Creative Writing and the Digital Marketplace: A Student’s Experience in Higher Education

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This thesis is presented for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy of The University of Western Australia

School of Humanities

Discipline of Creative Writing

2018
Thesis Declaration

I, Susan Suchy certify that:

This thesis has been substantially accomplished during enrolment in the degree.

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The work described in this thesis was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship. Funding was also provided by the UWA Graduate Research School, the UWA School of Humanities and the UWA Institute for Advanced Studies to attend conferences in Canberra, ACT; Sydney NSW; Auckland, NZ; and Crawley, WA, respectively.

This thesis contains only sole-authored work, some of which has been published and/or prepared for publication under sole authorship.

Signature                                             Date: 17 March 2018
Abstract

The radical changes that technology has brought to the marketplace call for the discipline of creative writing to be more engaged in the digital age. There have even been suggestions that the discipline might let go of some of its resistance to the marketplace. The aim of this research has been to explore the relationship of a creative writer in higher education to the digital marketplace. The research was emergent and required developing an understanding of perceptions of the marketplace relationship before being able to address the research question of: How does a creative writing student write for the digital marketplace?

To answer the research question, I needed to learn more about the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. I engaged in research and developed a series of creative projects. The emergent research is presented in three published papers that represent my experiences at various stages of the candidature. In the final stage of analysis I sought to elicit more findings. The data were my experiences as a creative writer working within the university trying to write creative work for the digital marketplace during the period of my candidature. The data (i.e., my experiences within this particular context) were collected in my journals, correspondence, annual reports, audio recordings and documents that were related to the development of the creative projects, as well as in published and unpublished papers and creative work. I adopted grounded theory methods to analyse my data. This method for analysing the data draws on Pace’s (2012) methodological discussion for artist-researchers on using grounded theory analytic strategies and Foss and Waters’ (2016) approach to data collection and analysis. The findings are presented in an analytic autoethnography.

The analysis revealed that the answer to the research question was that as a creative writing student in higher education I used three specific strategies to negotiate the relationship between academic demands, creative interests and marketplace opportunities. The literature review demonstrated that a creative writing student in higher education must negotiate a complex relationship to reach the marketplace. My study shows that this continues to apply in the digital context. The negotiation to reach the digital marketplace occurred across five locations: 1) in the self-help industry, 2) between disciplines, 3) in the English department, 4) in creative writing
communities and 5) at the final stage of writing up the dissertation. Importantly, to balance the relationship, the same three strategies—self-educating, relationship building and tactical compromise—occurred in various ways in all locations. These findings highlight areas of support as well as resistances to digital marketplace engagement for a creative writing student in higher education.
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Acknowledgements

Although this dissertation is credited to me alone, I wrote it with the help and support of many and through numerous grants and scholarships provided by the University of Western Australia (UWA) during my dissertation research. I certainly could not have completed it without the support of my main supervisor Steve Chinna, whose patience with my indirect path was unflagging. I am also grateful for my other supervisors: David Savat, who welcomed me into media studies and provided useful critical feedback; Kieran Dolin, who also gave great critical insight and wrote amazing support letters; and Tony Hughes-d’Aeth, who matched me up with Steve and then took me in at the last minute to wrap up the final elements. I also thank Van Ikin and Philip Mead who offered direction at key times. All helped me along the research journey, whether it was to untangle some intellectual confusion or to find a route around a bureaucratic obstacle.

The students and educators of the School of Social and Cultural Studies (and now Humanities) have, over the years, provided a stimulating intellectual environment that has changed my way of thinking about things. Doctoral colloquiums were particularly useful for learning and discussing the practical aspects of becoming a researcher. Alexandra Ludewig, as the Head of the School, helped me stay strong in the final year with her unquestioning confidence in my ability and the support of working space and training. I would especially like to thank my engaging and stimulating office mates and neighbours from my constantly changing offices and all those who kept me connected in academic-related social media groups.

Other seminars at UWA such as the ones run by the Institute for Advanced Studies were also of great help to me, offering additional forums for presenting, interaction and valuable feedback. The amazing and supportive librarians and the ever-patient departmental team helped me sort out all the little details, from finding materials to travel and publishing payments. The Graduate Research School staff were always most helpful and encouraging with training and funding. The opportunity to be part of a range of groups both on campus and off and attend numerous conferences helped immensely. Digital Humanities introduced ideas about the value of the research. The determined, creative folks of the Australasian Association of Writing
Programs inspired me and opened my mind to the potential of creative writing in an academic context.

I was lucky enough to meet and have the support of many wonderful people in the various creative projects that were essential to the dissertation. There were those who went on creative chases with me and those who helped find homes and outcomes for the creative imaginings. They include the Words&Thoughts group members, Ted Snell, the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery folks, the media centre champions, Uni Print (for my experiments in self-publishing), the UWA Alumni Association, the Perth International Arts Festival, the UWA Co-operative Bookshop for making publication and presentation possible and the wonderful people involved with TEXT, Trove and Westerly.

For the final editing, I am indebted to Dr Lisa Lines who made it possible for me to complete my thesis on time.

My whole family has been uniquely supportive as my years of graduate school stretched on. I am especially grateful to my parents who have informed this dissertation and supported me in so many ways, to my son Jim who won the academic race but encouraged and cheered me across the finish line, to my son Joe who was always ready to wrestle any critical or creative idea with me and to my Umbrella, who refuses to allow creativity and story ever to be second to anything.

Finally, I dedicate this work to my father, who has always believed in the value of a PhD.
Authorship Declaration: Sole Author Publications

This thesis contains the following sole-authored works that have been published.


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<td>ANZSA</td>
<td>Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association</td>
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<td>APWN</td>
<td>Australian Postgraduate Writers Network</td>
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<td>ASA</td>
<td>Australian Society of Authors</td>
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<td>AWP</td>
<td>Associated Writing Programs</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Master of Arts</td>
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<td>Master of Fine Arts</td>
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<td>NASS</td>
<td>National Academy of Screen and Sound</td>
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<td>NAWE</td>
<td>National Association of Writers in Education</td>
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<td>SSHFF</td>
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Chapter 1. Introduction

‘If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people.’
(Virginia Woolf, 1952)

1.1. Background

In 1997, I graduated with a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in creative writing from a United States (US) university. At that time, the focus of creative writing courses was on the development of the writer’s voice, not on methods for approaching the marketplace. The training was much as Vanderslice (2010) describes in ‘Once more to the workshop: a myth caught in time’—a 1930s–1950s Iowa-type model with workshop critiquing in a ‘post-baccalaureate incubator’ (pp. 30–31). My understanding was that this training would prepare me for teaching and publishing outcomes and this view seemed to be supported by my professors. Upon completion of the MFA oral examination on my novel, I was praised for my creative work. Later, over a celebration dinner, my supervisor said something to the effect of: ‘Now that we know you can write, let’s see if you can get published’.

My beliefs about publication were in line with Sarrimo’s (2010) contention that ‘to be published is thus regarded the major legitimising act to become a “real” writer’ (p. 180). I wanted to be published and my peers also expressed this goal for themselves. In ‘Introducing Masterclasses’, Roe (2010) reports that both Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Master of Arts (MA) students say that their goal is to have their work published (p. 195). When I entered the MFA program, my aim was to be recognised as a brilliant writer by a professor who would then connect me with a publisher. The rest would be fait accompli, or so I thought. The connection part of my plan was realised, in that one professor did introduce me to his agent and another had me contact his editor; however, making those contacts was not enough. I did not think to develop a strategy for the other issues involved in reaching the marketplace, nor was I aware of the changes the publishing industry was facing. As it transpired, neither of the two publishing contacts wanted the type of story I wrote, although one suggested that if I changed the main character to a Hispanic female there might be interest, because there was a high demand from this growing population. I was stumped by that suggestion. My character was male and of English/Irish descent. Today, in taking
such an approach, a writer would be confronted with the issue of cultural appropriation.

No discussion in the classroom had prepared me for the business aspects of being a writer. The only other reference in my training to finding and engaging with the marketplace was the occasional mention of the short story market of mainly non-paying or low-paying US journals. Although I lacked a career strategy for becoming a published writer, I was fortunate to have received pedagogical training in teaching first-year university writing (a class in the US that incorporates narrative within the context of the other rhetorical modes). That training led me into teaching a range of writing courses including creative writing classes in prose, poetry and scriptwriting. This allowed me to support myself while I continued to write creatively.

Through my own efforts to engage in the marketplace, I did succeed in publishing my poetry, fiction and scriptwriting. I also became aware of a new type of marketplace and of the changes the digital world was having on publishing outcomes. Not since the invention of the Gutenberg Press has the communication of ideas been affected by such radical technological change (Shillingsburg 2006). In the 1990s, the world wide web opened the door to global commerce and then to social media. Most of the population, particularly students, are now regularly presenting, creating, communicating and even selling on social media sites. However, while this digital space was compelling and significant, the discipline of creative writing at the university level did not appear to be very engaged with the digital world or with the possibilities that social media might provide. As McGurl (2009) contends, the current state of most creative writing programs is ‘rather low-tech and quaintly humanistic’ (p. 21).

It was at this time that I entered the PhD program with the goal of learning more about the opportunities of the digital marketplace for the creative writer. I was concerned by reports such as Moxley’s that most creative writing students would ‘fail to become published poets or novelists’ (2010, p. 236). I wondered how this could be possible in the digital age with its new opportunities for publication. Did this represent a failure in creative writing education or on the part of the student?
Creative writing theorists have begun to focus on how to move the field forward in the digital age. For example, there are suggestions that training should incorporate a range of digital engagements, as well as preparation in legal issues Moxley (2010, pp. 236–237). There are also suggestions that distribution should be addressed (Mayers 2009, p. 225) and that criticism of digital craft needs to be examined (Koehler 2013, p. 380). Creative writing programs now offer digital engagement and some do focus towards the marketplace, but most courses do not engage with the digital marketplace and there is a lack of research in the field on this subject.

Recently, the lack of research on ‘the profound impact digital technology has on our discipline’ has been challenged (Clark, Hergenrader & Rein 2015, p. 2). Within this important discussion on the effect of the digital age, the marketplace issue makes an appearance. Some who discuss the discipline in the digital age work from the assumption that students will find careers in areas other than publishing their books. Others look to more literary outcomes, such as using social media to develop an audience beyond the classroom. For example, in ‘The marketable creative’ (Clark 2015), the focus is on the need to help students achieve career outcomes. Clark addresses the issue of ‘using technology and broader notions of skill in the fiction course’ (p. 61). His new model recognises the need for students to shift from being employable to marketable. Clark acknowledges the entrepreneurial imperative students will face in their future as creative writers and his approach also intends to better prepare students for working in other fields. The tactic is to broaden students’ training by drawing from ‘sources as diverse as engineering, business and network theory’ (pp. 61–72). This approach may be useful if the creative writing teacher can tap into other fields, but this is not generally the case. Harper (2015) contends ‘much in the teaching of creative writing continues to address a pre-digital world’ (p. 7).

The concept that not all students are looking for literary careers is argued by Hergenrader (2015), who states that ‘many undergraduate students in our creative writing classes have no intention of seeking a career in literary publishing’, and instead seek to apply their skills to other mediums such as ‘film, digital media or game design’ (p. 46). However, it is not clear if the situation described by Hergenrader applies to most creative writing classrooms, the beliefs of teachers and the wishes of students. Other scholars who talk about the digital marketplace take a

These approaches lead to ideas about what it means to sell and how writing on the page may not be enough. There is a need to consider multimodality in the marketplace discussion. Krauth (2016) calls for multimodal teaching, asking his students: ‘Why don’t you write that as a multimodal novel on your iPhone? You’ve got a keyboard, a camera and a microphone pickup’ (p. 196). He argues that the future will be multidisciplinary, but this raises questions as to what is happening now. Do students need additional support and do they need to cross into other disciplines to gain support to produce multimodal outcomes? What will the final work look like? What is the goal and outcome of this approach? How will it be assessed?

All this discussion indicates a concern about audience and the marketplace for creative work. It raises questions about the type of training a creative writer in higher education should receive in the age of ‘nearly universal authorship’ (Pelli & Bigelow 2009 cited in Adsit 2015, p. 105). Further, if students are already digitally connected with publications that have a ‘larger audience than some small press’ (Adsit 2015, p. 105), the discussion and research needs to explore the nature of the classroom in relation to the traditional model. Authors Koehler (2015), Amato and Fleisher (2015) and Leahy and Dechow (2015) recognise the importance of the traditions of the field, while also working to advance into the digital age. This awareness is important when they are persuading their audiences to embrace digital tools while honouring tradition. Others challenge tradition. For example, Adsit (2015) is critical of the ‘ethos of literary creative writing’, because it suggests that writers might sully themselves in the marketplace (p. 110). In recognising that marketing is different now, she argues that concerns about commercialism need to be put aside in favour of the benefits. Adsit notes, in the case of author-philosopher Alain de Botton, ‘Twitter becomes a means not only of publicity but also of developing and extending an authorial identity’ (p. 110).
While Adsit’s ideas are relevant, does this resistance she is challenging still serve a purpose? In training students, what other goals might have to be put aside to make room for such an approach? For example, at a broader level, social media and the digital marketplace might threaten our Enlightenment-based educational system if we consider, as Radia (2012) argues, that Western education since the Enlightenment has privileged the separation of the private and public spheres (p. 166). Conversely, there is now a different type of marketplace, one in which private and public appear to come together. Perhaps the situation is like ‘the Ancient Greeks’, as Radia suggests, using the ideas of Bauman (2000), where ‘the agora was a place of education’ in which the two were ‘brought into communication’ (Radia 2012, p. 166). Can this view be recognised in creative writing practice as a student tries to reach the digital marketplace? Can there be a balance? What happens when marketing is ‘a subject of our analysis in the creative writing classroom’ (Adsit 2015, p. 110)? The digital marketplace raises many opportunities and concerns for the field of creative writing and Adsit’s comments signify two important points: 1) there is a different kind of marketplace and 2) there are barriers to the field’s engagement with that space. Research is needed to better understand the relationship, for how can there be any useful conversation about teaching and training in creative writing and the relationship to the digital world if there is no examination of the student experience of trying to engage in that space?

1.2. The Research Question

I focused my research on the relationship of the student in higher education creative writing to the digital marketplace, as I wanted to understand how to best train students in the new environment while teaching in a very traditional workshop-based creative writing program. I also wanted to advance my own creative outcomes. I was particularly interested in the role of social media in the marketplace, as that appeared to be where much of the selling and communication was occurring. Hecq (2012a) recognises the ‘strong connection between creative writing and the marketplace’, and contends, ‘all writing exists in a specific social and economic context, which comprises the conditions that enable or hinder it’ (Intro, p. 3). Therefore, a better understanding of the context might enhance pedagogical practices and outcomes. To my knowledge, no study has been conducted from the position of the creative writer
situated within a university trying to write for the digital marketplace and examining that relationship. Specifically, my research seeks to understand the relationship and answer the question: How does a creative writing student working within higher education write for the digital marketplace?

1.3. Chapter Outline

1.3.1. Chapter 2: A literature review of the marketplace relationship

There are no studies that directly deal with the creative writing student’s relationship to the digital marketplace and the discipline; therefore, before I could begin to research I needed to understand the current relationship of the creative writing student in higher education to the marketplace. I wanted to understand the context I was working within while creating content with the express intent of writing for a marketplace. The best way to assess the environment was to determine the views of those who practice, teach and theorise in the field of creative writing studies. A significant body of research exists on the pedagogy and practices of the creative writer and creative writing in higher education. Consequently, the literature review examines the relationship of creative writing to the marketplace as described in the current scholarship in the field of creative writing. The study considers stakeholders’ views, experiences, teaching goals and marketplace theories and draws from empirical investigations.

1.3.2. Chapter 3: Research approach: Know thyself

This chapter addresses my early experiences in examining challenges of the relationship and the potential of the digital marketplace. Initially, I had planned to write a single creative work and provide an exegesis to support that work. However, the two did not easily come together. This chapter represents my efforts to learn more about the new marketplace and to find a way to connect that knowledge to academic expectations and requirements when developing creative work. The material for the published paper that forms this chapter was first presented at the 2010 National Academy of Screen and Sound (NASS) Conference held at Murdoch University. Soon after, the paper ‘Know thyself: know thy market’ was published online in IM: Interactive Media E-Journal of the National Academy of Screen and Sound (Suchy 2011a). In taking the step of publication, I was seeking to locate the
discussion in a field and validate the research. Although this chapter did not conform to some expectations of academic rigour by some readers within my university, at the time it laid a foundation for the next stage of research. In the final analysis, the experience contributes to answering the research question. As Kroll (2015b) argues, ‘Failure can lead practitioners in new directions, close pathways, solve specific problems that turn out to be more significant than the project as a whole and suggest more fruitful questions to pose’ (p. 143). This paper presents early findings and demonstrates the emergent nature of the research.

1.3.3. Chapter 4: The social media marketplace in the ‘quaint’ creative writing classroom

This chapter presents the published paper ‘The social media marketplace in the “quaint” creative writing classroom: our terms for engagement’ that was published in TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses (Suchy 2013d). In the paper, I sought to define the new digital marketplace in relation to the university creative writing classroom and its traditions. The paper begins with a brief history of the creative writing classroom’s focus on preparing students to publish and engage in a marketplace. It then considers the opportunities for digital involvement that are relevant to the creative writer. Next, the paper focuses on social media’s relationship to the marketplace while proposing a definition that expands the discipline’s perspective of marketplace and theorises approaches to pedagogical engagement that honour creative writing’s traditions. By coining the term ‘social media marketplace’ in relation to creative writing and situating a range of contemporary practices within the space, the work helps envision original approaches to utilising the digital marketplace in a way that honours the disciplinary traditions. The paper argues that this type of approach can enhance educational experiences without excessive cost or training. Publication at this stage helped to affirm the value of the research and led to the next stage of research and publication.

1.3.4. Chapter 5: Writing for the social media marketplace

The original intention for the dissertation was to submit a creative component with an exegesis. This chapter includes a discussion of some of the practice-based research, as well as an analysis of the outcomes and findings of that work. The third
published paper ‘Writing for the new social media marketplace: a direction for creative writing in the university’ was published in the proceedings of the 19th Conference of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs and is presented here. The paper examines the developmental stages of a postgraduate creative artefact designed for a particular digital space in relation to the marketplace to: 1) help make an argument for having students work in this space, 2) reveal how a student might work and 3) inspire new assessment ideas for creative writing artefacts. The completed screenplay (discussed in this chapter) was designed to demonstrate how a social media engagement might be used for creative research. In presenting my experiences of trying to make a creative work that represented the relationship, the chapter also helps to further explore the relationship of a creative writing student working within the university to the marketplace and theorises another opportunity for engagement with the digital marketplace.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 represent the first approach to the research in which I believed that a single creative artefact would be submitted for the dissertation as a representation of how to write for the digital marketplace.

1.3.5. Chapter 6: Final analysis research design

At this point, I became dissatisfied with the idea of submitting a single creative work because the screenplay I wrote did not fully represent my experiences. Therefore, I adopted another approach and used grounded theory method to help develop an analytic autoethnography of the entire experience of working within higher education and trying to reach the digital marketplace. To answer the research question, I examined my own experiences as a student during the period of my candidature. The plan was to learn more about the relationship. This work could not have been accomplished without the experiences presented in the earlier chapters and my attempts, as a creative writer in higher education, to reach the digital marketplace. This chapter will clarify the approach to the final stage of analysis and the role of the creative work in the research. To elucidate my approach in this final stage, the research design discussion is divided into two sections. The first section examines the data and the second section examines the procedures. In the data section, the data that was used for the study is identified and justification is given for the choice of data and its appropriateness for answering the research question. The procedures
section contains two subsections: data collection and data analysis. Firstly, the method for collecting the data is discussed and justification for the approach is given. Second, the method for analysis of the data is explained and some background on the method is provided. Additionally, a justification for the choice of method of analysis is provided.

1.3.6. Chapter 7: Analytic autoethnography

Throughout my PhD candidature, and as part of my research, I engaged in the development of a series of creative projects as I tried to understand how to write for the digital marketplace. The key to understanding how I wrote for the digital marketplace was identifying the various locations in which I positioned myself while working during the period of candidature and observing how the strategies of self-education, relationship building and tactical compromise were used to balance the relationship as I tried to reach the digital marketplace. The findings are presented as an analytic autoethnography. Using a narrative approach to present my experiences helps to provide a context for the creative projects and thus reveal why they were made and how they emerged. As well as being helpful for providing a context for the creative work, writing a narrative, or telling a story, is by definition the act of creative writing. As this act is the primary practice of someone working within the discipline, providing a narrative of the research experience serves as a natural and fitting way to present and reveal findings about the relationship.

1.4. Conclusion

This chapter summarises and interprets the findings presented in the analytic autoethnography and is followed by a discussion on the limitations of the approach and the possibilities for future research. The findings reveal the field’s resistances to—and the areas of support for—the creative writer working in the digital marketplace. The study had limitations across three areas: sampling procedures, design and methods. This section identifies why the limitations occurred and how the findings continue to be of value. The final section considers the importance of future research on the digital marketplace relationship.
Chapter 2. Literature Review

‘No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money.’ (Samuel Johnson, 1776)

2.1. Introduction

The goal of my research was to better understand the relationship of a creative writing student in higher education to the digital marketplace. To achieve this outcome, I wanted to determine how to write for the new digital marketplace from within the university. There are no studies that directly deal with this topic. Therefore, before I could begin the research, I needed to understand the current relationship of a creative writing student in higher education to the marketplace. I wanted to understand the student and educator view of the relationship and the context I was working within, while creating content with the express intent of writing for a marketplace. Light’s (1995) qualitative study of creative writing students finds that:

Student conceptions of creative writing are not stable, independent cognitive entities, but are, rather, characterised by the complex myriad of socio-cultural and institutional issues describing the individual and the writing course; issues governed and defined by an authoritative ‘literary’ discourse or paradigm. (1995, p. 3)

Light’s work recognises the core debate of social science research and that is the struggle between agency and structure. His findings indicate that the student is not autonomous in this academic environment. From this perspective, if context influences a student’s conception, the environment the student works within at the university informs the student’s views of, and relationship to, the marketplace.

A significant body of research exists on the pedagogy and practices of the creative writer and creative writing in higher education. The literature review examines the student’s relationship in creative writing to the marketplace, as described in current scholarship by students and educators in the field of creative writing. The study considers stakeholder’s views, experiences and teaching goals and draws from empirical investigations. From the study, the idea emerged that the student must negotiate a complex relationship that offers both resistance and support.
The review begins with a brief description of the methodology used to locate relevant works. The relevant literature is then examined and discussed. Student views, experiences and expectations about the marketplace (from the student’s perspective and the educator’s perspective) are examined, as well as resistances and engagements and how these are supported as they appear in the terms used and the goals of education in the field.

2.2. Methodology

The literature focuses on the discussion within and about the field of creative writing in higher education, from the early 1990s to the present day (2017). There were several reasons for selecting this time frame. First, this is the period in which studies were conducted on the subject. Second, the time frame fits with my own experiences, as it begins at around the time of my MFA/MA graduation. Importantly, within this time frame the digital age has had a visible effect on the field of creative writing. For example, in 1996, the Australasian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP) established TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses as an online resource. Additionally, digital developments have rapidly changed how people engage in personal and professional ways, through new forms of communication, digital networking and new ways of doing business. For more on this, see Koehler (2013) in the US context. Koehler provides a view of the field in relationship to digital developments and suggests categories for organising the ‘digital arm of creative writing studies’.

To find the literature, I systematically searched the University of Western Australia (UWA) database OneSearch and EBSCOhost for peer-reviewed articles, journals and books. I also searched JSTOR and Project Muse. The challenge was to not select creative work; hence, journals that focused on pedagogy were most useful. Specific creative writing journals on pedagogy were also searched, with TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses and New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing yielding the most significant amounts of relevant information in single locations. In addition, searches were performed through Google and Google Scholar. The ‘snowball’ method was also used to locate pertinent articles by drawing from citations in recent works. The key to managing the large amount of material was to keep the focus on the research question (i.e., What is
the relationship of the student in creative writing to the marketplace?) and to keep within the field’s discussion as much as possible. Slight variations of words and phrases, such as creative writing student perspectives, digital marketplace, market, publishing, expectations of creative writing in higher education, goals of creative writing, relationship to marketplace and relationship of creative writing to marketplace produced relevant literature. The situation was complicated to examine. For example, there are different expectations for different study levels, different countries have different approaches, as do different institutions, individual educators and students. Therefore, some literature and studies may have been missed or were not included. [2] In addition, I drew from a discussion in a private Facebook group that focused on pedagogy in the field. Occasionally, news articles that appeared in searches on the field were used. This method of searching may demonstrate a bias towards open source journals and may also create a bias towards a particular country.

After gathering the literature, I coded and sorted it to create a conceptual schema. For more on this method, see Foss and Waters (2016, pp. 77–99). What emerged is an overview of the relationship from a range of voices in the field. I recognise that pedagogical approaches change over time and I have attempted to organise ideas in a time-linear fashion. However, I have made exceptions to emphasise points and because some studies occur over a period of years.

2.3. Students’ Views

Although there is not a large body of empirical research on student expectations about, and conceptions of, creative writing in higher education (Olthouse 2013, p. 261; Light 2002, p. 259), there are reports and surveys that demonstrate some of the views of students and their experiences of the marketplace and their training. [3] The report by Evans and Deller-Evans (1998) of their survey of Australian undergraduate and postgraduate creative writing students at Flinders University and Adelaide University shows a difference between undergraduate and postgraduate goals. Postgraduate students had ‘more specific, craft related hopes such as developing their skills and improving their prospects for publication’ (sect. 6.1). Postgraduate (MA) students expected that they would be ‘stretching themselves to the maximum, publishing their work, completing first full-length work within the course, boosting confidence, continuing on to a PhD when possible’ (sect. 3.10). In assessing the
study, Kroll (2000) determines that, while some students have other goals, others ‘actually think that one day they might make a living out of their passion’ (sect. ‘Student profiles’). To learn about their reasons for enrolment, Kroll (1998) canvassed students who were studying children’s book writing. Her findings show a publishing and a market-focused interest, with two out of six responses to why they want to take a ‘Writing for Children topic’ specifically stating that was their goal. The responses were ‘I feel that this course could refine my skills and help me to produce publishable work’ and ‘As I am planning to be a professional writer, especially of novels and stories for children, I believe this course would be invaluable in providing skills and information that would assist me in succeeding in this career’ (sect. ‘Of pleasure’).

Some express concern about postgraduate-level students achieving marketplace outcomes. Hayes’s (1998) reflections indicate that there is little discussion or concrete preparation provided to students about the marketplace. In searching for a writing career and publication outcomes, Hayes pursued the ‘American experience’, travelling from Australia to America on a Churchill Fellowship to discover what practical preparation was being offered to writers in creative writing programs. She found that none of the faculty anticipated writing careers or publication outcomes for the majority of their students. There was a belief that a few might have success on ‘a second or third attempt’ at publication. However, there was little ‘professional’ guidance and it was rare for universities to invite publishers or agents to meet students. Hayes notes an unusual case: ‘One university boasted that all graduating students would by the end of the year have found themselves an agent’ (1998, para. 22). Hayes concludes that, in her home state of Western Australia, there would not be opportunities for creative writers emerging from graduate programs to become career writers (para. 27). However, as Jeremijenko (2007) reports on her own experience, when a student is offered a marketplace-focused experience the opportunity is appreciated. Jeremijenko travelled from Australia to the US to examine the MFA experience. She found the training she received there in market preparation as ‘perhaps the most valuable lesson of [her] studies’ (2007, para. 1). [4] Her teacher required students to submit creative work to journals and utilise Writer’s market, a US-based publication listing publishers and resources. Jeremijenko describes a positive experience in being trained about the relationship between
creative production and the marketplace (para. 2). Both cases raise questions about the marketplace relationship. Was Jeremijenko’s experience due to an exceptional program or teacher, as Hayes reported? Alternatively, a change might have occurred in the nine years since Hayes’s visit to the US, in which programs might have become more market-focused. From these two limited student accounts, an answer cannot be determined. Neave (2006) provides another view of the US situation. In her 2002–2003 student experience as a MFA student on the East Coast of the USA (she does not name the university), Neave reports relishing the literary market-focused experience. She argues that US programs do focus towards the publishing industry, with efforts made to support the student in building relationships with agents, publishers and publishing writers. She argues that some MFA programs highlight the successes of big name writers such as ‘Richard Ford, Joyce Carol Oates, Raymond Carver and many others’ (p. 58) to promote themselves. However, Neave concludes that ‘creative writing programs may, in the end, position themselves more firmly where they are strongest—at the maddening and problematic nexus of theory and practice’ (pp. 62–63). Neave attributes the reasons for moving away from a publishing focus to scholarly demands and more support for experimental work (p. 62). The relationship of marketplace outcomes to assessment is a concern to McKenzie (2007), another Australian postgraduate student, who asks, ‘Is the market being used as a measure of creativity?’ (p. 26). While recognising the liminal nature of the relationship, McKenzie emphasises, ‘It is important to realise that the terms of higher degree assessment influence the nature of the writing produced within them’ (p. 20). In the United Kingdom (UK) context, an MA student in 2007 offers a student’s view on the likelihood of making a living in the marketplace as a published writer stating that while some are dreamers aiming for ‘rock-star’ writing careers, he was not willing to ‘give up the day job’ (Wright 2007, n.p.). Perhaps some hold both views. Wright concludes from the interviews with students that:

Far from being the universities’ dupes, students realise that success in writing, if it comes at all, will only come after much hard work and experience. They are prepared to pay higher fees, but only for a more personalised and professional service, which often includes extensive meetings with agents and publishers. (2007, n.p.)
As part of a larger study, Brook (2009) conducted a survey of Australian undergraduate students in tertiary creative writing programs to learn the reasons for their interest in creative writing. The study also addresses student interest in literary writing and literary publishing. Brook concludes: ‘It is clear the sample group had a strong interest in reading literary genres, publishing in literary magazines and journals and gaining professional advice on publication generally’ (2009, p. 45). He clarifies that this was not ‘universal’, as ‘37.8% of the sample did not indicate they were enrolled in the subject to improve their chances of publication in literary journals or magazines’. Further, ‘24.32% of the group did not indicate that professional advice on publication was important’ (p. 46). In concluding, Brook argues that the students value the training and ‘personal skills’ gained through study, apart from their interest in literary writing (p. 46). In further discussion, Brook (2012) cautions, ‘Given the very small size of this survey it would be unwise to draw any conclusions from such statistics’ (n.p.). Neave’s (2014) assessment of the report is that ‘This albeit limited research suggests that the way some students view the discipline differs from the value attributed by researchers to the development of research and knowledge in the field’ (para. 5).

The UK-based National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE) provides more insight from students in a collection of case studies that give students’ perspectives of their experiences and outcomes. The case studies are commissioned narratives by students (at all levels) of their university experiences studying creative writing in the UK context. There are two components to the NAWE study: ‘Studying Writing’ (NAWE 2003) presents life as a creative writing student, while ‘Life after graduation’ (NAWE 2010) has the same contributors reflecting on the past and reporting on their post-graduation experiences. The students described a range of experiences including ‘their ambitions and expectations, the high points and low points’. These graduates are now freelance writers, journalists and teachers. ‘Some have forged careers in other fields, finding this the best way to support their writing. Others have been drawn to further academic study and have enrolled in Creative Writing PhDs’ (2003, para. 2). These stories reveal some of the realities of trying to make a living as a writer and the challenges of reaching the marketplace. The advice from many of these graduates to aspiring writers is not to give up the day job and to be willing to make compromises. This is a realistic view of student experience that
takes the focus off the ‘star’ outcome that some universities and departments use for marketing and advertising publications that are, according to Thebo (2013), ‘in nearly all cases, from students in postgraduate study in programs with narrow admissions policies’ (p. 37).

In a qualitative study on student learning in creative writing courses in the UK, Light (2002) examines both undergraduate and master’s level education. The study focused on 40 students’ perspectives of creative writing compared with other academic writing. Light refers to the work of Lea and Street (1998) and concludes that ‘one explanation for problems in student writing might be the gaps between academic staff expectations and student interpretations of what is involved in student writing’ (Lea & Street, p. 159). The final phase of Light’s study considers students’ general conceptions of their experience of writing in the higher education context. In addition to other questions, he asked for general views of creative writing and some of the responses touched on the marketplace and audience issue. Light reports that there was ‘reader awareness’, in that creative writing students recognise that ‘readers exist in concrete, social situations, using specific cultural forms: they are part of a readership’ (2002, p. 267). This awareness extends to the marketplace. As one student states in the study: ‘One thing the course has taught me is to be much more aware of the market you’re writing for’. Yet, in the study a student also expresses ‘dissent’ from conforming to any specific demand of ‘a readership’ (2002, p. 267).

From these few studies and limited accounts from students, it seems that, regardless of other motivations for being in a creative writing program, students at various levels do want to find a marketplace and publish. During their education, some students appear to become aware of the challenges to publish and adjust their expectations accordingly.

2.4. Teachers’ Perspectives

The teachers’ perspectives of students’ views provide some additional insight into the complexity of the relationship to the marketplace. The cases presented in this section represent situations in which either students did not directly report their views or it was unclear who was presenting the views in the study. The teachers expressed concern that there were illusions on the part of students regarding
publishing and marketplace expectations. Haake (1994) argues that these marketplace misconceptions are encouraged by American creative writing programs and are problematic. Haake states that they ‘foster false expectations on the part of our students—that the “best” writers will eventually emerge, go on to publish, secure teaching jobs and so on. These are problematic assumptions at the graduate level’ (p. 80). In Australia, Kroll (1998) also expresses concern for students who want writing careers. She contends that, although most undergraduates do not expect to make money from writing, a few do expect to make money but have no plans on how to achieve this. While most students seek ‘catharsis’ or ‘self-development’, she also finds that ‘students do not always understand that artistic integrity has to be tempered with market sense’ (para. 3).

Other researchers support the concept that students are undertaking creative writing courses for non-financial reasons. In an interview with Brien (2000), Gutkind states: ‘It is not often that a student can provide a reason [to study creative writing], I am dismayed to say. Writing seems like an interesting major—a springboard to law school, marketing, sales, etc. I guess it is’ (sect. ‘Why then are they studying’). In the Australian context, Krauth and Webb (2007) emphasise that: ‘Students don’t enrol in large numbers in order to become best-selling authors any more. They enrol to learn about writing’ (2007, sect. ‘A cult’). Yet, in the UK, Roe (2010) contends that being published is the goal for students at the BA and MA level. When she queried students on what was their ‘key ambition for their writing’, the response was ‘I just want to finish a novel and publish it’—despite this accomplishment being a ‘tall order and the realisation of it exceptional’ (p. 195). In the US, Moxley (2010) also contends that ‘most creative writing students will fail to become published poets and novelists’ (p. 236).

This view of ambitious students fits with student expectations described by Chapman (2013). However, Chapman does not conclude that the students will ‘fail’. He argues that many students seek to publish and ‘publish well’ (i.e., make money). Chapman contends that the relationship of creative writing in higher education to aiming for the mass market can work. He clarifies what many students want to achieve:

They want novels with fancy covers. They want books that will greet people at the front of a bookstore, or piled up in the hundreds on the tables of a Costco or Sam’s Club. They want books that are read by masses of
people. Not all beginning students lean in this direction, but many do. (2013, p. 230)

Chapman’s position is that there is no reason why mass market and literary work cannot both be taught. This view appears to challenge Haake’s concern expressed 20 years earlier of false expectations. Chapman’s approach requires authors to examine their aesthetic and ask: ‘Why do you write?’. He states that there still is no quick fix: ‘This question will take years to answer properly. Our writing careers are, in their entirety, an attempt to answer this question’ (2013, p. 244). Rather than perceiving the outcome as failure, this perspective has the student committing to the reality of a long journey to reach a marketplace outcome.

