

**School of Design and Art**

**Lala Land:  
A Discursive Ethnography of Professional Commercial  
Photographers**

**Trigg Craig**

**This thesis is presented for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
of  
Curtin University**

**September 2016**

## **Declaration**

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The photographic images used in this digital submission have been blanked out for IP reasons and to protect the privacy of those who participated in this research.

Trigg Craig

## **Abstract**

Marking a shift away from the textual and exegetic understandings about photography gleaned from analysing photos, this research investigates the professional practice of commercial photography with prominence given to the significance of the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality. As such, this research is about relationships: professional relationships between photographers and their clients and commercial relationships between photographers and the discursive formations with which those clients seek to engage.

Following contemporary ethnographers such as Marcus, Orr and Pink, the findings presenting within this thesis are based on evidence that emerged during two years of ethnographic fieldwork with fifteen professional commercial photographers who worked in Perth, Western Australia between August 2001 and January 2003.

Having shifted from the analysis of photos to the analysis of practice, I use Foucault's conception of discourse to analyse the knowledge, materiality and power that constitutes these relationships. It is with Foucault's sense of discourse, as both the objective and the means of power, that I depict the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality as essentially reciprocal.

Whilst this reciprocity is, perhaps by definition, at the nexus of the photographers' practice, having rendered it receptive to both description and analysis, it is the photographers' awareness, management and accommodation of this reciprocity that is the key finding of this research.

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank my family, friends and colleagues for their support during the protracted process of writing this thesis. In particular, I thank my mother Delys Craig and my sister Elsja Stein for their support. I thank the photographers who participated in this research for their interest, their willingness to participate and for their steadfastness as I came to realise what I was doing. Most importantly, I owe a debt of gratitude to my supervisors, Ann Schilo and Joan Wordrop.

To Ann and Joan,

We made it.

Thankyou.

# Table of Contents

Declaration .....	i
Abstract .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Plates and Figures.....	viii
Prologue.....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Background.....	5
Why photographers and not photos?	5
Background to the research: the place and the people	13
The place: Perth WA	13
The people: professional commercial photographers	17
House keeping	21
My role as a commercial photographer	21
The inclusion of an Art photographer	21
The inclusion of photos.	22
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework .....	23
Michel Foucault's discourse analysis	23
Power, knowledge, the subject and the individual	26
The discursively empowered individual	30
The (photographer) self and the (client) self	32
Discursive practices	34

Photographic Statements	35
Commercial photo as Discursive event	39
Chapter Three: Methodology and Literature Review.....	41
Contemporary world ethnography	41
Participant observation: Assisting	42
Field site construction: the multi-sited imaginary	48
Sorting the winks from the twitches: the multi- <i>sighted</i> imaginary	53
Interviewing: The Space	57
Chapter Four: the Working Day.....	63
A one-day photo shoot	63
Commonly used production methods	71
A series of Polaroid or digital images	72
Making multiple exposures	75
Working with an extended time frame	78
Chapter Five: the Studio and Other methods.....	82
The Studio	82
Fixtures & fittings and plant & equipment	88
Cycloramas	88
Cameras	88
Camera Bags	90
Lights	92
Things and stuff	93
Further Methods	95
Unarticulated understandings	96
Photogenia	100

Chapter Six: Editorial, Corporate, Advertising -	the Reciprocities .....	108
Editorial client-briefs		109
Corporate client-briefs		114
Advertising client-briefs		117
Chapter Seven: Preference and Production .....		124
Naming the self: service providers and communicators		124
Measured Expression		128
Less pejorative expression: not lying, but not telling the truth		131
Investing in themselves		138
Visibility and the production of Ben		142
The production of all		144
The redemption of Tom		147
Labels		149
Chapter Eight: A-typical Scenarios .....		155
The professional wedding couple: a case study		155
Interpreting the client-brief		156
The client-brief check-list:		157
Analysing Jeremy's interpretation of the client-brief		159
Silencing and Naturalising		161
Award and Invitation		164
Ben's observations		168
Diminished concern for the truth and softer sense of reality		171
Chapter Nine: Summary and Findings .....		174
The reciprocity		176
The reciprocity varies		176

The Reciprocity is formative	178
The Reciprocity is empowering	179
The photographer self and the client self	181
Epilogue .....	185
Bibliography .....	186

## List of Plates and Figures

<u>Plate number</u>		<u>Photographer</u>	<u>Page</u>
Prologue	Visualising the thesis	(Hung Ky 2012)	x
Plate 01	Proof Sheet 1	Fredo	76
Plate 02	Proof Sheet 2	Fredo	76
Plate 03	Invitation-Brief	Nicole	77
Plate 04	Fox Talbot's Studio	(Waterman 2002)	83
Plate 05	Construction Co. Promotion	Nicole	105
Plate 06	Editorial/Invitation	Ian	111
Plate 07	Editorial	Ben	112
Plate 08	Editorial	Ben	112
Plate 09	Editorial	Ben	113
Plate 10	Editorial	Ben	113
Plate 11	Promotion/Branding	Nicole	115
Plate 12	Promotion/Branding	Nicole	115
Plate 13	Promotion/Branding	Nicole	120
Plate 14	Real Estate Sales Brochure	Nicole	121
Plate 15	Food Magazine Editorial	Ben	127
Plate 16	Polaroid	Ben	139
Plate 17	Award Aesthetic	Ian	165
Plate 18	Award	Trigg	166
Plate 19	Invitation-Brief	Nicole	167
Figure 01	Action Enquiry Spiral	(Kemmis 1983)	074

## Prologue

PhD research is often a difficult journey as the candidate moves from undergraduate understandings to doctoral levels of insight and original thinking. This thesis has perhaps been a more difficult journey than most as, to paraphrase a psychiatrist's comment in support of my most recent extension of time, I have had first to work around my learning disability before being able to represent my intellectual ability.

I would like to thank the University for their patience and consideration in affording the ongoing extensions to my candidature, for enabling me to commandeer rooms in which I could set out my thesis and for the support and understanding of my professional colleges during this time. It is in this spirit of patience, understanding and determination that I provide the following prologue to my thesis.

*I am a photographer. Perhaps not by chance. For most of my life, through school and my undergraduate degree, the written language had remained obscure and unmanageable: school being a series of failed exams, my undergrad degree being largely photographic and my honours dissertation not requiring the writing of original thought in the way a doctoral thesis does.*

*It was some years and several requests for extensions of time in to my PhD research before I first realised that something must be wrong. I should be able to do this but I could not and I had never not been able to do something that I had tried to do. An array of neuro-psychological tests revealed what is termed by psychologists as a moderate scatter through my neuro-psychological profile: high aptitudes in most areas masking over and assuaging the effects of one particularly deficient area.*

*Perhaps a terminal realization for some, it was only at this point that I really became interested in what I was doing: having enrolled in a PhD program for no reason other than I was offered a scholarship to do so. Now, with clinical reports*

*showing that, on paper at least, I should not be able to do this, I sensed a challenge. Perhaps not one I could refuse, for I also envisaged the undesirable effects of a self imposed glass ceiling if I walked away from the first thing that I was unable to do.*

*On clinical advice I began using medication usually associated with the treatment of learning disorders in children. What can I say? It changed my life. For the first time my mind could be still for long enough for me to get from one end of a sentence to the other without falling over myself trying to skip ahead.*

*I could read.*

*Writing, however, continued to be laborious – protracted – painful and taxing. Within in relatively short time though, a procedural method by which I could manage the linear syntax of written language had emerged to me. It was protracted, requiring the writing out, on individual A6 pieces of card, every heading and topic sentence in my thesis. I arranged these on pin up boards so that I might access and arrange my thoughts at a glance and in a visual way.*

*Soon I was using my remedial process for the strategic rhetorical possibilities its more spacial syntax afforded. I was at last making progress. It was going to take a long time, but now with the right people to help me, I realised that I could actually do this. What had once been blind faith in my self had now become real. I set up a workspace in temporarily unused rooms in various 'off the grid' locations around the university, moving on when I needed to. Not small rooms and not as I found them. I soundproofed them to minimise distractions and clad the walls 360° with pin-up boards to accommodate my visual approach to writing.*

*There were times, as I sat in the middle of one of these rooms, surrounded by my thesis in progress, when I looked around and thought - this is the real story – perhaps for another day. At other times I took my hat off to the people who had been able to walk away from their projects. I did not have what it took to do that.*

*I was here for now.*

*With a mind set suitably described by the saying 'crash or crash through', my pin-up boards came to include a photo of Mount Everest with the climbing route marked*

*out and an illustration of Captain Ahab, lashed and entangled to a submerging Moby Dick.*

*One way or another ...*



Visualising the thesis, Building 201, Curtin.

(Hung Ky 2012)

## Introduction

The aim of this research is to investigate the professional practice of commercial photography with prominence given to the significance of the relationship between professionalism and commerciality. As such, this thesis is about relationships: professional relationships between photographers and their clients and commercial relationships between photographers and the discursive formations with which those clients seek to engage.

The photographers who I worked with during the fieldwork stage of this research are professional in several different ways that are relevant to this research. They do photography for reasons of livelihood. As self-employed service providers, their occupational professionalism (Evetts 2009) involves relations of trust, respect and discretion: they can be depended upon to provide their service to their client's satisfaction. As such, one key aspect of maintaining their professionalism is maintaining their own ability to provide their service.

The photographers' practice is commercial in that the photographs they produce go towards the production, exchange and maintenance of economic, social and cultural capital. Where their professionalism is embodied in their relationships with their clients, their commerciality may be described as the relationship between themselves and the archives of the discursive formations with which their clients seek to engage. Reflecting perhaps the most elementary aspect of the relationship between their professionalism and commerciality, each photographer's discursive relationships are as multifaceted as their professional relationships are dispersed and multifarious. Their professionalism is in their commerciality as much as their commerciality is in their professionalism.

Having shifted from the analysis of photos to the analysis of the professional practice of commercial photography, I use Foucault's conception of discourse to analyse the knowledge, materiality and power that constitutes these relationships. It is with this Foucauldian sense of discourse, as both the objective of power, but also its means, that I argue that the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality is essentially reciprocal.

As a practicing commercial photographer, I was aware that a gulf existed between both popular and critical understandings about commercial photography and those with which professional commercial photographers practiced. Compared to those of practicing commercial photographers, both popular and critical understandings are characterised by assumptions of photographic reality and an associated sense of objective positivism.

It is important to emphasise that the photographers who participated in this research were not a collective in any sense that existed independently of this research. For this reason, as I discuss in detail in chapter three, the principal contemporary ethnographic method that I used to most productively conceptualise my contemporary world field site is the 'multi-sited imaginary' (Marcus 1995): the practice of establishing imaginary boundaries so as to annex and incorporate multiple sites to form elaborate multi-sited fields.

Further to this established practice, the most distinctive methodological aspects to this research are what I have termed the 'Multi-*sighted* Imaginary' and 'The Space'. I formulated the multi-sighted imaginary to work in much the same way as the multi-sited imaginary operates. Where the multi-sited imaginary annexes distinct locations and incorporates them to form one field site, my multi-sighted imaginary allowed me to see each of these otherwise dispersed and disparate subjects in relation to each and all of the others. I was then able to compare and evaluate a range of otherwise isolated behaviours and understandings. The Space is a distinguishable period of time that emerged from the approximately 120 interviews that I completed with the photographers. It is a period of time during an interview when the participating interviewee has become more actively engaged with the ideas under discussion than they had previously. Having recognised, accentuated and made sophisticated use of this temporally delineated space, I describe it chapter three as a contemporary-world ethnographic epistemology.

In chapter four I examine the photographers' professional and commercial relationships as they manifest in the moments during and leading up to the production of photos for their clients. I do this by describing a one-day photo shoot and critiquing some of the photographers' more readily recognised production

techniques or methods. Whilst these methods may be readily recognised techniques for the production of photos, I describe them as a means by which the photographers manage their professional commercial reciprocity.

In chapter five I draw on Foucault's conception of power in terms of relationships and in particular his notion of 'discursive practices' (Foucault 1981) to examine the photographers' studios, equipment and other methods of production further to those described in the previous chapter. By considering the photographers' studios and equipment as discursive practices, as all-encompassing combinations of textual, material, physical and discursive elements, I am able to distinguish between the studio as a place and as a method for the production of photos. This distinction becomes further apparent when I consider the methodical function of photographers' studios in the specific terms of the thesis: their management of the relationship between their professional and commercial relationships.

The further methods that I evaluate in chapter five include the ways that the photographers articulate visual concepts and their deft use of photogenia (Barthes 1977). It is significant that these methods were less immediately apparent to me than those described in the previous chapter. Some, which were only made conspicuous to me by their absence, reflect understandings that are necessary to the photographers' management and accommodation of their professional and commercial relationships, but the verbal expression of which is not.

In chapter six I examine some of the differences between three distinct types of work that the photographers do: editorial, corporate and advertising. In particular, I analyse how the type and magnitude of reciprocity between a photographers' professional and commercial relationships differs depending on the type of work being undertaken.

In chapter seven I examine some of the particular ways that the photographers attempt to occupy certain subject positions and how this practice causes the distinction between the empowered individual and the produced subject to be, at times, ambiguous. Drawing on Foucault's technologies of the self, I show how the photographers care for their professional selves by influencing the understandings of other people, including their clients, by naming themselves, expressing

themselves in certain ways and, when they feel it is necessary to do so, providing alternative less pejorative descriptions of themselves and their practice.

In chapter eight I analyse two examples of the photographers' work which are atypical in several ways which throw aspects of their more usual practice into much sharper relief. The first involves a case study of one particular client-brief. The second is an analysis of the common but infrequent practice by all of the photographers of producing photos to submit for award to industry bodies like the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) or by invitation from entities like charity organisations.

In the final chapter I briefly recount the significant characteristics of the photographers' professionalism and their commerciality as first outlined in chapter one. I revisit findings arrived at in the preceding chapters in terms of the difference and conformity that characterize the photographers' professional and commercial relationships respectively. I then conclude this thesis by describing the reciprocity between the photographers' professionalism and their commerciality as being such that the single most important characteristic of each is its effect on the other. The nature, purpose and extent of their commerciality, their archival relationships, is determined by their professional relationships between themselves and their clients. In turn, the net specificity of each photographer's discursive expertise, amongst other things, determines the make-up of his or her client-base: their commerciality facilitates their professionalism and their professionalism facilitates their commerciality. Underscoring this reciprocity, necessity is indeed the mother of invention here. The purpose of the discursive relationship is professional and the nature of the discursive relationship is commercial.

Ultimately, the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity may be described as the relationship between a photographer's knowledge and the client's will to power.

# Chapter One: Background

## Why photographers and not photos?

While undertaking my honours project, which involved a semiotic analysis of fashion photographs, I was also working as a commercial photographer and found myself analysing some images produced by photographers with whom I had worked. As I moved between photographic theory and practice, I noticed that other photographers exhibited limited awareness of the semiotic approach to understanding photography. Certainly no such understandings were expressed when they were producing photos. So it was when I was both analysing and producing photos that I came to realise the semiotic approach to understanding photos seemed only to proceed in a direction other than that in which the practice of photography lay.

I had read the French theorist Roland Barthes' *The Fashion System* (Barthes 1983), although it was another of his texts that pricked at my imagination whenever I reflected on this lack of correspondence between theory and practice. In *Camera Lucida* (Barthes 1993) Barthes observes that:

... a photograph can be the object of three practices (or of three emotions, or of three intentions): to do, to undergo, to look. The Operator is the photographer. The Spectator is ourselves, all of us who glance through collections of photographs – in magazines and newspapers, in books, albums, archives ... And the person or thing photographed is ...the Spectrum of the photograph (Barthes 1993 9).

Significantly, Barthes goes on to tell us that one of these practices was barred to him and he was not to investigate it, saying that: 'I am not a photographer, not even an amateur photographer: too impatient for that' (9). As famous as his semiotic insight both into photography and via photography has become, I suggest the reason why the practice of 'Operator' was barred to Barthes had little to do with his ability as a photographer or impatience as a person. It was the exegetic

inclination of his approach to understanding photography that denied Barthes that adventure. His textual approach relied on texts being to hand: photographic grist for his semiotic mill.

This reliance marks what I call the spectator/operator gulf, between textually afforded understandings about photography, like Barthes' and others,<sup>1</sup> and the understandings with which professional commercial photographers practice. The former can only commence at the point where the latter finishes: the photo. This apparent gulf led me, as a PhD candidate, to propose what has become the background to this research: that the insight gained by exploring the operator side of this gulf may augment and ultimately provide a valuable alternative to the existing critical understandings arrived at via the textual approach.

As a practicing photographer, I was aware that this spectator/operator gulf also existed between popular understandings about commercial photography and those with which professional commercial photographers practiced. This popular gulf exists for a variety of reasons, two of which are the familiarity that comes with the ubiquity of the commercial photographic image and the ease of production of photos generally. It is important to recognise that this ubiquity affected how we understood photography prior to any digitally afforded proliferation of photographic images. As Gisele Freund observed in 1980:

Photography is now so much a part of our daily lives that our familiarity causes us to overlook it. One of its singular characteristics is its acceptance in every social class (Freund 1980 4).

Now, the ubiquity of the commercial photographic image is indisputable. One cannot travel far, in even the poorest countries of the world, without seeing a photo that has been produced for a commercial purpose. In wealthier, capitalist, consumer

---

<sup>1</sup> Others textualists include: John Berger, (1983). *Ways of Seeing*. London BBC; John Berger and Jean Mohr, (1989). *Another way of telling*. Cambridge, Granta Books; Tony Thwaites et al. (1994). *Tools for Cultural Studies: an Introduction*. Melbourne, Macmillan; Jean Baudrillard, (2006). *The Evil Demon of Images*. Sydney, The Power Institute of Fine Arts.

cultures these commercial images are unavoidable.

In the thirty six years since Freund wrote about our over familiarity with photographic images, the ability to produce photos has increasingly been relocated to within the means of ordinary people. Leaving aside mobile/smart phones, vast ranges of cameras, which are affordable to the point of being disposable, are now available. These are designed for convenient operation with a minimum of knowledge. When viewed from the spectators' side of the gulf, this ease of photographic production and the increasing ubiquity of commercial photographic images encourages the popular misconception that commercial photographs may be produced with similar ease.

A further related reason why I proposed to investigate the practice of commercial photography prior to the material existence of the photographic text is because there is a tangibility or representational realism inherent to photographic images that influences its spectators: critical and popular alike. In semiotic terms, C.S. Peirce describes signs that function with this tangibility as iconic: where the signifier represents the signified by having a likeness to it (Noth 1995). With photographic images, this relationship is so highly iconic that it can cause ordinary people to read photos as objective *re*-presentations of the things in them. Frank Webster, in *The New Photography* (Webster 1980), notes the particular strength of this relationship in the visual language of photos, suggesting that '... people do perceive photographs as carrying a tangibility lacking in other communicative forms' and that consequently, 'we believe photographs to be more real than words' (20). Critical readers of photographic texts may be more questioning of this tangibility than are most people. However, the semiotician Daniel Chandler argues that we all make interpretive assumptions based on this highly iconic relationship between photos and what they are taken to represent. Echoing Freund's point above, Chandler suggests that this feature of the medium tends to blind its users to the part it plays in constructing their experiential worlds (Chandler 2005).

One might expect that the advances in digital technology, which have aided in the proliferation and ease of production of commercial photos, could also provide for a softening of the effect of the highly iconic semiotic function of photographs.

However, critical and popular understandings of photography continue to be influenced by the tangibility of the photographic image. Today, ordinary people and critical theorists alike are well aware that photos can be manipulated with readily available software such as Adobe Photoshop. Although Cara Finnegan gives us evidence to the contrary suggesting that, even in this digital age, despite our post-photographic understandings, 'we [continue to] assume photographs to be "true" or "real" until we are given a reason to doubt them (Finnegan 2001 1). Hindsight supports this. Prior to the digital revolution, Frank Webster had already argued that: '... most of us know that photographs can and do deceive' (Webster 1980 20). Neither critical cognisance nor any post-photographic understanding afforded by digital technology can grant complete immunity to this tangibility and the assumptions of photographic reality that it fosters.

This assumption is problematic. I call it the reality issue. Some readers interpret photos as realities because the photos look like the things in them. Whilst readers of photos continue to assume that photos represent, in some way, a reality, it is significant that the people on the operator side of this gulf, professional commercial photographers, make no such assumptions. In fact, a lack of concern for the relationship between photos and the realities that those photos are assumed to represent has been aptly articulated by many distinguished photographers. One is the London-based fashion photographer, Nick Knight. His reply to U.S. President Clinton's criticism of the Heroin Chic<sup>2</sup> style, which both Knight and the fashion industry generally were promoting at the time, was 'If you want reality, look out the window' (quoted in Wren 1997 22). Knight contended that such a relationship did not concern him as a photographer and nor should it concern the people who look at his photos.

Knight makes a sound and not uncritical assertion. To continue to try to gain insight into photography by looking at the photos is to disregard a fundamental premise upon which all post-structural thought is based. The semiotic relationship between

---

<sup>2</sup> 'Heroin Chic' was a style sported by some female and male fashion models during the mid 1990s. It was characterised by gaunt androgynous bodies, pale skin and sunken eyes: the aesthetic affording connotations of the ill effects of drug addiction.

signifier and signified is arbitrary – no matter what its modality. Implicitly underpinning the work of anyone who addresses the question of a photo's relationship to a reality is the assumption of a reality with which to relate. For John Berger to suggest in *About Looking* (Berger 1980) that a photo is a tracing, he assumes a reality to be traced. For Barthes to suggest in *Camera Lucida* (Barthes 1993) that the photo has a privileged relationship with reality, he assumes a reality with which it is possible to have privileged relations. For Jean Baudrillard to speak of the confusion between the sphere of images and the sphere of reality, as he does in *The Evil Demon Of Images* (Baudrillard 2006), he must assume a reality with which to confuse.

These problematic assumptions of photographic reality are accompanied by a sense of objective positivism in photographic language. This language, in turn, reinforces the perspective gained from the spectator side of the gulf: that photos are objective *re*-presentations of the things in them. Desiree Navab is one of the few authors who also recognise this objective positivism in photographic language as an ongoing cause for misunderstandings about photography. In *Re-picturing photography: A language in the making* (Navab 2001) she suggests that: 'This universally employed language remains a largely unconscious and unquestioned convention in photography' (69) and goes on to examine the casual use of positivist photographic terms like 'shoot', 'capture', 'expose' and 'take'. Navab does not pick a popular or easy mark in taking issue with the language used by critic and author Susan Sontag in her seminal book *On Photography* (Sontag 1977). Terms like 'shoot', 'capture' and 'expose' had attracted Sontag's critical eye for their loaded masculinity and associated connotations of power and control. For example, Sontag suggests that the voyeuristic fantasy of the male photographer, 'of having a gun, knife or tool strapped between their legs' (14) is no more than that; a male photographer's fantasy. She also suggests '... that there is something predatory in the act of taking a picture', that 'to photograph people is to violate them, ...' (15). Navab contends that, having distinguished fantasy from reality, Sontag ultimately fails herself through her own use of positivist terms.

In questioning this language convention, Navab shows that positivism operates in

critical photographic discourse. It would seem that, in the same way that the insight gained via a semiotic approach does not grant the reader immunity to the tangibility of the photographic signifier, even critical theorists the calibre of Sontag are not immune to a reflexive use of language when talking or writing about photography. In defence of Sontag though, she is in good company. Her language betrays the same assumptions as those made by Berger, Barthes and Baudrillard, noted above, for to shoot, capture, expose or indeed to violate something presupposes something to shoot, capture, expose or to violate. Positivist language reinforces the assumption of reality, which in turn permits the use of that language: the ongoing use of which must surely limit any critical description of photography to within the boundaries of the positivist paradigm.

One further reason why I set out to investigate the practice of photography prior to the material existence of the photo is because this sense of positivism is noticeably diminished in the language used on the operator side of the gulf. Consider the relative grammar. Popular and critical understandings about photography, which are premised with the assumption that photos refer to realities, employ the terms 'shoot', 'take', 'capture', and 'expose' as verbs. Whilst practicing photographers do use these terms as verbs, we also use them as nouns. Professional commercial photographers 'go to the shoot', or 'do the shoot'. When somebody phones the studio and the photographer is away working, they are 'on a shoot'. Commercial photographers 'make an exposure'. The directors and camera people working in the motion picture industry 'do the take'. It is only when used as verbs that the terms become positivist and attract connotations of violence. As nouns, any sense of positivism is diminished.

Having set out to investigate the practice of photography, two separate events brought me to the more specific question of the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality. The first was a proposed pilot study and the second was a subsequent interview with one of the photographer participants.

Versed in semiotics and aware that professional commercial photographers of my acquaintance were less so, I had grown curious as to what value an applied

semiotic approach to their practice might hold. I proposed a pilot study, involving all of the participating photographers, in the form of a text semiotics workshop. At the time I did not mean 'applied' in the way that Roland Barthes applied his semiotics to interrogate cultural texts in order to expose ideological underpinnings.<sup>3</sup> Closer to the applied semiotics of my proposal was the semiotic theory and praxis of Umberto Eco. As I was with Barthes, I was attracted to Eco for the scientific tincture of his semiotic endeavours. Eco claimed that:

Every single thing I have done comes down to the same thing: a stubborn effort to understand the mechanisms by which we give meaning to the world around us' (in Sullivan 1986)

Drawing particularly from Eco's text semiotics of metaphor, iconicity and ideology (Noth 1995 325), I proposed to investigate the possibilities of inverting the semiotic model for use during the production of commercial photos. Where Eco's book, *The Name of the Rose* (Eco 1983), has been described as a creative work of applied semiotics (Noth 1995), I proposed a commercial work of applied semiotics.

The study did not proceed for several reasons. On a practical level, the logistics of corralling and keeping these professionally busy, visually orientated people together for the duration of a demanding post-structuralist workshop became difficult. On a theoretical level, Barthes had already acknowledged that his sense for the scientific possibilities afforded by a semiotic approach, with which he performed his systematic study, *The Fashion System* (Barthes 1983), had been nothing more than a euphoric dream (Noth 1995). The terminal reason, however, was purely heuristic. With this research having taken its ethnographic turn, it became obvious that the quasi scientific parameters of such a workshop study could in no way reflect or reproduce the usual working environment in which professional commercial photography was done.

If I had to point to a eureka moment during this research, the moment when I

---

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Barthes, R. (1973). *Mythologies*. London, Granada.

turned, irreversibly, to focus on the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and their commerciality, it was during an interview with Tom. In the months leading up to this interview, in a bid to throw some light onto the agency with which professional commercial photographers practiced, I conjured a plan to identify instances of the photographers doing radical practice.

There was some methodological purpose behind this decision. Grounded theory exponents, Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss refer to this process of turning a concept inside out or upside down, so the researcher may examine the problem from a different perspective in order to highlight significant properties, the flip-flop technique (Corbin and Strauss 1990). I thought that identifying instances of radical practice might somehow throw what these photographers actually did into greater relief. Nonetheless, despite numerous interviews with each of the photographers, nothing had come from this line of enquiry.

I had spoken with Tom about it more than I had with the other photographers. On this day, having discussed radical behaviour for about an hour and a half whilst enjoying a meal and a bottle of wine, Tom returned from getting a cigarette and said to me, simply: 'It's not our job'. The effect that Tom's statement was about to have both on me and this research was seismic. With those four words – It's not our job - he terminated my endeavours to identify instances of radical practice. At the same time though, I did realise that I had established something, for in that same breath he refocussed my efforts towards the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and their commerciality. The 'not' in Tom's 'It's not our job', was something other than mere negation: something more than a simple refutation of my ill-conceived hypothesis. It was not that it *is not* their job to be radical that was significant. It was that it *is* their job *not* to be. The relationship between their professionalism and their commerciality demands this.

## **Background to the research: the place and the people**

### **The place: Perth WA**

The place where I worked with and interviewed the photographers who participated in this research is the city of Perth in the state of Western Australia. An affluent first-world city, Perth is also the most isolated and remote capital city in the world. Both of these factors, affluence and remoteness, impact the photographers' professional and commercial relationships. As service providers, they have become increasingly globally aware whilst also remaining sensitive to the local economic and social environment of their clients. As such, I describe the field-site for this research, in terms of economics, technology and geography, as being both global and local.

During the later decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the trade liberalization commonly referred to as globalization (Ceglowski 2000, Slaughter 2000) had shaped Perth in definite and undeniable ways. Economies such as Perth's and indeed Australia's, which were once separated by artificial barriers to trade and finance were, by the time of my fieldwork, linked to global formations in an increasingly dense network of economic interactions (Slaughter 2000). At the same time though, in a global environment where even some national markets are too small to permit efficient levels of production (Sachs 2000), a city such as Perth, which at the time of my fieldwork had a population of just under two million (ABS 2012), may only create so much economic activity. Goods and services that could not be viably produced here in Perth have been outsourced to other parts of the world. These global economic principles continue to shape Perth's commercial landscape in ways that impact upon the photographers.

The international economist Jeffrey Sachs (Sachs 2000) discusses the effects of these principles, in terms that are pertinent to the professional practice of commercial photography, with this comparison between the trade of similar and dissimilar goods. Both the USA and Europe make and sell, for example, cars. The USA finds it efficient to produce cheaper cars and then buy some expensive European cars. Likewise, the inverse is the case for Europe. The effect is that car-

makers in both Europe and the USA remain employed and consumers in each country enjoy a range of cars. The effect of globalization on commercial photographers becomes apparent when we consider Sachs' example trading dissimilar goods. When the USA exports, for example, high technology goods into Asia and Asia exports labour intensive goods to the USA, the net result is that low skilled workers in the USA and the high tech workers in Asia both find themselves with less work. The significance of this to commercial photography is that, while Asia's technicians are not building high tech gadgets, Asia's commercial photographers are not being asked to photograph them – the technicians or the gadgets. Soft drink production in Perth provides a clear example of this principle affecting the city's professional commercial photographers. Due both to the economies of scale and trade liberalization associated with global economics, local soft drink producer Weaver & Lock became unable to profitably compete with the multi-national Coca-Cola Amatil and went out of business. Whilst Coca-Cola Amatil took up market share in Perth, the photographs used for their advertising and promotional material continued to be produced elsewhere.

National manifestations of these global economic principles have also shaped Perth's commercial landscape in ways that impact upon the photographers. Many businesses seeking economies of scale have consolidated administration, production and advertising on the east coast of the country. Department stores, which are large significant consumers of commercial photography, provide an effective example. Since the long-established, Perth family-owned, department store Aherns was acquired by the Sydney-based retail chain David Jones, the production of their advertising and promotional material has been done in Sydney. Two of the photographers who participated in this research lost ongoing accounts with Aherns as a result of this merger. A similar outcome followed the acquisition of the long-established, Perth family-owned department store Boans, by the Coles Myer group.

A net effect of these global economic forces for the professional commercial photographers who work in Perth has been an ever-decreasing pool of large commercial accounts on which they can work. It is a small irony that whilst one of these commercial photographers may enjoy a Coke after a hard day's work, he or

she is not given the opportunity to produce the photographs for the Coke billboards and other advertisements that are so prominent in Perth's streetscapes. It is also interesting though, both in terms of the photographers' professionalism and commerciality, that as the larger accounts once held by some of the photographers centralise to other parts of the globe, those photographers find themselves doing more jobs of less magnitude and more variety. One, seemingly contrary, effect of globalisation on these photographers is that their client base has become more dispersed and multifarious.

The engine of this global economic transformation, the digital revolution and the resultant expanded communications capacity (Slaughter 2000), has particular significance for the people of Perth. Although it has at times been difficult to see beyond Western Australia's resource mining and export boom,<sup>4</sup> much of Perth's affluence has been made possible by advances in digital technology. When considered in conjunction with Perth's geographic isolation, these advances position the city, and its commercial photographers, uniquely within the global village. I call this Perth's 'geo-digital' relationship. Its uniqueness is in the asymmetry of the relationship between Perth's geographic isolation and the capacity, afforded by digital technology, for Perth's people to communicate with the rest of the world.

Perth's geographic isolation is extreme. Beyond the Wheat-belt and the pastoral leases located to Perth's north and east, there is a desert. Beyond that desert is another desert. If one traverses these deserts, one is still in Australia. Reasons for Western Australian's continual, if subdued, secessionist sentiments begin to make sense. Canberra, the nation's capital, is 3,750 kms away and the larger cities, Sydney and Melbourne, 4,000kms. Flights to any of these cities take at least three and a half hours and this increases to five hours for the return flight. If one chooses

---

<sup>4</sup> At the time of my fieldwork, Western Australia was experiencing a massive mining boom driven by the international, particularly Chinese, demand for iron ore. During this time, Perth grew rapidly. In 2000, the mining and petroleum sectors accounted for just under 80% of Western Australia's export income. In 2005/6, this had risen to just over 80%. In 20012/13, mining and petroleum in Western Australia accounted for almost 90% of the state's income, falling slightly from 91% in 2010: Gregory, J. (2013). *Exports. D. o. M. a. Petroleum*, Government of Western Australia.

to travel in another direction, as Western Australians increasingly decide to, there is ocean. It goes further than the deserts. A flight to Jakarta, the closest big Asian city to Perth, takes about the same time as it does to Sydney or Melbourne.

So, with isolation forming one intense element of Perth's geo-digital position, the significance of the other factor, digital technology, can be understood by retracing the digital revolution. In 1965, the co-founder of Intel, Gordon Moore, suggested that the number of transistors on a chip will double approximately every two years (Moore 2013). Not only has this prediction been borne out, its effect has been experienced by users of personal computers, including the photographers who participated in this research. For example, the first Apple Mac, built in 1984, cycled at 1.8 megahertz. Between fifteen and twenty years ago, an Apple Mac laptop cycled at 10 megahertz. In 2010 a MacBook cycled at 2.4 gigahertz and in 2015 at 2.9 gigahertz. The impact this advance in technology has had on global communication, and for inhabitants of an isolated but affluent city such as Perth, is substantial. The asymmetry of Perth's geo-digital relationship becomes evident when we consider the following. In 1965, when Moore made his prediction, it took approximately thirty hours to fly between Perth and London. In the fifty years since, during which digital communication speed and capacity redoubled every two years, air travel has also reduced the space between Perth and the rest of the world. However, whilst flights have become cheaper, flight times are only marginally shorter. Where digital computing power has doubled twenty five times, it still takes twenty hours to fly between Perth and London.

When put in ethnographic terms, Perth and its people can be considered as a bounded culture. While I am aware of criticisms from anthropologists such as John Morten (1999), who argues that many anthropologists fail themselves by continuing to write as though cultures were bounded entities, I take a position in which I accept that these boundaries are imaginary, yet useful as a means of demarcating my field site as well as authenticating the research subjects within it. As geographically bounded as we in Perth are, we are to greater and lesser extents, influenced from beyond these borders by, for example, news programs like Al Jazeera, Deutsche Welle and the BBC, by haute couture as it hits the catwalks of

Paris and Milan, by the U.S. Super Bowl, the Stanley Cup, the Tour de France and the World Cup in Korea or South Africa.

Similarly, the photographs produced by professional commercial photographers in Perth may arrive ready for use in another corner of the world in an instant. All things being equal in this time of freer trade and of perhaps more significance to this thesis, the images of their international colleagues may make the reverse journey with the same ease. Yet while photographic images may zoom along the information super highway, the photographers who were participant in this research may not. They remain grounded in Perth's geographic isolation. As the means for almost instant uploading and downloading of information becomes increasingly affordable to most, travel beyond Perth's borders remains expensive, time consuming and inconvenient. Our global connections in conjunction with these borders make Perth what it is. For the photographers participating in this research, it is the setting that reflects the light that exposes the film or the digital chip in their cameras. It is a setting that also reflects what they are asked, or not asked, to photograph.

### **The people: professional commercial photographers**

Of the fifteen photographers with whom I worked during the fieldwork stage of this research, all but one, who works primarily as an artist, are professional commercial photographers. It is through some preliminary definition and brief description of their professionalism and commerciality, and of how these characteristics set these photographers apart from others, that I collectively introduce the participants in this research.

#### **Professionalism**

The sociologist Julia Evetts suggests that the notion of professionalism is increasingly applied to work and workers in modern societies and that this takes two typical forms: occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism (Evetts 2009). Organizational professionalism is used increasingly by managers in work organizations and incorporates rational-legal forms of authority and

hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision-making. In contrast, occupational professionalism is a discourse constructed within professional occupational groups and incorporates collegial authority.

The photographers of this research are occupational professionals in several different ways that are relevant to this research. To begin with, it is an almost banal but necessary condition for positioning them to say that they are professional in that they do photography for a living. The significance to this thesis of this 'livelihood' sense of professional becomes apparent when we compare them with non-professional photographers, such as photographic hobbyists and enthusiasts who do photography, not for reasons of livelihood, but out of appeal and interest. In making this professional/amateur distinction however, it is important to note that I do not discount the photographic ability of enthusiastic amateur photographers. In distinguishing amateurs from professionals, I include one of the most able and enthusiastic of all photographers: Ansel Adams. His three books, *The Camera*, *The Negative* and *The Print* (Adams 1997), along with his involvement with the Sierra Club,<sup>5</sup> attest to his enthusiasm. That his depictions of mountain scapes in the Yosemite National Park remain a benchmark for the landscape genre is testament to his passion and ability as a photographer.

The photographers who participated in this research do not work out of enthusiasm for the medium: at least not all the time. Sometimes their work is fun and sometimes it is not, sometimes it is engaging, intriguing, puzzling, but much of the time it is not. The significance of this difference becomes apparent when we consider this livelihood aspect of professionalism in conjunction with professional photographers' relationships with their clients. When the amateur's enthusiasm wanes, he or she may go home. Professional photographers, whose livelihood depends on their relationships with their clients, are not afforded such luxury.

A further important aspect of their professionalism is the fact that these photographers work for themselves. The significance of this becomes apparent when we compare them to, for example, press photographers who also do

---

<sup>5</sup> Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is one of the oldest, largest and most influential environmental organizations in the United States.

photography for a living but are employed by professional organisations such as newspapers and magazines. As with amateur enthusiasts, I do not discount the ability of these salaried or tenured professional photographers and nor do I discount their organisational professionalism.

One key difference is that the photographers who participated in this research are sought out and remunerated by a variety of people who feel, for one reason or another, that the photographer is better placed than themselves to serve their visual communication requirements. Where a salaried press photographer's professional relationship is singular, in that they answer to an editor or other manager, these self-employed photographers are engaged directly by multiple different individual clients who have vastly different needs.

