On Being an Academic – A Study of Lived Experience

Andrew David Leslie Scown

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April, 2003

Department of Learning and Educational Development,
Faculty of Education,
The University of Melbourne

Produced on acid-free paper
ABSTRACT

To be an academic and work in an Australian university at the beginning of the twenty-first century is to be caught in a web of change, contradiction and turmoil. Amidst this tumult, academics are experiencing increased pressure to maintain high levels of performance, and university life is expected to continue as normal. However, to describe what normal means for higher education today (indeed for any age) would be to answer a great vexed question. As Australia awaits the blueprint for reform of higher education that is to be released with the May 2003 budget there is much hope that things in the future will be different, that the pressures on the higher education system will lessen, and that academics will be able to focus on the core elements of being an academic. Regardless of the outcome of this or any reform there is inevitability that life for the academic will continue to follow paths that are coloured by traditional understandings of what constitutes the life and work of the academic. Admittedly, the time and place where academics live and enact their academic work will influence the lived experience of each academic thus rendering it extremely difficult if not impossible to offer a simple or unified description of what it is to experience life as an academic. However, understanding the meaning of such experiences is important to shaping the future directions in academic life. One vehicle to achieve this understanding is through researching lived experience.

This study seeks to uncover the points of unity that academics experience in their daily work, to identify the similarities and differences amongst academics as they face the challenge of working in a university at this period of time, and to provide academics with the voice to define and describe what rests at the core of their professional being. Ultimately, this study provides the opportunity for academics to comment on the uniqueness of their lived experience of academic life and to move towards defining the essential nature of being an academic.

This study is located in a large, established university in a metropolitan capital in Australia. Academics from varying disciplines and at different levels of academic appointment participated in the interviews for the study conducted in the closing
years of the twentieth century. Fifteen academics were interviewed on a bimestrial basis over a sustained period of time (over two years for most participants) and three academic managers from the university chancellery participated in a single interview. The focus of each of these interviews was to describe the lived experience of being an academic and to determine the meaning of what it is to be an academic in today's world. The theoretical framework for structuring this study is that of hermeneutic phenomenology and the guiding objectives for the study were to identify meaning in the lived experience of being an academic and to understand how being an academic is experienced today.

The study draws heavily on the existing knowledge of higher education and academic life. The literature review addresses the phenomena influencing higher education and examines the responses of higher education to accommodate such globalising trends. Policy decisions in Australia that have shaped higher education and influenced the direction of academic life and work are also explored in this review. Clear from this review is that the extant body of knowledge reports strongly and offers significant commentary on the influences shaping academic life. What is missing in this body of knowledge is clarification of the meaning of what it is to be an academic living and working in today's world. Accordingly, in identifying the essential elements of what is required for an academic to be an academic, this study attempts to bridge this gap in the literature by presenting and re-presenting that matter that constitutes the phenomenon of being an academic.

The analysis of data and findings of this research utilise strongly the voices of the participants in this study. The integrative themes of the Boyer scholarships (1990) have been employed to present the elements identified as essential to the phenomenon of being an academic. A phenomenological narrative is included to capture the lived experience of the participants in the study and to describe the phenomenon of being an academic. The study concludes with an overview of the significant outcomes of the study presented as challenges to the key stakeholders influencing academic life and also includes suggestions for further research.
DECLARATION

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD

(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text of all other material used

(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Andrew D. L. Scown
April, 2003
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to Dawn Gweneth Prowse - a true scholar, and heartfelt friend - who since 1973 has engaged me in conversations of life and learning. With profound gratitude for the gifts of insight and care that you bestow on me!

To research a phenomenon that you live daily is both a privilege and a challenge. To probe the depths of one’s being, to explore and to take ownership for the what, how, and why of what you do are confrontations to be faced honestly during such research. One result of this research is that my lifeworld is ever challenged yet my resolve to being an academic is strengthened. Important to me is to acknowledge the following friends for accompanying me on this journey. John Baird, my thesis supervisor, demonstrates true nurturing of students and discovery; John has confirmed unstintingly his support for this research and for me. Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope live daily the true meaning of academic life and share generously their experience, understanding, and support for me in many ways. The academics participating in this study willingly accepted me for repeated interviews and constant probing as to what constituted their academic life. My students around the world continue to challenge and affirm my decision to join the academy. Colleagues at The University of Melbourne - especially David Beckett, Sally Godinho, and Paul Molyneux – for sharing necessary words of support. Colleagues at RMIT University – particularly David Forrest, Stavroula Tsembas, Roberta Abell, and Peter Kell - who amidst the realities of daily crisis continue to offer me hope. Fr. Peter Cross, a genuine academic and true friend, has for many years inspired me through his faithful dedication; Peter’s caution against menopausal doctorates is one I both endorse and share freely. Family and friends continue to be present for me in many and varied ways; special thanks go to my parents - Madge and Norm Scown, and friends - Tony Dodd, Terry Laidler, Fiona Tonkin, Angela Kelly, George Robinson, Robyn Ruthven, Margaret and Noel Addicoat, Bernadette and Jim Shearer. To friends now departed, who shared lovingly with me many of the joys of living - especially Isabel and Jack Tonkin, Jo. Murphy, Merle Robinson, Valda Scown, and Michael Crotty. Finally to John Connors for his constant support, unerring insistence of the importance of completing something that has taken so much time, space and energy, and for carrying the brunt of this thesis. Sincere thanks to you all!
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABSTRACT**

**DECLARATION**

iv

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

v

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

vi

**CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

1. Setting the Scene

2

1.2 Framing the Question: Who is An Academic?

4

1.3 Approaching the Research

6

1.4 This Thesis – A Structural Overview

8

**CHAPTER 2: ON BEING AN ACADEMIC - THE VOICE OF LITERATURE**

2.1 Introduction

11

2.2 The Phenomena Impacting on Higher Education

14

2.2.1 Globalisation

15

2.2.2 Internationalisation of Higher Education

21

2.2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

29

2.2.4 Commodification and Marketisation of Higher Education

35

2.2.5 Massification of Higher Education

45

2.2.6 Corporatisation and Managerialism in Higher Education

51

2.3 The Context and Policy Framework of Higher Education of Australian Higher Education

57

2.3.1 Higher Education, a Policy Statement

59

2.3.2 The Higher Education Management Review

61

2.3.3 The Review of Higher Education Finance and Policy

63
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>The Lifeworld of Academics: Being an Academic in Today’s World</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1</td>
<td>General Overview of the Current Situation in Australian Universities</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2</td>
<td>Responding to Change in Higher Education – Strategy or Survival?</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3</td>
<td>The Work of Academics</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4</td>
<td>The Morale of Academics</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.5</td>
<td>The Identity of Academics</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.6</td>
<td>The Experiences of Academics</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Positioning this Study – Researching the Lived Experience of Being an Academic</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 3: RESEARCHING LIVED EXPERIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Researching Lived Experience - The Quest for Meaning</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Phenomenology – What Is It?</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td>Phenomenology – An Overview</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Historical Developments of Phenomenology</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3</td>
<td>Using Phenomenology as the Research Methodology For This Study</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4</td>
<td>Doing Phenomenological Research</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.5</td>
<td>Avoiding the Pitfalls – What Phenomenology Is Not!</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Researching the Lived Experience of ‘Being an Academic’</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>The Intent and Scope of this Study</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Defining the Research Framework of this Study – the phenomenological question(s)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3</td>
<td>The Phenomenological Interview - The Iterative Process of Researching Lived Experience in a Naturalistic Setting</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4</td>
<td>Delimiting this Study</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Phenomenological Research – A Process of Co-Research 109

3.5.1 Selecting the Co-Researchers 110

3.5.2 Research Protocols – Ethical Considerations 111

3.6 Analysing the Data – Thematic Analysis and Variation 113

3.7 Confirming the Analysis – Issues of Rigour and Validity 115

3.8 Phenomenological Writing – A Process of Writing and Re-Writing 118

CHAPTER 4: ON BEING AN ACADEMIC – VOICES OF EXPERIENCE 120

4.1 Diane Smart 122

4.2 Mark Barry 130

4.3 Patricia Anderson 136

4.4 Derrick Charles 138

4.5 Jane White 142

4.6 Paul Matthews 147

CHAPTER 5: ON BEING AN ACADEMIC – THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION 154

5.1 The Essentials of Being an Academic 155

5.1.1 Being an Academic is Experienced as Being Immersed Freely in the World of Ideas – (The Scholarship of Discovery) 156

5.1.2 Being an Academic is Experienced as Linking Generations and Spanning Boundaries to Create, Interpret, and Disseminate Knowledge – (The Scholarship of Integration) 175

5.1.3 Being an Academic is Experienced as Relating Within a Community of Learners – (The Scholarship of Teaching) 184

5.1.4 Being an Academic is Experienced as Improving the Professions and Society – (The Scholarships of Application and Engagement) 204
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

We had the experience but missed the meaning. And approach to the meaning restores the experience, in a different form, beyond any meaning. We can assign to happiness. I have said before that the past experience revived in the meaning is not the experience of one life only but of many generations.

(The Dry Salvages - T. S. Eliot, 1944, p. 34)
1.1 Setting the Scene

On The Brink (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998), At The Crossroads (Department of Education, 2002), In Crisis (Australia Parliament, 2001) are a few of the many descriptors offered to illustrate the state of universities and the higher education system in Australia at the start of the twenty-first century. On the eve of the release of the Australian Federal Government’s latest blueprint for the reform of higher education, due to be revealed as part of the year’s federal Budget in May 2003, academics and university administrators sit poised in anticipation and hope that things will be different and that the current situation impacting on higher education will improve. Whilst there is almost national agreement that a reform of Australian higher education is much needed and long overdue there is also foreboding sentiment pervading the higher education sector that the scope of the reforms and the level of resources required to revitalise higher education will fall short of the necessary requirements to release the system from its current thraldom. The following newspaper commentary is typical of the reports describing the increasingly common features of Australian universities: “... lack of student-teacher contact, less individual attention, over-stretched teaching staff and compromised learning” (Illing, 2003, p. 27). Such reports not only voice discontent from the antipodes, as other countries around the world are also reporting similar trends with regard to higher education (Slaughter, 1998). An analysis of the media reports on higher education in the United Kingdom (Tight, 2000) highlights that the perturbations affecting the higher education sector in that country parallel those in many other nations.

Universities, together with most other organisations in the developed world, have experienced unprecedented change in the last decades of the twentieth century. As a result of this change organisations have had to redefine their identity, restructure their business to align with new and emerging markets, and adapt to new systems in order to ensure their continuance in the new world structure. Foregrounding this new world structure are phenomena such as globalisation, economic neo-liberalism, corporatisation and managerialism. Responses within the higher education sector to these changes include the massification of higher
education, contestability, and the commodification and marketisation of knowledge based products. Ironically, society today appears to be experiencing a level of challenge that bears striking resemblance to the paradoxical situation described in a Dickensian novel:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us ... in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of the noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only. The Tale of Two Cities (Dickens, 1980, p. 9)

Higher Education, along with all other systems that rely on public funding, is caught in the web of this paradox of globalising trends and with significantly decreased resources is bearing the brunt of change. Consequently, those who belong to higher education systems remain exposed to the major levels of change and transformation that systems need to make in order to survive - the academic is no exception.

Underpinning this thesis are contentions that academics and the lived experience of working in a university are phenomena that are largely misunderstood. This is not to suggest that Homo Academicus (Bourdieu, 1988) is a peculiar species deserving preferential treatment over students, administrators and others within the genus of the higher education family. Rather it is to suggest that, amidst the burgeoning literature on higher education, any focus on what it is to be an academic falls short to excursuses describing the number and qualifications of academics, what it is that academics do, and the conditions under which academics are forced to work. This research study aims to bridge that gap in the literature by focussing on the person of the academic and by investigating the lived experience of being an academic currently working in an Australian university.
1.2 Framing the Question: - Who is An Academic?

At a most simplistic level, to be an academic is to work for a university and perform academic duties such as teaching, researching, serving the community and the university. More sophisticated descriptions describe the academic as someone who is a “supreme classifier among classifiers” (Bourdieu, 1988, p.xi), or as someone who is “constantly to be exposed to scrutiny by peers, students, and the public, indeed to be constantly evaluated” (Moses, 1983, p. 157). Numerous stories detailing academic characters and extolling the virtues of the carefree nature of academic life (Amis, 1992; Lodge, 1975, 1984; Nasar, 1998; Wilding, 2002) thrive in the literature and appear on cinema screens. Unfortunately, these depictions often approach the fictitious or reflect days long since gone: the so-called halcyon days when academics were free to be real academics. Consequently, any reference to academics in circles beyond universities often educes stereotypical responses coloured by fiction and/or influenced by times long past when the academic world was elitist and academics were both fewer in number and understandably perceived as a different breed cloistered from society in “a place apart” (Poynter & Rasmussen, 1996).

To break through these stereotypes it is crucial for research on academics to move beyond memories of the days of yore and away from the images of fiction. Given the many challenges that Australian higher education has experienced since the major restructuring accompanying the 1988 Review (Dawkins, 1988b), it appears essential that research needs to focus on the lived experience of being an academic if we are to understand fully the impact of restructuring higher education. Only through understanding the lifeworld of the academic today will it be possible to realise the degree to which academic life has changed and to predict how it will be lived out in the possible scenarios awaiting higher education in the future.

It is suggested that for today’s academic to survive in future times that a new academic identity will be needed. Indeed, as the following quotation from Barnett illustrates, the academic of tomorrow will present very differently from the academic of previous times.
The academic is dead; long live the academic. This new academic, this worldly academic, eschews academicism. She knows that, in the knowledge society, everyone is an epistemologist. There is no virtue in knowing as such any more. To claim epistemological superiority just because one knows something is to exhibit hubris of the most embarrassing kind. The emperor is without clothes. On the other hand, the new academic understands the real world. The new academic sees that she has to sell her epistemological wares to the world. And that means engaging with the world. The new academic is an epistemological entrepreneur, finding customers for her wares. This is an academic fully immersed in the world, not one separate from it. The academic, therefore, is displaced into the world and, in the process, is changed. (Barnett, 1997, p. 152)

Essential to identity formation for the academic is an understanding of what lies at the essence of the “indexes of the academic self” (Taylor, 1999, p. 41). However, to find meaning in what it is that rests at the core of academic life proves problematic.

Easily found in the higher education literature are data telling us about today’s academics and higher education workers. According to Commonwealth Government Statistics (Commonwealth Department of Education, 2002) in Australia in 2002 there were 63,034 people employed on a full-time basis in Australian universities: 9,396 employed on a fractional full-time basis, and 13,401 on a casual basis. The total staff complement of 85,831 university staff includes 42.6% academics and 57.4% non-academic staff. Of the academic staff, 830 (1.1%) of these full-time or fractional-full time staff were employed as Teaching only staff (0.6% male and 0.5% female), 8,553 (11.8%) were Research only staff (6.4% male and 5.4% female), whilst Teaching and Research academics numbered 23,336 (32.2% – 20.6% male and 11.6% female). Of those staff classified as Academic there were 7,437 appointed above Senior Lecturer status, 8,471 at Senior Lecturer (Lecturer C) Status, 11,850 at Lecturer (Lecturer B), and 6,493 below lecturer (Lecturer A). Also included in this Commonwealth data are reports on the highest level of qualification of academic staff, the numbers tenured or on limited term contracts, and staff numbers by various academic organisational units. Similarly, research on the changing nature of academic work (Martin, 1999) and the number of hours that staff engage in academic work (McInnis, 2000b) are also readily available. However, lacking from the literature
are commentaries on the lived experience of being an academic, insights into how this lived experience impacts on the very being of academics, and adequate descriptors of the essential nature of the phenomenon of being an academic. Given this gap in our knowledge the challenge is to move beyond the statistics, the models of economic forecasts for higher education, and the commentaries on how academic work is changing. Accordingly, this study takes up the challenge to journey with academics to their offices, lecture theatres, laboratories, indeed into their academic lives in an attempt to gain glimpses of the many ways that the academic profession is lived out in everyday life. The central focus of this thesis is the phenomenon of being an academic and this focus is approached through exploring the matter of the lived experience of being an academic, questioning what rests at the heart of academic work, and defining the essence of being an academic.

1.3 Approaching the Research

This study researches the lived experience of being an academic and central to this lived experience is the voice of the academic. A necessary foundation for this research is a methodological framework that supports and encourages each participant to describe his or her lived experience of being an academic and to find meaning within this experience. Critical to this framework is an approach to research that allows all participants to engage in a process of co-research and be active in constructing the meaning of their lived experience. To structure this framework the study draws heavily on the theoretical perspectives underpinning the research methodology of hermeneutical phenomenology as outlined by Max van Manen (1990) in his text *Researching Lived Experience*. Scaffolding on this foundation is the conceptual framework for *Doing Phenomenology* as proposed by Michael Crotty (1996). Together these hermeneutic and phenomenological perspectives – acknowledged as both philosophy and methodology - have guided the research approach for this thesis.
This study is an attempt to understand the lived experience of the phenomenon of being an academic. It is not purporting to follow Heidegger's approach to Being as presented in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1996). Rather, what this study offers is an understanding and interpretation of the meaning of the essential elements that form the core of the academic experience. Inevitably, issues of ontology and identity become inextricably bound with any research on lived experience. However, rather than exploring the philosophical issues of what it is to be and the nature of Being as proposed by Heidegger, this study maintains a concentrated focus on the lived experience of the academic and uses the experience and language of higher education as its vehicle for the research journey.

The research site for this study is a large, established university in an Australian capital city. The participants in the research were employed as academics by this university — fifteen participants who were performing the regular duties of an academic and three participants who had been promoted from academic duties to management positions in the university chancellery. An iterative series of interviews with each of the academic participants was conducted over an extended period of time with most participants being involved in six interviews. Due to participant availability the interviews with chancellery staff was limited to one interview per participant. An overview of the participants is presented as Appendix 1.

The time frame of this research spans the dawning of the new millennium. Despite being enveloped by the furore of the *fin de siècle* and *millennialism* the academy continued to maintain its usual business and function normally. Indeed, it is the normalcy of everyday life for the academic within a university that this research needs to exploit. The data for this research were collected in the final three years of the twentieth century and the data analysis, interpretation, and the composing of this thesis accompanied the first two years of the twenty-first century. Truly, this research journey has bridged the dawning of the new millennium.
1.4 This Thesis – A Structural Overview

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The introduction serves to set the scene and to introduce the reader to the issues being explored in the thesis and the approach to the research that has been assumed. Each of the issues contained in the introduction are dealt with in depth in the relevant chapter(s) of the thesis.

Chapter two is titled On Being an Academic – The Voice of Literature and explores the body of knowledge that has been gleaned through the research and commentary of others. Guiding this chapter are three themes that have been used to expose the conceptual underpinnings and theoretical foundations upon which academic experience is based. The first of these themes - The Phenomena Impacting on Higher Education – traces the impact of globalisation and the concomitant responses such as massification, internationalisation, commodification, marketisation, that higher education has been required to make in order to maintain a place in the new world of knowledge. The second theme – The Context and Policy Framework of Australian Higher Education – situates the current policy trends in Australia and provides an overview of the significant changes that have resulted from the major restructure of the Dawkin’s review of 1988. Theme three – The Lifeworld of Academics: Being an Academic in Today’s World – establishes the current knowledge base of what it is to be an academic and work in a university. Paramount to this literature review is the realisation that lacking from the literature is any in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of being an academic.

Chapter three provides an overview of the methodological framework used in this study. The chapter begins with tracing the history of phenomenology as a philosophical movement and then notes the developments in this movement that have led to phenomenology being employed as a methodology for qualitative research. Particular note is made in this section of the pitfalls to be avoided in pursuing phenomenological research. Contained within this chapter is an overview of the scope and limitations of the research, the methods to be employed in data collection, analysis, and reporting, as well as addressing the issues of rigour and validity as they apply to a study of lived experience.
Chapters four to six describe the voices of experience – the lived experience of academic life. Chapter four utilizes a narrative form to profile six of the academics participating in this study. The narratives introduce the academic experience of these six participants and describe the frames against which these participants have established their academic identity. Notable in this chapter are the similarities and differences among participants with regard to the academic experience.

Chapter five is structured in two sections. Section 5.1 contains a series of themes describing the essential elements of the phenomenon of being an academic. The themes, analysed against the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, have been distilled from the data of the transcripts of each interview with the participants in this study. This section utilises an integrative framework derived from the theoretical perspective of Boyer (1990) to present these themes. Section 5.2 describes the actuality of the lived experience of being an academic. By employing the philosophical perspective of approaching lived experience from the existentials of lived time, space, corporeality, and relationality (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) this section moves beyond the essential elements of the phenomenon of being an academic as offered in Section 5.1 to describe the lived experience of the participants' academic lifeworld(s).

Chapter six is a synthesis of the writer's interpretation of the lived experience of each participant and is presented as a phenomenological description of the lived experience of being an academic. This chapter aims to take the reader beyond the formality of data classification and thematic categorisation to arrive at insights of how the phenomenon of being an academic can be experienced in everyday life.

Chapter seven – The Challenge to Listen to the Academic Voice – summarises the significance of this study and concludes the thesis with a series of recommendations presented to many of the players who shape the experience of being an academic.
Chapter 2

ON BEING AN ACADEMIC - THE VOICE OF LITERATURE
2.1 Introduction

In a study of this scope there are many thematic aspects that could be named as essential to the life experience of the academic and thereby warrant inclusion for consideration in a literature review. Examples of such experiences are the relationships that exist between an academic and an academic manager, the value that the public accords to academe, and the role of universities in society. Admittedly every theme that reflects an aspect of academic life is important in its own right and we are reminded of the need when reviewing the literature to “cast a wide net” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). However, there are particular issues of academic life that constitute the conceptual framework undergirding this study that have been chosen for exploration at the expense of other themes that are more tangential. The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant literature on the higher education sector, universities, and academic life and work to gain an overall understanding of what is contained in the literature about the phenomenon of being an academic and working in a university in Australia at the end of the 20th Century. From the review of literature will be constructed a theoretical framework to scaffold the process of data collection and analysis to be utilised for this research study.

For this study, “To Be an Academic” is to work in and to be part of a university that operates as part of a higher-education sector that has experienced significant change over the last 20 years. The responses of universities and academics to this change shape the nature of academic work, morale, and identity. Considered together, these issues unite to form an overall picture that foregrounds this study—the lived experience of being an academic. The chapter reviews the literature relating to the lived experience of academics from the following perspectives:

- The phenomena impacting on higher education,

- The context and policy framework of Australian higher education,

- The lifeworld of academics: Being an academic in today’s world.
The Phenomena Impacting On Higher Education

The last two decades of the 20th Century have witnessed a major transformation in the identity, purpose and operation of universities throughout the world. Several phenomena have been identified as underpinning the reshaping of the higher education sector (and indeed many other public sector organisations). These phenomena include globalisation, marketisation, the use of information and communication (ICTs), corporatisation, and managerialism. Each of these gives rise to other phenomena that in turn necessitate further change in systems and structures (e.g., massification, and the internationalisation of higher education are two examples of change that have resulted from the universal phenomena of globalisation). Even though these “changes themselves have varied in nature, provenance and intensity”, they “all impact on academic staff and their perceptions of their roles” (Adams, 1998, p. 421) and continue to provide many challenges that will shape the future of universities and academic work. Section 2.2 of this chapter will investigate these phenomena from the perspective of understanding more fully the impact these phenomena (both individually and collectively) are having on the higher education sector and on academic life.

The Context And Policy Framework Of Australian Higher Education

Whilst the aforementioned phenomena are universal and are effecting world change there are also national and state realities, often issued in response to these larger global trends, which sculpt the policies and practice of universities thus determining the nature of academic work. In Australia, where universities are “linked to government policy and funding initiatives” (Adams, 1998, p. 428), the blueprint of today’s university has evolved rapidly over the last 50 years. The face of today’s system has been fashioned by several commissioned reviews and reports into higher education; the outcomes of which range in magnitude and impact. Some recommendations of these reviews shape the operational procedures and practices in universities; one example is the abolition of the binary system as an outcome of the Dawkins review. Other recommendations suggest broad policy reviews that should be considered; one example is the revamping of university governance under the Hoare Committee (1996). To understand what it is to be an academic working in an Australian university at the end of the 20th
Century it is important to have a broad overview of the developments that have occurred in higher education as a result of these commissions and reviews. These issues will be explored in Section 2.3 of this chapter.

**The Lifeworld Of Academics: Being An Academic In Today’s World**

As policy makers respond to the abundant changes that influence the higher education sector it is a natural expectation that such change will impact on and transform institutions and academics alike. The reality of this transformation will be experienced through changes to the nature of academic work, the identity of the academics, and the morale of the academic workplace. Undoubtedly, the lifeworld of today’s academic will differ from the lifeworld of the academic in the days when John Henry Newman was writing about his idea of a university.

Section 2.4 reviews the literature relating to academic life and work in today’s world and it traces the changes that academics have encountered as the world of higher education has adapted in accord with global scenarios. A key focus of this section is the exploration of how academic life is experienced in this time of change: a change that has seen higher education move from a traditional, settled and self-referential environment to one that is now uncertain and is judged by standards external to the academy.

**Setting Boundaries For This Chapter**

A boundary set to delimit this chapter was to review the literature pertaining predominantly to Australian universities. This is not to suggest that the international corpus of literature has been avoided; indeed much of the literature reviewed reflects the perspectives of academics from universities throughout the world and does offer international comparisons (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). However, it is to acknowledge that the primary focus of this research is the experience of academics working in Australian universities and as such an attempt has been made in this review to maintain a national perspective rather than extending outwards to focus on the literature pertaining to higher education policy and practice across various nations or to offer a comparative analysis of such.
A further boundary set for this chapter was to investigate selected phenomena from the perspective of exploring the impact these phenomena have on academic life rather than interpreting the phenomena from particular philosophical perspectives. The multitudinous perspectives assumed by different authors enrich the higher education literature. Indeed, the literature is rich with interpretive critique and commentary from numerous philosophical or theoretical frames (e.g., Foucauldian perspective (Kenway & Langmead, 1998), Deleuzian perspective (Peters & Roberts, 1999), Marxist perspective (Marginson, 1997c)). Whilst acknowledging these different perspectives a choice was made to focus this chapter on investigating the impact of these phenomena on the higher education sector and academic life and on understanding more fully the experience of being an academic in today’s world. Clearly, certain concepts could appear in more than one of the three sections that constitute this literature review. However, to avoid duplication, a decision was made to focus on each theme once and not to repeat the material in subsequent sections unless there were different perspectives deemed essential to warrant such replication.

2.2 The Phenomena Impacting on Higher Education

The many changes influencing higher education are the subject of much attention in academic literature (Chapman & Salvage, 1997; Martin, 1999; McInnis, 1998b; O'Neill, 1992; Smyth, 1995; Stanley, 1997). These changes are often driven by and made in response to the development and interplay of phenomena (and events) at a world level and their subsequent impact on nations.

Certain phenomena that that have impacted on the world and subsequently on higher education, will be examined in this section. These phenomena are Globalisation, Information and Communication Technology, and Corporatisation and Managerialism. In addition, three other phenomena – The Massification of Higher Education, Commodification and Marketisation of Higher Education, and The Internationalisation of Higher Education - each having a direct impact on the purpose, identity and operation of higher education institutions and academic work, will also be explored.
2.2.1 Globalisation

'Globalisation' refers to the growing impact of world systems of finance and economic life, transport, communications and media, language and symbols. It is as much about the cross-global movement of people and ideas as about markets and money, and more about networks than about patterns of commodity trade or off-shore production. (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 47)

Globalisation is a phenomenon that is both shaping our worldview and is influencing most aspects of contemporary life. From the simple choice of deciding what food we eat, to complex decisions involving international finance, we are influenced by globalisation. Globalisation suggests different things to different people (Kellner, 2000; Pratt & Poole, 2000) and the many uses of the term have led to multiple definitions and a lack of precision as to what the term actually means. Some definitions are simplistic (Friedman, 2000; Porter, 1999), and written with a certain journalese that appeals to the popular reading markets. Other definitions reflect a particular theoretical perspective such as post-modernism and post-structuralism and are aimed at specific target audiences (Barnett, 1997; Peters & Roberts, 1999; Readings, 1996). We are alerted by Marginson (2000, p. 24) of the need for the term “globalisation” to be “defined and used with care” so as to avoid “common errors” that can be associated with the use of the term. These errors result from reading the term from too broad a focus or from embracing a unitary definition that is restricting. Burbules (2000, p. 14) attempts to avoid such restriction by grouping the issues associated with globalisation under categories – “economic, political, and cultural” - whereas Currie (1998) identifies globalisation as a “package of coinciding and converging social, political and economic changes” (p. 71).

There are many changes attributed to globalization that foreground operational practice in higher education and impact on academic life and work. A significant change is the relationship between globalisation, the nation state, and the role of the university in defining the nation state and in producing knowledge. Throughout the literature reporting on the effects of globalisation on higher education are the following key themes: -
> **Time/Space Compression** - the compression of time and space results in an interconnectedness that is both caused by and enables the near instant communication between people from all around the world (Barnett, 1997; Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Currie & Newson, 1998; Giddens, 1994; Lingard & Rizvi, 1998; Robertson, 1992).

The place and pace of technology generally, and in particular the *Internet*, in enabling this communication is undeniable (Friedman, 2000; Marginson, 2000). The result of this connectedness is that communication and information technologies are seen to be driving the world – especially the world of higher education (Edwards & Usher, 2000; Urry, 1998). Castells (1996) refers to the “Network Society” and a new techno-economic system characterised by multiple networks that provide the capacity for the economy to work with fast capital in a system of technological change and information. As these systems involve information flows, “the network society is one that cannot be contained within national borders” (Delanty, 2001, p. 117). To move beyond these borders points to a reconstruction of personal identity and a questioning of the legitimacy of social order (Kenway & Langmead, 1998, p. 29).

> **Transnational/Multi-National Domination** - the dominance of transnational and multinational corporations operating through a network of world financial markets enabled by the instantaneous transfer of monetary funds (Marginson, 2000).

The economic perspective receives much attention in globalisation theory (Jarvis, 1996; Ritzer, 1996a; Wiseman, 1998) suggesting that a world “economic restructuring is seen to be concomitant with the trend towards globalization” (Burbules & Torres, 2000, p. 7). Barnett (2000) notes that the “massive movements of capital, twenty-four hours a day, across the world, aided by the information technology revolution” are the motors of “incessant change” that are defining the age of globalisation (p. 58). Whilst Hirst and Thompson (1996) argue against such extremism, cautioning that economic changes “are more complex and equivocal than the extreme globalists argue” (p. 1), it is clear that the rhetoric of “economic globalisation” (Dudley, 1998) does occupy a significant
place in defining globalisation. As a result of globalisation there has been a rethinking of finance and financing throughout the public sector and particularly in higher education. Themes such as “economic neo-liberalism” and “economic rationalism” (Dunphy & Griffiths, 1998), “managerialism” (Considine & Painter, 1997; Yeatman, 1993), “corporatism” (Berman, 1998; Kenway & Langmead, 1998; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) and the “commodification and marketisation” of higher education services (Fisher & Rubenson, 1998; Popkewitz, 2000) are now part of the lexicon of academe.

The term “neo-liberalism”, referring both to an ideology and to an alliance group called the “neo-liberals” (Kenway & Langmead, 1998; Morrow & Torres, 2000), appears repeatedly in the higher education literature. The neo-liberal element is seen as a characteristic of globalisation focussed on reinstalling “a (selective) vision of a common culture, to place more emphasis on the ‘Western tradition’, on religion, on the English language” (Apple, 2000, p. 59). This pressure, particularly noticeable in the United States of America, has led to what is referred to as a conservative restoration (Apple, 1993) where the neo-liberals are “guided by a vision of the weak state” and in which “what is private is necessarily good and what is public is necessarily bad” (Apple, 2000, p. 59). Understanding the neo-liberal discourse does help provide insight to context the massive changes witnessed in higher education through the introduction of operational practices such as managerialism, economic rationalism and the commodification and marketisation of services. Whilst these practices are often used as synonyms for globalisation, they are more correctly seen as symptoms or effects of globalisation. However, Marginson (2000) reminds us that globalisation involves “more than neo-liberal ideas about the primacy of market economics and the minimisation of democratic politics” and suggests, “in some respects, globalisation is not necessarily neo-liberal at all. There is nothing inherently neo-liberal about faster transport or better communications” (p. 46). This reminder is timely in that it provides a challenge to heed the trap of adapting too narrow a stance when employing such a complex and ubiquitous term as globalisation to describe the current change in practice within higher education (Kellner, 2000). This caution aligns with that of Lingard and Rizvi (1998) in their suggestion that “talk of any direct impact of globalization on higher education is fundamentally
misleading because, in the construction of policy, globalization works as an ideology just as much as it refers to direct empirical effects" (p. 258).

➤ A Changed Nation State – with globalization, the image and value of the “nation state”, the regulation of how nation states operate in the world and the place of citizenship and the role of the citizen in society and the state are altered.

Globalisation is causing major change not only at the economic level but also in the realms of politics, identity, and culture (Lingard & Rizvi, 1998; Readings, 1996; Rizvi, 2000). These changes involve dissolution of the nation state and new notions of what it means to be a citizen. This is viewed by some as a diminution of power that in turn leads to a changing philosophy of higher education where universities are forced to redefine and to adjust to a new global identity (Coady, 1996; Harman, 1997; Sharpham & Harman, 1997) as they struggle to understand fully their role in shaping the nation state.

With globalisation the role of the nation-state has changed significantly. One notable change is “a shift in the role of the nation-state from protecting national interests to enforcing global competitiveness on domestic capital and labour” (Singh, 1998, p. 12). Another shift has occurred that transfers the focus of people from their meaning and identification within the networks of nations and societies to now find their identity in global networks that traverse the once traditional boundaries (Lash & Urry, 1994). This translocation of people and systems into “global networks” (Castells, 1996), impacts on the identity of individuals, their understanding of citizenship, and ultimately their understanding of what it is to be human; a term that once “meant that one is unambiguously a member of a particular society (Urry, 1998, p. 2). Marginson (2000, p. 25) suggests that whilst globalisation does not necessarily “abolish the nation state” that it definitely “changes the conditions in which nation states operate” (see also Crossley & Jarvis, 2000; Green, 1997). Readings (1996) speaks in a similar vein suggesting “under globalization the state does not disappear; it simply becomes more and more managerial” (p. 47). The university (and indeed all educational sectors) are now operating from within these changed conditions and many questions of
uncertainty are being raised as to the place and role of the university alongside the nation-state within the context of globalisation. As globalisation is not a temporary perturbation to which there is a quick-fix solution, but rather an evolving concept (Sadlak, 1998), universities will need to continue to negotiate to redefine their place and their purpose in the changing conditions of the global world.

Clearly globalisation is not a “local phenomena” and effects such as the dissolution of the nation state are universal (Slaughter, 1998; Taylor, 1999). Where globalisation is seen as “a variety of socio-economic and cultural processes that seem, increasingly, to integrate diverse local and national entities into a single global whole” (Albrow, 1993, p. 248), this theory is often viewed as hegemonic in that it suggests that the world is dominated by Western countries. Dudley (1998) contests that despite globalisation inferring a “narrative of incorporation into a world system” there is an “increasing dominance of Western, and particularly U.S. models of production and consumption” (p. 22). For some writers this Western hegemony, often characterised by the homogenization of culture and the dissolution of nations, infers that globalization equals westernisation (Blackmore, 2000; DeAngelis, 1998; Luke & Luke, 2000; Robertson & Khondker, 1998). However, we are cautioned against attributing globalization to meaning only Westernisation (Appadurai, 1996). A notion that helps avoid such attribution is that of a “Vernacular Globalization” that enables us to “reject globalization as meaning only Westernisation, Americanization, commodification, and homogenization” and that allows for localized policies and practices to be considered alongside the metanarratives that dominate the globalization debate (Lingard, 2000, p. 80 – 81).

- **New Knowledge and Distributed Sites of Knowledge Production** – a major condition of change influencing the place of the university within the global world is an attempt to redefine what counts as valued knowledge and a questioning of the primacy of the university in the production of knowledge.
“Pride of place throughout the modern era belonged to the state” and with this positioning came a conferring of agency on the state to legitimise order for the conduct of affairs within a certain territory (Bauman, 1998, p. 60). From this viewpoint, knowledge was a shaping force that enabled us to describe and order the world, and the university held a major claim as the site of authentic knowledge production. This relationship meant that the university became “interwoven with the development of the liberal nation-state” as “the principal knowledge-producing institution” (Peters & Roberts, 1999, pp. 47 - 49). The university thus played a major role in society and accordingly was supported by the state to assist in the shaping of society through the processes of the disinterested pursuit of knowledge (Filmer, 1997; Kenway & Langmead, 1998).

As the traditional producer and distributor of knowledge, the university once held a privileged place in society, and university education was “oriented toward the construction of ‘citizens’ for the nation-state” (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p. 35). However, in today’s postmodern world there has been a challenge to this traditional ownership of the rules of intellectual discourse (Barnett & Griffin, 1997). Universities are no longer able to claim sole ownership to knowledge, and the thinking that characterised the Enlightenment period (G. Patterson, 1997) where knowledge was regarded “as an objective phenomenon which could be tested through logic, empiricism, or pragmatism” (Jarvis, 1996, p. 236), no longer holds. These changes result in contestability as universities now compete with other recognised producers and providers of knowledge to survive and find a place in markets that were once unknown. As Edwards and Usher (2000) indicate, “Globalisation has contributed to bringing to the fore the significance of different forms of knowledge” (p. 73). Knowledge is now classified using categories such as Mode 1 (culturally concentrated) knowledge, Mode 2 (socially distributed) knowledge (Gibbons et al., 1994), and Working Knowledge (Symes & McIntyre, 2000). Gibbons (1998a) notes, the universities that once “styled themselves as producer of ‘primary knowledge’ and took the ‘high ground of basic research’” (p. 72) are now becoming absorbed “into a distributed knowledge production system” (p. 73). Aligned with these new ways of viewing knowledge is also the tendency within the globalised economy to judge knowledge through “its use value” where it “has to perform, to show that it has an impact on the
world" (Barnett, 2000, p. 38). Systems now measure the performance value of knowledge (Lyotard, 1984), and this notion of performativity has become a measure of performance that is used by the university to determine the nature and value of academic work (Ball, 1994; Cowen, 1996; Edwards & Usher, 2000; Vidovich & Currie, 1998).

"The problem with knowledge for the modern university" Barnett (2000) suggests "is not that knowledge has come to an end. Rather, it is the case that there are now many knowledges vying for a place within the university" (p. 35). At the same time, individuals (other than academics) and institutions (other than universities) are also gaining recognition as knowledge and intellectual workers (Drucker, 1995; Polster & Newson, 1998; T. A. Stewart, 1997). Knowledge is now regarded as a commodity that is traded between institutions and around the world for large sums of money rather than being used primarily to shape the nation-state. Accordingly, a true internationalisation of higher education is needed to expedite both the inclusive nature of global knowledge and the trading of knowledge around the globe.

2.2.2 Internationalisation of Higher Education

"Internationalisation' describes the growth of relations between nations and national cultures. (Marginson, 2000, p. 24)

Internationalisation of higher education is the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution. (Knight & de Wit, 1997, p. 8)

Universities and academics have for many centuries been international in their work (Altbach, 1999; Currie, 1998a; Jaspers, 1960; Teichler, 1998b). Welch (1997, p. 323) refers to the "itinerant scholar, like the wandering minstrel, seeking new knowledge, or students, or seeking refuge from hostile environments, academic and political", (see also Fulton, 1996; Lodge, 1975, 1984). Similarly, students have traversed national borders to pursue knowledge in different contexts and environments and to broaden their experience at both a personal and
professional level. These internationalising features characterised the university as it existed from its earliest beginnings, accompanied its positioning alongside the rise of the nation state, and are again to the fore as higher education is reshaped through the forces of globalisation (G. Patterson, 1997; Scott, 1998; Teichler, 1998b). As a result of these globalising forces universities have been challenged to re-think what it is to be international in their nature and work (Newson, 1998). Prior to exploring these developments it is important to differentiate between the terms globalisation and internationalisation.

There is a tendency in the literature to conflate the terms globalisation and internationalisation (Edwards, 1995; Welch, 2001), with the resulting effect that globalisation has become an object of blame for all change in the higher education sector (Becher & Trowler, 2001). Kress (1996) defines internationalisation as “the cultural, political and economic influences from somewhere outside a particular locality on the value structures, practices and forms of social organization of that locality” (p. 188). Scott (1998) in differentiating between these concepts suggests, “not all universities are (particularly) international, but all universities are subject to the same processes of globalization” (p. 122). Knight (1999) views globalisation and internationalisation as dynamically linked in that the internationalisation of higher education is “one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalisation”, yet as different in that internationalisation “respects the individuality of the nation” (p. 14). de Wit (1999) and van der Wende (2001) theorise internationalisation as a process responding to globalization (not to be confused with the globalization process itself). The internationalising effects of globalisation are being felt in all education sectors (Crossley, 2000; Welch, 2001) but particularly in higher education where the impact is felt in teaching/learning (Baird & Caldwell, 2002), and also in research (Singh, 2000).

The following section utilizes the concept of Rationales for the Internationalisation of Higher Education (de Wit, 1999) and employs as its structural frame for examining the internationalisation of higher education the category titles of de Wit’s four rationales; academic, socio/cultural, political, and economic.
The Academic Rationale for the Internationalisation of Higher Education.

Whereas once the traditional notion of the wandering scholar in search of knowledge and understanding dominated the thinking behind the academic rationale, the notion of the internationalisation of the curriculum is now its centre point. This notion embodies concepts such as diversity and inclusiveness and allows for developing a shared understanding of cultures, politics, and markets (Cope & Kalantzis, 1997; Kress, 1996; Martin, 1999). The strengths of an internationalised curriculum impact on both the quality of education itself and the international positioning of the institution. A further strength is the flow-on benefit for students who, in today's globalised society, are moving amidst international labour markets (Haarlov, 1997; Kehm, 1995). These benefits support the OECD definition of an international curriculum characterised by an "international orientation in content, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context" (OECD, 1994, p. 9). The shift to an internationalised curriculum is essential if we are to move to a globalised approach to higher education rather than maintain a curriculum that could be characterised as ethno-specific (Alexander & Rizvi, 1993). Such a localised view would assert that cultural diversity is merely added on to a traditional curriculum (Singh, 2000). This is not to deny the importance of cultural diversity in the international curricula; rather it is to view diversity in its own right. Indeed, we are cautioned by Rizvi (1998) of the need to be aware of the place of diversity in the higher education curriculum and to view the relationship between curriculum and cultural diversity in a "dynamic, relational way, rather than in purely instrumental terms" (p. 9).

In order to view the internationalisation of higher education as a process rather than a series of independent activities there needs to be high levels of interdependence and interrelationship between the many and diverse elements of an internationalised curriculum. Such a nexus ensures that the global citizen has the competence to be able to move beyond the boundaries of groups traditionally defined in terms of ethnicity and national identity. The internationalised curriculum provides opportunities that enable the global citizen to be able to communicate and engage across cultures and transform and transcend...
worldviews. To achieve this demands a level of "intercultural competence – multiple abilities that allow one to interact effectively and appropriately across cultures" (Fantini, Arias-Galicia, & Guay, 2001, p. 8). Internationalising the curriculum is far broader in focus than the increasing numbers of international students who choose to study abroad. The internationalised curriculum embodies elements such as international content, cross-cultural skills, and interdisciplinary area study programs (OECD, 1994). To achieve this outcome demands of academics a rethinking of the processes of teaching and learning and appropriation of the capabilities that support academic work in such a global context (Back, Davis, & Olsen, 1996).

➢ The Socio/Cultural Rationale for the Internationalisation of Higher Education.

A socio/cultural rationale for internationalising higher education invites us to expand the traditional role of universities in preparing students to be part of the localised nation state and to look beyond national borders to allow for a higher education curriculum that integrates global perspectives (Jones, 1991). Such perspectives expand the homogenous and mono-cultural basis from which nations have long operated and opens up an engagement with the pluralities of knowledge production, distribution, and utility that accompany the notion of civic pluralism as a new form of citizenship (Cope & Kalantzis, 1997). This presents a major challenge given that globalisation itself can produce a homogenising culture through its reliance on the English language especially when we consider that English is becoming a lingua franca (if not a lingua mundi) that is in fact destroying many of the world’s languages (Cope, 2001; Kress, 1996; Singh, 2001a, 2001b).

Traditionally the university has been focussed on locating its work within the realm of the nation-state. This locus produced university graduates who had been schooled in studies in literature, culture, history and ideas of the nation-state that in turn fed a mono-cultural identity. A role of the university was thus "the production of national subjects under the guise of research into the inculcation of culture, culture that has been thought, since Humboldt, in terms inseparable from
national identity” (Readings, 1996, p. 89). To move beyond this notion of localism requires substantial and sustained efforts on the part of universities to expand the notion of cultural identity and to promote opportunities for the student to be “a subject who is no longer tied to the nation-state, who can readily move to meet the demands of the global market” (p. 49) and who is well versed in understandings of cultural diversification. To achieve this understanding of internationalisation is “not just a matter of less-developed countries learning about western ways and views” (Martin, 1999, p. 12).

➢ The Political Rationale for the Internationalisation of Higher Education.

The political rationale for internationalising higher education focuses on the policies of the nation-state and the discourse that underpins these policies (de Wit, 1999; Jones, 1998). Phenomena such as colonialism and cultural imperialism, often masqueraded as initiatives for peace and mutual understanding, once formed the basis for framing policy and political discourse (de Wit, 1999). As the nation state was “the primary reference point for culture and economics” (Delanty, 2001, p. 118) these political agendas often directed government policies that promoted hegemony (Wah, 1997) through a “control of the public agenda as well as control of the means of production” (Marginson, 1997c, p. 22). As the nation-states are no longer (or should not be) dominant in internationalised higher education environments (Tikly, 1999), and with political developments following World War II and accompanying the end of the Cold War era there is now a new rule impacting on higher education; the rule of capitalism (Bauman, 1992). The university is “no longer called upon to uphold national prestige by producing and legitimating national culture” (Readings, 1996, p. 14) but is challenged to collaborate in the new perspective that underpins this post-cold war environment (Altbach & Davis, 1999). This perspective includes a focus of government policies that mandate universities to be engaged in “academic capitalism” (Slaughter, 1998, p. 64) in fields such as techno-science and intellectual property. As well as shaping today’s research agenda at local levels these perspectives can also be international in nature and assist in shaping the world of tomorrow. Universities are challenged to graduate students who are capable to assist with “the resolution of political and social problems, even on an international scale”
International partnerships between universities, governments, industry, and communities in cooperative research are essential if socially distributed knowledge production is geared to advancing world progress. Accordingly, governments and universities are moving to endorse policies that articulate and are consistent with the internationalisation of higher education (Back et al., 1996).

The Economic Rationale for The Internationalisation Of Higher Education

The economic rationale for the internationalising of higher education is dominant in the discussion in the literature on internationalisation and tends to reflect “the economic imperatives of global competition” (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p. 41). As a result of globalization the reallocation of diminishing state resources has had “a major impact on higher education, forcing it to engage with the market” (Delanty, 2001, p. 122). International education has now become a major economic imperative that adds considerably to the nation’s trade balance. Moses (1997) views the shift to internationalisation that Australian universities were asked to embrace as part of “the global economy, not as part of an international community of scholars” (p. 191). The Australian Government’s 1984 Jackson Committee found that “international trade in Australian education services had potential as a significant new industry for Australia” (Marginson, 1993, p. 52). Further evidence of the Government’s favouring of the economic rationale is clear in decisions such as that of Minister Dawkins, begun in 1987, “to overturn previous Labour policy and reintroduce student fees (only partial fees for Australians) ... but full fee recovery for an increased number of foreign students” (DeAngelis, 1998, p. 125). The Jackson Committee of 1984 found that existing “student subsidies constituted a form of industry protection and should be abolished” (Marginson, 1993, p. 53). This shift in policy moved Australia from a “traditional aid to a trade perspective in relation to foreign students” (Smart & Ang, 1996) and now places universities in an “entrepreneurial dynamic” where producers “have a strong incentive to expand production as far as possible, while minimising the unit cost of each educational commodity produced” (Marginson, 1997c, p. 32).
In the European Union various action programs for internationalisation have been established to position Europe in the global economy (Altbach & de Wit, 1995; Tran, 2000). Programs such as ERASMUS and SOCRATES have been created “to stimulate a European identity and to develop international competitiveness through education” (de Wit, 1999) that involves both the Europeanization as well as the internationalisation of curriculum (Teichler, 1998b).

As a result of the internationalisation of higher education the production of the educational commodity has had to be redefined. Academics are now engaged in teaching beyond the traditional lecture theatre and are aiming to reach an international audience. This international audience takes many forms:

*International “On-Shore” students* – students who leave their home country to take a place in an overseas university. These students are usually “full-fee paying” students who attend regular classes with students from their host country. In 1995 there were 39,685 international students studying on-shore in Australia and this number grew to 72,717 students in the year 2000 (Australian Education International, 2001).

*Transnational education* – describing a situation where teaching or learning activities are delivered to a student in different countries to where they are produced and managed. Examples of transnational education are Distance Education, Locally Supported Distance Education. Twinning Programs, Articulation Programs, Branch Campuses, and Franchising Arrangements. (Lee, 1999; McBurnie & Pollock, 1998). In 1995 there were 11,026 students studying “off-shore” from Australian Universities. In the year 2000 this number had grown to 34,905 students (Australian Education International, 2001).

*Borderless education* – where virtual players such as corporate universities (e.g., Motorola University) and “for profit” universities’ (e.g., The University of Phoenix) are beginning to shape and define the character of the new university. These universities often conduct programs of online study utilising information and communications technology to far greater levels than employed by traditional universities (Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs, 2000).
The internationalisation of higher education, like globalisation and most other phenomena impacting on higher education, is not ephemeral, is compound in nature and is unavoidably complex. Universities have been challenged to move away from an:

Enrichment view which sees internationalisation as an 'enhancing add on, a reform desirable for some' to an 'integrative' view which locates internationalisation at the centre of curriculum design, development and evaluation; as integrated into all aspects of teaching and learning and research and development as an essential exploration of and engagement with, global transformations for all – staff and students, local and international. (Hill, 2001, p. 1)

This movement suggests that that we are just entering a period where internationalisation will lead to “transforming and transcending world views” (Fantini et al., 2001, p. 7) for both the academic and the student.

A dilemma for universities is that of balancing the economic need for internationalisation alongside the other rationales in order to achieve this transformation of worldviews. From an economic perspective higher education needs an international clientele (Altbach, 1997). Martin (1999) also acknowledges that, “few universities can afford to turn a blind eye to the opportunities of immediate revenue and longer-term social and cultural benefits and nor should they” (p. 12). However, there is a need to situate these financial benefits within a cost-benefit analysis that considers also the profound impact of internationalisation on academic work (Smith, 1994; Gale, 1997). The multiple and mixed modes of delivery to international students as outlined above foreground a whole new set of responsibilities that academics are facing. Such responsibilities include (inter alia) the production of online materials for global audiences, engaging students with new pedagogies, the moderation and support of local lecturers and tutors (i.e. off-shore facilitators), and in assisting local students who are studying international programs in their home country through the use of materials developed by academics in overseas universities. Teachers and students alike are challenged to become more reflexive about teaching and learning, and assessment practices need to be culturally sensitive and inclusive (Rizvi, 2001). These challenges are being lived out in a changing regulatory environment for higher education. Changes such as deregulation, and the increase of institutional
autonomy (albeit paralleled by an increasing commitment to quality assurance mechanisms) are allowing institutions to become more responsive to their environment and to engage with the cross-border marketing of higher education (van der Wende, 2001). Despite these challenges, it is difficult to disagree with Altbach and de Wit (1995, p. 4) that internationalisation has become “mandatory for any higher education system in the 21st century”, nor with Welch (1997) that any “moves to curtail or abandon internationalisation may well prove short sighted” (p. 339).

