MORELAND: REPRESENTING PLACE THROUGH ALTERNATIVE CARTOGRAPHIC PRACTICE

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Media and Communication).

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the dissertation is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Bianca J. Frost

January 2016
Representing place through alternative cartographic practice

Bianca J. Frost
Victorian Electoral Commission statewide overview of local government areas (2012). The area circled in black indicates the location of Moreland City Council.
Victorian Electoral Commission map detailing the three electoral wards of Moreland City Council (2012).
**Dedication**

I dedicate this project to Moreland City Council and its people, animals and things, past, present and future. I also dedicate it to the other travellers, wayfarers, vagabonds, solivagants, *flâneurs*, philosophers, thinkers, dreamers and poets in the hope that my map might help inspire them to create their own.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of the lands now known as Moreland. It wasn’t until I embarked on this project that I realised how shamefully uneducated I was about your rich history, culture and connection to land on which I now live. In some humble way, I hope the things I have learned about you will, in turn, make me a more respectful citizen deserving of the honour to call Moreland my home.

I would also like to acknowledge the unerring support of my supervisors, Associate Professor Tania Lewis, Associate Professor Francesca Rendle-Short, and Dr Jessica Wilkinson who took me in as an academic orphan following the departure of my original supervisor, Dr Antoni Jach.

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I also thank my Senior Associate Supervisor, Francesca for the clarity of her creative vision, her inimitable flair for structure, and ability to wring original ideas and surprising potential out of work that I would’ve otherwise discarded. I would especially like to acknowledge Francesca’s contribution to the central premise of this dissertation. It was Francesca who first encouraged me to explore Moreland as a ‘more land’ of ‘more-ness’.

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not be in the form that it is without her insight and poetic sensibility. Jess was also instrumental in encouraging me to make more of my photography throughout this dissertation.

Without the combined goodwill and considerable time and effort of these three smart, funny and talented women who continued to show confidence in and enthusiasm for my practice-led research project even as mine waxed and waned, I would not be in the position to submit this dissertation for examination.

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Finally, a little bit closer to home, I would like to thank my Maltese-Shi Tzu terrier, Mushi Mushi who very diligently accompanied me on all my research walks around Moreland. His unconditional love and companionship makes every day of my life just that much better. And, as always, thank you to my parents, Peter and Cathy Frost. I hope this poetic map of my new home makes you as proud of me as I am of you. I love you both.
Table of contents

Abstract 9

Part one

Moreland: A poetic map 12

Introduction 13

The application of cartographic concepts within the poetic map:
A reader’s guide 16
Glossary of cartographic concepts 25

Moreland: Poetic map 29

A1. Moreland: A snapshot 30
B1. Hoddle’s grid: A master class in cartography 34
C1. A short stroll from Bourke Street: A toponymic history 37
D1. The kinematic equation 39
E1. Mapping the geosynchronous orbits of Moreland 41
A2. Bourke Street, Brunswick: A residential portrait 43
B2. Half way down the street, the laneway 45
C2. The spectre of old Randazzo or: Rendezvous with angry magpie 47
D2. The Araucaria Heterophylla on Victoria Street 50
E2. Elegy for the everyday (discarded and forgotten) 52
A3. Greek tragedy in the double-fronted brick veneer 54
B3. The old lady from Sparta with the clubfoot and cane 56
C3. Place and the forensics of self 59
D3. Colonial subdivision of the New Lands, 1839 and the infinite geometric series 61
E3. Moreland: An etymological map 63
A4. The twin lumbar spines of Sydney Road 65
Part two

Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary approach 111

Introduction 113

Mapping a research journey: An iterative approach 116
Mapping the exegesis: An interdisciplinary approach 121
Chapter summaries 124

Chapters 127

Mapping Moreland 128
Walking Moreland 159
Seeing Moreland 188
Knowing Moreland 212
Writing Moreland 236
List of images  

263

List of figures  

269

List of cited works  

276
Abstract

Moreland City Council is a local government area located approximately six kilometres north of Melbourne’s CBD. Once part of the first European settlement in Victoria, today Moreland is one of Australia’s most densely populated and culturally diverse urban environments. It is a lively, changeful assemblage of ‘more-ness’, a palimpsest of histories, stories and multiple human and more-than-human events, actors and points of view.

This practice-led research project aims to outline a range of alternative cartographic practices for mapping the more-ness of Moreland in a personal, poetic and ‘more-ly’ way. The central contention of this project is that place is produced by the intersection of multiple spatial, temporal and cultural factors (de Certeau 1984; Massey 2002). It argues that place is important to us because it is the materially inscribed and psycho-geographical embodiment of our passage through the world (Debord 1956). That is, as we make place, so place makes us (Grosz 1999; Morris 2006). It proposes that mapping, whether literal, figurative or imaginative, is one of the fundamental ways in which we organise knowledge to represent and ‘make sense’ of place (Solnit 2010; Turchi 2004). The rationale for making a poetic map is premised on the fact that conventional maps are inherently exclusionary; that they deliberately and intentionally omit facts, perspectives and points of view not central to their purpose (Cosgrove 2005; Hegglund 2003). By moving beyond conventional cartographic practice, this project aims to offer a more diverse, plural and inclusive ‘map’ of Moreland.

To achieve this, this project adopts a creative, iterative and interdisciplinary approach to research practice. It does this within the context of ‘an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge’ both by the ‘means of practice and the outcomes of that practice’ (Candy 2006).
The research approach is framed by three key questions: How might the creative practitioner theorise a method for mapping place through alternative cartographic practice? What creative strategies, practical interventions and critical frameworks might assist in the representation of place in more diverse and inclusive ways? And, how can the poetic form be used as an instrument of alternative cartographic practice to represent the more-ness of Moreland?

In terms of addressing these questions within a practice-led research model, this project observes the principle that ‘the creative higher degree needs to be understood not as research about art – the province of the theorist or critic – but art practice undertaken as research’ (Fletcher and Mann 2004). This view proposes that art is research and that artistic production is fundamentally an interrogation of the pervading ideas, questions or thematic preoccupations that imbibe creative work. The nexus between these approaches is demonstrated in my research outcomes, which are presented in two separate but interconnected parts (Part one – Moreland: A poetic map and Part two – Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary approach).

*Part one – Moreland: A poetic map* includes a creative map of Moreland that presents my research findings in a personally speculative, experimental and reflective poetic mode. *Part two – Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary approach* details the theoretical underpinnings of the project and its critical methodologies and frameworks. While the poetic map, as the source of this practice-led research, sits at the heart of the work, the creative and exegetical components of this project are ‘conceptualised as independent answers to the same research question’ (Stewart 2001). The objective of this approach is to integrate the different ‘languages’ of creative and exegetical response via a dialogic exchange that mimics how my poetic map moves between creative and critical modes to represent the ‘more-ness’ of Moreland in an alternative and cartographically inspired way. This means that while *Part one – Moreland: A poetic map* is presented first, this dissertation is structured in such a way that *Part two – Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary approach*
could also be read before it. Likewise, the construction of this dissertation has been designed in such a way that the reader can ‘dip’ in and out of different poems and exegetical chapters (each of which have been conceived as their own independent response to the key research questions of this dissertation) in any number of ways to facilitate new readings, understandings and discoveries.
Part one:

Moreland: A poetic map
Maps are a collection of versions of a place, a compendium of perspectives, a snatching out of the infinite ether of potential versions, with only a few that will be made concrete and visible.

~ Rebecca Solnit

I live in Moreland, but I’m not from here. I come from a different place; a rural, greener, less populated and more ‘natural’ place. Perhaps this is why Moreland strikes me as such an ebullient, rambunctious, somewhat ramshackle and occasionally calamitous assemblage. It is a composite of shifting configurations; a complex spatial architecture in a state of temporal flux. It juxtaposes the old and the new, past and present, renewal and decay, ease and dis-ease, the fixed and un-fixed in a relentless process of inscription and erasure. It places subjects, objects and memories, and in doing so, displaces others to alternately cover and un-cover the rich palimpsest of its
indigenous, colonial and migrant histories overlaid and intermingled with more-than-human – animal, plant and material – points of view. Regarded collectively, the more-ness of Moreland can be bewildering.

This map is my attempt to negotiate the difficulty I have in describing Moreland’s densely woven intricacies, to make sense of my own entanglement within it and to better understand my own conflicted relationship with the place that I now call home.

Broadly speaking, a map is a contrivance that allows us to organise information in order to make sense of phenomena. There are, of course, already many maps of Moreland. There are transport maps, utility maps, electoral maps and land survey maps, just to name a few. By their very nature, these maps tend to reduce the many stories and possibilities of place into a selection of verifiable and ostensibly objective and observable facts. They purposefully exclude the multiple voices, experiences and points of view of its urban constituents. They eschew the personal, private and peculiar in favour of the generic, flat and static. Such maps tend to suggest that Moreland is an orderly, measurable and quantifiable construction that can be represented with the same techniques used to map other places. As cartographer Denis Wood (1992) argues, ‘no map can show everything. If it could, it would no more than reproduce the world, which without the map we already have’ (86).

As the creative artefact of this practice-led research project, the purpose of this poetic map is to represent Moreland in a more personal way than more conventional maps allow. Through the lens of a creative writing practice, it peers into the interspaces created by the limits of traditional cartographic practice to embrace the inherent plurality of Moreland. In particular, Moreland: A poetic map draws on ‘poetry’s capacity to offer small, local and contingent truths’ (Webb 2012: 9) to reflect a personal, experiential and embodied knowledge of Moreland within a subjective,
specific and idiosyncratic map. As such, my work draws on a range of poetic devices that play with established cartographic principles in order to suggest different ways of representing the work’s key tropes and thematic preoccupations. It uses the elasticity of the poetic form to traverse an imaginative space in order to map Moreland not simply as it is, but as I imagine it to be.

While no single map can represent the full, layered and variegated richness of Moreland, this poetic map acknowledges that ‘even after we mark the page, there are blanks beyond the borders of what we create, and blanks within what we create’ (Turchi 2004: 29). It then exploits these limits to transform the partial, episodic and incomplete; to make art from absence, to use the space of the page to say something about the space of the world.

In the spirit of exploring the more-ness of Moreland, this map invites the reader to see Moreland through my eyes, to walk in my shoes and contemplate the ‘interspace between the external and internal, between reference to a public world of shared experiences and a private world of significations’ (de Gruyter 1988: 501). It is not an objective map but a deeply personal one that reflects my own research interests and engagements with Moreland. As such, not only is it a map of Moreland, but of my own interior landscape. It is a map about place, but like any map, it is bound by the limits of the mapmaker’s knowledge. The possibilities it suggests exist not only ‘on the page’, but beyond it as well. It is not an objectively ‘truthful’ map but a springboard for other readers to launch their own associative leaps into an imaginary Moreland constructed from my own confabulations.
The application of cartographic concepts within the poetic map: A reader’s guide

As more-ness is a key thematic preoccupation of Moreland: A poetic map, cartography is its central conceit. While the individual poems embody a range of forms that mimic the diversity of Moreland, cartography is the recurrent motif that unites them. Each poem within the map draws on a variety of cartographic principles and techniques, which I have applied in a range of literal, figurative and metaphorical ways, some more obviously than others. It will be apparent to readers familiar with poetic contrivances that many of these strategies are inherently similar to existing poetic techniques. For example, poets have long played with the spatial elements of the page and sought to exploit them for poetic effect. However, the purpose of cartography in this project is to invent a sustained metaphor that invites the reader to consider how these devices, when applied to a poetics of place, might be extended, juxtaposed or manipulated in new and possibly surprising ways. Indeed, the original contribution this project offers to the field of creative writing practice is precisely its engagement with cartography as a literary conceit.

In keeping with this cartographically inspired practice, the poems that make up this map have been organised within the metrics of a Cartesian grid (Figure B).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moreland: A snapshot</td>
<td>Hoddle’s grid: A master class in cartography</td>
<td>A short stroll from Bourke Street: A toponymic history</td>
<td>The kinematic equation</td>
<td>Mapping the geosynchronous orbits of Moreland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourke Street, Brunswick: A residential portrait</td>
<td>Half way down the street, the laneway</td>
<td>The spectre of old Randazzo or: Rendezvous with angry magpie</td>
<td>The Araucaria Heterophylla on Victoria Street</td>
<td>Elegy for the everyday (discarded and forgotten)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek tragedy in the double-fronted brick veneer</td>
<td>The old lady from Sparta with the clubfoot and cane,</td>
<td>Place and the forensics of self</td>
<td>Colonial subdivision &amp; the infinite geometric series</td>
<td>Moreland: An etymological map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The twin lumbar spines of Sydney Road</td>
<td>In coda: A truncated history of Moreland between (the)</td>
<td>Pseudo-archaeologies and other mortal excavations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Black sea and sails: A photo-poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared house, room for rent</td>
<td>Meridian arcs, in cowboy boots,</td>
<td>Night on the bottle</td>
<td>Waste redacted (redacted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( E = A \cdot v \cdot t \cdot \varpi \cdot \frac{1}{2} v^2 )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Displaced pide on Sunday</td>
<td>Fe(2)O(3)·nH(2)O and the rust-red melancholy</td>
<td>Place and the space-time continuum or ( \varphi = \tau - \chi \tau )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure B:** Grid of map coordinates.
Oriented on a traditional $xy$ axis, each cell within the grid includes a series of bijective coordinates (e.g. A1, B1, A2, B2), which function as sets of geospatial markers. The rationale for presenting each poem as a cell within a single map – as opposed to a collection of maps within a compendium or atlas of maps – is twofold. One, this simplified schematic better expresses the relationship of one poem to another. It does this by creating a kind of poetic topography where nodes of thematic interests intersect and traverse spatial boundaries (e.g. B5, C5, D5 or D5, E5) in ways that a discrete series of maps would not. Two, it facilitates opportunities to read or navigate the work in multiple ways that still belong to a conceptual whole. This allows the work to be approached in any number of different linear (e.g. A3, B3, C3 or A1, A2, A3) and non-linear (e.g. D1, E1, D6 or B3, C4, E6) configurations that set up unexpected detours and poetic encounters. Not only do these yield potential for generating new meanings and interpretations beyond the mapmaker’s intentions, it also simulates how a ‘traditional’ map is read and the ways in which our experience of place is not that of a seamless space-time continuum, but of disrupted moments and impressions.

The decision to index the poems within a Cartesian grid as opposed to any other mapping device is therefore based on three key considerations. One, it pays homage to the colonial appropriation of the original ‘more lands’ and how the cartographic tools of empire functioned to erase indigenous knowledge of place through a systematic process of displacement (see Mapping Moreland in Part two). In doing so, the application of a Cartesian grid as a means of systemising the equal representation of space reveals the limits of its own constructed nature in contrast to the limitless material and cultural constructions that it seeks to constrain (see Writing Moreland in Part two). Two, it seeks to playfully subvert the authority of any single mapping device as a means of representing the multiplicity of Moreland by populating each cell of the grid with ‘mini-maps’ that draw on a range of poetic techniques and imaginative topographies, thereby enacting the idea that the ‘whole is more than the sum of its parts’ (see Seeing Moreland and Knowing Moreland in
Part two). Three, conceived an organising principle, the Cartesian grid provides a means of spatially, temporally and thematically linking each poem (see *Walking Moreland* in *Part two*).

While individual poems are replete with their own thematic (topic) and topographical (shape) features, in terms of composition, they all share similar characteristics, which I have mapped in the following legend (Figure C).
A3. Greek tragedy in the double-fronted brick veneer
For Denise Kako.

Figure C: Map legend.
The key features to note in this legend are as follows:

I → Map coordinate
The map coordinate includes the grid reference and title of each poetic cell. The coordinate (e.g. A1) allows the reader to navigate through the poetic map, while the title provides a description (often abstracted) about the poem’s thematic intent. In some cases, the title becomes part of the poetic body (e.g. B2, C5) to explore the interplay between these two elements and how a map’s meaning can be influenced by how it is named.

II → Main image
The cell of each poem usually begins with an image. In most cases, this image is a photograph that I have taken in the course of researching Moreland although, on occasion, it might be a map (e.g. in B4) or other artefact (e.g. in A2). The purpose of the main image is to document the connection of the poem to the ‘real world’ or materiality it either seeks or has inspired me to map.

III → Metadata
In literal terms, metadata refers to data about data. Sitting beneath each main image is a perforated text box that includes information that either relates to or informs the dataset of each poetic cell. The function of metadata in this map is to link the main image to the poetic projection (see V below) and footnotes (see VI below). The metadata incorporates significant historical, theoretical or personal observations (or combinations of observations) that are important but non-critical to enhancing the reader’s understanding of the poem’s context and intent. The broken-line framing of the metadata has been used to indicate the porous boundary between research and practice that infuses the work and gesture to the ways in which fact and fiction flow in and out of the poetic work.
IV ➔ Map pictography

Occasionally, in addition to the main image of each poem, some maps also incorporate additional photographic images. When included, these images might juxtapose the main image (e.g. as in A3) or, in other cases, they have been included as an integral part of the poem itself (e.g. as in E4). In the latter instance, these maps explore how map pictography interacts with the textual elements of the work.

V ➔ Poetic projection

The main body of each cell is dedicated to a poetic representation or what is cartographically referred to as a projection of the idea, theme or topic that informs it. The form of this projection varies between cells in much the same way as each cell of a conventional map differs from another.

VI ➔ Footnote

Each poem ‘concludes’ with a footnote that leads into the footnote of the next poem. The inclusion of footnotes is intended to further supplement the poetic work by offering an insight into the ‘foot work’ of researching Moreland. The footnotes are written in the second person as a creative means of inviting the reader to embody the experience of my own physiological, intellectual and imaginative perambulations. Like metadata, they are not necessarily critical to reading the poetic work but they do offer another layer of explication with which to make clearer the preoccupations that – quite literally – underpin the work as represented by the line sitting above them. Read sequentially, the footnotes also offer their own narrative thread thus offering an alternative pathway by which to navigate the map.
Glossary of cartographic concepts

The following glossary lists some of the cartographic concepts I have used in my poetic map. The glossary has been included to signpost how these devices have been re-interpreted for poetic purposes and enhance the reader’s understanding of the work as a cohesive whole. Where definitions overlap with other terms in the glossary, italics have been used to assist the reader to cross-reference their meaning and how these terms and definitions have been applied in the work.

Area

Area is a term commonly used in both geography and geometry to describe a pre-determined unit measurement of a flat, curved or other geometric surface. In cartography, these unit measurements are represented as a function of projection, distortion, scale and direction whereby each unit is attributed a given value, such as length or volume. Area is usually defined within the context of a uniform grid of vertical and horizontal lines on a flat linear plane where each unit corresponds to an equal value (Figure D). Area can also be measured via a system of longitude and latitude, known as graticules, on a spherical surface where only units located on the same meridian and parallel plane share the same measurement (Figure E).
In my poetic map, I’ve applied and manipulated the principles of grids and graticules to inspire new spatial compositions. For example, in some cases, I have literally constructed my poems within a grid, some of which remain visible (e.g. B1) while others are ‘hidden’ (e.g. A2, C2, D3). In some instances, I have used graticular principles to distort an equal area grid as a way of suggesting the representational limits of rendering the three-dimensional world on the page (e.g. D4).

**Direction**

In cartographic works the four cardinal directions of north, south, east and west, specify direction as represented on a standard compass. Some maps also refer to meridian arcs, which trace the longitudinal lines running between the earth’s two terrestrial poles. For navigational purposes, direction is a critical map feature.

Within my map, I draw on cartographic principles of direction in a number of ways. From representing relationships (e.g. the map’s system of grid coordinates and the arrangement of individual poetic cells) to the arrangement and placement of poetic stanzas (e.g. E6), I use direction to represent binary oppositions (e.g. A4), play with reading patterns (e.g. D3), and suggest textual transitions and movement (e.g. C5, or the vertical transition from poems into footnotes and the lateral transition between poems and footnotes). The purpose of incorporating these devices is to introduce a conceptual play on both the way in which maps are read or navigated and the way real world relationships between phenomena might be represented.

**Distortion**

Distortion is the direct effect of any map projection. In cartography, distortion describes the process by which any map characteristic projected onto a two-dimensional plane is transformed
and the degree to which that transformation alters the shape or proportions of those objects in relation to one another.

Within my map, I apply the principle of distortion in two key ways. Firstly, I use this principle as a counterpart of frequency, as indicated by how often a particular idea, theme or topic is represented in relation to others throughout the work. For example, some ideas (such as indigeneity, migration and displacement) recur more often than others (e.g. sub-division). Secondly, I consciously manipulate distortion through a range of poetic techniques. For example, I might apply condensation to distil the general into the specific (e.g. D1, E1) or, through metaphor, analogy, and allusion, magnify the particular into the universal (e.g. A5). In broader terms, playing with *area, direction, generalisation* and *scale* also produces other kinds of distortion within the poetic work to produce a range of different effects (e.g. B6).

**Generalisation**

In cartography generalisation refers to the task of eliminating any characteristic that is not central to the specific purpose or function of a given map. The aim of generalisation is to reduce complexity and highlight the object of the map’s enquiry.

Likewise, this map of Moreland is highly selective in what it chooses to represent at the expense of other possible inclusions. While the application of generalisation is a natural function of selection and omission common to any literary project, it is also a feature of this poetic work that finds form in both specific thematic treatments (e.g. D2) and the symbolic use of blank space, absence and redaction (e.g. E5) within a cartographic context.
**Hachures**

In many maps physical characteristics such as woods or mountains are denoted by a closed system of graded lines known as hachures. Hachures are often represented in a map legend as a series of single and crosshatched lines in a scale of varying lengths, widths and densities.

In my poetic map, I reimagine hachures as the concentration of particular ideas by contrasting blank space with text and verbiage to experiment with density (e.g. B5 and E2), and play with line and stanza lengths to represent length and width (e.g. A1). On occasion, I also use colour gradients (through typography) receding in saturation to indicate the temporal progression of the present into past or of remembering into forgetting (e.g. D4, D6).

**Marginalia**

Marginalia refers to information relevant to a map that sits outside the map 'proper'. It is generally used to provide data such as legends, compasses, scales, titles, coordinates and authorship.

In my map, these elements of marginalia are re-purposed in alternative contexts to produce different poetic effects (e.g. main images, metadata, footnotes and the use of parentheses within the main body of text).

**Projection**

Projection describes the task of rendering three-dimensional phenomena onto a flat surface, usually within a system of graphic notation. Projection is primarily a mathematical concept and there are different formulas that can be applied to different types of maps to reduce distortion and improve the accuracy of map characteristics.
In Moreland: A poetic map I use projection as a process of transferring the ephemera of knowledge, memory, perception, experience and imagination onto the page through a combination of poetic and pictorial language. The various poetic projections I use are based on different linguistic and spatial devices, often inspired by scientific and mathematic formulas, to achieve different effects (e.g. D3, E6).

**Scale**

In scientific maps, scale refers to some form of measurement to represent size, distance, mass or other physical attributes in accurate proportion to others.

Due to the poetic nature of this map, the concept of cartographic scale is subject to significant distortion. In most instances, scale is represented metaphorically in terms of the ideas, themes or locations that occur more frequently (e.g. Bourke Street) than others (such as human versus non-or more-than-human concerns). Scale is also expressed by longer sentences to give a sense of distance and create textual ‘panoramas’ that mimic the temporal duration of the ‘sweeping gaze’ (e.g. A1) in contrast to more sustained, focused interrogations (e.g. B5) or poetic fragments (e.g. as used in D4 or E5).

**Shape**

Shape describes the cartographic problem of representing the external form of a map characteristic, such as its perimeter, outline or surface. Representing shape in a map is considered different to other properties such as the characteristics of colour, texture or material composition.

In Moreland: A poetic map I employ what is variously termed as ‘shape’, ‘concrete’ or ‘visual’ poetry to foreground how material forms embody meta-physical associations (e.g. D2, E2, D5). By no
means is this an exhaustive glossary of the cartographic concepts re-deployed in this project. There are many others including references to different branches of mathematics (e.g. the infinite geometric series in D3) and the physical sciences (e.g. velocity and fluid mechanics in D6) that form part of the broader cartographic lexicon. Being primarily a poetic work, this project draws liberally on its licence to enlist ideas from these fields and repurpose them as metaphors to serve the broader aim of mapping the more-ness of Moreland.
Moreland: A poetic map

All maps are poems. All poems are maps.

The poem is the map where memory is placed. Reading other poets allows you to study their maps. Each poem is a map of the breath, a map of the encounter.

~ Sheila Packer
The history of Moreland is writ in the boom and bust cycles of the city’s economic development and migratory waves. These can be read in the gridded patterns formed by the vibrant clash of the rag-tag architectures that characterise Moreland’s ad hoc urban environment.
1.

If you head north out of Melbourne’s central business district, the city soon gives way to the wide campus of the University of Melbourne and the tree-lined streets of Carlton, punctuated with Italian trattorias, second-hand bookstores and an eclectic sartorial mix of locals, students and tourists. If you keep heading north, past the crowded cemetery, and out past the cosmopolitan neighbourhoods of designer boutiques and homeware stores cradled in the husks of gold boom terraces, you’ll come to a collection of small inner-city suburbs, their once-upon-a-time bourgeois splendour interspersed with light industrial wastelands, urban infill and generations of the displaced and working poor.

This place is known as Moreland.

2.

Stretched between the crooked longitudinal graticules of Merri Creek in the east, and Moonee Ponds Creek to the west, Moreland is an unevenly gridded patchwork of collapsing 19th century weatherboards, double-block fronted Victorians skirted by wide lace-hemmed verandahs, and grandiose double-storey mansions bedecked in polychromatic brick patterns made famous by Melbourne’s post-gold rush architects. Among these, you will find turn-of-the-century Queen Anne and Federation architectures chaotically interspaced with and Californian bungalows and unapologetically squat 1960s and 70s flats.

Out on the northern fringes, new residential Mc Mansions embarrass post-war experiments in cheap modern housing whose fibro, asbestos and concrete sheets sulk behind scraggly bottlebrush and candlebark trees, irregularly planted. Among their overgrown lawns lie the skeletons of bicycles, prams and cars abandoned to rust. Along the main transport corridors, the factories where immigrant workers once fabricated sheet metals and fine-knitted wools have been demolished to make way for multi-storey apartment towers that cast long shadows even at the zenith of the noonday sun.

—You stand on the fringe of the old broad meadows, described by one Miss Dowling in the late 1800s as ‘a harsh windy place with a few trees and unfinished shacks’. From this northern most boundary of Moreland located 142 metres above sea level now mangled with factories and derelict industries, you gaze south across the unfurling suburbs below. From here, everything that you see is flattened into an elaborate mosaic of dissimilitude.
Embedded in the cultural artefacts of Moreland reside everyday narratives (often hidden, unnoticed or forgotten) signifying, histories faded, discarded and subject to change.
3.