The only empirical study in which teachers’ views of students were included was conducted in the UK (Munden 2013). However, the study does not clarify if the views of the students are given by teachers, administrators or by the students themselves. [5] Munden investigates the changing nature of creative writing at 27 universities over the previous 10 years and considers the future of creative writing. Although the marketplace relationship is not the direct focus of his research, the study does offer some insights on this matter. For example, teachers report that ‘false expectations in terms of publishing and/or job opportunities sometimes skew students’ appreciation of the more essential benefits of their study’ (2013, p. 8). The ‘essential benefits’ would appear to include ‘professional development’ that is ‘given widespread attention, though the aims and means are highly varied’ (p. 9):

There is an interesting discrepancy of opinion regarding publication as the prime goal but consensus about encouraging students to be entrepreneurial in their publishing pursuits. There is evidence of tracking alumni but mainly through central channels that are not necessarily of direct use to Creative Writing departments. The use of Facebook to track alumni is an alternative means adopted by at least one HEI. (p. 9)

The study shows that publishing outcomes do ultimately matter to some in the university, but there is no clarification as to whether, or in what way, students are supported to be entrepreneurial or supported in finding digital marketplace outcomes. There does not appear to be any significant research on this entrepreneurial pedagogical approach.
There are other relevant findings in the report from which conclusions might be drawn. The view that ‘students are particularly enthusiastic about visiting professional writers’ and that they value being taught by ‘published writers in a research unit with an impressive RAE/REF record’ (p. 19) could indicate that students are seeking role models, both in creative and academic publishing. Additionally, the study reports that students ‘also often believe that an MA will either guarantee jobs or publication—although we never suggest this’ (p. 19). The students’ aim to achieve publication appears to continue at the time of the report and there still seems to be a discrepancy between the expectation of publication and outcomes. This inconsistency raises the question as to whether it represents a failure of the programs. However, it hardly seems a failure in that creative writing programs continue to enrol and retain students. Alternatively, the issue may be that students’ expectations of reaching the marketplace (i.e., being published) are not the goals of the educators, as Munden’s study might indicate. Arguably students should be more selective when choosing creative writing programs. The issue is significant enough to motivate Earnshaw (2007) to develop *The handbook of creative writing*. Earnshaw argues that there is no one standard for creative writing programs and he aims to help students navigate their path. A few universities do offer publishing-focused programs (Thompson 2014). However, this is not common for most creative writing programs.

More questions have recently been raised about students’ views of the marketplace relationship in Creative Writing Pedagogy, a private group on Facebook comprised primarily of creative writing instructors in higher education. Anna Leahy and Stephanie Vanderslice, who are both leaders in the field in the US, manage the forum. The conversations offer a useful insight into current views and approaches to pedagogy. In this discussion of the marketplace relationship, Leahy, after reading criticism by creative writing students that they felt ‘duped’ by their programs and training, posed the question: ‘How do we talk with MFA students about the realities of publishing, the writing life and money without being too discouraging?’ As a teacher in the field of poetry, Leahy’s experience was that neither she nor her students think they will make money from their writing. Vanderslice tells her students that they will ‘have to have another job’. This raised two questions from Leahy: Did students believe this? And, what were other instructors telling their students? A handful of educators responded with their own experiences of learning to
be pragmatic. Anecdotally, Leahy found that a ‘lack of practical knowledge about the writing life [was] more common in today's MFA student’. In addition, Leahy wondered if things had changed and concluded by asking, ‘Where are MFA students getting their misconceptions so that reality must be “faced”? How do they not know, before they start an MFA program, that most of us toil and struggle unappreciated? Has the focus of higher ed shifted from job to career to such an extent that degrees are subtly considered job training?’ (Creative Writing Pedagogy 2016). The lack of answers in this discussion indicates a need within the field for more research about students’ views and experiences in the relationship.

Some of the terms used by the field offer further insight into the complex nature of the marketplace relationship and the resistances that students must negotiate.

### 2.5. What is Publishable?

Interestingly, the idea that students should be creating ‘publishable’ work is one that is deeply held in the field. However, exactly what publishable means is contested, as can be observed in Munden’s study. A key term of assessment used by educators in the field is that the work created by a student should be of ‘publishable quality’. In the US context, the aim of the MFA is to produce students who can create a ‘publishable book-length creative work for the thesis’ (Association of Writers & Writing Programs 2017a). This view is not unique in the US. Across all levels of training, the terms ‘publishable quality’, ‘publishable standard’, and ‘publishable’ have been used. In 2000, the AAWP initiated a program of state-based seminars, the first of which were held in Adelaide and Melbourne. These seminars involved many of the writing teachers in each state, from the TAFE and University sectors. Topics discussed included ‘publishability’ and ‘publishable standard’ (TEXT 2017, n.p.). In the UK, Cusk (2013) reports, ‘The upper benchmark of academic assessment is that the work should be ‘of publishable standard’. As the ‘Subject Association for Creative Writing’ in the UK, the NAWE, rather than providing an overall guideline like the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP), presents an outline of what various programs offer. In this, some courses do state that they aim for publishing outcomes. Others do not indicate whether this is a focus (NAWE 2017).
Discussion about the term often does not provide clarity as to whether the work will actually be published and this is a concern to some in the field. Dawson (1999) argues that a creative component of publishable quality is a work that ‘can sustain the same sort of critical scrutiny deployed in the study of exemplary texts, that it can contribute to knowledge in the same fashion’ (para. 42). He also contends that the postgraduate student’s ‘manuscript must eventually be able to sustain the sort of critical scrutiny which is applied to published texts that are circulated within the discipline as examples of good writing’ (Dawson 2005, p. 117). This approach does not indicate whether the work will be published. Bourke and Neilsen (2004) express this concern about unpublished work being assessed, asking, ‘How then are we to assess the usefulness of a growing body of work that seems to comment on the production of unpublished—perhaps unpublishable—works?’ (sect. ‘First’). Their study shows that ‘While many universities state—or imply—that works considered for examination are being assessed, at least in part, in terms of their ‘publishability’, relatively few MA (Research) or Honours creative works have gained publication’ (sect. ‘Second body’). Some seek to address the issue, but there is no one approach. Kroll (1999) wrestles with what the term ‘publishable’ means and challenges the resistance to marketplace preparation. She wants more transparency of the term and proposes either including an assessor from the industry (such as an editor or agent) on an examination committee or having a non-academic who looks for ‘what sells’ to supply a report to examiners, particularly when the examiner is not ‘well-published’ (1999, sect. 3). Harper (2005) considers ‘publishability’ an out of date standard for assessment and argues that the writing programs ‘were referencing the conditions established at the birth of the modern period in relation to the marketplace notion of creative writing and its connection with private property’ (pp. 82–83). As McKenzie (2007) clarifies, ‘In other words, the writing was to be judged as artefact, object and product, as it might be in a marketplace’ (p. 27). McKenzie’s concern is with how this approach affects assessment.

The term continues to be the standard of evaluation, as Boyd (2009) reveals when examining the issue of ‘publishable quality’ in creative writing doctorate outcomes from 1993 to 2008 in Australia. Boyd concludes that ‘publishable’ is still ‘the primary assessment benchmark’ (sect. ‘Which genre’). Her findings also reveal that ‘universities appear to encourage less publishable literary creative works’ (sect.
‘Which genre’). This further demonstrates a resistance to commercial marketplace outcomes. Boyd seeks to negotiate an alternative in proposing that more popular genres should be given recognition within higher education and by reframing them as ‘new sites of radical engagement’. In this way, Boyd aims to ‘bring literary flavour’ to the new genres (para. last). Krauth (2009) notes that Boyd’s study demonstrates that ‘creative writing doctorates are highly publishable’ because nearly half of the creative works examined in Boyd’s study did reach the marketplace in some fashion (para. 3). This analysis indicates that publishing does matter.

Publishing is not just a measure of what students should aim for; it implies that achievement of publication, of finding a marketplace, can also be used as a measurement of program success. Edmonds (2004) considers a shelf of published books displayed at the University of Adelaide as a sign of a high standard of success (para. 2). However, he is careful to point out that publishing is not the only outcome from the training and program. Further, he advises, the current situation is very different to the 1970s when validation came from a few readers. Edmonds argues that in the modern marketplace ‘academic structures can sometimes be the only validation’ for the writer (para. 12). He recognises the challenge of trying to negotiate the marketplace relationship in which ‘we must encourage publishers, but we should not worship the commercial arm of the industry as the ultimate validation for our activities’ (para. 38). Edmonds (2007) goes on to argue the importance of print journals that can provide marketplace outcomes, such as Wet Ink, but he also acknowledges that, while some students will publish, this is not the goal for every student (para. 2). Negotiation of the marketplace can and does come in the form of developing and supporting outlets for publication such as small presses and literary journals and through efforts to recognise and value these publications in the field. Now that many journals are digitally published, this raises questions about the effect on a student’s relationship to the marketplace.

Some researchers demonstrate concern about focusing on the idea of publishing and valuing any commodity outcome over the creative act itself. For example, Harper (2010c) proposes that creative writing consists of ‘acts’, ‘actions’ and ‘activities’ (p. 60), and that whether the work is published or publishable is not more valuable than other ‘activities of Creative Writing’ (p. 116). Harper is not alone in this view.
Others consider that despite this ‘publishable’ issue, creative writing education is about something else. There are more ways that the field demonstrates resistance to a focus on the marketplace and these are found in other terms that are used.

2.6. What is the Marketplace and What is Literature?

Another term that requires consideration is ‘marketplace’. Related to this, the term ‘economy’ often arises. First, what exactly is the marketplace to those working in higher education creative writing? A commonly held belief is that a creative writer in higher education will publish in the ‘literary marketplace’. The slippery nature of this term is recognised by Edmonds (2007) when he examines ways to engage in the ‘so-called’ literary marketplace. According to Brier (2017), who also recognises that the term is ‘elusive’, the ‘literary marketplace’ produces literature and is the context for literature. When Brier examines the term ‘literature’, he concludes that ‘even if a definition can be agreed on or accepted provisionally, a distinct marketplace for it, an arena in which literature but not nonliterature is sold, is hard to discern’ (sect. ‘Defining’). He argues that the distinction arises because of, among other reasons, the appearance of ‘a market economy as disseminator of culture’ (sect. ‘Defining’).

This idea is drawn from post-World War II scholarly work including ‘The field of cultural production, or: the economic world reversed’ (Bourdieu 1983) and The economy of prestige (English 2005). Both works position literature and cultural production in sociological accounts of marketplace and market economy at national and global levels. However, Brier argues the discussion is ongoing ‘as ideas about the nature of literature and art generally change and as the role of market institutions change’ (2017, sect. ‘The idea’). Bourdieu offers a foundation for many theorists in creative writing and the field also draws from the creative industries in its views of the relationship. Other theorists including the psychologist Csikszentmihalyi are useful in negotiating the relationship between author and audience (Clark 2012, p. 92; Webb 2012, pp. 40–41). There is recognition that engaging in the commercial or mass marketplace is a struggle for those in the field of creative writing. For example, Sheahan-Bright (1999) examines children’s literature to consider how ‘publishing has often denied to so-called “literature”, access to the mass market and similarly has taken a high moral ground in refusing to acknowledge literary value to extremely popular works’ (para. 2). Mayers (2017) refers to this separation in creative writing
programs as the ‘tension between “literary” and “genre fiction”’. He argues that this issue has become ‘persistent’ lately (p. 16). Certainly, changes brought about by the digital marketplace must play a role in this increasing tension that Mayers describes. Kroll (1999) addresses the problem of defining ‘literature’ and recognises it as a ‘Pandora’s box’ (sect. 2). She concludes that:

How we evaluate the literary product is, of course, related to how we define literature and so is the next crucial topic when we consider creative higher degrees. In order to evaluate, academics and critics compare; that has traditionally been the basis of how we judge. Every time we read a set of essays we consciously or unconsciously set each one against every other one, or the set we read last semester or five years ago. We do have an ideal conception of what an A or a B is, at least in academic work. If we no longer have a canon, an ideal order in mind, then, how do we rank creative work? This is a much more complex issue than assessing projects in undergraduate writing topics with clearly defined requirements, such as exercises, class participation and final project. So I will let this question float answerless above the argument while I turn to more down-to-earth matters. (Kroll 1999, sect. 2)

In keeping with Kroll regarding further discussion of what is ‘literature’, I will move on to practical pedagogical issues. Mayers (2017) recognises that some programs will still train MFA students for the literary marketplace to varying degrees, but he is opposed to training or producing writers for this end and argues that the aim should be ‘experience-based inquiry into the act of writing’ (p. 17). Hergenrader (2017) also recognises the limitations of the ‘literary marketplace lore’ (Vanderslice 2005) in the digital age, along with the issue of genre to which, he argues, students are often more alert than teachers (Hergenrader 2017, p. 137).

Creative writing scholars have used other terms to explore the relationship to the marketplace. For example, by examining the relationship between the creative writer and ‘the creativity market’ Hecq (2012a) positions creative work produced in the field within the global knowledge-based economy. Importantly, the concerns about being publishable ‘receive detailed treatment and reflect upon how authors must position themselves in the academy’ (Kroll 2013, para. 2). Hecq’s introduction offers an overview of ‘research into the creative mind’ and addresses the terms ‘new knowledge products’, ‘knowledge economy’, ‘creative economy’ and ‘knowledge capitalism’ (Kroll 2013, para. 2). These terms are related to the idea that creative writers are involved with ‘knowledge production’. [6] In Hecq’s context of the
‘creativity market’, Webb (2012) argues that the university can function in the same way as the Greek agora (a communal space for political, religious, economic, educational and social interaction) to balance marketplace and creative needs (p. 14). Other terms used by the field include ‘the marketplace of ideas’ (Menand 2010), ‘cultural capital’ (Kroll 2002), the ‘public intellectual’ (Dawson 2005) and ‘gift economy’. A gift economy describes creative writers in higher education as being involved in ‘the making and exchange of literary talents and gifts’ (AWP 2017b). A more sustained discussion of the various terms is beyond the scope of this review. However, these examples demonstrate how it could be argued that the terms all represent an ongoing effort by the field to negotiate a relationship to a marketplace and a resistance to engagement with strictly commercial market outcomes.

2.7. Reasons for Resistance

There appear to be good reasons for resistance in the contemporary context that include protecting students, teachers and the boundaries of the field from the vagaries of the marketplace and other external pressures. For example, the challenges of making an income as a writer in Australia due to a small population and a lack of grant support, have been demonstrated in numerous studies. Kroll (2006) brings Throsby and Hollister’s (2003) Australia Council Report into the creative writing discussion. The report shows that ‘the median creative income for Australian writers in 2000–2001 was a pitiful $4,800, while the total arts income was only $11,700. The mean earned creative income was $11,400’ (Throsby & Hollister 2003 cited in Kroll 2006, sect. 6). Kroll also references Stevens’ explanation that: ‘The inexorable mathematics of Australia's population means it's almost impossible for writers—even established ones—to earn a living from our books’ (Stevens 2004 cited in Kroll 2006, sect. 6). This discussion also points to the need for grants; however, Kroll (2006) questions the likelihood of many writers receiving such funding (sect. 6). The capricious marketplace’s influence on education is not the only concern. Government and political factors exert pressure on aesthetic practice (Harper 2012b). There is a worry that government policy can apply unproductive influence upon academic outcomes. This useful warning is important when considering the publishing outcomes students should be prepared to achieve within the discipline and in ensuring that the terms of engagement are carefully negotiated. For example, Perry
(2009) clarifies her preference for ‘creative ecologies’ over ‘creative economy’ to ensure that there is no confusion about economic imperative. In this environment, over-extended educators must maintain their creative work as well as other demands (Bennett 2012). Related to this is the issue of the transient nature of being a part-time or ‘gypsy’ academic (Schell 1998). Another issue is that of maintaining ‘disciplinary integrity’ (Kroll 2010, para. 1). In the US context, creative writing often seeks to differentiate itself from English literature and composition writing classes, although in many cases the development of creative writing as a field emerged from, or in relationship to, these areas (Bishop 1994, Adams 1993, Berlin 1987). The borders present challenges and ongoing discussion is required ‘in the context of volatile institutional and research environments as well as variable student bodies’ (Kroll 2010, para. 1). Another example of the challenge of identifying where the boundaries lie is within the areas of creative writing and professional writing that are sometimes lumped into the one discipline. An example is magazine studies. Williamson (2008) notes magazine studies can be situated within ‘creative and professional writing’ and approached from a scholarly perspective because it contains both ‘professional and creative elements’, although it is a field that has traditionally been part of other disciplines. Williamson also believes ‘higher degree programs could look to magazine writing by extending the creative work/exegesis model to the production of specialised writing intended for commercial magazine markets, supported by exegetical analysis of that writing’ (2008, conclusion).

Not all would agree. There is a difference and there are dangers. In referencing Taylor (1999), Surma (2000) argues that ‘in contrast to creative writing, the discipline of professional writing is more secure within the tertiary sector, given the latter’s assimilation into “the job-oriented ethos of so much current university thinking about education” ’ (Taylor 1999 cited Surma 2000, sect. ‘Professional writing’). Surma warns of the danger of the marketplace to professional writing, seeking to locate professional writing away from any vocational or professional orientation and closer to her perspective of the unfettered relationship of creative writing.

In addition to these resistances, the purposes of creative writing education demonstrate many goals that are not directly about marketplace preparation.
2.8. A Variety of Activities

The development of creative writing programs in higher education has been well examined from an historical perspective (Myers 2006; Dawson 2005; Wandor 2008); and the goals for creative writing programs and classes have been discussed extensively in the pedagogy and are identified by each university and instructor. In the contemporary context, creative writing in higher education in the US reached its ‘full growth’ as a discipline in the late 1960s and early 1970s ‘when the purpose of its graduate programs (to produce serious writers) was uncoupled from the purpose of its undergraduate courses (to examine writing seriously from within)’ (Myers 2006, p. 149). [7]

2.8.1. Undergraduates

In line with the ‘uncoupled’ approach that Myers describes, the 2017 website of the US-based AWP differentiates undergraduate from graduate work and states that the graduate school’s goal is ‘to nurture and expedite the development of a literary artist’. Undergraduate programs are ‘mainly to develop a well-rounded student in the liberal arts and humanities, a student who develops a general expertise in literature, in critical reading and in persuasive writing’ (AWP 2017c). In a succinct summary of the developments, Bennett (2013) clarifies that these were the goals of universities and governments, not of the students. In Australia and the UK, creative writing developed differently. However, in the current context, the idea that the undergraduate program is not focused on training for a mass marketplace or even training serious literary writers has also been recognised in many programs. Harper (2003) argues ‘in the 1990s, Creative Writing in UK Higher Education came of age’. The focus was on:

Teaching and learning about both an individual practice and a practice defined by social, cultural, political and economic conditions; discussions around authorial intention; undertaking close reading and connected hermeneutical practices; considering the role of the reader; looking at the aesthetics of a country, region or local environment; approaching forms, styles, patterns and structures, dealing with voices, sounds, dictions and tones; using and considering grammars and discourses, denotations and connotations, the literal and the metaphoric and points of view; revising and editing. (2003, sect. 4)
For the UK undergraduate, the focus was on reading and writing, as well as developing communication skills for other jobs. As a young Assistant Professor of English who teaches creative writing contends: ‘It can't be about making famous writers—that's wrongheaded from the beginning. It has to be about teaching them to think well and to read closely’ (Bartlett 2002, p. A41). That there is resistance to the marketplace in undergraduate training is clear. Freiman (2005) argues that ‘Rather than claiming to teach students to write “publishable” writing (after all, published by whom?), we are teaching them about writing/reading and how language functions in its “worldly” contexts’ (para. last). Krauth and Webb (2007) note that writing course enrolment in Australia has increased, while ‘traditional literature’ study has decreased. They analyse this as a move away from a passive way of learning to an active way of learning that creative writing classes offer (sect. ‘A cult’). However, the idea of ‘learning to read as a writer’ is also challenged. [8] Jarvis (2011) argues for a ‘more radical, liberated reading praxis, a “writerly reading” ’ (sect. ‘Conclusion’). He aims to help the field ‘transform from a place in which existing cultural codes are replicated and from which they are promulgated, to a space where the interrogation of cultural codes can take place and new, radical codes can be formed, a locus of dissent’ (sect. ‘Conclusion’). Regardless of the debates on approaches, the current strategy for undergraduate training seems to be fairly consistent in that the approach is about teaching reading and writing. According to Radia (2012), training is not generally focused on the marketplace. However, at the advanced levels of education, what the training is about is more contested.

2.8.2. Postgraduates

In higher-level training there are more expectations and discussion of writers becoming ‘professional’. There is concern that it is not possible to produce large numbers of professional writers and that there is a need for other jobs for these students. For example, Hayes (1998) considers the practicality of marketplace outcomes for students training as writers and believes that the Australian situation is similar to the US situation. She proposes ‘publishing and journalism’ as alternatives and encourages student internships as being beneficial to the student, the university and potential employer organisations (para. 24).
Although the discussion can turn to the idea of vocational training, this is carefully navigated. For example, Edmonds (2004) does not want to be trapped by publishing outcome expectations, but sees the teacher as ‘agent/editor’. He views the workshop as a mini version of the publishing market, with university teachers of creative writing being ‘in a sense the academic version of the proactive agent or editor’ (para. last). Wandor (2008, p. 219) is also careful with the idea of vocational training, describing her approach as ‘professional’, steering away from the ‘mystique of creativity’, training towards neither ‘Romantic muse or professional writer’, but rather building knowledge through critical reading to learn about literary traditions and improve writing. [9] Brook (2015), in considering vocational outcomes in Australian creative writing programs, argues that ‘Creative writing is not a failed form of vocational training for professional literary careers; rather, it is a form of general literary education in which the figure of “failure” has, at times, played a key pedagogic role in forming personalities’ (p. 3). Cowan (2016) recognises the validity of Myers’ ideas about ‘examining literature from within’, yet contends that there is an:

Increasingly vocational orientation of many undergraduate programs (with their emphasis on skills appropriate to employment in the ‘creative industries’) and the research orientation of many PhD programs (with their aim of producing serious academics). (2016, p. 39)

The lack of clarity about the vocational nature complicates the environment the student must navigate.

Another purpose for creative writing arises with the idea of research in higher levels of study. By the end of the 1990s, there had been a move away from creative writing as training for writers and a move towards it being about ‘practice-oriented research’ (Earnshaw 2007). In Australia, Krauth (2000) argues for more higher degree research and creative writing PhDs, as he views the historical context of this aim:

I see us standing at [a cross-roads] following the pioneering decades of the seventies and eighties, and the coming-together forged during the nineties. Creative writing courses have now achieved a critical mass, a clear recognition and respect, perhaps even some envy, from academia in terms of our economic viability in teaching and learning, and our significant relationship with employment applicability and cultural and technological change, at the turn of the millennium. (Krauth 2000, para. second to last)
Krauth (2000) wants to see creative writing working in the ‘higher echelons’ of academia where the focus is ‘on research excellence and which, to a significant extent, gives universities their “real” reason to exist’ (para. last). Others recognise this direction and see the effort being made to acknowledge creative writing ‘as a form of research’ (Dawson 2001). More recent discussion on training by Kroll and Brien (2006) focuses on preparing students for ‘life’ in a way that may not be about making a living as a creative writer, even if writing and publishing is part of the outcome. They argue that practice-based research prepares graduates ‘to take part fully in the intellectual, creative, cultural and economic life of our nation’ (p. 11). They are concerned that students ‘will not find a permanent niche within a university nor make a living as a writer’ and question ‘why not help them make contacts outside the academy while they are still inside?’ (p. 11). The US context is different in this regard. ‘In Australia, we are not as blinkered as some in the USA who promote their programs as the only way to develop talent that will make a lasting contribution to culture’ (Kroll and Brien 2006, p. 11). In the US, the focus of the MFA is on the creative work and there is rarely a research component, but there has been some change in this. Donnelly (2011) argues that one of the more critical ambitions of creative writing studies is the training of its graduates in teacher preparation. She references Radavich’s (1999, p. 110) concern that ‘advanced degrees in creative writing cannot generate the job prospects available even to graduates of more traditional doctoral programs’ and that ‘there is no profession for which an MFA or PhD in creative writing provides direct training’ (cited in Donnelly 2011, p. 150). Donnelly sees the potential for creative writing studies to ‘be an emerging field of scholarly inquiry and research’ (2011, p. 1). [10] Even with this new direction, there is a concern about publishing and the marketplace, about what constitutes research outcomes for the creative writer and about new challenges in publishing, both creative and critical (Norton 2013).

The struggle between creative writing and scholarly expectations increases as more researchers in the field emerge. Programs may need to recognise that students will have to piece together their careers. Williamson (2012) introduces the idea of students in the creative arts as ‘future protean careerists’. She focuses on ‘the situated nature of writing’ and refers to Carter’s (2007) ‘pedagogy of rhetorical dexterity’ in which students learn the ‘code of a community of practice new to them’ (p. 574). She
also adopts Woods’ (2008) framework for academic writing that does not differentiate between orientations (e.g., creative writing, professional writing and so forth). Williamson argues this approach allows students to gain training that helps them to make a cognisant transfer as writers to a workplace. She sees this approach as taking academic writing beyond generic limitations. A 2015 Curtin University final report from a study of 4,360 graduates from Communication and Media degrees that included creative writers, cites Williamson’s work and argues for training across various areas of writing.

Many educators have contributed new literature and terms as writer-scholars of creative writing practice-led research. Some have focused on identifying new research methods to bring critical research and creative practice together (Kroll & Harper 2013). The educators’ role is also discussed in this environment. For example, Krauth (2009) considers the role of supervisor as editor. The questions of whether this implies a preparation for the marketplace and, if so, what is that marketplace and what degree of editorial intervention is required are not easily answered. Krauth contends that for doctoral candidates, supervisors are the best editors (sect. ‘Conclusion’). Manery’s (2016) phenomenological study reveals five different pedagogical identities in educators in the field: ‘Expert Practitioner, Facilitator, Change Agent, Co-Constructor of Knowledge and Vocational Coach’. These findings are useful for negotiating the complex situation for students and for educators. All these issues indicate the complex territory that the student negotiates if they are trying to write for the marketplace.

2.9. Other Ideas About Training

Additionally, there are many other ideas about what occurs in creative writing education, in which the focus shifts away from the marketplace. These include ideas about creativity, therapy and experience and other non-market-oriented outcomes. The ‘creativity’ issue is widely debated. Pope (2005) discusses creation v. production. Kuhl (2005) is concerned about ‘marketplace creativity’ and weighs up personal therapeutic writing v. literary writing. Freiman (2003) discusses the ‘dangers of the myths of creativity’. Rodriguez (2008) provides a summary of the many different approaches. Fenza (2008, p. 167) describes the wide range of approaches and goals creative writing covers—from the aesthetic, to the social and
political roles the student takes and how students learn about ‘literature from inside their own work, rather than from outside a text; and this has motivated many to gain greater command of rhetoric and communication skills in general’. He also claims that students ‘analyse psychology and motives, the dynamics of social classes and individual, regional and national beliefs’. Additionally, students learn to ‘order their lives and their world’ while ‘advancing the art of literature’ and making stories and poems as ‘gifts for readers and listeners’. Importantly, this engagement is ‘a highly civilised and humane act; and appropriately, academe has accepted the practice and making of the literary arts along with study and scholarship in the literary arts’ (2008, p. 167). This view is recognised by Harper and Kroll (2008, p. 167). By including Fenza’s views in their work, they appear to value these goals and outcomes in Australia and the UK. However, the approaches do not have to preclude preparing for professional outcomes. Brophy (2012) has broad experience as an educator and an AAWP attendee and is aware of the significance in Australia of ‘outcome-based education, of professional opportunities and the acquisition of transferable skills for students’. These, he argues, are ‘central imperatives’ in a large number of creative writing programs (2012, para. 8). However, the situation varies from program to program and from educator to educator and makes it a challenging space for the student to negotiate.

2.10. Educators in Favour of Being Market-Prepared

Despite these other focuses—or even resistances—there are educators who are concerned about students becoming market-prepared. For example, Kroll (1998, 2000) seeks to create a consciousness in her students about who will be their customers, about editing and publishing and about the economic concerns of the writer. Kroll seems to challenge the status quo in helping students find that balance. Manhire (2002) confronts the marketplace situation in the Australian context in an address to the 2001 AAWP Conference, in which he describes a course called ‘Creative Writing in the Marketplace’. He begins by giving apologies for his topic, providing an indication of the angst associated with even raising the topic of the ‘marketplace’ in the discussion. Manhire provides opportunities and methods for the discipline to help students become more market-prepared. Fisher (2006) raises concerns about a lack of training for creative writers in a plenary address in 2005 at
the AAWP 10th Annual Conference in Perth. Speaking on ‘The Professional Author; Researching Creativity and Reality’, Fisher argues that writer-artists will become ‘freaks’ without market engagement. He argues that there is more than the mass market to consider and that writing courses should ‘address fundamental issues related to writers making a living—contracts, copyright, legal issues’. Educators must also help writers to envision themselves in the marketplace, as part of ‘an industry that survives on market forces’ (para. 1). Edmonds (2007) warns of the dangers of a closed system and stresses the need to be talking about a broader marketplace. He sees this discussion as being an academic responsibility and believes that educators do ‘want publishing outcomes for our students’. Therefore, he asks ‘what institutional resources can we bring into play that can contribute to an intervention into the so-called literary marketplace?’ (para. 3). He recognises that not everyone will create commodities for the mass marketplace, but at the same time a certain realism is required:

In 2001 Frank Moorhouse accused the sector of creating dream factories that were unsupported by the publishing industry—of, in effect, creating unrequited expectations. (8) He was right and wrong, because his conclusions were predicated on a relative acceptance of existing industry structures, and a notion that the graduates from creative writing programs should only become writers, when in fact we also produce teachers, readers and citizens. Even so, his was a timely warning. (Edmonds 2004, para. 25)

In the US, Vanderslice (2011) is concerned about the concept of not training students to be teachers and publishing writers. She makes clear her stance on these notions: ‘Youth and their misconceptions about reality aside, if I thought I was educating my students to pursue a life like mine, only to lead them to a locked door, I couldn’t do it. I’d have to find another line of work’ (p. 43). Others also challenge those who do not recognise the professional writing outcome expectations of their students. In Australia, Fisher (2013) provides insight on his perspective and that of Thebo (2013) on the role of the university in preparing students for the marketplace:

In chapter two, on the history of creative writing programs, Mimi Thebo writes: ‘We do not expect Creative Writing BA students to become professional writers any more than we expect English Literature BA students to become professional critics (37)’. (Fisher 2013, para. 3)
Fisher finds Thebo’s position ‘specious’. He questions the lack of ‘engagement with writing as a profession or publishing as the principal industry within which professional writers work’ (para. 3). Fisher does not want to see universities turning out students unprepared to earn a living. This is a failure of education as far as he is concerned:

There is no point in producing students who can write if we do not give them knowledge of the environment in which they might be expected to live on the earnings from the skills and techniques we have taught them. (2013, para. 3)

However, according to Vanderslice (2011, p. 43), Thebo has helped her students become more ‘publishing savvy’ with the development of two courses at Bath Spa University. These are focused on undergraduates and they initially met with resistance from both colleagues and students. The aim was to help students to develop a professional perspective. Vanderslice argues that such approaches are necessary.

A solution to these differences might be to provide more clarity about exactly what a program does and where it fits in relationship to other programs, as Cowan (2012) proposes in his strategic plan for the peer review workshop. He argues for various models that:

Might be arranged along a horizontal axis that has as one pole the wholly taught, exercise-based class for beginners and at the other the wholly discursive workshop for advanced students. (2012, para. 1)

In terms of a market focus, Cowan proposes ‘alternative axes’ that might ‘calibrate the extent to which a program is publication- or research-oriented, or to which the pedagogy is premised on a formalist or a “sociological” poetics’ (2012, para. 1).

2.11. Limitations

Limitations in this study are in two key areas:

1) Creative writing courses are offered in a range of approaches and through a variety of departments and schools. ‘You can get creative writing with a religious flavour at the Australian Catholic University and creative writing with a military flavour at the Australian Defence Force Academy’ (Krauth
2000, para. 12). There are undergraduate and postgraduate awards. Some universities offer it as a ‘solitary undergraduate subject or only a couple of subjects’ (Krauth 2000, para. 12) Creative writing is also offered through a variety of departments and schools. For example, Krauth (2000) found in Australia that creative writing courses in universities were offered in ‘several English departments, a School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities, a School of Creative Communication and Culture Studies, a School of Literary and Communication Studies, a Faculty of Arts and Business, a School of Media and Journalism, a Department of Creative Media, a School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, a Faculty of Social Enquiry, a Faculty of Creative Arts and so on’ (para. 28). Inevitably, an attempt to gain a broad understanding of the issues will exclude some situations. However, the discussion is useful, for although there are a variety of approaches, and there are variations between Australia, the US and the UK, the complex relationship to the marketplace is common to all.

2) While creative writing has been gaining traction, the battle for recognition of research, what constitutes research and the necessary training of students for research outcomes is relatively new. Thus, ways to research and collect findings about the sociology of the field are still being developed. The method I have used for gathering material is not uncommon in many fields; however, while the digital age provides new methods that make it possible to quickly access articles and books, the amount of literature to be reviewed increases and creative writing (like many areas in the humanities) is establishing approaches for research that are relevant to the activities of the field. Nonetheless, the findings indicate the broad general trend of a complicated situation for the student in the relationship.

2.12. Digital Future Discussion: The Effect of Technology

Many in the field are aware that digital technology needs to be addressed. Krauth and Webb (2007) signal their awareness of the effect of technological changes in making writing more public and expanding publication opportunities. They acknowledge that ‘today’s students have a different idea of a writing course from that of the older
generation (who may include their teachers), but this is not with the expectation of becoming best-selling authors (sect. ‘A cult’).

In the US, the AWP website now includes goals on new media technology:

Instruction in new technology is critically important for writers who would participate in the full spectrum of the writing world; this includes an understanding of writing on the web, website construction, integration of other media with writing and desktop publishing. (2017c, ‘Goals’)

This goal further emphasises the need for research to enhance pedagogical understanding and improve practice.

There are many ways that creative writers are engaging with the digital world, one example being digital poetics. Yet, the focus does not consider the sociology of the relationship to the space as a marketplace. There are those in digital poetics looking at the relationship with the creative writing classroom and digital storytelling, but there is not much consideration of the student trying to write for the digital marketplace and what effect that may have on the field. Andrew (2012) discusses the possibilities of online teaching and is encouraged by Healey’s (2009a) argument that the ‘opposition between cultivated humanism and vulgar marketplace, between impractical creativity and practical profitability, is rapidly disappearing’ (Healey 2009a cited in Andrew 2012, sect. ‘Introduction’). [11] Further, Andrew argues for the need to nurture the market for online delivery by ‘better understanding the theories and pedagogies of online delivery and its potential for community-building and for workshops’ (para. 5). Others are engaging in this research. For instance, Rein (2015) explores ways to improve the online classroom situation. Some researchers are focusing on the opportunities afforded by digital publishing. For example, Williams (2015) considers the creative writing pedagogy of the future and argues that students should be taught to ‘think strategically and rhetorically about where to publish and how to be read’ (p. 256). Williams argues that finding an online audience should be a part of what is taught, whether that is weighing up the quality of online journals and sites or using social media to connect and draw readers. But what are the implications for a student trying to work in this space? Barnard (2017) considers her existing skills from previous training in other forms of technology that could also
have value for ‘the demands of a “postdigital age” ’ (p. 1). Further, she believes that this approach can be taught to others.