2.2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

The noise and bustle of keyboard keys replaces the quiet contemplative environment of the library. Browsing on the internet (an activity that uneducated children seem to be, at least superficially, more adept at than many scholars) replaces browsing the library shelves, an activity of the initiated few. Just as conversation in the home has, it is said, lost its place to television, so now in academia, collegial discussion in a more contemplative atmosphere has been replaced by an interface with computerised student record systems, email communications and the like. (Campion, 1997, p. 149)

Information technology has already had a significant impact on higher education, and will continue to reshape the education landscape in coming years. (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 6)

In exploring the phenomenon of Globalisation it is essential also to explore the nexus between Globalisation and Information and Communication Technologies; the reality is that one cannot exist without the other (Burbules & Torres, 2000) as they both work in an almost virtuous circle (Castells, 1996). Information and Communication Technologies (hereafter referred to as ICTs) have reshaped higher education in the latter part of the 20th Century. This sub-section builds on the theorising of globalisation and internationalisation of the preceding sub-section(s) to position higher education and academic work within the reality of its current context – one highly immersed in and dependent upon ICTs, and one where the adage “clicks and mortar” (Steinfield et al., 2001), and new educational enterprise such as “Click2Learn” (Kriger, 2001) are continuing to challenge traditional ideas of the university.
Academics have long been reliant on technology to assist in the production and dissemination of knowledge; print based media being a prime example. In a crude form technology can be defined as anything that assists efficiency, thus "a "technical move" is "good when it does better and/or expends less energy than another" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 44). Whilst some literature links the advent of technology to the Aristotelian concept of "techne" (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994), highlighting within professional practice both a craft, skill or art, and the "capacity to use various tools and instruments to get things done" (Australian Council of Deans of Education, 2001, p. 92), we are cautioned by Beckett (1995) that techne implies "more than narrow skill deployment" (p. 25). Beckett relates professional practice to wisdom (poesis) and highlights the importance of understanding professional [read academic] identity. Given the changing milieu of academic work where research and teaching have become increasingly dependent upon technology, academic identities are also being redefined and are almost identifiable now as electronic identities (Marginson, 2000).

The positive aspects of ICTs in higher education include increased student access and collaboration, international academic networking, and more direct and faster information processing (Alderman & Milne, 1999; Curtis & Lawson, 1999). Negative aspects include threats to long-standing traditions such as academic freedom and autonomy (Allport, 2001), increased opportunity for plagiarism (James, McInnis, & Devlin, 2002), and disadvantage for those students who cannot afford access to the technology (Brabazon, 2002). Whilst ICTs enable a proliferation of knowledge and propel the speed at which knowledge flows (Blackmore, 2000), they also create other sites of knowledge production and transmission that once were the traditional preserve of the university. This move can be seen as leading to a decline of academic authority (Bauman, 1997) as the university no longer controls or mandates the parameters of access to neither information nor the place and time of learning. Such is evident in the realization of "virtual" universities (Kriger, 2001) which offer twenty-four hour access, seven days a week to web-based course materials, communication and learning tools, and academic support.
The new production processes of knowledge outlined in Section 2.2.1 are "critically dependent upon the emerging computer and telecommunication technologies" (Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 10). These technologies expand the diversity of sites where knowledge is both produced and consumed. The traditional mode of knowledge production (Mode 1), which occurred in, by, and for the university (Gibbons et al., 1994), is now replaced by a tripartite partnership - referred to as the triple-helix of university, industry, and government collaboration (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997) - with the result that the production of knowledge is distributed beyond the academy where it once resided. To assist this process universities are both creators (through applied research and development) and users of new ICTs. They are constantly being called upon to advance the needs of a technological civilization through education (Reich, 1991), and to collaborate (and compete) within the triple helix for technology/research/knowledge production and dissemination. A result of this collaboration is a "form of a global web whose number of inter-connections are being continuously expanded by the creation of new sites of production" (Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 14).

Kenway (1996, p. 218) uses the metaphor of the "Information Superhighway" - also called the "Global Information Infrastructure" (Melody, 1997) - to refer to "the unstoppable trend to replace current technologies for the delivery of information, communication, and entertainment with new" technologies (see also Edwards & Usher, 2000; Kellner, 2000). This proliferation of ICTs is "generating a new industrial revolution already as significant and far-reaching as those of the past" (Bangemann, 1994). The Internet is almost a household commodity (Friedman, 2000) with an estimated 500 – 600 million users at the turn of this century (Sheehan & Tikhomirova, 1998). While the accuracy of the statistics of computer usage may be challenged (Emmison & Frow, 1998) it is indisputable that computer-mediated communication is supplanting traditional modes of communication and education and is producing "radically different – blended, merged and reshaped – social practices and conceptions of community, subjectivity, time, space, textuality, and communication" (Luke, 2000, p. 77).
This reshaping that Luke refers to is evidenced clearly in the university through the growth of computer-based instruction, flexible delivery, and distance education with academic programs being available totally “online” to students in any region of the globe. The availability of these resources “make them a potent globalizing force and means of accommodating to the demands of globalism” (Evans, 1995, p. 260). Consortia such as Global University Alliance (GUA), and Universitas21 (Booth, 2000; Gilbert, 2000) are providing marketing gateways (including brokering and franchising agencies) for university programs through which students in Africa can enrol (totally online) for an education degree from a university in Australia and complete the entire program (again totally online) with students and academics from the world over who only ever meet in cyberspace. Universities that provide for total distance and online education such as The Open University in the U.K., The University of Phoenix in America, and Open Learning Australia are also providing alternative pathways to higher education for students and alternative career paths for academics. Clearly, we are entering an age of educating for a global world, and these organisations provide an example of the “networked society” (Castells, 1996) that characterises globalisation (Campion & Freeman, 1998).

Much of the literature relating to ICTs in higher education leans toward a critical appraisal of the incursion of these technologies into academic practice rather than a description of the technologies and their uses. A binary divide within this literature attempts to contrast the positive and the negative features of ICTs in the globalising processes. Particularly relevant to higher education is the reshaping of the concepts of place, space, and identity which ICTs have redefined (Wark, 1994), and the increasingly uncertain role and place of the university within the networked society (Candy, 2000). Kenway (1996) addresses both sides of this binary divide from a framework of “utopian” and “dystopian” perspectives (see also Edwards & Usher, 2000, p. 44).

Whilst some academic writers describe how to maximise the usage of multi-media packages and other ICTs to supplement and improve teaching (Gunn, 1999; Laurillard, 1993; Laurillard & Margetson, 1997; McNaught, 1997; Spender, 1995) and to empower and support learners (Tait, 2001), others are challenging the
impact of ICTs on teaching and learning (Brabazon, 2002). One claim against ICTs is that they result in the formation of new pedagogical spaces (A. Welch, 1997) that promote disembodied learning (Edwards & Usher, 2000; Luke, 1996; McWilliam & Palmer, 1996). With the demise of face-to-face contact as experienced in some computer mediated communications (especially online distance learning), the relationship between student and lecturer that once provided for embodiment and allowed for an understanding of individual students within a situated perspective (ethnicity, gender) has been replaced with an anonymity that disconnects the body from the learning equation (Beckett, 1998). Similarly, the nomenclature of the academic is changed to that of “a facilitator of learning”, defined as one who is a “manager of the educational space, and expected to have nothing of particular importance to say on any topic, other than being able to point the way to a good Internet site, or set up project groups” (Smith, 1999, p. 3). Clearly the debate about the indifference that many academics currently experience in relation to ICTs and their place in the fields of teaching and learning is still in its infancy (Allport, 2001), yet it is a debate that is gaining speed amongst those academics who are experiencing first-hand the impact that ICTs are having on academic work and identity (Brabazon, 2002).

As “all knowledges are always situated and constituted initially from within specific sets of local conditions and cultural values” (Gough, 2000), there is a risk that the dispersal of knowledge and information beyond the sites where it is produced (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999) will homogenise and universalise the culture and identity of those who consume the product (Harding, 1998). The flows of knowledge through ICTs can thus have “a deterritorialising effect – of people, images and information, commodities, money and ideas” (Edwards & Usher, 2000, p. 42), thus forcing a rewriting of personal auto/biographies that become shaped as “unstable, multiple and diffuse” with “marginality and otherness increasingly figuring as the signifiers of identity” (p. 43). The distributed knowledge that is now possible through ICTs is creating diasporic public spheres (Appadurai, 1996) where the nation state is fast disappearing and citizens are losing identity. This is noticeable as nation states accommodate and educate “polyglot populations” (Lo Bianco, 2000) who are beginning to speak new languages; particularly the language of the Internet (Cope
Global communication is embedding “new people in new worlds” where distributed and networked systems replace the security of “fixed identities, static localities and permanent jobs”. Citizens are now identifiable as “portfolios” that can fit into communities of practice operating with/in distributed networks (Gee, 2000, p. 61). These portfolio workers possess the multitude of skills that technology both enables and demands of workers; particularly knowledge workers (Heron, 1996).

ICTs are situated within the emerging world of “new capitalism” (Gee, 2000), and their proliferating in higher education is in fact creating wider markets for higher education. Academics are challenged to reshape the teaching and learning environment (Coardrake & Stedman, 1998; Gray, 2001) and to commodify education in products [learning objects] that will be marketed to and consumed by people around the globe (Ritzer, 1996b). Where a transfer of products and processes moves from the university to the market this is referred to as “technology transfer” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Ironically, it is this technology transfer that is displacing academic staff as the networks of “many to many communication” enabled through ICTs replace the formal lecture style format that existed within the boundaries of time and space of the traditional university. The choice to purchase education from knowledge providers around the globe is being determined by students, industry, and governments on the capacity of each university to differentiate its products in the marketplace, and will be governed in the future by technological advancement and reliability of delivery. Universities will increasingly need to debate and be challenged in decision-making processes relating to ICTs and to ascertain if there is a point at which “choice and flexibility in delivery of curriculum becomes self-defeating” (McInnis, 2001, p. 10). This debate is challenged by the inference that the new virtual “Pseudouniversities are not universities” (Altbach, 2001, p. 2). However, the debate occurs in a context of economic neo-liberalism that promotes the commodification and marketisation of higher education within the framework of new capitalism – a phenomenon that will now be explored.
2.2.4 Commodification and Marketisation of Higher Education

The relationship of the suppliers and users of knowledge to the knowledge they supply and use is now tending, and will increasingly tend, to assume the form already taken by the relationship of commodity producers and consumers to the commodities they produce and consume — that is, the form of value. Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. (Lyotard, 1984, pp. 4 – 5)

Efforts have also been made to create a more competitive environment within higher education. This may refer to governmental policies to build up a market-like resource allocation system, as well as to efforts to strengthen competition between and within higher education institutions. (Enders, 2000, p. 13)

Whilst “markets have always been a part of higher education” (Marginson, 1993, p. 43), the reality of education (particularly higher education) operating in a market place and under the jurisdiction of market forces, is a recent phenomenon. For example, higher education in Australia during the reign of the Labor Government under the leadership of Gough Whitlam (1972 – 75) allowed for the full funding of higher education, and from 1974 this even included free tertiary education (Round & Siegfried, 1998). However, Australian Governments (of different persuasions) since the Whitlam era have worked progressively towards introducing a market-based system rendering the concept of “free” education as a now distant memory. With this change towards an increasingly dominant market based system, higher education is radically different for both academic and student alike (McInnis, 1998b, 2001). The introduction of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) that accompanied the Unified National System (UNS) under Minister Dawkins’s reform as proclaimed in Higher Education: A Discussion Paper in 1987, heralded the “creation of a quasi-market system” (Marginson, 1997c, p. 220). For this market system to operate in a government controlled higher education system changed both the context and nature of higher education due to the fact that there are limited market mechanisms that can be government controlled (Niklasson, 1996). Along with the trends outlined in previous subsections of this chapter, the move towards commodification and marketisation of higher education have forged radically a new world of academic work (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994).
The major themes recurring through the literature concerning the commodification and marketisation of higher education and the resultant changes to academic work can be clustered around four key concepts:

- **The commodification of knowledge** which attributes exchange value to the knowledge based products of universities and academics (Gibson & Hatherell, 1997), and where exchange value is determined by a commodity being "marketed for profit, rather than by its usefulness in contributing to 'genuine' human need" (Winter, 1995, p. 136),
- Trends towards "marketisation" - the creation of markets in which these commodities are attributed exchange value and are exchanged (Kumar, 1997),
- Competition between universities resulting in contestability (Marginson, 1997a),
- The development and segmentation of academic labour markets (Finnegan, 1993) that result from marketisation.

The commodification of information and knowledge parallels the creation of a knowledge society (Stehr, 1994) that expands well beyond the university (Melody, 1997). This society allows for many different forms of knowing and knowledge and considers knowledge as a "carrier for extramural interests, whether of a practical or a self actualising form" (Barnett, 2000, p. 14). Accordingly, in a knowledge society, knowledge is judged in terms of commodity and performative value and is measured by its capacity "to pay its way, in whatever form" (Barnett, 2000, p. 14). This represents a shift away from the traditional perspective that focussed on knowledge as a necessary and sufficient condition for individuals to grow in human understanding, and as an essential and incontestable contributor to the "human ability to develop talents and capacities" (Gadamer, 1989, p. 10). These traditional views, often expressed in the concept of Bildung, inferred that knowledge was central to "self-formation" (Sharkey, 1997; Smith, 1985), and henceforth the university as the site of knowledge production was essential to the formation of individuals. Bildung, which developed as a "genuine innovation of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, was conceived as a universal requirement for humanity" that transcended disciplinary
barriers and worked toward supporting the cultural formation of national subjects (Moran, 2000, p. 267). Where universities support the notion of Bildung, there occurs “a process of development, of the cultivation of character” (Readings, 1996, p. 64) and knowledge acquisition is considered “a process rather than ... a product” (p. 67). However, as a response to globalising forces (Held, 1995), universities no longer focus on Bildung and knowledge is now viewed as a product or commodity that “ceases to be an end in itself” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 5). Universities have thus replaced the concept of Bildung and other traditional discourses that shaped higher education with that of performativity.

Under conditions of performativity “knowledge has to perform, to show that it has an impact on the world” (Barnett, 2000, p. 38), universities have to become focussed on matters of efficiency that judge the relevance of what is researched (and taught) in categories of utility and economics (Cowen, 1996), and accountability structures are created which place universities under intense surveillance by Government(s) that “maintain central control over the ‘products’ of universities” (Vidovich & Currie, 1998, p. 207). These accountabilities are largely a result of the “dereferentializing process of capitalist bureaucracy” (Readings, 1996, p. 126) that situates the university without “specific referents; they no longer refer to a specific set of things or ideas” (p. 17). This is opposed to the time when universities were once “self-referential” (Gibbons et al., 1994), “were seen as self-referencing” (Marginson, 1997b, p. 360), and where the processes of nation building and Bildung were identifiable by the university as a raison d'être. The traditional idea of the university both in name and through its charter sought to “turn (versus) all things into one (uni) ... this, then, is what the university does, it brings everything together, it unifies” (Smith, 1996a, p. 9). This concept of the unifying nature of the university is prevalent in Newman’s Discourses (1927), which note, “the generality of knowledge is provided by the unity of different disciplines within an overarching theological framework” (Winter, 1995, p. 131).

With moves towards commodification and marketisation the focus of higher education has moved from unification to differentiation (Ramsden, 1998a) and the theological framework is replaced by a globalised capitalist framework as
evidenced through the diversification of knowledge-based products and markets. The *raison d'etre* of universities now appears to be the growth and development of markets that not only provide “full cost recovery” (Fisher & Rubenson, 1998) but that lead to profits that support the business of higher education as it grows further markets. The results of this sea change in higher education include the following:

- The notion of the welfare state that once supported education has waned (Stoer & Cortesao, 2000), and welfare “has been redefined as a privilege, rather a right, within a framework of mutual obligation and the goal of individual self-sufficiency” (Lingard, 2000, p. 86). With performativity measures based on the criteria of the market being used to “allocate resources and regulate entry” (Gibbs, 1996, p. 156) there is little regard for individual welfare that once helped define higher education.

- Economic restructuring signifying “the fiscal crisis of the welfare state” (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p. 45) has resulted in an increasing privatisation of education and other social services (Burbules & Torres, 2000). Education is now considered as a “private rather than a public good” (Meek, 2000, p. 24) and education policy is “dominated by the drive to reduce fiscal costs” (Considine, Marginson, Sheehan, & Kumnick, 2001, p. 3).

- Paramount in government thinking are systems that allow for “meeting the demands of the ‘postindustrial’ society” (Barlow, 1995, p. 181). Such systems engage with Human Capital Theory; a theory premised upon “the self-maximizing, autonomous, individual chooser and upon national productivity measures” (Blackmore, 2000, p. 144), that views students as future workers who “must be given the requisite skills and dispositions to compete efficiently and effectively” (Apple, 2000, p. 60). However, Marginson (1997c) cautions against the overuse of human capital theory and suggests it is more positional relativity that determines the value of education as not all education “can have high economic value” (p. 48).
• The role of Government (The State) in education has changed. Whereas once there was state control under which the government had total oversight of the operation of the public services, there is now a "state supervisory steering model" (Meek & Wood, 1997; van Vught, 1989). This model is hand in glove with market models that not only order the funding and organisation of universities but also act as a control system.

• Academics [read academic labour] have been classified as (inter-alia) "market professionals" (McCollow, 1996) who are expected to engage in these market behaviours and are measured on their performance to add value rather than be "asset strippers - taking out their pay but not bringing in resources" (Kenway & Langmead, 1998, p. 29).

• Students are now consumers of knowledge - often referred to as clients, (Anderson, 1997) - who along with industry and government are both willing to and required to pay for the purchase of knowledge commodities on a user pay basis (Roberts, 1998).

Marginson (1997a) describes "marketisation" as "the introduction or extension of some or all the forms of a competitive economic market" (p. 6). Whilst Fairclough (2000) suggests a broader reading of the term and uses it interchangeably with the terms "commodification" and "consumerisation" his definition is useful in characterising the changes in higher education where marketisation is observable as an "extension of market modes of operation to new areas of social life" (pp. 163 - 164). Constant to the literature on marketisation are the suggestions that marketisation signifies the conditions of neoliberal political philosophy (Apple, 2000; Fairclough, 2000; Gordon, 1991; Marshall, 1995), and that markets operate within a framework of the global spread of the political and economic forces of capitalism (Dudley, 1998; Fukyama, 1992). These forces "threaten to submit the integrity of educational and academic values to the forms and priorities of market-oriented production (Winter, 1995, p. 129). Capitalist production (Marginson, 1997c) which always take place "on the basis of unequal ownership of capital" and involves an "unequal exchange: each party tries to profit at the expense of the other" (p. 15) has become normative for universities throughout many countries (Slaughter, 1998). Capitalism is defined
as "an economic system in which allocation decisions are driven by market forces" (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p. 9). Accompanying the marketisation of the higher education system is the inescapable reality that universities and academics, once traditionally considered as employees of the public sector, are now in fact engaging in "academic capitalism".

In a globalised society, information is commodified, packaged and exchanged through world markets (Melody, 1997) and knowledge is regarded as "a commodity tradable in the market" (Edwards & Usher, 2000, p. 93). These markets exist on a global scale due to "the lowering of barriers between countries in respect of the transfer of capital" (Jarvis, 1996, p. 234) and are made possible due to increasing free trade (Mortimore, 2000). With knowledge production assuming the characteristics of an industry (Winter, 1995) albeit in ways different to the traditional sense of the term (Hambly, 1997), and the commodities of education being traded within a consumer society (Jarvis, 2000), there has developed a new consumer relationship providing students with increasing choices (D. Johnson, 1998) and governing how students interact with the university. Consumers of higher education (or as they are often referred to as clients) are given “authority – the authority which comes from the power to choose, and to shop around” (Fairclough, 2000, p. 164) as they selectively customise their own learning programs through various combinations of modular components (Dearlove, 1997). This authority changes greatly the traditional role of the academic and affects the relationship(s) between academic and student. What then are students purchasing with the commodity of higher education?

Marginson (1995, p. 19), drawing on the work of Hirsch (1976), describes the commodities in education as falling into two main forms; “positional goods and knowledge goods”. Positional goods are defined as those that "provide students with relative advantage in the competition for future jobs, income, and social standing and prestige ... and are not only scarce (like all market goods) but scarce in absolute terms" (Marginson, 1993, pp. 46 – 47). Knowledge goods “are not subject to absolute scarcity and the expansion of the production of these goods does not necessarily reduce their value”. Such expansion is witnessed in higher education through a proliferation of the "artefacts of knowledge, as defined by the
laws governing intellectual property (e.g., copyright, patents, trademarks)” and when “people purchase an education not for occupational or social position, but in order to change themselves, to turn themselves into different people in some way” (p. 48). Kell (1998) adds to this definition by suggesting that commodification has repackaged education into “lifestyle options and choices” and students are transformed from receptive (often passive) and dependent recipients of the old public service model of education to being active consumers able to exercise choice as they seek to maximise their options (pp. 8 – 9).

To view knowledge as an economic resource (Barlow, 1995), determines that higher education must operate amidst market forces that consequently lead universities into situations of competition (Dill & Sporn, 1995; D. Johnson, 1998). This competition is often seen as encouraging market responsiveness, enhancing productivity, and ensuring accountability to those who purchase the products of education. Competition now occurs between universities (both nationally and internationally) for standing and prestige within the higher education system, for students, consultancy, and funding for research and teaching. The tertiary education sector has also recently witnessed the introduction of private providers of education and the growth of open training markets in the Vocational and Educational Training (VET) sector. This provides evidence that under conditions of increasing deregulation universities may also be forced to compete in the open market to provide “a diverse and client centred focus” that the institutional form of public sector universities is incapable to provide (Kell, Balatti, & Muspratt, 1997, p. 43). These market conditions create a scenario of contestability that allows “for new producers to enter the game, create new approaches and place more pressure on the existing producers” (Marginson, 1997a, p. 6).

The capacity of universities to compete with the better resourced private commercial organisations is questioned by Kumar (1997) who asserts that universities are becoming “absurd and increasingly despised as they compete among themselves like manufacturers of washing powders, employing increasingly grotesque marketing strategies” (p. 27). However, the inescapable reality is that universities now face the need to position themselves within the market place, and to compete with each other within an environment of “mutual
contestation of knowledges” (Smith & Webster, 1997b, p. 5). This positioning of universities within the market place - often characterised by market segments based on the history and prestige of the institution rather than the products produced and services offered - is “part of the commodity value which each institution takes with it into the market” (Gibson & Hatherell, 1997, p. 131). Marginson (1997a) categorises these institutional (and market) segments of the Australian university sector as the “Sandstone” universities, comprising the older traditional universities in each State; the “Wannabee Sandstones” representing the other pre-1987 universities; the “Unitechs” previously the Institutes of Technology in each State; and the “New Universities” representing the other post-1987 universities. In a later classification (Marginson & Considine, 2000) the “Wannabee Sandstones” are reclassified as “Redbrick” and “Gumtree” universities. This segmentation indicates that universities are increasingly geared towards differentiating themselves and their products to operate in a market that is highly contestable. It is inevitable that under these conditions that accompany this post-Fordist era (Barlow, 1995) in which performance and productivity are seen as the positive by-products of competition (Hilmer, 1993) that there will be an impact on the academic labour processes that determine the nature of the academic workforce and the conditions for academic work.

There are many levels of impact on academic labour and academic work caused by the commodification and marketisation of higher education. Firstly, universities are controlled by government policy that since the latter part of the 20th century has addressed the perceived crisis of Fordist production techniques. This policy has changed from one that supported an education of the elite, to one that encourages a mass education that focuses on students as future workers who are multi-skilled, flexible and able to demonstrate mastery of the competencies that are deemed as essential capabilities for the new worker for the post-Fordist era (ACTU/TDC, 1987; Carmichael, 1992). This post-Fordist era is characterised by “an abandonment of undifferentiated mass production, of linear careers, of hierarchical (and deferential) social structures, even of personal identities as traditionally determined” (Scott, 1997, p. 42). Whilst these policy changes were happening at a macro-level it was natural that the impact of change in higher education would also be felt at the local level and in immediate and palpable
ways. Firstly, a change in policy determined a change in curriculum. A major change occurred with the “restructuring of education curricula ... to meet the needs of the workforce reform agenda” (Barlow, 1995, p. 182), and curriculum focussed less on content and more on allowing for the acquisition of generic capabilities (Bowden & Marton, 1998) and measurable outcomes (Barlow, 1995). Secondly, as economic policy led universities towards a market driven system, there were significant changes required to define and develop educational products that were highly tradable on the education market. Aligned with the workforce restructuring agenda mentioned above was a proliferation of short-term and modularised courses that allowed workers to “up-skill” and to embrace the capabilities required of the new worker. Universities were keen to capitalize on these markets and those courses in high competition (such as business/management) were prioritised within the academy (Marginson, 1995; Pederson, 1991). Whilst these programs are often referred to as “professional courses” their popularity in terms of market-driven criteria have led to a diminution of [perceived] value in courses in the social sciences and humanities (Hunter, Meredyth, Smith, & Stokes, 1991; McCalman, 2000). Market forces also now regulate entry of students into these courses with mechanisms such as highly competitive entrance scores replacing the notion of individual welfare (Gibbs, 1996). Thirdly academics were forced to “restructure their own work ‘practices’ in return for productivity gains and hence pay rises” (Barlow, 1995, p. 183) as they became more productive (Currie & Woock, 1995). This restructuring of work practice in response to market demands makes it increasingly difficult for academics to maintain a market value, particularly for those academics who work in disciplinary specialities that are not in high demand (Burke, 1988; Finnegan, 1993; A. Welch, 1997).

At a more general level, the thesis of Braverman (1974) that accompanying twentieth-century capitalism is an increasingly controlled and deskilled workforce, applies as equally to academic labour as to its original target cohort of manual workers (Currie & Woock, 1995; Smyth, 1995; Winter, 1995). Thisdeskilling of the workforce is witnessed in higher education with academic labour being proletarianised (Dearlove, 1997; Halsey, 1992; Wilson, 1991), and with academics moving from their original status of “craft worker” to one of purveyors
of commodities within a knowledge supermarket (Winter, 1995). The new academic worker requires increasing flexibility and mobility and is required to continue to up-skill to meet the demands of new market requirements (Barrow, 1995). Miller (1995) suggests that academic markets are “increasingly determined by the state, institutional managers, and the market” (p. 56) with the result that academics are “losing ‘ideological’ control of their work” (p. 57). Marginson (2000) refers to this phenomenon as a “Deconstruction of the Academic Profession” (p. 32) characterised by a rise in marketisation and central control through university professional administration and management and an accompanying loss of autonomy by academics over both their teaching and research.

A further change in the academic labour market is a shift in academic labour (employment) patterns. A casualised (often referred to as “contract” or “limited tenure”) workforce has gradually replaced a permanent (tenured) academic workforce as a direct result of franchising and modularity (Trowler, 1998). Casualisation can foster disadvantage as non-tenured staff often do not have the opportunity for conference participation, contract research, or consultancy; credentials that are taken as the mandatory for entry into the academic labour market and/or promotion and career building (Henkel, 2000). This privileging of the tenured academic, whilst bolstering “the career progression of the core labour market academics, who in the main are male” (Barlow, 1995, p. 189), is often at the expense of the efforts of female academics who may choose, or be forced to work as casual academics (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Dearlove, 1997) and who receive “lower pay and have insecure appointments with no benefits” (Currie, 1998b).

Despite the realities of commodification and marketisation it is questionable as to what extent universities are (and can be) fully market-driven and thus be required to operate totally as a private good within a market economy (Dill, 1997). As Meek (1997) suggests, “if it were a ‘true’ market environment, the government would allow some universities to go bankrupt” (pp. 271 – 272). Questioning by academics and other critics of the transformation of the higher education sector that is arising as a result of commodification and marketisation indicates “a
conflict between economic and educational objectives which is likely to become a permanent feature of the landscape” (Marginson, 1993, p. 59). Competition (for students) has always been a part of universities (Thorne & Cuthbert, 1996). However, the attempts by some universities to move towards a full market culture through processes such as privatisation, commercialisation and the deregulation of fees, need to be considered in light of the reality that as a result of these developments “the newer and smaller campuses in the system will suffer” (Gale, 1997, p. 112). Clearly the market in higher education is uneven, there is no level playing field and the gain of one institution will be at the loss of another. The process of commodification, competition and marketisation is in some ways a “zero-sum game: what winners win, losers lose” (Hirsch, 1976, p. 52) but it is a game that will continue to dominate the academic agenda for many years to come.

2.2.5 Massification of Higher Education

The term ‘mass higher education’ was traditionally employed to describe the growth in enrolment beyond the level of academic reproduction and training for a small number of occupations requiring this education for demanding professions and privileged social positions. (Teichler, 1998a, p. 19)

Where once the role of the university was seen as providing opportunities for “the training of the gentleman” (Newman, 1927), or as providing an education for an elite and small number of able students who could afford such a privilege, the contemporary university is seen as providing education and opportunity for a diverse student body drawn from a broad social and economic mix. This transformation has created opportunities of access for those who desire a higher education by removing the barriers to entry to university programs (Smith & Webster, 1997a). Consequently, it has also moved the system from one that called for comparatively little expenditure of public funds to one that now makes major financial demands on society (Harman, 1992). The phenomenon of mass higher education is relatively recent and is seen to coincide with the expansion of higher education “after 1945 under the impact of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act (The GI Bill) in the USA” (Cowen, 1996, p. 252). The expansion in higher
education that has occurred since World War II is referred to as “Mass Higher Education” and the phenomenon is known as “Massification”. Massification in higher education does not stand as an isolated phenomenon but is aligned with other changes in society – particularly that of the change to post-industrialism (Scott, 1995, 1997) and post-Fordism (Amin, 1994) – as evidenced through a differentiation of technology, a complexity of labour division, and a fragmentation of social order (Cope & Kalantzis, 1997).

The seminal work of Trow (1970; Trow, 1973) brought to the fore a theorising of the shift from an elite to a mass higher education system. For Trow, a mass higher education system replaces that of the “elite” system when it reaches an age participation rate of between 15 per cent to 40 per cent of the eligible population, and becomes a “universal” system when more than 40 per cent of the age grade in higher education are enrolled (Barnett, 2000; Scott, 1997; Trow, 1973; Trowler, 1998). The growth in participation rates in higher education that characterise massification now appear as a common feature amongst the majority of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nations (OECD, 1998). Sadlak (1998) suggests that between 1980 and 1995 the increase in students participating in higher education in the world rose from 51 to 82 million – an increase of 61% (p. 101). Barnett (2000) indicates that by 1995 the UNESCO figures indicate participation rates in higher education for the developed world at 60% (p. 173). In Britain, the age participation index of students in higher education more than quadrupled between the 1960’s and the mid 1990’s (Filmer, 1997; Scott, 1995), and in Australia, a country that has committed universities to serve “the general citizenry rather than the elite for whom the system originally was designed” (Tierney, 1997, p. 19), the student numbers between 1987 and 1998 “grew from 393 734 to 671 853” (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 56). At the end of 2001 these figures for Australia are reported to be 726, 418 (Lawnham, 2002).

The shift towards massification has been accompanied by wide ranging implications. Gibbons (1994) refers to this period of massification as a “profound transformation of knowledge production inside and outside of universities” (p. 76) and outlines ten major shifts that have accompanied massification. These shifts
include (inter alia) a diversification of function in universities, changing social profile of students, a reliance on multiple sources of funding, and a broadening of accountability; many of these areas have been explored in the previous subsections of this chapter. In this section it is proposed to explore massification from three key perspectives that appear in the literature – the relationship between massification and government policy and finance, the student experience and quality education, and the re-creating of the university in this era of mass higher education.

Mass higher education has a direct relationship with government policy and finances (Lingard & Rizvi, 1998). The policy focus of massification is seen clearly in the White Paper (Dawkins, 1988b) that resulted in profound changes to higher education through establishing the Unified National System, a system that encourages diversity amongst student populations. The result of the Unified National System has been an “alleged abandonment of a binary system” (Patience, 2000); the reference to an alleged abandonment inferring that there is little evidence of unification in a higher education sector that continues to distinguish and differentiate between the established and the new universities (Filmer, 1997; Scott, 1995). With regarding to the government financing of higher education it is evidenced that as student numbers have increased, the expenditure of government on higher education has decreased significantly (Tierney & McInnis, 2001). Such change in these variables of the financing equation result in a sharp reduction in unit costs. Given the increases in productivity achieved through the accountability mechanisms of efficiency and effectiveness, it is ensured that mass universities are now working in a different economic system from elite institutions (Watson, 1996). In Australia, the total funding derived for higher education derived from governments fell from 85 per cent in 1987 to 54 per cent in 1997 (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 56). During the period 1996 – 2000 the total Commonwealth Operating grants for Australian Universities were set to fall a further “20 per cent in real terms” (Williams, 1998, p. 151). Scott (1998) in exploring the relationship between massification and government financing suggests that the price of massification has been “demands for greater accountability ... and more exact subordination of universities to national political purposes (p. 113).
Accompanying these changes in government policy and finance is that of a trend in labour markets towards credentialism. Credentialism — "an increase in the credential required to enter the same level of occupation" (Marginson, 1997c) - has become a by-product of massification (for both secondary and tertiary education) with the result that there has been "a deflation of the exchange value of credentials" (p. 208) as occupations now require higher levels of credentials of workers entering the workforce. This is evidenced in the number of students returning to university to acquire post-graduate degrees in the hope of increasing their prospects of future jobs or to attain promotion (the nature of positional goods) for employment that once would have required far less in terms of qualifications.

A second issue is the impact of mass higher education on the student experience and the quality of academic offerings made available, both of which are affected by the number of academics available to communicate with students. The number of academics employed in Australian universities has declined (often in favour of professional administrators) whilst enrolments are rising thus altering the staff-student ratio from 13:1 in 1987, to 16:1 in 1996 (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 59). This ratio was 18.8:1 in 2000 (Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee, 2001) and is reported as currently being at 19:1 in 2001 (Lawnham, 2002). Whilst the relationship between quality education and funding appears as a strong positive correlation, any transformation in higher education in terms of quantitative expansion does not appear to be paralleled by a transformation in quality education (Scott, 1997). The quality of university experience for students and the availability of course and program offerings that accompanied the elite system has moved from that of a liberal and holistic education to align with labour market expectations of a more vocational and competency based training (Langtry, 2000). The growth in size of universities required for the provision of mass education has been accompanied by changes to the more collegial nature of the traditional university. Where once the university provided a total campus experience, the reality of the massified university is one where students expect universities to fit with their lives, to be places where they converge occasionally to attend lecturers and then return to their communities (both social and
professional) to socialise and to earn money to pay for university fees; a process referred to by McInnis (2001) as “Disengagement”.

Coinciding with massification has been a re-creating of the image of the university. Through metaphor the image of the university has been likened to an “isolated village with its priests”, a “one-industry town ... with its intellectual oligarchy”, and a “city of infinite variety and multiple uses ... a Multiversity” (Kerr, 1963, p. 41). Barrow (1995) adds to these images with reference to a further transition – a ‘flexiversity’ model - that emphasizes market specialization and faculty flexibility (p. 159).

Linking massification with the phenomenon of commodification and marketisation has been the establishment of many new higher education institutions, often calling themselves universities (Pelikan, 1992), which provide alternative products and delivery modes to higher education consumers. These institutions have been referred to as “Pseudouniversities” (Altbach, 2001), and the process/es in which they engage are likened to a “McDonaldization” of higher education (Mok, 1999; Ritzer, 1996b) due to the use of popular American consumer icons (McBurnie, 2001) in their marketing campaigns. Largely belonging to the for-profit sector, these organisations compete with State (and National) universities for students who do not gain a place in a mainstream university or who prefer a more professional or commercial training orientation to that offered by regular universities. In terms of contestability and competition these entrants certainly challenge the preserve of the traditional university in conferring exchange value on knowledge (Bauman, 1987), and in being the exclusive institutional model within higher education (Scott, 1998). However, balancing this is the opportunity afforded by these institutions to those who can afford to pay the high level of fees that these organisations charge thereby freeing up more publicly funded university places for the mass markets of students.

The massification of higher education brings with it positive and negative elements. The benefits of greater access, equitable participation in higher education and increased human capital contributing to the advancement of society are strengths that accompany mass higher education. At the other extreme is a
continued debate about the capacity of the university sector to provide adequately for the increasing cohorts that are now participating in higher education (Filmer, 1997). The multi-dimensional nature of the university encouraged both by massification and marketisation has led to great diversity amongst universities, referred to as a “legitimation of disorder” (Clark, 1983). However, this diversity, whilst indicating that universities do not need a great deal of interdependence, may also be disadvantageous for those students who do not gain a place in the universities that are higher on a league table, that receive greater financial support paralleling their research reputation, and that provide increased opportunity for graduating students.

Whilst massification is referred to as a move away from an elite system it is suggested that elements of elitism remain despite larger proportions of any cohort now being able to access higher education (D. Johnson, 1998). This view echoes that of Neave (1985) and Robertson (1996) that claim that the new mass education system is a rewriting of the elite system only with far more students (Trowler, 1998), and parallels that of Gibbons (1994) with regard to research which is “still considered an elite activity, even if carried out by large numbers of people and requires intense socialisation in an academic discipline” (p. 70). It is to be noted also that mass higher education does not extend to all disciplines within the academy. On the basis of market control and positional value, certain disciplines such as medicine and law have been able to maintain their elite status despite the trend to massification in business and other professional areas (Marginson, 1997c). Such mechanisms as competitive entry, or the charging of high/er fees do act to regulate certain academic qualifications and to ensure that some academic degrees do retain their elite nature (Round & Siegfried, 1998), therefore indicating that the rhetoric of equity may be tempered by reality.

As evidenced in this section, an exploration of the links between massification and marketisation suggests that the threads of the phenomena effecting higher education are closely interwoven, and such links give rise to other phenomena. For example, the diversity that now exists amongst universities calls for measures of greater accountability to government and independent funding bodies that finance the work of higher education thus giving rise to the phenomena of
corporatisation and managerialism. These phenomena impact greatly on higher education and most other public sector organisations and are explored in the following section.

2.2.6 Corporatisation and Managerialism in Higher Education

The mass university has two organisational characteristics – managerialism and reflexivity. The first is most marked during the early stages of the transition from elite to mass higher education, which broadly corresponds to the shift from ‘collegial’ to ‘managerial’ modes of institutional management. Universities are forced to become more robust organizations, partly to compensate for the decay of common academic and professional cultures, and partly to counteract the erosion of public trust, which has undermined most established institutions. (Scott, 1995, p. 70)

Governments across the English-speaking world are seeking to harness higher education to their political agendas and this requires not just more direct control of universities but a style of university governance that facilitates government intervention and direction. Managerialism supports the sort of style that governments are seeking: responsive and focussed on ‘value for money’. (Lindsay, 1995, p. 12)

To explore the phenomenon of managerialism in higher education it is necessary to interpret the rise of managerial practices in universities within the wider change scenario that has impacted on public sector organisations. To isolate managerialism from these larger issues could present a skewed picture of managerialism and possibly perpetuate without critique, a view that managerialism “can give satisfying expression to the distaste that many professional scholars feel for the mundane frustrations of being employees in a large organization” (Gilbert, 1998a).

Managerialism - often labelled New Managerialism (Deem, 2001), New Public Management (Considine & Painter, 1997), or Corporate Management (Marginson, 1997c) - refers to a mode of management for publicly funded institutions, that “embodies an ‘output’ emphasis and defines and attempts to measure management performance on the basis of outputs wherever possible in quantifiable terms” (Painter, 1997, p. 39). The systematic managerial techniques that characterise managerialism are basically derived from the private sector (henceforth the term...
corporate management) and are aimed at aligning organisational sub-units, and balancing centralised control with decentralised autonomy (Alford, 1998). The rise of managerialism has effected public institutions across the board - not just universities - to the extent that we now engage in a new language of public administration (J. Patterson, 1997).

The term managerialism can refer either to techniques of management in their application, or more broadly to the ideologies that support these values and actions (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Deem, 2001; Pollitt, 1990). Alford (1997) in questioning if public and private sector management is “Similar or Different” (p. 154) suggests that both factors need to be considered; the task (function) of managing in the public sector, and the context of managing in the public sector.

There are numerous frames (such as economics and/or public policy) through which to explore the restructuring processes that surround managerialism and its impact on State (public) services. Lingard (2000) refers to a political shift attempting “to bring transnational capital and state organizational form into ‘sync’... under the rubric of ‘new public management’ or ‘corporate managerialism’” (p. 82). Peters (2000) cites managerialism as “one of the prime elements in a shift to a neoliberal educational policy discourse” (p. 118) that manifests itself as a “technology for institutional organization” (p. 110). Considine (1997) views the rise of corporate management as “shifts in the mode or framework of control within organizations ... viewed as changes in technologies of power rather than major paradigm shifts” (p. 48). Marginson (1997c) links the rise of managerial practices to “the marketisation of government functions” (p. 70) that occurred in the late 1980’s and a resultant economy that was “truly market liberal in character” that “undertook the task of economic rationalisation” (p. 71). With reference to higher education, Marginson (1997c) observes that as a result of this liberal government policy and “by turning collegial autonomy into corporate market autonomy, universities were redeployed as self-regulating and partly self-financing market institutions” (p. 72). Slaughter (1991) notes a similar move towards a new management of academic labour in relation to scientific research. Despite this move to self-regulation, governments may seem to have “withdrawn from the direct control of outcomes” (Brett, 2000,
p. 144) but they are in fact governing or steering from a distance (Ball, 1994; Maassen, 1996; Marginson, 1997d; Miller & Rose, 1990). Meek (1997), in quoting a 1993 report from the Department of Employment, Education, and Training (DEET) that “government should assist institutions to achieve ... strong managerial modes of operation, removing barriers to delegation of policy implementation while maintaining a variety of inputs to policy determination”, supports this theme of a market steering of higher education and suggests that this “requires strong corporate management at the institutional level” (p. 262).

As with the management of most public institutions, academic management of today is different to that experienced in previous eras (Dearlove, 1997; Knight & Lingard, 1996). Where once the dominant models for university management were the collegial model (Karmel, 1987; Miller & Findlay, 1996) that provided for “shared decision making along with trust, openness, concern and cooperation” (Currie & Vidovich, 1998, p. 158), or departmentalism (Rowe, 1960) where “each department was a fiefdom ruled over by the Professor-God” (McQueen, 2000, p. 15), the new managerialist framework now “puts a premium on the efficient and disciplined use of resources, the achievement of value-for-money and increased productivity” (Middlehurst & Elton, 1992, p. 253). Issues such as accountability and quality assurance have entered the realm of university management by way of response to the requirements placed on universities to be more accountable to governments where “emphasis is placed centrally on broad policy steering, accountability, and performance” (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 12).

Where Bergquist (1992) refers to the managerial culture as one amongst four cultures of the academy, Scott (1995) in outlining the historical development of management in modern universities suggests there have been four distinct phases in university government and management; The Civic Phase (late 19th to early 20th century), The Donnish Phase (the 1920's - early 1960's), The Democratic University (late 1960's - 1970's), and the Managerial University (1980's onwards). The context of the Managerial University is a response to a “harsher external environment of (fewer) resources and (more) accountability and to a radical intensification of complexity in terms of both intellectual values and organizational structures within the university” (p. 62). In acknowledging that
Scott is writing primarily about the ‘old’ British universities - he does also include the ‘New Universities’ with reference to them as “free standing corporations” (p. 67) - there are similar developments observable in the restructuring of management practices in public institutions both in Australia (Barlow, 1995; Miller, 2000) and in other countries (Altbach & Davis, 1999; Berman, 1998; Mok, 1999).

It is suggested that public universities working within this context of managerial change could no longer be managed under the “old traditions of scholarly self-government” (Dearlove, 1995, p. 161), and relationships (both economic and political) within these changing external environments could no longer “be handled on the basis of leisurely senate discussion but required crisp managerial responses” (Scott, 1995, p. 64). Studies into university efficiency such as The Jarratt Report in the United Kingdom began to articulate loudly that universities are first and foremost corporate enterprises to which subsidiary units and individual academics are responsible and accountable (Jarratt, 1985). However, such accountability can also be viewed as an attempt to relocate power away from academics to management (Cave, Dodsworth, & Thompson, 1995). To achieve “new approaches to campus management” (Duening & Kadipasaoglu, 1996, p. 57) required experimentation with different techniques of management (e.g., Total Quality Management). Similarly, management and administrative positions within universities have been reclassified and retitled to reflect these changes; Vice-Chancellors are now referred to as Chief Executive Officers (Currie & Woock, 1995), Librarians are referred to as Directors of Information Services, and numerous positions of Deputy or Pro Vice-Chancellors positions have been created to manage specified portfolios (e.g., International Students, Teaching and Learning, Business Development).

One outcome of the emergence of new public management has been the sustained debate that managerialism challenges the traditional academic culture. Whilst academics such as Brett (2000), Crittenden (1997), Currie (1998), Kogan (1989) and Gibbons (1994) suggest that the biggest challenge to academic culture presented by managerialism is the disrespect and erosion of collegial relations, proponents of the new management suggest that these new management
techniques do in fact respect collegial decision-making. As Gilbert (1998a, p. 5) states “Collegial decision making must be representation. Not everyone has the necessary knowledge and expertise to inform every decision. The diversion of time and commitment away from direct scholarly activities that would be needed to achieve that would be disastrous”. This is to suggest that new management (as opposed to that exercised through collegial decision making) can in fact allow academics to focus on their distinctive competence that lies in matters academic rather than some of the unproductive aspects of administration that falls under the techniques of managerialism (Patterson, 1992; Penington, 1997).

With regard to new university management, academics such as Langtry (2000) and Molony (2000) adopt the traditional view of Newman that universities should be isolated against “worldly motives of politics and economics, devoted simply and exclusively to the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake through the free and critical exchange of ideas” (Winter, 1995, p. 132). Others take a more balanced stance; for example Yeatman (1995), whilst acknowledging current managerialist rhetoric as a vehicle for change in higher education, claims that “universities are not like business firms” and therefore have to work in different ways; “ways which encourage a critical culture of rational enquiry” (p. 204). Taylor (1999) suggests that for many academics the term managerialism represents “a convenient characterization, a concrete and coherent set of managerial practices and a set of experiences (alienation, falling morale, and so on) associated with an assumed world-view” (p. 72). However there is also evidence that critics of the modern university, who on observing the lack of administrative or external control exercised in the university as opposed to other organisations, see this as “evidence that the academy is indeed an asylum in the hands of the inmates” (Kennedy, 1997, p. 139).

Regardless of where individuals reside in the debate, studies into academic work conducting in the era of managerialism (Martin, 1999; McInnis, 1998b; Sheehan & Welch, 1996; Winter & Sarros, 2001) indicate that academics are becoming “increasingly dispirited, demoralised, and alienated from their organizations” (Ramsden, 1998a, p. 75). The kickback by academics against managerialism is reflected in the suggestion that “Managerialism gradually comes to dominate
collegiate cooperation in the organization of both teaching and learning” and in
the witnessing of a “gradual proletarianisation of the academic profession”
(Halsey, 1992, p. 13). Such sentiments have led many to suggest that indeed the
university is in crisis (Reeves, 1988; Scott, 1984; Wiltshire, 1990). The current
Minister, Dr. Brendan Nelson, has recently revoked this allegation stating
unequivocally “there is not a crisis in higher education, I find it hard to accept that
there’s a crisis in a sector that has $20 billion in fixed assets ... and is likely to
have revenues this year in order of $10.4 billion” (Nelson, 2002). Ironically, this
statement of Nelson’s follows closely in time an inquiry of the Senate of the
Commonwealth of Australia with the findings and recommendations reported
under the title “Universities in Crisis” (Australia Parliament, 2001).

“Corporate reforms to Australian universities present challenges to both managers
and academics” (Winter & Sarros, 2001, p. 15). These challenges will continue
well beyond managerialism and it appears that the next phase of management in
public institutions is already emerging and we are poised to enter a period of
“Post-Managerialism” (Trossa, 1997). McNay (1995) in expounding a model of
change in universities uses the dimensions of Policy Definition, and Control of
Implementation to categorise university cultures under the headings of Collegium,
Bureaucracy, Corporation, and Enterprise (see also Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999,
p. 12; Ramsden, 1998a, p. 31; Taylor, 1999, p. 76). Whilst the Bureaucracy
model is where McNay places the current managerialist approach of universities
he predicts that there is a further move ahead and that is to the Enterprise
University. This theme is also taken up by Marginson (2000) who defines the
future model of the university as Enterprise to “capture both economic and
academic dimensions, and the manner in which research and scholarship survive
but are now subject to new systems of competition and demonstrable
performance” (p. 5). In a similar forecast Scott (1995), with reference to mass
higher education, predicts a move “from ‘managerial’ to ‘strategic’ institutional
cultures” as the bureaucratic model that emerged “to cope with the internal shift
from homogeneity to heterogeneity and with a more exacting external policy
environment, may not be sufficiently flexible to manage these larger institutions”
(p. 69). In her inaugural professorial lecturer as Vice-Chancellor of RMIT
University in Melbourne, Professor Ruth Dunkin develops further the writing of

56
Clark (1995) by suggesting the new way forward is from "entrepreneurship" to "innovation" (Dunkin, 2000). In a similar inaugural professorial lecture at Macquarie University, Pro Vice-Chancellor Alan Lindsay suggests that a way forward is to emphasise leadership to "contribute to the integration of collegiality and managerialism" (Lindsay, 1995, p. 17). The writings of Coaldrake (1998), Ramsden (1998a), Barnett (2000), and Sarros, Gmelch, and Tanewski (1998) also focus on the role of leadership and vision in relation to academic management. However, universities are cautioned in pursuing such vision when appointing academic managers at the expense of appointing academic leaders who exhibit "a personal love of scholarship, a strong sense of the old, deep things a university is for, and with a capacity for getting to the point in practical matters" (Evans, 2002, p. 108).

In acknowledging that the future shape of higher education is largely unknown we are reminded that our current position has been characterised as one of standing "at the crossroads" (Department of Education, 2002). Accordingly, in order to ensure that the path we select for our future is indeed the most appropriate, it is essential that academics and higher education policy makers continue to monitor and evaluate the impact the aforementioned phenomena are having on higher education in general, and the specific impact these phenomena have on the life experience of the academic. To assist this process it is important to situate the reality of today within the historical context of the major policy decisions that have led us to arrive at this intersection of the crossroads.

2.3 The Context and Policy Framework of Higher Education of Australian Higher Education

The latter half of the twentieth century witnessed a groundswell in policy development relating to higher education in Australia. As suggested in the previous section, continuous change in the policy and practice of the higher education sector is essential if universities are to keep abreast of the many related phenomena that are impacting on the world at large. In this section it is proposed
to examine the context and policy framework in Australia that has accompanied the changes that have led us to our current position regarding higher education.

The significant Australian higher education commissions and reports in the latter half of the 20th century that have shaped the context for today's universities are:

- The Murray Report (Committee on Australian Universities) 1957,
- The Martin Report (Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia) 1964,
- The Williams Report (Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training) 1979,
- The Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission) 1986,
- The Dawkins Review (Higher Education, policy discussion (green paper) and statement (white paper) 1987–88,
- Higher Education: Quality and Diversity in the 90's (Hon. P. B. Baldwin) 1991,
- Achieving Quality, (Higher Education Council) 1992,
- Higher Education Management Review (D. Hoare, Chairman) 1995,
- Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy (R. West, Chairman) 1998,
- At the Crossroads (Commissioned May 2002).

For this thesis, three government policy reviews have been selected for consideration. These reviews are:

a) Higher Education, a Policy Statement (Dawkins)

b) The Higher Education Management Review (Hoare)

c) The Review of Higher Education Finance and Policy (West)

This selection is based on the significance and the scope that these initiatives presented to the higher education sector, the resultant policy decisions that have led to systemic and structural reform, and the debate that these reviews have initiated about current and future developments for higher education in Australia. It is to be noted that in selecting these reviews for consideration there is no
inference as to worth or place in history of the other mentioned reports and reviews.

2.3.1 Higher Education, a Policy Statement

In July 1988 the Hon. J. S. Dawkins announced a significant restructuring of the Higher Education system in Australia. Central to this restructuring was the introduction of a “Unified National System” of higher education. This system was to replace the dual or “binary” system that had been operating in Australia since 1965 following the recommendations of the Martin Committee (The Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia). The binary policy assumed “separate roles and responsibilities for universities on the one hand, and for colleges of advanced education on the other, in the provision of higher education” (Davies, 1989, p. 1). The Unified National System for Higher Education removed these “distinctions made between the university and advanced education sectors” and proposed funding arrangements on “the basis of merit and achievement rather than historical precedent and arbitrary classification” (Dawkins, 1988b, p. 10). This was not to suggest that the unified system mandated uniformity of institutions (Dawkins, 1988b, p. 28), rather “emphasis was placed on the desirability of encouraging diversity” (Karmel, 2000, p. 162).