There are more people per square kilometre in Moreland than any other Victorian municipality, an irony not lost on the city’s ageing infrastructure as it struggles to keep up with the demand of its existing 150,000 citizens and forecast to grow by 30 per cent within the next 20 years. Yet despite the years of poverty and neglect, time has somehow transformed the architectures of Moreland into what its residents call ‘character’. And even though the laneways make-do as dumping grounds for building waste, unwanted appliances and household rubbish, a ramshackle charm still manages to flourish among the urban flotsam of daily life discarded.

4.

Among the residential labyrinths, you’ll find young families, little dogs, and sunning cats set against the percussive soundtrack of a Lebanese wedding rising over the neighbourhood on Saturday. In the heat of summer evenings, the old Greeks and Italians gather to play cards and skol grappa on shady porches. Hidden in backyards, crooked trellises tied with cloth and plastic bags support a tangle of grape vines, vivid red tomatoes, pregnant lemons and fragrant pomegranates. Meanwhile, on the main streets, Mediterranean supermarkets sit cheek by jowl with halal butchers, Indian grocers and Chinese two-dollar shops. Musicians, artists, and would-be philosophers roost in cafés where chilled out beats are infused with the aromatic memory of freshly ground coffee from South America.

---

*With the remote, impervious indifference of the mapmaker, removed from the minutiae of place, you begin to strategise how you will render Moreland in two-dimensional space. Against the tyranny of the flat page, you resort to juxtaposing patterns, recruiting fragmented and discontinuous forms to describe and make sense of the more-ness you perceive.*
B1. Hoddle’s grid: A master class in cartography

Australia is a lucky country run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck.

~ Donald Horne

A map is always a work in progress. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the prosperous urban constituency of Moreland. In less than two hundred years, its colonial and post-colonial inhabitants have written and re-written its spaces into an encyclopaedia of inscriptions that endure in varying degrees.
Russell Hoddle in his office hypothesising space from the vast acres of a Chesterfield chair A problem: to make order the rebellious blank By all accounts, an orderly man one can only imagine his disdain for the ad hoc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hoddle’s grid:</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>West + East</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>neat symmetrical borders</th>
<th>laid</th>
<th>with mathematical precision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thoroughly modern Hoddle</th>
<th>giving the wicked rabble</th>
<th>drunks thieves whores</th>
<th>redemption</th>
<th>the purity of straight lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gesturing towards</th>
<th>road to salvation</th>
<th>between paper and graphite</th>
<th>between puffs on his pipe</th>
<th>his surveying eye</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>taming topographies</th>
<th>with only flat media for an aid</th>
<th>rubs his luxuriant beard</th>
<th>with practiced precision</th>
<th>the butcher - the wood splitter - King Henry’s favourite executioner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

“You regard the anatomy of the page and contemplate bow you will use it to dissect space and time. With a cartographer’s precision, you stake out the parameters of your enquiry, driving words into the blank.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>shambles of Botany Bay and Van Diemen’s Land</th>
<th>AVERTED</th>
<th>the blank page affords far less inconvenience than the chaotic grammar of illiterate men left to their own wayward devices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A city of rare clarity</td>
<td>ELEGANCE AND GRACE</td>
<td>a godless bedevilled colony in need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter-sect-ing</td>
<td>trigonometric confessinals every 45 degrees</td>
<td>a draftsman’s moral compass signposts to: heaven &amp; hell ← and → between right and wrong –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fundamental cartographic challenges of his task</td>
<td>setting the map’s agenda</td>
<td>contemplating the land’s physical traits not all to his liking two crooked rivers and swamplands to boot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his lead scalpel</td>
<td>a parallel and two perpendicular strokes</td>
<td>two decisive strokes Hoddle to the New Lands for better or worse, history made→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*But what you map is unruly, not content to abide by neat mathematical units. Try as you might, the world within the grid takes on its own life. As you navigate the page, your map becomes a poem; making turns, connections; a collage of imperfect fragments.*
C1. A short stroll from Bourke Street: A toponymic history

History begins at ground level, with footsteps.

~ Michel de Certeau

To walk Moreland is to trace a history articulated in the toponymy of street signs. At each corner, they covertly slip the passer-by stories rescued from a secret treasure trove of human geographies, a poetic map of people and places maybe dead or far away but through the life of names spelt out in the roguish romance of Highway Gothic, not entirely forgotten.
BOURKE (Home)

The number of times
I’ve walked this path

Turned right

Tracing the
destiny of the
ill-fated
explorer

Then left

(Victoria
lying between the royal union
night after night in exquisite
extra-matrimony?)

THOMAS

And right again

(One would have to ask Mr
Wilkinson, that
entrepreneurial land owner
who dreamed up the shape of
this place with a nub of lead
after a meal of ham hock and
contra rum late one sleepless
Sunday)

ALBERT→

---

“Home is the place that means most to you. Home is where your memory is invested. Home is where you write your autobiography in the abstraction of everyday acts. You wonder what will be left of your story after you are gone. You wonder this as you contemplate the names of suburbs and streets. You wonder if one day, you too, will come to haunt these places.”
D1. The kinematic equation

I.

anonymous democracies +
the collective will of feet
on the way to

other fates unknown =

observers
of journeys taken
in perambulatory forgetfulness to

Fawkner Station +

the local shops.

II.

granular imperfections
(inscribe) aggregates and binders
bound in kinematic maps
(quietly) measuring

space +

time =

metro-

dome

domestic pilgrimages
sneaker trips and falls
facilitate acceleration to

the first day back at school.
III.

weighing alternating mass \((x)\)

centrifugal velocities,
continuum of wheels

olfactory offerings: (To dwell means to leave traces, or at least said Walter Benjamin)

perfumed ladies
little dogs
calligraphies
love =

wayfaring autographs

bow-legged bronze-tailed doves.

---

Your footprints leave behind traces indelible as ink. Step by step, they enumerate Newton’s three laws of motion as you author space from an equation of infinite variables of which you are the sum of its parts.
E1. Mapping the geosynchronous orbits of Moreland

Map one

Geosynchronous objects demarked in the static map
don’t capture the domain of moving things
the differential equation ≠ indeterminate life:

human traffic
vehicular bondage
the little green parakeet cracking jacaranda seeds under the November sky.

Barely visible emanations,
turbo combustions
stealthily wrecking adverse change
in everyday locomotions.

Acceleration (force with gravitational attractions)

propel →

Map two

Movement moving unseen:

orchestras of music and bowels
clock hands, pacemakers and defibrillators;

phenomenological ballets:
frontal lobes and quotidian musings;

ideological perambulations:
lobbyists, activists and the anarchic at heart.
Map three

Machinations
– loves and wars –
set against a world-negating pessimism:

“If philosophy is supposed to contemplate that which is permanent and changing, then the confrontation with impermanence poses a real problem.”

(Nietzsche’s argument with Schopenhauer)

There are no gods or masters here
Only time itself.

— Change is the only constant. You know this as you watch the subtle vicissitudes of time and space in motion as you walk. Like an anatomical clock, you map daily life in chronometric beats. Place, like time, is not inert. Day by day, both you and Moreland change in trans-corporeal synchronicity.
A2. Bourke Street, Brunswick: A residential portrait

The map is uncompromising in its discipline to a clearly defined purpose. Its genius lies in its ability to ruthlessly distil all the unruly phenomena of the world into a neat diagrammatic representation. It addresses the inevitability of representational failure with supreme self-confidence.
Triangulation 1.1:

Bourke Street treads fifteen perpendicular degrees towards it’s northern neighbour, Blyth. It is narrow and the asphalt is cracked. In sections it has come away completely like a peeling scab revealing the cold brown earth beneath, smooth as a kitten’s scar. The footpath is gnarled and wrinkled into gravelly peaks and troughs from years of alluvial expansions and contractions that, in the twilight, whisper of accidents waiting to happen. Viewed from above, Bourke Street is one part of the vast geometric circulatory system of streets and laneways that traverse Moreland in a dense, arterial web. It is a short, varicose street, bursting with cottages, terraces and townhouses; an unsightly swelling of competing fabrications.

Triangulation 1.2:

There is something desultory about this vagrant crowd of residential artefacts; something slapdash, slip-shod, willy-nilly, as if it were the distracted afterthought of an absent-minded inventor; a portrait of crooked chaos; a clothesline mess of caved-in fences, lopsided letterboxes and languishing rooflines. It has the child-like naiveté of a five-year-old’s crayon drawing; the attention deficit disorder of an unruly adolescent; and the forgetful, progressive dementia of an ageing octogenarian all rolled into one disordered family portrait. In many ways, Bourke Street is a microcosm of Moreland itself. It is an imprimatur, a synecdoche of perpetual disagreement; stubborn and unprincipled, a petty quibble about the unhappy accident of neighbourhood.

Triangulation 1.3:

In winter, the naked Chinaberry trees unfurl their branching fingers across the rows of cars parked haphazardly along each side of the road. In summer, long lady-like sprigs cast dappled shadows beneath the western sun, coolly fanning gentle eddies through open windows and doors. On days when the light is clear and not yet polluted by daily life and smog, the street has a mesmerising loveliness that filters through the roses and silver birches clustering carefree under the silken shadows of the plastered parapets. Beneath a lone mulberry tree, the neighbourhood tom and self-appointed sheriff of rodent control, takes a break from his nocturnal roustabouts and suns himself tummy-ward in his bed of lavender and dust. High above, perched on the snub of a red bull-nosed verandah, a pair of gleaming bronze-tailed doves murmur sweet nothings while a magpie warbles wobblingly that all is well with the world.→

---

“You know this place, but you don’t have any evidence to prove it, other than what you think, see and feel. You have nothing tangible to offer but a map composed of impressions, triangulated against other impressions that, inconveniently, don’t always agree. These are the only things you own other than a title deed tucked away in an archive that exists somewhere else. A single piece of paper that neatly organises this place in ways that you cannot.
The three local government wards of Moreland are cobbled together with over 50 kilometres of laneways hand-laid with bluestones quarried from the western banks of Merri Creek and Coburg Lake. Collectively, each basalt pitch represents a cubic measure of geological time separated by an infinite number of liminal spaces.
intersects the brotherhood of conjoined terraces curling 90 degrees around corrugated backs a secret lovers’ embrace here lies a clandestine coterie of abandoned fridges mattresses a truant shopping trolley fat with empty beer boxes masticating in the rain a laid back arm chair lounges next to a pile of building waste beneath bougainvillea vividly fuchsia crimson rosellas roosting in the vermillion bottle brush mouldering roots and leaves mingle with used tissues threadbare carpet jagged slant cobbled blue stones still ringing clattering cart wheels when wet hand-hewed edges refract small diamonds white lights shimmer and sparkle a dark sea brought to life overhead a cobweb of power lines crisscross an elaborate tangle of sparkling kilowatts humming gently early evening a cat’s purr a baby’s murmur composing urban lullabies

→ In your walking, you notice, wedged between the hand-hewn chinks of bluestone laneways, little pieces of the past; a library of fragments, small stories located in interspace.
C2. The spectre of old Randazzo or: Rendezvous with angry magpie

(Bowls or sculpture or both?)
Footsteps on asphalt measuring out time one beat after another melancholy the flat pale sky sagging under its own grey weight like an old man’s threadbare y-fronts

I look → then to avoid the pot hole on the corner of the park named after the commune in Sicily, and again, to check on the nesting nr steely glint of motherhood white on ferocious flickering orl warbling wars sharp pointy beak be-feathered reminder: intrusions unwelcome outraged by indifference

continue
Remembering:

the pleasure of repetition

the things you know well and have pleasure in doing

things that have been rehearsed beyond thinking like typing nail-biting or twirling one’s hair

RANDAZZO PARK

SYDNEY ROAD

roads not taken become questions unanswered

little hooks tugging at regret

archived in the memories of muscle senses become a fertile chimera for journeys perambulating absently on well-worn paths-

- Like the migrants from bomb-ravaged Randazzo in Italy, the once lush grassy plains and abundant wildlife of Moreland were displaced long ago. Perhaps that’s why you find this small irregular incision crusted with bark and dog turds so strangely unsettling. Not that you stop to think about it. You are only passing through on the way to somewhere else. The melancholy you feel is but a fleeting uneasiness, a vague sense of the uncanny, a shadow of something that was but isn’t anymore.
D2. The Araucario Heterophylla on Victoria Street

If space is objective phenomena, then place is its subjective construction. Place is where subject and objects converge to produce new narrative possibilities. In the context of an urban constituency, place is the site where cultural memory is located.
other-
wise known as
Norfolk Pine, its awl-shaped
leaves and squat globose cones
stand gravely over Boyne Russell House
the 30-bed high-level residential care facility
where ageing souls cocoon unseen

behind orange brick walls and green window frames
colours oddly apt for the citric stench
of stale milk curdling in the molar mass of hospital grade bleach
slow death – disordered thoughts – dwindling visits from family and friends
out onto the footpath where harried nurses seek escape on plastic stools
woofing nicotine for consolation. An oddity far away
from the onshore winds of its tiny ancestral home marooned under the vast blue forgetting of
the Pacific moon. It’s the tallest living thing in this

graceless ghetto

a coniferous compass resolutely pointing to something somewhere else
(convicts, crimes, mutinies on the *Bounty*)

reminding this landlocked neighbourhood of what is not
nor, unfortunately, Polynesian dancing girls

not anything
but itself and
every thing
it signifies
but is absent

---

*You navigate your way across Moreland assembling landmarks full of personal signification. These landmarks locate, orient and guide you. They mark your passage through space and time. They are the embodiment of your memories and experiences, the site of the associative leap you make between one thing and another.*
E2. Elegy for the everyday (discarded and forgotten)

Through the study of objects and things, new possibilities begin to emerge for a map based on different perspectives. Imagining new shapes and more democratic, post-humanist points of view gradually displaces the traditional Cartesian paradigm of mapping human-centric knowing on an x-y plane.
It wasn’t always this way for the fridge freezing at midnight on the Mitchell Street nature strip. Once upon a time, before the dint bruises and the heat pump heart-attacked in one great shuddering paroxysm around the curdling tubs of yoghurt and slowly mouldering fruit, accidentally scrambling the tender yolks of yet un-cracked eggs in its thermally insulated womb, this proudly standing Kelvinator was the buzzing centre of a two-bedroom red brick veneer family steeped in burnished tile glazes shining early morning, wet, like the oiled skins of muscled Spaniards on the heaving beaches of Ibiza.

Day and night the happy hum of capsicum, cheese and ham conversed quietly between mealtimes and midnight snacks – faintly rotting aromas of daily ageing meats – fattening little bellies by Fahrenheit degrees – grubby fingerprints worn like badges of household honour through the years of accidental knee-scrapes, disappointments and other childhood tribulations – protecting perishables against the inevitability of decay – steady loyal celebrant of consumption chilling pink champagne before commemorative celebrations – devoted domestic servant largely forgotten in the busy business of bustling daily life. But ends come to all – men, food and stoic fridges alike. The sickness first came in increments splattering ammonium stutters in between tetrafluoroethane gasps. It was evident to all – even the baby spinach – that something was terminally wrong the day the ice cream melted in a Neapolitan pool around the peas. Frank discussions were held in full hearing of the ailing fridge before they finally pulled the plug. The penultimate moment was abrupt and matter of fact – a crushing blow to the only faintly cracked ice tray – before being unceremoniously stripped of all its foodstuff friends and wheeled out to the nature strip – make-shift mortuary for all household appliances unwanted – standing cold and shivering into the lonely night – next to a blank-faced TV equally resigned to the fate of things deemed obsolete – waiting for its final journey to the place of all unwanted. Its passing only heralded by a procession of small insects unceremoniously carrying away the last remaining crumbs.

*Wandering the back streets of Moreland, you find yourself drawn to little oddities, the objects of daily life abandoned. You document the everyday to uncover the secret life of things. Through the lens of your camera, you take census of a discarded world usually left un-thought of. Later, you sort through your photographs and set yourself to writing the world in networks of new configurations.*
A3. Greek tragedy in the double-fronted brick veneer

For Dmitri Kakis

Once regarded as an immigrant ghetto, an influx of young professional families looking for housing close to the CBD has caused a wave of gentrification to wash over Moreland’s small workers’ cottages that for decades subsisted unperturbed in palliative disrepair, their once bright paints flaking like the eczema off an old man’s chest, windows rheumy with age.
Inside, your house is dark and smells of pistachios and pastry. A wide corridor feeds into an open living and dining area with aluminium sliding doors that lead out to a concreted patio. There are three plastic covered sofas arranged around a rectangular brass and glass coffee table. Everything is neat, tidy; knows its place; knows its name. Your floor is cold and tiled. There are no rugs, or cushions. The only soft furnishings are heavy lined curtains that hang stiff with Aegean portent. In the corner of the room stands a medical trolley complete with a size E oxygen tank and nebuliser. In the bookshelf, instead of books, are rows of plastic, yellow-topped medicine bottles with prescription stickers bearing the byzantine names of 6-Mercaptopiperine, Aldesleukin, Bortezomib. The air in your house is still, gloomy, as if holding its breath for something inevitable that it hopes to hold off by the sheer, shrill virtue of its will. On the wall sits a cheap reproduction of the Madonna with all the grief in the world distilled in one single tear on her cold and immovable cheek.

Your family prays for health, but the orthodoxy of silence gathering behind closed doors isn’t optimistic.

*With malignant ease, a new demography is taking root in Moreland and this place of immigrant refugees will never be the same. You recall the words of your old neighbour, Jim – now deceased – as prescient as a Greek chorus: ‘My friends, they die. My children live far away. Everything different now. Everything change.’*
B3. The old lady from Sparta with the clubfoot and cane,

There were some attempts, as Hoddle’s New More Lands expanded between the wars, to attract residents to Fawkner’s paddock with reticulated water, electricity and rail. But for decades the sub-divisions remained resolutely empty. For reasons as incontrovertible as they are unclear, no one wanted to live here. Perhaps that’s why a cemetery was built in this small former borough of Box Wind where, in 1906, the only passengers to arrive at Fawkner Station were already dead. It is unknown what the post-war immigrants who eventually settled here after fleeing the terrors of Auschwitz and other unthinkable traumas from half a world away thought about the awful irony of this cemetery where long-gauged trains rumbled to their terminal end.
registers her protest against another
abandoned cigarette
butt on the path outside her door
with an unforgiving whack from her switching broom
startling the vagrant dust
unsuspecting from its makeshift bed
high above the neighbouring roofs
like a skein of migratory birds
sprinkling remnant DNA
of dirt, dandruff and mites
into the whooshing wind
dancing pyrrhicbio

a drunken Spartan tribute to

– life
– death
– and war

over Fawkner Cemetery
until they –

fall –

fall –

Fallschirmjäger -

alighting in a feather kiss
over husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, children

passed

→ You discover that the present is only a temporal veneer, a thin disguise that separates a ‘now’ from ‘then’, a ‘here’ from ‘there’. But you only have to scratch its surface and, like an old wound never quite healed, the past comes bleeding forth.
in a melancholy embrace
among restive rootless leaves
insects amberfied
while overhead
steel winged birds
trace impermanent marks in grey-stained shadows
hovering on their way to

somewhere

far

far-away

all the while

the old lady from Sparta with the clubfoot and cane
watches from under veiled-hand
gnarled against the olive wood of her face blue-veined
as tiny grains of dust from

Japan, and

may-

be

Alaska

confederate
on the path outside her door

before turning back to her house
quietly remembering what is

no

more.

---

“You cannot hide from the places you’ve been or the things you’ve seen. History insinuates your map as insidiously as dust. Your map becomes the repository of memories, some of which originate with you, and of others that come from someone, somewhere else. It is a document of stories appropriated.”
C3. Place and the forensics of self

Place is what we make of it or, in the words of those people who spend time thinking about things like this, place is a cultural construction. For others, place is simply where the links of generations are foregrounded against the building blocks of linear time. Place is a map for imagined futures.
You are
the blood flowing through
the great circulatory system
of human migration.

You trickle and ebb,
you rush and roar. You are
the macromolecules of all known life
encoded amino.

You are
the mortal supercoiled, conduit of
sequences replicated in
stranded helices.

You author
genetic code tracing space and
groove between the twin ropes that bind
memory to mitochondria.

You construct
memory from geometric shapes. In the
shadows of the genealogical biosphere, you
mutate over time.

― Moreland is more than a geospatial location; it is an intricate braid of memories embedded in atoms as singular and idiosyncratic as a fingerprint. In its DNA, you locate your own. As you make Moreland, Moreland makes you. You are interchangeable constructs of fates intertwined.
Once a hunting ground for the nomadic Wurundjeri-Willum tribes, the traditional owners of Hoddle’s New Lands were quickly displaced by the pioneering children of the British Isles who saw here a mirror of their old country and soon sought to transform these ancient and shallow-soiled volcanic plains into a facsimile of their homeland. The subdivisions started as paddocks for grazing cows. The bovine appetites of agricultural man were later complemented by orchards and butteries; queer marsupials replaced by the foreign domesticity of pigs and fowls. Less than 200 years hence, the subdivision of Moreland has accelerated to the point where it is almost impossible to visualise what these colonial settlers saw in the first place.
There are lots of things that men can make, but space is not one of them
(as the entrepreneurial squatters from Van Diemen’s Land already knew as they plotted their coups over crown lands across the Bass Strait)

European colonies bred an unstoppable appetite for foreign terroir but space is finite and has a mind of its own: indivisibility is the domain of atoms and the unfathomable.

an infinite geometric series converging on the absolute sum of diminishing units

as the New Lands grew old, and the more lands became less the people became more all ironies and paradox

The proliferation of empires puts even cancers to shame.

---

According to quantum physics, within any finite series there exists an infinite divisibility of its sum. Within this geometric series, space becomes the subject of a paradoxical calculus. As a function of scale, the smaller its units become, the greater its acuity to detail, and the more there is to map. And while, cartographically speaking, this reduces your map’s distortion, the smaller the units you map the more pixelated the image becomes. You realise ‘more land’ is a misnomer. Your map only makes sense when it oscillates pan- and sub-optically between small and larger pictures.
Maps are important because they are the material inscription of culture recalling histories of longing and desire. They provide a multi-faceted mirror simultaneously reflecting and refracting past, present, and future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Scotland)</th>
<th>Dr Farquar McGrae</th>
<th>Born 1807</th>
<th>Emigrated 1839</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Australia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchased 600 acres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divided John Fawkner’s estate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Made Moreland Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Renamed 1842 (Wentworth House)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To this day, the floral gardens surrounding the stately lady gaze into the frangipani sunset atop the Coburg Hill across the distant western grazing districts where sheep hunker group-ward in woolly community against the shipwreck winds reminiscing about their Highland roots.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Jamaica)</td>
<td></td>
<td>But ‘La Rose’ wasn’t Dr McCrae’s first property in the area – that honour goes to Moreland – a Caribbean salute to Columbus and the Scottish diaspora named in tribute to his family estate, Westmoreland, one of the many ubiquitous sub-tropical sugar plantations rooted deep in the Jamaican morass.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impoverished 1843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Died 1850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Buried Fawkner Cemetery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Moreland)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As you make place, so place makes you. Understanding Moreland is about more than understanding how space is transformed into a cultural artefact; it’s about ‘making sense’ of yourself. You map place to organise what you know about yourself. You name things to remind yourself that we are defined as much by what is not present, as by what is.
Moreland is widely regarded as one of Melbourne’s best-serviced public transport localities, a factor often cited in defence of the ‘transport oriented development’ of high-rise apartments along its main arterial corridors. One by-product of this rationale is the congestion created by intersecting transport routes. Urban planners might assume that bodies only move on a north-south axis, even though the routes of living things are not dictated by the cartographer’s compass. The unruliness of life cannot be simply contained within an x-y grid.
Ante Meridian

as night gives way to yawning day as day gives way to sleepless night
songbirds quarrel the working swill
the e-class grumbling awake pack the tram to bloat
defibrillating shocks fat bottomed ma’am
into the electric current to bearded man

circulating crushing

inertia into motion jowl to cheek

soiled steel bones grating scapular over knee hand rail complaints creaking ignored
out of the old depot among the groaning
resentfully onto old road Sydney of weight limits recklessly exceeded

shuddering sputtering spat gruelling hauling mauling mass
the hacking paroxysms hour up and down all day
syncopating coughs seven days a week
mimic the percussion of smokers tangent lateral segue – even left from right –
splattering oily phlegm pocked words engineered from a vocabulary
pearl purple green as far away as flight
with petrochemical carcinogens the only language the 19 knows
accrued acquired
on the daily lug every morning from the indignity of aerosol cans and schoolboys

up and down in curlicues

arterial route 19 black and white –

*Maps are ruled by binary oppositions. Within these conventions, you seek another way of mapping Moreland based on the pulse of daily life, of meridians and circadian rhythms. You take your cue from the Sydney Road heralding human trajectories to and from other places.*
stop starting staring weary down the hill from Coburg
the twin lumbar spines of Moreland stretching each articulated vertebrae
tensile mute
along the track from plying trade
like a great glob of cholesterol two ventricular parts
choking the straining heart sluicing the cleaved betweens
of commuters up the rabid carriageway of community divided/united by utilitarian means
festooning turning rims with sprays of carbon grit it’s hard, uncomfortable, thankless work
as it meets the expectant faces bringing the people back home
of passengers ready to ride to homes children garden pets
not such a bad way to start the day but such is the lot of the e-class tram
rumbles the tram with pride and as good as the number 19 gets

Post Meridian Ante Meridian

---

*Within the vestibule of the tram’s arterial body, you encounter a space where, for brief stretches of time, all walks of life converge. You consider how you will juxtapose these conjunctions and plot them as a series of binary coordinates on the page.*
B4. In coda: A truncated history of Moreland

The map is a description of place rendered abstract ignoring the specifics not central to its purpose. Over time, the map remembers things that we forget.
WESTERN RING ROAD

SYDNEY ROAD

High on the north-western wedge, animals of empire graze indolently on the soft yellow pastures bequeathed to them by Batman’s Treaty and the Wurundjeri in exchange for blankets, flour, mirrors, and a couple of machetes too.

Moreland was built with bricks gorged out of its southern swamps. Millions of years of –

silt
eels
mosquitoes
rains
winds
indigenous bones
songs
thrust into gasping furnaces.

The first name for the mud-raked carriageway heading north past Parkville into the swamp was Brunswick after Queen Caroline’s luscious green estate.

Everywhere across the more lands, growing industries multiplied the insatiable population, which is how the voluptuous rise of the Lobb’s old paddock was erased by the manic Keynesian subdivision of blanks into fractals and squares.

STEWART STREET
(nee LOBBS LANE)

Later, it became Pentridge after the notorious prison where quarried bluestones were artfully chiselled, bound for the well-dressed promenades of Collins Street.

"As long as you could see the Hoffman's Chimneys you wasn't lost", remarked one local wag, which was just as well after you’d a few brews at Miss Amelia Shaw’s infamous retreat.

