Service and leadership in the university:

Duoethnography as transformation

Abstract

This paper uses duoethnography to explore experiences of service as work in the university, an institution increasingly shaped by neoliberal values. We trace the shift in emphasis within the university from one of a care-oriented form of service to a highly managerial form of service. We first interrogate childhood stories to make sense of our initial response to the role of service in a lecturer position, and then to the increasing organizational demand for leadership within the university. As two women academics we both see our work in teacher education as a particular form of service - as 'our calling'. This duoethnography reveals different histories in relation to service, but similar ways of thinking about the changing nature of service in the university. With particular regard to women in the academy, it reveals our desire for a more transformative approach, recognising the importance of collegial relationships, and valuing an ethics of care, in order to develop inclusive and transformative service and leadership in the academy.

Introduction

… [the]willingness of women of [our] generation to continue to act as departmental mothers and maiden aunts while competing for tenure in an increasingly research-orientated culture may also have owed much to [our] backgrounds (Burgan, 2010, p. 25).

This paper explores our different experiences of service in the university. We see the profession of teaching as a service – as 'our calling' – although we come to it from different starting points. Initially employed in a Teachers College, we experienced, in the early 2000s in New Zealand, the amalgamation of Teachers Colleges with Universities. And with this move a shift from a focus on 'service' to research. An issue we encountered was the *lack of definition* regarding what the notion of service entailed in our work, which through amalgamation became especially problematic with the introduction of a 'leadership framework'. In this paper, using duoethnography to unearth subjective understandings of *service* in the organisation of the university, we "open up conversations that have been silenced giv[ing] us the opportunity to voice important issues and continue necessary conversations" (Le Fevre & Sawyer, 2012, p. 285). Aligned with the university's claim to be

the critic and conscience of society (Kelsey, 2015), we share personal and theoretical trajectories, engaging with what we argue is 'our call to service'. Each of our stories reveals unique family histories, alongside wider developments in the university, where we both share a sense of existential crisis in our negotiation of who we are, and who we may be allowed to become. We see that service and traditional ideas of care are under pressure within the neoliberal university, with its demand for high productivity within diminishing timeframes; especially with the current emphasis on leadership. The potential relationship between service and different definitions of leadership are considered as we struggle to make sense of our own practice. This duoethnography explores where our personal understandings of service emanate, our attachment to these understandings, reflections on our subjectivities and a critical turn to making our personal claims a wider social endeavour.

We first discuss the methodology of hanging out deeply through the collaborative autoethnographic method of duoethnography. The complexity of service in the university is then discussed in relation to notions of care. We next consider the relationship between service and leadership: how it is imagined and some of the key ideologies that inform the relationship. In the latter part of the paper we present the duoethnography: It includes a weaving of theory with conversation fragments (from transcripts) as well as music, images, metaphor and poetry. These conversations drawing on childhood memories and personal history, as well as our roles in the University, provide different perspectives on care, service and leadership in the academy and reveal the ways in which we reconsider these ideas in the continuous changing environment of the university.

Duoethnography – an innovative methodology of hanging out deeply
In higher education organisations, few studies explore the unique subjectivities through which people make sense of their academic identities. Taking a narrative approach, we use the methodology of duoethnography to focus on the interplay between personal experiences of academic service and broader social, cultural and political contexts (Juntrasook et al., 2013, p. 210). Most important in this duoethnography is how personal, familial stories reveal themselves as unique forces that underpin our service roles in the organisation. Oscillating between macro institutional influences and micro family influences, we focus here on the 'how of narrative', i.e., how people constitute themselves, and are constituted, as experiencing subjects (Juntrasook et al., 2013); in this instance when making sense of our *service* roles in the University.

If ethnography is the parent of autoethnography (Allen-Collinson & Hockney, 2008), duoethnography is the younger sibling of autoethnography. Like autoethnographers, duoethnographers typically take a postmodern view of identity. Premised on postmodern explanations of subjectivity, duoethnographers acknowledge the culturally layered, contradictory, socio-political and constantly changing nature of identities (Sawyer, as cited in Krammer & Mangiardi, 2012). As a methodology, it has a close affiliation with collaborative autoethnography, where researchers work together to generate data, reflect on the experiences, acknowledge and respect difference, and check with each other as to what should be included in the final narrative (Allen-Collinson & Hockney, 2008). There are also similarities to co-produced autoethnographies (Kempster, Stewart, & Parry, 2008) where data is generated by one author and is then interrogated and interpreted using relevant theory, creating a 'narrative sandwich', and by a focus on writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson, 2008). However, duoethnography differs in the *critical* nature of the collaboration, where both researchers are involved in the process of generating data, and in subsequently interrogating their unique experiences of a shared phenomenon. Throughout, they seek understanding and remain open to transformation.

