

Seven Days Down South:

A war story

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Abstract

Seven days down south: a war story is a doctoral dissertation that consists of two distinctive parts. The first part is a DVD which is a representation of my experience and memories of returning on an anniversary pilgrimage to the Falkland Islands 25 years after I fought in the Falklands War. The film offers an autoethnographical performance narrative that recreates and retells my return to the islands. It is multimodal, thereby communicating in and across a range of semiotic modes. I have used photographic, audio, written and video data from the pilgrimage and artefacts of memory in the form of photographs, diary entries, letters, and film from previous and recent times. This forms the basis of the multimodal approach to documentation that I have used and lays down the foundations of my meaning making.

The film explores the social, cultural and individual expressions of such an experience. It performs memories, emotions and embodiments of my experience of war and returning to a place of war and it reconnects with loss, sacrifice and the consequential psychological effects of war. My performance is a form of emancipation from the cultural identity scripts that have governed my identity as a war veteran with a mental health disability.

This, the second part of the dissertation, contextualises and explores the film and the overall research project through academic writing. I employ life story and other documents of life to explore theoretical issues that inform and conceptualise the research. I discuss how Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder from war is represented and the ethical issues that arise. I consider the methodological issues and research methods that I have drawn on. Lastly I look at the implication of this research for my audiences and myself.

Dedications and Acknowledgements

This dissertation is dedicated to all who have lost their lives in conflict, to all the families who carry that pain of loss, to those who are physically scarred by conflict and to those who carry scars “in their minds where nobody goes.”

I want to acknowledge the love, encouragement and support I have been given by Sharon, Emma, and Kate, not only through the period of this doctoral journey but through our lives together. It is not easy living with someone who has experienced war or for families to help carry these mental scars. I would not have been able to carry mine without them.

To Mum, Dad, Michael and Andrew for being who they are.

John Collins said that “in prosperity our friends know us, in adversity we know our friends.” So I would like to acknowledge friends I know, especially Andrew, Sandra, Dave and Wendy.

I would like to thank Andy for the use of his home studio, playing bass and his production of Soldier, Soldier, Ami, my niece, for some amazing backing vocals, Jack, 15, for playing rhythm guitar and Harry, 13, who composed the drum part and played drums.

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The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without Dr Malcolm Reed. Our lives crossed paths several times with strong connections of Plymouth, service life and the Royal Marines. These closely interwoven threads have forged an empathetic, supportive, challenging and gratifying supervision relationship. So I would like to thank with all my heart my supervisor, Dr Malcolm Reed.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED:..... DATE:.....

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Notes

Seven days down south: a war story is a two-part dissertation. The text that follows makes no sense unless the DVD is viewed in its entirety prior to reading.

The audio sound quality on *Seven days down south: a war story* has been normalised to that of a standard lap-top speaker system. However, the viewing of the DVD will be enhanced if a more sophisticated speaker system is used.

The DVD is not recorded in wide-screen format.

To aid cross-referencing of the DVD with the written text I have included on the following page an index of chapter timings.

Index of DVD chapter timings

Chapter 1. Prologue	00.00
Chapter 2. Tuesday 6 th November	18.09
Chapter 3. Wednesday 7 th November	25.24
Chapter 4. Thursday 8 th November	36.23
Chapter 5. Friday 9 th November	47.48
Chapter 6. Saturday 10 th November	57.32
Chapter 7. Sunday 11 th November	1.03.39
Chapter 8. Monday 12 th November	1.12.45
Chapter 9. Epilogue.	1.15.52

Chapter 1. Contextualisation of the issues that inform the research.

In war, there are no unwounded soldiers. (Narosky, 2008, p.102)

Madness need not be all breakdown. It may also be breakthrough. (Laing, 1967, p.110)

Introduction

*Seven days down south*¹: a war story is a messy and in some ways untrustworthy representation of my experience and memories which I have presented to you through the medium of video. It is performed in a space of intense personal and cultural risk and constructed deliberately to engage and move you.

My performance is a form of emancipation from the cultural identity scripts that have governed my identity as a war veteran with a mental health disability. The film offers an autoethnographical performance narrative that recreates and retells my return to the Falkland Islands. It is about returning on an anniversary pilgrimage 25 years after I fought in the Falklands War in 1982. It explores my journey through the seven days spent on the islands and ends with a photographic representation of war performed to the backdrop of a song called 'Soldier, Soldier' (Reeves, unknown; Jackson, 2009). The 25th anniversary pilgrimage took place during the first ten days of November 2007.

The pilgrimage gives rise to a subjective and personal dissertation that reconnects with loss, sacrifice and the consequential psychological effects of war. The activity of returning and representing enables me to review my war memories of the past 25 years since serving as

¹ Down south is the Royal Marine slang for going to the Falklands War.

a Royal Marine. On my return I was able to compare memories and artefacts of memory in the form of photographs, diary entries, letters and video with the reconnections and records I had made on the pilgrimage and have made in recent times. This forms the basis of the multimodal approach to documentation that I have used.

The film narrative takes the audience chronologically through my remembered experience of the pilgrimage and invites them to take from it a multitude of meanings. It explores the social, cultural and individual expressions of such an experience. During the pilgrimage I was able to return physically and mentally to places in which I had seen active service and explore my emotional responses to them. On my return to England I was then able to work with how to represent the internalisation of my experiences in 1982 and during the pilgrimage in 2007. I looked at how my responses are reframed as memories, and how I have re-presented (brought again to the present) these experiences through this research. I was also able to make connections and reconnections through historical and cultural narratives with a group of war veterans who had experienced the Falklands War. Most importantly I explored the memories, emotions and embodiments of my experience of war and returning to a place of war through a dialogical performance (Spry, 2001). I am able to embody 'an intimate understanding of self's engagement with another within a specific sociocultural context' (Spry, 2001, p.716).

I am going to use a number of ways to bring the contextualisation of this research into play. I will employ life story and other documents of life and consider theoretical issues that inform and conceptualise the research. Each of the theoretical terms and issues will be discussed later as becomes necessary.

Description of the DVD

Seven days down south: a war story is divided into nine chapters which reveal a chronological journey that invites the audience to witness a narrative account of that journey. The first chapter is a prologue and then follow seven chapters which sequentially progress through my seven days on the islands. The final chapter is a song performed against a backdrop of film and photography, which is set out chronologically beginning at the First World War and poignantly ending in our current time.

Each chapter presents itself as a canvas inviting a witnessing of a visual and auditory performance. The performance within each chapter contains artefacts of the pilgrimage such as digital photography, film and spoken narrative. The spoken narrative of the performance consists of three aspects of data collection and to distinguish between the three narratives different backgrounds are used within the performance. The first audio narrative is my post-pilgrimage reflections which were written in my research diary on my return. They are heard against a black canvas. The second audio narrative presents excerpts from my written diary which is spoken against a photographic representation of that diary surrounded by artefacts of my war. Finally the third spoken narrative presents excerpts from the audio diary which I kept on the pilgrimage. This is heard in front of a representation of audio recording in the form of a photograph of my Dictaphone and other artefacts of my war.

Life Story

Richardson (1990) positions life story as both a 'mode of reasoning and a mode of representation' (p. 118), a way then to conceive of and also tell about the world. I am using life story as a method which will give a representation of and reasoning behind the issues that inform my research. I am going to use life story to help to negotiate and make sense of the social and cultural interactions I have had and continue to have through my life as a war veteran. These interactions are numerous and varied but they are an important oral history. They recount experiences from within my personal history, representations of war veterans in the media and encounters I have had with other war veterans over the years.

My story of being a war veteran is not linear in its form but rhizomatic with many connections and reconnections to past chapters of my storied life (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992). My life stories draw connections between the events of the past and present. In turn these rhizomatic connections offer emergent ideas and new alternative ways of knowing. Rozenwald & Ochberg (1992) suggest that 'It is no longer plausible to regard the events that informants describe as intelligible without further inquiry into the background assumptions of the speaker and their audiences' (p.3). By bringing some of my life stories into this text I am able to open further inquiry into the issues that inform this research.

I will be using life story to explore:

- narratives of being part of a government-funded group for war veterans;
- embodied representation of war veterans within the news media and its resonance with my story;
- news stories that explore some of the social difficulties that war veterans experience;

- my own development of identity as a man who is a war veteran with a mental health disorder;
- theoretical terms and issues employed in autoethnographic research.

Poststructuralism

Elizabeth St Pierre (2000, p.479) describes poststructuralism as a theoretical critique that can be ‘employed to examine any commonplace situation, any ordinary event or process, in order to think differently about that occurrence – to open what seems natural to other possibilities’. Through poststructuralism I am opening the not-so-ordinary narrative of *Seven days down south: a war story* to an alternative examination. Poststructuralism is not concerned with what ‘it’ means or to find out exactly what is going on (St Pierre, 2000), so it is from this position I feel a sense of liberation and freedom, because this releases me from the need to be concerned about what my narrative means or what is going on. Sawicki (1991, p.27) explains that the freedom I experience ‘does not basically lie in discovering or being able to determine who we are, but in rebelling against those ways in which we are already defined, categorised and classified.’ *Seven days down south: a war story* is an act of resistance.

It is through the use of a poststructural positioning in relation to my narrative that I am able to disrupt, transgress and challenge areas of my own life experience that I (and perhaps others) have taken for granted. I am going through a process of reconstruction ‘of subjectivity that necessitates an understanding of self’ (Youngblood Jackson, 2004, p.673). This exploration, as I take up new positions, allows me ‘to be willing, to think differently’ (St Pierre, 2000, p.478) and to pose an alternative set of questions to myself and society. Poststructuralism gives me an opportunity to look at my relationships with the social

structures and processes that have shaped my subjectivity as a war veteran. I am able to explore a construction of a subjectivity that is of a war veteran but challenge this and offer a multitude of meanings through my war story. In turn I have continued my questioning of discourse and power relations, as explored within my previous research assignments² so that I am able 'to re-evaluate and disrupt what we have been taught' (Youngblood Jackson, 2004, p.686).

The process of becoming a war veteran

Poststructural feminist theories of subjectivity explore the process of becoming in the world rather than just being in the world. My being in the world is shaped by social structures and processes which are situated within discursive fields. Within these structures and processes are language, power relations, discourses and social institutions which all give competing ways of giving meaning to and constructing subjectivity (Weedon, 1997). As Youngblood Jackson points out:

Subjectivity is fashioned out of the interrelationship among discourses, power relations, historical experiences and cultural practices. Further more, subjectivity is open to reconfiguration because discourses, as part of the network of dynamic power relations, are never fixed and closed but fracture at various points and create spaces for alternative constructions of subjectivity. (Youngblood Jackson, 2004, p.674)

I therefore take up a poststructural feminist perspective because my experiences since leaving the Royal Marines have caused me to question many aspects of 'being a war veteran'. In turn I have recognised and questioned the institutionalised world of the military. The idea

² During my EdD modules I have explored, through my assignments, several aspects of narrative inquiry. These include an autoethnographic performance using PowerPoint as a canvas; the interviewing of a Second World War veteran through the medium of letter writing; an exploration of the 25th anniversary year of the Falklands War and an autoethnographical paper which was published in 2008 (Jackson, 2008)

of ‘self’ as being something that is shaped by the social process and structures that exist within discursive fields is something I have lived.

My own subjectivity has been fashioned out of: the cultural practices I adhered to during my time in the Royal Marines; the values I have, that have been shaped by the ethos of the Royal Marines; my experiences of service in Northern Ireland and the Falklands War; and compliance to the hierarchical power relations that exist within this discourse of military service. More recently, whilst I have existed in Civilian Street³ with my identity as a war veteran with a mental health disability, I have had to reconfigure my subjectivity within different discourses and power relations. This has been a process of taking up what is available within particular discourses and acting upon that.

It is through this process that I have taken up a shared identity with other war veterans and more specifically with war veterans with a mental health disability. This shared identity has been constructed within historically, socially and culturally mediated practices such as the portrayal of war veterans through the media and film, the stereotyping of war veterans, and the predominance of a particular type of medical discourse (I will be discussing these later in this work). These mediated practices are not single acts but continuous and repetitive acts that are contained within our bodies and sustained by culture and society⁴. These acts are confined within and restricted by the discourse of being a war veteran. I feel this is further restricted by being a war veteran with a mental health disability which is full of ‘institutionally specific structures of statements, terms, categories and beliefs’ (Scott, 1988, p.35). My performance as a war veteran with a mental health disability forms an identity and this notion of identity is crucial to performativity. Butler’s (1999) concept of gender performativity says that I do not have a role to act out but that I have become a subject through repetition within a discourse that constitutes me. So, I am a man who, historically,

³ Civilian Street is a term used in the military for civilian life and life outside of the military.

⁴ This was explored within my assignment *Re-performing remembrance* a poststructural analysis of the act of remembrance.

has performed being a war veteran through repetition within a storied world. It is my perceived version of reality that culture communicates to me that I perform and hence constructs my subjectivity.

Youngblood Jackson (2004), when discussing her own performance as an American southern woman, explains:

When we act in certain ways as women in particular contexts, other expressions are silent erased, hidden-to ourselves and to others. It becomes necessary, then, to take up an identity that is “provisional”, an “error” or a “mistake”. As troubling, identity categories are normative in that they are used to regulate people through a process of interpellation, a linguistic act of hailing, or calling an individual that initiates her into subjected status and therefore into “a certain order of social existence” (Althusser, 1971; Butler, 1993, p.121). This hailing is an act of forming the subject to comply with and obey the laws of the discursive or social domain. (p.677)

Consequently, as a war veteran with a mental health disability, I am constituted through my performativity and repetition. This is regulated by the medical model of assessing my Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and by government policy on war veterans’ affairs. It is in my act of ‘hailing’ that I comply with these criteria and perform a certain order of existence.

The influences on becoming a war veteran

I believe there is a marginalisation of war veterans as a collective group through discursive formations, institutions and games of truth. It is the games of truth that set out the procedures that:

lead to a certain result, which, on the basis of its principles and rules of procedure may be considered valid or invalid. It is a set of rules by which truth is produced (Foucault, 1997, p.297).

I argue that our construction of truth as war veterans is influenced by the historical and cultural stereotype, media scientific discourses. Trinh (1989) believes that this production of truth is exercised within the power relations of discourses, discursive formations and games of truth. Foucault (1977) explains this relationship between power and truth as follows:

The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power [...] truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (p.131)

Further to this Foucault (1988) writes 'I believe too much in truth not to suppose that there are different truths and different ways of speaking the truth' (p.51). Whilst we do not participate in this construction of truth, we as war veterans do conform to norms that regulate us. We are kept within a particular grid of intelligibility by the governing and punishing of non-normative behaviour (Butler, 1995). It is central to my research to raise questions as to whether these discourses can claim to be right or claim to be authoritative knowledge. I will illustrate how these power mechanisms have functioned within my own life story.

The discursive formation of scientists who study war veterans with mental health disorders from conflict form, through their research, sets of rules in which a truth is produced. This scientific research is predominately post-positivist and continues to offer a scientific legitimacy to the truth they present. This research asserts to having 'a universal and general claim as the right or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge' (Richardson, 1994, p.517). Our differences are erased and the real plight of the war veteran becomes subjugated knowledge buried under the relationships of power that are 'exercised from innumerable points' (Foucault, 1978, p.94).

As a sufferer of PTSD my illness is legitimatised by this research and in turn is validated by the principles and rules of procedure of the institutions and games of truths that are performed within the medical model. Currently this legitimacy produces resources through an application of government policy; for example, by the awarding of a small war pension for a diagnosis of PTSD from war. More recently there is a new resource in the form of a support group for war veterans with PTSD (National Health Service, 2010). There are five groups being trialled around the country including Cornwall where I live. I have been invited to attend the monthly two-hour group meeting of fellow sufferers of PTSD. It was prior to one of the group meetings I experienced an example of the principles and rules in which another truth is played out. At the moment the support groups are funded by the government, but after an initial period the local health authority will be expected to find the funding. I was enquiring, through the chief welfare officer of the Royal British Legion (RBL) for my area, when and where the meeting in August 2009 was being held. He informed me of the date but went on to say:

“You must attend Mr Jackson as it is going really well. We need you to attend because it is only funded until 2010 and it will be up to Cornwall Healthcare Trust to fund it after that. We need as many people there as possible for it to continue.” (Telephone conversation)

This social encounter with the RBL is an institutionalised dialogue about another notion of truth that is about being a statistic that might support funding. It is a use of a set of rules in which the dominant discourse can identify me so that I can be ‘more easily be slotted into a hierarchy or grid and then manipulated, dismissed and oppressed’ (St Pierre, 2000). It does not speak of the benefit I might gain by being part of the group and leads me to feelings of manipulation, dismissal and oppression. I wondered how many Likert scale surveys I would have to complete or how many questionnaires I would have to fill in to support the

continuation of the group. I was being objectified so that the group could fulfil a certain numerical truth. As a war veteran with a mental health disability I was being asked to respond to an anticipated conformity of identity with a belief that institutions have power and in turn an assumption that I would attend the group. This interchange between the RBL representative and me does not acknowledge other versions of self, experience and reality that are parts of my storied world.

Whilst my own subjectivity, which aligns itself to the belief that institutions have power, might lead me to act in a certain way within a particular context, I recognise that these networks of dynamic power relations allow me alternative spaces in which to disrupt and challenge these beliefs. *Seven days down south: a war story* provides such a challenge and disruptively offers alternative truths.

Language and being a war veteran

Poststructural feminism uses poststructural critiques of language ‘to make visible how language operates to produce very real, material and damaging structures in the world.’ (St Pierre, 2000, p.481). The single identity category of war veteran obscures the individual significant differences of war veterans such as race, class, age and most importantly wellness. This shaky single identity is accomplished through language and attempts to produce an order, stability and reliability.

St Pierre (2000) explains that:

In order to keep shaky categories intact, it is imperative to define the essence of the category as well as the essence of the things in the world, the “thing itself”, so they can be matched up. This activity, which is accomplished with language, is the search for identity, and it, of course, privileges identity over difference (p.480)

This privilege of language over our differences influences how we are constructed as a disadvantaged group. It is language that reveals the storied lives of damaged war veterans through the medical discourse, the scientific discourse and through the discourses of the press and media. The gaze of society falls upon us and monitors us through an evaluation of our illness once we have aligned ourselves with the medical model.