A key objective in creating the Unified National System was to establish “fewer, larger institutions in Australia’s higher education system” and through this consolidation to “preserve and enhance the strengths of the constituent parts while overcoming whatever inefficiencies may exist” (Dawkins, 1988b, p. 41).

Addressing the assembly of a national conference on The Green Paper on Higher Education in 1988 Dawkins referred clearly to the nexus that exists between higher education institutions and the economic growth of the Nation (Dawkins, 1988a, p. 14). He acknowledged the contribution that higher education makes to society and offered an invitation to higher education to continue its role in the shaping of the national agenda. It was proposed that such could be achieved by the higher education sector providing “intellectual leadership, leading and shaping community attitudes through independent and vigorous critical analysis in all
matters of public policy and debate” (Dawkins, 1988a, p. 16). In light of this nexus the Green Paper argued for growth in the higher education system according to our economic, social and cultural needs. Proposed mechanisms for funding of this growth were HECS (the Higher Education Contribution Scheme) and nurturing selected fee-charging for international students, postgraduate students and continuing professional education (Marginson, 1998, p. 160). The Higher Education Contribution Scheme was introduced in 1989.

That universities know their own needs and should be given enhanced institutional autonomy as they “strengthen and streamline their own decision-making processes” (Dawkins, 1988a, p. 14) was presented as one side of the coin for restructuring. That universities need to realise they exist in “a climate of fiscal constraint” where governments are “increasingly required to scrutinize and justify every area of public expenditure, as they seek to meet the challenges posed by an increasingly harsh and unforgiving world” (p. 15) was the other side of the coin.

There is little doubt that the effects of the change instituted through the Dawkins’s reform were far-reaching and revolutionary. However, the response to these changes is polarised. Some commentators have signalled Dawkins being personally responsible for these changes. He is named as a source for the Australian university system passing through a period of “disruption and change unparalleled in its 140 year history” (Penington, 1991, p. 105). He is also named as the one who “betrayed the universities” (Molony, 2000, p. 81).

There are others who suggest that the changes to the system of higher education were necessary and that Dawkins has been used as a scapegoat (Aitkin, 2000). In his article titled When In Doubt, Brandish Dawkins, Aitkin suggests that Dawkins bears the brunt of heavy battering and further suggests that Dawkins is represented (along with the modern vice-chancellor) as the diabolous ex machina of higher education.

Whatever views are held of Dawkins and of his reforms there is little doubt that the impact of the changes as proposed through the Green Paper and mandated in the White Paper was “far reaching” (Sharpam & Harman, 1997, p. 14). The
effects of these reforms are still becoming manifest as we experience "the new logic of micro-economic reform, managerialism and human capital formation into the higher education sector" (Treuren, 1996, p. 55). Certainly the name of Dawkins is a cause celebre of the higher education sector in Australia and all indications suggest that it will be so for many years to come.

The years following the release of the Higher Education Policy Statement saw many discussions and debates questioning the virtues of the reforms outlined in this paper. As suggested above the discussions still continue with some passion (Coady, 2000), however it is also noted that the focus of these discussions have moved with time. The focus of the discussion has turned from a commentary on these "structural changes" (Adams, 1998, p. 422) to one of exploring the ramifications of these changes. Such exploration is central to this thesis as the ramifications of these changes in academic policy and practice continue to impact on academic identity, purpose, and operation (Coaldlake & Stedman, 1998; Scott, 1997; Sharpham & Harman, 1997; Smith, 1996b). Central to these changes is the relationship within the university of higher education management – a role that was reviewed in the Higher Education Management Review of 1995.

2.3.2 The Higher Education Management Review

In 1995 the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Hon. Simon Crean MP, announced, "that a review of the higher education system would be undertaken with the objective of developing excellence in management and accountability for the resources available to the sector" (Hoare, 1996, p. 19). This review, often referred to as the Hoare Review (named after the chair of the Review Committee – Mr. David Hoare), was expansive in scope and provided opportunity to gain insights into the many changes instituted by the Higher Education Policy of 1988.

The review committee acknowledged clearly that "pressures on higher education are relentlessly evolving" and that these pressures will "continue to force universities to deal with changes and to manage the difficult task of refining and, probably, reformulating their fundamental mission" (Hoare, 1996, p. 23).
The review, in acknowledging the need for universities to preserve their unique nature, also outlined the need for universities and academics to be cognisant of the complexity of these organisations that are now operating in a “more diverse, competitive and uncertain environment” (Hoare, 1996, p. 32). Through identifying and addressing five “key areas of higher education management: accountability; governance; strategic management; workplace reform; and finance and asset management” (Hoare, 1996, p. 1) the committee promulgated 18 recommendations relating to these five key areas. The 18 recommendations that were developed for the Hoare report have in the main been adopted as part of the management structures currently prevailing in Australian Universities. Although some of these recommendations caused lively discussion at the university level at the time, the review did not seem to invoke the angst or the discussion of previous reviews, especially the Dawkins Review. Where structural changes were made, it appears that these were more of the fine tuning nature rather than the transformational change that was enacted under the Dawkins Review, and as such caused political discussions more internal to individual universities than to the sector as a whole. Coaldrake (1998), in describing the disruption that the debates regarding university governance caused to some University councils, relays an anecdote of The University of Melbourne’s eventual compliance with the Report (see Review Recommendation 4.c) to reconstitute the governing council of each university to a workable size, typically between 10 – 15 members (p. 172). Clearly, these debates were highly influenced by the personal investment with which many university councillors approached their terms of appointment, and the political sway of member factions within council.

Of particular importance to this thesis is the section of the Hoare review titled *Leading Change Through People*. This section of the review acknowledges that staff of universities – both academic and general – are the “key resource for universities” and that “it is the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and performance of staff which directly affect the quality of teaching, research, consulting and community service” (Hoare, 1996, p. 68). The Report also provided a strong critique of many of the practices governing university employment and staffing practices. Specific calls for a reformulation of these practices in light of “the changing nature of the academic enterprise” which “had not yet been fully
grasped within Australian higher education” (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998, p. 154) addressed particular issues in relation to workplace change. The recommendations of this section are listed as:

- alignment of people with vision and strategy (recommendation 11),
- a phased in approach to performance management (recommendation 12),
- stronger focus on staff development and training (recommendation 13),
- support for promoting women through the organisation (recommendation 14)
- restructuring of superannuation arrangement (recommendation 15)
- reform of the industrial relationships in the higher education sector (recommendation 16).

Each of these recommendations is supportive of academics and recognises both the contribution that academics make to the system of higher education, and the importance of developing academics professionally. However, the implementation of these recommendations of the Higher Education Management Review in terms of achieving demonstrable outcomes is debatable (J. Stewart, 1997). In part, the lack of potency of the Higher Education Management Review, can be attributed to a change in federal government (March 1996) and to the concomitant changes to issues of funding and enterprise bargaining (Adams, 1998, p. 428; Marginson, 1998, p. 157) that affected the system. A further reason was an overshadowing of the Management Review by a subsequent Review; the Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy chaired by Roderick West. West “was appointed by the Commonwealth Government in August 1996 to make recommendations on higher education policy and funding for the next two decades in Australia” (Marginson, 1998, p. 157). The committee and the review are referred to as the West Committee and the West Review.

2.3.3 The Review of Higher Education Finance and Policy

In its 1996 budget the newly elected Australian government announced that an independent review was to be established “to examine the processes shaping the future of higher education and to develop a policy and financing framework to enable the higher education sector to meet the nation’s economic and social needs
in the long term” (Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy, 1998, p. 1). The then Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs – Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone – announced in January 1997 the 3 specific terms of reference for this Committee. These terms commissioned the Committee to:

- Undertake a broad ranging review of the state of Australia’s higher education sector, the effectiveness of the sector in meeting Australia’s social, economic, scientific and cultural needs, and the development which are likely to shape the provision of higher education in the next two decades.

- Develop a comprehensive policy framework for higher education that will allow universities to respond creatively and flexibly to change, and will ensure that the sector meets the needs of students, industry and society in general as these are likely to develop over the next two decades.

- Identify options for the financing of higher education teaching and research, and for providing Commonwealth funding to higher education institutions for these purposes. (Committee of review of higher education financing and policy, 1998, p. 177, Appendix).

The findings of this Committee were published under the title *Learning for Life* (both at discussion paper and final report stage). The final report lists 38 recommendations that were presented to the Australian government as a “culmination of the Review Committee’s deliberations” (Committee of review of higher education financing and policy, 1998, p. 2).

These recommendations were made with reference to a context of change and acknowledged the local and international trends in higher education that were addressed in Section 2.2 of this thesis. Significant in these trends was the move from an *elite* to a *mass* higher education system (Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy, 1998, p. 5), and the impact of communication and information technologies (pp. 59 – 62). The process of the Review Committee provided much food for thought and wide opportunity for consultation as to the current situation and to possible scenarios for policy and structural change in Australian higher education for the future. The listing of responses to the Review
Committee’s Discussion Paper and the itinerary of visits and consultations of the Committee (Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy, 1998, Appendix 3 and 4) indicate the breadth of this consultative process. However, both the discussion paper and the final report have been subject to much scrutiny and criticism from dissatisfied critics of these documents.

One criticism arises from the report being “almost solely preoccupied with developing its argument for market reform” in light of a tacit objective of the committee to promote “the creation of a fully fledged economic market in higher education” (Marginson, 1998, pp. 157 - 158). Another criticism of the report is made by Taylor (1999) who suggests, despite the Committee being presented with terms of reference nominating three specific foci, the first of these terms received scant attention. Taylor suggests this is due to the Committee being “quite fixated on the second term of reference – the next two decades, and the changes that have to be made to meet Australia’s social, economic, scientific and cultural needs in this period” (p. 22). Further criticism and debate suggest the work of the Committee was “polarised around its support for student-centred funding, or ‘vouchers’” (Wells, 1997, p. 4), and viewed “higher education as an industry ... so they believe in competition between our universities” (R. Johnson, 1998, p. 9). Molony (2000) states the West Committee failed “to come forward with advice deemed to be either useful or acceptable” (p. 72). Taylor (1999) echoes these sentiments in his reference to the West Committee’s failure to connect their preferred vision for change over the next two decades “with current achievements or realities” (p. 23). These statements would be of little surprise to Marginson who suggests, “at the foundations of the West Report there is an extraordinary collapse of national identity and political will” (1998, p. 165).

In analysing the recommendations of the West Report it is clear that the recommendations are concentrated around the second and third terms of reference; options for the financing of higher education teaching and research particularly for the next two decades. As suggested by Taylor (1999) this focusing on the next two decades has been at the expense of a review of the “effectiveness of the sector – where the only significant acknowledgement is to growth” (p. 22). In a similar manner it could be argued that the impact of the review on the life and work of the academic is minimal. For example, there is only one recommendation
(Recommendation 24) that refers specifically to teaching and to recognising scholarly teaching as core to academic work, promotion, and tenure. Is this to suggest that the place of teaching and the scholarship of teaching are insignificant in terms of policy and decision making in higher education? Whilst the purpose of the review was undoubtedly higher education financing and policy it is important to acknowledge that academic life and identity, albeit influenced by and contingent upon matters of financing and policy, are central factors that need to be addressed in relation to any discussion on higher education and actioned accordingly through any policy statement. Whereas the Hoare report was able to provide significant focus on academics through its recommendations on *Leading Change Through People*, the West Report has not met with the same success.

Each of the three policy reviews that has been explored in this thesis has as its central focus the structure, management and governance, and financing of higher education. Common to each of these reviews is the admission that economic, social, and cultural needs are indeed a key focus of the higher education sector and an acknowledgement that universities contribute significantly to meeting these needs. Similarly, the exigency towards change that universities are facing is a feature of each of these reviews as are the exhortations to universities to clarify their role in society, and to academics to redefine their sense of identity, purpose, and operation. Whilst some critics suggest that such is an imperative from policy makers that equates to “do more with less or get less to do the same” (Jackson, 1998, p. 10) others suggest that it has more to do with quality and public accountability (Sharpham, 1997). Watts (1997) cautions academics of the need to redefine our identity and purpose as both risk being lost in a system of change that results in “sameness, averaging and, too often, in the inevitable mediocrity that follows from central controls and the loss of the will to be different” (p. 256).

Having acknowledged that the main focus for this thesis is the development of higher education in Australia, it is important also to note the trend, both in rhetoric and recommendation that has occurred in higher education at an international level. In particular the reviews of higher education in the United Kingdom (through the Robbins Report – 1963, and the Dearing Report – 1997) and the concomitant recommendations and responses of universities to these reports,

Section 2.4 that follows explores the response of universities to the challenges outlined above and highlights the impact that the changing landscape of higher education has on the experience of being an academic.

2.4 The Lifeworld of Academics: Being an Academic in Today’s World

As discussed, higher education has undergone many revisions particularly in the latter part of the 20th Century, in response to the many challenges that are impacting on public sector organisations and the world at large. The university has always been dependent upon the society “from which it receives its primary sustenance” (G. Patterson, 1997, p. 231), and as society adapts to change so must the university and all other institutions that are recipients of public benefice.

Accompanying the changes in university operation has also been a questioning of the nature and purpose of universities. The “idea” of the university has long provided a source for reflection. Many academic works examine what it is that constitutes the idea of a university - Newman (1927), Humboldt (1970), Leavis (1948), Ortega Y Gasset (1944), Jaspers (1960), Oakeshott (1989), Habermas (1989), Barnett (1990), Tierney (1991), Pelikan (1992) and Coady (1996). However, it is suggested that these examinations are predominantly shaped by traditional and unified notions of the universities of Germany and the United Kingdom in keeping with the views of Humboldt and Newman (Brown, 1996), and that any rigorous debate about the idea of the university is usually only advanced when the institutions are “under attack by the dominant institutions in society” (Melody, 1997, p. 78). With the contemporary challenges that both
society and the university are facing in today’s world, the “idea” of the university is again under attack (Peters, 1992) and it is contestable as to whether it is possible for such an “idea” still to exist (Weber, 1996).

There is unequivocal agreement in the literature that universities are in a state of transition that is forcing academics to refocus and to redefine their vision, purpose, and identity (Bella, McCollow, & Knight, 1993; Clark, 1997; Tierney, 1999). To ignore this transition and assume business as usual would be to disengage from a debate that is both needed and desirable. However, we need be mindful that to extend the debate to an extreme position presents the possibility of an “academic revolution” (Etzkowitz, 1990) as cited by van Ginkel (1995, p. 14).

Section 2.4 of this thesis aims to provide a series of glimpses contained in the literature that address the experience(s) that universities and academics encounter as they face the challenges of working in today’s higher education sector – a sector in transition.

2.4.1 General Overview of the Current Situation in Australian Universities

The overwhelming impression gained from the literature is that Australian universities (and indeed universities in most developed countries) are in a state of crisis (Brabazon, 2002; Encel, 2000). Support for this notion of crisis appears largely in the writings on and by academics (Peters & Roberts, 1999; Talburt, 1997) (Reeves, 1988). Not surprisingly, those who reject the notion of crisis are politicians (Nelson, 2002) and critics outside the system who rebuke the university sector for the way it has responded to the many challenges it faces (Cribb, 2002).

Whilst the term crisis normally suggests a reference to a particular reality (e.g., a fiscal crisis), the term is predominantly used in the higher education literature to refer to myriad phenomena cumulating together and creating a sense of helplessness, despondency, frustration and general malaise on the part of academics (Martin, 1999). Often this helplessness results in “caution, criticism, and doubt” (Ramsden, 1998a, p. 171) and is accompanied by cynicism and
distrust towards university managers (McKinnon, 1983; Penington, 1997). The current crisis in higher education is clearly not ephemeral and it has been reflected on and written about for many years (Powell, Barrett, & Shanker, 1983), especially since the major changes accompanying the Dawkins reform of Australian higher education in 1987 (Harman & Wood, 1990; Neumann, 1993). Documenting these changes are a number of studies and reflections that detail (inter alia) the perceptions of academics (Adams, 1998; Hort & Oxley, 1992), the attitudes of academics (Everett & Entrekin, 1987), the job satisfaction among academic staff (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Lacy & Sheehan, 1997; Oshagbemi, 1996, 2000; Tack & Patitu, 1992), academic values and academic work (Enders, 2000; Harman, 2000; Harman & Wood, 1990; McInnis, 1993, 1998b; Moses, 1992; Powell et al., 1983; Smyth, 1995; Tight, 2000). These texts provide valuable insight into academic life and work and are enriched by the benefits of longitudinal studies researched by organisations such as the Carnegie Foundation (Boyer, Altbach, & Whitelaw, 1994). The research of Sheehan (1996), McInnis (1999), and Winter (2000) provide a sound basis for comparison and commentary on the changes that academics are experiencing in the various aspects of their profession, and academic writers are now also comparing the comparisons (Adams, 1998). Central to this literature is clear evidence of a developing state of depression and despair amongst academics and little hope that things will improve in the immediate future without a drastic re-injection of resources into the system.

2.4.2 Responding to Change in Higher Education – Strategy or Survival?

There is a complexity associated with the changing nature of universities and academic life (Coaldake & Stedman, 1999) and equally, a complex array of responses have been put in place by universities to both ensure their survival and to manage these changes strategically. These complexities result largely from interplay between the realities that now shape academic life. However, the realities of today's academic experience were once viewed as conflicting opposites. Examples of such include; commerce and collegiality (O'Neill, 1992), scholarship and competition (Kennedy, 1997), teaching and research (Robertson, 1999), (Lafferty, 1996), the sciences and the humanities (Hunter et al., 1991),
supply and demand (Gibbons, 1998b). These issues appear frequently in the academic literature under category headings of change, transition, and transformation (Bella et al., 1993; H. D. R. Miller, 1995).

There is a tendency in the literature on change in higher education to bifurcate the response of academics along a clear divide; the harsh reality of today versus idyllic memories of the past. However, to create such a clear division is to misunderstand the complexity of the nature of change in higher education. Karmel (1987) posits this complexity of change in a tri-partite relationship that exists between “Scholar – Institution – Society” (p. 7). Because of the complexity accompanying the change process, some academics have been left with a sense of confusion and a clear imbalance of what is required to survive this situation of chaos. Clark (1997) suggests that this situation will continue because it is not possible for universities to achieve a “new state of equilibrium ... because demands on higher education outrun the capacity to respond” (p. 291). The result of this is a state of disequilibrium that poses significant challenge to both current and future generations of academics (Taylor, 1999).

For some academics to respond to the demands and challenges of change can create a sense of hopelessness and despair. For others, change harnesses the energy to rise and meet these challenges and to renegotiate a way of working within a new milieu. Trowler (1998) proposes a quadrant of four broad categories of response to the changing academic environment and labels these responses as “sinking, swimming, coping, and reconstructing” (p. 113). Some academics may be seen as sinking while others are swimming; those who are sinking one day, through the use of “reconstructive strategies” may be swimming the next (p. 126). Whereas Trowler does indicate that these categories are response to change rather than academic types, McCollow and Lingard (1996) propose a number of “ideal type” or models of academic work that have arisen in line with institutional changes in the higher education sector. These types are: the academic sui generis, the academic as state professional, the academic as market professional, the academic as corporate professional, and the academic as worker. Of these types the authors suggest that “the academic as sui generis still holds considerable sway” (p. 11) but they also acknowledge that the nature of academic work is such
Aronowitz and DiFazio (1994) propose a similar typology and suggest five types of academic professional have emerged: scholars and/or intellectuals; administrators and managers; entrepreneurs; teachers; the academic proletariat (p. 238). "These are pure or ideal types – that is, the attributes of each type may not correspond to the work of any particular individual, which may cross over into other types. From the individual's standpoint, however, the work generally corresponds" to one of these types (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994, p. 238). The usefulness of such typologies is through relating the types to the domains in which academics operate. Such domains are explored by Harman (1989) who sees academic types as an aid to "help accentuate and typify essential categories of behaviour" (p. 3) that can assist the "functioning of the university of a number of differentiated types of academics whose loyalties are directed to diverse areas" (p. 10).

Of particular note in the literature is the relationship between changes in higher education policies, politics and structures (Bailey, 1977; Perellon, 1998) and the impact of these changes of academic work, identity and experience (Henkel, 2000). Understanding these relationships is essential to providing a foundation for successful change management strategy in universities (H. D. R. Miller, 1995). In today's climate of change many academics are forced to develop coping strategies to deal with the new environment of academic existence (Trowler, 1998) and to try to make sense of the turmoil in which they are placed (Clark, 1997). This turmoil is part of the situation that universities are experiencing through deregulation that accompanies the "commodification of knowledge and entrepreneurial pursuit of self-interest" and "re-regulation, with universities being redefined as part of the new efficient corporate state" (Porter, Lingard, & Knight, 1993, p. 29). It is evident throughout the literature that there exists amongst academics an uncertainty as to the future of universities and the academic profession caused by the intensity and scope of change. It is also evident that this will continue for quite a while as "faculty members are realizing the extent to which they have been proletarianised and mobilizing the deal with these realities. For them, as for the university, it is a matter of survival" (Shumar, 1995, p. 96).
2.4.3 The Work of Academics

To be an academic working in a university (as opposed to an independent researcher/scholar), means working in a highly regulated formal higher education organization (Blau, 1994). Whereas once the term academic inferred "an independent self-regulating academic profession" (Marginson, 2000, p. 33), regulation is now aligned to external frameworks emphasizing quality and accountability. Such regulation is changing the nature of academic work (McInnis, 1992; Pickersgill, van Barneveld, & Bearfield, 1998).

The once neat division of academic work into the four silos of teaching, research, administration, and public service to the community (Boud & de Rome, 1983; McInnis, 1992; Neumann, 1990; Powell, Barrett, & Shanker, 1981) is rapidly changing. Differential rewards are increasingly awarded to the component of academic work that best suits the institutional need at the time, resulting in academics becoming increasingly multi-skilled (Moses, 1992), often at the expense of the essential nature of academic work – scholarship (Damrosch, 1995; Jaspers, 1960; Pelikan, 1992). The major risk associated with such changes to the nature of academic work "is that 'academic' work will occupy a decreasing proportion of the total work of universities" (Taylor, 1999, p. 92). Universities are traditionally renowned as organisations where "the blurring of the boundaries has been long accepted" (Martin, 1999, p. 53). However, such reference usually relates to the conditions of academic work such as academic freedom (Kennedy, 1997; Ramsden, 1998a), academic accountability (Dearlove, 1997), and the flexibility about where and when academics work (Halsey & Trow, 1971) rather than to the nature of academic work per se. Recent trends in the structuring of higher education policy and practice suggest that we are currently experiencing a redefinition and a reconstruction of academic work (Marginson, 2000; McInnis, 1998a; Moses, 1997; O'Brien, 1992; Smyth, 1995; Tierney, 1999).

One attempt to redefine the nature of academic work is that advanced by The Boyer Scholarships (Boyer, 1990). These scholarships attempt to develop an integrating (as opposed to a segmented) approach to academic work (Glassick, 2002; Rice, 1996; Rice, 1992). Long recognized has been the imperative for
academics to teach, research, and engage in scholarship (Neumann, 1993; Powell et al., 1983). However, given that academics are now forced to juggle many aspects of their work as they cope with a somewhat obvious work overload (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1998), structures in universities that perpetuate a clear division between these roles are both impractical and inadequate in supporting academics to cope with academic change. Whilst it is generally agreed that teaching and research mutually benefit, stimulate and enrich each other (Kogan, 1997) there is evidence that academic staff feel dissatisfied with the teaching element of their academic life and that there are differing degrees of importance placed by universities on research and teaching (Baird, 1988). The Boyer scholarships attempt to move beyond the teaching versus research debate (Boyer, 1990, p. 16) by exposing the anomalies of the current situation where “research and publication have become the primary means by which most professors achieve academic status” (p. xii). Boyer’s work explores what scholarship means and suggests ways by which academics can integrate all aspects of their academic work into scholarship. Boyer initially proposed that “the work of the professoriate might be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping, functions” and through his writing(s) he sought to reconceptualize academic work to allow its diversity to emerge and be rewarded. These functions of academic work cluster around four scholarships: the scholarship of discovery; the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of application; and the scholarship of teaching (p. 16). Ramsden (1998b) defines these clusters of scholarship as a) original research and the advancement of knowledge, b) connecting ideas and synthesis across discipline boundaries, c) assembling knowledge through an interaction between intellectual and ‘real world’ problems of practice, d) transforming knowledge through bridging the gap between the scholar’s understanding and the student’s learning (p. 18). The function of these scholarships relate easily to the traditional ideas of academic work of research, multi-disciplinary scholarship, consultancy, and teaching. Prior to Boyer’s death in 1995 (Coye, 1997) he advanced through his last published essay a fifth element of scholarship: The Scholarship of Engagement (Boyer, 1996). The Scholarship of Engagement according to Boyer “means connecting the rich resources of the university to our pressing social civic, and ethical problems” (Boyer, 1996, p. 21), to enable a “boundary crossing” (Sandmann, 2002, p. 4) that captures into the
scholarly agenda “the multiple aspects of teaching, research, and/or service or discovery, and application” (p. 5). Central to Boyer’s approach was a desire to elevate teaching to greater levels of recognition and reward (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999). One tangible result of his contribution to redefining academic work has been achieved through a reformulation of teaching as community property rather than remaining as something removed from the academic community (Hutchings, 1996; Shulman, 1993).

Boyer initially set the heart of his debate around exposing the reward system in higher education and he questioned openly the activities of the professoriate that were most highly prized. Whilst this focus enabled Boyer to contribute significantly to reconceptualizing academic work we are cautioned by certain academics as to the limitations of his work. Davis (1998) cautions us to consider Boyer’s failure to recognize “the socioeconomic context of universities and the purposes universities have historically served” (pp. 23 – 24). According to Davis, Boyer in ignoring these issues focuses more on “control of others than to an increase in quality of instruction and research” (p. 24). Coaldrake (1999) also questions the value of Boyer’s work if it fails to address the real world issues that are changing academic work (viz. reduced staffing, resources, limited communication etc) and that impact on both the environment (institution) and academics. Shulman (2000) recognises Boyer’s lack of attention to the difference between “scholarly teaching and a scholarship of teaching” (p. 50). Despite these critiques the importance of Boyer’s work lies in its capacity to challenge university administrators and academics to clarify in the midst of this current period of change what it is that constitutes the essence(s) of academic work. When considering what it is that constitutes the essence of academic work we are reminded of a responsibility to ensure that scholarship (i.e., all academic work) retains objectivity and truth (Barnett, 1990), and the need for the university to generate and disseminate new knowledge and understanding (Cuthbert, 1996), to move across boundaries and disciplines (Berberet, 2002), and to foster intellectual development particularly amongst students (Kennedy, 1997).

Central to academic work are the concepts of place and time. The once traditional view of the university as a physical space where people congregated on-campus to
engage in the pursuit of knowledge is rapidly being replaced by the university of cyberspace where teaching and learning is channelled through web-portals (Acker, 1998). With these new approaches (such as e-teaching) to academic work there is evidence that the time spent on academic work is increasing as academics now begin to write courses for on-line teaching (Brabazon, 2002) and explore methods that will allow for integration of content across courses some of which may be outside of an academic's discipline area (Lafferty, 1996). Further demands are also created by the massification of student numbers (Harris, 1993), and of the new structures of accountability and quality. To meet these commitments the time devoted by academics to academic work are shown to be escalating considerably (McInnis, 1999). The claim that "all academics ... work a notional 40 hours per week" (Harris, 1993, p. 145) has been superseded by later studies suggesting a rise in the average working week of almost 50 hours and "a substantial group of 40 per cent are now working more than 50 hours a week" (McInnis, 1999, p. 58). A study of European academics (Enders & Teichler, 1997) notes that some "Dutch university professors work 57 hours per week during the lecture period and 54 hours outside the lecture period" (p. 358).

2.4.4 The Morale of Academics

Job satisfaction is not easily defined and academic work values are not easily measured (Lacy & Sheenan, 1997). Serious research into the morale of Australian academics began with the substantive work of Everett & Entrekin (1987) focussing on "how the work-related attitudes of academic staff have changed" (Everett & Entrekin, 1994, p. 205). Another study around this time, supported with Australian Research Council funding, sought to answer questions such as, "Who are the academics?" and "What are their basic values, motives and concerns that affect their professional roles?" (McInnis, Powles, & Anwyl, 1995, p. 132). International perspectives on these same issues are gleaned through the research supported by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Boyer et al., 1994) that focussed (inter alia) on the sources of satisfaction and frustration of the working conditions of academics. An Australian research team developed the work of this international survey by conducting the survey "in and for
Throughout these studies there is recorded an ambivalence of response by those surveyed and because of this it is difficult to summarise definitively the job satisfaction of academics. Further statements such as “By and large, the academics surveyed are relatively satisfied with their profession ... There are areas, however, of which academics are quite critical” (Enders & Teichler, 1997, p. 370) typify the ambivalence presented in the literature on academic job satisfaction. Knight (2002), refers to the claim of Altbach (1996, p. 48) “that the professoriate is by no means demoralized” as “an apparent contradiction” (p. 11) to the findings of McInnis (2000a). Sheehan (1996) describes “significant differences were revealed in satisfaction with particular aspects of the respondent’s job according to type of institution, gender and his or her preferences for teaching or research” (p. 84). Whilst some research has been directed towards correlating these variables and job satisfaction (e.g., gendered attitudes to academic work (Poole, Bornholt, & Summers, 1997), type of institution to job satisfaction (Hort & Oxley, 1992), association between age and satisfaction in teaching, research, and administration and management (Oshagbemi, 2000)), there is little in the literature that presents a clear and unified picture as to how academics experience their work.

Having said this, there are clear indicators in the literature suggesting that academic staff overall are experiencing increased levels of job dissatisfaction: “40 percent of more say their job is a source of considerable strain” (Boyer et al., 1994, p. 13). In recognising that a decline in job satisfaction is often linked with poor levels of remuneration (Australia Parliament, 2001, Recommendation Thirty-Five; Marginson, 2001) and low standards of benefit status (Schuman, 1995), it is also to be noted that the intrinsic rewards of being an academic, often derived by academics through “the opportunity to pursue their own academic interests” (McInnis, 2000b, p. 141), are declining. Oshagbemi (1996) emphasizes that different levels of satisfaction relate to the different components of academic work. Blackburn (1995) extends this concept by suggesting, “characteristics of individuals and their employing institution combine and lead to variations in
faculty motivation, behaviour, and productivity” (p. 15). Given the demands being placed on academics to accommodate the situations of change they are currently facing (Esland, 1998) it is suggested that there is considerable stress in academic life (Fisher, 1994); a conclusion that “may not come as much of a surprise” (Andrew, 1996, p. 100).

2.4.5 The Identity of Academics

Given the change in academic work and the impact of this change on academic morale it is understandable that academics question their identity as they explore what it is to be an academic negotiating today’s vicissitudinous academic climate. The traditional understandings of academics as to their identity and their academic roles have been challenged greatly (Nicholls, 2001) with today’s academic being influenced by demands such as the expectations of the new knowledge economy that determines how and where knowledge is produced and distributed (Usher, 2002). Whilst Pelikan (1992) argues that if the university is in crisis then it may be a “crisis both of confidence and self-confidence” (p. 168), Sutherland (1996) infers that the crisis is more a “lack of identity rather than merely lack of confidence” (p. 5). In clarifying academic identity (noting that some authors prefer to refer to academic identity as “self-identity” (Edwards & Usher, 2000) and the process of reflection on identity as “reflexivity” (Giddens, 1991)) it is clear that academics need to engage repeatedly in the process of questioning and clarifying their professional self-identity as part of making meaning of the academic profession. Such a process entails “a willingness to articulate one’s values and priorities, a willingness to engage critically and openly one’s sense of what a professor ‘is’ and ‘does’” and “to recognize that we do make meaning through our work and professional existence, and that the best we can do is to make intellectually, ethically, and communally defensible meaning” (Hall, 2002, p. 10).

The formation of identity is a complex issue that involves multiple realities such as individual identities operating within community and disciplinary identities (Henkel, 2000). For example, at one level there is the consideration that people outside of higher education hold towards academics and the value of academic
work; secondly there are conventions within the academic communities relating to specifications of individual disciplines and academic circles; and thirdly there is the internal focus that academics hold of their own identity. Taylor (1999) emphasizes that academic identity "is not a unitary construct" and that "academics have to learn to live with two 'publics': the general community and the disciplinary community" (p. 42). This concept of dual identity for the academic is also promoted by Warren Piper (1992) by reference to "subject based identity" and identity that arises from academic employment "in a teaching and degree conferring academy" (p. 19). Negotiating this identity is riddled with complexity for the academic given that the identity of the university – the locus of academic identity - is also radically changing. The universities of today have become "sites of contradiction, change, variation, and strange conjunction" (Smith, 1996b, p. 10) that bear little resemblance to their traditional form (Melody, 1997). Despite this new found heterogeneity of academic identity (Smith & Webster, 1997c), there is still one dominant image prevalent in the literature that identifies the academic; that of the Cosmopolitan (Crittenden, 1997; Gouldner, 1957; Moses, 1992). According to Taylor (1999) this cosmopolitan identity is "the more universal image of the academic identity which overlaps disciplinary boundaries" and centres on the values of academic autonomy and academic freedom (p. 42).

Academic identity is a public identity and involves considerable scrutiny "by peers, students, and the public" (Moses, 1983, p. 157). This scrutiny places academics in a vulnerable situation as their worth and contribution to society are assessed by an ever critical public. It is suggested that academics have witnessed "a significant diminution of the standing and status of academics" (Smith & Webster, 1997c, p. 100) and that this trend is most likely to continue unless there is a reappraisal of the value placed on higher education. To achieve this means moving beyond the myth(s) that still prevail in the minds of some of the university as a place apart (Poynter & Rasmussen, 1996), an old-fashioned village (Chisholm, 1958), or an ivory tower (Bok, 1982) where academics are viewed as "serving the true ends of scholarship: alternatively, he is a parasite behaving as if the world owed him a living" (Bailey, 1977, p. 48), or as a vicarious leisure class (Veblen, 1954) who enjoy a gentlemanly way of life (Halsey & Trow, 1971). It is hopeful to read that these misperceptions of universities (and henceforth
academics) "as arrogant self-servicing institutions" have begun finally, albeit belatedly, to be countered (Monahan, 1996). Unfortunately such hope is mitigated when reading the reflections of a prominent academic who identifies academics as follows:

Academics like to keep their eyes on the far horizon with the result that everything and everyone in the near horizon gets sacrificed ... Academics like to feel morally culpable, especially in relation to those who would give anything to be in their place ... Academics like to feel morally superior, which they manage by feeling morally culpable ... Academics like to eat shit, and in a pinch, they don't care whose shit they eat. (Fish, 1994, p. 278)

2.4.6 The Experiences of Academics

It would seem that the academic profession is primarily an instrument again, rather than an experience. (Porter et al., 1993, p. 28)

The above quotation, paraphrasing a statement of Portus (1939), reflects the view that Australian governments held prior to the second world war of universities being totally utilitarian and little interested in the academic experience (see also McCollow & Knight, 1993). In Portus's mind what was missing with regard to higher education was a lack of interest in the "cultural side of the University" (Porter et al., 1993, p. 27). It can also be inferred from the above statement that there has long been little interest in the academic experience yet much interest has been placed on universities and academics adding value through their efforts. The experience of being an academic is very much conditioned by such views and many decisions made concerning academics often reinforce these views. In many ways it is not useful to lament current experiences with reference to halcyon days; in fact today's situation is largely the result of the choices made by our predecessors. However, there is a key challenge for the academic community in every age to "take strategic control of its own destiny" (Gilbert, 1991). Unfortunately, the challenge may have gone unheeded (Brown, 1996) and it is suggested that perhaps the opportunity has passed us by:
In the late seventies or the early eighties, when the fabric of academic life had not yet frayed entirely, when it could have been restored with careful mending, we should have thought strenuously about how to retain the capacity of an apparently irrelevant culture to support an emerging and confused society with little faith in the models of the past. Yet by and large we turned our backs on that opportunity. (Riemer, 1998, p. 189)

The experience of academics cannot be neatly summarised into a unitary statement. As has been explored above there are different realities to academic work, different levels of job satisfaction and morale, different ranks of academic appointment and job responsibilities all of which influence the experience of being an academic (Oshagbemi, 2000). Similarly, experiences of academics in the traditional and the newly established universities are different because of the apportioning of time, resources, and priority to the different academic activities (Harman & Wood, 1990).

Much of the literature of academic experience focuses on biographies and the telling of stories of academics in relation to specific experiences of academic life. For example: being a teacher (Ballantyne, Bain, & Packer, 1997; Schwartz & Webb, 1993), being a senior member of faculty (Bland & Bergquist, 1997), being a woman in academe (Stiver Lie & O'Leary, 1990; Tack & Patitu, 1992; Walkerdine, 1995), being a professor (Richards, 1997), being a vice-chancellor (Horne, 1997). In exploring the notion that the different phases of academic life entail different realities and different experiences, Frost & Taylor (1996) present a series of autobiographical accounts. Practical guidelines to accompany the different phases of academic careers are detailed by Sadler (1999).

A recent study of academics’ experience of professional growth and academic development utilises phenomenographic research to “investigate variation in underlying the meaning of, or ways of experiencing, the phenomenon” (Akerlind, 1999, p. 2). This work highlights that “despite often low morale, high stress, seemingly impossible work loads and concerns for the future ... academics are primarily self motivated by various desires to do a good job, expand their intellectual lives, receive respect and recognition amongst their colleagues and be rewarded by promotion” (p. 10).
Other studies include a focus on how academics experience "the relation between teaching and research" (Kreber, 2000; Robertson, 1999), an investigation of what constitutes the experience of academic work (Lewis, 1996), and larger group studies reflecting on the experiences of change in different facets of academic life (Martin, 1999; Ramsden, 1998a). Potts (1997) employed the socialisation theory approach from the Chicago School of Symbolic Interactionism in a study to describe the world of a "group of academic staff as they themselves experienced it" (p. 4). In this study Pott's pays particular reference to the academics' experience of the transition from a former College of Advance Education environment to a University and the correlation between academic occupations and institutional change (Potts, 2000).

What is common to this literature on academic experience is that there appears to be a "widening gap between academic ideals and the realities of daily experience" (Powell et al., 1983, p. 312). For some academics this is manifest through a disconnection from what constitutes the core of academic life: freedom and autonomy (Walsh, 1999). Academic freedom and academic autonomy appear in the literature as unequivocal values that are highly prized and essential elements to the experience of being an academic (Adams, 1998; Ramsden, 1998a; Warren Piper, 1992). These values are viewed both as rights and as privileges that entail duty (Anderson, 1996; Jaspers, 1960; Kennedy, 1997) on the part of each academic. However, it is also suggested by these writers that the experiences of academic freedom and autonomy, which have long been enjoyed by academics, may well be disappearing with the changes higher education is experiencing (Dearlove, 1997).

2.5 Positioning this Study – Researching the Lived Experience of Being an Academic

We need to know more about working in higher education, and we need to work on and in more ways of knowing. (Cuthbert, 1996, p. 20)

The many voices that constitute the literature on higher education and academic life portray higher education as a highly complex scenario. Contained within this
scenario are multiple phenomena that act simultaneously as both driving and opposing forces that shape the experiences of being an academic and of working as an academic in an Australian university. This chapter has explored the voices contained in the literature under the category headings of the phenomena impacting on higher education, the context and policy framework of Australian higher education, and the lifeworld of academics.

The many concepts that have been explored through this literature review act together to form a theoretical framework on which to position this study and on which to scaffold the empirical investigation for this research. Each of these concepts outlined above is integral to the life experience of the academic. For example, it is not possible to be an academic of today and avoid the realities of a massified higher education system, a system of reduced resources, and a questioning of what constitutes academic identity. However, to further our understanding of these concepts it is both timely and essential to move beyond the voice of the literature and to investigate the concepts from a different perspective; that of the lived experience of the academic.

The literature reviewed for this thesis describes well the trends in higher education, analyses the current circumstances of higher education against traditional models and understanding, and offers commentary on how higher education should be shaped in future years. Identified as a gap in the literature is an exploration of the phenomenon of being an academic in today's world and a description of what it is to be an academic amidst the changing scenario of higher education. Accordingly, the phenomenon of being an academic and the experience of being an academic in today's world constitute the research focus for this thesis. The central focus of this study is an investigation of the experiences that constitute the daily lifeworld of the academic. The purpose of this investigation is to find meaning within these experiences to understand what constitutes the essence of the lived experience of being an academic. In order to construct a research framework that supports this study in achieving this focus it is essential to understand the methodological issues that accompany the research of lived experience. These issues are presented in the following chapter - Researching Lived Experience.
Chapter Three

RESEARCHING LIVED EXPERIENCE

... to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind’s attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand. (Coleridge, 2000, p. 314)
3.1 Introduction

To understand phenomenology one really needs to do phenomenology, yet to do phenomenology one needs to understand what phenomenology is and what it attempts to do; it is as though we need to be welcomed through a closed door to gain understanding from the inside rather than merely looking in from the outside. Unfortunately, many researchers who claim to be doing phenomenological research do not have this “emic” perspective and so pursue a line of inquiry that is more akin to other human science and social inquiry methodologies than it is to phenomenology. This misunderstanding often arises when researchers lay claim to phenomenology yet assume a non-philosophical approach to research that infers that any study of people and meaning is phenomenological (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). To avoid such misunderstandings and to gain a view of phenomenology from the inside this chapter attempts to marry the philosophical with the methodological approaches to phenomenology that will permit this study to be classified as phenomenological.

The chapter is structured around the various elements that constitute the design for a phenomenological approach to educational research. Section 3.2 deals with the nature of human science research and its quest to find the meaning of the phenomenon under investigation through exploring the experiences of life. Section 3.3 provides an overview of phenomenology in all its many forms and argues that there is one approach to phenomenology that is the most appropriate for this study, that of hermeneutic phenomenology. The section also outlines this methodological approach and the steps of enquiry employed in this study, and forecasts the pitfalls that can entrap phenomenological researchers. Sections 3.4 – 3.8 explore the issues of qualitative research design and implementation and provide details of the research focus, design, and methods employed in this research project.

3.2 Researching Lived Experience - The Quest for Meaning

The image of a closed door is an image that has long intrigued me. I find this image powerful and evocative and it is one that I have experienced on occasions such as standing outside a synagogue or a mosque when a service is in progress,
on seeing an operating theatre when walking through a hospital to visit a sick friend, and in standing outside a university college in cities such as Oxford and Cambridge. The image contained in this closed door includes elements of space, time, embodiment, and relationships that are reserved for those who are permitted to enter through the closed door into a world that only they know and understand. I imagine people entering through this door into a coherent culture of language and ritual, and I sense an inclusion that unites these people together and shapes them with a certain identity; the coherence and identity that goes with being “an insider”. Those who do not belong or at least posses a ticket of entry are fated to be “outsiders” and the closed door represents a barrier that speaks of exclusion and separation. From the outside, the actuality of what goes on behind the closed door is only ever suggestive and the language, the ritual, the identity, and the experience of belonging to a group can only be imagined. To be a part of a group that is permitted behind closed doors is denied to those who do not posses the rights of passage.

The image represented above is both a genesis and a touchstone of my orientation to this study. Despite having engaged with and learned from the many concepts that are voiced in the literature on higher education and academic work, I was still standing at a “closed door” in my understanding of the experience of being an academic. Whilst the literature provided glimpses into various phenomena associated with higher education, these snapshots were still not potent; they were full of information but void of meaning. Was it possible to weave the many threads that are voiced in the literature review into a tapestry that captures the experience of being an academic or was I ever condemned to be on the outside imagining what went on beyond the doors of the academy? How could I structure this study so that the closed door was opened to reveal everyday experience as lived by academics and to find within this lived experienced the meaning of what it is to be an academic?

The day-to-day experiences that constitute an individual’s existence provide many opportunities for developing insight(s) into a range of issues. In defining this study it was important to seek inroads into the research design that would allow for the data to provide what it was that I was actually seeking: an understanding of
the experience of being an academic. After examining the processes for developing qualitative research and exploring the heuristic tools (Janesick, 1994), (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to guide the research design process I encountered much confusion as I considered, then duly discarded, various research methodologies. For example, one possibility was to apply instruments such as questionnaires, time sheets, diary and journal annotations, and running records to collect data that could be useful in analysing what it is that constitutes academic work. Such data could then allow for measurement and comparison of the variables across different categories (e.g., responsibility against level of academic appointment). These instruments could also provide tools to explain and to predict with reliability and validity certain propositions regarding academic life. Another approach was to move towards the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism and engage in an ethnographic study of academics that would provide “a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group” (Creswell, 1998) p. 58. Whilst these perspectives are rich and allow a researcher to “enter into the perceptions, attitudes and values of a community, becoming persons in the process ... being able to put ourselves in the place of others” (Crotty, 1998b, p. 8) they did not provide me with what I sought – the essence of the lived experience of being in the world as an academic. True, these possible studies provided the possibilities of investigating human experience, but what differed in the intent of my study was the theoretical perspective that was underpinning the various approaches (methodology) and subsequently determining the means (methods) of investigation (Crotty, 1998b). Ultimately, the issue was to determine what I wanted this study to reveal and work forwards rather than falling into the trap met by many novice researchers of settling on research methods first then reading back from the findings to justify a methodology and a theoretical perspective. Slowly but surely it became clear that in order to achieve the purpose of my study - to find meaning in the experiences that constitutes the daily existence of an academic - the theoretical perspective that was needed to underpin the research was that of Interpretivism, especially that as developed in the phenomenological tradition based on a study of the lifeworld; “the lived world of phenomena, events and relations as experienced by individuals” (Smith, 1997, p. 75).
According to van Manen (1990) to say “phenomenology is the study of the lifeworld – the world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it” is synonymous to saying that a “phenomenological study is the study of lived experience” (p. 9). The “Lifeworld” (from German – Lebenswelt) has a primacy in phenomenological research as it is within the lifeworld – “the encompassing world of our immediate experience which can be recovered from the world as given to scientific interpretation by a special type of reduction” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 746) – that we can gain access to our direct, immediate, and primary experience. In exploring this perspective I found an entry point into human science research and in phenomenology I was provided the key to unlock the door that was keeping me “on the outside looking in”.

This world of lived experience (from the German Erlebnis) entails “the experience of being in the world, the world of everyday life, the world as it is experienced” (Bergum, 1989, p. 9). As we engage with lived experience we have the potential to uncover understanding(s) of our experiences that have previously deluded us. What has been veiled and hidden from us is brought into view and meaning can be created with reference to what we are experiencing in our lives. What is presented through phenomenological inquiry is the opportunity to see things in new ways and in “a manner that enriches our understanding of everyday life experience” (van Manen, 1997, p. 345). Put another way, through phenomenology we have the possibility of “re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii). It is in and through this direct and primitive contact with the world of lived experience that meaning can show itself and where we can discover what meaning there is to be revealed. However, this is not to suggest that meaning is inhering and lying dormant within the world of experience waiting to be uncovered for what it is. To suggest such would be in contradiction to phenomenological theory and method and would place us clearly in the positivist tradition. Rather, the phenomenological approach asserts that meaning, both historical and new, is created through engagement, the “process of dialogue, a dialectic, between subject and object that brings meaning into being for both” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 70). In this sense, lived experience is “a unit held together by common meaning” (Palmer, 1969, p. 107) [paraphrasing
Lived experience is “the breathing of meaning” (van Manen, 1990, p. 36), it is “to the soul what breath is to the body” (Dilthey, 1985) quoted in (van Manen, 1990, p. 36), and it is the place “where meaning originates at the basis of all subject/object relations” (Burch, 1989, p. 195). As phenomenology presents as a way to approach meaning through the study of lived experience it is necessary to understand phenomenology as both a philosophical movement and as a research methodology for the human sciences.

3.3 Phenomenology – What Is It?

Phenomenology means: \textit{apophainesthai ta phainomena} - to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself (Heidegger, 1996, p. 35).

Whilst phenomenology may have presented as the key to unlock the door for this study the reality on entering through the door was one of being left to stand alone in the vestibule. With the naiveté of any neophyte researcher I tried to apply my newly acquired knowledge and sought to engage with and grasp the full intent of Heidegger’s definition of phenomenology – a statement equally as complex as it is simple – only to find that the starting point was not in doing phenomenology but in the preparation and understanding needed to be a phenomenologist. As I worked through the history and theory of the phenomenological movement, investigating how to (and how not to) link the theory with the practice of research I have arrived at a deeper understanding of how this approach can be applied into human science research. The following sections present these understandings of phenomenology as a philosophical framework as a basis for human science research – an understanding that makes no pretension of approximating that of the professional philosopher – and from this basis links the research methods and techniques that I applied through this research in the attempt to ground this study in its rightful place as a “a critical methodology” that, along with all other phenomenological research, calls into question our current understanding of the phenomenon being investigated (Crotty, 1996a, p. 275).
3.3.1 Phenomenology – An Overview

The word phenomenology links to the Greek roots *phainomenon* or *phainesthai* and *logos*. *Phainesthai* means “to flare up, to show itself, to appear” and is constructed from *phaino* - to bring light (Moustakas, 1994, p. 27) – the Greek root *pha* meaning light. *Logos* refers to the meaning that is conveyed in speaking, and it is through this function of speaking that meaning is let to appear. *Logos* thus “points to phenomena ... it lets something be seen as something” (Palmer, 1969, p. 128). Thus Heidegger’s definition of phenomenology quoted above becomes clearer when we realize that phenomenology lets us bring phenomenon into the light – some thing is able to show itself in itself – and we are “bringing to manifestness, what a thing is; it brings it out of concealment into the light of the day” (Palmer, 1969, p. 128). Thus phenomenology is a study of phenomena, the things themselves that constitute the everydayness of life and living in the attempt to allow a phenomenon to be seen in itself for what it is in itself. What then are we expecting to be manifested or revealed through this process? What is sought in phenomenology is the essence of what a thing is - its “whatness” rather than its “thatness” (i.e., that it exists) (Howard, 1994; van Manen, 1990) – and we seek that which enables us to distinguish the essential nature of this thing from any other thing, so much so that without that essence the thing would not be what it is. It is the things themselves that we seek and it is “back to the things themselves” (Husserl, 1970, p. 252) that phenomenology takes us in the attempt to put “essences back into existence” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii). These essences are those that are found in the things themselves (the phenomena) as they are encountered in our lived experience.

3.3.2 Historical Developments of Phenomenology

Emerging initially from discontent with a philosophy of science that centred exclusively on the study of material entities without reference to cultural or social contexts (Leninger, 1985) phenomenology sought to “oppose the acceptance of unobservable matters and grand systems erected in speculative thinking” (Embree & Mohanty, 1997, p. 1). The beginnings of phenomenology can be traced back to the refinements that scholastic philosophers started to make of the philosophy of
Kant who proposed that relationships “existed between the subject and the object of the subject’s consciousness” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 39), and of Hegel who used the term phenomenology to refer to “knowledge as it appears in consciousness, the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one’s immediate awareness and experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). Linking with Dilthey’s notion of Geisteswissenschaften — “the human world characterized by Geist — mind, thoughts, consciousness, values, feelings, emotions, actions, and purposes, which find their objectifications in languages, beliefs, arts, and institutions” (van Manen, 1990, p. 3), phenomenology sought to understand (verstehen) rather than explain and predict human experience and from its inception was envisaged to be a “rigorous science” (Husserl, 1983).

The phenomenological movement boasts a genealogy that reads a little like a ‘Who’s Who?’ of European (Continental) philosophy of the 19th and 20th Centuries. Not surprisingly, given the radical nature of phenomenological philosophy in its divergence from traditional positivist approaches, its birth and subsequent development has encountered a turbulent history as it worked its way into the canons of philosophy.