Importantly, the approach is underpinned by Freire's (1972) critical theory and Pinar's (2012) framework for autobiographical reflection, 'currere', in demanding that participants engage in critical inquiry and transformative practice. *Currere* is concerned with investigating the "nature of the individual experience of the public" (Kincheloe, 1998, p. 129). *Currere*'s personal-political project is with the shaping and re-shaping of human experience, and thus with humanity, through the construction of knowledge within "a critical system of meaning" (Villaverde & Pinar, 1999, p. 248). In this way, then, the deeply personal holds a wider purpose of working toward social change.

As friends and colleagues, both authors of this work have been "hanging out deeply" (Geertz, 1997) in the changing landscapes of the university for more than twelve years. Duoethnography provides a method to examine and critique the intersection of our working lives in the university organisation, and to interrogate our self-identity and position within the larger social context (Herman, 2017). Our self-identities and positioning are understood as 'haunted' by the touchstone stories (Maddison MacFadyen, 2013) of our childhood, as well as the traditional heroic models of leadership (Fletcher, 2004) that are endemic in the university. Complicating this narrative is the now heavily managerialised, neoliberal framework of university management and governance.

Our data-gathering has taken several years, 2012–2017, while much of this has been informal conversations and sharing of stories, we have, over the past five years, taken the time to record (audio and written) our conversations. This informality of data gathering speaks to the ethnographic lived experience of the participants (ourselves). Each researcher shares experiences through various narrative forms, including written conversations, audio or visual recordings, photographs and poetry. It is part of a burgeoning scholarship that draws on writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson, 2008) and other creative practice such as visual methodologies (Wall, 2013; Weber, 2008). Thus, a focus on crafting is essential, as the work aims to take the reader beyond the personal stories to considerations of the social and political. The narratives are juxtaposed, revealing differences and commonalities that form the basis of narrative exchanges, revealing both authors' different social and cultural formations of self. Personal narratives become shared inquiries, layered to reveal the intersubjective and ambivalent nature of personal and group identity (Sawyer & Liggett, 2012).

Service in the university

In 2017, we reconnected to an earlier investigation (see Farquhar and Fitzpatrick, 2015) and began to, again, focus on understandings of service. Using narratives from 2012 as a beginning, we explored service further, first by sharing ideas and juxtaposing our stories, then critically reflecting on them. Our personal stories are quite different. Although we come to similar conclusions about the de-emphasis of traditional notions of service in the university, we suggest a need, also, for a more critically informed understanding of service linked to notions of care.

Sandy's story of service best fits with the definition 'work done in obedience to and for the benefit of a master' while for Esther's 'serving (God) by obedience, piety, and good works' is more relevant. Similar to Elizabeth and Grant's (2013) argument that academics do not share a common understanding of what it means to be a researcher, so too, academic understandings of service vary. It is important in continuing conversations of service in the university to value the complexity inherent in the term. We provide this troubled account of service in the hope that we add to a richer discussion, contributing something of moral and ethical worth. As Adolph (2010) suggests, "most faculty members who are (over) committed to professional service can attest to the various passions and ethical issues that drive their endeavours" (p 171). This paper provides a way to enter into a conversation, not to provide

a 'truth', but to "invest in the conversational dynamic ... in which [our] voice is ... one of many" (Hall, 2010, p. 221).

As universities adapted to the new climate of globalisation and market driven forces (Black, 2015), increasingly a shift to managerial practices was realised. Over the past twenty or so years this shift was demonstrated through the change to an 'outward-facing' student focused approach, from the traditional inward-looking collegial approach (Black, 2015), and a shift away from a trust based model of the university, with a move to *manage* academics (Shore & Davidson, 2015). The result is a commodification of academic practice increasingly governed by numbers, measured by thin audit processes that privilege outputs in the form of publications above other academic roles, including teaching, research, and service (Ball 2012; Elizabeth & Grant 2013). This academic environment charged with the language and practice of neoliberalism; is one in which academics are measured according to the rules of manipulability, interchangeable potential, linear ranking and monetary value (Ball, 2012, p. 25). In keeping with Ball, we set about to reflect on and imagine ….

