

Introduction

Nearly four years ago I set up an organisational development and participative research company, Mindful Practice. Much of the work I undertake now draws on the experiential knowledge and lived values of practice built up in a long career in children's services as a social worker and manager, and then as a social work academic. I am frequently called upon to design projects which improve practice or service delivery in one form or another. This thesis is an account of the development and application of my knowledge and practice in this field; it also addresses issues within my own childhood and the influence of World War II on me as a child growing up and as an adult now.

Personal and professional learning are intertwined; the shape of the thesis takes the form of cycles of action and reflection within and between chapters, which alternate between and draw out the learning across these two interwoven strands. This alternative approach to thesis structure is congruent with the way my living theory of inquiry evolved (Fisher and Phelps, 2006): from experience, to representations of that experience as forms of intuitive reasoning and loose thinking; to propositional knowledge in the form of theory and research as forms of analytic reasoning and strict thinking (Munro, 1999, 2002; Bateson, 1972). I describe and explain my own educational development and my living theory of responsibility [response-ability] (Levinas, 1969, 1989; Whitehead, 1989; Moran, 2000; Oliver, 2001; Biesta, 2006; McNiff, 2007).

The research seeks to balance first, second and third person inquiry (Reason and Torbert, 2001), which reflects an enduring interest in responding to the narratives of others; checking out my understanding and interpretations with them through dialogue; and disseminating them in a form that both respects their narratives and promotes others' engagement. I see stories as precious gifts. When a person has agreed to participate and share something very important about their life with me then I, as a fellow human being, have a responsibility to share it with others in a form that does justice to the original narrative in my interpretation of that narrative. I explore, through a storied web, the essence of inquiry with people who, for various reasons, have difficulty in expressing their experiences and being understood. When the Object becomes Subject, responsibility [response-ability] towards the 'Other'; and the ethical obligations implied in that relationship are all considered (Levinas, 1991; Oliver, 2001): compassion for and being able to respond to each other is the healthy state of being human. The research draws on this value base, and also considers compassion for and care of self (Foucault, 1986).

At times it has been challenging to strike the right balance between my identity as the child of a former prisoner of war, growing up with my father's narratives of suffering and making sense of them as an adult; and my professional identity as a children and families' social worker and participative researcher listening to intimate and sometimes harrowing accounts of people's lives. In both instances, I have felt the weight of responsibility in how the narrative accounts, and the learning derived from them, are represented within the public domain. This touches on the profound sense of privilege and responsibility which I grew up with as a child; which I felt as a social worker working in some of the most deprived areas of the Midlands; and which is always there with me in the work I do now.

Through the narratives, I clarify the meanings of the relational dynamic values as they emerge in my inquiry, and form them into the standards of judgment that constitute my

accounting for myself and to others, which includes my responsibility [response-ability] towards the other. It is the narrative inquiries that show the dynamic relationships between my ontology, my epistemology and my methodology and their contribution to the original expression of a responsibility [response-ability] towards the other in what I am referring to as the inter-human. The meaning within a narrative or narratives constitutes a lesson in living, where openings to others are created through suffering. In the last part of the thesis I address what can be learnt from the narratives, and how to act in the world.

Rather than learning being about acquisition, learning here is about *response* (Biesta, 2006). Conceived this way, learning focuses on our personhood and coming into a world of difference and plurality as unique beings, where all the time we question our responsibility for and towards others: where we find our own voice and presence in that accountability and act in a worldly space. The account that follows is a narrative inquiry of challenges and responsibility, of profound encounters in the worldly space of otherness.

Scoping the terrain: the experiences and stories that the set the scene

First there is the childhood that shaped me. At the time growing up in a home which was in effect a memorial to my father's fallen comrades in World War II did not seem at all strange. I grew up with a sense that 'doing death well' was important: something which is denied soldiers with the imperative to move forward rapidly under attack; it was also denied people in concentration camps, who worked as slave labourers and were effectively being starved to death or, in some instances, shot because the person holding the gun felt like it. These penetrating accounts formed the substance of my father's war stories, which were balanced by some very entertaining narratives of the ridiculousness of army life. However the effects of living with a person with some symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder were always there in the background: irrational outbursts over what seemed to be trivia to other members of the family, such as the tiniest scrap of food left on the dinner plate. This led to a degree of vigilance on my part as I scanned for changes in his mood, and adapted my behaviour accordingly. Perhaps it was this attention to the non verbal in my own childhood home, which eventually became a distinct advantage in my professional career as I scanned for the non-verbal in other children's homes.