More recently society's gaze passes over us through the considerable press and media coverage of war veterans. An example of this is a feature recently published in *The Observer* (2009). *The Observer* (Antony, Day, Hoby, Mulholland & Townsend, 2009) wrote several articles under the title of 'The Cost of War'. There were tales of physical injury, grief, hope and the battle to readjust to Civilian Street. A double amputee talks about how he has thought about leaving the Royal Marines but still echoes a well-rehearsed mantra of just doing his job:

"I knew I had a job to do, this was the job and I needed to get on with it to the best of my abilities." (Antony, 2009, p.2)

This is a well trodden path for me as I have said this many times before:

How many times am I told I was just doing my job? How many times do we hear this echoing through the generations? Is part of just doing our jobs, just struggling, just feeling pain and just committing suicide? (Diary entry).

This concept of 'just doing our job' is also bound up in a historical and cultural narrative. As recently as May 2009 I heard these words ring out across two generations of war veterans. I was stood, with Tony Harris (another Falklands veteran) and two Second World War commandos, P and A, on the beaches of Normandy during a 65th anniversary pilgrimage. They told their tales of valour and bravery pointing out places etched in their

memories as I had done during my own pilgrimage. In a moment of silence except for the sound of water kissing the sands of Sword Beach, A, a landing craft coxswain, said proudly:

You know, Dave, I never got anyone's feet wet. I was just doing my job.
(Diary entry)

It is this commonality between veterans contained within these conversations that define us. There is a notion of truth that we were just getting on with it and we will continue to just get on with it as we all continue our lives. It is also this shield of language that covers other stories of fear, loss, struggle and trauma which become known later in many war veterans' lives. This was illustrated within the article in *The Observer* by the words of a veteran who could not get on and experienced loss and trauma interwoven with his own experience of going to war.

I hadn't got a job, I'd lost my wife and kids and I was living back with my dad
(Antony, 2009, p.9).

This utterance has a strong connection with me as I recall witnessing a similar story outside the Union Jack Club in London before I embarked on my pilgrimage:

Met another bootneck⁵ outside the entrance, had a yap with him like you do. It is funny, you used to recognise ex-marines and you quite naturally speak to them. Anyway had a yap with him, talked about our experiences. I told him what I was doing, he is telling me about the amitriptyline he is on, the court injunction, the break up of his marriage, the anger he feels. (Chapter: Prologue)

⁵ Bootneck is the slang term for a Royal Marine Commando

Deconstructing the war veteran

It is through the critical practice of deconstruction that we are able to take into account other identity categories and look at how the category has been constructed, how it is produced and what makes it tick. St. Pierre (2000) writes

One of the most significant effects of deconstruction is that it foregrounds the idea that language does not simply point to pre-existing things and ideas but rather helps to construct them and by extension, the world as we know it. (p.483).

She goes on to write:

We have constructed the world as it is through language and cultural practice and we can also deconstruct and reconstruct it (p.483).

Deconstruction becomes a powerful tool for critiquing the identity structure of war veterans and offers the potential to help rewrite our world and our storied lives. Through poststructuralism we are able to do this without blame and re-examine our apparent complicity with our identity.

Over the years I have witnessed this complicity from war veterans who collude with the cultural, historical and social representation of war veterans. I hear them say that “This is just the way it is. This is the way it has always been.” However I level the accusation against these veterans that they are being compliant with ‘discourses, power relations, historical experiences and cultural practices.’ (Youngblood Jackson, 2004, p.674).

It is inaction to change and deconstruct this marginalisation of war veterans that regulates us as a group. If we want to reinvent ourselves we must resist these notions of power through the challenging of the power structures, such as scientific games of truth and the binaries of well and ill or sane and insane. This empowerment through deconstruction,

challenge and resistance facilitates an opportunity for us to retake from within these and other relationships we have with discourse. It is about using language in a different way to ask different questions that might give other possibilities.

In summary, poststructural theories – and particularly those of feminism – offer me as a researcher an alternative. Weedon (1987) writes that subjectivity is ‘the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her (his) sense of herself (himself) and her (his) way of understanding her (his) relation to the world’ (p.32). It is through my narrative of *Seven days down south: a war story* I am able to find a fractured point and create a space, which opens an opportunity to construct an alternative subjectivity. I am using language to open up my lived experience. I want to avoid domination; I want to resist and move to a new freedom through my narrative. However, I do not want this just for me but for others as well.

Autoethnography as narrative inquiry

Autoethnography is a form of ethnography that overlaps science and art and is part self (auto) and part culture (ethno) (Scott-Hoy & Ellis, 2008). Scott-Hoy & Ellis (2008) write that autoethnography:

Refers to the process as well as the product of writing about the personal and its relationship with culture. It is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness. (p.130)

During my own existential journey I have found a new found confidence of certainty and with this I have become ready to develop my war story. To do this I have used autoethnography and like others I have used this genre as a way of showing lived experience

(Mukaia, 1989; Ronai, 1992; Ellis, 1993; Richardson, 1997). I have turned to the tools of visual methods, metaphor, symbolism, poetic and lyrical representation to illustrate and give meaning to living with the tensions of my remembered past. It has enabled a connection between the personal and the political. I have tried to create an effect of reality which is embedded in the complexities of living with an experience of war and subsequently living with a mental health disability. It opens a window to my 'lived moments of struggle, (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.744). I have been able to look outwards towards parts of my personal experience which are forged in the historical, cultural and social aspects of being a war veteran (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Through this autobiographical genre of research I also am able to look inwards and expose a well-masked vulnerable self. Ellis & Bochner (2000) recognize that within autoethnographical texts there is an exposure to emotions, embodiments, self awareness and reflection. They go on to say that these appear 'as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure and culture which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought and language' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.739).

My autoethnography is exposing the personal and the cultural to enable an understanding of a self, however it strives for a different kind witnessing from the audience who view the narrative. It invites them to enter a personal relationship with the exposed self and me, the researcher. They become involved with my world through the evoking of understanding, reflections and feelings. It gives opportunities for them to look inwardly so they can 'reflect on, understand and cope with their own lives' and 'to share authority and to author their own lives with their own voices' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.742).

I have performed a messy but evocative and meaningful narrative using sensory and emotional experience (Shelton, 1995) and performed from an ethic of care and concern (Denzin, 1997). It is a narrative that matters and contributes to an understanding of being a

war veteran. I feel that it matters even more as we await the ‘ticking time bomb of mental illness and suicides in young army veterans’ (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/shocking-suicide-toll-on-combat-veterans-1746475.html>).

Autoethnography is not without its critics. Atkinson (1997) maintains that personal narratives are unworthy of being classified as a part of social sciences because they are not treated to the rigours of analysis. He sees their goals as a process of self-discovery, self-reflection and therapeutics. I do not deny any of these processes, however the process of revealing myself through my performance is about recreating and representing a past significant existential moment in my life and without revealing these moments in our lives we are in danger of becoming stuck in the mud of sameness.

Whilst it is a personal choice to move through a therapeutic performance and act of self-discovery I believe my other choice is to stay within the confines of the social categorisation of war veterans with a mental health disorder and align myself with the very structures that I believe marginalise us as a group. If I am able to ‘foreground my own voice’ (Church, 1995, p.5) I can then assume that my voice and hence my subjectivity is filled with the voices of other veterans. Church (1995) believes that by foregrounding your own voice you are writing about others and their worlds which are created and lived within.

Furthermore Stanley (1993) points out that we do not live our lives in a social vacuum. There is an interaction with many guises of the other when retelling past events and with this comes a connection between that retelling and social processes. My performance displays and acts out the embodiments of an experience of war and living with the aftermath of such an experience. This is my own history and as such is embedded within the social and cultural history of war veterans. Gergen (1999) offers an explanation to this. My performance is threaded with a history of relationships I have within the social grouping of war veterans and outsiders. It is through the performance I am able to express manifestations and an expression

of these relationships. That is not forgetting the relationship I have with myself and my own mental health disability and its consequences and how that is manifested and expressed.

My experience cannot be seen in isolation, it is a social experience and a historic cultural experience. Any accusation about autoethnography as social science research being self-indulgent closes the door securely to the many interpretations of my narrative which might be evoked from the audience. I feel this assumes that any audience of my narrative, whether they are from within my group or outsiders, are presumed to be a universal audience bereft of resources, different tools, different experiences, values, personal philosophy and embodiments. The audience comes to a meeting place of collaboration with all of their selves where this collaboration ‘encourages connection, empathy and solidarity, as well as emancipatory moments in which powerful insights into the lived experiences of others are generated’ (Sparkes, 2002). Sparkes (2002) goes on to say that autoethnographical performance tells, rouses and disturbs by bringing to an audience’s attention their own involvement in social processes about which they might not have been aware.

Through *Seven days down south: a war story*, I am inviting the audience to experience my world. I have used autoethnography to enable me to write about my own experience of returning to the Falklands whilst allowing a connection to the cultural, social and political aspects of being ‘a war veteran’.

The social and cultural construction of a war veteran

The notion of truth of being a soldier, and for me more especially a Royal Marine, is that there are certain characteristics that you have complied with during your military service. You embody the institutionalised discipline of being strong, loyal, and showing humour

under adversity. This tendency to be strong and show a stiff upper lip poses difficulties in moving from one discursive field, the military, to another, Civilian Street. It poses greater difficulties when you search out and attempt to gain resources for yourself and come under further monitoring from the medical model.

I also believe that my society inadvertently uses dividing practices to distinguish us as a collective. As members of Her Majesty's armed forces we represent our country which in turn holds up high a moral statement that proclaims that we must fight evil and tyranny. Since the Second World War our soldiers and Royal Marines have fought against: the Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA) from 1948 to 1960; the People's Republic of China (with air support from the Soviet Union) during the Korean War from 1950 to 1953; the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) in Aden in 1963; the Argentinian Junta in 1982; the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) from 1969 to 2007; and now Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Our nation historically holds its returning soldiers up to the world through public displays of patriotism and the awarding of medals as heroes that have conquered over evil. However once this passes there is an expectation for us to be strong, show a stiff upper lip and get on with it. It is as if we have can just turn off the switch of the subjective experience of war.

After the Second World War returning troops were advised to not talk about their experiences (Turner & Rennell, 1995) and in conversation with fellow veterans of recent conflicts we too do not talk about 'it' albeit for different reasons. We wonder if society wants to understand or even cares. We find ourselves subjected to the historical and emerging stereotypes of being war veterans. This is no different to the experience of returning veterans from the First World War (Arthur, 2003), the Second World War (Turner & Rennell, 1995) and more recently Northern Ireland (Wharton, 2008). This forms a connection of identity with other veterans that have returned from wars.

The stereotyping of war veterans

There are several examples of normative judgements being used and made by society as a whole upon war veterans. We are open to assumptions about how we should behave and act when we are integrating back into civilian society. An example of this is the position of returning hero where historical and cultural stereotypes are performed. As I recall, on my return from the Falklands to Hartland (the village I came from in Devon), I did not want the bunting, the town band, the crowd of proud villagers; I wanted to turn around and run away from this conformity. Discussions with other Falklands veterans in recent years has shown that they did not want banners and bunting because they were just doing their job. The returning hero is a historical and cultural stereotype and was an unwanted identity for many of my colleagues when they returned from the Falklands.

We are also positioned through other cultural practices such as cinematography and the mass media. There have been numerous films about war veterans attempting to exist within society after returning from war. Films such as *The Best Years of Our Lives* (Wyler, 1946) and *First Blood* (Kotcheff, 1982) are about the challenges of integrating into society after war; *Coming Home* (Ashby, 1978) explores the act of returning from war; *Born on the 4th of July* (Stone, 1989) and more recently *Waltz with Bashir* (Folman, 2008), *Stop-loss* (Peirce, 2008) and *Trooper* (Martini, 2009) are about living with PTSD. It is through the way in which we are talked about and are represented that contributes to the discursive formation of new subject positions and the reinforcement of old subject positions, including stereotypes.

Within my own lived experience in Civilian Street I have been stereotyped and divided from the norm. I have been called: an aggressive man; an angry but proud war veteran; a difficult employee; and most damningly ‘the counsellor who is unfit to work with young

people⁶. It is these and other stereotypes that form a sense of identity through our performativity as war veterans within the ever tightening restrictiveness of our category. All of this positioning acts paradoxically because whilst bringing to the attention of our society our struggles it also in turn acts to silence and marginalise us. These normative judgements reinforce stereotypes.

In addition, within media discourse there have been several stories recently that tell of the struggles war veterans have as a collective and illustrate another positioning within our society. In *The Sunday Times*, Bilton (2007) speaks of 'a land unfit for heroes' and the 300 suicides since the Falklands Conflict. He writes:

Servicemen with symptoms of traumatic stress got help – if they asked for it. Most did not. Overwhelmingly, Falklands veterans with PTSD were too ashamed or in denial. (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article1899458.ece>.)

Even the plight of war veterans and mental health disorder during the 18th century is well documented. Royal Marines and sailors who were damaged in the line of duty were called 'navy lunatics' and were given extra horse hair in their mattresses to help them sleep. A naval lunatic was considered to be someone who had lost their reason through grief, accident or illness – or as we now know was suffering from PTSD (Bilton, 2007).

Butler (2005) wrote an article in *The Guardian* about homeless war veterans and some of the difficulties they had. He reports the experience of one former Royal Marine:

When I left I still had the bootneck attitude from being inside the corps. I soon realised the outside world could not care less. People have a different mindset to a squaddie; they live life differently. Outside, it's dog eat dog. It took me a long time to adjust. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2005/may/04/homelessness.guardiansocietysupplement>)

⁶ In June 2009 I took my employers to an employment tribunal. It was the comments made by a senior personnel officer which started my two year employment impasse. The bases of his comments were founded in a stereotypical assumption about war veterans with a mental health disability working with young adults as a counsellor. I had carried out this role successfully for a period of 8 years previous to his comments.

In *The Daily Telegraph*, Leach (2008) reports the growing number of veterans within the penal system. In 2008, there were an estimated 24, 000 veterans in prison which makes up nine per cent of the prison population.

Finally, an article in *The Independent* (Morris and Sengupta, 2009) highlights research that found that veterans under the age of 24 are two to three times more likely to commit suicide than men of the same age who have not served in the armed forces. The report goes on to say;

David Hill, director of operations for the charity Combat Stress, said it took an average of 14 years for veterans to ask for help with post-traumatic stress disorder. Many suffered in silence – often harbouring suicidal thoughts – because they were reluctant to admit to their vulnerability.
(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/shocking-suicide-toll-on-combat-veterans-1746475.html>, 2009)

There are clearly many factors which contribute to these war veterans' circumstances and there are many stories to be told. However one of the strong and recurring themes is that 'of not asking for help'. This self reliance is an embodiment of the institutionalised ethos that we, as war veterans live by during our time in the armed services.

There are many statements, terms, categories and beliefs which the armed forces collectively embody. We carry these embodiments into Civilian Street with us as war veterans. If we do ask for help and acknowledge any form of mental health disorder we then exist in the world and take up certain subject position (Youngblood, Jackson 2000). The term war veteran as a topic of social and cultural dialogue can produce negative images. It is an image constructed from historical, cultural and social practices. This gives cause for society to unknowingly divide us from the 'normal'. It is these assumptions made by society and other imposed identities such as returning hero, homeless man, drunkard, suicide risk and prisoner that build, rebuild and support historical and cultural stereotypes.

Conclusion

The performance of my war story allows a bringing to the surface of an experience which is of great significance to me as a man and a war veteran. It is through my narrative I am able to re-evaluate and disrupt what I have been taught through my identity as a male and as a war veteran with a mental health disability. It is through my poststructural performance that I am empowered and enabled and thus move away from repetition of a performativity that constitutes me as a subject (Butler, 1999). I am rebelling against my 'identity categories that function as regulatory and normalising' (Youngblood Jackson, 2004 p.675).

It also gives me opportunities and different ways of being a researcher. I can use language differently; subsequently, by using a different form of language through my narrative, *Seven days down south: a war story*, I can ask different questions. It offers me a voice in which I can challenge and resist. It gives me a voice in which I can offer an alternative truth. It offers me an opportunity to challenge my subjectivity, to reconfigure and reconstruct and in turn it gives me another truth in which I can re-present to the other.

So the not-so-ordinary narrative of *Seven days down south: a war story* requires a different performativity (Butler, 1996) which acknowledges my own identity as a war veteran, who struggles with a mental health disability, who struggles within Civilian Street, who still feels the pain of losing a best friend and feels every loss from current conflicts but who wants to find a voice to rebel and be free. Through this different performance I do not want to take the place and voice of others but I am offering the audience possibilities for consideration (Spry, 2001). I am engaged in shared conversation 'which they (I), speak, not for, but with the community' (Pelias, 1991, p.151). I recognise within poststructuralism that there are a multitude of possibilities for a different way of representing the discourse of war veteran.

Chapter 2. How Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from war is represented and the ethical issues that arise from my research.

Research, PTSD and war

During the last 60 years worldwide there have been over 200 wars and armed conflicts and it is well known that these have a profound impact on individuals, families and communities, both in the short and long term. During this period researchers have attempted to establish the effects of conflicts on the mental health of those affected by war. The focus of research has been on war trauma, PTSD and other trauma-related mental health difficulties. Consequently, several theories and treatment programmes have been developed from this research that aim to treat the effects of conflicts on individual mental health difficulties (Kienzler, 2008).

A search through the many databases available, using the search criteria ‘PTSD and war’, made accessible a multitude of research papers. In Ovid (2009) I found 10662 published papers; in PubMed (2009), 2179 documents; in ISI Web of Knowledge (2009), 1554 research papers; and finally in Illumina (2009), which is accessed through a link at the web site of the National Centre for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, I found 5127 papers, books and journal articles. The National Centre for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, which is part of the Department for Veterans’ Affairs in the USA, tracks journal articles, books, technical reports, doctoral dissertations and other relevant pieces of writing on the subject. Although the tracking of these articles are limited to English, there have been 23,896 indexed since 1980.

Research into war veterans who have been affected by their experience of war can be viewed historically through the searches I carried out. In 1980, the term PTSD was first formally recognised as a mental health disorder and included within *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Volume III (DSM III). However there is evidence of scientists studying the affects of war on veterans during and after the First World War. They used such terms as ‘war neuroses’, ‘neurasthenia’ and ‘shell shock’ to describe these mental disorders. Further research was carried out through the intervening war years and during and after the Second World War. The most significant period in the narrative history of PTSD is during and after the Vietnam War, where an increase can be shown in research into war trauma or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as it became known at this time. Research into war veterans and PTSD is still a predominant part of trauma research.