Again, by way of analogy, I invite you to return to the image of the closed door used to introduce this Chapter, and to imagine that on entering the building (“The Academy of Phenomenology” is particularly suitable given the focus of this study) you encounter a series of chambers opening onto a large shared space. In each of the chambers is a particular group of academics that have developed a perspective on phenomenology that is slightly different from their colleagues in the other rooms. Whilst each chamber is separated from the rest there is a freedom of movement between these spaces. No closed door isolates one chamber from the other and the shared space onto which each chamber opens is a place of debate in which a familial language is used – the language of phenomenology – but it is used in ways that both reflect the dialect used in each particular chamber and that refines the thoughts and shapes the specific focus that the residents of each individual chamber have adopted. The residents of these chambers include (inter alia):
Franz Brentano (1838 – 1917)
Carl Stumpf (1848 – 1936)
Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1958)
Max Scheler (1874 – 1928)
Martin Heidegger (1889 – 1976)
Alfred Schutz (1899 – 1959)
Jose Ortega y Gasset (1883 – 1955)
Gabriel Marcel (1889 – 1974)
Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900 – 2002)
Jean-Paul Sartre (1905 – 1980)
Hannah Arendt (1906 – 1975)
Emmanuel Levinas (1906 - 1995)
Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908 – 1961)
Paul Ricoeur (1913 - )

There are also many philosophers who have dwelt in the realm of phenomenology before developing a particular approach to philosophy that has become constituted in its own right (eg. Habermas, Foucault, Derrida). Discernible in the writings of these philosophers is the infusion of phenomenology into the approaches that they have developed and pivotal to these approaches are fundamental concerns “with understanding the meaning of our life through interpretation of human experience” (Bergum, 1991, p. 56).

To summarise the contribution that each of these scholars has made to phenomenology is well beyond the scope of this thesis. Such contributions are readily found in both the primary source material that these scholars have developed and in the excellent summaries and commentaries that have been developed to reflect and outline the different schools of phenomenological thought. In particular, the major works of Herbert Spiegelberg (1994), The Phenomenological Movement – a Historical Introduction, and of Dermot Moran (2000), Introduction to Phenomenology provide excellent entry points into phenomenological philosophy.
Within the open space of our "Academy of Phenomenology" there is also a series of current day visitors representing researchers, philosophers, and academics who engage with the language of the residents and provide commentary on the works of these people, as they seek further understanding of the phenomenological movement from its inception through its major forms of outreach and into its application as a significant research methodology for the human sciences — indeed you as reader of this text are one such visitor. Significant voices amongst these contemporary writers on phenomenology are Maurice Natanson, Joseph Kockelmans, Don Ihde, Kurt Wolff, Max van Manen, Michael Crotty, Robert Sokolowski — unfortunately for scholarship some of these voices are no longer to be heard yet the memory of these people exist through their writings. Through the writings of contemporary scholars of phenomenology it is possible to enjoy a gentle entry into this world of phenomenology as both philosophy and research methodology (McPhail, 1995) because these scholars are able to interpret and translate the original source material into a language that applies to today's understanding of human science research.

Throughout the history of phenomenology certain stages have emerged into which defined strains of phenomenological thinking can be categorized. These "dominant and sometimes overlapping tendencies and stages ... can be characterized as (a) Realistic, (b) Constitutive, (c) Existential, and (d) Hermeneutical Phenomenology."

Embree & Mohanty, 1997, p. 2). The first two stages of phenomenological developments (realistic and constitutive) are referred to as 'Descriptive' or 'Transcendental' Phenomenology and are attributed chiefly to Edmund Husserl. Foremost in the development of Existential and Hermeneutical Phenomenology was Martin Heidegger. Rather than refuting entirely the preceding stage/s of phenomenology these successive developments often reflect a building on and extension of prior knowledge that accompanies the formulation of new philosophical pathways. Indeed, as with the initial material of Brentano, we see in the works of Husserl and Heidegger many developments that resulted as these students extended the existing state of insight of their teacher/mentor to arrive at reformulated and new insights.
Though each stage in the history of phenomenology reflects defined paths that lead from Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology, there is a shared language that has endured as the defining language of phenomenology throughout its history. This lexicon not only defines “the what” of phenomenology it also details “the how”. Central to this language are the following concepts that are essential components of the phenomenological process at both the philosophical level and also in the implementation stages of a phenomenological study in the data collection and analysis. Each of these concepts (intentionality, bracketing, essence) is difficult and it would be easy to dismiss them as historical artefacts that relate only to the world of philosophy. However, to engage in authentic phenomenological research and to remain true to the rich historical tradition through which phenomenology has developed, it is necessary to both understand and to strive to employ these concepts throughout the research process. These concepts are explored below, and again in Section 3.3.5.

**Intentionality:** Husserl, in developing this concept originally used by Brentano, maintained that there is an “inseparable connectedness of the human being to the world” (van Manen, 1990, p. 181). To research lived experience is thus to focus on our engagement with the world. This engagement, signifying a co-constitution between the self and the world, means that consciousness is always consciousness of something and henceforth consciousness points to something beyond itself; “it is essentially related to the phenomenon – to the object of experience, to what is experienced” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 40). From *intentio* (Latin), intentionality acknowledges “the mind’s capacity to direct itself knowingly to objects and states of affairs” (Burch, 1990, p. 157). Through intentionality our “consciousness is always and essentially related to objects” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 37), henceforth all our thoughts are thoughts of something. Husserl recognized within the intentional act there are two polar aspects – a subject and an object - and he used the terms “noesis” and “noema” to “correspond to the subjective and objective sides of intentional experience” (Natanson, 1966, p. 15). Key to phenomenological research is the belief that intentionality signifies inseparability between the self and the world in terms of meaning and that this inseparability demands we be present both to ourselves and to the things of the world that we are researching (Moustakas, 1994). Between these two poles (self and object) there exists an
intentional relationship. Phenomenology grounds this concept on “the radical conviction that meaning is neither in the mind alone, nor in the world alone, but in the intentional relationship between the two” (Kearney, 1986, p. 15). Intentionality ensures that the phenomenological researcher is not just trying to describe the object of research as though it is an entity external to the person experiencing it, nor is it just an attempt to describe the subject who is describing the experience. Rather, it is to acknowledge that nothing exists independently of consciousness and henceforth phenomenological research aims “to seek object in subject, fact in interpretation, thing in consciousness” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 46).

Bracketing: Central to Husserl’s phenomenology was his quest to get “back to the things themselves”. However, the things themselves are often clouded by what we assume them to be – assumptions that we have gleaned through popular usage and inherited traditions. This “natural attitude”, the collective of our everyday assumptions and understandings – our “everyday unreflective attitude of naïve belief in the existence of the world” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 742) – must be cast aside, “bracketed” out as it were, to allow us to return to the things themselves. True description of these things is only possible in our “pre-reflective, pre-predicative experience – our experience as it is immediately given to us before we make sense of it” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 4). To suspend what is already known about the object of our research, to set in abeyance our commonsense beliefs in the world as we already know it (Natanson, 1966), we engage in a process of epoché. Epoché - taken from the Greek Sceptics signifying that we should “refrain from judging until the evidence is clear” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 49) and henceforth eschew our pre-defined intuitions of a phenomenon - allows for a “phenomenological reduction” of the “natural attitude” so as to turn to the phenomenological attitude – the attitude of phenomenological reflection which “refrains from seconding the naïve belief” (Spiegelberg, 1982) of the natural attitude. To achieve the phenomenological attitude and be able the see the true nature of experience we need a detachment from the natural attitude, a re-orientation (Moran & Mooney, 2002), and a “change of attitude that throws suspicion on everyday experiences” (Armstrong, 1976). The process is achieved through reduction (from the Latin - re-ducere – leading back) and enables “a reflective turn to transcendental subjectivity in which the pure phenomena are
Throughout the literature the terms epoché, bracketing, reduction and phenomenological reduction are often interchanged. However it is generally recognised that reduction is a process rather than an event and that several levels of reduction are required if we are to arrive at the "essence or eidos that lies on the other side of the concreteness of lived meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p. 185). In Husserl's original phenomenological method are evidenced bracketing (epoché) to suspend the natural attitude, phenomenological reduction, free (imaginative) variation, an intuiting of the essence of a phenomenon, and finally the description of the essential structures of both the noema and the noesis (Kearney, 1986).

**Essence:** Phenomenology has been described as "the study of essences" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii) and "aims to be a science of essences" (Moran, 2002, p. 1), through which we can approach the essential nature of a phenomenon. The essence of a phenomenon, that "which makes a some-‘thing’ what it is – and without which it could not be what it is" (van Manen, 1990, p. 10), infers essence(s) that are universal. To see the essence (Greek – ousia meaning the inner essential nature of a thing, Latin – essentia from esse meaning “to be”) of a phenomenon (van Manen, 1990, p. 177) we employ the process of reduction of which one stage is eidetic reduction – "from the Greek eidos which Plato had employed as an alternative for ‘idea’ or ‘form’" (Crotty, 1996c, p. 32). Husserl used the terms "eidetic seeing", “seeing essence” (Wesensschau), and "essential seeing" (Wesenserchauung) to refer to the possible insight that we can have into the essential natures of things (Moran, 2000, p. 134). We access the essence of the things themselves directly through the lifeworld – the world of lived experience. The following quotation from Merleau-Ponty (1962) captures this concept succinctly:

"All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression (p. viii)."
3.3.3 Using Phenomenology as the Research Methodology For This Study

Having examined the history of phenomenology and the components of phenomenological research the task became one of deciding on the phenomenological approach that would be appropriate for this study. The focus of my study was to investigate the life world of the academic, a world that entails many phenomena coming together and impacting on each other; henceforth a descriptive approach to a singular or pure phenomenon was not appropriate. What I sought to investigate were the experiences that constitute the academic experience and through this investigation to derive an understanding of the meaning that accompanies this lived experience: namely that which enables an academic to interpret and describe what it is to be in the world as an academic. This search led me to hermeneutic phenomenology and it this approach that has been utilised as a methodology for this study.

Hermeneutics was originally defined as the science of interpretation that was employed to assist the exegesis of Scripture. Whilst these origins assume that hermeneutics rested principally in biblical exegesis it is important to recognise that hermeneutics always performed a discrete function. Whereas exegesis referred primarily to the actual commentary on scripture, hermeneutics provided the ground rules, theory and methods for this interpretation. This interpretive function relates back to the origin of the word (from the Greek, verb – *hermēneuein* meaning “to interpret” and noun – *hermēneia* meaning “interpretation”) and references the Greek wing-footed messenger-god Hermes who was associated with “transmuting what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp” (Palmer, 1969, p. 13). Hermeneutics has moved beyond its origins of interpreting texts, and is now applied to assist in understanding human experience. Central to this function of this process of interpreting human understanding is that of language (the discovery of which the Greeks attributed to Hermes), thus hermeneutics is now defined as “the process of bringing to understanding”, especially as this process involves language” (Palmer, 1969, p. 13). The term and concept of hermeneutics is paramount to the works of both Frederick Schleiermacher (who associated hermeneutics with the understanding of texts regardless of their provenance) and Wilhelm Dilthey (who
linked hermeneutics with Geisteswissenschaften – the humanities and social sciences). However, its association with phenomenology is attributed particularly to the work of Martin Heidegger.

Heidegger, once a student of Husserl and also a former theological student, appropriated the term hermeneutics to the work he had been pursuing in phenomenology. Accordingly, Heidegger attributed to the method of phenomenological description the centrality of interpretation (Heidegger, 1996). Whereas Husserl had focussed on being in relation to the consciousness of phenomena, Heidegger focussed on the meaning of Being itself. Heidegger saw in phenomenology the potential to come to an understanding of the meaning of Being itself (to which he applied the term Dasein). For Heidegger this understanding of being was essential, and his thesis united “not only ontology and phenomenology but, through hermeneutics with its connotations of dialectics and rhetoric, the element of language as well” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 80). Phenomenology provided Heidegger a way for being to disclose itself, and he saw an inseparability between phenomenology and hermeneutics that enabled a power “to grasp one’s own possibilities for being in the world in certain ways” (van Manen, 1990, p. 180). Whereas Husserl’s focus had been epistemological, for Heidegger understanding was “a mode of being rather than a mode of knowledge” (Blaikie, 1993, p. 34) and his focus was ontological.

With its focus on ontology, Heidegger’s phenomenology came to be referred to as “hermeneutic phenomenology”, which is best described as an “interpretative phenomenology of the phenomenon of Dasein” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 750). In this he saw phenomenology as a hermeneutic of existence that sought to explicate the potentialities of one’s “Being-in-the-world”, a reference “to the way human beings exist, act, or are involved in the world – for example, as parent, as teacher, as man, as woman, or as a child” (van Manen, 1990, p. 175). Heidegger’s work was continued through his student Hans-Georg Gadamer who sought understanding of the influence that tradition (the world itself that is communicatively experienced by us) played in the role of human understanding (Gadamer, 1989). Despite the title of his book - Truth and Method - Gadamer argues that truth is reached not through method but rather through a dialectical
process. This process connects tradition, language, and ontology to seek understanding of the way of being. He argued that “understanding is the original characteristic of the being of human life itself” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 259) and central to achieving this understanding is the potential for growth – “the opening up of new horizons” (p. 302). Through opening up the boundaries that can limit people there is the possibility of development. Gadamer saw in the hermeneutic process a “fusion of horizons”, a term he used to describe the phenomenon of human understanding that “takes place as a fusion between the horizon of the interpreter (always in a process of formation) and the horizon projected by the life expression being interpreted” (Sharkey, 1999, p. 26). As humans are essentially situated in a world that is encountered in and through language, and “language has its true being in speech, the kind of speech which occurs in the context of a ‘conversation’” (Moran, 2002, p. 19), thus for Gadamer the process of coming to a mutual understanding, the working towards a fusion of horizons, is like that of a conversation “where something is expressed that is not only mine or my author’s but common” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 388). Through the conversation, the things themselves as referred to by Husserl, the essences of situations, “come to light in speech and specifically in dialogue” (Moran, 2002, p. 312). Given that conversations that lead to understanding involve both experience and language and given the linguistic structure of lived experience (van Manen, 1990) it is suggested that human experience is like a text (Ricoeur, 1981). The meaning that Husserl sought “as an essence to be intuited” is approached by Ricoeur “as a text to be interpreted” (Kearney, 1986, p. 108). Accordingly, this concept of conversation and textuality provide strong support in helping one approach and enter into human science research with its focus on understanding one’s being in the world.

Given this focus it seemed obvious that hermeneutic phenomenology with its attentiveness to both aspects of the methodology – “descriptive (phenomenological) methodology because it wants to be attentive to how things appear, it wants to let things speak for themselves” and “interpretive (hermeneutic) methodology because it claims that there are no such things as uninterpreted phenomena” (van Manen, 1990, p. 180) - could provide the most appropriate methodology to research the experience of being in the world as an
academic. This form of research is based on the assumption that “the manner in which someone gains an understanding of the lifeworld of another and is then able to describe this so that others can understand it through language and text” (Smith, 1997, p. 76). After viewing many contemporary approaches that embrace both hermeneutics and phenomenology as a research methodology I settled on the approach to Hermeneutic Phenomenology as worked by Max van Manen (1990) to form the foundation on which to scaffold this research study.

3.3.4 Doing Phenomenological Research

Phenomenology is accessible only through a phenomenological method. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. viii)

Just as there are different strains of phenomenology there are also different methods of phenomenological research. Even within the one strain of phenomenology there may be different representations of how to approach the study, and various protocols, strategies and methods for data collection, analysis and description. Whereas some of these approaches preserve the traditional intent of doing phenomenology (Spiegelberg, 1975), (Crotty, 1996b), (Moustakas, 1994), other approaches represent the application of phenomenology to different disciplines (e.g. Phenomenological Psychology - (van Kaam, 1966), (Giorgi, 1975), (van Kaam, 1966), and Sociology (Schutz, 1967)). Each of these approaches (albeit often contradicting one another) involves different elements and varying numbers of steps in the process of phenomenological research.

For this study, the methods used include a combination of the approaches suggested for descriptive (also referred to as intuitive) phenomenology (Crotty, 1996a) and hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 1984). This combination was chosen to safeguard against the pitfalls of many novice researchers who maintain that they are employing phenomenology research yet often align themselves more with the humanistic approaches found in symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998b) - these pitfalls will be described in section 3.3.5 of this chapter.
For Crotty there are five successive steps presented to scaffold phenomenological inquiry. These steps are:

1. Determine as precisely as possible what phenomenon we are focusing on
2. Consider the phenomenon precisely as phenomenon
3. Describe what has come into view for us
4. Ensure the phenomenological character of this description
5. Determine the essence of the phenomenon, (i.e., the element or elements in the phenomenon as phenomenon that make it precisely what it is.

(Crotty, 1996a, pp. 277 – 278; 1996c).

In van Manen's methodology there are four procedural activities:

a) Turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
b) Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;
c) Reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;
d) Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and re-writing.


In this methodology there are also many intermediate activities outlined under each main section (van Manen, 1984, p. 42) and these intermediate activities will be explicated as appropriate in Sec. 3.4 that follows.

Whilst these steps (procedural activities) are presented as a guide and can be varied according to the scope of an individual research study they do provide support for the researcher by providing a systematic and comprehensive approach to phenomenological research that is phenomenological rather than research that masquerades as phenomenology when in fact it is ethnography, ethnomethodology, or symbolic interactionism. However, it should be noted that phenomenology cannot be conducted according to any "predetermined set of fixed procedures, techniques and concepts that would rule-govern the research project"
rather the methodologies presented above are meant to serve as a guide, they act as “a certain methodos – a way” (van Manen, 1990, p. 29) by which to structure hermeneutic phenomenology. The ways in which these methodologies are implemented are outlined in the following sections of this chapter.

3.3.5 Avoiding the Pitfalls – What Phenomenology Is Not!

Bringing objectivity and subjectivity together and holding them together throughout the process is hardly characteristic of qualitative research today. Instead, a rampant subjectivism seems to be abroad. It can be detected in the turning of phenomenology from a study of phenomena as the immediate objects of experience into a study of experiencing individuals. (Crotty, 1998b, p. 48)

Rushing into descriptions before having made sure of the thing to be described may even be called one of the main pitfalls of phenomenology. (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 693)

Michael Crotty, an avowed phenomenologist who was steeped in the philosophical tradition of the phenomenological movement yet honest enough to admit of “its many vagaries” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 1), was particularly sensitive to and critical of a “new phenomenology” – that as proposed by the group of researchers who claim to be pursuing phenomenological research whilst in fact they are engaging in research more akin to symbolic interactionism and ethnography (Crotty, 1996a, 1996c, 1998b). Crotty is not alone in adhering to the phenomenological tradition with its focus on the richness of “the things themselves” as the way to pursue phenomenological research authentically. Similar admonitions against moving away from the essential nature of phenomenology to focus on the subjective experiences of the people who are informing a research study are found in the works of Moustakas (1994), Kvale (1996) and van Manen (1990).

From a phenomenological point of view we are not primarily interested in the subjective experiences of our so-called subjects or informants, for the sake of being able to report on how something is seen from their particular view, perspective, or vantage point ... the deeper goal which is always the thrust of phenomenological research, remains oriented to asking the question of what is the nature of this phenomenon as an essentially human experience. (van Manen, 1990, pp. 62 - 63)
One way to ensure authenticity in phenomenological research is to be attentive to the concepts of intentionality, bracketing (phenomenological reduction), and essence (the essential nature of the phenomenon as encountered in lived experience) as outlined in Sec. 3.3.2 above.

These concepts as they apply to phenomenological research ensure that:

- The focus of the phenomenological study must always be the experience of the phenomenon under investigation not the person experiencing the phenomenon, it is to think of the things themselves and to experience the things themselves not ourselves (Intentionality);

- To achieve direct contact with the phenomenon we need to lay aside all that we already know in our ‘natural attitude’ and try to approach the ‘phenomenological attitude’ where we can see things afresh and as if for the first time. Expressed another way, we need “to question the ‘taken for grantedness’, to look at what is truly said in the conversation. Such questioning allows for new understandings, new possibilities, that may go beyond the reality of the presuppositions” (Bergum, 1989, p. 12), which determine our natural attitude. (Bracketing).

- The essence of the things themselves is found in the lived experience of the person(s) experiencing such. To describe the essence of a phenomenon – a lived experience – is not easy and can be “as painstaking as the works of Balzac, Proust, Valéry or Cézanne – by reason of the same kind of attentiveness and wonder, the same demand for awareness, the same will to seize the meaning of the world or of history as that meaning comes into being” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. xxi). (Essence – Lived Experience).

To pursue a study of lived experience from the hermeneutic phenomenological perspective demands an application of these principles to the research process if one is to avoid the pitfall(s) of presenting merely subjective observations and to transcend the extreme subjectivism and objectivism contained in attempts at
phenomenology that characterize the uncritical and untrained phenomenological researcher (Spiegelberg, 1982).

3.4 Researching the Lived Experience of 'Being an Academic'

This section presents an overview of the issues that accompany this research project. It develops the themes from phenomenological philosophy as presented above and illustrates the ways in which hermeneutic phenomenology will be applied to this research study of the lived experience of being an academic.

3.4.1 The Intent and Scope of this Study

This research study seeks an explication of the meaning of the lived experience of academics in order to develop an understanding of the meaning of being in the world as an academic. This focus does not attempt theorizing, categorizing or causal explanations of why an academic's lifeworld is experienced as it is today - as opposed to how it was yesterday or could be tomorrow – indeed, many of these explanations have been addressed in the literature review above. What this study attempts to achieve is to move beyond and away from such causal explanations and to get behind the masks that screen the essences of our experiences of life and that prevent us from finding the true meaning in our lived experience. Whilst these masks may allow us to speak about the things of our experience they often prevent us from speaking of the things themselves (Ortega y Gasset, 1963). This study is an attempt to remove these masks and to penetrate the screens (Crotty, 1996c), to move beyond those descriptions that present academic life according to someone else's blueprint of what it is, how it should be, or why it isn't what it could be. It is an attempt to identify the essentials of our lifeworld, the lived experience that constitutes our being in the world as an academic for exactly what it is, in the belief that within the actuality of our lived experience is the potential of possibility (Heidegger, 1977). Such possibility will be achieved if through this study our consciousness is heightened and our understanding is enhanced with regard to the meaning of the lived experience of being an academic.
Whilst phenomenological discourse may highlight “something particular while really addressing the general or the universal” (van Manen, 1990, p. 120), it is not seeking to achieve “naturalistic generalisation” (Stake, 1978) from which readers can extrapolate selective research findings to fit their situation (M. Patton, 1990). Clearly there will be elements of naturalistic generalisation as the reader of the text identifies with and reflects on the phenomenological discourse in relation to their own lived experience. However, the degrees of success of this study will be the extent to which the study makes visible and renders explicit (Gendlin, 1965) that “what hitherto has remained implicit, i.e. our ‘pre-ontological being-in-the-world’” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 169), and the extent to which the anecdotal narrative and phenomenological discourse contained in this dissertation “pulls us in but then prompts us to reflect” (van Manen, 1990).

This study attempts to enjoin both descriptive and interpretative functions to give voice to what it is that academics experience in the world of academe. This voice is achieved through language – the speech of conversation, anecdote, metaphor, narrative, art, poetry and text - remembering that language does not stand alone but touches also on our thought and our being (Heidegger, 1971). The proposition that “human experience is only possible because we have language” (van Manen, 1990, p. 38) demands that hermeneutic phenomenology be sensitive to its linguistic and textual nature if we are to understand the essences that constitute our lived experience.

To enable the academic voice to be heard with any hope of gaining understanding of the essence of experience as lived by academics (van Manen, 1984, p. 40), it was necessary to converse with academics and to listen to the stories they narrated of their experiences and the sense they have made of their own professional lives (Bradbeer, 1998). These stories help shape the storyteller, the listener, the world and how we live in it (Clandinin, 1990). Through these conversational encounters was sought both a description of the experiences that constitute academic life and an interpretation of what these experiences contain. To enable an observation of the participants in their usual workplace and to encounter the realities of academic life as experienced in situ, these conversations were held in the “naturalistic”
setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the university spaces where the academics worked.

The conversations continued through an iterative series of interviews conducted on a bimestrial basis with fifteen participants over a period of twelve to twenty-four months. The actual number of interviews varied between participants due to circumstances such as time availability or change of employment location. In two cases the participant and myself reached agreement to terminate the interviewing process (after the third and fourth interview respectively) as there was little new descriptive material forthcoming and henceforth the research process had reached "saturation" point (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In addition to the fifteen co-researchers who participated in this study an additional three single conversations were held with senior academic managers who reflected on and narrated their experiences of academic life as an academic, an academic manager, and a manager of academics. These single conversations provided another perspective towards academic experience – that of being an academic who manages other academics.

3.4.2 Defining the Research Framework of this Study – the phenomenological question(s)

Hermeneutic research allows the research question to emerge during the conversation of the research rather than being stated prior to the beginning of fieldwork. (Sharkey, 1999, p. 19)

To engage in hermeneutic phenomenological research is to enter into the lifeworld of others and to bring “to reflective awareness the nature of the events experienced in our natural attitude” (van Manen, 1990, p. 7) through constructing an "animating, evocative description (text) of human actions, behaviours, intentions, and experiences as we meet them in the lifeworld" (p. 19). However to arrive at a space where such reflective experience is possible demands a sensitivity to the task at hand by all involved in the research conversation. We are reminded that:
Phenomenology begins in silence. Only he who has experienced genuine perplexity and frustration in the face of the phenomena when trying to find the proper description for them knows what phenomenological seeing really means. (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 693)

This silence is achieved gradually as people communicate, find trust in one another, and achieve a level of respect that allows for risk-taking in the search a genuine phenomenological seeing of the experiences at hand (Weber, 1986). Rather than hitting the research subject between the eyes with a question that reads like a problem to be solved, it is important to move gradually to the point where the conversation flows freely and the focus is on the experience itself rather than on the person experiencing it. To achieve this flow the following questions were structured as a research framework that sought to engage with the central phenomenological question defining this study - ‘What does it mean to be in the world as an Academic?’ These questions sought to access the autobiographies and personal life histories (van Manen, 1990, pp. 71-74) of the co-researchers, to obtain narrative accounts and experiential descriptions from the co-researchers [in accord with Stage 4 of van Manen’s Methodological procedural activities (1984, p. 55)] and were adapted from the guiding questions suggested to encourage respondents to “focus on the phenomenon purely and simply as they experience it” (Crotty, 1996a, p. 279). A sample of the questions asked and descriptive statements to be completed by the academics involved in this study include:

- What comes to mind when you hear that someone is ‘an academic’?
- What is essential for you in being an academic?
- What must remain in your professional world if you are to be an academic?
- What metaphor describes best what it is for you to be an academic?
- How do you describe an academic?
- When you reflect on being an academic what do you see?
- How do you picture being an academic?
- Being an academic is like ...
- For me, to be an academic is ...
Whilst the phenomenological interview was the usual conversation, on two occasions the conversation consisted of a musical composition with accompanying narrative.

3.4.3 The Phenomenological Interview - The Iterative Process of Researching Lived Experience in a Naturalistic Setting

The data of a hermeneutic phenomenological study are the lived experiences of those who participate in the study. Contained within the lived experience is the potentiality of its meaning, and henceforth, “the lifeworld, the world of lived experience, is both the source and the object” for this study (van Manen, 1990, p. 53). To access data (datum – something given or granted) for this study it was necessary that the dialogic conversations with the participants approach their experiences of academic life with the aim of capturing the meaning of what it is to be an academic. To achieve such rich (Kvale, 1996; Erickson, 1986), thick (Denzin, 1989) descriptions demands that the phenomenological interview not be restricted to a series of questions that require a formulaic response; to do so would be to limit the participants from exploring as fully as possible their life experiences. Similarly, the phenomenological interview cannot be totally unstructured as such freedom may result in the participants being lost for words, or describing and hypothesizing about why things are as they appear, or how the co-researcher feels about these things rather than describing the things themselves. To achieve the balance required for phenomenological interviewing demands some direction to lead the conversation towards its focus without being so prescriptive that creativity is destroyed. Such balance was achieved through the use of a standardized technique of open-ended interviews (M. Q. Patton, 1990) through which the participants were pointed in the general direction of the focus of the interview. This technique is akin to the “semistructured life world interview ... an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale, 1996, pp. 5 – 6). For all interviews, other than the initial introductory conversation that outlined the study and the process of phenomenological research, participants were circularised with sample questions and/or focus statements on which they could reflect in preparation for the conversation. This preparation attempted to ensure the necessary condition that
phenomenological reportage begin “in silence” (Natanson, 1985) and also returned the participants to the central focus of this study – the experience of being an academic.

3.4.4 Delimiting this Study

Social constructionism is relativist. What is said to be 'the way things are' is really just 'the sense we make of them'. Once this standpoint is embraced, we will obviously hold our understandings much more lightly and tentatively and far less dogmatically, seeing them as historically and culturally effected interpretations rather than eternal truths of some kind. Historical and cross-cultural comparisons should make us very aware that, at different times and in different places, there have been and are very divergent interpretations of the same phenomena. (Crotty, 1998b, p. 64)

The implication of the above quotation is that to reach a full or exhaustive understanding of any phenomenon is impossible. In fact, we are cautioned “to attempt to do hermeneutic phenomenology is to attempt to accomplish the impossible” (van Manen, 1990, p. 18). Despite all attempts to bracket our current knowledge, understanding and judgements, every phenomenological description will always reflect the time and place in which the description is grounded and the capability of the researcher(s) in the task of describing, interpreting and expressing their experience(s) of any phenomenon. Similarly, no description can ever fully exhaust the meaning of any phenomenon because there will always be other ways of seeing, different ways of experiencing and alternative forms for describing the phenomenon and our lived experience of such. The phenomenon we seek to understand is always “pregnant with meaning” (Crotty, 1996c, p. 152), henceforth the phenomenologist acting as midwife performs the maieutic function of bringing this meaning to birth through the conversations of their research (Carson, 1986). It is almost as though we can go deeper and deeper into our experiences in the attempt of bringing to birth the meanings which we have not yet discovered – meaning that will be reworked and reinterpreted by successive generations as they approach the same experience.

Given these insights it was more appropriate to scope this study to gain depth and to seek more penetrating insights into the meaning of the lived experience of being academic rather than merely skimming the surface and finding little
variation. In order to facilitate this a bounded case study approach was adopted (Stake, 1988). The case study “is not a methodological choice, but a choice of object to be studied” (Stake, 1994, p. 236) and as such it enabled me to pursue this research in an in-depth manner within accessible and manageable boundaries. These boundaries limited the study to one site – a large metropolitan university in Australia with a long-standing tradition and a successful track record in both teaching and research – and to one group of co-researchers consisting of fifteen academics and three academic managers. Whilst each academic formed a singular case and the group never met collectively, the case study approach I adopted was instrumental (as opposed to an intrinsic) (Stake, 1994, p. 237) in that it sought to reveal the meaning of a shared lived experience – the lived experience of being an academic – rather than to detail each individual within the case. Another boundary was that of time in that the study was limited to a minimum time of twenty-four months (up to six iterations of interviews). The time established was framed to encompass at least one complete academic year to ensure that any variations in the rhythm of academic life that accompany certain phases of the academic year could be noted. Whilst some conversations continued longer than others this was the result of mutual agreement with individual participants who found the reflective process both illuminating and helpful in terms of their making sense of being an academic and henceforth were keen to continue with the conversation.

3.5 Phenomenological Research – A Process of Co-Research

Phenomenological research of the kind proposed here is clearly a first-person exercise. To disregard prior assumptions and understandings and look hard at what presents itself primordially in experience is obviously something one must do for oneself in relation to one's person experience. It is not possible to take someone else's account of experience and somehow strip away the everyday interpretations and reach the phenomena as they give themselves to that person. People must do that for themselves. (Crotty, 1996c, pp. 170 – 171)

Crotty's inference is not so much that phenomenological research does not involve others; rather that phenomenological research is “markedly different from the usual research pathways” (p. 171). As opposed to other forms of research in
which the subject or respondent provides data that are gathered for analysis, categorization and prediction, the processes of hermeneutic phenomenology is more one of co-research which demands a phenomenological seeing from all involved in the study according to each person's experience. The issues and the protocols for this research study are explored in the following section.

3.5.1 Selecting the Co-Researchers

The task of selecting participants for a hermeneutic phenomenological research study with its requirements of commitment, thoughtfulness and reflection was one that provoked thoughtful consideration both on my part and that of each invitee as they considered the request to participate equally as co-researchers in this study. Given the ultimate aim of this methodology is to "elucidate lived experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 27) a minimum requirement for the study was to engage co-researchers who were committed to the journey required to reach a phenomenological seeing of their lived experience of being an academic – a journey that cannot be truncated into a single interview or a simple questionnaire. Alongside this commitment (acknowledging that the requested time commitment from each participant was sizeable) it was important that the participants were able to "reflect, focus, intuit and describe as the phenomenological endeavour requires" (Crotty, 1996c, p. 172).

To develop a list of possible co-researchers who would satisfy the above-mentioned criteria I engaged in a period of consultation with colleagues who were familiar with both the process of hermeneutic phenomenology and the site of the study. Important to this selection was ensuring diversity amongst the co-researchers that reflected the experiences of academics from different points on the career hierarchy (from lecturer to professor), from the different perspectives that accompany the academic employment portfolio (viz. teaching, research, academic management), and from varying disciplines within the university. Also sought was a balance of male and female academics. In essence a "purposive sampling" approach, aimed to achieve maximum variation was developed (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The sampling group also reflects that of "criterion sampling" as "all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the
phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 118). In addition to the core group of co-
researchers, three senior members of the Chancellery were also approached to
participate fully in this study. However, given the commitment of time required
for full participation in this study it was decided to restrict the involvement of the
Chancellery participants to a single interview each. Of interest is that each of the
eighteen co-researchers who participated in the study was selected from the initial
list of nominations. Drawing from a possible cohort of twenty-five there were
five academics who indicated their interest in participating this study but who
were also aware that they could not meet the time commitment or that they would
be leaving the university during its progress, the other two invitees never
responded to the invitation.

An overview of the participants within this study with respect to the nominated
categories (also noting the categories of appointment – tenure/contract, and the
holding of a doctoral degree) is presented in Appendix 1.

3.5.2 Research Protocols – Ethical Considerations

The research frame for this study was constructed around and adhered to the
protocols and ethical considerations for involving human subjects in research
projects as promulgated by the university in which this study was completed.
Approval was sought and granted from the University Human Research Ethics
Committee to conduct the study prior to its commencement.

Before inviting any academic to participate in the study a letter of request was
sent to the immediate supervisor(s) of each potential participant seeking
permission to approach these individuals. For academics in faculty positions
these requests were made both of the Dean of Faculty and the Head of Department
in which the academics were employed. Prior to approaching members of the
chancellery, permission was sought from the Vice-Chancellor. Upon receiving
the required authorisation to approach the participants in this study, telephone
communication was initiated with the nominated participants to outline the study
and to forecast the requirements of time and commitment, this was followed with
a formal letter of invitation, an outline of the study and the expectations of
participants, and a letter of agreement to participate in the study. On receipt of the signed letter of agreement an initial conversation was scheduled with each participant to explain the focus of the study, to overview the processes of the hermeneutic phenomenological research, and to draft an interview schedule. Permission was sought from each participant for the interviews to be tape-recorded to assist the process of record keeping and transcription. In accord with university policy, all letters authorising consent to participate in the study, field notes, transcription of interviews, tape-recording, and phenomenological descriptions developed from these interviews have been locked away for safekeeping.

During each interview, field notes were taken to augment the tape-recording and to provide cues to assist in interpreting the texts of the interviews (Kvale, 1996). Before transcribing each interview I listened to the tape-recording of the complete interview and consulted the field notes to compare the nuances and reactions of the participants as captured on tape with the references to individual annotations made in the field notes. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and the written transcript then compared with the spoken words on the tape-recording to ensure that any inconsistencies were corrected prior to the printing of the transcripts. The printed transcript of each interview was checked with the participant for accuracy and used to begin the subsequent interview. On certain occasions these transcripts were summarised by myself into a phenomenological description that formed an introductory narrative to set the scene for that subsequent interview.

Throughout this study every attempt has been made to ensure confidentiality of all participants and the academic unit in which these people work. Accordingly, the names of the individual co-researchers referenced throughout this study are pseudonyms and every care has been taken throughout to ensure that these people could not be identified through direct reference to themselves, their colleagues, or the area in which they work. Similarly, every care has been taken throughout the study to ensure that no participant has knowledge of the other participants in the study. However, with hindsight, this protocol does have a major shortcoming in that it prevents a collective meeting of the participants thus precluding the depth and richness that can be harvested from such a shared reflection. I recommend for
similar studies that permission be negotiated with the participants prior to their involvement in the study for such a focus-group type meeting at some stage during the research process.

3.6 Analysing the Data – Thematic Analysis and Variation

A major function of the data analysis for a hermeneutic phenomenological study is to create a foundation from the lived-experience description (obtained through the process of data collection in the phenomenological interview) upon which the phenomenological description will be developed. As “lived-experience descriptions are data, or material on which to work” (van Manen, 1990, p. 55) there is a need to take from this raw material that which will enable the phenomenological description to be built. Involved in this process is not just repeating the stories of the participants but also the constructed interpretation of the story. “There is a great contrast between the story and the interpretation. The interpretation ... represents further involvement with the texts of the transcripts and entails tracing etymological sources, searching idiomatic phrases ... and attending to personal experience” (Bergum, 1991, p. 65). This interpretation forms an integral part of the data analysis of the phenomenological study.

A form of data analysis that is frequently employed in phenomenological research (Colaizzi, 1978; Moustakas, 1994; van Kaam, 1966), is that of thematic analysis which attempts to recover “the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work” (van Manen, 1990, p. 78). As opposed to the attempts in some qualitative research to perceive thematic analysis as the “mechanical application of some frequency count or coding of selected terms in transcripts or texts” (p. 78) the analysis of themes in phenomenological research attempts to uncover the structures of human experience - “the experiential structures that make up the experience” (p. 79). Themes in phenomenological research provide the possibility to gain greater access in terms of our phenomenological seeing and as such should “be considered simply as a means to get at the notion we are addressing ... (to) give control and order to our research and writing” (p. 79). Once identified, these themes were employed to
assist the process of imaginative variation that accompanies phenomenological research. Founded in the principle that “there is no single inroad to truth, but that countless possibilities emerge that are intimately connected with the essences and meanings of an experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 99), it is important within the phenomenological conversation to present the participants with the opportunity to consider the structures of the experience from different perspectives. Acknowledging that each experience holds many potential variations it is possible on considering these themes from different perspectives throughout the interview process to arrive at interpretations that add new and further insights to the phenomenological description and that allow for the multi-dimensional and multi-layered meaning of the phenomenon to be described (van Manen, 1990, p. 78). In this sense the process of hermeneutic phenomenology involves entering into the “hermeneutic circle” through which we obtain access to “understanding the whole through grasping its parts, and comprehending the meaning of parts through diving the whole” (Crotty, 1998b, p. 92).

In reading and re-reading each of the transcripts of the conversations held with participants there were discernible statements, concepts, references and inferences that appeared prominently throughout the transcripts as meaning units for the participants that allowed for “thematic portrayals of the experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 131). Such statements are sometimes referred to as thematic moments or simply “moments” (Bergum, 1989) to capture “the special aspects that are highlighted” through the participants’ stories (p. 13). To capture these themes I engaged in each of the three approaches to thematic isolation as suggested by van Manen (1990). These approaches can be described as a) the wholistic or sententious approach, b) the selective or highlighting approach, and c) the detailed or line-by-line approach (pp. 92 – 93). The transcripts were also read from different perspectives - also referred to as “different readings” (Lather, 1995) - to note any “descriptive nuances, differences, and paradoxes” (Kvale, 1996, p. 226) that may be discernible. By employing each of these approaches it was possible to move more confidently between the whole and the part with the hope of preserving the integrity of the entire conversation rather than losing the wood for the trees.
Having identified a particular thematic unit as holding meaning for one participant all other transcripts were scrutinised to determine if this or similar themes could be discerned. The theme statements were then compared across transcripts and any similarities and differences noted. To assist the manipulation of text units within the research process the qualitative research computer program HyperRESEARCH (Dupuis, 1998) was utilised for text identification, storage, and retrieval. The strength of this program is that it enables a text that has been identified as a meaning unit to be worked and reworked in various formats (e.g. a single statement from the participant, a collective of statements from all participants, every appearance from every interview of the meaning unit). However, it must be noted that the use of such a program to perform the thematic analysis for a phenomenological study would not be encouraged if by thematic analysis was inferred an electronic counting of words or phrases that appear throughout the data. As the process of hermeneutic phenomenology is never one-dimensional (van Manen, 1990, p. 78), the value of the theme is not found simply through counting repeated occurrence but rather in the capacity of the theme to act like “knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholes” (p. 90). As such, these themes identified through the textual representations of the conversations are the “fasteners, foci, or threads around which the phenomenological description is facilitated” (p. 91), and represent both the foundation and the expression of the data analysis and findings of this study as presented in Chapters 4 – 6.

3.7 Confirming the Analysis – Issues of Rigour and Validity

In considering the issues of reliability, validity (Burns, 1991), and trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) that accompany any rigorous educational research program it is important to recognise that hermeneutic phenomenology does not set out to present the truth in terms of objectivity (Hekman, 1986) with results that are “generalizable, reductionist, or measurable” (Bergum, 1989, p. 15), in an attempt to generate grand theories (Anderson, 1991). Rather, it attempts to allow for insights into understanding the lived experience and to reveal glimpses of meaning in ways that the readers can identify with, perhaps even experience for
themselves, the phenomenon being investigated. The "phenomenological description is collected by lived experience and recollects lived experience – is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 27). It is a search for truth "that goes beyond the exclusive dichotomy of abstract and experimental reasoning, analytic and empirical assertion" (Burch, 1989, p. 197). However, the concept of truth within phenomenological research needs careful explanation and it cannot be assumed that phenomenology employs the concept of truth as it is employed in everyday usage. In human science research the "subject and object are integrated – what I see is interwoven with how I see it, with whom I see it, and with whom I am. My perception, the thing I perceive, and the experience or act interrelate to make the objective subjective and the subjective objective" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 59). Hence, to refer to truth within the context of this research is to refer to the concept of Aletheia (Greek – Truth) where "truth is better seen as something that must be uncovered or as something that reveals itself into unconcealment" (van Manen, 1990, p. 175), and to be concerned with the self-showing of our life experiences (Heidegger, 1977), that "best fit the phenomenon under study" (Guba, 1981, p. 77), rather than their correctness.

In phenomenological research (as in all qualitative research) it is neither possible nor desirable in our attempts to verify the data that we exclude the interpretation from the observation. Consequently, we need to avoid the trap that suggests that the "validity of data would be guaranteed if interpretations were scrupulously excluded from reports ... often called 'the dogma of immaculate perception'" (Kaplan, 1994, p. 4296). This is neither to infer that any description will suffice or that rigour need not be considered as important. Indeed, the issue of credibility (Janesick, 1994) is essential for any genuine phenomenological study and numerous criteria (e.g., verite, integrity, ethics, verisimilitude) are presented in the literature as ways of approaching the issue in qualitative research that seeks expressive - as opposed to explanatory - knowledge (Willis & Neville, 1996, p. 103). However, the rigour of the hermeneutic phenomenological description is its power to return to the reader to "the things themselves" (Husserl, 1970) where "already-given objects are newly displayed in the theatre of consciousness. The
consequences of that display is the propagation of meaning, the enlargement of experience” (Natanson, 1985, p. 12).

One aspect that determines the rigour of phenomenological research is the process of verification (Creswell, 1998) through which the co-researchers have the opportunity to clarify their statements and develop further their thoughts with reference to their life experience and to ensure that the description is phenomenological (i.e. it does come from our own experience as opposed to external theories, subjective emotions or other outside sources) (Crotty, 1996c). The phenomenological interview provides excellent opportunities for this to occur as the interviewer can “repeatedly check the reliability of the interviewees’ answers, as well as to verify the interviewer’s interpretations” (Kvale, 1997, p. 7) thus reaching agreement on the “face validity” (Lather, 1986) of data. Through this process of verification a “continuing alteration of validity occurs as people articulate and describe their experiences. Reciprocal correcting of reality takes place in social conversations and dialogues” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 57).

A further strategy to assist this process of verifying the data collected through this research was that of “member checking” (Guba, 1981) whereby the participants were provided with the opportunity to validate the accuracy of the transcripts of our conversations and my interpretation of the experiences they shared as true to their lived experience. Through this process was sought “an accurate portrait of the common features and structural connections that are manifest in the examples collected” (p. 57) and it was employed in preference to the usual process of triangulation that is “considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 1994, p. 241), in which “a variety of data sources ... and different methods are pitted against one another in order to cross-check data and interpretations” (Guba, 1981, p. 85). Whilst triangulation does have a place in many qualitative research studies it does not accord well with hermeneutic phenomenology “where prominence is given to the constructed and multiple realities that surround the phenomena being investigated” (Sharkey, 1999, p. 129).
Another strategy employed throughout the research process to assist with verification and trustworthiness was that of “practicing reflexivity ... in which introspections are made ... and tested during peer debriefings” (Guba, 1981, p. 87). This process was employed both by myself and by many of the co-researchers throughout the research calendar. The reflective entries that were made became part of the conversations held, informed the phenomenological descriptions that the co-participants developed during the research process, and supported the phenomenological writing of the descriptions that follow in Chapters 4 – 6 of this thesis.

3.8 Phenomenological Writing – A Process of Writing and Re-Writing

Hermeneutic phenomenology is an involved and taxing process in its attempts to capture the essence of the lived experience. The process also requires constant vigilance on the part of all co-researchers and a focussed attention to detail. Given that the objective of such research is “creating a phenomenological text” (van Manen, 1990, p. 111), an essential component throughout this research process is that of “phenomenological writing and rewriting” (p. 32) whereby we can bring to speech and give voice to the experiences that structure our life. For such a text to do justice “to the fullness and ambiguity of the experience of the lifeworld, writing may turn into a complex process of rewriting, re-thinking, reflecting, re-cognizing” (van Manen, 1989, p. 32). To assist this process of writing and rewriting we can draw from many textual forms (e.g., narrative picturing (Stuhlmiller, 1996), anecdotal narrative (Rosen, 1986), vignettes (Miles & Huberman, 1984), metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), story (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994)) and different forms of textual representation (Tierney & Lincoln, 1997), (Ellis & Bochner, 1996)). The challenge for the researcher engaged in this process of qualitative research writing is thus one of selecting from the many available textual forms and utilising these in this process of phenomenological writing and rewriting to develop “a textual genre for representing experiences which is appropriate to the phenomenological project” (Willis, 1996, p. 220) and which “tells us about ourselves, about being, and about the world” (Sokolowski, 1985, p. 14).
For this study the process of descriptive writing has been used to give voice to the experience of being an academic. This task of descriptive writing aims at producing "an account of the meaning of something, phenomenological interpretation is the act of producing or establishing meaning" (Silverman, 1984, p. 22) and henceforth these descriptions involve both the telling of the stories of the co-researchers as well as the interpretation of these stories. These descriptions are poetic in that they are part of a "poetizing project" (Willis, 1996) that attempts to offer "incantative, evocative speaking, a primal telling, wherein we aim to involve the voice in an original singing of the world" (van Manen, 1990, p. 13). The descriptions of the lived experiences of the academics participating in this research are ordered as follows:

- Chapter 4 presents the voices of individual academics as they reflect on and relate their day-to-day experiences of academic life. Also included in these descriptions are interpretations of what these experiences mean for these individuals as they live in the world as an academic.

- Chapter 5 is presented in two sections. Section 5.1 is a series of thematic presentations that distil the essential elements (Willis, 1996, p. 221) of the experiences of being an academic and the meaning attached to these experiences by the participants of this study. Section 5.2 addresses the reality of being an academic and presents the lived experience of the academics participating in this study from the philosophical perspectives of the existentials of lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), and lived human relation (relationality or communality) (van Manen, 1990, p. 101). These existentials "all form an intricate unity which we call the lifeworld – our lived world" (p. 105) and as such they foreground phenomenological research as they are the way by "which all human beings experience the world" (p. 102).

- Chapter 6 presents a phenomenological description of the experience of being an academic.
Chapter 4

ON BEING AN ACADEMIC – VOICES OF EXPERIENCE
The process of phenomenological research provides many opportunities for those involved in the research to move closer to the essence of the many phenomena that constitute the lived experience. The hermeneutical task does not call us to recreate the world of the other (Gadamer, 1975) in order to provide a clear, uncomplicated statement; rather it is more a process of entering into a conversation that enables understanding. To engage with this conversation is to embark on a journey of phenomenological inquiry and to enter into the hermeneutic circle where we are led to "a richer and richer understanding of the text" (Dreyfus, 1995, p. 36). As a co-researcher, I was privileged to become part of this journey – a journey of dialogic conversation with academics describing the experiences of their lifeworld – some of these descriptions are presented in this chapter. As a reader of this thesis you are invited to join the journey and to enter into these conversations as you reflect upon and interpret these descriptions in light of your own lived experience.

The journey of phenomenological inquiry is multi-layered with each layer holding the potential for revealing the phenomenon in its many rich meanings – a potential that can only be realized through careful reflection, analysis and interpretation. The very nature of lived experience makes it difficult to summarise, paraphrase, or recreate the phenomenon in a simple definitional form. Phenomenological research is not a puzzle to be solved or a problem to be answered; it is a search for the meaning of the lived experience of a specified phenomenon as experienced by each co-researcher. As such, there is always something more, another layer of meaning that can be identified and revealed that reflects the different ways the experience is lived and interpreted by each person.

These layers are stories and the descriptions of this chapter are conversations – constructions that reflect the lived experience of the interviewees in relation to their being as Academics. They are not simple narratives that describe selected experiences of a day, a class or a research project that can then be strung together to describe the phenomenon. These stories have become double constructions (Lincoln & Guba, 1990) in that they have been processed further as I, as researcher, have interpreted the stories from my own life experience and distilled and fashioned them "within a conceptual frame" (Bradbeer, 1998, p. 53). As a
reader, you also work from a personal frame of reference, and you will interpret further the stories from the viewpoint of your own personal lived experience. This process of distillation reflects Gadamer's insights into interpretation as he writes, "The artist who creates something is not the appointed interpreter of it. ... The meaning that he, as reader, gives his own work does not set the standard. The only standard of interpretation is the sense of his creation, what it 'means'" (Gadamer, 1989, p. 193).

In this chapter you will engage in conversation with six academics. These conversations are drawn from the many interviews held with each of these six participants. Each conversation is presented as a single vignette and the actual voice of the participant appears in the text as direct quotations. The decision to select six academics from the total group of participants was determined purely by the limitation of size. However, whilst the conversations with every participant could have been selected to offer rich and different understandings of the experience of being an academic, the following six have been selected because they illustrate clearly the different ways in which academic life is influenced by factors such as the level of academic appointment and tenure status. Chapters 5 and 6 will extend further the conversations of this chapter and will include the voice of all participants in the study as they reflect on their experience of being an academic.

4.1 Diane Smart

"When the department moved into our new building, I was on the second floor of a terrace house and I had a window seat in this beautiful terrace, and when I first moved into that room I had this wonderful fantasy. It was a fantasy of reading and being immersed in ideas but it was also a picture of myself as an academic".

Diane moved into academic life after working as a clinical practitioner in the behavioural sciences. She describes the transition from practitioner to academic as one of "gradual transformation. Initially, on my appointment as an academic, I think I would of seen myself as a practitioner who was training people for my profession" said Diane, "it wasn’t until I really did more research, started my
PhD, and was publishing regularly that I started to see myself as an academic”. For Diane, this move to academe certainly does not equate with a retreat from her core profession. “One’s foundation profession and whether there remains a strong primary identification with the purposes of one’s profession is important. It is still primary for me, even though I see myself now as an academic rather than a practitioner”.

Inevitably, the transition from practitioner to academic does involve some detachment from your profession, “not in terms of being out of touch with practice, but in terms of being able to look at things from different perspectives, to be distanced from the taken for granted reality”. For Diane this experience of “being the outsider, being able to stand outside and look back” also provides many opportunities to influence the profession that she could not exercise from within. “The ability to look at things from different perspectives, to conceptualise from the concrete, and to frame day to day reality in ways that give practitioners new insights into what they are doing” is the “real kernel of what we as academics have to offer”. It is understandable that Diane finds the “research that excites the most” is the research “generated from practice that then has a feedback loop to practice and policy”. Unfortunately, maintaining this link with practice is proving a current source of frustration for Diane.

