample revealed that I am roughly 92% Celt and 8% Arab. I have always known I am a Celt. It is something deep in the psyche which cannot be explained. Scotland has my roots. The old saying, “You can take a girl out of Scotland but never Scotland out of the girl” is most certainly true in my case.

It is interesting to find myself almost back to where I started in 1970, at the lowest rung of the ladder. My post is lecturer level A and I have no management responsibilities for the first time in twenty-five years. I am able to concentrate on my job and have time built-in to my schedule for research. It is expected that I will progress through my doctoral studies in the first three years. I may not finish it in that time but I expect to make good progress and have the end in sight.

To say that I am back where I started is not quite true. I come to this post with the accumulation of knowledge and experience gained in and out of the classroom over the preceding forty years in the education world. I

might even be bold enough to suggest that there might be some wisdom drawn from the knowledge and experience, but that could stretch credulity a bit far. I do know that I expect the next tide to be successful completion of my doctorate, followed by contemplation and enactment of retirement. Where that tide will take us, I can't say. I do know that as long as we are fit, Eleanor and I will continue to enjoy life to the full, travelling and exploring places we have not managed to fit in because of work and family commitments. That will be truly our time.

This final destination is both an end and a beginning. The wind whispers and sighs across the waters. The surface is disturbed and tiny droplets are sucked into the air to become moisture soaked clouds which deposit their water on the land. The water that began its life seeping through the moss of a highland plateau now brings new life to areas far from Cairngorm. The cycle of life has no beginning and no end but is transmuted into a fresh form in a different environment.

The water seeps from the earth and begins its journey....

Metaphor is a useful tool in assisting with the reflective process and van Manen (1990) considers that “language can take us beyond the content of the metaphor toward the original region where language speaks through silence” (p. 49). The metaphor of “Uisge Beatha” represents the gestalt, the essence of my life experience. I wrote the piece as a way of expressing how I came into the world: appearing like the small trickle of water from the Cairngorms and developing through life's journey. The accumulation of life experiences have caused me to morph into the person I am. It has been an organic process with unnoticed beginnings and no end. I will hopefully continue to develop as life experiences occur on a daily basis. Some experiences are scarcely noticed while others have a profound, life changing effect.

... metaphor is not merely a matter of language. It is a matter of conceptual structure. And conceptual structure is not merely a matter of the intellect—it involves all the natural dimensions of our experience, including aspects of our sense experiences: colour, shape, texture, sound (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 235)

Golombek and Johnson (2004, p. 324) described teacher-authored narratives as “not simply a device used to story one's experience, but a semiotic tool that facilitates teacher development and can document how teachers participate in and constitute their social reality.” Cacciari (1998, p. 125) contends that “Many metaphors use the expressive properties of

events and things that surround us for giving names to mental contents otherwise difficult to shape linguistically.” For me, the image of the river as expressed in “Uisge Beatha” powerfully represents the shape of my lived experience. Being a foundling, I feel as though I have emerged into the world from an unknown source but have grown physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually over the intervening sixty plus years. From introspection came the words and images of “Uisge Beatha” which I have used as a motif throughout the chapter. The use of the Gaelic *Uisge Beatha* and the Scots ‘burn’ are deliberate: they reflect what I feel and know of my genetic cultural heritage.

According to psychologists, our memories seem to work best when we can see things as part of a recognised pattern, when our imaginations are aroused, when we can make natural associations between one idea and another, and when the information appeals strongly to our senses. An imaginative story, rich in vocabulary, that appeals to the senses, which works as a metaphor, and is cumulative in nature, clearly fulfils all these criteria (Berman & Brown, 2000, p. 4).

“Uisge Beatha” (Figure 2-1), fulfils these criteria as an integral part of my personal reflection. The beginning of life is probably clearly defined for most people and then we grow and become part of the landscape. As we mature, we think, work and act with others in the sharing of tasks and supporting one other’s efforts. Life experiences accumulate—some positive and some negative. Most people reach adulthood and settle into a pattern of life with family and career. Changes happen, however, and these cause us to review our lives. Storms, in the form of personal or professional shifts can cause us to discard some of our accumulated life structures and make room for new growth. At our journey’s end our legacy—for good or ill—lives on. As teacher educators, we hope our legacy will be evident in the classrooms of tomorrow.