Turning to my career in children and families work, many children and young people and their families have had an impact on me. However, when I am asked to identify the nodal points in my career that have changed my thinking and practice, times when I have experienced a breakthrough in communication or felt intensely uncomfortable and perhaps even fearful, this reduces the number to perhaps five or so. Some of these experiences influenced my writing on competence, reflective practice and power relationships in the 1990s, and others have waited for this opportunity to be written up and reflected upon. Three children's lives had a profound effect on my professional development and their stories are given more attention within the thesis.

Third, there is the experience of being in Russia, working on an evaluation project at a children's therapeutic community 200 km south east of Moscow. Many of the children were there because they had been orphaned, most often through parental death from drug or alcohol abuse, or their parent(s) were addicted to drugs or alcohol and they had compulsorily been removed. Physically this was one of the toughest places to be, and one

where my value base received a challenge which altered how I judged the behaviour of and inquired with others who have faced extreme hardship. At the same time this was one of the most beautiful, wild places I have ever been; the abundance of nature in the form of wild berries, flowers and miles and miles of birch forest punctuated by heathland and lakes, called 'ponds' by the Russians to reflect the difference in their reading of the scale of terrain before us. The landscape had an intense, healing-like effect on me, and yet it hid unimaginable suffering in the verdant mounds of earth, now moulded into the landscape and softened over time, but which signified old trenches and shell holes. During World War II some of the bitterest fighting on Russian soil took place here as the Germans repeatedly advanced and then retreated between the summers and winters of 1941 and 1944. It was in this part of Russia that "the Germans stood the longest", as one person there said of that time.

The children's community in Russia is the place where the two strands in this thesis meet: the impact of World War II on my life and a deepening interest in understanding my father's wartime experiences after his death in 1999; and my professional career as a practitioner, manager, academic and consultant in children and families work. The link is through the way in which we open up the space to relate to 'the Other' as Subject rather than an object of concern, and how we then interpret and respond to the stories people tell us. In this case children who have been abused have narratives that are very difficult to tell and for us to hear and understand as many abuse survivors have testified. Men who have been in combat situations, perhaps wounded and then taken prisoner like my father, experience similar difficulties because we, who have not been there, cannot comprehend what it is like: we are often quick to judge and ask the wrong questions like "Why didn't you escape"? For the ordinary serviceman who was taken prisoner, this was rarely a possibility: the prolonged effects of hard labour and malnourishment affected mind, body and spirit.

Six months later in January 2002, I joined the CARPP programme at Bath and, as part of the first day, I was asked to put together a visual representation of my potential inquiry. I chose to make a collage (see Figure One, p.10). The process of setting down my knowledge in this visual way really tested me: I was aware of deliberate procrastination which normally signifies some sort of fear. My daughters supported me by going through old magazines looking for suitable images and cutting them out. Then when it came to designing the collage, my brain felt exhausted like never before: I realised that it was normally the left, verbal, rational, side of my brain that was dominant and that now the right, non-verbal, intuitive side of my brain was being engaged as I grappled with representing my inquiry as presentational form (Heron, 1992; Reason, 1994; Heron and Reason, 2001; Edwards, 2001). Much of my life had been influenced by World War II, signified by the War Memorial in the middle of a copse of silver birch trees in Russia and the words 'Of love and loss'. There was a tacit, troubling awareness, as I glued those words onto the collage. Did I dare to delve beneath those four words?



Figure One

Through the action/ reflection cycles presented in the chapters that follow, I refer to different parts of the collage to track the links between the various parts of the whole and the deepening of my inquiry. Within the narrative form of the thesis I explain the educational influences in my learning. My story is my living educational theory in which I show the meanings of responsibility [response-ability] toward others; it also forms a healing quest narrative (Frank, 1995).