2.13. Significance

Debate about the marketplace relationship is ongoing in the field of creative writing. By reviewing the literature, I have elicited the views of students and educators about the student’s relationship to the marketplace and addressed some of the terms used when talking about the issue. The ‘marketplace’ is a site of resistance to be negotiated and this raises the question of how those in the field might negotiate the opportunities presented by a digital marketplace while honouring a range of traditions.

2.14. Conclusion

The study has examined a creative writing student’s relationship in creative writing to the marketplace, as described in current scholarship by students and educators in the field of creative writing. The findings indicate that there are students who do want to reach the marketplace and publish and that there are resistances to this outcome, as well as support for achieving this goal. Although there has been resistance to the marketplace relationship for valid reasons that honour the traditions and protect the boundaries of the discipline, there are ongoing negotiations of what the relationship to the marketplace means. There is also a range of ways to engage with the marketplace and there are educators who seek to challenge resistance and argue for engaging and preparing students.

Digital technology and new marketplace opportunities raise questions about whether the values, goals and terms used in relation to the marketplace are still valid and if the resistances and areas of engagement can or should be re-negotiated. Digital changes and the unique relationship of the discipline to the marketplace mean there is a need for further research to answer questions such as: how might one write for this new marketplace from within higher education? What strategies would be needed to write for the digital marketplace from within the university context? What does trying to write for the digital marketplace reveal about the relationship? Can new terms be defined to describe the relationship that are in keeping with the
traditions of the field and that do not disrupt the goals? Is there an ideal model of what a creative work might look like? Can the student bypass this confusion and go to the marketplace directly? Would this be a good idea and, if so, should it be supported?

How a student reaches the digital marketplace is significant in an environment that is in constant negotiation, as the field and the marketplace seem to be. Students are affected by this and must engage in some sort of negotiation of their own. Studying how a student might do this could increase understanding about pedagogy and practice and improve outcomes for educators and students. The study has raised more questions than answers and further research is needed.
[1] Manery (2016, p. 159) reports that: ‘A few years ago, AWP quietly phased out its pedagogy forum, although AWP conferences still include numerous panels on creative writing pedagogy (often sparsely attended). AWP’s pedagogy papers, once prominently displayed on its website, have now either vanished completely or become impossible to find even with diligent searching’. A search on the AWP website revealed that *The Writer’s Chronicle: feature archive* has articles about pedagogy but they require an AWP membership to access. The UWA library did not provide access (24 October 2017), https://www.awpwriter.org/magazine_media/writers_chronicle_features

[2] The cases that emerged focus on the Australian, US and UK contexts. While each country has its own approaches and pressures that have shaped the development of programs and inform the practices and pedagogy, in all cases resistances and support do occur.

[3] Olthouse (2013) argues that, in the US context, ‘Empirical research on MFA program outcomes or experiences of MFA students is rare’. She also contends that, ‘The ever-growing popularity of MFA programs, combined with the lack of qualitative or quantitative inquiry into the discipline, makes this context an appropriate area of study’ (p. 261). She does not consider the marketplace issue. There has been more research conducted in the UK and Australian creative writing contexts; however, as Light (2002) argues, historically creative writing ‘has not been regarded as suitable for study in higher education, let alone an object of theoretical study’ (p. 259).


[5] The study refers to ‘universities’ as doing the reporting, so it is not clear whether the answers are from teachers, administration or directly from students.

[7] Myers (2006) argues that, by 1996, the massive growth of creative writing programs had secured creative writing in the university and the debate had become about the organisational relationship (sect. ‘Afterword’). McGurl (2009) divides *The program era* into three parts. The third part represents the ‘normal functioning since then as one of the signal educational practices of reflexive modernity’ following the ‘long 1960s, when the program really began to multiply’ (p. 28). This period does not distinguish the digital era as significant. Understandably, this was not McGurl’s focus. Dawson (2001) argues for creative writing to become a discipline of knowledge. Donnelly (2010) assesses the creative writing workshop and aims ‘to ascend creative writing studies as a distinct discipline independent in its own scholarship’, alongside literary studies and composition studies (p. 10). Also, see Mayers (2009).


[9] Also, see others on the Romantic myth such as Royster (2005) and Leach (2005).


[11] Healey also presents this argument in his dissertation which I offer for clarity, as I could not access the article that Andrew references (Healey 2009b, p. 9).
Chapter 3. Research Approach: Know Thyself

3.1. Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 1, this dissertation is presented as three published papers along with an analytic autoethnography that is introduced with its own separate methods chapter. The overall approach was emergent and each chapter is thematically related and addresses the broad aim of the research—to examine the relationship of the creative writing student in higher education to the digital marketplace. Action research was used in the development of creative work to engage in the digital marketplace. For each of the three published papers, the approach taken and the reason for the approach will be explained. Following each paper, a summary will clarify the findings and the future work required. This explanation helps to clarify the emergent nature of the research.

This chapter presents the paper ‘Know thyself: know thy market: an examination of the role of new market opportunities in relation to academic assessment of creative arts and the pursuit of knowledge’. The paper was written for the 2010 National Academy of Screen and Sound (NASS) Conference held at Murdoch University. It was accepted for publication in June 2011 and published online (Suchy 2011a). Some of the sources cited are no longer available online. In these instances, I have provided up-to-date sources or removed the reference.

3.1.1. Approach

I wrote a position paper to begin to address the relationship of the creative writing student in higher education to the digital marketplace. The paper examines the relationship of the creative writer in an academic context in the quest to attain an academic ideal of self-knowledge, while pursuing a university degree and engagement with the marketplace. I seek to clarify the challenges and potential of moving towards more engagement with the digital marketplace. After providing background about the philosophical concerns of self-knowledge, creative writing and publication, I question when a writer has enough knowledge to begin publishing considering the new publication opportunities afforded by the digital age. Statistics from government agencies and associations, along with arguments from
philosophers, artists and academics, are used to debate the issue of when a student in higher education should engage with the digital marketplace.

My reason for choosing this approach was that, in the beginning stage of the research, my goal was to write a screenplay that would be realised in the digital marketplace. This goal had some specific challenges in terms of the critical component of the dissertation and the project development. The field of creative writing has been shown to be rather non-market-focused; therefore, engaging with the marketplace and determining how to present the research and have it recognised was a concern. In addition, screenwriting as an area of research is only beginning to receive recognition in the field of creative writing (Baker 2013, Baker et al. 2015).

My research had started before this recognition began to occur. At the time, I sought to generate support for my research and to find an academic community in which my work would be recognised and potentially produced. I turned to NASS which was holding a conference in which some of my cohort from media studies were presenting papers. I felt that this event was a good starting place for positioning my work for the following reasons:

1) the experience might build relationships that could help me overcome the challenge of working between two departments (this is addressed further in Chapter 7)
2) ‘IM: Interactive Media is a refereed interdisciplinary electronic journal administered by the National Academy of Screen and Sound (Australia) and conceived as an interactive forum for researchers in screen and screen production’ (NASS n.d.). At the time, the journal was A-ranked. This ranking system is no longer in use. I believed the high-ranking, refereed publication would help me to validate my research
3) the conference was being held locally within the next two months, so it was convenient and would provide the opportunity for relatively quick feedback.
3.2. Know Thyself: Know Thy Market

3.2.1. Know thyself

Inscribed on a wall at the UWA campus are the words *Know thyself* (see Figure 3.1). This dictum is a constant reminder of the student’s purpose, at least during the tenure of their study.

![Figure 3.1: A constant reminder of the student’s purpose](image)

Source: University of Western Australia (photographed by author).

This ancient maxim is found on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi and is attributed to many, including Socrates, who ironically was accused of corrupting the youth of Athens. It raises the question of how anyone can judge someone else’s journey into self-knowledge (whether in arts or any academic pursuit). Ideal teachers may provide resources. They may create real or virtual rooms for the student to enter and explore. Academia may require certain information to be mastered and may test the student to determine whether mastery of a prescribed foundation has been attained, but can
anyone be judged in creating a work that is recognisable as original and masterful while in the process of mastering their own voice?

3.2.2. Judging self-knowledge

Poet, philosopher and artist Kahlil Gibran had clear ideas on creativity and identity. In a letter to Mary Haskell, the American schoolmistress and Gibran’s secret love, Gibran wrote of the judgement of his painting and the conflicting agendas of the judge (in this case a Miss Keyes) and the artist: ‘I know too well what is wrong in my work and I am trying to make it right, but Miss Keyes does not know and she thinks it is the technique. Even when my technique becomes perfect Miss Keyes will not like my work’ (Gibran & Haskell 1973, p. 52).

Gibran’s comments are interesting — not only do they demonstrate that as an artist he had a very clear plan to exploit his work, they suggest that if a person is pursuing a true journey to self-knowledge then that person knows exactly what is wrong with the work. And who else can see what is there? There can be great compassion, some teachers will be able to guide better than others and some may be wiser and older in spirit, but ultimately the journey belongs to the individual.

The controversial Indian philosopher Osho confirms the difficulties of judgement when a creative person is in the process of self-discovery, when he says: ‘The greater a person is the more time it takes for people to recognise him … He has to create his own values; by the time he has created the values, he is gone’ (1995, p. 201). If this statement is true, then we might question if students who are considered successful early on are actually the least creative by long-term standards. We do not have the perspective of time to judge.

3.2.3. What is a teacher to do?

Despite these idealisms about creativity and greatness, if time is the true judge, what are teachers to do? The reality is that, until now, we have lived in a hierarchical system that demands judgement. While as teachers and practitioners we like our comforts, and we want an income, we may not like what we must do and may prefer to be doing our own art.
Matthew Arnold, the nineteenth-century poet, philosopher and inspector of schools, complained of his distaste for having to judge: ‘All the best of my days [are] taken up with matters which thousands of people could do just as well as I and that what I have a special turn for doing I should have no time for’ (Stone 1997, p. 85).

Nietzsche recognised the limits of an ‘ambitious program of self-cultivation’ when he went to work as professor of philology at the University of Basel. He recognised that in taking the position of teacher a person can become smug, indifferent or even hostile to art: ‘Now I must be a philistine too’ (Stone 1997, p. 85). His bohemian wings were clipped.

3.2.4. Teachers as philistines?

Making a living may interfere with the personal pursuit, but teaching is also learning—as teachers and critics we learn about ourselves. We have a choice in judgement as clarified in Matthew 7:2: ‘For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you’. This idea grants us the opportunity to affect the system that we live in. If we are concerned about our own careers, we set a standard that will elevate our students and ourselves and the belief that art is valuable to our society. Maybe the role of the teacher is to help students to find a way to judge themselves. In this way perhaps, the teacher can have an ‘aesthetic consciousness’ that also attaches to communal responsibility. If teachers are accountable to the highest standard, then they will be the best teachers. ‘Arnold praised Humboldt’s view that one should first “perfect one’s self by all the means in one’s power preparatory to helping others”’ (Stone 1997, p. 85). Likewise, when the Dalai Lama was asked how he deals with the enormous burdens he shoulders, he replied that he must know himself first and that in nurturing and caring for the self he can better teach others (2002). [1]

In the student/teacher relationship nurture and learning (for both parties) can come from the Socratic Method, in the posing of questions to allow the development of an inner dialogue. If, as Plato says, ‘thought is the inner dialogue of the soul with itself’ (Gadamer 2008, p. 66), then what is the place where there is no more dialogue, where there are no more questions to be asked on a subject? Is this a place of pure knowing? Maybe that is where the student has created art.
What happens on the way to this place of pure knowing, to this place in which there can be no more discussion? Of course, for the artist, there needs to be production of the creative work, but when it is time to move on, whether by real or artificial pressures, how do students move on, and are they prepared, can they be prepared for what they must face?

3.2.5. Moving out of the classroom: the Rapunzel enigma

The classic fairytale Rapunzel demonstrates this problem and raises many questions. There are many variations of this fairytale, but most versions begin with a couple that live next door to an enchantress or witch. The pregnant wife craves a root that she sees growing in the garden of the enchantress. The husband steals the root for his wife and, when confronted by the enchantress, agrees to give up his unborn child to save himself. The child Rapunzel (named after the root) is handed over to the enchantress and is kept in a tower.

Everyone knows Rapunzel is the girl with the long mane, but she is more than a pretty head of hair. Several versions of this story, including the Grimm’s version, reveal that Rapunzel is a singer (Grimm & Grimm 1812). [2] She has an enchanting voice and her ethereal song is what attracts the young man or prince to the tower. The story continues with the enchantress’s discovery of the young couple. The enchantress shears Rapunzel of her hair and ousts her from the tower into the world, much like the student artist who is booted from the protective walls of the ivory tower into the real cold, cruel world. Later, when the young man comes to visit Rapunzel, the enchantress drops the hair down, but when the prince climbs into the tower he is not deceived. He is not in love with the hair or the mere appearance of beauty. He jumps from the tower, falls into a prickly bush and is blinded.

Meanwhile, Rapunzel wanders the world and, we are told, she is still singing. Song is her art form. Her voice is the spirit calling in the wilderness for love. Ultimately, the art does find its own audience and own reward. Rapunzel’s voice is heard by the young man who was blinded and love is blind to her physical appearance. He knows her by her art, by the projection of her spirit. When she cries upon his eyes, he sees again and all is right.
The ability to release students who can go into the world to find what they are seeking with their art is the Rapunzel enigma. What is it that she was seeking? What is she singing for? Why did she need to express herself in that way? In other words, what is the student seeking, what are they creating for, why have they chosen to express themselves in that particular way? And why did Rapunzel not just call out ‘Help, help’ from the window at any passer-by? The answer is not that she is in danger, but that she is seeking something greater through her creative expression—she is on a quest. Who will the audience be, who will hear the voice of the artist and be blinded to everything else but the real beauty, the real art that is projected from the heart and soul and spirit? How can art, the expression of the unique, true spirit find its place in the world? And can teachers do more than cut off the student’s metaphorical ‘hair’ and kick them out, that is, graduate them?

This story raises a great deal of questions. Is the ivory tower a holding place to practice art? Can the teacher offer any more than the enchantress? Is the true audience in the world and not in the tower? When do we leave the tower and ‘get real’? When is the student perfected?

3.2.6. Perfect enough?

We need, as artists and individuals, to have validation that what we know is already known in a sense—that our ideas are connected and that we are not an isolated self, but rather are part of a continuum and connected to the greater transcendental self.

[3] It is this legitimisation that we wander the world seeking, looking for a piece here, a piece there.

Gibran imagines how it might have been for the first poet: ‘[He] must have suffered much when the cave dwellers laughed at his mad words. He would have given his bow and arrows and lion skin, everything he possessed, just to have his fellow-men know the delight and the passion which the sunset had created in his soul’ (Gibran & Haskell 1973, pp. 53–54).

Nothing has changed in terms of that longing to express and connect, for it is not ourselves we seek, it is ourselves in connectedness to the other, larger self. As Arnold states, ‘The prime direct aim’ of instruction is enabling ‘a man to know himself and the world’ (Stone 1997, p. 89).
Sharing creative art with the world is noble by Arnold’s terms, yet how much is being done to prepare the student and does the academic world have a responsibility to do this? Even if the artist is prepared and trained to share their art, will the world really comprehend that great journey? According to James, ‘The deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer’ (James 1972, p. 21). Will that quality be recognised and what do we do to help the quality of the mind of the producer?

Nietzsche reminds us that ‘our fittest educators are those who point back to the ancients—Schopenhauer, Wagner, Burckhardt, Thomas Arnold and—best of all, the Greeks themselves’ (Stone 1997, p. 88). Although this helps us to ascend Nietzsche’s ladder of culture, the question is, is this the student’s goal? And should that be the goal of all universities for all students? While Nietzsche believed that only a handful would climb the arduous ladder towards perfection, Arnold advocated a system of state-administered schools aimed at the genuine perfecting of the individual.

The question we keep coming back to is: when are we perfect enough? When is the student perfected? The irony of this question is that perfection takes time and this seems in conflict with the rat-race nature of the world. Yet, we live in a world obsessed with perfection. Image enhancement software such as Adobe Photoshop is a good example of our commercially driven ideals of visual perfection, of taking a person, who is supposedly already God’s perfect creation and making that person just a little bit more perfect to sell the next product.

Science tells us of the impossibility of perfection. For example, basic quantum mechanics says that states of knowledge cannot be complete and that an observer cannot know the result of all possible measurements perfectly well. Therefore, if maximal knowledge is defined as pure state and states of non-maximal knowledge are mixed state, we might say an art student is in the mixed state and that the pure state is not achievable. There is no maximal knowledge and this is more evident today than ever before in history.

3.2.7. New realities

The reason no one can attain maximal knowledge is that we live in a new age and a new economy. Western society moved from an agricultural base (in which
knowledge was controlled by the church, texts were copied by hand and available to a limited audience) to an industrial base (the Gutenberg press made knowledge more widely available). While we still have agriculture and industry, our economy has moved to being one that is information based. Knowledge is built upon information, but survival does not mean the acquisition of maximal knowledge.

Survival once meant mastery of a large body of somewhat manageable knowledge that could only be accessed by certain people within a certain system. The gates of the system were carefully guarded. Those gates are being knocked open everywhere because of the internet. Survival now, and in the future, depends on how students will sort and manage the vast amounts of information they can access.

A new utopian society might be considered a wisdom society, in which wisdom lies in knowing what to do with all this knowledge and how to make it useful—an ideal society in which all human beings are educated to the highest level, as Arnold would prescribe. However, this again becomes a circular argument about the pursuit of perfection.

The fact is information is a commodity. We can collect, create, exchange, distribute, circulate, process, send and control information and this is how a living can be made. Art, too, is part of the information economy. The practitioner gathers information and forms knowledge of their subject. How artists can sort and express that information will determine their success. Godin (2006) says that the new marketplace will determine real creativity and reward it. [4] This pushes the discussion of whether a marketplace approach is valid in the academic environment into a new arena.

We might agree or disagree with older academic arguments, such as the Baroque ideal of an audience being necessary to complete a work, or, in literature the idea of reader response criticism, or the Aristotelian idea that part of the definition of perfect means that something has attained its purpose, such as the art having attained an audience. However, a couple of employment facts may better support the idea of a marketplace approach:

1) there will be more self-employment (Torres 2010) and the odds are the artist may be self-employed
2) there will be more competition. [5]

We are also experiencing a changing marketplace with less bricks and mortar, an increasing dependence on the internet for information and as a place to buy and with more people doing both over time. [6]

3.2.8. Fear and frustration

The fact that change is occurring and there is a demand for the artist to be entrepreneurial is evidenced through social media. [7] Some artists are finding freedom for creative expression and entrepreneurship without any concern for the standards of anyone but the consumer. Others are finding the new world more frustrating as expressed in Book Launch 2.0, a 2010 Moby Award winning YouTube short film, in which the author character says, ‘YouTube. Of course. ‘Cause you know that’s the dream, right, because 20 years ago a big part of the dream was being able to put little videos on the internet. That’s it. That’s why we do this’ (Cass 2008, min. 2:29).

Certainly, the great ‘cry from within’ never before conceived marketing itself through new technologies, but the reality is these are new mediums or new tools for the artist to work with. Maybe this cry of frustration is more at not being seen rather than any real problem with the technology.

The issue is that the marketplace in film, books and music has changed. The publishing and producing giants are threatened. The number of feature films being acquired at festivals is very small, book publishers want to see proof that the writer has an audience and music downloading has changed the way of business for musicians, for better or worse. Some consider this as an opportunity and many new practitioners are thinking across platforms.

3.2.9. Sullied or sacred?

So, are these artists selling out by turning to business for the answers? Alboher (2008), asked this question in an interview featured in The New York Times. Absolutely not, answered one respondent. ‘Yes, playing music is mostly about the art. But it’s important to think about what you’re going to do with it. You can play it in a bar, or you can be striving to take it to the top’ (Alboher 2008).
For many people money is the determination of success, but there are also people who judge success by other standards. McGucken (2014) discusses this issue of putting higher ideals above the bottom line. McGucken argues the artist should lead to create wealth that serves soul, spirit and character and not just the economy (McGucken 2014, min. 6:55).

This is an imperative for the artist, a moral obligation. Artists cannot ‘sell out’ if they are creating and leading responsibly. Fear of leadership and the work involved is another thing. Some might believe that it was enough that they had the idea and created the work, even if it was only art for art’s sake. However, this is never enough, as Gibran concurs: ‘It is surely a noble thing to say “art for art’s sake” but is it not nobler to open the eyes of the blind so that they may share the silent joy of your days and nights? True Art should be made practical by revealing its beauty to people—I said practical because anything that adds to our world of vision is practical’ (Gibran & Haskell 1973, p. 54).

3.2.10. The key lesson: stop waiting to be discovered

Jean Cocteau, who was a poet, novelist, dramatist, designer, boxing manager, playwright, artist and filmmaker, is credited by many as saying something to the effect that film will only become art once its raw materials are as inexpensive as pencil and paper. Today, the tools for filmmaking are not only cheap, individuals can control the whole process, including the most important aspect (from a business perspective) of having a direct pipeline to their audience. This applies to many fields of art.

Obviously, ease of access creates more competition. Many questions arise, such as: do we have real art and is anyone able to make a living from this? Are people making a living as artists or living off people who want to be artists? Are the dreamers being sucked dry of the dream? Is art for art’s sake possible? Is it realistic to expect to make a living in such a way? Is the commercialisation of art through new media and social media viable? Or are people being sold snake oil? What is valuable? What is an artistic commodity? Is any project worth doing if the artist does not have a viable plan for marketing to a pre-sold audience?
Multi-talented Cocteau was an entrepreneur who created wherever he found his market. This creative imagination and entrepreneurial application appears to be more important than any marketing tool. The question then becomes: what relevance is there in creating without intent or without understanding of the marketplace?

Creators who knew their audience have produced many great stories. Two obvious examples are Shakespeare and Dickens. There is also the matter of the canon and who decides and makes up a canon. These issues are shifting and can be controlled in different ways than in the past. For example, author and trainer McColl (2012) teaches programs that guarantee the possibility for anyone (with dedication and hard work) to achieve bestseller status. [8] What does this mean? Are we seeing a true democratisation or is this something that only those who have been educated sufficiently and with enough money to access the resources can achieve?

Prestige is a concern for some. Others ask: can we at least sustain a livelihood? If not, is the creation of art still in the domain of the independently wealthy? Has technology done nothing to move us forward? Do we hold big business or, as in Australia, the government, accountable for providing the means for the artist? These are all issues to be explored. Nonetheless, the more unique we are as artists, the more we know the uniqueness of ourselves and the better we can define our brand.

Brand may sound like a bad word to some, but our brand is our own unique identity. Gibran had a brand and so did Shakespeare. Each is unique in his identity and we know them for that. Once we have decided upon the identity we wish to express we must discover who is interested in allying with this. In this way, we find our affiliates and who will work with us.

Is branding in conflict with the ideas of the higher education? I do not believe this is the case. Branding is essential and relevant. It has always been done. The difference is today we have new tools. We are talking now about being in the world as artists, not being known by the university, and the sooner we help prepare the student for this reality, the better.

If the creator wants to fit into the new marketplace, they do not just think about creating products or services, they must create experiences. They must consider building a tribe—every tribe has members who are storytellers, painters, dancers and
musicians. Some members play multiple roles. Do you the teacher or you the creator know your tribe? Do you know who wants to hear your story or share your images?

These questions also mean that artists need to consider if they are going to give the art away and let someone else provide the experience and profit from it, or if they are going to own it.

The quest for perfection is futile in the academic environment, as it is an artificial world that cannot really define worth. The student senses that if only they can make their work perfect by the academic standard then someone out there in the world will recognise their genius.

In de Heer’s film Dingo (2005), when Miles Davis is asked to judge the music of the aspiring John Anderson, he notes ‘If I say I like it, you’ll think I’m being nice, if I say I don’t like it, you’re going to be hurt. You don’t need my opinion’ (time. 1:26).

The only thing we can do is to go deep into ourselves, to our unique experiences and create from there. I recommend to all who are creating works to not be afraid of what you perceive to be strange within you, for your own voice does sound strange compared to the rest of the world and that is good. We must take our own visions and boldly put them out into the marketplace and let no one discourage us from what we see.

Pink (2009) popularised the notion that artists, especially those who can marry left- and right-brain skills (i.e., the analytical and the creative), will be in high demand in the coming years. Alboher (2008) reports that artists are taking charge—rather than seeing art as something to pursue in the hours when they are not earning a living, artists are developing businesses around their talents. Alboher’s article examines artists who are part of a growing movement that has caught the attention of business experts and is being nudged along by both art and business schools.

3.2.11. New directions in education

Students need tools and schools can provide these tools. Some teachers are offering options such as McGucken, who teaches a class in Artistic Entrepreneurship and Technology at Pepperdine University in California. His course addresses issues related to protecting content, branding and setting up a store. McGucken encourages
those who create art to have the skills to own it, profit from it and protect it (McGucken 2014).

The artist should be concerned with knowing that their intellectual property is valuable and needs protecting. Others are teaching what schools are not teaching. Goldstein, a film producer, teacher, entrepreneur and lawyer, teaches these basics to writers and entrepreneurs and finds a huge following because artists realise they need these essential skills but he is not affiliated with any academic program. He consults privately to those seeking to advance their writing careers in the film industry. [9]

3.2.12. Seeing the object as it is

A disinterested examination of the internet might reveal it to be a tool to assist the artist’s journey, a way to help us brand ourselves and value ourselves, a way to practice as we aim for the bullseye of our Zen moment. [10] At what point the world pays attention we do not know, but if we are not showing our work we are not seen. If we are not finding our tribe and connecting, if we are not reaching out as soon as possible to an audience, then we are not using one of the most powerful marketing tools the artist has ever had available.

Commercialisation may not be for everyone. There are times when the artist needs to find a voice without a commitment to outcome; however, understanding the ways to make the work valued is a choice that should be considered. We can allow the random hand of fate to determine the outcome, or we can have some choice in directing our future as artists. The internet offers an opportunity for the artist’s empowerment. Now, more than ever, we must follow the dictum know thyself. For knowing yourself is knowing what you care about, knowing that you are worthy and have value and knowing that what you dream, imagine and create is your purpose and that your work can sustain you and others.

3.3. Summary

The research question asks how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university and the research seeks to understand the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. This chapter represents the starting place of the research. At the start of the candidature, I was engaged with the self-help industry and with learning about
the digital marketplace. The data used at this stage was my past experiences as a creative writer and teacher in the university and in the marketplace. This data was primarily drawn from my memories. I tried to synthesise those experiences into a theory to test and I made the claim that to write for the digital marketplace a person needs to ‘know thyself and thy marketplace’. To analyse the experiences, I compared my own struggles with the marketplace to the experiences of artists who have expressed their own angst with the marketplace. I presented statistics and some popular arguments about the digital marketplace.

The major findings of this stage of the research were that:

- in comparing my experiences with others, I found that many have struggled to balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship
- the digital marketplace appears to offer opportunities that might challenge ideas of perfection and change ideas about the judgement of creativity.

3.4. Interpretation of Findings, Limitations and Future Research

In the first six months of candidature, I was seeking to understand how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university. I was trying to grasp the dynamic between the creative writer working within the academic context and the changes brought by the digital marketplace. The paper demonstrates the struggle.

A UWA reviewer criticised the paper for its broad, unfocused canvassing. Additionally, my statements were not well supported, yet the approach indicates the concern for the aesthetic, an inability to connect to a field and a lack of awareness or direction towards sociological research being conducted in the field of creative writing. What was important at the time of writing was to sort out what the ‘world’ seemed to indicate the digital marketplace offered and to position that against what I knew at the time of the university creative writing experience. Further, the urgency of finding a community and publication drove this early publication. At the time I did not feel that within English studies and creative writing the film script and the engagement with the marketplace would be recognised. My training in an American MFA program (in the 1990s) did not provide me with much awareness of the research being conducted in Australia and the UK and the strong community that has
developed. Nor did my background prepare me with the skills to conduct a social science research project. The paper serves as a call to arms and represents my experiences at this stage of the dissertation journey. However, the level of academic writing was not strong at this point and did not engage deeply with the field and pedagogy of creative writing, because I had not located the literature on this subject. I did not believe English literary theory would help me to address the research question; therefore, I did not regard my master’s degree background as helpful in that regard. Ultimately, this paper has come to represent some of my experiences and provide some data for the analytic autoethnography that is presented in Chapter 7. However, at this stage, there was a need for further research into the field, its pedagogy and practices and a need to develop a connection with the creative work.
Notes

[1] This idea is presented in several ways in the Dalai Lama’s How to practice: the way to a meaningful life (2002).


[3] In this instance, I refer to what is sometimes called American transcendentalism, as distinguished from the word transcendental. Transcendentalism in this definition means to transcend the physical and empirical and is realised through the individual's intuition rather than through the doctrine of established religions.

[4] Godin (2006) defined the term ‘permission marketing’. In his blogs and books, Godin says that the marketplace will determine real creativity to reveal what is unique and original and reward it.

[5] Robinson (2007) claims that because in the next 30 years, more people will be graduating then ever before ‘this means suddenly degrees aren’t worth anything’ (min. 19:00).


[7] Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as ‘a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content’.

[8] McColl offered a special course on how to turn a book into a bestseller and offered a one-year money back guarantee.

[9] Author, speaker and Hollywood film producer Goldstein has consulted, advised and mentored me on legal and business issues. His website is garywgoldstein.com

[10] In this instance, I am playfully stretching Arnold’s definition beyond criticism of literature.
Chapter 4. The Social Media Marketplace in the ‘Quaint’
Creative Writing Classroom

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the paper ‘The social media marketplace in the “quaint” creative writing classroom: our terms for engagement’ that was published online in TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses (Suchy 2013d). TEXT is published by the AAWP.

4.1.1. Approach and justification for approach

To further explore the theme and define the relationship of the student to the digital marketplace, I developed a second paper for publication. In this paper I attempted to define a new relationship for the undergraduate student in regard to the digital marketplace in a way that honoured pedagogical approaches. I focused on a significant tool used in digital marketing: social media. The approach specifically sought to engage with and address the AAWP audience. I researched various approaches to teaching creative writing as well as theories about the marketplace relationship to begin to define a theory for the digital relationship.

There were several reasons for this approach. First, I had discovered the leading body for research work in, and discussion of, creative writing in Australasia. I wanted to test the ideas with this audience to see if the ideas could be validated and thought it useful to do this through peer-reviewed publication. Second, while I sought to develop the creative work of my own project, the work in this chapter went beyond my own creative production to consider pedagogy and the practices of other students. I reasoned if other students could connect the creative component of their work to the digital marketplace and this could be recognised in pedagogical research and discussion, I might be able to better justify my own creative work in this regard.

Importantly, when there is no previous work on a subject, descriptive theories and definitions need to be generated. The literature review demonstrated that the discipline of creative writing is not unaware of the relationship of writer to marketplace and that the relationship is one of engagement and resistance that the
student must negotiate. There are many times when the creative writing classroom has responded to marketplace pressure or even encouraged marketplace involvement (often in unique and creative ways). This background is important in assessing and considering current goals for students in regard to publication outcomes, particularly in a new marketplace that allows anyone to publish at any time. Finding terms for the discussion would lay groundwork for future research.

4.2. The Social Media Marketplace in the ‘Quaint’ Creative Writing Classroom: Our Terms for Engagement

Despite calls for more digital engagement and the fact that students are arriving on campus with digitally connected skills, creative writing classrooms are generally ‘low-tech and quaintly humanistic’ (McGurl 2009, p. 21). We do not appear to be incorporating the socially networked student experiences in the ‘quaint’ creative writing classroom. One of the barriers to more engagement may be our hard-won ‘markers of professional difference’ (Ritter 2001, p. 208), that is, the things that distinguish us from other classes. This particular marker is that we are not market-driven. Through examining this issue, but not eliminating the marker, we might determine if we can and should open the class up to more engagement. This paper explores the terms ‘social media’ and ‘social media marketplace’ to consider changes to the marketplace and the ways to engage with the digital world that honour our traditions and benefit our classrooms by enhancing educational experiences, without excessive cost or training.

There have been calls from creative writing studies theorists and practitioners for attention to the matter of engagement with digital technology. For example, Moxley (2010) proposes that teachers should be teaching ‘Interactive gaming environments, video, wiki poems, and wiki fiction [and] hypertextual texts’ (p.237). At the PhD level, he advises that programs could include training in ‘Intellectual Property, Social Networking Systems, Desktop Design and New Media’ (2010, p. 236). Mayers (2009) calls for ‘explor[ing] the implications of new electronic forms of text distribution’ (p. 225). Donnelly (2010) considers the ‘Google Generation’ (p. 11) and reports that some institutions, including the University of Massachusetts Amherst, George Mason University and Adelphi University are pioneering work in digital writing workshops (p. 16). Other university English departments, such as Purdue,
demonstrate an interest in technology as can be observed by their websites. Recently, Koehler (2013) proposed defining and examining a ‘digital arm of creative writing studies’ (p. 380). His aim is to build a ‘digital craft criticism’ (pp. 379–397). However, while some are talking about and becoming more digitally literate in their classrooms, the ‘quaint’ classroom persists. [1]

There are many possible reasons why our classrooms function without much engagement with digital technology. These include training and cost, lack of interest and a need to maintain markers of difference. First, the use of digital technology requires training and funding for equipment. For example, to write ‘digital poetics’ in Losh’s University of California San Diego class requires learning how to write basic computer code. [2] Therefore, the teacher must have knowledge in computer coding. [3] The divide may also be related to the mainly part-time professoriate, economic, administrative and funding issues. Second, there may not be an interest in the issues of digital classroom engagement that Moxley proposes, such as creating hypertext or writing games. There may be a belief that there is not time to engage when we have other things to cover and the focus of teaching for many is on the forms of prose narrative, poetry and play or script. [4] Third, there may be a belief that engaging with the digital world threatens the position of creative writing in the academy and our hard-won markers of professional difference. [5]

There are undoubtedly other reasons for the divide. However, as teachers in the quaint classroom, we are not taking advantage of some of the opportunities that we have for engagement in the digital world that would not require much effort on our part. Selwyn (2011) notes students are arriving at university already engaged with social media networks and in acquiring knowledge in non–traditional ways. [6] These students are highly connected, collective and creative (2011, p. 2). [7] In fact, both students and teachers come with ‘connected’ knowledge that can inform the quaint creative writing classroom in interesting and useful ways. This does not mean that we need to address hypertext or write games. We do not need to teach those forms. We can stay within the traditional forms if we choose (or consider useful ways of expanding those forms) and we can maintain our markers of difference. However, we can also engage our connected experiences.
The focus of this article is on one marker of difference to give direction to an aspect of digital engagement that may be of particular use. This marker is the creative writing classroom’s relationship with the marketplace. Radia (2012) notes ‘most creative writing programs define themselves as separate from professional writing’ and, in particular, ‘market-driven’ writing (p. 165 [emphasis added]). The distinction is an important part of our history—the creative writing classroom has long resisted the idea of training for a trade or on training to sell, that is, our outcomes should not be influenced by market forces. However, while we may not be market-driven, our history shows that we are not unaware of the relationship of the writer to the marketplace. Today, technology is changing the marketplace for writers. [8] For example, *The National Writers’ Congress Australian Society of Authors* in October 2013 recognised the historical and digital marketplace changes. [9] Writers and teachers have a responsibility to consider the classroom relationship with the marketplace and technology. With this in mind, this paper examines the terms ‘social media’ and ‘social media marketplace’ to consider ways to engage that honour our traditions and benefit our classrooms by enhancing educational experiences without excessive cost or training.