BRUNSWICK ROAD

Moreland is replete with historical postscripts. You refer to old maps to recover the shape of times past and re-model them to see the present (blocks, lines, roads) in re-imagined ways.
C4. Pseudo-archaeologies and other mortal excavations

Place is a constant work in progress with no clear beginning and no foreseeable end. All that is certain are the archaeological layers (if you can find and separate them) that leave behind traces of what has been before. In any defined measurement of space, there are other places created in other times, waiting to be uncovered.
Here we live
on a concreted carcass

of -------
what

has been -------
before.

Visible and invisible

a living palimpsest -------
of inscriptions

L
A
M
I
N
A
T
E
D

earth, water, air.

Buildings demolished and rebuilt

demolished -------

rebuilt -------
(repeat ad infinitum).

Walls painted

church white -------
over Brunswick green

and -------
heritage red.

---
You consider how you will represent place as palimpsest of temporal and spatial inscriptions. You imagine Moreland as a stratigraphical sub-section, a type of abstracted book where each story you uncover is like a new page turned...
Flaking surfaces

revealing ------
remnant traces of ------
Bushell’s Tea

news publications ------
ceased.

Old posters

gigs and -------
bills for ------
Palestinian protests

glued on one day

removed -------
the next.

Replaced

with -------
photocopies for gigs

and -------
resident meetings.

Pleas for help in finding lost

and -------
stolen pets.

Street paintings and stencils
mash-ups and found art

there -------
today gone -------
tomorrow.

Where?

Nobody knows.

---

Your map of Moreland becomes a series of spaces that manipulates the dimensions of the page to represent the temporal hierarchies of a culturally constructed place.
Friable asphalts

slowly -------
lifting

to -------
reveal

the bluestone cobbles below.

Down -------
down -------
and -------
down.

Sedimentary layers

basalt -------
silt -------

between domestic artefacts

lost -------
nails

children’s -------
toys

keys -------
rust, forgot

on top of bare

Indigenous -------
biofacts

and -------
unidentified bones.-
In 1835 on the banks of the Merri Creek, Billibellary and seven other Wurundjeri elders conceded 600,000 acres of land to Batman and his cohorts from across the Bass Strait. Four years later, his descendants, a mob born of 40,000 years of indigenous history, were massacred in what took less than a blink of an eye in the great historical narrative.
inarticulate lines on the rough-rendered soft-donkey-marsupial-grey

bloodlines traced

an unsteady hand

unfinished canvas describing

a curvature of want rendered flat

vertical

windless shadow

- BATMAN’S TREATY

outlines misshapen

a discarded draft screwed into a ball

run through the wash hung out to dry

crooked transitory silhouettes

potent symbols un-articulating protest

to passers-by indifferent -

- In making your map, you imagine yourself as the colonial conqueror confronting new territories on which you will rewrite history. You can do this, because the map allows you to. The map becomes an abstraction that allows the mapmaker to erase the past and whitewash ambiguity. You are aware that in writing your map, you are excluding the maps of others.
E4. Black sea and sails: A photo–poem

Imagery, symbols and pictography are devices commonly used in the making of maps. These devices enable mapmakers to render the world in a visual language that transcends linguistic barriers. However, images, like all texts, are always read within the context of codified conventions. Likewise, the images used by mapmakers are an extension of their own cultural and imaginative projections.
Part I: Embarkation

Once upon a time ---
--- waves of post-war immigrants came here, covering up the period facades with sheets of fake brick and asbestos. Timber-framed sash windows were covered with bars and aluminium shutters, or pulled-out and bricked-in completely ---

--- but the wind in the olive trees smells warm, whispering wistfully of time on the ‘Fairsea’, the immigrant ship with billowing sails and half-starved children stowed in cargo wailing across the Atlantic, while the candlestick pines worry what fear, what terror, drives people halfway across the world to a wide land under an open sky, only to box themselves in darkness ---
--- but here there are only questions; the answers are as far away as ---

--- home.
Part II: Disembarkation

There is something broken in these chains of generations, these stories from across the sea.

Who can know what tectonic shifts are wreaked on the refugee soul? All the little pieces cut and floating adrift on the waves of human migration, are here held together here by liberal slabs of concrete like one thick massive scab, as if earth itself was enemy ---

--- as if the world outside was a terror that these inhabitants need to fortify themselves against, and it’s unclear whether what they’ve created are prisons or fortresses to ward off ---

war ---
famine ---
persecution ---
--- still raw like fresh cuts on the skin ---
these homes ---
these places ---
--- a little bit of both.→

"Your map is not of one place, but of many. It is an assemblage of other places reconfigured. You realise that no matter where you come from or where you go, you are anchored to the places you have been. You can no sooner separate yourself from them than you can separate yourself from your shadow."
Statistically, compared to the greater Melbourne area, Moreland has a larger percentage of residents born overseas and who speak a language other than English at home. Census by census, the location of world conflict can be traced in its evolving demography.
air
over
time
always moving—history—tides
sweeping up, up over cities, riding currents between continents, carrying stories from the orient across the forgetting blue —— chasing gulls—sails—freight-laden ships— running spices and tea—electrical confections and mechanical marvels among the roving plastic ducks as fishing boys reel leaky deaths—men white-knuckling desperation, while women console fearful children clinging barnacle on skirts
daily prayers
carried windward over dust and goats, improvised explosions scattering blood, bone, heart over borders—catching kites above Tehran, the revolutionary bells ‘clang-clang, clang-clanging’ and always, always, the machines of war roll westwards, howling towards destinations unknown
restless, endless— my breath over Mesozoic fossils, furrowed deep into the earth’s ageing brow—

I saw the first tetrapods, you know, waltzing tarantella-drunk, out of the primordial ooze
all, one— one, nothing—weightless. I’ve torn down walls, and twirled palms like a French lady’s parasol high over Haiti in torrential rains before resting in the Micronesian doldrums—driving Ahab’s crew mad for weeks and weeks on end before bursting into Monsoon
I’ve caressed the smooth thighs of schoolgirls at lunchtime, and whispered sweet nothings into the ears of kings, queens, criminals and commoners alike. I’ve tickled tabby cats sunning on window-sills, and wrapped you, loved, unloved, wet, dry and sweaty inside my unpredictable embrace
the lungs, the bellows, of the unutterably unfathomable—my squall feeds the wildfire raging in restless hearts—I breathed life into the Holy Spirit before disambiguating into the night. Solar, planetary, I am the fear of horses roaring on the moor. Running, racing, sometimes still—insinuating every space with my forked and lapping tongues—
borrowing rhythms from Africa’s beating drums, I fanned the human diaspora to the four points of the globe, classifying desire on a spatial scale spanning land and air and sea

God speed and wind shear, I bore the seeds of hope from rice paddies, olive groves, and the cardamom fields of Kerala, plying trade ships to 40°N 30°W where the North Atlantic Gulf Stream splits between Europe and West Africa

I am

Brickfielder, Chinook, Mistral, Fohn and Halny, chasing migrations from the Carpathian Mountains to the rainforests of Brazil. Deified by the Greeks, Egyptians, Aztecs and Japanese—

I'm author of the Coriolis Effect, turning time and gravity—the Aeolian sculptor eroding rock into plain—enabler of el Niño, describing

rock-a-bye-baby

in oscillations over the Southern sea

a living panorama gusting along the coast, sweeping leaves and cities—conduit of pollution, eddying above the hopeless metropolises—mingling with birds, balloons and aircraft in the democracy of sky—a madman’s dream in the padding of white cells—the nirvana of travellers, journeymen, pioneers and refugees. The constant of change from south pole to north. I pass through all things—

nautilus—

witness to everything, in bondage to none, I bring the world to you. Listen. Listen, and hear me...

air
over
time

always moving—moving like history—moving like tides.

— Every human migration is a map, a synecdoche of history marked in movement. You can argue that place is a changeable cultural construct, but displacement is a physical fact. Mapping the origin of Moreland’s human diaspora is analogous to mapping the wind.
Broadly speaking, there are three types of residents in Moreland: long-term owner-occupiers, new owner-occupiers, and rental tenants. The homes of long-term residents tend to be decaying but neat. Those of newer owners are renovated and often extended. The homes let out for rent are characterised by at least one of several things: the odd assortment of items stored on front verandahs; a changing procession of cats, bikes and beat up cars; persistently untended gardens; and mail boxes stuffed with local newspapers, real estate brochures and flyers for household repairs – unwanted and unread.


**Entrance.**

It was once an old weatherboard miner’s cottage but at some time in the 70s it was clad with sheets of brick façade tacked onto its face as if ashamed of its working class roots. It has a heavy brown door, carved with swirling bulges, and panes of piss-yellow glass etched with swallowing curlicues. Its windows are framed in thin aluminium, poked and dull from neglect and age. Inside, the rooms are dark, and the long green-grey carpet is flattened into paths most trodden, like the soft ribbon of wallaby trails through the underbrush. It smells faintly of rot, rising damp, tobacco and bucket bongs, small olfactory tattoos inking into the past.

**Kitchen.**

In the dim light of morning or dusk, the kitchen radiates a dull grey patina of grease, dust and cooking splats, transforming the filth into a soft, velvety skin. The benches are crammed with opened boxes of cereal, rice and flour; an ageing banana; a forgotten apple. Tiny ants, reeking of industry, swarm over a bridal-confetti of breadcrumbs, leaving a trail of formic acid in their wake. A clutter of pots and pans convenes at awkward angles around the kitchen sink, while the whole room quietly thrums to the humdrum beat of a dripping tap. On the embossed linoleum floor glide miniature Catherine wheels of fluff and cat hair, desolate and playful, waltzing in the cold draft from one whimsical partner to the next.
Bathroom.

Down the hall, the bathroom is a mess of towels and other shared house intimacies. Pubic hair and fingernails knot in a passionate embrace among the rusting web of drains, taps and softened soap. Toothpaste and pimple spit cover the peeling mirror in a Pollock-like orgy of bodily exuberance. Underwear and tampons, half empty shampoo bottles, blunted razors and soggy tissues, all the detritus of life un-cleaned mingle democratically in the catacombs of the unwashed floor. Above, stacked neatly against the wall, an audience of identical tiles watch the daily ablutions, their faces smeared and grubby, blank with routine indifference.

Room for rent.

Backyard.

Out the back beside the fly-wire door, a faded blue dish caked with cat food sits sentry next to a red ice-cream container of water that’s become a death trap for small insects. A broken concrete path leads out to a dilapidated clothesline sagging sadly against a gap-toothed paling fence. The yard is strewn with the carcasses of dead pot plants, beer bottles and an upturned shopping trolley. In a corner, a spindly lemon tree stands forlornly, its uncared for branches gnarled with gall wasp and other diseases. At its feet, a muck of rotting compost gestates worms and rat fodder rank into the thin grey sky.

→ Your map is full of blanks, of private, interior spaces occupied by others. You map what you can with the understanding that all maps are but a map within another map; like rooms within a house. Occupants bring with them a personal map of their own making. When they vacate, they take what they want of their map with them. What they leave behind becomes part of a public vernacular, a dangling past participle connecting the individual to the communal.
C5. Meridian arcs, in cowboy boots,

The historical abundance of cheap accommodation in Melbourne’s inner-north has long been a magnet for artists, students and the unemployed (or at least those pursuing an alternative lifestyle outside the mainstream economy). As a result, alongside its neighbours, Fitzroy and Northcote, Brunswick is one part of the dominant triad that forms the epicentre of local hipsterdom.
you were made for walking

and with Johnny we walked the line

through blue-grassed vertigos
playing urban cowboys

outside the Retreat Hotel.

Our fixed steel steeds are tethered to the clearway
as we tap
our Cuban heels and

snub-nose toes

---

You visit your local for a few afternoon rounds timed to the twang of an alt-country guitar. You hang with other locals who are only local until their lease runs out, after which someone else takes their seat at the bar.
mash rollies under the smoky
meridian
galloping lager hoof-ward

thirsty throats
until
all our credit’s run out
and the sheriff chucks us out
on the highway to home.

Rawhide, we mount the wobbly saddle
under the shining northern star,
a rancour of wayfaring strangers
carousing drunk on the sitting

riding greenhorn
through the street-lit trails of Brunswick
back to our rented stables.

---

Decked out in rockabilly tatts and cowboy hats, the crowd hates on America as they chow down Mex-Tex and burger sliders. Later, at home, you reflect on the irony of cultural appropriation as you tipsily map the rambling, contradictory politics of your own urban flâneury.
D5. Night on the bottle

On any night of the week, Sydney Road is full of revellers who don’t live here but pour into its pubs and bars to partake of craft beer and live music. At some time before dawn they withdraw, leaving behind bottles and used contraceptives in various formations on vomit-crusted kerbs.
on the way to the MORE LAND HOTEL after the BRUNSWICK GREEN

you see them everywhere in varying states of hungover poses the morning after the night before craving greasy big breakfasts of eggs, bacon, fat-laced chipolatas and a double-----espresso from Ray's
in neat rows
snookered in
[ door-stops ]
clear green and
brown sporting sticky
lapels bearing alphabets from
all over the world crook and crooked
slumping along fences or loitering on street
corners in unruly piles reclining at awkward angles

***** smashed *****

evidence of raucous riots and unremembered
drinking games next to untended shopping
trolleys that have wandered into the carparks
off Sydney Road like lost un-shepherded sheep

outside the Cornish Arms they gather
among winkle pickers & second-hand copies of
Kerouac like glass teats to oblivion casual sex
and abandon…

I saw two, just the other day, sitting on a
bench with an empty box of Cascade Stout as
companionably as two old friends waiting for a
bus to smoke-filled pokies and parmas at the

M O R E L A N D H O T E L

--- You find everyday objects inhabiting unexpected locations and imagine what possible narratives led them there. Disembodied from one context, you reconfigure them into another. ---
E5. Waste (redacted)

Waste is a persistent feature of Moreland. It moves about in contra-beats of weekly, fortnightly and annual collections set against unplanned, unpredictable cycles of transhumance. Like a writer’s rejected draft, sometimes what is jettisoned is as interesting as what is retained.
Once a week
wheelie bins stand colonnade
unwashed sentinels of waste

overflowing

excoriated packets
egg shells and potatoes
on rubbish collection days

While they wait
for truck generals to articulate
mechanical call to arms
carillon arias of scotch emanate
rotting breath
swatting flies

snot-filled rags and
yellow-mortled fags

advertising homeware bargains

(in-between dirty jokes described unsanitary)

When the council truck finally comes
thermoplastic fibres of
crisp chip
polypropylenes

Lightweight and durable
sweaty in the palms of schoolboys
now gummed gum medallion
to their dark green drums

drop

absently
wrapper bracelets around stormwater grids

---
drip

---
gravity bound

underworldlings
industriously refashioning waste and unseen things

(flaking skin
hair follicles ----

saliva)

best identified under
micro-scope

Within your map there are things you want to include and write about, but the nature of waste is that in absence, you can only imagine their narrative arc. You follow these trails of consumption to see what, in absence, they have to say about the configuration of surprising actors.
A6. Serenity of rats

For the rat now buried beneath piles of forsaken drafts

Beneath Moreland lies a catacomb of subterranean sewers, gas pipes and storm water drains. Here lives a community of others rarely thought about by the terrestrial beings passing overhead.
crawling down manholes
displaces the serenity of rats
foraging un-thought of
among spume

now
the rodent diaspora
emerges road-ward under cars

knotted viscera radiating malfeasance

paws stretched stiff

at night
if you listen carefully
you can hear the low wails
of mothers
grieving for sons −

− In imagining what an alternative map of Moreland might look like, you consider writing your map based on the journeys of omniscient others to flush out new lines of enquiry. Ultimately you abort this idea, lest you be accused of anthropomorphism.
Authors are plentiful here; their writing rife with pleas. So it is that Moreland, in sympathy with the grand Australian narrative, has transformed displacement into a brutish art, a savage culture; a bleeding, beating heart thumping bare upon the pavement.
The nameless alleyway
treads undercover
alongside the old Flour Mill

It’s peppered with billboards for the Socialist Alliance
and punk nights at Noise

A hiding place for kids playing

--- hooky
on weekday afternoons

Temporarily occupying
doorways

(small naves)

for homeless casks of goony
pissed into grated drains

Cigarettes and cement
grime-pressed
and cleaned
by the hems of long skirts
and jingling niqabs

Chubby prams
collect discarded gum and

--- general neglect

on rainy days when
gutters swollen
full of leaves and
tinseled paper
spill

'Art is context' reads the black typeface on the white canvas crouching cat-like on the threshold of a bricked-up doorway. 'Who are you?' asks an anonymous hand on a vandalised wall.
Great sledge(s) of paint

--- drip

--- dripping

DARK
BLOODY
RED

authoring pleas for refugees
and the fates of
Sri Lankan Tamils

Raising the uncomfortable
question, could

Brunswick = racist scum?

In the most multicultural of municipal harems
we are the 99%
cultured by

(politics) from

--- all over

--- the world.

→ All maps, including yours, are fallible. They are a propaganda championing one point of view among many.
C6. Displaced pide on Sunday

Severed from history or maps, we find the location... of the ambivalent distillation of cultural memory.

~ Bill Ashcroft

Sometimes a picture says more than words.
The old Turks who made this their home

stroll the top end of Sydney Road
bags full of fresh baked *pide*.

Pushed out into Coburg by the gentrification of Brunswick,

by colourful hijabs
and bat-black burqas

still wary of Ottoman massacres.

‘The curse of Babel’, whisper the old women at the bus stop,
nodding their heads.

‘No good will come of this’

Together,
they turn as one
eyes avert on feet
Leavening against the tide of changes
D6. Fe₂O₃ · nH₂O and the rust−red melancholy

Like memory, space exists everywhere and nowhere all at the same time. Unlike memory, space is indifferent to the matter that occupies it.
The Hills Hoist stands
stark and cranking,
naked, but for the fading plastic pegs
ripening in the noonday heat.

Polymer composites decaying
idly with the seasons,
slowly loosening their grip
with each creaking opening and closing until

the strain

becomes
too
great

and their frail bones

into white and pastel dust
among the milkweed and ragwort
rioting unchecked in the backyard.

...

The Hill Hoist dejects
bent and melancholy,

Thinking, once upon a time,
children played tag here
under billowing sheets
but that

was long,

long

ago.
Now there is nothing left to do
but wait for the turning seasons
to oxidise what’s left of osteoarthritic joints.

Usefulness

disintegrating
daily
in ferrous, friable flakes.
---
The Hills Hoist slumps
low and sighs,
crown wheel-and-pinion
reminiscing
lost-
wards
in the drying

---

*Even as you write your map, the Moreland you seek to document rots, fades and falls apart. Your only persistent references are the things that you remember, but even these you have to record somehow before they also disappear.*
E6. Place and the space–time continuum or $s^2 = \Delta r^2 - c^2 \Delta t^2$

Not everyone will agree on what Moreland is, but there is always space for other stories, other narratives, other points of view.
PLACE: A PARTICULAR POINT (.) OR AREA DISTINCT FROM OTHERS

LOCATED IN SPACE AND TIME (=D/S)

IN PLACE WE SITUATE+

LODGE+

INVEST+

MEMORIES

PAST (REMEMBERED) PRESENT (EXPERIENCED) FUTURE (IMAGINED)

PLACE: THE

0 G R
N I SPACE
I B I

AROUND THE BODIES THROUGH WHICH ALL BIOLOGICAL
BUT 
SOMETIMES 
A PLACE 

(CAN LOSE 
ITSELF)

AND A 
PLACE 
WITHOUT 
IDENTITY 

BECOMES 

PLACE- 
-LESS 

GERTRUDE STEIN: 

“THERE IS NO 
THERE 

HERE” - 

- You end up with the following: place = space + time (x perspective). You conclude that, based on the nature of variables, Moreland is an impossible equation to answer. You resign yourself to representational failure with the full understanding that whatever you believe Moreland to be is like a sentence that you can never...
END.
Part two:

Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary approach
I love white space, love the telling omission…

… and find it oddly depressing that which seems to have left out nothing.

~ Louise Gluck
Introduction

Moreland: *A poetic map* is an experimental map that probes the challenge of representing Moreland through deeper, more plural and meaningful engagements with place than traditional cartographic practice allows. As landscape architect and theorist James Corner (1999) writes:

Mapping is a fantastic cultural project, creating and building the world as much as measuring and describing it. Long affiliated with the planning and design of cities, landscapes and buildings, mapping is particularly instrumental in the construing and constructing of lived space. In this active sense, the function of mapping is less to mirror reality than to engender the re-shaping of the worlds in which people live. While there are countless examples of authoritarian, simplistic, erroneous and coercive acts of mapping, with reductive effects upon both individuals and environments, [there are also] more optimistic revisions of mapping practices. These revisions situate mapping as an enabling enterprise, a project that both reveals and realises hidden potential. Hence, in describing the 'agency' of mapping, I do not mean to invoke agendas of imperialist technocracy and control but rather to suggest ways in which mapping acts may emancipate potentials, enrich experiences and diversify worlds (213).

Within the context of ‘revised’ mapping practices as a ‘world-enriching agent’ (Corner 1999: 213), the key innovation of *Moreland: A poetic map* is its manipulation of cartographic techniques, principles and strategies to represent the *more-ness* of Moreland in more creative, diverse and inclusive ways. It explores alternative representations of place from multiple perspectives oscillating between personal observations, lyrical musings and material explorations. It moves between factual and fictive realms in alternatively meditative, speculative and reflective modes. On some occasions, such as its appropriation of mathematical and scientific principles as poetic devices, it is quotidian. In other instances, such as its reimagining of history, *Moreland: A poetic map*
is quixotic. Its iterative treatment of themes like indigeneity, migration and displacement produces different textural patterns and leitmotifs throughout the work. It also acknowledges, as I will argue, that place (as opposed to space) is primarily a cultural construction and that any one place is, in fact, an assemblage of lived experiences embodied in multiple material sites.

In terms of form, the poetic map I offer is a highly self-reflexive portrait of place. Each poem is a personal marker of place, an exploration of its spatial qualities imbued with a mix of temporal chronologies designed to give voice to the palimpsest of Moreland’s histories, stories and multiple points of view. As an example of alternative cartographic practice, Moreland: A poetic map employs material and immaterial, human and more-than-human perspectives – both ‘real’ and imagined – to figuratively take the reader off the conventional cartographical grid and partake in an alternative construction of Moreland’s pervasive more-ness. At every turn – both figurative and literal – Moreland: A poetic map offers readers opportunities to ‘plot their own route’, as it were, to discover new and different encounters with Moreland’s particularly more-ly qualities.

The decision to poetically map Moreland, as opposed to using any other creative writing medium, is primarily predicated on the correlation between cartography and poetry’s ability to make art out of the partial and incomplete. For example, cartographic historian and scholar J.B. Harley (2002) notes the relationship between utterance and the intentional or unintentional silences in maps. For Harley, ‘silence and utterance are not alternatives but constituent parts of map language, each necessary for the understanding of the other’ (86).

As a creative artefact, Moreland: A poetic map offers a similarly fractured poetics of place that aims to draw the reader’s attention to what might otherwise remain hidden, unseen, unknown or un-thought of. To explore what I argue is the inherent partiality of cartographical practice it utilises a poetic mode interplaying textual inscription and the exploitation of intentional gaps, blanks and
what Harley calls ‘silences’. The purpose of these devices is to create spaces within spaces (Massey 2005) in order to locate knowledges gleaned from my own personal experience, imaginative engagements and research interventions.

The idea for Moreland: A poetic map did not simply arrive as a fully fleshed-out concept. Like most creative projects, the final form of Moreland: A poetic map emerged after multiple iterations. In fact, one of the most interesting aspects of this project has been the process leading up to the making of this map. Not only does it indicate how the practice led the research and the research informed the practice, but the very nature of its production is full of remnant traces of what has come before, of inscriptions and erasures, of making, unmaking and making anew. This palimpsest is in fact evidence of its own argument, a mirror of its own making and a metaphor for the primary aim of the exegetical component of this project: namely, to outline a method for mapping Moreland that embraces difference, diversity and plurality, and the ontological ‘messiness’ this implies. Indeed, more-ness in tandem with the iterative and interdisciplinary project of mapping alternative knowledges is the conceit that binds the poems of Moreland: A poetic map together.
Mapping a research journey: An iterative practice

(Iteration one)

At the outset of my research, and long before I embarked on a journey to poetically ‘map’ Moreland, my initial plan was to undertake a doctoral research degree with a 50/50 split of creative and critical practice. In terms of the creative work, I planned to produce a novel exploring identity politics within a contemporary multicultural setting. The intention of the accompanying exegesis would be to provide a critical analysis of current debate surrounding migration, cultural diversity, identity politics and the fallout from the so-called ‘culture wars’ of the 1980s and 90s (Dixson 1999). In particular, I was interested in exploring literary theorist and critic Bill Ashcroft’s (2011) concept of the ‘transnation’ as a means of thinking ‘trans-spatially’ with regard to how identity is located or, more appropriately, trans-located, within a trans-global culture.

(Iteration two)

About 12 months into this project, a change in supervision and the way in which project-based research theses were being implemented by RMIT, saw my initial proposal undergo a radical re-thinking. Under the new model, rather than the higher degree research dissertation being understood as ‘creative work plus [my emphasis] exegesis’ (Fletcher & Mann 2004), creative or practice-led research projects would be expected to provide two interdependent answers in two independent languages (i.e. one creative and one theoretical) to the same research question/s (Milech & Schilo 2003). While still coming to terms with what this would mean for my research, I was encouraged by my new supervisors to think more about the setting of my creative work. This initiated my first explorations of Moreland in terms of a place of ‘more-ness’. These engagements led to an interest in the idea of place as palimpsest, the site of multiple inscriptions, which allowed me to incorporate the many histories (e.g. colonial, post-colonial and
contemporary) of Moreland – both real and imagined – within a creative work. The impact of these ideas led to the writing of highly detailed and descriptive sketches of Moreland. Over time it became clear that the central protagonist of my work was Moreland itself and that my writing favoured a more poetic mode than I had previously been practicing. It was the dawning of this realisation that quite organically led me to abandon my novel and pursue more poetic forms for the representation of place.

(Iteration three)

A key aspect of my shift away from a more humanist ‘realist’ narrative embedded in identity politics to an experimental poetics of place was a new focus on alternative points of view, including those of plants, animals and everyday objects as agents of place making (Bennett 2010; Bogost 2012). Subsequently, this invited more vigorous interrogations of multiplicity and a different kind of examination of identity politics, this time from ‘more-than-human’ points of view. This resulted in the production of a series of poetic vignettes about Moreland presented from the third person point of view of a fictional rat. At the time, writing from a rat’s point of view provided a means of navigating place and its relationship to identity. It allowed me to expose, both literally and figuratively, that which ‘lies beneath the surface’ and give voice to the discarded, forgotten and marginalised (ideas that still persist in Moreland: A poetic map). As a literary device, the rat also engendered a more dystopian view of Moreland as a site of contestation between competing identities and points of view. Metaphorically, the rat became a trope for colonisation, migration and displacement – all of which are thematic preoccupations that continue to characterise Moreland: A poetic map in its present form.