In writing this chapter I have worked collaboratively with a colleague, Dr Janice K. Jones, who is an experienced writer and encourager to those of us still new to the art. The process has provided us both with added insight into the narrative inquiry methodology. Figure 2-6 gives a graphic interpretation of the experience, replicating Figure 2-1 but including academic, rather than the personal, aspects of this chapter.

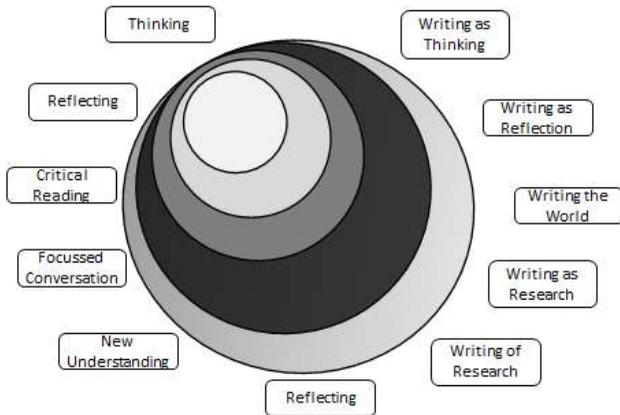


Figure: 2-6: Writing as research: A reflective process

Janice speaks:

What follows is a writing story (Alvermann, 2000) where I endeavour to give voice to the processes (Figure 2-6) and interactions that supported the creation of this chapter. Importantly, Figure 2.6 does not suggest a one-way flow, as these iterative and re-iterative processes may be nested in multiple ways, allowing writing upon writing; and further enhanced by talking about, reflecting and critically evaluating what is said, what is unsaid and the meaning(s) of both. Yvonne and I met twice to explore the meanings and connections between two texts: her life story and the metaphorical piece, “Uisge Beatha”. In those conversations we walked through the two texts together, bringing close consideration to gaps and silences in the texts and asking clarifying questions. Our conversations were recorded. After several weeks we returned to the transcripts of those conversations, so that our re-visiting of what was said was managed from a critical distancing. During our review of the transcripts, Yvonne and I employed our respective theoretical frameworks as ‘windows’ onto the data and their meanings.

A further challenge was negotiating between us the selection and positioning of narratives within in the chapter: the task of bringing together several texts, and agreeing a theoretical lens from which to read and re-construct a meaningful chapter was complex. Moreover, we

became aware of a changing dynamic: was I still the lead author? Yvonne's story had become central to the chapter, and this required that we honour Yvonne's creation of the central narrative and that I take the role of midwife to that birthing. Moving around a large table, on which 4 A1 sheets formed a backdrop for the chapter, we cut and pasted important sections from Yvonne's life story, "Uisge Beatha", transcripts of interviews and Yvonne's literature review. We were literally 'weaving words' as we negotiated their positions, their relative importance and their connections with the other texts. This kinaesthetic approach allowed an egalitarian, creative and nuanced process for selecting elements to be foregrounded, and how their juxtaposition made meaning.

Yvonne and I drafted an introduction to the chapter with this framework in mind. However, our approaches to reading the meaning and positioning the chapter were subtly different. Yvonne's life-narrative and the "Uisge Beatha" metaphor had drawn from me a strong affective response, and I had applied a postcolonial theoretical lens to the texts, focusing upon identity, power and symbolic violence. This aligned comfortably with Yvonne's approach. However, I had applied another metaphor to Yvonne's texts. In Celtic folk tales an infant may be stolen by earth or sea spirits to become a changeling, or a child may be persistent and clever enough to find a way between worlds, as in the story of Andrew Mor and the Sea People (Moray, 1966). The representation of children as hybrid beings who are able to move where adults cannot, across the boundaries of earth, air and water, was consistent with border theory. However, what I considered to be a powerful metaphor for re-presenting Yvonne's experience of being, belonging, becoming, and the symbolic violence of cultural norms did not sit well with Yvonne's purpose. Yvonne considered that the discourse of Changeling folk tales served to further inscribe patterns by which children are labelled 'other'. For this reason, her own experience of the systemic violence of labelling is embodied as a silence in Yvonne's narratives: perhaps to give voice to the unspeakable is to breathe into it a dangerous new life through our telling? Yvonne's words confirm this: *I don't know that I ever could write about [things] which are so deeply embedded that to share the way my mother and I were treated, would be to diminish myself* (Transcript 2 [21.02.2013]).