Abram (1996, p. ix) discusses the role of the senses in this interrelated world: 'Humans are tuned for relationship. The eyes the skin, the tongue, ears and nostrils – all are gates where our body receives the nourishment of otherness'. It was the sensory nature of the world we inhabit, represented in the top right of the collage (Figure One), which profoundly influenced my assessment of a child's home circumstances in a case where I was acting as his Guardian *ad Litem*¹: I began to question the current emphasis on 'evidence-based practice' which was largely based on propositional knowledge (Reason, 1994; Heron and Reason, 1997, 2001). Working with a severely neglected child who had lived in this home for over seven years, was one of the saddest and richest learning experiences in my professional career as a social work practitioner. In Chapter Four I use presentational form to deepen the learning from a visit to his home, where I describe my sensual response to the environment in which he grew up.

It was this thinking about assessment, derived primarily from my experiential knowledge and applying it in teaching sessions, which informed an action research project proposal at the end of 2002 to improve the quality of family placement assessments. This was based on my enduring interest in how workers formulate hypotheses in assessment, using both head and heart, which is represented in the top left hand corner of the collage (Figure One). During this study I worked with a group of social workers looking at how they could improve their assessments of potential foster carers and adopters. I also wanted to find out how they 'managed' emotions in their work, for example, when a placement breaks down. There is resonance here with the way practitioners are judged and blamed, particularly by the media, during and after a child death inquiry, such as that of Victoria Climbié (Lord Laming, 2003). In Chapter Four I include a paper I wrote on the Victoria Climbié Inquiry, which describes the highly charged landscape of child welfare and the issues I believe are central, one of which is responsibility.

The emotional terrain of child protection is represented in the bottom left of the collage (Figure One). Victoria's picture has a veil over it to represent the tendency of unsupported practitioners to separate themselves emotionally from an abused child and objectify him/her, thus keeping the child and her/his suffering at a safe distance (Ferguson, 2004, 2005). A similar process was in evidence in the family placement assessment study: the adopters discussed how 'looked after' children [children in the care of the local authority] were talked about by social workers as if they were "second hand cars", not people: children and young people viewed as objects at a safe distance as opposed to subjects.

It was the family placement assessment study which was the catalyst for the extended first person inquiry into my father's war time experiences when I posed to myself the same question that social workers asked potential adopters and foster carers: Why do you think your parent behaved the way s/he did? Also as I have mentioned previously, there was a parallel with the way children and former prisoners of war, as people who have had

¹ An independent social worker appointed by the Court in care and related proceedings.

traumatic experiences, can be objectified. I wanted to understand more about the experiences of combat and the transition into becoming and being a prisoner of war.

A poignant journey 'Of love and loss', the words by the memorial on the collage, commenced when I conducted my father's funeral in 1999; and deepened in 2005, when I started to relate to his war diaries and other memorabilia and reflected on my evolving understanding of the impact of World War II on both him and me. It is the process of this first person inquiry which is described in Chapters Two and Five: what I did, how I did it, how I felt about what I found out, and how I interpreted it are all considered.

The inquiry with ex Prisoners of War, described in Chapter Six, occurred over a two year period between 2005 and 2007, and involved group conversations at their annual reunion on the south coast of England and at other venues chosen by the men on an individual or group basis. I also conversed through email and telephone (Skype and landline) with a former German soldier who was captured by the Russians in 1945 and subsequently escaped. Our conversations challenged my pre-existing frameworks of understanding: I began to realise that the particular historical and cultural context in which I had grown up was limiting my perception of his narrative. During this action reflection cycle, understanding of my living theory (Whitehead, 1989; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; McNiff, 2007) deepened as I engaged with and responded to the different narratives. I learnt more about how I built respect and trust; and how I responded to the different narratives and to myself: the ethical imperative of being and acting in the world.

As part of the inquiry into my father's prisoner of war diary and his stories, I engaged with the landscape of war and visited the war tunnels in Jersey, built by slave labour, and British, German and Russian war cemeteries and sites of former prisoner of war camps in Germany. These were photographed and the visual representations are also included in Chapter Six to acknowledge my relationship with those places and the people who lived and died there; this engagement with place and the way nature is beginning to heal the scars on the landscape had a profound influence on me.

The last part of the thesis refocuses on my professional career in children and families work, and a participative evaluation of integrated working where I interviewed parents and children/young people individually and the practitioners working with them in focus groups about how the model was working from their point of view. In the design, conduct, and dissemination of this project, I was strongly influenced by the inquiry with ex Prisoners of War and the work of Thomas Schwandt (2002) on evaluation practice, which sees evaluation as an educational experience: an understanding of self in action (Habermas, 1988) , where the *Being* of the evaluator is central.