(Iteration four)

While pursuing this interest in alternative points of view, I became increasingly interested in the more-than-human agents of Moreland as actors enmeshed in a lively network of vital materiality
re-imagined as the ‘secret life of things’ (Appadurai 1986; Latour 2007; Law 2003). At the same time, I was introduced to the literatures of anthropologist Tim Ingold (2007, 2010) and ethnographic scholar Sarah Pink (2007, 2009, 2011, 2013). Their work became seminal in the development of my own research methodology based on walking, photography and recording my own sensory entanglements with Moreland. Not only did this initiate my experiments with *ekphrasis* (a term generally used to describe a certain kind of writing practice based on extant and usually visual art works) based on my own amateur photography, it also – for an extended period of time – saw walking prevail as the dominant structural conceit of my work. As a result, I now envisaged the rat as conduit or ‘tour guide’ popping in and out of the poetic work. Initially, the idea behind this narrative device was to represent Deleuze and Guattari’s (2004) concept of the rhizome as a metaphor for the ‘weft and weave’ of ‘smooth and striated’ space. The rat offered a dual means of representing the configurative nature of place as proposed by actor-network theorists such as Bruno Latour (2007) as well as a method for logically connecting one poetic vignette to another. It was at this point that I first started thinking of my work as a ‘map’ of Moreland albeit in very loose and, as yet, unstructured terms.

**(Iteration five)**

Had it not been for three concurrent and unexpected turns in my research, the final form of my creative work might have ended there. However this was not to be. Instead, as I progressively investigated the more-than-human, I also began thinking more critically about materiality or the *it-ness* of place (Edensor 2012). Crucially, while still building on the work of Latour *et al.*, I became increasingly interested in Ian Bogost’s (2012) object-oriented ontology as a tool for conceptualising place as a systemised ‘whole’ and the role its constituent parts play within its organisation. Collectively, these engagements involved bringing together my existing humanities-based approaches (i.e. literary theory and politics) and more exploratory and critical engagements with mathematics and science (Spencer 2012). In particular, I was interested in how the non-
humanist language and formulas of mathematics and science might be applied to give voice to not only the materiality of Moreland but also to the process of change and changefulness that was already emerging as a key theme in my writing.

Inspired by these research findings, the first impact these more scientific leanings had on my creative work was a succession of experiments that involved representing Moreland within a series of abstracted equations informed by mathematical and scientific principles. For example, I re-conceptualised migration as a displacement formula based on flow, velocity, and acceleration over time (an example of which can still be found in ‘E = A•v•t•½v²’ of Moreland: A poetic map). I also used DNA and genetic science as a metaphor for the physical effects and psychological affects that migration has on the perception of place (i.e. in ‘Place and the forensics of self’). Breaking up my poetic vignettes to mimic these ideas on the page, I began to strategise a more active practice of what is alternately called ‘shape’ or ‘concrete’ poetry to better represent my ideas.

(Iteration six)

Meanwhile, strategising a more proactive approach to concrete poetry led to a second major impact on my creative work, namely the (somewhat ironic) ‘eradication’ of the rat as a fictional device (in Moreland: A poetic map this is eulogised in ‘Serenity of rats’ as a dedication to ‘the rat now buried beneath piles of forsaken drafts’). In its place, I devised the use of footnotes as a multifunctional tactic for simultaneously representing the theoretical and practical ‘foot work’ inspired by my walking and the practice of flânerie (defined here as an artistically inclined wanderer who observes and records the minutiae of city life in an ostensibly impartial manner) as practical research interventions for the making of Moreland: A poetic map. Within this context, the ‘subterranean’ narrative of the rat metamorphosed into footnotes, which now act as a sub-textual thread that sits beneath, ‘grounds’ and links each poem.
(Iteration seven)

The third and final major impact of maths and science on the current form of my creative work was a concentrated study of cartography as an intelligible schematic for codifying my practical and theoretical research engagements with the writing of Moreland. Cartography’s focus on the temporal and spatial representation of place, the qualities of its spaces, and the relationship between the objects of its consideration provided a uniquely appropriate fit for melding the breadth of my research interests. For example, as geographer Denis Cosgrove (2014) writes, part of the ‘contemporary artistic interest in maps’ (36) is based on their ability to ‘explore the complex intermingling of art and science’ (Woodward 1987: 1). Likewise, as an instrument of place making, maps offer creative practitioners a multitude of ways in which to represent their ideas about the world in which we live.

Consequently, through the diverse literatures of cultural geographers, I began to research alternate theories about the construction of place (de Certeau 1984; Massey 2005), the relationship between place and cultural practice (Ashcroft 2011; Grosz 1999; Morris 2004), and the synergies between writing and cartographical practice (Cosgrove 2005; Solnit 2003, Turchi 2004) that have ultimately shaped the current form of this project. These new spatial and temporal engagements with place as a cultural construction, as a story always being written, as something produced not given (Massey 2005), and as something personally and imaginatively experienced as much as a material site, provided the ideal conceit with which to more inclusively map the more-ness of Moreland.
Mapping the exegesis: An interdisciplinary approach

By the time Moreland: A poetic map reached its current form, it was clear that I had amassed a substantial theoretical tool kit complemented by numerous practical research interventions. The many approaches adopted in Moreland: A poetic map signal that place is a multi-layered, multi-temporal, multi-cultural construct. It also demonstrates how the task of mapping the more-ness of Moreland is complicated by human and more-than-human perspectives set against a nebulous backdrop of changing configurations. As a result, my research is deliberately, consciously and necessarily a bricolage of interdisciplinary approaches. As part of a practice-led research project, Moreland: A poetic map is an example of what visual artist and academic Robyn Stewart (2001) describes as a ‘pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive practice’ that appropriates a range of creative strategies, practical interventions and critical frameworks that ‘invents or pieces new tools together as necessary’ (9). However, as Stewart also observes:

It is not easy being a bricoleur. A bricoleur works within and between competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms... To do so they must read widely, to become knowledgeable about a variety of interpretive paradigms that can be brought to a problem... The resulting bricolage will be a complex, dense, reflexive, collage-like creation that represents the researcher's stories, representations, understandings and interpretations of the world and the phenomena under investigation (9).

The following exegesis documents how I have approached mapping the more-ness of Moreland by drawing on a range of emergent and established critical approaches to ‘accommodate notions of practice and place’ in an experimental, theoretically informed model based on ‘a constellation of processes’ (Pink 2011: 93). Each section of the exegesis is broadly organised around one of five key strategies that inform the theoretical underpinnings of my research. While I refer to these sections as ‘chapters’, in practice they might better be regarded as ‘perspectives’ since each
reflects the others and is best understood as a different lens with which to view the research interests embodied in the making of Moreland: A poetic map (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of the integration between the creative (Part 1 – Moreland: A poetic map) and exegetical (Part 2 – Mapping the more-ness of Moreland: An iterative and interdisciplinary approach) components of the project and how they might be read.
As many of the ideas outlined in these chapters converge and dovetail into one another to form a kind of ‘exegetical matrix’, I have developed the following legend to help the reader navigate interconnecting concerns within and between each chapter:

지도자 Moreland

지도 Moreland

세echa Moreland

지식 Moreland

쓰기 Moreland

The purpose of this legend is to indicate where a particular concern discussed in one chapter intersects with similar, broader or relevant discussions in another. As signalling devices they have been selectively applied as an alternative to footnotes and to avoid any unnecessary repetition. For the purpose of referencing, the chapter and page number are signposted by the chapter icon followed by the page number within square brackets (e.g. a reference to page 136 of Walking Moreland within Mapping Moreland would be indicated as [2136]).
Chapter summaries

The following summaries provide a brief outline of the key concerns of each exegetical chapter.

Mapping Moreland

*Mapping Moreland* sets out to examine map-making as a strategy for the spatial organisation of knowledge and consider the shared tools and techniques cartographers and writers use to do this (Turchi 2004). Drawing on a range of literatures, including cultural geography, literary theory and anthropology, this chapter looks at the literacies of cartography and the way that maps, as a narrative strategy, merge geographic concerns with cultural ones to transform undifferentiated space into a recognisable place (Hegglund 2003; Massey 2005). It also explores mapping as a site of contestation between conventional cartographical and other forms of situated knowledges (Cosgrove 2005). In doing so, this chapter proposes an alternative approach to the limitations of conventional Western cartography in the form of more experiential, embodied and imaginative forms of mapping place, as suggested by the indigenous inhabitants of what now forms the city of Moreland.

Walking Moreland

In *Walking Moreland*, I explore walking as a means of making, knowing and researching place, and why, out of all possible mobilities, walking might be regarded as the preferred gait of both writers and philosophers (Solnit 2002). Focusing on the work of anthropologists and ethnographers Ingold (2007, 2010) and Pink (2007, 2009, 2013), this chapter examines how walking Moreland might be regarded as a *mobile ethnography* facilitated by an iterative practice of everyday noticing and sensory entanglements that ultimately lead to what might be called *ambulatory knowledge* (Sheller and Urry 2006). This chapter also draws on the literatures of cultural geographers such as de Certeau (1984) and Morris (2006) to discuss how walking as a culturally
specific practice transforms otherwise undifferentiated space into a personally significant place (Massey 2005), and what the relationship is between walking and the writing of place.

**Seeing Moreland**

*Seeing Moreland,* outlines a number of practical research interventions based on photography and everyday 'noticing' as means of generating data on which to model a poetics of place based on place, memory and imagination (Ingold 2010; Pink 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013). In this chapter I consider how each of these approaches offers a praxis for exploring ‘place as event’ (Massey 2005; Pink 2009) and the different ways in which we ‘see’ place through a range of theoretical lenses, frameworks and points of view. I then discuss what critical opportunities they offer for understanding place as the configuration of specific assemblages and what the multiple gaps, absences and interstices observed through alternative modes of ‘seeing’ (Gibson 2010, 2011, 2014) might help to reveal about the ‘unseen’ mechanics of place in visual, perceptive and imaginative ways suitable for incorporation within a creative writing practice.

**Knowing Moreland**

*Knowing Moreland* discusses a range of models for exploring an alternative phenomenology of place based on ‘who knows’ and ‘what they know’ through the prism of vibrant or vital materialism, thing theory, and object-oriented ontology (Bennett 2010; Bogost 2012). In seeking to give form to the ‘secret life of things’, this chapter discusses the *it-ness* of things as actors involved in a lively network of complex systems and relations (Appadurai 1986; Latour 2007; Law 2003). It also outlines the ways in which I’ve engaged with these ideas and applied them to represent the more-ness of Moreland and the many heterogeneous and polyphonic voices of the things that constitute it.
Writing Moreland

In *Writing Moreland*, I engage more specifically with creative cartography as a geographical and site-specific art practice (Cosgrove 2005; Hawkins 2012). This chapter begins by looking at how other creative practitioners have appropriated, and even subverted, the possibilities offered by cartographic practice in order to embrace, expose and challenge the limits of geospatial representation through alternative mapping strategies. I then examine what poetic techniques might be applied to a cartography of place (Turchi 2004), and how I have used these to represent the multiple spatial and temporal dimensions of place in *Moreland: A poetic map*.

The range of approaches adopted in this project acknowledges that cartographic representation is a complex exercise in representing the partial, fragmented and incomplete. The following exegetic component of this project seeks to address how creative writers might approach a more inclusive and multi-perspectival cartography of place than is found in more conventional approaches to mapping. In an effort to represent the more-ness of Moreland, I have adopted a systematically iterative and interdisciplinary approach for modelling an alternative and cartographically strategised representation of place, characterised by a more ‘more-ly’ approach to creative research. These approaches not only reflect the challenge of representing the more-ness of Moreland, but also the *process* of thinking ‘more-ly’ about Moreland.
Chapters
Introduction: Mapping a representational problem

Figure 2: Melway Moreland City Council Wall Map (2015). The land area of Moreland is represented in white while the surrounding locations are shaded yellow.
The city of Moreland is a dense and highly compact urban environment. As this present-day map shows (Figure 2), it is constructed from a complex network of intersecting roads, waterways and public transport routes surrounding a matrix of unequally sized public, commercial and residential spaces, including parks and sporting grounds. Framed by a series of bisecting alphanumeric coordinates (e.g. A1, B2, C3), this map represents Moreland within a grid of pale blue equidistant quadrants. Within these units, the spaces of Moreland are broken down into a diminishing series of smaller units before terminating into white, unspecified blanks.

In terms of Moreland: A poetic map, this Melway map is relevant in several ways. First, it demonstrates the purposive nature of maps. That is, it is a map charged with a clearly defined aim; in this case, it details a number of specific localities within Moreland City Council. Second, as a pictorial snapshot of Moreland, it uses scale (e.g. at full scale, one centimetre equals one kilometre) and direction (i.e. the standard orientation of north and south along a vertical axis) to spatially contextualise the relationship between those localities. Third, as a navigational tool, its focus on transport corridors allows the reader to link one location to another and plot routes between a multitude of ‘heres’ and ‘theres’. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, despite being an impressively comprehensive map, it includes certain features to the exclusion of others, thereby illustrating the ultimate limits of conventional cartographical practice. As such, this map exemplifies the traditional map’s exposition of ostensibly verifiable facts and, in doing so, simultaneously suggests spaces for other possibilities including the fictive embodiment of alternative narratives and situated knowledges. It not only shows what is but what is possible. The very nature of its limitations indicates that other maps might be made, maps that offer opportunities to wander off the conventional cartographic grid and imagine Moreland as a rich world of unchartered interspaces that this Melway map neither can nor wants to show.
In Moreland: A poetic map, I have drawn extensively on these possibilities to bring together facts and fictions, the personal and the historical, phenomena and ephemera, within a poetic practice to represent Moreland in ways that more conventional maps cannot. However, I have also done this by researching, analysing and exploiting established cartographical devices.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the cartographic principles and techniques that have specifically inspired the writing of Moreland: A poetic map. To do this I have looked at a number of existing maps of Moreland to assess the aims and strategies of their makers. While my focus is very localised, the ideas explored in this chapter draw upon a wide pantheon of cultural, geographical, anthropological, historical, and, of course, cartographic discourses. I begin in part one by looking broadly at the purpose of mapping as a strategy for representing spatial knowledge and consider this within the context of a writing practice. In part two, I explore the map as a cultural construct and the ways in which conventional maps transform space into place (Massey 2005) as a function of cartographic practice. In part three, I explore the map as a contest of authorship before finally, in part four, considering what this means in terms of creating an alternative map, such as Moreland: A poetic map, based on the fictive embodiment of competing narratives and situated knowledges.

**Part one: Mapping as a spatial practice**

Broadly speaking, a map might be best described as a diagrammatic representation of some kind of place, whether physical, conceptual or psychological. For literary theorist Jon Hegglund (2003) maps are best understood as ‘an aesthetic object that prompts a critical consciousness of spatiality’ (167). Geographer and cartographer J.B. Harley (1989) contends that ‘the steps in making a map’ are ‘inherently rhetorical’ (11). For Harley, maps involve a complex process of ‘selection, omission, simplification, classification, the creation of hierarchies, and symbolisation’
which leads him to conclude that mapmakers should rightly be regarded as the *writers of place*.

In *Maps of the Imagination: The writer as cartographer*, writer and academic Peter Turchi (2004) argues that maps help people understand where they are in the world in the same way that stories attempt to explain human realities. Turchi demonstrates how writers and cartographers use many of the same devices for plotting and executing their work, making crucial decisions about what to include and what to leave out in order to get from a ‘here’ to a ‘there’ without excess baggage or a confusing surplus of information. In this view, mapmaking sets up an encounter with the multiple dimensions of space and how it might be read or understood as a particular representation of place. For both writers and cartographers alike, this poses a confrontation with the ‘page’ and the challenge of representing the object, or subject, of their enquiry within the limitations of the tools and techniques available to them.

Regarded as an inherently narrative practice, maps can be read in concrete or abstract terms. They help to bridge the gaps between the known and the unknown, past and present, the actual and the possible. The stories they tell can be factual or fictive, speculative or descriptive. They can represent phenomena or ephemera, and even both at the same time. As depicted in Figure 2, maps can be simultaneously graphic (as in the depiction of physical features such as transport thoroughfares), symbolic (as per the visual shorthand of the map legend) and discursive (such as the naming of suburbs, roads and parks). As an artifice, maps offer a deliberate, focused and purposive means of giving form, pattern and context to spatial phenomena. Mapmakers seek out relationships between the ‘things of the world’ in order to make sense of spaces and, in doing so, locate spatial knowledge within a structured form that facilitates physical or imaginative navigation. However, as the maps depicted in Figures 3-6 show, the form of maps – whether concrete (Figures 3 and 4) or conceptual and abstract (Figure 5) – are so varied that it is almost
impossible to distill their purpose into one neat definition. They can be the repositories of data (Figures 3 and 4), a tool for planning journeys (Figure 4), or a reference guide that enables new discoveries to be made (Figure 6) [239].
Figure 3: State electoral districts of Coburg and Brunswick West (1956).
Figure 4: Census map, Cities of Brunswick and Coburg (1966).
Figure 5: Travel Smart map depicting public transport routes.
Figure 6: Urban Walkabout map featuring sites of commercial activity.
Among the heterogeneous functions of maps, in *Moreland: A poetic map* I primarily focus on the map as a contrivance for *organising spatial knowledge*. Within this context, spatial knowledge is defined as a complex set of geometric and mathematical processes that deals with a set of object relations spanning height, width, length, and time (e.g. as a function of the distance between objects). *Moreland: A poetic map* also incorporates the situation of subjective personal, sensory and experientially derived knowledge alongside other place-based histories and events. The act of locating these knowledges within a cartographic schematic sets up an encounter with the multiple dimensions of space and the temporal durations in which those encounters occur. In each instance, transposing knowledge – whatever that knowledge is – into a legible ‘map’ poses a confrontation with the two-dimensional page and the inevitable limits of representing the diversity of space upon it.

Conventionally, the cartographer’s page is a complex mesh of grids and graticules, longitudes and latitudes, or parallel and meridian arcs. Their tools include projection, generalisation, scale and distortion among a range of other graphical and notational devices such as pictures, symbols, and lines. The combination of these devices allows the mapmaker to visually depict space and assist readers to calibrate the relationships of localised points, features or objects within those spaces via a system of intersecting linear coordinates. For example, the map uses projection and direction as a means of plotting ‘space’ through at least two points. In this way, lines become connectors that enable spatial orientation on a horizontal and vertical *x,y* axis, also known as a Cartesian plane (Figure 7) in much the same ways that narrative arcs position events over time (Figure 8).

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1 For definition of these terms, please refer to a ‘Glossary of cartographic concepts’ in Part one - *Moreland: A poetic map.*
Figure 7: Example of a basic Cartesian plane.

Figure 8: Example of narrative plot points within a basic three-act structure.
The spatial projection of these points not only tells the map-reader where they are but allows them to plot where they have been and where they might go. In other words, these cartographic tools seek to _locate_ some form of knowledge in spatial and temporal relation to other knowledge. The information thus provided by the map enables its reader to plan routes, make connections and view the relationship between map objects in perhaps new or different ways. Regarded as part of a narrative practice, maps also indicate that there are ‘an infinite number of directions in which the work could go’ (Turchi 2004: 14).

As a means of representing spatial knowledge, the nature of maps supports the idea that place is produced, not given. For example, scholar Michel de Certeau (1984) equates space and its representation as a plane projection where knowledge is inscribed on the equivalent of a blank page, thereby fixing and ‘flattening’ knowledge through the act of writing or inscription (35). From a cartographic perspective, this view suggests that space, like the page, is the place where meaning is made. On the other hand, cultural geographer Doreen Massey (2005) argues for a more fluid and elastic conception of space as one that liquidates more conventional static, closed and immobile views of space in favour of a ‘coeval multiplicity’ where many meanings co-habit one space at the same time (18) [201].

For the mapmaker, this raises a number of interesting considerations. Not only does Massey’s view of space challenge the authority of the flat map and the manner in which it inscribes knowledge, it also has implications for the way that maps, as instruments of _place making_, are produced and understood. As part of an alternative cartographic practice, in _Moreland: A poetic map_ I have interpreted Massey’s views on space as something more akin to a multi-layered, multi-temporal psychological or cognitive map in which place becomes the ‘dimension of multiple trajectories’, the temporal and spatial location of a ‘simultaneity of stories-so-far’ (Massey 2005: 24). As a result, the poetic map I have created aims to highlight the intimate bond of the spatial
and the temporal; space, and the qualities or values of that space, associated with human and more-than-human activity, interest or purpose [223-224]. It explores different ways of representing what is known or unknown both on and beyond the conventional cartographical grid.

Within this context, I will next discuss mapmaking not only as a means of representing spatial knowledge in such a way that facilitates orientation, navigation and the spatial—and sometimes, temporal—relations between any given physical, non-physical or even meta-physical objects, but also as a method for making place in culturally specific, socially constructed and personally meaningful ways.

**Part two: Mapping as a cultural practice**

The first colonial map (Figure 9) of what would, many years later, incorporate the present day city of Moreland, illustrates how cultural intervention functions to convert the myriad possibilities of ‘space’ into multiple culturally dependent notions of ‘place’. It does this, as I will soon illustrate, by cartographically displacing existing—in this case, indigenous—knowledge in favour of its own colonial and culturally inspired knowledges. In other words, this map shows how cartography should be regarded as an inherently cultural practice. That is, like place, maps are made, not given.
Figure 9: Map of Port Phillip from the survey of Mr. Wedge and others (1835).
For example, this map, created by surveyor and farmer John Helder Wedge in 1835, is notable for being the first colonial map to outline the location of the future Southern capital eponymously named after the British Whig, Lord Melbourne. It was made following the colonial pioneer John Batman’s treaty with the indigenous Woi Wurrong and Kuril people of South Eastern Australia on June 5th of the same year. This map loosely describes, as Wedge tells us: ‘A tract of country ceded by the Native Chiefs of Southern Australia’ to the Port Phillip Association led by Batman and a small band of entrepreneurial pastoralists who travelled across the Bass Strait from the island colony of Van Diemen’s Land, now known as the Australian state of Tasmania.

One of the most striking features of this 1835 map is the curious juxtaposition between the precise articulation of the Port Phillip Bay coastline and the sketchy vagueness of the continental interior that lies beyond it. The receding confidence of Wedge’s rendering of these topographical features denotes the increasing uncertainty and ultimate limits of the mapmaker’s knowledge. Wedge’s map both inscribes existing knowledge (via the detailed coastline) and offers new and as yet unknown creative possibilities for the future ‘writing’ of place (upon the largely blank interior). This first attempt to map the new Port Phillip settlement is, as, Turchi (2004) points out, emblematic of the mapmaker’s quest to ‘organise information on maps in order to see our knowledge in a new way. As a result, maps suggest explanations; and while explanations reassure us, they also inspire us to ask more questions, consider other possibilities’ (11). This much is suggested by the fact that Port Phillip Bay, as the colonial entry point to the new settlement, is represented as a wobbly-looking question mark (Figure 10).

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2 For a detailed account of the toponomy of Melbourne, see Michael Cathcart’s (1993) abridged edition of Manning Clarke’s ‘A history of Australia’ [1962].

3 For a historical account of the Port Phillip settlement and colonisation of Melbourne, see James Boyce’s ‘1835: The founding of Melbourne and the conquest of Australia’ (2013).
Figure 10: Detail of Wedge’s 1835 map showing the contrast between the accurate rendering of Port Phillip Bay and the sparsely chartered interior.
Both literally and figuratively, this map announces the beginning of a critical cartographic enquiry into the new territories it seeks to represent. Indeed, Hegglund argues that colonial maps represent a ‘synecdoche of the imperial archive and a grid for all its data’ and, as such, ‘mapping thus worked within an economy of knowledge that privileged the blank map as a ground on which systemised knowledges could be inscribed’ (171). In a similar manner, Ingold (2007) defers to de Certeau (1984) and his idea of ‘making place’ by imagining:

…the modern writer as the isolated Cartesian subject, standing aloof from the world. A master of all he surveys, the writer confronts the blank surface of a sheet of paper much as the colonial conqueror confronts the surface of the earth, or the urban planner confronts a wasteland, in preparation for superimposition upon it of a construction of his own making. Just as society is created in the space of colonial rule, or a city erected in the space encompassed by the plan, so the written text is produced in the space of the page. Thus the text is an artefact – a thing fabricated or made – that is built where there was nothing (Ingold 2007: 12-13).

Likewise, mapmakers seek to transform a conceptually ‘blank’ space into a culturally informed ‘place’ in a way that mirrors their own ideological preoccupations. They construct the world as they imagine or want it be, not necessarily how it is. As such, the map is not ‘fixed’ or ‘natural’ but a nebulously constructed artefact defined by its potential to be plotted in a multitude of ways. While mapmakers are fundamentally engaged with eliciting and organising sites of spatial knowledge, they do so as part of a specific culturally practice. In fact, geographer Denis Cosgrove (2005) notes that all maps should be treated as ‘cultural objects and mapping as a social and cultural activity’ (36). Cosgrove’s argument suggests that maps are a product of the kind of cultural literacy defined by academic and literary critic E.D. Hirsch (1987) as a ‘network of information that all competent readers [of a homogenous culture] possess’ (2). That Wedge’s
map makes any kind of *sense* relies on some familiarity with the conventions of mapmaking as a culturally informed practice.

An example of the relationship between maps, culture and intelligibility can be seen at play in this much later, 1933 Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works map of Brunswick (Figure 11), which now forms part of the present day southern local government ward of Moreland City Council.
Figure 11: Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works plan, Brunswick (1933).
In this map, horizontal and vertical lines mark out the subterranean route of water mains, while circular points indicate the location of manholes. While the perpendicular vertical and horizontal gridlines of this map are no longer represented, the striking grid-like uniformity of the city’s roads still graphically implies its presence, as does the conformity of the north-south, east-west orientation of the man-holes located on a conventional, two-dimensional x-y axis. It is notable that, for those familiar with Western cartographic strategies, the omission of the grid and compass rose does not impede the reading of this map. In fact, this map assumes knowledge of specific cultural literacies, which encompasses both a Western cartographic practice of a standard northerly orientation at the top of the page and the so-called English ‘Z’ reading pattern where information is spatially organised top to bottom, left to right, in an orderly temporal sequence. This illustrates how cartographic artefacts, like written pages, are read as a function of tacit cultural knowledge. As Turchi (2004) writes, ‘to learn how to read any map is to be indoctrinated into that mapmaker’s culture’ (106). However, as Turchi also points out, cartographic conventions are simply tools, part of a ‘mathematical formula used to project points… onto a sheet of paper’ (77) and since ‘there is no way to do so with uniform accuracy’ (74) these cartographic projections are sometimes referred to as distortion formulas.