### 4.2.1. Terms

Choosing the appropriate terms for this discussion has been particularly difficult. There are many people talking, researching and theorising about different elements of the digital world in terms of marketplace. For example, are we talking about a digital market, digital sales and selling, digital publishing, social media, participatory media and engagement media? Are we talking about digital storytelling, transmedia or cross-media marketing or storytelling, an electronic marketplace or global marketplace? Or are we talking theoretically about social capital, market economies, gift economies and so forth? My mind boggled at these possibilities before I recognised that trying to engage with all of these terms and the various fields was defeating my purpose. My goal was to encourage a comfortable, easy level of engaging and an equally comfortable and fairly simple way of explaining a new way of looking at the creative writing classroom relationship with technology and the marketplace. In researching these terms, viewpoints and fields, I was seeking to
bring clarity to what could be done in the quaint classroom in relation to the marketplace and the digital engagement opportunity.

First, I consider the term ‘social media’ in regard to the networked connection experience that most students bring to class. Social media includes Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs, wikis and so forth and can usefully be described as the tools with which we engage and talk online. However, social media is more than that. A helpful business definition of social media is:

Online content created by people using highly accessible publishing technologies. In its most basic sense, social media is a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content. It is a fusion of sociology and technology, transforming monologues (one to many) into dialogues (many to many) and is the democratisation of information, transforming people from content readers into authors. Social media has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world to form relationships for personal, political and business use. Businesses also refer to social media as user-generated content or consumer-generated media. (ISM 2013)

In relation to creative writing, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) note that whatever we are doing with social media, what is most important is understanding that ‘it’s all about participation, sharing, and collaboration, rather than straightforward advertising and selling’ (p. 65). While their approach addresses a business perspective, generally this new relationship with the marketplace and social media is far more than advertising and selling and this is useful when we think about our classroom engagement. [10] That is, we might more easily welcome the idea of engaging with a marketplace that does not only look to advertise and sell. From a business perspective, engaging with social media means the line between creating an object, engaging and selling is softened in a sense. From a creative writing teacher’s perspective, this means we can perhaps relax a little on how we view this marker of difference. We can engage with social media without being market-driven, whether we are presenting artefacts or ideas or practicing how we present ourselves for whatever purpose we intend.

In addition, the choice of the term ‘social media’ for our relationship emphasises the social engagement element over the digital (as in digital media). In the creative writing classroom we are not privileging technology, but human interaction. Harper (2010b) argues for ‘a human experience as the primary defining notion’ of the
workshop and that the focus should not be only on commodification (p. xviii). Thus, in a classroom, if we are not focused on commodification but on ‘valuing’ human experience, we should be observing and discussing the relationship to technological change, and considering the effect and engagement in the classroom—and this includes social media.

For the creative writing classroom, ‘participatory’ is a problematic term because of its association with collaborative work. While there is important research being done in the field of participatory media, and this research can well inform us, we do not want to infer that anyone else need contribute (i.e., write) our developing work, although we do garner feedback. In the creative writing classroom, students generally are not producing collaborative works.

Further, I am not only addressing social media usage—I am examining the creative writing classroom’s relationship with the marketplace and this is why I am interested in the business definition. Social media and social media usage do not necessarily have any relationship to the market unless that term is also used. Therefore, the idea of social media in relationship to marketplace, or, more simply, the term a social media marketplace is useful. [11] To better understand how we might regard our relationship to the social media marketplace, Webb’s (2012) ideas on agora are helpful. [12]

By utilising research into how creativity works, Webb seeks ways in which we can improve our own writing and teaching practices and understand the place of writing in society. Webb’s aim is not to define what creativity is but, by following Csikszentmihalyi’s work (1988, pp. 325–329), to focus on where creativity arises socially and historically (Webb 2012, p. 40). She proposes that the market can help us think in new ways about creative practice to help students deal with ‘the competing imperatives of art and the economy’ (2012, p. 45). From the idea that ‘exchange is not something separate from society, but a part of it’, Webb points to the shared aspect of all markets as having ‘the property of being places for exchange and hence relationships’ (pp. 45–46). An example of this is the Ancient Greek agora, a public forum with a range of functions that included social, civic, political, religious and military, philosophical and commercial encounters—a place of debate, dialogue, evaluation and discourse. Webb argues that agora no longer exists and that
’the only markets that replicate those of the ancient or the medieval worlds are quaint replicas or places for hobby rather than conventional commerce’ (2012, p. 47). She argues that the global marketplace cannot be confined to ‘the narrow walls of the local market’ and that artists and writers should ‘look back to the agora as a metaphorical space and analogue for contemporary practice’ (p. 47). Webb believes that ‘the mass media creates such spaces too; but that this public space is “reductive” ’ (p. 47). [13] Webb concludes by proposing that a creative work such as a book itself can be seen as having the qualities of the agora in that it can be a civic or political encounter and it can generate a space for interaction and discussion (p. 51).

Webb’s ideas about the agora are helpful when considering the social media marketplace. However, I propose that, while a book may have qualities of the agora, the social media marketplace is an agora, in the sense of the Ancient Greek space. It is sufficiently wide enough for global human gathering and we witness an international community in constant interaction. It is not ‘television and other forms of media’ (Webb 2012, p. 47) that have replaced the agora. Television is a one-way interaction, although it might feature messages from people phoning in and Twitter feeds running across the screen. Whereas the social media marketplace allows all dialogue, discussion and interactivity as a whole. Viewing the social media marketplace as an agora further opens the space beyond being a place that is delimited to commodification (and the anxiety that this produces for the creative writing student or teacher).

In summary, viewing the social media marketplace by the terms of agora can clarify the meaning of the space and the relationship to the creative writing classroom. The social media marketplace need not be viewed as pressuring a writer to produce for a market imperative. This might be regarded as antithetical to the economist Florida’s view of creativity, of privileging the economic over creative expression (Florida 2002). Economic outcomes can be encouraged if that is the pedagogical goal of a particular classroom. Imagining possibilities for engagement with the social media marketplace can lay foundations for professional outcomes. Or, if we regard the creative writing classroom as primarily a space for creative practice, or even therapy, there are opportunities that the social media marketplace can afford for that practice.

There is far more that can be done in defining the social media marketplace in
relation to the creative writing classroom. However, this brief examination provides a starting place for understanding that if we are not being pressured to engage in market-driven outcomes, we may actually open up the space to allow students to be better engaged and better prepared with their writing and training for actual outcomes and we can begin to see reasons for our engagement in relation to preparing our students. [14]

Following are some of the reasons for engagement with the marketplace:

1) students and teachers are already utilising social media, thus, we can be more engaged in the classroom by incorporating experiences we are sharing outside the classroom that relate to our creative writing work

2) if artists are ‘created’ out of social formations and cultural influences (Bourdieu 1996, p. 167), then we do need to consider the influence and engagement with social media and the social media marketplace

3) our workshop model can offer an environment for shared knowledge [15] and, by sharing knowledge and experience, we can enhance the knowledge base of the group

4) the writer can situate the creative work in a wider context than the classroom and gain from the feedback of the class to assist in that positioning (development and understanding of context and audience—whether commercial or aesthetic)

5) students can become more aware of opportunities and develop networking skills in a protective and supportive environment that helps them shape themselves as a presence and in developing a voice.

It is important to keep in mind the support given to students to help them transition from academia and that a voice is not ‘a once-and-for-all-matter’. Rather, the ‘voice itself has to be reinvented under the pressures of changing individual and collective experience’ (Cook 2005, p. 200).

There are many other reasons for engagement and by examining both theoretical and practical possibilities we can start to explore more of those reasons. The following suggestions are not intended to suit everyone’s needs but are to open up thinking towards opportunities and benefits for engagement with social media and the social
media marketplace. [16] Further, a teacher does not have to feel intimidated about engaging with social media and looking at the social media marketplace because, as Joosten (2012) stresses, referring to yourself as an expert on the subject is not a good idea because of the ever-changing nature of the medium (p. 26).

The next section offers some practical possibilities for the classroom in ways that honour traditions [17] and ideas on how to achieve the following pedagogical benefits (Joosten 2012, p. 30):

1) gathering and providing feedback
2) increasing communication and contact
3) providing experiential learning opportunities
4) creating cooperative and collaborative learning opportunities.

4.2.1.1. Gathering and providing feedback

An easy way to begin is to explore what already exists by discussing the subject and using student knowledge. As Moxley encourages, we should work ‘with students leading the way’ (2010, p. 237). Students can be encouraged to share their experiences. As Joosten describes, ‘I survey my students to ask them what social media they are using, why they use it, what they like about it and so forth’ (2012, p. 26). Specifically, we can survey students, have an online discussion forum or engage in an informal chat. We might ask them about their preferred social media sites to determine if there is a common place for engagement. In addition, we can ask students what they value about the sites they use and, more specifically, what they value in relation to their own creative writing work and how it informs their creative development and expression, as well as what concerns they have. We do not need to have answers, but we may open these issues to group discussion.

Another option would be to give students an assignment that ‘explores effective uses of social media to enhance the class’ (Joosten 2012, p. 26). In a creative writing class, this could be as simple as a journal entry response or a brainstorm session. If the focus is towards marketplace and publishing outcomes, students may benefit from sharing these ideas with each other or using their thoughts to further develop outcomes for their own projects. Have they been thinking about that engagement? Are they attempting to sell their work? What success have they had? Where and how
do they promote their work? How would addressing a particular audience help their work? Would the class’s understanding of their particular audience benefit the feedback? Alternatively, this could be a discussion on the benefits of not engaging in the marketplace at this stage of the work. Perhaps students are too quick to give away their ideas and development time is required or there is a need for more selectiveness in placement of the work. Students are receptive to this—they already share with each other and want to share in the classroom. When I brought up the idea of social media marketing to my students, they were enthused, sharing ideas and information. For example, one student said his friend had an online magazine and was seeking stories of a particular genre. Several of the students in the class wrote in this genre.

4.2.1.2. Increasing communication and contact

We might encourage communication and contact with our students in many ways. For example, D’nn Lovell and Palmer (2013) increased connectedness by utilising Facebook and journalling with an undergraduate introductory writing class. The goal was to increase students’ ‘feeling of connectedness and to improve critical thinking and writing skills’ (p. 1). While creative writing is now recognised as a separate discipline of study from composition, which this class appears to be, many writing pedagogies do stem from, and are informed by, composition practices.

A common practice in composition, and for some creative writing teachers, is to assign students a journal for warming up, developing thoughts on a topic and trying out ideas. D’nn Lovell and Palmer observed that students demonstrated more enthusiasm for writing on Facebook than in their student journals and decided to investigate how to turn the enthusiasm of Facebook writing to journal writing. A review of the literature revealed the potential benefit to be social capital through increased social bonding and civic engagement. They also sought to discover how writing mechanics might improve and anticipated that using Facebook could increase ‘students’ ability to analyse and discuss local and global problems through their writing’ (p. 1). When the same discussion topics were posted for Facebook engagement, rather than the traditional paper journal read solely by the teacher, the outcomes were that students who were reserved in class were more communicative in the Facebook environment and this carried back to the classroom. Trust and empathy were increased and a stronger sense of community was created. While
writing mechanics on Facebook were not strong, D’n̄n Lovell and Plamer recognised the groundwork that the dialogue laid in creating a draft to prepare for the polished final written product. Students’ initial opinions on using Facebook were varied, with one student strongly opposed. However, in the end, all seemed satisfied with this medium. In conclusion, the researchers recommend Facebook and confirm higher engagement with writing by students and improved analytical thinking (pp. 1–4).

Another way to improve contact with our students is to examine our means of communication outside the classroom. Required office-hour times will bring in a student; however, students may not engage as often and if teachers are trying to reach them in this way, we may not be most effective. Even email may not be the most effective method for communication. Email lacks the speed of communication that students can achieve through social media. What we want to communicate, and how quickly, will determine if social media engagement is important. Studies would have to be examined to determine if enhanced speed of communication could improve engagement, understanding of assignments and learning outcomes. However, personal experience demonstrates faster and improved communication when students are engaging on a Facebook open group page. Through this method, I was able to provide students with class information more immediately. This offered a more public engagement, in which everyone had a chance to check in and see what was happening. For example, in the Facebook group an individual could identify the number of members who had viewed a posting. For teaching ‘attendance’ purposes this provided the identity of the student, so we could see that the message had been read, as well as have dialogue. In addition, we could private message (pm) individual students through this medium. Students should be offered the option to ‘opt out’ if they find such engagement awkward, but in this experience engagement did not offer any problems and instead increased communication and contact.

4.2.1.3. Providing experiential learning opportunities

The idea of the creative writer using the social media marketplace to engage with the public could align with Dawson’s (2005) proposal that the creative writer should ‘command a presence as public intellectual’ by using the forum of the media in all its forms (p. 202). [18] For example, if the teacher is focused towards this outcome, encouraging students who are writing novels that speak towards social concerns
might also look towards engagement with websites such as www.theconversation.com. This would encourage the professionalism of the writer and help to clarify the development of the creative work. This could be done as an exercise and, if something particularly well written emerged, the work could be submitted to the online discussion. The practice of thinking about the creative piece as also having a social place could benefit the developing work.

However, training the public intellectual is not the goal of all classrooms, nor is the idea of politicising creativity. Harper (2012b) stresses that ‘recognising that creative writing does not primarily involve the creation of final artefacts is important’ (p. 22). The goal of the classroom practice may not be to create complete or public works. As an alternative, we might examine where meaning in creation is privileged to help determine how the social media marketplace might be engaged and valued. Thus, another way to provide experiential opportunities is through consideration of our pedagogical needs and the experience of teaching. We might draw from what Donnelly calls pedagogical strands to engage creative writing in the social media marketplace. Donnelly builds on literary theorist Abrams’ triangle of author, work and reader to identify four major pedagogical strands for creative writing that she refers to as New Critical, Expressive, Mimetic and Reader Response (2011, p. 18). Donnelly argues that:

What a teacher privileges as it relates to text, writer, reader and reality (as an implicit or explicit world-view) is tied directly to her/his pedagogies, to the structure of her classroom, to her course planning, selection of readings, choices of exercises and assignment, reading practices, classroom management, workshop practice, social relations—evaluation, justification and the grading of course requirements. (p. 18)

We might add social media marketplace to this list, to consider the effect on the pedagogy of the classroom and if we are talking, sharing, collaborating or selling—all of which are aspects of the social media marketplace. An example of how this would be applied is if we privilege the reader, and we select readings and materials related to reader response criticism, we would do well to examine what this means in the social media marketplace. We could bring that discussion into the classroom to explain to the student our own theoretical underpinnings and ask students to lead the thinking, applying their own experiences to the approaches we are using to examine creative work.
While the creative writing classroom may be idealistically committed to the development of the individual, we cannot be sure if the student is training to become an accomplished writing practitioner when ‘most creative writing students will fail to become published poets or novelists’ (Moxley 2010, p. 236). Students may become appreciators and buyers of books or work in another part of the industry, as Dawson notes regarding the ‘traineeship’ aspect of programs. Even from that perspective, the social media marketplace can be useful in helping students to experience how new materials are being accessed, created and presented, as well as the writer’s role in the social media marketplace. One approach is to experience engagement with writers, publishers, editors and others in the field. Bizzaro (1994) supports the idea of teachers spending ‘less time telling our students what they should do when they write and more time showing them who they can be’ (p. 234). Thus, engaging through the social media marketplace can help build networks and encourage students who are serious about developing writing careers or otherwise being involved in the field and community to connect in a professional way, whether through formal communication on sites such as LinkedIn, or less formally through Facebook and Twitter. We never know who will be working where, and we can selectively network today with the people we feel will benefit from the relationship and who we may be working with tomorrow. In addition, this may offer students a continuity that is lost with the modern university staffed with ‘contingent’ workers (Rifkin 1995, p. 190; Schell 1998, p. 12) or global travelling leaders in the field (i.e., the ability to continue a working relationship with a professor).

Connecting through social media networks builds a creative community of writers who can support each other beyond the short life of the classroom. Whether this work will be paid or not is not the point. The goal is to build a network. When we go to a party to network, we do not engage by telling people we want to be paid for meeting them. We are engaging with people who share common interests. We are developing relationships and discussing work and this is what we do in practice in the creative writing classroom. Engaging with the social media marketplace offers more opportunities. For many writers, social engagement is difficult, but it is also necessary. Online communication may be easier for the very reason that they are writers and the written word may be their most effective method of engaging and communicating. They may find they can share resources and opportunities more
easily. These shared experiences can increase social capital inside and outside the classroom.

4.2.1.4. Creating cooperative and collaborative learning opportunities

There are many opportunities for collaborative learning and work done in lower grades and the published literature on this subject can offer support and direction for higher education. A possibility for learning about an audience would be to have students ‘workshop’ their pieces in class and then test the work on a wider audience, posting to a community blog that is to be read online, rather than using the traditional handout approach. The group could be closed for broader and more detailed feedback. When putting something online, there is more of a sense of a published, polished work and there is a different effort put into preparation, as well as into evaluation. This type of assignment is already being practised and documented in pedagogical practice for secondary education. For example, see Teaching writing instruction in the digital age: techniques for grades 5–12 (Wolsey & Grisham 2012) and DIY media in the classroom: new literacies across content areas (Guzzetti, Elliot & Welsch 2010). For higher grades, DIY media: creating, sharing and learning with new technologies (Knobel & Lankshear 2010) is helpful.

Other group activities might utilise traditional creative writing exercises and assignments in combination with the social media marketplace. Burroway (1987) provides an example of how we might engage using a traditional craft development exercise. Burroway’s approach has been used in many classrooms throughout the world over the years and the numerous reprints and new editions of her work attest to the usefulness of her lessons that address common subjects in most introductory creative writing classes. For example, Burroway addresses voice and the development of voice as a process that takes place over a period of time. She notes that students have different voices they use, such as when they speak to professors, parents and adults, v. how they speak to peers, although they may not be consciously aware of this behaviour (p. 47). An exercise using the social media marketplace to create awareness in students of the different voices they use is to have them observe how they present themselves on Facebook. Additionally, they could use Facebook as an exercise on developing character for their novel, in a character sketch to help bring a character to life—even if they do nothing more than fill in the details that
Facebook offers. For example, their birth date, where they go to school, what questions the character chooses to answer or not answer, what groups they join, who they are friends with and their types of post are ways of exploring character. Ultimately, this might lead to the student using the Facebook page to promote a story or book. As an exercise, students have a chance to examine how they present themselves, scrutinise the trail they leave behind of themselves and consider how others view them in the social media marketplace. This assignment could be approached from any pedagogical perspective.

4.2.2. Additional approaches

We might also imagine how our own approaches could engage. For example, Wandor (2008) challenges many of the assumptions and practices of the workshop and provides a list of her own personal aims for creative writing pedagogy. In her classroom, all writing is done in class and read aloud (pp. 212–213). There may be no place for the social media marketplace at this stage; however, when the class moves to discussion of possibilities for development of the text, then possibly genre, audience consideration and placement of the work could include discussion of social media and the social media marketplace. Engaging with the social media marketplace as a pedagogical approach might even help address the ‘ideological confusion’ Wandor describes, in which the teaching either ‘overvalues the art’ or ‘overvalues the individual’ (2008, p. 128). We might not be as concerned with the work or consider the individual as special, but rather witness how the piece might sit in this new space.

Relevant to our thinking about the social media marketplace is Cain’s (2010) revision assignment as a re-seeing of the writer in relation to the ‘textual, social and material space assumed by specific genres’ (p. 223). The social media marketplace, and positioning of a work to be seen in this space, even if hypothetically or theoretically, engages the student to go beyond the space of the classroom. It works with Cain’s idea of ‘thirling’ that ‘enables writers to demand and claim a different, revisioned representation of themselves in social, cultural and political—in other words, public spheres’ (p. 223). What is more public than the social media marketplace for examining if the creative writing piece ‘works’ and ‘how, for whom, when, where and why’ (p. 216)?
4.2.3. Considerations

To assure constructive outcomes, educators must be involved in the process or student outcomes will not be positive (Joosten 2012, p. 16). Educators may also need to keep up-to-date with the changing engagement and interests in different social media websites. [19] There is a need for discussion on the use (or misuse) of social media such as Facebook in schools, as there are reports of problems (e.g., bullying in lower grades) (Kwan & Skoric 2013). Equal opportunity is also a consideration. Not all students have access to the technology and there are those that, for whatever reason, choose or prefer not to engage. Yet, for the most part, there is no reason why we cannot begin to examine opportunities.

4.2.4. Conclusion

While the traditions of the classroom should not be forgotten, we should consider how our valued lessons, methods and practices can shape our relationship with technology. Technological changes affect aspects of our lives, for example, the way people live and the way they exchange ideas and goods. Social media appears to be changing how business is done and students come to our creative writing classrooms with digitally ‘connected’ skills. We may be avoiding engagement with social media because we perceive it as a business practice and because we fear that if we engage we are approaching market-driven outcomes. However, by looking at engagement with social media and the use of social media in the marketplace as more than ‘advertising and selling’, we might engage in ways that honour our traditions and benefit our classrooms. By understanding that if we talk about the social media marketplace we are not being pressured to engage in market-driven outcomes, we may actually open up the space to allow our students to be more involved and better prepared with their writing and training. Importantly, students can be more engaged and will bring interesting and useful ideas to the classroom if given the opportunity. The key to beneficial outcomes from social media and the social media marketplace for the creative writing classroom is to be creative and receptive. The teacher must set clear guidelines for behaviour and assessment, understand their own pedagogical goals and reasons for engaging and be clear about working within the traditional markers of the workshop. Social media and the social media marketplace offer opportunities for creative writing students and teachers to reach beyond the
limitations of the classroom. This reaching should begin in the classroom and be
done in a way that honours our traditions and enhances the learning experiences of
the ‘quaintly humanistic’ creative writing classroom.

4.3. Summary

In seeking how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university, the
research for this published paper examined the relationship of the creative writer
working within the university to the digital marketplace from a pedagogical and
theoretical perspective. By focusing on one of the areas of disciplinary resistance, I
sought a definition for a relationship to the digital marketplace and explored the
benefits of engagement with the digital marketplace in relationship to a range of
existing pedagogical or theoretical approaches.

The major findings of this stage of the research are:

• while valuing traditions of creative writing theory, pedagogy and practice, a
  new relationship with the digital marketplace can be described
• the new relationship recognises that most practitioners already come digitally
  ‘connected’ and that knowledge can be leveraged to take advantage of an
  aspect of the digital marketplace (in this case, social media) while working
  within the university
• adopting a view of social media as more than ‘advertising and selling’ can
  usefully challenge resistances to the marketplace stemming from old
  traditions, perspectives and fears.

4.4. Interpretation of Findings, Limitations and Future Research

The findings show that the traditions of creative writing do not have to be threatened
by a new type of marketplace. Further, the approaches to pedagogy in the field of
creative writing tend to be flexible and therefore offer room for digital marketplace
engagement and opportunities. This research provided a starting place for
understanding how a relationship with the digital marketplace might work in a
classroom and how it might be defined. However, this is preliminary definition
research and further testing of the relationship is needed. Focusing on an individual
case study and creative practice could provide more insight into the relationship.
Notes

[1] The ‘quaint’ classroom often adopts the workshop approach. Blythe and Sweet (2008) confirm that the workshop method, in which students bring a story and are critiqued, is the most commonly utilised approach (p. 317), although they argue against this method of teaching. Digital engagement in the classroom is not typically a part of this classroom experience unless that is the specific focus of a class. The discussion in this article will address creative writing degree programs in general terms, recognising that there are courses or subjects that focus on creative practice, humanities-type content and theories, professional practice or industry-based courses or subjects and that different countries offer different focuses.


[4] In talking about keeping the workshop model, Albers states that faculty ‘would rather spend that time writing their own work than taking on the extra reading, thinking, experimentation and training that new models would take’ (cited in Donnelly 2010, pp. 1–2).

[5] The term ‘markers of professional difference’ originated with Kelly Ritter in regard to training PhD candidates to teach undergraduates in the field of creative writing (Ritter 2001, p. 208).

[6] ‘Social media networks’ refers to connections established through social media websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and so forth, in which people form groups.

[7] The ideas behind social media have been around since before 1960 when ‘Bruce and Susan Abelson founded Open Diary’ (see Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, p. 1). Since then, other fields such as media and communication studies have recognised the uses and value of engagement. For example, Boyd (2007) identified the connected nature of students. Rheingold (2008), also working in the field of communications,
encouraged civic engagement through the use of participatory media. In his literature review, Tess (2013) covers a range of fields that are recognising the role of social media in higher education classes. The field of creative writing studies, pedagogy and practice is absent from this list.

[8] Our history shows we also have trained students for outcomes. For example, see The elephants teach: creative writing since 1880 (Myers 2006).


[10] The term ‘social media’ has broader meanings and there are researchers across many fields exploring and defining the term. For example, Larissa Hjorth at RMIT and David Savat at UWA both examine the social effects of media from a gaming culture perspective. Manuel Castells considers the role of social media from a sociological and urban planning perspective. Boyd (2007) specialises in the field of social media, from a computer technology background and her work experience with Microsoft Research. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media developed from Web 2.0 and allows the exchange of user-generated content.

[11] A definition of the social media marketplace in regard to creative writing need not assume a relationship to the field of creative industries. There is a difference between the two fields, as others recognise. For example, Webb, who aspires to help tertiary students become ‘highly creative practitioners’, differentiates creative arts and creative industries (2012, p. 49). Along with Cunningham (2004, p.109), Webb argues that ‘it is not feasible to collapse the two sets of practices’ (2012, p. 49). The concept of ‘generation of intellectual property, typically on an industrial scale’ has never been the focus of humanity programs or art schools (p. 49). Researchers in the creative industries field have suggested the idea of considering ‘social network markets’ as ‘an emergent market economy’ (Potts et al. 2008, p. 167) and have proposed moving beyond the ‘industry’ metaphor (Hartley 2011, p. 5).

[12] The notion of social media as a public agora or a public-sphere is also subject to much debate (see above references).
In addition, the social media marketplace is not limited to the traditional definition of mass media, that is, organisations that control technologies such as television stations and publishing companies that have a presence online but are not solely based online. The social media marketplace affords a space for individual engagement that is not possible through mass media and that is one of the reasons for its extensive use. Through social media, everyone can have a voice and can engage with as few or as many people as they desire.

By necessity I have been speaking in general terms, due to the range of pedagogical needs and teaching approaches. The level that the student is working at would affect how social media and the social media marketplace might be utilised. An undergraduate curriculum would be different to a postgraduate focus. Mayers (2009) recognises a difference between the MFA and PhD programs and proposes that the MFA should focus on a studio approach and the PhD should be critically based (p. 226). This does not deny engagement, but rather implies that engagement with the social media marketplace would be different. There are uses for the social media marketplace at the postgraduate level. For example, the thesis itself might demonstrate an application or engagement with the social media marketplace. Hecq (2012a) proposes that in higher degree creative writing the focus is not on the market. She anticipates that there will be more discussion by workers in the university sector towards viewing how we might think about the markets of the future (p. 7).

Many of the articles in Leahy (2005) explore different ways we might structure the creative writing classroom.

For example, Dawson’s (2005) ideas of preparing the intellectual are quite different than Vanderslice’s idea that the focus should be less on the ‘shop’ for the undergraduate students and more on the ‘work’, with less critiquing and more writing and examination of process rather than product, because Vanderslice does not see an elite group being prepared for the marketplace in most creative writing workshops (2010, p. 34). In this type of undergraduate classroom in which selling is not addressed, social media marketplace engagement can still be beneficial to students depending on how we view this space.
[17] The following suggestions are directed towards the undergraduate level creative writing workshop (although they are not limited to this) and provide a starting point for thinking about engaging the creative writing classroom with the social media marketplace. The focus may or may not be selling oriented, depending upon the pedagogical goals of a classroom.

[18] Dawson (2005) contended that ‘the discipline of Creative Writing hovers today between a vocational traineeship for the publishing industry and an artistic haven from the pressures of commercialism’ and called for the creative writer to be regarded as a ‘public intellectual’ (p. 214).

[19] For example, Shontell (2013) reports that teens claim to be ‘bored’ with Facebook. However, this does not mean they are not still using it. The easiest way to determine whether Facebook is effective for a class is to talk to the students.
Chapter 5. Writing for the New Social Media Marketplace

5.1. Introduction

This chapter includes the paper ‘Writing for the new social media marketplace: a direction for creative writing in the university’ that was presented at the AAWP conference in Wellington, New Zealand in December 2014. The paper was published in the AAWP conference proceedings (Suchy 2015c).

The research is described by K Dolin, Associate Professor at UWA (2016, pers. comm. 24 May), as ‘a form of practice-based research that situates [Susan’s] own personal search for a new mode of writing that is responsive to the new social media within the macro-level context of the discipline of creative writing at university, its history and key concepts’.

The chapter also helps to further explore the relationship of the creative writer in higher education to the marketplace and begins to theorise some more possibilities for engagement with the digital marketplace. Dolin describes the analysis as ‘astute and wide-ranging’ (2016, pers. comm. 24 May).

5.1.1. Approach and reason for approach

Throughout the period of candidature, I was engaged in action research. The action research involved the development of creative work and this was occurring while I was seeking to understand and theorise the relationship. Action research is useful for the complexity of the issue and appropriate for the field, for as Kara (2015) recognises, action research has been used to ‘investigate slippery and complex topics such as identity (Guiney Yallop et al. 2010) or emotion (Stewart 2012)’ (Kara 2015, p. 79). The action research involved the development of more than one creative work (see Appendix A). This raises the question of why not make a single work, as is more typical in a dissertation with a creative writing artefact.

The approach was emergent in that I had begun by thinking I would make one screenplay for the creative component and I ended up developing many creative
works This turned out to be a suitable approach, as being engaged with only a single work could have increased subjectivity when it came to evaluating outcomes. The emergent approach was also useful because the research question was asking how to write for the digital marketplace and there is no one correct way to do so.

The design of each creative project was guided by two questions:

1) Does this approach demonstrate a relationship to the digital marketplace?
2) Does this approach adhere to my understandings of traditions of the discipline of creative writing?

The answers to the questions were not always clear, and I did not fully understand the significance of the approach at this stage, but as Parsons and Brown (2002) argue, the value of action research is in the questions being asked (p. 159).

To find a starting place for uniting the creative and critical research, I began by identifying and limiting the topic to the digital marketplace. This broad topic became further narrowed to the ‘social media marketplace’, a phrase I coined. The research would consider the challenges and opportunities of social media for the creative writer from a cultural and literary studies perspective and a single creative work would be devised that fit with this critical research.

Although I developed many creative works as the action research progressed, there was never a change in direction of the research. The study was always focused on the triangulated relationship of the pedagogy and practice in the discipline in relation to the creative writer and the digital marketplace (see Figure 5.1).
With the creative works I was testing the relationship of the discipline and the student writer to the digital marketplace. In the first part of my candidature, I came to believe that a single creative work would be a representation of a way to engage. As I moved towards what I thought was the completion of my dissertation, I prepared to submit a full-length screenplay, ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d). This chapter presents the third published paper and argues how the critical and creative work fitted together at this stage. The paper also discusses some of the other creative work that emerged.

5.2. Writing for the New Social Media Marketplace: A Direction for Creative Writing in the University

5.2.1. Introduction

The goal of my research has been to examine the relationship of university-level creative writing to the marketplace. In 2013, I described approaches for undergraduate classroom engagement with social media in ways that honoured academic traditions and standards (Suchy 2013d). [1] The editors of TEXT described my work as asking ‘the tricky question of how the creative part of creative writing and the marketplace find each other and how the classroom might make deeper
contact with students through the incorporation of social media into what the students are asked to do’ (Krauth, Brophy & Brien 2013).

Since the time of my 2013 publication, others in the field have been examining how creative writing classrooms can engage in meaningful ways with social media. For example, at the University of Pennsylvania, Goldsmith (2014) indicated that he planned to run a creative writing course for undergraduates called ‘Wasting time on the internet’. The course drew media attention and described it as follows:

The higher purpose of the course is to shape the detritus of the internet into meaningful works of art. As the description asks prospective students: Could we reconstruct our autobiography using only Facebook? Could we write a great novella by plundering our Twitter feed? Those are big questions for some of the nation’s best and brightest, who will begin to answer them this coming spring. (Kedmey 2014)

The idea of sorting the detritus of Facebook into story is already being commercialised by companies such as ‘Memoirs’. ‘Memoirs’ uses algorithms to sort the data of emails and Facebook conversations into bound books. Although technology is certainly changing publishing and is affecting fields such as journalism, [2] algorithms and robot writers are not a problem for the creative writing classroom because inherently creative writing is, as Harper contends, a ‘human activity’ (2012a, p. 1). Creative writing is a way of seeking knowledge through a creative process, it is performed by an individual and is ‘experiential’ (Hecq 2012b, p. 3).

Goldsmith (2014) recognises that plundering the internet for creative purposes is not unfamiliar territory. The larger goal is to locate a human digital experience within a literary tradition. In Goldsmith’s example, the aim is to demonstrate that (seemingly) wasted time spent on the internet can be reconceived as worthwhile.

There is value in examining the writer’s experience in relation to the internet, for ‘experiential evaluation is, after all, frequently the starting point for the creation of new knowledge’ (Harper 2010a, p. 1). This article examines my experience of creating an artefact for a dissertation from data gathered on the internet, thus, anticipating the ‘higher purpose’ that Goldsmith’s undergraduate class will pursue. My aims are to consider what it means for a postgraduate student to work in a social
media space in relation to the marketplace, to argue some of the benefits of having students work in this space and to introduce questions that might be used for the assessment of creative writing artefacts.

5.2.2. The marketplace and the history

My work began with the recognition that, through digital technology, a new type of marketplace with new opportunities has emerged and that the line between selling and buying and social interaction has blurred. In this digital space, writers now engage in the exchange of information and ideas, whether bought, traded, bartered or given freely, for commercial or cultural capital gain or without expectation of any profit. Much of this interaction occurs while the writer is working with social media in what can be referred to as a social media marketplace. This social media marketplace is ‘all about participation, sharing and collaboration, rather than straightforward advertising and selling’ (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, p. 65). This new way of looking at the marketplace is useful for university-level creative writing, as the threat of a marketplace imperative (to sell a creative work) is reduced and this fits with traditions of academic creative writing.

In the creative writing classroom today, we tend not to pay much attention to either the marketplace [because of the belief that we are not ‘market-driven’ (Radia 2012, p. 165)] or to the digital world [because we are ‘rather low tech and quaintly humanistic’ (McGurl 2009, p. 21)], although students and teachers do come to the classroom digitally ‘connected’ (Selwyn 2011, p. 2). [3] The digital engagement of a traditional creative writing classroom is part of the reason why Goldsmith’s classroom made news; however, the marketplace relationship has not been discussed in this situation. [4]

While the marketplace still may not be the focus of most creative writing classrooms, there have been times when marketplace outcomes were valued and worked towards. It could be argued that the introduction of creative writing for credit in the university by Barrett Wendell at Harvard (between 1890 and 1913) was based on a market interest. Wendell taught students how to write on the basis of his own writing aspirations and accepted verse and fiction for classroom credit (Myers 2006, pp. 48–49). Importantly, he also provided information on publishing to his students (Adams
1993, p. 70). George Pierce Baker represents another example of a teacher concerned with real-world outcomes. In 1904, he declared his vision ‘to aid the development of an artistic and commercially viable indigenous American theatrical tradition’ (McGurl 2009, p. 95). Baker and his students—American greats such as Eugene O’Neill, Edward Sheldon and Philip Barry—began to accomplish this goal (Kinne 1954). A third example of being market-focused can be observed during the 1930s–1950s in the US, when students were being trained in Iowa under the program conceived by Norman Forester and furthered by Paul Angle. There was a sense of vocational outcome towards the mostly male war veterans and a belief that they were being prepared for the marketplace (Swander 2005, p. 168). While these are three examples of historical times in which working with the marketplace was important to creative writing classrooms and programs, I am not arguing that the university should expect vocational outcomes from creative writing students (although there is certainly a need for that discussion). I contend that there are times when creative writing classrooms have worked with the marketplace and that the field has recognised real-world opportunities and still managed to negotiate a space that is not market-driven. The unique negotiation of engagement with the marketplace while maintaining a non–market-driven position characterises creative writing in the university and can be considered one of university creative writing’s ‘markers of professional difference’ (Ritter 2001, p. 208; Donnelly 2013, p. 132). [5]

Although an understanding of the marketplace and the history provided an important foundation, the ideas needed to be practically applied to the production of a full-length dissertation creative artefact. I began by determining accepted assessment criteria for a creative dissertation and found that academic expectation directed outcome.