> …some aspects of that 'reformation' brought about by that rough neoliberal beast and the concomitant changes in [our] academic subjectivity. In particular those aspects of reform that have required [us] to make [ourselves] calculable rather than memorable. (Ball 2012, p. 17)

'Service' is a complex area of academic work life subject to increasing objectification through measurement of various institutional activities. Accounting for one's service is complicated on many levels. First, there is a struggle to define in a professional academic role what service entails (Masse & Hogan, 2010). Second, due to a lack of a definition, the historically and culturally complex ways academics have defined and lived service varies greatly. The consequence of the latter has seen a history of women in the university occupying a majority of the service roles. A predominate theme of the book 'Over ten million served' (Masse & Hogan, 2010) is the importance of the academic service role being 'counted'. The argument is posited that, as a result of a period of austerity, universities are becoming increasingly service-intensive.

> Increasingly, the very language ascribed to the university is a language of service: faculty members respond to increased demands for endless reports of various kinds; administrators ask faculty and staff to assist them in marketing the public image and mission of the institution and students are treated as discriminating "customers" to

whom faculty and staff must provide academic guidance and personal attention. (Masse & Hogan, 2010, p. 11)

And mostly, it is women who step up to the job, perhaps because "women have been socialized to be caretakers" (Keating cited in Masse & Hogan, 2010, p. 8). As a response to the call for service to be counted, Clausen (2010) describes the importance of a framework for documenting and evaluating service, to provide guidance for those making an 'account' for their service, and to generate data for them to build a case for excellence over time. Paradoxically, the situation described in this paper is the experience both writers encountered as the resulting change of how service is defined by such a proposed framework. Although recognising, and for the most part agreeing with, the argument for service being rewarded, we see the commodification of service as fraught with complications. Increased marketisation of higher education, globally, resulted in the establishment of competence frameworks to assist in leadership development (Black, 2015). One response to the demand for service to be 'counted' at our university, was integrating service into a leadership competencies framework.

Service and Leadership

How do service and leadership complement each other? Perhaps there is potential here for Greenleaf's (1970) notion of 'servant leadership' (cited in Laub, 1999). While Black (2015) argues that transformational leadership is the dominant paradigm in Higher Educational competency frameworks, Santamaria and Santamaria (2012) highlight how servant leadership differs from transformational leadership, where a *servant* leader understands themselves as being responsible for more than organizational goals; and further argue that educational leadership is both a moral and ethical enterprise (p. 74).

Servant leadership is described by Laub (1999) as an understanding of leadership that places the good of those being led over the self-interest of the leader. This concept links to Sergiovanni's (Brandt, 1992) argument that in idea-based organisations, leaders require moral authority. The servant leader is someone who has a 'natural feeling' of *wanting to serve*, who learns to lead through being a 'servant' who:

> promotes valuing and developing people; building community; practicing authenticity; providing leadership for the good of those being led; and distributing power and status for the common good of each individual and the organisation. (Santamaria & Santamaria, p. 73)

This resonates with Sergiovanni's description of the leader with moral authority, who is an excellent follower, is authentic in their response to others, and is "better at articulating the purposes of the community; more passionate about them, more willing to take time to pursue them" (Brandt, 1992, p. 47). Further, the servant leader has a desire to serve others, where they are motivated to lead in response to, and with a *focus on*, a 'calling' to serve (Patterson, 2003). Patterson (2003) describes seven virtuous constructs that are inherent in servant leadership: (a) agape love, (b) humility, (c) altruism, (d) vision, (e) trust, (f) empowerment, and (g) service. Although we posit that all seven of these constructs are interrelated and interdependent, in this paper we are especially interested in how service is defined as

> [a] virtue ... displayed ... when one is doing something deliberately with a desire to perform as human beings ought, that is, in the proper way ... It is the primary function of a type of leadership that is not based on one's own interests but rather on the interests of others ... a choice of the interests of others over self-interest. (Patterson, 2003, p. 6)

These things are difficult to measure. However, it appears measures have been created in order for the *power* of servant leadership to be harnessed by organizations (see Liden, Wayne, Zhao,& Henderson, 2008).