In cartography, distortion is mainly a function of scale. In geographical terms, scale refers to ‘the depicted size of a feature on a map relative to its actual size in the world’ (Baltes and Smelser 2001: 13501). Scale can be spatial, temporal or thematic. It can be represented verbally, graphically or in fractals. According to Baltes and Smelser, how cartography ‘distorts these relations is part of the topic of map projections. In many projections, especially small-scale maps

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4 These definitions of scale have been adapted from the International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences, which states: ‘A verbal scale statement expresses the amount of distance on the map that represents a particular distance on the earth’s surface in words, e.g. ‘one inch equals a mile.’ The representative fraction (RF) expresses scale as a numerical ratio of map distance to earth distance, e.g. ‘1: 63,360.’ The RF has the advantage of being a unitless measure. Finally, a graphic scale bar uses a line of particular length drawn on the map and annotated to show how much earth distance it represents.’
that show large parts of the earth, this distortion is extreme so that linear or areal scale on one part of the map is very different than on other parts (13502). As a consequence, all flat maps invariably distort spatial relations on the earth’s surface whether in terms of distance, direction, shape or area. The relative emphasis (or weighting) of the features they depict is based on the mapmaker’s own intentions, preoccupations and cultural biases. So although cartography has traditionally been understood as a scientific practice, the nature and limitations of its tools also invoke highly subjective connotations that highlight how cartographers ‘must continually confront the fact that there is no such thing as objective presentation’ (Turchi 2004: 73). While maps ostensibly set out to accurately represent the real, ‘the most accurate map, and the most detailed map, is not necessarily the best [my emphasis] map’ (Turchi 2004: 44). As such, maps, like narratives, are in fact a cognitive projection of conventions and symbols embedded within an agreed understanding of their cultural nomenclature.

It is this understanding that has seen cartography increasingly understood ‘as practice rather than simply the map as image’ (Cosgrove 2005: 39) [241]. The ability to recognise and understand map images is, as Cosgrove (2005) argues, something ‘learned and cultural rather than a function of the map’s scientific objectivity’ (39). So, without some kind of cognitive or imaginative projection, maps would simply be lines and markers on a page just as literature would be nothing more than strings of letters interrupted by spaces and punctuation. Maps – like writing – only make sense when they are decoded by a culturally literate reader. The manner in which a map is ‘written’ establishes the conditions of not only what it claims to represent but also how its maker intends it to be understood. The map is effectively a shorthand for representing the world within notional, systematic and intelligible symbols. Rather than being the place where meaning is made, what appears on the cartographer’s page are merely signposts; an abstraction of the knowledges that they purport to represent. Their real meaning resides elsewhere, somewhere beyond the page and off the cartographic grid.
Part three: Mapping and the contest of authorship

Even though the map represents a distortion of the world as it actually is, for a culturally literate reader, this is rarely an impediment to making sense of its intended meaning. For example, within the enlightenment concept of rational and objectively verifiable ‘truth’, Wedge’s 1835 map is, at least by Western cartographic standards, largely an ‘empty’ map. However, the spaces depicted in this map were neither blank nor empty. For example, on this map one might observe the curious mix of colonial and indigenous place names inscribed in a cacophony of capitalised serif print fonts and hand-written copperplate scripts receding in density from the coastal fringes and geographical features its maker was most familiar with to those he was not. The inclusion of these names suggests that other kinds of ‘maps’ of this place representing other knowledges, named and organised in ways quite different to the colonialists’ own cartographic strategies already existed. Therefore, aside from being the first Western map of Melbourne, this map is also significant for the ways in which it foreshadows the ominous re-configuration of indigenous places through colonial cartographic practice that was soon to follow.

This contention becomes clearer when you notice the lightly shaded, more or less isotopic triangle labelled Dutigalla floating horizontally across the centre of the map. Stretching from Mount Iramoo in the north beyond Geelong, now the second city largest in the state of Victoria, to an unnamed section of the south-west coast (somewhere between the present day coastal townships of Anglesea and Lorne) before ricocheting north-east to a point only described as ‘rich black soil’, the area of Dutigalla represents the ‘ceded’ lands of Batman’s Treaty. There is something inescapably alien about the imposition of the colonial cartographer’s rigorous geometry hovering over the squiggly coastline, meandering waterways and broad, open spaces depicted in this map. However, what this map quite literally shows is the design that the men of

5 In some accounts, Dutigalla was the name of the indigenous tribe that provided Batman his ‘grant of territory’. In other accounts, such as those of Paul Carter (1990), Dutigalla is the corruption of nuthergalla ‘from nuther meaning nothing’.
Port Phillip had in mind for this place. It is a blueprint for cultural appropriation; a propaganda promoting the colonial myth of indigenous place as an empty space, or *terra nullius*, awaiting inscription through culturally-inspired cartographic practice. It applies mathematical techniques to plot the points, distances and angles necessary for creating a two-dimensional diagrammatic representation of three-dimensional space. The resultant triangulation thus frames a quantitative overview inspired by an enlightenment model of a ‘dispassionate’, ‘rational truth’ that clearly sets out the *parameters* of its enquiry. It is, in fact, an initial cartographic *survey* with far-from-enlightened intentions.

To illustrate this point, one might notice, located in the bottom right-hand quarter of this map, a compass denoting the four cardinal directions of north, south, east and west. Here the compass is represented by a sword-like inscription topped with a *fleur-de-lis* (Figure 12).
Figure 12: Detail of Wedge’s 1835 map showing compass and scale.
With the benefit of historical hindsight, the decision to render the compass in this particular way signifies that this map was indeed made with the intention of claiming an imperial ‘stake’ in the indigenous lands of Port Phillip⁶. Hence, its pictorial representation might be regarded as the symbolisation of its ideological function as a colonial claim to power and ownership.

To further illustrate this point, a year after completing his 1835 map, Wedge was engaged to create a second map (Figure 13), which makes the somewhat nebulous intention of his previous map startlingly apparent.

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⁶ One can only wonder if the indigenous inhabitants knew what these ‘designs’ were and, if they did, whether they would have been so complicit in sharing their knowledge, let alone their land.
In this 1836 map, the territory formerly identified as Dutigalla has been filled in with a patchwork of straight-lined geometric shapes iteratively abstracted into a series of seemingly inscrutable mathematical units. Here the compass stake has been excluded in favour of the surveyor’s stake. In this map, the same isotopic triangle of the Port Phillip settlement has been divided into 13 subdivisions with several more lying outside the parameters of the original 1835 concession. Each of these units is then mapped to a numerical legend representing the names of the colonial landowners to whom each subdivision was allocated. The section marked 9, Mr Batman’s allocation, encompasses the vast majority of what now incorporates the present day boundaries of Moreland City Council. As an example of the proclivity of colonial mapmakers to assign and re-assign ownership, this map adumbrates the relentless subdivisions that characterise Moreland to the present day.

Not only do Wedge’s maps chart colonial arrival, but they also eerily and ominously foreshadow the departure of indigenous peoples, language and culture. For example, the presence of indigenous place names in Wedge’s 1835 map contrasted against vast tracts of blank spaces makes it clear that the men of the Port Phillip Association were reliant on pre-existing knowledge in order to locate and describe the ‘lush grassy hills’, ‘freshwater’, and ‘lightly timbered plains’ of the new colonial settlement. That spatial knowledge in this map is represented as a hybrid of indigenous oratory and colonial inscription illustrates the ‘formal oscillation between the panoptic visual space of the map and the local knowledges of narrative’ (Hegglund 2003: 166). However, this is an inescapably imperial map, deeply embedded in the cultural practices of its maker who, in this case, is primarily concerned with questions of power derived from appropriation, control and ownership. This much is evident in Wedge’s 1836 map, where most of the indigenous names featured in 1835 have been erased. This removal mirrors the disappearance of the indigenous inhabitants who were rapidly being displaced beyond the boundaries of the Port Phillip settlement to lands no longer included in the significantly
tightened focus of the 1836 map. As a result, this map is entrenched in the assumption of *terra nullius* (‘nobody’s land’) and its colonial author’s refusal or failure (or both) to decode culturally divergent signifiers of ‘place’ (the glaring irony here being the mapmaker’s dependence on indigenous knowledge and local narratives to create his 1835 map even as, in 1836, he textually erases their ownership).

The intelligibility of Wedge’s maps for colonial readers is based on the imperial belief that existing human occupation must be codified within a taxonomy that organises spatial knowledge in a meaningful and culturally specific way. However, the existence of other maps (i.e. those connected to pre-existing indigenous knowledge of these lands) shows that Wedge’s concept of cartographic *terra incognita* (unknown or unexplored territory) is a fallacy based on a mono-cultural literacy that simply ignores the importance of others. His maps exemplify how cartography ‘flattens’ knowledge irrespective of the topographical and anthropological landscape. As indicated in later maps, his ultimate disregard for pre-existing local knowledge in favour of his own shows how mapmakers write place into being by often erasing the traces of what has been mapped before. As a result, they concomitantly exclude the historical, political and sociological ramifications imposed within their making. In this respect, all maps might be regarded as a contestation between different cultural constructions of place. Thus the map becomes the site of competing knowledges and points of view, and the mapmaker the author of their conflict.

**Part four: Mapping as a fictive device**

In Moreland: *A poetic* map the idea of the mapmaker as the author of conflict is re-imagined as a cultural dispute that invokes the tension between the ostensible precision of cartographic representation and the way it simultaneously ‘draw[s] attention to its absences, opacities, and representational failures’ (Hegglund 2003: 175). It is premised on the argument that maps are
based on cultural conventions and assumptions, and those assumptions are based on selective inclusion and omission as well as various ‘distortions’ designed, in at least some part, ‘not simply to serve us, but to influence us’ (Turchi 2004: 88). Just as no map is ever ‘complete’, no map is free of the mapmaker’s own bias and desire to influence and convince others of its own veracity. So it is that despite their claim of representational ‘truth’, conventional maps often set up a contest between one worldview and another, while at the same time glossing over their own contingent nature. The features ‘which make them inconvenient to include on a single-scale depiction, are simply excluded’ (Turchi 2004: 88). Just as Wedge’s maps draw our attention to how the re-imaging of ‘space’ as colonised ‘place’ displaces one kind of knowledge in favour of another, they also show how place is constantly made and remade by those who map it. However, rather than being a reductive process, the cartographic re-visioning of place might also be thought of as a psychogeographic curation; an example of how we make place through acts of representation, imagination and interpretation [239].

Such cartographic re-visioning demonstrates how place might be regarded as ‘the palimpsest of previous inscriptions’ (Ashcroft 2011: 36), an idea I draw on extensively in Moreland: A poetic map. It is also an example of how maps can transform the ‘heterogeneity of place into the abstraction of space’ (Hegglund: 171); of how mapmakers manipulate, or even erase, other culturally significant places to make space for their own imaginative constructions endlessly reconfigured in a multitude of the possible. It shows how ‘mapping unfolds potential’ and remakes territory over and over again, each time with new and diverse consequences’ (Corner 1999: 213).

With regard to mapmaking, the combination of relatively vigorous scientific practice with local, place-based knowledge highlights the ambiguous inter-textual nature of cartography that challenges a common assumption that:
… the objects in the world to be mapped are real and objective, and that they enjoy an existence independent of the cartographer; that their reality can be expressed in mathematical terms; that systematic observation and measurement offer the only route to cartographic truth; and that this truth can be independently verified (Harley 1989: 4).

The comparison between Wedge’s 1835 and 1836 maps demonstrates that while one purpose of a map is to organise and represent spatial knowledge, cartographic practice can also be viewed as the fictive embodiment of situated knowledges. In other words, maps not only represent the world but construct it. Part of this cartographic strategy is not only about locating spatial knowledge but about dis-locating it as well. This view acknowledges the fact that maps are as much about displacement, disruption and disarrangement, as they are about an orderly, objective or true representation of a verifiably ‘real’ world. Effectively, this corroborates Massey’s argument that space is a fluid construct in a constant flux of making, unmaking and remaking. In noting this distinction, Massey eschews the view that space represents passive ‘being’ and time its active ‘becoming’ in favour of the infinite divisibility of space, which in itself transforms the idea of a fixed and closed space into the ‘dimension of plurality, discrete multiplicity’ (23). Massey argues that representation itself is ‘an activity, a practice, an embedded engagement in the world of which it is a part’ (28). This is perhaps best expressed as the insoluble bond between space, time and representation where ‘representation is no longer a process of fixing, but an element in a continuous production; a part of it all, and itself constantly becoming’ (28). This supports Corner’s (1999) contention that:

… the unfolding agency of mapping is most effective when its capacity for description also sets the conditions for new eidetic and physical worlds to emerge… mappings discover new worlds within past and present ones; they inaugurate new grounds upon the hidden traces of a living context (214).
The ambiguous authority of maps, based on selective decisions about what to emphasise and what to ignore, shows that ‘even after we mark the page, there are blanks beyond the borders of what we create, and blanks within what we create’ (Turchi 2004: 29). This means no map, including Moreland: A poetic map, can ever be truly comprehensive. As Cosgrove notes, if a map were to recreate the world in its most full and infinite detail, then the map would not be necessary. Likewise, as an artistic contrivance, the writing of place can never recreate life as it is. It can only draw attention to a selectively organised generalisation of specific phenomena. While this is an undeniable limitation of the map, it also proffers opportunities for the making of other, different maps; maps that exploit the politics that underpin representational practices as a legitimate subject for further reflexive cartographic investigation.

**Conclusion**

As the maps of Moreland included in this chapter demonstrate, place is a culturally constructed manifestation of the infinite possibilities of space. Such maps reveal that place can also be regarded as an imaginary construct, a projection of simultaneity, a palimpsest of ‘stories so far’. In these ways, the maps analysed in this chapter illustrate what the primary strategic purposes of Western maps are; that is, to organise spatial knowledge through various cartographic tools and techniques. In doing so, these maps highlight the intimate bond of the spatial and the temporal; space and the qualities or values of that space associated with human activity, interest or purpose. In noting the difference between conventional Western cartographic practices and the possibilities afforded by different kinds of maps, such as those proposed by the indigenous Woi Wurrong and Kuril people, it is possible to conceive of other alternative kinds of maps. These include the maps of memory, experience and imagination that transform ‘blank’ space into the richly storied construct perceived as place thus redefining the possibilities of representing Moreland on the page and beyond the conventional cartographic grid.
In this view, mapmakers are just one of the writers of place, and what they write is a narrative as much of their own making as anything verifiably objective or ‘true’. Maps not only describe place, they make place in much the same way that fictions present us with alternate worlds and points of view. Harley’s (1989) claim that the writer is cartographer is therefore premised on the shared practice of purposeful omission, compression; of subjective perspective, orientation, and emphasis; and the creation of representational illusions. Turchi (2004) concurs, arguing that mapping is a ‘potent metaphor’ for the ways in which writers practise precisely this kind of ‘selection and omission; convention (adherence to and departure from); inclusion and order; shape, or matters of form; and the balance of intuition and intention’ (25). As a corollary of writing practice, it could be said that as we understand maps, we also understand our culture. In Turchi’s words:

We chart our cities, so we chart ourselves. To chart the external world is to reveal ourselves – our priorities, our interests, our desires, our fears, our biases. We believe we’re mapping our knowledge, but in fact we’re mapping what we want – and what we want others – to believe. In this way every map is a reflection of the individual or group that creates it. By ‘reading’ a map, by studying it, we share, however temporarily, those beliefs. This explains why we can enjoy, collect, and hang on our walls maps of places we’ve never been and never expect to go – even places that don’t exist. Because the map takes us there (146).

In short, maps are, have, and continue to be, integral to the way spatial knowledge is organised and how we might imagine new possibilities for where we are, where we have come from and where we might yet find ourselves.
Walking Moreland

Introduction

Figure 14: Shadow of author and her dog taken while walking Moreland.
All enquiries must begin somehow and mine began with walking.

I start by setting out the door and down along Bourke Street (Figure 14). At Victoria Street, I turn right retracing a path that I’ve walked countless times before, on my way to and from other places. If you pay attention, you might notice that there’s something intensely lyrical about the metronomic rhythm of footfalls keeping time with the inhalation and exhalation of breath; the ventricular rhythms of the heart; as if walking is the cadence of time itself. As an embodied practice, perhaps walking more than any other gait recovers the ‘profound relationship between body, world and imagination’ (Solnit 2002: 250). Poetically speaking, walking generates a musicality of being full of meter and rhyme in ‘the chorus of idle footsteps’ (de Certeau 1984: 97).

Walking belongs to a long tradition of writing practice. Of all possible locomotion, it has — and continues to be — a popular trope for writers, from philosophers to poets. Snaking through history, walking traces a hereditary line of scholarly thought all the way back to Aristotle who is said to have preferred to walk as he taught. Indeed, it was this practice that gave rise to the name of his peripatetic school; peripatetic being derived from the colonnades or peripatos that surrounded the Lyceum where he taught in Athens. Peripatetic is now used to mean itinerant; to meander or wander. Arguably, it is within this tradition that walking finds particular favour with writers. For example, in Wanderlust: A history of walking, writer and independent scholar Solnit (2002) points out that the philosopher Kierkegaard was famed for his endless roaming, while Rousseau once wrote; ‘I can only meditate when I am walking. When I stop, I cease to think; my mind only works with my legs’. Likewise, walking is equally entrenched in a poetic tradition. From William Wordsworth to Charles Baudelaire and Elizabeth Bishop, images abound of the poet striding forth through space in an intimate bond of mind and body (Solnit 2002: 104-117). Both literally and figuratively, poets’ walking opened up new vistas manifesting themselves in different ways of making new connections, turns of phrase and lyrical refrains. As Walter Benjamin (1979) writes:

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7 Jen Webb attributes the link between philosophy and poetry to ‘their shared attention to epistemology’ (2012: 9).
Only he who walks the road on foot learns the power it commands, and of how, from the very scenery that for the flier is only the unfurled plain, it calls forth distances, belvederes, clearings, prospects at each of its turns like a commander deploying soldiers at a front (50).

Within this context, it could be argued that the act of walking gives shape to thought itself, as if a step equates to a word, and each subsequent step another word that follows the former, in much the same way as a writer builds a sentence. Indeed, the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl (1931) argued that the walking body ‘is our experience of what is always here, and the body in motion experiences the unity of all its parts as the continuous ‘heres’ that move toward and through the various ‘theres’ (Solnit 2002: 27). For de Certeau (1984), within ‘the framework of uttering… the walker creates a near and a far, a here and a there’, which, as a ‘locatory fact’ sets up the preconditions for a ‘rhetoric of walking’ (107). As one walks, one ‘speaks’ thus corroborating de Certeau’s claim that walkers are the ‘practitioners’ of the city ‘whose bodies [and utterances] follow the cursive and strokes of an urban ‘text’ they write without reading’ (102). But how does walking do this? Is it the way that walking links spaces to make places? Or is it that, as an embodied research practice, walking generates its own knowledge? And what is the relationship of the urban walker to a citified environment? How is this realised and resolved in poetic writing practice? Do different kinds of walking produce different results? Does walking offer a specific spatial and temporal experience of space that offers alternative ways of thinking and writing about place?

In Moreland: A poetic map, walking is more than a means of conducting background research. It is also foregrounded as a subject in its own right. It is a theme that I return to on an iterative basis, inspiring the form of several poems based on the imaginative reconstruction of actual walks I’ve taken.
The purpose of this chapter is to outline how, in Moreland: A poetic map, I have used walking as a research methodology to create a poetics of place based on experience, memory and imagination. It is not intended to provide a complete history of walking\(^8\) or a comprehensive critique of walking theory\(^9\), but rather a kind of ‘road map’ for understanding how walking, as both a theoretical and creative technique, has been applied within this project. In part one, I define some key terms and consider how walking might be regarded as a culturally specific practice that transforms otherwise undifferentiated space into a personally significant place (Massey 2005), and what relationship this has to writing. In part two, I outline how, as a research methodology, walking Moreland might be regarded as a kind of *mobile ethnography* that facilitates an embodied knowledge of place through a range of sensory entanglements that ultimately lead to *ambulatory knowing*. In part three, I briefly turn my attention to walking in the post-industrial city and what implications this has for an urbanised perception and participatory ‘practice’ of place. Finally, in part four, I reflect on an alternative walking practice based on the tradition of the urban *îlîneur* and how this kind of walking translates into a poetics of place based on the physical, mental and imaginative imprimaturs of the urban walker.

\(^8\) For an expansive history of walking, see Rebecca Solnit, ‘Wanderlust: A history of walking’ (2002).

Part one: Preamble to an enquiry

As I walk Moreland it becomes clear that Moreland isn’t one place but many. In fact, the more I walk the more I come to understand that place is an abstract entity of multiple spaces loosely configured within a meshwork of cultural constructions that are neither fixed or discrete – a nebulous assemblage that collectively forms a densely woven fabric whose boundaries are never clear, whose perimeters are always blurred, changing and multiplying over time.
For the purposes of researching *Moreland: A poetic map*, walking is defined as an intervention between the body and the spaces it traverses. According to Ingold (2007), walking is ‘the most fundamental mode by which living beings, both human and non-human, inhabit the earth’ (81). As an embodied practice, Ingold argues that walking is a metaphor describing the ‘epithelial, connective, muscular and nervous tissue’ that resolves body, place and knowledge into a meaningful structure based on being and, more specifically, of being in place. For Solnit (2002), ‘each walk moves through space like a thread through fabric, sewing it together into a continuous experience’ (XV). In turn, de Certeau (1984) contends that the ‘act of walking is to the urban system what the act of speaking… is to language’ and, as such, the ‘first definition of walking thus seems to be a space of uttering’ (106).

These definitions rely on the premise that place – like writing – is essentially a construction non-existent in and of itself; that is, it is produced, not given (Massey 2005). Indeed, the philosopher Simon Critchley (2005) contends that ‘all possible orderings of reality are fictional’ (58). The concept of place might thus be regarded a series of spaces that only gain form through an act that connects one space to another. However, like footsteps, spaces are a series, but a series without number; ‘they cannot be counted because each unit is qualitative in nature… The motions of walking are spatial creations. They link sites one to the other’ (de Certeau 1984: 105). Within this context, walking operates as an embodied syntax for making place. For example, the route of one walk will structure a series of spaces differently to the route of another walk. Likewise, the narrative produced by one walker will not be the same as another’s. As a research method for poetic practice, walking to generate utterance recalls what Critchley (2005) describes as ‘the relation between thought and things or mind and world’ (4). According to Critchley, this view:

...permits us to see fiction as fiction, to see the fictiveness or contingency of the world. It reveals the idea of order which we imaginatively impose on
reality. Plainly stated, the world is what you make [my emphasis] of it. The fact of the world is a factum: a deed, an act, an artifice (58).

Walking connects thought and being to produce place from what Massey (2005) describes as a ‘continua’ of movement that links ‘discrete’ spaces into a series of ‘becomings’ (22-29). Within this context, walking is not simply ‘walking’. As several theorists have noted, it is a culturally constructed technique (Ingold 2010; Massey 2005). For example, as cultural theorist Brian Morris (2006) points out, ‘everyday life is not everywhere the same...[the everyday] is produced and experienced at the intersection of many fields by embodied individuals’ (691). Walking enlivens us to the diversity of how place is experienced by different beings, in different ways, at different times. It is precisely the act of ‘going on foot’ and engaging both bodily and imaginatively with the everyday that, in the words of philosopher John Dewey (2005), empowers the walker as writer with ‘the ability to transfer these values from one field of experience to another, to attach them to the objects of our common life and by imaginative insight make these objects poignant and momentous’ (118).
Part two: A mobile ethnography

Figure 16: Couple using a Sydney Road pedestrian crossing.
Every walk for every walker tells a different story. Walking provides a medium for linking experience to place and place to people. It gives shape, form and context to the way in which the walker makes sense of the world and the body’s relationship to its entanglements within it. For the researcher, walking figuratively offers the ‘green light’ for proceeding with an alternative ethnographic practice that acknowledges the sensorially, embodied and mobile nature of how we ‘make’ place by moving through the world.

In researching Moreland: A poetic map, walking has been a key strategy for collecting material, establishing themes, recognising patterns and identifying contrasts and contradictions. As a conscious and deliberate practice of ‘noticing’, my walking might be described as an ambulatory ‘reconnaissance’ thus transforming a simple everyday act into a ‘mobile’ or ‘itinerant’ ethnography (Schein 2013 cited in Soderstrom et al. 2013). As an embodied practice, I have used walking as a practical research intervention to bring to life the emotional and sensual geographies of place (Sheller and Urry 2006) that I have subsequently re-imagined within a personal poetics of place.

Walking activates the deeply intra-subjective relationship between perceiving beings and their environment. While this kind of intra-subjectivity is a fertile source for the creative writer, it represents a number of challenges to traditional academic objectivity [207-208]. As a research practice, it demonstrates ‘the complexity and ambiguity of the role of the researcher in undertaking embodied, participatory research’ (Lewis 2015: 349). It also suggests that the way we make sense of place is as much about measurable, objective and physical phenomena as it is about the sensed, felt or imagined. That is, how we perceive place is not so much a ‘fact’ but a subjective experience. As we walk, we effectively bind these experiences together to create place in the image of our own elaborate, imaginatively constructed and personally specific ‘fiction’.

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10 I use the term ‘fiction’ here in the sense of something invented and not as something fallacious or untrue.
Conceptualised as a research methodology, walking invokes what anthropologist and ethnographic scholar Sarah Pink (2009) describes as ‘a multisensoriality of experience, perception, knowing and practice’ (1). In Moreland: A poetic map, I have incorporated walking as an interpretation of sensory ethnography. Pink (2011) defines sensory ethnography as a method that accounts for how sensory experience ‘is integral both to the lives of people who participate in… research and to how we ethnographers practice our craft’ (95). Essentially, Pink argues that knowledge is created through ‘specific experiential engagements with physical environments’ (95). Sensory ethnography is based on the premise that knowledge isn’t simply something we receive; it is something we make through our capacity as sensory beings. As Ingold (2010) writes:

… ‘transmission’ is quite the wrong word to describe the ways in which people come to know what they do… knowledge is indeed made… in the sense implied when we say of people that they ‘make their way’ in the world. It is not a construction, governed by cognitive mechanisms of one sort or another, but an improvisatory movement – of ‘going along’ or ‘wayfaring’ – that is open-ended and knows no final destination (122).

Proponents of sensory ethnography argue that embodied research practices, such as walking, foster sensory entanglements with ‘material, immaterial and social environments in personally, socially and culturally specific ways’ (Pink 2007: 240). The application of sense in this practice is used to ‘invoke the complexities implied by an anthropological use of the phrase a sense of place as a means of place making. In this way, sensory ethnography seeks to test the claim that ‘as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place’ (Feld & Basso 1996: 91).