The First World War to Vietnam: PTSD and its treatment

From the First World War through to the present day it is noticeable that the research that examines PTSD and war asks several common but fundamental questions:

- What is PTSD (shell shock, war neurosis and neurasthenia)?
- How is it displayed within war veterans?
- In what way is this disorder treated⁷?

⁷ Since the 1980s there has been an emphasis on how this disorder is best treated. There has been much claim and counter claim about the best treatment for war veterans. During my searches I could not find any evidence of veteran-led treatment programmes.

Papers published during the First World War started to write about issues such as war-shock (Eder, 1917), lunacy and mental deficiency (Author unknown, 1917) and war and insanity (Author unknown, 1917). In 1941, during the Second World War, Goldstein (1941) discusses in detail the clinical aspects of war neurosis and concludes with a consideration of the problems of therapy. He writes about the need to eliminate from military service those mentally unsuitable as a way of reducing the incidence of neuroses in wartime.

After PTSD was recognised within the DSM-III, Mullis (1984) wrote one of many papers which were published after the ending of the Vietnam War discussing the medical and social problems faced by war veterans. It is called 'Vietnam: The human fallout' and describes three distinct stages in which veterans develop 'the classic symptoms of PTSD' (Mullis, 1984, p.27). This paper illustrates some of the stages I recognise following my involvement in the Falklands War.

The first stage is a period of denial about the impact of war and a numbing. Next there is a latency period where the denial and numbing continue through a period of adaptation to the social environment these war veterans found themselves returning to. This corresponds with what I found on returning from the Falklands War when I re-engaged with my pre-war life and continued my career in the Royal Marines. The final stage in this process is the post-trauma phase in which is acknowledged both the impact of such an experience and that one has a mental health disorder. In my life this has been the hardest stage to work through, as social and cultural expectations, which are embodied (and embraced) as being a war 'hero', jostle for position with the embodied part of self that struggles with the symptoms of PTSD.

The ways of treating war trauma have also come under scrutiny by the research community. In 1917 *The Lancet* published a paper called the 'The Treatment of Common war neurosis' (Adrian & Yealland, 1917) where interventions of rest and recuperation, psychotherapy and electric shock treatment were advised. In 1942 during the Second World

War, Beccle (1942) reviewed the treatment of war neurosis and reported that it included ‘prolonged narcosis, electrical and insulin shock, and psychotherapy’ (p.136). Current treatment regimes use medication, exposure therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy. Exposure therapy uses: education about the disorder; anxiety lowering techniques (for example, controlled breathing and biofeedback); gradual exposure to the stressors that triggered the symptoms to enable a reduction in symptoms; and a process of talking through the trauma (National Centre for Post-Traumatic Stress, 2010a). Cognitive behavioural therapy, like exposure therapy, uses education as the starting point for any therapy, followed by: a process of raised awareness of thoughts and feelings; a learning of new skills and techniques (for example, the technique of stepping back from any intrusive thoughts and feelings); and finally an exploration of the client’s beliefs about the trauma (National Centre for Post-Traumatic Stress, 2010b). These are the most common treatments used both by Combat Stress, the leading service provider in the care of veterans’ mental health in the UK, and by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs in the USA.

The social impact of living with PTSD

There is also evidence through my review of the research that some social problems experienced by war veterans are as relevant today as they were during and after the First World War. Brock (1918) published a paper called ‘The war neurasthenic: A note on methods of reintegrating him with his environment’. In 1944 Drought wrote, in ‘Psychological factors related to re-employment of discharged war veterans’, that ‘war veterans with neuropsychiatric problems and others with less serious problems will be difficult for employers to handle’ (p.436). These words resonate with me very strongly as my

own storied life of being an employee within Civilian Street is full of narratives that have labelled me as being difficult to handle. In 2005, Iversen, Nikolaou, Greenberg, Unwin, Hull, Hotopf, Dandeker, Ross & Wessely in a paper titled ‘What happens to British veterans when they leave the armed services?’ wrote:

UK servicemen whose mental health is poor are likely to be the most vulnerable to social exclusion or hardship such as unemployment, and it seems that this risk factor may be a chronic one extending into a veteran’s life, with little evidence of remittance of ill health after leaving. (p.183).

The validity of war-induced PTSD

I found evidence in the literature search of wider debates about the validity of PTSD as a mental health disorder that is rooted in the historical narrative of war trauma. In the last few years further debate has occurred concerning the usefulness of PTSD as a universalistic and cross-cultural signifier to indicate traumatic distress (Kienzler, 2008).

During the First World War there was much argument within the scientific community about the validity of shell shock. The alternative medical term for this mental breakdown in war veterans during the Great War was malingering (Lumsden, 1916). A malingerer is someone who makes up or exaggerates the symptoms of mental or physical disorders with a motive to gain from these actions (Oxford English Dictionary, 2010). The most telling and poignant consequence of a stress reaction to the war during this time was the execution at dawn of 346 British and British empire soldiers. It is recognised now that many were likely to be suffering from PTSD. It was not until 2006 that these soldiers were given a pardon by the British, Irish and New Zealand governments.

Currently the debate still continues as it is suggested that PTSD is constructed from socio-political ideas rather than psychiatric ideas (Summerfield 2001). It was not until the end of the Vietnam War, when the diagnosis of battle fatigue and war neurosis was replaced by PTSD, that the diagnosis shifted its focus from the veterans' psyche and social background to the traumatogenic⁸ nature of war. This created for Vietnam War veterans a sense of victimhood when it was politically acknowledged that these veterans were traumatised by the roles thrust upon them by the United States government. With political acknowledgement came political responsibility, the subsequent awarding of resources through a disability pension for the veterans and an increase in funding from the government to treat and support sufferers. However, at no time during this important transformational period for war trauma and its effects on veterans' mental health was there any debate within the psychiatric community about how or whether this disease or disorder existed.

Scott (1990) describes the narrative of PTSD as such:

In the story of post-traumatic stress disorder we see again how the orderliness of the natural world is to be found in the very accounts of its orderliness. Theories represent competing sets of assumptions that are inseparable from the interpretation of the evidence taken to support them and their predictions. Hence scientists and those who adopt its discourse evaluate evidence and make claims about what they have discovered. The goal is to move disputed claims along a path towards acceptance as taken-for-granted fact. This calls for appropriate documentation, the ability to command the attention and respect of critical persons and groups, and the skills and resources necessary to marshal this effort. This is how facts are made. (p.308)

Further to this Young (1995), a medical anthropologist, concluded that:

The disorder is not timeless, nor does it possess an intrinsic unity. Rather, it is glued together by the practices, technologies, and narratives with which it is diagnosed, studied, treated and represented, and by the various interests, institutions, and moral arguments that mobilised these efforts and resources. (p.5).

⁸ Capable of producing a wound or injury

This is not to say that Young believes that people who have PTSD do not suffer. He argues that it is possible for something to be real and to be socially constructed as well.

Over the subsequent years since PTSD was included in *DSM III* (1980) the debate has raged on within the scientific community. Within the psychiatric community there are critics of the diagnosis of PTSD who see it as a way in which society and politics have created (not found) a mental disorder which has been constructed from psychological knowledge within a particular culture at a particular point in time (Kienzler, 2008). There has been no agreement about the public health value of a diagnosis of PTSD and no agreement about the most effective way in treating this disorder (MacFarlane & Yehunda, 2000).

In addition, when trauma relief from non-government agencies became a taken-for-granted response to disasters around the world, models of western therapeutic interventions were brought along as well. Critics of a western therapeutic model that uses trauma questionnaires and counselling point to the assumption that victims of disasters understand the questions within questionnaires the same way the author does even though there will be social and cultural differences between victim and author/counsellor. Further criticisms of western therapeutic interventions that use counselling suggest that counsellors are often unfamiliar with the historical, social and cultural circumstances in which the trauma has taken place and they are sometimes unaware of the social and cultural differences of the individuals they seek to help (MacFarlane, 2006). Kienzler (2008) adds that the PTSD therapeutic model silences and suppresses alternative interventions and local perspectives.

In my own life I was lucky to find a counsellor with whom I was able to engage, but many of my colleagues who have had unsuccessful therapy talk of long skirts, candles, petunia oil and someone “who has not got a clue”. As a counsellor myself, I do not align with the view that counsellors have to have had an experience of something to be able to work therapeutically with that experience. However, I do believe that war veterans’ cultural

differences, the appearance of a stoic attitude to war, and their own life experiences, can mask the complexity of their therapeutic needs. These needs will not always be addressed by western therapeutic interventions even when war veterans seek out treatment. Acknowledgement of the resilience of war veterans who reconstruct their lives is largely ignored. We need to move away from a medicalised model and its dominance within PTSD and war veterans' research and seek models of social rehabilitation through alternative interventions and local initiatives.

Research and Falklands' veterans

Since the cessation of the Falklands War on the 14th June 1982 there has been a total of 12 published research papers specifically relating to it and its veterans. Nine of the papers were published in journals, two were published as chapters of books and one was a conference paper. The twelve research publications are listed chronologically below:

Price, H. (1984) The Falklands: Rate of British psychiatric combat casualties compared to recent American wars. *Journal of the Army Medical Corps*. Vol. 130. pp.109-113.

Collazo, C. R. (1985) Psychiatric casualties in Malvinas war: A provisional report. In Pichot, P., Berner, P., Wolf, R. & Thau, K (Eds.). *Psychiatry: The state of the art*. Vol. 6. New York: Plenum Press.

Jones, G. H. & Lovett, J. W. T. (1987) Delayed psychiatric sequelae among Falklands War veterans. *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*. Vol. 37: p.34-35.

McMillan, T. M. & Rachman, S. J. (1987) Fearlessness and courage: A laboratory study of paratrooper veterans of the Falklands War. *British Journal of Psychology*. Vol 78. pp.375-383.

Abraham, P. (1990) *Post Traumatic Stress, a Lesson from the Falklands*. Second International Conference of Wartime Medical Services, Stockholm, Sweden, 25-29 June 1990.

O'Brien L. S. & Hughes S. J. (1991) Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Falklands veterans five years after the conflict. *British Journal of Psychiatry*. Vol. 159: pp.135-141.

Ørner, R. J., Lynch, T. & Seed, P. (1993) Long term traumatic stress reactions in British Falklands War veterans. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*. Vol. 32, pp.457-59.

Ørner, R. J (1993). Posttraumatic stress syndromes among British veterans of the Falklands. In J. P. Wilson, & B. Raphael. (Eds.). *International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes*. New York. Plenum Press.

Ørner, R. J. (1995) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and war veterans. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*. Vol. 34 (2), pp.313-315.

Ørner, R. J. (1997). Falkland War veterans: What lies ahead as they emerge from obscurity? *Psychologist*. Vol. 10, (8). pp.351-355.

Burnell, K. J., Coleman, P. G. & Hunt, N. (2006) Falkland War veterans' perceptions of social support and reconciliation of traumatic memories. *Aging and Mental Health*. Vol. 10, (3). pp.282-289.

Richards, D. (2008). The Armed Forces Act 2006 – Civilianising military justice? *The Criminal Law Review*. Vol. 3, pp.191-203.

The 12 publications fall into three distinctive groupings. The first group of Collazo (1985), Jones & Lovett (1987), McMillan & Rachman (1987), O'Brien & Hughes (1991), Ørner, Lynch & Seed (1993), Ørner (1993, 1995) fall within the positivist or post-positivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2000). The second group of publications include Burnell, Coleman & Hunt (2006), a critical inquiry, Ørner (1997) and Richards (2008), both critical theory papers. These include some of the social aspects of being a Falklands War veteran. The final group contains two papers: Price (1984), which is a historical comparison study; and Abraham (1990), a paper presented at the war time medical services conference. I now want to explore some of these papers further.

The positivist and post-positivist publications

The papers that are situated within the positivist and post-positivist paradigms represent, through their formulaic data, beliefs that speak of traditional constructions of validity, rigour, internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (Guba & Lincoln 2000). O'Brien and Hughes' (1991) research paper talks about questionnaires⁹ with individually matched controls and a neutral set in a non-clinical situation designed to alleviate the potential problems that can arise from the effects of prior priming and 'set' (La Guardia, Smith, & Francois, 1983). It also shows that 50% of the veterans group described symptoms fulfilling three or more of the four criteria for PTSD as defined within *DSM-III*. Ørner. Lynch and Seed's (1993) paper employed network sampling (Rothbart, Fine, & Sudman, 1982) using a questionnaire based on the symptom criteria for PTSD (American Psychiatric Association, 1980) and the 60-item *General Health Questionnaire* (Goldberg, 1978). They found that there was a strong association between physical injury from the Falklands War and the diagnostic criteria for chronic PTSD. Jones & Lovett's (1987) reported on severe delayed reactions to the experience of the Falklands War, within three Falklands veterans from South Wales, showing many of the symptoms of PTSD.

The three papers briefly discussed (and the four not discussed) focus on the psychological sequelae of Falklands War veterans. In turn the evidence presented within these papers offers a scientific legitimacy to the truth. Foucault (1977) argued that the professional disciplines characterize and classify individuals, and that this is achieved

⁹ The Service experience questionnaire (SEQ), (O'Connell, Unknown) and the General health questionnaire (GHQ) (Goldberg 1978).

through a process of observation and surveillance – through questionnaires which in turn leads to diagnostic outcomes – through *DSM-IV*. These diagnostic outcomes are defined as an analysis of peoples’ lives based on specialist knowledge and the expertise of professionals who carried out the research. It is through this construction of diagnostic outcomes through classifications systems, like *DSM-IV*, that the boundaries of professionals are marked out. Due to the dominance of this discourse these diagnostic statements are then invested with the status of truth. The problem with this is that these diagnoses are thin descriptions, which in turn place themselves within a global and universal discourse leaving any other voice at a distance (White 1997). Gergen, Hoffman & Anderson (1996) warn us that diagnosis ‘is based on the assumption that language is representational and can accurately depict reality’ (p.3). With this come assumptions about these diagnostic realities leaving professionals tempted to act from a privileged position

The critical inquiry and critical theory publications

I am going to explore the Richards (2008) paper, ‘The Armed Forces Act 2006 -civilianising military justice?’ and the ‘exploratory qualitative study’ (p.288) of Burnell, Coleman and Hunt, (2006) which focuses on the role of social support in the reconciliation of traumatic memories caused by the Falklands War

Richards’ (2008) paper was published in *The Criminal Law Review* and focuses on the case which ‘would change forever the landscape of military justice’ (p.191). The case of Alexander Findlay, who served in the Scots Guards during the Falklands War, was taken to the European Court of Human Rights where the court martial was found to be deeply flawed and contravened his human rights. What is important about this paper is that it tells a

narrative of living with the consequences of war. During a tour in Northern Ireland in 1990 'he suffered what a psychiatrist called "an almost inevitable" event; the combination of stresses and heavy drinking led him to hold members of his unit at the point of a pistol, to threaten to kill them and himself' (Richards, 2008, p.191). Subsequently he was brought before a court martial and dishonourably discharged from the army and sentenced to two years in a civilian prison.

The final paper I am going to review is called 'Falkland War veterans' perceptions of social support and reconciliation of traumatic memories' (Burnell, Coleman & Hunt, 2006). The aim of the research was to explore social support and how this helps with reconciliation of their memories of the war. They used semi-structured interviewing methods to interview four serving Royal Marines who saw active service in the Falklands War. They applied thematic analysis to the data and found several themes that pointed to a reconciliation of the traumatic memories. There were three themes found which related to social support. These are support from comrades, the support from wives and families and societal support.

Some of the responses about the support from comrades resonate with me and are part of my time in the Royal Marines. One interviewee when talking about his shared experience of the war said:

There is a bond you form with these people because you have been through the same experience that never goes away. It's something that never goes away. (Burnell, Coleman & Hunt, 2006, p.285)

When talking about trauma management one veteran explained:

A lot of our management is done with the group of men that work together. We go out get heavily drunk, talk about things, swing the lead¹⁰, feel better about it and get on with the next day. (p.285)

¹⁰ Swing the lead is the Royal Marines slang for telling stories from the past

Finally in relation to ‘the perception of an unspoken understanding between comrades regarding traumatic memories’ (p.285) one veteran spoke as I have done many times before:

It doesn’t need to be said, you can hint towards it, they will nod and you will know that they know (p.285)

In relation to family support the interviewees stated that they did not reminisce about ‘the misfortunate things’ and talked about ‘the Dan Dare type stuff’ (p.286). One of the Royal Marines revealingly said:

I tried to tell someone once about it and they said ‘oh well never mind’ and that’s not the kind of thing you want to hear. It made me very angry. I do not think I have ever talked about it again. (p.286)

Finally when exploring the societal support there were two conflicting emotions for one of the veterans:

There was joy on the one hand and resentment on the other. They were all celebrating the fact we won, but actually they don’t know what we have been through and you resent that to some extent. They (society) are not feeling the anguish that you feel when you’ve lost comrades (p.287)

This utterance is most poignant to me because it forms a strong emotional connection to my own life story. Most importantly it empathically sits beside *Seven days down south: a war story*

Other stories

Whilst the value of this research is evident in telling the story of psychological sequelae, the story of a Falklands veteran who “inevitably” broke down and the supportive nature of “being in”, you only have to trawl the discussion military boards to find other stories of PTSD that become disclosed. These stories are not part of academic practice and discourse but of the generally unspoken becoming spoken:

Then eventually in 1992 I cracked [...] gave up everything, was drinking like it was going out of fashion, and with no money coming in. The mood swings were getting worse, and I could change in 2 and a half seconds without any effort.

I was not sleeping at night and getting by on about 4 hours a day. If I did go to bed then as soon as I had gone to sleep I would be wide awake and covered in sweat. Flashbacks were coming thick and fast and depression was setting in [...] and the drink was going down. I was also having a go at the family.