Duoethnographies of service

The following three sections of the paper comprise a number of conversations where we explored the types of service in the university we became involved in, and how our familial and cultural backgrounds informed our approach. We focus our attention on three inter-related and dynamic themes: duty, gender and leadership. In the first conversation we discuss our understanding of service in relation to our respective family experiences. Although our experiences are clearly different, common themes of gender and duty emerge. The following conversations move the focus away from childhood, to explore how service changed when our place of work shifted from being a tertiary college to a university, and became managed through a leadership framework.

Conversation 1: Sounds of music – childhood memories

In this first section – we share photographs and part of a recorded conversation. Over a period of four months, ideas of *role*, *place* and *duty* played out in nuanced ways throughout many of our conversations. The fragments that we share here relates to how notions of

service emerged from within our respective family contexts. It was also in this discussion that we began to consider how early understandings of service played into our interpretation of service in our roles as academics.

Serendipitously, early in our duoethnographic conversations, we found a common soundtrack to our memories — the 1965 film *The Sound of Music.* To discover this movie/music humming away in the background of our childhoods was a surprise. Two photo images have been included to engage the reader with the visual story. Gina Wall (2013) describes the medium of photography as 'ghost writing', making explicit links to Derrida's notion of hauntology and différance. The visual image of the photograph conjures up questions of *what is?* that are haunted by questions of *what is not?* "Between the [visual] image and the subject is a gap, and in this in-between is the play of the spatial and the temporal…" (p. 240).

Image 1. Sisters in uniform.

Image 1 is of Sandy (un-uniformed) and her two older sisters (uniformed) standing outside their house. Image 2 is of Esther's mother dressed up as Mary Poppins in her red velvet dress. As we shared our photographs with each other, we began to recognise our early understandings of service related to the concept of duty:

Sandy: When I was very young – a delightful game – we would line up like soldiers – called cadets. Dad would give us our chores to do and award us points! We three girls [me and my two sisters] articulated a dance called 'form squares' as we marched and saluted our way through a strange little routine which we performed after dinner, around the dinner table, squeezed in between the kitchen servery and the dining chairs. Then we would line up in age descending order (me being the youngest at the end) to be given our cleaning-up roles and orders for the next day. Being the youngest, I tended to receive the lightest chores and the most points!

Esther: It reminds me of something out of The Sound of Music. You know where the father would blow his whistle and get the Von Trapp children all lined up like soldiers. Funny that ... cos my life was almost the opposite.

Sandy: How's that?

Esther: Well, I was basically brought up on The Sound of Music, but my Mum modelled herself after Maria.

Sandy: (Laughs) what - running through the fields and flying over the hilltops ... all that 1960s freedom and peace.

Image 2. Kathy in her red velvet dress.

Esther: Pretty close actually. My Mum ran what she called an 'open home' which meant we had a lot of people, mostly musicians and 'hippies', turning up at any time for a meal or bed. I don't know if you have heard of the Jesus movement, a hippy counterculture? Our home was always full of people and the dinner table was like ... we would just cook up big soups and pizzas or whatever to feed the masses. We used to have this huge stainless steel dish – which is like a bowl for soaking things in ... about a foot and a half diameter and we used to make the coleslaw in that. I'd chop up the coleslaw, chop up three cabbages, a bag of carrots (actions grating with sound effects chchch), and in they'd go – amazing eh – so that was our dinner.

The Sound of Music worked as a metaphor to demonstrate and represent the different childhood 'touchstone' stories we drew on to define service. Sandy's story brought out discussion around military service and ideas of honour, respect, discipline and responsibility. Contribution to the family, which to Sandy (the youngest child in a new immigrant family), came with a sense of sticking together and making a go of it. Hard work, honesty and tenacity were family codes, and she recalls the immigrant narrative of New Zealand as the 'pavlova paradise' – a place of 'milk and honey' – where a hardworking 'man' could get ahead and provide for the archetypal nuclear family, with mother at home involving herself in community service (through the church and school). Like most families where she lived, hers was a patriarchal model of family, deeply embedded in a local community through church-based networks. She recounts family contributions to church fairs and galas – cake baking, knitting, 'white elephant' stalls, and delivering 'meals on wheels' to the elderly. The photo Sandy includes here evokes a shadowy set of memories: being the youngest – feeling

less important. She is pictured here alongside her sister in their Girls' Brigade uniforms and recalls a sense of wonderment at her sisters' achievements – their badges awarded for dutiful acts. She also recalls her abysmal failure at Girls' Brigades when she was finally of age to be able to attend. However, she fondly recalls this time of local community and in later conversations developed on the sense of duty, loyalty and care that emerged among the women of the family, particularly as her father travelled a lot.