The photographers of this research are professional in that they provide a service to their clients. As service providers, their clients do not buy their photos, as one might buy an Ansel Adams landscape print. These clients pay for a service, which is the production of photos specific to their individual needs. As professional service providers who accept briefs from clients, these photographers are obliged, not just to fill those briefs, but to fill them in a professional manner. Eliot Freidson (Freidson 2013), who writes about types of professionalism, makes the point that maintaining professionalism is the foremost principle for service work. In the first instance, this professionalism is reflected in the way that the photographers behave towards their clients. This sense of professionalism involves relations of trust (Evetts 2009), respect, discretion and dependability. Having accepted a brief, they are obliged to keep working until their service has been provided. A client may have spent a considerable amount of money, many professional hours and much logistical effort during the weeks, days and hours leading up to a professional photo shoot. With locations sourced and paid for, models dressed and made-up and various other crew needing to be paid for a day's work, the professional obligation for these photographers to achieve an outcome becomes unavoidable, rain, hail or shine.

This obligatory sense of professionalism and its maintenance becomes suggestive of the relationship between the photographer's professionalism and their commerciality. As service providers, they are obliged to complete their task in a way

that satisfies a client's reasons for hiring them: of photographically communicating what they have been hired to communicate. As such, part of maintaining their professionalism is maintaining their own ability to provide their service.

## **Commerciality**

When viewed discretely, the commerciality of what these photographers do may also be appreciated in several different important ways, one of which becomes apparent when we consider their involvement in the production, maintenance and exchange of capital. In terms of economic capital, the commerciality of this involvement is obvious. These photographers are engaged by their clients to produce photos that are, amongst other things, used to promote the buying and selling of goods and services. As professionals, these photographers also accumulate their own economic capital by way of their fees as well as holding copyright<sup>6</sup> over an ever-increasing number of photos.

A further sense of their commerciality is gained when consideration is given to their involvement in the production, exchange and maintenance of social and cultural capital as described by, amongst others, the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986). As professionals, their education, vocational training and occupational identities (Evetts 2009) are sources of cultural capital for them. These photographers draw on this capital as part of their means of production, during and as part of, their process of producing photos: photos that their clients use for the promotion and maintenance of particular ways of being.

The principal means by which I describe and analyse the photographers' commerciality, as well as its relationship with their professionalism, is Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, which I explain in detail in the following chapter. Where the photographers' professionalism, as I have briefly described it above, is embodied in their relationships with their clients, their commerciality may be described as a relationship between themselves and the archives of the discursive

---

<sup>6</sup> In Australia, photos are classified as intellectual property and, as such, photo ownership starts with the photographer. This is covered within the Copyright Act 1968 (2016).

formations with which their clients seek to engage. These archives are a productive and delimiting aspect of everyday communication in the social world. To have a relationship with these archives alone is of no great importance. All of us have relationships, both consciously and not, with these archives.

It is the commercial nature of the photographers' discursive relationship that becomes significant here. Both distinguishing this relationship from the everyday relationships that ordinary people have with discursive archives, and underscoring the relationship between their professionalism and commerciality, the photographers' connection with and understanding of the discursive archives is conscious and purposeful. As I show throughout the following chapters, it is nothing less than their stock in trade.

## **House keeping**

### **My role as a commercial photographer**

I include myself amongst the photographers at several points through out this thesis. I do this for several reasons. Prior to the fieldwork stage of this research, I had worked for several years as a professional commercial photographer. Having some understanding of the meaningful structures pertinent to the people who I was studying, there were times when my own experience caused me to recognise the veracity of explanations provided to me by the photographers. Similarly, there were times when I recognised myself in the behaviours I observed. It is also significant that the photographers knew me as a photographer. Our conversations often reflected this and, as such, the accounts made throughout this thesis of our interviews and our working conversations reflect this.

### **The inclusion of an Art photographer**

I noted above that all but one of the photographers with whom I worked were professional commercial photographers. I include the other photographer, Dave, who is an artist, and his descriptions and working practices amongst my accounts of all the photographers for the very reason that his practice and understandings are

a-typical. His understandings often cut across the grain of the others' in ways that caused the others to become more visible to me.

### **The inclusion of photos.**

Having shifted from an analysis of photos to that of photographers, I include some photographs produced by the participating photographers through out the thesis. My intention in this is not to analyse those photos but rather to use them to illustrate the points that I am making. Whilst some photos have been used by the photographers' clients, some not used and some used several times by several clients, all photos have been provided to me by the photographer explicitly for use in this thesis. As such, the only context in which the photos should be considered is this thesis.

## Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

### Michel Foucault's discourse analysis

This thesis is about relationships: professional relationships between photographers and their clients and commercial relationships between photographers and the discursive formations with which those clients seek to engage. Having shifted from the analysis of photos, which I described in the previous background chapter as a structural analysis performed after the fact of production, to the analysis of the professional practice of commercial photography, I use Foucault's conception of discourse to analyse the knowledge, materiality and power that constitutes these relationships.

The title of this thesis 'Lala Land' came from an interview with one of the photographers, Nicole. The suitability of Foucault's work as a framework for the critical analysis undertaken throughout the following chapters emerged from that same interview. Just prior to Nicole coining this phrase she had said, '... the trouble with all advertising commercial work is that it is all a bit of a front, really'. When I asked her what this front was for, she said, without hesitating 'For the truth'. 'For the truth...?' I asked Nicole, to which she replied, again without hesitating:

Yeah - I don't think I really - I don't work in a real world at all. I'm always trying to present things a bit better than they really are - a lot better than it is in real life.

As a fellow commercial photographer, I empathised with Nicole's concerns about commercial photographs being fronts for other domains. Even as we spoke though, I began thinking about Foucault's notion of the discursive formation and, in particular, that these formations have no inherent substance or status: nothing more than '... a complex group of relations that function as a rule' (Foucault 1976 74). Front is all there is, I thought as I envisaged Nicole's front for the truth as something akin to the contingent existence of those formations. Later, reflecting on the interview, I imagined Nicole's Lala Land as a sovereign state: the Discursive

State of Lala Land, a place where one could neither lie nor tell the truth: a front for the truth, which she told me she felt she was so often asked to produce, being all that anyone in Lala Land could produce.

The applicability of Foucault's discursive framework for the specific purpose of this thesis began to crystallise. I imagined that, if Michel Foucault were a commercial photographer, his practice would be unhampered by any sense of personal obligation to produce photos that represent reality because his sense of reality is purely contingent. If he were Nicole, there would be no problem. Since truth in his reading is contestable, he would recognise that his job was, simply, to contest it. Of course, Foucault was not a commercial photographer. Even if he were, in the same moment that he picked up a camera on someone else's behalf, he would contend with the same professional, commercial and indeed discursive pressures that these photographers do. That said, Foucault's discursive framework does provide a complete and ideal theoretical context in which to locate this research about the professional practice of commercial photography. Here I explain why and how I have used Foucault's methodological principles and philosophical themes to analyse and describe the professional practice of commercial photography.

For various reasons, not least the passage of time since Foucault's inaugural lecture<sup>1</sup> at the College de France in 1970 (Hook 2001), his conception of discourse and discourse analysis has been interpreted and applied in many different ways. Some of these do not reflect the Foucauldian sense of discourse that I use for the critical framework of this thesis. For example, there is the structural linguistic form of discourse analysis as described by Gunther Kress<sup>2</sup> (Kress 1993). The relevant significant difference between this variation and Foucault's conception of discourse is its constructionist approach to the analysis of discourse. Whilst the sign remains

---

<sup>1</sup> Foucault, M. (1976). *The Discourse on Language*. The Archaeology of Knowledge. New York, Harper Colophon Books: 215-237.

<sup>2</sup> Gunther Kress is Professor of Semiotics and Education at University College London. Prior to Kress, the structural linguistic form of discourse analysis precedes Foucault's with, for example, Claude Levi-Strauss' fusing elements of the Saussurian linguistic framework with his anthropological work - Lévi-Strauss, C. (1968). *Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology*. Structural Anthropology. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press.

central to Foucault's structuralism, it does not manifest itself in the direct application of linguistic formalisms (Noth 1995).

In his article 'The Disorders of Discourse: misuse of discourse analysis as proposed by Michel Foucault' (Hook 2001), the scholar Derek Hook contends that many subsequent variations of discourse analysis are misapplications of Foucault's work. Be they misapplications or not, Hook's distinctions serve well to further emphasise the Foucauldian sense of discourse that I employ throughout this research. For example, Hook takes issue with the Discursive Action Model<sup>3</sup>, as suggested by Jonathan Potter, Derek Edwards and Margaret Wetherell (Potter, Edwards et al. 1993), the 'Conversation Analysis' as described by Michael Billig<sup>4</sup> (Billig 1999) and the linguistic analysis of spoken or written discourse as described by Malcolm Coulthard<sup>5</sup> (Coulthard 2014). These differ from Foucault's conception of discourse in that the 'discourse', which is being analysed in these models, is limited to the verbal conversational sense of discourse: the analysis of language. The Foucauldian discourse that I use throughout this thesis is situated far more closely to knowledge, materiality and power than it is to language (Hook 2001).

Hook takes particular issue with the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Ian Parker (Parker 1992) but also with CDA<sup>6</sup> generally. Hook contends that the

---

<sup>3</sup> The Discursive Action Model draws from Foucault's work, or 'continental' discourse analysis as the authors refer to it, as well as structural elements from those linguistic models mentioned immediately above.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Billig is Professor of Social Sciences at Loughborough University.

<sup>5</sup> In *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*, Coulthard, M. (2014). New York, Routledge, Coulthard describes this form of discourse analysis as the analysis of verbal interaction or discourse.

<sup>6</sup> Other than Foucauldian discourse analysis, the variant called 'Critical Discourse Analysis' or CDA has experienced the most growth since Foucault's series of lectures at the College de France. Edward Haig, Professor in the Graduate School of Languages and Cultures at Nagoya University, describes CDA as the linguistic approach to the study of ideology. Proponents of CDA include Ian Parker Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics*. New York Routledge; Norman Fairclough, Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. London, Longman; Fairclough, N (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. London & New York, Longman; Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power*. 2nd ed. Harlow, Pearson Education; Martyn Hammersley, Hammersley, M. (1997). "On the foundations of critical discourse analysis." *Language & Communication* 17(3): 237–248. Haig suggests this variant has flourished to the point of becoming a field of research in its own right Haig, E.

linguistic/textual approach, which characterise CDA, is at odds with Foucault's conception of discourse because analysis only at the textual level remains an analysis of discourse only as the effect of power whilst neglecting to engage with discourse as an instrument of power. This essentially Foucauldian feature of discourse analysis: the capacity to analyse discourse as both effect and instrument, is central to this research about the production of commercial photos.

Foucault writes that '... discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle' (Foucault 1981 52). It is with this Foucauldian sense of discourse, as both the objective of power, but also its means, that I am able to describe the reciprocating effect between the photographers professional and commercial relationships. This description is essential, for the photographers accumulate a very particular knowledge; not just professional knowledge, not just commercial knowledge, but knowledge built on the productive and delimiting effect that each of these has on the other.

### **Power, knowledge, the subject and the individual**

Fundamental to Foucault's conception of discourse is the analysis of power as a relationship between power, knowledge, the subject and the individual. This is distinct from the analysis of power as operating between competing interests or as the subjugation or otherwise of individuals by their society. I employ this conception of power, as immanent to relations between subjects and existing only through its application (Foucault 1976), to examine the photographers' professional relationships with their clients. Foucault writes that:

Let us not . . . ask why certain people want to dominate, what they seek, what is their overall strategy. Let us ask, instead, how things work at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies,

---

(2004). "Some Observations on the Critique of Critical Discourse Analysis." *Studies in language and culture*.

govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours etc (Foucault 1980 97).

In order to do this, Foucault locates the subject, the individual, within what he calls the discursive formation. Whilst Foucault often refers to discourse and the discursive formation in the singular, it is by recognising the photographers as subjects within discrete discursive formations, like for example, the discourse of 'professional commercial photography', that I am able to focus this research on their professional relationships. By locating the photographers, their clients and other associated people within a variety of discursive formations, including those with which the clients seek to engage, I am able to describe the ways in which power is brought to bear on and by the photographers.

This affords, amongst many other things, the important description of how the photographers are made subjects. Foucault notes that, during the eighteenth century, there was 'an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations' (Foucault 1990 140). Termed variously as 'anatimo-politic', 'bio-politic', 'bio-power' and 'microphysics of power', Foucault suggests these techniques are present at every level of the social body. Drawing from Foucault's earlier work, in which he analyses the relationship between power and the subject by emphasising subjectivity - the ways in which people are produced as subjects - I describe how the photographers are subjected gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted (Foucault 1980 97) by their own discourse.

Amongst the instruments by which Foucault suggests that power is brought to bear, by which individuals are subjected, are his conception of surveillance as developed from Jeremy Bentham's (1787) panopticon prison design and the confessional and. The design of Bentham's panopticon consists of a guard's tower in the centre surrounded by a ring shaped building composed of prisoners' cells (McHoul and Grace 2015). Foucault's development of this design is key to the analysis of the photographers' professional relationships. Building on the panoptic surveillance afforded by Bentham's design, Foucault suggests that the mere possibility of

continuous surveillance afforded by the panoptic design induced ‘... a power relation independent of the person who exercises it: in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers (Foucault 1977 201).

I use of the notion of an independent or internalised power relation in several chapters, but particularly in chapter seven to explain why the photographers modify their behaviour at certain times. This includes accounting for ongoing or systematic behaviour as well as a more acute modified behaviour due to that same internalised power relation. This enables, for example, descriptions of some of the photographers’ decisions as being less about a photographer’s ability or not to accept and fill a particular client-brief, and more about the possibility of being seen to do so.

Likewise, I use the idea of an internalised power relation to explain the coincidence of sudden change in a photographer’s behaviour with the arrival of other people to the studio. For example, in chapter four I recount a shoot with Mathew when the account executive from the advertising agency arrived with a marketing person from the client company. At the very least, I observed Mathew behaving more formally and politely to the client and the account executive than he had been to the rest of us to that point. In terms of this research, these changes are interesting because they can cause the distinction between a photographer’s professionalism and commerciality to be more apparent than usual.

I also use Foucault’s notion of the confessional, as a functional technique of bio-power, to explain something of the photographers’ behaviour. Foucault suggests that, further to, but also as part of its role as a religious ritual, the confessional has functioned for some time as ‘the general standard governing the production of the true discourse on sex’ (Foucault 1990 63) and, as such, the relationship between sexuality and power. As with his extension of panoptic surveillance from the prison to society in general, Foucault suggests that the present power relationship of the secular confessional is all pervasive. Foucault also views the confessional as a mechanism of power that collates information on people’s activities and existence. This gathered knowledge is then used to further reinforce exercises of power

I use the confessional in several ways. In conjunction with Foucault's notion of ethics (Foucault 1990), which I elaborate on more fully below, I use it throughout chapter seven to account for the photographers reactions and attempts to provide less pejorative account of themselves when I raised the issue of lies, truth and reality in commercial photography with them. As well in that chapter seven I explain that the photographers endure the seemingly innocent practice by advertising and public relations agencies of pigeonholing: the labelling of individual photographers according to that photographer's proven abilities in line with an agency's requirements. Further and more specifically, I emphasise the photographers' mindfulness of this subjugation. Foucault writes that:

The question [he] would like to pose is not, Why are we repressed? but rather, Why do we say, with so much passion and so much resentment against our most recent past, against our present, and against ourselves, that we are repressed? (Foucault 1990 8)

I use this sense of the confessional, not so much to explain why the photographers have become pigeonholed, but the professional and commercial circumstances by which they have come to feel pigeonholed. Foucault's notion of the confessional affords portrayal of a very real and material subjugation, for, as I show throughout chapter seven, eventually a photographer becomes subjugated to the extent that the prevailing circumstances are such that he or she is less able to work in other ways.

The idea of the confessional also sheds light on something of the relationship between the photographers and myself. Foucault notes that, whilst the person to whom one confesses may be real or imaginary, they are an authority, '... the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile' (Foucault 1990 61). As my time working with and interviewing the photographers went by, I became this authority, real or imaginary. It was subsequently, within this power relationship, that they attempted to provide less pejorative accounts of themselves.

## **The discursively empowered individual**

The same framework provides for analysis and description of the techniques of self-governance by which the photographers manage the power relations of their professional relationships, the ways in which they resist discursive pressure. Drawing more from Foucault's later work, particularly *The Care of the Self* (Foucault 1988), I describe ways in which the photographers may be considered as creative or self-governing subjects.

Having decided to investigate photographers rather than photos, the viability of the notion of a discursively empowered individual is vital to this research. The idea that Foucault's discursive principles accommodate the creative individual is in line with scholars like Derek Hook as well as others like Colin Koopman (Koopman 2011), and Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace (McHoul and Grace 2015), who suggest that the processes of normalisation, which are associated with the subjectivity described above, do not necessarily produce conformity and regularity to the extent claimed by Foucault's critics. Having reminded us that, 'Where there is power, there is resistance' (Foucault 1990 95), Foucault's further elaboration on the discursively empowered individual is particularly relevant here. He suggests that, '... consequently, resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power (Foucault 1990) and that as such, 'The individual, ... is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is, ... one of its prime effects' (Foucault 1980 98). This Foucauldian understanding of power, not as something that is simply accessible to the individual, but rather, power as the individual, is vital to the analysis undertaken in this research because the photographers who participated are hired as individuals, for their individuality. By locating the photographers within, amongst many others, the discursive formation 'professional commercial photography' we can see that one of the regular statements, concepts or thematic choices that make up that formation is the expression of a photographer's individuality: in asserting their individuality, they are constituted as subjects.

Foucault describes techniques of self governance that individuals use to work on themselves as 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988). I use this idea, if at times implicitly, throughout all the following chapters. In particular though, I use it in

chapter seven for a dedicated critique of ways in which the photographers care for themselves in this Foucauldian sense. I show that they care for their professional selves by exercising their preference to be understood in certain ways and not in others. For example, I show how they attempt to occupy particular subject positions by naming themselves as, amongst other things, service providers and professional communicators.

I also use Foucault's care of the self to account for what I call 'measured expression', which includes the photographers remaining circumspect or being ambiguous about what they do or how they do it. Their attempts to provide less pejorative accounts of themselves, when they feel it is necessary to do so, are also gainfully critiqued in this way. In terms central to this thesis, this type of analysis enables description of the photographers' considered and measured, but circumspect or ambiguous expression as one technology by which they facilitate the ongoing management of their professional relationships.

The same framework provides for critique of the photographers' practice of using unduly sophisticated photographic methods - simply because they can and other people cannot: a technique for maintaining some distance between themselves and other photographers. For example, when I asked Jeremy about his preference for sharp focused images in dance photography, he said because '... it's very easy for any idiot to go up to - to go and shoot something and have it all blurry'. Likewise, when I asked Ben why he was using such a convoluted method for a small and simple job, he responded by saying: 'Probably because I [would] know how it's shot. You [would] know someone has just wheeled the soft box up to it and gone bang'.

However, it is not the photographer's use of these technologies alone that is significant to this thesis. Whilst I describe their techniques, strategies and tactical behavior in this way, I do so to emphasize that these technologies of the self only exist within the power relations that comprise the photographers' professional and commercial relationships. When Ben says that he wanted to use a complicated process because, otherwise he would know that it was shot with a very simple and easy process, he actually meant that other people who know him and knew that it

was his photo would know that it was shot with a very simple and easy process. Similarly, I was talking to Jeremy about maintaining high production values on small jobs, he said:

I think it is something you have to do - I mean I like to think that - maybe I slip up you know - now and then - but I like to think that - yeah - if I take on a job as a professional photographer then I take it on - no matter how big or small - you just got to do it.

For this reason, I also employ Foucault's idea of the care of the self to emphasise that, by deploying these techniques the photographers are investing in themselves. In Pierre Bourdieu's terms, this is a labour of inculcation and assimilation which costs time and energy (Bourdieu 1986). Foucault also emphasises the effort and resources go into such investment by drawing our attention to the Greek for 'care of the self', '*epimeleia heautou*', to remind us that '*epimeleia*' implies a labour. In *Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art*, (Heidegger 1981) Martin Heidegger makes a similar emphasis, noting that the Greeks also use the phrase '*melete epimeleia*', or 'carefulness of concern'.

Whilst I describe the photographers' care of the self in terms of these and other technologies, I also acknowledge the internal power relation that induces the investment. Jeremy's words 'you just got to do it', reveal the productive apparatus, the effect of discursive pressure. As he works on an otherwise inconsequential brief in a professional manner, he is also working on himself in order to meet and comply with the models normalised by his professional culture. True to Foucault's notion of the discursive, Jeremy's account is of an individual who is regulating his body, thought and conduct and it is also an account of an individual whose body, thought and conduct is being regulated.

### **The (photographer) self and the (client) self**

The specificity of these technologies of the self are such that several important distinctions are required. This is because, where I use Foucault's notion of the care of the self to describe the photographers as empowered subjects, the reciprocity

between their professional and commercial relationships necessitate that I use the same principle to examine ways in which their clients take care of themselves.

Thus, the first distinction that becomes necessary in order to properly evaluate the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity is that between a care of the (photographer) self and a care of the (client) self. With this distinction made, in line with my emphasis that the care of the photographer self must be described as a product of the photographers' professional and commercial relationships, I locate Foucault's conception of the will to truth with the client, rather than with the photographer. It is the client's will that, in part, makes up the client-brief. Building on the Nietzschean concept of the will to power, Foucault inter-relates our sense of the true with his discursive conception of power, knowledge and the subject, arguing that truth is simply an event which takes place in history and is produced by various techniques.

By distinguishing between a care of the photographer self and the client self, I am able to describe the client's use of photographs, their means of representation, as a technology of the client self. In this thesis that is about photographers rather than photos, I describe the client's use of a professional commercial photographer to produce those photos as a core technology of the client self, before describing their choice of a certain individual to be that photographer as a further, more refined and dedicated technology of the client self.

I make a similar distinction in my use of Foucault's notions of ethics (Foucault 1990). Derived from the Greek *Ethos*, Foucault's ethics concerns the kind of relation one has to oneself and also the intentional work of an individual on itself in order to subject itself to a set of moral self-recommendations. '... one goes about confessing, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell' (Foucault 1990 59). It is necessary to distinguish between an ethics of the photographer self and an ethics of the client self because, as with the will to truth, it is the client's set of moral self-recommendations that, in part, comprise the brief to the photographer.

Foucault describes what I depict as technologies of the ethical (client) self, when he writes about:

... those reflective and voluntary practices by which men [*sic*] not only set themselves rules of conduct, but seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make of their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria (Foucault 1990 10).

For example, in chapter eight I examine some atypical scenarios as a means of throwing the photographers' more usual practice into greater relief. This includes a case study of one domestic brief where the client, a married couple, were unsatisfied with their wedding photos to the extent that they commissioned Jeremy to photograph a reconvened wedding ceremony, five years later. The disparity between this domestic client and what I describe as the commercial nature of their brief caused the desires of the client, their relationship with their photographer and especially the photographer's relationship with the archive to be much more visible than with the photographers' usual client-briefs.

### **Discursive practices**

Following the decision to focus on photographers and the production of photos rather than the interpretation of photos, the materiality of Foucault's discourse provides an important facet to the framework of this research. At the beginning of this chapter I noted that Foucault's conception of discourse is situated more closely to knowledge, materiality and power than it is to language. This is because, unlike other more exclusively textual forms like Conversation Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, Foucault conflates the textual, material, physical and discursive into what he calls 'discursive practices' (Foucault 1981). This all-encompassing notion of discursive practices enables me to depict the photographers' studios as material manifestations of power that have been brought to bear on and by the photographers.

I account for the fact that these studios, as discursive practices, all look like photography studios. There are certain discursive regularities that tell us we are

dealing the discursive formation of 'professional commercial photography'. I also consider that every studio is different: that in establishing his or her studio, no photographer has been immune to what Foucault calls the 'arts of existence': reflective and voluntary practices by which each photographer has made '... of their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria' (Foucault 1990 10).

In addition, I describe the contents of each photographer's camera bag as a discursive practice because each is a product of relations between power and knowledge. By describing the photographers' production methods as discursive practices, I show how they work towards a photographic representation of a discursive ideal – their clients' preferred truths'. In particular, I analyse the photographers' studios, equipment and methods of production as discursive practices to address the central issue of this thesis. I show that each studio is where it is and what it is for the same reason: the reciprocity between each photographer's professionalism and commerciality.

## **Photographic Statements**

In this thesis that is about photographers rather than photos it remains useful to describe the photos produced by the photographers as discursive statements. I use Foucault's notion of the archive as a system of dispersion of statements to undertake a dedicated analysis of the photographers' commercial relationships and I use the archive along with Foucault's notion of the enunciative function to enable consideration of commercial photos as discursive events.

Foucault regularly defined the statement, the basic unit of a discursive formation, by comparison with the sentence and the proposition. He shows that each of these elements relates similarly to its field, arguing that: 'A statement belongs to a discursive formation as a sentence belongs to a text, and a proposition to a deductive whole' (Foucault 1976 116). When considered at the level of the sentence, commercial photos function in much the same way as verbal or written texts do. At the level of the sentence, both modes of communication can be

described using Saussure's linguistic framework (Saussure 1983). Sentences are constructed with a linear syntax, commercial photos are constructed with a spatial syntax and meaning is created in both instances by the juxtaposition of communicative elements.

About the dispersion of statements, Foucault writes that:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, ... a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, ... that we are dealing with a *discursive formation*' (Foucault 1976 38).

Foucault's emphasis here is on regularity, which he describes as the set of conditions in which the enunciative function operates and which guarantees and defines its existence (Foucault 1976). He writes that:

Every statement bears a certain regularity and it cannot be dissociated from it. One must not there for oppose the regularity of a statement with the irregularity of another (that may be less expected, more unique, richer in innovation), but to other regularities that characterize other statements' (Foucault 1976 114).

This principle of regularity is one of the central planks of this research framework. I draw on it, if at times implicitly, throughout all of the following chapters. I use Foucault's conception of the archive, as a system of formation of regular statements, to show how the photographers' discursive relationships are thematic and regular to the point that, at times, the photos they produce for their clients may be regarded as cliché. Nicole's confession continues to suffice:

If you are asked to go and shoot a land development some place for instance - it's a classic example - it's always so cheesy - happy family - they're having a picnic - they're

walking the dog or what ever - and - I mean that does go on in real life - its just - I guess you can't do - you can't really do anything else but shoot that cliché.

More broadly, I invoke the archive throughout the following chapters to show that the photographers' commercial relationship, the relationship with the archives of the formations with which their clients seek to engage, must be considered one of conformity. As I indicated in chapter one, when Tom told me that it is not their job to be radical, it was not that it *is not* their job to be radical that was significant. It was that it *is* their job *not* to be. It is this discursive regularity that the photographers acknowledge whilst producing photos for their clients. The relationship between their professionalism and their commerciality demands this. Nicole's modesty aside, when she says that about half of her work could be anyone's and that people hire her because they like her, it is just as likely, as I show throughout chapter six, that they hire her precisely because half her work could be anyone's.

Foucault's principle of commentary affords similar critique of the productive and delimiting discursive forces encountered by the photographers, particularly their approach to corporate client-briefs, which I examine in chapter six. In defining his principle of commentary, Foucault writes about the interchange between what he describes as primary or foundational narratives of a society and secondary cultural texts, suggesting that the latter are commentaries on, or recitals of the former. This is of specific relevance to the professional commercial reciprocity that this thesis explores. Foucault goes on to explain that, with this notion of commentary, we are able to create new texts or discourses *ad infinitum* so long as these are 'recitals' (Foucault 1976 221) of those primary or foundational narratives.

Foucault's also describes the archive as an historical *a priori*, 'an *a priori* not of truths that might never be said, or really given to experience; but the *a priori* of a history that is given, since it is that of things actually said' (Foucault 1976 127). This conception of the archive affords analysis of ways in which the photographers use the archive to their advantage - taking recourse to it as a means of keeping abreast

of what is being said, photographically.

I employ this idea of the photographers' archival awareness and familiarity to portray a dedicated management of the relationship between their professionalism and commerciality. Some of Ben's work, which I expand upon in this regard in chapter six, provides a concise example. A client, who Ben knew socially, had persuaded him to find a way to have photos of her house appear in an Architectural/Homes style of publication. We were looking at the photos in the magazine when Ben said: 'She was very keen to get it into something, so I just shot it with this flavour and I sent it to them [the magazine] and they loved it'. The flavour included, amongst other things, a subtle shallow depth of field, about which Ben said, 'Yeah - which is pretty standard - seems to be standard procedure in magazines at the moment'. Ben achieved the positioning of his photographs, and therefore his friend/client, by the simple strategy of using his familiarity with the archive so as to conform to what was being said in this style of magazine. Like Ben said: 'Obviously I flip through the magazines'.

Or, returning to Foucault's principle of commentary, we can say that, with each interior/architectural client-brief that Ben accepts, he is afforded '... the opportunity to say something other than the [primary] text itself, but on condition that it is the [primary] text which is uttered' (Foucault 1976 221). The primary text or grand narrative being, for arguments sake, 'Architecture' and the secondary text being the clients house. Put simply, I use Foucault's principle of commentary to show that Ben satisfied that particular client-brief by providing the magazine with a recital.

However, in terms specific to this research, it is not this regularity that is key. The primary characteristic of the photographers' discursive relationships, which causes these relationships to be commercial in nature, is the reciprocating effect of their professional relationships. Often professional commercial photographers are asked to make distinctions where there is little room for distinction to be made. As I show throughout the following chapters, the reason why Nicole feels like she can't really do anything else but shoot that cliché is because her archival relationship is with the formations with which her clients seek to engage. This is Nicole's commerciality.

In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, this interchange between primary

and secondary texts and the accompanying dynamic between opportunity and condition provides for a critical analysis of the relationship between the photographers' professionalism and their commerciality as they manage the relationship between their clients' desire for difference, or will to power, and the commercial or discursive necessity for those clients to conform.

By using Foucault's conception of power as immanent to relations between subjects (Foucault 1976) in conjunction with his conception of the discursive formation as a system of dispersion of statements, I am able to show that it is the reciprocity between their professionalism and commerciality that is key to the professional practice of commercial photography.

### **Commercial photo as Discursive event**

Where photos and statements function in much the same way at the level of the sentence, at the level of the statement Foucault makes the distinction that a sequence of linguistic elements, be it a sentence or photo '... is a statement only if and when it is immersed in an enunciative field' (Foucault 1976 99). That is, like written or verbal texts, the photographs transition from text to photographic statement is a product of the enunciative function.

In describing photos as statements, I do not propose to account for the effect of the enunciative function. However, in describing the enunciative function, Foucault also describes the archive, similarly, as a system that establishes statements as events (Foucault 1976 128). It is necessary to describe commercial photos as statements because these archival and enunciative functions are what cause Foucault's conception of discourse to be more about knowledge, materiality and power rather than just about language.

Drawing again on Foucault's conflation of the material and the textual, it is by regarding the photographic statement as a discursive event that commercial photos most reflect Foucault's conception of discourse as something that both implements power and also *is* power. I describe commercial photos as statements because they are '... the thing for which and by which there is struggle' (Foucault 1981 52).

In turn, it is with this quintessentially Foucauldian sense of discourse, as both the effect and instrument of power, that I am able to describe of the reciprocating effect between the photographers professional relationships with their clients and commercial relationships with the archives of the formations with which those clients seek to engage.

## Chapter Three: Methodology and Literature Review

### Contemporary world ethnography

As a method of enquiry, ethnography has changed substantially since the iconic anthropological works of, for example, Bronislaw Malinowski's *Argonauts Of The Western Pacific* (1932), Napoleon Chagnon's *Yanomamö: The Fierce People* (1968), Levi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* (Lévi-Strauss 1973) and Clifford Geertz's Balinese work in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973). In contrast to those distant and exotic locales, the field site for this research, Perth in Western Australia, is a modern city. It is home to the academic institution where I worked and that administers this doctoral thesis. Perth has also been my home for most of my life. The people who are the focus of this research, with whom I did my ethnographic fieldwork, are my professional contemporaries, some are my friends, doing their modern job in this modern city.

By the time of this fieldwork, ethnographic writers including A.P. Cheater (1987), John Morton (1999), Judith Stacey (1999), Vered Amit (2000) and Christiane Alsop (2002)<sup>1</sup> had suggested that, whilst fields other than their own may remain the conventional locations for anthropologists and other ethnographers to work, they had for some time been doing fieldwork in modern cities, observing and participating with subjects who are culturally and socially close at hand. Take for example the more recent work of Cristina Moretti who, in *The Wandering Ethnographer: Researching and Representing the City through Everyday Encounters* (Moretti 2011), reflects on her ethnographic fieldwork as her means of gaining insight into complex social processes and disjunctures in contemporary Milan. Here

---

<sup>1</sup> A.P. Cheater, A. P. (1987). The Anthropologist as Citizen. *Anthropology at Home*. A. Jackson. London, Tavistock Publications: 164-179; Morten, J. (1999). "Anthropology at home in Australia." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 10(3): 243-258; Stacey, J. (1999). "Ethnography Confronts the Global Village: A New Home for a New Century?" *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 28(6): 687-697; Amit, V., Ed. (2000). *Constructing the field. Constructing the Field. Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London, Routledge; Alsop, C. (2002). "Home and Away: Self-Reflexive Auto-/Ethnography." *Qualitative Social Research* 3(3): 126-139.

in Perth, amongst a number of possible examples, is the anthropologist/sociologist Philip Moore whose chapter 'On the Tools: the physical work of building and renovating houses in Perth, Western Australia' (Moore 2013) is an ethnographic exploration of the physical work done by building sub-contractors working in Perth's suburbs. In its temporary and transient qualities, the object of Moore's research is a field of work that possesses many similar characteristics to mine. Having spent almost eighteen months of intensive ethnographic fieldwork, working as a labourer and then as a sub-contractor, Moore takes different positions from mine but offers productive insights on how that work is organised and the physical activity or bodily praxis of the people doing it.

## **Participant observation: Assisting**

I spent a similar amount of time to Moore doing fieldwork, working as an assistant with the photographers. As a photographer, I knew that assisting would be an excellent means of participating, for in this professional photographic sense, assisting is not simply about helping out. Photographic assisting is a specialized job. Some photographers make a career doing this: selling their services to other photographers on a freelance basis. From a researcher's perspective, assisting provided an excellent place from which to observe the photographers and the relationship between their professionalism and commerciality as it manifested as practice.

My participation as an assistant required me to be proficient in all technical aspects of commercial photography. I became knowledgeable about and dexterous with a variety of professional camera systems. I came up to speed with relevant digital hardware and software and maintained a general competence when working in the studios of these photographers as well when working on location. To work effectively as an assistant, one necessarily becomes an extension of the photographer. During a shoot, assistants perform tasks quickly, smoothly and, once familiar with the photographer, before the tasks become necessary. Good assistants are both indispensable and inconspicuous. Photographers come unconsciously to

depend on them. A TV documentary about the New York based photographer David La Chapelle (MacGregor 2002), illustrated this dependence in a number of ways, two of which I recount here. La Chapelle had at least three permanent assistants, his crew, who had been with him for some years. His lighting assistant mentioned that, when they first met, La Chapelle had 'absolutely no understanding of lighting'. Then, during one of the studio shoots being documented, a junior assistant failed to have a film back ready when La Chapelle needed it. This caused La Chapelle to miss a shot that perhaps ten people had been working towards for at least an hour.

As a photographer, I was able to perform this participatory part of my ethnographic fieldwork with relative ease. My stock of experience may not have matched that of all of the photographers, but it was certainly more than sufficient for me to assist in a professional and competent manner. I was unobtrusive. The photographers with whom I had worked previously were at ease with me as an assistant from the outset. I did notice initial scrutinizing glances from some with whom I had not worked. This is to be expected. However, I had only to set their lights up once in a manner that reflected the requirements of the client-brief we were working on, or handle their particular camera system with familiar dexterity, before they also felt at ease with me.

When writing about the distinction between forcing and emergence of evidence, the sociologist and grounded theory co-founder,<sup>2</sup> Barney Glaser (Glaser 1992) acknowledges the worth of the researcher's own experience and knowledge, of bringing one's personal experience into the research arena. Prior to this though, Glaser had also made the point that the researcher's acquisition of theoretical sensitivity (Glaser 1978) is central to this approach, asserting that the insensitive researcher can attempt to force categories or themes to emerge by presupposing what one expects to observe and then seeking to observe it.

I had never participated in commercial photography as an ethnographer. Perhaps I had always been, at least in part, an observer, but not an ethnographic one. As such, my ability to observe with a critical reflective ethnographic eye and to be

---

<sup>2</sup> See: Barney Glaser & Anselm Strauss, 1967, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Aldine Publishing, Chicago.

theoretically sensitive, came to me less immediately than my ability to participate. Nonetheless, as I spent an increasing amount of time working with the photographers, my awareness and sensitivity grew. I found myself periodically stopping and thinking anew about what I was doing: considering multiple vantage points, comparing, following leads and building on or reconsidering ideas. Nursing researchers/practitioners Karen Hoare, Jane Mills and Karen Francis note that this seemingly tentative, faltering and provisional trajectory is actually in line with Glaser's position: that the route from data collection to a grounded theory often requires the ethnographer to double back. In 'Dancing with data: An example of acquiring theoretical sensitivity in a grounded theory study' (Hoare, Mills et al. 2012), they write that, '... the route forward inevitably results in the analyst stepping back. Additionally sidestepping through, leading participants down lines of inquiry and following data threads with other participants, is also characteristic of acquiring theoretical sensitivity, a key concept in grounded theory' (Hoare, Mills et al. 2012 240).

As I moved from being just a photographer to being also an ethnographer, from being a theoretically insensitive participant to a participant observer and through even to the observation of my participation (Tedlock 1991), the trajectory of this research and my proximity to it shifted. I began to see and hear differently, eventually coming to realise that I was not as familiar with these people and their practice as I had at first thought.

I changed during this time. Experiencing personal change whilst doing ethnographic fieldwork is not uncommon. I did not expect it to fascinate me as it did. I write of this transformative time, not as an indulgence but for the following methodological reasons. As I changed, following leads and building on ideas, my relationships with the photographers also changed. My explicit commitment to a self-reflexive way of knowing tracks these changes in my relationships with the photographers, who themselves changed, with something of their change being in response to change that they saw in me.

The issue of the 'observer effect', the mitigating effect that an ethnographer's presence may have on the subjects being studied (Stoddart 1986) was never a

concern for me. The photographers knew what I was there for. Sometimes they would ask me to come on a job instead of doing our pre-arranged interview, insisting that we could talk while we worked. For example, having worked with Tom for a day, my notes record that:

We were like bricklayers - talking about the football - we would talk [about my research] - then pay attention to the tasks at hand - then when those tasks were completed or became routine - we would continue talking - almost as a distraction.

Torin Monahan and Jill Fisher write about the benefits of this observer effect, suggesting that, 'Instead of aspiring to distance and detachment, some of the greatest strengths of ethnographic research lie in cultivating close ties with others and collaboratively shaping discourses and practices in the field' (Monahan and Fisher 2010 357). On another occasion working with Tom, he made the inquisitive comment: 'This must be interesting - what you're doing - seeing how so many different people do this'.