5.2.3. The creative project: gaining permission to not sell

Academics recognise the complexities of assessing non–traditional research outputs and seek to provide some clear guidelines. For example, the AAWP encouraged the use of the ERA 2015 submission guidelines from the Australian Research Council in revision of creative submissions for the 2014 conference proceedings. The guidelines require a creative work to be accompanied by a research statement that identifies
research background (the field, context and research question), contribution and significance.

My work was being conducted in the field of creative writing studies in the context of the marketplace, so the research question now needed addressing in regard to the creative artefact. Development of the research question was aided by the insights of Brabazon (2010) and Butt (2013). According to Brabazon, the exegesis should ‘[articulate] the artefact’ not in ‘how’ the student created the work, but in ‘why’ it was made (sect. 9). In seeming conflict, Butt observes that the PhD by publication report (United Kingdom Council for Graduate Education 1997, p. 10) states that ‘an academic art researcher is obliged also to map for his or her peers the route by which they arrived at that product’ (Butt 2013, p. 10). This idea might appear to suggest that one should show ‘how’ a work is created (and would contradict Brabazon’s ‘why’); however, Butt goes on to explain that the goal is not to provide a ‘how to’, not ‘a mere autobiographical chronicle of what was done’ (Butt 2013, p. 11). Rather, the candidate needs to explain ‘what drove the thinking and production of the texts and/or artefacts’ (Butt 2013, p. 12).

In my case, the research question that drove my thinking and ultimately the production of the creative work was: How does a creative writing student write for the digital marketplace? Also, I focused on the social media marketplace aspect of the digital marketplace.

The answer to how to write for the digital marketplace is to write without thinking about how to sell creative work in the marketplace. This is a comfortable and traditional position for the university creative writing student and this answer may seem obvious. However, it was not. The reason for that answer is because looking at and working in the social media marketplace does not mean having to think about selling in any traditional way and that is significant. Using the interactive dynamics of social media as an agora for the exchange of ideas, a postgraduate student can gather content and discover research possibilities. The creative writing student can have ‘permission’ to develop creative work in relation to social media and the social media marketplace and can approach a marketplace, rather than avoid it. Avoidance of and non–interaction with the marketplace are not uncommon experiences for the creative writing student, because ‘the teacher’s primary role is to support the
students, to help them gain confidence in their vision and in developing their original voice’ (Epps 2006, p. 104). This primary role often precludes marketplace preparation and is due to the belief that the teacher should ‘stress process over product’ (p. 104). That is, students are learning a craft process and not working for the market outcome of a published book during their time of study. Under the tutelage of educators encouraging this approach, students naturally become more inward looking and, thus, less connected to the marketplace. There are, no doubt, good reasons for keeping students ‘cocooned in their own insular world’ (Starkey 2006, p. xii). However, in holding on to pre-digital marketplace ideas and not accounting for the modern *agora*, students become restricted in their thinking and can miss out on potential social media marketplace relationships that can enrich their writing and publication outcomes.

However, simply accepting that a student can work in the marketplace is not sufficient. A student also must not be concerned about selling. For example, in my case, thinking about how to sell a creative work in the social media marketplace was leading to the creation of a business plan. My initial proposal for the artefact was to create a script divided into 10 x 10-minute segments to be posted on YouTube. This was easy enough to draft; however, the outcome was a script that seemed stilted in terms of a relationship to the research. A business plan would be needed to address issues such as how an audience would discover the work when so much content is available, what would be the monetising model and so forth. Although I might write a business plan as part of a creative writing project, business plans are not conventionally a part of the discourse of creative writing courses.

A second example of not understanding the appropriate relationship to the social media marketplace was my attempt to be ‘socially’ engaged and produce creative work in collaboration with others. This included creating works presented in digital social media spaces in combination with live performances and readings. While these projects utilised the social media marketplace in a variety of ways, the need to conform to the length expectations of a novel or screenplay were pushing me towards transmedia writing which involves developing story across multiple platforms. Transmedia writing’s roots are in the gaming area and it is heavily used for ‘franchise’ enhancement (Gomez 2013). Again, there is a push towards selling. In
addition, the approach is collaborative. While other academic fields (e.g., media studies) do develop transmedia projects, ‘schools as institutions have been slow to react to the emergence of this new participatory culture’ which shifts ‘the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to community involvement’ (Jenkins et al. 2006, p. 4). In the university creative writing field, ‘collaborative writing is relatively rare’ (Butt 2013, p. 8). Writing expressed as part of a ‘community’ would complicate assessment. Additional research could help to provide arguments against those barriers.

Once creative writing students understand they have ‘permission’ to work with the social media marketplace without expectation of having to sell, the student can begin to engage in a more traditional and organic way. That is, in the way in which a creative writer usually works in thinking about developing story (as recognised by writing programs today), in a way that fits well with what the social media marketplace is ‘all about’ (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, p. 65).

5.2.4. Locating a ‘creative habitat’ and finding the creative work

In negotiating fresh territory for university-level creative writing, a starting point is first recognising that meaningful creative work can and is being developed from the ‘detritus’ of the internet within the social media marketplace. Next, the writer might identify a specific ‘creative habitat’ (Harper 2010a, p. 3), a space (real or virtual) in which the writer can be found working and a more specific place than the internet at large. This need for identification can be observed in Goldsmith’s description of works students might be creating. The student might be working in Facebook (to create an autobiography), in Twitter (to create a novella) and so forth. I needed to determine a more specific location to work. My position as researcher, a traditional story development source (that is, a journal) and my pre-existing engagement with a social media space helped me to clarify my ‘creative habitat’.

As a postgraduate researcher working in the field of creative writing and the social media marketplace, I needed to create an artefact that fulfilled both the condition of ‘research’ and of ‘utilisation’ of the social media marketplace. Importantly, this idea of researcher clarified the role of the creative writer utilising social media and the relationship of the writer to the social media marketplace. A researcher makes
meaning from massive amounts of information, an essential skill in our current data-heavy digital environment and in the social media marketplace. Engaging online requires filtering practices and addressing questions such as: what does all this information mean? How can I manage the information? How can I create meaning from the information? The writer also seeks answers to these questions (and has always done so). The outcome of the filtering is presented on the page in the finished artefact. Also, the creative writer often asks a question, or has a problem to explore. In dissertation parlance, this is the research question. In a creative work, the problem and answer may be indirectly or directly presented. For example, in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, a problem being examined (or a theme) is how do we find happiness? [6] This is how the researcher makes sense of data and so does the creative writer. A more contemporary example can be observed in McBride’s memoir *The color of water* (1997), in which he questions who is this woman that is his mother? [7]

What was the question I was asking in the creative? At some level I was still asking how to write for this space; however, I required an emotional component to make for compelling storytelling for ‘emotion in the author is after all the source-spring of emotion in the story and through it, in the reader’ (Esenwein 1908, p. 195). Therefore, I sourced personal journals written during this research period and identified two helpful ideas: I had something that looked like a story, a nagging emotional concern and I was already using the social media marketplace to reveal the answer to that concern.

The idea for the creative artefact began with a personal issue—that I did not know the person I had spent the past 15 years with, that the person I thought I knew was a complete fabrication. The overriding question was similar to McBride’s, that is, ‘Who is this person?’ Additionally, I was aware that I was already searching for the answer to that question in the social media marketplace and the focus of this research was in genealogy across several genealogical websites. Thus, I had located a ‘creative habitat’ in the social media marketplace in which to work.
5.2.5. Genealogy in the social media marketplace

Storytellers have long used genealogical ‘data’ for their own purposes. For example, the *Bible* is a collection heavy with genealogy, from the who-begat-who of Genesis and onwards. To what purpose this genealogy is used is arguable and beyond the scope of this work. Contemporary utilisation of genealogy for narrative fiction can be observed in novels such as Faulkner’s *Absalom, Absalom!* (2005), an American classic that traces generations of a family to make meaning of racism, life in the South and so forth. Haley’s *Roots: the saga of an American family* (2007), brought an understanding of the African-American heritage to the public. I offer those novels as examples in which the genealogical significance is foregrounded in the work. Other works may draw from genealogy in less marked ways. Further, a search online using the key words ‘genealogy fiction’ reveals that genealogical fiction appears as a category (if not a genre) of writing and there is no lack of books on this subject. [8]

DeBartolo Carmack (2009) describes seven genres of genealogical writing: ‘Technical Genealogical Narratives’, ‘Life Story Writing’, ‘Family History Narratives’, ‘Family History Memoirs’, ‘Genealogical Fiction’, ‘Edited Letters and Diaries’ and ‘Writing Guidebooks’. She offers examples under each category. The works of ‘Life Story Writing’ and ‘Genealogical Fiction’ might best fit within the classroom, although the other areas offered might also work. However, while the practice of categorising is useful for selling purposes, works can also fall into multiple genres and be called crossovers. For example, Garcia Marquez’s *Love in the time of cholera* (2005), an homage to the author’s family history, is also a work of magical realism. Again, it is important to note the idea that genealogical information can be central to the work and foregrounded or used in a subtler way. Genealogy can provide texture and background, without even being referenced, so that categorisation as genealogical may not be appropriate. [9] However, what is evident is a popular context as well as a literary context for the work researched in the genealogical marketplace and that using the space can be helpful in creation of a work. Writers can gather content and background information, as well as inform storylines, develop plot, build character and create texture with genealogical material.
In the social media marketplace, there has been a massive explosion of genealogical information, research, memories, experiences, stories, images, documents, histories and archives. All are being exchanged, sold, shared, read, recorded and bartered and creative writers can and are drawing and borrowing more broadly than in the past. To answer my creative research question (in the story development) as to ‘who is this person?’, the social media marketplace offered information that I would not have found otherwise, as well as quick and easy access to that information, serendipitous discoveries and connection to a scattered population that is able to share information over large distances.

Interestingly, in this field, computers are already generating simple stories based on some key genealogical data (e.g., www.ancestry.com). The algorithmic generation of these types of stories gives factual highlights of the life of an individual, but they depend upon human input for dramatic and emotional imperatives.

Regarding the construction of my creative artefact, I planned to work with the traditional craft form while utilising the social media marketplace. Additional research was conducted to gather the details for the story, but that is not the focus of this paper. I have examined how the research is related to the creative work in the sense of why it was developed.

My creative project demonstrates research conducted in one area of the social media marketplace: genealogy. The broader value of the research lies in recognising how this type of work might change and benefit classrooms in terms of assessment and working towards more marketplace-aware outcomes.

5.2.6. A possible classroom value

For the contemporary creative writing classroom, I suggest that in recognising how a work utilises the social media marketplace we might be more outward looking, yet also value ‘the academy’s conservative research club’ (Brady 2000, sect. ‘The exegesis’). By encouraging students to imagine creative and research approaches for utilising the social media marketplace the creative work might be able to better ‘stand alone and allow a multitude of readings’ (Brady 2000, sect. ‘The exegesis’) and overcome the fear that ‘theory will guide, interpret, or frame the reading of [the] novel’ (Perry 1998, sect. ‘Interpretations’).
In assessing student work, we might ask the following questions:

- Has the writer defined why they will utilise social media or the social media marketplace?
- Has the writer demonstrated where the interaction will take place?
- How has the writer transformed the gathered information into a coherent, whole story utilising traditional craft techniques?
- Does the writer demonstrate a method for that transformation?
- How does the social media research inform the creative process?
- Did the social media marketplace ‘data’ help to answer the research question, that is, the writer’s question?
- Is the marketplace area of engagement appropriate for the research?
- How has it supported the development of story elements, such as character, dialogue, plot and so forth?

5.2.7. Conclusion

My aim in my research was to discover how a creative writing student writes for the digital marketplace. I found that a student can utilise the social media marketplace aspect of the digital marketplace for research and, by using creative imagination and details from the research, develop a story without having to think about selling while working within a marketplace. In the case of my creative work, the creative research question asked was: Who is this person? The research into family history revealed who that person was, as McBride revealed his mother in his memoir. The creative work also has a larger context, as McBride’s does. His reflects larger social concerns about race and colour. My creative work reflects larger concerns about the massive amounts of information that we can gather about others. How that work will be ‘shared’ or sold is not the concern at this stage; however, I suspect the work may be better prepared for the marketplace because of where the research has taken place. In my case, the engagement led to the discovery of the developing genre of genealogical writing and could aid with marketplace positioning outcomes.

The value of this work to the academy is that the research that led up to the construction of the creative work demonstrates that the creative writer working within an academic environment and looking outward to the social media
marketplace can enhance and enrich a creative work with research information gathered from that space. A research approach, such as this, is outward looking to the social media marketplace and can honour traditional expectations of academic creative writing work. The approach can open the boundaries of the classroom, does not require a business plan or the need to cross into other fields and perhaps can even provide some useful new criteria for developing and assessing creative works.

5.3. Summary

In further exploration of the discipline–creative-writer–marketplace relationship, I used practice-based, action research to situate myself within the social context to answer the research question of how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university. The chapter examines my experiences as a creative writer working within the university and trying to create a single artefact for the digital marketplace (with a specific focus on social media). The research experience involved the development of many creative projects. Each project was analysed before it was developed to determine whether the work demonstrated a balance between critical-creative-marketplace needs. This paper argues that the creative project ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d) engaged with genealogical research in the digital marketplace and represents a way to balance the discipline–creative-writer–marketplace relationship.

The major findings of this stage of the research about how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university are that

• a creative work can be made to balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship by adopting a definition of the digital marketplace relationship, in this case by viewing the new marketplace as a research space for developing a story without being concerned about selling, yet the space is a marketplace in terms of buying and selling of ideas and information
• a creative writer working within the university can be outward looking and engaged with the digital marketplace in a specific sense, thus allowing creative freedom and satisfying the resistances to commercialism and to crossing disciplinary boundaries
new terms of assessment criteria for pedagogy might be applied to the relationship.

5.4. Interpretation of the Findings, Limitations and Future Research

This stage of the research served as a major turning point. New terms for assessing creative work that recognised the digital marketplace emerged and I thought I had found the answer as to how to write for the digital marketplace from within the university and that a single creative work (a screenplay) would now serve as a representation of the relationship of the discipline–creative-writer–marketplace relationship. In spite of the publication of this paper (Suchy 2015c) and support for the work, I knew that the single creative artefact failed to fully present my experiences. Further, the critical work did not connect with the creative work to my satisfaction.

I began to withdraw from certain expectations I held about what the dissertation should contain. Although I had engaged in research classes and read methods in creative writing, I had only brushed the surface of learning how a creative writer-researcher is capable of discovery. From this period of study, I immersed myself in a deeper study of research methods to answer the research question of how a creative writing student writes for the digital marketplace. My goal was to find a way to better represent and present my creative experience for the dissertation.
Notes

[1] According to Merriam-Webster, social media are: ‘various forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content (such as videos)’ (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media).


[3] The ‘we’ throughout this paper refers to teachers and students of creative writing at the university level.

[4] Spencer (2013) considers statistical market research as one example of creative writing research. In her PhD research, she considered ‘Whether market writing (that is, writing for, and in direct response to, the marketplace) could be really be boiled down to statistical norms’ (p. 78).


[6] Tillyard (1966) claims that happiness (earned) is the universal feeling evoked in The Merchant of Venice. Bullough recognises that the question ‘What is happiness?’ is a common theme addressed in many of Shakespeare’s works (Tillyard 1966, p. 201; Bullough 1957, p. 453).

[7] McBride asks other questions about racial identity and family relations and so forth (and Shakespeare also asks other questions); however, often (or for certain purposes) we need to identify a simplified and dominant question.

[8] For example, see Popular Genealogy Fiction books listed in Goodreads: http://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/genealogy-fiction

[9] This also shows a limitation of using genre for evaluation.
Chapter 6. Final Analysis Research Design

6.1. Introduction

The original goal of my research was to examine a creative writing student’s relationship to the digital marketplace. For this exploration, I intended to develop a screenplay. However, when I began the dissertation, after writing and publishing the paper presented in Chapter 5 (Suchy 2015c), I was not happy with submitting only a single screenplay. This is because the development of a single screenplay had not been the focus of my research. The focus was on the relationship question and I knew that all the creative efforts could reveal more about the relationship than a single screenplay. Thus, I did not believe that an exegesis and presentation of a single screenplay would be representative of the work I had done and would not effectively answer the research question. This might be regarded as a lack on clarity in how to approach the research. However, a lack of clarity is not uncommon for educators seeking to understand their environment (Dyson 2007, p. 36).

The primary changes I made at this time were in how I would present the creative aspects of the research and how I would analyse the findings of the research. I sought to better integrate the presentation of the critical and the creative components. A significant discovery in clarifying my approach was found in Supervising practices for postgraduate research in art, architecture and design (Allpress et al. 2012). This book includes work by people who supervise creative writers, although the title does not emphasise this aspect of the content. This exemplifies the challenges for creative writing research students in finding support for new approaches to research. Of particular relevance for me was Daley’s (2012) account of working with a creative writing candidate who could not reconcile the creative development with academy expectations. Daley’s suggestion was to give up on the idea of having a single creative artefact and instead have ‘two or three incomplete fictional artefacts that comprised the creative work(s)’ (p. 97). Daley noted that a completed novel would not drive her student’s research. The student did not need to do a literary analysis of sources. Instead, the approach would be to examine a larger problem. Further, the originality of the research would be addressed by approaching the ‘problem of
composing from the position of a creative writer and the disciplinary practice of fiction writing’ (p. 97).

I have not adopted the approach of submitting samples of fictional artefacts for assessment; however, the fictional artefacts I developed during the period of candidature helped to address a larger problem about the marketplace relationship and the challenges a writer working in the university faces in trying to write for the digital marketplace. This chapter clarifies the approach to the final stage of analysis and the role of the creative work in the research. Also, I introduce my approach to developing the analytic autoethnography that examines my creative experience as a PhD candidate.

To clarify my approach in this final stage, the research design discussion is divided into two sections. The first section examines the data and the second section examines the procedures. In the first section, I identify the data that was used for the study and provide a justification for the choice of data and its appropriateness in answering the research question. The second section contains two subsections: data collection and data analysis. First, the method for collecting the data is discussed and justification for the approach is given. Second, the method for analysing the data is explained and some background on the method is provided. In addition, justification is provided for the choice of method of analysis.

6.2. The Data and Justification

The data for this research project were my experiences as a creative writer working within the university trying to write creative work for the digital marketplace. My experiences occurred during the period of my candidature, as I worked to develop a creative artefact with a related critical exegesis.

There are several reasons that validate using experience as data in a general sense and for using my own experiences. First, examining experience is a well-recognised method used in research in many fields including the social sciences, the arts, and education, as well as in the discipline of creative writing. Brien (2013) notes, for creative writers ‘gleaning information from their own experience of the world is a regularly utilised research methodology’ (p. 49). Second, my embedded position in the field as a professional writer and as an academic can be valued. I have published
and sold work in a range of creative genres. I have also worked in the business world. My experience in the academic world includes teaching at university and community college level for over 10 years and as a student (Creative Writing MFA; Literature MA and History BA). My position as a long-time participant within the discipline, in the marketplace and of creative practice is important, because the purpose of qualitative research is to examine a social phenomenon from within. My knowledge and experience brought a representative case of someone in this specific sociocultural microcosm. This research prizes that bias, as an embodied knowledge can help to assure that the collected experiences are useful when analysed.

Justification for researcher-as-subject self-experimentation finds support from psychology researchers who believe accessing experiences helps to develop understandings of social phenomena. Corti et al. (2015) argue that the benefits of such an approach include:

(1) access to ‘social qualia’ that is, the subjective experience of social phenomena, (2) improved mental models of social phenomena, potentially stimulating new research questions and (3) enhanced ability to be reflexive about the given experiment. (p. 288)

Further, self-study is often used in educational research and part of my goal was to provide insight about the relationship in regard to the discipline and to consider how pedagogical practice might be improved. Although I did not study my own teaching practices, pedagogical practice in creative writing can be informed by the teacher’s own creative practice and my teaching background also informed this research. My goal in the research has been to not only consider my own outcomes, but also to open the field to more engagement with the digital marketplace in a way that honours the field’s traditions.

A third reason for the selection of my experiences as data was that the raw data of my experience was easily available to me. At this point, other types of research were not appropriate as the phenomenon needed to be identified and described before further research could be conducted. This was a long-term study, occurring over a period of seven years of candidature and involving the development of many creative works. An alternative approach of involving other students or educators was not economically feasible. In addition, others making creative work would have
complicated the study, as the terms of my enrolment involved making my own original creative work.

6.3. Method for Collection of Data and Justification for Approach

My data (i.e., my experiences within this particular context) were collected in my journals, correspondence, annual reports, audio recordings and documents that were related to the development of the creative projects or ‘what might be considered in literary terms as ephemera’ (Harper 2013, p. 108), as well as in published papers. The process of keeping journals and maintaining written communication are part of my daily work habits as a writer and provide an efficient method for gathering data. The annual reports, much of the correspondence and some of the creative works (published and unpublished) provide a record of data that is readily available. Waters (2000) validates this approach, when she explains that for data collection:

Any way the participant can describe their lived phenomenal experience can be used to gather data in a phenomenological study. You can use an interview to gather the participants’ descriptions of their experience, or the participants’ written or oral self-report or even their aesthetic expressions (e.g., art, narratives or poetry). (2000, sect. ‘Data collection’)

In this research, I gathered raw data about my experiences as I gained knowledge of the discipline and the student relationship to the marketplace in making creative work for the purpose of engaging with the digital marketplace. I also gathered data when researching the traditions and pedagogical practices of the field, something that Donnelly (2011) encourages in the interest of advancing the field of creative writing studies (p. 4). Continuous questioning and reflection stimulated the approach.

6.4. Method of Analysis

I adopted grounded theory methods to analyse my data. This method for analysing the data draws on Pace’s (2012) methodological discussion for artist-researchers on using grounded theory analytic strategies and Foss and Waters’ (2016) approach to data collection and analysis. The findings of the analysis are presented in an analytic autoethnography. Grounded theory methodology has roots in social sciences such as the fields of anthropology and sociology. Pace (2012) argues that creative practitioners who identify as autoethnographers can use grounded theory analytic
strategies to gain better theoretical understandings about creative practice (p. 1). Importantly, the social science characteristics of grounded theory focus on theory generation, rather than theory verification. There is no central hypothesis used and in this research I had no clear sense of what the relationship with the digital marketplace should be or how to write for the digital marketplace. I had to first explore and try to define the qualities of the marketplace and explore the potential and problems that were presented to the discipline and the practitioner while developing creative work. The focus was on creation and discovery. To clarify how this approach was applied, I describe how phases identified by Pace occurred in my study. This description helps to clarify how grounded theory analysis can reveal findings in the emergent research that I conducted.

The first phase of grounded theory analysis is called open coding. This involves ‘identifying significant concepts in the data’ (Pace 2012, p. 10). Further, ‘codes can be attached to data chunks of any size—for instance, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs and different researchers code their data in different ways’ (p. 10). To open code effectively, a ‘unit of analysis’ must be identified (Foss & Waters 2016, p. 243). The unit of analysis comes from the research question. As Foss and Waters explain: ‘The unit of analysis should be a concept, idea or action that illuminates the significant features of your data so that the question you asked can be answered’ (2016, p. 243). In coding the data, I was seeking to understand how I wrote for the digital marketplace while in higher education. Another way to word this question is: ‘How did I negotiate the relationship?’ I began to search the data to ‘assemble the examples into a coherent and original answer’ (Foss & Waters 2016, p. 244). In searching for ways that I had negotiated the relationship, I did not know what I was going to find. Foss and Waters note that this is ‘coding with naiveté’ or forgetting what you know about the topic (2016, p. 245). I began to code, drawing from the data in my journals, memos, letters, annual reports, publications and creative work ephemera. I found that the easiest way to gather all the experiences was to create a time line of the key events and include the significant experiences that demonstrated the unit of analysis. This meant that I was conducting ‘the second phase of grounded theory analysis, known as theoretical coding’ (Pace 2012, p. 12) at the same time as the first phase. This approach is appropriate. The second phase helps to clarify how the concepts relate to each other and while the two phases are identified as separate
for descriptive purposes, they work in parallel in actual practice (Glaser & Strauss 1967, p. 43; Pace 2012, p. 12). I placed the events in time order to demonstrate the causal relationship of the experiences. Figure 6.1 provides an example of the approach to the coding.

**Dec 1 2014** In my year-end review, I note that I ‘need more publication for creative and critical’, that is, I don’t feel my work will be recognised as legitimate. I need to have a book written and reviewed with awards by end of next year to be legitimate. I should have ‘no more little niddles’, that is, I perceived no value in smaller publications.

[seeking creative publication] [seeking critical publication] [positioning] [goal setting]

**Nov 30 2014** ‘Cat’s pyjamas’ presented at AAWP New Zealand.
[positioning] [seeking academic creative community]
‘Writing for the new SMM’ at AAWP New Zealand.
[positioning] [seeking academic critical community]

**Figure 6.1 Example of coding with time line**

The many experiences I had were divided into ‘discrete incidents—objects, events, actions, ideas and so on’ (Pace 2012, p. 10) and placed on the time line. Each ‘incident’ was assigned a code. The codes were highlighted in grey for ease of identification. During this process I was writing ‘memos’ about the codes and how the ideas related to each other. As Pace observes: ‘These memos capture and record the emerging theory’ (2012, p. 10).

I was looking for a relationship between the different codes, without attachment to any particular outcome about the topic. In the third phase, known as ‘selective coding’ (Pace 2012, p. 12), the researcher restricts the coding to the ideas that relate to the core concept. The theory began to take shape. I identified three areas that were emerging to describe how I negotiated the relationship. These areas were: (1) self-educating or self-training, (2) collaborating, networking or seeking community and (3) changing perceptions or making trade-offs and positioning. I refined these areas to the themes of (1) self-educating, (2) relationship building and (3) tactical compromise.

The final phase of grounded theory analysis is sorting the memos and writing the theory (Pace 2012, p. 12). At this stage, I began to write the autoethnography. A final
structuring of the information required determining how to show the relationship between the three themes. Foss and Waters explain that it can take multiple sortings to reveal a good schema and they provide a checklist to help determine when sufficient sorting has been done. The criteria are that the schema ‘encompasses major categories of data, shows organic and coherent relationship among labels, shows reasonable inference, produces new insight and achieves an “aha” feeling’ (2016, p. 263). I reached this final stage of realising the schema when I found that defining the locations where I worked during the candidature was key to revealing the three strategies as I negotiated the relationship.

Although my own experiences and interests influenced the choices in how each of the creative projects would develop as I researched the marketplace relationship, my goal was to reveal broader strategies that might provide insight to creative writing practitioners and educators working within the university. I worked within the discipline as a postgraduate; therefore, not all of the experiences are relevant to all students. However, a better understanding of the experiences of a postgraduate seeking to engage with the digital marketplace and the strategies adopted to reach the digital marketplace can be useful to many in the field who struggle to understand the relationship. In addition, the need to balance the creative and critical output is a shared and ongoing concern. The characteristics of analytic autoethnography allowed me the opportunity ‘of not only truthfully rendering the social world under investigation but also transcending that world through broader generalisation’ (Anderson 2006, p. 388).

During the process of exploring the discipline-student-marketplace relationship, I conceived or created many different creative projects. I used a narrative approach to present my experiences during the research period. This approach also helps to contextualise each of the creative projects and, thus, reveal why they were made and how they emerged. As well as a way of providing a context for the creative work, writing a narrative, or telling a story, is an act of creative writing. This act is the primary practice of a person working within the discipline; therefore, providing a narrative of the research experience serves as a natural way to present and reveal findings about the discipline-student-marketplace relationship. The narrative approach I adopted to present the experience is autoethnography. Autoethnography is
a social science method that combines the characteristics of autobiography and ethnography and it is now recognised within the field of creative writing practice as a useful approach for research (Pace 2012). Autoethnography is differentiated from autobiography in the requirements of analysis by social science conventions:

Autoethnographers must not only use their methodological tools and research literature to analyse experience, but also must consider ways others may experience similar epiphanies; they must use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders. (Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011, sect. 2)

The creative projects in this study are representative of what any creative writer in the discipline produces. While the environment particulars will vary from person to person, there are many common experiences. This exploration represents a subjective experience in creativity and in a social context; however, the general struggle will be recognisable to many practicing creative writing students. This idea of the individual experience as recognisable to others is valued in autoethnographic research, as it opens up rather than closes down conversation (Ellis 2004, p. 22). Pelias (2004) notes that autoethnography works at the ‘nexus of self and culture’ (p. 11) and used this approach to produce ‘a sociology of the academy’ (Pelias 2003, p. 369). In taking an autoethnographic approach that uses the ‘self as a springboard, as a witness’ to the relationship, the author can also provide ‘me too’ moments for the reader (Pelias 2004, p. 11).

The goal was not to present everything I wrote, created, or experienced in the relationship during the study. Rather, the autoethnography is analytic and reveals some of the strategies I used as I tried to find a ‘right’ or ideal creative project. Thus, I was seeking a creative work that would fulfil the disciplinary expectations and requirements, be aesthetically pleasing and be situated in the digital marketplace. In examining the data of my experience in trying to achieve that outcome, I discovered that there were strategies I had adopted to try to balance or negotiate the relationship. The next chapter describes my efforts to make creative work for the digital marketplace while working from within the discipline. The autoethnographic narrative focuses on the complexity of, and conflicts within, the relationship and reveals the strategies I used to negotiate the challenges. Further, the chapter
demonstrates a way in which creative practice can be used to help study the sociology of the field of creative writing.
Chapter 7. Writing for the Digital Marketplace: 
Strategies to Negotiate a Relationship

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. 
(TS Eliot, 1944)

7.1. Introduction

Throughout my PhD candidature, and as part of my research into the critical-creative-marketplace relationship, I developed a series of creative projects to understand how to write for the digital marketplace. [1] These creative projects are discussed throughout this chapter as part of my experiences in writing for the digital marketplace. To understand how I wrote for the digital marketplace, I analysed my experiences in the relationship using grounded theory, as described in Chapter 6. I identified the various locations in which I positioned myself while working during the period of candidature and observed how the strategies of self-education, relationship building and tactical compromise were employed to negotiate the relationship as I developed the creative projects. This chapter begins with some background that shows the early need to find a way to negotiate the relationship. Next, each of the five locations is presented and examined in regard to the three strategies.

7.2. Background

The need to balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship was evident at the time of my application for admission to the UWA PhD program, although I was not focused on the idea of achieving a balance (this was something that emerged). First of all, I was clear that the creative work would be a single screenplay. The creative project was to be ‘House of bones’, an original horror screenplay (Suchy 2009b), loosely based on the Grimms’ fairytale The robber bridegroom (1884). My plan was to write a single creative work that would fulfil my own artistic interests and support the screenplay with a 25,000-word exegesis in keeping with the university’s requirements. A single creative work is the most common approach for a creative
writing dissertation with creative component at the UWA in English and Cultural Studies and at most Australian universities. In regard to the critical work, I was confident in my writing abilities and believed my academic background prepared me to address the critical aspects of the research, although the approach I suggested was somewhat vague:

Research will be presented from a collection of critical voices from a cultural studies and literary studies perspective and also cultural economics will be examined to debate what has come to be termed the cultural economy of creative industries. Following a critical tradition in literary education, the research will examine the effect of this thinking on the education of the modern writer. (Suchy 2009a, p. 1)

The marketplace portion of the proposal complicated my situation. I stated that my plan was:

To examine the impact of new methods of marketing via new technologies on the craft of story. The research is to include a creative component that would fit a unique market niche. Proposed outcomes include a determination of methods and techniques to maximise potential, the development of a team that will realise the project across a number of different platforms, an examination of the artist as entrepreneur and an investigation of new business models for artists. (Suchy 2009a, p. 2 [emphasis added])

This idea of actually realising a work in the marketplace would be significant in the outcome of the dissertation and the development of the creative work. While a candidate is expected to produce a work of publishable quality, realising that work in a marketplace as a criterion for assessment is not a common practice for the discipline. Although nothing in my experience of English literary criticism was connected with my wish to locate a work in the digital marketplace while working from within the university, I was confident about this approach. In the beginning, I had three good reasons to believe that realising ‘House of bones’ (Suchy 2009b) in a marketplace was possible. First, the creative work that I proposed fitted a popular genre. Horror was popular in movies at that time. In a 2009 retrospective of historical events in film, the Guardian reported that: ‘it soon became apparent that horror movies would be the dominant genre once again’ (French 2009, para. 2). Second, I understood horror’s appeal to a specific potential audience. My own connection to the fairytale source stemmed from an introductory English class I taught in a
community college in Santa Ana, California, in 2006. For most of my students, English was their second language. Some students came from a socioeconomic experience that included gang violence. I found that fairytales were engaging to this audience—they were more real to the students’ experiences and more relevant to their maturity than the basic reader books written for students from lower grades. The stories were effective for improving comprehension and writing skills, as the students practised re-telling and re-writing the tales in their own words. Of all the fairytales, the Grimms’ tale of *The robber bridegroom* (1884) held a particular appeal and interest to this audience, resonating with its themes of surviving cannibalism and violence. My third reason for believing the film could be realised was that I was working in and connected to the film industry in ways that could help achieve a successful outcome. Some of my film business work was already located in the area of horror. A couple of years after teaching the Santa Ana class, I spent time in New York working with the Fluxscope Pictures team and the Schoharie Scary Horror Film Fest (SSHFF). [2] It was at that time I conceived the initial ideas for ‘House of bones’ (Suchy 2009b). At the time of my PhD application, I was involved in marketing a produced movie that had won the Wes Craven Best Picture Award at the SSHFF. In addition, at the time of my PhD application, I was working to develop other film projects with the support of the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme in Western Australia. Also, I was also working with storytelling in my part-time job as a town oral historian; negotiating an option as a writer and producer for an original television series script for an established Perth film company; and developing another original creative work of mine that had been accepted into the Film & Television Institute Keyframe program. Having multiple projects in development is common and necessary in the film business and I believed that, for the dissertation, my film industry work experiences and connections would be useful.

Although these signs indicated the potential to realise a film, at this stage I was not aware of the dissertation challenge that I had created for myself in regard to the three components (i.e., the critical, the creative and the marketplace). I was examining each component separately, but I did not understand how difficult they would be to link together. Along the way, I would learn that linking the creative and the critical is often complicated for the creative writing PhD candidate (Berridge 2007; Daley 2012). As well as the need to link the critical and creative, I had given myself
another challenge: the additional component of the digital marketplace, a relatively new territory that many individual artists were exploring and looking to exploit. This challenge would be significant in the outcome of the dissertation. Trying to link the three components and realise a work in the digital marketplace led to the development of more creative works. For each creative project, I planned a specific critical, marketplace and creative approach. Some of those approaches will be discussed as part of this chapter to help provide a loose sense of the causal connections between the creative projects.

As previously described, the focus of this analytic autoethnography is to present the broad strategies I adopted of self-educating, relationship building and tactical compromise in attempting to balance the relationship. The strategies will be clarified through the examination of five locations. The locations that will be examined are 1) the self-help industry 2) between disciplines, 3) the English department, 4) creative writing communities and 5) the final stage of writing up the dissertation. It is important to note that while the five locations are presented in a linear time order, within each section examples are given of experiences that demonstrate the strategies but they do not always fall in a completely linear pattern. Further, some of the examples overlap into different locations and, thus, may read repetitively. However, in terms of the analytic nature of this chapter, this trade-off was necessary to draw out and present the findings.