(<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=sick&action=display&thread=12624&page=1>, 2007)

When I left the Corps in '96 I ended up on anti-depressants for a while. I used to get horrendous black mood swings and felt like doing myself in. I'd been through a divorce at the same time as a tour in Sarajevo the year before – good timing eh. I used to have horrific nightmares but I must say they have faded away over the last 5 or so years. It changed me and certainly made me more emotional over things. I think having someone who knows what it's like must really help – like admitting you're scared shitless when incoming mortars start arriving. Unless you've been around incoming fire you can't imagine it for a minute – that's why I laugh at Hollywood war films. (<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=sick&action=display&thread=12624&page=3>, 2008)

I got diagnosed with PTSD by my GP and sent me to a counsellor, who ended up flipping crying which didn't help me at all. Then my GP arranged for me to see an NHS physThInGy¹¹ in Taunton. When I entered his room, I sat down and asked him if he had ever seen a pub brawl? NO, he replied. Had he ever seen anyone shot or stabbed? NO, he replied nervously. From start to finish his mouth stayed open and after three hours of me telling him of what was going on in my head he called a halt. He said that he would send his report to the war pensions. To cut a long story short, another visit to GP. Do I want PILLS? he asked. No, no thanks. I get by and with ups and downs as we all do, (I think). Sorry for that guys and girls I feel a bit better now.

¹¹ PhysThInGy refers to a psychologist or psychiatrist

(<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=sick&action=display&thread=12624&page=5>, 2009a)

These are extracts from three posts on the *Once a Marine Always a Marine* (1996) discussion board (<http://www.onceamarinealwaysamarine.co.uk/>) and whilst they do not fall within any formalised literary review they are worthy of mention. They do not find themselves in papers that inform and influence policy but as I will argue in chapter five academics and policy makers perhaps need to listen.

The ethical considerations of *Seven days down south: a war story*

I have encountered several ethical challenges during this research. *Seven days down south: a war story* is a risky text with the potential for harm. It is a story of hesitation and through the act of researching and act of witnessing it is a journey into the unknown. This journey has a degree of risk and there are possibilities of unwelcome responses from me and the audience. There are also risks to the social relationships I have with my audiences and at worst, because of differences in social and cultural experiences, there is a risk of rejection by those audiences. During the research process I have not been able to anticipate my responses or the audiences'. I cannot anticipate this uncertainty.

What is important is that I am offering an insider experience and representing the everyday ethics by which I live my life. (Speedy, 2008). With this comes an ethic of accountability and responsibility to myself and the audience. I have an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982), so my 'ethical know how' (Varela 1999, p.4) is central to these ethical uncertainties. As Speedy (2008) writes:

‘the truth’ is a slippery and multi-storied customer and few of us know what is deemed to be good and what is deemed to be the ‘telos’ or ethical substance of other people’s lives, except those with insider knowledges. (p.50)

I will be considering some of the ethical issues of *Seven days down south: a war story* in relation to the constituencies of myself as researcher and those of the various audiences to which the DVD has been shown. This is broken down into two areas. Firstly in relation to me:

- What effects will my video performance have on my own mental health disability?
- How my experience of working as a counsellor supported me in the telling and retelling of my story safely.
- How the witnessing of my own war story affected me as I edited and reconstructed the narrative over a period of 14 months.

Secondly in relation to the audience:

- The effect on the audience who witness the performance.
- The gaining of consent from the audience to use the stories that they told after witnessing my story on the DVD.

Ethics in relation to me

I am well aware of the professional and personal responsibility I have because of my work as a counsellor over the last ten years. I have relied on personal therapy less and less. I have become self-reliant and use many coping strategies to maintain a level of competence so that I can work as a counsellor. In relation to my position as researcher and researched I have a well-practised ethic of care with regards to looking after myself. I also have access to my supervisor with whom I can openly discuss any issues that might have arisen during the research process.

This research project began in the 25th anniversary year of the Falklands War and that same year I joined the *Once a Marine Always a Marine* discussion board (<http://www.onceamarinealwaysamarine.co.uk/>). During the period of this project I have made strong connections with others who share a common experience. I have found a place, through conversations with other veterans and through the discussion board, where I am able to talk freely without fear of rejection from other Royal Marines with whom I had gone down south. Previously, I had always felt that I would be rejected by other Royal Marine Falklands' veterans if I had said I was having problems. It has been through this relationship I established with this discussion board community that I am able to expose some of my struggles, my research over the last four years, and my heartfelt views on the way forward for the care of war veterans in our society. I have not been rejected but have felt a great deal of support from the members of the site.

During the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War I was experiencing a very difficult employment issue and an employment tribunal. I posted many threads during this time and the posting below show the therapeutic nature of such discussion boards. This is a good example of my ethic of care to myself during this difficult period.

Well that is it or is it?

I have just told you the story of this employment issue in a manly stiff upper lip way, however as we know on this site this is not the whole story. How do I feel emotionally? What effects does this have on me and my PTSD?

I became very emotional after Tony left, during the visit to Normandy with the World War 2 veterans, because I suddenly had the comparison of those lovely people I had spent the weekend with and those arseholes at home who have ruined my life. I cannot get a job doing the job I am good at and enjoy very much. Sometimes I feel they have ruined my life (however only if I let them). I have had waves of quite scary anger, I have waves of wanting to cry my little heart out because it is just not fair. I feel guilty I do not contribute to the money coming into the house.

Of course my dreams are back. I sleep if I am drunk but generally I do not sleep well and I can go on. This is the reality of a situation like this. It is my reality at the moment.

(<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?action=display&board=general&thread=19774&page=1>, 2009b)

These are some of the supportive responses

Can relate to the anger thing, two days until the night of three battles¹² 27 years ago, may be adding to your angst. But in ten days time it would be over and you would have been in the peacock room, pissed as a fart, I hope you have the same outcome. Seems barking mad that the enemy at home is far more of a threat than them .5's¹³ one in one tracer and armour piercing.

(<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?action=display&board=general&thread=19774&page=1>, 2009c)

Good luck Dave not seen you for over thirty years been following your write ups remember we are your other family

(<http://civviestreet.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=general&action=display&thread=19774&page=2>, 2009d)

The second aspect of ethics in relation to me was how the witnessing of my war story might affect me. The process of taking a research idea, subjecting it to a creative process and seeing this idea come to fruition as a finished research dissertation has been long. The first dissertation meeting took place in March 2008 with the final edit of the film being shown to my supervisor in September 2009. During the last few months of this process I have taken my film on tour and presented it to Falklands' veterans, friends, family and professional colleagues. For me this has involved watching the film with the audiences but also witnessing the witnessing of my own war story as it played out on the screen. I have been surrounded by many emotional responses during the film and then a silence from the audience that has seemed to follow the ending. I have felt during these periods of witnessing my own story a sense of objective detachment. I say to my audience that to me it feels like a piece of work and it does not feel like me on the screen. This detachment is not a scientific ethic of

¹² The night of the three battles refers to the battles for Two Sisters,

¹³ .5's refers to the calibre of the Argentinian ammunition. In some cases they would fire one tracer round and one armour piercing rather than the one tracer and four ordinary rounds ratio which was standard practice for the British forces.

objectivity. The model I choose to use is ‘a feminist ethic of commitment’ (Reinharz & Chase, 2001). My detachment is safety. Whilst I am ready to disclose this part of my life story, I am not ready yet to immerse myself publicly in the reality of what going to war has done to me.

That is not to say that I did not have moments of distress. On three occasions I became very sad (specifically when the poem was read out in the church in Port Stanley) as I believe I have shifted my position from researcher to a war veteran who recognises the story within the poem as an embodied part of me. I will discuss embodiment in the next chapter.

Ethics in relation to the audience

There is a risk to witnessing my artistic testimony and audiences’ witnessing my war story and it is important that I am standing beside them to anticipate their concerns and expectations (Park-Fuller, 2000). I do not want to exaggerate the power of my story and I am concerned to value ethically the vulnerability of my audiences. W, a professional colleague of mine, stated after watching my narrative that she was “physically shaking after watching that and very emotional” and in many cases my audience was tearful. This showing of vulnerability has the effect of talking to the losses and yearning in people’s lives (Park-Fuller, 2000).

I have offered an multimodal narrative in which I have deliberately invited my audiences to craft their own meanings (Cole & McIntyre, 2004). There are ethical challenges in this. My war story ‘moves in, rearranges our understandings of ourselves and the world, and goes home with us in ways that traditional social science research representations rarely do’ (Sinding, Gray & Nisker, 2008. p.462). Therefore it has the potential to harm. The

connections and spaces between the audience and my war story are ethically complex spaces. To this end it was an important part of the audiences' witnessing of my narrative to give opportunities to talk and to retell the stories that the performance had evoked. I am aware, as a counsellor, of the power of such encounters and offered further post-performance discussion through email or telephone if individuals wanted or felt the need for this.

It was also possible for me to ask what further reflections some of my audience had had after the performance as I would see them on the odd occasion. There were scenes of commonality during discussions and the theme of loss was common to all who witnessed my war story. This was what some of my audiences found distressing: for example, when showing the film to another Royal Marine called S who had been down south, it reminded him of all the other losses he had experienced in his time in the Corps. (This will be discussed further in chapter five). In a sense, the themes of loss and sadness of loss were embedded within the narrative as they are embedded in all of their lives. My audiences move with me through the whole performance and will journey on existentially after the witnessing (Sinding, Gray & Nisker, 2008).

It is the use of art and performance within this research that can lend boundaries to what is difficult to endure, observe and engage with in real life (Gilman, 1988), yet can also mess up the possible divisions between art, performance and reality. I do not want to assume that *Seven days down south: a war story* will allow all the audiences to have a distance from the subject matter portrayed. It is the closing of the distance that gives this narrative aesthetic merit and audience appeal (Sinding, Gray & Nisker, 2008). The audience comes to a place of collaboration with their physical and emotional being and *Seven days down south: a war story* brings to their attention their own involvement with emotional being within the social processes in their lives.

Summary

I have discussed several research publications, albeit to limited degree, concerned with the Falklands War. They illustrate several aspects of the mental health of Falklands War veterans. The dominance of positivist and post-positivist research is apparent but some of the other papers do represent explicit narratives within their texts. However there are stories from outside the academic genre that offer something else to the academic community. Here are stories which have the potential to move away from the categorisation of war veterans and towards the individuality of an experience of war and survival of its aftermath. There is an ethical risk in hearing such stories but a risk that is worth taking. These stories, as well as *Seven days down south: a war story*, are important. They could enable an exploration of the behaviour, language and the stories of war veterans with PTSD which could sit beside other research but challenge the traditional values of meaning, truth and reality (McLeod 1997).

Chapter 3. Methodological issues in the application of narrative inquiry.

This chapter will discuss the methodological issues that arise from this research. It will explore why *Seven days down south: a war story* is a narrative inquiry and the philosophical approaches that support this research. It will argue why the use of multimodal representation of the data is important to this narrative and lastly will discuss embodiment, performance and performativity in the construction of the film.

Writing as inquiry.

The starting point for this thesis can be traced to early on in the Doctor of Education (EdD) programme. During the early part of the doctoral journey I started to reflect on my sense of self as a war veteran in relation to new concepts, theories and philosophical positions I was being introduced to. Foucault (1980) writes that a sense of self is seen to change, over time acknowledging the historical, social and political contexts in which it is located and in which it locates itself. These reflections, through a process of writing in my diaries, have enabled me to explore changes and acknowledge my self's locality in differing contexts. In turn this aided me in conceptualising my early ideas about this research and how I would represent my narrative. As St. Pierre (2000) writes:

writing is thinking. Writing is analysis, writing is indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery. (p. 967)

The reflections in my research diary are indeed a seductive and tangled discovery. I explore my emotional experiences of war and how these, over the years, have been ever-changing. I have moved through differing political, cultural and social contexts from a serving Royal Marine to practising counsellor and now as a researcher exploring the culture of being a war veteran. My reflections in my dairies have raised many questions for me on how we (war veterans) are constituted as a group (Youngblood Jackson, 2004). I have asked:

- How are we really represented?
- Whose interest does this serve?
- How many voices have not been heard?
- How many voices are silenced?
- Who speaks for us?
- Do they speak of us from a distance?

As I reread my diary entries from that time I can see these questions tangled up in a veiled undercurrent of anger as I have linked them to various received stories: of the suicide rate amongst war veterans (Bilton, 2007); of veterans who are within the penal system (Leach, 2008); of homeless war veterans who live on the streets of our towns and cities (Butler, 2005); of the current research on Falklands' veterans; and from the anecdotes I have been told by other war veterans about living in our society.

I feel an outrage towards the discursive practices that constitute us as a collective group. However as Olesen (2000, p. 215) writes 'Rage is not enough'. So it is through this research I want to take up the challenge to move from my rage to a 'progressive political action' (Holman Jones, 2005, p.767).

Within *Seven days down a south: a war story* there are two different representations of language. The first is audio recording on a Dictaphone of the experiential journal I kept on the pilgrimage¹⁴. The second is my diary writing (as previously discussed) and further journal writings during and on my return from the pilgrimage. I have embedded this writing within the narrative in two ways. I have read extracts from my journals as a method in which I bring my own embodied self (discussed later in this chapter) from behind the monomodal content of such documents¹⁵. Secondly I have re-presented my writings from my diary as an audio experience¹⁶. I am retelling through my spoken words the links and relationships within my storied world, importantly linking and forming relationships with the other representations of data enmeshed within my war story.

My writing does not attempt to give explanation but guides the audience on a journey of collaboration and by using my voice I am attempting to capture the audience's attention and engage them in conversation. I am carrying out a deliberate act of confession of 'therapeutic privileging' (Speedy, 2005a, p.66) and through the voicing of my writing, presenting a performance that others can listen to. My voice is heard from a place of therapeutic curiosity and any connections come from an empathetic hearing which resonates (Bandura, 2002). As any form of confessional points to a co-creation of self this form of representation and retelling, through my reading of chosen sections of my diaries, points towards a poststructuralist way of knowing (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005).

Sellers (2004) in Helene Cixous' *The Writing Notebooks* describes writing as having the ability 'to take us beyond the limitations of self to a terrain where other understandings and perspectives come into view' (p.viii). Through the writing of my diaries I am disclosing my thoughts, memories, emotions and embodiments. I am disclosing the stories of struggles, fear, and sadness. I am writing in that moment I write as a 'corporeal act' (Sellers, 2004, p.x)

¹⁴ Presented within *Seven days* against a picture of a Dictaphone and other artefacts of war.

¹⁵ Presented against a picture of my dairy and other artefacts of war.

¹⁶ Presented against a black screen

through my body honouring the location of self. I am giving further honour by situating this writing as spoken word within an academic text. It is the writing in the moment about a deeply emotional journey, which I have re-presented as a story, which explores how the discourse of war veteran functions and how it exists externally and internally (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005). These words, through an act of inclusion, are influenced by my conscious and unconscious choices, so I am avoiding self-censorship – capturing these words without a net so that they can be free to exist elsewhere.

The spoken words of my writing sit in the liminal spaces between the taken-for-granted assumptions about war veterans and the truthfulness of my story. They sit ‘between showing and telling’ (Speedy, 2005a, p.67). These words give a credible account of my individual sense of the pilgrimage before, during, afterwards and beyond, compassionately intertwined with the photography and video. They point to a future that has uncertainty and hope.

Redefining a sense of self

As well as my diary writing, my return to the Falkland Islands, the reconnections with fellow Falklands War veterans through the 25th Falklands’ anniversary commemoration parade, and the funeral of a close friend were important parts of my ‘lived experience’ (Johnstone, 1999, p.25). They have enabled me to further acknowledge differing senses of self during these moments in my storied life. It is important to acknowledge this ever-changing sense of self in the application of narrative inquiry. Johnstone (1999) writes:

The experiences of that self, stand as the methodological starting point for the collection and analysis of data [...] it takes the internal theorising (the everyday making

sense of one's life experiences) of the subjective as the principal instrument for interpreting the meaning of that self's own lived experience. (p.27)

My everyday sense of being a war veteran with a mental health disability, through these reconnections and my diary writings, were a starting point. From this I was able to give other meanings to my lived experience of going to war and new meaning to returning to a place of conflict. I was able to acknowledge my pain of loss and in turn give myself permission to grieve. It is through my writing I am able to recognize the desire to 'stand on a comrade's grave and say goodbye' (Allen/Jackson, personal letter). It is through these reconnections that I am able to grieve differently.

The use of narrative inquiry offers the opportunity to show myself embedded in the complexities of living with my experiences and with my own struggles. It has offered an opportunity to explore the 'chaos, disconnection, fragmentation, marginalisation and incoherence' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.744).

Seven days down south: a war story explores the chaos of the anxiety I experienced prior to my departure for the Falklands' Islands. It shows through the narration and audio diaries the disconnection I have had with many of the emotions of loss and sadness I felt during my time back on the islands. Over the years prior to the pilgrimage I have only experienced fragments of this pain of loss – fleetingly, on Remembrance Sunday when society gives me permission to grieve.

During the film I show many of the landscapes of the Falklands War through video and photographs and I sometimes describe them through the narration. This narration demonstrates a reconnection with some of the spaces in which I experienced war. For example, during the chapter Friday 9th November I describe the snow that was falling as 'the cold, cold, wet snow of history'. As I arrive at the bridge over the Murial River later that day, I say with a disbelieving tone, 'We came across that bridge 25 years ago, apparently', and

finally on that Friday I reconnect with the minefield. I describe the area and my recollections of that night and suddenly I stop speaking and say ‘Oh dear’ as I reconnect with the actuality of that night.

Lastly, I explore the fragmentation and incoherence of some of my memories from the war through talking with other veterans who served in the same unit as me down south. I am able to put together the missing and forgotten parts of these memories and represent them within the film.

I use words in spoken and written form as well as other representations within *Seven days down south: a war story* to explore the chaos, the disconnections, the marginalisation, the missing and the forgotten. These words ‘are representations of the play of differences between ideas not essential representations of reality’ (Ronai, 1999, p.116). *Seven days down south: a war story* is and is not what it is like to be a war veteran on a pilgrimage because of the various levels of mimesis. This identity or sense of self is *sous rature* (Derrida, 1976), under erasure, as it is modified and readjusted to ‘fit the emerging picture of social life that one constructs for oneself’ (Ronai, 1999, p.126). In essence it is about redefining my sense of self.

Why is this narrative?

Seven days down south: a war story, represented as a messy somewhat untrustworthy narrative, adds to a rich interdisciplinary history of narrative inquiry. It follows diverse and historically significant works that tell stories about the marginalised (Sutherland, 1937; Shaw, 1966), research that has studied and gained an understanding of and from within group cultures (Radin, 1926; Lewis, 1961) and challenging feminist texts based on personal

narratives and life histories (Ruddick & Daniels, 1977; Jacobs, 1978). *Seven days down south: a war story* offers a personal narrative which evocatively invites the witnessing of alternative stories and understandings about being a war veteran. In turn this evokes from the audience their own stories.