I also write of this time of change for the company in which it finds me, for other researchers have benefitted similarly. For example, I share ground, humbly, with the ethnographer and sociologist, Loic Wacquant. In his, *Body and Soul: notebooks of an apprentice boxer*, he writes of '...a transformative experience that [he] had neither desired nor anticipated, and that long remained confusing and obscure ...' (Wacquant 2004 viii). Whilst Wacquant was no doubt better prepared when he set out for his field, we both set out with something else in mind. I had set out to establish the value of semiotic theory to professional commercial photographers and Wacquant had set out seeking a point from which to scrutinise the everyday reality of a black American ghetto. I arrived, via a previously unimagined ethnographic route, at a discursive analysis of the relationship between professionalism and commerciality. Wacquant arrived at Chicago's *Golden Gloves* boxing tournament – with gloves on!

Perhaps, as Lee Stringer, author of *Grand Central Winter: Stories from the Street*

(Stringer 1998), suggests, we both owe a debt of gratitude ‘... to the erstwhile Nelson Algren, who told [him], posthumously, that writers are at their best when they don’t know what they are doing’ (11). For me, it was only through the lessons that I learnt whilst on this journey, as I put my faith in a research method that I did not initially understand, that I was eventually able to observe the behaviour of my professional colleagues, arrive at the question that is the focus of this thesis and write this account of my own group.

I also recount this time here for the same reason that other established ethnographers recount their intimate moments of their personal change: as a means of emphasising the degree to which they have become immersed in the cultures that they are studying. Bronislaw Malinowski, in his introduction to *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Malinowski 1922) notes the extent to which he had become immersed in that Melanesian society by claiming that he became able ‘... to wake up every morning to a day, presenting itself to [him] more or less as it does to the native’ (7). Where Malinowski describes a state of being, Dorinne Kondo emphasises the extent of her immersion into the Japanese culture that she was studying by describing a moment in which she mistook her own reflection for that of a Japanese woman. Experiencing a fragmentation of the self, her realisation of the extent of her transformation was sudden: ‘At its most extreme point [she] became “the Other” in [her] own mind, where the identity [she] had known in another context simply collapsed’ (Kondo 1990 16). Clifford Geertz describes the extent of his immersion by recounting the moments immediately after a truck full of Balinese policemen arrived to close down an illegal cockfight that he and his wife were observing. He writes of how: ‘On the established anthropological principle, ‘When in Rome’, my wife and I decided, only slightly less instantaneously than everyone else, that the thing to do was run too’ (Geertz 1973 415). Geertz then unpacks the meaning of this by recounting the following morning’s activities when the villagers ‘... asked [him] about it again and again, ...gently, affectionately, but quite insistently teasing [him]: “Why didn’t you just stand there and tell the police who you were?”’ (416). As it was for Malinowski, Kondo and even Wacquant, Clifford and Hilda Geertz had become immersed to the point that they behaved, more or less, as

everyone else does.

As an experienced commercial photographer I already knew what it was to wake up each morning to a day that presented itself to me as it would to another commercial photographer. As a novice ethnographer, I assumed that I had always been immersed. Of course, I did not expect to be so completely wrong about this. Perhaps as it had been for Hilda and Clifford Geertz, as they spent an increasing amount of time with the Balinese people, I had not been noticing those subtle changes in my relationships with the photographers, for I was approaching a point of realisation that would prove quite similar to those written about by these ethnographic writers above. As it was for Kondo, in the moment of her realisation, or even for Wacquant when he found himself scrutinising the everyday reality of a black American ghetto from inside a boxing ring, the moment when I realised the extent of my immersion was astonishing. What happened to me, in the field on that day, was profound.

I was working as an assistant with Marcus on a fashion shoot. He had been shooting both with a 35mm Voigtländer,<sup>3</sup> which was hanging around his neck, as well as with a Contax 6/4.5.<sup>4</sup> Both were film cameras. I had a small camera bag tied around my waist that contained 35mm and 120 film as well as several loaded film backs and a Polaroid back for the Contax. We were nearing the end of a long day when Marcus approached and handed me the Contax to reload. I removed the exposed back from the camera and replaced it with a loaded one from the camera bag. Marcus then asked me to reload the Voigtländer. I put the Contax on top of everything else that was in my small camera bag, took the Voigtländer from him, opened it, placed it next to the Contax on the camera bag and proceeded to remove the exposed roll of 35mm film. We were standing in close proximity and I had not taken the Voigtländer strap from around Marcus's neck. As I was removing the exposed film, Marcus and I stepped apart. I watched as the Contax tumbled, as though in slow motion, out of my camera bag and crashing onto the rocks. It was

---

<sup>3</sup> The Voigtländer is a clone of the iconic M series Leica rangefinder 35mm film camera.

<sup>4</sup> The Contax is a medium format SLR camera with the '6/4.5' denoting the exposed frame size – 6cm x 4.5cm.

the worst possible thing that could have happened. Everyone was looking at me. I had never dropped a camera before, let alone one worth \$5,000 during a \$5,000 fashion shoot. Expecting that an overwhelmingly dreadful emotion was about to flood over me, I quickly bent down to retrieve the scratched and dented camera. Then the most amazing thing happened. Far from any dreadful emotion, I heard my inner voice say, in as cool and detached a tone as I have heard it say anything, 'This will be interesting'.

What amazed me in that moment, in the field on that day, was my immediate recognition that what would happen next would reveal something to me about Marcus that I did not know and that I had sometimes wondered. What that was is beside the point of this thesis. What happened that is relevant is that I realised, in that very shocking moment, that I had become an ethnographer. Just as suddenly as it was for Kondo, I experienced a fragmentation of the self. Whilst I knew that I had not stopped being a photographer, I recognised the extent to which I had become immersed in the culture of ethnography. I also appreciated my emergence as an ethnographer as something of a paradigm shift. I knew then and there that there would be no putting this genie back in the bottle. My journey into ethnography had begun. It would prove to be a similar journey to that described by Kondo: '... more or less linear, where order and meaning gradually emerge from initially inchoate events and experiences' (Kondo 1990 7).

## **Field site construction: the multi-sited imaginary**

Whilst observing and participating with subjects who, like the photographers, are culturally and socially close at hand has become more common, the recurrent use of the prefix 'contemporary' in contemporary world ethnographic literature implies the practice somehow produces ambiguities and paradoxes inconsistent with those encountered when doing ethnography in remote fields with exotic subjects. Given that the photographers were neither remote nor exotic to me, this was, in part, my experience.

Following John Morten, who is currently a senior lecturer in Anthropology at the

Australia National University, I assuaged some of my concern for the appropriateness or otherwise of my contemporary world project by being cognisant of these two interrelated questions: what is an appropriate anthropological object and what are the appropriate methods for studying that object? (Morten 1999). By the time of my fieldwork, a variety of methods had been developed for addressing these questions<sup>5</sup> as well as the further related issue of the planning and management of fieldwork performed so close to home (Kalocsai 2000). Field site construction, the practice of establishing imaginary boundaries around contemporary world fields, is the principal contemporary method that I used to most productively conceptualise my field site. My first move was to demarcate the places where I participated with and interviewed the photographers from the rest of Perth's expansive suburbs.

George Marcus, Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, conceptualises this seemingly rudimentary type of construction as the 'multi-sited imaginary' (Marcus 1995), for this simple act of demarcation also allows the ethnographer to annex and incorporate multiple sites to form elaborate multi-sited fields. Julian Orr is one ethnographic researcher who constructs a multi-sited imaginary with which my multi-sited field has strong parallels. In *Talking about machines: an ethnography of a modern job* (Orr 1996), he researched a small number of people, photocopy technicians in his case, doing modern work in a modern city. He defined his site as including certain buildings and certain spaces within those buildings where the photocopy machines were located. My site was made up of the photographers' studios, in a number of locations across the city and suburbs, as well as shoot locations spread across the state. Orr annexed the lunchroom in which the photocopy technicians told their 'war stories'. I annexed film processing labs and equipment supply stores, also where war stories were told.

In constructing his field site from the buildings, rooms and spaces that he found

---

<sup>5</sup>See for example: Kalocsai, C. (2000). The Multi-sited Imaginary: Notes on Transnationalism and the Ethnographic Practice. Comparative Research Workshop: (workshop); Gille, Z. (2001). "Critical Ethnography in the Time of Globalisation: Toward a New Concept of Cite." *Critical methodologies* 1(3): 319-334; Gille, Z. and S. O'Riain (2002). "Global Ethnography." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 271-295.

himself occupying, Orr not only demarcated that site from the rest of his world, he circumscribed and defined the people who would be the subjects of his study: his tribe. Significantly for both Orr and myself, this method resulted in people beyond the central participant set, photocopy technicians or commercial photographers, becoming defined as appropriate subjects for our studies. Orr's multi-sited construction expanded appropriately to include people who used the photocopiers and with whom the technicians formed ongoing relationships. In my field site this included the photographers' clients, other associated professionals and assistants, all of whom began to play roles in the complex performance of commercial photography.

A significant point of difference between Orr's study and mine is that Orr's photocopy technicians went to the lunchroom to meet, to sit and eat and talk. The photographers went to processing labs and equipment stores as individuals, only when they needed to, and not in the hope of meeting and chatting with others. Further more, due to technological changes in photography itself, these places where the photographers used to meet declined in number through the course of my fieldwork.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence, the photographers met less frequently. As my time working with them went by, even our occasional crossing of paths at equipment suppliers became increasingly rare.

Sarah Pink, who at the time of this research was a Professor working in the Design Research Institute and the School of Media and Communications at RMIT, reflects about the 'multi-sited imaginary' in *Informants who come home* (Pink 2000) in ways more akin to the situation that I encountered. In stark contrast to geographically bounded people like those studied by Chagnon, Geertz and Malinowski, the people Pink studied, Spanish graduates who were migrating or had migrated to live in England, were a dispersed population. As Orr did, Pink used the multi-sited imaginary as a means of alleviating some of the difficulties caused by working with a dispersed population. Further to this though and reflecting issues similar to my

---

<sup>6</sup> The period of my fieldwork coincided with a sharply accelerated uptake of digital technology by the photographers – to the extent that it marked a tipping point from film to digital.

situation, Pink used the multi sited imaginary to help moderate some of the difficulties inherent in doing ethnographic work in a culturally familiar milieu. She noted that, having herself spent two and a half years living in Spain, many of the migrants were close friends. I encountered similar familiarity. I had lived in Perth for most of my life, was familiar with my object of study: professional commercial photography, and some of the photographers were my friends. In a solution that resonates with my own, Pink observes that it was only by annexing multiple relevant sites away from her other familiar sites, and subsequently understanding them in that demarcated and relational context, that she was able to deconstruct personal and professional boundaries and moderate problems associated with her familiarity and closeness.

I also found myself in step with contemporary world ethnographers by invoking the multi-sited imaginary for its rhetorical possibilities. By the time of my fieldwork, other ethnographic writers were aware that, what I had come to call 'contemporary world anxiety', was being addressed by drawing on the rhetoric of classic ethnography. Having assumed the anthropological master tropes of participant observation and fieldwork (Aggarwal 2000), my further attempts to discover how I could research with my participants included a conscious decision to draw on anthropology's distinctive conceptualisations, questions and metaphors. I accentuated the ambiguities and paradoxes, which were specific to my contemporary situation: the very terms 'field' and 'tribe', for example, which had only been made viable by annexing multiple spaces and circumscribing groups of people. I used these tropes as one means of shoring up my footing as I proceeded, to stake out my conceptual ground, to construct my field and authenticate the people in it – not least myself. As a novice who was not travelling to a distant locale, who was familiar with his field site as well as the central occupation of its inhabitants, I continued to use these tropes for the duration of this research, to continually position myself theoretically and physically in ways that allowed for the accentuation of the form that any authenticating markers might take.

Joanne Passaro is another ethnographic writer who recognises the ongoing accentuation of the foreign, the distant and exotic in contemporary world

ethnography. She points to the 'rite-of-passage' aspect that used to accompany the tropes, reminding us that there was a time when travelling the distance, doing the time and becoming fully immersed in the cultures that they studied were all prerequisites to becoming a fully-fledged anthropologist (Passaro 1997). Whilst I never sought to become a fully-fledged anthropologist, I was particularly influenced by Passaro. In her defiantly titled chapter 'You Can't Take the Subway to the Field: Village epistemologies in the Global Village' (Passaro 1997) – in which she shows why it is possible to do so - she recounts parts of a brief conversation she had with an academic who she met on the subway in New York, her field site at the time. "You can't take the subway to the field" the academic had protested, upon establishing what Passaro did. "What kind of fieldwork can you do in such an uncontrolled environment?" he asked. Excellent fieldwork, I remember thinking to myself as I read Passaro's detailed insight into how short-sighted and prescriptive that academic's protest was.

Given Perth's suburban geography, car travel is the norm and the mode by which most of my fieldwork travel was done. One day, however, having just read Passaro's paper and with sense of solidarity with her, I made a point of taking the train into my ethnographic field site. I was to be assisting Tom on a full-day shoot in the city and so taking the train from the beachside suburb of Cottesloe made practical sense. Obviously the unbounded imaginary had caught my imagination. As I sat on the train that day, having decided that it was taking me to my 'field', I imagined myself for a moment wearing the authentic garb of an archetypal early twentieth century ethnographer: a pith helmet and safari suit, replete with a smoking pipe and handle-bar moustache, heading off into the field to observe the natives – my natives. I returned to reality, however, as I reminded myself that I was assisting a photographer for the day and, as such, would be the one carrying the boxes. Suddenly my imagination had me wearing only a sarong and my skin had noticeably darkened. And then, as reality again took hold, I was just sitting on the train wearing my usual jeans and t-shirt on my way to work for the day. Five stops.

## Sorting the winks from the twitches: the multi-sighted imaginary

It is important for me to emphasise that the photographers were not a collective that existed independently of this research. In order to make a 'thick description'<sup>7</sup> (Ryle 2009), which is ultimately upon what this thesis is built, in order to, as Clifford Geertz suggests, sort the winks from the twitches, several further practical problems to those outline above had to be overcome.

In *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Geertz 1973), Geertz's illuminates Gilbert Ryle's distinction between thick and thin description with a hypothetical illustration of three boys rapidly contracting the eyelids of their right eyes. I recount it here because, with it, Geertz affords himself three important luxuries that the reality of my fieldwork would not afford me. Geertz begins by describing two boys rapidly contracting the eyelids of their right eyes. He notes that these identical movements are for one boy a conspiratorial signal to a friend whilst for the other, an involuntary twitch. Geertz then introduces a third boy who he describes as parodying the first boy's wink. What was conspiracy, Geertz suggests, has now becomes ridicule. Then to add complexity to this situation, Geertz makes the further suggestion that, should the third boy be unsure of himself and choose first to practice this parody, he would no longer be winking, twitching, or parodying, but rehearsing. Geertz then makes his point:

... that between what Ryle calls the "thin description" of what the rehearser (parodist, winker, twitcher...) is doing ("rapidly contracting his right eyelids") and the "thick description" of what he is doing ("practicing a burlesque of a friend faking a wink to deceive an innocent into thinking a conspiracy is in motion") lies the object of ethnography: a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of

---

<sup>7</sup> In *The Concept of Mind*, first published in 1949, the British philosopher Gilbert Ryle writes about a thick description of human behaviour as being one that explains not just the behaviour, but its context as well, such that the behaviour may become meaningful to an outsider.

which twitches, winks, fake winks, parodies, rehearsals of parodies are produced, perceived and interpreted and without which they would not... in fact exist, no matter what anyone did or didn't do with his eyelids (Geertz 1973 7).

The three relevant ethnographic luxuries that Geertz affords himself in order to be able to make his point are proximity, similarity and understanding. Firstly, Geertz assumes a proximity by which he and each of the three boys were able to observe the twitches, winks and/or parodies of each of the others. The reality of my situation was that I rarely saw any two photographers in the same place at the same time. Even their shared professional status as commercial photographers, which found them within my critical gaze, found them working as individual practitioners. They were seldom even in a position to perceive or interpret each other's actions, let alone read a tone of voice or see such minutiae of body language.

Compounding this adverse remoteness, these photographers are not just strewn across Perth's geography, but throughout its society. They do all manner of work, for all manner of clients, in all manner of places, for all manner of reasons. They are individuals whose behaviours and understandings remained diverse, idiosyncratic and often contradictory. Geertz, when describing the three boys in his hypothetical example, assumes them to be as similar as he needs them to be. The reality for the subjects of my study is, but for earning their living through taking photos, they have very little in common.

Perhaps the greatest luxury afforded Geertz by the hypothetical nature of his example is his assumption of his own complete understanding of the three boys' stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures. Geertz is completely aware of the licence taken here, putting it that 'You can't wink without knowing what counts as winking' (Geertz 1973 12). This said, I must admit that the reality of my situation did not prevent me from assuming I knew what counted. As a photographer, I did have some understanding of the meaningful structures pertinent to the people who I was studying. However, as I have been indicating, I would come to realise that I

was not as familiar with these people and their practice as I had thought.

In order to be able to sort the photographers' winks from their twitches, establish what was collectively meaningful and provide a description more thick than thin, I imagined these photographers into a collective: my tribe. I did not, however, draw on the multi-sited imaginary as conceptualised by Marcus. It was the imagination of a quite different author that facilitated this move. Provoked by d'Artagnan's call to his brothers in arms, 'All for one and one for all',<sup>8</sup> I realised that I could, after all, see all of the photographers, just not at the same time. On the strength of this, I formulated a method, which I was soon calling '*La Méthode Musketeer*', that mimicked the hypothetical proximity by which Geertz made his observations.

The principal function of *la méthode* was to render, *if only in my mind's eye*, each individual photographer, the one, visible to the rest of my now imaginary collective of photographers, to the all. I formulated this imaginary proximity to work in much the same way as the multi-sited imaginary operates. Where the multi-sited imaginary annexes distinct locations and incorporates them to form one field site, my multi-sighted imaginary collected these otherwise dispersed and disparate subjects together. Once gathered around my mind's eye, I was able to see each and all of the photographers in relation to each and all of the others. I could now compare and evaluate a range of otherwise isolated behaviours and understandings. For example, when something of an individual's behaviour caught my attention, their carriage, gesture or tone of voice, I would watch the others for similar behaviour. When I recognised similarities or heard an individual's understanding echo in the space of another, I would investigate further. Where the multi-sited imaginary allows the ethnographer to circumscribe the people to be studied, my multi-sighted imaginary allowed me to circumstantiate the understandings and behaviours of each individual by comparing them with the understandings and behaviours of each and all of the others. And when voices or

---

<sup>8</sup>Set in the 17th century, Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* recounts the adventures of d'Artagnan after he leaves home to become a musketeer. He and his three musketeer friends; Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, become inseparable and live by the motto 'all for one, one for all'. Dumas, A. (1906). *The Three Musketeers*. London, Dent.

behaviours did go on to strike a chord across the collective, I was able to flesh out those pertinent understandings, conceptualise them, then articulate them as concepts that truly reflected the collective's concerns.

I accept that this method required me to make judgements. Sometimes, and initially this was often the case, my judgement was off. What I thought would be collectively meaningful was in fact only an individual's idiosyncratic twitch. Sometimes though, my judgement was good; behaviours corresponded and voices harmonised. Sometimes this too came as a surprise to me. But whether my judgement was poor or good was never to be the point. *La méthode* was simply my means of establishing the significance of what I was seeing and hearing. It was my way of arbitrating between the idiosyncratic nuances inherent to individual behaviour and those individual behaviours or understandings that would have collective import.

As my fieldwork progressed and I became a more sensitive ethnographer, this method developed, sometimes in unexpected ways. Whilst I conceived of it so that I might address substantive collective concerns, it continued to provide for the valuable ethnographic function of highlighting differences and particularities of context (Hirsch 2002). This meant that, as my understanding grew to reflect the collective breadth of all the photographers who were involved, I also retained the insights peculiar to individual photographers. This unexpected combination of collective breadth and individual penetration compounded to grant me even further access to deeper knowledge, which in turn facilitated my acquisition of greater theoretical sensitivity (Hoare, Mills et al. 2012).

Sometimes my rearticulation of one individual's insight jogged the memory or caught the imagination of another. Sometimes the insight taken from one photographer caused old collectively familiar territory to be revisited in a new light: the idiosyncratic behaviour of just one person providing for an expansive journey into the tacit, unarticulated and since forgotten. When working with or interviewing the photographers, I could tell from the look on a face, the change in a tone of voice, or from a reaction like, for example, Nicole's: 'Oh – ok – you want to talk about that ...', that *la méthode* was affording me significant access to the deeper

strata of meaning of commercial photographic practice.

I was identifying and exploring concepts seldom considered collectively but at the same time only in ways that were collectively relevant. The depth and breadth of my insight, with which I was provoking individual photographers was, after all, nothing more than their collective insight. Multiple individually penetrating voices that, when combined in the provoking and reflective fashion that *la méthode* afforded, collectively conceptualised those understandings and behaviours sourced from their individual depths: *quid pro quo*. Or, as d'Artagnan might describe this mutually beneficial relationship: 'All for one and one for all'.

## **Interviewing: The Space**

When considered in contemporary world ethnographic terms, the most significant methodological aspect of the approximately 120 interviews that I completed with the photographers is something that I came to call 'The Space'. It is a distinguishable period of time during an interview when the participating interviewee has become more actively engaged than they had previously. I first noticed the space whilst transcribing some of our earlier interviews. I had learnt that none of the photographers engaged in our conversations from that first moment when we sat down to talk and that then some would engage sooner than others. Nonetheless, all of the photographers, most of the time, did become more deeply engaged during some subsequent period during the interview. Pondering these differences and similarities, I recognised this recurring dynamic that characterises the space. Interviews typically commenced with a period of casual involvement: before the space opens. This is followed by a period of deeper and more reflective engagement: the space itself. This reflective time is finite. Not only do these spaces close, they are near impossible to re-open. Having recognised, accentuated and made sophisticated use of this temporally delineated space, I describe it here as a contemporary-world ethnographic epistemology.

I am not alone in my resolve to use the temporal delineation of distinct periods of time as touchstones or even to recognise them as gateposts to my field site. In

'Point of departure: Feminist locations and the politics of travel in India' (Aggarwal 2000), Ravina Aggarwal examines, amongst other things, the contested meanings of 'the field'. She writes about similar dynamic temporal characteristics to those that I observed and demonstrates a similar reflexivity in noticing, using them and by aiming her project at '... capturing the rhythms, the currents, the locations and dislocations that are implicated in the process of culture making' (Aggarwal 2000 537).

Kathleen Stewart, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas, is another who stresses the critical possibilities afforded by this type of temporal delimitation. Stewart is particularly relatable here through her interest in ethnographic engagement based on curiosity and attachment and consequent awareness of the temporal and human dynamics that characterise the space as I conceived of and used it. In her paper 'Atmospheric attunements' (Stewart 2011), she writes about similar occurrences to those I encountered, describing them as the charged atmospheres of everyday life: suggesting that spaces of all kinds become inhabited, modes of existence accrue, circulate, sediment, unfold, and go flat. Her paper includes a short section entitled 'Pockets', which is astoundingly evocative of 'The Space'. In it, she recounts a passage from *The Garden of Last Days* (Dubus 2008), describing a nightclub bouncer looking for 'pockets' of possible trouble in the crowd:

Looking for pockets is a labor of attending to a space opening out of the charged rhythms of an ordinary. There's a pause, a temporal suspension animated by the sense that something is coming into existence. The subject is called to a state of attention that is also an impassivity - a watching and waiting, a living through, an attunement to what might rind up or snap into place. Events and outcomes are immanent, unknown but pressing (Stewart 2011 446).

As I became increasingly attuned to our becoming attuned, I became better able to take advantage of the space. I became better at waiting. I made sure that I only asked, what I thought were significant questions, in a timely manner: once we were both in the space. I prepared a short list of throwaway questions that I used during

the earlier moments of interviews. Sometimes I mentioned something that was photographically topical, just to get us underway. Sometimes this led into interesting topics, sometimes not. If these throwaway questions failed to inspire, I would at least have waited until we were both settled, the minutes not passing quite as quickly as they had been, before I began asking the questions that I thought bore consideration.

Sometimes the space opened in a quite obvious way, both in how the photographer interviewee behaved and in how I behaved. These occurrences are tactile and describable moments. Aggarwal recounts one such moment by describing a cohabitant of her space like this: 'All of a sudden, her tone became contemplative' and 'She paused and looked into my eyes' (Aggarwal 2000 549). In Stewart's words, the opening of a space '... can pull the senses into alert or incite distraction or denial' (Stewart 2011 445). An alternative way to describe my experience is to say that it suddenly became apparent to me that the space was open, and that I was in it. Aggarwal also recounts such moments when she noticed that her ethnographic senses had become better attuned. Moments when she realises that the airport they were in had become, to use Dorinne Kondo's term 'the setting', and that this setting had filled with 'actors'. During the time that this setting, this charged atmosphere, this space, this temporally defined field site existed, the actors, including Aggarwal, played games, became reflective and even experienced a brief moment of solidarity. Stewart describes her charged atmospheres similarly, suggesting that, 'They have rhythms, valences, moods, sensations, tempos, and lifespans' (Stewart 2011 445).

Having learnt that the space within our interviews was finite and that I had very little chance of re-opening one, I endeavoured to make sure that it was never me who closed one. Further to this though, I also learnt that sometimes interviewees reflected further and differently once the more formal part of our interview concluded: sometimes the space remained open. It was within the relative informality of these moments that interviewees sometimes raised issues that they thought may have been beside the point of our discussion to that point.

Similarly, having recognised the space as an authentic and authenticating place, I

became better at, not just waiting, but waiting to see if I could let the interviewee open the space and, in doing so, have them take ownership of that interview. The epistemological benefits of this type of ownership are significant. Letting a photographer open the space with a topic that they wanted to talk about both expanded the scope of the evidence that would eventually emerge from my fieldwork as well as lending greater authenticity to that evidence. For example, the title of this thesis, 'Lala Land' came from within a space that was opened and owned by one of the photographers, Nicole. The two of us had met unexpectedly and both with some time to spare. On her suggestion, we did an impromptu interview in a nearby cafe. We had completed five interviews prior to this one and had also worked together several times. Like most of the photographers at this stage, Nicole had become familiar with the comfort and security afforded by the space. Towards the end of a lengthy and deeply reflective discussion that had been driven by Nicole, she said:

Because there is really two answers to it - I don't see what I do personally as the same as what I do commercially, and what I'm being asked to do commercially is really – its sort of Lala Land in a way.

I have re-read the transcript for that interview many times. I reflect further on it here because, in the hindsight of post fieldwork reflection, our space on that day is something of a microcosm of the state of my fieldwork and relationships with all the photographers at that point. The interview was cathartic for Nicole. Only then, after months of my talking and working with her and her partner Ian, had she decided to open up, to allow herself to speak as herself. Our relationship changed on that day. Nicole's posturing during our earlier meetings, her performance of a public self, which I only really noticed as such in hindsight, dissipated as we talked. Later, when I looked back at how our relationship had developed, I realised that Nicole had always feared that our conversations would come to this point: to what she perhaps felt was a less than honourable aspect to her work. When we did arrive at this moment, I could not have stopped her if I wanted to. On that day I became her

confidante and for that I am in her debt, for the crucial insight that came to underpin much of my research.

Now when I look back and hear that first consenting sigh that Nicole let escape into the insulated safety of our space on that day, I hear a validation of my ethnographic efforts to that point. Now when I read back between our transcribed lines to again sense that rising subtext of guarded unease, I am reminded by Joanne Passaro of ethnographic times gone by when we ‘... delighted in harrowing ethnographic accounts of the conquests of physical landscapes and of the reticence of the native’, when wresting “secrets” from remote and exoticised “natives” was the *raison d’être* of the endeavour’ (Passaro 1997 147). Whilst the landscape of my field-site may have been benign and the natives less than exotic, their reticence had to be overcome nonetheless, their secrets wrested from them.

Eventually the comfort and security afforded by the space also permitted some photographers to become professionally introspective. Some even found themselves questioning their own practice on the strength of our conversations. These were particularly engaging moments. They were engaging for me because something that I had brought from beyond our space found such resonance with somebody within it. For the photographers, well I cannot be sure, but I will briefly recount just one such conversation here because I can still see the look on Jeremy's face as his thoughts turned inward during one of these engaging moments.

We were about two thirds of the way through an interview: right in the fat of the space. Jeremy was considering my question about what he thought a couple were trying to achieve with the portraits that they had hired him to do. He had just told me that they had wanted the photos to look like snaps. I asked him what he thought ‘snaps’ were or meant for these people, and he said:

Ok - they were really keen on having shots where they looked like they are at a party somewhere - or just enjoying themselves out in their backyard and some one just happened to have a camera – bang.

I asked him why he thought they had employed him, a commercial photographer of

some reputation, to be the 'someone' who just happened to have a camera and, similarly, why they might want professional quality, but candid style, photos of themselves in their inner suburban garden, dressed in their smart but casual clothes. Staring into the space between us, Jeremy eventually answered, in a contemplative tone, with, 'I'm really not sure'. What I noticed though, as I first found and then held his gaze, was that he was also wondering why. But what really stayed with me, what I saw in Jeremy's eyes as I continued to hold his gaze within our space on that day, was that he was actually wondering why he had not wondered about this before.

It is from the reality of moments like these ones involving Nicole and Jeremy upon which much of this thesis is built. Sufficiently detached from the immediacy of their personal, professional and commercial lives, the space was expansive and provocative for all the photographers at least some of the time. The intimate relationships that were, in part, cultivated by this environment let individuals reveal understandings to me that would otherwise have been mitigated: their rich nuances dulled by the patinas of apathy, etiquette and convention. In the same way as I used the multi-sited imaginary to demarcate our field site from the remainder of our worlds, and how I used my multi-sighted imaginary to collect the photographers to within my gaze, I used the temporally bounded imaginary of the space to sequester our time together away from the remainder of our busy working days.

## **Chapter Four: the Working Day**

In this chapter I describe the photographers' professional and commercial relationships as they manifest in the moments during and leading up to the production of photos for their clients. I do this by describing a one-day photo shoot and some of the photographers' more readily recognised production techniques or methods; using Polaroid or digital images for ongoing reference during a shoot, making multiple exposures in order to achieve one photo and using an extended timeframe for production.

Drawing on Foucault's analysis of power as a relationship between power, knowledge, the subject and the individual (Foucault 1976), I show that, even at this cursory descriptive level of investigation, the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity is gainfully understood in terms of relations of power. For this reason, I describe the photographers' production methods as also being a means by which they manage their professional commercial reciprocity: techniques of self-governance by which they manage the power relations within those relationships.

### **A one-day photo shoot**

The following description of a one-day photo shoot illustrates how the photographers' professionalism and commerciality manifests in practice. It is based on my observations made when working as an assistant with the photographers as well as my experience as a photographer, and is composed from fragments of work done in studios and on locations. I use a composite description for the same reason that Vered Amit used a composite to describe her ethnographic fieldwork. As I indicated in the previous chapter, Amit sought to provide an archetype, referring to her description both as a composite but also familiar portrait (Amit 2000).

Like ethnographic fieldwork, commercial photo shoots have some characteristics in common. These are often indicative of a photographer's commerciality. Also like ethnographic field sites and the people in them, every commercial photo shoot is

different and this difference is often indicative of an individual photographer's professional relationships. Suggestive of the reciprocity between the photographers' commerciality and professionalism, the following account of a one day shoot is a typical description of an otherwise diverse and nuanced practice.

For any photo shoot, a photographer's preparedness and preparation is key to managing their professionalism and commerciality. When the shoot is to be on location, the day can begin even before the sun has risen. One reason for this is because the sunlight in Perth, after about 10.00am, can reach an intensity that becomes unsuitable for the commercial requirements of many client-briefs. Another reason is because location jobs draw from the same equipment inventory as studio jobs, so these days often begin with the loading of equipment into vehicles. Some equipment may have been sorted, checked and organised during the previous day, but generally not loaded. Whilst the photographers carry various levels of insurance, from none through to comprehensive, it rarely covers theft of equipment from vehicles, which is from where most theft occurs.

For an assistant, a studio day often starts with sweeping the floor, moving equipment around and clearing any residue from the previous shoot. The studio's cyclorama,<sup>1</sup> if it is to be used, will usually have been painted the day before. In effect, the studio is cleared and refreshed so that the photographer may work unchecked and with a clean canvas. As an assistant working in the photographers' studios, it became routine for me to look over all the lights, checking globes and fuses. The various light shapers and diffusers like umbrellas, dishes and snoots<sup>2</sup> are also checked to be in working order. Power boards, extension cords and double adapters are located and placed ready for use. When using digital cameras and laptops, power cords and/or power packs are checked. If the photographer is going

---

<sup>1</sup> Described in more detail below on page 88, a cyclorama is a white wall, seamlessly curved to join with the floor, other walls and sometimes even the ceiling, which is also white.

<sup>2</sup> Described in more detail below on page 92, these are various light reflecting, shaping and scrimming devices that the photographer uses to control the amount, direction and spread of light.

to be shooting tethered,<sup>3</sup> then the interfacing cables for these items are checked. If shooting to memory cards, often called SDHC<sup>4</sup> cards, these are also checked.

Whether preparing for a day in the studio or a day on location, sometimes there are also courier type jobs to be done at this early point in the day. With coffee often the first of these, assistants might also be sent to buy film, batteries, Polaroid film and other consumables for the day ahead. The fact that photographic consumables may be sourced on the morning of a shoot does not reflect an afterthought on behalf of the photographer: on the contrary. This reflects both the professional management of a small business's inventory and a service provider's preparedness by ensuring batteries are new and fresh and film stock has not gone beyond use-by dates. Whilst this early or preliminary preparedness may not be specifically towards the client-brief of the day, it is essential to the photographers' professional practice. As service providers, maintaining professionalism is an essential organizing principle of their work (Freidson 2013). This preparedness is one way that they maintain their own ability to provide their service.

My memories of working with the photographers during these early hours include doing so with a relatively generous sense of both time and energy. Perhaps this is because, as a photographer myself, I knew what was going to happen later. Another reason is because these early tasks can remain relatively generic. With little obvious immediate reciprocity between the photographer's professional and commercial relationships, the photographer and assistant are working towards *a* shoot rather than towards *the* shoot.

As we continue our preparations, our preparedness, talk does inevitably turn to the shoot, often about the client or the people who will be working with us. We might talk about which models are being used, who has worked with whom previously and what sort of relationships have or have not been established. The photographer and

---

<sup>3</sup> 'Tethered' means using the camera while it is connected to the laptop. This allows for instant review of images on the lap top screen. It also allows the photographer to control the camera from the laptop.

<sup>4</sup> Secure Digital High Capacity

assistant may look through layouts,<sup>5</sup> if they have been provided by the client, and begin refining their approach. What was general discussion turns more towards the specific requirements of the day ahead.

Sometimes, marking a distinction between commercial and domestic clients, we prepare to circumvent potential problems caused by any differences between a client's understandings and our own. For example, the budget may be discussed, particularly if the photographer feels that it is insufficient and, as such, likely to impinge on his or her capacity to fill the brief: the photographer's commercial relationship being compromised by that particular professional relationship. Sometimes a contingency plan may be given some thought, particularly when preparing for a location shoot. For example, if the photographer knows that the client's preferred location is likely to become unsuitable later the day, an alternative 'plan B' might be considered: the photographer's commercial experience assisting that professional relationship.

This client-oriented type of preparedness is not limited to the needs of inexperienced clients. It is essential to the management of each and every professional relationship and I describe it here as one of the techniques of self-governance by which the photographers manage the power relations within those relationships. In practice, the differences between types of client and between a client's understandings and the photographers can present as limitations, which are constantly negotiated and renegotiated.

Caroline Scarles, Head of Tourism and Events at the University of Surrey, recognises this ongoing negotiation and also sees it in terms of power relations that exist in the moments during and leading up to image production. Scarles has done extensive research concerning the production of photos used for tourism promotion and writes that:

Image construction becomes a series of spaces within which numerous knowledges, expertise, agencies, practices and

---

<sup>5</sup> Layouts are thumbnail sketches provided by the client/agent depicting what the photo should look like.

processes clash, complement and converge in the creation of the final product' (Scarles 2004 47).

One example of such a space is the periodic gathering around a laptop computer screen or Polaroid image to review progress to that point in the shoot. Reflecting Foucault's conception of power as immanent to relations between subjects and existing only through its application (Foucault 1976), this convergence of knowledges and ongoing negotiation, which characterise these spaces, are moments during a photo shoot when power is brought to bear on and by the photographers. These are moments during which the photographers are constituted as subjects, but also when they assert their individuality.

I noted in the previous chapter that assisting the photographers would provide an excellent position from which to observe their behaviour in practice. I already knew that those earlier generic tasks mentioned above will be supplanted by ones more specific to the client-brief as the photographer becomes increasingly occupied in meeting the commercial requirements of that particular client-brief. It was only as an ethnographic researcher, participating as an assistant but less caught up in the immediacy of what was happening than the photographer is, that I recognised this change could throw the distinction between a photographer's professionalism and commerciality into greater relief. I noted that the spaces described by Scarles could be recognised as professional spaces or commercial spaces.

I also knew from experience that the arrival of other people to a shoot can cause a photographer's behaviour to change. The arrival of people who are involved in the shoot, like other assistants, stylists, models, hair and make-up artists can cause the distinction between photographer and assistant to become more apparent. As I also noted in the previous chapter, photographic assisting is a specialized job. One reason assistants are employed is to continue with some of the more production oriented tasks as the photographer's time becomes divided amongst an increasing number of other professional people.

As a participant observer, I now noticed that a photographer's behaviour can change in different ways depending on who the new arrivals are. The arrival of

people who are less directly involved with the shoot, people like account executives from advertising agencies or the clients themselves, can cause a greater, or more noticeable change in a photographer's behaviour. This change can also throw the distinction between a photographer's professionalism and commerciality into greater relief.

I recall one instance of this heightened difference in particular with Mathew. We were part way through a shoot when the account executive from the advertising agency arrived with a marketing person from the client company. At the very least, I observed Mathew behaving more formally and politely to the client and the account executive than he had been to the rest of us to that point. What I also found interesting was that he began acting differently, more formally, towards me than he had been until then.

Reasons for Mathew's behaviour change are, no doubt, many and varied. Now with 'suits' (as agency and corporate executives are often referred to) in the room, Mathew may have been trying to act more professionally – whatever that meant to him. Another reason may have been because, whilst these people had only come briefly to watch, they do hold the purse strings: the terminal point of any photographer's professional relationship.

Foucault's notion of care of the self provides at least one explanation for Mathew's behaviour. Foucault notes that the Greek writing of 'care of the self', *'epimeleia heautou'*, implies an investment of labour in one's self (Foucault 1988). Mathew clearly did this. Looking back, the distinction between his professionalism and commerciality became more apparent because he consciously and conspicuously directed a certain amount of effort for a certain amount of time to maintaining just his professional relationship with the client and the agent.