Referring to the design, management and findings of the study, and a reflective supplementary report on the evaluation, written in the first person, I discuss the influence on me of some of the interviews, how I responded to participants' narratives, and how I took care of myself. I develop my living theory of responsibility [response-ability], extending notions of responsibility and response-ability as they relate to narratives of suffering (Levinas, 1988, 1989, 1991; Frank, 1995; Oliver, 2001; Biesta, 2006) to one which encompasses practical, trust-building, appreciative, and participant-affirming responses. I consider in more detail theoretical influences on my living educational theory where I articulate my meaning of responsibility [response-ability] *towards* the Other as distinct from Levinas' insight of responsibility *for* the Other (Levinas, 1989; Biesta, 2006). I link my living theory to wider debates on dehumanization in public services, and to

children and families work, in particular. Finally, I share the healing aspects of the research process through presentational form.

Crafting the research account

When crafting an account of a research process, it is difficult to know quite where to begin and how to frame the journey. A form is needed that will allow readers to feel the moral dilemmas and join with the 'nodal moments' which define an ethnographic project (Graham, 1989; Ellis and Bochner, 2003). A 'neat' way of telling the story would have been chronologically starting with re-telling some childhood experiences and then steadily moving forward, but this does not feel right as it was only through later experiences in my life that I had the capacity to reflect on my childhood and adolescence and some of the people I met in a professional capacity.

I have therefore broken with the more usual form of a doctoral thesis, typically a five chapter model, comprising introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis and conclusions. Rather I have chosen to view the research process and writing as 'performing art' rather than 'recipe' as implied in the more traditional approach to writing a doctoral thesis: the literature which has informed the inquiries is placed temporally within the relevant action research cycles, in some instances supporting my actions and at other times challenging my perspectives and assumptions (Fisher and Phelps, 2006). In the earlier chapters as a general rule, I have tended to use references which influenced my thinking and professional practice at the time, rather than more recently published texts, which I have referred to in the last two chapters of the thesis as my practice, theoretical engagement, and reflective capacities developed during the research. In my view, this emergent approach within the research account promotes greater congruence between the epistemological, methodological and ethical aspects of action research.

Ethical responsibilities

As this is my narrative account, I take full responsibility for what I have chosen to put in the public domain about my life; and I indicate from time to time my rationale for what I include and what I exclude. My narrative also includes and refers to many others' accounts. After the circulation of earlier drafts, further correspondence and discussion by phone over the past few months, all the adult participants are content for their names to be in the public domain. Following the usual ethical conventions, all the children I met in a professional or research capacity are referred to by pseudonyms.

At this point it may be appropriate to caution the reader as part of my responsibility towards you: at times this may not be an easy read, but it is hard for me to judge which aspects of the inquiry might challenge or even disturb you. Note your responses, perhaps jot down what resonates, what troubles, and take time out when you feel the need. The choice is yours. At the same time, I aspire to engage you in an interesting read where I articulate and inquire into significant moments in my life and the lives of others.

As part of the thesis, I have included some self care resources on the accompanying CD to support engagement with the narrative, and for those times when you might feel the need to take a break and switch off. They are offered on an entirely optional basis - to be ignored, explored, and if thought helpful, used.

A preliminary introduction to key ideas used in the thesis

One challenge posed by seeing the research process and writing as 'performing art' rather than 'recipe' is that meanings emerge and change through experience and the narratives which represent that experience. In order to help signpost the reader, I refer here to some of the key ideas within the research account, which are elaborated upon towards the end of the thesis when their significance becomes apparent through the process of narrative inquiry.

Action research and living theory

In action research the focus shifts from the more conventional spectator approach of the social sciences, where theory is generated through observation and descriptions of other people's actions, to one where the researcher or practitioner generates new knowledge and/or theorises about her own learning, which is derived from experience and cycles of action/reflection (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). This approach uses an inductive approach to theory building; and draws on an extended epistemology where all people have the capacity to create their own knowledge or 'living theory' in different ways from a range of experiences and different ways of knowing.

As a practitioner researcher I am influencing and influenced by the knowledge creation, often in narrative form, of all those in dialogue with me. In this thesis the notions of response, responsiveness and responsibility are explored and developed into a living theory of response-ability, with an emphasis on the dynamic, action-oriented and practical nature of response. This is combined with a philosophical discussion on narratives which derive from episodes of chaos, loss and suffering and what can be learnt from them at a deeper level (Frank, 1995; Levinas, 1991; Oliver, 2001).