It exposes the differing emotions experienced prior to, during and after the pilgrimage so that they can be understood and theorised in relationship to self, power and culture (Spry, 2001). It is a story that helps reveal cultural, social, personal and political worlds where ‘the unspeakable is invoked but not silent’ (Holman Jones, 2005, p.767). Through my narrative I have invoked a new sense of sadness I feel for all that were killed down south, ‘as I stood by the seven graves of the Royal Marines with Stu, and Steve and we cried the tears of loss’. (Chapter: Wednesday 7th November).

Chase (2005) identifies five major approaches in the diversity of contemporary practices of narrative inquiry: psychological approaches; identity work; interview approaches; narrative ethnography; and most importantly in relation to my research, autoethnography. This is where researchers ‘turn the analytic lens on themselves and their interactions with others’ (Chase, 2005, p.660). Chase (2005) goes on to write that it is narrative inquiry’s distinctiveness through its own historical development that makes it different from other forms of qualitative research. Narrative inquiry’s distinctiveness is contained within the empirical material it studies; it is flexible in its meaning, which allows it to be written, oral or performed.

Life history refers to a story that might be about an epiphanic event or a birth to present narrative (Bertaux, 1981). Oral history is used when the focus is not on the historical events themselves but about what living through these events meant to the participants who lived through the event (Chase 2005). Some researchers use the term personal narrative to describe ‘compelling topical narrative’ (Chase, 2005, p.652) and also use it when referring to journals,

diaries, personal letters and autobiographical stories. Finally performance narrative describes narrative that is performed, either in a public space, on stage or on video that can also include poetry, music and fiction. (Denzin, 1997, 2000, 2003; Richardson, 2002).

Seven days down south: a war story draws on this distinctiveness by using a performance consisting of oral and written representations, poetry and music. It shows what it is like to live through an event which is compelling, personal and topical as our country's military men and woman fight in Afghanistan and become the war veterans of the present and future.

Aspects of narrative

Seven days down south: a war story highlights many aspects of narrative inquiry. As narrative it is socially situated within the local setting of a pilgrimage and my experience of the pilgrimage. It uses interdisciplinary analytic lenses to look at my historical and culturally significant experiences of what it means to have lived with the experience of going to war, my experiences on the pilgrimage and my return (Crawley, 2002; Ellis & Berger, 2002; Holman Jones, 2005). As I look through these lenses and analyse the experience of the going to war, returning to a place where I experienced war, living with this experience and the subsequent mental health disability I own, I present a distinct narrative form of discourse, which shapes and orders my past experiences and memories.

During the pilgrimage there was opportunity to remember and recreate memories of my experiences of the war. I was able to visit historical sites of significance with other war veterans: for example, the visit to the site where my unit was bombed by seven aircraft. My memories of this temporally individual experience were different to the others' memories as I

can only remember three aircraft attacking us. This fragmented memory is an elementary practice of self which gives shape and meaning to that event during the war for me. (Brockmeier, 2000). It gives me a sense of identity which connects me to the past and the present. This memory gives me an opportunity to understand myself in time. It is through the conversations I had with these ‘brothers’ that I was able to re-present my memories of this significant event. Hence this ‘autobiographical remembering’ (Brockmeier, 2000, p.54) becomes connected to the future through the reshaping and reordering of my original memory.

Another example is the visit to the minefield where I had spent a long and fearful night. My story of that event was that it was a stray mine that got the vehicle in front of me. However through seeing the space, speaking about the event and re-remembering that night the significance of the event changes. What I was able to do was carry out an act of reorganising those two experiences through a revisiting and that brought about a retelling. I have been able to retell the night in the minefield and recreate a different story. It is:

a way of understanding one’s own and other actions of organising events and objects into a meaningful whole and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time (Chase, 2005, p.656).

As a war veteran I am able to take up available discourses and practices which construct my subjectivity. However at the same time I am ‘forced into subjectivity by those same discourses and practices’ (St Pierre, 2000, p.500). This is acted upon through a cultural and historical stereotyping of war veterans and an understanding of what it is like to be a war veteran grounded by medical, academic and media discourses. As I tell my story I am shaping, reconstructing and performing the self, experience and reality. I am in the ‘struggle-filled passage from one position to another’ (Spivak, 1992, p.803) whereby I perform the self in a representation of an experience as a retrospective reality. This opens possibilities and

opportunities for the experience and the reality to be intelligible to me and within the collective group in which I situate myself. In turn this has the potential to produce commonality and understanding through the group's identity with my story. Chase (2005) writes that:

Audiences whose members identify with the narrators story might be moved by the researcher's interpretation to understand their stories in new ways and to imagine how they could tell their stories differently (p.668).

To be able to tell my war story differently I have had to listen to other stories of war veterans. I have been empowered and enabled by the hearing of these minimal autobiographical utterances (Rosen, 1998) during conversations with colleagues during and after the 25th anniversary of the Falklands conflict. Within the prologue of *Seven days down south: a war story* I recall, into my Dictaphone, a conversation I had with another Royal Marine. He talks about the break-up of his marriage, the amitriptyline, the court injunction and the drinking. Rosen (1998) points out that my hearing of 'a single utterance, which while itself not a story, points to a larger narrative' (p.60). It is the elicitation of this utterance that enables a finding of a voice. Rosen (1998) writes that the drawing out of these utterances is:

breaking through a tongue-tied silence, an act of massive social significance. Voices are not found easily by all those oppressed and muffled in their world. (p.51)

Through my conversation with this veteran, outside the Union Jack Club in London, I was able to elicit his story and present it within the film as part of a larger narrative that is an act of social significance (Rosen, 1998). It is these utterances that form part of the collective narrative of being a war veteran. These stories told in passing moments on the pilgrimage become significant because they highlight the social aspects of being a war veteran.

I know many war veterans find their transitions into Civilian Street fraught with difficulties. The adjustments of living and sometimes struggling to exist in Civilian Street is very hard (Deahl, 1997). Marriages and other relationships break down as war veterans tussle with their experiences and they drink, take drugs and contemplate suicide. However hearing these utterances through witnessing my film 'serves as a way to valid membership of some kind of community' (Rosen, 1998, p.60) and in turn this helps an understanding and forges a commonality within the group. The forging of commonality will be discussed in a later chapter.

I have also disclosed my own minimal autobiographical utterances during the film. I have spoken about war and living with PTSD. In the past it was these experiences that I would self-censor because of the influences of the transition and adjustments made in becoming a civilian. Whilst out of the Corps I was able to tell stories of war and living with a mental health disability but these stories were in a censored and silenced form. I have never spoken openly about my grief for the loss of my friend, Doc Love. I, like many war veterans, have used the historical culturally constructed discourse of Remembrance Sunday to grieve the loss of all of the fallen in all wars. This has always symbolised the loss of Doc for me. Now I have been able to unsilence this story of loss. As Rosen (1998) asserts:

talk sweeps past and leaves no room for him/her to get into full stride. Or the speaker had hoped for signals of encouragement which were never hoisted. Or the speaker is not ready to develop the full story or is not certain how to do so (p.60).

Seven days down south: a war story presents new possibilities for retelling war stories and using this form of inquiry as a new way of doing narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It is because of my own censoring and silencing of my war story that I have never got into my full stride when telling my war stories. The encouragement to talk has been enabled by a deliberate journey across a landscape which is constituted by a contemplation and exploration

of what being a Royal Marine has meant to me and what it has done to me. My connections and reconnections with the utterances of other war veterans during and since the 25th anniversary of the war have given me a readiness to tell a fuller story and I have gained a certainty in the way I want to carry out this act.

Another reason *Seven days down south: a war story* is narrative inquiry is because it creates a reality during a particular time and place, in this case a significant anniversary of the war and my participation in the pilgrimage. This places a particular situated cultural and historical emphasis on the strong connections with other war veterans who served in the Falklands War (Chase, 2005). However my story is able to emphasise and elicit patterns of subjectivities and realities which are connected to war veterans of other conflicts. I have made connections with P, who was a Second World War veteran. After he had witnessed *Seven days south: a war story*, he spoke to me of the loss and tears for his friends who had died so young. This made a strong connection with my own stories of loss and gave a greater sense of empathetic understanding between two war veterans of different generations.

It is my intention through *Seven days down south: a war story* to *show* rather than to *tell*. (Denzin, 2003, p.203). I am not telling a war story. I am showing a narrative that contains ‘concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self consciousness’ (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.739) and they appear as:

relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure and culture which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thoughts and language (p.739)

By deciding to return down south for the pilgrimage as a war veteran of the Falklands War, I am taking a walk into the unknown. This requires a certain type of courage. In turn to use such a journey as an experience in which I explore many aspects of being a war veteran also requires courage. To show my narrative is to reveal a nakedness and expose hidden

aspects of self and encourage a positive change in my sense of self through this courageous act.

Without this act of courage and concrete action the social, cultural, relational and institutional stories go untold. It is through my action I am able to represent a war veteran. I do this with the purpose ‘to understand a self and some aspect of a life lived with a cultural context’ (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.742).

In addition my experiences during the pilgrimage allowed me access to my emotions through reconnections with the embodiments I have carried within my body. (Embodiment will be discussed later in this chapter). I reveal in several places raw and sometimes painful emotions. It is an empowering process to create and recreate a space in which to express raw and momentary emotions. Within the narrative these moments emerge suddenly, for example as I read the poem, ‘Sea Fever’ (Masefield, 1902) at the memorial for the Atlantic Conveyor I say, whilst fighting back the tears, “that is an incredibly emotional poem” (Chapter: Saturday 10th November). The emotional resonance is a connection to the people who lost their lives when the Atlantic Conveyor was sunk which is the connection I feel as a war veteran with all those lost in war. To have this emotional connection always reminds me that what we did was ‘real’ and that war is real.

Some of these emotions would sit knotted deep in my stomach before exposing themselves. There are many examples of this within the chapters of the narrative. In the prologue I talk about my continuing apprehension as we climbed onto the buses on our arrival on the islands and I describe the shiver that ran down my back when I heard the sound of a jet as ‘a known feeling, a known embodiment’ (Chapter: Tuesday 6th November). On my first visit to San Carlos I powerfully acknowledge to my Dictaphone that “there is a big part of me that wants to just have a, wants to have a good, good, good old cry” (Chapter: Wednesday 7th November).

The deliberate evocation of emotions is important because it helps to understand and theorise the relationship between myself and culture. It helps understand the relationship between me and my returning to Bomb Alley¹⁷. I seek ‘to express the complexities and difficulties of coping and feeling’ (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.748) and through this I can extend *Seven days down south: a war story* beyond myself. I extend the story beyond the stereotype and beyond the assumptions of what it is to be a war veteran through an evocation of emotions which are witnessed, empathised with and connected with.

My thoughts were spoken into a Dictaphone, recorded in my diaries and continued to be collected during a reflective period on my return from the pilgrimage. Through this on-going process I am able to reinterpret my own history and move through the passage between different struggle-filled positions that Spivak (1992) writes about. I perform this history through a spoken depiction of the pilgrimage as a retrospective reality. However what I have found is that there has been less resistance to move through this passage as I have found a new space for reworking and resisting (Youngblood Jackson, 2004).

It is the use of an evocative emphasis of voice through the differing representations of language that reveal the narrative. The audience are invited to listen empathetically to the narrative and to the voice in all of its guises (Frank, 2000). They are invited to listen, see, think, imagine and feel whilst searching out the revealing story through the interplay between the film, photography and spoken narration. I am bringing into view a polyphonic intertextuality of people in contexts (Spry, 2001, p.726) and voicing my position of being a veteran as I move through the days of the pilgrimage. I am communicating through my voice being a veteran with a mental health disability as I describe the embodied feeling of a

¹⁷ Bomb Alley is the slang term for the stretch of water where the Argentinean aircraft would fly down to attack the ships and land forces dug in either side of San Carlos Water.

flashback¹⁸ as I stood on the shores of San Carlos Water and remembered the experience of being in Bomb Alley.

In the research I have discussed in previous chapters ‘the body is erased in the process of scholarship, knowledge situated within the body is unavailable’ (Spry, 2001 p.724). This knowledge is restricted by the linguistic moulding of positivistic dualism. Through the giving of voice to this embodied experience there is a ‘felt-sensing meeting between theory, writing and performing’ (Madison, 1999, p.107). I am giving voice to my own discoveries as I describe the embodied moments on the pilgrimage but more importantly I am collaborating with people, culture and time.

My narrative creates ‘highly personal encounters within an increasingly impersonal public sphere’ (Holman Jones, 2005, p.773). Currently, as we witness coffins coming down the ramp of parked aircraft from Afghanistan paraded publicly, we are in danger of not hearing other personal narratives of war. The cultural performance of paying homage to the fallen, as people bow their heads, veterans lower the standards to half mast and relatives throw flowers as the coffins pass through Wotton Bassett bestows a shared national identity. However it is in danger of becoming the historical narrative of the Afghanistan conflict where society is positioned within assumed memories of paying homage, grief and loss. I am not rejecting or discarding this act as it is important to remind ourselves of sacrifice (St Pierre, 2000), which bridges the gap between past, present and future losses through conflict. Nevertheless, when the veterans put away their standards and the people go home until the next time what happens to their stories? Where are the personal stories of that painful loss of a loved one; the loss of a brother in arms which haunts you every remembrance day; the personal stories of a grieving process that (in my experience) you live with everyday; and the

¹⁸ A flash back is one of the symptoms of PTSD. It is the reliving of the traumatic event and can include physical symptoms: for example, increased heart rate and perspiration

stories of surviving such a loss, perhaps through breaking through or even through breaking down?

Why choose a multimodal representation of narrative?

Semiotics is the study of communication through the interpretation of signs and symbols that function in various fields. Social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988) focuses on the uses of semiotic systems in social practice and has been extended to consider multimodal texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Semiotics explores the importance of sound and visual images and how modes of communication are combined. *Seven days down south: a war story* is a multimodality narrative and being multimodal, it communicates in and across a range of semiotic modes. These modes are the writing, the speech and the images and offer the foundations of meaning making. This includes the notion that narrative is a mode because it ‘allows discourses to be formulated in particular ways (ways which personify and dramatise discourses amongst other things)’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p.22). The media contained within the film are the forms in which the modes are realized, such as the photographs, the poetry and the diary extracts. The modes and media used with *Seven days down south: a war story* are detailed in figure 1.

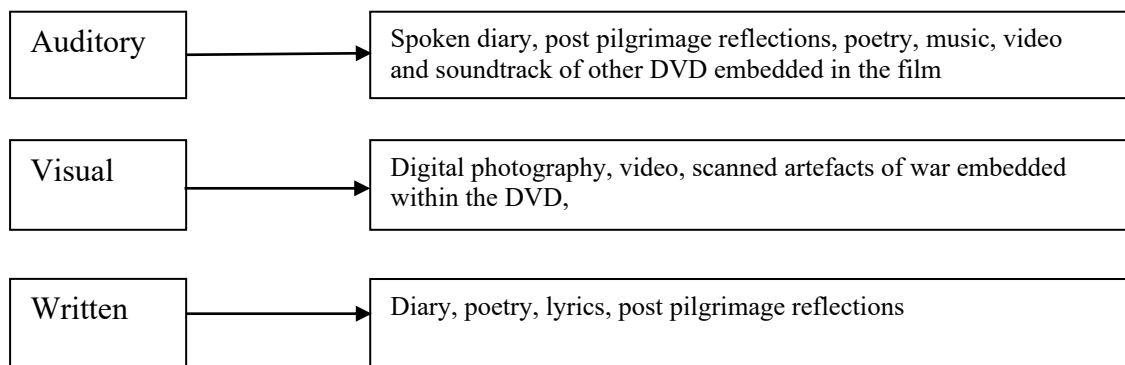


Fig. 1. A multimodal representation of Seven days down south: a war story.

I have also used Kress & van Leeuwen's (2001) concept of provenance which refers to signs that are imported from another social group, culture or era. I have used this within the epilogue and brought in media from other eras. For example I have used a photograph of a post box with a recruiting poster on it to signify the cultural and historical values associated with that time and context and its connection with war (Figure 2).

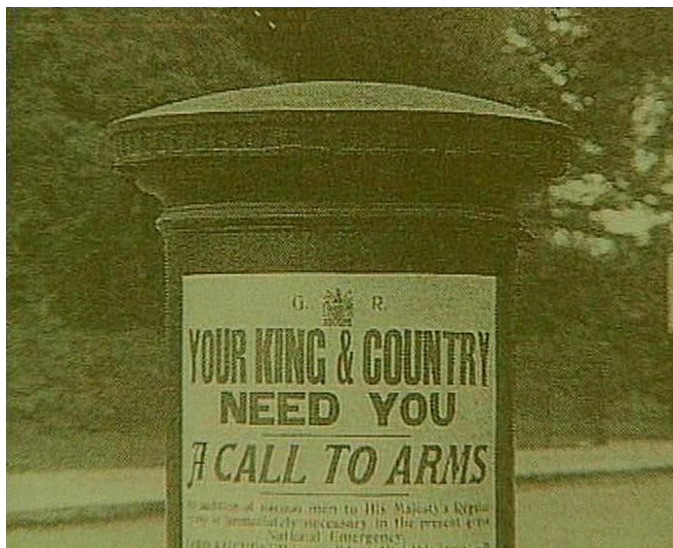


Fig. 2. Image representing changing cultural and historical concepts of war (acquired from War in the Trenches (DVD), 2005).

Kress & van Leeuwen (2001, p.1) stress that ‘within a given social-cultural domain, the same meaning can often be expressed in different semiotic modes’. They dismiss the notion that different modes are strictly framed by specific undertakings and aligned to their own assumptions, language, strengths and weaknesses. They move to a position of ‘a view of multimodality in which common semiotic principles operate in and across modes and in which it is quite possible for music to encode action or images to encode emotion’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p.2).