The intermittent diversion of time and energy away from one relationship and towards the other is common to all the photographers. As professional and commercial pressures continue to build and reciprocate during a shoot, the prominence of each oscillates in the photographer's mind. I have observed more experienced photographers drawing energy from this increasingly building tempo. Less experienced photographers can develop a growing sense of urgency or anxiety

as their sense of professional obligation heightens: sometimes to the point of compromising their commercial production.

Product shoots do not escalate so noticeably to the crescendo that is about to be reached when photographing people. The dynamics and time constraints are different. Products are not being paid by the hour and do not, at some inevitable point, have to be somewhere else. Aside from the perishable nature of some items, products do not fatigue. This said though, whether in the controlled environment of a studio working towards a less demanding product shoot, or on a difficult location working with increasingly demanding people, the minutes are now passing a little more quickly than they were earlier in the day.

A series of Polaroids or digital images will have been made during the hour or so leading up to the moments of actual shooting. Any manner of adjustments are made, photographed and reflected upon in a process that I describe below in detail as a dedicated method. If it is product being shot in a studio, then the final Polaroid or digital shot all but marks the end of the day's work. One roll of 120 film, or a few sheets if the photographer is using a large format camera, and the shoot is over. The client's discursive ideal has, photographically at least, been achieved.

If the brief involves a model or other people, then shooting is about to start. Everything done earlier in the day, as well as during the days leading up to the shoot, has been towards this point. If shooting to film, the Polaroid back is removed from the camera and a film back is put on. Assistants remain in a constant state of readiness during what can be a testing time for them. Every one becomes more focused as shooting begins.

Even the most pleasant natured photographer can turn prima donna during this time. I have done so myself. I do not know any photographer who has not. Indeed, for some it is a normal mode of operation: a temporary insanity for which some will, as a matter of course, apologise afterwards. The documentary filmmaker and Balinese art authority, John Darling<sup>6</sup> even pre-empts this by apologising for his

---

<sup>6</sup> Sadly, John Darling has died since we spoke about this. He is described by Clifford Geertz, in the foreword to *The Three Worlds of Bali* by J. Stephen Lansing, as the island's most

behaviour beforehand. He told me of how he takes some time out before a shoot/take to warn people who are new to his set that his personality is about to change, probably for the worse, but that it will return to normal when shooting is finished. The celebrity photographer David La Chappelle, working out of New York, goes further. He takes his crew out for a meal after the shoot to make up for the way he behaved – every time (MacGregor, 2002).

Like the change in a photographer's behaviour brought on by the arrival of other people to the shoot, this behaviour change during the penultimate moment of a photo shoot can be attributed to many things. What is interesting though, in the specific terms of this thesis, is where the arrival of other people lead to the distinction between the photographer's professionalism and commerciality becoming more apparent. This change during shooting coincides with that professional commercial distinction becoming, again, less easily discerned. Both the time and energy, which was so abundant earlier in the day, has become much more precious. There is no longer time for such marked oscillation. The photographer does not have time to dwell on just a professional concern or to reflect on possibly more suitable commercial alternatives to what is about to be produced.

This period of time during shooting is the most intense, demanding the constant and concerted focus of everyone involved. This intensity is suitably exemplified here by the execution of one particular shot that I was involved with during the Castle Rock shoot with Marcus. It had been a long, hot day on location. It was late, the light was dropping and we had one further shot to do after this one. Palanya, the model, was lying on some smooth rocks. She was in an awkward position that took some effort to maintain, particularly whilst also looking relaxed and glamorous. The low light coming across her was creating some deep shadows that were becoming increasingly difficult for me to soften with the A2 size piece of white cardboard that I was using as a fleck board. Her hair and clothes were also being blown about by

---

innovative cinematographer. *Bali Hash* (1989) is outstanding amongst Darling's many documentaries for his juxtaposition of the Balinese celebrating a ten-day festival and the drunken antics of the expatriate 'hashers'. John Darling directed and produced the internationally acclaimed one hour documentary *The Healing of Bali* (2003), which was screened on SBS on *The Cutting Edge* on Tuesday October 7, 2003 at 8.30pm, to coincide with the first anniversary of the Bali bombings.

an ever-strengthening breeze coming off the ocean and required constant readjustment by Sam, the hair and makeup person and Fiona, the client/stylist. Each of these adjustments was taking time and light, both of which we were running out of. Marcus, having just taken a series of shots, stopped and turned for a moment to adjust his camera. The rest of us pounced immediately. Fiona adjusted clothes. Sam tidied hair. I took light readings to check the contrast ratio between the highlights and the ever-deepening shadows. Palanya lay still and remained calm as she was re-tweaked to perfection. At the time it reminded me of a pit crew scrambling around a Formula 1 race car that had just screeched to a halt in the pit lane.

Then, for one reason or another, it's a wrap. Sometimes the brief will have been filled as per the layouts or agreed concept, but the photographer, safe in the knowledge that the shots are in the bag and now with time to consider further commercial alternatives, starts pushing some more expansive ideas around. Sometimes the brief will have been filled in good time, the photographer is happy with the outcome, and everyone goes home.

There are also occasions, which are indicative of the photographer's concern for their current professional relationship, when the photographer keeps shooting, modifies his or her behaviour, because they have been paid for a day's work and know that the client expects a day's work from them. Jeremy pointed this out to me, saying that, with experience and practice, he had become faster at doing his job, such that, he said: 'you almost have to slow down to justify why you are charging them the money.' Then there are times more indicative of the reciprocity between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships when, as it was for the Castle Rock shoot, shooting only stops because the sun has gone down.

## **Commonly used production methods**

The photographers use numerous production techniques or methods as they work towards filling their client-briefs. Here I describe their use of Polaroid or digital images for ongoing reference during a shoot, making multiple exposures in order to

achieve one photo and using an extended timeframe for production. Whilst these methods are readily recognised techniques for the production of photos, they are also the means by which the photographers manage their professional commercial reciprocity.

### **A series of Polaroid or digital images**

All the photographers use instant Polaroid film or digital images as a means of review and adjustment as they work towards meeting the professional and commercial requirements of a client-brief. Some photographers who used Polaroid in the past, which is most of those who participated in this research, but who now shoot tethered to laptop computers, tend to view and use digital images in much the same way as they used to use Polaroid film.<sup>7</sup> It has also become common for photographers more used to working digitally to shoot a series of digital images, let us say three or four, before then exposing a Polaroid which is passed around for people to look at. In whichever form it takes, the extent to which this process is methodical is indicative of how pragmatic the management of professional commercial reciprocity can be during the production of photos.

The process goes as follows: the situation to be photographed is set up in an approximate manner. Lights and/or scrims are positioned and light meter readings are taken. Then with, for example, a model in position or the photographer's assistant if the model is getting dressed or made up, a Polaroid or digital is exposed. If using Polaroid, we all wait the 90 seconds or so for the image to develop before it is peeled away and the relevant people gather around to look at. If using digital, these people gather around a laptop computer. This includes most

---

<sup>7</sup> This stands in contrast to, for example, current photography students, most of whom have never used film cameras. Having learnt photography by utilising the instant feedback afforded by digital technology, these students proceed in a quite different way to those who have learnt photography using film and Polaroids for ongoing feedback. A photographer who is used to using Polaroid will have done so sparingly due to cost and time. Often, these photographers work the same way when using digital, where a photographer who is more accustomed to using digital will simply shoot away until they have achieved the desired result.

people involved in the shoot because each wants to see the net effect of their input to the convergence of knowledge and agency that create the final product. If the desired effect has not been achieved or, if in achieving it a further change has become necessary elsewhere, these people confer, the relevant adjustment is made and another Polaroid or digital is exposed.

Whether shooting product or people, on location or in a studio, any manner of adjustments can be made during this process. Lighting might require adjusting in order to achieve a more suitable contrast ratio.<sup>8</sup> Figure/field relationships, particularly when working outside, can require adjustment. Often clothes need to be altered to better fit the model. This is achieved using things like dress makers pins, gaffer or double sided tape and bulldog clips. But for the pins, these things are sometimes used to make the model better fit the clothes. Sometimes a lens or lens filter will be changed. This process continues until all professional and commercial concerns have been met: the desired photographic outcome arrived at.

This practice is methodical to the extent that it exemplifies Donald Schön's distinction between mere thoughtful action and the reflective practice method formalised by him (Schon 1987). In this reflective conversation described by Schön, his term *situation* is akin to the photo that is being produced and his term *back-talk* is akin to the series of instant Polaroids or digital images.

He [*sic*] shapes the situation, in accordance with his initial appreciation of it, the situation "talks back," and he responds to the situation's back-talk. In a good process of design, this conversation with the situation is reflective. In answer to the situations back-talk, the designer reflects-in-action on the construction of the problem, the strategies of action, or the model of the phenomena, which have been implicit in his moves (Schön 1983 79).

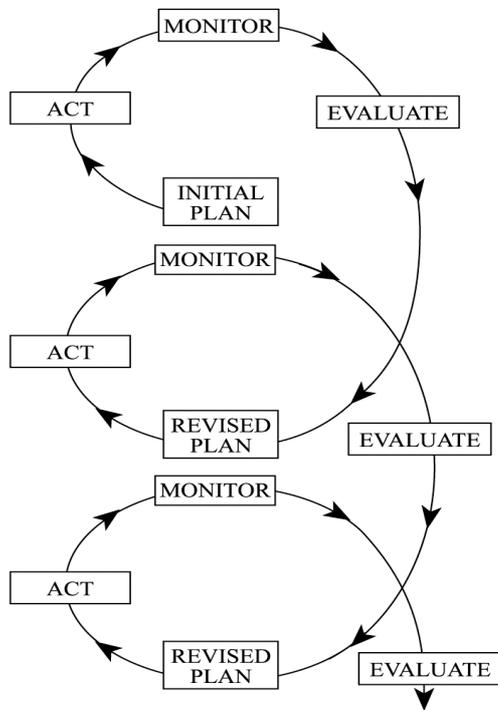
The significance to this thesis of Schön's description is that the conversation between photographer and situation moves, often alternating, between professional

---

<sup>8</sup> Described on page 103.

and commercial concerns. As the photographer's professionalism and commerciality each begin to influence the other, the photographer continuously revisits and reflects on one and then the other.

This alternating dynamic between professional and commercial concerns can be



illustrated using the action enquiry spiral model, shown in figure 1. The *initial plan* is the photographer's interpretation of the brief and conception of how he or she might proceed. The first *action* is the initial set-up: done perhaps just to establish light levels. This initial set-up is *monitored*: the photographer makes a Polaroid or digital image of it. Then, each time the situation is *evaluated* – each time the Polaroid or digital image is critiqued and a revised plan enacted, the photographer will have done so for either professional or commercial reasons. When the photographer evaluates and revises a photo in response to a

Figure 1 Action Enquiry Spiral Kemmis 1983

professional requirement – something the client desires, and a further change has become necessary elsewhere, that further change will often be a commercial consideration.

Foucault's notion of 'rarity' also provides for a useful critique here, for it can account for the net effect of the alternating dynamic of the reflective process. Foucault uses rarity to show how the statements within a discursive formation refer to each other and that, when considered separately, each statement is an expression of the totality of the formation to which it belongs (Foucault 1976). Foucault writes that:

In relation to this implicit, sovereign, communal 'meaning', statements appear in superabundant proliferation, since it is to that meaning alone that they all refer and to it alone that they owe their truth: a plethora of signifying elements in relation to this single 'signified' (118).

Each time the photographer evaluates a change that was made for professional reasons, made to accommodate the client's will to truth/power, the reflective conversation or question being asked is: has the photographer managed to add only to the plethora of signifying elements and helped his or her client engage with that discursive formation, or has something else, something original been produced?

### **Making multiple exposures**

As distinct from the use of Polaroids/digitals for preliminary and ongoing feedback, the photographers manage the reciprocating forces of their professional and commercial relationships during production of photos by exposing multiple frames in order to achieve just the one final image. All of the photographers used this method for various reasons and in a variety of ways. One way, which is indicative of their commercial relationships, is as an extension or refinement of the Polaroid/digital process described above. Another, which reflects their status as service providers and, as such, their professional relationships, is to reduce the likelihood of an unsatisfactory outcome.

This method of exposing multiple frames cannot be misconstrued as randomly exposing as many shots as possible from which the most suitable will then be chosen. As professional service providers, the photographers cannot leave the successful provision of their service to chance. That would be unprofessional. The photographers make a series of almost identical exposures, in order to achieve just the one, because they know that, for example, subjects/models can blink at just the wrong moment or forget to hold themselves as they have been directed to. Some models can even lose concentration as they are being photographed.

Whilst the practice reduces the likelihood of an unsatisfactory outcome, the photographers also use this time to establish immediate working relationships. For example, having progressed via a series of Polaroids/digitals to a point where, in structural terms, all the elements are arranged in place and ready to be used, the necessary rapport between model and photographer may not have been achieved. As photo after photo is being taken, both photographer and model are developing a

relationship, working together towards achieving a certain look, portraying a certain emotion, a discursive ideal as per the client-brief. The photographer can be intensely engaged with the model during this time, as can the assistant with the photographer. When using film, the more zealous of photographers might have their assistants loading and unloading film backs continuously and in no longer time than it takes the photographer to expose the 10 – 15 frames in the film back on the camera.

Sometimes a photographer exposes a series of frames as a means of warming up. Fredo recounted an instance of this, which betrayed a definite cognisance of the advantages afforded by using this method. He pointed generally to the first of two proof sheets (plates 01 and 02) and said:



So at that stage – I’m probably not loose enough to be shooting my self [by which he means anybody] - I'm still going through the technical parts of it - and then it develops - ok - that’s the warm up roll.

Beyond reducing uncertainty, Fredo is using this method of exposing multiple frames as a production technique in its own right. Even as he was exposing the first

roll, he knew that he would expose a further roll in order to achieve the result that he wanted. Despite this being a self portrait, or perhaps even because it was, we can see, between the first frame of the first sheet and the last one on the second, evidence of the work done as he proceeded through the shoot, exposing multiple frames as a means of building towards a final outcome.

Ian's comments about this method betray another quite different understanding. When I mentioned it to him, he said: 'Yeah, it's quite funny that - you can shoot a roll of 36 (35mm format) and you can only use the last frame'. Sometimes the opposite is also true. Sometimes the photographer gets lucky right at the start. Nicole provides the exception here. She was showing me this portrait below (plate 03), when she pointed specifically to the frame number of the negative, emphasising that it was the second frame of the first of two 24-frame rolls, and said:

Normally it would be - normally towards the end [of the roll of film or the shoot] because you've worked into it and the subject relaxed and they've got into it as well - um - so it was a bit unexpected to find something like this at the start.

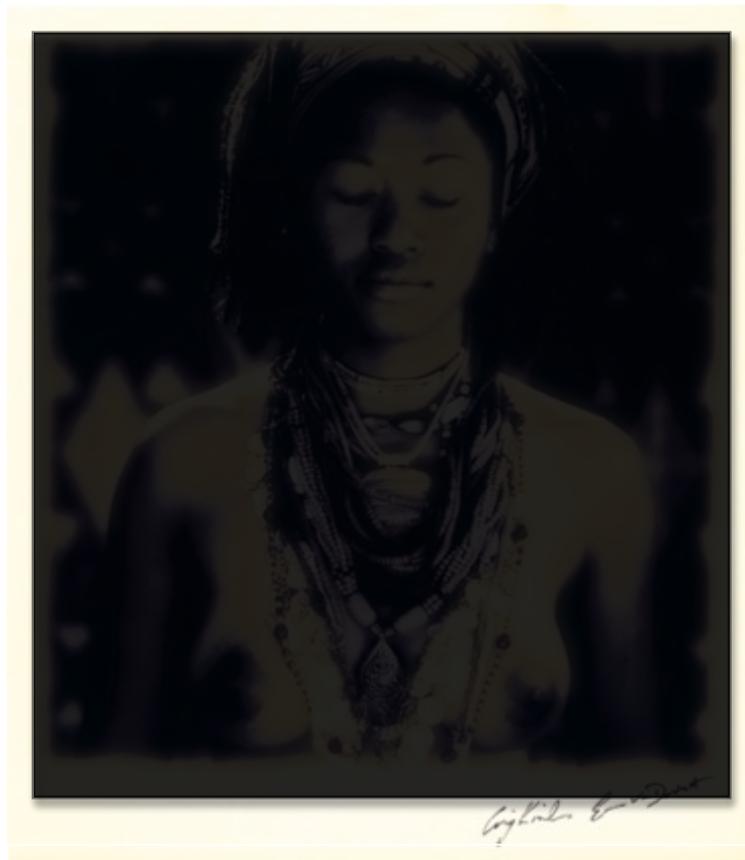


Plate 03

Invitation-Brief

Nicole

These practices of reducing uncertainty, establishing rapport and warming up are, of course, performed in conjunction with and as part of a process of refinement as the photographer works towards a photographic representation of the client's discursive ideal. Jeremy's practice as a ballet photographer provides an example of this. He knows that his success when photographing ballet dancers depends on preparation, organization, execution and timing. Indeed, Jeremy's keenly developed sense of timing is such that he usually 'knows' when a shot is good. Nonetheless, he knows that luck, be it good or bad, can be a factor when trying to photograph such dynamic movement as dancers performing and portraying it in a way that reflects the client-brief.

As a professional, Jeremy also knows not to rely on luck. Rather, he uses the process of exposing multiple frames to minimise the risks. Again, whilst one could argue that Jeremy's process is indeed one of hit and miss, it is much more than that. Like the other photographers, he is also building rapport during this time. Further, and also as it is for the others, Jeremy's acceptance of his dependence on this formulated methodical approach is a source of agency for him. Safe in the knowledge that he does not need to 'get the shot' in one go, this process affords both him and the subject/dancer who he is photographing a freer, more expressive, working environment.

### **Working with an extended time frame**

But for their cameras, the most commonly used method by which the photographers manage their professional commercial reciprocity during production is the extended timeframe over which they produce their photos. Amongst other reasons, they use this extended timeframe to accommodate the protracted methods described above. As with those methods, each photographer appreciates their use of an extended time frame differently, to greater and lesser extents as well as placing emphasis on different parts of it.

Nicole emphasises the entire expanse of time leading up to the moments of actual shooting. We had been talking about portraits and the longer than expected

timeframe in which good portraits are achieved, when she said:

Particularly a corporate portrait – that's in my mind at the moment - they need to be seen in a certain way I guess - you don't want to belittle them or make it too quirky and then they might look like a joke - so yeah - there is little things like that popping around in your head while your setting up for sure.

It is apparent from Nicole's words that the things popping around in her head as she is setting up are both professional and commercial things. Her words, 'they need to be seen in a certain way' indicate a client's ideal photographic outcome, the client's preferred truth, as well as Nicole's professional obligation to achieve this. Her familiarity with the archive of the formation with which her clients seek to engage, her awareness of discursive rules of production, are evident in her concern that the subject not appear too quirky. Reflecting the extent to which her professional and commercial concerns are rolled into one, Nicole then said,

Not that I've ever really been conscious of it - that's all just part of the process. The biggest part of any job is setting up - you spend most of your time doing that.

Ian provides a different emphasis. Working together from time to time, Ian and Nicole are aware that each proceeds differently through the extended timeframe of a commercial photo shoot. It had taken an amount of time for each of them to get used to the way that the other worked because, to use Ian's words, they 'definitely had different ways of doing things'. Comparing himself to Nicole, he said:

Its quite amazing because - I often will see something and go - that's what we are doing straight away - you know - after thirty seconds of looking at it - and then go ahead and do it - rather than be a little bit more contemplative.

Whilst both he and Nicole spent significant amounts of time setting up their photos,

Nicole described her decision making process as an ongoing one, while Ian describes his as being completed after thirty seconds. I worked with Ian a number of times and this is actually how he approaches a shoot. In his words, 'It's just a feeling isn't it - I think I like to try to pre-visualise the final print - the final product before I even start shooting'. He might take more than thirty seconds, but he will quite quickly visualise the final product, decide how the shoot is going to proceed, before setting about the extended process of achieving it.

In complete contrast to Ian, Jeremy emphasises the penultimate moments of the extended timeframe of his photo shoots. In doing so, he points to several reasons why the reciprocity between the professionalism and commerciality of all the photographers is often indistinguishable. We were talking about the ways in which different photographers work when he said:

Because there is so much stuff coming before it [before taking the photo, but also before accepting the brief] - that you are influenced by - and all the time you are trying to clear your head of it - to get something fresh.

When I responded with, 'Yeah – it's quite a moment that you are working in there', Jeremy immediately said, 'It is almost a Zen moment - get rid of everything and just loosen up'. At the time I thought Jeremy's description of his process, as achieving 'Zen' was particularly apt. As I noted above, these penultimate moments of a photo shoot can be intense, demanding the constant and concerted focus of everyone involved. By trying to loosen up or be Zen like, Jeremy is trying to assuage some of the difficulty associated with these difficult but decisive moments. Emphasizing realization through meditation and *dharma* rather than through theoretical knowledge (2007), Jeremy's use of the term 'Zen' is also symptomatic of at least one reason why this practice can be misunderstood. As I show in chapter seven using Foucault's notion of care of the self, some photographers prefer to describe their practice in less than precise or ambiguous terms and 'Zen' is not, for many people, a definitive term.

Upon reflection though, what bears analysis is Jeremy's suggestion that he is trying

to clear his head all the stuff he has been influenced by. As I have been showing throughout this chapter, each photographer's commercial relationship, the relationship maintained with the archives of the formations with which his or her clients seek to engage, must be regarded as a relationship of conformity.

Whilst the brief from any one of Jeremy's clients might be for him to get something fresh, it is a difficult brief to fill within the rarefied atmosphere of discursive formations. Discontinuities aside, it is perhaps an impossible brief to fill. In discursive terms, each photo that Jeremy produces must bear a certain regularity from which it cannot be dissociated. The 'stuff' that he claims to be influenced by is, amongst other things, the historical *a priori* of the discursive archive. Whether or not he is able clear his head of it during those final moments of a shoot, this is the very stuff that all of the photographers must acknowledge on their clients' behalves: the discursive regularity of their commercial influences.

## **Chapter Five: the Studio and Other methods**

In this chapter I draw on Foucault's conception of power in terms of relationships and in particular his notion of 'discursive practices' (Foucault 1981) to examine the photographers' studios, equipment and other methods of production further to those described in the previous chapter. By considering the photographers' studios and equipment as discursive practices, as all-encompassing combinations of textual, material, physical and discursive elements, I am able to distinguish between the studio as a place and as a method for the production of photos. This distinction between place and method then becomes further apparent when I consider the photographers' studios in the specific terms of the thesis: their management of the relationship between their professional and commercial relationships.

The materiality that Foucault's 'discursive practices' brings to his discourse analysis enables me to examine and portray the photographers' studios as material manifestations of power that has been brought to bear on and by the photographers. I highlight how each studio, as a discursive practice, is a reflection both of a produced subject and an empowered individual as well as a physical manifestation of each photographer's professional and commercial relationships. By considering their equipment and how they use it, the ways that they articulate, or not, complex visual understandings as well as their use of photogenia (Barthes 1961), I show how these further, perhaps less obvious, methods for photographic production are in fact essential to the photographers' management of the reciprocity between their professionalism and commerciality.

### **The Studio**

At first glance, photography studios may seem an obvious source of agency for the professional commercial photographers who use them. However, as places these studios are no more than rooms in buildings. Anyone with the money to spend can own one, fill it with expensive equipment, but then fail to produce photos that would satisfy a client-brief.

For this reason alone, I suggest the photographic studio is better appreciated for its methodological function rather than simply as a place. Consider Fox Talbot's studio and/or dark room (plate 04) built and used by him in the 1840s.



Plate 04

Fox Talbot's Studio

(Waterman 2002)

Fox Talbot chose this building, amongst other reasons, because its location, size, shape, and possibly affordability, served his pioneering investigations into photography at the time. It served his methodological, by which I mean operational, organisational, practical and functional purposes. It did nothing more than this and nothing less. One reason why it continued to look like a European domestic green house is because, for Fox Talbot's purposes, it need not look any other way. Its appearance was irrelevant to what Fox Talbot was trying to achieve. If he had found a reason to change it, he would have. That the 'place' where Fox Talbot worked, a green house, is of secondary significance to what that place allowed him to do, is reflected in the studios occupied by the photographers who participated in this research. As I show below, as places, the photographers' studios have little in common. Indeed, the variety of locations along with the range of sizes, shapes and appearance of the photographers' studios underscores the secondary significance of 'place'.

Tom's studio provides an apt example of how a photographer's management and accommodation of his professional and commercial relationships can, in some way,

determine the location, size, shape, fixtures and equipment, and even the name of that photographer's studio. By conflating these textual, material, physical and discursive elements into the all-encompassing discursive practices, I can describe Tom's studio as a material manifestation of his relationships of power.

Tom trades under the name 'Sawtooth Studios'. He chose this name because of the frequency with which he found himself leasing studio space in underpopulated or even derelict, light industrial areas: places where many of the factory buildings have roof-lines with a sawtooth profile. As a professional person running a small business, Tom finds these places suitable because the relatively cheap rent is affordable within the framework of his business model. As he is a commercial photographer, the generous space and, at times, quite beautiful light from the north facing vertical windows provides for Tom's photographic requirements, again reflecting his business model. Like Fox Talbot's green house, the location of Tom's studio may be less than salubrious. However, this location or place is secondary to what the space allows Tom to do: the methodical management and accommodation of his professional and commercial relationships.

Peter takes a different approach to Tom's, leasing an entire house in one of Perth's residential suburbs for both his studio and offices. From the outside, nothing about this domestic setting says 'commercial photographer' – it does not have to. The domestic nature of this setting, of this place, is of less consequence to what the house allows Peter to do. Its combination of large and small rooms, with one or two internal walls having been removed, along with kitchen and bathroom facilities, provides for Peter's methodical management and accommodation his professional and commercial relationships. Like Fox Talbot's green house, Peter has found no professional or commercial reason to alter the outward appearance, so he has not.

Nicole and Ian have set up their studio in their home. They bought the property, a corner delicatessen with house attached at the rear, with the specific intention of converting the large delicatessen space into their studio. Jeremy also has his studio at his home. Unlike Nicole and Ian though, Jeremy had this studio purpose built. With the greater part of his work involving ballet and other forms of dance, this studio has a sprung wooden floor. One wall has a floor to ceiling mirror on it and

another has a stretching rail or barre attached. It could just as well be a dance studio. In contrast to the studios belonging to Tom, Peter, Nicole and Ian, upon entering Jeremy's studio, one gets an immediate sense of his commercial relationships: the discursive formations, which we might call 'ballet' or 'dance', with which the bulk of his clients seek to engage. The fact the studio is an extension of his home is largely irrelevant. What is relevant is that it provides for the methodical management and accommodation of his professional and commercial relationships.

Ben rents a relatively expensive commercial space in an inner suburb. Multiple offices, client meeting spaces and a gallery or display section are accessible from the street frontage. The actual studio, which with a floor space just shy of a tennis court is large enough to accommodate large vehicles like trucks, is accessible from a laneway at the rear. Where Jeremy's studio gives one an immediate sense of Jeremy's commercial relationships, Ben's studio is indicative of a more equal or balanced dynamic between a photographer's professionalism and commerciality. Immediately upon entering through Ben's front door, one gets a sense of the scope of both Ben's professional and commercial relationships – current and prospective. The first room is a display section, filled with folios of magazine tear-outs.<sup>1</sup> Beyond this room are the dedicated meeting spaces, which then lead through to the offices. Upon entering the studio, which is not accessible from the display section or meeting rooms, one finds one's self in the best equipped and most commercially versatile of all the studios in which I worked during the fieldwork stage of this research.

If we consider Ben's studio as a means to an end, rather than simply as a place, I can say that his means is the greatest of all the photographers in whose studios I worked. However, when we consider Ben's studio as a discursive practice, as a material, textual, physical and discursive method for managing the reciprocity between his professional and commercial relationships, I can say simply that his means fits his ends, nothing more and nothing less. Highlighting the reciprocating effect between Ben's professionalism and his commerciality, the purpose of such a

---

<sup>1</sup> Tear-outs are pages from publications, often the cover page, which have used photos by that photographer.

studio is not to have the greatest commercial capacity. Rather, it is so that Ben can accommodate the greatest number and diversity of clientele. In contrast, Jeremy's studio, with its focus on dance, may be described as a more refined method, a more dedicated discursive practice. Like Ben though, I can also describe Jeremy's means as fitting his ends.

Reflecting both photographers' professional commercial reciprocity, it is what their studios allow them to do that is significant. Consider, as an example, the discursive event that I will call 'photographing ballet dancers'. While this could be performed or practiced in either studio, Jeremy's would be much better suited than Ben's, but Ben's studio would, nonetheless, accommodate the discursive event of 'photographing ballet dancers'. However, where Ben could, and could have reason to, photograph a truck in his studio, Jeremy would have no reason to even consider it.

Further highlighting the distinction between place and method, none of these studios, including Fox Talbot's, are recognisable as such upon approach. However, upon entering any one of them, one immediately recognises similarities between them. As I explain below, these studios include common fixtures and fittings like cycloramas, camera systems and expensive lights, which when seen together, may be read as 'professional commercial photography'. Having worked in each of these studios, I can argue that the photographers were responding to discursive rules for organizing and producing different forms of knowledge: managing, accommodating, being produced by those same rules that allow certain statements to be made. In Foucault's terms, one can recognise a regularity between objects, types of statement, concepts and thematic choices (Foucault 1976 38) that tells us we are dealing the discursive formation of 'professional commercial photography'.

Further, by considering these studios as discursive practices, it becomes evident that the photographers have put some effort towards ensuring this regularity. In establishing these studios, each photographer has taken some care to occupy the subject position 'professional commercial photographer'. Whilst Tom and Ben find themselves at opposite ends of town, with Jeremy, Peter, Nicole and Craig at points between, each photographer's studio is where and what it is for the same reason.

Whether they felt compelled to or not, each photographer has produced a truth of power that their society demands, '... of which it has need, [of which] ... it institutionalises, professionalises and rewards its pursuit' (Foucault 1980 93). By combining each photographer's textual, material, physical and discursive elements into an all-encompassing discursive practice we see how each photographer's studio reflects ways in which that particular individual has been constituted – reproduced into that subject position.

However, whilst they may be collectively rewarded for producing a truth of power that their society demands, these photographers are hired as individuals. They are rewarded for their individuality, for their society demands that also. Foucault's analysis of power as a relationship between power, knowledge, the subject and the individual is particularly apt here, for one of the regular statements that make up the discursive formation of 'professional commercial photography' is an expression of a photographer's individuality: it is also by asserting their individuality that they are constituted as subjects.

When thought of just as places, these studios are converted delicatessens, disused industrial buildings, extensions to homes, entire houses, even green houses. And because each photographer's professional relationships are with different people and, as such, commercial relationships with the archives of different formations, the inside of every studio is different. When regarded as discursive practices however, these studios are similar in that each is a material manifestation of that photographer's methodical management of those relationships. Each studio is an expression of regularity – it looks like a photography studio. Each studio is an expression of an individual photographer's commercial knowledge and power relations. And each studio reflects what Foucault suggests is the essential condition for the practice of one's ethics: the freedom to choose one action over another (Foucault 1990).

## **Fixtures & fittings and plant & equipment**

I noted that the photographers' studios commonly include fixtures like cycloramas and equipment like camera systems and lights. These too are gainfully critiqued by considering them as material manifestations of each photographer's power relationships and, as such, as discursive practices by which the photographers manage their professional and commercial relationships.

### **Cycloramas**

All of the photographers who occupied studios when I worked with them had built cycloramas: a white wall curved seamlessly to join with the floor, usually at least one other wall and sometimes to the ceiling, which is also white. These structures provide a pure and seamless white background in photos. With no orientating edges or apparent depth, it can be disconcerting to stand on the floor of a freshly painted cyclorama. The pure bright white can cause one to become disorientated in only a few seconds. The fact that cycloramas are routinely re-painted, fortnightly when busy, stands as testament to their methodological function: it is not the 'place' or the fixture that needs maintenance, it is the method.

The photographers do not spend time and money building and maintaining cycloramas out of interest and nor do their clients demand they do this either. The photographers build and maintain cycloramas so as to enable the production of commercially suitable photos for those clients. As an integral part of the studio, the cyclorama is a material manifestation of each photographer's management of his or her professional and commercial relationships: a methodical means by which they fill the briefs that they accept from their clients.

### **Cameras**

All of the studios in which I worked were equipped with multiple types of camera system. This profusion alone is indicative of the methodical function of these

cameras. The fact that they are referred to by the manufacturers and retailers as 'camera systems' is also indicative of their methodical function.

The photographers commonly use three types of camera system. They all, whether they had studios or not, had at least two full frame<sup>2</sup> 35mm DSLR<sup>3</sup> cameras and one or two medium format cameras, film and/or digital. Two of the studios, Ben's and Peter's, were equipped with large format film cameras. Ben and Peter continued to use film for their large format work because digital backs for these cameras remained too expensive for all but dedicated users. Also indicative of the methodical and, as such, discursive function of these camera systems is the associated array of lenses: ten to twenty are typical. These are usually stored, along with the cameras, in a secure locked cabinet, for collectively they can be worth as much as a new car.

For the photographers' part, given the chance, they will choose to use their 35mm cameras. Smaller in size and with a greater array of automatic functions than their medium or large format ones, these 35mm cameras are quick and easy to use and relatively cheap to run. Reflecting their professional commercial reciprocity, they only turn to their medium format cameras when a brief requires the superior optics and/or image/file size<sup>4</sup> afforded by these cameras. With both film and digital versions being physically larger than 35mm cameras, with fewer automatic functions and equipped with prime<sup>5</sup> lenses with manual focus control, the photographers find themselves taking a more considered approach when using these slightly more cumbersome cameras.

The photographers only use large format cameras when absolutely necessary. The principal commercial benefit afforded by these cameras is the greater depth of field

---

<sup>2</sup> 'Full frame' means the same size as 35mm film.

<sup>3</sup> Digital Single Lens Reflex

<sup>4</sup> Whether using film or digital, medium format cameras give an image size approximately two and a half times that of 35mm cameras.

<sup>5</sup> A prime or fixed lens has only one focal length. For example a 50mm lens is a prime lens. This is as opposed to a zoom lens. A typical zoom lens for a 35mm camera is, for example, a 28mm to 70mm.

and scope for optical manipulation afforded by the bellows<sup>6</sup> type construction that characterises this type of camera. The draw backs, when using these cameras, are that they are heavy, awkward to handle and can only be used on a tripod. With no automatic functions, a separate light meter must be used and the correct shutter speed and aperture for each shot must be set manually. Lacking the SLR function of the smaller cameras, the photographer must compose the image whilst looking at a ground glass screen, with both photographer and camera shaded under a piece of dark fabric and everything on the ground glass screen appearing upside down. For the same reason, the photographer cannot see through the lens of one of these cameras when the shot is being exposed.

When each photographer's inventory of expensive camera gear is considered as a discursive practice, it can be portrayed as a material manifestation of the reciprocity between that photographer's professionalism and commerciality. As professionals running small businesses, the photographers' cameras and lenses represent a significant capital investment that only depreciates in value. If they could use the one small 35mm camera for all of their jobs and avoid carrying such expensive equipment inventories, they would. With no single client ever likely to see an entire inventory, it is evident that the photographers' clients do not insist on these expensive inventories either. The photographers only carry such inventories because their commercial capacity must be such that they can provide their service to multiple disparate clients who each have a variety of commercial needs.

## **Camera Bags**

In chapter three I drew some methodological parallels between this research and Julian Orr's *Talking about machines: an ethnography of a modern job* (Orr 1996).

---

<sup>6</sup> Where both 35mm cameras and the bodies of medium format cameras are rigid, the lens and the film back of large format cameras are connected with bellows: a light proof flexible and expandable extension between the film plane and the lens plane. They are called bellows because they are pleated in a concertina to allow the lens plane to be moved towards or away from the focal plane, for focusing. Because a bellows is flexible in three dimensions, the photographer can also change the angle of the film plate with respect to the optical axis of the lens, to correct or exaggerate perspective distortion.

We both researched a small number of people doing their modern job, photocopier technicians in Orr's case, in a modern city and we both used the contemporary ethnographic conception of the 'multi-sited imaginary' to assuage some of the difficulties inherent to contemporary world ethnographic research. A further more specific parallel becomes evident when we consider both of these modern jobs as discursive practices.

Orr describes each technician's inventory of parts, carried in that technician's van, as being specific to that individual. Orr then emphasises that each technician's inventory is based on that individual person's years of experience at least as much as it is on the service manuals and parts catalogues for the machines serviced. The contents of each photographer's camera bag have evolved similarly to include only that which is required by that particular individual: nothing more, nothing less and based on that individual's experience. This parallel highlights how even the most minute detail of the photographers' practice is influenced by their professional commercial reciprocity.

Building on this equivalence, the particularly enlightening correlation between Orr's study and this research is between the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity and Orr's finding that: 'The real work of field service technicians is to maintain a triangular relationship between the technicians, their customers, and the machines ...' (Orr 1996 66). The significant correlation is in the nature of the relationships. It is neither the technicians nor the people who use the photocopiers who determine what goes in a technician's van, just as it is neither the photographers nor their clients who determine what goes in a photographer's camera bag. When considered as a discursive practice, the inventory of parts carried in a van is a manifestation of that technician's management of his or her three cornered relationships. Similarly, the contents of each photographer's camera bag is a manifestation of that photographer's management of his or her professional and commercial relationships and of the reciprocating effect that each of these has on the other.

## Lights

Like their inventories of cameras and lenses, the array of different photographic lights found in the photographers' studios are also suitably portrayed as a manifestation of the reciprocity between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships. Ranging from tungsten balanced lights, available at most hardware stores, right through to the daylight balanced hydrogaram medium-arc iodide or HMI lights, more commonly used on movie sets, these lights also represent a significant capital investment that only depreciates in value.

At between 3500 and 4000 degrees Kelvin (k),<sup>7</sup> tungsten light is warmer or more yellowish than daylight. These lights afford a photographer a constant light source, but become extremely hot as soon as they are turned on and will melt or burn anything placed close by that is not constructed from metal. HMI lamps, at approximately 5600k to 6000k, afford the photographer a constant daylight-balanced light source. These are the most expensive type of studio light and, starting at 5000 watts in power, are too big for most photography studios. None of the photographers who I worked with locally owned or used these, although Mathew was working with them in Europe at the time. Also balanced at 5600k to 6000k are the moderately expensive strobe or 'flash' lights. These were the most commonly used studio and location light during the time of my fieldwork. They produce little to no heat build-up because they only flash each time the camera shutter is released. As such, various diffusers and shapers can be placed over these lights as a method of controlling the contrast, intensity and spread of light.