Amidst the imperatives of teaching, research, and management “it is the community service dimension that seems to be least controllable”. This lack of control manifests itself “because people in the professional field are desperately wanting to have research-driven practice and policy and this means as an academic that I cannot say ‘No’”. Diane does admit candidly that her compulsion to say “Yes” is broader than professional altruism and that it also has a lot to do with “the necessity of having to generate revenue from external sources, and trying to implement university policy to seek external clients”. The implications of continually saying “Yes” and in accepting this contractual work on top of all other work imperatives creates the experience for Diane of “juggling too many balls and feeling continually frustrated as they crash and bounce around the floor”. This proves problematic for Diane who admits, “I have always been someone who has hated the anxiety of deadlines. I like to have things done on
time, I find it very stressful not to, and this is the experience of being an academic that I am having now”.

Diane states with deep concern her current experience of “operating on a declining stock in terms of knowledge of the literature”, not only in her immediate professional field but also in the “broader cognate disciplines”. As she explains, “I am using up accumulated resources, which have use-by dates, and I am not replenishing them”. Through use of a metaphor Diane paints a clear picture of the concerns that she has for herself as an academic and also for her students. “It is like living on my credit card, both in terms of knowledge of the literature and publications. I am not bringing in the money – I am living beyond my means”. In exploring this metaphor Diane offers another image of herself as academic by painting a picture that consists of “fragmentation and multi-spans. It is a picture where there are lots of discordant things happening, cutting across each other, clashing colours, it doesn’t have coherence and sense of unity”. She relates this image back to the “juggling of the balls of the imperatives of academic work” and adds that “it isn’t just one ball from each colour I’m juggling – I’ve got several balls from each of the colours all moving at once”.

These concerns have led Diane to question her role as an academic; “I really now feel that a fundamental part of being an academic, which is to be immersed in the literature in one’s discipline, is slipping away”. Diane tells of a recent experience of marking a thesis and “becoming really aware of how little reading I now do - reading referred to in the student’s literature review – the literature that I should know but have not read for the last couple of years”. The realisation of this “sense of inadequacy” results in a feeling of “flying by the seat of your pants” and this is causing Diane to question her identity as an academic. “My disconnectedness from the literature and the debates that are occurring in the broader intellectual milieu is a threat to me being able to say ‘I am an academic’”.

These feelings of doubt are enmeshed with feelings of frustration and anxiety caused by unrealistic deadlines. “When I got very pointed and very critical faxes, e-mails and memos from the Faculty for not having marked the thesis on time I decided to no longer be an internal examiner for the university”. It appears also
that this sense of frustration and anxiety is influencing other decisions that Diane is making regarding her academic career. “I have recently made a decision not to go for the promotion round this year because the time has got so late, so crowded out by marking assignments and doing a whole lot of things that I just can’t put off doing”. There is a clear sense of disappointment in Diane’s voice as she tells of this decision and a discernible element of despair caused by the conflict of “doing work that you value that then distracts from your promotion opportunities”.

Diane suggests that her involvement in professional practice through consultancy has caused her “not to pursue academic research that depends on large research grants and the coordination of large teams” and that this is “a negative in terms of promotion”. She qualifies this by explaining that the expectation for an academic to be eligible for promotion means “keeping up one’s publications and research grants. This is proving to be an expectation that I cannot meet because of my teaching and professional practice and this is a major source of frustration and disillusionment”.

The “diffusion of work and home boundaries, the lack of finiteness about the work and the lack of closure to the academic day” present other issues and frustration in Diane’s experience of academic life. “I have always been a person who has been very, very seduced by ideas and thirsty for that,” says Diane. “However, this computer here in my office is only used for writing memos and e-mail and letters. I have never once had a document on this computer that is more than administration. All the work around research papers, articles, even lecture notes are on my home computer. It is virtually all done at home so this boundary between work and home means that to get the work done I am continually working well into the night”.

“Why stay in academe?” I wondered, but the question was answered before it was asked. “I have started for the first time to fantasise about retirement,” said Diane, “last year when we were shedding all our contract staff I began to fantasise about retirement”. This sounded sad coming from someone who demonstrates such a passion about “a love of teaching” and who “thrills at the discovery of new
knowledge through research". Diane had announced early in our conversation “I like the performance of teaching, I like being on the stage, I love using language in a way that excites or arouses, the very process of the delivery I enjoy and I am good at”. It seems difficult to imagine Diane leaving this aspect of academic life behind and she too is clearly aware of a pending sense of loss that would accompany retirement. “I always thought I was the sort of academic who would certainly retire in a formal sense but never in a sense retire — I would remain on as a senior associate, would still be supervising higher degree students, doing some research, and writing papers. I saw this as a vocation not just a profession but now I am questioning the intrinsic sources of satisfaction in being an academic”. We chuckle as Diane tells how “I used to say to people that I would do my academic work even if I didn’t get paid — if I was a kept woman I would still be working as an academic without pay because I find it so intrinsically satisfying”. Unfortunately, “this no longer holds true”.

Perhaps these thoughts of retirement are situated in light of the “crisis the university is currently having about resources and having to earn its revenue.” Perhaps they are part of a “vocational crisis that I and many of my colleagues are having” says Diane. “Where is the life raft in the future?” she asks. “If I could see it on the horizon I could probably swim or float to get to it and that might keep me going. It really is that, it is looking for what are the resting spots in the future that I can sort of hold out for, make for the desert if I think there is an oasis around the corner sort of thing”.

Diane suggests that “the oasis around the corner” could manifest itself in the following ways: “To have one focus only when doing research instead of having to apply for other research funds at the same time. To do current research projects without trying to administer part of the under-graduate program amidst teaching in the post-graduate program, doing consultancy, and research supervision”. The life raft may become a bit clearer on the horizon “if there was time for focussed attention”. This “lack of focussed attention” translates to “a competition for resources, especially the precious commodity of time and money to buy support”. Furthermore, this competition for resources is having an impact “both on the individual academic as well a posing a threat to one of the great features of
academic life - the community of scholars”. “The tensions that develop in the faculty group around competing for the scare resource of time, and time out from the day to day in order to have study leave and research time, are quite divisive”, Diane explains.

With reference to the community of scholars, Diane expresses her view that being an academic is more an experience “of collegiality than cohesion and community. Universities have always been places where there has been a lot of competition between people; they have never been cohesive workplaces because the very sorts of personalities that end up in academia are often very competitive and very achievement oriented. There is this cadre of academics who see another’s success as one’s own loss. This leads to a guarding of your own territory with clear lines of demarcation”. Diane laments the events of recent years that have seen a change from “divisions, which historically have been issues to do with ideology and all sorts of lines that are quite legitimate and valid and healthy”, to now becoming “divisions on far more mundane lines”. The ramifications of this for Diane’s department are many and she describes in detail how “this fight for resources and personal approval within the department is leading to a pervasive blanket of political correctness that is proving a threat to the lifeblood of being an academic - academic freedom.” Diane admits cautiously, “I will sometimes publish things in obscure journals and literally hope that people don’t read them”. She expands this statement by telling “I have just written an article that I would not want to be in currency in my department ... and this is a paradoxical thing to say, that you are actually writing articles in the hope that people don’t read them”. To experience this “resentment from within a team depending on your success” seems a far cry from the “notion of a community of scholars that once characterised academic life”. We explore carefully Diane’s dismissive claim that “the affirmation she receives from outside circles does create some problems for the people with whom I work”, and her theory that this situation could be the result of “the issue of sibling conflict that exists within an academic department”. “What I fear is at stake in these current experiences of academic life”, Diane explains, are the issues “of personal identity, truth, and integrity on which I base my being as an academic”.

127
"The way we as academics approach the world of ideas, the way we interpret research findings, and the way we manage issues around ownership in the world of ideas" are the manifestation of these issues of integrity for Diane. "They are the values that are core to being an academic" and there is a threat to your identity of being an academic if you cannot "be open about your research and publications in the academic community".

We discuss further the concept of collegiality and in particular Diane's experience of academic life at the faculty and department level. Our discussion leads to Diane suggesting that the "ideal of the community of scholars" can never materialise fully until we as academics "address the more basic issues of professional and academic identity".

The issue of "academic identity" is potent for Diane. "It is about continuity and being the one link in a chain of ideas across time and also across disciplines in the current moment". She is forthright in acknowledging that she is "strongly linked with those who came before and hopefully linked with those who will come" in terms of her discipline and professional practice. "There is a strong sense of being generative" she explains "and it is important that you realise that you are only one link in the chain of tradition". It is clear that she sees herself as part of this chain; "I am very focussed in my discipline and focussed as the inter-generational link in that chain". Diane professes a "strong historical orientation for her discipline" and likens this "to a wave coming into the shore with other waves behind it. It is a long wide wave and I am only one bit of that wave coming into the shore at one point in time".

As being an academic at this point in time is the issue at hand I ask Diane to describe the essence of her lived experience of being an academic. She radiates energy as she states unequivocally that she is "very privileged and excited to be part of the world of ideas" that constitutes the life of an academic. "It is being immersed in that world of ideas, being part of that, receiving, transmitting, and exchanging ideas that is the essence of being an academic".
We return to Diane’s fantasy of reading “in her window seat” and of being immersed in the world of ideas where she can “explore the conceptual content of ideas with post-graduate students and academic colleagues”. This world of ideas in which Diane sees herself “immersed” also foregrounds her fantasy for conducting research. “I would be thoroughly reading the literature and be part of that literature myself, I would be intellectually productive in that the research would get done and it would be useful”. She assures me that the experience of being an academic within her fantasy world would not be that of “a self-indulgent ivory tower” because “research would always be linked to social ends”. However, she does insist, that central to being an academic within her fantasy is “the time and space to actually immerse oneself in that world of ideas and to nourish this by reading” and that this “calls for some relief from the rush and tear” that constitute her current experience.

We speak further of “the necessary and the sufficient conditions” for being an academic and Diane is adamant that “central to being an academic is the very precious thing of academic freedom”. Diane expounds that “to be a researcher without academic freedom it is like not having oxygen. I think an academic without intellectual freedom is really in danger of respiratory collapse”. She compares and contrasts her experience of conducting academic research with that of conducting contract research and describes the “restrictions that conducting such contract research places on her freedom as an academic. When I engage with these outside departments as a contract researcher I am extraordinarily struck by the politicisation of the environment and how it is such a sort of paranoid, manipulative environment. People there are afraid to say ‘the emperor has no clothes’”. As Diane tells of one research project “where I was bound by a legal contract not to discuss in a public forum any research finding” she explicates her fear of the “threat to academic freedom” that the commercialisation of research could cause. She is emphatic that “academic freedom must be safeguarded” and that “the university as the agent of protection” needs to continue to provide academics with “an enormous autonomy and freedom in an intellectual sense”. This freedom is key to being a successful researcher and is one reason why Diane became and continues as an academic. “It is that freedom, the preciousness of academic freedom, hopefully that will continue as the essence of being an
academic, and that, along with the excitement of really conveying ideas in a way that people respond to and are stimulated by, is why I am an academic”.

Diane speaks of her curiosity-driven research as “the intrinsically satisfying experience that is the fire that ignites me as an academic. If I was to let those intrinsic interests go there would be even more diminution in the satisfaction”. I thrill to hear the excitement in Diane’s voice as she speaks of being an academic in this way and hope that this passion and commitment will keep alive her vision of academic life. However, as she explains “often the fantasy doesn’t match the reality – there is often an experience of loss”. Whilst it is clear that Diane’s current life experience of being an academic is a mixed bag she concludes that it is “the preciousness of finding your being in the world of ideas” that is at her heart, and because of this she proudly proclaims, “it is a privilege to be an academic”.

4.2 Mark Barry

“I am not able to achieve what the university really wants me to achieve. The university obviously has aims and goals that it would like its academics to do – teaching, research, and so on, but the situation is such that I can probably only do one of the things that the university requires of me. We simply don’t have enough support to be able to do it”. Mark raises his voice and repeats with emphasis, “There simply isn’t time to do what is asked of me”.

Mark’s appointment to the university is fairly recent and follows a PhD candidature and post-doctoral fellowship at an overseas university. It is clear that “the change of culture and the process of settling in” are challenges for Mark. “The emergence into this new academic culture is difficult. In Asia things were very rigid and prescribed, but here things are very amorphous and lacking direction. I want to know my boundaries and also the philosophy of the school but to establish such is almost impossible because it is either unknown or unstated”. Perhaps this transition has been made more difficult for Mark because
of a lack of control over his academic duties? “The fact that the area that I have been given to teach is not my area of specialisation” and the reality that “I just had to take this new area anyway” are discussed. This discussion leads into an exploration of Mark’s area of specialisation and why he has chosen to take up an academic appointment after 7 years of “highly successful private practice in a lucrative partnership”.

“I have always wanted to be able to teach students,” said Mark. “I’ve wanted to be able to create professionals, hopefully of the highest quality, who can give back to the profession what I have received from it. I have a strong interest in trying to develop undergraduate students. I want to provide to the public the best kind of practitioners who will then improve the profession as a whole”.

During his time in private practice, Mark enrolled in a research degree because he was “looking to build up an area of specialisation”. He also conducted some “sessional teaching for undergraduate students”. Through undertaking “a small research project and combining research and teaching with private practice there was certainly a variety in my life” he explained. However, this variety did not prove enough to sustain Mark’s interest in private practice and “the idea of academia continued to persist. The idea of being an academic presented me with the opportunity to research, teach, as well as work with clients. I enjoy each of these three areas and believed that there was more scope in working as an academic than as a private practitioner where I could only work with clients” he explains. Mark is quite candid in describing the appeal of an academic post: “I also want a position that is hopefully stable so that no matter how hard-working or how lazy I am the money would still be coming in each week. In private practice if you have slow periods then it is a little bit nerve wracking”. Despite this throwaway line it is clear that Mark’s commitment to teaching and research “which you really can’t do easily in an area outside a university” are key to his vision of being an academic.

Mark clearly enjoyed and profited from his doctoral experience in an overseas country and he recounts this experience quite often during our conversations. Key to the success of this overseas academic experience “was the team approach to
research where there was time built into the working schedule to be able to apply to research and to be able to discuss matters with others. These people were available.” He contrasts this with his current academic experience, which is causing a “feeling of isolation and frustration brought about by not being able to discuss matters with colleagues”.

In exploring this issue Mark describes his current working situation. “There is quite a political atmosphere in my department with many concerns arising around managerial issues” he explains. “There is a sense of competitiveness. There is someone here who tries to undermine what we are trying to do in our courses because she is not competent to teach in new areas, so you have to be fairly political to be a successful academic in this department”. I am quite surprised when Mark states “Yes, we often take chunks out of people in the department because of the conflicting views held by each other, especially the opposing views between the current Head of Department and the Deputy Head. This tension seems to permeate the department and henceforth precipitates the actions we take”. The issue of competitiveness arises again and Mark explains “it is a little bit like this area is mine and that area is yours. There are staff members here who are very firm about defining their teaching area so that no-one else shall step foot into it. There is a strong sense of the autocratic here and the collegiality gives way to competition”. As we explore this immediate situation I invite Mark to reflect on the phenomenon at hand – his experience of being an academic.

“At the moment it is impossible, it really is. It is just impossible and perhaps frustrating”. These words of Mark echo in various forms through each of our six interviews. In exploring this sense of impossibility Mark responded “I feel like a pawn in the system that is pushing me. It is chaotic, I feel like I’m in a washing machine, or in a little boat in the middle of a storm trying to find its way”.

Mark refers repeatedly to the differences of his academic experience in Australia with that of overseas. Emerging from these discussions is the concern that Mark has for the Australian higher education system. “I mean my biggest worry is not merely the working as an academic, it is working in Australia. That is probably the thing that is worrying me the most at the moment. It worries me to the extent
of whether I should be starting to look for positions outside Australia”. Key to this crisis is “a paucity of resources devoted to higher education in Australia and a lack of support shown by the government towards higher education”. Mark expounds his view that “the biggest problem is that in Australia both the politicians and society in general do not realise the value and importance of Higher Education in the development of the country – not only as a knowledge base but also as an economic base”.

That these concerns are causing Mark to question his current position is clear. “Quite frankly, I wonder if I am wasting my time working as an academic in this country” he states. He also shares an observation that “the best Academics in Australia have left the country because they cannot get the funding or the support to do the work that they want to do”. Obviously, it is in and through these issues that Mark is living his current experience of being an academic and it against this current backdrop that Mark experiences his being as an academic. Returning repeatedly to the phenomenon of being an academic, I ask Mark to describe his lived experience of academic work.

“Really, at the moment it is centred on passing knowledge onto students with not too much time to achieve the other things that I would like to achieve” is how Mark responds to this request. I enquire as to these “other things”. “Because of time commitments in teaching and developing courses I have no contact with outside groups or consultancy. The academic duties and organisation is so huge that there is not even time for research”. He continues by adding “this pressure is leading me to go around in circles” and the experience “of being spread over three teaching areas and probably spread thinnest on the ground in this department” is one of “absolute chaos”.

We discuss the issue of time management and other professional development programs the university has on offer that may address this chaos. “Time management is not the issue” responds Mark, “especially having run a successful private practice I had to manage time very effectively because time meant money”. He speculates that “the real problem is the little things that keep cropping up that make closure to academic work impossible. I think I’ve sort of
got it under control and then suddenly two or three different things suddenly appear out of the blue and this puts everything back into absolute chaos". Example of these unforeseen things are "being told to go on an interview panel for new teaching staff" and having to "continually apply for research grants, sources of funds and sponsorship for new equipment". As Mark continues and describes his involvements in "developing new courses, taking over from the other academics who are not competent in teaching their current courses, and continually being badgered for publications" it is clear that the management of workload issues is more problematic than management of time. To illustrate his academic workload Mark outlines his academic week; "By the time I have done one and a half to two days teaching, the lecture preparation and administration, I am lucky if I get half a day to do research. There is lots of work to take home". He laughs at the suggestion of conference leave or dedicated research time. “It is impossible to take leave. If I go away on leave the amount of work that will be sitting in the in-tray will be about three times more than what it was when I left. This then means I’ve got to work three times harder to get that into a mildly ordered state without going crazy, so it is pointless to take leave”. It is hard to disagree with Mark’s sentiments; “It is not fair on me and it is not fair on my partner that our personal relationship should suffer just because of this place and because it is so chaotic.” It is not hard to gauge the exasperation in Mark’s tone as he states “the University owns us 24 hours a day 7 days a week”.

Promotion is a high priority for Mark at this point of his career and this goal is causing him to assess his current workload issue. “I have to start thinking about myself for at least one day a week because if I don’t I am not going to be able to get promotion or I’m not going to be able to keep or even start researching”. He has a clear understanding of what is required for promotion; “I am very aware of where the problems of not being able to get promotion lie so I am trying to keep going in these areas”. He has also sought advice of colleagues on how to achieve these targets; “The pressure to publish was discussed at my last performance assessment and it was pointed out that if I want promotion to Senior Lecturer status then I need some locally produced articles”. Mark is keen to publish and has some thoughts on potential papers. However, he is also acutely aware of “having run out of publications” and explains that even though there is “a
potential article on research that I completed last year, I simply haven't had time to sit down and write it up". Again the stress of workload raises its ugly head as Mark states; "The two or three days you need I just do not have. Everything completed has now been published so I have to start writing again, and I just haven't had time to sit down and write."

We explore the issue of publication as an integral component of being an academic. Mark describes his theory that "it is easy to go off on the wrong track with research, particularly in Australia because there are so few academics around and this means you haven't got another person working in the next laboratory with interests similar to your research". The result of this is that "you tend to be the lone person in your field so you have to really expose yourself. I guess publishing is a way of knowing if you are doing the right thing or the wrong thing by exposing your ideas and your methodology for other people to look at and it is a way of being put back on the rails if need be".

It is easy to discern the passion in Mark's declaration of commitment to being an academic. "I want to become known on an international basis for good research, to be able to produce professionals of the highest quality possible given the current circumstances, I want to see this school gain a reputation for producing the best graduates in the country if possible". I enquire as to how this could possibly be achieved amidst the turmoil we had been discussing. "I can't" he responds. "It is almost like going down a tunnel that is getting deeper and darker every moment. There seems to be no end. It is just becoming more and more exponentially complicated and I would love the day when I can just sit down and do some research".

Mark infers there is a paradoxical nature to the experience of academic life. "One side is very exciting and it is great to see the opportunities that are there. However, it is also depressing to know that there is just so much else that has to be done and know that this means there is little chance of being able to take advantage of these new discoveries". He repeats this theme of paradox in his statement that being an academic is "almost like being a manic depressive in some
ways — it can be extremely frustrating at some times and at other times it will be very rewarding”. I question him on why he stays in academe.

“I will stay in the position because I like to teach, I like to do research, and I like to have the chance to work with the public through consultancy” he explains. “I don’t want to change my job because it gives me the opportunity to do the things that I am interested in doing” and “private practice did not provide that”. I suggest to Mark that it appears a high price to pay given the experiences that he has described. He responds optimistically stating “being an academic provides me with hope. The hope of one day being able to get on top of things, the hope of producing world class graduates, the hope of improving the profession”.

4.3 Patricia Anderson

“I don’t know that I am an Academic. I am a tertiary teacher. If being an academic includes being a researcher I’ve had very little opportunity for that so therefore can I call myself an academic?”

The craft of teaching is at the crux of Patricia’s experience of being an academic. “I was invited to this position because of my teaching skills” and teacher rather than academic is a defining feature of Patricia’s descriptions of her academic experience. “I look at my life as an academic from a teaching point of view” she states and “it is teaching that I do, a lot of teaching and more teaching”.

Patricia’s academic career “has always been on a .4 or .5 basis that has been topped up with sessional teaching” she explains. Currently in her thirteenth year of short-term limited contracts she excitedly announces that her latest contract is for two years. Patricia describes this type of academic appointment as “scare-mongering in some ways because you aren’t sure whether you have a job from one year to the next”. I question Patricia as to why the university continues to employ her if they are not prepared to offer her tenure. “Because I’ve brought in lots of money through successful funding applications” she responds, “and because through my contacts and successful networks I have been able to secure
lots of equipment for the university”. Patricia expresses her view that “the current experience of being an academic is very much influenced by the greater political scenario” and suggests that because her academic field “is valued greatly at this moment in time then there will be a demand for people like me”. We discuss how the insecurity of contractual employment impacts on morale. “I feel sometimes like a puppet being manipulated by the university and the whole administrative system” she responds. “The university determines where you as an academic will teach, where you will do research, how you will bring in the money, and then dictates that you will do this according to the latest policy – I feel like a commodity that is being manipulated”.

Despite Patricia’s attempts to become involved in research projects she claims little success; “I’ve tried desperately to get involved in research but it seems that in my field I just have to work so much harder to be credible”. Patricia is currently working in the field of communication and information technology and describes this field as highly competitive and characterised by rapid change. She suggests that one major hurdle to immediate success for research funding is “because my literature reviews are always seen to be light on theory”. There is irony in her rebuttal to this critique as she explains, “because my discipline is only a very new area the literature just isn’t around”. Patricia outlines another hurdle to success in gaining research funding, “the grant awarding committees just do not understand what we are trying to do as we apply communication and information technologies to the processes of teaching and learning across the disciplines”. As Patricia tells of having her latest submission for a research grant “knocked back” she suggests that the “evaluation committee were not judging the quality of the submission as much as making biased decisions because they didn’t understand the technical and academic use of one word”. The disappointment of “yet another knock back and another barrier to being a researcher” is clear in Patricia’s voice as she expounds her wish “just to get into Research and Development even at the expense of losing her teaching”. We explore what it means for Patricia to be a teaching academic.

“I certainly love teaching and gain a great deal of satisfaction from having students develop a love of learning from whatever I teach”. Patricia describes
vividly that the “true rewards of being an academic are in having an exciting class, and in engaging students to enjoy the pathway of discovery rather than just doing an assignment”. To achieve these outcomes drives Patricia to “value the intrinsic factors of teaching and learning, and to try and make each class exciting for students. This is what drives me as an academic and to achieve this demands a constant investigation of learning methods, to take this new knowledge on board, and to modify my teaching methods in light of this knowledge. To achieve this successfully is not always so easy”.

Patricia describes a recent teaching experience. “I got really upset with a class yesterday who wouldn’t accept the points I was trying to make. The concepts were derived from research but the students’ personal perspectives were the ones that they thought were more valuable”. Patricia is concerned about this scenario and suggests that “this experience is symptomatic of the instant gratification cohort of students” that she is currently teaching. “They will suddenly pull out their lunch and eat it and when I challenge them they say ‘Oh, I’m hungry, I can’t wait until this lecture is over’”. It is sad to hear Patricia’s summation that the compounding effects of these experiences are leading her to question “if I’ve had enough and should bid fare-well to academic life?” Even more poignant is her assumption “that I don’t think I’ll have a choice anyway, as my next contract will probably not be renewed”. As it eventuates, Patricia is correct in this assumption and along with many other departmental colleagues her employment with the university was terminated quickly and abruptly.

4.4 Derrick Charles

“For me to be an Academic is to be a researcher, to do my research and get paid for it, that is I am not doing my research just as a hobby that I would do anyway even if I wasn’t an academic, but to get paid for it is great. You could take away my administration and I would still be an academic, you could take away my teaching (albeit reluctantly) and I would still be an academic, but not my research”.
Research is foremost in Derrick's academic experience and it is this theme that drives our conversations about his experience of being an academic. "If I was not engaged in research I would not lay claim to being an academic. If there is a kernel to being an academic it is to be a researcher". A key link identified by Derrick between research and being an academic is learning. "Research is a continuation of my learning. I am a professional sticky beak and I like to see what things do, it then allows me to compare other's work with data from the models that I have devised to see if they do work". The notion of continued learning is important to Derrick who suggests "the inquiry aspect of being an academic is something that is so pervasive that it carries over into every area of your life".

The concept of academic freedom is a central characteristic of the academic experience for Derrick. When questioned as to the sources of excitement in academic life Derrick's automatic response was "freedom to pursue my own interests". This freedom is one that provides "opportunities to try and answer the questions in which I am interested" and "the freedom to learn what you want to learn". Such freedom is different to flexibility although this too is a central factor of the academic experience. "Academic life gives you flexibility to structure your own time in a way that wasn't possible when I was teaching ... as a teacher your time is so scheduled that there is very little discretion within that to, you know, you might have a wonderful idea during the day and you are just not in a position to act on it because you have students in front of you, so being an academic has flexibility to it". This flexibility brings with it a "freedom of control" and as Derrick admits "I am a control freak and it is not that I want to control other people but I want to have control in particular over my own time, and I think that's right, I think that's a real preoccupation to be able to make decisions about what you do and not have them made for you ... provided that you can keep the other factors under control you simply have flexibility to construct a time-table on a daily basis to meet your needs".

The academic world for Derrick Charles exudes a sense of wonder and excitement. Derrick's success as an academic started when he was a student in an honours year and achieved "a very successful international publication".
Following this publication and further post-graduate study Derrick worked as both a teacher in schools and as a university researcher in his discipline. In the early 1980s, after a successful career of teaching in secondary schools where he “fell in love with teaching”, Derrick moved to work full time in university education. This love of teaching is still a strong component of Derrick’s work and as an academic he places much emphasis on the inextricable link between teaching and research. “I do think that the obligation to teach is a facet of what it means to be an academic ... I do think that there is an obligation to share what we are doing”. He suggests that where teaching and research support one another there is a strengthening of the links between theory and practice. “My teaching has always been the enactment of my research. Seldom have I had to teach something or some area that I wasn’t engaged in research for. My credibility was that I was engaged in research in that area”. This engagement in research within the university places “responsibility on the academic to share developments and contributions to the discovery of new knowledge and to encourage graduate students to participate in team research projects. An academic has to be concerned with developing new knowledge and sharing the consequences of their discovery in an educational forum”. Derrick extends these links as he reflects “research is about the development of new knowledge and what is teaching about – teaching is about the sharing of that knowledge with others and so at the heart is a concern with knowledge, its construction and its sharing”

This sharing of research and new knowledge within the academic community is another essential of being an academic for Derrick. This sharing provides “the opportunity to talk with people whose ability I respect” and this opportunity brings with it “an energy, an excitement and an intellectual stimulation that goes with being an academic”. Being an academic also provides “access to the community, access to a community of people who are just simply to my mind really interesting people doing interesting work on things that I myself am involved in”. The forum of the academic conference is an essential element in facilitating access to such like-minded people. Derrick maintains that the participation in conferences is unquestionably “an integral part of the academic experience” yet he is also realistic in suggesting that it is the networking opportunities that prove more successful than the quality of some conference
presentations. He describes the success of a recent conference and reflects, “I
could justify the trip on the strength of one paper by one person who is now going
to come down and work on a research project for a week with us”. Whilst the
networks that Derrick speaks of “exist independent of the conference” he does
point out the necessity for people “who are working in similar areas ... to
construct a sense of community so that everyone is reminded that they are not out
there on their own, that there is a community out there with similar interests”.
These contacts are often made at conferences and the interests shared at
conferences have enabled for Derrick “invitations from research centres that are
doing work very similar to the work that I am doing ”. With reference to visits
that Derrick had recently made to research centres in Malaysia, Italy, Sweden,
The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, and California he explains “You could
classification the places into those where you walked away thinking ‘gee I got
something out of that’ and those where you walked away and said ‘oh, I was able
to give them something”’. It is this type of feedback you need, “the sort of
interaction that you need from someone who wasn’t so close to the project that
they shared your assumptions but was sufficiently assertive to say ‘Well I don’t
think this is right’ and then you have to say ‘OK, well we’ve got to talk this
through’ and we probably talked at each other for three and a half to four hours”.
Attached to these collaborations are the characteristics of “scholarly reflection and
writing finding their enactment in the research that you do”. Derrick asserts
clearly that if “that reflective activity were missing, you would then have
difficulty in laying claim to being an academic”.

Important for Derrick as an academic is being part of many academic teams that
allow for “collaboration ... I enjoy being a member of an academic team, you
know somebody who is working with others on a common endeavour, it is a good
feeling and also it provides the opportunity to reality check your work against the
work and ideas of your colleagues”. The teams he refers to with affection include
“other academics in a committee setting, doctoral students, academics and
research assistants within a research team, colleagues from other institutions and
from overseas at conference settings, and students from your teaching area”. 

141
In summarising the essential nature of being an academic Derrick’s response is profound. “My profession now is to do educational research. Take it away and I would not be an academic. I am singularly privileged. If there is somebody in the world luckier than me I give them my best wishes because they are very, very fortunate ... I have friends everywhere. I and these people are members of a community that has absolutely no borders. This is a group of people with high commitment who get excited about what I am trying to do. That is payment, that is what it is for me to be an Academic”.

4.5 Jane White

“Being an academic means that you are paid by the University to work with students, you are a teacher, you are to achieve to the utmost in your field of expertise so you are a professional who has international links and who also works at that level with your colleagues nationally, so you are interested in researching, you are interested in furthering knowledge in your field ... it is a balance between having a certain number of students, of having a kind of critical mass of students that you work with, having a critical role in teaching and feeding your research into that, being a researcher and someone who is generating knowledge and working with colleagues to do that”.

Academia has been the one profession in which Jane White has been employed since her graduation with an honours degree in the late 1970’s. She differentiates profession from career by explaining “I have found the notion of career is one that implies some sort of notion of deliberation and intent, whereas a lot of people come to these things by accident and I think in many ways that this is true of myself”. Jane has enjoyed a variety of academic roles in universities, and a College of Advanced Education that was then amalgamated with a university under the Dawkins era. In discussing her entry into academic life in which there was “an element of serendipity or chance which wasn’t part of setting out to be where I am now or part of a deliberate plan” Jane is praiseworthy of the academics who have nurtured her. “The notion of apprenticeship is very
important and that is what we as academics need to do. It is almost like a trade. We had no formal training to be academics. I had a few years working with very capable academics in a sort of modelling situation. The discussions, the collaborative teaching arrangements, the open approach of these people with students in the quest to generate new knowledge I liked a lot ... being an academic is an enormously complex job as academics operate at multiple levels". Jane laments, "there aren’t many new academics coming through these days with whom I can share the things that shaped me as an academic nor do we have time to nurture and share with other academics the things that happen at the levels of day by day learning, questioning and thinking".

Jane is currently managing a research centre and her passion for her discipline area and for research and teaching is obvious. A recurrent focus through our discussion is Jane’s role as an intellectual, pursuing “intellectual issues”, and particularly “those issues that relate to practice”. This integration of theory with practice is key to Jane as an academic and she stresses repeatedly the need for “finding ways of making the intellectual work that I do and my colleagues do, make it contribute, make it real, make it meet the needs of particular sectors or whatever we decide we are working in”. As much of the research work with which Jane is involved relates to organisations in both the public sector and private enterprise we explore the essence of being an academic by differentiating between the academic and the private consultant. Jane is adamant that she “will not use the University to run a private consultancy. I am an academic, I am working with students of all sorts, I want to be paid by the University, I don’t want to buy out my time except perhaps in particular circumstances but not as a matter of principle”. She raises the concerns that some academics “are buying out their time to operate as private consultants and therefore they don’t honour their obligations to their academic community”. This she sees as “fragmenting a lot of things that academics should be are doing. Faculties and Departments have less meaning, and the notion of a community of scholars gives way to academics as a bunch of free-wheeling consultants”.

A further differentiation between academics and consultants for Jane is the reality of academic freedom - that capacity for an academic “to be an intellectual, to
generate new knowledge, to link that with current practice but not necessarily in the ways of other people's agendas". She gives an example of the difficulty of having to work towards satisfying the agenda of those who fund research and consultancy: "I can engage with the State but it is certainly not a comfortable relationship because there are a lot of things that I think are questionable about the way the State is operating. I think that given the complicity of such conflict that it makes it very difficult for academics to work in these situations. Academics should play a radical role of challenging and questioning rather than delivering what is expected". Defending the role of academic freedom is important for Jane and she exhorts that "academics will need to look pretty closely at what we value and to fight for the freedom to be scholars or intellectuals because that's what we have to defend. Basically we have to defend our professional territorial right". On this issue of whether academics should be able to determine their own research, Jane admits "we have a great luxury, we are really lucky of being able to pursue questions which we determine to be important quite outside political interference or because it is the latest fad. We do have the opportunity to generate knowledge". However, she does admit, "doing that critical intellectual work that is very important to Australian society ... is in jeopardy". Not that the local arena limits Jane, as clearly she is at home as "part of an international community of peers: a community that acknowledges the importance of your work, important not just for Australia but important also for the world. Being an academic is being on a world stage".

Research is but one of the aspects that fuel Jane's passion for the academic life. "The variety of the things I do excites me. I work with industry, with organisations and schools, really great students. The multiple things excite me". Because of these multiple involvements Jane reflects that "being an academic is almost a kaleidoscope where you have to give weighting, not necessarily equal, but give weighting to a number of different things. So, for me, and it is hard to sum it up, it is working with ideas, working with people, creating change, being reflective about my position and work ... there is no single mode of being an academic".
Teaching is a central aspect of Jane's academic life and she admits that "students have been very important to my formation as an academic, the questioning, the thinking of where have I gone wrong etc. has been very important to me". Jane is unequivocal that the concept of "teaching only academics is a travesty ... it is not good for the students, for the people who are teaching and for academia as a whole ... there is something very important in getting research to students". In exploring this further she suggests teaching is essential as "working with students is a means of putting forward ideas ... generating, checking the ideas out, and listening ... for getting feedback on whether you are on the right track or not and also what's relevant. I think students are a really important guide for academics in that they tell you what the real issues are and if you are coming at them in the right way. Do these ideas capture the students' imagination? Can they relate to it? ... I find students are just an integral part of the whole academic work picture".

Jane speaks of the rewards of being an academic that stem from her teaching; "it is the successes that my students have that make me feel I have been able to facilitate and achieve something, this is also a challenge as very few students are the same so there are new challenges all the time".

An imperative for leading a successful academic life for Jane is reflection; "Being an academic is to be purposeful, reflective, critical" and she suggests this reflection should envision futures both about academic disciplines and academic work. Jane foresees major problems for academics will occur in the future because "there is very little work being done in Departments to look at what is going to be the nature of our work in five or ten years' time. Very little work, this is essential work that we can do, academics can do it, academics aren't stupid, but we are acting in a stupid way". However, for creative visioning, for reflection to occur, an essential element is time. Jane is strong in her view that for academics to have time for reflection, to do their critical work, is an issue that needs to be supported by university management. She advocates that sabbatical leave for academics is essential as "it takes away that pressure that academics get in their everyday work that says 'you have to be right' ... when you are on sabbatical, you are out of your normal community, you can sit back and listen, you can open your mind up, you can read widely, you can go to other people's seminars and there is not that pressure to be delivering all the time".

145
Jane expends tremendous energy in achieving her fulfilment as an academic. "The sort of academic I am you have got to work on the front of doing high, doing great scholarship and high quality work that you put forward to your peers in journals and in books, you have got to work on the front of teaching and working with the new generation as much as you can, and you have got to work on the front of making this all more accessible to a wide audience, a lay audience, because I think that if this work is not able to be translated into the lay language and be useful to ordinary people then there is not necessarily a lot of point to it."

Investing this amount of energy is not without cost especially given that working in today's university can be experienced as being ignored and disrespected both professionally and personally. "I am not just an academic, I am also a person and I think that some of the things that have been done to us are insulting and hurtful at a personal level and I am sick and tired of the denial of the fact that we are people, that we all have feelings, we have a professional life". Jane is recounting a directive she has just received from university management. "I have been given messages from the Managers, that is the Dean and my Head of Department that earning money is basically, by hook or by crook, basically fundamental. That the intellectual work and its quality is of secondary importance to actually, simply earning an income and because, and this is an irony that I have been thinking a lot about lately, because I have been successful as what I would call an intellectual and working not just on pure scholarship but also applying it, I have gained a lot of projects which bring in some income not for me but for other people, I have now been told that I am to generate half of my own salary". In discussing this scenario she confesses her despair at this notion of "shifting my role as an academic to be basically a consultant who uses the logo of the university ... and to use that private consulting work to pay my salary in part". We relate this to our previous discussion on academics versus private consultants and similar issues arise. "The problem ... is that it takes, there are only so many hours in a day, and it means that if I go along with that I will be spending more of my time being a consultant like being paid to do what someone else wants me to do, not being an intellectual where you have as the core the freedom of pursuing important ideas because they are important. No, I will be forced to answer the questions that are
devised by the bureaucrats of business I suppose and simply be a paid employee. Yes, using my intellectual skills but not to really push boundaries rather sometimes to close them. That’s what they often want, policy is not necessarily pursuing knowledge, someone has got the answers in mind and they just want you to fill in between you know at its worst. I mean we struggle with that all the time but we have been able to get a balance there, and now the university is pushing to make that juggling act more difficult”.

Jane is confident in her being as an academic. However, she does admit that this confidence is sometimes shaken. On being told “you are so good at what you do you can pay half your salary” Jane admitted that “I made it clear there was no way that I was going to do what they said”. Such confrontation takes “a lot of energy to do that, believe me you don’t stand up to your Head of Department like that, I am not really that kind of person. I am the kind of person who is collaborative and do what I am asked to do, so to turn around and get that much steel in your spine, it is really hard. They don’t realise how hard it is”.

A key sentiment that stays with me from meeting with Jane over the period of this study is her capacity to demystify academic life. “Academics are just workers in a particular industry at one level, nothing magic about it”. Having said that she does admit that for her: “being an academic is to engage in the research, the reading, and then teaching that in-depth, to be working with and in my own field where I am paid to be at the cutting-edge and to work against the tides of time. I am always striving towards that and to me it is my value, it is the real excitement of being well-read in my field and feeling that I am constantly pushing the boundaries and defining what I call new knowledge in my own field”.

4.6 Paul Matthews

Paul’s experience of being an academic includes a variety of positions as both an academic and an academic manager. “Following my D. Phil. at Oxford I was appointed as a research fellow and then to a lectureship in 1960” explains Paul.
His experience as an academic manager includes appointments as Head of Department, manager of research teams, and currently directing a research centre. Paul's experience has also involved numerous administrative and community service responsibilities such as "sitting on promotions committees for the university ... being a member of university council ... and participating in governmental advisory bodies in higher education". During the journey of our research meetings Paul draws considerably on each of these many different aspects of his academic life. As well as reflecting on his lived experience as an academic Paul also offers glimpses of the many academics with whom he has worked during his academic career.

Paul is an active and engaged academic with the ability to synthesize concisely the many changes that have transformed academic life during the 40 years in which he has been employed in universities. Whilst Paul never attempts to offer a retrospective of academic life, a central motif through our many discussions is that of change and how change in the higher education sector has impacted on his experience of being an academic. Paul seems hesitant to use change as a scapegoat on which to lay all blame for the current situation in universities. "Both how little and how much has changed in that time" he reflects. "Some lectures are still being delivered in the same style as they were when I was a student. Sure the content may have changed but they are basically still the same traditional method of delivery in very much the same way as I experienced them in 1952. Technology has changed some of the facets of teaching. Instead of chalkboard we now have whiteboards, overhead projectors, videos etc. which some people are using, others are not".

Significant changes for Paul "in terms of what I do everyday" revolve around the reality that "the pace has gone up enormously. The number of students has exploded. Things are a lot more crowded on this site. The pace of life - there used to be much more opportunity for reflecting in a more laid back way for both academics and students ... and the idea of dispassionate research - the situation where once you only did what interested you has now just disappeared - now you only do research if you have an external research grant". As a result of these changes Paul states "I am working harder now than I did before as an academic in
terms of the actual requirements and I think for most academics that I see, even academics just starting out, it is a hell of a lot more difficult than when I started out”.

Paul suggests that this frenetic pace is part of today’s experience of being an academic. “I am conscious of being an academic that you are doing so many different jobs simultaneously, all within the one day, sometimes within the one hour ... to do that you need a high tolerance for ambiguity”. This ambiguity demands from academics “an ability to be able to put down what you are doing and move on to something else feeling reasonably secure that it is still going to be there when you come back to it, it won’t have run away and run out of control somewhere”.

Paul’s immediate response when asked to define an academic is “someone who works at a tertiary education institution and conducts teaching and research”. An important issue to which we often return is the nexus between teaching and research. “For me being an academic is teaching and researching. You could almost divide these”. Paul is definite in suggesting that both teaching and research are imperatives for an academic. “In a tertiary institution, to be an academic you should teach and you should be involved in research. This is an irreducible minimal requirement. An academic who doesn’t teach is not necessarily an academic. An academic who doesn’t research is not necessarily an academic. Academics should all do the two”. Paul stresses on many occasions that “the central indicator of academics is that they are doing both” and suggests that the “interaction between the student and the lecturer, the relationship between the teacher and the research, is all essential to being an academic”. He also maintains, “it is an intellectual cut and thrust of the department that determines that people should do both”. Paul comments that “it seems to me almost self-evidently true that if you have a university that would call itself an international standard university ... it is inconceivable that the research does not inform the teaching. ... It is the nature of the content as well as the actual teaching techniques. In other words in a sense what you teach is even more important than how you teach it but they are both important, they both interact”. Paul refers to the claim by some researchers that they do not need to teach to be successful
academics. "I notice a lot of statistics out there that say that research and teaching
don't interact very strongly and that good researchers don't necessarily teach any
better". In response he states unequivocally "that people who want to be
researchers only should go to allied places like C.S.I.R.O or other research
institutes". It is not surprising that he also transfers this claim about the teaching
and research imperative to academic managers. "Some (academics) are just doing
so much administration you have to wonder if they are academics. Usually these
people are still working at their disciplines and this is necessary. How easily one
forgets how messy the academic life is. The senior academics do need to keep at
the coal face if they are to be called academics".

To illustrate how management can overtake academic duty Paul speaks of the
responsibility that academic managers, and indeed all "mature academics need to
offer academics who are in their early career phase". I note the genuine concern
in Paul's voice as he states: "one of the things I ventilate about from time to time
is that Departmental Heads and Deans - I mean people who have got some sort of
control and impact and who control people's lives to a degree - have not always
been very careful in making it clear to people what is going to be valued. I mean
people who are doing things because it is convenient. I can give you an example
of the sort of thing I mean, the caring and sharing women who run practical
classes in the sciences for years and years when everybody knows that they will
never be promoted for doing that because they aren't doing research or whatever
the sacred cows are of the university. Often this suited Departmental heads not to
point out to them that this wasn't the way to get promoted because it was
convenient for them to do that while other people could get on and do the things
that were useful to them or the Department... now I feel a strong moral
responsibility when I am counselling an academic to make it abundantly clear to
them what they need to do if they want to get promoted".

The issue of advancing ones' academic career through promotion is an important
issue for Paul as an academic manager and it is another recurring theme through
our interviews. He notes that this "stress on promotion" has resulted in "much
greater competition between academics". Paul indicates with support that there
has been "a significant change within the university on the perceived importance
of teaching in relation to promotion. Whereas academics always realised that for promotion they have got to do research, get research grants, get research publications, a lot of academics are now realising that promotions committees are taking a lot more notice of teaching. If somebody comes up with a bad teaching profile (or not even a very ordinary one) wanting promotion from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor they are very likely to have it denied”. For academics to achieve promotion “there are thresholds, and you have to achieve excellence in all three areas of teaching, research, and service to the community and the university”.

I am interested in Paul’s insistence on achieving balance in each of the imperatives of academic work. He illustrates this with scenarios of some academics spending too much energy and time on fostering one imperative at the expense of the others. “If you feel this great imperative to focus all your attention on your students then I think it will be rather difficult to get promotion ... You really do have to maintain that balance ... you can’t afford to let anything go and you can’t afford to say ‘well I’m just going to do research and stuff the teaching’ or you hear people say ‘well I’m just going to concentrate on teaching and stuff the research’. In the past the latter was never really an option if you wanted promotion but neither option is available now”. Paul laments that many of the victims of these scenarios that militate against promotion or tenured positions are younger academics, those on temporary appointments, and female academics. To achieve this balance Paul suggests that academics need to make the links “professional, practice, research, and scholarship can almost be bundled up together, they can all inform teaching in various ways and I think should inform teaching”.

With reference to the highlights of being an academic Paul reflects that he “enjoyed some aspects of teaching more than others – constructing courses and devising ways of stimulating students interest in things ... watching the research students build their thesis and understanding the discipline is great”. Paul speaks of with great affection of the “interaction with young inquiring minds” that characterises his teaching and supervisory experience as an academic. For Paul,
being an academic “is always a process, it is like that with courses I think they are always in process and never finished”.

I ask Paul for to share his experience of being an academic in light of his perceptions of how things may be for academics in the future. His response is reflective and careful as he states; “I don’t know really what the future holds for young academics today. I am at the end of my academic career and my views are slightly dated but when I look at some of the young people here I wonder if they will last the distance – not because there is anything wrong with them it is just what they are asked to do. When I say last the distance I don’t so much mean that they will flake out because they are overworked, I mean that they won’t think it is worth it, they will move on and they will do something else. I would go as far as suggesting that some people are suited to academic life and others aren’t. I guess I have a sense that the quality of the staff in academia is, on the average, going to drop over the next ten to fifteen years. I mean security is less, I think that the very top people will remain quite good because they will get paid market rates and the university is moving that way, but I suspect that the people on the ground, the troops at the coal face, well I am not sure that they will be so good on the average ... I think it is tough, I don’t think I would like to be starting out”.

This discussion leads us to note the characteristics of academics with whom Paul has worked during his career. He notes that the “erstwhile colleagues who I would regard as quintessential academics ... were people who were concerned with knowledge, a genuine love of knowledge for its own sake, almost to the level of what I call crossword puzzle solving – that is their love of knowledge just wasn’t justified by the fact of the intrinsic usefulness of what they were doing or anything like that, they were just genuinely interested in knowledge for its own sake”. It is clear from our discussions that Paul is certain that the university of today does not necessarily provide the conditions in which such colleagues could continue to flourish.

When asked to crystallise his experience of being an academic Paul is quite reticent. He suggests, “Academics have got so many things! A great joy of the job is the freedom to make your own job to a much greater degree than other
places because you have got the freedom. In fact the only thing you’ve really got to do is your teaching but even then in collaboration with your colleagues what you teach is something you have a great degree of control over... the freedom to choose the sort of research you do or the community service you do... I think the freedom to make that sort of choice is characteristic of being an academic”.

My final question to Paul is “has it been a good experience?” He responds unassumingly “Oh well, yes, I think it has been, but I’ve probably been lucky”. With those few words we say farewell.
Chapter 5

ON BEING AN ACADEMIC – THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research. The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence — in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience. (van Manen, 1990, p. 36)
Chapter 5 presents a textual expression of the empirical data of this research study clustered around the key themes that emerged through the data analysis. Direct reference is made throughout this chapter to the conversations of the co-researchers participating in the study. The name (pseudonym) of the academic is used where reference to a particular academic is woven through the text (e.g., Donald responded “...”). All quotations taken directly from interview transcripts refer specifically to the academic and the particular interview by number (e.g., Academic 12:4). The list of academics participating in this study is contained in Appendix 1. The perspective(s) of other authors in the field are also sourced as appropriate through links to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

This chapter comprises two sections. Section 5.1 is a clustering of the research data around the thematic perspectives that emerged through the data analysis. The section draws largely on the voice of the participants in this study and engages with their conversations as they probe the essential characteristics of what it is to be an academic, and search to understand more fully the meaning contained within the lived experience of academic life. Section 5.2 addresses the everyday reality of being an academic and describes the lived experience of the academics participating in this study. Given that it is through the existentials of spatiality, corporeality, temporality, and relationality that we can engage with and experience any phenomenon, this section utilizes these existentials to describe the lived experience of what it is to be an academic in today’s world.

5.1 The Essentials of Being an Academic

At its most basic level, scholarship involves open-ended, thoughtful reflection about what it is to be alive, about what people do and have done. It’s about understanding, thinking, conversing, learning, teaching without any concern for the ways in which the products of the work might be deployed in the satisfaction of our material needs (Vallance, 2002).

In the process of analysing the data it became clear that scholarship in general, as well as the specifics of the scholarships of the Boyer model (Boyer, 1990; Boyer, 1996), constituted a sound theoretical framework for presenting the textual descriptions of the essential elements of the lived experience of being an academic
for those academics participating in this study. This is not to suggest that the Boyer Scholarships have been used as a heuristic methodology for collecting and analysing the data (Moustakas, 1994). Rather, the framework of the Boyer Scholarships has been applied in this section because it captures succinctly the themes that emerge through the data – the "thematic moments as they 'showed themselves' ... the identifiable aspects of this experience" (Bergum, 1989, p. 13) of being an academic. The thematic moments of being an academic that emerged through this study are distilled in the following statement.

Being an academic is experienced as:

- Being immersed freely in the world of ideas
- Linking generations and spanning boundaries to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge
- Relating within a community of learners
- Improving the professions and society

Accordingly, each premise of this statement is detailed in the various subsections of Section 5.1.

5.1.1 Being an Academic is Experienced as Being Immersed Freely in the World of Ideas – (The Scholarship of Discovery)

The advancement of knowledge can generate an almost palpable excitement in the life of an educational institution. (Boyer, 1990, p. 17)

The scholarship of discovery comes closest to what academics mean when they speak of research, although we intend that this type of scholarship also include the creative work of faculty in the literary, visual, and performing arts. The academy holds no tenet in higher regard than the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, a fierce determination to give free rein to fair and honest inquiry, wherever it may leave. At its best, the scholarship of discovery contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge, but also the intellectual climate of a college or university. (Glassick, Taylor Huber, & Maeroff, 1997, p. 9)

To be an academic is to make a public statement that certain criteria deemed necessary for membership of the academy have been satisfied; it is generally
assumed that an academic has successfully cleared a number of hurdles so that they can be referred to as an academic. Such hurdles include success and mastery as related to the holding of higher degree qualifications, satisfying selection criteria as prescribed by the University, and contributing to one’s discipline through academic research, publishing, and teaching. As these hurdles are not set in stone the criteria for membership of the academy, and similarly the nature of academic work are quite vicissitudinous. This is due in part to multiple variables such as the relationship that universities maintain with the ruling Government of the day, and the academic body itself as it interprets the nature of contemporary academic work (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994) according to the existentials of time and place. Because the nature of academic work and henceforth the experience of being an academic change according to these variables there can be a sense of uncertainty and unease amongst academics regarding the expectations and the requirements of being an academic.