My re-casting of Yvonne's story therefore risked re-inscribing the very processes of labelling and disempowerment that she sought to reject. By re-framing Yvonne's story through a metaphor other than her own, I had unconsciously privileged my voice and agency over her own as storyteller.

Yvonne's tactful rejection of that approach allowed internal coherence: her voice and story were foregrounded.

Conclusion

Liquidity of identity and voice:

During this narrative process it emerged that how we narrate identity is liquid (Dervin, 2011, 2013) and positional. In choosing the term Celtic or Scot, Yvonne self-presented aspects of identity that spoke to her own and others' understanding of what it is to be of Celtic background. However, while positioning herself as a member of a very broad genetic and diasporic group wherein there are multiple languages, cultures and histories Yvonne's intent and the potential meanings of applying a label to herself was different from being labelled by another (Dervin & Layne, 2013), in terms of personal agency, and the impact of labelling.

Metaphor is a powerful tool for researchers:

Writing that is poetic or narrative in form gives voice to ideas and experiences that may not find expression in other ways. For Yvonne, metaphor allowed her to understand and voice her identity in terms of a connection with the land. *That's the Celt in me coming out. I've spent so many years cumulatively, in the highlands, climbing, touring round. It's a miracle to me, the way the water just seeps out, feeds the earth, and becomes the beautiful rivers and the lochs that we have in Scotland, teeming with life, with beautiful Salmon and Trout, and provides the very rich water for the whisky, where Uisge Beatha, the water of life and the peaty taste [comes from]* (Transcript 3 [21.02.2013]).

Metaphor gives shape and form to what is said, what is unsaid, and what cannot be told, (Figure 2-1). After many years of seeming dormancy, as described by Yvonne, her chosen metaphor gives life to a particular way of understanding and telling: through our choice of metaphor we write self-and-the-world (Figure 2-1). Our processes of writing, reading and then talking about the narratives revealed a range of meanings and possible interpretations: a crystallized representation. My initial reading of Yvonne's two texts was as separate entities. However, read as parallel narratives the texts afforded more than two ways of knowing and understanding Yvonne's life, and the power of writing for her as a researcher. For Yvonne, the same experience of reading and discussing her life narrative and its accompanying metaphor of Uisge Beatha, generated

wonder at the source of her own voice. In our discussions we questioned why Yvonne's professional life was not present in her life-texts. As educators, that silence brought into close focus the central message of her writing. Janice: Transcript 4 [21.02.2013]: *There's a kind of mystery at the heart of this [story] for me. Perhaps the reason why you did this writing about yourself, [is] about the self being central to you as a teacher?* Yvonne: *With your belief system, with all the things that make you the person [you are]. I don't see how it cannot impact on how you treat your students.*

Through our conversations about Yvonne's writing, it emerged that a driving motivation in her career as an educator has been to counteract the destructive force of labelling in the lives of vulnerable children.

Life-writing is an organic and relational process:

Co-authoring a chapter around a life story presents challenges relating to the narrators' positionality, voices and contexts, as discussed by Bignold and Su (2013, p. 412), first in relation to the role of researcher as narrator of her own, or others' texts, and also in relation to which aspects of narratives, and whose telling of those tales is privileged within the final text. Yvonne expressed wonder in our conversations that her story "seemed to write itself", echoing the reflections of pre-service teachers in this book. This suggests that when a narrative has value for identity-construction the lengthy gestation of that story is not always recognised by the author, for whom the story emerges fully-formed.

Janice observes:

I am touched that Yvonne considers me an 'experienced writer'. This extended process of co-authoring and analysis of our conversations has taught me the importance of listening, and opening space for others' stories and unique voices to emerge. Because the process highlighted differences in our ways of making meaning, it allowed our mutual recognition of how agency and power is expressed through writing choices. For Yvonne and the research participants who share their life stories in her doctoral study becoming an attentive listener will be as important as 'finding a voice'.

Life history writing for personal and professional development is a well-established practice in teacher education, according to Goodson and Choi (2008, pp. 7-8). The power of life-writing emerges when it moves beyond the 'telling' of life experience, to become an active process in the

construction and interpretation of identity (Clandinin, 2012), as it has in Yvonne's experience. Clandinin reminds us "how deeply grounded narrative inquiry is as a relational methodology" (2013, p.135). For Yvonne and for me as co-author, the writing of this chapter has engaged us in a 'relational methodology'. It has highlighted the power of metaphor in research, and the importance of careful listening and the giving of a respectful space for our own and others' story-telling.

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