The array of diffusers and shapers is also gainfully understood as a discursive practice. These are called by a variety of names that usually reflect their shape and/or function. Umbrellas, for example, look like umbrellas, but are made from either a reflective or translucent material. These are placed in front or behind flash heads to either reflect or diffuse the light. 'Dishes' function like reflective umbrellas

---

<sup>7</sup> The colour temperature of white light is measured in degrees Kelvin and is expressed as 'k'. Higher temperatures are cool or bluish. Lower temperatures are warmer or yellowish.

but are made out of lightweight sheet metal. A 'soft-box' is a large, one to two meter, often cubic aluminium tube frame covered with translucent fabric. This is placed over a flash head as a means of producing an even more diffuse or softer light. 'Snoots' are a broad funnel shape, also made from lightweight sheet metal. These are fixed to the front of flash heads to restrict the size of the pool of light. 'Honey-Combs' often look like snoots but are built around a honeycomb type centre, not unlike a bundle of metal drinking straws, which further restrict the size of the light pool. Shaped as their name suggests, 'eggs' and 'tents' are similar in size to soft boxes and also built from aluminium tube and translucent fabric. They differ from soft boxes in that small products such as watches and jewellery are placed inside these structures and photographed while the material is lit from the outside – the result being a seamless panoramic light source. A 'swimming pool' is a more elaborate and much larger version of this. It is the shape and size of an inverted swimming pool, under which products like cars are photographed.

As with their expensive inventory of camera equipment, the photographers would prefer to spend less money on lights. They would also prefer to work with less unwieldy equipment than soft boxes, eggs, tents and inverted swimming pools. As with their camera inventories, it is also evident that their clients do not insist they carry this array of lights and nor do those clients insist on how the photographers should use them. Except for an umbrella, most clients would be unable to even name a diffuser or shaper. Each photographer's array of lights and variety of diffusers and shapers has evolved through professional and commercial necessity: necessity for the photographer to be able to produce commercially acceptable photos for a range of clients, with a range of needs, who seek engagement with a range of discursive formations.

## **Things and stuff**

When considered as discursive practices, each photographer's studio contains an amount of what I call 'things and stuff' that reflects that photographer's professional commercial reciprocity: that photographer's methodical means to his or her

professional and commercial ends.

For example, not readily recognised as photographic equipment, but found in every studio, are relatively inexpensive things like scrims, flecks and gels. A scrim can be any form of translucent material, used like a diffuser but in a more rudimentary and immediate manner. It is not uncommon to find kitchen baking paper in studios or even in camera bags, for it is one of the few materials that can be used as a scrim in front of tungsten lights. 'Flecs', 'flec' boards, or reflectors can be any form of reflective material that can bounce or reflect light into localised parts of an image. Polystyrene foam sheet is often used in studios. Gels are sheets of coloured translucent plastic which, when placed in front of flash heads, create coloured or polarised light. When placed in front of the much cheaper tungsten lights, they melt or immediately catch fire. Other things include more generic equipment like double adapters, power-boards, extension cords, dustpans-and-brooms, paint rollers and brushes. All these things are just as important to a photographer as his or her camera. The best studio with the most expensive equipment is useless without enough double adapters.

I include 'stuff' in this description of the photographers' studios because, where the studios and equipment are suitably critiqued as material manifestations of the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity, this stuff may be regarded as a material residue from that discursive practice. Little bits and pieces of cardboard torn, obviously hurriedly, into odd shapes. Bits of gaffer tape, bulldog clips, various little bits and pieces which, beyond that photographic studio context, are indeed just stuff. Within a studio context, this stuff has names like cookies, cutters and gobos. Gobos or French flags are small sheets of card or metal used to flag off or shade the smallest of areas of the subject or object being photographed. Cutters are long thin finger like gobos. Cookies are flags with a small hole cut in them, used to prevent all but the smallest and tightest pool of light from falling on a particular part of the subject or object. The adjustments made during these final moments of shooting are often achieved using this stuff. For example, cookies and cutters fashioned between shots, made on the run, torn and fabricated from whatever material is closest to hand as the photographer asks for the smallest of changes to

be made while the entire production stands, momentarily, still.

When considered as the material residue of a discursive practice, perhaps nothing reflects the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity more than this stuff. It is the residue from those heightened moments of a photo shoot described in chapter four: those most intense, demanding but definitive moments when any distinction between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality has completely collapsed.

## **Further Methods**

Some themes, like the commonly used photographic methods described in the previous chapter, were relatively easily observed. Some of those descriptions and distinctions were simply offered to me by the photographers. Other methods, like the ways that they articulate visual concepts and their deft use of photogenia, were less immediately apparent. Some themes were only made conspicuous to me by their absence.

In methodological terms, I accept that a collective absence of phenomena can only be recognised by having first presupposed its existence and that this presupposition breaches fundamental tenets of the ethnographic method. American writer and philosopher Robert Pirsig uses the analogy of motorcycle maintenance to explain his position on such presuppositions in a way that clarifies my position. In *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (Pirsig 1989), he draws on the French philosopher Henri Poincaré to emphasise the subliminal choices that we all make about what facts we might observe. Having first emphasised that critical knowledge should be sought fairly and impartially, Pirsig makes the point that, nonetheless, one has to expect something. He writes

As Poincaré would have said, there are an infinite number of facts about the motorcycle, and the right ones don't just dance up and introduce themselves. The right facts, the ones we really need are not only passive, they are damned elusive and we are not going to just sit back and observe them. We are going to have to be in there looking for them or we are going to be here a long time (Pirsig 1989 285).

In a similar vein, in chapter three I noted that the grounded theorist Barney Glaser acknowledges the worth of a researcher's own experience and knowledge, of bringing one's personal experience into the research arena. Critically though, I also noted Glaser's assertion that the veracity of this approach depends upon the researcher's acquisition of theoretical sensitivity (Glaser 1978): that the insensitive researcher can attempt to force categories or themes to emerge by presupposing what to expect and then seeking to observe it. Like motorcycles and their maintenance, there are infinite facts about commercial photography and about the people whose business it is. As an experienced commercial photographer, I knew that certain of these infinite facts and understandings were indispensable. As a novice ethnographer, or as Glaser may have referred to me, an insensitive researcher, it seemed only reasonable that I should expect to observe some expression of these understandings.

So, it was whilst I was in there looking for the 'right facts' that I came to realise I was not observing some facts and understandings that I knew to be indispensable to the professional practice of commercial photography. As my eye became more focused, my mind more theoretically sensitive, the somewhat finer grain of collective phenomena, which characterizes these later themes, gradually became apparent. The photographic methods I describe here represent common understandings that are indispensable to the professional practice of commercial photography, but which may not always have been at the front of a photographer's mind during our time working together. The significant characteristic, in the terms of this thesis, is that the absence or non-expression of these things that I expected to see and hear is a product of the relationship between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships

### **Unarticulated understandings**

I became aware that the photographers were not articulating some understandings at all. For example, whether working in a studio, on location, or talking with individual photographers within the reflective space of our interview time, I noticed

an absence of explicit or overt reference to photographic equipment and certain technical aspects of photography. I do not mean that I observed less photo-centric understanding than I expected to. It was quite obvious to me that all of the photographers understood their equipment, recognised their dependence on it and appreciated the agency that came with their ability to use it. Rather, these are understandings that are necessary to the photographers' management and accommodation of their professional and commercial relationships, but the verbal expression of these understandings is not.

Further, when I endeavoured to pursue what I assumed to be unarticulated understandings about professional commercial photography, I noticed degrees of difficulty with which the photographers then attempted to articulate these essential but unexpressed aspects of their practice to me. Something of this difficulty is to be expected. For example, the art and design critic Michael Clarke writes about the difficulty inherent to verbalising visual phenomena. He introduces his book, *Verbalising the Visual: Translating art and design into words* (Clarke 2007) with the words: 'Translating a visual experience into a verbal statement, spoken or written, is far from easy' (8). He goes on to say that, nonetheless,

We all constantly verbalise our visual experiences. A substantial part of our daily conversation with others is taken up with our need to give them some idea or impression of the people, things, places or events that we witnessed but they may not have seen (Clarke 2007 20).

The photographers had difficulty verbally expressing some visual aspects of the practice to me because it is no less difficult for them to do this than it is for the people in Clarke's example. Moreover, when the photographers do use words to express the visual, they are not doing so simply to translate an experience. Whether working in a studio or on location, they are constantly trying to communicate professional and commercial aspects of the production of the visual texts that they are currently producing.

Also indicative of their professional commercial reciprocity, the photographers had

difficulty articulating these visual ideas to me because they had grown accustomed to expressing these aspects of their practice in other non- or less-verbal ways. They know that visual ideas must continue to be communicated and experience has taught them that misunderstandings attributed to the shortcomings of visual/verbal translation can prove costly in both time and money – for them and for their clients. The adage, 'a picture is worth a thousand words', does come to mind. For professional and commercial reasons, they have come to depend less on verbal articulation, particularly during the heightened moments of a shoot, by drawing on other better ways of communicating visual ideas: ways that circumvent possible misunderstanding.

For example, consider the Polaroid process described in the previous chapter where the conversation between photographer, assistant and others is effected whilst looking at instant Polaroid images or at the screen of a laptop computer. This method of production, this management of professional commercial reciprocity as a photographer builds towards the discursive ideals contained in the client-brief, removes the need for verbal/visual translation altogether.

Marcus is one photographer who makes extensive use of this method in this way. Beyond checking adjustments as he proceeds, Marcus uses Polaroids as an ongoing means of communicating with clients and art directors for the duration of a shoot. Each time he wants to confer about something in the shot that he is working on, he passes the camera to the assistant, the assistant replaces the film/digital back with a Polaroid back, Marcus exposes the Polaroid, rips it from the back and passes the camera back to the assistant who again changes the backs and stands ready with the loaded camera. On the one hand, this relatively convoluted process might seem to impede or at least interrupt the rhythm of the shoot, which it does. On the other hand, rather than attempt the difficult process of translating his visual thoughts of that moment into words, Marcus simply made an instant Polaroid image of them.

Another method by which the photographers mitigate the potential hazards of working with visual concepts, which need articulating, is by using shorthand expressions of these otherwise complex ideas. When, often on the strength of visual cues, it becomes necessary for the photographers to verbally articulate a visual

thought, that verbal articulation can take the form of abbreviated technical jargon like 'add half a stop here' and 'take half a stop from there'.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes these short utterances only make sense in the immediate context: 'more here', or 'soften this', or 'can you make this pop?'

Where this type of shorthand expression is often used during photo shoots, in the heat of the moment in response to visual cues, other readymade shorthand expressions are used when no visual reference is available. One particularly efficient way that the photographers do this is by referencing other commonly known visual texts. Julia Kristeva's notion of intertextuality offers a useful framework for understanding how a text's meaning is influenced by another text. In one of Kristeva's descriptions of intertextuality she refers to the process in terms of two axes: '... a horizontal axis connecting the author and reader of a text, and a vertical axis, which connects the text to other texts' (Kristeva 1980 69).

This model reflects almost exactly a conversation I had with a visual artist. We had only just met and were discussing a colour palette for a project. In Kristeva's terms, we each occupied one of the opposing end points on the horizontal axis, alternating between who was the author and who was the reader. Then, with the proposed but yet to be established colour palette occupying the space at one end of the vertical axis, we set about locating one text after another, well known fashion magazines in this case, at the other end of that vertical axis until we found one that used a similar colour palate to what we wanted. By working a short list of intertextual references through one point on Kristeva's vertical axis, each time referencing complex visual ideas very quickly but completely, we arrived at a complex and specific understanding by using very few words.

---

<sup>8</sup> A 'stop' is an abbreviation of f-stop, which is the unit of measurement for light. 'F' numbers are calculated by dividing the focal length of the lens by the diameter of the aperture. We can see by the progression of f-stop numbers, 1 - 1.4 - 2 - 2.8 - 4 - 5.6 - 8 - 11 - 16 - 22 - 32, that they are powers of the square root of 2. Each f stop then lets in either half or twice as much light as the previous one, depending on whether the lens is being opened up or 'stopped' down.

## Photogenia

The photographers use their studios, different cameras and lenses, various lights in various ways and shorthand expressions of complex visual ideas in a quest to mobilise their quintessential photographic method: photogenia. Roland Barthes (1977) defined photogenia as an informational structure comprised of an inventory of techniques, effects and aesthetic qualities that are peculiar to the photographic means of image production. He lists six, what he then called 'photographic connotation procedures'; trick effects, pose, objects, photogenia, aestheticism and syntax. At the time, Barthes was using photography and photogenia as a means of furthering his critical cultural investigations. This included his suggestion that: 'In photogenia the connoted message is the image itself, 'embellished' (which is to say in general sublimated) by techniques of lighting, exposure and printing (Barthes 1977 23). This is indicative of Barthes' then functional distinction between denotation and connotation (Barthes 1977). Whilst the distinction would ultimately prove untenable for him,<sup>9</sup> the idea that photogenia both embellishes and sublimates what might otherwise be regarded as the figurative reality inherent to the photographic mode of representation remains useful.

It is similarly useful to regard Barthes' inventory of photogenic techniques as the grammar and spatial, or non-linear, syntax with which photographers produce photographic texts for their clients. In terms specific to this thesis, the photographers use photogenia in these ways to manage and accommodate their professional and commercial relationships.

Here I draw first on Barthes' ideas about photogenia to show how the photographers use these techniques as their means of addressing the professional and commercial requirements of their client-briefs. Following this, I use Foucault's principle of commentary, through which he suggests we are able to create new texts or discourses *ad infinitum* so long as these are commentaries or 'recitals'

---

<sup>9</sup> It was with a sense for the promise of scientific method offered by the semiotic approach that Barthes undertook his systematic study of fashion photos. By the time he completed that study, he had admitted that his sense of the scientific possibilities afforded by semiotics had been nothing more than a euphoric dream: Noth, W. (1995). *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington and Indianapolis., Indiana University Press.

(Foucault 1976 221) of the primary or foundational narratives of a society, to show the photographers use of photogenic techniques reflects their familiarity with the archives of the formations with which their clients seek to engage. The techniques that I describe are: shutter speeds and lens apertures, different focal length lenses, camera positioning and lighting.

Because the photographers have relationships with multiple different clients seeking to engage with different discursive formations for various reasons, each photographer uses diverse photogenic techniques in different ways and for different reasons. Some use them subtly and some more obviously. They all use these techniques in ways that are determined, or allowed, by the client-brief that they are working on: as a method for managing and accommodating that immediate professional-commercial relationship.

For example, a slow shutter speed and, as such, small aperture<sup>10</sup> can produce what photographers call motion blur, which can be used to indicate movement. If a photographer is briefed by the client to illustrate the movement of, for example, a ballet dancer, a shutter speed of something like 1/30<sup>th</sup> of a second could be suitable. Similarly, a fast shutter speed, and as such, large aperture, can be used to freeze or capture movement. If a photographer is briefed by their client to capture or freeze, for example, the otherwise perpetual motion of a landscaped waterfall, then a shutter speed of 1/250<sup>th</sup> of a second or faster could be suitable. In both cases, the shutter speed has, at least in part, been determined by the client-brief. The photographer is using shutter speed as a method for managing and accommodating that immediate professional-commercial relationship.

The exaggerated convergence of parallel lines inherent to the optics of wide-angle lenses can be used by a photographer to exaggerate perspective. Be this augmenting or compromising, it is a standard technique used by the photographers for making small spaces appear larger. If a photographer has been briefed by a client to, for example, photograph small office spaces or hotel rooms, that

---

<sup>10</sup> Exposure Value, or EV is the number that represents a combination of a camera's shutter speed and aperture setting. All combinations that yield the same exposure have the same EV value.

photographer is already reaching for one of these wide lenses as a method for managing and accommodating that immediate professional-commercial relationship. Conversely, a long focal length, sometimes call a zoom lens, can be used to understate or flatten perspective. This creates a greater sense of distance between the eventual viewer of the photo and the situation being photographed. These long lenses also limit the depth of field in an image, focusing the reader's eye just on the foreground, the middle ground or on the background: depending on the requirements of the brief

The simple act of positioning a camera is a photogenic technique employed in response to the photographer's professional relationship - what the client is asking the photographer to do, in conjunction with the photographer's commercial relationship – his or her familiarity with the archives of the discursive formations with which the client seeks to engage. A low camera angle positions the viewer so as to be looking up at what has been photographed, whilst a high camera angle positions the viewer so as to be looking down.

Lighting, whether in the controlled environment of a studio or outside on location, is a further example of how a photogenic technique is used as a means of addressing the professional and commercial requirements of a photographer's client-brief. Portrait lighting provides a particularly apt example. Portraits are often lit using three lights: a fill light, a key light and a kicker. The fill light is used for overall exposure, to illuminate the subject, perhaps using a soft box as a diffuser. The key light can be used to brightening just one side of the subject's face, perhaps with a snoot attached to control the spread of light. The kicker might then be used to the limited extent of adding highlights in the subject's hair.

The difference in contrast ratio<sup>11</sup> between the three lights is determined by the client-brief - what the client is asking the photographer to do in conjunction with the photographer's familiarity with the archives of the discursive formations with which the client is seeking to engage. For example, if the photographer is working on a fashion/beauty brief using a female model, a contrast ratio of less than 1, with an

---

<sup>11</sup> Contrast ratio, which is measured in stops, is the difference in brightness between the softest light and the brightest light.

EV<sup>12</sup> of +1/3 so as to slightly over expose or flare out any blemishes on the model's skin, could be suitable. Alternatively, if the photographer has been briefed to photograph, for example, a male sporting personality, a greater contrast ratio of between 1&1/2 and 2 and an EV of -1/2, which would create slightly deeper shadows and more textured skin, could be suitable. If the brief is to photograph an actor in his or her role as a detective in a TV series, the photographer, in response to the heavier moodier treatment that these characters are often given, might use a contrast ratio of between 2 and 2&1/2 with an EV of -1. In each example, the photographer is meeting the client's requirements by using a lighting technique that reflects the photographer's familiarity with the archive of the discursive formation with which that particular client seeks to engage.

I mentioned that some photographers use photogenia more subtly than others. Ben is one photographer who makes a more conscious and definite use of photogenic techniques. Architectural and interior architecture briefs make up a significant proportion of Ben's ongoing work. As a photographic discourse, 'Architecture' includes a set of commonly used communicative elements with which Ben has become familiar. He knows that, amongst other things, the photos he produces when filling these client-briefs will often include subject matter that does not move or breathe or return the photographer's gaze. He knows that the efficacy of these photos come to rely on the graphic impacts achieved by his combination of photogenic techniques to compose those commonly used communicative elements.

Ben's archival awareness, his commercial relationship with the formations with which his clients seek to engage, also tells him that architectural photos need to look a certain way, particularly those within the same magazine. For this reason, his conscious and definite use of photogenia is not as obvious as it is for some other photographers. Something of his deft use of photogenia is explained by his admiration for the American photographer Walker Evans.<sup>13</sup> We spoke at length

---

<sup>12</sup> 'EV' stands for Exposure Value'. Plus value EV's indicate over exposure and negative value EV's indicate under exposure.

<sup>13</sup> Walker Evans was an American photographer who, amongst other things, worked for the Farm Securities Administration during the Great Depression when he produced stark and

about Evans several times, yet it was only subsequently that I realised it was not Evan's efforts towards combatting American rural poverty that had captured Ben's imagination. It was rather the matter-of-factness, the seemingly banal and dispassionate aesthetic of Evan's documentary style photos that continued to enthral Ben. Like Evans, Ben goes to some lengths to conceal his use of photogenia as he embellishes certain parts of the situations he photographs and sublimates other parts.

This confident but concealed used of photogenia is suitably analysed with Foucault's principle of commentary. In defining the principle of commentary, Foucault writes about the interchange between what he describes as primary or foundational narratives of a society and secondary cultural texts, suggesting that the latter are commentaries on, or recitals of the former. This is of specific relevance to the professional commercial reciprocity that this thesis explores. As I noted above, Foucault explains that, with this notion of commentary, we are able to create new texts or discourses *ad infinitum* so long as these are 'recitals' (Foucault 1976 221) of those primary or foundational narratives.

I recall one instance in particular when I was drawn in by Ben's use of photogenia in this regard. The two of us were looking at some of his architectural style photos of a large established house in the wine region south of Perth when he drew my attention to the point at which the focus dropped out in one of them. Far from conspicuous, it was not until then that I appreciated the impact that his subtle use of depth of field had on those images. With architectural briefs accounting for much of Ben's work, he knows that the rules of production in terms of discourse are fluid, but also that using a complete depth of field is one commonly adhered to. With this particular client-brief, Ben knew that he could push the rules a little bit as his way of creating a more interesting image, but whilst continuing to have that image read as 'Architecture'. He knew that he had employed this photogenic technique to a point where he was pushing the rules because he pointed it out to me. At the same time

---

seemingly dispassionate photographs to emphasize the plight of the American public. He also focused on the townscapes and architecture so as to visually contrast advertising slogans with the poverty of that time. In later professional life, Evans explored more artistic, abstract modernist photography.

though, he had not been so obvious with his employment of a shallow depth of field that I noticed prior to him showing me. Using Foucault's words we can say that, with each interior/architectural client-brief that Ben accepts, he is afforded '... the opportunity to say something other than the [primary] text itself, but on condition that it is the [primary] text which is uttered' (Foucault 1976 221): that primary text or grand narrative being, for arguments sake, 'Architecture'.

Nicole's use of photogenia also reflects the way she manages her professional and commercial relationships. Like Ben's, her use appears subtle, to the point that it appears almost invisible, but it is in fact particularly clever as she augments/embellishes and compromises/sublimates the realities that she photographs. Consider the image below (plate 05).

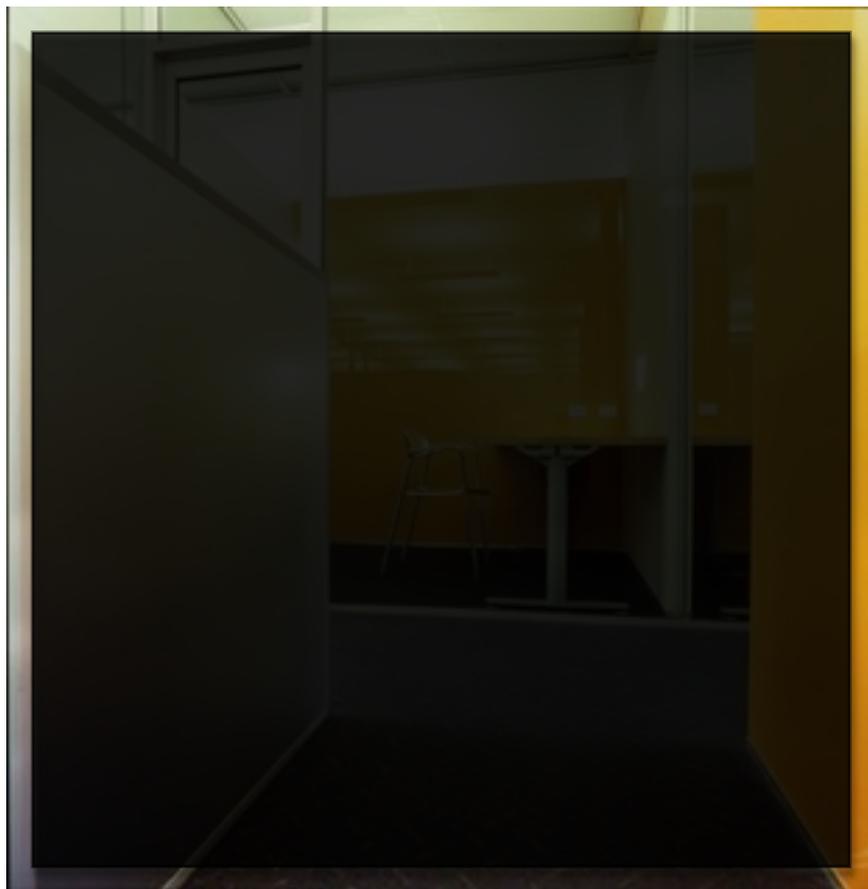


Plate 05

Construction Co. Promotion

Nicole

At first glance it appears an unremarkable, line of sight<sup>14</sup> interior architecture style depiction of office spaces. However, when we consider both her and Ben's professional commercial reciprocity, Foucault's principle of commentary provides a more interesting perspective. In contrast to Ben's example, where the client-brief and the situation being photographed were such that Ben could allow himself to push the rules, Nicole found herself drawing on those same discursive rules of production, but for the specific purpose of ensuring that it will be the primary text or grand narrative that is uttered.

Nicole said that, '... sometimes you will turn up to a shoot or a location and it is pretty awful and you manage to make it look a lot better than it really is'. To achieve this, in order to make a very small, awkward, un-decorated and not yet inhabited space to look just as good as photos of other grander more finished spaces – alongside which this photo may well be read, Nicole has used three photogenic techniques. The strong converging lines quickly told me that she had used a particularly wide lens, but it was only when she pointed to the horizon line that I realised, far from line of sight, Nicole had positioned the camera only 60cm to 70cm above the floor: below the table top. The third technique is Nicole's deft composition or spacial syntax. Whilst perhaps not a technique peculiar to photography, its use within photography has photogenic significance (Scarles 2004). Despite the unusually low point of view from which the image must be read, Nicole has positioned the horizon line midway between the top and the bottom of the photo in an attempt to conceal her use of a wide lens and low camera angle.

Drawing on her skill with and understanding of photogenic techniques, Nicole has, to use her words, made it look a lot better than it really is. At the same time though, she drew on her enhanced knowledge and understanding of the archive to make sure that she produced an 'Interior Architecture' photo. Part of her management of her immediate professional and commercial relationships was to compose the photo so as not to cause the viewer to feel like they are down on their hands and knees as they look at it.

---

<sup>14</sup> Line of sight means the aspect from which a person standing and looking straight ahead would see.

Both photographers used photogenic techniques to provide their clients with what, in Foucault's terms of commentary, may be called secondary texts: recitals of a primary text, grand narrative or dominant discourse. Ben used the rules for production of the discourse 'Architecture' as something to push up against. Nicole, on the other hand, used her familiarity with the discourse 'Interior Architecture' as something to work towards.

In drawing on Foucault's conception of power in terms of relationships in the way that I have thought out this chapter, and in particular his notion of 'discursive practices' (Foucault 1981), I have made the distinction between the photographers' studios as places and as their method for the production of photos. Further, when considered in the specific terms of the thesis, the materiality that the concept of discursive practices brings to this analysis has enabled me to portray the photographers' studios, as well as their inventories of equipment, as material manifestations of power that has been brought to bear on and by the photographers: physical manifestations of their professional commercial reciprocity. When considered as a discursive practice, each studio and inventory of equipment is a reflection of a produced subject, an empowered individual and a physical manifestation of that photographer's professional and commercial relationships.

Similarly, I have shown how the ways in which the photographers articulate complex visual understandings about their practice, as well as their use of photogenic techniques (Barthes 1961), are also products of their professional and commercial relationships. Like their studios and inventories of equipment, these behaviours are methods by which the photographers' manage the reciprocity between their professionalism and commerciality.

## **Chapter Six: Editorial, Corporate, Advertising - the Reciprocities**

In this chapter I examine some of the differences between three distinct types of work that the photographers do: editorial, corporate and advertising. In particular, I analyse how the type and magnitude of reciprocity between a photographers' professional and commercial relationships differs depending on the type of work being undertaken. Their editorial reciprocity is different from the corporate reciprocity, which is different again from their advertising reciprocity.

The photographers understand their practice in a myriad of different ways. Certainly no two of them understand it in quite the same way. As a commercial photographer, I was prepared for some of the diversity I encountered because I knew that commercial photography was a diverse profession. I expected that, even as I began to explore some of the photographers broader professional and commercial concerns, some latitude for understanding would be evident. I also realised that different lifestyles, socio-economic situations and education meant that the behaviours and understandings of some of the photographers would continue to remain idiosyncratic.

Nonetheless, the photographers use some common elementary distinctions as a means of defining the types of work they do. These are not necessarily common understandings, but rather their common means of understanding. Possibly the most elementary distinction they make is between their commercial work and what they call domestic work. Whilst they all engaged in a limited amount of domestic work, like for example, weddings, christenings, debutantes' balls and family portraits, most of them did almost exclusively commercial work during the time that I worked with them. Jeremy is the exception who, at the time, was doing weddings along with his dance/ballet work.

In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, the photographers do not form the ongoing relationships with domestic clients that they do with their commercial clients. One reason for this is because the mere mention of a commercial photographer's fee can be enough to prevent relationships between commercial

photographers and domestic clients from proceeding any further. Another reason, if the fee does not prove to be an issue, is because in this culture that domestic client will usually only then get married or make their debut so many times.

It is from within the commercial category that the photographers make the further distinction between their editorial, corporate and advertising work. Editorial client-briefs most often come from publications such as lifestyle and other periodical magazines as well as weekend newspaper<sup>1</sup> colour supplements. Corporate work can refer to briefs from large corporations and government departments. Advertising briefs come from advertising agencies as well as directly from clients.

I analyse these difference from several theoretical perspectives. Further to Foucault's discursive approach to the analysis of power as immanent to relations between subjects (Foucault 1976), between clients and photographers, I make particular use of his principles of commentary and discontinuity (Foucault 1981) and the post-structural notion of genre.

## **Editorial client-briefs**

Relative to corporate and advertising client-briefs, editorial client-briefs are poorly paid. Unlike the photos produced for corporate and advertising briefs, the photographers are sometimes credited for their published editorial photos. This combination of poor pay and good exposure results in what I describe here as a diminished professional commercial reciprocity.

The trade-off between good published exposure and relatively poor pay is neither a recent nor a local phenomenon. The French Humanists (photographers who worked predominantly in Paris during the period 1945 – 1960.<sup>2</sup>), for example, come readily to mind. Like the photographers working in Perth, they were commercial

---

<sup>1</sup> As distinct from news reporting, which press photographers do, newspapers often engage commercial photographers for this editorial type work.

<sup>2</sup> The French Humanists include, amongst others; Édouard Boubat (1923-1999), Brassai (1899-1984), Jean-Philippe Charbonnier (1921-2004), Jean Dieuzaide (1921-2003), Robert Doisneau (1912-1994), Janine Niepce (1921-2007) and Willy Ronis (1910-2009).

photographers who also did editorial work (Hamilton 1997). Their briefs, taken from the Paris-based magazines, were poorly paid, yet exposure in such publications has ensured their ongoing reputation beyond photographic or scholarly circles.

With publication in, for example, a Sunday newspaper's colour supplement being possibly the greatest credited exposure that these local photographers can receive, magazine editors will often use the promise of this exposure to support an argument for lower remuneration. As such, this promise in lieu of pay could be construed as giving the editorial client the upper hand in that professional relationship. However, having worked with the photographers and examined some of their editorial photos, I suggest this is not necessarily the case.

In economic terms, this lower remuneration by the client diminishes the photographer's sense of contractual obligation. In terms of reciprocity, the lower remuneration diminishes the influence that the professional relationship has over a photographer's commercial relationship. Compared to the photographers' corporate and advertising client-briefs, there is a sense of freedom that comes with this editorial type of work. This relative sense of freedom is often reflected in the briefs written by editorial clients, which are typically less precise than corporate and advertising briefs.

Having accepted a lesser remuneration than they might for corporate or advertising work, and with the promise of published credited exposure, the photographers take advantage of the relative freedom associated with this diminished professional commercial reciprocity in various ways. Some take the opportunity to showcase their commercial ability, emphasising their commerciality by expressing something of their own relationship with the archives of the formations with which their clients seek to engage.

For example, consider the next image (plate 06) produced by Ian for a lifestyle magazine published in Perth.



Plate 06

Editorial/Invitation

Ian

Perhaps indicative of the ways in which he feels constrained by corporate and advertising client-briefs, Ian described the image to me as 'a highly worked over photo' before emphasising his point by saying that:

It kind of makes it somewhat more graphic in appearance - wide angle lens - down really low to the ground - looking up to him - adds to the graphic nature of the final look - and it is polarised and I warmed the light as well.

A further way that the photographers take advantage of the latitude afforded by working with this diminished professional commercial reciprocity is by satisfying the brief in a more formulaic way than they might do when filling the more tightly written and better paid corporate or advertising client-briefs. For example, Ben made the images below (plates 07 and 08) for a Perth food magazine.

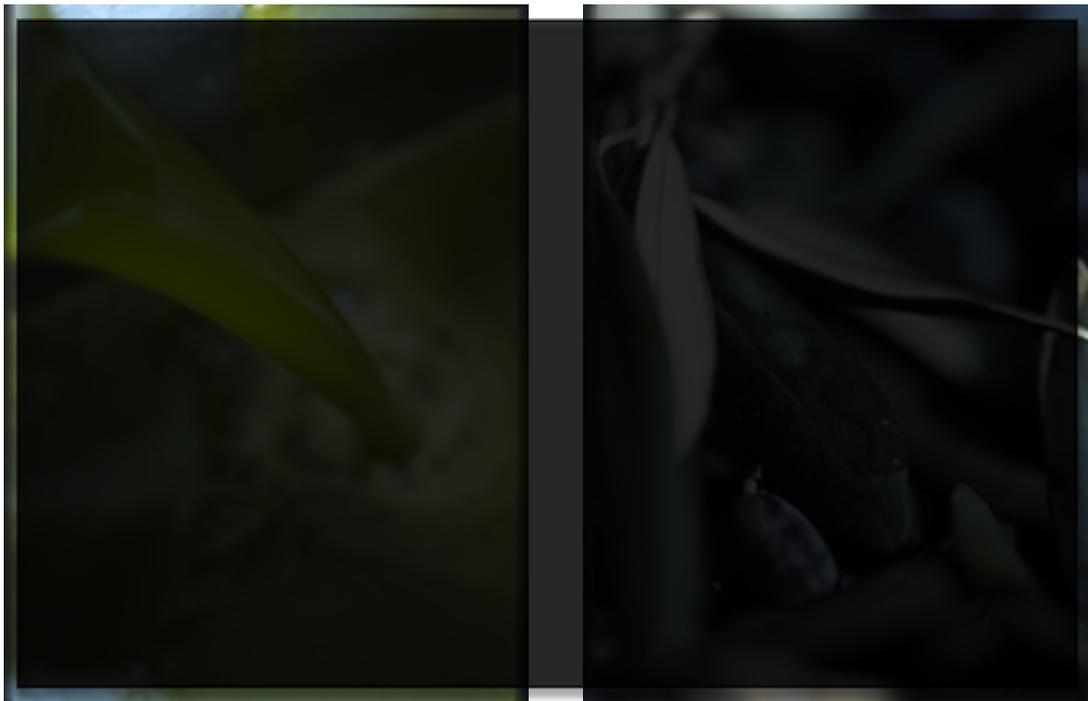


Plate 07

Editorial

Ben

Plate 08

Editorial

Ben

When we were critiquing them, Ben emphasised that:

This is the sort of stuff that magazines use big [half or full page] - and it's just sort of a graphic exercise - I mean its just - you know - a diagonal line and a few little random shapes. It's a graphic exercise that looks nice on the page.

Where Ian took the opportunity afforded by his diminished professional commercial reciprocity to showcase his commercial talents with an array of photogenic techniques, Ben, the more established of the two photographers, took the opportunity to fall back on tried, trusted and routine methods of production. Indeed, Ben consciously practices this formulaic approach whenever the opportunity presents. These next two images (plates 09 and 10) were produced by Ben using a formula that he calls his 'Nature's Bounty Shot', focusing on a double handful of a single food, enhancing and articulating core qualities and attractions.



Plate 09

Editorial

Ben

Plate 10

Editorial

Ben

The first image is with truffles and the second is with olives. I have also seen one of the same from Ben showing a double handful of grains of wheat.

The possibility of this formulaic approach to producing editorial images can be explained in terms of genre. Genre theorist Vijay Bhatia (Bhatia 2004) describes a genre as a group of texts which is characterized by a common set of communicative elements. Bhatia also notes that established members of a particular profession may have an enhanced knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of genre. These professional photographers work with such knowledge and understanding. They exploit their awareness of the genre-specific elements common to the fields in which they find themselves working.

Ben took the opportunity to provide the magazine with genre pieces by selecting and arranging several elements common to the 'Editorial' genre: graphically strong, colourful, perhaps imprecise in meaning, un-challenging and associated only generally with a particular culture or lifestyle.

When considered in terms of genre, Ian's image above (plate 6) on page 111 includes some elements of the 'Portrait' genre as well as various elements from other genres including, for example, 'Landscape'. This combination, along with his photo-centric production techniques, indicates a less formulaic approach than Ben's. But then Ian was taking the opportunity afforded by a diminished professional relationship to showcase his commercial talents. Ben was just getting the job done. In both cases, each photographer took advantage of the relative freedom associated with the diminished professional commercial reciprocity that characterises editorial client-briefs.

## Corporate client-briefs

The photographers are better remunerated for their corporate work than they are for editorial work. For this reason alone, their corporate professional commercial reciprocity, or corporate reciprocity, is of a different type and magnitude compared to their editorial reciprocity. Where their editorial client-briefs are such that they can express something of their own relationship with the archive, or fall back on routine methods for production, here the reciprocating effect of a more considered professional relationship is such that the photographer's commercial relationship is more strongly mediated.

Corporate client-briefs typically come from larger private sector companies or federal and state government entities. The images produced by the photographers for these corporate clients are used for, amongst other things, public relation and promotional material. At the time of my fieldwork the photographers took corporate briefs from private sector clients such as national and international banks, mining and exploration companies operating in the state's north-west region, large construction and engineering companies, as well as large partnerships like accounting and legal firms. Federal and state government clients included universities, hospitals and government departments as well as privatised but regulated public utilities such as gas and electricity providers and the government owned but privately run Water Corporation. Smaller private sector corporate clients included private schools, religious institutions and the Western Australian Turf Club.

The difference between editorial reciprocity and corporate reciprocity is manifest in several ways. Where editorial photos are often produced to accompany human interest stories, the photos produced to fill corporate client-briefs are used to brand or position that corporate client. Where editorial clients might provide their photographers with less than precise briefs, and the photos produced to fill those briefs being vague in meaning, associated only generally with a particular culture or lifestyle, corporate briefs are written with a more dedicated outcome in mind.

Corporate photos can have a less intimate aesthetic than editorial photos, with that intimacy being replaced by a more obvious discursive inclination. A commercial or

economic imperative, whilst not necessarily foregrounded, can be more overt in corporate images produced, for example, to be used in the prospectuses for new businesses and annual reports of existing businesses such as banks, mining companies and legal and accounting firms.

In her research concerning the production of photos used for tourism promotion, Caroline Scarles examined the production of corporate type photos used for promotional purposes and found that this production ‘... depends upon photographer’s understanding and interpretation of [the client’s] discursive aims’ (Scarles 2004 53).