The photo of Esther's mum is a haunting memory of a life full of adventure, music, and dreams. It conjures up the essence of a childhood lived within the confines of a religion yet, simultaneously, within an era of freedom of expression and working for justice. Esther's touchstone stories are always filled with music and people. Service was understood through the idea of serving one another, at home, at church or on the marae[1]. As a female this often involved working in the kitchen or caring for others' needs. Serving others required a humbleness of spirit, to enable and provide spaces for others to shine. Leadership was understood as a male preserve, where pictures of old white men with flowing beards filled the walls that surrounded her. As the oldest daughter of four and the eldest female grandchild, she dutifully learnt the skills of cooking and caring. Often told she was gifted – gifted with childbearing hips.

Although our stories are different, the idea of dutifulness is a strong theme that emerged for both of us. Narrative inheritance refers to stories given to children by and about family members, reaching back to stories that have travelled through family genealogies and social history (Goodall, 2005, p. 492-520). These stories are an important part of how we make sense of ourselves. Narrative inheritance resonates with Maddison-MacFadyen's (2013) work on touchstone stories where she describes how we are all haunted by our pasts, and in particular 'our childhood touchstone stories, those stories that live deeply within us and inform our perspectives of the world' (p. 4). She argues that by analysing our touchstone stories, which often provide a colonial meta-narrative, we engage with counter stories as an act of decolonization.

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[1] Marae: Marae is a word that originates from the indigenous Maori people of New Zealand. In the context of this conversation Marae is the location and place of a specific area of land and the large communal meeting house/s belonging to a particular Maori group/extended family.

Conversation 2: Working on the Chain Gang – An Academic Story

In this next conversation, we begin to make links to our roles in the university. Esther begins to relate how service and duty – important parts of her narrative inheritance are no longer valued. The idea of "making it all work" emerges – a theme critiqued later as particularly gendered, in which nurturing and facilitative are dispositions no longer valued or counted.

Esther: Well I've just been given the hard word. Not enough publishing. Last year I was awarded with my Master's degree, published one article and submitted another two – in with the reviewers.

Sandy: And you enrolled in your PhD.

Esther: Yeah, but it's not enough. I've been too busy doing other things. They are now telling me to cut back on the teaching! I mean back to what we were talking about before – why do we say yes? They said, write this course, could you coordinate that – why do we say yes?

Sandy: I don't think I'm ever asked really … it needs to be done … and I'm dutiful and I do it.

Esther: Dutiful! Interesting word. It reminds me of what I've been doing for the last few years running around doing these committees, writing degrees – being busy teaching – but not sitting down and reading literature and writing and doing research. Ha! That reminds me of what O'Loughlin (2009) was talking about. Looking back at these photos and revisiting family stories with you has opened up memories of my childhood - it was really good reading that article because it put this situation I am in now into perspective.

Sandy: What? That you need to facilitate everybody else …?

Esther: Yeah! Eldest child … eldest granddaughter … female … teacher. All these expectations from a very strong Christian family.

Sandy: Teacher, not artist … pushed in the direction of teaching rather than becoming an artist?

Esther: I was told I had to get a job!

Sandy: Ah, that's what it was!

Esther: And artists aren't workers – it's a very privileged position. Interesting conversation …

Sandy: Yeah! We're having it …

*Esther: Yeah – like that conversation about why we do what we do – why don't **you** say no?… Hindsight would say that after my meeting today, definitely I should have said no – because apparently, coordination and service are a big waste of time. And I thought I was just being really important and significant and helpful! At this stage in my career, I should have said no. I should have been writing, and no one told me that. So why didn't we say no? Why do we have to help people out and solve problems? Where do you fit in with your family?*

Sandy: Well, I'm the youngest of three girls. I always think of myself as the canary in the mine – if there is something wrong I'll squeak … or maybe not!

Esther: But you will confront?

Sandy: Mmmm – yeah, but we're all very conformist – we were our Mother's daughters. We were all very focused together and supportive of Mum … you know – making it all work.