### 7.3. The Self-Help Industry

The strategies of networking and building relationships emerged in December 2009, around the time of my UWA acceptance. These relationships would lead to me self-educating about the self-help industry and to making tactical compromises on the creative project that I had planned for the dissertation. I was preparing to fly from Perth to Los Angeles to market some film projects. I proposed a June 2010 start date for the PhD, because my proposed research of realising a work in the marketplace aligned so closely with my creative business interests. The business trip could help me to develop my plans for the dissertation. The plan for the trip included attending conferences and workshops to network and pitch my projects. I also arranged a few meetings with other contacts. During the trip, discussions about distribution and funding turned to the digital marketplace. My thinking about who was leading in the
digital marketplace was particularly influenced by my encounters in Los Angeles with my entertainment attorney, a former student and with attendees of a book marketing conference.

My attorney, Gary Goldstein, was also a film producer and my encounters with him were important to my thinking about business approaches. Goldstein is interested in helping writers in the industry succeed at making and selling their work. He was helping me build my production company and guiding me in negotiating writer and producer contracts in Australia. This had been a long, arduous process, as the screenwriter’s rights in Western Australia have been poorly represented compared to the US. I was acutely interested in the possibility of controlling the whole process from inspiration to distribution. This helps to explain why I felt a need to realise the creative work. I was seeking a level of control over all stages of the production and this is something that Goldstein recognised the digital world was offering. He told me about people who were doing interesting things with distributing their work, but I did not quite understand how to become involved and feared it would cost me more money. I did not realise that Goldstein was involved with self-help industry and was marketing and training with the industry to build his business. His involvement would come to influence my thinking.

I learned more about self-help industry developments through a conversation with a former student, Kent Healy. Healy has often challenged my thinking about the marketplace and informed my ideas about pedagogy. When he was in my composition class, he was an A grade student, but towards the end of the term he was struggling to balance his school requirements and career pursuits. Healy was co-writing ‘Cool stuff they should teach in school’ (Healy & Healy 2005) and was being mentored by Jack Canfield, co-author of Chicken soup for the soul (Canfield, Hansen & Newmark 2013). I was sympathetic to Healy’s publishing objective and I recognised that many of my writing students were entrepreneurial, across a variety of fields and interests. I restructured my class to be more inclusive of their talents and of social and digital engagement. The goal was to make learning compositional writing directed towards, and supportive of, real-world applications and outcomes. This re-encounter with Healy reminded me of my past experience and how this had informed my thinking about what teachers could do. This focus on pedagogy helped
to refine my dissertation focus. [3] Healy directed me to the 2010 Mega Book Marketing Conference in Los Angeles, organised by Mark Victor Hansen (co-author of *Chicken soup for the soul*). Usually, I would avoid such events; however, I respected what Healy had accomplished. Hansen also appeared to be worthy of consideration, as he knew a great deal about marketing. *Chicken soup* is one of the best-selling books of all time and Hansen’s marketing approach, using word-of-mouth marketing, radio and many other media methods also included digital marketing. In addition, I had investigated how search engine optimisation worked and that research revealed that many of the ideas for marketing were coming from the self-help industry. [4] I wondered whether the strategies used by this group included digital marketing and could be applied to filmmaking.

The conference was a digital marketing networking and educational experience. A few hundred people from all over the world, including Australia, attended the event. There was a sense that this was a select group—a ‘leadership’ conference, in which the leaders were training the audience on the digital marketplace and how to be leaders. [5] I found a small group of filmmakers who were searching for new approaches to marketing and this confirmed that I was not the only one thinking about how filmmakers might learn from self-help industry techniques. The filmmakers had gathered around an ‘expert’ who claimed he had a strategy that was guaranteed to sell films. I learned that some of the people interested in his work turned out to be working in the adult film industry and were trying to rebrand themselves. One woman, attending with her lawyer/manager, was trying to rebrand herself as a sex expert. She had a radio show and her experience and stories about relationships with movie stars were her selling points. Another man worked as a television sports producer and made adult films to pay the bills. This experience was showing me how some filmmakers were trying to approach the digital world to expand their audience or change their careers (or the audience’s perception of who they were and what they had to offer). At the conference, I was surprised to run into Goldstein, who was there to develop and promote his own training courses. His attendance and that of other recognised professionals provided me with an affirmation of sorts about the wisdom of my approach. If established professionals were engaging with this group, perhaps I was right to follow along. However, there were also signs that this might not be the answer for my need to realise a creative
work. While I wondered if there were opportunities for me in marketing a Hollywood-type film using some of these methods, I did not see how that was possible without it also costing me indeterminate amounts of money. I had not yet found a person with a clear method for teaching how to reach the digital marketplace. Peggy McColl, who is also affiliated with the self-help industry, challenged my thinking on this. McColl (2012) runs coaching classes on how to turn a book into a bestseller on the various US bestseller lists. [6] I became interested in her step-by-step approach. She appeared to be professional and experienced. McColl’s own success in publishing and her organised approach to the marketplace made me think that I might be able to adapt her tactics for my own purposes, particularly if I used a novel as the creative project. [7]

Building relationships with these people and learning about the self-help industry and the leaders in digital marketing, caused me to shift my thinking about the creative project. The self-help industry suggested that there were opportunities available to find the digital marketplace and this was the priority for me. Importantly, there was flexibility on my part, that is, a willingness to position the creative in relation to the marketplace to keep my expenses to a minimum in realising the work while meeting academic demands. This was the first sign of the broader strategy I would adopt throughout the period of the dissertation of tactical compromise on the creative work.

To meet the discipline needs and meet the marketplace, at this time I considered two tactical compromises for the creative. Both compromises leaned more towards the ‘literary’ rather than the horror film. I began to consider making either a novel or a collection of poetry. My reasons included the opportunity to build on my MA and MFA work, my growing opposition to the horror genre and my doubts that a horror film would be acceptable to the discipline of English. This doubt over what is ‘literary’ and what is acceptable for submission is problematic for many in the field, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Light 1995; Boyd 2009; Brier 2017; Kroll 1999). To ensure the story met academic standards, I could make it more ‘literary’ and also write it as a novel. [8]

My opposition to horror was also because I felt the genre did not fit well with the self-help industry and my interests in the genre were shifting. Although there were
other people I might affiliate with in the horror filmmaking field, my creative interests were no longer engaged in that area, in part for financial reasons and also because I was more interested in psychological and literary stories than the projects that were emerging from my New York connections. In addition, I doubted I could produce the story in Australia as it had such a strong New York influence and trying to maintain a production in one country and undertake a PhD in another would be too difficult.

I also began to have doubts about the the English discipline’s acceptance of film in regard to publication outcomes. I was concerned that a screenplay, let alone a realised film, was not going to be easily recognised in publication outcomes. That early suspicion is confirmed by the following announcement of a symposium at the University of Southern Queensland:

To date, it has been difficult to study the scriptwriting that happens in higher education settings, largely because scripts written in the academy have not been seen as credible research outcomes, but also because there has been a lack of opportunities for publication and production of these scripts. This situation is now changing, with a number of academic journals publishing scripts as creative research. (Baker 2016, para. 2.)

Instead of a script, I considered returning to the novel for the creative component. I thought of developing my MFA novel, ‘Blind truth’ (Suchy 1997). This approach offered me the opportunity to build on my MA and MFA interests, a common practice with the PhD; however, I had concerns about the self-help approach. Based on a preliminary examination of McColl’s method, I wondered if I could effectively brand the work, brand myself in relation to the work and market it myself. I was not sure that I could create a popular appeal with a literary work. Again, I was working from the assumption that the work had to be in the marketplace and have an audience. While this approach aligned with my wish to earn a good income from book sales—no easy task for a creative writer according to a 2010 study in Australia (Throsby & Zednik 2010)—based on my experiences in the university, I assumed submitting popular fiction v. literary fiction for assessment would not be supported, so I could not change the creative into something more ‘marketable’. In addition, with time and distance from the draft of the MFA novel, I recognised its weaknesses as a first novel and suspected it would be better kept in the bottom of the bureau drawer. However, I was not quick to give up on the idea of a novel. Time had given
me perspective and writing experience and, because of my training in McColl’s method, I began to think about building a marketing plan. This would include writing a new story, another tactical compromise on the creative work. I began developing some stories that I felt would be more effective for the proposed research and my perceptions of disciplinary expectations, as I attempted to balance and negotiate the relationship. These ideas were influenced by my American MFA experience in the 1990s and my business experiences. In 2009, I was not aware of the Australian-based PhD research and studies that were beginning to explore the potential of social media within the university context. For example, I toyed with the idea for a new novel, ‘Shame’ (Suchy 2009c). This novel would be developed following a very specific market strategy and would also satisfy my concepts of what the discipline would perceive as ‘great’ literature. Yet, in seeking to develop a literary work, again I found it difficult to determine how to also pitch for a mass market, a not uncommon experience. Bourdieu’s 1993 chart (see Figure 7.1) illustrates the separation between an ‘intellectual audience’ and the academy and a ‘mass audience’.

![Figure 7.1 ‘The field of cultural production’](source: Bourdieu (1993, p. 49))
I did not commit to either of the novels, ‘Blind truth’ (Suchy 1997) or ‘Shame’ (2009c), for the dissertation, due to my doubts about how research into the marketplace would work for the dissertation in terms of what I had already proposed and whether realising what I had proposed was even possible with the self-help industry’s marketing strategies. Further, I did not know if literature could be sold in the same way as self-help. To negotiate the relationship and try to reach the marketplace, I turned towards poetry as a tactical compromise.

Poetry is recognised by the discipline; therefore, I thought I might develop a collection of poetry entitled ‘Tree life’ (Suchy 2013g). This poetry project would also align with a type of self-help book I had observed at the conference. I had met a few people who were putting together book collections of inspirational short stories and marketing them with the same approach as the Chicken soup series. My collection might be formulated to mesh with this marketplace and also contain poetry that could fit with the discipline. I felt strongly that finding a marketplace was possible with this book, but had doubts that it was the right project for my research. I could not see how it could be research and fit with some existing genre or be literary enough as poetry, because it stemmed from a meditation practice, grounded in my interest in esoteric readings and practices outside my academic research background. Ultimately, some of this poetry was the first of the creative work to be realised in the digital marketplace (Suchy 2013e; 2013f; 2013h). This outcome was not achieved through the self-help industry, although I did utilise some of the relationship building strategies I had observed, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

This struggle to find a balance between the critical-creative-marketplace represents, in a heightened sense, the conflict and resistances for many in the relationship. The efforts to network and find community, to learn from leaders in an area, to self-educate and adjust the creative work to conform were strategies that emerged as I tried to balance the digital marketplace goals with the disciplinary needs and my own creative aesthetic. During this time, I was also changing my perceptions about the digital marketplace and my thinking about the compromises needed to achieve various outcomes. My resources were a deciding factor in where to go next to realise a creative work. Time and money were limited and I needed to return to the university.
7.4. Between Disciplines

By mid-June 2010, I was underway with my degree and aimed to submit a dissertation research proposal (Suchy 2010, Research Proposal) by early December. Although I had not committed to the idea of incorporating McColl’s bestseller plan into the dissertation, I tried to combine her marketplace approach with my creative strategy for a poetry collection. Venturing down this path seemed possible because I had learned of a woman who had sold her novel to a publisher in a bidding war by using a specific social media campaign. Yet, I had doubts. First, in examining the marketplace and the creative project, I was not sure whether my concept was big enough to be a bestseller. The other major problem that emerged was that the self-help industry was outside the academic theories recognised by the discipline of English. [9] To try to resolve the problem and maintain the marketing approach of realising a work in the digital marketplace, I started to explore how I might reach beyond the discipline boundary of English, yet stay within the university. [10] I decided to build relationships with what I perceived as more market-oriented fields within the academy: media studies and business. In crossing disciplinary boundaries, I worked to build new relationships to reach the marketplace through more self-educating and found that there were limits to tactical compromise on the creative.

7.4.1. Media studies

To help realise a project in the digital marketplace, I thought to position myself partly in media studies. My experience is as a writer, producer and actor. I have no competency with camera work and editing. There are film schools that have writing programs; however, as UWA is not one of those schools I was trying to find resources that people working in other university programs might not need to source for themselves. Media studies was located in the same discipline cluster and in the same building and seemed accessible in terms of resources and community for either making a film or for supporting a project with film and media resources if that was needed for digital marketing. My research focus was directed towards studying creative writing within English, thus, I would not fully position myself in media studies. When the chair of the media studies department became my second supervisor, we discussed the critical and the creative work and he made two significant suggestions. First, the research question I seemed to be asking was: How
do I write for this new marketplace? This was a topic of concern in media studies. In addition, he suggested a model for my creative component: The Guild, a fictional comedy web series created by Felicia Day, an avid gamer. Day’s project achieved huge commercial success as it tapped into a specific gaming audience (Day 2007). Aligning with media studies and embracing these two suggestions was significant. At this point, I retitled my study to be: ‘Creating an economically viable and replicable model for the entrepreneurial artist’. The experiences from this period further demonstrate the strategies of relationship building, self-educating and tactical compromise.

In terms of relationship building, the media studies department projected a strong sense of community and the opportunity to build relationships with postgraduate students. Media studies students were more visible and socially engaged than most of the creative writing students, who worked in a more isolated fashion, writing novels for the most part. Creative writing students were also less visible to a new postgraduate candidate. The media studies students invited me to weekends to play games and design game stories. Gaming is not my form of storytelling, nor is it traditionally part of the English curriculum in creative writing, although some writers are challenging this now (Hergenrader 2015, pp. 44–59; Hergenrader 2017 pp. 135–149). However, through these relationships I learned of an upcoming conference at the NASS at Murdoch University, in which writer and filmmaker Rolf de Heer was scheduled to be the keynote speaker. I saw an opportunity to engage in a discussion about the marketplace and about scriptwriting and submitted a proposal that was accepted, with a possibility of publication in the conference proceedings. In this way, I was trying to enter the marketplace and to share ideas with an academic community. In addition, achieving critical publication would provide a form of validation of my research.

Educating myself (that is, about the type of research I would conduct) would be different than what most of my peers in creative writing at UWA were doing, as their work was being driven by a single creative project. Daley (2012) argues that there are other approaches for the creative writing candidate who cannot reconcile the creative development and the academy expectations. She notes that a completed novel need not drive a student’s research. The student does not have to do a literary
analysis of sources, but instead can examine a larger problem. Further, the originality of the research could be addressed by approaching the ‘problem of composing from the position of a creative writer and the disciplinary practice of fiction writing’ (2012, p. 97). However, in 2010 I did not know of anyone discussing this challenge or where to position myself, so I stumbled around trying to find a theoretical grounding for a project that I could not define. Although I was directed to and conducted research into cultural economics, the creative industries and many other areas, I could find nothing to serve as a guide to what I wanted to research. Nor did my background from my MA work help. I had connected with the American Transcendentalists and done some work with postmodernism; however, this did not fit into my study. My MFA did not require any theoretical component, as, in the US, the creative work stands alone and is judged on its own merits. What I did not know was that creative writing is not only a field in its own right, but that there were theorists arguing that creative writing is a discipline (Donnelly 2011). This was the community that I needed to locate. While my early literature review discussed some of the American creative writing academics with whom I was familiar, I had no sense of a united community for PhD research in creative writing, as there is in Australia through the AAWP and is now growing in the US. [11] I also did not know about the historical relationship of creative writing within the academy and the marketplace that I would soon explore. I started to develop a paper on the opportunities of the digital marketplace for the creative writer to present at the NASS conference.

As I researched for this paper, I examined my own experiences and struggles to engage with the marketplace, and considered why the critical caused me to struggle and why I continued to try to engage with the university. I knew that the university and teaching offered some financial security to the creative writer, as others have observed (Wandor 2008, p. 176). I understood the writer’s imperative, as illustrated in the literary canon. The aim was to write something of profound significance, an intimidating objective to the writer-in-training. I did want to write a story with meaning that was wise, spoke some truth that I knew, something of the human condition, of suffering and learning, of vision and what it means to see at a transcendental level. I also knew that to step over the border of the discipline into media studies or business would require me to challenge these values. For some
people and at some times being market-focused is acceptable. However, before dropping with tradition, I needed to determine if the digital marketplace changed anything about those values and if I needed to make compromises. Importantly, I believed that the digital marketplace offered new opportunities and I needed to define my value in an environment in which I could not seem to gain a foothold. These concerns led me to draft the conference presentation ‘Know thyself: know thy market’.

At the beginning of September 2010, I presented my research at Murdoch University. My presentation received praise from the convener who said the discussion was needed and publication of the article (Suchy 2011a) soon followed. This publication was the first work to reach the digital marketplace. Although not a creative work, the publication was in an online open access journal and this began the process of thinking about positioning myself in the digital marketplace as a creative writing practitioner-researcher. [12] Later, when I presented this published paper as a sample chapter for the dissertation it was not well received, because it lacked focus, development of an argument and grounding and depth in a particular field such as the creative industries. I was advised to ‘play by the rules’. [13] As a first chapter for a dissertation in the discipline of English this feedback is understandable as I could not clarify that the experiences were the data I was studying. Nor could I determine the type of content the literature review would need to support the study of my own experiences, although I believed that I was working on ‘experiments’ in relationship and creativity. [14] When I had proposed the idea in my Research Proposal in December 2010, the suggestion of ‘experiments’ in creative writing caused concern to the UWA referees. I did not understand enough about methods and social science research to develop the idea or clarify my approach; therefore, I had to resubmit the proposal and I changed direction. The new title for the dissertation work was ‘Defining the creative spirit in the social media marketplace’. The title shows the narrowing of the topic to social media, a key tool in digital marketing. The research proposal was accepted in May 2011. The new title also suggests that I was attempting to define terms and my work did lead to this, in a published paper in TEXT (Suchy 2013d). The approach also influenced the development of the creative work. I developed ‘Empathy and the claw’ (Suchy 2011b), a feature-length screenplay.
To tactically position the creative work, I began thinking about making more relatable characters for a university audience. I chose a football player and an arts student to create a young romance, along the lines of *The Guild*. In addition, I considered whether production of the project could be accomplished on a low budget. The idea of writing a script that could be realised (as opposed to actually being realised) by being divided into 10 segments and posted on YouTube was encouraged and met with approval by the university. However, despite acceptance of the script idea, I still did not commit to the approach. In my opinion, the script concept lacked the commercial appeal of *The Guild*. Further, I still believed I needed to actually realise the creative work and have it physically situated somehow in the marketplace and even have it sell. I thought this would mean not only making at least a segment for YouTube but also building an audience. I also would have to connect this to critical research and an academic community. At the time I did not have the perspective to explain my struggle, so I held on to the bestseller book approach and those related projects because I thought I might be more likely to achieve that marketplace outcome with my limited resources. I began working towards this direction. I explained my plan to my English department supervisor who was patient with my explorations and shifts. Ultimately I did not use McColl’s method because I did not understand how to justify the time needed for marketing in terms of my academic research, although I did try. A full draft of the screenplay ‘Empathy and the claw’ was submitted to my supervisor in June 2012 (Suchy 2012, Annual Progress Report, sect. ‘completion plan’)

7.4.2. Business

In August 2010, a second area of crossing disciplinary boundaries occurred, this time into more business-oriented approaches. I was investigating the idea of art student as entrepreneur and considering whether I might work with the business school, because I was still motivated by the need to realise a creative project. I felt I would learn skills that would enable me to achieve that outcome and I would become a more effective, entrepreneurial businessperson. My supervisor discouraged my involvement with the business school, as working in other schools would be too administratively complicated. This did not prevent me from trying to find a way to finance the making of a screenplay. I was offered a place in the Developing
Commercialisation Skills Workshop run by the UWA Office of Innovation and Industry (see Appendix B). I attended, hoping to glean some strategy for a way to gain financial support for my project. At the conference, I was informed that a single film was of no interest to investors; however, if I was doing something that was internet-related there would be great interest, as there was demand for technology that could be capitalised and patented. I was the only arts student at the conference, and my creativity and communication skills helped to elevate the concepts of engineers in the teamwork activities. This was not a new experience to me—in the 1980s I had worked as a technical writer alongside engineers to promote work for government funding. However, my creative writing projects did not find support. The workshop lacked the appropriate group members with commitment for a film or digital content outcome. This business experience was of no value to my goal of realising a creative project in the digital marketplace. I was unwilling to make a compromise to try to develop new work for an unlikely outcome, but I did advance my thinking about the critical and the creative and the relationship to the marketplace by crossing boundaries and seeking to build new relationships.

7.4.3. English studies

I also looked to the English department to try to connect the critical and creative while realising a work in the digital marketplace. My experiences within the discipline of English as I engaged in commonly utilised doctoral studies approaches reveal how the broader strategies of self-educating, collaboration, tactical compromise and positioning occurred in this location as I tried to reach the digital marketplace. I considered my supervisor’s area of research and looked to my master’s work; I reviewed literature for the critical and I returned to work in the creative writing classroom. This was a form of collaborating with the past (Melrose 2016; Barnard 2017).

7.4.3.1. The supervisor’s work and the master’s work

My English studies supervisor’s practice and research in theatre and performance informed my thinking and influenced my next steps. Although I had some background experience in theatre and performance, I had no critical or research base on which to build and I was open to whatever opportunity or connection might
emerge from his performance class and the works being taught. I learned more about his background and interests [15] and I was willing to adjust components to create a balance between the creative, critical and marketplace needs. Further analysis of my reports and journals on this aspect of my experiences reveals that, as I was self-educating and relationship building, I was seeking to position my research in the digital marketplace by incorporating theatre in my creative approach.

An example of an initial attempt to position and utilise theatre can be observed in journal entries. On 28 July 2010, I attended a seminar at UWA titled ‘7 habits of highly effective PhD students’ (see Appendix B). At the seminar, we were told that, as scholars, we must stand on the shoulders of giants, of the people who have come before us. On 15 August 2010, I watched a man walking down the street with a little boy sitting on his shoulders and I began to form an idea for a low-budget theatre piece called ‘Children of giants’. I was trying to scheme a creative concept for theatre combined with what I was being told about research. My aim was to utilise my supervisor’s resources and background for support to realise a work. While I read and investigated about what my supervisor was doing, I was ruling out approaches and selecting the pieces I needed for my goals. I did not go beyond this initial thought, nor did I compromise the academic strategy for ‘Empathy and the claw’ (Suchy 2011b), or any of the projects that were still under my consideration. I recognised the real problem as I continued to try to develop the creative project: I could not commit to the creative project because I was not satisfied that there was a good connection with the other components.

Next I began to consider my master’s research. This demonstrates another example of strategic negotiation and positioning and a willingness to shift on the critical to try to find a way to balance the components. At this point, I recognised another problem. I did not know who the ‘giants’ were for this study. In English and creative writing, the giants are the creative writers, the literary canon. In retrospect, my problem was a lack of understanding about how the canon could inform my thinking in the context of the research I was trying to conduct. However, my MA and MFA work did not end up offering strong outcomes in terms of realising a work in the digital marketplace. In my December 2010 Research Proposal I proposed that I would build the creative to be placed in the digital marketplace based on a new dramatic model
that would develop from Henry James’ work in *The ambassadors* (1987) as a representation of a mystical journey (Suchy 2010, Research Proposal). James had strongly informed my MA work and my MFA work, so my initial approach was to try to build on the past. I returned to ideas about the spiritual and aesthetic based on a paper I had written and presented at the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society in Rome (Suchy 1998). I had no concerns about being able to create a story based on this mystical journey model, because this was an original technique I had developed for my own scriptwriting. To assist in the critical development, I planned to return to myth and to classic fairytales, subjects that I had studied in the past to build stories and screenplays. This approach was also the reason for renaming and repositioning my study as ‘Defining the creative spirit in the social media marketplace’, with a focus on building the critical and theoretical from the MA background—at least in part—and the creative component was proposed as ‘Empathy and the claw’ (2014b). While the approach provided a possible connection between my theory of storytelling and the creative work which would utilise the original methods for development, the screenplay was not critically connected to the marketplace issue in a way that satisfied me. Importantly, what still concerned me was realising the work.

Other inputs were also influencing me to change the creative work. For example, another way that I was self-educating was through reading about movement in theatre and this led me back to my own interests in dance. My supervisor gave me a DVD of a German modern dance performer, choreographer and teacher Pina Bausch. I was reading widely, for example, Tharp’s (2003) *The creative habit: learn it and use it for life*. I was seeking creative inspiration and began imagining theatre pieces that incorporated dance. I had to venture into the science library for Tharp’s book, as it was located in the field of psychology. The science of the mind in psychology had no basis for me and I had already experienced challenges in crossing disciplinary borders. I was not aware that I was conducting a sociological study examining my experience in creative production in a particular context. I had not trained in such an approach and did not understand the value. However, the readings encouraged my imaginings of theatre pieces and this led me to a new approach for the creative work, a work that would be tactically positioned to take advantage of the resources I had in English, Media studies and from my own creative past. The compromises would be made in the length of the creative work and in collaboration. This also led me to
reach beyond the academic world to try to build on old relationships for funding and, failing that, to build new relationships and engage in more tactical positioning with the creative to reveal new ways to think about the digital marketplace relationship.

The tactical strategy for the new creative work began after I submitted the research proposal (Suchy 2010, Research Proposal). Although I had proposed the screenplay ‘Empathy and the claw’ (Suchy 2011b) for the creative, as described I was not happy with the plan. Through my interest in building on the theatre relationship with my supervisor for the creative component, I turned to a more theatrical piece I had written for a salon performance. This would become a screenplay, ‘Mixed messages’ (Suchy & Umbrellahem 2011). I had the initial idea for this work years before, when I was privately commissioned to write a performance piece. The story was written as a half-hour performance for two actors, developed from a series of email communications. For the dissertation, my new creative concept was to draw from this theatre piece and develop a feature-length screenplay that would also utilise the Media studies department’s resources of camera equipment and crew. I was not completely clear about all the details. My supervisor was aware of my approach and supported my exploration, making the Bradley Studio workshop space at UWA available to me. This experience demonstrated my willingness to tactically compromise the creative, to position the work to balance the needs and to utilise the resources and relationship of the English department and the Media studies departments. I was also willing to consider submitting a collaborative work, as I had written the script with a partner and other people would be involved in development. This decision about collaboration worried me and was probably the reason why I was still considering the poetry book on and off throughout this six-month period (i.e., January 2011 to July 2011). While this new film approach would be more theatrical and easier to produce, it would still need funding to reach a marketplace.

More positioning and collaborating is evident as I searched for funding opportunities through traditional sources. At the end of January 2011, I applied to Screenwest for support. I was subsequently shortlisted for a business consultation with the Screenwest Legal Clinic. To prepare for the consultation, I developed the idea that the film could highlight beautiful locations in Western Australia and be useful for tourism. I began to think I could realise the movie with the resources available. My
creative partner had already scouted locations in which the story would be set, from Cape Leeuwin to Cape Naturaliste (including the Boranup Karri Forest, caves, lighthouses and other scenic spots). He had also gained some permission for filming. We had connections with tourism in the Margaret River region and were aware there was a focus on growth in the area. These relationships could benefit the project’s development financially and could help with developing a digital presence. I theorised this project would be a realised representative model of a digital marketplace relationship, in which others helped to locate the project in the digital marketplace. This perspective would influence later outcomes. However, funding was still needed and I had doubts about the compromises on the creative and the collaborative approach.

My doubts are evident in a journal entry on 7 February 2011, in which I wrote that as well as still playing with the idea of doing the poetry book ‘Tree life’ (Suchy 2013g) or one of the novels which might better suit a discipline outcome, I had doubts about the collaborative approach and the film production for the dissertation. I also had doubts about raising money. Pursuing and waiting for Screenwest decisions was exhausting, on top of everything else to be done for the dissertation. I felt pulled in too many directions and was shifting too far from the discipline of English. While I did not let go of the other creative projects, the next day’s entry, 8 February, indicates I was planning for filming and had met with my two supervisors about this. They supported my efforts.

On 11 February, I attended the Screenwest clinic (see Appendix A), a meeting with legal people who help develop small businesses. In my meeting with Michael Tucak of Creative Legal, I was advised that I needed a turnover of $1 million a year, but that this amount could be reduced to $750,000. This conversation confirmed to me that I was not going to easily find financial support and I could not pursue this type of business development while conducting PhD research. I made a repositioning decision about funding and resources for the film and that was to stay within the university.

This tactical compromise to stay within UWA led to new ways of thinking about the digital marketplace. The new approach, conceived within the constraints of the academic world, was to focus more on the collaborative nature of the digital
marketplace. I thought about how sharing and building relationships and collaboration was an important element of the digital marketplace and how that could work for the creative project. I conceived the idea of an organic development model, in which no outside funding would be needed. Organic development meant the project would grow and be informed by the input from other creative people as they collaborated, providing experiences and working in ways that helped them develop, expand or enhance their own work. We could cross-promote and utilise whatever social media and digital marketplace opportunities that suited our needs, thus allowing the whole project to evolve in an organic relationship to the digital marketplace. Payment would be in kind, through an exchange of services and promotion. Even the development of the screenplay could be directed by this approach.

With this new approach in mind, I returned to my creative contacts and began to build my relationships in new ways. By 12 March 2011, I had gathered a creative team for ‘Mixed messages’ (Suchy & Umbrellahem 2011). I drew up contracts and engaged in discussions with an aspiring actress and an actor (who were seeking to advance their careers), an aspiring photographer (who would take stills of his actress girlfriend), a cameraman from the university (who was also a musician with a band he wanted to promote), a clothing designer (with her own line of organic clothing), a musician (who would produce a music video from the outcome to promote himself, the project and the other members of the group) and my writing collaborator as director (to see his work realised). In addition, I gained permission to access any equipment we needed from the university (e.g., green screens, cameras, lighting, sound equipment, editing equipment and so forth), provided it was not required by anyone else at the time. The plan was to film during holiday time, so that the volunteer students were available to work as crew members. All the pieces were in place and the biggest issue in development planning was in situating the project so that it would find a commercial outcome. One month later, I arranged to borrow equipment from Media Services and organised through my coordinating supervisor to begin meetings and rehearsals using the Bradley Studio. In May 2011, rehearsals were underway and another draft of the screenplay was completed. The team began filming a music video teaser trailer in the Perth Hills at a stunning location outside the clothing designer’s workshop. This was a good strategy for enabling the work to
be noticed and supported. We all thought we could build from this starting place; however, the creative work strategy did not hold.

Although the creative team had started strong, by the end of July 2011, the lead actress had fallen very ill and, soon after, she and the photographer moved interstate. The director was involved in other projects and other people had commitments that did not allow for any rapid forward movement of the project. The lack of commitment from others for my dissertation was understandable. People needed money for their time. In addition, the university was now facing budget cuts. This restricted the support I could receive through editing and equipment. Although I had footage and partial editing was completed of the music video teaser trailer, I could not move forward. I was advised there were classes available so that I could learn to do the editing myself, but this was not realistic for my circumstance.

Despite the need to stop production, the experience led to new thoughts about collaboration and controlling the creative. Meanwhile, I was also examining the critical component and trying to locate the literature that I needed.

7.5. The Literature Review

In examining my literature review experiences, the themes of self-education, collaboration and tactical compromise and positioning also emerge. The literature review was ongoing and, from the beginning, there was a great deal of self-educating and positioning to determine the most relevant areas to review.

My initial literature review demonstrates my efforts to draw all the components of the dissertation together by self-educating across many areas. For a critical base, the areas can be briefly summarised as: art and production (i.e., writers such as Matthew Arnold, Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Dawson), commercialisation in academia (i.e., writers such as Derek Bok, David Kirp and Donald Stein), creative/myth construction including mystical and transcendental (i.e., writers such as Joseph Campbell and James E Miller), for literary writing and film writing (writers such as Lajos Egri, John Gardner, Michael Hague and Chris Vogler) and the digital marketplace (i.e., writers such as Seth Godin and Daniel Pink). For a creative- or -spirit-based approach to dissertation writing, I reviewed Hume and McPhilips (2006) and Don Trent Jacobs (2008).
I also reviewed the academic literature connections from my past MA research to try and create new connections. Examples of this effort are demonstrated by my scholarly work on Virginia Woolf and her methods (Suchy 2012a) and Shakespeare and his creative methods (Suchy 2012b). While both these efforts found audiences, they did not help me to resolve the critical link of the dissertation. Neither the Shakespeare nor the Woolf scholarly work connected my creative experiences to the digital marketplace. [16]

In my 2012 Annual Progress Report, I describe a need for a new literature review—a strategy that required more self-education:

The nature of the relationship between the script and the critical component has changed a bit too, though still holding to the original aims in a general sense. Work on the critical component, based on critical feedback from advisors on first chapters, required that the research be more grounded in a particular field. There were a number of alternatives for fields, including creative industries, critical theory and cultural studies. Although there is some exploration into these fields, the work needed a solid grounding in one area. The choice for me was creative writing theory and taking an historical approach. (Suchy 2012, Annual Progress Report, sect. ‘Summary’)

In strategising a new tactical position, I explained that this approach was justified for the following reasons (Suchy 2012, Annual Progress Report):

1) my experiences and desire to understand those experiences, as a student, a teacher and a writer working within the academic world of creative writing, motivated me to want to understand the historical context of what I was doing
2) the size and relevance of the historical field is appropriate. The history of creative writing programs in the university spans a fairly brief period (less than 150 years) and the work done in this area is quite manageable. This worked well, as the focus of my work is not purely in the history, but also looking to the future
3) my undergraduate background as a history major gave me an understanding of how to approach structuring a history.

I began to see that I was attempting to determine whether or not social media marketing had a place in the contemporary creative writing curriculum and that my
research contribution would be towards the pedagogy and practice of creative writing.

This focus on the field of creative writing was driven by the need for a community and a connection to the practice of creative writing in relationship to the marketplace within a pedagogical context. I searched the history, looking for examples of the marketplace relationship. This additional self-study was required as I had no background in this area, for the history of the field of creative writing is not generally taught to students at any level. I also researched in depth many areas within creative writing such as assessment practices in creative writing pedagogy and the examination of creative writing dissertations.

By 2013, I was beginning to clarify what this positioning had accomplished:

The focus this year has been heavily towards the critical work and understanding how and where to position myself. In the process of needing to write the third chapter, I was forced to narrow the field. Previously, I felt the work seemed to be leaning towards marketing and I wondered if I needed to do research into business and selling, which was my initial motivation for doing the PhD, or at least I thought it was. To make a living I wanted to be able to sell something I wrote, so I had to figure out how to sell my own work. Yet, I have learned that I also came into the PhD program to learn about what my own experiences in education have been, as both a student and teacher. I had written a great deal, yet finding a way to make a living was never something addressed in any of the academic study I undertook. This frustrated me and I have learned that this conflict between expectation and outcome is not uncommon. This was interesting and I wondered if what was happening with the social media marketplace changed the paradigm. [Chapter 4] the newest research, gets at the core of this conflict and looks at what is going on in the creative writing classroom, tying together the historical attitudes towards selling with contemporary practice. There has not been much talk about technology, in particular the social media marketplace in relation to the creative writing classroom and I realised that this would be a good corner for me. (Suchy 2013, Annual Progress Report, sect. ‘Summary’)

In the same report, I indicated that I was learning about who was involved in the conversation from a more contemporary point of view and where I wanted to build relationships:

I needed to determine the key players in the field of creative writing that I was addressing. Currently, there is a relatively new and growing field called Creative Writing Studies, in which theorists and practitioners are
addressing issues related to the contemporary creative writing classroom. Graeme Harper (with Taylor and Francis) is publishing collections that allow many of the key players to give voice to the issues. The players are from an Australian and international community and include people such as Dianne Donnelly, Joseph Moxley, Patrick Bizzaro, Catherine Cole, Paul Hetherington, Jen Webb, Jeri Kroll, Dominique Hecq and Anna Leahy. There are many more and I am creating a list of top players. Having trained myself in the history of creative writing through readings of writers like DG Myers, Paul Dawson and others and having also developed an understanding of the pedagogy, I have a clearer understanding of my own teaching practice and how that evolved and was situated in relation to teaching composition and other classes within an English department in the US. I have come to better understand the struggles of creative writing in higher education. (Suchy 2013, Annual Progress Report)

In locating myself in this space, I was now gaining confidence about the dissertation work and I sought presentations and publications to confirm my position (Suchy 2012c; 2014a). This history was an attempt to understand the traditional ways in which people who were working from within the discipline met the marketplace. Finding the examples of where that happened in the past was interesting and provided a foundation that I needed, but it was not useful to advancing the argument of the dissertation in the form of a full chapter. In that research I was still seeking permission from the past to enter the marketplace, an idea that I had already addressed in ‘Know thyself: know thy market’ (Suchy 2011a).