There are certain hurdles that you have to jump over like, you have to have got to a certain level of qualifications and experience in certain sorts of fields of knowledge that are considered to be academic fields of knowledge. Yet, that’s an ever expanding domain of what is considered to be an academic field of knowledge, it is an ever expanding framework of who is considered expert enough to be an academic. (Academic 12:3)

The current entry point into Academic life is restricted (in the main) to those who posses a research degree at Doctoral level. However, there are academics without a Doctorate and academics with a doctoral degree ‘in progress’ who have been employed successfully by universities for many years. Of the participants in this study, four were involved in study towards a Doctoral degree, one had not commenced a Doctorate, and all others have completed successfully the PhD degree. These figures accord with the notion that there is an “increasing expectation that new academics will have, or be working towards, a PhD” (Blaxter et al., 1998, p. 282). Underpinning this notion is the belief that a doctoral degree may guarantee that academics have gained some training in research.

Research training provides opportunities for academics to develop the skills, attitudes and values that characterize the research process. Such attitudes and values are “the capacity for perseverance and diligence, for individual and isolated
engagement with intellectual issues, for the methodical pursuit of understanding, and for doubt and scepticism" (Taylor, 1999, p. 128). The research function - the scholarship of discovery - as core to being an academic is the focus of this subsection.

The historical development of the university to embody the research function as well as the traditional teaching function is well documented (Crittenden, 1997; Jaspers, 1960; G. Patterson, 1997; Pelikan, 1992). In recent years the university has been seen as "the fulcrum for all research" (Pelikan, 1992, p. 17) and the corollary of this is the supposition that all academics will be successful researchers. Jaspers (1960) stresses that "only he himself who does research can really teach" (p. 58). However, this is a far cry from Newman's division of intellectual labour between academies and universities, and between university teachers and researchers.

To discover and to teach are distinct functions; they are also distinct gifts, and are not commonly found united in the same person. He too, who spends his day in dispensing his existing knowledge to all comers is unlikely to have either leisure or energy to acquire new. (Newman, 1996, p. 5)

Newman's sentiments aside, the discovery of new knowledge, and the systematic analysis of current knowledge leading to new patterns of understanding is taken as a given for today's universities and for academic staff. Research "aimed at increasing our depth of understanding of the world, including human beings and human activity" is one of the three key goals central to the "telos of the university" (Langtry, 2000, p. 88). Ironically, research - in particular the discrepancy between the rewards for research over teaching, and the distortion between research and teaching priorities - is listed by Langtry in the same publication as one of his three key concerns about universities today. What then is the experience of academics regarding research as a central component of academic work?

In this study there were opposing reactions towards the research function as central to academic work. One group of academics was concerned about their personal capacity to conduct research. The group of academics who were initially
employed in the Colleges of Advanced Education and other tertiary institutions prior to these institutions amalgamating to become part of the *Unified National System* raised this concern. The responses of the following academics indicate that a transformation in identity from academic as teacher and practitioner to academic as teacher and researcher is proving problematic with regard to research.

My biggest challenge as an academic is to shift from thinking of myself just as a teacher to be able to think of myself as a researcher also ... I am a practitioner rather than a researcher – this is the hard bit for me to transform and shift into the research mode. (Academic 4:1)

I am learning to be a researcher, I am quite confident with my teaching but I am learning to be a researcher and what that means. (Academic 4: 5)

When I read of all that research people in universities are doing I feel this is a new thing for us – I mean at the Teachers' College we did performances and exhibitions and that sort of stuff but this sort of research is different ... I was appointed because of a certain expertise in teaching but then I was obliged to do research (Academic 5:2)

Basically, and what I am happiest doing, and that's why I do this work, is that I am a teacher not a researcher. (Academic 10: 2)

The research I am doing is more a case of playing with ideas - other people's ideas rather than doing research - I am teaching and do a bit of writing which is putting ideas together but there is no research. (Academic 3: 1)

These views contrast with the sentiments of the following academics who were nurtured in the culture of the research university and who view the opportunity to facilitate and be involved in research as the thrust of what it is to be an academic.

When I became an academic I was happy not because I was doing science but because I was doing research. Researcher is the label I applied to myself. (Academic 9:1)

Academics are professional critics by nature and training. (Chancellery Staff B)

I am sure most academics would say the same thing, in fact, what you end up valuing mostly is research ... If I stopped doing research I wouldn't feel that I was actually being an academic. (Academic 9:3)

The core role function of being an academic is to do with research. I find the research interests highly stimulating. (Academic 13:3)
To have the opportunity to think about a lot of different things in exciting new ways and at the same time to do research and find out new things that nobody ever knew before and to use that new knowledge is central to being an academic. (Academic 14:2)

However, two academics initially employed at Colleges of Advanced Education speak excitedly of the research process as central to their experience of being an academic. Thus, it is neither possible nor useful to infer causal links between the prior academic experience and confidence in research.

I think over the years I've made a real contribution to what it is and how it is that we conceptualize what it means to live in society - the generation of new research projects around this is essential ... we need to stop and think and reflect (as academics) on how what we are doing can be cutting edge research. (Academic 15:1)

I want to do research and focus on things that are more geared towards change and improvement and action, political action even ... I get on a real high when I am doing research and I am thinking through things and I come up with what I think is a real idea, or a new way of thinking through things that other people mightn't have thought about before. I get a real buzz out of that. (Academic 12:1)

It counts to me that the research that I've done is significant in that it might change practices or improve the ways people work in my field. (Academic 12:2)

**Immersion in the World of Ideas**

An essential element of being an academic is that of discovery and of being immersed in the world of ideas.

That's what being an academic is. This is the core for me ... an academic is a person who can deal with ideas, think issues through, and come up with new ideas. A person whose business is thought and ideas I guess. (Academic 14:2)

The intellectual side is the sense of being immersed in ideas and being a sieve for ideas. (Academic 3:1)

Academics are essentially thinkers who are employed to be thoughtfully creative. (Chancellery Staff B)
The world of academe is a world of ideas – a world of intellectual stimulation and challenge. In many ways, this world of ideas is the lifeblood of the academic; “It is the intellectual challenge. We think we are at the limit – the academic pushes the limit harder” (Academic 7:5). Core to the role of being an academic is “being a scholar, being interested in knowledge from epistemological, methodological, and pedagogical points of view, shaping knowledge from creation to transmission, assisting with the assimilation and the synthesis of knowledge” (Chancellery Staff A). Knowledge is both the raison d'être and the tools of the trade for the academic and to be an academic is to engage with and be “immersed in that world of ideas, being part of that receiving, transmitting (and) exchanging” ideas (Academic 13:5). This engagement involves both “developing new knowledge and sharing the consequences of discovery in an educational forum” (Academic 9:4), and using knowledge as a means “to influence or change the world with those ideas” (Academic 14:2). Academics are those “who explore the broadening of options ... those who push the boundaries” (Academic 7:4).

There is almost:

An element of ideas as ends in themselves so it is not narrowly utilitarian. There is a sense of vocation, not just a profession, so can you ever have a retired academic? ... Being an academic is not something from which one retires, so I guess that’s what I mean by vocation, one continues to be involved in the intellectual life. (Academic 13:5)

When asked to describe the essence of being an academic, Donald responded:

For me it has to be the intellectual side. You are expected to have a sense of what is going on in your area (intellectual) and to be developing and contributing to this. So whether it is a course you are doing or research you are doing there is that sense that the intellectual side is what you are there for (Academic 3:1).

For Gilda this intellectual involvement involves “changing practices or improving the ways people work in my field ... it counts if it makes a difference I guess” (Academic 12:2). Jane agrees, “I am interested in the intellectual issues but I am very interested in those issues that relate to practice” (Academic 15:4). This shaping of practice by academics involves:
Helping to shape culture and to provide a voice about public issues ... there has to be an intellectual mind behind that and it has to be worked out and universities are a place where that can happen (Academic 15:2).

The search for knowledge - the conceptual frameworks and the theoretical structures - is a driving force for the academic and it is this "depth and breadth of knowledge, and search for new knowledge ... trying to be on the fore-front of seeking out so-called truths, facts, and so on that probably sets the academic aside" (Academic 15:2).

For example, Rhonda cites that being an academic involves:

Wanting to extend my intellectual capacity, not being content with a certain level of knowledge but knowing that there is still ever more to learn about even in one's area of expertise. You can never say 'that's it, I know all there is to know about a certain thing' ... you can never go home and say 'I've finished and I've learnt everything and there is nothing else I could do to extend my academic capacity'" (Academic 10:2).

It is this intellectual pursuit and the challenge to extend my own intellectual capacity ... not sitting still but being on the go all of the time to better what I have done in the past ... to become accepted widely and internationally as an expert in my field. (Academic 10:1).

For the academic, the world of ideas contains many levels of meaning. At one level it is a world of intrigue and can be likened to a hobby or some activity done for interest. Academics "play with ideas and contribute to ideas and influence or change the world with those ideas" (Academic 14:2). Donald voices a similar sentiment as he describes academic life as "a consistent playing with ideas and knowledge and doing something with it" (Academic 3:3). It is, as Jane says:

To be engaged in debate ... a playing with words ... putting a challenge to a person that they have to respond to, it is an intellectual thing in a kind of way. It is often hedged with humour and sometimes with sexism and racism but anyway still, it is intellectual, and it may happen in other places, in a pub or anywhere, but the debate, that for me is part of being an academic, so it is the job and I am sorry we don't see it more often" (Academic 15:2).

For Derrick, this world of ideas "is a continuation of my learning. I am a professional sticky beak and I like to see what things do. I would do badly what I am not interested in" (Academic 9:1).
On another level the world of ideas can present as an aura and a mystery, hence to be immersed in the world of ideas is likened to "the constant search for a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow if you want to put it in layman's terms - the never-ending search or the never-ending story even" (Academic 1:4). "In some ways you have got to actually play a detective to find out what is going on in your field" (Academic 10:2). However, to be an academic in the professional world of ideas entails certain responsibilities.

You need a commitment to being thorough about your sources of information, not simply saying something and being like a journalist, not just raising something for the sake of flying a kite, not putting a particular angle on something for the sake of it, but actually working it through and relating it to an intellectual context of previous work. (Academic 15:2)

There are issues of intellectual honesty. When you write a paper you have to frame an argument and you have to be very careful about how you do it for example. Rigour in the argument and marshalling evidence of a certain kind is a key part of that in order to research a well-defended decision. (Academic 7:4)

There is the challenge to do the right thing at the right time and in the right way. This means there is a need for intellectual rigour, and that this intellectual rigour involves a care and a precision. (Academic 7:5)

Academics are by nature reflective practitioners. We have a responsibility to make sense of what people say and do and understand the full impact of what theories represent (Chancellery Staff C)

In a liberal institution, and the university is a liberal institution there must be a commitment - and it is hard to even use the word in a post-modernist era but it is truth, that there is a real integrity around the way one approaches the world of ideas, the way one interprets research findings, the way one manages issues around ownership in the world of ideas. I mean there are all those issues about integrity and I think they would be core to being an academic. (Academic 13:5)

Immersion in the world of knowledge and ideas induces excitement and reward:

It is exciting that you can sort of be in a little area where you can carve out a little domain if you like in that you are the expert, it might take you a life-time to do that but you know that you can do that and that's exciting that you can sort of in a way be a bit of a pioneer or an adventurer and go places where nobody else has been before - putting your foot prints in the sand in a new place or something and that's what I think is exciting. (Academic 12:2)
Being intellectual is a luxury. It is a job but in the broad sense of things it is a luxury. It is a privileged position of which I am extremely conscious of and treasure. (Academic 15:1)

I don’t do things because I want to be an academic. I enjoy the world of ideas and thoughts and that’s why I do them. (Academic 11:3)

It is creative – working on creating new compositions and discovering ways of creating using new techniques and instruments. (Academic 6:1)

Immersion in the world of knowledge and ideas can also prove a source of stress:

I actually see myself struggling to keep up-to-date. I am desperately trying to keep up to date and fortunately it is a blossoming field in the fact that it has only suddenly come to light and I am always being asked to review books in the area. So I do a swag of four or so at the time thinking good that’s it, nothing else could be written on it surely for the moment, and then blow me, in the next post of the next journal issue here is another four on the same thing. So it is a struggle. I see myself struggling to keep up. (Academic 10:2).

Mark concurs with these sentiments and relates his experiences of academic life:

Being reasonably stressed out and tired ... like a huge essay in draft form but it never gets beyond draft form, it just get bigger and bigger but you never quite get your i’s crossed and your i’s dotted ... this is partly due to trying to keep up with new information that is coming through all the time, and trying to incorporate that into your own knowledge and philosophies so that I can keep ahead of the people around me. (Academic 1:3)

For some academics, immersion in the world of ideas is experienced as a double-edged sword:

For me to be an academic is a privilege, it is exciting, it is frustrating, it is stressful, it is never dull, and it is an area or an industry which keeps one’s mind open and ready to entertain new ideas and new ways of looking at things. (Academic 2:1)

However, this duality has not always been the case and the experience of being an academic today is different in many ways to that experienced by colleagues of previous times where curiosity driven research was normal.
Research Driven by Curiosity

Paul, in recalling the experience of beginning as an academic in the late 1950's describes the quintessential academic:

Those academics who were concerned with knowledge, a genuine love of knowledge for its own sake, almost to the level of what I call crossword puzzle solving – that is their love of knowledge just wasn’t justified by the fact of the intrinsic usefulness of what they were doing or anything like that, they were just genuinely interested in knowledge for its own sake. (Academic 8:4)

For these academics, and indeed most academics of previous times, curiosity driven research was a defining characteristic of academic life. However, with regard to curiosity driven research, the lived experience of the academics of yesterday contrasts greatly with academic life today. Paul outlines some of these changes:

There are two sorts of research academics. Research directed academics, particularly in the sciences, who are members of staff who are very aware of the latest research, have reflected on it, and tested it. These are not creative researchers but they are good scholars. There is not much room for that in the university now. However, there is room for the active researcher, those at the cutting edge who are there doing it. There is room for these people if they are doing the right work. (Academic 8:1)

The idea of the dispassionate research, the situation where once you only did what interested you has now just disappeared. Towards the end of my research career my selection of research topics were things that highly interested me. Now you only do research if you have an external research grant ... Now today if you don’t get your external grants you don’t get research. The university provides very little support, especially for the basic sciences. The university now covers infrastructure costs but that’s about all. (Academic 8:2)

People like the older style academic have now been squeezed out. This occurred because they wouldn’t go for big cooperative research grants. The importance of the traditional scholar is going to be very missed. Now, it is almost impossible to center your concentration on your discipline for the discipline’s own sake. (Academic 8:2)

Central to these changes in research is the move away from curiosity driven research to commercially funded research. With the marketisation of higher education the role of the academic approximates more closely that of the “market
professional ... via involvement, for example, as consultants to both commercial and public sector operations and through the production of commissioned and applied research for commercial and other purposes” (McCollow, 1996, p. 15).

I think that university academics, and it is worrying me, are less and less able to choose the sort of research that they do, or least the research areas that they go into or perhaps even the methods that they use ... in my last position I was actually told that curiosity driven research is not on at the moment because we can't afford it. (Academic 14:4)

Government funding for research once focused on individuals and projects and that led the direction of the ways that research would be carried out. Now, the government has moved more and more to projects that it wants researched because of what it feels is politically desirable. (Academic 8:2)

If we as an organisation produce a lot of high quality research this raises the status of the institution which ultimately leads to better quality students coming, and being better able to get business funds and research funds. There is sort of a link. Also, individual academics can raise and increase their status by research, so thereby in general we are carried along too as individual academics can generate funds from their research. (Academic 11:4)

What is going to shut off new ideas being generated is that research grants are going to be limited and unless a proposal has a practical end it won't even be considered at all. (Academic 2:1)

The results of this change are manifest in the research that academics now pursue. “There are pressures to encourage people to think more about applied projects. There are people in this department who resist that and I think that it may in the long run cost them a great deal” (Academic 7:4). “Fashionable research will be considered favourably by the granting bodies ... we are being forced by Government funding and it is driven solely by what is of use to the economy” (Academic 8:1). For Tony, this change is anathema and he laments the demise of curiosity driven research and refers to the great discoveries that curiosity driven research reaped:

We are never going to discover penicillin again, we are never going to discover the effects of Rubella on children's blindness and deafness again, we are never going to come up with a law of gravity, all of those things have depended upon independently curious intellectual academics. In fact two of these came about by accident - penicillin, and the Rubella virus knowledge. Now we are setting our research agenda of course to keep the
bottom line black and to make more money, and if that is a short-term survival strategy then we need to do it but I am worried about the future ... the university is no longer a place to do curiosity driven research. (Academic 14:4)

For Patsy, an academic who “never thought that I would be engaged more in research than in teaching” (Academic 4:5), there is a degree of sadness at the passing of the era where active researchers would be able to nurture and mentor younger academics. Patsy expresses her desire to have the opportunity of a quasi research apprenticeship “where you not only learn skills but where you imbibe the culture ... which you can’t just learn in a set of skills or competencies ... I really want to ride on the coat tails of somebody whose done it” (Academic 4:3), and to “work alongside a really good researcher to see how they do it, and that doesn’t happen” (Academic 4:5). This causes concern also for Tony, who in offering a retrospective of academic life suggests, “the younger generation of academics are not even getting to taste what it is like to be an academic” (Academic 14:2). One explanation why this no longer happens is because the imperative for academics to secure external sources that generate income through research funding is so great that is distracts from the collegial nature that once governed academic life (Barnett, 1994).

To secure external research funds is almost a necessary condition for survival in today’s university. “The bottom line is that you have got to get money to survive which is grants, research grants” (Academic 4:2). Unfortunately, these funds are not easily accessed – “Just getting things like research grants ... it would almost be as sensible to go out and buy a Powerball [lottery] ticket as it would be to put in a research grant” (Academic 1:5) – and the time consumed in developing submissions for funding generates pressures that take away from the other imperatives of the academic profession. Understandably, this play of opposites – the desire to do research and the necessity to generate income to fund the research – is experienced as a source of frustration.

The need to continually find funds to run research ... it is an annoyance because you have got to, and I really think this is endemic right through academia, because the research that we do is not a funded part of our conditions of employment. All that our conditions of employment guarantee us is, supposedly, the time to do the research but not the
resource with which to do it. So we are expected to get the funding, to generate the resources through our own efforts, so rather than doing the research you are doing all of this preparatory stuff. (Academic 9:3)

The need to be seen to be active, engage with the community, and generating funds of a variety of kinds is certainly there. It takes away a lot of time and just simply by soaking up time it removes flexibility, and flexibility is a big part of having the autonomy needed for research. (Academic 7:4)

Where the difficulty comes is trying to get the money to do the research ... it becomes extremely difficult and it is more than frustrating, it can in some ways be a bit soul destroying. It is a bit like banging your head up against a brick wall when you know you've got a good research project and the referee reports will come back very positive ... but the whole thing hinges on the interview. If you are not a particularly good interviewee you know your chances become more difficult, and this year's round in trying to explain something to people who have absolutely no knowledge whatsoever of your area of research, the feeling is that it just becomes a complete waste of time. (Academic 1:5)

The need to seek contract funding and to respond to that sort of tendering that we are currently doing will in the long term be a potential threat. (Academic 13:1)

Recognizing the budgetary situation of the Department and the reality of that ... unless we bring in some extra income it means that one position will go. Now, it won't be my position, so it is not in order to save my own job that I do funded research, it is in order to save someone else's. (Academic 13:3)

Accordingly, this can cause tension between the academic and the university. As Gilda suggests, "what counts to me is the extreme satisfaction of doing research work, whether it is funded or not to me in a sense doesn't matter although it matters to the university ... I only do unfunded research that I think matters because what counts to me may not be seen as counting to the university" (Academic 12:2). Mark also reflects on curiosity driven research and suggests that the essence of being an academic is:

Doing research which industry would think is probably uneconomical, but which is aimed towards answering the questions that will ultimately have benefit in the area I work. The research I want to do industry would probably not be interested in, but if I get some good results then they will become interested because it will assist them in developing materials. I think academics probably need to do research that has long term benefits. (Academic 1:2)
However, as essential as this concept of curiosity driven research may be to the academic there are external influences shaping “the choice and design of research problems. Does the system provide too many temptations for financial opportunism? Are professors picking topics not because they are of the greatest significance, but because they are most likely to be funded?” (Kennedy, 1997, p. 181). Understandably these changes are causing academics “to change the way they think about research, and how they see themselves as researchers” (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 164).

The concept of selling knowledge and charging for research is a cause for concern and there is real pressure on academics to increase university research with “expectations that research will contribute to economic objectives” (Ramsden, 1998a, p. 16). Academics are constantly challenged to “find time to attract external research grants, to conduct the research, to publish from the research, to disseminate the research to a wider public, to facilitate commercialisation of research” (Moses, 1997, p. 188). It is almost as if a “particular irony surrounds the public boasts by universities about pursuing and valuing knowledge for its own sake when the financing of all higher education, public as well as private, arises from moneys earned either in the past or present through the application of useful knowledge” (Turner, 1996, p. 293). This relentless search for research funding and charging expensively for the discovery and dissemination of knowledge causes Tony to reflect in an impassioned fashion on this reality:

We should do with knowledge what is appropriate to do, and that is to share it free of charge – give it away. I find that charging for knowledge is almost reprehensible. I feel like I am a prostitute. I feel, I do, I am not overstating this, I feel morally compromised. (Academic 14:2)

Gilda is also concerned with these trends as she recounts her experience of working with “researchers for sale, you know mercenary researchers that just research whatever the project is that comes up” (Academic 12:1). For Derrick, this concept of dollar driven research is expressed with less concern as he suggests, “the sort of research that is being valued by the people who have the money is one kind of research and you can put a little fence around that” (Academic 9:5). However, he does agree that the university does value funded
research as "both employment and promotion are hugely dependent on the quality of your research work and yet the actual quantification of that in your actual job description is almost absent. They simply presume that it is going to get done" (Academic 9:3).

A further impact of the change away from curiosity driven to commissioned research is the way that the research is conducted and reported. Such a shift places the role of the academic in line with that of the "corporate professional ... under the direction of the corporatised institution in which the corporatised professional works" (McCollow, 1996, p. 15). Difficulties arise when a "sponsoring firm wants a particular outcome" (Kennedy, 1997, p. 177), and often there are, as Peter suggests, "big costs of speaking out in public" (Academic 11:3). Other academics concur with this sentiment:

I can engage with the State but it is certainly not a comfortable relationship because there are a lot of things that I think are questionable about the way the State is operating ... So our research is always pushing towards equality and social justice and that is one of the reasons why we will not be a state implementer because the state is currently definitely not on about social justice or equality, and it has been very bad to certain social groups, so that is one reason why the corporate thing is a problem. (Academic 15:4)

As Departments become increasingly dependent on external funding and particularly contract research there is a threat ... particularly in contract research where one is bound by a legal contract not to discuss in a public forum one's research findings. (Academic 13:5)

These boundaries on academic freedom pose serious concerns given the historical place that academic freedom and autonomy have maintained in the experience of academic life. Academic freedom and its significance in the lived experience of being an academic will be now be explored.

**Freedom to Reflect, Think, and Write**

Most of us will be familiar with the established idea of academic autonomy, which is a conception that is becoming more and more difficult to describe without parody, despite the fact that nearly all of us will feel some commitment to it. It is that academic power should reside within the community of scholars who profess their disciplines ... Academic freedom
in its strongest form implies the absolute personal right to pursue the truth wherever it may lead, uninfluenced by ‘management’ and accountable only to the community of scholars. (Ramsden, 1998a, p. 25).

Academic freedom initially referred to the “insulation of professors and their institutions from political interference” (Kennedy, 1997, p. 1) and provided for the professor “to choose his subjects for teaching and research, and to investigate and teach without government interference in his particular field of competence” (G. Patterson, 1997, p. 156). Academic freedom allows for and privileges “unusually creative people to lead unusually creative lives” (Kennedy, 1997, p. 1). It also entails responsibility and duty (Kennedy, 1997) because it “is a privilege which entails the obligation to teach truth, in defiance of anyone outside or inside the university who wishes to curtail it” (Jaspers, 1960, p. 19). There is evidence in the academic literature to suggest that academic freedom and autonomy are essential to the nature of being an academic (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Crittenden, 1997; Martin, 1999; Moses, 1997; Warren Piper, 1992).

For the academics participating in this study the phenomenon of academic freedom is a defining characteristic for being an academic.

My job gives me the opportunity to do the things that I am interested in doing. It gives you some sense of freedom that even though you have to answer to a much larger system you still have some freedom to do the kinds of things that you want to do. (Academic 1:3)

I name freedom as counting for me as being an academic because it gives me the ability to choose from the range of activities that come my way. (Academic 8:2)

There is a certain freedom of action associated with the job that sets it apart from other jobs. The idea of independent academic inquiry and independent academic creative inquiry free from the commercial constraints of a commercial nature was what I saw in academe ... it is the individual freedom of action that is really important to me. Being an academic is to have a sense of freedom of action. It may be an illusion, it may be a partial illusion, but it is a psychological frame. (Academic 6:3)

What I prize about being an academic is autonomy – shaped of course by minimal regulations. I guess intellectually in terms of the range of research areas that I can select and pursue, clearly there is a variety of external incentives that shapes that but there is still a great deal of autonomy. (Academic 7:4)
In academic life there is a strong tradition, perhaps too strong, of allowing people to do what they like and there is this tacit agreement that I won't interfere with your patch if you don't interfere with mine. So you leave me to teach my subject, to examine it as I like, do my research and I will do the same to you. There's this tacit understanding. (Academic 11:2)

Academic freedom is so essential to "being an academic, that if you took it away I wouldn't like my job or it probably wouldn't be the job anymore" (Academic 12:1). As Jane suggests "we could pursue what others want of us but could we call ourselves academics because we wouldn't be academics any more. We would be doing a job but we won't be doing that critical intellectual work that I think is very important" (Academic 15:1). The essence of academic freedom to academic life recurs frequently throughout the interviews:

To be an academic is to be an intellectual, to generate new knowledge, to link that with current practice but not necessarily in the ways of other people's agendas. You link with them but I guess the difference between being a researcher in a university and a researcher who is a private consultant is that as a researcher in a university you have got a bit more freedom and control over what the questions are and I think there should be. (Academic 15:4).

You determine your own curriculum what gets taught. We planned the new course and we made all the decision ... yes it is a terrific freedom. (Academic 5:2)

This freedom and choice allow for independence and are a reward of academic life:

We are allowed a lot of independence in all sorts of ways. We are allowed a lot of independence through the subject of our research. We are allowed a lot of independence in the material that we teach, and we are allows a lot of independence to the ways we organize our resources. (Academic 11:4)

I have been able to shape an academic life around the things I believe in most and being supported in a sense to do that, it is not as though it has come easily but my efforts have been rewarded and supported. (Academic 15:2)

I have independence of action and thought. (Academic 10:1)

Your day is your own to structure apart from your teaching commitments, and intellectually it is great. You get paid to read and write. (Academic 3:1)
In terms of the day-to-day sort of work life of an academic I appreciate the flexibility that I have to direct and control my own activities. (Academic 12:4)

Logistically in terms of flexible work hours, and well it is not really the same thread, but given my current relatively senior position there is also the influence over particularly the undergraduate programs which is driven off and related to academic independence. (Academic 7:4)

Being an academic involves a great variety of experiences and a great freedom to choose among that variety of experience. It think what is most important or striking about being an academic is that I am free to choose what ever types of research I undertake. I am free, within some constraints, but very free anyway to choose what I teach my students; free to teach how I teach them ... I guess that this is what attracts me to academic. (Academic 11:2)

One of the things that give me a buzz is being a master of one’s own fate to perhaps a greater degree than in jobs outside the academic world. You’ve got a certain freedom for your own action in a way others don’t have. (Academic 8:3)

I have the extraordinary freedom to state things as they are without concern for political ramification. (Academic 13:5)

The academic in the university is in that luxurious position, is at luxury of being able to develop his or her own values I guess in what important research questions are and develop his or her own research agenda whereas someone in a commercial research institute might not. (Academic 14:4)

For an academic the sky is the limit in terms of ideas and you can involve yourself in investigating anything - the community or politics or whatever ... Academe offers more of an opportunity to play the big game I suppose and the extent to which we do that is without our own hands. (Academic 15:2)

However, there are suggestions both in the literature and from the participants that academic freedom is being eroded and that this erosion is changing both the experience and the nature of being an academic (Evans, 2002). With this “crisis of traditional academic autonomy” (Marginson, 1995, p. 33) the academic is torn between upholding the values of academic freedom and autonomy that have traditionally defined their being and the pressure to generate funds to ensure their place in the academy. It is unequivocal that the university needs to maintain a commitment to “the essential value of academic freedom. The decisions taken in the university are made with regard to the value of academic freedom”
(Chancellery Staff B). Another member of Chancellery who participated in this study reinforces this commitment to academic freedom and autonomy:

My definition of the university is that it is an intellectually autonomous community of scholars and students involved in a common search for knowledge and its transmission, and also the application of existing knowledge and also the creation and synthesis of new knowledge. (Chancellery Staff A)

However, for some academics participating in this study the erosion of academic freedom presents a major concern that impacts both on the ways that academics conduct their day-to-day work, and also on the culture of the academic environment.

The opportunities for the academic that come with autonomy is still preciously a part of university life, although I would have to say that this autonomy seems to be eroding. (Academic 7:4)

In the community there are restraints on what you can say, for the academic it is more that you are not allowed to voice ideas that fellow members of your department would find extremely and enormously embarrassing. (Academic 11:2)

In this department there is a pervasive blanket of political correctness ... that is so oppressive – the ideologically correct lines of thinking – in fact I find that the greatest threat to academic freedom. (Academic 13:4)

It is not surprising therefore that the concept of academic freedom - the "freedom of action in the sphere of activity where things are not charter fixed, where the essential part is the part which I determine for myself" (Academic 6:2) – appears repeatedly throughout the conversations of this research. Of interest is that the majority of references to the centrality of academic freedom as an element of academic life appear more frequently in the conversations with experienced academics and those academics holding senior and managerial positions within the university than in the conversations with newly appointed academics. This aside, it is evident that one essential aspect of being an academic is the experience of being immersed freely in the world of ideas.
5.1.2 Being an Academic is Experienced as Linking Generations and Spanning Boundaries to Create, Interpret, and Disseminate Knowledge – (The Scholarship of Integration)

Integration ... involves faculty members in overcoming the isolation and fragmentation of the disciplines. The scholarship of integration makes connections within and between the disciplines, altering the context in which people view knowledge and offsetting the inclination to split knowledge into ever more esoteric bits and pieces. (Glassick et al., 1997, p. 9)

Section 5.1.1 explicated how academics are immersed freely in the world of ideas. However, this immersion is not to suggest that the world of the academic is sequestered solely into the silos of discipline specialisation, nor to suggest that academics work in isolation. Increasingly, academic work is required to span discipline boundaries, and university management is encouraging and rewarding integrated and multi-disciplinary team approaches in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. “There is a strong tendency now for big team research, collaboration is inevitable”. (Academic 8:1) “I think we are tending to leave the old discipline thing behind”. (Academic 8:5) This collaboration and movement beyond the limitations of a single focus enlivens Boyer’s suggestion (1990) that it is “through ‘connectedness’ that research ultimately is made authentic” (p. 19).

Central to the academic experience is that of applying the known and making sense of the unknown through the interpretation of existing knowledge and the creation of new knowledge. To achieve this calls forth from academics the capabilities of integrating across disciplinary and other boundaries to seek “to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research” (Boyer, 1990, p. 19; Glassick et al., 1997, p. 9).

As an academic I need to develop a scholarship in a reasonable range of areas, so that if someone says ‘What do you know about such and such?’ even if it is not an area that I have direct and current interest in, that I can be clear about the area, the interesting problems, the important ideas, the connection that I may or may not be doing. I view that as an important thing for me to be able to do. (Academic 7:3)
I have published and co-authored with people out of my department and have colleagues in other departments. I have an Australian Research Council grant with people from another faculty. Often there are not colleagues in your own department with significant overlap of your research interest. (Academic 7:1)

Working with doctoral students puts me in touch with related disciplines so there is a broad area of interests which give me access to other fields and related ideas that they have done the work on. I have vicarious access to the doctoral candidates' work. They in fact start to do your reading for you. (Academic 9:1)

Essential to achieving this integration is recognising that continuity and being part of an intellectual tradition go far beyond the efforts of each individual academic. Accordingly, integrated scholarship not only moves beyond the realm of an individual academic to embrace multiple perspectives on knowledge generation and interpretation, it also spans across generations of academics to link the current developments in knowledge generation and interpretation with that bequeathed to us today by those academics who have preceded us. For academics of every generation this means taking "a connected view of old and new, past and present, far and near", to have "insight into the influence of all these one on another; without which there is no whole, and no centre" and to possess "knowledge, not only of things, but also of their mutual and true relations; knowledge, not merely considered as acquirement, but as philosophy" (Newman, 1996, I, VI, 5, p. 98).

Academics make a contribution to a chain you know that is ongoing. (Academic 4:5)

I see myself as strongly linked with those who came before and hopefully linked with those who will come after, so I have a strong sense of generativity. The academic is not just an individual but one very much linked to a history of ideas within your discipline but also with strong links to a breadth of other disciplines. (Academic 13:5)

We should not ever lose any of our knowledge bases otherwise they will be lost and non-reclaimable. (Academic 2:3)

It is not based solely on me, it is based on what we produce from the institution, and I perhaps I can be just one little cog in the system which may help inspire other cogs within the system to do something similar. (Academic 1:3)
Academics explore, they push the boundaries of knowledge and human creativity, and in doing so they are in a good position to impart this information to successive generations. (Academic 6:4)

I belong to an intellectual tradition, but it is a number of traditions and there are also other inter-generational chains that each discipline reflects on. (Academic 13:5)

Each individual academic synthesises and integrates things in different ways because there is their own particular theory, their own intellectual traditions into which they connect, their own philosophical movements into which they connect. So it is synthesized in unique ways, so that someone like one of my great teachers – historian, anthropologist, – was able to synthesize ethnography and history in specific, but he is also an ex-priest and he was both in a certain place and a certain time so that he himself is a creature of his historical context, his pastoral context, so the disciplines that he has been able to ponder are synthesized with unique and individualistic expression through the life of one individual. So being an academic has that sort of uniqueness to it. (Academic 13:5)

These statements support the notion of integration and affirm the proposition that “the university deteriorates if it becomes an aggregate of specialised schools ... Scholarship depends on a relation to the whole. Individual disciplines are meaningless apart from their relation to the whole of knowledge” (Jaspers, 1960, p. 59).

The scholarship of integration challenges the descriptors of *detachment*, *aloofness*, and *removed from reality* that are often used by people external to the university to describe the leisured life of the academic and the university (Aitkin, 1997; Evans, 2002). Indeed, the participants of this study suggest that integration is becoming the reality that is fast replacing the mentality of separation and remoteness often attached to the ivory tower syndrome (Bok, 1982). Unfortunately the public view of the academic often seems to lag behind in such matters and as Mark suggests:

The general persons’ view of the academic is someone who lives in an ivory tower away from the rest of the world. (Academic 1:4)

Descriptors that are more appropriate for today’s academic work are “interdisciplinary, interpretive (and) integrative” (Boyer, 1990, p. 21). However, to achieve such is experienced by some academics as “neglecting your
disciplinary training because as all the other bodies of knowledge associated with teaching and research and their application are exponential, it is difficult to keep up with them all" (Academic 4:2).

Despite this competition for time, the plurality of the scholarship of integration means the lived experience of today's academic life is one of spanning many boundaries. A particular boundary to be spanned is the divide between theory and practice. Academic work involves "marrying research and practice because one informs the other all the time. It is a theory/practice sort of thing, both inform each other," says Gilda (Academic 12:1). Similar sentiments are echoed by other academics:

The ability to conceptualise from the concrete and to frame day to day reality in practice, in ways that give the practitioners new insights into perhaps what they are doing and into the very phenomena by which they are being called by the society to intervene in. That type of perspective, standing back and really questioning the taken for granted constructs is something which is essential to be an academic – in a sense it is being the outsider, it is being able to stand outside and look back ... academics do it through conceptual frameworks, through a theoretical structure. (Academic 13:1)

Academics are more than scholars. Scholars are operating in a much narrower sense than the academic. To me a scholar is a person who is basically involved in one area, whereas an academic is interpreting that research and integrating it. (Academic 2:2)

As academics we need to have a depth and integration with what others are saying about the same areas. You don't need to do this if you are just preparing a report for a corporation. As the academic you not only need to be on top of your own ideas but also on top of those of like and different minded people. It is about integrating and helping others make sense of the wind bands of knowledge that are out there. (Academic 7:5)

My research is generated from practice and particularly from practice wisdom or clinical judgement. What are the working hypotheses that experienced practitioners generate inductively from their practice, which might then lead to being able to be explored in a more systematic way? So research is very much not only refined for me by its relevance for practice – that drives it all the time as does relevance for policy and practice – the research that excites me most is some of the research that is generated from practice and then has a feedback loop to practice and policy. (Academic 13:1)
One element of integration is to engage and involve diverse groups in the research process so that the research is both concerned with and guided by those for whom the research is intended. The participants of this study working in the social sciences advocate this integrated model loudly.

I believe that social research should advocate for people and where possible be one with them and not about them. I guess I am a very participatory, advocatory type researcher. (Academic 15:2)

You are invited to get an insight into somebody else’s world, I guess it is conversation in a way ... and the conversations are most enlightening. (Academic 4:3)

It is a privilege to be in a context where you are able to mix with people who have good minds and who cherish ideas and to be able to be in that public discourse is affirming. (Academic 13:5)

Similarly, integrated research and inter-disciplinary research teams are also being used effectively in the natural and applied sciences and are advocated by the participants in this study working within this framework.

Academics need to get new perspectives on the knowledge they hold and I guess the greatest scholar is the person who is willing to admit that he or she has made a mistake and not be particularly dogmatic about things but look at other people’s ideas and change your own position as need be if it warrants changing. (Academic 1:2)

The more I interact with other people like in writing submissions and getting other people’s points of views the more exciting it all seems. Rather than having my own body of knowledge and not receiving ideas from any others, I realise my body of knowledge has lots of pores in it because it will accept like a cell the knowledge of others. It will also throw some out too. I thrive now on seeing other people’s points of views on issues. (Academic 2:2)

The research I am associated with involves working up a vision of how you would like to shape your research, of engaging in broader discussions, and in marshalling up the resources to perform the research rather than solving a particular problem. (Academic 7:3)

The cutting edge in research has now switched from the basic to the biological sciences and we are now looking at the big team approach. (Academic 8:2)
I mean the old categories are beginning to break down. You become a molecular biologist and all of a sudden the academics in chemistry are working with biologists and they are using their particular specific chemical skills dealing with individual molecules because biology is being worked at that sort of molecular level now so you need people with the skills of the macro-biological skills on the one hand, and people with the micro molecular skills of the chemist need to collaborate, and so teamwork is becoming more important to the research end of things. (Academic 8:5)

People really need to draw on a wide range of skills because we are learning more and more about just how complex the world is. So the sort of traditional research that was done in the areas like physics, and chemistry, and biology are becoming more and more difficult to do in isolation. You really do need to work with the use of teams of people whether they be small or large teams, where we have got skills in different areas. (Academic 8:5)

A second element of integration that spans across discipline boundaries is the creation of interdisciplinary frameworks on which current knowledge is interpreted and new knowledge is constructed. Boyer (1990) refers to such frameworks as an essential part of integration into which the academic interprets and fits original research “or the research of others into larger intellectual patterns” (p. 19). This integration is often achieved through teams of researchers:

Created to complement the strengths and qualities of individual members. They come together by design and desire rather than by accident or necessity. They come together with a common purpose, that of addressing a major problem or issue. They work insightfully and critically, that is, they collect evidence and they question that evidence. Members build on, and spark off, each other’s insights and they take the ‘collective knowing’ way beyond that of the individual knowing. (Martin, 1999, p. 67)

Participants in this study voiced positive experiences of integration in the creation and dissemination of knowledge:

Whereas once I mastered a narrow topic, now I need also a very substantial understanding of its relationships with other topics and in ways that when called upon you can somehow translate that into information for anyone on the street. There are different people who have different aspects of that knowledge and (as an academic) I am gluing the pieces together. (Academic 7:2)
The academic is someone who is knowledgeable in his or her particular area not only through research but also through clinical experience as well, and it is someone who is willing to look at different ideas. And I guess the academic is someone who should be willing to accept argument and that they in fact may be wrong in a particular opinion and to change their opinion in light of the new evidence that someone else may happen to present to them or that they may happen to find from their own research. (Academic 1:4)

The academic needs a wide basis of knowledge, they have a broad, basic deep knowledge ... you are seen as a repository of the latest knowledge and we have got an overview of the many fields of knowledge you are involved in ... you are always thinking and extending, stretching your brain a bit further trying to think of new things and new ways of doing things. (Academic 10:2)

The academics that other academics looked up to as the “really bright ones” were the scholars who had an excellent overview of the literature, usually not just the literature in their field either. These people were used as consultants, we sought their expertise and their knowledge and they would generously put you in touch with the latest. (Academic 8:2)

Integrating knowledge and trying to help others to see what I think are useful overviews, useful models. (Academic 8:4)

The integration of academic work also spans across national and cultural boundaries and given the nature of a globalised and internationalised higher education it is essential that research “contribute in some way to a collective international view of Australia’s contribution to the world scene” (Academic 12:2), as it is through such “connectedness that research ultimately is made authentic” (Boyer, 1990, p. 19). An anecdote relayed by Derrick of his participation in an inter-national, cross-cultural research group highlights the importance of such integration:

Here I am sort of discussing the relative merits of my research for various purposes and the members of the group from other countries are saying ‘I don’t see the point you are making at all’. And I couldn’t see what their problem was until we negotiated this matter. Now that called into question all the assumptions that I was making because the perspective was so distant from theirs. I don’t see how I could meet that challenge within Australia and it was hugely useful. Every presentation I gave after that I was thinking to myself – well suppose the overseas guys are in the audience here, have I sufficiently justified what I am doing, have I defined things in operational terms so that the meaning is not being carried just by the words or by labels, but by example and counter example and so on? (Academic 9:5)
Patricia, Gilda, and Mark, who express their delight in cross-cultural research initiatives, tell similar stories.

The experience of being in research groups that brings groups from four different countries together and exchanging both research and practice together, and from this is generated a research agenda for another short period and then we meet again next year in Finland and the year after here, is a positive part of being an academic. (Academic 2:3)

I used to feel very much part of a group team situation, particularly when I worked in an Asian university. There was a very strong sense of collegiality and teaming and planning and sharing ideas about research or things that were coming up in journals. There was a good culture of all of that. (Academic 12:1)

When I was working in an Asian university there was very much a team approach to research and there was time built into the working schedule to be able to apply to research and to be able to discuss matters with others. These people were available. (Academic 1:1)

What is expressed in these sentiments is a desire for the experience of integration that “transcends the confines of one institution to form invisible colleges that, for many academics, have much more meaning than the university in which they are employed” (Dearlove, 1997, p. 68). Unfortunately for Mark, (as expressed in his story in section 4.2), and for Gilda, this integration has not been as forthcoming in his experience of academic life in an Australian university:

The problem is that people just don’t have the time to sit down and talk anymore. On the other side of the same concern is that there is no-one else in my area of research interest in particular who would understand what I am talking about ... there is no one I can sit down with and talk to about this research or discuss my ideas. To do that I would have to go either to North America or Japan and I just haven’t got the time to do that”. (Academic 1:2)

There are probably lots of reasons why it is happening ... it is sort of like a loss you know and there is a grieving process because there used to be all these support people you could talk to about concerns. If you weren’t quite sure about how to do some sort of analysis for your research there was somebody you know whom you were friendly with that you could go and talk to easily about it. If you didn’t know how you were going to run the next class there was always somebody you could go to who could help you with some sort of ideas, but now we are losing all those other people because there are just a few of us left. We are all doing different things in a way so it is making us more isolated. (Academic 12:1)
We are confronted by Mark and Gilda's statements to appraise the scholarship of integration - the crossing of boundaries as a reality of everyday faculty work - and consider how easily this is achieved in universities. There is evidence in the literature suggesting that the scholarship of integration is not easily achieved. Turner (1996) notes that, “Faculties confront enormous difficulties in making transdepartmental decisions ... committees drawn from across departments or across schools rarely choose to challenge the decisions of the initiating faculty” (p. 296). Martin (1999) voices similar sentiments when reporting on the integration achieved through teams, observing there is “minimal collaboration amongst the staff themselves concerning new directions or synthesis” (p. 66). Crittenden (1997) draws on the words of R. M. Hutchins (see Wiltshire, 1990, p. 86) - “a university is a collection of departments held together by a heating system” (p. 97) - to describe the difficulties of achieving internal coherence (and henceforth integration) within the university.

The constraints of university structures that promote isolation and prevent integration cause Paul to reflect on his considerable experience of working in universities and the changes he has witnessed over the years:

I wonder whether the particular faculty structure of this university, I wonder just how much longer that will survive. I think that other universities have changed already in that regard. Look at a discipline, like let me illustrate it with chemistry, there is a chemistry school in the science faculty, there are chemical engineers in the engineering faculty. I mean why are they sitting in different faculties, it must be an inhibition to their cooperation, and then there is biochemistry and other biological sciences in the medical faculty. Again, why are they so separated from us? It inhibits collaboration, and I don’t know what the solution is to that in this university because they are in physically different buildings and all this sort of stuff but I can’t help feeling that we are going to have to evolve better structures. I don’t mean administrative structures, I don’t think that is the problem ... it is the academic structures themselves that will really need to evolve, and that can be quite difficult to do but I have no doubt that it will happen. (Academic 8:5)

Given that a “general absence of interaction and institutional bonds among the various parts of the university accounts for the absence of shared vision and in turn for the internal confusion that many universities confront in establishing priorities” (Turner, 1996, p. 295), such changes to faculty and university
structures appear inevitable and accordingly these changes must impact on academic life as academics embrace the new world of academic work (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994).

Notwithstanding these difficulties, what emerges from this study is that the academics interviewed acknowledge that the experience of integrating across generations and across boundaries to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge is essential to being an academic. To isolate any of these variables and to pursue one at the cost of the other would be to mitigate the academic experience. Accordingly, the coexistence of these realities of academic life removes from the academic any possibility of hiding behind the infamous mask of the God professor or being sheltered within the confines of an ivory tower (Bok, 1982). Integration also welcomes into the academic community of practice those who wish to embrace and participate in the world of knowledge and ideas. This community becomes one of learning and the many relationships that exist within this community of learners are identified as a further reality that is essential to the academic experience, as will be considered next.

5.1.3 Being an Academic is Experienced as Relating Within a Community of Learners – (The Scholarship of Teaching)

... Educator Parker Palmer strikes precisely the right note when he says knowing and learning are communal acts. (Boyer, 1990 pp. 23 - 24)

The work of the professor becomes consequential only as it is understood by others. Yet, today, teaching is often viewed as a routine function, tacked on, something almost anyone can do. When defined as scholarship, however, teaching both educates and entices future scholars. Indeed, as Aristotle said, “Teaching is the highest form of understanding.” (Boyer, 1990, p. 23)

It is proper to the role of the scientist that he not merely find new truth ... but that he teach, that he try to bring the most honest and intelligible account of new knowledge to all who will try to learn. (Oppenheimer, 1954 as quoted in Glassick et al., 1997, p. 10)

The world of academe is a world of relationships centred on knowledge that unites scholars, teachers, students, and the wider community in the processes of learning. The university “unites people committed to scholarly or scientific
learning and the intellectual life” (Jaspers, 1960, p. 75) and the essence of the university is “a community of masters and scholars, associating in the pursuit of higher education – teaching, learning, and exploring the frontiers of knowledge and understanding” (G. Patterson, 1997, p. 9). Originating from a medieval Latin word ‘universitas’ the word university “meaning group or community came to be applied to a community of scholars, teachers, and students” (p. 9). As an academic community the university “should enable scholars to enter into direct discussion and exchange with fellow scholars and students” (Jaspers, 1960, p. 75). This discussion within the academic community is indispensable if we agree with Readings (1996) who suggests, “community is grounded not in organic identity but in rational communication” (p. 82).

Despite the move for today’s academic community to be driven by a largely commercial focus and to include corporate customers who purchase knowledge products (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997), the original notion of the university as “a community of masters and scholars associating for the pursuit of learning, is as appropriate now as it was then” (G. Patterson, 1997, p. 59). Communication with other learners is an essential experience of the academic and it is also essential to the mission of the university:

In order to do the work of the university successfully, there must be communication of thinking men. Scholars must communicate with one another, teachers with their students and the students among themselves. Communication of all with all is necessary.” (Jaspers, 1960, p. 51)

However, given that the phenomena explored in Chapter 2 of this thesis have caused major change in how we understand the world and higher education alike we are challenged to appraise constantly what community now means to the university and to explore new ways by which academics can relate within these evolving communities of practice. We are reminded by Readings (1996) “in a global economy, the university can no longer be called upon to provide a model of community. And the appeal to the university as a model of community no longer serves as the answer to the question of the social function of the university” (p. 191). Nonetheless, we are challenged by the academics in this study to reflect on their accounts of relating within a community of learners and to consider their
sentiments that posits the relationships (and relating) with the community of learners as essential to the academic experience. This relating within a community of learners takes many forms – teaching, publication, networking – and underpinning these relationships is the opportunity for collegiality and collaboration of which communication is an integral component.

Communication is part and parcel of the task of being an academic and you need to be able to develop certain skills in that area, if you are not able to do that you are probably not much use as a teacher. It doesn’t necessarily mean that you have to be an orator, but at least you should have the ability to convince your colleagues and your students of the worth of what you are doing. (Academic 6:4)

To commune I think is absolutely vital. That the knowledge you may gain not necessarily just from teaching but also from research and so on you really need to be able to talk through with other people. (Academic 1:5)

Essential to being an academic is the playing with ideas and the knowledge. The other side is the people side, being with people, and talking to people. Whether it is at a conference, or in a class, or talking with people in a corridor. It is not an isolating thing. It is playing with ideas, the knowledge, and then doing something with it with other people. These are the essential things that underpin all other things perhaps. Maybe for the academic these things, the knowledge, the ideas, and the people side are what enable us to put out into all the other sorts of things we have to do. (Academic 3:2)

You need to communicate your research in a way that the community of like-minded people with related interests find of use to them; it informs their thinking. (Academic 9:2)

The successful academic is outstandingly knowledgeable in some field of endeavour, I think that is the very least you would expect. And I guess to be successful then that has to be combined with the ability to communicate that knowledge. Now I would say that a person who was able to communicate that to the world at large was one form of successful communication ... but for most of us it is the ability to communicate and inspire students. (Academic 7:4)

A metaphor often used to describe the relationships that exist between learners (academics and students alike) is that of conversation:

The pursuit of learning is not a race in which the competitors jockey for the best place, it is not even an argument or a symposium; it is a conversation. And the peculiar virtue of a university (as a place of many studies) is to exhibit it in this character, each study appearing as a voice
whose tone is neither tyrannous nor plangent, but humble and conversable. A conversation does not need a chairman, it has no predetermined course, we do not ask what it is ‘for’, and we do not judge its excellence by its conclusion; it has no conclusion, but is always put by for another day. Its integration is not superimposed but springs from the quality of the voices which speak, and its value lies in the relics it leaves behind in the minds of those who participate. (Oakeshott, 1989, p. 98)

The use of the word *conversation* as a metaphor for academic life is evocative and touches the heart of the experience of many academics.

My image of academe is the conversations ... being invited in to get an insight into somebody else’s world. I guess it is conversations in a way ... it is the conversations that are very enlightening. You must find the one word or the something that connects the words. There are conversations with students, and it is probably why I enjoy teaching so much because it is mostly conversations with them, and they appreciate that. (Academic 4:3)

It is the conversations, and conversations with yourself too, which are so important. So they might be anywhere but out of those conversations there can be like, not a bolt, but ‘Oh! Yes! You know!’ I always say to the students that I want them to seek out those conversations with people that might be totally unexpected. So the content of the conference or activity that they are attending might be deadly boring or dry, but the one conversation with one person had over coffee that struck up a professional relationship is worth it. (Academic 4:3)

You can see through these conversations where the next things are coming from and so you go for it. (Academic 3:1)

You need to talk to people to help you refine your own ideas and that is great. (Academic 3:2)

Setting up a conversation with people whose interests are close to mine and with whom I want to meet regarding a matter that you know is clearly academic ... to meet with people who are involved in the same sort of research I am is fundamental to my academic activity and I will be taking actions as a result of particular conversations to support academic activity for myself and others. (Academic 9:2)

So that my research is oriented in a way that will be useful to the profession and so that I don’t go off into airy-fairy land it is necessary to keep up everyday conversations with people in the field. (Academic 12:3)

The academic conversation happens at many levels and extends beyond the spoken word:
Professor M, one of the most admirable teachers I know, does much of her educating in the margins of her student papers. She creates a conversation in writing between text and critic that is generous and encouraging but also challenging. (Kennedy, 1997, p. 81)

Patsy recounts a similar story:

Being an academic for me today was having the conversations with students whilst marking their work. When I am assessing their work, I don't do it as much as I used to, but any comments I write is a conversation and they should be seen in that light, they are not a judgement. There might be a thought that struck me as something needy, and that is not my explanation – I learnt that from one of the examiners of my Masters thesis. He wrote me a very lengthy report and I rang him up to thank him and he said ‘Oh, I wasn’t sure whether you would find the comments useful or not, but I was actually having a conversation with what you’d written’. (Academic 4:3)

Entwined with this image of the academic conversation is that of relating within a community of learners. Such an image challenges any possibility of the academic being dispensed from the obligation to form networks and to relate with those who constitute such communities.