The next two images (plates 11 and 12), produced by Nicole for one of Perth’s larger construction companies, reflect both the corporate type of reciprocity between Nicole’s professional and commercial relationships as well as supporting Scarles’ findings.

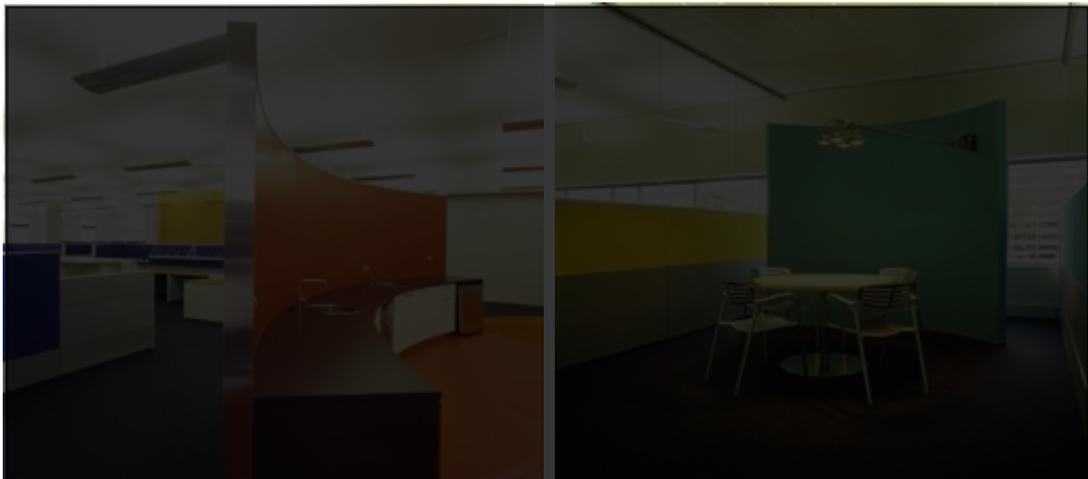


Plate 11

Promotion/Branding

Nicole

Plate 12

Nicole told me that she has an ongoing brief with this client, which is to photograph only the higher quality projects that they have constructed, She said that the images are used for the ongoing promotion of the company and that the client leaves the more mass-market advertising work to other photographers. She also mentioned that she enjoys this work because she is left to her own devices when doing these jobs and that the client continues to use her because of the aesthetic she creates as she ‘documents’.

With Nicole’s professional relationship being based, in part, on the aesthetic she

creates - her aesthetic, it might seem that she is working with a sense of freedom more commonly associated with editorial work: that this client-brief is less than precise in the way that I described editorial client-briefs as being. However, two details, when considered together, show Nicole is in fact working towards a highly developed and specific brief.

Reflecting Scarles' suggestion, that production depends on the photographer's awareness of the client's discursive aims, the ongoing nature of Nicole's professional relationship with this corporate client is such that her awareness and understanding of the client's discursive aims have been keenly developed, reflected upon and refined to the point that the client is able, simply, to employ Nicole for the aesthetic that she engenders.

The second detail that points to the specificity of this client-brief is the fact that the images are used for the construction company client's promotional purposes. This is suitably analysed using Foucault's principle of commentary (Foucault 1976), which Foucault defines as the relationship between the primary narratives of a society and secondary cultural texts, the latter being commentaries or recitals on the former. He writes that:

By a paradox which it always displaces but never escapes, the commentary must say for the first time what had, nonetheless, already been said, and must tirelessly repeat what had, however, never been said (Foucault 1981 58).

Reflecting the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity when doing this type of work, corporate images, perhaps more so than editorial and advertising images, offer a particularly clear insight to the functioning of this discursive principle. This, in turn, can be explained by returning to the genealogical foundations of Foucault's earlier work.

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1976), Foucault investigated the historical origins of powerful institutions and in particular their ways of establishing orders of truth: what was accepted as 'reality' in particular societies. Many of the institutions that Foucault critiqued and described as 'discursive formations', are the

financial, legal, educational, religious and medical institutions that account for much of the photographers' corporate client base.

Returning to the corporate images produced by Nicole for the construction company, what is being said for the first time is, amongst other things, Nicole's particular aesthetic. However, her professional commercial reciprocity is such that, with her aesthetic, she must recite those primary or dominant discourses, which amongst others include 'Architecture', 'Commerce', 'Consumption' and 'Capitalism'.

These corporate images provide insight to the functioning of the discursive principle of commentary because the ongoing promotion and public relations campaigns, on which the photographers work, are how these corporate clients maintain their orders of truth and acceptance of their reality in this society.

To paraphrase Foucault, the aesthetic that Nicole achieves may be something other than the institutional discourse itself, and her client may continue to use her for that purpose, but only on condition that it is the institutional discourse that Nicole continues to present (Foucault 1981). Her aesthetic may be explicit in her *brief* from that *client*, but the discursive conditions of possibility underwrite the whole process. As much as Nicole feels she has been left to her own devices, this is the reciprocating effect that Nicole's commercial relationship has on her and on the production of those photos.

## **Advertising client-briefs**

The photographers accept advertising client-briefs that come from advertising agencies as well as directly from clients. Like with their corporate work, they are better remunerated for this advertising work than they are for their editorial work. The briefs that come through agencies can be especially well paid because the photographer's fee is often budgeted for as one specific production aspect of the agency's client's advertising campaign. Accordingly, the type and magnitude of professional commercial reciprocity is different again. Where editorial client-briefs can afford the photographers some discursive latitude, and where the more considered professional reciprocity of corporate client-briefs is such that the

photographer's commercial relationship is more strongly mediated, here their commercial relationship with the archive can be tightly controlled.

This control is particularly evident with agency generated advertising briefs. The sense of obligation that comes with better remuneration aside, these briefs are typically more precise than some corporate and most editorial ones. Written by advertising agency personnel, these briefs are designed with a specific, even quantifiable, outcome in mind: to sell goods or services. These briefs are precise to the point that some form of layout – a graphic designer's illustrated impression of what the photographs should look like – is usually incorporated. Further, a *creative*<sup>3</sup> from the agency, who will have had a hand in writing the brief, is almost always present during these agency advertising shoots, sometimes in the role of art director.

In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, the effect on the photographers when producing photos to satisfy these professionally written briefs, often under direction from agency personnel, is that the agency exerts significant influence over the photographers' commercial relationship with the archives of the formations with which the agency's client seeks to engage. However, just as the diminished nature of the photographers' professional editorial relationship does not necessarily give that editorial client the upper hand, this professionally briefed and directed production, this overseeing, does not necessarily reduce the photographer's role to that of a mere technician.

One reason why this advertising work pays well is because the photographer must be able to talk the talk and walk the walk. The photographer must have the discursive awareness to understand what he or she is being asked to achieve. This is in line with Scarles suggestion above, that production depends upon photographers' understanding and interpretation of the client's discursive aims (Scarles 2004). Further to this discursive awareness, the photographer must have the interpersonal and production skills to achieve those aims – at least to the limited

---

<sup>3</sup> Common parlance in the industry, I often hear advertising agency personnel called either 'suits' or 'creatives'. The suits manage the agency's accounts and the creatives come up with the ideas, produce the layouts and can act as 'Creative Director' on the photo shoots.

extent of producing photographic representations of those discursive ideals.

The discursive awareness demanded by the photographers' professional advertising relationships becomes apparent when we consider some key differences between advertising agency briefs and direct client advertising briefs. Where corporations like the types mentioned previously often use advertising agencies, direct-client client-briefs can come from smaller sized businesses, partnerships and professional individuals. In notable contrast to the ones that come through agencies, these direct-client client-briefs can appear to have been written with less regard for budget, often arrive without illustrated layouts depicting how the photographs should appear, and are often executed with the client present. In this situation, the photographer is likely to have a broader, more seasoned, but also more seasonally specific *commercial* relationship with the archive of the discursive formations with which the client seeks to engage than the client himself.

I emphasise *commercial* because it is the commercial nature of a photographer's discursive relationship that causes it to be other or greater than the client's relationship with the relevant formation. When a photographer's professional advertising relationship is not facilitated and mediated by an agent, the photographer will be drawing on some of the same commercial type of knowledge and understanding as that provided to clients by agency personnel.

Whilst not an advertising client-brief, an example from Ben's work serves well to illustrate how a photographer draws on the same commercial type of knowledge and understanding as agency personnel do. Ben and I were examining some of his editorial style photos of a house in the current issue of a architecture/lifestyle magazine when he mentioned that he had not had a brief for this job from the magazine, but that the owner of the house knew him and she had persuaded him to find a way to have photos of her house appear in a publication of this type. Ben told me that 'She was very keen to get it into something, so I just shot it with this flavour and I sent it to them [the magazine] and they loved it'. The flavour Ben referred to was a subtle use of a shallow depth of field, which when I asked, he said, 'Yeah, which is - pretty standard, seems to be standard procedure in magazines at the moment'. In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, Ben's

broader, more seasoned and in particular his seasonally specific relationship with the archive enabled him to satisfy that professional relationship.

With the photos produced to fill corporate client-briefs going towards branding and promoting that corporate client, and the photos produced to fill advertising client-briefs going towards selling a client's product or service, the boundaries between the two might appear fluid. Indeed, they are.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, a clear distinction between them is easily made. Just as it is for editorial and corporate photos, the difference is manifest in the aesthetic of the images produced. Where the commercial imperative can be more overt in corporate images when compared to editorial ones, now, in advertising images, the commercial imperative becomes explicit, even if it is not clear what is being sold.

Consider again the two corporate images that Nicole made for the construction company, which I have reproduced again together here as (plate 13) and compare them to the advertising image below (plate 14) produced by Nicole for a real estate development company's sales brochure.

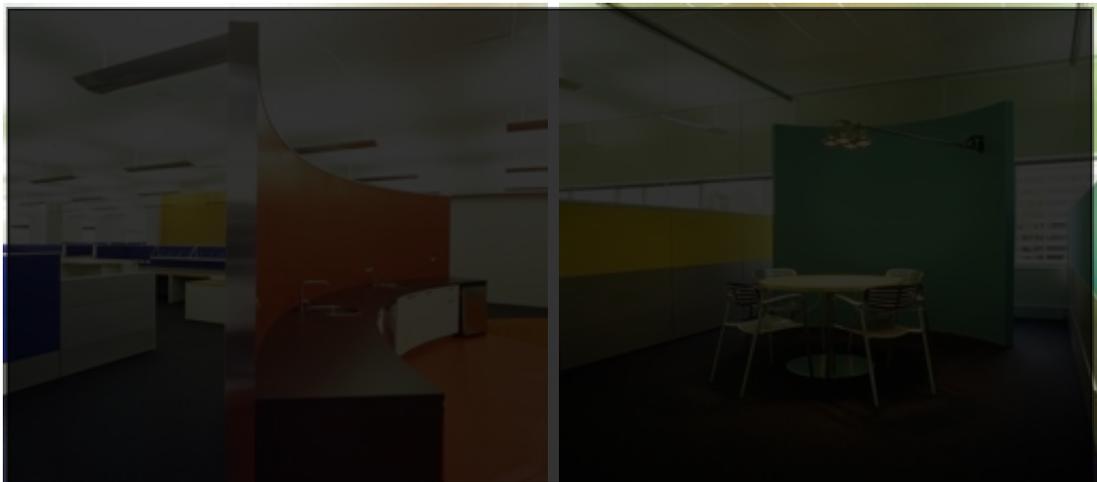


Plate 13

Promotion/Branding

Nicole

---

<sup>4</sup> One example of the blurring of this distinction is found on late night TV or home shopping channels where the terms 'advertorial' and 'infotainment' are used to label the long play advertisements for various lifestyle type products.



Plate 14

Real Estate Sales Brochure

Nicole

More engaging than her corporate branding images, yet not as personally intimate as editorial photos, this advertising image has been designed to engage the reader and have them identify with and desire the client's product.

Like her corporate images, this advertising image may be considered in terms of Foucault's commentary, as a recital. However, where I described those corporate images by noting the extent to which they exemplify this discursive principle, the agency personnel who briefed Nicole on this image were more strategic, targeting specific elements from numerous different dominant discourses including, amongst others, patriarchy, marriage, family, leisure, recreation and consumption.

Where corporate images may be regarded as commentaries *par-excellence*, the multiple elements that, with Nicole's composition and aesthetic, comprise this advertising image cause it to be more suitably scrutinised with Foucault's principle of 'discontinuity'. Foucault uses discontinuity to emphasise the idea of 'series' rather than 'unity' in discursive formations. He suggests that, whilst discursive events are homogenous or regular:

Discourses must be treated as discontinuous practices, which cross each other, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other (Foucault 1981 67).

In Foucault's terms, Nicole's professional commercial reciprocity is such that she is party to the discursive practice of normatively sanctioning the juxtaposition of certain desirable elements from otherwise dissociable discourses so as to secure a power relationship that advantages those most advantaged by the social practices represented within: the people with whom she has a professional relationship: her client. Nicole has been able to successfully compose and unify certain discursive elements, because of her understanding of her client's discursive aims combined with her interpersonal and production skills. Nicole's ability here, to walk the talk, reflects the commerciality of her relationship with the archive.

In this chapter I analysed some of the differences between the photographers' editorial, corporate and advertising work. Further to Foucault's discursive approach to the analysis of power as immanent to relations between subjects (Foucault 1976), between clients and photographers, I made particular use of his principles of commentary and discontinuity (Foucault 1981) and the post-structural notion of genre. In particular, I showed how the type and magnitude of reciprocity between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships differs depending on the type of work being undertaken.

Arriving from publications such as the lifestyle and other periodical magazines, as well as weekend newspaper<sup>5</sup> colour supplements, the photographers' editorial client-briefs are relatively poorly paid. This lower remuneration diminishes the influence that the professional relationship has over a photographer's commercial relationship. Compared to the photographers' corporate and advertising client-briefs, there is a sense of freedom that comes with this editorial type of work.

---

<sup>5</sup> As distinct from news reporting, which press photographers do, newspapers often engage commercial photographers for this editorial type of work.

The photographers' corporate client-briefs, for which they are better remunerated than they are for their editorial ones, come from larger corporations, utility providers, government departments and institutions like hospitals and universities. Here the reciprocating effect of a more considered professional relationship is such that the photographer's commercial relationship is more strongly mediated. With these briefs often having been written as part of public relations or promotional campaigns, the photos can exemplify Foucault's principle of commentary: recitals of the society's grand narratives.

Advertising client-briefs can be especially well paid. For this reason alone, the photographers' commercial relationship with the archive can be tightly controlled. However, just as the diminished nature of their professional editorial relationship does not necessarily give that editorial client the upper hand, this professionally overseen production does not necessarily reduce the photographer's role to that of a mere technician. Further to Scarles' position that photographic production depends upon the photographers' understanding and interpretation of the client's discursive aims (Scarles 2004), the advertising photographer must have the interpersonal and production skills to achieve those aims – at least to the limited extent of producing photographic representations of those discursive ideals.

## Chapter Seven: Preference and Production

In chapter two I emphasised that the notion of the discursively empowered individual is vital to this research. It has been with this conception of power, as accessible to the individual, that I have elaborated some of the photographers' practice to this point. In this chapter I examine some of the particular ways that the photographers attempt to occupy certain subject positions and how this practice causes the distinction between the empowered individual and the produced subject to be, at times, ambiguous. Drawing on Foucault's technologies of the self, I show how the photographers care for their professional selves by influencing the understandings of other people, including their clients, by naming themselves, expressing themselves in certain ways and, when they feel it is necessary to do so, providing alternative less pejorative descriptions of themselves and their practice.

I draw on those same technologies to also account for the effect that Foucault's mechanisms of power, including the internalised relations of power can have on the photographers' preference to be regarded in certain ways. This provides for the further critical step of exploring why the photographers put some effort towards exercising this preference and caring for their professional selves in this way. Foucault emphasises this effort by drawing our attention to the Greek for 'care of the self', *'epimeleia heautou'*, to remind us that *'epimeleia'* implies a labour. Using Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of capital, I conceptualise the photographers' efforts as '... a labour of inculcation and assimilation which costs time and energy' (Bourdieu 1986) to show how they manage the reciprocity between their professionalism and commerciality by investing in themselves.

### **Naming the self: service providers and communicators**

One technology through which the photographers' exercise their preference to be understood in certain ways and not in other ways is by naming themselves. This is one way that they manage their professional relationships: caring for their professional selves by fostering the understandings of other people. When

understood as a discursive practice, this technique of naming one's self is one way that the photographers attempt to occupy preferred subject positions.

For example, it is only through their insistence that I have referred to the photographers as service providers. Further, the immediacy of their assertions in this regard were such that they seemed almost to have been formulated. 'We are service providers', Shaun said to me insistently staking out his ground. Tom and Marcus both maintain that, amongst other things, they are hired: '... to facilitate an environment in which the job will get done' - to use Tom's words. Moreover, it is also interesting that they were able to make this collective assertion, exercise this preference, without any consensus definition as to what service provision entails. These aspects, the immediacy of their assertions and that they did so without any consensus definition, both make sense when considered in light of an ongoing discussion, which I call the 'service provision/creative production' debate.

Distancing herself from the creative producer position, Nicole insists that half of her work 'could be anybody's', and that clients continue to hire her because they like working with her. It was clear too, both from working with Ian and interviewing him, that he felt that the quicker he could provide his service, or do his practice, the better he was at his profession. The photographers had no need to define 'service provision' because their assertion was made to emphasise that they are not artists: their job is not one of creative production. The reciprocity between their professional and commercial relationships, particularly when doing corporate and advertising work, leaves them no room for artistic expression. Their collective response to this issue seemed formulated because it is part of their ongoing care of their professional self.

Implicit in my suggestion that the photographers prefer to be understood in certain ways is the idea that they regard themselves in certain ways. For example, they regard themselves as communicators. As with their collective claim to be service providers, this claim is made without any consensus definition of 'communication'. When I asked Nicole to describe her professional practice, she told me that: 'Most obvious I guess - it's a form of communication'. Shaun simply said 'We communicate'. When Tom and I spoke about what it is to interpret a client-brief, he

said: '... basically it's a communications study'. Fredo agrees with Tom, saying that the question that '... the photographer must ask themselves, with any client-brief is - so how do you communicate that idea?' Ben was talking about his practice, as well as the commercial photography profession generally, when he said: 'Basically its communication', while Steven also saw it as 'an exercise in communication'.

It is interesting that the photographers did not use the term 'visual' when describing themselves as communicators. One possible reading of this is that they did not feel a need to use 'visual' because their communication practice is so obviously a visual one. Another is, where artists might emphasise the visuality of their means of expression, for the photographers who participated in this research, it is neither their means nor their expression – it is their clients'.

However, as I transcribed and read our interviews, I soon established something more: an obvious collective aversion to the term visual. In the few instances that the term 'visual' was used within this context of service provision and communication, it carried an inflection that revealed to me the photographers' collective desire to be understood in the way that other professional communicators, those who work with verbal or written texts like for example, copywriters, legal attorneys or political speechwriters, are understood. This aversion to the term visual, in conjunction with the absence of a consensus definition for 'communication' suggest their claims are made at least as much to underscore their professional status, by aligning themselves with those other professional communicators.

When considered together, the photographers' techniques of adopting the subject position 'service provider' by opposing themselves to creative producers and adopting the subject position of 'professional communicator' by aligning themselves with other, more readily recognised professional communicators, is a core technology of the self. Foucault describes a technology of the self as a practical rationality governed by a conscious aim (Foucault 2007). Here the photographers are consciously fostering understandings about themselves, managing their professional relationships by saying 'we are professional service providers'.

The following account by Ben of his practice is particularly illuminating both of the

photographers' service provider position and their preferred status as professional communicators. We were looking at some of Ben's editorial style photos, which included (plate 15) below, when he said:

I mean - I'm trying to earn a quid out of it – photography - and in many respects a lot of these pictures aren't pictures that I would choose to take if I worked in an unrelated industry and photography was my hobby.

Then, having pointed to this particular photo, Ben went on to say:

I mean if I went there on my holidays and I worked for the tax department or something - I wouldn't take that picture. But I think that is actually - really successful.



Plate 15

Food Magazine Editorial

Ben

As a service provider, Ben of course takes photos that he might not take to satisfy his own interest or artistic expression. The relevant distinction is that it is not as an artist or hobbyist, but as a service provider that Ben thinks this image is successful.

Ben's client was paying him to produce those photos for a context specific use: alongside a story about olive oil production, including how olives are picked. In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, Ben has successfully serviced the specific needs of another party: he filled the brief given to him by his client. It is perhaps unlikely that Ben, as a tourist, would even find himself in a position to take a photo like this one.

## **Measured Expression**

A further way that the photographers exercise their preference as to how they would be understood by other people, is by expressing themselves in certain ways. For example, they attempt to influence the understandings of other people, including their clients, by being measured in their descriptions of themselves and their practice. This measured expression includes remaining circumspect and being ambiguous about what they do and how they do it. When considered as a discursive practice, these considered and measured, but then circumspect or ambiguous, expressions of who they are and what they do is a further way the photographers care for their professional selves by managing their professional relationships.

Sometimes, as it is with Nicole, a photographer's circumspection can be described as judicious and reflect as much that photographer's care of their personal self as it does their professional self. For example, when, on strength of our Lala Land interview I re-read Nicole's previous interviews, I detected a subtext with definite connotations of guarded unease. As I re-read between our transcribed lines, I could hear her voice saying something like: I wonder how far Trigg will want to go with this? I recount this again here because this subtext revealed to me that Nicole had been holding her guard, resisting me with a judicious circumspection for the first month or so of our fieldwork together. And even then, when I had earned Nicole's trust, she continued with ambiguous descriptions, for example, describing what she does during a shoot as 'poncing around'.

A less than complete or circumspect articulation of what a photographer does, or how he or she does it, can also be indicative of that photographer's assumption that

other people do not have the knowledge and, as such, language to comprehend a more sophisticated description. Relative to the other photographers, Tom's preference to remain circumspect in this regard often borders on the outright dismissive. As with the others, sometimes his circumspection functions as an opening gambit. For example, he and I had been reflecting on the inadequacy of lay understandings about commercial photography when he said, about talking to lay people, 'I say that *I take photos*. I throw that on the table'. Thus indicating that he used this as an opening remark or initial response, after which he might become less circumspect if he felt the conversation warranted it.

The photographers' assumptions that other people may have less sophisticated understandings than their own is in line with their awareness generally of the gulf, described in chapter one, between their understandings of professional commercial photography and those of other people. One reason why the photographers are aware of this gulf is because they play their part in maintaining it. They can be less than precise about what they do because they prefer that other people do not have similar understandings to their own. For example, in a moment that I recall vividly, Jeremy claimed there were aspects of his practice that he is unable even to think about, let alone articulate, before then suggesting that these aspects of his practice came to him intuitively.

Jeremy and I knew each other well and I knew that he would give as good as he got, so I provoked him by saying I had been thinking about the intuition side of things and that I felt there is no such thing. Jeremy seemed genuinely shocked by this, responding adamantly with, 'No, no, no, no - It's all intuition!' Whether or not Jeremy believes himself here is beside the point. What is significant is that his claim towards photographic intuition is one way that he cares for his professional self. As it is with the other photographers, Jeremy's language reflects his own occupational self-interest and jurisdiction (Evetts 2009). For reason that he claims not to be able to articulate in words, his inference is that he is the only photographer who can do what he does and if somebody wants this sort of photographic work done, they will have to pay him.

The use of jargon that I described in chapter five is another form of expression with

which the photographers attempt to exert their preference as to how they would be understood by other people. In that chapter I examined how they use shorthand and readymade expressions to reduce the chances of misinterpretation inherent to verbal-visual translation and noted that, as expert members of their professional community they were exploiting generic resources to express organizational intentions (Bhatia 2004 ). Here I suggest that the photographers are acting out of occupational self-interest and protecting their jurisdiction by exploiting their language as a resource by regulating their use of it. Their use of words and phrases common to their professional community, but used less by other people, can be viewed as an exercise in power relationships within a field of knowledge.

Two corresponding features of Foucault's conception of power are relevant here. The first are his mechanisms of surveillance and the confessional, which produce various types of knowledge and collate information on people's activities and existence (Cousins and Hussain 1984). The corresponding feature is his technologies of the self: techniques that allow individuals to work on themselves by regulating their bodies, their thought and their conduct (Foucault 1988). Interestingly, in being measured or ambiguous with their language, the photographers are caring for their professional selves by controlling, and as such producing, the types of knowledge that other people have about them and their practice.

Whilst Foucault does not suggest that language is a device of power, he does see it as one instance where power is considered as a set of relations of force (Foucault 1980). Reflecting his position that discursive power is omnipresent and operates at the most micro levels of social relations, the photographers control the knowledge of other people with whom they have professional relationships by regulating their own language during their immediate relations with those people.

No doubt Jeremy would prefer that other people, particularly his clients, think that his abilities are intuitive to him and, implicitly, him alone. However, I have closely observed aspects of Jeremy's practice, which he expresses in this way. I described some of them in chapter four, where I emphasised how his acceptance of his dependence on a formulated and methodical approach, the very opposite of an

intuitive approach, is a source of agency for him. Having also watched Nicole doing that which she describes as 'poncing around', and having assisted Tom as he works towards achieving those things that he continues to so flippantly dismiss, it is clear that the photographers' measured expression is an exercise in maintaining at least some air of mystery about what they do and how they do it. Perhaps it is for them as it was for the dancer Isadora Duncan, who maintained that, 'If I could tell you what it meant, there would be no point in dancing it' (Lechtman 2006 276). Having used Foucault's conception power as a set of relations of force within a field of knowledge, I can now provide a more relevant and critical insight by saying something similar.

Foucault writes that '...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations' (Foucault 1977 27). The photographers care for their professional selves by being measured with their language. Their years of experience aside, if they told their clients and other people how to do it, there would be no point in those people hiring the photographers.

## **Less pejorative expression: not lying, but not telling the truth**

The photographers exercise a preference for how they would be understood by other people by providing, when they feel it is necessary to do so, alternative less pejorative descriptions of themselves and their practice. This is precisely what they did when I raised the issue of lies, truth and reality in commercial photography.

Several points about this preference are significant. When I began gently provoking the photographers with various conjugations of the, admittedly loaded, word 'lie', they were ready for me: all of them. But then of course they were. I was not the first to broach the subject with them. Commercial photography is routinely and publicly examined about the ethics of its practices, about the morality of presenting situations in ways other than they might be, for representing as desirable that

which is most likely unattainable. Fashion photography is an obvious example.<sup>1</sup> It and its associated industries and discourses are regularly derided for using female models who are beyond six feet tall, waif-like but with breasts, strikingly beautiful, alien creatures from another planet when positioned alongside the rest of us.

The core of this theme, which I call 'not lying, but not telling the truth', is that every photographer felt compelled to provide me with a less pejorative alternative to the term lie. I had been in the field long enough to also sense that they responded to my questions and propositions on this topic a little too swiftly. Further, in what I describe below as an exigent chorus, each photographer provided me with remarkably similar alternatives to the notion of lying. In doing so, they brought to the surface a preferred understanding, which had been running beneath all those they had articulated to me until then.

I recognised this theme as an undercurrent because, prior to its emergence, the photographers had been awkwardly silent on the matter. I had heard this silence before: the silence with which my early questions regarding radical practice were met. Unlike earlier moments though, the photographers now displayed an awareness that they had remained silent on this issue, certainly as individuals and, yes, also collectively. This theme is important because these understandings and attitudes manifestly exist as a tangible undercurrent to the photographers' professionalism and commerciality.

Whilst the photographers' collective assertion is that their photos are not lies, but not necessarily truths either, each photographer did nonetheless exhibit a degree of concern for the truthfulness of his or her own images. As such, it is necessary to account for the fact that these concerns have been shaped, at least in part, by each photographer's perception of what 'truth' *per se* is as well as each photographer's perception of 'reality': some photographers practice with a relatively concrete sense of reality whilst some practice with a more contingent one. The significance to this thesis of these relative perceptions of truth and reality is that each photographer's

---

<sup>1</sup> Pearson, R. (2015) Banning size zero models from the catwalk won't stop eating disorders. The Telegraph; Clements, K. (2013). The truth about size zero The Guardian Australia Edition; Yellowlees, A. (2010). Is our obsession with size zero damaging health?. BBC News.

perception of truth and reality has significant influence on his or her relationship with the archives of the formations with which his or her clients seek to engage.

In relation to the other photographers, Nicole has a greater concern about the truthfulness of her photographs. In previous chapters I have discussed some of the many jobs that Nicole has done involving photographing new building interiors. The field has come to represent a significant proportion of her ongoing client base. Her individual style and skills combined with her professional genre-specific competency has rendered her able to perform this type of work to very high standards. Yet it was this type of work that she was talking about during her cathartic and confessional 'Lala Land' interview. Her words '... the trouble with all advertising commercial work is that it is all a bit of a front - really', indicates her sense of her own preference to work truthfully.

We were talking about one of her construction industry clients when she said: 'There is no emotion really attached to what they do - it's very hard'. Nicole meant two interrelated things by this. First, that there was a hard aesthetic to some of what her construction company clients had built; concrete, glass, steel, modernist architecture, contemporary hard edges, and so on. Secondly though, she was telling me that she continued to find it difficult to represent these construction company clients in, what she felt was less than truthful, ways that they demanded of her. Having said this though, when Nicole and I spoke about lies, truth and reality in commercial photography, she sought to temper my suggestion that commercial photos are lies by saying '... maybe not tell a lie, but maybe not tell the truth either'.

Perhaps, in accordance with her sense of her own need to work truthfully, Nicole works with a relatively concrete sense of reality. Note her use of the terms 'better' and 'real' when she says '... advertising is always showing things as better than they maybe are in real life'. Not only does reality exist for Nicole, she can precisely articulate how and where she enhances it. She went on to say ...

Well - like a lot of businesses that employ you to produce images that are aesthetically good and pleasing - they are about none of those things - they are really just about bricks and mortar and making money.

It is very hard for Nicole, emotionally difficult, because her own need to work truthfully combined with her relatively concrete sense of reality can cause her to work with a sense of misrepresentation. Compared to the others, her commercial relationship with the archives of the formations with which some of her clients seek to engage begins to seem almost adversarial.

Jeremy is also sensitive about the truthfulness of his photos, but in a different way to Nicole. When we discussed the extent to which commercial photos might be considered as deceptive, as lies, his first reaction was to turn our conversation to what he saw as some differences between his work with ballet dancers and other photographers' advertising work. Unlike Nicole, whose confession had been in full swing for some time, Jeremy continued to care for his professional and personal self by suggesting to me his preferred understanding that 'other photographers lie'. He went on to say:

What I find in, unfortunately, a lot of the players [photographers] is that they are selling lies. Stretching the truth until it is just on the edge of lying, or they are lying. In dance, well it is very hard to lie, its such an abstract thing to start with.

As Jeremy continued revealing the story behind some of his photographs, I was intrigued by his preference to claim a higher moral ground than some of his colleagues. This was even as my increasingly specific questions left him less and less room to manoeuvre. After I had pressed him on some similarities between his and others' work, our conversation shifted register. I picked up one of his proof sheets and pointed out some things that he had chosen not to photograph or that had been cropped out. He knew that I was deliberately stretching my point when I said 'You haven't taken a photo of the scaffolding that is behind the curtain - and you haven't taken photographs of three months of rehearsal - and dancers, working in gyms'. Despite his cognisance of my leading rhetoric though, Jeremy quickly agreed, saying, 'Yeah - none of the hard bits'. After a brief pause I began asking, again, 'So - what is the difference between those lies and ...' when Jeremy

interjected, searchingly but not as a question, 'Or is it not telling the truth?'

Compared to Nicole, Jeremy works with a relatively contingent sense of reality. Whilst he initially took the position that other photographers lie, but that he does not, he also said, implicitly including himself, that 'commercial photographers are not beholden to the truth'. One indication of what he means here came from a previous interview during which he described his production work using terms such as 'isolate', 'enhance' and 'compose' to build for me a picture of his understandings of his practice. In this sense, reality for Jeremy is constructed and rhetorical.

Ben's concern for the truthfulness of his images is in line with his relative ambivalence regarding lies, truth and reality in commercial photos generally. Nonetheless, his less pejorative alternative to the notion of lying came in almost identical words to Nicole's when he said: 'It is not lying, but it is not about telling the truth', Compared to Nicole though, Ben's relative indifference suggested to me that he felt his job had nothing to do with either.

Compared even to Jeremy, Ben works with a relatively contingent sense of reality. His principal, perhaps only, concern in this regard is that readers of his photos interpret the situations represented in them as real, whatever that might be. This is in line with his deft use of photogenia as described in chapter five. In that chapter I noted how Ben goes to some lengths to conceal his use of photogenia, to keep it real, as he, to borrow Jeremy's words, isolates, enhances and composes the situations that he photographs.

Marcus is an outlier to this theme in that he was the one photographer who had not remained silent about lies, truth and reality in commercial photography. I did not have to provoke him, unlike the others, in order to bring the idea to the front of his mind. My field notes record several instances when he turned our conversations to the 'reality issue', as he called it. For example, during the Castle Rock shoot he challenged me by asking, rhetorically: 'So, is this reality?' as he pointed out that everything in front of us did actually seem to be happening: - Palanya, a swimwear/lingerie model with a commercial (alien) type of beauty and proportions was indeed posing in the turquoise waters of Geographe Bay, south of Perth. Her hair was magnificent and her makeup faultless, both having been redone only

seconds before. Her swimsuit and wool shawl sat perfectly, provocatively, having also just been restyled. Her face was warmed by gentle light from a 'flec' board that I was holding close by, but just out of shot. My response, as I recall, was, 'Well, this is your reality, but then you are a fashion photographer'. Marcus just laughed.

Marcus is relatively sensitive about lies truth and reality in commercial photography, certainly more so than Jeremy and Ben, but in a different way to Nicole. Perhaps, as I indicated above, this is because fashion photography is regularly criticised for its spurious relationship with reality, for representing as desirable that which is unattainable. Like Jeremy when he says that it is hard to lie in dance photography because it is such an abstract thing to start with, one way that Marcus cares for his professional self is by defending the discursive formations with which his clients seek to engage. Compared to Nicole, whose comments carried a confessional note, Marcus remained unapologetic. In terms of professional commercial reciprocity, the difference here is that, where Nicole has a greater concern about the truthfulness of her photographs, Marcus's concern is more about defending the truth and reality of fashion and fashion photography (swimwear and woollen shawls notwithstanding).

For Tom, his preference for working with some distance between his personal sensitivities and his professional obligations helps him to alleviate some of the angst that lies, truth and reality in commercial photos can create. When I raised the issue with him, he spoke about 'the madness of it all', referring to a recent fashion shoot that he had done. Where I remain grateful to Jeremy for his willingness to engage and debate and to Nicole for her ongoing forthrightness, it was Tom's ironic, even sardonic, wit that provided insight here. I distinctly remember thinking that I was a step closer to being able to comprehend the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity when, describing a recent job, he said: 'I just closed my eyes and did what was necessary'.

Dave, the only artist photographer who participated in my research, had just done one of his infrequent commercial jobs when we spoke about lies, truth and reality in commercial photography. The job had been for an aged persons/pensioner lifestyle magazine which was running an editorial on older people who continued to be community leaders, or 'champions' as the magazine's editor had referred to them.

The person whom Dave photographed had reached great heights in international sport when she was younger and was now the leader of a small church. Dave's brief from the magazine was to show her as an heroic older person.

We were looking at the proof sheets, talking about the brief, about some of the differences between commercial work and his usual work including some of the difficulties he encounters when doing commercial work, when Dave pointed to a frame and said:

I think that is what they wanted - yeah - although that particular shoot - once again, it [the church building, which is actually a warehouse in a light industrial area] was - in this kind of building next to car yards in Osborne Park - under fluoro lights - very un-hero like surroundings. Although, if I was shooting my funny stuff [Dave's usual art, social commentary] that would have been ideal.

When I brought our conversation back to the issue of lies, truth and reality in commercial photography, he said:

Yeah - I mean to have her with a car yard in the back ground - it would have - that's satire - it would have been perfect - but they wouldn't have liked that. As for the truth, the truth is that the church is next to a car yard.

I noted in chapter one that I include Dave and his art practice in this thesis for the very reason that he and his practice lack the professional commercial reciprocity that this thesis addresses. To Dave's satirical artist's eye, perhaps the most appealing truth, his preferred truth, is that the church is next to a car yard. In terms of his art practice, that juxtaposition may well have been ideal. Perhaps because he is not used to working with the reciprocating effect of a professional relationship, his observation here, that the truth is the church is next to a car yard, highlights the fact that it is not his truth that he has been asked to photograph: it is the client's truth.

Of all the photographers, Mathew seems to practice with the least concern for the truthfulness of his photos. He also practices with perhaps the most contingent sense of reality. When I asked him about reality in commercial photos, his actual words were, 'There is no reality'. What he meant by this is in line with Nick Knight's position as I outlined in the chapter one. When Knight said that 'If you want reality, look out the window' (quoted in Wren 1997 22), his point was that commercial photos do not refer to realities. When I asked Mathew about lies and truth in commercial photography, he said, 'It's got nothing to do with lies or truth, or there are lots of truths'.

At the time I saw the same indifference in Mathew's response as I did in Ben's. However, Foucault's principles of contingency and the will to truth/power let us appreciate Mathew's response as something more insightful, something that goes directly and specifically to the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity. As Dave's artistic preference for his own satirical truth reveals, it is not the photographer's truth that a commercial photographer is obliged to photograph: it is the client's preferred truth. Any truth or reality in commercial photography is the client's preferred truth or preferred reality. Mathew is right. There are lots of truths, because there are lots of clients.

## **Investing in themselves**

The photographers' maintenance of their preferred subject positions comes at a cost to them. In Pierre Bourdieu's terms, exercising their preference as to how they would be understood by other people is a labour of inculcation and assimilation which costs time and energy (Bourdieu 1986). The techniques of naming the self, of measured expression and providing alternative less pejorative accounts of themselves all require an amount of the photographers' professional resources. The photographers' apparent willingness to incur this cost seems to blur the distinction between an empowered individual and the produced subject. Just as it is with their inventory of expensive cameras and studio lights, they only invest in their professional and commercial selves for reasons of professional commercial

reciprocity. This can be explained with Foucault's conception of surveillance, in particular his notion of the internalised power relation brought on by this mechanism of power. In reference to his analysis of Bentham's prison, Foucault suggests that the major effect of the Panopticon is:

... to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its actions; (Foucault 1977 201).

When considered as an effect of an internalised power relation, the photographers' ongoing care of the self becomes more observable in their working practices. Ben's practice provides a perfect example of the mere possibility of surveillance giving rise to a photographer's ongoing, or automatic, care of the self.

I was working with Ben in his studio photographing a bottle of white wine. The final image would be a composite of elements taken from three photos, each using a

different lighting setup. The label was softly and evenly lit from the front. The foil was lit from slightly above and to one side. The bottle was lit from behind so as to avoid any direct light reflecting off the front surface of the bottle.