Seven days down south: a war story does not frame the elements that are contained within the narrative. By framing, I mean that the differing modes used are not disconnected from each other or marked off from each other within each chapter (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Kress (2001) states that modes are often used for specialised tasks and can be historically shaped to afford specific meanings. Each mode of communication interacts with the others sometimes as an equivalent and at other times as complimentary. My research draws on this view of multimodality and combines modes of representation to support each other and fulfill balancing roles. They are used to fill gaps in the narrative but also allow evocative reflection from the audience. As an example the chapter Monday 12th November is represented by visual, written and auditory modes and these modes offer partial meanings conveyed through the media used in that chapter. I have used music as a canvas to the written lyrics of the song ‘This Song Has No Title’ (written & performed by Jackson, 2007) and I use a film of the calm waters of San Carlos water to symbolise a silence I want the audience to hear. I use the film of poppies as a historical and cultural symbol of loss (Figure 3).



Fig. 3. Visual representation of historical and cultural symbolism of loss (still image taken from own video footage).

All of these differing media symbolise and metaphorically complement the song which is about the loss and grieving for my friend, Doc Love, and communicate partial and differing meanings. My argument is that the differing media I have used provide ‘a signifying power of every observed entity’ (Dicks, Soyinka, & Coffey, 2006, p.83).

Therefore, within *Seven days down south: a war story* I have paid careful attention to endow each chapter with meaning, not just in terms of the modes used, but through accessing the feelings, sounds, thoughts and imaginations that I have represented through the media used. As argued by Hastrup (1992) the use of multiple modes offers a map which acts as a cultural tableau that can show the audience much bigger pictures.

It is through the multimodal approach that I have been able to move way from the dominance of monomodal papers that have studied Falklands War veterans. These papers are perhaps of little interest to the common soldier. Most poignantly, as stated by Gus Hales (2007) during the pilgrimage in the chapter Sunday 11th November, “no one asks the humble

soldier” (British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS), 2007). The use of multimodal narrative produces sociological knowledge which does not just sit beside monomodal research but challenges what has gone before. It has an accessibility that engages others in construction of meaning through the witnessing of *Seven days down south: a war story* and from the stories in their lives it evokes.

Embodiment and performance autoethnography as methodological praxis

Within this section I will explore three concepts: embodiment, drawing on the work of Lakoff & Johnson (1999); an exploration of performance and performativity and how they are conjoined, drawing on the work of Langellier (1999); and positionality, drawing on the work of Spry (2001) and Davies & Harré (1990).

Embodiment

The term embodiment does not adhere to one paradigmatic position; however, it is generally accepted that it is an existential condition and a process in which meaning-making is taken into the body or upon the body (Csordas, 1999). Embodiment relates to our existence within culture and our existence as cultural bodies. The term ‘being in the world’ captures this sense and is a temporal and historical engagement and presence within the world. Embodiment is a condition of ‘being in the world’ (Csordas, 1999).

In Philosophy in the Flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to western thought, cognitive linguists, Lakoff & Johnson (1999), define embodiment as having three levels: the neural level, the cognitive unconscious, and the phenomenological level. All of these levels can be applied to the subsistence of living with a mental health disorder, going to war and to other aspects of my life.

Lakoff & Johnson (1999) describe, within the neural level, embodiment as a concept that:

is a neural structure that is part of, or makes use of the sensorimotor systems of our brains. Much of the conceptual inference is sensorimotor inference (p.20).

They describe the cognitive unconscious as the process that goes on below the surface of all conscious thoughts. It shapes and structures all of our automatic cognitive operations such as grammar, phonology, mental lexicon, emotions and mental imagery. Furthermore it includes all of our implicit knowledge, our belief systems and abstract entities such as friendships. They write that the cognitive unconscious ‘thus shapes how we automatically and unconsciously comprehend what we experience’ (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p.13).

There are two areas of Lakoff & Johnson’s (1999) work that I will argue are most relevant to my narrative and the concept of embodiment: the phenomenological level and the embodied mind being part of the living body.

The phenomenological level is conscious or accessible to consciousness. It consists of everything we can be aware of, especially our own mental states, our bodies, our environments, our physical and social interactions. This is the level at which we speak of the ‘feel’ of the experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p.103).

It is the distinctive qualities of experience and how we feel about them that are embodied as concepts at a phenomenological level: for example, the sound of a guitar, the

taste of chocolate, or toothache. My experiences of the Falklands War are embodied concepts and they are distinctive to me. When I returned on the pilgrimage I carried these embodied concepts of space, interactions and experiences of going to war within my body. They are my inbuilt phenomena.

In addition, Lakoff & Johnson (1999) describe the embodied mind as part of the living body and dependent on the body for its existence. They go on to state that properties of the mind are fashioned by the brain and the body and how they function in the world. The brain and body are connected to what we touch, smell, see, hear and feel. The mind is not:

merely corporeal but also passionate, desiring and social. It has culture and cannot exist culture free. It has history, it has developed and grown and it can grow further (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p.565).

The performance narrative of *Seven days down south: a war story* is an amalgamation of the embodied concepts of thoughts, feelings, memories, sounds and interactions which are thought, felt and remembered within my body. It is a narrative that uses the body ‘as a site of scholarly awareness and corporeal literacy’ (Spry, 2001, p.706). It is this socially and culturally inscribed body that is central to the meaning-making of my narrative. It is my living body that is the significant entity of the research process. I am, through my subjective self, interacting with the sociohistorical implications of living with the embodiments of an experience of war. The story emerges from my living body as it interacts with these embodiments, the spaces and others during the pilgrimage:

If embodiment is an existential condition in which the body is the subjective source or the intersubjective ground of experience then studies under the rubric of embodiment are not about the body per se. Instead they are about culture and experience insofar as these can be understood from the standpoint of bodily being in the world. (Csordas, 1999, p.143)

In these terms my experiences, explored through my narrative, move away from the research that objectifies the body; for example, the categorisation of my experiences of suffering from PTSD through the medical discourse. *Seven days down south: a war story* is about my 'being in the world'. It is about trying to understand my experience of war, returning to a place of war and the experiencing of the consequences of war (i.e. PTSD). It explores historical sites of embodiment and my own relationship with the differing cultures I have existed in and experienced.

Performance and performativity

Seven days down south: a war story, as a personal narrative, includes both performance and performativity. Performance depicts a certain type of narrative which contributes to the 'so what?' – 'the evaluative function of personal narrative' (Langellier, 1999, p.127). Langellier (1999) writes:

The focus on performance emphasises the way telling intervenes between the experience and the story, the pragmatics of putting narrative into practice and the functions of narrative for participants (p.127).

She further adds:

narrative performance is radically conceptualised: first, in the voice and body of the narrator; second, and as significantly, in conversation with empirically present listeners; and third, in dialogue with absent or ghostly audiences (p.127).

The representation of my personal narrative is enhanced through performance. It is the performing of emotions, reported speech, narrative detail and other features that intensify the

story and evoke other stories through the witnessing. Hence my performance is not just situated through the conversations and public disclosures voiced for example within my minimal autobiographical utterances (Rosen, 1998) and the utterances I hear from others, but situated within the discourses that have shaped the language, identity and experiences of being a war veteran. My personal narrative, as a performance, takes the social issues and relationships of power as seriously as it does my reflexivity. This offers opportunities to examine the cultural production and reproduction of my identities and experiences. They serve ‘a political function’. (Langellier, 2001, p.271).

Performativity constitutes the witnesses of *Seven days down south: a war story* and myself, as the narrator. My experiences, identity and the social relationships that are embedded in being a war veteran are constructions of a marginalised identity and the performance of these constructions are crucial to communities left out of the dominant discourses. Langellier (1999) describes performativity as something that:

articulates and situates personal narrative within forces of discourse, the institutionalised networks of power relations such as medicine, the law, the media and the family, which constitute subject positions and order context (p.129)

Performativity reveals questions about the ‘so what?’, who is interested and why this matters (Langellier, 1999). It brings a reflexive awareness to the performance. It is from the perspectives of performance and performativity that the film as a personal narrative ‘is situated, embodied, and material – stories of the body told through the body which make cultural conflict concrete and accessible’ (Langellier, 1998, p.213).

Performance and performativity are conjoined and the dynamic between these perspectives brings moments when ‘identities and experiences are constructed, interpreted and changed’ (Holman Jones, 2005, p.774) through the body. This dynamic maintains the inseparableness of performance from performer and the inseparableness of performativity

from politics and personal narrative. The personal becomes entangled ‘within the political and the political within the personal in ways that can, do and must matter’ (Holman Jones, 2005, p.774). Most importantly:

When performativity comes to rest on performance, questions of embodiment, of social relations, or ideological interpellations, of emotional and political effects, all become discussable (Diamond, 1996, p.4)

Positioning

There are several aspects of position that I have taken up during this research. As a war veteran with a mental health disability I see the world through:

The vantage point of that position and in terms of particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned. (Davies & Harré, 1990, p.4)

My 21 years in the Royal Marines has meant that I have integrated story lines, concepts and ethical positions which were relevant to me within the confines of this discourse. A large part of this has been about how I embodied my own experience of war and how I dealt with this experience. The movement into Civilian Street allowed an involvement in other discursive practices: for example, becoming a counsellor or becoming part of the medical discourse through diagnosis of a mental health disability. Once again, carrying my own embodied experience of war and through social interaction, I am constituted and reconstituted through the varying discursive practices I am positioned in. Consequently, who I am is always shifting within these discursive practices available to me and that others make available to me.

It is through speaking and acting from these shifting positions within the contradictory that I bring to *Seven days down south: a war story* my history as a subjective being. My history connects with many different forms of discourse: for example the medical, the military and the academic. Considering how I have been constituted through and in relation to these discourses is located in the conversations and story lines of my narrative. I positioned myself reflexively as ‘an observably and subjectively coherent participant’ (Davies & Harré, 1990, p.6). In addition, during the narrative, I position myself in relation to the film audience as I talk about my experiences about being a war veteran because I am assigned to the category of war veteran and I am positioned as such. Even if the audience does not want to position me in terms of how I have been constituted as a war veteran inevitably they will. Positioning is created by how the audience perceives me positioning myself and by the normative social discourse that perceives war veterans. I invite the audience, who are not war veterans, to position other war veterans by offering different interpretations of being a war veteran other than cultural stereotypes which they might already conform to. I offer war veterans who witness the film an opportunity to break away from the stereotypes and give opportunities to tell their untold stories. (As discussed in Chapter Five).

Seven days down south: a war story ‘does not fit a linear, noncontradictory story line’ (Davies, 1991, p.51) but recognises ‘the constitutive forces of discourse and the means by which it inscribes in the body and emotions of the constituted subject’ (Davies, 1991, p.50). It sets out to reveal contradictory discourses and examine them. It facilitates opportunities to refuse a discourse or refuse the positioning made available within that discourse not just for me but the audience as well. My positionality as a performer might inspire my audience to reflect on their own positions in relation to the wider social and historical contexts of being a war veteran, on how we interact with others and our own construction of self (Ellis & Bochner, 1996).

Seven days down south: a war story is a conscious witnessing of the realities I have constructed and reconstructed around being a war veteran and in turn critiques ‘the situatedness of self with others in social contexts’ (Spry, 2001, p.710). It enables me ‘to interrogate the political and ideological contexts and power relations between self and other, and self as other’ (Spry, 2001, p.716). It also provides a space to introduce the body to the mind within scholarly discourse.

It highlights, within the other research about the Falklands War veterans, that the body is hidden beneath a dualistic separation of mind and body. As Falklands’ veterans are researched, thought about and spoken of, we are ‘restricted by linguistic patterns of positive dualism – mind/body, objective/subjective – that fix the body as an entity incapable of literacy’ (Spry, 2001, p. 724). When the body is not situated within this research any knowledge that is situated within these bodies is unavailable. As a researcher I position myself, as a war veteran, in the cultural settings in which I inhabit. I present and represent my embodiments, performance and positioning through my body so that it can be read. In turn I am giving voice to and presenting embodiment as knowledge.

Seven days down south: a war story offers me a different road along which I can represent emotions, imagination and embodiment and use them as well as intellect as ways of knowing. I am offering a space for the lived body, the experienced body and the researched body of a war veteran to be heard, seen and felt. This research ‘privileges the body as a site of knowing’ (Conquergood, 1991, p.180) and through this privileging attempts ‘to reflexively map multiple discourses that occur in a given social space’ (Denzin, 1997, p.xvii).

Chapter 4. The research methods that inform the video representation.

In this chapter I will explore the data collection process and the subsequent reworking towards its representation as *Seven days down south: a war story*. Research methods that have been used comprise:

- Visual imagery, including digital photography and video;
- poetical representation;
- lyrical representation through songs and the use of music.

The assimilation of data and the process of representation

In this section I am going to explain the data collection process, the editing of the film and audio, and the composition of *Seven days down south: a war story*.

Data Collection

On the pilgrimage I took with me a digital video camera, two digital cameras and a Dictaphone as means of capturing the experience. During the pilgrimage there was not a predetermined plan to capture a story – I responded to the situations I found myself in day by

day. It is important to note that the film and photographs were also to serve as a collection of artefacts for my life beyond this research.

On the pilgrimage I shot 2 hours and 16 minutes of film, recorded 4 hours and 33 seconds of audio material on my Dictaphone and took 593 digital images. I also wrote diary entries in my Moleskine notebooks before and during the pilgrimage totalling 60 pages. During the construction of the film I had access to other Falklands veterans' digital photography and was sent 82 additional pictures. Other pictures included within the performance were scanned from books pertaining to the Falklands War (Thompson, 1985) and pictures scanned from newspapers. I also scanned several newspaper articles (Smith, 2005; Evans, 2009; Craig, 2009) into the narrative. I extracted clips from several DVDs and embedded these within the narrative. (Molley, 2005; Hardy, 2005; AG Plate, 2002; Pegasus, 2002; BFBS, 2007).

The editing of *Seven days down south: a war story*

To construct and edit the film I used a video editing software called Corel® Videostudio 12 (Corel Inc., 2008). Any adjustments to the audio contained within the performance were edited using Sony Sound Forge® (Sony Creative Software Inc., 2006). In becoming familiar with both these programmes editing became a more intuitive process. This ease of use with programmes allowed me to make decisions in the process of doing and from this further ideas were developed. The recording of the song 'Soldier, Soldier' contained within the epilogue took place in a studio in Hartland, North Devon. It was recorded over two sessions, using Pro Tools (Digidesign, 2008), which is a software and hardware based system for audio and midi recording.

Film composition

I made the decision early on in the process to chapter the film chronologically. This was to help the narrative to have a sense of journeying for the audience. My first task was to write my reflections of each day of the pilgrimage focusing on the significant events and experiences. As I constructed I reflected and told stories from memory. These were recorded in audio form and were used to sketch out days of the narrative. I have used them to sit alongside, stand in isolation and complement the other forms of data constructed by my narrative.

I then went through a lengthy process of searching through the film, photography and audio clips to find representations which would bring visual life to the narrative. I have tried to use these visual clips in several ways. Firstly as a piece of data that tells its story on its own; secondly, through data that symbolically represents what I am performing; and finally, by employing data as metaphorical representations (Zubair, 2007). As the construction and reconstruction went on I was then able to take and use photographs which had specific aims. These photographs were stage-managed with different shots taken of artefacts to give a particular effect or purpose. For example, the photographs I have used as wallpapers (the visual background) to distinguish between the audio diary, journal reading and the post-pilgrimage commentary within the narrative are there specifically to signpost and distinguish between these different forms and methods of data presentation. Another example is the photograph of numerous types of drugs in the epilogue of the film. This is constructed to make the audience wonder and then attach their own symbolic meanings as the image interacts with the lyrics of the song (Bresler, 2008).

Once the first eight chapters were completed I worked on the final chapter: the epilogue. The composition of this epilogue is a chronological journey from the First World

War through to the current war in Afghanistan. During the first session of the recording of 'Soldier, Soldier' we put together the drum, bass, rhythm guitar and vocal tracks. I worked on the guitar solo and added samples to the song in the interim period between sessions. The second session involved the recording of the guitar solo and the mastering of the completed song. The photos and film were added to the songs track using Corel® Videostudio 12 (Corel Inc., 2008).

Visual imagery

Our lives are flooded with visual images and we have access to these both externally and internally (Weber, 2008). We only have to shut our eyes and reflect on a certain experience and we evoke sounds, feelings, thoughts and smells. When we sleep we have dreams in the form of images, generally as narratives which seldom have an ending, are sometimes metaphorical and sometimes have an emotional resonance that can seem real. However to be surrounded by these different presentations of images, whether in our sleep or as we reflect on an experience or even scan a Sunday supplement, does not mean we notice what we see. It is the paying attention and what you notice when you pay attention that is important (Weber, 2008).

An explicit image has many meanings and these are dependent on the reasons it is presented, the context, the time and the audience (Weber, 2008). Sturken & Cartwright (2001) point out, 'The meaning of each image is multiple, created each time it is viewed' (p.25). These meanings are produced from the historical and cultural context in which the image is produced and represented and the social conventions and codes that influence the interpretation of these images. It is our personal experience that informs us of the meanings

we find and apply. This does not happen in isolation and works through a collaboration between the image producer, the image and the audience. Images are part of the external and internal realities which reflect the relationship between sense-making and human perception. They are a dynamic product of these interactions (Weber, 2008).

Within *Seven days down south: a war story* I have brought together photography and film (which I will refer to as images) from various historical times and have been positioned them to become a whole which represents, sometimes metaphorically and symbolically, a narrative. There are many arguments for carrying out this act of representation but I want to discuss those that support my poststructural performance. In some cases I have used images that have been essential to capture what was hard to put into words; this is akin to what Ong (1982) calls ‘orality’ (as cited in Weber, 2008, page 45).

In the chapter: Sunday 11th November I have used 11 photographs of war memorials, which are situated on the Falkland Islands and in Wales and England. I have also used edited film of the walk to and placing of a cross at Doc Love’s tree within the Memorial Wood¹⁹ to symbolise aspects of remembrance (Figure 4). I wanted to evoke the wider social and historical representations of remembrance through memorials and the tolling of the bell at eleven o’clock on Remembrance Day, as well as a personal representation through a walk in silence and the ‘placing by a tree a poppy cross, with poignant messages to my friend’ (Chapter: Sunday 11th November).

¹⁹ The Memorial Wood is area in Port Stanley where a tree has been planted for every British serviceman who was killed during the Falklands War.



Fig. 4. Visual symbolism of memorial and remembrance for Doc Love (still image taken from video footage in Seven days down south: a war story).

It is these acts that have enabled some aspects of my war story to be revealed rather than being hidden in the margins of my storied life. I have used these images to make the audience pay attention, not only to my narrative but to their own storied lives of remembrance and loss.