As a method for developing a poetic map of Moreland, sensory ethnography permits the writer to draw on subjectivity as a legitimate research practice. While the knowledge generated by personal experience is clearly not ‘scientific’, it does belong to a phenomenological domain,
which facilitates what cultural theorist and interdisciplinary scholar Tania Lewis (2015) describes as a ‘multi-sensory approach to ethnography that takes into account senses of smell, feel, and sound’ (357) as well as ‘a haptic relationship with the environment’ (Sparkes 2009 cited in Lewis 2015: 357). This not only allows the writer to act on place, but place to act on the writer. As a result, the sensations produced by proprioceptive engagements with physical environments (through things such as surfaces and weather) become the source of new knowledge with the potential to inspire different, and perhaps surprising, ways of thinking about place.

In effect, walking as a mobile and sensory ethnography employs what Ingold (2010) has termed ambulatory knowing. Like sensory ethnography, ambulatory knowing is predicated on the premise that knowledge is first and foremost a function of embodied experience and that walking in particular is one way to understand the world as part of an immense, complex and knotted ‘entanglement or meshwork of lines in movement’ (Ingold 2007: 93). As Ingold (2007) writes:

> To be a place, every somewhere must lie on one or several paths of movement to and from places elsewhere. Life is lived, I reasoned, along paths, not just in places, and paths are lines of sorts. It is along paths, too, that people grow into a knowledge of the world around them, and describe this world in the stories they tell (2).

In Ingold’s (2007) view, ‘walking is a matter of laying a trail’ (16). These pathways thus become the ‘conduits of inscribed activity’ (79). By following these routes as part of an iterative everyday practice, the researcher-as-walker ‘traverse[s] and organise[s] places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them’ (de Certeau 1984: 6). However, as already noted, encounters with place are not the same everywhere. For example, walking Moreland, which is a densely built urban environment, is not the same as walking a rugged coast, rural idyll or vast desert. Walking Moreland invokes a particular kind of walking inspired by the
shape and mobilities afforded by a contemporary, post-industrial city. This is perhaps what feminist scholar Elizabeth Grosz (1999) means when she speaks of the ‘interface’ between body and city. According to Grosz, ‘the city is made and made over into a simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, ‘citified’, urbanised as a distinctly metropolitan body’ (242).

In Moreland: A poetic map, walking produces a very specific poetics of place that reveals ‘the ways in which bodies, subjects and built environments are interlinked and enmeshed’ (Morris 2004: 676). As people shape cities, cities shape people. Thus, the kind of knowing that walking Moreland produces cannot help but be informed by the shape and character of the city itself.
Part three: Walking in the post-industrial city

Figure 17: An ostensibly ‘shared’ pathway along the Upfield railway, which, by design, practice and social convention, tends to favour the trajectories of bike riders over pedestrians.
As I reach the corner of Victoria Street and Sydney Road, I’m reminded of how radically the urban form of the post-industrial city has configured and re-configured our perception of and embodied engagement with place. Little more than a hundred years ago, horses, carts and feet dominated the movement of bodies in Moreland. These have now been replaced by trains, trams, trucks, cars, motorbikes, scooters and skateboarders, all existing in a mobile hierarchy negotiated on a currency of velocity and mass that renders the pedestrians who remain as biological bodies vulnerable and frequently at risk (Figure 17). The post-industrial space of Moreland thus demands a ‘vigorous and multi-dimensional account of the complex manner in which bodies, power, mobility and urban forms intersect within the contemporary city’ (Morris 2004: 681).

Industrialisation radically reconfigured the relationship of walkers to their environment. The construction of industrialised cities created new divisions between homes, civic space and places of work, forever changing the way that the body moves about these social constructions. This shift in the body’s relationship to space was also played out on the written page. For example, literary theorist Franco Moretti (2005) has demonstrated that the circular narratives of village life, where protagonists once wandered about on foot from location to location, have been superseded in the industrial and post-industrial age by what he refers to as ‘hub and spoke plotlines’, which mimic the changing shape and character of cities and new forms of urban mobilities they have subsequently engendered (35-64). However, not only did industrialisation see the roaming body replaced by what might be called a ‘directional’ one journeying ‘in and out’ of designated activity centres, it also restricted the body through the increasing privatisation of previously public spaces. As a result, the places where corporeal bodies might once have roamed have been reconfigured, creating new circumscriptions for the exploration and, therefore, knowledge of place (Debord 1956).

In the post-industrial era, the inhabitants of modern cities increasingly privilege covering more distance in less time than the other way round (Grosz 1999; Ingold 2007; Sheller & Urry 2006). Once the primary mode of moving bodies, walking was rapidly and unceremoniously displaced in the post-industrial era by the temporal efficiencies of trams, trains, automobiles, and
airplanes\textsuperscript{11}. In the early twentieth century the footsteps of walkers, like the clatter of horses’ hooves, were silenced by these faster, more efficient modes of mass transport, thus marking a radical re-thinking of the relationship between space and time (Cosgrove 2005: 38). During this same period in Moreland, farmlands and other open spaces were gradually quarried away to make room for the ever-increasing volumes of private, non-pedestrian traffic. Footpaths and other public thoroughfares were instated to control the movement of pedestrian bodies and promote the unimpeded transit of mechanical transportation. Over time, existing cobble-stoned carriageways were widened and their pitched surfaces covered with concrete, asphalt and other smooth aggregates to accommodate the passage of the rolling wheel over the percussive traffic of the walking foot. Most of the ornate Victorian verandahs skirting Sydney Road and Lygon Street were removed to make way for the vertical passage of trucks, buses and trams. The evolving shape of Moreland as a modern post-industrial city has, quite literally, changed the very rhythm of everyday mobility (Edensor 2012; Ingold 2010). In doing so, the way an urban walker might perceive Moreland and experience not only its surfaces but also its ‘tempo’ and ‘pulses’ (Simmel 1997) has also been irrevocably altered (Figures 18 and 19).

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{11} Taken from the Latin ‘pedester’, a noun meaning ‘to go by foot’, pedestrian has long had connotations in English of ‘plain’, ‘dull’, ‘monotonous’, ‘boring’, ‘uninspired’ and ‘unexciting’. In writing cultures, ‘pedestrian’ is used to imply the ‘prosaic’, a euphemism for the ‘everyday’, the ‘uneducated’ and the ‘un-poetic’.
Figure 18: Horse trams; corner Sydney Road and Bell Street (1910). Note the prevalence of pedestrians and the way they quite comfortably occupy the road space. They do this despite the lack of road signs, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings. To the far left of the image, you can see an example of the wide verandahs common to Moreland’s high streets until after the Second World War.
Figure 19: Corner of Sydney Road and Victoria Street looking north towards Coburg in 2015. In contrast to Figure 18, in this image there is a notable absence of walking bodies in relation to the number of private vehicles and certainly none occupying the road itself. A bike lane has been installed, but outside of peak hour clearway times, it is functionally redundant due to the parking rights of cars over the passage of bicycles. A range of traffic control devices including traffic lights, street signs and painted markers are also evident. The wide verandahs have also been removed and replaced with narrow awnings.
Today the passage of the urban walker is disrupted by vehicular traffic and punctuated by intersections, kerbsides, and traffic lights. An abundance of road signs, advertisements and graffiti operate as a series of semantic disruptions that further impact the pedestrian traveller’s experience of place (Figure 20).

Roadways, painted lines, and the growing footprint of private spaces also seek to limit and control the flow of pedestrian bodies (Figure 21). The urbanised city sets up a contest between ‘designers’ and ‘users’ as it seeks to tell us not only where we might go but also when and at what speed we might do it (de Certeau 1984).
Figure 21: Barriers and signs re-routing pedestrians from a public footpath during the construction of a private apartment development on Victoria Street.
These changes in the temporal and spatial scale of cities, and the ways in which the walking body is encouraged to move about them, cannot help but influence how we come to know and experience urban environments such as Moreland. As the superstructure on which the infrastructure of place is written, the very design of cities dictates the grammar of not only walking the city but also of writing it. As Solnit (2002) observes:

A city is a language, a repository of possibilities, and walking is the act of speaking that language, of selecting from those possibilities. Just as language limits what can be said, architecture limits where one can walk, but the walker invents other ways to go (213).

Solnit’s claim can be understood in two ways. In a literal sense, human walkers can trespass or take short cuts (Figure 22).
Figure 22: Fleming Park, Brunswick East. This path created by users of a local park illustrates the contest between ‘designers’ and ‘users’ within an urban context. Given the opportunity, it is clear that walking bodies prefer to ‘go their own way’ rather than follow a prescribed route.
For example, the urban traceur (or traceuse) practicing the highly physical urban sport of parkour may scale buildings, fences and stairways in unusual, creative and often dangerous ways. Likewise, other ‘more-than-human’ walkers such as cats, dogs, and birds, routinely transgress the architectural nomenclature of the citified environment. However, (and especially in terms of researching Moreland: A poetic map) these transgressions can also be metaphorical. As creative writer, researcher and scholar Jen Webb (2012) observes, walking, like writing, allows us to ‘see a little differently, to think a little differently, and thus to generate new ways of knowing and of doing’ (6). The question is, what particular kind of walking allows the writer to do this?

**Part four: Wayfaring and the urban flâneur**

*Figure 23: Two footprints pointing in different directions imprinted in concrete on the Victoria Street footpath between Brett Street and Nash Streets.*
My walking is of two kinds: one straight on end to a definite goal at a round pace; one, objectless, loitering, and purely vagabond. In the latter state, no gypsy on earth is a greater vagabond than myself; it is so natural to me, and strong with me, that I think I must be the descendent, at no great distance, of some irreclaimable tramp.

~ Charles Dickens

As I set out along Sydney Road on my way to nowhere in particular, I consider these words of Dickens’ as relevant today as they were over 150 years ago. Then, the loose collection of new townships which make up the present city of Moreland were booming with the untold riches of Victoria’s gold rush. Now, as for Dickens, some of my journeys are purposive; trips counted out in passing street numbers; the diminishing distance between landmarks equated to a temporal economy measured in boot-beat beats; quickest routes to the supermarket, the train station, a social rendezvous; the perfunctory movement between destinations. Then there are the strolls of leisure, the dog walks, walks to clear one’s head, meandering through the heart of Moreland randomly bending left and right on whim; each twist and turn carrying me alternatively north, east, south and west along footpaths, absently jaywalking from one side to the other over curbs, past driveways and into disused laneways carpeted with weeds and the changing litanies of everyday debris.

As a counter-point to the rise of the post-industrial city, this same period also saw the birth of the flâneur, a particular kind of city walker made famous by Benjamin (1978) through his Parisian arcade projects of the early 20th century. As a reflective walker himself, Benjamin advocated the art of ‘idling’. He eschewed modes of rapid transportation as a means of moving about the city in favour of a much slower gait that enabled him to roam and enmesh himself within the urban environment. Benjamin famously described this kind of peripatetic walking as ‘botanising on the asphalt’, a method that he employed to create poetry from the everyday (Dobson 2002). Ingold (2007) has also made the observation that ‘the walker proceeds by plantigrade steps impressing on the ground a sequence of discrete footprints rather than a continuous trail’ (92) and later likened the practice of walking to storytelling in terms of its ability to ‘dram an entire thread of antecedent events from the examination of say, a single footprint’ (Ingold 2010: 134). Indeed, art
critic, writer and painter John Berger (1982) writes that no story is ‘like a wheel’ whose ‘contact with the road is continuous’:

Stories walk, like animals and men. And their steps are not only between narrated events but between each sentence, sometimes each word. Every step is a stride over something not said (284-285).

In Moreland: A poetic map, I have imagined each step as a space along a continuum of spaces while each walk is the act that braids them together as ‘places’. In sequence, these imaginary ‘footprints’ represent a series of signs and signifiers to which I have attached my own knowledge as a means of actualising a poetics of place. The metaphorical nature of this process is described by Webb (2012) who writes:

Metaphors do not operate in a vacuum, but rather transfer knowledge and understandings along routes that already exist in our social and cognitive spheres, by means of what are often unexpected detours. Their ‘magic’ is in their ability to link spaces (concepts) that are not adjacent, that are not manifestly related and, in affording these links, to bring the new into social awareness (6).

Based on these ideas, in researching Moreland: A poetic map, I have focused on two key types of walking. The first type belongs to what Ingold (2007) calls occupational movement. Occupational movement has been theorised by Ingold as the mobile trajectories that follow the most direct path between one point and another for a specific purpose. These trips are often characterised by a mode of transport in which movement itself is an interval, an interruption between destinations. Properly speaking, occupational movement is quantitative and privileges temporal
economy over spatial awareness. Occupational movement focuses on moving between one place and the next by the quickest possible means (Figures 24a and 24b).

These are the walks often repeated that belong to an iterative everyday practice that enables the passerby to relive, rehearse and revise personal narratives. They are the walks where roads, corners, buildings, trees, animals, people and other ephemera such as scents and sounds become the site of inscribed knowledge, experience and imagination. As sites of personal affect, such phenomena provoke a metaphorical dialogue between walker and place. In this way, place becomes a kind of rhetorical device enabling discourse between its constitutive elements and the personal memories the walker invests in them. Morris (2004) understands this two-way relationship between the walker and the city as a moving away from more dialectical models of bodies and cities where one is privileged over the other towards a notion of more ‘contingent and contextual assemblages’ (692). In addition to being an affective practice, this view suggests
that walking produces place not simply as a series of pathways but through the convergence of multiple punctuated nodes of experience, which, in turn, work to form a complex networked whole.

For example, while walking Moreland, I connect memory to place and place to memory in a kinetic interplay reminiscent of the *method of loci*. The method of loci was a mnemonic technique practiced widely by Roman and Greek orators to recall narrative sequences from memory. As a literary practice, this method involves taking an imagined ‘walk’ along a path populated by a series of locations or ‘loci’ where each locus is associated with a particular idea or story in such a way that things become not ‘objects but tropes’ (Ingold 2007: 90). In much the same way that writing might be thought of as ‘a set of signposts, direction markers or stepping stones that enable [readers] to find their way’ through a literary landscape (Ingold 2007: 16), the method of loci invigorates those markers with an array of meanings that the observer associates them with. In much the same way, as I walk Moreland, the places I pass evoke spectres of the past in whose ghostly imprint I note the passage of time and the changes it brings via a ‘strange toponomy… floating above the city like a musty geography of suspended meaning’ (de Certeau 1984: 111).

The second type of walking I’ve used in researching *Moreland: A poetic map* is what Ingold (2007) describes as *habitational* (Figure 25). Habitational movement privileges ‘being in place’ as an embodied experience as opposed to occupational movement, which is primarily about ‘moving between places’ without regard to the qualitative potential of the spaces it traverses. In contrast to occupational movement, habitational movement values spatial awareness over temporal economy.
Habitational movement is more akin to the kind of walking favoured by Benjamin and other urban flâneurs from James Joyce to Virginia Woolf. While sharing many features with the occupational walking I have discussed above, habitational walking tends to be of a diffuse character more in line with being itself. This kind of walking facilitates the nexus between environment, noticing and doing in a kind of ‘unthinking thinking’ in what may be regarded as a liminal or in-between state of consciousness that allows the mind to inhabit a moment as opposed to merely occupying it. It is slower in pace, more spontaneous and less predictable. It is the walking that enables unexpected and chance encounters along unplanned routes. It facilitates an examination of everyday minutiae ranging from the temporary tableaux of household rubbish and street art to found ‘objects’ like dead rats and shopping trolleys. Writer Edward White (2008) describes this type of flânerie as pedantic pathology. A feature of this type of flânerie might be regarded as a forensic attention to detail not only of the outer world but also of the inner thus
recalling surrealist poet and frequent flâneur Andre Breton’s (1987) assertion that ‘only a precise reference to the emotional state of the subject to whom such things happen can furnish any basis for their evaluation’ (39).

In Moreland: A poetic map, I use each of these techniques to explore walking as an opportunity to figuratively wander off the prescribed city grid through embodied engagements based on experience, memory and imagination. As the basis for writing a poetics of place, these engagements demonstrate that ‘space and place are not merely inert of neutral features of the built environment’ but must be activated by the ‘rhetorical’ practice of users (Morris 2004: 677) as exemplified by the walking body.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined how, in the making of Moreland: A poetic map, I have employed walking as both a research method (a mobile or ambulatory ethnography) and a way of creating a poetics of place. I have suggested that the process of writing Moreland based on walking demonstrates that place is more than a passive by-product of everyday life. It involves a collection of active and performative strategies based on the moving body’s sensory entanglements within an urban environment. Walking thus becomes a medium not only for facilitating everyday encounters but for producing and writing them. This articulation is made possible by the kinetic interplay of mind and body afforded by the various architectures and other human and non-human constituents of the city who effectively become the repositories of an embodied memory that allow the walker to write the city in personally specific ways that are not ‘classificatory but storied, not totalising and synoptic but open-ended and exploratory’ (Ingold 2010). Not only does walking give shape to thought, the walker is ‘in effect, a mental map-maker’ whose perambulations produce a structural representation of place in which walking itself is the
connective thread that reminds us that ‘the motions of the mind cannot but traced, but those of the feet can’ (Ingold 2010: 134).
Seeing Moreland

Introduction

Bourke Street (Figure 26) is a short, narrow, crowded street packed with small, slightly crooked houses that frequently suffers from a chronic lack of car parking. It is lined with chinaberry trees whose bulging roots push up the footpath creating a miniaturised topography of cresting hills and sunken valleys. Above, branches interlace a cats-craddle with power lines in a messy tangled web. You could say that, visually speaking, it is a microcosm of the boisterous, cacophonous ‘more-ness’ that pervades the wider city of Moreland. It might also be understood as a synecdoche of the tireless ebb and flow of change and changefulness intrinsic to this vibrant and vital urban constituency. While the architectures of these transformations are less monumental than those of the aggressive proliferation of mid-density high-rise apartments sprouting mushroom-like along Moreland’s main transit corridors, they are equally unremitting. On Bourke Street, change is most visible in the buying and selling of houses, the revolving-door procession of renters moving in and out; the appearance and disappearance of cars, bikes, dogs and cats; the incremental wearing down of surfaces, fading paints and peeling facades, not to mention the cyclical, seasonal change of plants and flowers. Each of these moving, evolving parts is evidence
for the claim that place isn’t a static entity but a dynamic one in a persistent flux of shifting configurations – large, small, and often undocumented (Figures 27.1-3).

Figure 27.1: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.
Figure 27.2: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.

Figure 27.3: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.
In effect, Bourke Street reflects Massey’s (2005) observation that place is not a fixed locality but an *event,* something that perpetually *takes place.* Likewise, Pink (2011) theorises that *place-as-event* is open, shifting and best understood as part of an active, moving or *performative* practice. As Massey (2005), Cresswell (2004), and Edensor (2012), among others, have demonstrated, neither time, space nor any other single entity makes ‘place’, although their coefficients, as part of an endlessly moving, shifting orchestration, do. Within these parameters, *place-as-event* might be best described as a meshwork of human and more-than-human objects, cultures, material and immaterial things that come together as actors within an assemblage of laminated narratives inscribed in, on and over one another [226-227]. In this view, place is a living artifact defined by the relationships between its constituent parts and the forces that work together to shape, change and transform one another. It is the site of constant *becoming* apprehended at the intersection of practice, perception and practical knowledge (Creswell 2004).

It was precisely from observing these everyday transformations on Bourke Street that I began to devise a research strategy for *Moreland: A Poetic map* that could be applied to the wider project of mapping Moreland in a more-than-conventional way. It was from Bourke Street that everyday activities such as going to work, walking the dog or visiting the supermarket led to *noticing,* which ultimately led to taking photographs and producing writing based on those photographs as acts of *place-making.* Bourke Street is important to *Moreland: A poetic map* because, in the words of Turchi (2004), ‘just as mapmakers have traditionally put their homeland at the centre, the part of the world we know best, the place or places we live, loom largest’ (137).

This chapter is about my own visual engagement with Moreland. However, ‘seeing’ place in *Moreland: A poetic map* is about more than the strictly visual. It is also about my own thoughts, feelings and imaginative projections. Seeing is a point-of-view. Seeing is about revealing what is hidden, obscured or *unseen,* about *uncovering* or *recovering* what might’ve been discarded or
forgotten. It is also about making sense of the partial, episodic and ambiguous, and about making connections and understanding the relationships between ideas, objects and concepts. As part of my research practice, seeing Moreland in these ways thus involves a process of visualisations based on a collection of experimental interventions and strategies. In this chapter, I will demonstrate what these techniques are and how I have deployed them in Moreland: A poetic map as part of a multi-pronged, visually-based research methodology that opened up new ways of picturing what a poetic map of Moreland might look like.

To do this, in part one I discuss the role of visual ethnography in Moreland: A poetic map and outline how photography has been incorporated as a methodology for collecting and collating a body of primary research data on which to model a creative writing practice. In part two, I examine how an improvised strategy of subjective everyday noticing led to a poetic appropriation of ‘seeing’ Moreland based on place, memory and imagination (Pink 2009) and consider how this data can ‘generate and convey knowledge about change’ (Gibson 2010: 7) in order to see Moreland in more diverse and multiple ways. In part three, I outline how seeing might be regarded as a participatory practice of place making before, in part four, I demonstrate how I have applied visual techniques to creatively map the dynamic, nebulous assemblage that is Moreland within a fractured poetics of place.
Part one: Visual ethnography as research methodology

Figure 28: An informal ethnographic encounter on Blythe Street. The subject’s face has been redacted to protect their privacy.
Field notes 1:

During one of my many walks through Moreland photographing buildings, rubbish, rubble and lazy cats, this time along Blythe Street, I noticed that I was being observed by an elderly woman wearing a headscarf and a long, colourful skirt. Thinking that she might’ve thought I was some kind of criminal in the process of casing out her local neighbourhood, I waved and nodded. She nodded back and I continued taking photographs. As I moved along the footpath, she slowly started to wander down the street in my direction. It wasn’t long before she caught up with me and said something to me in what I think was Turkish, but since I don’t speak Turkish or whatever language she was speaking, I can’t be sure. Instead, I smiled and nodded and showed her my photos.

I’ll never have any way of knowing what she thought of them, or what she thought of me taking pictures of such random objects in her street, but it was then, while we were both nodding, smiling and pointing in the way that people who don’t share a common tongue do, that she pointed at my camera, herself and then me. At first, I wasn’t sure if I’d understood her properly or not, but after confirming what I thought she was suggesting, I took this photograph of her (Figure 28). Once it was done, she patted me on the arm, turned and shuffled back down the street, occasionally pausing to inspect a front garden or simply gaze up at the sky.

From a research perspective, seeing Moreland through a photographic lens is part of an established – if experimental – sub-set of ethnographic field practice known as visual ethnography. In terms of a research method primarily concerned with the way in which urban spaces are constituted, proponents of visual ethnography (Ingold 2010; Pink 2007, 2011, 2013) maintain that visual research practices invite ‘specific experiential engagements with physical environments’ to produce more perceptive and affective modes for describing the ‘phenomenology of place’ (Pink 2011: 93-95). Writing about amateur photographic practice and the ‘collective practices of representation and the constitution of place’, Pink (2011) argues that as a research intervention, visual ethnography allows the researcher to imagine and create representations of their urban environment’ (95).

Within this context amateur photography in Moreland: A poetic map is ‘part of the perceptual and experiential activity’ that enables the researcher to ‘conceptualise the temporary convergences of
people, things, discourses and more’ (Pink 2011: 93). In keeping with this view, the purpose of photography in Moreland: A poetic map is to document the ‘material, immaterial and social environments’ of Moreland in ‘personally, socially and culturally specific ways’ (Pink 2012: 240). Within this approach, photography both provokes and facilitates an alternative and experiential ‘picture’ of place that cannot be seen simply by ‘looking’. The image provides a reference point, but it is not in and of itself the ‘story’. The story resides elsewhere, both within the subjective experience of the researcher’s authorial ‘I’ and between the ephemeral intersection of space and time. While photography evokes emotional and sensory responses, the image itself, no matter what sense of immediacy it creates, is always a superficial representation of a now-past moment that requires more than a visual record to make full sense of its unseen meaning. Meaning in this sense is understood as something that resides subjectively with the researcher in personally notional, mediated and discursive ways (Field notes 2).

Figure 29: Backyard ambient portrait, Bourke Street.
In Moreland: A poetic map, the photograph as research artefact provides a ‘bounded (even if porous at the edges) and mappable’ (Pink 2001: 93) representation of Moreland (see Figure B: Legend reference II in Moreland: A poetic map). Its incorporation within the poetic map visually anchors the topic of each map projection, which is then expanded in a combination of material metadata, poetic inscription and subjective narrative (see Figure B: Legend reference III, V and VI in Moreland: A poetic map). In this context, photography as praxis represents a research methodology where the image as documentary artefact not only provides evidence of the ethnographic enquiry but also suggests a range of alternative readings and interpretations based on critical observation and personal experience. Each photographic image implies a web of relational contexts, histories and experiences that impact the ways in which the image might be read. Regarded in this manner, photography as research evidence can be understood as embodying a certain degree of phenomenological autonomy. For example, as literary theorist and scholar Roland Barthes (2000) has argued, the instant a photograph is taken, it is disconnected from both the author and its original subject. It may preserve the resemblance or likeness of the original, but it is no longer the original nor can it ever be. It is immediately and permanently a
facsimile; a copy. As such, photography empowers phenomena with an existence seemingly independent of the singular subjectivity of the researcher. The photograph thus persists in and of itself, thereby critically distancing the creative practitioner as researcher from the objects of their enquiry and resultant creative work by providing an enduring reference point from which to frame, argue and calibrate different critical frameworks and analytical lenses within a variety of contexts, perspectives and points of view. According to writer Geoff Dyer (2005), the photograph is an ‘ongoing moment’ perpetually alive to reflexive, speculative and reflective interpretations. In Moreland: A poetic map, photographic practice thus provides a springboard for further spatial, political and historical readings by a range of different audiences.

While Barthes argues that the photograph has a certain autonomy in the world, photography (like other forms of ethnographic research) is inherently mediated by the subjectivity of the researcher. Just as writers and mapmakers practice selective inclusion and omission (Cosgrove 2005; Turchi 2011) [154-155], so the researcher as photographer makes decisions about what to include and exclude in any given image. They make decisions not only about composition, but what the very subject of the image is going to be. The result, as evident in Moreland: A poetic map, is a clustering of thematic preoccupations that, like maps, are not only partial but culturally and discursively constructed. In turn, they are characterised as much by what they show as by what they don’t show [250]. However, as a practical intervention, photography paradoxically provides an opportunity for recognising patterns and identifying themes through an iterative practice of everyday noticing that leads to a much deeper appreciation of the multiplicity and difference that is central to this project’s quest to see, map, and write the diverse, temporal, spatial and multiple points of view that constitute Moreland.
Part two: Everyday noticing and the subjectivity of ‘seeing’

While Moreland: A poetic map is dedicated to representing the abundant sense of multiplicities that exist within Moreland, it is impossible to separate what I, as the author of Moreland: A poetic map, photograph and how I compose a photograph from my own point of view. For these reasons, the routes I most iteratively travel and the spaces I most frequently inhabit naturally inform the thematic preoccupations of what I see and, subsequently, what I write. In this project, place and displacement, permanence and impermanence, constancy and inconstancy represent the recurrent dichotomies that pervade my analysis of Moreland. In the tradition of the flâneur, as photographer I become ‘an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitring, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes’ (Sontag 2002: 55).