Plate 16      Polaroid      Ben

This Polaroid image (plate 16) is from the bottle shot, where we went so far as to reflect the light through the bottle by bouncing it off the rear cyclorama wall. For the simple task of photographing a bottle, this shoot with Ben was remarkably complex. Ben's rationale for such a complex lighting technique is interesting. When I asked why we were

spending so much time and effort ensuring that no direct light reflected off the front surface of the bottle he said: 'Probably because I [would] know how its shot. You [would] know some one has just wheeled the soft box up to it and gone bang'.

Ben chose to use a composite production method, which necessitated using multiple complex lighting setups, simply because it reflects a more sophisticated way of doing commercial photography. He took this convoluted approach upon himself. No production or lighting technique was specified in the brief and a much less complex technique would have sufficed. Lacking the presence of mind at the time, I did not think to ask Ben who, other than himself, he thought was going to know? Nonetheless, I suspect he may have imagined people who know him, like his clients and other photographers and their clients: people who might actually know how it was shot. Ben had been caught in '... a power relation independent of the [people] who exercise it...' (Foucault 1977 201). Not as an inmate in a prison, but, for reasons of professional commercial reciprocity, Ben had created a form of self-surveillance brought on by the mere possibility of surveillance.

Jeremy's account of his practice reveals a similar internalised power relation: one that further blurs the distinction between individual and subject. He was telling me about his preference for maintaining high production values when doing smaller jobs when he said:

I think it is something you have to do - I mean I like to think that - maybe I slip up you know - now and then - but I like to think that - yeah - if I take on a job as a professional photographer then I take it on - no matter how big or small - you just got to do it.

Jeremy's account of an individual doing an amount of work which, from time to time, is beyond that necessary to fill the client-brief highlights a specific tactic: an empowered individual's way of operating, a conscious self-practice that underscores the 'professional' in 'professional photographer'. When he says that, if he takes on a job as a professional photographer then he takes it on, he is talking about protecting or caring for his professional self

At another time, during one of our conversations about ballet photography, he mentioned his preference for sharp, or non-blurry, images. As a rule, Jeremy prefers images with no discernible focus drop out caused by insufficient depth of field as well as no motion blur caused by the slow shutter speed necessitated by the small aperture required to achieve his preferred depth of field. His reason for his preference is in line with Ben's, for he suggested to me that '... it's very easy for any idiot to go up to - to go and shoot something and have it all blurry'. Drawing on his years of experience photographing ballet, Jeremy is caring for his professional self by doing something that other people cannot do. He went on to say:

It's captured – it's like sports photography - you know - you can go out and get a racing car going past - like a blur - but the real trick is to get it pin sharp - right in focus - at that crucial point.

Like Ben, Jeremy is talking about filling client-briefs in a way that sets him apart from other less capable photographers. Both Ben and Jeremy talk about practicing a care of the professional self by maintaining high production values, no matter how small the job, and employing techniques and methods beyond the capability of most people. Interestingly, both photographers describe an individual who is regulating his body, thought and conduct and an individual whose body, thought and conduct is being regulated (Foucault 1988). Their capacity to practice with methods beyond the capabilities of most people seems to have, at least in part, caused them to do so.

Returning to Jeremy's account of doing small jobs, his words 'you just got to do it', reveal the productive effect of an internalised power relation. As Jeremy works on what may or may not be an otherwise inconsequential brief in a professional manner, he is also working on himself in order to meet and comply with the models normalised by his professional culture. He is practicing a care of the self whilst at the same time reinforcing the subject position 'commercial photographer' as well as himself into it.

## Visibility and the production of Ben

As my time working with and interviewing the photographers went by my relationship with them changed. This caused some of them to modify their behavior when in my presence. The commercial and professional knowledge that I was amassing was their knowledge, the combined depth and breadth of which is uncommon for any one photographer. One unexpected manifestation of the efficacy of the multi-sighted imaginary with which I was amassing this knowledge was that some photographers recognised that it was my panoptic vantage that was affording me the extraordinary insight. For example, Tom became quite intrigued with the exceptional nature of the insight that my centralised presence afforded me. Others, like Jeremy, even came to sense possibilities for their own practice. Perhaps the least expected manifestation of the efficacy of this methodology was that some of the photographers came to sense that my centralised and increasingly authoritative presence amongst them might render their behaviour more visible to the other participating photographers.

Here I draw on a combination of Foucault's conception of the confessional in conjunction with a panoptic sense of surveillance to examine the photographers' modified behaviour, not as an ethnographic observer effect *per se*, but due to the possibility that I had become a conduit or medium for the gaze of the other photographers, their clients or other associated people.

I knew that, as professionals, the photographers all felt the gaze of associated professionals, including existing and potential clients and other photographers. Interestingly, the sense of enhanced visibility felt by some photographers caused them to alter their behaviour in ways that threw the effect of surveillance generally into much greater relief than it had been previously. Indeed, at a point where I had become quite captivated by the application of theory to the behaviour that I was witnessing, I remember even asking myself: Can't anyone else see this?

Whilst each photographer reacted differently to the possibility of enhanced conspicuousness, one instance involving one photographer in particular caught my imagination. I recount it here because it was on the strength of experiencing this

photographer's reaction that the professional commercial reciprocity of all the photographers was thrown into greater relief. I came to call my experience with that photographer 'The production of Ben.'

Ben and I had just finished working on a job in his studio when a potential client came into his office. Ben left the studio to meet the person, very briefly, and then came back to the studio where I was finishing clearing up. He told me that the person was a landscape gardener who wanted one of his recently completed jobs photographed. Ben said that he had been to see the garden, that it was a domestic backyard, then went to some lengths explaining his reasons for declining the client-brief.

Amongst his reasons he said, 'If I did these [photos] I would do them to my usual level'. Ben meant several things by this. As it is for all the photographers, Ben meant that he would work to his usual level because his business is set up for that level and type of work. He also meant that his usual level of service and production attracts a fee that, perhaps having been to see the job, Ben felt would be beyond the financial means of this landscape gardener.

These reasons made sense to me. Ben's usual level is what he usually does and knows how best to do. His inventory of equipment, habitual practices, business structure including his client base, reflect this. However, two details about Ben's explanation did not make sense to me. First, I had not asked him who the person was, what they wanted, let alone why Ben had declined the brief. It was none of my business. For reasons that I did not comprehend right at that moment, Ben felt compelled to tell me these things. The second point was the economic premise of his rationale. Put simply, I did not believe Ben's reasons for palming off a potential client, because I knew him, not just to have worked for less than his usual fee, but to produce photos beyond and above his usual level whilst doing so. I also knew that photographing a landscape gardener's recent domestic work was not beneath Ben professionally. The first job that I did with him in the course of this research was photographing a vacant lot for a real estate company. So, despite his claims to the contrary, Ben's behaviour was not about money and nor was it about the type or magnitude of the job. I suggest, like the prisoners housed in the cells of the

outer ring of Bentham's Panopticon, it was the threat of surveillance that caused Ben to behave in one way rather than another. Ben had become aware, even if subconsciously, of the possibility that my central position could render his behaviour more visible than usual to those photographers.

He modified his behaviour towards me because of the potential for surveillance through me, by the editors of lifestyle magazines, which include photos of landscaped gardens and account for a significant portion of his client base. He modified his behaviour due to the possibility of surveillance by other photographers who work for those magazines. If any of these people, including the other photographers participating in this research, could see what I was seeing, Ben wanted them to see it in a particular light.

### **The production of all**

Having recognised this effect on Ben, I immediately recognised similarly affected behaviour in the other photographers: instances when they had told me of work they declined followed by their rationales for declining it. Like Ben, these rationales made sense in that each included sound reasons for that photographer's discriminating behaviour.

Jeremy told me that he declines some client-briefs for a similar reason to Ben, saying: 'I reject a lot of jobs - little jobs - I think, no, you'd be better off with somebody who can spend a lot of time with it - can work on that budget'. At another time he suggested that: 'Little jobs are for the students who can spend the time on them'. This is Jeremy caring for his self by mitigating the potential harm that working with an insufficient budget might have on his ongoing professional relationships

Tess provided a different type of rationale for declining work that she had been approached to do. About her decision to decline a fashion client-brief, she said, simply: 'I'm not really geared up for that'. In this instance, Tess was justifying her actions to me by telling me that she lacked some of the equipment that fashion photographers use. This rationale also makes sense. Fashion shoots can be complex

and can require both equipment and perhaps habitual practices that Tess claimed to not have.

Tom provides a slightly different perspective from which to consider the photographers' behaviour: one which I did not initially recognise as modified in the way that the others were. He told me of an instance when he actually relinquished an ongoing client-brief. This job involved photographing seasonal catalogues for a home-ware importer/retailer: table-top shots of a range of decorative and serviceable home-ware products. For Tom, as it would be for any of the photographers who participated in this research, filling the brief was simple. With the same white background and lighting set up sufficing for every shot, it would have just been a matter of setting his equipment up once and then shooting away. However, having gone through this process twice, he decided to provide that client with written diagrammatic instructions on how to light and shoot their new ranges of products themselves. Tom concluded our conversation by rationalising his behaviour to me with the rhetorical question: 'Who could be bothered?' Even this type of rationale makes sense. Tom's disinclination to continue servicing the home-ware catalogues client reinforces my own experience, which tells me that it can be prosaic work. If one's professional situation is such that one can decline client-briefs, then this type of work could be the first to go.

When each is considered in isolation, these rationales are unremarkable. Whilst there might be little similarity between them, each rationale addresses that photographer's professional and commercial concerns. However, from my central position as an ethnographic observer, another similarity stood out. I realised that each photographer's rationale was, in some way, inconsistent with my observations of that individual's behaviour otherwise.

At the time when Tess suggested that she was not geared up for a fashion shoot, she was moving away from commercial photography towards an art practice, similar to the constructed social commentary that Dave does. Shortly after our conversation she exhibited some of her work at the John Curtin Gallery at Curtin University. The photos were carefully constructed portraits of younger women who had recently become mothers. They were all in a style that can and has been used for fashion.

Despite Jeremy telling me that little jobs are for the students who can spend the time on them, I knew that he did many small jobs for young dancers who earn little money. These briefs are, in fact, little jobs on which he sometimes spends an inordinate amount of time. Tom's decision to provide his client with instructions on how to shoot their own catalogue would have been fair enough. However, his rationale, his rhetorical 'who could be bothered' did not ring true because I knew that at that particular time, Tom could have used the money.

Whilst disparate, these inconsistencies between what I was told and what I had observed or knew to be true allowed me to see one further commonality in the photographers' rationales. They had all been careful to rationalise their behaviour to me in terms that were acceptable to the discourse of professional commercial photography. The economic premise in both Jeremy's and Ben's rationales provide an acceptable argument for anyone running a small business. Tess's rhetoric was more professional/photographic. To be under resourced is not unusual in a profession whose individual practitioners use dedicated inventories of equipment. Even Tom's rationale of 'who could be bothered' is acceptable in this professional context. This type of production line catalogue work is not inspiring and can leave one feeling reduced to the uncreative role of a technician.

I do not claim that economics, resources and boredom played no practical part in these decisions. However, as I look back through Foucault's discursive lens, I now suggest that the roles played by economics, suitability of photographic equipment and boredom were more rhetorical than about actual fiscal constraint, incompatible inventory or mental indifference. I suggest the photographers used this rhetoric to align their reasoning with professionally and commercially acceptable discourses.

So, whilst interesting, it was not which jobs the photographers did or did not accept that caught my attention, nor was it how they rationalised their decisions or even the inconsistencies within those rationales. The significant feature of their behaviour, in terms of the distinct and unifying ideas upon which this thesis rests, was what I saw as their need to tell me these things. However, I now also see that these rationales were not, in fact, intended for me. Rather, they rationalised themselves in ways that their professional associates would find acceptable.

When I look back through our interviews and my field notes, I can see that I had been witness to many moments during which discursive pressure compelled an individual to act in one way and not in another. None of these photographers declined work purely for reasons of economy, because the work was boring or because they were not geared up for that kind of work. Equipment can be rented and boredom can be overcome.

The photographers did not modify their behaviour for me, but for the potential power of my knowledge. For all of them, the compulsion to rationalise behaviour was a response to the productive and delimiting rules of discourse: the discourse of 'Commercial Photography'. Under what they felt was a heightened threat of surveillance, the photographers were subjected by their own discourse, reproduced by their own practice into the subject position of professional commercial photographer. In caring for their professional selves, each became his or her own overseer.

### **The redemption of Tom**

I noted above that Tom's rationale for not continuing to shoot the home-ware product catalogue, 'Who could be bothered?' caught my attention because I knew that he could have used the money at the time. When, sometime after this, I became aware of the extent to which Tom could have used the money, his earlier behaviour seemed to me to border on deliberate self-harm. We were talking socially, but also about work, when Tom said that he had been washing dishes in a commercial kitchen in order to meet his rent. That Tom was washing dishes is, in itself, of no great importance. We had spoken about kitchen work previously. We had both done it. We had also both read and discussed George Orwell's *Down and out in Paris and London* in which Orwell describes such work.

I think one should start by saying that a PLONGEUR is one of the slaves of the modern world. Not that there is any need to whine over him, for he is better off than many ... (Orwell 1933 116).

What is significant is that the catalogue job that Tom could not be bothered doing would have paid at the very least A\$150 per hour. It would have been neither physically nor mentally demanding. Washing dishes would have paid perhaps \$15 per hour and would have been physically demanding. With such a disparity, who could be bothered washing dishes? The answer came during one of Tom's more reflective moments when, with perhaps the straightest answer of any of the photographers about caring for their professional selves, he said: 'One's professional pride tends to be compromised by the nature of some small jobs'.

Albeit with the stakes much higher, Foucault writes of an analogous situation involving Socrates, suggesting that:

... it is clearly as a master of the care of the self that Socrates presents himself to his judges. The god has sent him to remind men that they need to concern themselves not with their riches, not with their honour, but with themselves and with their souls (Foucault 1988 44).

Tom's actions regarding the relinquishing of an ongoing paying client-brief can sustain a similar teasing out of motive and hidden purpose. Beyond one's pride, professional reputation will surely be compromised if one continues to do small jobs. Tom's reputation as a portrait and fashion photographer is substantial. When he worked in London through the 1970s and 1980s, he did so almost exclusively as a portrait photographer. Since his move back to Perth in the 1990s, the necessity for some diversity of practice in order to run a commercially viable business found Tom doing as much fashion work as portraiture. The fashion genre/practice lets him use similar equipment, methods, interpersonal skills and habitual practice as when shooting portraits.

Despite knowing that almost any photographer could do the catalogue work, Tom had already completed two of these jobs for that client. Fully aware that labels eventually stick, he decided that he was not going to be subjugated by such a disposable label. Rather, he very precisely named what he was not. He pointed to a specific subject position and said 'I am not that'. Tom would wear a kitchen apron,

and be better off than many, before accepting that label.

Tom's obstinacy in the face of financial hardship might seem self-defeating. However, I suggest that such care of the self is understandable in light of the following anecdote. In August of 1997, a time during which the English paparazzi's photographic practice was at its most virulent, Tom was contacted by a London public relations firm and asked if he could be available to shoot a small wedding within the next few weeks. He was told little more than that secrecy was paramount as the couple were celebrities and they wanted a private wedding. Their marriage would be newsworthy to the extent that the public relations firm felt it could not brief a London based photographer for fear of a leak to the tabloid press. Tom's name had been provided as a photographer who was capable of doing the job and upon whose discretion they could count. Tom would be the only photographer. He would be told of the location closer to the date. The public relations firm would arrange the flight and he would be told who the couple was once he arrived. Tom accepted the brief and awaited instructions. Unfortunately, however, the brief did not eventuate, for Tom was contacted by the public relations firm shortly afterward and told that the wedding was not going ahead. Nonetheless and irrespective of who the couple were going to be, Tom's reputation as a world-class portrait photographer was significant. It still is.

## **Labels**

Despite the photographers' efforts towards maintaining their preferred subject positions and exercising their preference to be understood in certain ways, some understandings do get imposed upon them by other people. Like their preferred subject positions described above, these impositions, which I describe here as produced subject positions, are an effect of the reciprocity between the photographers' commercial and professional relationships. They take a variety of forms and can happen for a variety of reasons.

One example of this form of subjectivity is the way that the photographers become labelled by their clients. This form of subjectivity may be read as an effect that a

photographer's professional relationships have upon his or her commercial relationships. Dylan, who works out of New York but regularly visits family in Perth, suggested as much when he told me that commercial photographers can become 'pigeon holed': labelled as being good at doing certain kinds of work. Dylan claimed to have been pigeon holed as a fashion/beauty photographer. Internationally sought after, the images he produces in this genre are typical of the advertisements found within the first few pages of the more upmarket glossy women's magazines.

The photographers with whom I worked in Perth have not been pigeon holed to the narrow extent claimed by Dylan. This is because of a difference between working in New York as compared to Perth. Even though Perth is a relatively affluent city in world terms, its population of 1.7 million (ABS 2012) is but 20% of New York's. The relative size, diversity and affluence of New York's population as well as its proximity to large northern hemisphere commercial markets, allows more of the most specialised niche photographers to run commercially viable businesses. In contrast to this, the photographers with whom I worked in Perth had retained some diversity of practice in order to, amongst other things, remain commercially viable.

Nonetheless, at the time of my fieldwork each had become known, or been labelled, as being good at certain kinds of work. I heard it in their words, saw it in their photos and observed it in their behaviour. Nicole's commercial label may be read as 'Interior/Architecture' photographer. For our first interview, she had prepared some images from her more recent jobs for us both to look at, saying that they were, '... just a lot of what I do, which is interiors'. Plates (11) and (12) on page 115 in chapter six were amongst the photos we looked at that day. These are typical of the photos produced by her under that label. Whilst Nicole does recognise her label, she puts a less pejorative spin on her situation than Dylan. After a particularly fruitful discussion about the aesthetic that she had achieved with those photos, as well as unpacking how she had come to do so much of that type of work, Nicole said, modestly, 'You become known a little bit for some things'. From the client perspective, Nicole's clients know that, according to her label, they will get their photos as they want them.

Further to their commercial abilities, the photographers also get labelled for

professional reasons. Reflecting the preferred subject position of 'service provider', other people such as agency executives and clients label them as professional: as people who will get the job done. In this sense, Nicole has been labelled as a photographer who other people like to work with. She recognises this label, telling me that '... the reason people use me is they like me - because that is a big part of it'.

Personalities do play a significant part in creating those professional environments in which everyone must work. Nicole's modesty aside, her claim that people hire her because they like her is in line with Tom's suggestion that 'Our job, really, is to create an environment in which the job will get done. Reflecting the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity, Tom does not just mean that the client will receive some photos. He means that the photos produced will be suitable, so that when the client uses the photos, they will be successful – the photos and, as such, the client. I know that, like Nicole, much of Dylan's success as a fashion/beauty photographer is due to his personality and temperament. Fashion and beauty models like him and like to work with him. As such, Dylan's personality and temperament go towards creating an environment in which the shoot will be completed and also towards achieving the client's desired aesthetic in those fashion/beauty photos.

Where professional labels reflect something of the individual, commercial labels perform a role that marks Foucault's distinction between the individual and the subject position. When Nicole said she had become known for certain things, she was referring broadly to her style, to the aesthetic she creates when doing her interior/architecture work. By the time of my fieldwork, agencies and clients had come to recognise, not so much Nicole, but the style and aesthetic of her photos. Mathew pointed out this form of subjectivity to me, in different terms and very early during my fieldwork, when he said, 'Ad agencies are buying into that style when they employ that photographer'.

The more a photographer's individual style and other specific competencies become recognised, the more clients ask that photographer to work in that style or genre-specific way. If an agency hired a photographer for an advertising campaign and

that campaign worked particularly well, the agency is likely to hire that photographer again for similar work. As an individual photographer continues to be hired on that basis, a label or subject position materialises. From the client's perspective, while that label sticks, it is reasonable for clients and agents to expect that photographer's familiarity with the archives of the relevant formations to be conscious, seasonally specific and commercial in nature.

One reason why labels do stick is because advertising and public relations agencies, which use multiple photographers, use labels to quickly and easily discern one photographer from the next. This seemingly innocent professional practice is also a form of subjugation because these labels do not necessarily cover a photographer's range of commercial abilities, let alone his or her personal ambitions. The agencies label a photographer only according to that photographer's proven capacity with regard to that agency's and/or their clients' needs.

This practice by agencies and clients of labelling the photographers is usefully analysed in the same way as I analysed the photographers' practice of naming themselves as service providers and professional communicators. I suggested that the photographers managed their professional relationships by controlling the knowledge of other people by regulating their own language during their immediate relations with those people. Here we can see the photographers' clients caring for their own professional selves by controlling, and as such producing various types of knowledge and collating information on individual photographer's activities and existence (Cousins and Hussain 1984). As such, this time it is the client's language that influences the power relationships within a field of knowledge. Each time an agency or client refers to a photographer by their label, that subject position is reinforced and the individual photographer is re-produced into it. Once labelled, a photographer's career can continue to be channelled in a direction that does not necessarily reflect changes in the photographer's personal and professional desires. This was part of Dylan's point. Having done fashion/beauty successfully for a long time, Dylan has found himself thinking about other genres and practices. His client and agents, however, continue to think of him, and employ him, as a fashion/beauty photographer.

Whilst some photographers notice and feel this subjectivity more than others, the strength of this subjugation should not be underestimated. As I noted above, just because Nicole and Dylan, or any of the photographers with whom I worked, can do the type of work they are labelled for does not mean that they cannot, or perhaps *could* not, do other types of work. Prior to Nicole and Craig starting their photography business, Nicole worked at commercial studio where, for some years, she specialised in studio/table-top product photography. She became very good at this type of work. I emphasise the past tense because, with Nicole's studio/table-top product experience being of little concern to the agencies and clients who label her as 'interior/architecture' and employ her only for that, a discursive and professional atrophy can set in. As it is with all the photographers, with their livelihoods at stake, Nicole and Dylan have become professionally obligated to meet the commercial preconceptions encouraged by their labels. As their inventories of equipment, their skills, habitual practices and client-base evolve with the type of work they are most often asked to do, they become less able to do other work. Eventually a photographer becomes subjugated to the extent that he or she becomes less able to work in other ways.

In this chapter I used Foucault's idea of the care of the self to examine some of the ways that the photographers attempt to occupy certain subject positions and, despite these efforts towards maintaining their preferred subject positions, how some understandings are, nonetheless, imposed upon them by other people.

Because the photographers' techniques of naming, measured expression and providing alternative less pejorative accounts of themselves all require an amount of their professional resources, the distinction between the empowered individual and the produced subject is, at times, ambiguous.

I drew on Foucault's conception of the confessional in conjunction with a panoptic sense of surveillance to examine the photographers' modified behaviour, not as an ethnographic observer effect *per se*, but due to the possibility that I had become a conduit or medium for the gaze of the other photographers, their clients or other associated people.

I showed that, whilst some photographers practice with a relatively concrete sense

of reality and some practice with a more contingent one, each photographer's perception of truth and reality has significant influence on his or her commercial relationships with the archives of the formations with which his or her clients seek to engage.

## **Chapter Eight: A-typical Scenarios**

In this chapter I analyse two examples of the photographers' work which are a-typical in several ways and which throw aspects of their more usual practice into much sharper relief. The first example involves a client-brief that Jeremy had filled just prior to our first meeting regarding this research. The second is the common but infrequent practice by all of the photographers of producing photos to submit for award to industry bodies like the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) or by invitation from entities like charity organisations.

I examine Jeremy's client-brief by way of a case study. Drawing on Foucault's notion of contingency and his principle of the enunciative function, I highlight an uncommon disparity between this client and their brief. This, in turn, lets me depict the photographers as a technology of the client self.

I investigate the production of photos to submit for award or by invitation by examining three such photos in terms of their aesthetic and the behaviour of the photographers when producing them. I bring Roland Barthes' notion of 'photographic connotation' (Barthes 1977) to bear on my observations and the observations about this aesthetic and associated behaviour provided to me by one photographer in particular, Ben. I then consider the photographers' concerns for truth and reality as described in chapter seven to bring critical focus to the distinctive insight afforded by investigating this common but infrequent practice.

### **The professional wedding couple: a case study**

The client in this case study was a young couple celebrating their fifth wedding anniversary. It is not the client's domestic status that causes this client-brief to be a-typical. As I noted in chapter six, all the photographers engaged in a limited amount of domestic work like weddings, christenings and family portraits during the time I was working with them. What is unusual in a way that highlights aspects of the photographers' more usual practice, is how remarkably detailed and elaborate the client's brief to Jeremy was: much more commercial in nature than domestic. It

is this disparity between a domestic client and the commercial nature of their brief that throws the photographers' more usual professional and commercial relationships into sharper relief.

In practice, it is unusual for professional commercial photographers to consider a client in isolation from their brief. As I have argued throughout the preceding chapters, the two are inextricably linked. However, by taking this unusual step and interrogating each separately, I make use of the peculiar dynamics caused by this disparity to provide further critical analysis of several key aspects of the more usual client/photographer relationship: emphasising the actions and understandings of all the photographers in a way that is less apparent in their more usual professional relationships.

The disparity also causes the couple's care of the self to be much more visible than it is with the photographers' more usual clients. This is because, as I show below, the couple were exercising a commercial like care of their social self. Drawing on Foucault's principles of contingency and the enunciative function, I analysis the couple's rhetorical and discursive strategies to reveal how several discursive processes, or technologies, are similarly at work in the photographers more usual client-briefs.

### **Interpreting the client-brief**

As with any client-brief, Jeremy's first task had been to interpret it. I use the numbered checklist below when teaching photography students about interpreting commercial client-briefs. Although Jeremy's brief was from a domestic client and despite the fact that he had already filled it, I used this list as a means of structuring our conversation.

This type of methodical interpretation is the norm for commercial photographers in order that the full complexity of the brief is made apparent. It is not unusual for one of the points on the list to require a disproportionate amount of the photographer's attention. This is often the case with first time commercial clients because the photographer initially needs to understand the client in order to understand what

the client really wants – their brief.

### **The client-brief check-list:**

- A. Client: Who has commissioned you?
- B. Product - Service – Event: What do they want photographed?
- C. Purpose: Why are they doing this and why have they engaged you?
- D. Outcome: What do they hope will be achieved?
- E. Research: What research still needs to be done?

#### A. Who is the client?

In this case, the client is a married couple. As Jeremy and I looked through the proof sheets, discussing the couple and their brief to him, he mentioned that each had told him several times that they were both professionals working in a medical field. Jeremy and I concurred that their marital status as well as being seen as upwardly socially mobile seemed important to them.

#### B. What did they want photographed?

On the face of it, the couple wanted an event photographed. However, from the moment when Jeremy and I began looking at the proof sheets, I developed a sense of ambiguity about this client-brief. I soon learnt why, as Jeremy began explaining the brief to me, saying that: 'This couple got married - five years ago - and they wanted some anniversary photos'. I pointed out to Jeremy that he and I were not looking at anniversary photos, but actual wedding photos. Not just with a bride and groom, but with an entire formally dressed wedding party. Jeremy acknowledged this, saying: 'Yeah, they were really disappointed with their initial wedding photos'.

It is significant that it had not been until Jeremy mentioned this that I realised these were not photos of the couple's wedding, which had taken place five years earlier, but a subsequent staged re-enactment. So, the couple's brief to Jeremy was that they were celebrating the event of their fifth wedding anniversary by re-enacting certain parts of their wedding and they wanted him to photograph that re-enactment. In terms of interpreting a client-brief, celebrating an anniversary by re-

enacting the wedding is not without precedent. Some couples even re-take their vows.

C. Why were they doing this and why had they engaged Jeremy?

The couple were celebrating their anniversary and they had engaged Jeremy to photograph that celebration. Moreover though, I now sensed that they were attempting to assuage their disappointment with their original wedding photos. However, the question as to why they were using Jeremy still remained. They could have commissioned a wedding photographer to cover their event for a fraction of the amount that he would have been charging.

D. What was their desired outcome?

Despite the fact that Jeremy had already filled this brief and the photographic outcomes were there in front of me to see, I was not immediately sure about the couple's desired outcome. Interestingly though, it did appear that the couple had been quite sure about what they wanted to achieve. Perhaps this was because Jeremy's proof sheets contained very few photos that I read as 'anniversary celebration': they definitely looked like a wedding. Jeremy had told me that the couple wanted some photos to replace their unsatisfactory wedding photos, produced five years earlier. However, the extent to which they were going to achieve this caused me to wonder why it was so important to them. The logistical effort and expense, which I knew was behind these photos, is usually reserved for commercial client-briefs: briefs with commercial budgets and clients with expectations that money spent is, in some way, to be recouped. As to their desired outcome, I was still not sure what the couple had imagined Jeremy might achieve for them that had not been achieved by the wedding photographer five years earlier.

E. What research still needs to be done?

The final point on the list is perhaps more relevant and readily applied to commercial clients with commercial briefs. However, in the context of a domestic client-brief, which is the manner in which Jeremy had been approached by the couple and the way in which he had initially interpreted their brief, Jeremy was

obviously struck by its strength and detail. Unprompted, he said:

It's funny - because I went there one Sunday and spent about two hours walking around their house talking - discussing all their clothing - like the colours. ... We went to about ten different locations around the house and back yard - and talked about light and shade and when was the best time to do it - and coordinating the family.

Jeremy then informed me of a further aspect of the brief, saying: 'They were doing a family portrait at the same time - which I haven't got any proofs of - twenty people - we spent a lot of time.'

### **Analysing Jeremy's interpretation of the client-brief**

I noted that Jeremy had shot this job just prior to the fieldwork stage of this research. It was on the strength of our first meeting that he put the proof sheets from this job aside because he thought I might find it interesting.

Like Jeremy, I was struck by the strength of purpose and detail of the brief. It is unusual to have a photographer spend two hours doing reconnaissance, some weeks prior, to a domestic portrait shoot. It is unusual to look at ten different locations and to discuss clothes, colours, light and shade and times of day. Actual weddings aside, domestic client budgets do not usually extend to this. This type of reconnaissance is more usually performed for commercial client-briefs. It is indicative of a professional photographer's preparations for a job with commercial consequences.

A further aspect of the client-brief that we both found interesting was the couple's request for a mix of both formal and faux candid styles of wedding photographs and portraits. The faux candid portrait, in itself, can be an elaborate undertaking: often more complex than a formal sitting. As Jeremy noted:

It's quite an elaborate thing - they wanted - this idea that they [the faux candid portraits] are just snaps - they're like - not looking at the camera - they're just looking away - they didn't particularly want to be looking at the camera.

As a practicing photographer, I knew how difficult a task producing 'snap' type photos can be, so I asked Jeremy what, in this particular situation, constituted a 'snap'. He said:

Ok - well a snap - well it's not a snap in the sense - ok - they were really keen on having shots where they look like they are at a party somewhere - or just enjoying themselves out in their back yard - and someone just happened to have a camera - bang.

Jeremy then further reinforced the complexity of this brief by reminding me that:

... they also wanted the more - portrait - formalised - the champagne - to celebrate their five-year anniversary. They had a really strong idea of what they wanted - so that was interesting.

In time, two further points about Jeremy's interpretation of the client-brief came to intrigue me, both of which address some of the unanswered points from the client-brief check list, above. I had become intrigued by what I saw as a further disparity - between the precision of the couple's brief and their desire for a mix of both formal and faux candid styles of wedding photographs and portraits. I had initially thought that the couple's request for both may have been a hedging tactic: an uncertain and thus ambiguous attempt to cover a variety of social bases. However, this type of uncertainty does not sit with the strength and precision of the brief. As Jeremy had told me, the couple had a really strong idea of what they wanted.

The second point relates to the reconnaissance that Jeremy undertook. I noted that this type of reconnaissance is more usually performed for commercial client-briefs

and is indicative of a professional photographer's preparations for a job with commercial consequences. It only occurred to me later that the reconnaissance for this client-brief was not so much being done by Jeremy as it was by the client, the couple. Looking back, some of the disparity that I sensed was because, in this case, it was the client who was preparing, researching and questioning their photographer about what would work and what was possible.

As a domestic client, their two hours spent with Jeremy some weeks prior to the shoot had given them a more commercial understanding of their possibilities and rendered them better able to brief their photographer. So, ultimately, it was the lack of ambiguity that caused my enduring sense of this client-brief to be about the couple's care of the self and of the transparency, if perhaps only to me, of their desire to hide their efforts in this regard. The reason they engaged Jeremy instead of a much less expensive wedding photographer is because they wanted to brief a photographer rather than hire one. They wanted a photographer who could brief them.

### **Silencing and Naturalising**

This client-brief throws the care of the client self into greater relief than usual. In discursive terms, the photographers' more usual client-briefs may be depicted as examples of clients exercising their preference to occupy certain subject positions. The strength and precision of the couple's brief to Jeremy becomes significant because, implicit to the care of one's self is one's self knowledge, which includes preparing for possible contingencies. The couple recognised, even if subconsciously, that realising their preferred (wedding) truth was contingent upon silencing their non-preferred (wedding) truth.

By appreciating the couple's brief, in part, as a strategy for silencing a non-preferred truth, the impetus for the re-crafting of their wedding becomes clearer: the very real potential for the realisation of a non-preferred reality. As Danaher et al suggest, regulatory practices deployed in an attempt to perfect one's self include overcoming those things that might threaten one's attempts (Danaher, Schirato et

al. 2000). Irrespective of what the couple perceived their present truth to be, they were aware of two other specific contingent truths; one would be for the better and the other for the worse.

The one for the worse was an especially inconvenient truth, for it had the potential to thwart their attempts to perfect themselves because they possessed a photographic representation of it in their actual wedding photos. The one for the better, their preferred truth, lay in their brief to Jeremy.

Jacques Derrida's (1978) method of defining two theoretical opposites against each other lets us make sense of the strength and precision of the couple's brief to Jeremy. This, in turn, provides further insight to the briefs that the photographers accept from their more usual commercial clients who seldom have such a singular clear and present non-preferred reality against which to push when writing their briefs.

The couple were able to focus their efforts in a way that commercial clients seldom can because, as Derrida suggests, 'unless a distinction can be made rigorous and precise it isn't really a distinction' (Derrida 1988 126). It is because this couple were in a position of having something to oppose, an opposite to consider, rather than a myriad of hypothetical contingent realities, that they were able to design a strong and precise brief.

In chapter two I mentioned that I did not propose to account for the effect of Foucault's principle of the enunciative function (Foucault 1976) other than that it transforms texts into statements and, as such, into discursive practices or events. Having suggested that the photographers play their part in realising their clients' preferred realities by producing photographic statements of discursive ideals, it is important to remember that this realisation is contingent upon those visual texts being enounced into discursive formations. Un-enunciated, they amount to nothing: the photo has been produced but the statement has not been made.

This might seem a theoretical distinction only. It is not. A further reason why I chose this client-brief as a case study is because it provides a concrete example of the enunciative function, or more specifically, of the contingency of that enunciative

function. This, in turn, provides further insight to the briefs that the photographers accept from their more usual clients, for it is the contingency of the enunciative function that both allowed the couple to brief Jeremy with the strength and precision that they did, as well as being the very thing that drove them to do so.

The couple were able to brief Jeremy to photograph a re-enactment of their wedding because, in their eyes, the original photos of their actual wedding were visual representations, which had not yet been subjected to the enunciative function. Amongst other things, the possibility that photos of their actual wedding could transition from text to statement, to become a discursive event, is what compelled the couple to brief Jeremy. What they did with their original wedding photos, I do not know. But with all that they were doing in order to achieve more acceptable ones, my sense is that those photos did not again see the light of day.

This time around, in an attempt to put the disappointment of their actual wedding photos behind them, they decided to take matters firmly into their own hands. As they became better able to do this, the client/photographer relationship changed. Power relations were re-negotiated as the couple became increasingly confident in being able to brief a professional commercial photographer in a quite different way from which they had briefed their wedding photographer five years earlier.

In chapter two I noted how it was necessary to locate Foucault's conception of the will to truth with the client, rather than with the photographer, for it is the client's will that, in part, makes up the client-brief. In briefing Jeremy, the couple was exercising their will to truth. The extent to which this couple were prepared to go to dress their care of the self with an air of informality let me see a distinction between their discursive ambition and their rhetorical strategy for achieving this ambition. This distinction between *what* the couple was doing - their discursive practice and *how* they were doing it - their rhetorical strategy is often less apparent in the photographers' more usual commercial briefs. Further, this distinction highlights a process of naturalising: a key component of the photographers' more usual professional commercial reciprocity that obscures the effect of that reciprocity.

Naturalising can be understood in relation to the political, biological, and language or cultural processes. For example, one can become a naturalised Australian when

one becomes a citizen of Australia. To naturalise a plant or animal is to cause that plant or animal to become established in a new environment. Perhaps closest to my intended meaning: a naturalised word or custom refers to one of foreign origin that has been adopted and in turn accepted in another language or culture.

In terms of their discursive practice, the couple were willing to subject themselves to such an elaborate and expensive production because they wanted to be naturalised into particular discursive surroundings. If not already established, they were seeking to become established in those environments. They wanted, upon the enunciation of the visual texts prepared for them by Jeremy, to become accepted. They wanted to shore up their citizenship in, and ownership of, those discourses with which they so strongly identified.

They briefed Jeremy to produce a faux candid aesthetic as a naturalising strategy because they wanted to look 'natural' in their environment of choice. If this couple were to live the discourses of their desire, if they were to live their truth, they had to appear at ease whilst doing so. They wanted to appear in these photos, not just as upwardly mobile, happily married, successful medical professionals, but to appear as if this was the only way that they ever had been and were ever going to be. Imagine what the Smiths or the Jones might think if they knew that the couple had briefed a commercial photographer to represent their selves in a way that they really were not. In the mean time, the couple's willingness and ability to improve and perfect their status quo stands as manifest evidence that, as Foucault has suggested, the notion of the human being is not inevitable (Foucault 1980).

## **Award and Invitation**

The common but infrequent practice of producing photos to submit for award to industry bodies like the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) or by invitation from entities like charity organisations is another a-typical practice that throws the photographers' more usual practice into greater relief. It is a-typical in that there is no specific client involved, thus throwing the usual influence of the client into greater relief as well as the extent to which the relationship between the

photographers' professional and commercial relationships is reciprocal.

Here I analyse this a-typical practice by examining three such photos in terms of aesthetics and the behaviour of the photographers when producing them. I bring Roland Barthes' notion of 'photographic connotation' (Barthes 1977) to bear on this aesthetic and, in particular, the observations about this aesthetic and associated behaviour provided to me by one photographer, Ben. I then consider the photographers' concerns for truth and reality as described in chapter seven, to bring this new insight fully to light.