I use my images to elicit an emotional response as well as an intellectual response. Weber (2008) see images as being able to ‘burn themselves into our brain forming internal memories that may be hard to erase’ (p.45). In the epilogue I have deliberately used images alongside each other that show some of the realities of war. Here I intertwine images of corpses with images of leaving for war, patriotism, and saying goodbye (Figure 5). These are all used to elicit differing and varied emotional response from the audience.



Fig. 5. Visual representation of historical realities of war (acquired from *War in the Trenches* DVD, 2005).

I want these internal emotional responses to resonate rather than go unnoticed or become dishonoured by not being attended to. I use the images to talk to the audience hence giving them an opportunity to engage in different conversations and to adopt a different gaze from a different viewing position. These images of death and leaving when embedded within *Seven days down south: a war story* ask critical questions: for instance, about how we as a society support our returning war veterans. These images coexist with and are integrated within the narrative and as such they become useful in the service of change for social justice. Weber (2008) writes that:

In an era when the relevance of research to questions of social justice is increasingly expected, few features can provoke critical questions and encourage individual and collective actions as well as images. (pp.46-47)

The images used in *Seven days down south: a war story* give texture and shape to my narrative and afford the audience an opportunity to hear, see and feel the lived experience. They encourage embodied knowledge through moving away from the intellectual towards a more sensory response. It is through this sensory journey that the audience are connected to

the trustworthiness and believability of my narrative (Weber, 2008). Even if a war story is unfamiliar to the audience they are invited to witness the narrative and attend to the differing images as they interplay with the other modes that have been used.

Finally the use of image in research is a method of narrowing the distance between the performer and the audience. If we choose to view each other from this distance we only serve the predetermined categories, discursive practises and games of truth that seep out of dominant discourses (Weber, 2008). It is the quality of the image I have used and the judicious and knowledgeable choices I have made when integrating them into my research that can:

simultaneously present multiple viewpoints and generate multiple interpretations and call attention to the everyday by making it strange or casting it in a new light. (Weber, 2008, p.50)

Gallagher, (2001) writes that if we embrace an intimate relationship of telling and showing, and listening and seeing, it opens up potential for fluidity, communication and therefore personal and political change This can be achieved more readily through the use of images.

Video

I have used video within *Seven day down south; a war story* as an appropriate ‘way of seeing’ (Berger, 1982) and as a way of sharing an embodied experience. During the narrative I am inviting the audience to walk alongside me and witness. It is through the film contained within the story that I am offering a more sensory engagement with the environment in which I experienced war and to which I returned on the pilgrimage. Video offers a tool that can

facilitate understandings that are empathetic and draw the sensory experience of the witnessing together with the context in which the video is set (Pink, 2007). This has been carried out through using historical film of war, contemporary film professionally produced during the pilgrimage by British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) and hand-held digital camera video. The filming during the pilgrimage took me, the experiencing body (Pink, 2007), to places of historical experience. This formed a multisensory engagement which was re-presented within my war story as edited clips.

Postma (2006) sees film as being able to communicate ‘experiential’ or ‘body to body knowledge’ (p.328). The process of witnessing the integrated video clips makes possible the potential for the audience to empathetically understand the embodied experiences I had during these vignettes of the pilgrimage (Pink, 2007). The videoing was able to portray an engagement with a significant inhabited world that I had experienced both during the war and on my pilgrimage. For example, through the filming of the weather I was able to connect the present to the past as I described this weather as:

the cold, cold snow of memories: as I paced out the steps to the trench into which I had run during an air raid as bombs were falling, and as I walked around the many battlefields that were strewn with the remnants of war and searched out the artefacts of war with a childlike excitement (Chapter: Friday 9th November).

The use of film within my narrative is a fitting way to represent the enormity of returning to a place where I experienced war. As Pink (2008) concludes:

video is a research method that: can produce empathetic and sensory embodied (emplaced) understandings of another’s experience; is itself productive of place in any moment in time; produces audiovisual texts that define and represent place at particular moments; and communicates a sense of other person’s emplaced experiences that might be interpreted empathetically by its audiences. (p.250)

Photography

In addition to video I have used photography in various forms: digital photography taken before, during and on my return from the pilgrimage; photographs that are artefacts of my storied life; and photography from books, magazines and newspapers to complement specific points made by the audio data.

The use of photography has made parts of my 'self' more noticeable within the social and cultural environments in which my performance is acted out (Harrison, 2002). I have used these images to elicit story and as the basis for a different dialogue with my audience. These photographs are moments that Sontag (1978) suggests 'keep open to scrutiny instants which the normal flow of time immediately replaces' (p.111).

A very important aspect of the use of photographs within my war story is their ability to evoke memories. The act of returning to places I had not visited for 25 years enabled access to memories that returned and became recreated and retold. The act of photographing these places enabled another way to remember and hence recreate and retell other stories. They also reference historical and cultural aspects of the past and, as with other media used within this research, are a form of communication. Showing the film invites an interpretation of the multiple meanings of the photographs in isolation and as part of the whole, whether they are used to emphasis what words alone cannot express or whether they are used symbolically (Harrison, 2002).

As Barthes (1981) argues, photographs invite speaking about the experiences of others and act as communication that contributes, resists and challenges the social and the cultural. Photographs are what I saw, what I remembered and they are a showing not a telling. As Sontag (1978) indicates:

the force of photographic images comes from their being material realities in their own right, richly informative deposits left in the wake of whatever emitted them, potent means for turning the tables on reality. (p.180)

Musical representation

I have used music to draw the audience into a different way of hearing, seeing and feeling. Music opens another door to the embodiments contained within my war story (Bresler, 2008). It is through listening that more attention can be paid to the literal content. Music encompasses rhythm, tone, dynamics and mood and these facilitate the communication of music (Bresler, 2008). This communication has depth and a resonance and it is framed within a story (told by the lyrics). The interaction of hearing within a musical performance balances empathetic connection and resonance. Musical performance an empathetic connection through a form of dialogue (Bresler, 2008).

A major part of musical experience concerns embodiment. The emotions we feel when listening to certain types of music are the communication of embodiment (Bresler, 2008). I have used four songs within *Seven days down south: a war story* and they all offer differing empathetic connections and dialogues. They invite individual meanings to be evoked from within the songs. These meanings are not just cognitive interpretations but emotional and bodily responses through an interaction of all our senses when hearing the music (Bresler, 2008).

I have already discussed two: 'This Song Has No Title' (written & performed by Jackson, 2007) and 'Soldier, Soldier' (Reeves, unknown; Jackson, 2009). Now I would like to briefly discuss two others: 'The Post War Dream' (Pink Floyd, 1983) and 'Rock and Roll' by Led Zeppelin (Page, Plant, Jones & Bonham, 1971).

The extract from ‘The Post War Dream’ (Pink Floyd, 1983) in Chapter: Thursday 8th November is used to draw attention to the politics of war. I believe the question of ‘What ever happened to the post war dream?’ is answered in part by war veterans who are homeless (Butler, 2005), in prison (Leach, 2008) and commit suicide (Bilton, 2007). The song is also an artefact of war for me since *The Final Cut* (Pink Floyd, 1983), the album which this song comes from, became a powerful metaphoric and symbolic representation of my experiences whilst struggling with my own mental health disability.

The song, ‘Rock and Roll’ (Page et al., 1971) is used as a representation of an embodiment of memories from 1979, three years before the Falklands War. Five of my friends and I went to see Led Zeppelin at Knebworth²⁰ in August of that year, and Doc was one of them. We were young and none of us had yet seen active service. We all carried an innocence and this song symbolises that embodiment of not having experienced war.

In summary, it is music that gives resonance to the world and opens doors to memories and embodiments through a different hearing and it sings out to you to listen. Music cultivates and expands the ear to oral, kinaesthetic and cognitive sensitivities. Music requires attending to with the whole body and is experienced through the whole body (Bresler, 2008). I have creatively used music to represent wider narratives which are beyond the pilgrimage: ‘Music is sound that allows for interpretation of the visible and invisible and the tangible and intangible’ (Bresler, 2008, p.227). Within my film the songs are tableaux of sounds that have personal meanings and retell stories within their aural landscapes; they are sounds that offer personal embodiments and sing narrative in a different in a melodic key.

²⁰ Led Zeppelin played two open air gigs at Knebworth House , Hertfordshire in the first two weekends of August 1979.

Poetic and lyrical representation

The poetic and lyrical representation of data creates a space between the audience and the researcher. It is a form of representation that gives the audience permission to enter empathetically into witnessing of a performance and it ‘invites the cultivation of multiple forms of listening’ (Speedy, 2005b, p.289). In poetic and lyrical representation there is a resonance between the performer and audience that allows the audience possibilities of engagement that are ethical. Neilsen (2008) suggests that the characteristics of this type of inquiry embrace ‘liminality, ineffability, metaphorical thinking, embodied understanding, personal evocations, domestic and local understanding and an embrace of the eros of language’ (p.94). She writes that even if there are ambiguities and they are inadequately presented within the performance this does not matter, as there is a desire to honour the moment represented. Poetic and lyrical representations communicate these moments to others and this is spoken through sensory, intimate and evocative language (Neilsen, 2008).

Poetic and lyrical language is grounded in the particular and has often been described as embodied and resonant (Cixous, 1991; Kirsch, 1993; Kristeva, 1981). When using poetic and lyrical representations there is a greater focus on recreated moments of experience, moods, emotions and feelings that show embodiment and give resonance. The construction of poetry and lyrics through their metaphors, rhythms and imagery enables this process (Neilsen, 2008).

I am inviting, as a researcher, a space between myself and the audience to generate many meanings and many possibilities. It is in this space that the audience searches out meanings that are self-referential. By using poetic representation as a creative narrative method I am not attempting to tell a literal truth. I am positioned differently and I am writing from an ethic of making a difference. I am attempting to be accountable to the community in

which I exist, produce a credible account of a small part of the world of war veterans and give a sense of a personal embodiment (Speedy, 2008). It is within this ethical position the poetry brings a focus on embodied emotions and feelings.

Poetic and lyrical representation leaves a space for imagination. Rosenblatt (1976) writes that the space for imagination moves the audience into a storied world. When the last frame of *Seven days down south: a war story* fades out the audience leave and take with them the resonance of my world. In this space for imagination their emotions and senses are stimulated. Zwicky (2003) argues that when we enter this space and use our imagination to witness songs and poetry we are allowed to enter the experience of another without reductiveness, ownership or appropriation. These forms of representation are political as they challenge the status quo of outsider monomodal research whilst proclaiming individual lived experiences and draw away from categorisation or a search for commonality. Data in this form allow the marginalised voices to be heard and to be included (Bulter-Kisber, 1998).

Richardson (2003) suggests that poetry represents a lived embodied experience. My songs and poetry within my performance narrative are embodied language of a personal landscape and allow me to provide vivid re-presentation of a small part of my pilgrimage to the audience.

Within the performance narrative there are three poems: 'To Journey Down South Again'; 'Was that you?'; and 'Hello, Minister'. Each poem consciously performs and constructs a moment of a small part of my pilgrimage. It is through these poems that I give myself permission to give voice to what has been silenced in the past within my storied life. There is a poem which describes a journey in a Land Rover with two other veterans to a memorial service ('To Journey Down South Again'); one which describes the feelings of wonderment and reflections of the loss of Argentinean soldiers ('Was that you?'); and one which describes my anger at feeling I was not heard ('Hello Minister'). These three poems

offer an emotional truth which is heartfelt and honest (Scott-Hoy & Ellis, 2008). They open a window to the anxiety I felt as I returned to Bomb Alley, my sadness for the loss of soldiers who were the ‘sons, brothers and fathers who were just like me’ (Chapter, Thursday 8th November), and my anger at the political deafness and indifference to our plight as war veterans.

I have also included two songs that represent loss and dedication. ‘This Song Needs No Title’ was written during the pilgrimage and is used as an act of remembrance to my best friend, Doc Love. It is:

born out of the emotional and embodied experience I was having on the pilgrimage as I considered the way I would pay homage to my friend who was killed during the Falklands War. I carried out the act of construction and reconstruction of the lyrics, the chords and the phrasing and ended with a performance on a beach with only the still waters of San Carlos to bear witness. My song was shaped to form part of a personal ritual to move me through an expression of grief. I was acting outside the discourse of paying homage which had played itself out at the remembrance service the previous day at the memorial in Port Stanley (Diary entry).

‘Soldier, Soldier’ (Reeves, unknown; Jackson, 2009) lyrically shapes the epilogue and is complemented by film and photography. It is a song that was written for me by a friend and I have always felt a strong connection with the lyrics and their resonance. I have honoured this gift by performing it over the last five years. For *Seven days down south: a war story* I recreated an alternative arrangement and a song that tells alternative stories. I have added parts of my voice by composing two new verses.

I want the song to bring to audiences’ attention their own connections with and embodiments in the historical, cultural and social discourses of past wars and present conflicts. Most importantly it is about positioning them within the here and now. It is to evoke reflections on a possible tomorrow of a ‘ticking timebomb’ (Morris & Sengupta, 2009) as Iraq and Afghan war veterans struggle proudly in silence with their experiences of war.

Conclusion

The use of film, photography, music, poetic and lyrical representation as methods is important in the 'deliteralisation of knowledge' (Eisner, 2008, p.5). They open the audience to multiple forms of knowing and through the multimodal combination of utterances, images, and writing help evoke the situation I am describing in the narrative. As descriptive tools the methods attempt to create a mimetic relationship between what I have described and what I did on the pilgrimage. As evocative tools they offer an empathetic sense of my storied life. By allowing the audience to walk in the shoes of another I am giving means to understanding. Through imagination and feeling I give access to deeper insights (Eisner, 2008). Most importantly the methods I have used enable a showing to the audience that carries them beyond the words of traditional monomodal qualitative research.

Chapter 5. The implications and future prospects of this research.

The key issues that have been raised in this research.

I realise that through researching literature about PTSD and war, through listening to the utterances of many war veterans and through my own storied life, what I am offering as a representation of a war story is new and unique. As a narrative of a historical and cultural journey, *Seven days down south: a war story*, crosses uncharted territories. It reveals a personal story and places this alongside ignored aspects of being a war veteran and having a mental health disorder.

I have argued that as a collective group we are shaped by social structures and processes from our military service and also through how we are defined once we enter Civilian Street. We are categorised by medical and academic discourses and stereotyped by cinematic and other media discourses. It is significant that we tend to remain stoically silent about our experiences of going to war and living with the consequences. However, revealing other stories of being a war veteran, such as those that arise from chance meetings outside the Union Jack Club or are disclosed on military discussion boards, so that we can support war veterans better in society has to be one of the biggest challenges for the future. As we enter our eighth year in Afghanistan it is very poignant that the latency period for PTSD in war veterans is about 12 years. So in a few years' time there will be an ever-increasing number of war veterans who, at best will come under the gaze of the medical model through diagnosis, and at worst will struggle in silence with their experiences of war. I believe the research process and mode of telling my war story raise important issues about how we best represent and retell war veterans' experiences.

An important question that arises from this research is whether it is time to move away from traditional research as an approach when researching PTSD and war. As Bensimon, Polkinghorne, Bauman and Vallejo (2004) write:

The role of the research subject is to provide the information [...] the researcher is seeking. The researcher is the expert on the problem to be studied, which gives him or her the authority to provide solutions. The results of the research are reported in journal articles that are generally read by other researchers. Most of these articles have no influence. (p.106)

It is not my intention to argue against traditional research and its place in exploring PTSD and war. As I have already discussed there is a large amount of research in this area. What I will argue is that because traditional research does not involve subjects in the research design or in discussion of what approach is best (Heron, 1996) it holds our experiences of war at a distance and importantly ‘it largely fails to penetrate the experienced reality’ (Stringer, 1996, p.6).

Whilst I do not anticipate that many of my colleagues would rush to subscribe to *Qualitative Inquiry* to search out academic portrayals of PTSD and war, academic publications do not attempt to engage the subject (war veterans) in dialogue about what is the ‘best’ way to treat our symptoms and support us. I believe that for society to show an ethic of care and for the research community to gain a greater insight into the historical, cultural and personal experiences of being a war veteran they need to ask:

- How would we like to engage in deeper conversations?
- How can researchers represent our story empathetically?
- How can researchers tell our story more truthfully?
- How can we, as researchers, help you, war veterans, to engage in more political action and change?

It is not good enough anymore to just acknowledge the war veterans living in prison or on the streets or the suicide rate of war veterans through sporadic reporting in the media with quotes on statistics from ‘experts’. We deserve better.

We need to move towards a different way of engaging the subject in retelling stories and we need a different way of representing these stories to open a different engagement with policy makers. Whilst there is evidence that some research has informed policy and has changed the way war veterans are engaged with (for example, the use of exposure therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy as treatments), Huberman (1999) points out that these ‘mindshifts are inevitably self initiated’ (p. 311) and in turn may account for the limited impact of research.

Seven days down south: a war story does not come from a position of dominance through its act of telling but invites a witnessing of a personal story to have an evocative impact. It shows an act of ‘intimate provocation’ (Speedy, 2008, p. 160) and offers an alternative from the one-dimensional constraints of a written piece. I feel that it gives an engagement that has led to revealing dialogues through acts of feeding back, both to me as the researcher and me as the subject. *Seven days down south: a war story* as a piece of research is a powerful tool from which further dialogue will occur at many levels.

By incorporating immediate feedback, after the various audiences had watched the film, I was able to explore the immediacy of their act of witnessing. Within this space for feedback was an immediate place where implications and transference of meanings could be found. I was able to explore the impact of the film and in turn keep records of different people’s responses and reactions. I am going to draw on this evidence to raise and validate the research by means of these responses.

The audiences who witnessed the narrative

When I write about the audiences who have witnessed the film I am not talking about a singular category. A broad range of different people have watched *Seven days down south: a war story*. They watched the film usually in twos and on one occasion four friends watched the film together. The audience composition breaks down into four categories:

- family – my daughters (and their boyfriends), wife and younger brother
- friends – two who have known me since I returned from the Falklands War and another four who have known me for over 10 years
- colleagues – both academic and professional
- war veterans – two from the Second World War, five from the Falklands War and three wives of veterans.

Telling my story to these different audiences has the potential to be risky because of the different relationships I have with each group. However I am approaching the audience as a whole, as people who have lived with and been touched by PTSD and war. The fact they have a relationship with me, in whatever context or with whatever level of intimacy, means they have a connection with the embodiments of war that I carry within me.