To progress, I explored opportunities that the social media marketplace might offer the creative writing classroom. I began to focus the discussion on defining this particular aspect of the digital marketplace and this became the peer-reviewed article ‘The social media marketplace in the “quaint” creative writing classroom: our terms of engagement’ (Suchy 2013d). This outcome was significant in that it represented an engagement in the digital marketplace and with a new community, the AAWP. The relationship with this group would become significant and help to produce more digital marketplace outcomes in the creative and the critical as I will discuss further in this chapter.

At this stage of the research, the search for a community of creative writers and collaboration with the past was important. The pedagogical connection took me to areas I had not explored during my MA work in literature or my MFA work in creative writing. I was immersed in contemporary and historical readings and the
outcome was new perceptions and tactical positioning in defining terms and how to view the digital marketplace. For the creative works, I was still seeking to realise a large project such as a screenplay or book; however, from this point onwards there would be significant changes in my view of what it meant to realise work in the marketplace. I was beginning to consider my own terms for digital marketplace outcomes, for both the creative and critical context. I was encouraged towards producing more critical publication outcomes because they seemed to be more valued by the university and could become chapters for the dissertation. Some of the influence on this view came from the many academic conferences and seminars I was attending (see Appendix B).

7.5.1. The creative writing classroom (August 2011–November 2011)

Another area in which research students often engage is in the classroom. This location also demonstrates the theme of building on relationships. I sought to reconnect with the aspect of the discipline that mattered to me—to connect to the pedagogy. This experience enabled me to put aside my own personal interests and to gain a broader perspective. Although I was offered the opportunity to teach in media studies and to teach business writing within the discipline of English, I declined those positions and chose to stay with creative writing because I was dedicated to studying my field and believed that teaching should inform or complement the research. At that time, the only option for engagement was to tutor a unit. Although I have taught creative writing extensively in the US, this tutoring experience would educate me further about the Australian context. This course was not market-focused, but served as a general English class for undergraduates and provided a way of teaching about literature through writing by using a traditional workshop model of reading from a sampling of short stories and having students workshop their own original creative writing work.

As I began preparations for the term, I considered how this experience could inform my research. I conceived the idea of a survey of students and tutors at UWA as a way to examine contemporary practice and the relationship to selling in a marketplace. Having some market research background, I had no trouble putting together a survey. In my 2012 Annual Progress Report, I noted my progress on the survey:
In regard to the research survey work, ethics approval was received, the survey was given and I have been working with Laura Firth at the Statistics Clinic to organise the results. (Suchy 2012, Annual Progress Report, sect. ‘Summary’)

However, as time passed, this approach seemed irrelevant to the creative and the work did not help to address the research question. First-year students did not have sufficient experience in the conflicted relationship of the critical-creative-marketplace to provide the answers I needed. There was no connection to my research work with the exception of one of the class exercises I devised. To demonstrate the exercise, I wrote a short fiction to share with the students. ‘A pair of spectacles’ (Suchy 2014b) was realised in the digital marketplace two years later. Although the survey was not ultimately incorporated in the dissertation, the time in the classroom served to further connect me with the pedagogy of the field.

7.6. Creative Writing Communities

Over the next two years, I built relationships with academic creative writers. I was dissatisfied with the outcome of ‘Mixed messages’ (Suchy & Umbrellahem 2011) and with ‘Empathy and the claw’ (Suchy 2011b) as works representative of a digital marketplace engagement and had a strong need to have more control over all the facets of production for the creative project. Two groups that were significant in helping me achieve this control were Words&Thoughts (a creative writing community of postgraduates located at UWA) and the AAWP. Through these relationships and through more tactical positioning and compromise in scope and size of the creative work, more digital marketplace outcomes were achieved.

7.6.1. Words&Thoughts

Words&Thoughts is a postgraduate creative writing seminar series that began in March 2008 within the Faculty of Arts. My involvement with this group would help me to realise creative work in the digital marketplace. By January 2012, I had assumed the role of coordinator of the group. The focus of these creative writers was on critiquing each other’s creative work. Again, I was looking to build relationships to help achieve marketplace outcomes. My approach for leading the group was to expand the focus beyond the critique of creative writing to finding ways to build professional outcomes for myself and for others through working collaboratively, to
amplify our individual outcomes and become more visible, with an increased physical and digital presence. I wanted to build on the lesson learned from ‘Mixed messages’ (Suchy & Umbrellahem 2011) of engaging in a more organic way of developing the creative-market relationship, but with more control. This approach was effective in the development of the group, as I describe in a grant application:

In the past year-and-a-half, the program has grown steadily in number and the focus has expanded to help both our emerging and more established writers achieve professional outcomes, share creative works with a larger community and document the achievements of our group's members. Currently, there are over 70 active members on our mailing list. We have monthly meetings and seminars, develop creative projects, maintain a newsletter and have an online group. Words&Thoughts is student-run, but includes and invites staff and guests from outside the group for various events and activities. (Suchy 2013, UWA Annual Alumni Fund grant application)

Importantly, the approach did succeed in helping me and other members of the group reach the digital marketplace as can be observed in three examples: interviews, a collaborative poetry project and my own project The dust collectors (Umbrellahem & Taylor 2013).

The interviews began with the idea of promoting the members of the group by using the camera and sound equipment available through my media studies relationship. For my personal advancement, my idea was to try and connect my work and myself with other writers and to find places in the social media marketplace with like-minded people who would be both audience and participant. I believed that the group’s audience would expand my audience. An example of the approach is demonstrated in the audio interview I conducted with two of the poet-academics from the group to help promote their creative and critical research. The digital marketplace outcome can be heard at Westerly, a long running, well-respected Western Australian literary print and digital magazine (Suchy 2016e).

A second idea that I proposed was a collaborative poetry project to work across platforms to reach the digital marketplace. The group voted to focus primarily on poetry and short story because of the manageability of the shorter form. I coordinated a cross-platform approach so that the works could appear on Trove, a UWA digital literary journal and in the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery on the UWA campus. The
grant application I wrote seeking funding for the group presents some of the outcomes and the approaches:

*Trove*, Luminous Literature, Special Issue, April 2013 edition, http://www.trove.arts.uwa.edu.au. The group developed and workshopped a collection of poems and short stories on the theme of luminosity. These works were designed to tie in thematically with the luminous theme of the Perth International Arts Festival and the UWA Cultural Precinct. (Suchy 2013, Annual Alumni Fund)

Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, *Luminosity: Words&Thoughts*, Friday 19 April 2013, 1 pm, http://www.lwgallery.uwa.edu.au/publicprogram. At the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, the UWA writing collective Words&Thoughts created new works inspired by the theme of luminosity. In this talk they presented a unique glimpse behind the scenes of the creative process, charting the development of the language of a poem from conception to birth on printed page. Poets include Susan Taylor Suchy, OO Mehallerbm, Vivienne Glance, Ruari Jack Hughes, Gabrielle Everall and others. (Suchy 2013, Annual Alumni Fund)

This represents a digital marketplace outcome with work presented live and published and promoted online. I also report another digital marketplace outcome in my 2013 Annual Progress Report:

Additionally, we’ve created an iPad art project that presents the poetry. This is a new experiment for the gallery too, as it presents a ‘portrait’ of the artist on a technological interface, outside the usual exhibition space. We are also working with marketing through Facebook and other social media marketing to promote this work and other works of the artists involved. This is groundwork for the social media market side of the creative work I will be presenting for the dissertation. (Suchy 2013, Annual Progress Report)

To view the introduction to ‘Luminous Literature’ see Suchy 2013c.

Despite these useful demonstrations of digital marketplace connection, I had doubts about my approach. First, I did not understand the value of these creative outcomes to the dissertation at the time as I express in the next paragraph of the 2013 Annual Progress Report: ‘I had originally thought that some of these works would be part of the thesis, but with the new, tightened focus, they may not fit’ (sect. ‘Summary’). To try to find a way to make them fit, I looked into transmedia approaches for the theoretical. I attended Jeff Gomez’s seminar on transmedia writing in August 2013 (see Appendix B) and self-educated by examining the work of Jenkins and others.
However, I ruled out the approach because of the admittance of failure by this group to engage with academia. Jenkins et al. (2006) argue that, while other academic fields (e.g., media studies) do develop transmedia projects, ‘schools as institutions have been slow to react to the emergence of this new participatory culture’ that shifts ‘the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to community involvement’ (2006, p. 4). I was also concerned about the issue of collaboration and thought that I should promote solo poetry outcomes. ‘Lewis gets a call’ (Suchy 2013b) reached the digital marketplace, but this piece seemed unconnected to the dissertation at the time.

Due to these concerns in regard to the creative work, I persevered with The dust collectors (Umbrellahem & Taylor 2013). While The dust collectors was not a Words&Thoughts creative group project, I realised that the Words&Thoughts relationships could help promote my own work while helping others promote their work. In April 2013, at the UWA Centenary Celebration during the Alumni Weekend Book Festival, I interviewed Ambelin Kwaymullina (see Appendix B) about her book The interrogation of Ashla Wolf (2012). I also launched The dust collectors. We both had our books for sale through the University Co-operative Bookshop. My 2013 Annual Alumni Fund grant application presents some of the details of the experience:

‘The Alumni Weekend’ found our very own Ambelin Kwaymullina being interviewed by Susan Taylor Suchy for the Writers Corner about her new book The interrogation of Ashala Wolf. We were in great company, with Dennis Haskell reading his Centenary tribute and many other fabulous homegrown creatives. Also Susan’s article, ‘Shamanism in the future: Ambelin Kwaymullina’s “The interrogation of Ashala Wolf’ ’ will be appearing in the upcoming issue of Science Fiction Magazine: a review of speculative fiction. (p. 1) [17]

Although I was forging new relationships and had published, I believed that publication by a larger publisher would be needed for my work to be validated. Kwaymullina noted that to have a relationship with agents and publishing success a writer needed to be in the eastern states of Australia. [18]

In October 2013, I attended the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) Conference in Sydney (see Appendix B) and pitched to publishers, but I quickly realised that the time needed to follow up on submitting the works would disconnect me from the dissertation. I also feared I would not have control over the publishing process. In
other words, I might not achieve publication of a larger work during the period of candidature. However, the conference served other purposes. For example, it confirmed the validity of my research by highlighting the need for more digital marketplace understandings, as that was the theme of the conference.

7.6.2. AAWP and other academic creative writing groups

The Words&Thoughts group was useful for developing creative projects; however, there was still a lack of theoretical context—something bigger was needed. Back in October 2012, I had expressed my concerns at a meeting with Dr Philip Mead. His suggestion to seek publication with *TEXT* had helped to direct me towards another creative writing group, the AAWP, to share ideas on pedagogy and practice. I needed to be a part of a larger critical conversation and this group provided the new relationships I needed for my critical publication about creative writing pedagogy (Suchy 2013d). The referee process provided another relationship that increased my confidence about the research.

I was also positioning and seeking to build more relationships for the creative, this time with the AAWP. In November 2013, my poems ‘Cuppa poetea’ (Suchy 2013a) demonstrate that the creative can reach the digital marketplace in an indirect way, with an outcome that is not highly visible. This poetry was part of a research study. The work was shared in a pamphlet that was emailed to all the participants. The work was also read for an academic audience at the AAWP conference. From my research for this ‘publication’ and the confidence I attained in its recognition, I began to tactically position myself to think of the marketplace and outcomes in the digital marketplace in different ways. The idea of completing a film project with a commercial outcome was clearly not the only way to realise a work in the digital marketplace. However, I was unclear at this point as to what would constitute sufficient creative work for the dissertation.

In May 2014, I still felt I needed to write a full-length creative work that was representative of something realised in the digital marketplace. A book idea was fermenting. This would become the screenplay ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d). By November, I presented ‘Writing for the new social media marketplace’ at the 2014 AAWP New Zealand conference. This paper focused on my strategy for ‘Theta’s
ghost’. At the same time, I also presented and later published ‘The cat’s pyjamas’ (Suchy 2015b), a short story with a short exegesis. The story development utilised digital communications and the exegesis theorised the marketplace relationship. The story also presented an example of a work realised in the digital marketplace, but it was not of sufficient length, in itself, to be submitted for the dissertation’s creative component. However, the experience with the AAWP group made me aware of how contact with this community of creative writers makes publication in the digital marketplace possible for both the creative and critical writing.

7.7. Preparing to Submit a Dissertation

The three strategies occurred again in preparing to complete the creative and the critical work for my dissertation’s submission and trying to have the creative work reach the digital marketplace. I built on the relationship with the AAWP group and this led to a new need to self-educate and a new strategic compromise of the creative work and its relationship to the dissertation.

Realising the creative component in the digital marketplace was always an underlying issue and I was still struggling with this, but I had begun to reposition my thinking about what that could mean for the creative project and how the three components could be balanced. I now believed that I could move forward with the creative if I could make an argument to the AAWP group about the relationship of ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d) to the marketplace. This research was published after I presented my ideas at the 2014 AAWP conference (Suchy 2015c). Chapter 5 presented this research.

In this part of the research, I theorised that a balance of the critical-creative-marketplace relationship could be found by gathering genealogical research in the digital marketplace for the construction of a creative work. Defining the digital marketplace and what it might mean to the field of creative writing in the academy and understanding the digital marketplace as a place for the exchange of ideas and information and using that in the development of a creative work could be an example of ‘how to write for the digital marketplace’. This seemed a solution to connecting all the pieces. I argued that engaging with the digital marketplace—through researching the digital marketplace and utilising that knowledge in the
creation of the story—was a way to demonstrate how someone in the discipline of creative writing could write for the digital marketplace. Further, where I located myself, in the social media marketplace and with genealogical research, was the answer to the research question of how I wrote for the digital marketplace.

I also describe my position in my 2015 Annual Progress Report:

I am now well into the creative work ‘Theta’s ghost’ and have found unique ways to position the social media marketplace research I have conducted in the field of social media marketplace genealogy into the screenplay, thus demonstrating that the social media marketplace can represent a space for research, which is ‘one of the necessities, and one of the joys, of writing’ (Buchbinder 2005, p. 208). My work in positioning the social media marketplace discoveries into the creative work will be evident in the screenplay and I am also writing an additional chapter summarising why and how certain genealogical items were selected and utilised. (Suchy 2015, Annual Progress Report)

From January 2015 onwards, I worked on the screenplay. As I finished the screenplay, I prepared a paper for the June 2015 Limina Conference (Suchy 2015a) to address the additional chapter I planned to write (as proposed in the Annual Progress Report above). Although my presentation was well received, I was deeply dissatisfied.

After I had put all the pieces of the dissertation together and just before handing it to my supervisors, I read the abstract I had written and felt the argument was not significant in a broader context. I was not happy with the idea of submitting the final screenplay that I wrote (‘Theta’s ghost’) as solely representative of my research for a PhD with creative component. This resistance was for several reasons. First, I had not focused only on this one work during my study but instead had made many works and all of them were equally useful in helping to address the research into the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. Second, I did not believe that an assessment of the ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d) experience would offer a level of knowledge befitting a dissertation. Also, I did not believe that this single screenplay had been given sufficient time for reflection and revision for assessment. Further, some of the creative work revealed information and personal issues that I was not prepared to make public at the time.

I began a new approach, as described in my 2016 Annual Progress Report:
Since last June, I have continued working to complete my dissertation. Recently, I did make a change in my strategy. I have submitted an Application for Variation of Terms in that regard. Instead of a single screenplay being the creative component, I am presenting a number of works that represent data I am examining. The creative elements are still to be used and this will still be for the discipline of creative writing. As my research has always been to examine the relationship of the discipline and the writer to the marketplace, in light of a new marketplace that is driven by social media, the change is not radical, but substantial in relation to its form. (Suchy 2016, Annual Progress Report)

I now engaged in a six-month period of self-education on many research methodologies across many fields. This period allowed me to find a way to recognise, acknowledge and present what I had instinctively pursued. I found a way to analyse data that I had collected that would have more value to the discipline. A significant discovery for me was *Supervising practices for postgraduate research in art, architecture and design* (Daley 2012), as discussed further in this chapter. Daley’s suggestion to give up on the idea of having a single creative artefact encouraged me to find a way to present more than a single full-length screenplay because I was examining a larger problem. Further, the originality of my research would be addressed by how I approached the ‘problem of composing from the position of a creative writer and the disciplinary practice of fiction writing’ (p. 97).

This new stage of self-educating showed me that making creative works and examining the experiences was action research. After making a work, or not necessarily completing a work, I was analysing what was occurring at each stage. I came to understand that once all this work was completed, an additional analysis could occur. I could use grounded theory and conduct thematic analysis to examine the themes that arose across each phase of the research. Chapter 6 explained the method and this chapter presents that analysis.

Throughout the dissertation, I had been testing my understanding of the discipline and my understanding of the marketplace through action research. The process of making (i.e., what creative project to make next) was emergent and was guided by understandings that were primarily informed by previous experience, but also by self-educating about the discipline and the marketplace. Verification of the validity of my research was confirmed by relationships built by attending conferences and by strategic positioning in publications. What was constant was the research concern of
making for the marketplace. Each creative development had to try to work with the marketplace in some way. This revealed various ways to engage with the marketplace, ways to define what the marketplace is and what one might do in that pursuit, as well as areas of resistance, both from the discipline and from the artist. Usefully, this approach also allowed for a more natural and integrated presentation of the relationship between the critical and the creative.

The significance of building relationships was further evident as I worked towards writing up the dissertation but continued to seek publication. I began writing book reviews to position my research within a particular creative writing discussion. While this is not a new idea in higher education, it is not something I had been encouraged to do. Between January and February 2016, I wrote and published ‘Beyond fear: teaching creative writing with digital technologies’ (Suchy 2016b). This was a review of Clark, Hergenrader and Rein’s (2015) *Creative writing in the digital age: theory, practice and pedagogy*. Between September and October 2016, I wrote and published ‘Bringing up baby: nurturing creative research in an academic context’ (Suchy 2016c). This was a review of Kroll, Melrose and Webb’s *Old and new, tried and untried: creativity and research in the 21st century* (2016). These two reviews reached the digital marketplace and helped me gain confidence because I was able to further engage in relationships with others working in the field.

### 7.8. The Closing Strategy

Although I was gaining confidence, I was still not fully clear on how all the pieces of the dissertation connected, hence, I sought more marketplace outcomes with a new short story and the screenplay of ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d). In August 2016, I submitted a short story, ‘Sitting southwest’ (Suchy 2016d), to *Westerly*’s Writers’ Development Program. [19] I felt this might help advance my professional training for the marketplace and build a relationship with two different publishing groups. Although I was shortlisted, I did not win because, the editor noted, I was sufficiently advanced in my creative career (K Noske 2016, pers. comm. 12 August). For me, this letter served as an affirmation of sorts. Although Sarrimo (2010) confirms that ‘to be published is thus regarded the major legitimising act to become a “real” writer’ (p. 179) and I had been published, I still felt that I lacked legitimacy within the academic and ‘literary’ marketplace. Although this was a rejection letter, it also was
a statement of my professionalism. Creatively, I was professional enough. My publication level made me a ‘real’ writer in someone else’s eyes. I was ‘legitimate’ in the ‘so-called’ literary marketplace (*Westerly* is a paying academic journal with a long, significant history located in the literary marketplace).

I also completed a rewrite of ‘Theta’s ghost’ as part of a market-oriented six-month directed self-study program with Karel Segers as part of a Beta test group for his Immersion Screenwriting Course [20]. This was an effort on my part to prepare the script for submission with the dissertation as an example of how to write for the marketplace, even if the outcome of why it represented that goal was different than my earlier argument. This course also served to help me prepare the script for the marketplace. These were two relationships that helped me to realise that I had done enough for the dissertation. All the works represented the research and provided data that needed to be analysed. I was at the closure point in the research and at the end of making creative projects for the dissertation.

By September 2016, I began writing up the final draft of the dissertation and believed I was being truer in presenting what I had actually done. The process of creating and the quest to find a balance in the discipline-student-marketplace relationship drove the research. As I analysed the experiences, I began to find that I could draw out broader findings about the relationship, findings that would be of value as research to the discipline. Importantly, even in this final stage there was a need to continue to build relationships, to self-educate and to tactically compromise—an ongoing and inevitable part of negotiating the critical-creative-digital marketplace relationship. [21] A year and three months later, as I finalise this dissertation for submission, I cease this exploration (for now) and consider the significance of my findings.
Notes

[1] ‘Critical’ refers to any academic need and any disciplinary department that I was working with at the time under discussion. ‘Critical’ also can refer to the position of the teacher or supervisor as representative of the discipline. ‘Creative’ refers subjectively to my aesthetic and creative needs as well as my role as a PhD student and also objectively, as representative of any hypothetical student working within the academic environment. When I speak of the creative work-project-artefact and so forth, I am referring to either my work or any student’s work. ‘Marketplace’ can refer to the general idea of marketplace, or can refer to the digital marketplace. If the digital marketplace is being specifically referenced, then that is stated.

[2] The SSHFF is now defunct. Its debut was October 2007 (http://www.filmfestivals.com/festival/schoharie_scary_horror_film_fest)

[3] Crowdfunding began to gain traction online in the US in 2008. However, I did not consider this approach, as it was slow to arrive in Australia.

[4] Self-help now is also referred to as self-improvement.


[6] At the time, I did not realise that the bestseller list has many categories. For example, a book can be a bestseller in a certain type of poetry. This increases the odds of making the list, but does not necessarily translate into a large income from sales.

[7] I did not have any issues with McColl’s program, although it does receive mixed reviews in writers’ forums. It is important to note that many authors do need help in presenting themselves (e.g., building websites and so forth) and that there are many legitimate resources to help them achieve this outcome. (i.e., see http://absolutewrite.com/forums/showthread.php?593-Promotion-Bestseller-Coaching Program)

[8] For example, Eudora Welty’s novel The robber bridegroom (now also a stage play) or Margaret Atwood’s The robber bride, in which the gender of the villain is changed to female. Both are based on the Grimms’ fairytale.
[9] Interestingly, many of my fellow PhD peers (recent graduates) have adopted a social media presence that recognises the teaching approaches described by the people I was meeting in the self-help industry.

[10] This is as I understood the boundary to be at the time. That is, with strong resistances to certain forms and genres of writing and a high expectation of proving something to be ‘publishable’.

[11] In the US, AWP does not serve the same functions as AAWP in Australia, in that there is not an associated publication such as TEXT that provides a publicly available discussion of research and an open access database of resources in the field of creative writing, practice and pedagogy.

[12] This position reflects my knowledge about dissertation writing at the time. I was learning to define myself in a new academic role.


[14] To research the subject, I had to visit the science library, as this is where the books on creativity were housed that were considered part of the science of psychology. I understand now that this organisation system was specific to this university and there could have been other ways to explore the subject. Usefully researchers in creative writing are publishing on new methods approaches (Kroll & Harper 2013; Pace 2012).

[15] My reasons for researching at UWA and with my supervisor were that my academic areas of interest and background as a teacher seemed a better fit with this university than others in Western Australia. My supervisor is a highly respected teacher and accomplished playwright and was the most experienced person supervising scriptwriting at UWA. In addition, I did not have the option to go elsewhere due to personal reasons.

[16] The Woolf paper was presented at a Gender, Media and Cultural Studies’ Work in Progress (WiP) Seminar (Suchy 2012a). The Shakespeare paper about development of emotions in characters in The Merchant of Venice was presented at the 2012 Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association (ANZSA) ‘Shakespeare and Emotions’ Conference (Suchy 2012b). Both experiences seemed
irrelevant to the digital marketplace and provided me with no sense of how to connect the critical and the creative.

[17] The article was published in the 2016 edition (Suchy 2016a)

[18] This 2017 article also argues this perspective: https://overland.org.au/2017/04/you-can-be-a-successful-writer-but-only-if-you-live-in-melbourne-or-sydney/

[19] Some details of Westerly’s initial development program are available at: http://www.proximitywa.org/news/westerly-writers-development-program

[20] Segers’ program offers Immersion Screenwriting in 36 lessons. I submitted the revised screenplay ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d) as my final project for this class. My goal was to work on improving my script to be market-ready. The course helps with development of the script, as well as writing log lines and treatments. A preview of this course is available at: https://edu.tsd.im

[21] The degree in which I reached the marketplace, was published and was paid to publish is beyond the scope of this discussion, but I have included a brief analysis in the Appendix (see Table A.1).
Chapter 8. Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

The radical changes that digital technology has brought to the marketplace call for the discipline of creative writing to be more engaged in the digital age. There are even suggestions that the discipline might let go some of its resistance to the marketplace. The aim of the research has been to explore the relationship of the creative writer in higher education to the digital marketplace. The research was emergent and required developing an understanding of perceptions of the marketplace relationship before I could address the research question: How does a creative writing student write for the digital marketplace? To answer the research question, I needed to learn more about the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. I engaged in research and I developed a series of creative projects. The emergent research in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 represents my experiences at various stages of the candidature. The final analysis was conducted to elicit findings about my experiences as a creative writer-researcher and to answer the research question. To do this, I adopted an analytic autoethnographic approach using grounded theory. The method for that approach was presented in Chapter 6. The autoethnography was presented in Chapter 7. The following summary of the findings of the analytic autoethnography incorporates the experiences of the earlier chapters to reveal broader findings. Next, an interpretation of the findings is provided, followed by a discussion of the limitations of the research in terms of the sampling procedures, the design and the method used. A discussion of future research concludes this chapter.

8.2. Summary of Autoethnography Findings

I found that the answer to the research question was to use three specific strategies to negotiate the relationship between academic demands, creative interests and marketplace opportunities. The literature review demonstrated that a creative writing student must negotiate the complex relationship to the marketplace. My study shows that this continues to apply in the digital context. For me, the negotiation to reach the digital marketplace occurred across five locations. To balance the relationship, the
same three strategies—self-educating, relationship building and tactical compromise in the creative—occurred in various ways.

The first location was in the self-help industry in Los Angeles. I used self-educating as a strategy when I explored and learned about the industry and its use of the digital marketplace, particularly its use of social media. I attended conferences and investigated training programs on marketing and promoting creative works. I employed relationship building to try to reach the digital marketplace by networking in Los Angeles with contacts including an attorney-producer and a student-entrepreneur-writer. These contacts directed me to consider the value of the self-help industry’s approach to marketing creative content. I also networked and built new relationships at an industry conference. I used tactical compromise as a strategy while I was examining the self-help industry, as my experiences and the new relationships I formed in the industry led me to rethink my original proposal for the dissertation. To reach the digital marketplace, I was willing to compromise the creative work to make something other than my original proposal that would be realised in the marketplace, fit with the self-help type of projects and be accepted by the critical (i.e., academic) audience. The cost of production with this approach and a lack of film funds influenced my decisions and outcomes. Two creative options emerged as a better balance than a film project. These were either a novel to fit with more traditional English program outcomes (although I had no clarity about how this might fit with self-help) or a poetry collection that might fit with self-help and the English program with easier-to-realise publication outcomes. However, there was still an imbalance in that the creative was not connected with the critical. I had no sense of how the marketplace-related research would inform the development of the creative and inform the dissertation. In terms of marketplace outcomes, it transpired that some of the poetry from this period did reach the digital marketplace as part of a series of projects I organised with members of the UWA Words&Thoughts writing group. Applying some of the collaborative techniques I had learned during the self-help experience helped me to achieve these outcomes. However, there was a tactical compromise in the creative, as the original plan was to try to use a ‘bestseller strategy’ for the creative work. I could not find a way to have that strategy conform with the research obligations, as I did not have the resources to achieve that outcome.
The second location was defined as crossing disciplinary boundaries. In returning to the university and approaching the disciplines of media studies and business, I employed the strategies of self-education, relationship building and tactical compromise while trying to balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship and reach the digital marketplace. Relationship building occurred when I adopted the strategy of working in media studies to attain realised outcomes. This relationship influenced my ideas about the creative outcome and I felt encouraged to make a smaller, low-budget film. I became more entrepreneurial, seeking conference and publication outcomes for the critical within the media studies field. Self-educating occurred as I tried to find a way to connect the critical and creative. The first paper that I delivered and published (see Chapter 3) was to a media studies audience. I explored my experiences and struggles with the marketplace and called for consideration of the digital marketplace, highlighting what the digital seemed to offer in contrast to the traditional marketplace. This represented the beginning of my examination of experiences. The paper as a sample chapter for the dissertation was challenged by English department reviewers as lacking the appropriate scholarly rigour. I could not justify my research ideas at this stage, as I was engaged in emergent research. This is an experience that is not uncommon in practice-led research (Haseman & Mafe 2009, p. 222). I made tactical compromises while working with media studies in trying to reach the digital marketplace. The new creative project that emerged was to be more along the lines of the media studies influences and would represent the conflict I was experiencing written as fiction. A search for funding to assist in reaching the marketplace was the reason for crossing to business. I sought to build relationships, but I was resistant to changing the creative to gain support. From the business ‘location’ no creative or critical digital marketplace outcome was realised. The relationship with media studies was more supportive and helped me to advance some new creative ideas that emerged in the third location: English studies.

The third location was within English studies. My experiences reveal how the three strategies occurred when I turned to theatre (my English supervisor’s area of research), my own MA research, the literature review and the creative writing classroom. Relationship building occurred with my English supervisor and his area of work and in turning to my own master’s work to build on past relationships. This
also led to a new creative approach—a tactical compromise—to work from within the university, produce a shoestring-budget film project and build new relationships. The media studies relationship connected me to people in the media centre who supplied equipment and personnel for the film development. Although this project fell apart due to volunteers having to back away and financial cuts at the university, it did provide new ways of thinking about the critical-creative-marketplace relationship and new ways to collaborate and control the creative outcomes. I was willing to self-educate to learn about other areas of research and make a tactical shift on the critical to try to align the creative and marketplace outcomes. In the literature review, my experiences also reveal the three strategies. I self-educated across many areas before grounding my research in creative writing studies, theory, practice and history. I was willing to tactically compromise to position myself and build relationships in this area. I decided against using my MA research as part of the dissertation research, although the foundations and continual personal and aesthetic development related to it would be central to my creative work. The marketplace would be the focus of the study. From this position, I built more relationships and achieved publication in the digital marketplace. Self-education about publication values and outcomes and tactical compromises in the creative would also continue to be part of the experience. Although I was producing creative work, I still had not committed to a particular creative project and I sought to build relationships in the creative writing classroom to advance the research. The outcome was that the experience reconnected me to the pedagogical aspect and a broader way of looking at the research. While the strategy of a survey of creative writing students and tutors did not produce useful outcomes for this project, a single creative work did emerge and did eventually reach the digital marketplace.

The fourth location was in academic creative writing communities. Two important examples of creative writing communities I built relationships with were a postgraduate writing community located in my university and the AAWP. Digital marketplace outcomes were achieved through the relationships with the postgraduates and with more tactical positioning and building relationships with others within the university, through compromises in the scope and size of the creative work and through more self-educating in how to write for this new community. However, the critical-creative-marketplace relationship was not
balanced and I sought a critical grounding to explain what I was experiencing. I considered transmedia writing, but this did not explain what I had done nor was it an area recognised by the discipline. I also turned to the AAWP for a more theoretical context, to find a community discussing pedagogy and practice and to build more relationships for the creative outcomes. I began to tactically reposition myself in how I looked at the digital marketplace, but I was not clear on the final creative project for the dissertation. This began to change as I published creative and critical work (refer to Chapters 4 and 5) and achieved more outcomes in the digital marketplace. In working with this group, I began to develop a new tactical compromise for the creative and eventually for the critical work for the dissertation. The approach would balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship and engage with the digital marketplace, rather than having a single creative work realised during the dissertation.

The fifth location was in the space of preparing to complete the dissertation. Once again, the three strategies came into play. Self-education began as I worked to finish a screenplay that I believed served as a representation of a balance of the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. I believed that I could put the dissertation together with the single screenplay to show how I write for the digital marketplace. I argued that where I located myself in the social media marketplace (in this instance genealogical research) was the answer to the research question of how to write for the digital marketplace. However, after putting everything together as a draft of the dissertation, I was not satisfied and began a six-month period of self-education into methods across many fields including creative arts, social science, creative writing and anthropology. This strategy enabled me to gain a better sense of what I was seeking. I had more confidence about what I had achieved in writing and in publishing. Having completed the action research and having accepted my own knowledge about what I had experienced, I began to find the methods that described my emergent research. A new tactical compromise to the creative occurred. I decided that one screenplay was not the answer—on reflection, it had never been—although there was much back and forth on this decision. I needed to present the many creative projects I engaged with during the period of candidature, not a single screenplay. I began to see the connection, the way to bring the critical and creative together and also to demonstrate how I write for the digital marketplace. This
approach led to more self-educating about the grounded theory method and how to write an analytical autoethnography that could draw out broader findings that would be of value to the discipline. During this process, I learned that I needed to be more closely connected to the discussion on creative writing in the digital age that was emerging. I found an opportunity to position myself by writing two book reviews and exploring the marketplace aspect of the discussion. These two reviews reached the digital marketplace. This also helped to build relationships with creative writer-researchers in the field. A final tactical compromise was made in not submitting any pieces of creative work for examination, as the experience was the focus of the study. However, the creative projects were integral to the study and the action research related to them, along with the published papers, provides the rich detail needed for a reflective autoethnography and demonstrates external validation. In addition, the autoethnography contextualises the creative projects and published papers. Many of the creative and critical works are available online and these publications provide exhibits of my experiences in negotiating the relationship to realise work in the digital marketplace (see Appendix).

Importantly, the final analysis has revealed that the creative writer within the university writes for the digital marketplace by adopting the three strategies of relationship building, self-educating and tactical compromise to balance the critical-creative-marketplace relationship. The significance of each of the strategies used is considered in the following section.

8.3. Interpretation of Findings, Limitations and Future Research

8.3.1. Interpretation of findings

Although the literature review showed that negotiating critical, creative and marketplace needs is not an uncommon experience for a creative writing student, this study serves to extend the marketplace relationship discussion into the digital era. The significance of the findings from this study is that each of the three strategies (i.e., self-educating, relationship building and strategic positioning of the creative) helps to highlight the areas of resistance and the spaces of support and engagement that were presented to me as a creative writer while working in the relationship.
Although this is my unique experience, other writers may experience similar issues and the findings may be of value to those teaching and practicing.

8.3.1.1. Self-educating

To bring the creative and critical needs together and realise a creative work in the digital marketplace required a large amount of self-educating across many different areas. Self-educating meant learning about the content of each creative project (as well as aspects of the craft) and methods for research in English studies and literary theory, art, humanities, cultural studies, anthropology, sociology and history. It also meant learning about the self-help industry and its approaches to the digital marketplace, about media studies and business, about academic publishing and academic expectations of publishing (and what is recognised and rewarded in a literary marketplace and a creative economy) and in relation to the university. It meant learning about related fields such as creative industries and transmedia writing to determine if those areas could provide a relevant grounding. Self-educating involved learning about creative writing as a discipline, its history and traditions, as well as current thought about creative writing assessment theories. It meant learning about the digital marketplace, the changing culture in universities towards publishing, ranking humanities work and being a creative writer-researcher. Also, it meant learning about writing a PhD and the unique challenges of writing a dissertation in creative writing and its many approaches, as well as the contested terms of assessment. Importantly, it meant learning about what I value.