During the time I was working with the photographers, they each produced images for the sole purpose of submitting for a photographic award or by invitation from an entity such as a charity. These images look different from the photographers' usual editorial, corporate and advertising images, and the photographers behave differently when producing them. From very early on, perhaps even before this thesis took its ethnographic turn, I had pondered the seemingly paradoxical question; why do photos produced to submit for an award or by invitation possess a different aesthetic to the photographer's usual commercial one when the award is for commercial photography or the invitation has been made to a commercial photographer?



Plate 17 Award Aesthetic Ian

Whilst I discussed (plate 06) on page 111 in chapter six as an example of editorial work by Ian, I return to it here (plate 17) because his description of the photo aptly describes much of the difference in aesthetic between award and invitation work and the photographers' more usual paid work. About his treatment of the image, Ian said:

'It kind of makes it somewhat more graphic in appearance - wide angle lens - down really low to the ground - looking up to him - adds to the graphic nature of the final look - and it is polarised and I warmed the light as well'.

In line with Ian's description, the photographers often produce award and invitation photos with a conspicuously photo-centric aesthetic. Consider this next image (plate



Plate 18 Award Trigg

18), which I produced for a photography competition held by one of the large retail department stores in Perth's CBD. Its oversaturated colour and film frame edge are indicative of the photo-centricity afforded by this sort of work. Rather than covering my tracks, the regular penultimate task in the process of producing a commercial photo, I took the opportunity to leave a trace of myself, my ideas and my methods. Produced to submit for an award, this image is as much about me as anything else.

I realised the photographers behaved differently when producing these photos partly because they are not being paid to do it. Some even referred to such work as 'not a real job'. For example, I worked with Tom on a brief, which amongst other things, he regarded as an opportunity to have some fun. The make-up artist for this brief, also unpaid, was a close friend of Tom. Both working on their own time, they came together for the opportunity to catch-up and, as Tom might say, to have a laugh.

Similarly, Nicole emphasised her sense of freedom when we spoke about this type of work. She told me that:

The main thing is for me to enjoy the exercise of doing something completely off my own bat – compared to

commercial work – where - you are more concerned about whether they [the client] are going to understand what you've done - or like it.

We were looking at this next image, (plate 19) when Nicole then went on to explore her pleasure in 'breaking the rules', as she put it, when doing this type of work.



Plate 19

Invitation-Brief

Nicole

These things alone: breaking rules, having fun, pushing the medium, extending or expressing one's self, can result in an aesthetic that is, in some way, other than that found in editorial, corporate and advertising photos.

In terms of breaking rules, particularly when compared to corporate and advertising work, this image by Nicole has an unacceptably high contrast. The areas of white are overexposed to the point where there is no detail at all and the areas of black are underexposed to the same degree. The depth of field is so shallow that only the

tip of the subjects nose is in focus and her hair and arms bleed into the background. And her eyes are closed.

### **Ben's observations**

Whilst I realised that the different aesthetic was, in part, due to a markedly different habitus (Bourdieu 1990), it was Ben's observations about this atypical practice that let me see the potential in its analysis and which, ultimately, would inform this research project in a way that I could not have imagined. Ben distances himself from this award and invitation type of work. He expressed his dislike for what he described as the overproduced aesthetic of the images and, implicitly, the conspicuous behaviour of the photographer when producing them.

He and I were looking through an AIPP magazine when we came across some photos that had been selected for final judging for an industry award. I pointed to them and asked, 'So are these what you might call award type photos - or not?' To which he replied, 'Made for the awards - yeah - but the big thing is the over production. Everything seems to be duo-toned - or something!' I asked if he thought that the over production was part of an attempt by the photographer to produce a less figuratively real aesthetic, to which Ben replied, 'Yeah - yeah - but it seems that they will just try anything to do it - just all the tricks.' Then after a long pause during which neither of us spoke, he said, 'If I see one more picture of an out of focus barking dog, I will cancel my membership'.

At the time I took Ben's point to be that commercial photography is not meant to be about these non-commercial type photos. Now though, I read his aversion to both the aesthetic of these photos and the associated photographer's behaviour as being much more nuanced than I had at first thought - particularly when considered in conjunction with Ben's own inclination towards a more conscious and definite use of photogenic techniques, described in chapter five.

Roland Barthes' notion of photographic connotation assists in resolving what might be seen as a disparity between Ben's observations and his own behaviour. Using the photograph as a tool to explore his functional distinction between denotation and

connotation, Barthes' approach (Barthes 1977) (which would ultimately prove untenable for him<sup>1</sup>), remains useful because it continues to emphasise the regularly overlooked constructedness of photographic meaning. Perhaps with a nod to Marshal McLuhan's similar concern, that the medium is the message (McLuhan 1964), Barthes describes photographic connotation as the process by which photographic representation *in itself* brings connotations to what might otherwise be an objectively denotated reality.

Barthes lists six photographic procedures: trick effects, pose, objects, photogenia, aestheticism and syntax. Of the six, photogenia and trick effects help to address Ben's aversion to an overproduced aesthetic and his concerns about a photographer using all of his or her tricks when producing those photos.

Barthes contends that: 'In photogenia the connoted message is the image itself, "embellishes" (which is to say in general sublimated) by techniques of lighting, exposure and printing' (Barthes, 1977: 23). He suggests that:

The methodological interest of trick effects is that they intervene without warning in the plane of denotation; they utilize the special credibility of the photograph ... in no other treatment does connotation assume so completely the 'objective' mask of denotation (21).

The insight to the photographers' more usual practice begins to crystallise when, through Ben's eyes, but in Barthes' terms, we re-examine the previous three images, (plates 17, 18 and 19) on pages 163 and 164. To Ben's eye, my photo of the capsicum is overproduced. It has an unusually strong contrast, unusually deep shadows, and the colour is overly saturated. In Barthes' terms, this image of a capsicum has, in the first instance, been embellished simply through the

---

<sup>1</sup> As I noted in chapter one, it was with a sense for the promise of scientific method offered by the semiotic approach that Barthes undertook his systematic study of fashion photos. By the time he completed that study, he had admitted that his sense of the scientific possibilities afforded by semiotics had been nothing more than a euphoric dream: Noth, W. (1995). *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington and Indianapolis., Indiana University Press.

connotations inherent to the photographic means of representation. Further though, Ben's sense of overproduction may be described in Barthes' terms as an excessive or conspicuous use of photogenia. I over-embellished the capsicum, moving it further from reality through my technique of high contrast lighting, slight underexposure to saturate the colour and extremely shallow depth of field – just the front edge of the green stalk is in focus.

Ian's image of the pilot/airplane has been produced by a photographer who, in Ben's terms, has used all the tricks; a wide-angle lens, low camera angle, polarising filter, warming filter and cross-processing the film<sup>2</sup> has embellished the image to a point that the aesthetic might be described as photo-centric. In the same vein, Nicole's portrait could be seen as overproduced because it is duo-toned. Printed by hand, these duo-toned photos require three distinct processes. First a black and white print is made. This print is then bathed in a selenium solution to colour the areas of black with a deep Prussian blue, before being bathed in a sepia solution to give the areas of white an aged, slightly yellow tone. In Barthes' terms though, this portrait may equally be described as sublimated, as less than real, for Nicole has chosen photographic techniques which produce an aesthetic with possible connotations reminiscent of pre-colour photography: colour being one of the key indicators of reality.

To Ben's eye, Nicole, Ian and I have unashamedly accentuated the visibility of our creative efforts. Without a client-brief, I allowed myself to produce an aesthetic that, for some readers of that image, might be more sensually provocative than would usually be encouraged for the commercial photography of vegetables. For the same reason, Ian allowed himself an aesthetic that might be read as more dramatic and perhaps more caricatured than might usually be commercially acceptable. Far from attempting to cover our tracks, we each made conspicuous reference to the material technology of film. Where Nicole drew on photography's black and white heritage, Ian and I included the film frame edge in our final prints. As Ben might

---

<sup>2</sup> Cross processing is a technique that involves processing transparency film using the chemicals meant for processing colour negative film. The effect is greater contrast and more polarised colours.

put this, our misbehaviour was such that our photos no longer possessed a realistic aesthetic.

As a professional communicator who, in his own words, is 'in it for the money', Ben's observations are driven by a concern that the behaviour and associated aesthetic might compromise his professional medium. Ben regards overproduction/embellishment and conspicuous behaviour/trick effects as potentially compromising the special credibility of the photograph: the foundational premise of the realistic enthymeme<sup>3</sup>. The un-stated premise upon which photographic propositions rest is that photos objectively (re)present a reality. The realistic enthymeme continues to function because this premise of objectivity is assumed to be true.

As a rhetorical strategy, the power of the photographic image is often taken for granted. Because we perceive photographs as realistic, we make similar assumptions about their argumentative potential (Finnegan 2001). Ben would prefer that it continue to be taken for granted.

### **Diminished concern for the truth and softer sense of reality**

It is noteworthy that, when producing these award and invitation photos, each photographer's concern for the truth and sense of reality, described in chapter seven, seems to diminish and become less concrete. In the first instance, that a photographer's concern for the truthfulness of his or her images might diminish when working on briefs that are 'not real jobs' can seem a reasonable and plausible reading of this practice. However, whether the aesthetic of such photos is described as embellished, sublimated, hyper or less than real, the notion that the absence of a client could cause a photographer's sense of reality to become less concrete is less easily reconciled.

Significantly, an essential characteristic of the photographers' professional

---

<sup>3</sup> 'An enthymeme, in current usage, is an argument that has one or more premises, or possibly a conclusion, not explicitly stated in the text, but that needs to have these propositions explicitly stated to complete the argument from the text' (Walton 2001).

commercial reciprocity is addressed directly and completely when we reverse the question, to again focus on their more usual editorial, corporate and advertising work, and ask - why does the burden of truth become greater and one's sense of reality more concrete when working on briefs for clients. Why, for example, is it no longer just an exercise for Nicole when a client is involved? Why, for Tom, might it no longer be fun? Why might Fredo choose less expansive methods in the studio? And why does Ben seem more comfortable when there is a client to serve?

The absence of the client, *per se*, when producing photos for award or by invitation does not lead to the photographers embellishing their images and behaving conspicuously. Rather, it is the absence of reciprocating pressure between a photographer's professional relationship and his or her commercial relationship. The photographers' concern for the truth increases and their sense of reality becomes more concrete when working for clients because those truths and realities are the client's preferred truths and contingent realities. It is these truths and realities about which the photographers are briefed. Whilst any reciprocating professional pressure is such that a photographer's obligation for heightened client-specific discursive awareness is instant, the fact is that the client's discursive concerns do not become the photographer's. The significance of this in the specific terms of this thesis, the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity, is that the pressure felt by the photographers is professional and it is not discursive.

Throughout this thesis I have drawn on Foucault's discursive principles to describe the photographers' practice in terms of the relationship between their professionalism and commerciality. It is interesting that those same discursive principles now show how the absence of discursive pressure within the photographers' professional commercial relationships is the only way that it can be. When describing the archive as the first law of what can be said, Foucault emphasises, amongst other things, that truth and reality are just rules; whilst one can be in the true, there is no single truth; whilst there are current realities, these are all contingent. I reiterate these fundamental discursive principles here to demonstrate that, for these photographers, concern for truth and reality cannot be brought to bear through discursive pressure because a discursive formation *per se*

can exert no pressure. There is nothing concrete against or from which pressure can be build. One cannot feel the surface of a discursive formation because it is made entirely of statements. One cannot be inside a formation because there is nothing to be within. There is nothing to diminish or to be diminished by. There is nothing to cause concern.

At the start of this research I could not possibly have imagined, but as I will show in the concluding chapter of this thesis, the quintessentially discursive notions of truth and reality, which in Foucault's earlier texts are inescapable and in his later ones, perhaps contestable, are for these photographers no more than functional or instrumental elements of their professional practice.

## Chapter Nine: Summary and Findings

The aim of this research was to investigate the professional practice of commercial photographers who live and work in Perth, Western Australia. With the semiotic approach to understanding photographs proceeding in a direction other than that in which the practice of photography lay, I adopted an ethnographic methodology so as to observe the photographers' professionalism and commerciality in practice. In addition to the evidence gathered as a participant observer, I gained complementary insight to their practice through approximately 120 interviews conducted with the photographers during that fieldwork stage of the research.

One particularly significant methodological aspect of these interviews was something that I came to call 'The Space', which I describe here as a contemporary-world ethnographic epistemology in its own right. The space is a distinguishable period of time during an interview when the participating interviewee has become more actively engaged than they had previously. In a way similar to the multi-sited imaginary (Marcus 1995), I used the temporally bounded imaginary of the space to sequester our time together away from the remainder of our busy working days.

Whilst the significance of the space to this research represents a discovery in the methodology, I had not been alone in using it. Ravina Aggarwal has written about similar dynamic temporal characteristics to those that I observed. She demonstrates a similar reflexivity in noticing these characteristics, using them, and by aiming her project at '... capturing the rhythms, the currents, the locations and dislocations that are implicated in the process of culture making' (Aggarwal 2000 537). Kathleen Stewart, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas, is another who has stressed the critical possibilities afforded by this type of temporal delimitation. She writes about remarkably similar occurrences to those I encountered, describing them as the charged atmospheres of everyday life: suggesting that spaces of all kinds become inhabited, modes of existence accrue, circulate, sediment, unfold, and go flat.

Having recognised the space and made increasingly sophisticated use of its temporal dynamics, it has become an important methodological approach with

repercussions for further ethnographic fieldwork practice. Particularly as an authentic and authenticating space for ethnographers observing and participating with subjects who are culturally and socially close at hand.

Michel Foucault's conception of discourse analysis, with its emphasis on knowledge, materiality and the analysis of power within discursive formations, has been essential to describing the practice of the photographers who participated in this research. By locating the photographers, their clients and other associated people within a variety of discursive formations, including those with which the clients seek to engage, I have been able to describe the photographers' professionalism and commerciality in terms of relationships. Where their professionalism is embodied in their relationships with their clients, their commerciality may be described as the relationship between themselves and the archives of the discursive formations with which their clients seek to engage.

Similarly, by locating the photographers, their clients and others within discursive formations, I have been able to identify and analyse the ways in which power is brought to bear on and by the photographers. I have shown how the photographers are subjected gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted (Foucault 1980 97) by their own discourse, as well as ways in which they may be considered as creative or self-governing subjects.

Foucault's combined emphasis on knowledge and power has been essential for enabling the identification, analysis and description of the reciprocity between the photographers professionalism and commerciality. The photographers who participated in this research revealed that they had accumulated a very particular knowledge: not just professional knowledge, not just commercial knowledge, and not simply a mixture of the two. Rather, this knowledge is a product of the reciprocating effect between their professional and commercial relationships.

The materiality of Foucault's conception of discourse analysis, his conflation of the textual, material, physical and discursive into all-encompassing notion of discursive practices (Foucault 1981) has also provided an important facet to the framework of this research. As I showed in chapter five, by considering the photographers' studios and expensive inventories of equipment as discursive practices, I have been

able to depict these studios and equipment inventories as material manifestations of power that have been brought to bear on and by the photographers. Similarly, the notion of discursive practice enabled me to distinguished between the studio as a place and as a method for the production of photos: a means by which each photographer manages the relationship between his or her professional and commercial relationships.

## **The reciprocity**

On the strength of the evidence and analysis presented within this thesis, the key finding is that this relationship between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality is reciprocal. This reciprocity is such that the single most important characteristic of the photographers' professionalism and commerciality is the effect that each has on the other. However, whilst the research has identified the essentially reciprocal nature of this relationship, it is the photographers' awareness and management of their professional commercial reciprocity that constitutes the substantive findings of this research. It is testament to their awareness and management of this reciprocity that I was initially unable to distinguish between their professionalism and commerciality and it has only been in establishing the nature and extent of the reciprocating effect of each on the other that I have become able to see each for what it is.

## **The reciprocity varies**

Underscoring this reciprocity, necessity is indeed the mother of invention here. The nature, purpose and extent of each photographer's archival relationships is determined by the relationships between each photographer and his or her clients. As such, the reciprocity differs depending on the type of client and the work being undertaken. Whilst this has been highlighted throughout the thesis, the type and magnitude of difference is particularly evident in the distinctions drawn between the photographers' editorial, corporate and advertising work.

The relatively poor remuneration often associated with the photographers' editorial client-briefs diminishes the effect that those professional relationships have on the photographers' commercial relationships. The photographers take advantage of this diminished reciprocity in various ways. For example, in chapter six I showed how Ian used the opportunity to showcase his commercial talents and, as such, express something of his own relationship with the archive. Ben, the more experienced and established of the two photographers, took advantage of the diminished reciprocity by falling back on routine methods of production.

The photographers are better remunerated for their corporate work. One reciprocating effect of this more considered professional relationship is the photographer's commercial relationship is more strongly mediated. Significantly though, underscoring the reciprocity between their professionalism and commerciality, the photographers' commerciality is mediated by the regularity of the discursive formation with which the client seeks to engage just as much as it is by the professional relationship with the client.

In chapter six I drew specifically on Foucault's principle of commentary to emphasise the effect of this discursive reciprocity. Whilst a photographer's professional charge when filling a corporate client-brief is to photographically represent the client's point of distinction, what my research has shown is that, although conscious and purposeful, heightened, specific and commercial in nature, the photographers' discursive relationship remains one of conformity. This is the regularity that Foucault writes about when he describes the archive as the first law of what can be said (Foucault 1976). The photographers may produce photos that represent a corporate client's desired point of distinction, only so long as the photos remain recitals of or commentaries on the discourse with which the client seeks to engage (Foucault 1981).

When filling corporate client-briefs, the nature and extent of reciprocity between the photographers' professionalism and commerciality is such that, when considered without it, the relationship seems paradoxical, for it is a relationship between conformity and difference. With no room for different or new statements in the rarefied atmosphere of discursive formations, the nature and extent to which these

photographers position their clients cannot be described in terms of magnitude. The real trick, as Jeremy might put this, is to produce photos that enable their clients to conform in a different way: to make regular points of distinction.

The corporate images produced by Nicole for her construction company client are an apt example. Using her skills in her specific way clearly enables her client to publicise their unique selling point, to brand themselves, by demonstrating what they consider to be the best of their construction aesthetics through Nicole's, perhaps softer, photogenic sensibilities. At the same time, Nicole has managed the reciprocity between her commerciality and professionalism in that she has presented the interiors of those new buildings so that they stand out - but not too far. Her photos differentiate her client from other construction companies yet simultaneously represent and position that client's core business as construction.

The photographers' professional relationships with their Advertising clients exert significant influence over their commerciality. One reason is because Advertising work is often especially well paid. Another is because the briefs can be precise to the point that some form of layout – a graphic designer's illustrated impression of what the photographs should look like – may be incorporated. However, just as the diminished nature of the photographers' professional editorial relationship does not necessarily give that editorial client the upper hand, here the substantial remuneration and directed production does not necessarily reduce the photographer's role to that of an expensive technician. Photographic production continues to depend upon the photographers' understanding and interpretation of the client's discursive aims (Scarles 2004). One reason why Advertising photographers are remunerated well is because their interpersonal and production skills become integral to realising such specifically briefed photographic outcomes.

## **The Reciprocity is formative**

The reciprocity between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships is formative. Whilst their professional relationships with their clients determine their discursive awareness and expertise, the net specificity of each

photographer's discursive awareness and expertise determines the make-up of that photographer's client-base. The determining effect of this is felt more by some photographers than others. It is what Dylan refers to as becoming pigeon holed – or labelled. NoCole puts a less pejorative spin on the same thing when she says: 'You become known a little bit for some things'. When seen from Vijay Bhatia's (Bhatia 2004) theoretical perspective, it is the net effect of this form of reciprocity that results in one becoming an established member of a particular profession: an expert. It is important to emphasize the materiality of this reciprocal determination. It can be a very real and material subjugation, for eventually the prevailing circumstances are such that photographers can become less able to work in ways other than those demanded by their clients.

Nonetheless, the photographers' do manage to curb the determining effect of their professional commercial reciprocity in various ways. As shown in chapter seven, their considered and measured, whilst also circumspect or ambiguous, expression of themselves is one core technology by which they control other peoples' knowledge about them. Tom's decision to relinquish an ongoing paying client-brief is an example of the considered and measured behaviour of an individual ensuring that he will not be adversely affected by the reciprocating evolution of his professional and commercial forces.

## **The Reciprocity is empowering**

One consequence of each photographer's professionally driven discursive awareness is they become more adept with the rules of production for the statements that make up the archives of those discourses with which their clients seek to engage. This is one reason why they become pigeonholed or regarded as experts. Their familiarity with the rules of production of statements that comprise the archives of those discourses with which their clients seek to engage is their stock in trade. In chapter six I showed how Ben achieved the positioning of his architectural photographs, and therefore his friend/client, by the simple strategy of using his familiarity with the archive so as to conform to what was being said in this style of

magazine.

This empowerment, including the photographers' awareness of it, is manifest in their production methods. In chapter four I outlined the photographers' use of Polaroid or digital images for ongoing reference during a shoot, their making of multiple exposures in order to achieve one photo and their use of an extended timeframe for production. Whilst these are readily recognised techniques for the production of photos, what this research has shown is that even these most fundamental methods are a product of professional commercial reciprocity: a means by which the photographers manage their professional and commercial relationships and the reciprocal effect of each on the other.

Globalisation has affected these photographers working in Perth, Western Australia. One significant effect has been an ever-decreasing pool of large commercial accounts on which they can work. As the larger accounts, once held by some of the photographers, centralise to other parts of the globe, those photographers find themselves doing more jobs of less magnitude and more variety. The reciprocity is such that this may also be seen as a source of agency for the photographers. As their client base became more dispersed and multifarious, so did the extent of their archival awareness.

The digital communication revolution has also affected the photographers. Whilst their professional relationships typically remain in Perth, the most isolated capital city in the world, their commercial relationships have become global. Their professional commercial reciprocity is such that they have become increasingly globally aware whilst remaining sensitive to the local economic and social environment of their clients.

Jeremy's work with the professional couple is an example of the agency afforded by this breadth of discursive awareness combined with local sensitivity. It was not as a wedding photographer that Jeremy was able to fill that client-brief, it was as a professional photographer with global commercial influences. It was Jeremy's broad commercial knowledge, also gained through servicing multiple different clients with different needs, used in conjunction with his specific discursive familiarity, that enabled him to recognise precisely what his client, the couple, were trying to

achieve. It was as a commercial photographer that Jeremy knew that it was '... quite an elaborate thing - they wanted - this idea that they [the faux candid portraits] are just snaps'. It was as a commercial photographer that the couple briefed Jeremy: in a way that the couple had been unable to brief their wedding photographer

The reciprocity between the photographers' professional and commercial relationships is also empowering in that it has an enabling effect. Where their professional relationships *cause* their discursive relationships to be commercial in nature, the commerciality of their discursive relationships *allows*, or enables, them to produce photos that otherwise they may not. The purpose of the discursive relationship is professional but the nature of the discursive relationship is commercial. This was Ben's point when he said:

I'm trying to earn a quid out of it – photography - and in many respects a lot of these pictures aren't pictures that I would choose to take if I worked in an unrelated industry and photography was my hobby.

## **The photographer self and the client self**

Having located the photographers and their clients within discursive formations so as to identify and analyse the ways in which power is brought to bear on and by the photographers, particularly the power dynamic of their professional relationships, it became necessary to distinguish between the photographer self and the client self. In using Foucault's notion of the care of the self to describe the photographers as empowered subjects, it became necessary to use the same principle to examine ways in which their clients are empowered subjects.

This distinction is significant for several reasons. It has enabled me locate Foucault's conception of the will to truth/power with the client, rather than with the photographer. This, in turn, allowed me to describe the photographers as a core technology of the client self.

The distinction is also significant in terms of Foucault's ethics. Having made the distinction, the ethics of the client self is particularly apparent in the Jeremy's work with the professional wedding couple. Foucault's notion of ethics concerns the kind of relation one has to oneself, and the intentional work of an individual upon itself, in order to meet a set of moral self-recommendations (Foucault 1990). The couple's brief to Jeremy may be seen as their will to truth: the work they were prepared to put towards meeting their moral self-recommendation. Jeremy, along with the photographic means of representation, was their technology.

In terms of reciprocity, the distinction between an ethics of the photographer self and the client self becomes particularly significant. In chapter seven I noted that each photographer exhibited a degree of concern for the truthfulness of his or her images and also that photographers with greater concern practiced with a relatively concrete sense of reality whilst those with less concern practiced with a more contingent one. In chapter eight I showed that photos produced by the photographers to submit for award or by invitation possessed a different aesthetic than their usual work and that the photographers behaved differently whilst producing them. Their sense of reality softened, concern for the truth diminished. And they left conspicuous traces of themselves in the images.

When considered together, the key finding from these two chapters was that it was not the absence of the client, *per se*, that lead to the photographers embellishing their images and behaving conspicuously. Rather, it is the absence of reciprocating pressure between a photographer's professional relationship and his or her commercial relationship. Marking the distinction between the photographer and client self, the photographers' concern for the truth increased and their sense of reality became more concrete when working for clients because those truths and realities are the client's preferred truths and contingent realities. It is these truths and realities about which the photographers are briefed.

This is significant because it shows that any correlation between a photographer's concern for the truth and related sense of reality is a correlation between that photographer's perception of his or her client's truthfulness and sense of reality. It is actually the perceived truthfulness of a client's will to power that concerns some

photographers, like Nicole, more than others, for it is the client's set of moral self-recommendations that comprise the brief to the photographer. Just as the care of the photographer self is a product of the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity, even a photographer's confession is a product of that same reciprocity. Having discerned between the photographer and client self, we can see that each photographer's relationship with the self is not about the meeting, or not, of one's own moral recommendations, but of the intentional work put towards realising their client's set of moral recommendations. For this reason, the photographers' professional commercial reciprocity may be described as the relationship between a photographer's knowledge and the client's will to power.

Whilst not the aim of this thesis, what the research and analysis has shown is that the quintessentially discursive notions of truth and reality, which in Foucault's earlier texts are inescapable and in his later ones, perhaps contestable, are for these photographers no more than functional or instrumental elements of their professional practice. Whilst any reciprocating professional pressure is such that a photographer's obligation for heightened client-specific discursive awareness is instant, the fact is that the client's discursive concerns do not become the photographer's. The significance of this in the specific terms of this thesis is that the pressure felt by the photographers is professional and it is not discursive.

Having used Foucault's discursive principles to describe the photographers' professionalism and commerciality in terms of relationships, it is interesting that those same discursive principles show how the absence of discursive pressure within those relationships is, in fact, the only way that it can be. When describing the archive as the first law of what can be said, Foucault emphasises, amongst other things, that truth and reality are just rules; whilst one can be in the true, there is no single truth; whilst there are current realities, these are all contingent. I reiterate these fundamental discursive principles here to demonstrate that, for these photographers, concern for truth and reality cannot be brought to bear through discursive pressure because a discursive formation *per se* can exert no pressure. There is nothing concrete against or from which pressure can be build. One cannot

feel the surface of a discursive formation because it is made entirely of statements. One cannot be inside a formation because there is nothing to be within. There is nothing to diminish or to be diminished by. There is nothing to cause concern.

As such, without seeking to devalue in any way the discursive framework that I have relied on through out this thesis, a potential future research question might be: can discursive pressure exist without the impetus of a non-discursive force?

## Epilogue

*There are times when a shoot only finishes because complete fatigue has set in. I was working with Tom for Perth Bridal Magazine, and it was the end of the second of three 12-hour days. The model was about to go for another change when Tom said to the client, who was standing next to him, some thing along the line of, 'No, that's probably a good point to leave it for today'. We had done eight different wedding dresses that day and model was starting to look like she wanted to be somewhere else: not a good look for a bridal magazine. The location was in Fremantle, so Tom and I drove down to the café strip for a meal. I dragged the most expensive of his gear with us to a table and we sat. We ate pasta, drank house wine and barely said a word for two hours. We were spent.*

## Bibliography

- (2007) *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary*. B. Moore. Melbourne, Oxford University Press.
- (2012) *Australian Bureau of Statistics*. Regional Population Growth, Australia.
- (2016) *Federal Register of Legislation*. Copyright Act 1968, Australia.
- Adams, A. (1997). *The Camera*. Boston, New York, Toronto, London. Little, Brown and Company.
- Aggarwal, R. (2000). "Point of departure: Feminist locations and the politics of travel in India." *Feminist Studies* 26(3): 535-562.
- Alsop, C. (2002). "Home and Away: Self-Reflexive Auto-/Ethnography." *Qualitative Social Research* 3(3): 126-139.
- Amit, V. Ed. (2000). *Constructing the Field. Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London, Routledge.
- Barthes, R. (1961). *The Photographic Message*.
- (1973). *Mythologies*. London, Granada
- (1977). *Image Music Text*. London, Fontana Press.
- (1983). *The Fashion System*. New York, Hill and Wang.
- (1993). *Camera Lucida*. London, Jonathan Cape.
- Baudrillard, J. (2006). *The Evil Demon of Images*. Sydney, The Power Institute of Fine Arts.
- Bentham, J. (1787). *Panopticon Or the Inspection House*. Dublin.
- Berger, J. (1980). *About looking*. New York, Pantheon Books.
- Berger, J. and J. Mohr (1989). *Another way of telling*. Cambridge, Granta Books.
- Bhatia, V. (2004). *Worlds of Written Discourse: A Genre-Based View*. GBR, Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Billig, M. (1999). "Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis: an exchange between Michael Billig and Emanuel A. Schegloff." *Discourse & Society*

10(4): 543-582.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The Forms of Capital*. Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education. J. Richardson. New York, Greenwood: 241-258.

Ceglowski, J. (2000). Has Globalisation Created a Borderless World? *Globalisation and the Challengers of a New Century - A reader*. O'Meara, Mehlinger and Krain. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 101-111.

Chandler, D. (2005). "Semiotics for Beginners." 2012, from - <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>.

Cheater, A. P. (1987). The Anthropologist as Citizen. *Anthropology at Home*. A. Jackson. London, Tavistock Publications: 164-179.

Clarke, M. (2007). *Verbalising the Visual: Translating art and design into words*. Lausanne, AVA Publishing SA.

Clements, K. (2013). The truth about size zero. *The Guardian*, Australia Edition

Corbin, J. and A. Strauss (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, Calif., Sage Publications.

Coulthard, M. (2014). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. New York, Routledge.

Cousins, M. and A. Hussain (1984). *Michel Foucault*. New York, St Martins Press.

Danaher, G., et al. (2000). *Understanding Foucault*. Sydney, Allen & Unwin.

Derrida, J. (1978). *Writing and difference / Jacques Derrida*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

----- (1988). *Limited Inc / Jacques Derrida*. Evanston, IL, Northwestern University Press.

Dubus, A. (2008). *The Garden of Last Days*. Boston, MA, WW Norton.

Dumas, A. (1906). *The Three Musketeers*. London, Dent.

Eco, U. (1983). *The Name of the Rose*. Orlando, Harcourt Brace and Co.

Evetts, J. (2009). The Management of Professionalism: a contemporary paradox. *Changing Teacher Professionalism: International Trends, Challenges and Ways Forward*. S. G. e. al. New York, Routledge: 19-30.

Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power*. 2nd ed. Harlow, Pearson Education.

- (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. London & New York, Longman.
- Finnegan, C. A. (2001). "The Naturalistic Enthymeme and visual argument: photographic representation in the "Skull Controversy"." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 37(3): 133-149.
- Foucault, M. (1976). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York, Harper Colophon Books.
- (1976). The Discourse on Language. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York, Harper Colophon Books: 215-237.
- (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York, Pantheon.
- (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. New York, Random House.
- (1981). The Order of Discourse. *Untying the Text*. R. Young. Boston, Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd: 48-78.
- (1988). *The Care of the Self*. New York, Random House.
- (1990). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. New York, Vintage Books. Random House.
- (1990). *The History of Sexuality: The Use of Pleasure*. New York, Vintage Books. Random House.
- (1990). *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984*. New York, Routledge.
- (2007). *Space, Knowledge and Power*.
- Freidson, E. (2013). *Professionalism: The Third Logic*. Cambridge, Polity.
- Freund, G. (1980). *Photography & Society*. Boston, David R Godine.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays / by Clifford Geertz*. New York, Basic Books.
- Gille, Z. (2001). "Critical Ethnography in the Time of Globalisation: Toward a New Concept of Cite." *Critical methodologies* 1(3): 319-334.
- Gille, Z. and S. O'Riain (2002). "Global Ethnography." *Annual Review of Sociology*

28: 271-295.

Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Mill Valley CA, The Sociology Press.

----- (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: emergence vs forcing*. Mill Valley, Sociology Press.

Glaser, B & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Aldine Publishing, Chicago.

Gregory, J. (2013). Exports. D. o. M. a. Petroleum, Government of Western Australia.

Haig, E. (2004). "Some Observations on the Critique of Critical Discourse Analysis." *Studies in language and culture*. Nagoya University, Nagoya.

Hamilton, P. (1997). Representing the social: France and Frenchness In Post-War Humanist Photography. *Representation: cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Milton Keynes, The Open University: 75-152.

Hammersley, M. (1997). "On the foundations of critical discourse analysis." *Language & Communication* 17(3): 237–248.

Heidegger, M. (1981). *Neitsche: The Will to Power as Art*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Hirsch, M. (2002). "Feminism and cultural memory: an introduction." *Signs* 28(Autumn): 1-21.

Hoare, K. J., et al. (2012). "Dancing with data: An example of acquiring theoretical sensitivity in a grounded theory study." *International Journal of Nursing Practice* 18: 240–245.

Hook, D. (2001). "The Disorders of Discourse (misuse of discourse analysis as proposed by Michel Foucault)." *Theoria* (June): 41-70.

Jasinski, J. (1995). Aristotle's Rhetoric: An Art of Character. *Argumentation and Advocacy*. 32(1) 50.

Kalocsai, C. (2000). The Multi-sited Imaginary: Notes on Transnationalism and the Ethnographic Practice. Comparative Research Workshop: (workshop).

Kondo, D. K. (1990). *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace*. Chicargo, The University of Chicago Press.

Koopman, C. (2011). "Foucault across the disciplines: introductory notes on

- contingency in critical inquiry." *History of the Human Sciences* 24(4): 1-12.
- Kress, G. (1993). *Communication and Culture: An Introduction*. Kensington N.S.W., New South Wales University Press.
- Lechtman, H. (2006). Style in Technology: Some Early Thoughts. *The Anthropology of Art: a reader*. H. Morphy and M. Perkins. Carlton, Blackwell Publishing: 270-280.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1968). Structural Analysis in Linguistics in Anthropology. *Structural Anthropology*. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press.
- (1973). *Tristes tropiques*. London, Cape.
- MacGregor, A. (2002). David LaChapelle: Portrait of a Photographer. *Sunday Afternoon*. ABC TV. October 20.
- Malinowski, B. (1922). *Argonauts of the western Pacific : an account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Marcus, G. (1995). "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-118.
- McHoul, A. and W. Grace (2015). *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*. New York, Routledge.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York, McGraw Hill.
- Monahan, T. and J. A. Fisher (2010). "Benefits of 'observer effects': lessons from the field." *Qualitative Research* 10(3): 357-376.
- Moore, G. (2013). "Intel." Retrieved 10:01:2013, <http://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/silicon-innovations/moores-law-technology.html>.
- Moore, P. (2013). On The Tools. *Ethnographic Research in the Construction Industry*. D. T. Sarah Pink, Andrew Dainty. Oxon and New York, Routledge 58-72.
- Moretti, C. (2011). "The Wandering Ethnographer: Researching and Representing the City through Everyday Encounters." *Anthropologica* 53(2): 245-255.
- Morten, J. (1999). "Anthropology at home in Australia." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 10(3): 243-258.

- Navab, D. (2001). "Re-picturing photography: A language in the making." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 35(1): 69 - 85.
- Noth, W. (1995). *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington and Indianapolis., Indiana University Press.
- Orr, J. (1996). *Talking about machines: an ethnography of a modern job*. New York, ILR Press / Cornell University Press.
- Orwell, G. (1933). *Down and Out in Paris and London*. London, Victor Gollancz Ltd.
- Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics*. New York Routledge.
- Passaro, J. (1997). You Can't Take the Subway to the Field: Village epistemologies in the Global Village. *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*. A. G. a. J. Ferguson. Berkely, University of California Press: 147-162.
- Pearson, R. (2015) Banning size zero models from the catwalk won't stop eating disorders. *The Telegraph*. November 30.
- Pink, S. (2000). Informants who come home. *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. V. Amit. London, Routledge: 96-119.
- Pirsig, R. M. (1989). *Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance*. London, Random House.
- Potter, J., et al. (1993). "A model of discourse in action." *Behavioral Scientist*, 36 (3), pp. . 36(3): 383 - 401.
- Ryle, G. (2009). *The Concept of Mind*. Abingdon, Oxon, Routledge.
- Sachs, J. (2000). International Economics - Unlocking The Mysteries Of Globalisation. *Globalisation and the Challengers of a New Century. A Reader*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 217 - 226.
- Saussure, F. D. (1983). *Course in General Linguistics*, Open Court Publishing.
- Scarles, C. (2004). "Mediating landscapes: The processes and practices of image construction in tourist brochures of Scotland." *Tourist Studies* 4(1): 43-67.
- Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action* New York, Basic Books.
- (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Fransisco, Jossey-Bass Inc.

- Slaughter, A-M. (2000). The Real New World Order. *Globalisation and the Challengers of a New Century. A reader*. M. and K. O'Meara. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 112-122.
- Sontag, S. (1977). *On Photography*. New York, Dell.
- Stacey, J. (1999). "Ethnography Confronts the Global Village: A New Home for a New Century?" *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 28(6): 687–697.
- Stewart, K. (2011). "Atmospheric attunements." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29 (3): 445–453.
- Stoddart, K. (1986). "The Presentation of Everyday Life. Some Textual Strategies for "Adequate Ethnography". *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 15(1): 103-121.
- Stringer, L. (1998). *Grand Central Winter: Stories from the Street*. New York, London, Toronto, Seven Stories Press.
- Sullivan, S. (1986). Master of the signs. *Newsweek*. December 22.
- Tedlock, B. (1991). "From Participant Observation To The Observation Of Participation: The Emergence Of Narrative Ethnography." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 47: 69-94.
- Thwaites, T. et al. (1994). *Tools for Cultural Studies: an Introduction*. Melbourne, Macmillan.
- Wacquant, L. (2004). *Body & Soul: notebooks of an apprentice boxer*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Waterman, L. (2002). *The studio at Reading opened by Talbot after he had patented his Calotype process*. The Legacy Preservation Library, From the collection of the Fox Talbot Historical Experimental Apparatus in the Museum of the Royal Photographic Society, London.
- Webster, F. (1980). *The New Photography*. London, John Calder.
- Wren, C. S. (1997). Clinton Calls Fashion Ads' 'Heroin Chic' Deplorable. *New York Times*: A22. May 22.
- Yellowlees, A. (2010). Is our obsession with size zero damaging health? *BBC News*. February 17.