This research has entailed a process of reconstruction of selves through telling and retelling my war story (Youngblood Jackson, 2004). It is through the telling and retelling to differing audiences that I can re-author my storied life. A very important aspect of this is the ability for *Seven days down south: a war story* to un-silence some of my stories of living with an experience of war.

To tell my story to my family enables our relationship to become more intimate and in turn to evoke a seeing of other parts of me that were perhaps only hinted at in the past. For example, a public acknowledgement through telling of the loss of a best friend gives me permission to express and feel this loss beyond Remembrance Sunday. It gives opportunities for my friends to move away from the stereotypes they might have held about me. It allows my colleagues to take away stories that connect with their own professional lives as counsellors or academics. Finally *Seven days down south: a war story* shares some of the unspoken effects that war veterans experience. The voicing of my experiences, reflections and memories enabled the war veterans who witness the film to speak of their own experiences, reflections and – importantly – embodiments of war.

It is war veterans that I want to privilege as an audience because the primary purpose of *Seven days down south: a war story* is to help and empower other war veterans through the telling of my own experiences. It is the showing of my story and the elicitation of other stories of the experience of war that ‘create disturbances’ (Hughes and Roman, 1998, p.9) and move towards social and political action. I want my research not just to help that movement but also to inform society so as to animate a new political will for social change in the way we are cared for.

The act of witnessing *Seven days down south: a war story*

Seven days down south: a war story is a call to witness for both the audience and myself. It is not just a call to me to assume ‘a responsibility for telling what happened’ (Frank, 1995, p.137). Witnessing is never a solitary act and implies a relationship within which are obligations: to engage with constructions of truths; to engage in partial meaning-making; to

be open to change; to tell others of the experience of witnessing; and to explore any issues of ethics and care (Ropers-Huilman, 1999). Without the act of witnessing, *Seven days down south: a war story* is not complete as a piece of research. It is this collaboration between audience and performer that adds another messy layer through the evocation of alternative stories and their multiple meanings. I will present some examples of this later in the chapter.

Responses were recorded on Dictaphone, so what are lost are real emotions that were in the room after the film finished. There was often a silence that followed the film, sometimes broken by the crying of some of the witnesses. I would allow this to sit for a while and then invite a discussion about the experience of the film. Occasionally I would ask questions to prompt further reflections, but this was not scripted or planned.

How my family responded

My family have an intimate connection with me as a father, brother or husband, but with this comes an act of censoring parts of who I am. I have never talked to my family about my experiences during the Falklands War or in Northern Ireland even though these experiences are an important part of who I am. This self-censoring is carried out with an ethic of care to protect those you love from exposure to stories that might evoke sadness or shock. So to show them *Seven days down south: a war story* was a risky venture. However as a counsellor and a student of the history of returning from war I understand the benefits of disclosure which is to strengthen the intimacy of connection I have with my family.

In feedback, my daughters talked about the reconnection they had with David the father now as David the war veteran, and expressed an aligned embodiment:

“It was as if I was there with you, walking with you. It was like I was on the journey with you. I feel complete and utter sadness.”

They were able to find other stories:

“When you think about the Falklands you think about victory – how brilliant it was and what a success it was – but it is not like that at all. You’ve brought the realism to me. You get it, right here, right in there, right in the gut.”

They experienced moments of insightfulness:

“It was like, fuck, this is a long shot of the water but it gave me time to think as I looked over the water – the stillness of the water. It just reminded me of the stillness of death and mourning.”

They were able to ask empathetic questions that initiated talk:

“How did Doc die?”

My wife described the story as one of:

“Love and loss between two warriors.”

How my friends responded

I showed the film to six friends in total. These were A and S, two friends I met in December 1981, three months before I sailed down south. They have been a constant in my life over the last 29 years. D and W are friends from my rugby-playing days. I have known them since 1988. We congregate on the stand at Plymouth Albion Rugby Football Club during the season, drinking tea, eating pasties and complaining about the game. The other two are called

P and Pa who are constant companions on my daily dog-walking rituals. P and Pa saw the film separately whilst the others saw it in twos.

A and S talked about how I was on my return from the war:

“My memories of you, when you came back, was that you were very out there, pushing all boundaries, taking risk, you did not seem to care any more. You did not care about what people thought.”

“You were scary – there was something about the way you were. At times I really felt you were not there. I was staggered how much you could drink and when you had been drinking it was as if the mask had dropped. The journey that you’ve shown me is what makes me understand who you are now and how I really know you now all these years later.”

W made professional connections with the work she does with survivors of abuse:

“It could be a fantastic tool to use on anyone who suffers from PTSD from any war, in fact it has common threads with anyone who suffers from trauma that they could relate to. It does not matter where you have been, these are the sentiments that will come out. It is brilliant.”

It invited angry responses from P:

“I think the epilogue is really good. It starts off factually and then collapses like lives collapse from war. Anyone who had been through conflict would identify with those words and images. It brings up another message for me when the dead return from Afghanistan and this whole situation we are in. I thought it was very moving but for me it points up the contrast between the people who go through this stuff and the instruments of political policy. What makes me angry is that it is so disconnected with what they are asking them to do and to live with for the rest of their lives.”

How my academic and professional colleagues responded

I showed *Seven days down south: a war story* to three professional colleagues who work as counsellors and two colleagues I have met during my time at the University of Bristol, one of whom works as a counsellor. I have reflected on the reasons for asking colleagues to witness the film. There is a risk in trusting someone to hold my story safely and empathetically in my presence. I felt I could take this risk with these people without fear of judgement.

The silence after the showing of the film was different to the other reactions but it was also very familiar to me as a counsellor. It was a silence you felt after a client had walked out of the door after a counselling session. It was a reflective space in which to think about the story. This silence was broken with single utterances and questions from my colleagues:

“That was incredibly moving.”

“The loss felt still shocks me. I’m actually shaking now.”

“This is real, so real.”

There were many philosophical and reflective questions asked by this audience:

“Can we ever understand it? – What it is like to live with this?”

“What is the victory, Dave? What is the victory in all of this?”

“To me – the futility, the continuing futility. We do not know what the true cost will be and whether it will ever be acknowledged.”

The veterans' responses

The most difficult group to show my film to was my 'brothers'. My audience in this group had all experienced war. A and P were Second World War commandos, K is P's wife and a survivor of Dresden. I knew all four Falklands veterans and had served with them in various units during my time in the Royal Marines. I have known M for over 30 years. He was at Knebworth and the Reading festival with Doc, me and the others during the summer of 1979. I had served with S in the Commando Logistic Regiment for three years and he was on the pilgrimage with me in 2007. Mi, Pi and Pi's wife Ca watched the film on one of our five-yearly get-togethers. Finally C and Sa are from Saltash and I got to know them through the *Once a Marine Always a Marine* website. C is a friend who is there for me only in the way someone who has been to war can be. He was with 45 Commando during the conflict and has been diagnosed with PTSD and social disconnection.

The difficulty for me in being with them during the showing of the film was that I would play out a well-rehearsed script inside my head. I would have an irrational internal dialogue, wondering if I was the only one in the room who felt the way I did. I would question whether they would reject me because I was not showing humour under adversity. When I watched *Seven days down south: a war story* with them I felt anxious and I was fearful of rejection. However I did not want to be alone with my feelings anymore.

S sadly reminisced about his time on the pilgrimage which led to other heartfelt, emotional stories:

"When we went to San Carlos and saw the head stones – that was good. I still could not go and pay my respects at my squaddie's²¹ grave [...] and I still feel bad about it now. He was killed on F4²²

²¹ A squaddie is Royal Marines' slang for a Royal Marine who joined up at the same time and was in the same troop as you all the way through training

²² F4 was a landing craft from HMS Fearless which was attacked by four Skyhawks. All six crew were killed.

I did not go [...] I did not go where F4 copped it. I didn't go to the graves.

I've still got big issues. Before Northern Ireland out in Singapore, I got my PTSD from when the Brigade²³ was involved in Op Bholac²⁴. I do not think you know it, Dave – there was a cyclone in Pakistan.

We wondered why we were getting neat pusser's rum²⁵, and then we found out why when we were dragging bodies out of the rivers and waterholes. Everywhere, bodies everywhere. There were new-born babies to old people. We were cutting down palm trees, 30-40 foot palm trees, and there were bodies in the top.

I went on from there and I had a bad time in Northern Ireland, then the Falklands and Op Haven²⁶.

The thing is, it does not go away. You take this to the grave.”

I witnessed a sense of anger and discontentment with society from A and P, the Second World War commandos:

“For them, the politicians, there is no afterwards. You are just cannon fodder to them. You talked about getting back into civilian life and that is the point because no one cares, no one bloody cares.”

“I saw they were going to open the negotiations about Falklands with Argentina. It makes me very angry. These things they report, you are so hurt [...] you are so very hurt because politicians just damn well throw these ideas around like their balancing the books. But what about the sacrifices and the continuing sacrifices?”

For me the most poignant witnessing was when Sa and C watched it together. During the film they became more intimately connected as Sa reached and held C's hand. It appeared I spoke to them in way I could hardly have imagined. C connected with his story of living with an experience of war:

²³ The brigade refers to 3 Commando Brigade which consists of two commando units, one attached infantry unit and its supporting elements.

²⁴ In 1970 a cyclone hit East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) killing over 120,000 people. Operation Bholac was the humanitarian relief mission sent by the British government.

²⁵ Pusser's rum was the make of rum used for the daily tot, a tradition in the Royal Navy until 1979 when it was abandoned.

²⁶ Operation Haven was a military operation to protect Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraq and to provide humanitarian aid.

“I really feel numbness now it is finished; I am sort of overwhelmed by the information. What you have said, Dave, is all I have not be able to say for all these years. I have not been able to do it.”

Sa connected, at last, with C’s story:

“I was watching it and I was wishing that I could have been there with you, on the pilgrimage, but I was also watching, feeling I wanted to have been in the war with you both. I wanted to be there with you.

I wanted to feel very proud but I could not because I felt so sad for what war brings.

You summed up perfectly what C tries to tell me, but he cannot do it – he gets emotional and he feels he fucks up the words.”

Critical reflection: So what?

It has been my intention to produce a well-crafted, substantial and transformative narrative which aesthetically tells a good story. Through the act of doing this research I am inhabiting a borderland between arts and social sciences, between private space and public landscapes, between social and historical narratives of PTSD, and between experiences of war in the past and the present (looking towards the future.) These borderlands require differing criteria in which *Seven days down south: a war story* can be judged.

I will be using some current thinking about criteria as suggested by Speedy (2008, p. 56). This list is not a prescriptive checklist, nor is it ‘one size fits all’ or by any means exhaustive. However, it offers me the opportunity to reflect critically on how my narrative research might be responded to and ‘read’, and how it might support the reading of others.

Seven days down south: a war story is a performance narrative that has emerged from and addresses the lived realities of experiencing a war and its aftermath. I am claiming truthfulness that is embodied and situated within the narrative. My performance gives bodily

voice to stories of loss and stories of sacrifice. Within this performance I give myself permission to allow these embodiments that I carry within me to be disclosed. Thus I value my own experience and hope this will be of value to others. I mediate this act of disclosure through a range of creative methods, which open the narrative to a multitude of interpretations.

Through my performance I take audiences on experiential journeys through a significant part of my storied life. I invite them to walk with me awhile with a purpose of challenging their taken-for-granted assumptions of war veterans as a collective group. I want this walk to deliberately evoke emotional, intellectual and political responses. I want a resonance that they just do not carry safely in their heads but through a bodily response from an empathetic listening. More importantly, I want this resonance to form rhizomatic connections (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992) with their own stories and memories of courage, friendship, loss, sacrifice and other themes that might appear for them.

Seven days down south: a war story, through performativity, is able to recognise the social, historical and cultural power relations which occur in my performance of a war veteran living with a mental health disability and thus contributes to the understanding of what it means to be war veteran. What it has allowed me to do is challenge the structures that give meaning-making to being a war veteran and the discourses that constitute me. I have been able to construct an alternative subjectivity (Youngblood Jackson, 2004, p.686).

So what makes this different enough to make a difference? If through the act of telling I am giving voice to an experience that has been unspoken, I am making details known and accessible to public scrutiny. This is carried out with the purpose of bridging a gap between public and private domains. Much of the traditional research I have discussed does not reach or in any way empower the collective group to political action (Holman Jones, 2005). War veterans, including me, feel disconnected from academic and medical discourses. *Seven days*

down south: a war story bridges this gap through a connection between different publics (the plurality of audiences I have represented above) by presenting and eliciting personal responses to public events. It is through the eliciting of these personal responses that connections form between audiences, society and wider culture.

I am showing with the purpose of drawing attention to aspects which give meaning to being a war veteran beyond the structures and processes of dominant discourses and social institutions. The discourses and institutions that I have previously discussed place us on a well-trodden path of categorisation through terms like ‘shell-shock’ and PTSD. What *Seven days down south: a war story* offers, as evidenced by the feedback from other war veterans, is a way of engaging war veterans in a conversation which will move towards a more collaborative approach to fulfilling a moral and ethical responsibility our society has towards us.

Within the context of being a war veteran we go to war for our queen and country under the guidance or misguidance of politicians. When we return we are well schooled in getting on with it and telling the world we were just doing our jobs. However who we really fight for are our brothers-in-arms and it is within these strong connections we will find different landscapes and more engaging stories. In this research I have fought for the memory of Doc and for the other Royal Marines, like S, C, M, Mi and Pi, and other war veterans who struggle with their experiences.

My witnessing: looking back.

My journey from the fruition of an idea to the completion of this dissertation is a small but significant chapter of a much longer narrative. To witness my own story I have to

acknowledge a thread that runs through this longer narrative. It is my connection with war, loss and sacrifice.

This connection, whilst not spoken about until recently, is a strong part of my family's history. My maternal great-grandfather, Joseph Ward, fought in the Sudan during the late 1800s. My great-grandfather, Charles Jackson, and grandfather, Frank Jackson, fought in and survived the First World War. Most poignantly, Colour Sergeant Major Steven Ward, a great-uncle, was killed at the Battle of Thiepval Ridge aged 26, and Bill Ward, another great-uncle was killed aged 19 at the Battle of Cambrai during the First World War. My father lived in Sheffield during the Sheffield Blitz and joined the Royal Navy soon after the Second World War. I followed the same path and joined the Royal Marines to serve my country, and consequently I went to war.

I have to acknowledge the connection I have with the here and now. I feel immense sadness for the losses from Afghanistan and outrage when I read about the suicides of war veterans (Bilton, 2007). What I have chosen to research is present and actual and I witness it as such.

Where to now?

I have always considered my long academic life to be an investment and more importantly an investment in me. A consequence for me is that there has been an awakening of my confidence in what I have to say, whether this is through my poetry, song-writing or other creative activities. From this, I am full of ideas I want to follow through. In addition I feel validated by the feedback I have received from the war veterans who witnessed the film. I do not want *Seven days down south: a war story* to gather dust in a library.

Since showing the film to family, friends, peers and colleagues, I am taking my first step to make my work more public. I am entering a 20-minute edited film in the Cornwall short film competition. I am focussing on the theme of loss by reworking chapters Sunday 11th November and the epilogue supplemented by further dialogue. This is the next stage in its maturation. I would like *Seven days down south: a war story* to be published in some form and I also believe as a stand-alone DVD it has the makings of a useful tool for working with war veterans. I have several leads on film companies who might be interested in working with me. There is clearly the potential for this to lead to further research, publication and presentation at conferences. One thing that is certain is that the passion and desire to work with war veterans in some capacity has become very strong recently.

In addition I am considering writing a book narrative about living with the experience of war and its consequences. The anecdotal stories I have heard over the years from fellow war veterans are rich and textured. I believe they require a voice. My next multi-media project is to film war veterans telling their stories and frame these within specific themes regarding war and PTSD: for example, the reluctant hero, grieving for the loss, and losing the innocence. Some of these themes have arisen out of the research process engaged with during the making of *Seven days down south: a war story*.

How has this helped me to keep on respecting my mental health disability?

Every day of my life I connect with my war story, whether this is through the sound of jets that still make me freeze, continual dreaming about war, experiences of marginalisation within society, and knowing I have to adopt well tested strategies to cope and function when

my PTSD is bad. War is a constant in my life, sometimes hanging around in the background as a fleeting distraction and sometimes foregrounded as a lasting inconvenience.

I cannot answer with any heartfelt honesty whether the process of disclosure through *Seven days down south: a war story* has ‘cleared the ground’ and has been therapeutic. I mean therapeutic in the sense that I am not preoccupied with the past and I am freer to engage in other activities. I do feel a stronger sense of personal identity and this process has elicited an insightfulness into aspects of my life (Hunt, 2000). I do not doubt that the reflective process that I have carried out, through my diaries, poetry, or just in my head, has helped me question the performativity and repetitive acts that constitute me as a war veteran (Youngblood Jackson, 2000).

When I went on the pilgrimage, paying a personal homage to Doc was a big part of this journey. It enabled me to accept my loss more honestly. This sadness and loss does not go away nor does it preoccupy me. It just sits in me differently. It is a sadness that I value and respect but it is also a sadness I still feel. Similarly *Seven days down south: a war story* does not move me to disconnect healthily from the past and I would not want it to. I still have PTSD and live with the consequences. I still carry the embodiments of war and I still live in what at times I see as an alien world – Civvy Street. I still struggle. However what I do possess now is a deep understanding, both academic and personal, about who I am and how I became who I am. Also I possess a great sense of pride in what I have achieved on a personal level and great sense of hope for what I might achieve on a wider level. I have taken great risk, been brave and laid naked parts of me to public scrutiny, possible rejection and even voyeurism. However, whilst I am different and feel different from this process this is not just about me because it is also about my brothers-in-arms and their struggles. It is about finding a way to make them more accepting of these struggles and the damaged parts of self that arise from experiencing war. As Douglas MacArthur (2008) said:

The soldier above all over people prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war (p.103).

Dedication



Fig 6. In Remembrance.

Veterans

On victory parades of pomp and pride

You see us

With medals on chest and poppies red

You see us

Engraved on stones in village greens

You see us

In brass-handled coffins draped with flags

You see us

But through prison bars and suicide peepholes

Do you see us?

Through alcoholic breath and blankets soiled

Do you see us?

In cardboard beds on streets of shame

Do you see us?

With suicidal intention to ease the pain

Do you see us?

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