Relationship of 'disciplined narrative inquiry' to action research and living theory

I have arrived at a notion of research as disciplined narrative inquiry (McNiff, 2007), which you, the reader, engage with as I weave together my narrative with the narratives of others. As my own narrative of learning develops, it is challenged and influenced by the narratives of others, in this instance the hidden or silent voices of people who have difficult stories to tell - children who have been abused and neglected, and men, like my father, who became prisoners of war. Iterative learning takes place over time and within the narrative accounts: in this approach action, reflection and learning can occur more or less simultaneously or it may develop subtly over several months or even years. The thesis focuses on the transformational nature of stories, in which, over time, I think *with* different stories and find them influencing the kind of person I wish to become. This is different to thinking *about* stories, which is to reduce a story to content followed by an analysis of that content (Frank, 1995).

The inquiry is also influenced by the interrogation and evolving interpretation of artefacts; movement between and within places e.g. visits to former prisoner of war camps and battlefields; and photography as a means of holding an experience and bringing the visual into narrative inquiry (Bach, 2007). As such the research moves around and situates itself temporally and spatially within the three dimensional inquiry space: inward and outward, balancing the personal and social; backward and forward attending to the past, present and future; and focusing on specific places and their significance (Clandinin and Connolly, 2000). This framework of inner and outer movement, place and time is used in Chapters

Five and Six to show the dynamic nature of evolving interpretations in my inquiry as the child of a war veteran and former prisoner of war.

Extended epistemology and methodology

I draw on the extended epistemology or multiple ways of knowing in action research referred to as experiential knowing, presentational knowing; propositional knowing; and practical knowing (Heron, 1996; Heron and Reason, 1997; Heron and Reason, 2001; Reason and Torbert, 2001): I have direct in depth encounters with persons, places or objects; I draw on different forms of artistic expression to represent this knowing in action; I use journal writing and photographic inquiry to re-story my relationship with place e.g. when visiting the war sites in Germany where photographic inquiry is used to hold experiences which signify the passing of time between 1944/5 and 2006; I work with concepts and ideas to theorise about my knowing; and I apply these different types of knowing as practical knowledge about the nature of responsibility which, informed by my values, guides how I act in the world.

My epistemology stems from a participatory world-view where the natural world is a dynamic presence which draws us into relation, thus influencing what can be known (Dewey, 1981; Abram, 1996; Reason, 1994; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Thayer-Bacon, 2003). A relational epistemology stands to be corrected because of the socially constructed nature of knowledge; a core belief being that we are all one with the universe. We live in a unified, connected world that is alive, dynamic and constantly changing where appearances are not permanent or separate from us: 'It is a complementary, complex world that we can only begin to understand if we approach our inquiring with compassion and humility, in cooperation with each other' (Thayer-Bacon, 2003, p.242). As I more fully embrace a participatory world-view and encounter otherness, I reflect on evolving interpretations using ideas from hermeneutics and phenomenology.

I use mind and body to support my engagement during various phases of the research. I identify ways of being; and use different patterns of thinking, as I seek to understand people, objects and the world around me. I use loose thinking and intuitive reasoning to speculate and imagine; strict thinking and analytic reasoning to evidence and ground. I also practice care of the self to promote engagement with otherness and critical reflection (Foucault, 1986).

The writing and selection of images for this thesis seek to make external what is internal: the ontological values I bring to my professional practice are clarified in the course of their emergence through narrative inquiry, and formed into living, relationally dynamic standards of judgement. The epistemological and methodological contribution of the thesis is to show the development of my living theory of inquiry in the hope that it might benefit others' responses, particularly in children and families work.

Outline of chapters

Chapter One describes the professional foundation of my practice. Drawing on the narrative accounts of three children who influenced my professional development in different ways and early published work, I discuss the nature of child abuse, power relationships and competence in this field.

Chapter Two sets out the early ethical and methodological considerations in this research account as I begin to consider the meaning of 'love and loss' within my personal life. The narrative account, which draws on correspondence and the speech I gave at my father's funeral, forms the beginning of a first person inquiry into my father's wartime experiences.

Chapter Three outlines my introduction to action research after a long period of being seeped in more traditional approaches to research. I draw on the participatory world-view and extended epistemology of action research; and show a deepening understanding of the complexity of child protection practice where workers' emotions and senses are more fully taken into consideration.