While the nature of any PhD requires independent research, the large amount of self-training I undertook seemed extensive and challenging. Haseman and Mafe (2009) recognise that ‘practice-led research, particularly for the creative practice-led researcher, is unruly, ambiguous and marked by extremes of interpretive anxiety’ (p. 220). While I did learn about myself and about what I value, so much self-educating represented resistance, to me, from the discipline, in that there was not enough training support for this type of research. Yet, there were also areas of engagement and support. For example, the traditions of the field afforded me the choice of avoiding marketplace pressures and allowed for the development of different ways of valuing creative work in the digital marketplace. In addition, there was support in developing research outcomes, as demonstrated by the existence of this dissertation.
and the autoethnographic study. While the demands of self-training often diverted me from craft and creative practice, I did still develop many creative projects and there was the opportunity to gain mastery of a range of skills that brought the creative and critical into a more unified whole. For example, learning about grounded theory and analytic autoethnography helped to bring the creative back to the centre of the study and also allowed me to include the creative work without it becoming the subject of direct assessment. I did complete larger works (e.g., two screenplays) that are not going to be examined in the PhD. I am satisfied with the outcome because I value the research training and experiences that occurred, although, during the candidature, I often questioned the value of what I was doing. The need to confront the social context in which the creative was developed and to learn about the history and pedagogy seemed like a resistance and a challenge to the development of the creative projects for the digital marketplace. However, this experience increased my confidence and prepared me for writing, researching and teaching about the field and the discipline and produced outcomes such as theories about evaluation of creative work (as in the paper presented in Chapter 4). Further, the large amount of self-training meant there was engagement with new resources and new opportunities that may yet enhance my own career and creative outcomes in the digital marketplace. While a huge amount of time was spent self-training across a range of areas and this took focus away from the creative, I did attain a deeper understanding of the marketplace relationship and I found models within the academy of what I perceive as success.

8.3.1.2. Relationship building

Relationship building and collaboration occurred in all locations: in Los Angeles in regard to film and approaching the self-help industry, in approaching the disciplines of media studies and business within the university, within English studies including my supervisor’s area of work and my past MA work and experiences, in exploring other areas (such as transmedia writing) as well as making deeper contact with creative writing studies, in the creative writing classroom with students and with my own past teaching experiences. Relationship building also occurred with academic writing communities including a postgraduate community within the university (i.e., Words&Thoughts) and an external group in Australia (i.e., AAWP). Relationship
building also occurred in the development of the dissertation, for example, in building relationships with other creative writer-researchers in the field.

Although relationships will be built wherever a person is working, this finding also demonstrates areas of resistance and challenge as well as engagement and support for the creative writer trying to realise work in the digital marketplace. There was resistance to engagement with some relationships such as trying to develop works that might sell within the self-help industry, as the creative and critical work needed to be presented in a recognisable form (in this case, as a dissertation). However, the relationship with social science research afforded the space to present and value those encounters. While there was a need to pull away from relationships with commerce and in seeking funding from outside the university, this also served to protect my own creative values and challenged me to develop new relationships within the university to take advantage of what was offered by the field and to extend relationships into other fields, while still honouring the traditions and values of the field of creative writing. New ways of thinking developed through crossing disciplinary borders and building relationships in media studies. The relationships with the business school within the university did not afford much support. Relationships in the field of creative writing provided support for me as a creative writer. I received support from other university relationships such as with academic writing communities on the general idea of shifting my creative project and generating spaces for digital marketplace engagement.

Collaboration matters in the digital marketplace, but what does it mean to the writer working in the discipline? This aspect of the study points to areas in which collaboration worked and areas in which it was a struggle. Who I collaborated with affected the creative outcomes. Traditional relationships also provided benefits. Old traditions of publication valued by the field held new opportunities for digital marketplace outcomes, but did not require extra effort for me as a writer while working from within the discipline.

8.3.1.3. Engagement with the digital marketplace

Four traditional publication markets that I created works for demonstrate how old traditions of publication help the creative writer reach the digital marketplace. They
are markets that are respected, encouraged and rewarded by the field. These are: 1) academic literary journals, 2) small press and self-publication, 3) conferences and conference publications and 4) readings and performances.

Academic literary journals have a long tradition for students. There are still many journals, both paying and non-paying, that encourage students to move to professional outcomes and also to be a part of the creative writing economy. The digital marketplace has an influence on these journals, as it does on all publishing and most journals have some type of digital marketplace presence. This presence affects the writer working from within the discipline. The writer can achieve benefit with no effort made towards marketing. The focus is on the work and on building relationships in traditional ways. Someone else places the writer’s work in the digital marketplace.

For example, Trove published the poem ‘Lewis gets a call’ (Suchy 2013b). Trove is a UWA non-paying publication managed by students under a supervisory board. Works are peer-reviewed and the outcome is a digital presence for the writer. In searching ‘Susan Taylor Suchy’ and ‘Lewis gets a call’ (using no quotation marks in the search), the work appears as the top two ranked results, because the title and names are so specific and specifically searched. While this project was permanently archived, it continues to appear in a cross-search of the author’s name and the title, although it drops out of the listing on the first two search pages of only the author’s name. Marketing strategies could help improve search engine results or the author could choose to link the digitally published work to a website, blog, Wikipedia entry or other promotional pages or sites. Determining a strategy for wider outreach was beyond the context and time for the research. However, the outcome of this publication is receipt of a certain level of cultural capital.

Another example of an academic literary journal that produced a digital marketplace outcome for the writer is Westerly and the Words&Thoughts group project (Suchy 2016e). The Westerly relationship provided a digital platform for sharing interviews of group members from the Words&Thoughts project. Again, the relationship builds cultural capital for all those involved by having a journal serve as a secondary party that recognises and validates the work and shares it digitally. Possibly, through no particular effort towards the marketplace, the writer may gain a digital marketplace.
presence. The mere act of reaching out to engage produces the outcomes, because the journals engage in the marketplace and thus, provide opportunities and outcomes for the writer in terms of visibility. I could, in the future, action these into other promotional outcomes through online links (e.g., by including key words, website or book references). Encouraging students to submit and engage with these outcomes is not a threat to the traditions of the discipline and can enable the writer to build a public presence. More cross-platform opportunities can emerge if the writer is inclined to expand their engagement with the marketplace and build relationships. These also do not necessarily require more digital marketing work, as in this case with the Words&Thoughts group, *Trove* and the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery. The journal maintains the website and the gallery promoted the event.

Small press and self-publication are traditional publishing approaches that are recognised in the field. An example of the small press experience was with the short story ‘A pair of spectacles’ (Suchy 2014b) that quickly appeared in the digital marketplace once it was submitted. There are many literary and non-literary options for the creative writer. Self-publication also has a tradition with the discipline. Many poets turn to small press or self-publication for chapbooks. The digital marketplace offers such opportunities for writers. For example, my book *The dust collectors* (Umbrellahem & Taylor 2013), a poetic narrative co-written (using my pen-name) and adapted from a half-hour performance piece ‘Invisible stains’ that was co-written by the same team. Although the market strategy for this work included an intention of making commercial gain, I was aware that a self-published work of this genre does not tend to generate much income. This was an experiment in using social media for online marketing and self-publishing and was published under my own Strange House Press imprint. Book sales totalled just under $500, with all sales occurring around the time of the campaign. An ongoing, concerted effort to promote the book would have required me to print more copies and engage with more selling. The profit covered a little more than the cost of publication. UWA promoted the Alumni Weekend and The Writers’ Corner event. The University Co-operative Bookshop set up a book signing and selling table. Being part of a distinguished group and also knowing a large number of the audience helped with some sales. Additional sales were generated through online pre-sales to friends and family. However, word-of-mouth was the main generator of business and not online
marketing. Purchases were made online through the University Co-operative Bookshop website where purchasers had an opportunity to review the book. There are ways to increase reviewing engagement that could be further explored, but the experience was not focused towards that outcome. The University Co-operative Bookshop physically held the book in stock until this year, when I removed the final copies. They also continued to provide an online presence. This approach is demanding of capital—both money and time—that may not be useful for the student, but there are opportunities if a writer chooses to engage and if the discipline or teacher chooses to recognise such engagement.

Conferences and conference publications are accessible to writers working within the discipline and there are many of these to choose from. In Australia, the AAWP is significant for creative and critical publication outcomes. Five publications from this study appeared in TEXT, the associated journal. Two of those were presented at AAWP conferences. The value of the conferences and conference publications is that the work is peer-reviewed and I was remunerated in two ways: 1) the critical work was valued as a contribution that could be cited, ranked and so forth and 2) I received payment from my university for producing two critical publication outcomes in this outlet.

Readings and performances offer many opportunities to engage, for example, as a reader, a performer or as a coordinator of the whole project, as in my case with the Words&Thoughts (Suchy 2013f, 2013h) and LUMINOUSFLUX project (Suchy 2013e). The outcome is that the creative project is now part of the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, where it was recorded and archived and is also included in Trove journal’s archives. UWA recorded the interviews. Other interviews and creative projects are being developed for Westerly for a digital marketplace presence.

In all four areas, my digital marketplace presence was built by other relationships I had developed, but did not require extra effort for the digital component. With extra effort, the digital marketplace presence and networks could be developed for further use. These traditional approaches are easily accepted by the discipline, yet they situate the writer in the digital marketplace in a way that can reach a global audience more easily than ever before. It was liberating to allow others to market the creative work. I could focus on my creative work and on building relationships. These
traditional relationships can enhance building an online presence, by providing validation, community and support.

8.3.1.4. Tactical compromise

There is strong evidence of willingness on my part to adjust the creative project and conform to the critical expectations to realise work in the digital marketplace, both in the early stages of the research and throughout the candidature. While my goal was to realise work in the digital marketplace, this may also suggest a resistance from the discipline. Throughout, there was an underlying issue woven into the experience of the need for me to express my own aesthetic and creative style. This need found support within the relationship. For example, in the case of the business school relationship, creative compromise for a remote chance of funding did not occur and this did not present any problem for me because there was no expectation from the field of creative writing or English studies that I should engage in any particular way for a marketplace outcome. Further, while not all of the projects were realised in the digital marketplace within the time frame of the dissertation, this did not represent a failure or a problem of resistance, but rather a compromise I made to achieve certain outcomes. As Table A.1 (see Appendix A) of the creative projects shows, the process of reaching the digital marketplace is not immediate and some of the works may yet reach the digital marketplace.

During the period of candidature, there appeared to be resistance to having a larger work realised in the digital marketplace. However, making tactical compromises and producing smaller works also meant that I was assessing what I valued, that is, to have a work realised in the marketplace and to gain an understanding of the relationship. I became selective about how I would create and where I would locate myself. I became more aware of how the discipline’s values and the marketplace’s values are often at odds and I had to prioritise which value mattered the most to me at different times.

The strategy of tactical compromise by the creative writer-researcher while trying to realise a creative work in a digital marketplace indicates there may always be some sort of trade-off—a sacrifice needed in either the creative projects, the disciplinary need or in the marketplace outcome. Initially, I thought the goal was to find a perfect
balance and I felt that ‘Theta’s ghost’ (Suchy 2015d) and online genealogical research represented that balance. While this might be one way to write for the digital marketplace, in reality, there was a compromise made in terms of how I viewed the marketplace. I came into line with the traditions of my university and the discipline of viewing the space as a place for research. However, I also recognised that commerce could occur in this space, although I was not able to exploit it during the period of candidature.

The tactical compromises in the creative often helped me to achieve publication in the digital marketplace and recognition by the discipline, as that was my goal. For each creative project that I made, I had a strategy of how the work would try to fit into the marketplace, with the discipline and how it would work creatively. The more clearly I understood the marketplace, the expectations and the opportunities of the field or discipline and my own creative goals and terms, the more often I achieved an outcome in the digital marketplace. My perceptions of success were influenced by becoming aware of the traditional terms through which I was being ‘paid’, the way I was positioning myself in the relationship, where I was locating, learning what is rewarded by the academic world, the terms of success recognised by the field and how the digital marketplace serves those outcomes. This increased my satisfaction about making compromises, because I came to value these outcomes.

8.3.2. Concluding thoughts

The study constitutes a starting place from which to understand the relationship of a creative writer in higher education to the digital marketplace. The study revealed areas of resistance to the digital marketplace relationship as well as opportunities for engagement. The study also provides ideas for ways to increase digital involvement without extra cost or training. By recogniseing the traditions of university creative writing and examining these from the lens of a digital marketplace relationship, those working in the field can begin to think differently about how undergraduate-level and postgraduate-level students can use their skills to enhance engagement in the classroom and learning opportunities as well as potentially improve student outcomes.
The strategies of building relationships, self-educating and tactical compromise in the creative highlight areas of resistance and engagement to the digital marketplace relationship and show that some of the boundaries between the marketplace and other disciplines still have benefits. Perhaps students might achieve more through recognising their own terms of success and defining their relationship in the digital marketplace.

There are broader benefits for creative writers in defining their own terms of engagement that are important for the discipline’s survival. The literature review showed that the student must negotiate a complex relationship to the marketplace. There is work being done in the marketplace of ideas. Cultural capital is gathered. There are public intellectuals. Creative writers are part of a creative economy. There are those who are training to be publishers and editors, yet still seek to learn to write. These various ways of looking at the marketplace are part of the way creative writers in higher education define their own terms of engagement and have helped the field to thrive and can continue to do so. The discussion and exploration of the digital marketplace relationship is useful because it opens up possibilities and ways for creative writers in higher education to defend the role of the discipline when challenged by social and political pressures, such as a drive towards vocational outcomes, threats to the existence of the discipline, the changing status of the discipline location, confusion about the role of arts in academia, economic challenges, corporate interests that direct government interests and budget cuts in arts and humanities. Honouring the traditions but also recognising how they relate to the digital marketplace can allow those practicing to know where they fit in the academy and the significance of the work to society at large. Resistance by the field of creative writing is demonstrated by what is not recognised and this can be problematic. If creative writing’s unique engagement with the digital marketplace is not recognised and discussed, the discipline may not have the information needed to defend its position. The value of this study is it offers an important start to preparing for a national dialogue on the value of creative writing and training students in a digital era by demonstrating the challenges of the digital marketplace and identifying where support is needed. It also shows the ways that engagement with the digital marketplace occurs and is supported by the field.
8.4. Limitations of the Study

The field of creative writing has a complex relationship with the marketplace and it was a challenging goal to produce a critical examination of what the digital era has brought to the conversation while relating that to, and producing creative work to be realised in, the digital marketplace. However, doing both was essential to truly represent myself as a creative writer-researcher and reveal findings that would be useful. While I could have omitted realising the work in the marketplace, that would have only resulted in theoretical outcomes. The marketplace concern is a real part of being a creative writer and real experience is necessary to begin to develop understandings about the relationship. Taking on this challenge meant that there was no clear model to use for the research. This points to some of the limitations of the study, yet also to the originality of the work. The limitations occurred in three areas: sampling procedures, design and methods.

8.4.1. Sampling procedures

The challenge in sampling procedures was producing a large amount of creative work and the time it took to do this. Further, the resultant experiential data recorded in numerous places meant the analysis may not have been thorough or had enough depth. However, for this study many artefacts were required that needed to be placed in a range of online spaces. This revealed useful findings and more could be drawn from data already gathered for later discussion. If I had only produced a single work, that could have increased subjectivity when it came to evaluating outcomes. In addition, there are many different ways to engage with a marketplace that would influence the outcome (e.g., with form, length, genre and so forth). The large amount of creative work offered a range that was useful for examination. Most importantly, the research emerged in this way, as the research question asks how to write for this new marketplace and there is no one correct way to do so.

A further limitation was having only me, a single person, in the experience with my own biases. I tried to overcome this problem by surveying students, but the self-reflection that was needed required a lengthier study that would not have been an efficient use of resources, time or costs. To overcome the issue of the focus being too inward looking, I sought feedback in various ways—such as working with other
creative practitioners and researchers and by acquiring feedback through sharing research in seminars and through publication. While there is much to be learned about the critical-creative-marketplace relationship, this study serves as a starting point with its focus on a self-study of an artist at work in a particular context.

8.4.2. Design

It might be argued that the study’s design is flawed in that it does not follow a clearly defined pattern, and that the earlier chapters are not well written or researched (although published) and do not demonstrate a clear sense of understanding of the field. However, this appearance stems from the nature of emergent work. I had no idea of the challenge I had taken on—beginning on one path to make a work that was original and place that in the marketplace and also relate that to critical research of the marketplace. Although I conducted literature reviews across many areas, it was not until I was well into my candidature that I became aware of the challenges experienced by others in trying to reconcile the creative and the critical, let alone the challenge of realising the creative project in the marketplace and how that related to the practices of the field. The lack of literature on this topic has to do with the relatively new position of creative writing as a field of research in the academy and the discussions about expectations for ‘measurable outcomes’ (Haseman & Mafe 2009, p. 222) and what that means to the creative writer-researcher. Haseman and Mafe also indicate that ‘it is rare to find research training programs for practice-led researchers’ (p. 223). As my ideas developed about what the relationship was, I felt I could not present and stand behind a single screenplay and call it a representation of the relationship. Nor did I feel that it presented ‘measurable outcomes’. Haseman and Mafe refer to this feeling as ‘interpretive anxiety’ (p. 220). I had to find a way to reconcile and present a dissertation that would be more true to what I had actually experienced and be academically rigorous and I struggled to make the dissertation come together as a coherent sociological study. I do not believe this is a design flaw. It was a repurposing of what I knew and understood to ‘suit the language and protocols of research’ (p. 224). Therefore, while the earlier chapters may lack rigour, they demonstrate the focus of the study, that is, the relationship of the creative writer trying to write for the digital marketplace while working within the university.
8.4.3. Method

As I have described, I struggled to understand the best methods to use for this dissertation. For the final analysis, I used grounded theory and produced an analytic autoethnography. Autoethnography has been criticised as a method for many reasons. There is criticism that there is not enough fieldwork or subjects, that it is not scholarly enough or artful enough, that it is too aesthetic, too theoretical, navel-gazing, that the data is biased and lacks rigour (Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011, pp. 37–38). However, there are many arguments that have been made about the flaws in these criticisms. One argument is that it is an error to pit art against science, because autoethnography seeks to ‘disrupt the binary of science and art’ (Ellis 2004, p. 39). Although disruption means an upheaval, the outcome should not be chaos but a resultant new relationship—a balance. This is what I attempted to achieve in this dissertation, a balance of the creative and the critical, of the theoretical and the practical and of academic rigour and aesthetic outcomes. This outcome could not have come about unless I followed the needs of the question, rather than an a priori approach. Creating an analytic autoethnography using grounded theory allowed for broader results about the relationship to emerge.

Autoethnography was a new method for me and this presented challenges; however, the research method offered a useful approach in examining the position of the creative writer in higher education to the digital marketplace and it produced findings that fit with those of other researchers (Haseman & Mafe 2009; Light 1995; 2002).

8.5. Suggestions for Future Work

The study highlighted three areas of importance to the field in terms of honouring and protecting the discipline and also in terms of advancing training. Further examination of the degree of self-educating, tactical compromise and collaboration in the relationship could be important. The limitations of the study, as well as my experiences as described in the autoethnography and as demonstrated throughout the research in regard to the amount of self-education that was required, indicate the need to assess training for creative writers in arts-based research. There are others working on improving these outcomes (e.g., Haseman & Mafe). As Clark, Hergenrader and Rein (2015) argue, more research is needed on the significant
influence of the digital marketplace on creative writers (p. 2). The potential for further study is demonstrated by this research. There is certainly more that could be done in regard to the issue of the tactical compromises creative writers make while working within the discipline. For example, for researchers, should this type of compromise be valued? Is it recognised? What is the effect on creative production and training? What kind of outcomes does the study of creative behaviour offer? Certainly the field should consider what students are being trained for and how they are being trained. Studying production outcomes often falls into the research conducted by the field of creative industries. Can more research come from within creative writing studies? Collaboration is being researched in creative writing and how creative writers in higher education collaborate with the digital marketplace could also be further investigated.

While understanding the traditions and areas of resistance is important in supporting a certain kind of training for the creative writer and being able to argue that position to funding bodies, there is also a need to consider how best to approach and support engagement with the digital marketplace. Programs and educators are responding to calls for more diverse training and for more digital awareness, as well as for the need for market-awareness training. During my research, I became aware of a course at RMIT University titled ‘The Business of Creative Writing’ that appears to have been running since 2011. [1] According to the online syllabus, some of the focus of the course is on collaboration and on positioning, two areas that emerged as strategies in my research on trying to reach the digital marketplace. [2] A recent search using the key words ‘the business of creative writing’ revealed that some universities are seeking to address the new marketplace opportunities. For example, the University of the Sunshine Coast undergraduate program, [3] University College Cork in an MA program [4] and Full Sail University are doing so through coursework. [5] This awareness and the developments are to be expected with the ubiquitous nature of the digital marketplace. While some creative writing programs will adhere to the traditions, others will choose to push towards marketplace outcomes or adopt a balance and offer both options. Although it can be argued that most students are not being published, more recent scholarship and studies have focused on publication outcomes. This type of research provides accountability in training for market-focused outcomes, if that is the goal of the program. The question is, how do the
newer programs that focus on marketplace outcomes measure these outcomes? And if there is success, would this increase support for such approaches and would creative writers want this information? These questions suggest that future research on the effect of such approaches would be useful. Future studies could examine how creative writers do achieve certain outcomes, what they make, how they locate and position their work in the marketplace, how it is valued, how and where they obtain support and the conditions that surround the work. More understanding about how writers approach the digital marketplace could help academic programs with market-focused training for creative writing.
Notes

[1] For details on The Business of Creative Writing course at RMIT University, see http://www1.rmit.edu.au/courses/042137

[2] Tactical compromise and positioning were the terms I had originally used in my analysis. I condensed the finding to ‘tactical compromise’ to be inclusive of the term ‘positioning’.

[3] For details on the Bachelor of Creative Writing degree at the University of the Sunshine Coast, see http://www.usc.edu.au/learn/courses-and-programs/bachelor-degrees-undergraduate-programs/bachelor-of-creative-writing


[5] For details on The Business of Creative Writing course at Full Sail University, see https://www.fullsail.edu/courses/cwm690-the-business-of-creative-writing?degree=creative-writing-master&type=online
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Suchy, ST 2012, Annual Progress Report, 13 June, University of Western Australia.


Suchy, ST 2012b, ‘Il Pecorone as a source for The Merchant of Venice: delivering a more powerful message through the development of characters’ emotions’, paper presented at the 11th Biennial International Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association (ANZSA) Shakespeare and Emotions Conference, 29 November, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2012c, ‘To sell or not to sell: an historical examination of expectations towards publishing in the creative writing classroom’, English and Cultural Studies WiP, 30 November, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2013, Annual alumni fund grant application, 15 August, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2013, Annual Progress Report, 13 June, University of Western Australia

Suchy, ST 2013a, ‘Cuppa poetea’, in K Brophy & J Webb, ‘A conversation, on poetry’, 18th Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP), 26 November, University of Canberra, pp. 17–18.¹

¹ Note from booklet on Data Storage: ‘The data, transcripts and audio files will be stored on computer file in a locked office, in a computer with password access during collection, analysis and preparation of the results. Once the project is complete the data will be stored at the


Suchy, ST 2013g, Tree life, in possession of the author, Crawley, Western Australia.

Suchy ST 2013h, Tree life (selections), performed at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, 19 April, Univeristy of Western Australia


Suchy, ST 2015, Annual Progress Report, 13 June, University of Western Australia.

University of Canberra for a period of five years. At the end of the storage period the data will be destroyed.'
Suchy, ST 2015a, ‘Researching genealogy in the social media marketplace for a screenplay and utilising the gathered information’, paper presented at the Limina: ‘Think Forward, Look Back’ Conference, 19 June, University of Western Australia.


Suchy, ST 2015d, Theta’s ghost, in possession of the author, Crawley, Western Australia.

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## Appendix A

### Table A.1: Marketplace outcomes of creative work and the writer’s experiences during candidature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date Conceived for Dissertation</th>
<th>Market Outcome</th>
<th>Digital Market Outcome</th>
<th>Date of Digital Market Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House of bones (screenplay)</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>Suchy 2009b</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind truth (novel)</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame (novel)</td>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td>Chapters workshopped with Words&amp;Thoughts group (Suchy 2009c)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree life (poetry collection)*</td>
<td>Prior to June 2010</td>
<td>Portion published (Suchy 2013f)</td>
<td>Online journal</td>
<td>May 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public presentation (Suchy 2013e; 2013h)</td>
<td>Presented in Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, promotion by others</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy and the claw</td>
<td>Prior to Research Proposal (Suchy 2010)</td>
<td>Full script to supervisor (Suchy 2011b)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(screenplay)****</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual Progress Report (Suchy 2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed messages (screenplay)</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Film development commenced but not completed. Script drafted (Suchy &amp; Umbrellahem 2011)</td>
<td>Facebook network relationships</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date Conceived for Dissertation</td>
<td>Market Outcome</td>
<td>Digital Market Outcome</td>
<td>Date of Digital Market Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dust collectors (novel)**</td>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Print version sold through University of Western Australia (UWA) Co-operative Bookshop (Umbrellahem &amp; Taylor 2013)</td>
<td>Online versions sold through UWA Co-operative Bookshop, with event promotion by others</td>
<td>February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pair of spectacles (short story)*</td>
<td>August–November 2011</td>
<td>Yes (Suchy 2014b)</td>
<td>Online journal publication</td>
<td>August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis gets a call (poem)*</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Published (Suchy 2013b)</td>
<td>Online journal</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuppa poetea (poetry collection) **</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
<td>Presented (Suchy 2013a)</td>
<td>Emailed to group as part of study</td>
<td>November 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cat’s pyjamas (short story)*</td>
<td>September–November 2014</td>
<td>Presented at the 19th Conference of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs Published in proceedings (Suchy 2015b)</td>
<td>Open access journal</td>
<td>November 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: *Poems, short stories and a self-published book reached a published outcome and were all available in the digital marketplace. Arguably, all digital publications serve to advance cultural capital in creating public awareness of who I am as creative writer-researcher. All publications placed in the UWA archive (poetry and short stories) advance university-related cultural capital. I have been paid to conduct the research and complete the dissertation with many grants, awards and scholarships. Thus far, the academic outcomes have not provided commercial or cultural capital. While working in the university towards a PhD, there is a focus on more academic publishing outcomes, as these are financially rewarded and encouraged through seminars. I was paid through scholarships to do this work and make creative work. This had a value of over $100,000. **Only the book received payment from the publisher (myself) and the earnings covered the publication costs (about $500). While three critical publications were awarded publication grants from the UWA ($500 for the first publication and $250 for each additional publication), none of the creative publications received the grant. ‘The cat’s pyjamas’ with exegesis (published in the same open access journal as a critical paper that did receive the grant) did not receive the grant, as re-classification of the UWA audit criteria made it ineligible. Larger works such as the screenplays and novels did not reach any paying marketplace. ***While two complete screenplays were submitted to fulfil the dissertation requirements and could have been valued in that sense, I withdrew them as explained in the dissertation, because I did not believe they fully represented my experiences and I chose to conduct a broad analysis of all my experiences. Completing those two works did advance approvals in the dissertation process. ****I entered one of these works in an online course to advance the script development and began to build external relationships.

See Appendix B for links to many of the creative works which have been listed here in Appendix A.
Appendix B

Curriculum Vitae: Susan Taylor Suchy

Email: susan.suchy@research.uwa.edu.au

Work produced or developed during the period of candidature and some other experiences within the same time frame that were examined in preparing the analytic autoethnography.

Published writing

Refereed critical articles


Edited critical reviews


*Refereed creative with exegesis*


*Edited creative*


**Book**

Umbrellahem & Taylor 2013, *The dust collectors*, Strange House Press, City Beach, Western Australia.

**Other writing**

*Critical/recognised*

Suchy, ST 2014, ‘Publication, a dream or a reality: an historical examination of factors that contribute to publication outcomes for students’, accepted for *Great Writing: The International Creative Writing Conference*, 28–29 June, Imperial College, London (did not attend).


Suchy, ST 2016, Sitting southwest, writing sample submitted to *Westerly* writer’s development program (shortlisted).

*Creative work*


Suchy ST 2009, Shame, unpublished novel chapters, workshopped with Words&Thoughts group, University of Western Australia.


Suchy, ST 2011, Mixed messages, film script, developed between January–July, Crawley, Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2012, Empathy and the claw, feature film script draft, submitted as dissertation requirement, Annual Report 2012, 13 June, University of Western Australia.
Suchy, ST 2015, Theta’s ghost, screenplay, submitted as dissertation requirement, Annual Report 2015, 13 June, University of Western Australia.

*Conference, symposium, public presentations and panels*

Suchy, ST 2011, ‘Know thyself: know thy market’, paper presented at the *Diegetic Life Forms II Conference*, 3 September, National Academy of Screen and Sound, Murdoch University, Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2011, ‘Know thyself: know thy market’, paper presented at the *Diegetic Life Forms II Conference*, 3 September, National Academy of Screen and Sound, Murdoch University, Western Australia.


Suchy, S 2012, ‘Il Pecorone as a source for “The Merchant of Venice”: delivering a more power message through the development of characters’ emotions’, paper presented at the *11th Biennial International Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association (ANZSA) Shakespeare and Emotions Conference*, 29 November, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, S 2012, ‘To sell or not to sell: an historical examination of expectations toward publishing in the creative writing classroom’, *English and Cultural Studies WiP (Work in Progress)*, 30 November, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST, Umbrellahem, L, Glance, V, Hughes, RJ & Everall, G 2013, *Luminous literature*, Words&Thoughts Collective, public talk, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, 19 April, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2013, ‘Writing the creative dissertation’, chair, *Words&Thoughts Panel*, 19 June, University of Western Australia.


Suchy, ST, Curthers, N & Glance, V 2014, ‘Charting your course to publication’, Writing and Submitting for Publication Panel, November, University of Western Australia.

Suchy, ST 2015, ‘Researching genealogy in the social media marketplace for a screenplay and utilising the gathered information’, paper presented at the Limina: ‘Think Forward, Look Back’ Conference, 19 June, University of Western Australia.


Suchy, ST 2017, Did anyone hear?, online video, viewed 4 November, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPfzPdyZmKg&index=5&list=PLRBmGcdUu3erlte61p5en2XAg9p7J19C

Other creative presented or performed

Suchy, ST 2013, ‘The unbearable butterfly’, iPad performance, LUMINOUSFLUX, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, April, University of Western Australia.

Suchy ST 2013, Tree life (selections), performed at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, 19 April, University of Western Australia.


**Interviews**

Suchy, ST 2012, Interview with Lucy Dougan of *Westerly* on editing Randolph Stow, *Words & Thoughts*, 30 July.

Suchy, ST 2012, Interview with Gabrielle Everall and Siobhan Hodge on Sappho, *Words & Thoughts*, 27 August.

Suchy, ST 2013, ‘Injustice, Indigenous peoples and young adult writing’, interview with Ambelin Kwaymullina, *University of Western Australia Centenary Alumni Weekend*, 9 February, Crawley, Western Australia.


**Editorial work**


**Other professional practice**

*Associate Producer*


*Actor*

Suchy ST 2014, *Factory 293*, short film, Meaning Maker and Digital Media Arts (producers), Frame Media (distributor), Western Australia.

**Tutoring and mentoring**

August–November 2011, tutor, Creative Writing unit in fiction, University of Western Australia.

January 2016–present day, mentor, *Mentoring for Academic Excellence Scheme*, A Ludewig, Head of School, Humanities, University of Western Australia.

**Grants and funding**

University of Western Australia Safety-Net Top Up Scholarship, June 2010–June 2013.

University Postgraduate Award Scholarship, June 2010–June 2013.

Institute for Advanced Studies Conference Scholarship, University of Western Australia Institute for Advanced Studies, Australian Consortium of Humanities Research Centre (ACHRC) Conference and Survival Skills for Humanities Workshop, July 2013.

University Postgraduate Award Extension Scholarship, June–December 2013.

University of Western Australia Safety-Net Top Up Extension Scholarship, June–December 2013

University of Western Australia Graduate Research School Travel Grant: October 2013, November 2013 and October 2014.


Publication Grant, School of Humanities for work published in 2011, 2013 and 2015.

**Memberships**

AAWP, Australian Postgraduate Writers Network, Australian Society of Authors (ASA).
Conferences, seminars and master classes (attended)

15–16 September 2010 Developing commercialisation skills, workshop, University of Western Australia Office of Innovation and Industry, Yanchep, Western Australia.

11 February 2011, Screenwest Legal Clinic with Michael Tucak, Creative Legal, University of Western Australia.

2 August 2011, Small group teaching seminar, Love House, University of Western Australia.

3 August 2011, Planning for dissertation writing, University of Western Australia.

19 August 2011, Writing your literature review, seminar with Michael Azariadis, University of Western Australia.

26 August 2011, Conceptualising your thesis, seminar with Michael Azariadis, University of Western Australia.

10 November 2011, Research training on databases, Graeme Rymill at Reid Library, University of Western Australia.

11 February 2011 Screenwest Legal ‘Clinic with Michael Tucak, Creative Legal’, University of Western Australia.

23 February 2012, Writers festival publishing seminar, Perth Writers Festival, University of Western Australia.

23–24 April 2012, 7 secrets of highly successful PhD students, Hugh Kearns, University of Western Australia.

16 May 2012, Research with impact in the arts, humanities and social sciences seminar, Jennifer Chubb, University of Western Australia Institute for Advanced Studies.

5–6 June 2012, From academic researcher to entrepreneurial writer, Simon Clews master class, University of Western Australia Institute for Advanced Studies.
8 June 2012, *Socialising research*, Robin Owens master class, University of Western Australia.

21 August 2012, *Faculty of Arts postgraduate publishing symposium*, University of Western Australia.

7 July 2013, *Survival skills for Humanities postgraduate students and Early Career researchers workshop*, University of Western Australia.

8–9 July 2013, *Australian Consortium of Humanities Research Centre (ACHRC) 2013 Annual Meeting: Spaces and Networks for the Humanities*, University of Western Australia.

9 August 2013, *Transmedia storytelling*, Jeff Gomez master class, X-Media, Perth, Western Australia.

16–19 August 2013, *Negotiating contracts*, Edith Cowan, Australian Society of Authors, Mt Lawley, Western Australia.

26 August 2013, *Digital Humanities research seminar*, with Paul Arthur speaking on Australian Directory of Biographies, University of Western Australia Institute for Advanced Studies.


21 October 2013, *Digital Humanities*, Tully Barnett master class, University of Western Australia Institute for Advanced Studies.

7 November 2013, *Maximising and measuring your research impact for Arts researchers*, University of Western Australia.


8–12 March 2014, *Digital Humanities 2014 Australasia Conference*, University of Western Australia.

25 September 2015, *GRS thesis examination seminar*, Jo Edmonston and Sato Juniper, University of Western Australia.

8 October 2015, *Keeping your research up to date*, Philomena Humphries, Reid Library, University of Western Australia.

20 October 2015, *Advanced Google for researchers*, Carol Hicks and Chloé Alan, Reid Library, University of Western Australia.

6 November 2015, *Where to publish*, Nola Steiner, University of Western Australia.

20 April 2016, *Publishing and publications*, mentoring program, Alexandra Ludewig, University of Western Australia.


22 July–12 August 2016, *Scholarly writing for publication*, Richard Nile master class, University of Western Australia.

**Other**

January 2012–December 2014, led *Words&Thoughts*, University of Western Australia