Esther: I think a lot of my life was making it all work. A bit like your older sisters, as the oldest of four girls, I was busy trying to make a safe place for everyone. Home wasn't always a safe place for us to be.

In this conversation, Esther discusses her role within the family to facilitate, to make safe and, as Sandy suggests, to 'make things work'. We come from teaching backgrounds (Esther in primary and Sandy, early childhood) and were both employed initially in a Teachers' College, where the emphasis was on service (Cupples & Pawson 2012). The primary objective was to prepare teachers for the classroom/or early childhood centre. In New Zealand, teaching is a strongly women-dominated profession. When Teachers' Colleges in New Zealand amalgamated with Universities, our new roles in the university coincided with the changing nature of universities predicated on globalisation and commercialisation.

As former teachers, whose approach to service was underpinned by an ethics of care (Noddings, 1984), we suddenly found ourselves confronted with providing an account of ourselves. The rules of engagement and the ways in which we worked were largely undervalued in the new environment, and new norms that permeated the organisation were disorienting. The task of re-narrating ourselves began, even though as Butler suggests these norms where scarcely recognisable to us (Butler, 2001).

Conversation 3: From service to leadership in the university
Service
Behave

Manage self

Model leadership

Negotiate persuasively

Plan areas of responsibility

Develop working relationships

Promote collegiality and knowledge sharing

Look for continuous improvement opportunities

Esther: The poem above was written after re-looking at the guidelines for the school we were in after amalgamation (2004) which seemed to be about completing assigned duties, attending meetings, providing assistance, participating on committees, mentoring others, and involvement in professional training. But when I tried to find something on what is required for service today, it seems to have evolved into a matrix about leadership – where the word service has actually fallen off the page!

Sandy: Actually, Esther, I am looking at a more recent document – that horrible matrix where I am meant to 'exhibit', 'set direction', 'innovate', 'enable' and 'achieve results'. There is all this technicist language, and as I read, my sense is like having a mouth full of cotton wool. I am flabbergaste! It's the old story – we are going to be busy measuring that which there is nothing of because we are so busy devising the measurement for it. What is service, after all? I find this all quite ambiguous. I do love order, but I detest this language of business and management, and it is not just the language, it is the totalising takeover. I want to talk aesthetics; I mean why not a Zen Buddhist take on leadership? Tranquillity, simplicity and orderliness, combined with authenticity and creativity. It feels like innovation is dead because it has become so controlled. Once upon a time, in ivory tower land – academics were protected and cultivated, so that they could produce a good idea every decade or so. I mean, realistically, how much can one produce in a lifetime?

Esther: Well, I am looking at the old criteria – while no oil painting, it does talk about service and it does reflect the day-to-day work that we are engaged in for service, such as reviewing and refereeing, organising seminars and conferences, community outreach. In fact, there is a stronger focus on community and service. This latest document, though, it's all about stakeholders and commercialisation. For example the leadership framework describes the characteristic of the 'innovating and engaging' academic. When closely examining the idea of innovation the framework describes the need to 'adapt to changing external/market

demands'. Tidd and Bessant (2014) describe how innovation is understood as the "process of creating value from ideas", consequently innovation is measured through indicators of level of success. Organisational cultures of a university create mechanisms to support incremental innovation, in order to control and measure. However, these mechanisms can be counter-productive to radical innovation. Radical innovation is described by Tidd and Bessant (2009) as inherently messy, fraught with uncertainty and unfamiliarity, where the process is non-linear, explorative and experimental. Those things are difficult to control – no wonder you feel like innovation is dead.

Sandy: We've dabbled here with my military motif and your Christian giving-ness: I remember the motto of the primary school I attended was self, not service; intended to mean that we would learn to be self-sufficient, I think. When I think back to our childhood era, we had phrases like Christian service, serving others, voluntary service, military service, silver service. I think I recall that teaching was a service. In my mind, it brings up thoughts of a vocation – as in a calling – rather than a professional service. Our dutifulness to family and community was bound by locations which contained church and school. I think we did it because we were called to and we cared. Now, I am asked to perform service: committees, boards, reviews – and people have said to me, "Oh Sandy, this will be good for your service." It's like , service is a prosthetic - a category external to me but integral to my functioning. Something which is then measured to somehow equal 20% of another undefinable called 'workload'!