In Chapter Four I more consciously develop my living theory of responsibility, movement, engagement, withdrawal and self care. I address issues concerning 'distance' and 'relation' in social work assessments of children and families, and emphasise the importance of emotions in hypothesis formulation. I link feelings to responsibility, the imperative to act; and to a practice of self care. Finally as part of self care and self discovery, I acknowledge the need to address issues within my own childhood emanating from World War II.

Chapter Five marks a deepening in my first person inquiry practice where I open the World War II Pandora's Box 'Of love and loss' sitting beneath the Russian War Memorial on the collage (Figure One). I track the influence on me of my father's war narratives, my childhood home and his war memorabilia. I describe a deepening sensuous involvement with my immediate environment; craft imagining and grounding methods of inquiry; and track a process of self care. These methods form part of my living theory of inquiry.

Chapter Six describes an intense period of first and second person inquiry in which I immerse myself in dialogue with those who experienced World War II at first hand, and with the landscape of war now; I use photography, as visual narrative inquiry, to add another layer to narrative inquiry to show the process of my understanding and revisions to my interpretations; and I address the process of inquiry with people who have difficult stories to tell and for us to comprehend: narratives which emerge from episodes of chaos, interspersed with occasional glimpses of the inter-human. Through the narratives I clarify my meanings of suffering, chaos, loss and change; our inter-relatedness as human beings; and our responsibility towards each other. I show that learning can be at its most profound when seen as a response to what is different or other.

In Chapter Seven I apply the embodied learning from the narrative inquiry research account, outlined in earlier chapters, to the professional sphere and to children and families work in particular. Referring to the design, management and findings of an evaluation of service delivery to children and families, and to sections of a reflective supplementary report, I develop my living theory of responsibility [response-ability] in professional practice (Whitehead 1999, Whitehead and McNiff 2006; McNiff 2007). I show a practice characterised by responsiveness and response-ability *throughout* the 'Team around the Child' evaluation; and extend Levinas' notion of responsibility as it relates to stories of suffering to one which is far more extensive, encompassing practical, trust-building, appreciative and participant-affirming responses in daily practice.

Chapter Eight summarises how the ideas of others have influenced my living theory. I critique Levinas' notion of responsibility *for* the Other and his conception of 'facehood' (Levinas, 1969, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1991). I argue that the crucial issue is how the status of personhood or subjecthood is accorded; understanding of diversity and difference, of the Other as another person or *being* like me, only occurs through dialogue. I address issues that arise when our environment changes, that is, when and how we move in the world. I link my living theory to self/ employee care in human service organizations to slow down perception so that the Other might be seen and responded to, and to wider debates on dehumanization in public services; and I address implications for children and families work. Finally, I share the healing aspects of the research process through presentational form (Figure Two, p.272).

Text formats

This thesis includes various types of text, which are identified by different typefaces. Within the field texts a distinction is made between writings, such as stories, unpublished reports, narrative accounts and reflections; journal entries; verbatim accounts of dialogue; and quotes from published sources:

Writings use this font and are not indented.

Journal entries use this font and are in a text box

Verbatim accounts of dialogue use this font and are not indented

Quotes from published sources normally use this font and are indented.

On one occasion at the beginning of Chapter Four I include a short published article I wrote in 2003 as part of the thesis itself (Jones, 2003a): this uses the thesis font, Arial 11, and is not indented.

Photographs

I started to take photographs as part of this inquiry in 2006. As a general rule I have included most images to accompany text which relates to the time when I took the pictures. However in a few instances, I have made a judgment to include an image at an earlier point, for example, when I talk about the process of engaging with my father's war diaries in May 2005, so that you, the reader, might also benefit from the visual impact of the objects that are reflected upon in the accompanying journal entries and writings.

The photographic inquiry undertaken between June and September 2006 into Second World War sites in Germany and the Netherlands signified a new relation to the passing of time, and the landscape of my father's narratives. Physically re-treading that ground and taking photographs some 60 years later helped me form my own relationship with the landscape, and perhaps most importantly to generate a new narrative of reconciliation and right response from the people I met and the stories I heard along the way.

Finally, the selection of images for this thesis has been shaped by my values in much the same way as the editorial decisions about who and what is given voice.