In place of the lure of autonomy, of independence from all obligation, I want to insist that pedagogy is a relation, a network of obligation. (Readings, 1996, p. 158)

For the academic, relating within a community of learners moves the conversation beyond the simple “transfer of a prefabricated meaning” (Readings, 1996, p. 156). Academics are challenged to use these relationships to the mutual benefit of all in the community. Relating amongst learners provides a vehicle “to risk and test our prejudices in the pursuit of mutual understanding” (Webb, 1996, p. 106) and in order “to improve teaching and their students’ learning we should be committed to developing a relationship in its richest sense” (p. 106). It is this concept of relationship that underpins Patsy’s use of the metaphor of conversation as an essential image of being an academic:

It is about a relationship too, because a conversation is unlike discussions where it is task focussed basically over an issue. Conversations are really getting to know the other person and where they are coming from and what their values are and what they think, what interests and what the
mutual interests are in each other ... there is a kind of excitement that develops ... in academe you get to know the personality behind the conversation. (Academic 4:3)

Relating with students

A fundamental forum for academics to relate amongst learners is that of teaching. The creation of teaching and learning communities and the processes of teaching and learning call for “specialized patterns of communication appropriate to their relationship and to the task at hand” (Martin, 1999, 105). Communication within this “scene of teaching should be understood as a radical form of dialogue” (Readings, 1996, p. 154) rather than being perceived as “a matter of communication between autonomous subjects functioning alternately as senders and receivers (p. 156). This concept of the academic relating with other learners challenges some of the more traditional images of the academic as one who prefers “to fly solo” (Foster, 1992, p. 101) or the academic “as a mediator between a body of knowledge on the one hand, and student-learners on the other” (Sadler, 1999, p. 102). Communication through teaching is more than “the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it” (Newman, 1996, 1, VI, 5, p. 97). In order to achieve the “enlargement and enlightenment for which education strives” (Pelikan, 1992, p. 82) the teacher and the learner must relate in a manner that fosters “the mind’s energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards and among those new ideas, which are rushing in upon it. It is the action of a formative power” (Newman, 1996, 1, VI, 5, p. 98).

To relate within a community of learners engenders respect, reciprocity and mutual benefit amongst all members of the community and this is evidenced clearly in the nurturing relationships that develop between academics and students.

I am interacting with talented people doing doctoral work. My doctoral students meet regularly and lively and stimulating debates happen at this meeting. It is a privilege to be working with people from diverse backgrounds who are listening to what I say and then being able to debate and challenge this. (Academic 9:1)
I get as much as I have to give the students ... the mutual beneficial results of being able to teach talented, creative young people is my perception of being an academic. (Academic 6:1)

The interaction between the student and the lecturer, the relationship between the teacher and the research, are essential to being an academic. (Academic 8:2)

I like talking to individual students and that comes through I guess more with research students where you develop close relationships with individuals when you are dealing with particular sides of the problem. (Academic 8:4)

A positive outcome of the relationships that exist within the community of learners is that it provides the opportunity for academics to receive feedback about their academic work. “Teaching and learning are bulwarks against superficiality and routine” (Fuller, 1989, p. 12) and the opportunity for feedback is an essential element within the conversations of teaching. Understandably, “feedback is valued, partly because it can be a reward in its own right, and partly because of its helpfulness” (Knight, 2002, p. 65). If the feedback provided by students is taken seriously by academics there is both a source of reward and an opportunity to improve current and future practices in teaching and learning.

The rewards come from my teaching and the feedback from the students ... they give you good feedback about your work. Now those things are few and far between and you treasure them when they come because they give you a sense that you are able to contribute to others’ learning. You have a sense of it yourself, but it is nice to get feedback from others as well about that. (Academic 12:2)

Working with students is really good for getting feedback on whether you are on the right track or not and also about what is relevant. (Academic 15:2)

It is the best sort of praise that I can have when people want me to go out there to the workplace and extend what it is I have taught them in the classroom. (Academic 10:3)

Students should be challenging their lecturers – they should have the bold ideas. (Academic 5:4)

Given the mutual benefit that arises for all members of the learning community it is understandable that the “teaching imperative” (Academic 8:2) is an indispensable component of being an academic and that the process of teaching
and learning is valued highly by each of the academics in this study. Each participant in this study referred explicitly and repeatedly to the importance of teaching and working with students. Accordingly, to illustrate the importance placed on teaching and working with students and to assert that teaching is an essential element of the academic experience I have chosen to quote from every participant in the study.

I have always wanted to be able to teach students. (Academic 1:2)

I have a responsibility to the students to teach them and I want to teach them well. (Academic 1:5)

I look at my life as an academic from a teaching point of view ... I certainly love and gain a great deal of satisfaction from having students develop a love of learning from whatever I teach. (Academic 2:1)

The teaching side is important. (Academic 3:1)

The successful academic is capable of translating knowledge or interpreting it in ways that are meaningful for students and their courses. (Academic 4:4)

My teaching excites me most. I love enthusing students. (Academic 5:1)

Important for me in academe is teaching. (Academic 6:1)

From the earliest stages in academe I was interested in and good at teaching ... teaching is the driving interest. I accepted research as an essential component but my main interest was teaching. Being an academic for me is about teaching. (Academic 7:1)

For me being an academic is teaching and researching. (Academic 8:1)

I love teaching and I still love the teaching side of being an academic. (Academic 9:2)

Basically and what I am happiest doing is that I am a teacher. (Academic 10:2)

Being an academic is being in a stimulating environment. Stimulating not just in research but also in teaching ... you are also constantly confronted with young people in your teaching who challenge you and what you have to say. I think it is a very challenging, stimulating experience. (Academic 11:2)

I have a missionary zeal about teaching and learning ... I find the teaching part exciting. (Academic 12:2)
There are necessary and sufficient conditions to be an academic and I guess the necessary conditions would be that most academics would be teachers and researchers ... I don’t think you can have an academic who is not a teacher. (Academic 13:1)

An important part of being an academic is teaching to help young people find their directions and their potential and to meet that potential. (Academic 14:2)

Students have been very important to my formation as an academic. (Academic 15:1)

Academics need to bring out the best in other people – very much in the Socratic tradition ... I think the Socratic terms of commitment to knowledge acquisition and transmission and the enabling of this knowledge to transform human kind is what the academic profession is about. (Chancellery Staff A)

Teaching is essential to academics and it differentiates them from other knowledge workers such as people who may research but have no responsibility to communicate that knowledge. (Chancellery Staff B)

The academic is nothing if they are not teaching and researching. The nature of teaching and research will change, and the times and way you do it will change, but they are essential components of being an academic. (Chancellery Staff C)

The indelible nexus between teaching and research is a recurring theme throughout the discussion on teaching. "Teachers in higher education are bound to have a close understanding of much of the current thinking and work in their intellectual field. They have professional obligations to engage in that kind of scholarly work; and, in that sense, be right up against the ‘frontiers’" (Barnett, 1990, p. 131). Barnett’s sentiments accord with the findings of this study.

There are two sides of the role of the academic. The teaching and the writing/research role which I join because it is a bit of both. Some of it is writing where you are putting ideas together, I am currently doing some of this but there is no research in this it is more a case of playing with ideas, so writing is important. Then there is the teaching role. I think you need both. (Academic 3:1)

Teaching and research are linked. You wouldn’t want those who come here to learn to feel that they are not getting current stuff, cutting edge research that is of value to their lives in their contexts. (Academic 4:5)
I like the link between people who teach and people who do research because it seems to me that your research should be involved in what you are teaching. (Academic 5:4)

I notice a lot of statistics out there that seem to say that research and teaching don’t interact very strongly and that good researchers don’t necessarily teach any better. But it seems to me almost self-evidently true ... that it is inconceivable that research does not inform the teaching. In other words, if you are teaching merely front user subjects then of course you must be informed of the latest research ... it is the nature of the content as well as the actual teaching techniques. In other words in a sense what you teach is even more important than how you teach it but it is important that they both interact. (Academic 8:5)

My teaching has always been the enactment of my research. Seldom have I had to teach something or some area that I wasn’t engaged in research for. My credibility was that I was engaged in research in that area. (Academic 9:1)

My teaching and my research work is all tied up ... So it all binds up, and the teaching feeds the work and the work feeds the teaching. I think that to me is sort of the epitome of the thing that for me as an academic ... it is all bound together and I think that is the best possible way that it could be. (Academic 10:3)

It is essential to marry the research and the teaching because one informs the other all the time. It is a sort of theory/practice thing, both inform each other, and in the work I do it is important to have both. (Academic 12:1)

I still say we deal in ideas, research and teaching is part of that dealership. (Academic 14:2)

There are two things that are fundamental to being an academic. One is the commitment to searching out critical, critical work around the issues that you are expert in so it is at that critical perspective being able to sort out what is really happening to what we say is happening. The other is working with students. (Academic 15:2)

The sentiments of the participants in this study endorse the proposition that excellent academic researchers do not necessarily make the best university teachers (Ramsden & Moses, 1992). However, the suggestion by Moses (1997) that “the dogmatic and unhistorical insistence that all academic staff need to be researchers-cum-teachers is misguided” (p. 177) appears in direct contradiction to the findings of this study. Strong support was discernible amongst the participants for both teaching and research to remain as essential elements in order for an academic to qualify as an academic. Similarly, the possibility of teaching
only academics and/or research only academics in the university was deemed both undesirable and unacceptable.

I get frustrated with academics who don’t want to, or think they don’t have to teach. (Academic 7:1)

If somebody said ‘O.K., from now on you can only do research and you can’t do any teaching, or you can only do teaching and you can’t do any research’ I would probably think long and hard about it because in my conception of myself as an academic I think both of these parts, I don’t know if they are equally important but they are both important parts, so if one part was chopped off then I would feel I had lost part of my work, part of my job, and part of my focus of who I was and what I was doing. (Academic 12:1)

By my definition teaching is part of being an academic. There are some people who do not teach a lot, they could be academics but not necessarily by my definition. (Academic 2:2)

In a tertiary institution to be an academic you should teach and you should be involved in research. This is an irreducible minimal requirement. An academic who doesn’t teach is not necessarily an academic. An academic who doesn’t research is not necessarily an academic. Academics should do the two. (Academic 8:1)

I don’t think I would ever want as a purely research academic and not have the teaching dimension to it. (Academic 12:2)

Despite teaching and research both being deemed as essential to academic life, one difficulty experienced by many academics is the lack of recognition and reward that is attached to the teaching imperative. “There is an international phenomenon or strong, dissatisfaction with the rewards and recognition provided for good teaching in universities” (Ramsden, 1998a, p. 78), and indeed it is this reality that “teaching is not well rewarded, and faculty who spend too much time counselling and advising students may diminish their prospects for tenure and promotion” (Boyer, 1990, p. xii) that prompted Boyer to try to elevate teaching to a recognised level of scholarship.

Faculty are losing out too. Research and publication have become the primary means by which most professors achieve academic status, and yet many academics are, in fact, drawn to the profession precisely because of their love for teaching or for service – even for making the world a better place. (Boyer, 1990, p. xii)
Boyer's concern regarding this lack of recognition and reward for teaching are echoed strongly by the academics in this study, especially those academics with heavy teaching commitments where much of the working week is taken in face-to-face teaching and preparation for classes. For these academics, success in research and publication is much harder to achieve due to the sheer limitations of time, the nature of academic work "becomes increasingly similar to that of secondary school teachers" (Becher & Trowler, 2001, p. 16), and the role of the academic increasingly "shares features with what might be called state-based bureaucratic professions (or somewhat condescendingly, semi-proessions), such as school teaching and nursing" (McCollow, 1996, p. 14).

Some academics just do research and write papers and may have an occasional student come and talk to them. Others do a whole lot of experimental work with equipment and people and have a lot of others doing work for them. However, there are a lot who do what I do, a lot of teaching and more teaching. (Academic 2:1)

I haven't got the bloody time to research and publish - that's the problem. (Academic 1:4)

For promotion I do not have enough refereed articles ... I try to squash all my teaching into 3 days and have Friday as my writing day, but I've been so tired on Fridays because Thursday is supposed to be 8 hours of teaching ... I am just so tired on Friday that I just put off getting around to writing ... It is very hard to have a heavy teaching load and try to do a lot of research or publish at the same time. (Academic 5:4)

There are many pressures on academics with the teaching loads that we have at the moment and the pressures on academics to make money rather than to develop ideas - these are retarding factors and universities will pay for that in the long haul. (Academic 14:2)

I used to consider working in a research only institute but that meant giving up teaching and interestingly I didn't want to do that. Little did I think that the demands of staying in the university (both teaching and administration) might mean giving up research. (Academic 14:4)

The sentiment that "a publication list still carries more weight than an academic's record as a teacher" (Crittenden, 1997, p. 95) and the extent to which teaching is overlooked and unrewarded in terms of promotion, tenure, and job opportunity (Soliman, Sungaila, Clark, & Soliman, 1983) causes concern for many of the academics interviewed.
I know that within the university's promotion structure - teaching, research, service to the profession you belong to and service to the university community count. I know that it is written down in black and white and they may be getting better at it. But I know that the reality still is ... I know that to really get promoted or to pick up a job in another institution it is really your research profile that counts, or your publication record, or how much money you've bought in, or how active you are in working with the profession and things like that. So your teaching doesn't count in that sort of sense ... It is harder to get promotion on teaching quality. (Academic 12:1)

I know that if I am to be able to get the promotion that I have to have publications. (Academic 1:4)

The difficulty for promotion comes in trying to get the money to do the research to get to the next level. It becomes extremely difficult and it is more than frustrating, it is difficult putting it into words that actual feeling, it can be a bit soul destroying. (Academic 1:5)

I wouldn't necessarily take as successful those indicators that would result in promotion. So how we measure success and certainly there are people who may not succeed in promotion, who may not pull in large research grants, but who through the quality of their teaching and inspiration to their students make long-term contributions to their discipline and their scholarly work. (Academic 13:5)

Paul, in discussing the reality of this issue, shares willingly his significant experience in university administration and offers from his perspective a hope that the context of these difficulties that academics are experienced regarding promotion is changing:

I think there has been quite a big change, a significant change within this university, on the perceived importance of teaching in relation to promotion. It is taken more seriously now than it was ten years ago ... I think what a lot of academics are not quite realising yet is that promotions committees are now taking a lot more notice of teaching. If someone comes up with a bad teaching profile or not even a very ordinary one wanting promotion say from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor, they are very likely to have it denied if there is any hint of lack of application in their teaching. In that sense it has improved. You certainly can't do as you did say back in the 1970s where an academic could get a promotion say to Reader on the basis of total contempt for teaching but because you had an international research reputation. I don't think, well I just don't think I know, that this is just not possible any more. (Academic 8:3)

I have seen people who have been refused promotions to Associate Professor (Level D) because of inadequate teaching profiles. (Academic 8:4)
Relating with Colleagues

The value of relating with students through the process of teaching and learning is paralleled in value by the rewards that arise from academics engaging in dialogue and collaboration with other academic colleagues. Academic collaboration can happen in diverse contexts such as a research team, a university department, discipline specializations, and international networks. Indeed, such relationships are important to academic life and embody the time-honoured tradition of collegiality.

Collegiality infers a mutuality of exchange amongst academics enabled by the reality that membership of a college (read Department, Faculty, University) accords to each academic a level of respect and an active voice that deserves to be heard as a voice amongst equals. Unfortunately, the emerging reality is that “amid mass higher education, and large scale multifaculty universities, collegiality may have taken a knock” (Barnett, 2000, p. 114). Whilst the relevance of collegiality as a model for academic work in today’s university is being questioned (Dearlove, 1997) and universities struggle to redefine what collegiality means for today’s academic work (Gilbert, 1998a), it is clear that for the academics participating in this study the value of relating with their colleagues, collaborating on academic work, and belonging to wide networks of disciplinary specialization are seen as essential elements of the academic experience. These findings reinforce the sentiment that “academically, collaboration should enable us to perform at a very high level in our core activities” (Gale, 1997).

Important to being an academic is the notion that you are in a strongly collegial community ... I wouldn’t like doing the job if everything became reduced to an individual level with academics doing their own teaching and where there was no discussion across what the whole holistic picture is for the students. (Academic 12:1)

Working with colleagues is what excites me as an Academic. The collaboration is very important for me ... My excitement comes from working with colleagues. (Academic 4:1)
Being an academic is not being cut off from others. In fact the communications that are going on in institutions, faculties all around the world, is putting me in touch with colleagues and interested people all around the world. (Academic 6:1)

An image I can relate to is of a group of people sitting around a table engaged in debate ... for me that is a very central part of being an academic. (Academic 15:2)

I am so connected with a world out there in which my ideas are valued ... we need affirmation from within a group of scholars who appear to recognise the value of our work. (Academic 13:5)

I think the interaction with people is a key element and that operates at a number of levels. It operates at the level of talking to someone like the professors in the department, and hearing them say that what you are doing is good, so I think that interaction with people and the variety of people ... is one of the differences between this work and other types of work. (Academic 3:3)

Through collaboration you come to believe you have something to contribute. Why would you talk to anybody else unless you thought you had something to offer? Why would you talk to anybody else unless you felt you had something to gain? And I think the more time you spend working with others ... the more you discover that you have got something to share with other people and that you will benefit from the exchange. (Academic 9:4)

What leads to the best ideas is to have time to sit and think and exchange ideas with colleagues. (Academic 14:2)

Of vital importance to the academic is the networking that exists between colleagues. Networking serves different functions in terms of academic work. At one level there is a sense of reward offered through networking that reinforces the identity of individual academics and the value of the academic work with which academics are involved. This is particularly true where international collaborations are involved:

I got a letter from a colleague in America who wants me to be part of an international project and that's exciting. (Academic 15:3)

I just received a letter from an English university inviting me to go and be a keynote speaker ... it is a sort of reward if you like for doing the academic work. (Academic 10:2)
I have had the opportunity to attend international conferences and travel ... to talk about recent projects, significant projects that I have been involved in and that added to my academic profile. (Academic 4:3)

We do need to go to conferences to keep ourselves current in the world trends in research. (Academic 12:2)

I recently worked with a woman in Berlin whose opinion I respected and during our discussions it became apparent that my research was missing something ... the Italian perspective seemed to be quite different from anybody else's ... a couple of people were mentioned to talk to, and yes, it was worth a visit, it justified a trip to Italy which is a big thing to say. (Academic 9:3)

Through international forums for the last 7 - 8 years I have created networks with famous and renowned scholars ... having a quality of exchange and stimulation from people who I know have been agonising over like questions for many years. (Academic 9:1)

Similarly, the opportunity for networking helps to reinforce a sense of national pride as the work of Australian academics is placed on the world stage:

There is a sense of pride I guess in my own work contributing in some way to a collective international view of Australia's contribution to the world scene. (Academic 12:2)

I think that probably the major rewards come as things like recognition of your work as being important or significant, especially overseas. I mean, I find that really a motivator presenting papers at conference overseas and trying to submit articles to publications and so on, that people recognise that quality work goes on here in Australia. (Academic 12:2)

Martin (1999) in exploring the vicissitudes of contemporary academic work likens collegiality to the model of learning organizations as promoted in 'The Fifth Discipline' (Senge, 1992) and she offers this model as part of the necessary foundation to scaffold her theory of the changing nature of academic work.

Senge's disciplines have much in common with the fundamental principles of collegiality (for instance, to work within an acknowledged paradigm with a considered but firm individual position, but equally to engage in debate with colleagues and be open to their insights; these are working codes long cherished by academic staff). (Martin, 1999, p. 69)
Parallel sentiments are found in the suggestion that "there must be a culture of learning in each university, whatever its mission" (Moses, 1997, p. 180). Essential to the nature of the learning organisation (which universities by their very nature should embody) is that there is both individual and collective learning occurring across the organisation and that this learning is the result of rigorous and informed debate. Unfortunately, there is a growing trend in universities at the moment that forces academics toward isolation and competition rather than to providing the necessary conditions required for this robust debate to occur (these issues are explored further in Section 5.2.4). Whilst collegiality can go some way in providing the conditions for this level of debate to occur it is also necessary to be vigilant in ensuring that collegial relations do not turn inward but maintain an outward focus that display an openness to the critique and the challenges provided by academic peers and external critics. To achieve this openness it is important that academics project their work beyond the confines of the immediate parochial structures that can sometime characterize academic teams. To enable the work of each academic to be scrutinized by international scholars and by academics from other disciplinary frames it is essential for academics to relate with academic peers.

Relating with Peers

Relating with peers is another of the accepted traditions within academe and similar to collegiality is considered by the academics in this study as essential to their experience of being an academic. Relating with peers enables the work of academics to become "public, peer-reviewed and critiqued, and exchanged with other members of our professional communities so they, in turn, can build on our work" (Shulman, 2000, p. 50) and it is this public exposure, and receptiveness to peer review and criticism that allows the work of academics to be referred to as scholarship (Shulman, 1999). Whilst academic publications and public presentations at conferences are the usual modes through which academics relate with other academic peers there is an increasing trend towards public presentations by academics to qualify for tenure or promotion in academic employment.
Even though the familiar adage *publish or perish* may appear to be a hackneyed phrase the sentiment underpinning the statement is still core to academic life and scholarship.

'Publish or Perish!' is a fundamental psychological, indeed almost physiological imperative that is rooted in the metabolism of scholarship as a sacred vocation. For that is how research remains honest, by exposing itself to the criticism and correction of other scholars and by inviting them— or daring them— to replicate its results if they can and, if possible, to carry these results further or to refute them by more careful of imaginative research. Only the diffusion of knowledge through some form of scholarly publication can make this process possible. (Pelikan, 1992, p. 123)

Given that the “scholarly enterprise builds on the principle that the work of one person is exposed to the critical judgments of peers” (Kennedy, 1997, p. 200) it is understandable that the peer review that is enabled through academic publication and the rigorous discussion that accompanies the public presentation of academic work holds such a significant place in the life of the academic:

You are expected to and you also want to get things published so there again is that notion of getting your ideas out there. Publications could be in connection with research or it could be just in association with the body of knowledge that you have developed so it could be commentaries, comments, reviews and things like that. And in this notion of getting published I suppose I also consider the notion of presenting at conferences. In fact, the whole notion of publishing and conferences is another element of being an academic for me. Both attending conferences and presenting at conferences is important in its own right. (Academic 3:1)

Publication is one of our forms of communication. (Academic 3:2)

I am challenged by giving papers at conferences and meeting other people at conferences and hearing their work ... it’s a challenge at a level of pushing my work, sort of expanding the envelope of my work all the time. (Academic 12:1)

You have got to work on the front of doing great scholarship and high quality work that you put forward to your peers in journals and in books. (Academic 15:5)

Academics are offered a number of rewards and challenges through relating with peers and these peer relationships help move the academic (or more precisely their academic work) beyond the immediate world and into the public domain.
Peer review can provide the opportunity for constructive feedback:

By getting my publications out to people I will probably get some feedback and discussion that is important. (Academic 3:4)

Being an academic means you are part of an international community of peers. (Academic 15:3)

You need to have a forum for your ideas otherwise they are just ideas in your head ... without forums to talk through your ideas they are not much more than ideas. (Academic 3:4)

Peer review can provide for recognition:

On completing my research I was lucky enough to be published in an authoritative and renowned world publication. This gave me credibility and status. (Academic 14:1)

It is important to get feedback from more senior members of the profession that the students that we are producing are better than in past years. It is certainly positive reinforcement. (Academic 1:5)

There is the self-satisfaction of seeing that your peers have accepted the work that you’ve done and that you can get your name up in lights in that particular issue of the journal. I guess it is a means of proving to other people that you do have some self-worth and that the work that you have done was in fact useful. (Academic 1:4)

I achieved a very successful international publication. (Academic 9:1)

By getting more publications in print I am getting a bit further down the line of achievement. By having outside experts ask questions and so on I am getting external recognition. (Academic 1:3)

There is always a small number of papers one has written that is the expression and the results of the research you have done that you have a real pride in and you think, ‘I really did something good there, I made a real contribution to the literature’. (Academic 8:3)

Peer review can provide opportunities for collaboration and this in turn helps engender higher levels of academic morale and satisfaction (Ramsden, 1998a).

I am most productive in publishing when I work with colleagues, not exploitation but collaboration, generally it depends on what students and colleagues are around that gets me publishing. (Academic 7:1)
You are working on something, very frequently in collaboration with a student and we jointly or individually suddenly actually perceive a solution by looking at things in a different way so we see a solution we didn’t see before ... and then there is the satisfaction of writing it up. (Academic 8:3)

The imperative for academics to publish can also prove stressful. This stress is often the result of the requirement for quantitative measurement of publications that accompany academic work-planning and performance appraisal and that play a large part of assessment for promotion, tenure, or the securing of new academic positions:

There is a global expectation in the university, I think it is universal that you publish or perish. There are no ifs, buts, or maybes. (Academic 7:1)

I need to publish because management says that is what I should do. (Academic 2:3)

There is pressure to publish from the Department Head – a minimum of three referred journal articles a year. The Dean is keen to have staff in the most prestigious academic journals. (Academic 5:5)

The pressure to publish was discussed at my last performance assessment and it was pointed out that if I want promotion to Senior Lecturer then I need some locally produced articles. I have many (at least 30) articles published currently but these were mainly done overseas. (Academic 1:1)

I think it is almost encouraged that you are promoted now on the number of publications not the quality, so in fact the system is moving towards a devaluing of the scholar who might do maybe one really good article every two years that really rocks the foundation of your discipline. Forget it, if you do five shoddy ones that is what is going to give you promotion because they just really look at number, not totally, but it is really pushing in that direction. (Academic 14:2)

There is a pressure to work hard and publish, but it does not matter to fellow academics how many articles you publish whereas it does matter to academic managers. What matters to other academics is if you publish in third-rate journals. The publication demand seems to be to be a silly government request. (Academic 11:3)

I see it as a bad sign, it is a sign of the times of course because as pressure on the institutions to conform to the system and to meet the norms that are applied they indicate a rather naïve dependence on quantitative outcomes of academic publishing. (Academic 6:4)
When it comes to publications well next year I'll have one that is in a journal that has a very long queue so the stuff that was submitted two years ago and accepted won't actually appear until the first issue of next year but that may be the only publication in that year I have. (Academic 13:3)

There are problems within the system because of what counts and what doesn't count in terms of valuable, in terms of how people might then change their patterns and work practices in order to do things that count and not do things that don't count in terms of showing quality research ... for example, you can only claim a conference presentation if it gets put into a referred conference publication that publishes the conference. (Academic 12:2)

We need to be much more interested in terms of the quality of the publication – the quality of the journal that the publications are in. For example, a prestigious journal that is known because of its refereeing systems only to accept really high-class publications, whereas the local School of Mines review of current work or something like that should not count in quite the same bag. (Academic 8:3)

5.1.4 Being an Academic is Experienced as Improving the Professions and Society – (The Scholarships of Application and Engagement)

One is struck by the gap between values in the academy and the needs of the larger world. Service is routinely praised, but accorded little attention ... To be considered scholarship, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. (Boyer, 1990, p. 22)

The scholarship of engagement represents a new paradigm. Within these views of the 'new scholarship' rest the richness and the promise of the work and its demonstrated community impact and recognized benefits for the faculty member, profession, and higher education. (Sandmann, 2002, p. 7)

Academics relate with many communities and as has been explored in this chapter the engagement by academics with these many communities is an element essential to being an academic. Barnett's (2000) exhortations that “in an age of supercomplexity, the university has to engage with multiple communities” (p. 108) and “in a world of supercomplexity, there can be no ivory towers” (p. 109) act as statements of fact as well as offering an invitation to each academic to engage with many and various communities of practice. Through engaging with the many communities that constitute their own lifeworld academics are provided
with the opportunity to apply their specific disciplinary knowledge and expertise in real-life situations that are often far removed from the “ivory tower” of the university setting (Barnett, 1990, p. 65). When academics become part of the everyday life of these communities they are offered the opportunity to contribute their services to addressing immediate issues and to improving the situations which these communities may be experiencing. Boyer (1990) asserts, “all too frequently, service means not doing scholarship but doing good” (p. 22) and he certainly challenges the academic to redefine the notion of community service from one of service equating with good citizenship to one where “the application of knowledge moves towards engagement” (p. 21). To apply knowledge responsibly in problem solving and for knowledge to be helpful to individuals as well as institutions there needs to be careful consideration and purposeful action rather than haphazard and non-committed involvement. “Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor – and the accountability – traditionally associated with research activity. (Boyer, 1990, pp. 21 - 22). These are foundational requirements if the application and engagement of academic work is to be considered at a scholarly level rather than as charitable and well-meaning contributions.

Academics continually immerse themselves in and reflect on “the context of new combinations of peers, new groupings of students, new types of problems requiring multi-disciplinary solutions, new interconnections between theory and practice, and new, wider public spheres” (Maconachie, 2002, p. 12). As discussed earlier, academics are well placed to make a significant contribution to improving the professions and society.

I have this belief and value that I can make a difference, that I can change things, and that I can improve practice - my own practice as well as other people's practice. (Academic 12:1)

I interpret my job as an academic in terms of trying to change practice in the field. (Academic 12:4)

This engagement with these communities of practice as a way of ‘making a difference’ (Academic 14:1) accords with Boyer’s (1990) definition of the ‘scholarship of application’:
The scholarship of application, as we define it here, is not a one-way street. Indeed, the term itself may be misleading if it suggests that knowledge is first ‘discovered’ and then ‘applied’. New intellectual understandings can arise out of the very act of application ... Such a view of scholarly service – one that both applies and contributes to human knowledge – is particularly needed in a world in which huge, almost intractable problems call for the skills and insights only the academy can provide. (Boyer, 1990, p. 23)

The hope and possibility of making a difference appear often through the conversations that constitute this study and the frequency of these sentiments strongly suggests that making a difference is a salient feature of being an academic. Having said this, it must be acknowledged that professionals in many and varied professions voice similar sentiments thus lessening the impact that such a sentiment contributes to exposing the lived experience under investigation – that of being an academic. This feature notwithstanding, it is important in the first instance to acknowledge that academics believe their role is one where they can make a difference, and secondly to view the place of this sentiment in achieving a deeper understanding of what it means to be an academic.

When I portray myself as an academic, which is not very often, the immediate reaction of other people is often negative, that is people outside the field. So I usually have to show that the work that I do makes a difference, that in my job I am doing the same sort of things that they are doing in their job. I am trying to improve the world and that then makes a point of connection and we can start up dialogue about our respective work roles. (Academic 12:4)

Achieving difference through the outreach of academic work can be orchestrated in many ways and the impact can be felt at many levels. At one level there is the possibility of and the necessity for the university to impact on society and citizenship – “the university occupies a central position in society, standing as it does between culture and social structure ... occupies a central location in the articulation of cultural values and shaping of social institutions which rest more and more on higher education” (Delanty, 2001, p. 46). Whilst such an impact could be considered philosophical and removed from the reality of everyday life, for the academics involved in this study the belief that they can influence society...
is close to their heart and is seen as a pivotal factor shaping the identity of the academic.

To be a good teacher, to be a good researcher, and to participate in the broader intellectual life of the society in a way that makes a real contribution to that is important to being an academic. (Academic 13:5)

I have, and my colleagues here with me have, a commitment to creating a better society, working towards equality and social justice and that is basically the bottom line of what we do. (Academic 15:4)

I have a commitment to improving the quality of life of people in our society. (Academic 12:2)

I guess the fundamental thing I see as an academics’ work is a contribution to the way society runs. (Academic 12:3)

My role is to bring about improvements and bring about good change for other people. (Academic 7:3)

For me to be an academic is trying to change things for the better. (Academic 11:3)

The challenge is to be pro-active and to make a difference. (Academic 5:1)

The job of an academic is to advance society. (Academic 12:4)

I became an academic because I had recognition of something that I had to offer to improve educational opportunity for certain groups of people. I believed I could make a difference. (Academic 14:1)

Many academics speak out publicly because they have a very strong sense of social obligation ... we are not paid to do it, we are asked to do things that will lead to criticism from fellow academics. I do believe we can contribute to the general life of the intellectual community by publishing, editing, doing reviews. (Academic 11:3)

The academic has a responsibility to the world ... yes that’s the essence and it is strange that society in a way can’t do without academics or else society is not going to move much without these people pushing the limits of knowledge. (Academic 10:4)

It is important that what I do is of intrinsic value, intrinsic social value, that the content is intrinsically interesting ... and it is a socially valued role as perceived by others. (Academic 13:5)

The academic has some sort of special role to play as someone who can comment on society and can contribute to society in a very special way. (Academic 6:2)
Concurrent with this macro involvement of academics helping shape society, yet at a more immediate level, the university through its partnerships with industry and the professions plays a significant role in shaping and determining the professions and professionals of the future (Barnett, 1990, pp. 75 - 76). The possibility of improving the professions and henceforth of making a difference to the way things work is crucial to the experience of being an academic.

We can improve the profession of the students we teach. (Academic 12:3)

I get a real buzz out of working with professionals in my discipline, with practice experts who come in to do their Masters degree, and also when I work with them in professional development capacities. I get a real buzz that I am making a difference at the personal sort of level as well as at a bigger sort of level through writing and so on. (Academic 12:1)

I do have a sense of responsibility to help other women and other people get as far as I have got. (Academic 12:2)

I hope that my influence of teaching the students that they will gain a certain amount of knowledge and will have an overall beneficial effect on the profession as a whole, so that the profession will be better ... I can exert an influence in that I can try and raise the standard of the profession. (Academic 1:3)

I guess I almost call myself a vocational academic who is producing graduates that will have a strong responsibility to be professional and competent and have the highest level of skill possible. Also, I want to assist my discipline profession in redeveloping itself. (Academic 1:2)

I aim to give practitioners new insights into what they are doing and into the very phenomena by which they are being called by the society to intervene in. (Academic 13:1)

I have the possibility of influencing education for the profession in which I was originally trained. (Academic 5:1)

My concern is to bring my students to be the best in the state in their profession ... it is important to me that my students are doing well and making a name for themselves as office-bearers on professional associations and committees. (Academic 5:4)

The application and engagement of the academic with the professions and society are integral to the identity of being an academic and this engagement and application also provides the academic with a sense of achievement and success. The following statements accord with the work of Taylor (1999) who suggests
"academic identities are achievements ... they give a sense of belonging, a feeling of personal significance and a sense of continuity and coherence" (p. 43).

I can point to areas of practice and policy where I have played a significant part. (Academic 13:5)

Academics are seen as a repository of the latest knowledge and we have got an overview of whatever field we are in. People ring me up saying 'we think of you as knowing most in this area' it is quite good because it is society looking at you thinking this is the expert who can lead them in what they want to do. (Academic 10:4)

The academic of the future will need more emphasis on external relations, whether they be measured by community involvement or visible consulting work ...I think that by being connected with the community academics will continue to get out there and show that we are valuable. (Academic 7:4)

A further level of contribution to the community service domain that can reinforce this sense of achievement and success is often afforded to academics through service to the wider university community. Through membership of and responsibility for university committees (at Department, Faculty, and University level) academics can engage with and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure that these bodies achieve their objectives and run as smoothly as possible. However, to engage with these committees is often a mixed blessing for the academics concerned.

From a negative perspective, service to the university by an academic places demands of time and energy on that person that detract from the essential elements of the academic experience as outlined in the various sub-sections of this chapter. Similarly, the requirements for consultative decision making and authoritative endorsement that committee structures usually demand can deter from the possibility of immediate change that academics so often seek to improve the conditions for teaching and learning:

I don’t feel like an academic when I am sitting on committees. (Academic 14:2)

I was on the parking committee, and all my colleagues said 'you must have done something terrible in life'. (Academic 7:2)
It is frustrating because to try and change anything in the system I have to go through committee after committee after committee and that is a very frustrating aspect of being an academic. (Academic 11:2)

I don’t go to meetings when I think that the decision is going to be made for us anyway, I don’t bother now. I just select the things where I think I’ve got some influence. (Academic 5:3)

A positive perspective on the engagement and application through service to the university often accompanies the participation by academics on committees constituted to enhance the core business of the university and to improving the conditions under which academic affairs operate. This application can provide both a personal enrichment for the academics to contribute their talent to those committees in which they are involved, and also to develop and deepen their understandings of how the core business of the university works. Admittedly, for those junior academics who are trying to juggle university service with unrealistic workloads of teaching and research, the level of satisfaction gained through service to the university is often not as great as for those academics appointed at higher levels of the academic scale. This finding accords with the statement “the impact of these extra tasks and the additional time they involve varies with the individual’s academic rank” (Becher & Trowler, 2001, p. 17). Often for more senior academics this engagement and application through service to the university can prove a source of satisfaction. Lisa’s comments indicate her strong commitment to and great sense of reward from serving on university committees and assisting with the development of more junior academic staff:

Academe is littered with things that aren’t running well, therefore I get my jollies out of making sure that the things I am associated with are done professionally and well ... Committees, working parties, etc. I see as enriching my understanding of how the system works and I value this way of having some impact also. (Academic 7:1)

One of the nice things about being a senior in the university is having the opportunity to sit on committees and be yourself because there is the opportunity to interact. I see that as being one of the most unexpected but one of the most delightful aspects of being promoted. When I was promoted then automatically I was deemed to be kosher to sit on certain types of committees. (Academic 7:3)
I can exercise rational, informed judgements on committees such as selection committee or promotions committees ... and applying critical rational judgement is certainly a key part of my being an academic. (Academic 7:2)

I definitely like to see things working well ... as a senior academic I am in a position where I have influence both over people and structures, and knowledge. (Academic 7:5)

This section has attempted to explicate the academic experience of engagement and application that defines part of the academic identity as “a change agent or somebody who is working towards a greater good” (Academic 12:3). Undeniably, this value is a driving force for the academics participating in this study and their commitment to community service and improving the professions helps make sense of what it is to be an academic.

To be an academic is not a single focus – we need to be interested in both knowledge and the application of such and be able to connect all of this with the other tasks of being an academic – teaching, research, administration, and the community service. (Academic 7:5)

The integration of the various elements of the academic experience is what enables an academic to make a difference and is thus an essential element that distinguishes academic work from that of other professions. The following statements indicate that certain academics believe they can make a difference as an academic as compared to applying their discipline domain in other professional settings.

I think that what I do as an academic works towards improving my discipline and profession in a way that is more influential. I can make greater gains towards that goal through my work as an academic than I could if I was practicing my profession at the coalface. (Academic 12:4)

Being an academic gives me a chance to do a variety of things such as teaching students, treating patients, and doing research. In private practice you can only do one thing as a major component and that is treating patients. In professional practice not only do you lose your academic freedom you lessen your sphere of influence. (Academic 1:3)
I could get a far higher salary than I get as an academic by working in my professional discipline but I stay an academic because of the difference it makes to engage with that sense of being part of and working towards the search for truth and freedom of speech that is critical to advancing my professional discipline. (Academic 14:4)

To understand more fully the meaning of these sentiments the following statements are offered from Gilda and Patsy as a comment both about the difference an academic can make and also the *raison d'etre* for these people to be academics:

Probably the fundamental thing that I cherish as an academic is that I am in a position to influence a lot of people, more so than when I was a practitioner or professional myself. As an academic I can influence the professions and the professionals themselves. (Academic 12:4)

It is about making a difference out there. Whilst I can’t touch all those people individually, I can through my students who then will make a difference through their touch. (Academic 4:5)

**Conclusion to Section 5.1**

Sections 5.1.1 – 5.1.4 of this chapter have presented the voices of academics detailing the characteristics they perceive as essential to the academic experience. In phenomenological terms, these aspects or dimensions of the academic experience help construct the meaning of what it is to being an academic, and to take one or more of these aspects away would be to diminish or to distort the phenomenon (Crotty, 1998a). As outlined in the introduction to this chapter: To be an academic is described by the academics in this study as:

- Being immersed freely in the world of ideas
- Linking generations and spanning boundaries to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge
- Relating within a community of learners
- Improving the professions and society

These descriptions detailing the dimensions of the phenomenon of being an academic have been garnered from the conversations with academics reflecting on
the essential elements of this phenomenon. However, the essence of the phenomenon and the experience of living out that phenomenon can often appear as a contradiction. To understand more fully how the participants of this study experience this phenomenon it is important to explore the lifeworld of each academic participating in this research and to engage with the lived experience of being an academic amidst the realities of today – those issues explored in Chapter 2 that are currently shaping the world of academe. What then is the reality of being an academic in today’s world?

5.2 The Experience of Being an Academic

Sections 5.2.1 – 5.2.4 describes the lived experience of being an academic from the four philosophical perspectives of Lived Space, Lived Body, Lived Time, and Lived Other. To analyse a human experience from these four dimensions of human living (Willis, 1998, p. 28) is to continue the phenomenological tradition of Merleau-Ponty (1962) where these “four fundamental existentials ... belong to the existential ground by way of which all human beings experience the world ... and are productive categories for the process of phenomenological question posing, reflecting and writing” (van Manen, 1990, p. 102). The lifeworld of this study is the human experience of being an academic. The purpose of analysing the textual conversations of the co-researchers in light of these existentials is part of the search for deeper levels of analysis that can be achieved through exploring and engaging in a dialogical process with the texts (Bergum, 1989). Whilst each of these existentials is treated separately in this section it must be noted that the existentials by which we experience the world “can be differentiated but not separated ... But in a research study we can temporarily study the existentials in their differentiated aspects, while realizing that one existential always calls forth the other aspects” (van Manen, 1990, p. 105). Accordingly, it is important to realize that whilst reading one of the following descriptions there is an inextricable nexus with each of the other existentials; the meaning of the four existentials being unified in the lifeworld of each of the co-researchers.
5.2.1 The Existential of Lived Time (Temporality)

Although my present draws into itself time past and time to come, it possesses them only in intention, and even if, for example, the consciousness of my past which I now have seems to me to cover exactly the past as it was, the past which I claim to recapture is not the real past, but my past as I now see it, perhaps after altering it. Similarly in the future I may have a mistaken idea about the present which I now experience. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, pp. 69 - 70)

To engage with the lived dimension of time in a phenomenological study is to explore “subjective time as opposed to clock time or objective time” (van Manen, 1990, p. 104). In this study, to understand the dimension of lived time for the academic is to enter into the temporal experience of living in the world today as an academic as opposed to recalling the halcyon pre-Dawkins days or hypothesizing of futures unknown. However, given that temporality is always a subjective experiencing of time, the fusing of the horizons of our past, present, and future (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) are both necessary and unavoidable. The horizon of the past - my memory of how I experienced life yesterday - will colour my perception of how I encounter an experience today and how I envisage what it could be tomorrow.

The difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past’s awareness of itself cannot show. (Eliot, 1999, p. 16)

This unavoidable nexus of time, interpretation, and anticipation determines how each person lives and gives meaning to the temporal experiences of their lifeworld. The historical dimension of time is an inescapable element in identity formation because “as I make something of myself I may reinterpret who I once was or who I now am. The past changes itself, because we live toward a future which we already see taking shape, or the shape of which we suspect as a yet secret mystery of experiences that lie in store for us” (van Manen, 1990, p. 104). To reflect on these temporal links is to become most acutely conscious of our place in time and of our own contemporaneity (Eliot, 1999, p. 14).
For the academics participating in this study the existential of lived time is distilled through the descriptions of the temporal dimension of their lived experience. On one level, this temporal dimension can be “intuited as a series of events following one another slowly or quickly, lingeringly or tensely” (Willis, 1998, p. 233); at another level it provides profound insight into what constitutes the experience of being an academic. These descriptions both foreground this dimension of the academic experience from the participants’ perspectives, they also provide the reader with insight into the exigencies that academics meet in their daily toil. Understandably, the experience of the temporal dimension will be different for each academic. Nevertheless, there are threads common to this experience that enable the weaving of a textual description of these experiences that augments our understanding of the phenomenon of being an academic.

Emerging through the conversations with the academics is a number of trends that relate to the dimension of time and that provide insights into the temporal experience of being an academic. The following descriptions are enriched by the honesty and openness of each participant in their search to understand more fully the meaning of what it is to be an academic and why they continue in academe. “Within the things themselves, the future is not yet, the past is no longer, while the present is infinitesimal, so that time collapses” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 412).

The Academic Day is Indeterminate

To recall Mark’s statement in Section 4.2 “that the University owns us 24 hours a day 7 days a week” (Academic 2:5) and to listen to Patsy tell “that the academic day is always incomplete ... yes it is always incomplete as there is never enough time” (Academic 4:2) is to detect that the experience of working as an academic today involves great amounts of time. Clearly, these statements are not atypical as similar statements emerged through each of the interviews with all participants in this study when the issue of time and the capacity to complete the required academic work within the constraints of the academic day was broached. Given the frequency of response it is clear that these sentiments not only express the exasperation of junior academics like Mark and Patsy, rather they characterize the academic experience of today. The following statements point to the exasperation
that academics face in meeting the demands of working in an Australian post-Dawkins university:

Well it is everyday, almost 24 hours a day it usually never stops. (Academic 1:3)

When there are 24 hours each day to do all the things we need to ... I don't think you can do sustained research and teach large numbers of students in large face-to-face contact hours and do a number of other things as well. (Academic 2:2)

There is too much on the plate for the hours you have available to put in, and I am not sure whether I am going to get things done. (Academic 3:3)

The demands are competing for immediate priority which stops you from getting to what you plan to do. Plan what you think you'll do and then all hell breaks loose, major decisions have to be made and you find this all impinges on your time. (Academic 4:1)

There are so many calls on my time in the areas of teaching, research, and administration that just to try and keep everything ticking is quite difficult. I am trying not to just work in crisis management mode, I am trying to stop the crises before they arise. (Academic 6:3)

What frustrates me most is lack of time, lack of thinking space because too much time is spent reacting not reflecting, lack of time to keep abreast of the literature. (Academic 9:1)

Trying to juggle the expectations put upon me. Do more and more – more teaching, more publishing, more consultancies, more supervision and then do more and more. What frustrates me is not being able to do equal justice to all these demands. (Academic 10:1)

I think now the job is so big that you can't really do it justice. (Academic 11:3)

I am snowed under with getting things done... I haven't got time to do the things I am doing now. (Academic 12:2)

I am directing a research centre and there is the constant frustration of not being able to get things done. It is a constant juggling act. There are pressures to sacrifice the quality of my teaching or writing or research in order to get things done. (Academic 15:1)

These findings validate the recent research on academic work that notes academic work has increased to an estimated average of 49.2 hours per week (McInnis, 1999, p. 26). To meet these demands of increased workloads there appears to be
increasing demands for academics to blend the professional day with their personal lives in order to find time to achieve the necessary work required of them.

There is a diffusion of work and home boundaries and a lack of finiteness about the work so that there is never a sense of closure, just look at the intray. (Academic 13:1)

Nowadays I tend to go through the day-to-day routine of my work and the motions and then at night times I do the real thinking. In the midnight hours you know that’s when I really think, so that I guess it is that thinking during the night watch that drives everything I do during the day. (Academic 14:2)

*Lived Time - Gender Issues*

Of particular importance to this study is the suggestion in the literature that the blurring of the boundaries of professional and personal time confers great stress and imposes difficulties for academic women (Allen, 1990; Brooks, 1997) given that academic women often need to manage both the time commitments required to be a successful academic alongside those requirements and demands of managing a family and a home. The following statements from women academics in this study support this suggestion.

Being an academic woman I constantly seem to have half a dozen things on the boil all the time whereas a lot of the male academics I observe seem to be able to concentrate on one thing at a time. (Academic 5:4)

Family commitments interfere with my academic development. Whilst this university is supportive of us all in terms of flexibility of time, and respect for academic responsibility, there are still the competing demands on women’s time if they are to be full time mothers, wives, and academics. (Academic 10:1)

On Saturdays my preferred activity would probably be to get on with my research for my doctoral thesis, but if my son comes along and says ‘Mum, I’m playing hockey this morning, you are coming to watch me aren’t you?’ then I am not going to refuse. I am going to do the right thing and support my son, so I lose the morning to do the academic thing and I go off to be mother because that’s a choice I made earlier in life that I wanted to have a family. So you know, there are these family things that prevent you all the time from actually completing what you want and are required to complete. (Academic 10:2)
I find myself reading journals on a Friday evening when I should be watching my daughter play hockey ... in the Doctor’s waiting rooms while my son has a physiotherapy treatment I will read a journal article. Any of the time that I have spent reading the current literature has been snatched in these moments. (Academic 13:3)

Because of my domestic constraints I cannot do the conference circuit ... with different constraints I would of done more academic travel – I am not regretful because I have my priorities right. But with a different view I am aware of missing out on publishing and attending conferences that is good for your curriculum vitae. (Academic 7:1)

Because of my family commitments the opportunities for sitting in a dedicated environment and getting new ideas isn't there and this experience has shaped my view of being an academic. (Academic 7:1)

Striking a balance between the components of woman and academic I guess is one of the tricks that I haven’t really mastered. (Academic 12:4)

For family reasons it wouldn’t be viable to think about moving within my career, so for these reasons I am very constrained. (Academic 13:4)

The above statements report directly the experience of being a female academic and demonstrate the genuine difficulties faced by these female academics in managing the temporal conditions of academic work. Not surprisingly, similar observations about academic women are made by male academics who have had the opportunity to understand the intense pressures that female academics experience in juggling their many professional demands with personal commitments. Paul comments openly on these difficulties:

You know, mixing family commitments with academic careers is almost totally impossible. I think that’s changing but not totally. I mean, I think that there is always the biological necessity and for a woman to decide she is not going to have children so as to follow an academic career can cause a great deal of pain. I can think of some examples here now of women who are very successful but they have had a sort of a lump taken out of their careers of about 5 even 10 years to raise their children, or they operate at just a sort of ticking over level and have had to pick up the pace again when the children are old enough. (Academic 11:4)

Whilst Gilda concurs wholeheartedly with the difficulties faced by women academics, she suggests that managing the time commitments devoted to raising a family is only one side of the coin of the temporal experience of being a female
academic; the other is that women academics tend to commit great amounts of
time to be guardians and carers for their students.

Women academics tend to take on a lot of things because they see that
somebody should do this job properly – whether it is coordinating a
subject, looking after the welfare of students who are concerned with their
problems, putting together a better quality package in some way ... I think
women, and I am one of them, tend to do too much in a sense to the
detriment of where they will ultimately end up in academe" (Academic
12:2)

Lisa suggests that female academics tend to have “a greater sense of the
complexity and the importance of the range of other things that one might have to
do” and supports her view with the following anecdote.

I have just had a staff member walk into my office ready to write out his
resignation and he wanted to talk, then a student walked in and I said ‘Hi,
how are you?’ and the student said ‘I think I am about to have a nervous
breakdown’. I knew his psychiatric history, and he probably wasn’t
joking, so I have had two hours in a row of situations to deal with ... that
you need personal skills to help you deal with the kinds of situation is
often probably quite foreign to some male academics and if you asked
what they would do they would probably say ‘well, I’d send them off to
counselling’, or some fairly facile response which is probably plausible as
I guess they haven’t got that depth of experience. (Academic 7:3)

The reality of the above scenarios hit home when considered in the light of the
research on female academics suggesting female academics are “less highly
qualified in formal terms than their male counterparts, and were largely located in
the lower academic ranks of lecturer and assistant lecturer/tutor” (Harman, 2000,
p. 88). These findings parallel the following finding on gender differences in
work time where “women spend more hours per week than men on teaching
related activities, but less on thesis supervision, and scholarship” (McInnis,
2000b, p. 132).