Esther: There seems to be a lot of difficulty in defining what is meant by service at the University. I suppose I took on the service aspect of my workload, based on what I had experienced as I was growing up and in my career as a teacher. Our conversations around service prompted me to go back to some old reading material we used when we were the 'Auckland College of Education', where our main business was training teachers. Marles' (1992) discussed the role of teachers as professionals. In defining professional she described it as a 'unique and essential social service' that is not about monetary gain. Teachers, as professionals, have a duty to live their lives in such a way as to impart important values to the children in their care. This brings to mind the old saying 'walk the talk', which, funnily, was one of my Grandfather's favourite sayings. I guess in some ways I read 'service' as participating where I could, to benefit the students in our care, to support and help my colleagues, and provide a quality and positive work environment. Culturally, this meant

spending time with people through, for example, taking them out for coffee and being a
friend.

Sandy: Well it is quite different now – sometimes I am sure I can hear collegial laughter
ricochet through the corridors, as yet another email appears from some administrative boffin
with yet another request for us to do more. It is more menacing than just a request though –
there is a moralising tone to these missives: if you don't do this for 'your country', then you
are not a good citizen. And even a veiled threat: "you won't have a job." …. Everybody I know
is over workload! What an audacity to suggest that we need this next lump of work to fill out
our service! Like we need to do more 'service'! I did once ask them to quantify what measure
they were using – they couldn't answer. But what is more galling, is that this x that they
want done does not rate a mention on the leadership matrix. So, it is not even counted. And
we do so much already that is not included in the workload. All those ideas about care and
service, though, have been written out.

Esther: do you recall that faculty meeting – where one of our bravest stood up and asked
that if we are doing 60+ hour weeks already (and have achieved excellence), how do we do
more and maintain effectiveness. There was no response.

Sandy: There are some strange robot-men roaming these corridors. Remember that letter
you received, Esther – the one that suggested that you may like to attend a course to have
your "neural pathways extended"?

Laughter

Discussion

Holman Jones (2016) reminds us that 'critical' autoethnography is where "theory and story
work together in a dance of collaborative engagement" (p. 229). Likewise, duoethnography
works when authors engage theory to interrogate personal stories. And it is in *writing as a*
method of inquiry that transformation can occur. Undertaking this duoethnography provided
a way for us to make sense of and critique our re-narrating of self and service in the
university, examining our positioning and the intersections of our personal narratives
alongside the wider, changing, social context of the neoliberal university (Herman, 2017).
And further examined the unseen difficulties of navigating the continuous, changing
environment of the university for women of a particular era, during a number of radical

restructurings of our workplace. We are not alone as an organisation, or as women in any organisation, in experiencing these kinds of difficulties.

Servant leadership as service

Deliberately retelling our stories has enabled us to reflect critically on how *what we value* as service might be translated into a leadership framework. Greenleaf's (1970) notion of servant leadership resonates well with our understanding of service as our 'calling'. In this sense our work as academics in a Faculty of Education is our 'calling', and each aspect, teaching, research *and* service, are part of that 'calling'. There is overlap. Recently we both completed the performance based research funding audit, to 'count' our research contributions. Some of the activities being counted were 'student factors', 'reviewing', 'researcher development', 'fostering research relationships', 'facilitation, networking and collaboration'. Each of these activities, we argue, require those virtuous constructs evident in a servant leader; agape love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment and service (*with a focus to serve*) (Patterson, 2003). Perhaps our response to Ball's neo-liberal beast can be described as a deliberate shaping of our activities to meet 'performance expectations' whilst also redefining for ourselves the language of accountability – a 'tactical renegotiation' (Cupples & Pawson, 2012, p. 18). Where, in our publications, we disrupt traditional definitions of what counts as research, for example, "engaged in the writing of poetry as a critique of the neo-liberal university" (Fitzpatrick & Alansari, 2018, p. 214), so too our involvement in pursuing and valuing collaboration and relationships with others disrupts individualistic competitiveness.

To be memorable *and* calculable

Sharing our touchstone stories of making things work revealed us as dutiful women who provide the social glue (Fletcher, 2004). Is this a bad thing? Cognisant of Herman's (2017) notion of "the *activity* of organizing", in this paper we argue duoethnography provides a way for us to re-story and make sense of how our identity has been shaped by organising processes within the university whilst simultaneously those processes have been shaped by us (Herman, 2017).