The visual documentation of Moreland through the practice of visual flâneurie facilitates the noticing of change and changefulness of space over time by observing the ‘coeval multiplicity’ and ‘constitutive complexity’ that theorists, such as Massey (2005), argue are concomitant of place-as-event (8). In this way, photographing Moreland enables the researcher to ‘generate and convey knowledge about change’ (Gibson 2010: 7). Here, photographs not only provide evidentiary proof of ‘change in action’, they also allow the researcher to return to a transitory moment invariably erased by the changing nature of place-as-event (Field notes 3).
Field notes 3:

This photo (Figure 30) was taken in an old laneway that I frequently use to pass between Sydney Road and the Brunswick ‘Safeway’ supermarket. Once upon a time, it used to lead to a stable, one of the few existing reminders that horses and carts dominated the carrying wide of Moreland well before cars, trucks, motorbikes, bicycles and electric trams. Today it is a living, egalitarian gallery populated by an evolving procession of street art and graffiti from artless schoolboy tags to miraculous fully-fledged murals and catch-cries for different political causes.

Among the anonymity of all these visual authors, there is the work of one hand that I frequently notice popping up on the walls, fences and footpaths of Moreland only to be washed off, painted over or to simply fade away before appearing again somewhere else. The work is always an iteration of a slogan accompanied by an outline of the indigenous flag. It reminds us that the original Wurundjeri people and their culture have largely been erased from modern Moreland. Yet the author of this work refuses to let us forget or be rendered invisible, not allowing their art or history to be concreted, plastered or painted over. They demand that we take notice, insisting that we bear witness to the perpetual cycle displacement, of the connection between past and present that make up the DNA of this place called Moreland.
The photographs used in Moreland: A poetic map are contingent on everyday noticing. Everyday noticing is here defined as the conscious practice or method of observing everyday phenomena in a deliberate and overt way. In particular, it recovers everyday ephemera – the otherwise mundane, anodyne, and prosaic – from temporal or historical obscurity and re-appropriates them as legitimate objects for both critical and creative enquiry. For example, purposive everyday noticing can be a potent reminder of the irrepressible nature of change characteristic of contemporary, urbanised cities, such as Moreland. Since such places are neither static nor stable, photographs, and any accompanying literary commentary that ‘remembers’ them are both temporal and spatial artefacts. They are ‘not a description of the world as it is so much as an image in which the world is being made’ (Massey 2005: 5). What they reveal is that place is a configured abstraction possessing diverse layers or aspects apparent beneath the surface. The surfaces of the city – its peeling paint, cracking pavements and perpetual status as a continually built and re-built environment – reveal the equivalent of an archaeological subsection that provides the foundation for creating a storied history of place (Figures 31.1-3). Cultural geographer Tim Edensor (2012) visualises this in terms of a ‘speculative geological gaze’ with which to ‘reconstruct these long absent life-forms and the environment in which they were created as well as conjuring other unimaginably distant times and places’ (454).
Figure 31.1: Concrete lifting to reveal the bluestones and earth lying beneath.

Figure 31.2: Exposed layers of paint, render and brick.
In this way, everyday noticing operates as an ontological archaeology of place that depicts the propensity of cities like Moreland to construct, deconstruct, reconstruct, dispose and make anew. Simultaneously, glimpses of their temporal and spatial connections uncover the relationship between past and present and reveal new semantic possibilities through the lens of multiple material, social and cultural histories. As cultural geographer Louise Crewe (2011) remarks, our ‘attempts to manage, control and dispose of things are constantly challenged by the enduring fragments, vestiges, traces, and remnants of things that linger and haunt’ (28). When photographing Moreland it is impossible not to notice how place exists as a living palimpsest where one place in time occurs synchronously with others, scrubbed out, demolished or persisting in varying degrees of intactness (Figures 32.1-3).
Figure 32.1: Poster layers.

Figure 32.2: Painted layers.
Part three: Seeing as a participatory practice

Preserved through the process of photographic documentation, everyday noticing transforms what might otherwise be temporary observations into a semi-permanent record that rescues them from the vast visual wasteland of discarded imagery. In effect, photography transforms everyday noticing into a research act (albeit a subjective one), which, in turn, provides source material for imaginative, interpretative and creative practice [258-259]. In some ways, the photographic recovery of everyday phenomena through participative noticing is much like the ideological and economic practice of hard-rubbish *gleaning*. Once associated with the practice of picking-up leftovers from agricultural harvests, the term gleaning is now used to denote the re-appropriation of objects ‘found’ in public spaces such as roadsides and nature-strips, and Moreland is one of the few local government areas in the state of Victoria to legally sanction this practice (Lewis et al. 2014). In terms of creative practice, gleaning belongs to a tradition of re-contextualisation; that is, of taking something old or discarded in order to remake, remodel or re-envision it as something new (Figure 33).
In much the same way, as I notice Moreland as part of a subjective everyday practice, I am aware of participating in a process of poetic appropriation from which I ‘glean’ creative inspiration from the objects, people and materials that I encounter. Just as hard-rubbish gleaning is about ‘forming assemblages or “bundles” of inter-related “alternative” practices’ (Lewis et al. 2014: 8), the writer as gleaner is similarly engaged in the act of repurposing these everyday ‘found objects’ in possibly new and unexpected ways (Figure 34).
Everyday noticing facilitates this practice of creative gleaning by drawing attention to the buried, forgotten or simply unseen that form part of a colossal archaeological record that might otherwise remain hidden from view. Understood as a wider research methodology that includes visual ethnography and sensory embodiment [166], everyday noticing enables an imaginative reconstruction of time and place through creative assemblages. For example, as Pink (2013) explains, while ethnographic practices ‘purport to record’ or observe ‘reality’, in actual fact, ‘ethnographies themselves are constructed narratives’ (8). Citing interdisciplinary scholar James Clifford (1986), Pink (2013) describes ethnographies as ‘fictions’:

… not to claim that ethnographies are ‘opposed to truth’ or are ‘false’, but to emphasise how ethnographies cannot reveal or report on complete or whole
accounts of reality... they only tell part of the story... Not only is ethnography a constructed version of truth, but ethnographic truths are... inherently partial – uncommitted and incomplete (20).

‘How we see depends, in part, on what we want to see’ (Turchi 2004: 78) and what I see as I photograph Moreland is a reflection of my own personal perspective and point of view. Likewise, just as ethnographic ‘truths’ are storied, so is place. While simply noticing the everyday animates the inanimate with a type of agency [225-227], noticing can only purport to see part of the picture. As Gibson (2014) writes, while the individual as researcher ‘can curl and cinch together’ information, a ‘full system of knowledge’ is only possible with the participation of a ‘full community’, which is more ‘than any single person can receive and comprehend’ (150). Gibson not only highlights the inherent partiality of knowledge, he also draws our attention to the multiple gaps and absences that reside betwixt and between any single representation of place. This is why, according to Edensor (2012) ‘it is imperative to acknowledge them and allow them to provoke and proliferate the ways in which the city can be narrated, for behind each absence lies a story, whether historically apparent, fantastic or somewhere in-between’ (462).

In Moreland: A poetic map the connective tissue that holds these disparate points of view together is configurative in much the same way that narrative is. However, it may also be regarded as poetic in terms of the poiesis or making of the elastic arrangement between objects, language and the endless possibilities of their potential relationships. Translated into a writing practice, the combination of text and image lends itself to an ekphrastic tradition whereby a usually visual referent is semiotically decoded ‘as if it were a text, a web of verbal signs’ (Heffernan 1993: 1) [259-262]. This tradition allows the writer to not only see what is, but to imagine what is not; to fill the gaps between the seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown, and, ultimately, reveal place in hitherto unthought-of ways. In effect, this re-imagining of the active, relative,
and participatory engagements of the constituents of place opens up new and different possibilities for ‘seeing’ the multidimensional contexts on which a dynamic, creative and poetic map of the nebulous assemblage that is Moreland might be based.

**Part four: Visualising a fractured poetics of place**

In the course of photographing Moreland for this project, I have come to understand that ‘the role of the researcher and the camera, as a recording device, [is] in constructing [my emphasis] the space and place of the research encounter... both as a research technique and as practices that become co-constituent of an ethnographic place’ (Lewis 2014: 11). While photography, when practised as a method of visual ethnography, sets up a keen juxtaposition between the overtly ‘objective’ and the innately ‘subjective’, it likewise draws our attention to the different ways in which we might ‘see’ place and, as in Moreland: *A poetic map*, participate in *place making*. Photography as evidence may raise concerns about the partiality of the researcher, but as Barthes (2000) and Sontag (2002) have argued, it is precisely the elusive relationship photography has to ‘reality’, to the quiddity of what it claims to represent, and the tension of the gaze that frames, mediates and interprets photographic imagery, that makes it such a fertile source for the creative writer in terms of bridging the gap between the real and the imagined [260].

Just as *Moreland: A poetic map* necessarily embraces representational incompleteness, photographs are equally inconclusive. As a partial, episodic representation of reality, any given photograph (or poem, novel, painting, film or other artwork) contains ‘dismembered portions of information’ (Gibson 2014: 150). As a body of images, the photographs that purport to ‘represent’ Moreland in this project are not so much mimicry of the real but rather form a vast almanac of daily life that resists simple resolutions. As Gibson (2014) writes, ‘photographs offer something richer than certainty: they prompt endless questions and unsettling accounts of the real, material lives and places that have been pressed as luminous energy on each photographic sheet’ (244).
Inevitably, this raises questions about what I see, how I see, and why I see it. In terms of visual ethnography or, more specifically ‘art as research’, Gibson (2010) explains this as the oscillation ‘between seeking the insider’s ethical authority… and the outsider’s stance of critically distanced disquisition’ (7). In his view, photography opens up debate about the artist as researcher to ‘generate and convey knowledge about change’ in ‘the midst of complexity… catalysing mutability and making decisions about the best way to find form within it’ (7). For Gibson (2014), photography engenders an ‘aesthetic transformation’ that makes possible the perception of phenomena by the senses (245). This suggests that visual knowledge itself is speculative, experimental and full of enduring possibility as opposed to something fixed, traditional or didactic.

Applied to Moreland: A poetic map, the visual plays a critical role in reconciling the enormous complexity of place and the limits of a single authorial perspective or ‘vision’ of place. It thus contributes to a fractured poetics that privileges blanks and absences as active sites of imaginative possibility. Like photographic images, each poem within the map functions as a snapshot that collectively builds to form a composite based on multiple points of view. Each poem is in some way connected by thematic nodes and threads but like this photographic map (Figure 35), the overall picture is one of dis-integration. It only makes sense when regarded as a simulation of place.
This idea thus links back to the central tenet of visual ethnography, which foregrounds the intertwined concepts of place, memory and imagination (Pink 2009) and their role in producing alternative, perceptual and experiential representations of place.
Conclusion

Just as Bourke Street might be understood as a series of shifting, moving, fractured episodes, the wider project of ‘seeing’ Moreland in all possible senses is similarly part of a multi-pronged research methodology that brings together a range of different improvised strategies. Incorporating a variety of experimental research interventions, ‘seeing’ Moreland in terms of place-as-event demonstrates how visual ethnography, by way of photography and everyday noticing, opens up new ways of thinking and writing about place not as a fixed or static entity, but as a restlessly dynamic one in a persistent flux of ever-shifting configurations. As part of a practice-based, creative-led research practice, ‘seeing’ Moreland provides a springboard from which to theorise a model of creative research practice based on imagining place from multiple perspectives and points of view.

While visual ethnography might be criticised for its partiality, advocates argue that ‘subjectivity should [my emphasis] be engaged with as a central aspect of ethnographic knowledge, interpretation and representation’ (Pink 2013: 19). This view is especially relevant to the creation of a poetics of place that recognises that the writing of place is contingent on just such subjectivity and research participation in order to bring the variegated richness of place to life.

In effect photographing place reveals the intriguing interplay between singularity and multiplicity. That is, while maps grapple with the representation of place through omission, compression and substitution, the use of photography in Moreland: A poetic map operates as a similarly fractured and episodic appropriation of the moment as an encounter in space and over time. As a result, the photographs that I take of Moreland are both temporal and spatial ‘evidence’ of place-as-event as well as a methodology for a further examination of how place might be interpreted through multiple points of view represented by different critical frameworks, factual research and creative ‘lenses’.
Knowing Moreland

Introduction

Figure 36: Hard-rubbish and other abandoned household items on Howarth Street, Brunswick.
Moreland is full of things. Big things, small things; old things, new things. They reside in rooms, crowded on mantles, stuffed into boxes and cupboards. You can find them on balconies tangled among bicycles and washing lines. Out on the street, discarded fridges, televisions, and mattresses mingle with unwanted crockery, childhood toys and abandoned trinkets (Figure 36). Everywhere you look, there are things to be seen. If you dig a little deeper beyond the veneers and surfaces, there are even more things to discover. For example, I once found under my floor three spent bullet shells accompanied by a lead-painted donkey with a broken leg nestled among newspapers from 1942. One can only wonder where these things came from, to whom they belonged, what trajectories they trace, what stories they might tell.

Every year, over the months of April and May, Moreland City Council provides a free hard-rubbish collection service. For weeks beforehand, the ‘things’ of Moreland take over the streets as odd assortments of discarded household items, ranging from white goods to building waste, mysteriously begin appearing on footpaths and nature strips. Just as mysteriously, they disappear in the stealth of night as both amateur and professional hard rubbish gleaners pick away at other people’s waste with the intention of repurposing them for reasons unknown. Even outside of the ‘gleaning season’, the city is stubbornly and systematically interrupted by the presence of things. Houses, shops, apartments; cars, trams, trains; power poles, power lines; billboards, signs, fruit trees; abandoned trolleys, bicycles and cars; wheelie bins – full and empty – foods ripe, half-eaten, half-mouldering, rotting. From this perspective alone, Moreland is a heaving, moving, shape-shifting conglomeration of more-than-human actors engaged in a complex meshwork of intersecting material ‘beings’ in varying states of construction or degradation, inscription and erasure, of coming and going (Appadurai 1986; Bennet 2010; Bogost 2012; Latour 2007; Princen 2011). Together they co-exist with their human co-habitants in a secreted world of the largely un-thought of.

In Moreland: A poetic map, bringing to life this society of things is an important part of not only representing the more-ness of Moreland but of conceptualising the transience of place-as-event [©
It is about knowing Moreland from the perspective of more-than-human ‘actors’ engaged in a lively network of ‘being’ to show that there are other ways of mapping place. It is also about making sense of the multitude of configurations that constitute place, of how they come together, act on one another and change one another to demonstrate that place is never fixed, never constant, but a continual work of making and remaking in progress. As part of an alternative cartographic practice, Moreland: A poetic map seeks to understand these relationships by pulling them apart, examining them and then reconfiguring them to create new ways of representing the more-ness of Moreland.

In this chapter I explore this idea of the secret, phenomenological life of the agents of ‘more-ness’ through the prism of vital materialism, thing theory and object-oriented ontology as a means of more-than-human knowing. I do this by beginning in part one with an examination of more-than-human knowing and the it-ness of things and what contribution this makes to representing materiality in Moreland: A poetic map. In part two, I explore how the things of Moreland might be regarded as actors engaged in a storied materiality of being before, in part three, discussing how such everyday objects exist in a networked world of complex systems and relations and how these might be understood. In doing so, I aim to show how in Moreland: A poetic map I’ve engaged with these ideas and applied them to poetically represent the more-ness of Moreland through the heterogeneous and polyphonic voices of the many things that constitute it.
I found this couch (Figure 37) sitting quite amiably on the corner of Thomas and Albert Streets. It might’ve been stylish once, a proud new addition to some long gone household who sat down to watch television and eat their meals on its tightly sprung lap. Now, its brown vinyl skin is puckered and wrinkled like a weathered alcoholic prosthetically mismatched with threadbare velour cushions pocked with cigarette burns sagging over its one broken leg. Who knows how many houses it’s lived in or how many people have sat on it or who those people were or how many different configurations of domestic order it has been arranged in? If only this couch could talk, what might it say?
In Moreland: A poetic map, I purposively explore how a more-than-human imagining of things might capture not only the more-ness of Moreland, but how it might also be applied as a method for storytelling place by incorporating other unexpected points of view. Just as colonial mapmakers, inspired by enlightenment models of knowing, tended to exclude ‘otherness’ (such as the local knowledge of the indigenous Wurundjeri people of the pre-Moreland, Port Phillip Settlement [149-155]) in favour of their own culturally dominant modes of knowing, so too the agency of things is often lost, overlooked or simply ignored in more conventional (and human-centric) cartographic practice. In order to re-instate things as legitimate actors in the performance of place, I will begin by discussing the idea of things as material agents of change and how they might be re-interpreted through an ontologically-oriented phenomenology and the concept of it-ness (‘it-ness’ being here defined as the physical, chemical and mathematical properties of a thing without regard to any hierarchical privileging of human over non-human, subject over object, animate over inanimate, function over form and so on).

While we can never definitively know or speak for the other, by re-imagining the material qualities of things it is perhaps, no matter how feebly, possible for the creative practitioner to find different ways of representing the more-than-human qualities of place. For example, by allowing the phenomenological agency of things and empowering materialities to figuratively ‘speak’ for themselves, the writer can, in some way, mitigate the privileging of the authorial ‘I’ through what scholar Mikhail Bahktin (1981) calls heteroglossia. Heteroglossia is defined as ‘another’s speech in another’s language, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way’ (Bahktin 1981: 324). As philosopher and anthropologist Bruno Latour (2007) writes, ‘no matter how internally complicated [objects] might be… specific tricks have to be invented to make them talk, that is, to offer descriptions of themselves, to produce scripts of what they are making others – humans and non-humans – do’ (95).
In Moreland: A poetic map, writing from the point of view of ‘things’ is an intrinsically experimental and imaginative exercise. However, in making this map, I propose that one way of addressing the impossibility of representing the material other in language may, to some degree, be circumvented by considering the innate ‘it-ness’ of things. According to theoretical physicists such as Albert Einstein, the materials of the world are composed of matter and physical laws are a consequence of how different matter behaves. The two key points here to note are that 1) neither can exist without the other because they are, in fact, interdependent; and 2) all matter is predicated on change no matter how slow or fast that change might occur. For example, the law of mass conservation states that matter can be changed from one form into another, mixtures can be separated or made, and pure substances can be decomposed, but the total amount of mass remains constant.

This law implies that the sum of matter (i.e. the material of being) can neither be added to nor subtracted from; it can only be transformed. In turn, this suggests that any attempt to capture and render the it-ness of things in language might in fact benefit from a more scientific ontological treatment. While this initially seems to contradict the premise of an imaginative phenomenological engagement with the representation of things, as video game designer, critic and researcher Ian Bogost (2012) points out, ‘the scientific process cares less for reality than it does for the discoverability of reality through human ingenuity’ (14). Alternatively, as philosopher Joseph Spencer (2012) puts it, ‘object-oriented ontology has announced the need to dispense entirely with the subject-object distinction… by claiming that all objects are subjects’ (35). In this sense, the idea of it-ness renders all subject-object relations as one of authorial equivalency.

To illustrate this argument, the ‘pure’ sciences of physics, chemistry and mathematics all draw upon physical laws rendered in the theoretical language of numbers, fractals and variables (e.g. $x$, $y$). Their nomenclature applies equally to animals, vegetables and minerals in addition to even
more abstract concepts such as flow, pressure, and velocity. Incorporating these languages in *Moreland: A poetic map*, as an expression of it-ness, helps to balance the fallible nature of subjective impressionism intrinsic to more human-centric conceptions of the material world, since immutable and intransigent universal laws are arguably manifest in all matter, whether human or non-human. Essentially this provides the basis for a more-than-human rendering of place. It does not discount perception or subject-object hierarchies but acknowledges that the world is teeming with a range of human and non-human actors. In other words, the it-ness of being grants, as Latour (2007) tells us, that ‘there are divisions one should never try to bypass, to go beyond, to try to overcome dialectically. They should rather be ignored and left to their own devices, like a once formidable castle now in ruins’ (76).

Latour’s position recognises that, as human beings, we cannot think beyond the limits of our own consciousness any more than ferrous oxides can avoid corroding iron ores. However, as I will next demonstrate, by incorporating things into the social domain, a different, more inclusive and democratic kind of ontology remains possible, one that, as political theorist and author of *Vibrant Matter*, Jane Bennett (2010) writes, ‘can be broadened to acknowledge more non-humans in more ways, in something like the ways in which we have come to hear the political voices of other humans formerly on the outs [sic]’ (109).

In essence, Bennett’s claim supports the view of other object-oriented ontologists such as Bogost (2012) who argue for a new ontological equivalency between human and non-human, one inclusive of city infrastructures, technologies and other more-than-human actor networks (an idea I will return to shortly). In something of a radical departure from the idea of the mapmaker as the Cartesian subject standing master over their object-filled domain, Bennett and Bogost seek to diffuse the primacy of human-centric notions of power. By asking who knows, what they know and how they know, and extending the scope of their enquiry to the objects of the
material world, these thinkers propose a *vital materialism*, which, critically, extends *agency* to the non-human world. Bennett uses the term *thing power* to denote this shift in power. However, power in this sense is not hierarchical in the usual way. In allowing things agency, this approach suggests that each object is a subject and each subject should be represented from a position of equality. Thing power evokes what biologist and political theorist Thomas Princen (2012) calls a ‘neo-animist ontology’ that belongs to all matter of being within an epistemological schematic known as *flat ontology*.

According to Bogost (2012), flat ontology seeks to synthesise ‘the human and the non-human into a common collective’ that resists the hierarchical privileging of one type of being over another (17). For example, in what philosopher Levi Bryant (2001) calls the *democracy of objects*, ‘the bubbling skin of the capsicum pepper holds just as much interest as the culinary history of the enchilada it is destined to top’ (Bogost 2012: 17). Drawing on the work of Byrant and Latour, Bogost (2012) proposes that flat ontology ‘grants all objects the same ontological status’. In this view, ‘the term object enjoys a wide berth: corporeal and incorporeal entities count, whether they may be material object, abstractions, objects of intention, or anything else whatsoever… not one is ‘more real’ than any other (Bogost 2012: 12).

This flattening of the ontological plane is neither anti-human nor post-human. It simply suggests that ‘humans are no longer monarchs of being, but are instead *among* beings, *entangled* in beings, and *implicated* in other beings’ (Bogost 2012: 17). While philosopher and semiotic theorist Jacques Derrida (2002), among others, has explored the differentials of power through language, the gaze and the idea of thought itself, object-oriented ontologists seek to ‘treat non-humans – animals, plants, earth, even artefacts and commodities – more carefully, more strategically, more ecologically’ (Bennett 2010: 18). In doing so, they propose the possibility for a more-than-human *knowing*, one that can be expanded to incorporate the it-ness of things in more inclusive
representations of the world. For example, in Moreland: A poetic map, such new materialist theories of knowledge open up alternative epistemologies that provide a more structured way of imagining everyday otherness and the contribution these others make to the writing of place. While this approach might be criticised for being anthropomorphic, as Bennett (2010) argues, ‘close attention to the mundane’ enables us to see not only ourselves but also the ‘swarm of “talented” and vibrant materialities’ that inhabit space (99). It opens up new ways of representing place that enable us to see a ‘whole world of resonances and resemblances’ (Bennett 2010: 119) of which human existence is just one part of a larger assemblage.
Part two: Things as actors in action

Walking about Moreland, one encounters things in all sorts of different configurations. To the casual passer-by, they might seem innocuous enough but sometimes there’s something about their arrangement, their posture, their bearing that causes you to do a double take (Figure 38). Quite suddenly you become aware that there’s something undeniably uncanny about these things, as if the inanimate has come to life, defamiliarising the familiar, caught out in some kind of social life that exists just beyond the periphery of human comprehension.
By allowing things an ontological ‘voice’, an entirely new meshwork of networks, interactions and assemblages become apparent. Once these meshworks become ‘visible’, we soon become alive to the possibility that place is not only a human construct but also a materially embodied one that can be understood and accessed by imagining the secret of things\textsuperscript{12}. According to cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1986), to discover these secrets:

\begin{quote}
...we have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories. It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things. Thus, even though from a theoretical point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a methodological point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context (5).
\end{quote}

Appadurai’s argument hinges on the contention that things have no \textit{inherent} meaning. They only \textit{acquire} it by moving through different contexts or fields of human value. In other words, their meaning is \textit{socially} produced through their value as exchanged commodities. This reasoning is somewhat different from the vital materialism and object-oriented ontology proposed by Bennett (2010) and Bogost (2012). While Appadurai is particularly interested in the idea of the human-object relationship in terms of commodification and exchange, more object-oriented ontologists refute this view in favour of ontological equality rather than economy.

Appadurai’s position is based on his understanding of things as actors within the context of social reciprocity, not necessarily as innate beings in themselves. Appadurai sees the value of a thing as being governed by its social and cultural context, and the state of its current commodity.

\textsuperscript{12} At this point it would be prudent to clarify that the terms object and thing have been used here interchangeably. While some theorists are cautious about the use of the word object as it invokes a subject/object dichotomy, it is useful from a philosophical point of view in that the term object can encompass a thing, being or concept. That is, the term is broad enough to bracket anything we can think or talk about whether human or non-human. Like the term ‘more-than-human’, the use of ‘object’ here is intended to be non-denominational and all-inclusive.
status\textsuperscript{13}. While this view establishes a useful framework for thinking about things as moving beings or actors enmeshed in a social network, it also inherently devalues things as much as values them by limiting them to the confines of an economy of exchange contingent on human-centric notions of commodification. Appadurai’s thought certainly belongs in the canon of what might be called ‘thing theory’, but it sits more comfortably with other enquiries as to ‘how inanimate objects constitute human subjects’ (Brown 2001: 1) as opposed to how things are in and of themselves.

That said, as much as object-oriented ontologies open up the possibility for imagining what things are by provoking an interrogation of agency, contemplating what their it-ness is and permitting new ways of approaching the idea of more-ness through expanded phenomenological models, things do not exist in a vacuum. For example, while a bluestone pitch (Figure 39) exists in and of itself, it also sits in the earth, check to jowl with other pitches.