Lived Time - Academic Administration

“Administrative tasks are a constant demand all year” (McInnis, 1999, p. 20) and
the time committed to administrative tasks is perceived as burdensome and
unnecessary by all academics participating in this study. Whilst it is agreed by
most participants that “administrative work has to be done in order for other things to run along smoothly” (Academic 12:4), that “there is an essential administrative component that has to be done” (Academic 8:1) and that “administration can make a difference” (Academic 7:3) there is total agreement that the time commitments required for academic administration present an enormous frustration distracting from the core business of academics. Academic administration comes in many forms with activities often differentiated by the amount of time required to perform such tasks. For example:

Trivial administrivia such as form filling that does not require a lot of time, course coordination, program development administrative liaison with Heads of Departments about the implementation of programs, developing new programs, maintaining the quality of programs, the marketing of the teaching side of the Faculty’s activities, the promotion, encouragement, and stimulation of research activities in others. (Academic 9:4)

Whilst these activities may be considered as essential to the maintenance and development of academic work, the time required to perform these tasks is often viewed by academics as taking away from the essential elements of the academic profession; “Some academics are spending so much time on administration you would have to wonder if they are Academics” (Academic 8:2). The following comments paint a broad picture of the temporal experience of administration and highlight the frustration imposed on academics in managing administrative tasks alongside the other aspects of academic work.

An academic is not an administrator. I think we have some duties to organise things but I don’t think we should become or spend a lot of our time doing administrative work. (Academic 1:2)

Administration is another challenge. It is the administrative tasks that are taking up so much time. (Academic 6:1)

I seem for ever to be spending time putting things together for administration ... I seem to spend ages and ages just doing that. (Academic 10:3)

You could take away my administrative load entirely without affecting my role as an academic. (Academic 9:1)
I don't feel that when I am engaged in administrivia that I am acting as an academic. (Academic 9:2)

That the time required by academics for academic administration has increased exponentially and correlates with the reallocation of the academic workforce is supported by the findings from research study on academic work (Harris, 1993; McInnis, 2000b; Ramsden, 1998a). Such research suggests, “The area of most substantial change (to academic work) has been ... in administration in the last five years. This statistically significant jump, from 13.4 to 17.1% of working time is congruent with the strongly reported perception of administration becoming an increasing and seriously intrusive burden” (McInnis, 2000b, p. 139).

Derrick, in reporting a recent discussion shares the advice provided to him by his Vice-Chancellor; “The Academic who is expending more than 30% of their time on administration is not functioning efficiently”. Derrick’s response to this advice is; “By his definition, I am not an efficient academic because I am allowing the administrative role to take over too much of my time” (Academic 9:2). It was evidenced throughout this study that the time required for administration is distancing academics from the key elements of what it is to be an academic. The following statements suggest that the temporal experience of administration is a contributing factor to the low morale and despondency that was reported in the literature review.

My time now is not spent talking to my colleagues about our subject area, it is more directed to the administration of the university. It is at the point where it is not exciting and is in some ways kinds of insidious. This is more prevalent now than in my beginning days as an academic. (Academic 6:2)

I am not an academic now I am a bean counter, a supermarket controller, and an administrative manager. For the 10% of academic work that I am doing in research and teaching I still hold to my values of being an academic, but the competing demands of administration make this less than ideal. (Academic 14:1)

A key issue emerging from these comments is the need to investigate further what can be done to ameliorate this situation of administration overtaking essential academic work.
The lived experience of time for academic work emerges as a source of frustration for the academics participating in this study. However, at the same time there is always hope that things may get better as depicted in the following statement from Diane:

Wouldn’t it be lovely to be working on one thing, to have only one focus which was doing one’s research instead of trying to apply for research funds, trying to do current research projects, trying to administer part of the under-graduate program and teach in the post-graduate program, as well as managing the dozen higher degree students I have to supervise as well as having other things to do in the broader policy context. (Academic 13:3)

The issue of why academics continue to subject themselves to these experiences of lived time is surely perplexing, however, one answer lies clearly in this statement from Tony.

It is a life-style I think more than a working day. You do different things at different times of the day. You never stop being an academic, it is a vocation I think for most of us, at least for some of us, for those of us for whom it is not a vocation I don’t think would survive very long because the abuses we have in our working life need to be made up for by the satisfactions. (Academic 14:2)

When the issue of the vocational academic is raised with Paul his response differs significantly to the above statement. “I think that idea (of vocational academics) is an excessively pointless way of putting it given that a significant number of people move from being academics to doing a number of other things” (Academic 8:3). Similarly, Peter suggests “Being an academic is just a job – it is just what I do – it is somebody who works in a university, if I was to leave I wouldn’t be an academic anymore” (Academic 11:3). However, it is to be noted that for the other academics participating in this study the perception of academic identity as vocational rather than merely a paid employee is a recurrent theme.

For most people work is a means to an end rather than a means in itself but I think that for many academics it is still much more an end in itself. There is that vocational commitment because the nature of the work - the nature of the essential work of being an academic, the core, the essence - is so essentially satisfying ... it is a very, very privileged position. (Academic 13:1)
5.2.2 The Existential of Lived Space (Spatiality)

... to understand (a phenomenon) it is helpful to inquire into the nature of the lived space that renders that particular experience its quality of meaning ... Phenomenologically it appears that the structure of (any) experience asks for a certain space experience. In other words, each phenomenon has its own modality of lived space and may be understood by exploring the various qualities and aspects of lived space ... So it appears that lived space is a category for inquiry into the ways we experience the affairs of our day to day existence; in addition it helps us uncover more fundamental meaning dimensions of lived life. (van Manen, 1990, p. 103)

Descriptors that evoke the spatial dimensions of the university abound in our rhetoric about higher education, academics, and academic work. There is little doubt that the mention of names such as Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard are evocative of the place and space of the academic world, the university, and of higher education teaching, learning, and research. However, these descriptions of place and space are increasingly being contested by the new spatial dimension of higher education; that of cyber-space and the virtual university (Acker, 1998). In this new dimension, the reality of time-space compression is radically changing the academic labour process (Scott, 1997, p. 43), and challenging (if not dislocating) the academic auto/biography (Edwards & Usher, 2000, p. 113).

This compression of time and space is impacting greatly on how academics experience the lived dimension of space. Whereas once “the concept of the university as a separate, as a place apart, referred to a real space as well as a notional” (Poynter & Rasmussen, 1996, p. 3), the dominant narrative of the university for the twenty-first century invokes spatial metaphors of the “global information superhighway” (Kenway, 1996), and “clicks and mortar” (Steinfield et al., 2001). These terms indicate that the concepts of place and location are being re-defined as academic work rises to meet the many challenges laid out in Chapter 2 of this thesis. This section presents some of the issues associated with the changes to the spatial dimension of academic work and highlights the spatial-time compression as an unavoidable reality of being an academic; a reality according to Brabazon (2002) that academics ought to challenge.
In Section 4.1 the conversation with Diane highlighted a fantasy that she held about being an academic and the space required for such:

I was on the second floor of a terrace house and I had a window seat in this beautiful terrace, and when I first moved into that room I had this wonderful fantasy. It was a fantasy of reading and being immersed in ideas but it was also a picture of myself as an academic (Academic 13:2).

Unfortunately, the irony of Diane’s statement rests in the text preceding the above sentiment:

Most of my journals are at home because that is the only place that I read. I would never get to read them if they were here at work, I have never read at work and that is quite extraordinary for an academic to say. (Academic 13.2)

For Diane, and for many other academics in this study, the essential nature of academic work as described in Section 5.1 is becoming more and more removed from the location of the university and the lived experience of space for the academic is happening more and more away from the academy. There are possible explanations for this change in the spatial existential of academic work. One explanation is that the concept of academic autonomy allows for academics to enjoy a certain freedom to work from multiple locations.

I’ve certainly got a lot more freedom I think than somebody who may be employed in a 9 – 5 office job. I can work from home, if I am marking exams I can take the exams home and mark them at home and I’ve got the freedom to do that. (Academic 1:2)

Much of my academic work takes me to places in the evening and also at weekends. It is part of my job to attend places and review events for the paper or write articles about them or even to contribute to the work of some of the events that I go to review. Therefore, I need the freedom to move away from the university campus to go to these places at all times of day or night and to go to these events and to contribute in some places to the events that are happening. (Academic 6:2)

I cherish that I can structure my day a bit uniquely, that it is not all controlled by a 9 – 5 situation. I can come in early, I can leave early, I can come in late and then leave late. I can take work home and do work at home, you know those sorts of degrees of flexibility are something that as an academic you can do, let’s face it, very few other workers have that choice in their workplace. (Academic 12:4).
A further explanation is that the connectivity provided by information technology allows academics and the community of learners who reside around the world to engage in academic work in locations other than university campus.

With technology such as the e-mail and the Internet I can go home and work, I have made teaching slides at home and I am not so much tied to this office here. (Academic 1:2)

Through the Internet and e-mail our opportunities are enhanced – being an academic gives you the opportunity to do things and go places and meet people and to extend worldwide professional friendships. (Academic 4:3)

With technology I can now work from home ... I can treat my academic day as I need to and I certainly don’t need to sit in this room all the time to do my academic work. (Academic 6:4)

Whilst the above experiences of the shifting space of academic work are positive, there is also an increasing source of frustration generated by the reality that the time available for academic work during the working day does not necessarily allow for it to be completed within the traditional space of the university. Inevitably, any discussion of the experience of space that infers a lack of time or an unmanageable volume of work for the workplace, impacts indirectly on the existential of temporality.

I don’t get things done during the day at work. It seems crazy that you are at your office and you would think that you would get that chunk of time but I don’t get uninterrupted time during the day to do my work. (Academic 3:3)

The only way I can plan a day on campus is if I don’t come in because if I don’t come in I can actually sit and do one thing – sometimes you have to do that. (Academic 3:4)

If writing and reading are as essential to being an academic as I think they are, it is ironic that the majority of both of these two activities are done outside the university and normal working hours. (Academic 9:2)

As academics we take everything including our entire intellectual baggage home with us and we will be reading and writing away from the university. It doesn’t finish in the lecture theatre whenever your classes finish or in your office when your research projects are finished. Being an academic pervades your whole existence and your life I think. You never switch off, never. (Academic 10:2)
Perhaps because there isn’t a clear boundary between academic work and non-work because the vocational commitment means it can never be a 9-5 job 5 days a week. I certainly have a study at home where— I mean this computer here in my office is only used for writing memos and e-mail and letters. I have never once had a document on this computer that is more than that. All the work around research papers, articles, even lecture notes is all on my computer at home so it is virtually all done there. This lack of boundary between work and home means that because of the very nature of the beast academic work can never be finished at the university. (Academic 13:2)

My day starts around five o’clock in the morning and I get up early and go to my study and work until about eight o’clock in the morning if I can, that’s when I get most of my writing done. Sometimes I rise at four o’clock depending on how much pressure there is. So I work at home, and it is a sliding around of spaces I guess. I wouldn’t imagine I would do a lot of my writing here at the university. In fact, this is where I have things collected and a lot of business happens here, but actually my work, my intellectual work in terms of writing happens at home. (Academic 15: 2)

We are reminded in the literature “location is the place of identity and security” (Edwards & Usher, 2000, p. 119) and that “universities are breathing spaces in life’s course” (Kumar, 1997, p. 29). However, the experience of lived space for the participants in this study suggests that the space of academic work is moving far beyond the traditional sense of place that once defined academics and academic work. From the origins of the university as “a village with its priests” (Kerr, 1963, p. 41) and through subsequent interpretations defining the nature of universities, the concept of the university space has held much sway. Current shifts in the resource availability for higher education and the priority attached to higher education at national levels are accompanied by shifts in how academic space is experienced. Increasingly contested will be any idea of the university that suggests the university is solely:

... a place, a physical space with buildings and grounds that exist to facilitate the pursuits of students and teachers. To use them to the full, students need to live there, preferably continuously, over many months and years. No other arrangement can satisfactorily perform this function. That is why the ‘home-based university’ is a contradiction in terms, as insufficient in its own way as the new idea of the ‘cyberspace’ or ‘incorporeal’ university linking members through the computerized spaces of the Internet. (Kumar, 1997, p. 32)
The idea of the university of the future will continually need to be reinterpreted in light of the changes caused by the “knowledge intensification of scholarship (that) pervades all stages of the academic process ... whole infrastructures will change” (van Ginkel, 1995, p. 16). These infrastructure changes are currently happening to the space and time of the academic experience and it is in line with these insights that Acker (1998) challenges planning bodies to recognise the physical space and the pleasures of the built environment are essential elements needing to collaborate with rather than be replaced by the virtual university. Mindful of this challenge this section concludes by returning to the text of Diane’s fantasy of the place of academic work as a way to identify how lived space can influence the academic experience:

I bought some sherry into my office and put it on the mantle piece and once with a group of students we actually had some. Somebody made a joke to me saying ‘that’s what real academics used to do, they used to drink sherry with their students on winter afternoons’. It was a bit of a joke really. I guess it is a fantasy perhaps and maybe it never was reality. In the same way that I’ve done some professional work on the fantasy of women becoming mothers – often the fantasy doesn’t match the reality – there is often an experience of loss. (Academic 13:2)

5.2.3 The Existential of Lived Body (Corporeality)

Lived body (corporeality) refers to the phenomenological fact that we are always bodily in the world. (van Manen, 1990, p. 103)

To understand the bodily experience of being an academic is to seek “the body in the experience rather than the body in the meaningful interpreted reaction to the experience” (Willis, 1998, p. 233), and to seek the ways the experience is lived in terms of the physical body rather than focussing solely on the feelings of those describing the experience.

The body is an essential mode of our being in the world and an increasing awareness of the body in the lifeworld of each person can provide for a greater understanding of this modality of being. In academe, the experience of embodiment in the pedagogical relationship of teaching and learning is becoming a focus of research (Edwards & Usher, 2000; McWilliam & Palmer, 1996) with
the interest in this area resulting from the possible disembodiment that can happen through on-line teaching and learning (Beckett, 1998). Whilst Patricia reminds us “an academic is someone who can embody quite a few functions” (Academic 1:1) this study did not research explicitly how academics experience their body in the different aspects of the academic experience (viz. teaching, researching, consulting). Rather, data were sought more generally from the participants on their bodily experience of being an academic on the assumption as for each of the other existentials that the dimensions of lived experience can never be “exhaustive categories ... inevitably, these are selective conceptual or thematic simplifications” (van Manen, 1998, p. 9).

I am stressed out, tired ... I am not moving forward just treading water. (Academic 1:3)

Exhausting, I mean there are some days when you really wonder whether you are losing it ... constantly being battered left, right, and centre. (Academic 1:5)

I am stretched I am absolutely stretched ... My academic day does not involve having morning tea or lunch or afternoon tea. I usually don’t get time for any of those ... this is not good for my health but that’s how it goes. (Academic 2:2)

It is tiring. I am not feeling well, last month and the month before and this month coming up are very heavy. There is a sense of load. (Academic 3:2)

Due to the many frustrations of my work my body is, well it is physical, the ulcers in the mouth, the cold sores ...I am just tired, that’s all it is just the physical thing. (Academic 4:2)

At the moment my experience is of being tired, I am just tired, yes and it is a struggle for me to keep going. (Academic 4:5)

I have got a terrific headache today because yesterday was a really hard day, I spent a long time preparing to get things done and then I was anxious about should they work, then after working last night I ate late now I have got a headache today because of the worry of yesterday ... it is stressful. (Academic 5:4)

I am usually full of energy but I just feel so terribly tired. On Friday which is my research day I just sort of moped around and I tried to think and then I would try again ... I would try and come back to it but my brain just wasn’t working. (Academic 5:5)
Harassed, that's what it is like being an academic ... lurching from crisis to crisis with no time to think ... it is not very healthy. (Academic 7:4)

Mostly I am tired, seriously tired ... there is a sense of being tired and being pushed to the limit of your capacity. Not that you are not coping but that you are only coping. (Academic 9:3)

Since I last say you my health fell seriously apart fairly seriously for about a week and I am sure it was just overwork. Everything in my body shut down for about a week and I got a really severe viral infection ... my system just shut down long enough for me to recover. (Academic 9:4)

I am sure I live on adrenalin ... people know I will deliver the goods on time always, even if it means sacrificing life at home and so on it will be done. (Academic 10:2)

I am almost bursting my boiler to make room for my research ... it is like I need to take some leave in order to take a breath ... it is like I am being consumed ... I have always been someone who has hated the anxiety of deadlines, I like to have things done on time and I find it very stressful not to, yet this is exactly the experience that I am having now. (Academic 13:2)

To survive academe and do the things which give the greatest satisfaction and which might be more socially useful and gainful means I may have to go part-time. To have one foot in and one foot out, yes. (Academic 13:5)

My higher levels of stress have led to health problems ... it feels as though my world is falling apart. (Academic 14:1)

This morning I could hardly get out of bed. (Academic 14:4)

There is that sense that you never quite finish the day thinking 'well I really completed that' – there is no sense of closure, always more you could do. I find that mentally exhausting. (Academic 15:4)

What the academic of today needs is energy to cope with the changing landscape of higher education. Tomorrow's academic will be nothing if not resilient. (Chancellery Staff B)

Recurring through the conversations with each of the participants was the concept of stress and indicators that the stressfulness of being an academic is overtaking the excitement, enjoyment and purpose of academic life.

I have a number of academic colleagues, here and also in other universities, who are very depressed ... Around me are a lot of disgruntled people, there is a lot of unhappiness in academic life at the moment (Academic 11:2)
It is acknowledged that stress (and all other feelings) could be read as subjectivism (Willis, 1998) henceforth distracting from the experience of lived body. However, notwithstanding this potential for subjectivism, it is appropriate to conclude this section on lived body with the following bodily metaphors of academic life offered by the participants. Based on the stem approach where participants complete an incomplete statement about the phenomenon under investigation (Crotty, 1996a, p. 279) these statements illustrate clearly the nexus between the emotional and physical experience of the lifeworld of the academic and provide further insights into the lived experience of being an academic.

**Being an academic is like:**

Being in a washing machine, or in a little boat in the middle of a storm trying to find its way. (Academic 1:2)

Like being a tri-athlete, it is almost fragmented in someway ... a sort of gasping for breath almost. (Academic 1:5)

Being on a roller-coaster – it goes up and it goes down – you rise to great heights at times and you fall to the depths at others but you just keep going. You only stop by some external force. (Academic 2:2)

I am a commodity being manipulated. (Academic 2:3)

Clawing your way up to the edge of a cliff and you just get there and a piece of it breaks off so it is never secure for me. (Academic 4:2)

It is sort of like family – if you are in you are in. (Academic 5:3)

Trying to push forward through a sort of sticky rice pudding. You know there are some things that are coming against you, against the tide, but you’ve got to cope with them as they hit you ... Its like the Sorcerer’s Apprentice, as fast as you can complete things the next lot is washing in. (Academic 10:2)

Pissing in the wind – what does that mean, well everything ends up back in your face, and ending up with egg on your face is what it is like just at the minute. (Academic 14:4)

Working against the tides of time. (Academic 15:4)

Having the rug pulled out from underneath you and being kept on this little mouse-wheel as you haven’t got time to do all that is required of you. (Academic 12:4)
5.2.4 The Existential of Lived Human Relation (Communality)

The social dimensions of academic life as a venerable tradition within the academy have largely been explored in Section 5.1.3 – Relating within a Community of Learners. However, whilst that section addresses the essential nature of this aspect of being an academic it does not touch on the details of how the academics in this study experience the existential of lived relationship. Relationality can be described as “the lived relation we maintain with others in the interpersonal space that we share with them” (van Manen, 1990, p. 104). The links between relationality and communality (the community of learners) are extremely tangible for the academic. Unfortunately, it is questionable in light of the pressures that academics of today face whether collegiality is experienced as a positive reality or as a quaint nostalgia for things long past. The following text from the literature suggests the latter:

In this milieu, the urging for collegiality often turns into a plea to ‘leave me alone to do my own thing’. It can represent a disavowal of larger or alternative claims on one’s academic identity. The cry ‘collegiality’, accordingly, stands for a stable state – with secure identities – that is no longer available to the university: and it stands for an introversion that pretend that the university can remain an island, free of the claims of the wider world. (Barnett, 2000, p. 115)

For the academics in this study the possibility of relating with colleagues both within the physical space of the university or via electronic communication with colleagues around the world rates highly in the hierarchy of academic values. Accordingly, many accounts attesting to the value of the community of learners have been reported in the preceding sections. At the same time, the participants did not hold back in declaring that academic relationships are declining, moving towards being dysfunctional and in some instances virtually non-existent. These statements strengthen the theories that the community of scholars is “more part of a prevailing mythology than a direct representation” (Finnegan, 1994) and that fragmentation (Scott, 1994), and discord (Barnett, 1994) are as much a part of the lived experience of being an academic as is the joy and the excitement of functional collegial relationships.
I feel very much my aloneness in many ways. I want to get on with things but there are not many other people who neither have the time, or I suspect the will, to want to support me. (Academic 1:5)

There used to be morning tea and lunchtime when we would all gather together and discuss and exchange ideas. We explored the history of ideas as well as creating and testing new ideas. It was just fabulous. But, the tearoom was abolished and we could no longer gather together into a central spot so we no longer communicate with one another. (Academic 2:1)

Once you could go to the experts and have your own work validated. Now people are very guarded, they don’t want you to see what they are doing or know what they are thinking. There is this constant grab for resources and knowledge – ownership is taking over academe. If you are here then I probably won't be. We were for years very open but now it is not engaging, it is not collaborative scholarship it is individuality. We used to have a common purpose now everyone is out to prove that they can teach or research better than someone else because that is how they will keep their job. (Academic 2:1)

You are totally left to yourself, there is a lack of assistance, a lack of help, and you are left on your own to flounder through. (Academic 5:1)

Academia is very much one of being left to work things out for yourself. (Academic 7:2)

Everyone is far, far too concerned about themselves and where they are and their position and everything like that. Nobody has ever asked me what my PhD was about. They were simply not interested to know what my research was and I thought well that’s a bit typical, you stay in your little cocoon out of the way. (Academic 5:4)

There is always the potential in an academic department for disagreement and squabbles and I believe in this faculty there has been an ongoing history of feuds ... people have gone under because of these squabbles. (Academic 6:3)

Academics have always tended to be individualists and some academic departments have grown up that way. (Academic 8:3)

It is very territorial and we have to protect our own because we have got to watch our own backs and it is so terrible because we have got to look after number one because nobody else is going to. There is so much ill will ... it is very hard. (Academic 10:4)

I know of situations where there have been real threats to freedom of expression in universities because a person’s own colleagues have been embarrassed by that person’s academic viewpoint. (Academic 11:4)
The tendency seems to be over the last four or five years of just rewarding people for doing their own little individual thing and not working together. (Academic 12:1)

If I speak very directly and bluntly in relation to some of the issues to do with my research there would be members of this Department and the University that could possibly drum me out ... it does constrain your ability to pursue those public intellectual ideals, that responsibility to be involved in taking the discourse into the broader community. So when I am asked by certain journals I will duck rather than write something for them, just because I know how I will be perceived if my name appears in such a place. (Academic 13:4)

There is a tension in academia at the moment and that is competition. The notion that you have to promote yourself and be the best and be highly competitive is a tension. (Academic 15:1)

To acknowledge these experiences of isolation and the lack of relationality is not to deny the hope by the participants that the experience of dwindling communality will be restored as an essential component of the academic experience. Such findings confirm the propositions put forward by Martin (1999), Taylor (1999), and Ramsden (1998) that collaboration and positive relationships amongst academic teams are important to shaping the future directions of higher education.

Being an academic is relational. Because I am not a lone person, most things I do, in fact just about everything I do is done with others who prefer to work that way. (Academic 4:4)

As an academic I should be there to assist the role of the younger academic at the beginning of their careers. (Academic 6:3)

The ideal academic makes time to, mentor is a bit strong, but takes time out to see whether help, steer, point, guide, draw things to their attention, take an interest where appropriate in colleagues. (Academic 7:2)

It is clear through this study that the lived experience of academic relationality involves the highs and lows of any relationship and that whilst tension in a relationship may be inevitable it can also provide an opportunity for growth, change, and development. To enable collegial relationship to develop requires from all in the academy a commitment to the unity of the academic profession and a commitment to one another. Only through such a commitment that encourages "openness, cooperation and collegiality" will academics be able to move beyond
the isolation that casts them "into the competitive relationships they can experience at present" (Webb, 1996, p. 25).

The ties that bind us together during periods of disagreement and manifestations of profound epistemological disjunction must be ones of personal, collegial investment. Indeed, these ties can only be the result of decisions to commit to and identify with the department or other group even in its dissensual state. And in these personal decisions and in the numerous ways they are enacted daily, community building, community nurturance, and community maintenance are the responsibility of every members of a department. (Hall, 2002, pp. 68 - 69)

**Conclusion to Section 5.2**

Section 5.2.1 – 5.2.4 presented an overview of the lived experience of being an academic from the four existential perspectives of time, space, corporeality, and relationality. Each of these perspectives offers the possibility of understanding more fully the lived experience of the phenomenon being investigated. For the academics participating in this research study the actuality of the lived experience often stands greatly distanced from the core elements as listed in Section 5.1 that constitute the essence of what it is to be an academic. This distance is problematic and identified by the participants as a contributing factor to the current crisis in higher education impacting on academics.

Whilst the descriptions contained in Section 5.2 may appear negative and echo a certain fatalistic doom and gloom they should be read not as complaints, whinges and gripes. Rather they are presented as accounts of the lived experience of being an academic. Significant to the scope of this thesis is that the academics involved felt empowered to offer the descriptions of their lived experience without fear of retribution – a sentiment that many expressed they did not experience in relating such thoughts to their academic managers and university management in general. Accordingly, these descriptions are spoken with an honesty that is confronting and because of this there are considerable insights to be gained through listening to the voice of the academic experience.

The lived voice of the academic has been the central focus of all themes in both sections in Chapter 5. This theme is continued in Chapter 6 that presents the
phenomenon of being an academic in a textual style characteristic of phenomenological writing. Whilst written in a first-person narrative style the chapter is underpinned by the textual descriptions provided by all participants in this study as they describe their experience of being an academic.
Chapter 6

ON BEING AN ACADEMIC - A PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION
To be an academic working in an Australian university at the beginning of the 21st Century is an experience of challenge, difficulty, and contradiction. No doubt many professionals in many other professions could say the same. What then determines this experience as particular to the academic experience? In this section I will engage phenomenologically with the essential elements of the academic experience in the hope of moving closer to understanding what it is to be an academic at this period of time.

A metaphor that has appeared repeatedly in the literature throughout time beckons me in an attempt to describe the phenomenon of being an academic – it is that of the shipwrecked. Ortega y Gasset (1932) in his book The Revolt of the Masses wrote:

The man with the clear head is the man who frees himself from those fantastic “ideas” and looks life in the face, realises that everything in it is problematic, and feels himself lost. As this is the simple truth – that to live is to feel oneself lost – he who accepts it has already begun to find himself, to be on firm ground. Instinctively, as do the shipwrecked, he will look round for something to which to cling, and that tragic, ruthless glance, absolutely sincere, because it is a question of his salvation, will cause him to bring order into the chaos of his life. These are the only genuine ideas; the ideas of the shipwrecked. All the rest is rhetoric, posturing, farce. He who does not really feel himself lost, is lost without remission; that is to say, he never finds himself never comes up against his own reality. (Ortega y Gasset, 1932, p. 157)

This paragraph of Ortega y Gasset presents as a guide for doing phenomenology in that phenomenologists need to “ruthlessly cast aside the ideas that rule us and become like those lost at sea” (Crotty, 1996a, p. 273). I suggest it also presents as a description of the phenomenon of being an academic.

To be an academic is in many ways like being lost at sea because like the shipwrecked we struggle towards a resting point and a point of destiny. For the academic the destiny is that of making sense of the known, it is the hope of discovering the unknown in the world of knowledge and of making and remaking our world with the knowledge we discover. Not surprisingly, the metaphor of being shipwrecked appeared repeatedly throughout the conversations with the co-researchers in this thesis. Real for the academic is the chaos of the swirling sea,
the need to carry a lot of rafts onboard because we never know which one is going
to sink, and the need to row together in the hope of reaching the safety of dry land
where we can rest to restore our energy as the journey continues - this is the drive
of the academic. Yes, we know this is not easy and as the waves come crashing in
we become frustrated, equally as frustrated as does the juggler when juggling too
many balls of different colours and they unexpectedly crash and bounce around
the floor. Such thinking is not new to academe; in fact Newman in the 1850’s
suggested the need to:

Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of
silk: then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human
knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion
and pride of man. (Newman, 1996, Discourse V: 9, p. 90)

What are the giants that are impacting on today’s academics? How can we
recognise these giants and describe them? How do we contend with these giants?

Caught in crossfire is the image that leaps to mind as I attempt to answer these
questions about the giants of today that are besieging the experience of being an
academic. This language of combat currently seems to dominate the academy and
the experience of being an academic certainly commands that one be alert to the
battles that are waged between all parties involved in higher education. No one
seems immune from these battles. Whilst Governments deny responsibility for
any crisis in higher education and apportion blame on universities for the
mismanagement of resources they simultaneously charge to battle by further
reducing available funding, Vice-Chancellors challenge governments for bleeding
them dry yet at the same time strike out at the very heart of their own people
through chastising Deans and academics for clinging unnecessarily to past
traditions, academics compete with each other as they jockey for career
recognition and personal status, and at the same time as academics are
complaining that students lack commitment and are deficient in the basics of
literacy and numeracy these same students are inciting action against academics
for being out of touch with reality. Writers on higher education and academic life
seek to apportion blame for this situation on causes such as globalization,
massification, managerialism, economic neo-liberalism and other like phenomena
yet the complexity of the situation seems to defy simple cause and effect reasoning.

From within the trenches of academe there appears little hope of escaping this crossfire that is impacting so widely on academic identity and work. I am reminded often when I reflect on my own experience of being an academic of the passage from Scripture “Be calm but vigilant, because your enemy the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, looking for someone to eat” (1 Peter 5: 8 – 9). For academics today there appears this inexorable need for vigilance, as we never know who will be the lions and will be the victims of each day. Not only do academics live through this crossfire in the reality of their daily toil they are still pushed harder for bigger and better performance that is measured with variables that change capriciously. Society at large also falls victim to a barrage of disparaging stories about academics and of the supposed crisis of academe because these stories dominate every newspaper report on higher education. Of course there are some good news stories but these are often attempts at spin doctoring from the marketing arms of universities in an attempt to seduce potential clients (governments and industry) and customers (students) away from competitor universities.

However, it is precisely an escape from this world of theorising and an attempt to move away from these reports that dominate our thoughts on being an academic that is the challenge of this thesis. Back to the things themselves challenges Husserl and his evangelists who have brought the phenomenological movement into our times. Yet, what are these things? Academe by its very nature does not command a single focus so to describe the phenomenon appears as extremely difficult. Unlike teaching is to the teacher or nursing is to the nurse, the phenomenon of academe or more specifically the essence of the academic experience seems to defy a unitary definition that describes easily the things themselves. Yet clearly these things themselves are there and by their very nature are so indispensable to the experience of being an academic that if they were not there then the essence of being an academic could not be recognised for what it is.
At one level it is easy to describe being an academic as someone who teaches, researches, does consultancy, community service and administration. The metaphor of the juggler, who in a sequence and rhythm is juggling balls of many colours, surely applies to the academic because each of these balls can represent defined criteria against which academic performance is measured and rewarded. Yet these variables either individually or collectively also form a large part of the professional identity of knowledge workers who are not academics. The contract researcher for example may embody each of these variables to a lesser or greater degree than does an academic. Clearly there are some academics who do not teach and some who do not research despite expectations and directives that they should. What is it then that differentiates the academic from other professionals?

Is it the ability to make a difference that lies at the essence of being an academic? Clearly this theme is evidenced through many conversations with other academics. Unfortunately, this motif now appears so frequently in the mission statements of most companies and on the packaging of most products – our highly experienced customer-service attendants aim to make a difference to your experience of shopping with XYZ; you will not help but notice the difference that using ABC makes to your life – to focus on academics as making a difference with more than a fleeting glimpse would seem banal. However, to make a difference is undeniably an essential component of improving the professions and society and as this rests at the core of academic work to deny this statement as trite is perhaps a little unreasonable. It is how the academic makes a difference that matters and this difference is made through our immersion in the world of ideas, the playing with ideas, the moulding, shaping and fashioning of ideas that are essential to moving society forward that secures the academic a place in the society of any age.

This world of ideas and the freedom to explore these ideas is as essential to being an academic as is recognising the traditions from which our existing knowledge has been generated and the span that it covers. Freedom and the academic go together as do hand in glove. Diane (Academic 13) suggests that an academic without academic freedom is like not having oxygen; an academic without intellectual freedom is really in danger of respiratory collapse. However, freedom
can be a misrepresented word in today’s academy with connotations of the desire to shirk responsibility and the imperative to walk to the beat of a different drum. There would be very few academics who would deny that the former is not acceptable within a community of learners yet the latter is not only desirable it is essential. Whilst Peter (Academic 11) describes his experience - “being an academic is to be free like a bird” - he also insists that this freedom does entail responsibility; the responsibility to the tradition of academic disciplines, scholarship, the respect of collegiality and an honouring of the relationships that exist within the community of learners. Such responsibilities are lived out in the everyday experiences of teaching and learning, of peer reviewing and international networking, and of collaborating together in the quest for discovery, integrating, and applying knowledge as we make try to make sense of the unknown and progress our society to new and improved situations.

Whilst the notion of Bildung has more or less been removed from the notion of academe I suggest it is still a valuable concept in helping us to approach what constitutes the core of the academic experience. Bildung once held an important place in the life of the academic and was seen as essential to the academic experience. It was achieved through “inculcating and maintaining an idea of ‘culture’” (Weber, 1996, p. 55) and “imparting the full culture of the time” (Ortega Y Gasset, 1944, p. 81). The place for this to happen has traditionally been the university and the academic was central to enabling Bildung to occur. The process of Bildung - “the German equivalent of the Greek paideia, the Latin formatio, and the English term ‘formation’” (Moran, 2000, p. 266) - enabled learners to appropriate to their being the range of skills and knowledge that develop natural talents, and provided the potential for humanity itself to “recognise one’s own in the alien, to become at home in it” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 14) so that “the elsewhere that had once seemed so foreign proves to be not only a new home but (a) real home” (Weinsheimer, 1985, p. 70). Sorry, here I am theorising, ensuring that references are correct and citations acknowledged, falling into the trap of masking the phenomenon rather than exposing it for what it really is. That term of Heidegger that Michael Crotty uses with such affection – Gelassenheit, a releasedness, a letting go and letting be – is what is needed if we are to open ourselves and await the advent of Being. This concept is very much at
the heart of being an academic – being released from the systems that bind us so that we can be at home in places that seem foreign - knowing that we have a place in that long wave that washes up against the shore and a mandate to make that place our own as we analyse, synthesize and construct knowledge as we relate with other learners who also find a homeland in the world of ideas and learning.

Unquestionably, to achieve this in a climate that is less than encouraging of the ideals academics need to hold – truth, integrity, honesty - is far from rewarding and as a result the casualties of today’s academy are increasing exponentially. Understandably, the lack of morale, the incidence of burn-out and stress, the dog eat dog nature of today’s universities are decimating the ranks of the academic. More so the ranks are not being refilled, and the survivors have to do more with less. Ironically it seems that the ranks of the managers and bureaucrats seem to swell. Here I go again, letting the feelings and the frustrations of the personal experience take over and pull me away from the phenomenon. Max van Manen is truly correct in his warning of caution against this tendency to fall into the trap of describing oneself rather than the phenomenon under investigation, as is often said; “it is not about you”, but about the phenomenon itself on which one needs to focus – simply describe the phenomenon!

Academics from around the world can speak with ease as they describe the phenomenon of being an academic. The phenomenological painting of being an academic includes many elements; academics engaging in collegial conversations about the achievements of teaching a successful class, the discovery of new knowledge, the impact made in assisting others to understand knowledge and to view scenarios from many different theoretical perspectives, walking with learners towards the journey of understanding, agonising over the unsolvable for months on end whilst maintaining hope that our research which is so necessary to improving the situation of one or many will come to fruition, helping communities make and remake themselves in the light of the knowledge we have been able to disseminate, drawing forth new knowledge from within these communities that can then be applied across boundaries to assist others.
Without doubt, the tools of the academic trade are becoming more sophisticated and new communication technologies appear to make our work much easier. Perhaps such claims need to be questioned? In fact it is increasingly apparent that these technologies are distracting us from the core of our being by creating a noise that stops us from listening to those to whom we need listen and by mandating an urgency of task that replaces our availability to stop and be with other learners in working together on what it is that really does matter. To achieve what really does matter it is important that universities and academics alike recognise that there are alternatives to the way we are currently working. We could for example free ourselves up to engage on core academic work by co-opting the many other professionals operating commercially to assist in facilitating the consultancies for companies, to write reports on things such as program evaluations, and to provide the instrumental training in routine activities and the facilitation of professional development sessions for staff. Academics do not monopolise education and training nor should they; in fact to do so is to take away from what we do best and to deny the essence of our being. Only through linking each of the aspects of the academic profession and strengthening the inextricable nexus that exists between each of the strands that constitute the academic experience can we be true to what it is to be an academic. Indeed, it is using Newman’s silken thread to sew together the essentials of the academic experience – being immersed freely in the world of ideas, linking generations and spanning boundaries to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge, relating within a community of learners, improving the professions and society.

What we can’t expect from the academic experience is that to achieve the above will be easy. The world of ideas and knowledge, of teaching and working for the betterment of society can never be easy regardless of whatever levels of resources and funding are available. Again we need only to re-read Newman to realise that this understanding is not new. Characteristics of Newman’s academic experience of over 150 years ago resonate with our own experience:

Happy they who are engaged in provinces of thought, so familiarly traversed and so thoroughly explored, that they see everywhere the footprints, the paths, the landmarks, and the remains of former travellers, and can never step wrong; but for myself, Gentlemen, I have felt like a
navigator on a strange sea, who is out of sight of land, is surprised by night, and has to trust mainly to the rules and instruments of his science for reaching the port ... And thus, in spite of the pains we may take to consult others and avoid mistakes, it is not till the morning comes and the shore greets us, and we see our vessel making straight for harbour, that we relax our jealous watch, and consider anxiety irrational. (Newman, 1996, Discourse IX: 1, p. 148)

Like Newman and the many other scholars who traverse the academic path before, with and after us there is hope – the hope that as our vessel makes straight for the harbour and as we relax our jealous watch, that our anxiety will prove irrational. This may not mean that the battles will cease around us or that the noise distracting us from our tasks will quieten. Similarly, the seas may not abate and we may continue to be lost at sea for many years to come. However, we need to trust and to believe that all will be well, that we will be safe and that our ships will be moored once again as with a silken thread. As we continue to experience life as academics we also need to be aware of the danger of living “the experience but miss the meaning”; henceforth our journey towards understanding the essence of the academic experience needs to be purposeful and considered. Through approaching the meaning of the academic experience we have the possibility that we may understand more fully the generational link of the essential nature of who we are and of what we must strive to be if we are to move closer to realizing our being as academics.
Chapter 7

A CHALLENGE TO LISTEN TO THE ACADEMIC VOICE
7.1 The Significance of this Study, its Implications and Recommendations

The term *Walk The Talk* is often used in management circles to indicate a management style and a condition necessary to leading people effectively. This study has definitely *Walked the Talk*. The research journey, conducted over a considerably sustained period of time, allowed conversations with academics in the midst of their natural setting and provided glimpses of many aspects of the lifeworld of academics. To summarise the findings of this study would border on superfluity as these findings have been detailed clearly in Chapter 5 and repeated again in the phenomenological description of Chapter 6. However, to capture the essence of these findings – the glimpses of the phenomenon of being an academic that this study has revealed – the headings of Section 5.1 are repeated.

To Be An Academic is:

- To Be Immersed Freely in the World of Ideas
- To Link Generations and Span Boundaries to Create, Interpret, and Disseminate Knowledge
- To Relate Within A Community of Learners
- To Improve the Professions and Society

The implications of this study are contained in the lived experience of the participants in this study; these experiences have been revealed in Section 5.2. An outcome of this study is to recognise the paramount importance of identifying and attending to the contradictions that exist between the essence of being an academic and the lived experience of enacting academic life. At one level these contradictions can be easily dismissed as noise emanating from within universities and governments in response to the exogenous factors over which anyone has little influence. Unfortunately this noise is distracting from the core elements of the academic profession. At another level these contradictions are extremely significant and as this thesis reports, the discrepancy between the core of being an academic and the lived experience of this reality is challenging greatly the commitment to academic life that each of the participants displayed and spoke of with great affection during their participation in this study. These challenges need
to be addressed in the hope of improving the current situation for today’s academics and of ensuring that future generations of academics are offered the possibility to understand and to experience the fullness of academic life. The recommendations of this study for the theory and practice of higher education are presented below as a series of challenges and are supported by the voice of the academic as appropriate.

7.2 The Challenges:

7.2.1 A Challenge for Each Academic – Listen to Your Experience

It is very easy to be distracted in a university and with each distraction comes the possibility of being moved further and further away from core elements of the academic profession. A central challenge from this thesis to academics is provided in the following statements:

Stick to the fundamentals. The life of the professor is not going to be like it was in the past, nor is it going to be like it is today. I think the Socratic terms of commitment to knowledge, acquisition and transmission and the enabling of this knowledge to transform human kind is what the academic profession is about. (Chancellery Staff A)

Be the Best! That’s about all you can say because the people who are going to get dropped off are those the Department doesn’t value for whatever reason. (Academic 8:5)

Unfortunately, being the best is not easy in circumstances where academic values have been redefined or replaced by the exigency to conform to new ways of working that appear alien to the academic tradition. Similarly, what a Department values may differ from one day to the next.

Significant to this study are the reflections by the participants on what has sustained their experience of academic life. Central to this experience is the capacity to remain focussed on creating knowledge and concentrating on the core elements of the profession. Elements such as teaching, research, peer support and review determine academic success and enable the academic to Be the Best. Tasks such as administration, commissioned consultancy, and serving on
committees are associate tasks that can add to the academic portfolio and can assist the university to run smoothly. However, these associate tasks do not always sit comfortably with the key elements of being an academic particularly if they rob the academic of the time necessary for essential academic work. A challenge for academics is that of determining how they will demonstrate that they are the best. Ironically, to be the best it may be necessary to remove oneself from the tumult in the university and focus not on the distraction around us but on one's own experience of being an academic. Is our current experience allowing us to be immersed freely in the world of ideas, to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge, to work towards improving the professions and society? If these elements are missing from the lived experience of academic life can we rightly call ourselves academics? These are the challenges that need to be addressed through official forums such as professional and staff development forums, mentoring schemes, and promotion rounds. Whilst these challenges are not easily answered it needs be remembered that the academic never shirks from the difficult question – in fact it is through responding to the difficult questions academics have determined their identity. What is crucial in addressing these issues is for academics to find the space to explore the issues, to face these challenges, and to answer these questions – only by listening to the voice of our own experience can we truly respond to the challenges that the academic life presents to each of us.

7.2.2 A Challenge for All Academics - Listen to One Another

Academics cannot work alone if they are to be engaged fully as academics. The experiences of isolation and alienation as described in Section 5.2.4 issue a challenge for academics to start to work collaboratively and to revitalise the age-honoured tradition of collegiality. It is understandable in today's competitive culture that has engulfed the university that another's success highlights my lack of achievement. However, such sentiments can be destructive to individuals, departments and faculties. A challenge to academics from this thesis is to listen to one another, to engage and collaborate, to research, teach, and publish together as circumstances determine and to be present to each other.
The model of academic life I believe that works best is the collegial model rather than the God model. If the academic, especially at the department level, takes up the collegial model then the academic community will continue to develop. (Chancellery Staff A)

7.2.3 A Challenge for Academic Leaders - Listen to the Voice of Academic Experience

Academic leaders and managers run the risk of being totally removed from the core elements of academic work unless they continue to converse and work with academics as they facilitate their academic work. Few academic managers would deny that academics are hurting and that their pain is palpable. However, academic managers can only be informed of the cause and extent of this pain if they are prepared to listen to the lived experience of academics. A significant finding of this thesis is that the experience of academics varies considerably according to their level of academic appointment. For those academics at the lower end of the academic scale the experience appears one of pure survival as they try to juggle over-stretched teaching loads with research, publication and service in the hope of being promoted and developing an academic career. Whilst those academics higher at the scale also experience the need to juggle such commitments there undoubtedly appears to be greater levels of support and resources to assist these senior academics. Academic managers need to be cognisant of these discrepancies amongst academic staff and be prepared to listen to the voice of the junior academic who often feels that due to their inexperience they are without voice.

Whilst the demands in the media and some publications outline the level of resources that are needed to allow higher education to run smoothly, the expectation that academics will demand more and more of managers is not necessarily true. Throughout this study there was little evidence demonstrating any belief by academics that what is needed for things to improve is more, more, more. What academics are saying and what needs to be heard clearly by academic leaders is summarised in the following statement offered to academic management by one academic participant in this study. The statement has been included in its entirety because it is a statement filled with deep concern and expectation that invites academic leaders to accept the challenge to listen.
Listen to us in terms of what we think we are on about. Don’t just orientate yourself to whatever the current demands outside the university are. Consult with the people on whose behalf you speak. I don’t think that academic managers, well all of them have been academics themselves at some point or other in their career, but I don’t think they actually have a real sense of the pressures that are on academics in this economic time and how that impacts on what we really think about our job as an academic. I mean the fact that somebody tells you late on a Friday afternoon that you and a whole lot of your colleagues in this room might not have a job in a month’s time is very undermining of people’s work and who they are. There are enough unsettling things happening, it is unsettling enough to be introducing new learning technologies, to be working with larger groups of students, to be going out to do more consultancy work to bring in money to pay for your own salary ... I think that managers need to talk with academics about decisions that need to be made in these unsettling times. I think academics have a lot to say about ways in which they think their work could be streamlined, ways in which costs could be saved, ways in which programs could be reoriented, but at the moment there is just no forum or no opportunity to propose those sorts of suggestions. (Academic 12:4)

7.2.4 A Challenge for Policy Makers – Create a Climate of Listening

I don’t think that public servants and ministers particularly value the role of the university as commentators on society; they see that we are here to serve a particular function and that is training people for the jobs market. That’s the way the government sees us and I don’t think governments of either particular colour would be much different ... Government minister don’t really allow themselves that sort of reflection, they just see us as instruments and it is an instrumental view I think. But we are told that research is important, I am not quite sure whether they believe it or not. (Academic 8:5)

Chapter two of this thesis reviewed the literature on higher education from a number of different perspectives – global trends, national policy, and lived experience. The body of knowledge on higher education is vast and indeed the amount of publications addressing the many facets of higher education continues to grow rapidly. Despite the research and energy that supports these publications this thesis suggests that there is still an enormous gulf between the vision of what higher education could be and the reality of how it is experienced. How can this gap be bridged? Such a question is essential in times of reform and as suggested in the introduction to the thesis Australia is awaiting yet another reform package for higher education that is due to be unveiled in May 2003.
Academics alone do not have the sphere of influence that can influence the systems determinants at a macro level; nor do vice-chancellors, academic managers, higher education workers or students. However, each of these players in higher education share lived experiences and collectively presents a voice that deserves to be heard. The challenge for policy makers is to create the environment for listening, and to focus decision making within the realities of the experience of higher education. Only when each of the players can be heard is there a possibility for genuine change – changes that are needed if we are to grow as a nation and to contribute at an international level to developing the world through culture, knowledge and learning.

I am an academic because I care about universities, because I care about the world and about learning and culture. I do see a university as a key player in shaping that world. (Academic 11:4)

7.3 Arriving at the Beginning - The Quest Continues Through the Lived Experience of Being an Academic

By virtue of the nature of phenomenological research this thesis can never be completed. It is not possible to exhaust our understanding or to grasp fully the meaning of the phenomenon of being an academic (or of any phenomenon) as the experiences of time, place, corporeality, and relationality will continue to bring us to new, different or renewed understandings that elucidate the essential elements that constitute the core of the phenomenon. What is presented here is work in progress; the summation of a research process that has been conducted in a specific frame of time and place.

This study is limited by its focus on a certain group of academics in a certain place at a particular time. Such was needed to manage the study within the resources that were available. Certainly, different perspectives and insights could have been gleaned should the study have been extended across a number of universities both within Australia and internationally. Another limitation of this study is that the group of academics participating in this study primarily employ traditional methods of teaching and learning with their student cohorts. Whilst these academics speak freely of utilising and developing learning technologies to support their teaching and learning they could not describe the experience of
teaching fully on-line to students scattered around the world who remained faceless. Herein lie the recommendations for further research: to extend this research study beyond the confines of one university and to discern if national or cultural differences impact on the phenomenon of being an academic, to research how the lived experience of being an academic who works in a lavishly resourced university differs from those who work amidst a diminution of resources, to compare the academic experience between private and public universities, to discern the academic experience of academics who never meet students face-to-face but who teach at all hours of the day or night over the world wide web.

The objectives for exploring these issues rest in their potential to add further to what this study has shown about the academic experience and to note in particular those elements of the academic experience that are ever-present in any situation – such elements constituting the core of the phenomenon of being an academic.

This study has entered into the hermeneutic cycle in the attempt of “understanding the whole through grasping its parts, and comprehending the meaning of the parts through divining the whole” (Crotty, 1998b, p. 92). As outlined above there will always be other parts that remain unexplored thus precluding a unified picture of the whole at any period of time. Henceforth, as academics and other readers of this thesis engage with its contents, and reflect on their lived experiences, the hermeneutic cycle will be reconstituted, new perspectives and different interpretations will continue to emerge and as one cycle is completed the next will begin. To bring conclusion to this research study is simply to arrive at a new beginning because to understand what it is to be an academic and to employ the insights and findings from this study to enhance our lived experience of being an academic is to continue on the journey that leads us further into the phenomenon itself and draws us close to the essence of what it is to be an academic.

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time...  
And all shall be well and  
All manner of thing shall be well  
(Little Gidding - T. S. Eliot, 1944, p. 48)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dupuis, P. R. (1998). HyperResearch [qualitative research]. Randolph, MA: ResearchWare, Inc.


Enders, J. (2000). Academic staff in Europe: Changing employment and working conditions. In M. Tight (Ed.), *Academic work and life: What it is to be an academic, and how this is changing* (pp. 7 - 32). New York: Elsevier Science Inc.


Fish, S. E. (1994). There's no such thing as free speech - and it's a good thing too. New York: Oxford University Press.


Lather, P. (1995). The validity of angels: Interpretive and textual strategies in researching the lives of women with HIV/AIDS. *Qualitative Inquiry, 1*(1), 41 - 68.


Neumann, R. (1990). Interview-based research into academic work. In R. J. S. MacPherson & J. Weeks (Eds.), *Pathways to knowledge in educational administration: Methodologies and research in progress in Australia* (pp. 95 - 104). Armidale: ACEA.


APPENDIX
Appendix 1: - Co-Researchers who Participated in this Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Level of Appointment</th>
<th>Years as an Academic</th>
<th>Discipline Academic</th>
<th>Academic Management Responsibilities</th>
<th>Doctoral degree</th>
<th>Contract/Tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic 1 -</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level B</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Barry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 2 -</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level A</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 3 -</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Grey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 4 -</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level B</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patsy Steele</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 5 -</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level C</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robyn Matthews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 6 -</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level C</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherman Isaac</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 7 -</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Somers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 8 -</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Matthews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 9 -</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrick Charles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>Contract</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 10 – Rhonda Harrington</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level B</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 11 – Peter West</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level E</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 12 – Gilda Hart</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level C</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 13 – Diane Smart</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 14 – Tony Northwood</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic 15 – Jane White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellery Staff A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level E</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellery Staff B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Level E</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellery Staff C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Level E</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:
Scown, Andrew David Leslie

Title:
On being an academic: a study of lived experience

Date:
2003

Citation:

Publication Status:
Unpublished

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/36486

File Description:
On being an academic: a study of lived experience

Terms and Conditions:
Terms and Conditions: Copyright in works deposited in Minerva Access is retained by the copyright owner. The work may not be altered without permission from the copyright owner. Readers may only download, print and save electronic copies of whole works for their own personal non-commercial use. Any use that exceeds these limits requires permission from the copyright owner. Attribution is essential when quoting or paraphrasing from these works.