In this re-storying of our service in the university, we understand ourselves as 'tempered radicals' and recognize the importance of 'quiet leaders' (Le Fevre & Farquhar, 2015) and aim to disrupt, or intentionally interrupt the "wave of academia [that] may be reinforcing a leadership agenda that is suited to and made explicitly for men" (Haak, 2009, p. 301).

Encouragingly, the notion of leadership in line with latest thinking on distributed and lateral leadership (Johnson, Dempster, Wheeley, 2016) is intended to move away from the heroic model of the predominantly male figurehead in charge of a commercial company, to encompass a broader recognition of each individual's unique role within an organisation which clearly has merit. Yet as Haake's (2009) study suggests, the current leadership agenda in universities still favours men, an agenda in which much of the distributed leadership practice remains invisible, overshadowed by the highly visible signs of heroic leadership (Le Fevre & Farquhar, 2016). Issues of power in distributed leadership also require further interrogation (Robinson, 2009).

Perhaps this shift from traditional notions of service to a leadership framework has 'extended our neural pathways'. We have had to think differently and tactically negotiate. We have learnt the technicist language and have captured it for ourselves, deliberately redefining the terms and our own actions. When Esther describes her former service role as providing assistance, participating in committees and mentoring others, there is realisation these activities are still part of our role — only they have changed shape to include: the establishment of international and local networks we convene, support; our postgraduate supervisions; reviewing academic articles; and, providing assistance to ensure voices of marginalised groups of people are heard. There is hope here that in becoming memorable our work will be counted.

Concluding thoughts

Exploring our personal stories of coming to understand service differently in the university has enabled us to make clear links between the personal and larger organisational shifts. It has provoked us to examine literature on service and to value our own 'calling' to serve others, albeit also to meet the outcomes demanded by the leadership framework. Working in a Faculty of Education, there continues to be a strong philosophical valuing of relationships and professional practice. Sergiovanni's (1992) quote rings metaphorically true "They're not like most organizations: you can't apply organizational principles to places characterized by sandboxes, books, and children" (p. 49). We understand the tension when applying organisational principles to communities that value virtue and competence.

The increasing focus on commercialisation in an environment of managerialism is particularly problematic for women. Invisible, taken-for-granted, and lower status work is largely performed by women in organisations, at a cost both personally and professionally. It is part of the dominant narrative of leadership in the university, "very much framed as tip of

the iceberg, with what lies beneath remaining somewhat buried" (Le Fevre & Farquhar, 2016, p. 142). For women's leadership work to be recognised, to flourish and to be counted (Mass & Hogan, 2010) it requires tactical negotiations, and work that, through being memorable, makes an account for itself.

To counter leadership that privileges dominant narratives of the patriarchy, we relentlessly support and argue for good scholarship that emphasises a collective, feminist ethic of care that continues to challenge elitism within the neoliberal university. Sara Ahmed (2014) talks about "self-care as warfare", which is not just about caring for one's self but creating caring communities. She argues that feminism in neoliberal hands "becomes just another form of career progression: a way of moving "up," not by not recognising ceilings (and walls) but by assuming these ceilings (and walls) can disappear through individual persistence". Drawing on Audre Lorde's *A burst of light,* Ahmed argues instead for care that is "not about self-indulgence, but self-preservation" where "self-care becomes warfare" a kind of care that is "not about one's own happiness" but about "finding ways to exist in a world that is diminishing" (Ahmed, 2014, n.p).

As an ongoing enterprise, duoethnography offers a creative way to reimagine and re-story notions like service and leadership in ways that might satisfy, and simultaneously challenge, neoliberal demands for accountability. Further research that draws on the complex lived experience of individuals in the university will provide a richer understanding of how service and leadership are understood and realised. We hope that, in a similar manner, these stories might engage others in making sense of their own experiences with organizational change. We also like to imagine a world where the institutions that we are part of do better at recognising and valuing inclusive interpretations of service, particularly from the perspective of women academics. Hence, notions of the 'tempered radical, 'quiet leader' and 'servant leadership' are useful moving forward as we renegotiate our own understandings of service. Our real fantasy, though, begins in a post-heroic leadership world, with our dream of a macro political environment for education; one in which the real hero(in)es in leadership are actively celebrated for the quiet support and encouragement for others in their sphere of care and influence.

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