\textsuperscript{13} ‘The idea of a social life of things addresses the interactions between human beings and the material world in a way that pays particular attention to the specific reactions elicited by objects. This reflexive relationship in which the existence of people is responsible for the creation of objects and objects are responsible for the creation of the particularities of human existence is a useful avenue for archaeological thought’ (Appadurai 1986: 50).
Taken together, the pitches form a laneway, which, in turn, provide a corridor of transportation for a variety of walkers, wheels and paws. During the day, the sun shines or rain falls. Winds blow scattering shards of silver-lined lolly papers that passing bower-birds collect to bedazzle new nests. Leaves drop and rot. Beneath, the earth expands and contracts, skewering pitches at minor angles.

Bennett (2010) describes this as the ‘impossible singularity’ not simply of a single object, but of an interdependent configuration of objects that reveals the ‘excruciating complexity and intractability’ of the non-human world (4) because things don’t merely exist, they act. Latour (2007) writes that any thing that participates in ‘a movement, a displacement, a transformation, a translation, an enrolment’ (64), is ‘an actor – or, if it has no figuration yet, an actant’ (71). Things
‘authorise, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on’ (Latour 2007: 72). This is, in part, how agency – or what is sometimes referred to as vibrancy or vitality – can be ascribed to objects, whether animate or inanimate. It is the propensity of material, no matter what its configuration, to change and be changed that gives things ‘life’.

For example, if we consider the external influences of footprints, cartwheels, chemicals and weather on the bluestone pitch in Figure 39, it can be seen that over time, things change each other. That is, things do not simply co-exist, they inter-act. Ingold (2010) describes this ability of the more-than-human to interact as a process of ‘continual formation within an unstable zone of interpenetration’ (130). This ‘interpenetration’ invokes a multiplication factor that exponentially increases the ‘more-ness’ of things given the iterative nature of change and changefulness. To demonstrate this process of ‘abstraction and reconstruction’, Ingold (2010) writes:

> When the plant eventually dies and decomposes, its material deposit adds to the layer of soil, rich in nutrients, from which further growth issues. In this sense the earth is perpetually growing over, which is why archaeologists have to dig to discover evidence of past lives (125).

As cultural geographer Tim Edensor (2012) writes, things are the embodiment of ‘a vital, ever-changing materiality entangled within a host of relations’, which evoke ‘human and non-human agencies’ through ‘affective, sensual and imaginative’ engagements with what might be called a *storied materiality of being* (447). By ‘storied materiality’, I refer to the archaeological potential of things to impress, record and transcribe any range of human or more-than-human events. As Edensor points out, objects, especially those abandoned or forgotten, reveal how both the human and, especially, the non-human ‘work over various temporal scales’ to reveal ‘the uncanny, often imperceptible forces of nature that always circulate around urban materialities’
(457). In this view, the fact that things act upon one another is evident in the enduring ways that ‘fragments, vestiges, traces and remnants of things… linger and haunt’ (Crewe 2001: 28). For Edensor (2012), ‘this underscores how cities are endlessly materially reconstituted… through the formation, augmentation and dissolution of networks of various scales’ (452).
Section three: The network of things

Figure 40: Contents of the author’s refrigerator.
In the spirit of Latourian litany, this is a list of ten things in my refrigerator today:

1. White wine (sauvignon blanc)
2. Sparkling pinot
3. Mineral water
4. Milk
5. Left-over hamburgers
6. Eggs
7. Tomatoes
8. Cauliflower
9. Kalamata olives
10. Chicken stock

That said, over the course of weeks, days, hours or even minutes, this list will inevitably change. The list I write now will be different to a list I wrote yesterday or will write again tomorrow. When it comes to cataloguing the things of Moreland and the configurations in which they exist from moment to moment, to paraphrase, the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus; the only constant is change.

In the view of vital materialists such as Bennett (2010), the world is in a constant process of ‘becoming’. But change does not occur independently; rather, it occurs in concert or network. Philosopher Gilles Deleuze (2004) describes this in terms of the rhizome, a biological phenomenon of interconnectivity, of popping in and out, and of traversing inners and outers in a patterned weft and weave of smooth and striated space, or what Ingold (2007) refers to as threads and traces.

In Moreland: A poetic map, the concept of others participating in a network of complex interconnectivity provides a way of writing about ‘subjects who traverse the various categories by which subjectivity is normally constituted’ (Ashcroft 2011: 20). It opens out spaces for an investigation of the interstices between those who live ‘in-between’. It strives to challenge and subvert more human-centric notions of the linear and hierarchical. In their place, it substitutes a
dense, complex network of entanglements between all types and modes of being. Importantly, it shows ‘how much rather than how little exists simultaneously’ in the ‘dense meanwhile of being’ (Bogost 2012: 59). In contrast to the continuity and smoothness of Deleuze’s (2004) rendering of ‘becoming’, Bogost’s (2012) idea of the ‘meanwhile’ connotes ‘disjunction rather than flow’ (40). ‘Meanwhile’ is a prescription for the ‘jarring staccato of real being’ that ‘embraces messiness’ (Bogost 2012: 59). In effect, this brings together Spencer’s (2012) concept of ontological multiplicity as an expression of infinity, ‘that what is is [my emphasis] multiples of multiples ad infinitum’ (36), and what I propose might be regarded as a broader notion of multiplicity in action. Simply put, this implies that while many things happen at once, as components both actors within and subject to more extensive systems, things also possess a kind of autonomous agency within those systems.

The concept of ‘meanwhile’ in Moreland: A poetic map facilitates a layering of simultaneous spatial and temporal palimpsests. Meanwhile acknowledges that place cannot be understood or apprehended all at the same time, but is perhaps better understood in terms of a series of temporal ‘snapshots’ of space in time. This idea sits at the juncture of Latour’s (2007) practice of cataloguing units through lists (as in Figure 40), and the more conventional writerly project of narrative, which seeks to create meaning by making connections. While the former draws attention to the diversity and it-ness of things, the latter recognises that the more-than-human world exists in what actor-network (ANT) theorist John Law (2003) refers to as the ‘patterned networks of heterogeneous materials’ (2).

The more-ness inherent in the idea of networked others is an important organising principle in making sense of the multiplicity of being. As Law (2003) argues, all things are ‘social agents’ yet they ‘are never located in bodies and bodies alone’ but rather things are actors generated in
networks that pass through and ramify both within and beyond the body’ (4)\textsuperscript{14}. For Moreland: A poetic map, ANT offers a simplification of such complex systems through a series of punctualisations. Punctualisation is effectively shorthand for referring to an ostensibly unified system or actor, operating among a network of other systems and actors. For example, we might think of a refrigerator as a single object. However, if we look more deeply, a refrigerator is actually a complex network of interconnected components, electrical currents and chemical compounds.

The difficulty of comprehending the ‘endless complexity’ (Law 2003: 5) of the social structure inherent in this kind of engineering is resolved in ANT by referring to each of these as closed but interrelated systems. In turn, these systems become ‘resources’ for ‘social ordering’ which are then translated through other actors in varying states of contingency and resistance. In the case of my refrigerator, these other actors might include food, people, houses and neighbourhoods. In this way, the concept of translation is conceived as:

\begin{quote}
… a verb which implies transformation and the possibility of equivalence, the possibility that one thing (for example an actor) may stand for another (for instance a network)… This, then is the core of the actor-network approach: a concern with how actors and organisations mobilise, juxtapose and hold together the bits and pieces out of which they are composed, how they are sometimes able to prevent those bits and pieces from following their own inclinations and making off, and how they manage, as a result, to conceal for a time the process of translation itself and so turn a network from a heterogeneous set of bits and pieces each with its own inclinations, into something that passes as a punctualised actor (Law 2003: 5-6).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Law (2003) continues, ‘Hence the term actor-network – an actor is also, always, a network’ (4).
The punctualised networks proposed by ANT are one way of contending with the sheer multiplicity of networked actors within any social configuration, such as those that constitute the spaces and places of Moreland. Alternatively, they might be understood through what Bogost (2012) describes as a tiny ontology. According to Bogost, tiny ontology exists as a one-dimensional sub-set of the two-dimensional flat ontological plane. His reasoning is that:

If no one being exists no less than any other, then instead of scattering such beings all across the two-dimensional surface of flat ontology, we might also collapse them into the infinite density of a dot… a dense mass of everything contained entirely… (21-22).

Effectively, tiny ontology refers to a kind of synecdoche of being, where each part is not only representative of the whole, but where the parts are actually larger than the whole. For example, when considering the ‘more-ness’ of Moreland, one cannot escape the sheer volume of ‘stuff’ ordered and disordered, horizontally and vertically within a complex three dimensional grid traversing subterranean, terrestrial and atmospheric spaces. If one were to unpack all the component things that are part of the place we know as Moreland, they simply wouldn’t fit into the existing municipal footprint. It could thus be said that this represents a certain kind of ontological density emblematic of the ‘more-ness’ that permeates Moreland: A poetic map. It is a little like pulling everything out of a crowded pantry or wardrobe and wondering how it ever all fitted in the first place. As the conception of ‘object’ can be abstracted from the very specific to the very broad, objects may be regarded as something like Doctor Who’s Tardis, which is ‘bigger on the inside than it is on the outside’ (Morton 2010: 39).

To make sense of these complex relationships, Bogost (2012) proposes a visual ontological schematic that, quoting Tobias Kuhn (2011), ‘consists of a legend that introduces types and relations and of a mini world that describes the actual individuals, their types, and their relations’
with an emphasis on the interplay between ‘diversity and specificity’ (3). Bogost describes this kind of ontological representation as *ontography*. According to Bogost, ‘ontography involves the revelation of object relationships without necessarily offering description or clarification of any kind’ (38). As a ‘general inscriptive strategy’, ontography relies on the *ontograph* – a type of visual map with which to catalogue diversity as an ‘aesthetic set theory’ that might be best understood in terms of an *exploded view diagram* (Figure 41) (Bogost 2012: 38).

*Figure 41: Example of an exploded view diagram that demonstrates how visual ontography functions as a tool for ‘un-packing’ the constituents of place.*
As a research tool, ontography works to draw our attention to the ‘anonymous, unseen situation of things’ in a way that highlights their ‘configurative nature’ (Bogost 2012: 52). Conceptually, as a research model, ontography demonstrates how parts relate to a whole. Likewise, as a tool for seeing place in more than conventional ways, ontography allows the researcher to ‘un-pack’ dense and seemingly disparate data in order to see and make sense of the relationship between parts and, from those parts, creatively reconstruct how they come together and operate as a whole. In doing so, ontography highlights how the multiple gaps, absences and interstices between subjective noticing might help reveal the unseen mechanics of a particular place in different ways by opening up new ways of seeing place visually, perceptively and imaginatively. It allows for the ‘non-hierarchical identification of the innumerable agents and processes that combine to produce absences’ (Edensor 2012: 449), and opens up the possibility for new imaginative connections.

Ontography functions much like a metaphor for a Latourian list. It records an ‘un-ironic […] register of the world’ that ‘posits objects, even the objects of human activity, in a world of mysterious relation with one another’ (Bogost 2012: 49). Furthermore, just as a list can never be ‘complete’, neither can any single representation of place. That is, we simply cannot see everything at once. Rather, the ontograph makes explicit that place is more like a system of movable configurations apprehended through a series of temporal disjunctures. In terms of othering Moreland, the ontograph suggests that although we can list the co-constituents of place, it is only through realising the changeable, contextual relationships between those constituents that it is possible to make sense of the full, dynamic, performative complexity of place-as-event. Ontographs also remind us that while it is possible to catalogue the things within place, such things in and of themselves do not necessarily distinguish one place from another. Instead, in what might be described as an infinite geometric series, ontography reveals the essence of
multiplicity and more-ness through ‘the repleteness of units and their inter-objectivity’; it provides a relative ‘record of things juxtaposed to demonstrate their overlap and imply interaction through collocation’ (Bogost 2012: 38). Ontography shows how place is dependent on a mélange of constructions ‘never entirely reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them, never entirely exhausted by their semiotics’ (Bennett 2010: 5).

When it comes to making place, imagining things in this context enables us to envisage how specific assemblages are intimately bound to specific places; how the constituent objects of place and the relationships between them make any particular place as original and unique as a human fingerprint. This particular strategy for representing place is about analysing what the very DNA of a specific place might be. It is within this framework that one can begin to make sense of the moving, shifting, changing, more-ness of Moreland, the it-ness of its constituent parts, and the complex networks of relational objects – both human and more-than-human – in the formation of a dense meshwork of changeable being.

**Conclusion**

One of the key aims of *Moreland: A poetic map* is to represent the things and material others that contribute to the more-ness of Moreland. It is about recognising that place is constituted through the vibrancy or vitality of those entities and reclaiming what might otherwise be lost, forgotten or overlooked. In turn, it is about drawing attention to things ‘both ordinary and strange, both large and small, both concrete and abstract’ (Bogost 2012: 23) to understand how things act and interact with each other in a complex, moving network of relational and even social exchanges. It is about acknowledging that knowledge is ‘embodied in a variety of forms’ (Law 2003: 2), and that while all human knowledge of things is mediated through consciousness, theories such as vital materialism, thing theory and object-oriented ontologies can, through alternative epistemologies, facilitate a different kind of imaginative engagement with place. The
ontological project is all about taking so-called ‘wholes’ and breaking them apart to explore and articulate their constituent elements before putting them back together in new and original ways to help us understand, the configurative nature of place and the role that things play in it.
Figure 42: Real estate ‘map’ of Moorabinda Estate, Brunswick (1888).
Part text, part image, part geometric assembly, the map traverses the boundaries of art and science in ways that few other cultural artefacts can. The elasticity of the map and its potential for infinite reconstructions for a multitude of purposes – aesthetic, scientific, social, personal, political and economic – is foregrounded in this unusual 1888 commercial real estate map for Moorabinda Estate in Brunswick (Figure 41). What is most curious about this map is its invocation of pastoral imagery and ‘bush’ poetry to promote the land sale of a residential sub-division. The poem, by A.L. Gordon, sits beneath an illustration of a gentleman squatter mounted upon his horse among a herd of docile cattle resting in lush fields. In the background, one can see a generously proportioned homestead that is presumably the gentleman’s home. The poem reads:

’Twas merry in the glowing morn, among the gleaming grass,
To wander as we’ve wandered many a mile,
And blow the cool tobacco cloud, and watch the white wreaths pass,
Sitting loosely in the saddle all the while.

’Twas merry ’mid the blackwoods, when we spied the station roofs,
To wheel the wild scrub cattle at the yard,
With a running fire of stockwhips and a fiery run of hoofs;
Oh! The hardest day was never then too hard!

Whoever made this real estate map realised that our connection to place is emotional. The map they have made is a romance promoting the myth of a rural idyll far removed from the reality of domestic drudgery, of neighbours, of traffic and enclosed spaces. The very name ‘Moorabinda’ as the indigenous term for ‘sound sleep’ tells us that what they are really selling is a dream.
From ancient cave paintings to Ptolemy’s *Geographia*, the medieval *Mappa Mundi* and *Orbus Terrarum*, maps have always told stories and fired the imagination. Early maritime maps, quite literally, launched a thousand ships as explorers risked life and limb (despite depicting the horrors of mythical sea monsters both terrifying and mesmerising), lured by the promise of far away lands and fabled treasures (Figure 43). In literature, maps have frequently been incorporated to invoke motifs of quest and adventure (Figures 44 and 45). Even in their more prosaic, practical and everyday applications, maps still retain a mythic potential for enabling new discoveries. They show us where we have been and where we might go thus illustrating the intimate link between place and imagination. As Turchi (2004) writes, the enduring obsession with cartography illustrates that ‘we want to know more about where – and why, and how – we live’ (41).

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Figure 43 Detail from Olaus Magnus’s ‘Carta Marina’ (1572) depicting a sea monster attacking a ship off the coast of Norway.

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15 A 2nd century Roman atlas and cartographical treatise.
16 A type of world map that was popular in the middle ages.
17 Another type of medieval world map also known as a T-O map on account of its distinctive circular shape divided by a t-intersection to represent what were the three known continents of the northern hemisphere (namely, Europe, Africa and Asia).
Figure 44: Locality map reproduced from the first edition of ‘Treasure Island’ by Robert Louis Stevenson (1883).

Not only can maps tell stories, they can also provide the framework for the writing of new and as yet untold narratives. They can do this by combining facts with fictions, pasts with presents, and the possibility of encounters hitherto unexplored. While cartographic locations might be presented as geospatial ‘facts’, maps also suggest that our connection to place is emotive, personal and (sometimes) even poetic. In other words, our experience of place is psychogeographical (Debord 1956; de Certeau 1984). Place is where we locate our desires, store our memories and plot the trajectories of the imagination.

In this chapter, I outline a range of alternative cartographic practices that have inspired the writing of Moreland: A poetic map. In part one, I critique a selection of creative cartographic examples that best canvass the approaches I have used in writing Moreland: A poetic map. As mediums of place making, these examples of creative cartography each reflect a different aspect of my own representations of place. The works I have chosen to focus on, while broadly diverse in
genre, all share a particular engagement with the representation of place in some form of text or writing. In part two, I contextualise the role of creative cartography with relation to my own poetic practice before concluding this exegesis with a rationale for further scholarly investigation into the way we map, write and know place.

**Part one: Creative cartography and alternative representations of place**

Cartography is most commonly defined as the science or practice of drawing maps. However, as Cosgrove (2005) argues, maps originally belonged to the domain of art rather than science. Cosgrove summarises this interdisciplinary tension in the following way:

As items of quality craftsmanship and beauty, early-modern maps have served similar functions to early-modern painting and portraiture… [as such] a principal attraction of antique maps for collectors remains their aesthetic qualities. Unsurprisingly, the relationship between the two practices – art and cartography – came under scrutiny in the 1980s as historians of cartography sought to bring new critical thinking to bear on the interpretation of maps and tried to broaden our understanding of mapping practices, not least the conventional historiography of cartography’s evolution from art to science (35).

Responding to this debate, Cosgrove notes that there has been a radical re-thinking of ‘the relationships between map-making and artistic practice’ (35). For example, Cosgrove challenges the dominance of science in cartographic practice by suggesting that all maps are the product of ‘social and cultural activity’, which in his view, places ‘cartography outside the disabling classifications of art and science’ (36). To support this view, Cosgrove points to Catherine Delano-Smith’s (1988) observation that the distinction between art and science in cartography was first proposed during the Enlightenment and ‘thus intimately bound to [a] more critical turn
within the history of cartography’, which is now widely regarded by contemporary cartographers as an irrelevant ‘hermeneutic goal’ (Cosgrove 2005: 36). In breaking down the distinction between maps as either artistic or scientific artefacts, cartographers such as Woodward (1987) are more interested in exploring cartographic practices as a ‘complex intermingling’ of both art and science. These views mirror broader debates among geographers as well. For example, while once regarded as a primarily objective practice, Moretti (2005) citing geographer Claudio Ceretti (1976) writes that, ‘geography is not just ‘extension’ (Ceretti again), but ‘intension’ too: ‘the quality of a given space… [is represented as] the stratification of intrinsically different qualities and heterogeneous phenomena’ (55). As a result of these debates (and others) [141-158], maps are now widely regarded as cultural objects replete with a number of taxonomical possibilities [132].

As a consequence of these theoretical and practical paradoxes associated with mapping practices, Wood (2011) argues that:

…the map becomes really complicated. On the one hand, it’s got this ability to fall into a set of tabulations of latitudes and longitudes, and on the other hand it’s got this ability to fall into the world of fine art painting. It slips and slides between them like somebody skating with his shoes on a piece of black ice (2011).

According to cultural geographer and creative cartographer Harriet Hawkins (2012), these debates have given rise to a proliferation of ‘geography-art engagements, dispersed across diffuse theoretical terrains, guided by myriad disciplinary preoccupations and engaging a disparate set of artistic media’ that appropriates cartographic strategies for its own purposes (54). These cartographical engagements can vary from painting and sculpture to performance and writing. Collectively they incorporate an ‘expanded field’ of site specific art practices that merge the tools
and techniques of the geographer to those of the creative practitioner (Hawkins 2012: 54). The ‘promising set of intersections and exchanges’ (Hawkins 2012: 53) that these approaches might offer have hence become part of an established and growing practice of what might most aptly be termed creative cartography. Creative cartography is here defined as the appropriation and manipulation of cartographical tools, methods and principles of representation for the purpose of artistic expression. As a creative practice, creative cartography embodies the ascendance of human, social and cultural geography in cartographic representation by actively deconstructing the art/science dichotomy through alternative mapping practices, including those which draw on text, language and writing.

For example, in her typographical world map, American graphic artist Nancy McCabe (2011) reimagines cartographical practice as the intersection of art and science where place names surrounded by negative space replace conventional territorial boundaries (Figure 46).
While her map retains many of the recognisable features of scientific mapping practices such as a compass rose and parallel latitudes set against a grid of bijective coordinates, the dominant feature of this map is language itself. However, McCabe’s decision to use text as opposed to images also subverts the artistic orthodoxy of pictorial representation in mapmaking practices. By using place names instead of hachures and contour lines, McCabe invokes an alternative topography which suggests that the world can be understood as a linguistic construction as much as a material or visual one. In effect, this map illustrates Cosgrove’s (2005) contention that maps should primarily be regarded as cultural objects. McCabe’s decision to use English place names as opposed to local or indigenous ones also raises questions about the ‘politics of representation’ inherent in creative mapping practices. The use of proper nouns does this by inviting us to consider the history and origins of place names thus providing a toponymic sub-text to her work. While spatially specific in terms of their placement on the page, the non-specific
etymology of these place names recalls what de Certeau (1984) has described as a ‘rich vagueness’ that ‘earns them the poetic function of an illogical geography’ (112). Intentionally or otherwise, McCabe’s map demonstrates how selective inclusions and exclusions in cartographical practice contribute to understanding the map as a site of contestation between different authors and their cultural point of view as they systematically (in this case, through place names and typography) displace other forms of knowledge both spatially and temporally in favour of their own [151-155].

Guamanian poet Craig Santos Perez (2008) explores this contest of authorship further in his book *from unincorporated territory* [sic]. In this work, Santos Perez re-appropriates mapping practices to re-contextualise, re-place and re-claim indigenous knowledge displaced by colonial occupation. As Ashcroft (2011) writes, ‘maps have historically become the simulation of knowledge, of order and control’ and remind us of ‘the way in which language, representation, narrative and place are intertwined’ (37). The ‘page’ in Santos Perez’s work becomes a territory ‘mapped’ by decisions about the inclusion, exclusion and placement of language to represent and carry meaning. For example, in one map Santos Perez shows the location of US military bases on Guam (Figure 47).
Figure 47: Map from Craig Santos Perez's 'from unincorporated territory' (2008).
Utilising cartographic tools and techniques, Santos Perez incorporates fragments of indigenous language (Chamarro) and contrasts these against colonial place names to contemplate the disruptive influence of (American) colonisation and (Japanese) foreign occupation on the identity of Guam and its indigenous inhabitants.

According to Santos Perez (2011), these sites of territorial appropriation occupy approximately two thirds of Guam’s landmass. In this map, Santos Perez envisages the US military as an ‘invasive species’ seeking to displace or ‘un-incorporate’ the lands and language of Guam’s indigenous inhabitants. Reflecting on his work, Santos Perez (as a native descendent of Guam’s indigenous peoples) writes: ‘We are endangered’. In this particular map, this idea is represented by the inclusion of a handful of local Chamorro place names (e.g. Ritidian, Finigayan, Barigoda). By including these beneath the US naval base names, Santos Perez indicates the subordination of indigenous language and culture to that of its colonial masters. However, without the metadata implied by Santos Perez’s own description of his work, the presence of Chamorro place names could equally be interpreted as a subversive re-incorporation of indigenous authorship through textual intrusion. The possibility of an alternate reading of Santos Perez’s maps demonstrates how the map operates as ‘an ambivalent distillation of cultural memory’ (Ashcroft 2011: 37) where the cartographic representation of place operates as a site of cultural authorship, contestation and ownership.

In another map (Figure 48), Santos Perez marks out the maritime borders of Guam, which (for a three-year period in World War II) is the only US territory ever to have been occupied by a foreign power (in this case, by Japan).
Figure 48: Map from Craig Santos Perez's 'from unincorporated territory' (2008).
In this map, Guam itself has been rendered invisible in favour of the territorial disputes being waged on and around its Pacific Island location. Against this backdrop, Santos Perez traces the routes of his own hereditary migration through a system of arched lines and arrows originating from unidentified territories above New Zealand then spanning north-westwards into Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. In doing so, Santos Perez again uses the map to foreground place as a site of competing histories and points of view. Through a ‘process of abstraction and reconstruction’ (Ingold 2007: 24), the purposeful manipulation of blanks and absences in this map paradoxically makes more visible that which is hidden, excluded and ostensibly invisible (i.e. Guam itself) to the central protagonists in these territorial conflicts. As a cartographic device, this map shows how purposeful redactions intended to exclude the complete ‘genetic code’ of a particular place can, conversely, through ‘omissions, intended or unintended, provoke the imagination’ in the way that more substantiative representations of the whole cannot (Turchi 2004: 46-47).

In contrast to McCabe’s and Santos Perez’s work, other writers and artists employ alternative cartographic practices to bring to life what Ashcroft (2011) call the ‘multiple narratives of the everyday, rather than the ‘monologic’ narratives of history or nation’ (28). For example, in the work Map 9 K11, Australian visual artist Jane Shadbolt (2209) shows how ‘the life of the everyday gains meaning’ (Ashcroft 2011: 28) through partial, subjectively mediated cartographical practice (Figure 49).
Figure 49: Jane Shadbolt, 'Map 9 K11' (2009).
In this work, Shadbolt challenges the assumed objectivity of the map by filling in its customary blanks and absences with textual fragments based on her own personal memories, experiences and imaginative constructions. While based on a readily identifiable road map of the suburb of Erskinville in Sydney, Shadbolt purposefully inverts the dominance of typical map features such as road names, public transport routes and other marginalia in favour of representing place as a fractured narrative of her own making. Architect and academic Lee Stickells (2009) observes how Shadbolt’s approach ‘entwines two concepts of space that maps deal with: the measurable and the experiential’ by interweaving ‘a mass of tall tales and true, all precisely forming the street layout of their locality’ (para. 7). Detailed in tiny font, Shadbolt’s narratives are less a focus of her map than her conceptual rendering of place as a tapestry of subjective, psychogeographical encounters. Her textual intrusions into the map’s territory thus function to remind the reader how urban spaces are shaped ‘by the particularities of its occupation and use’ in order to ‘orient sensory and perceptual information’ and ‘produce specific conceptions of spatiality’ (Grosz 1999: 386). Like my own poetic mapping of Moreland, Shadbolt’s map exemplifies a practice of self-reflexive, sensory ‘noticing’ that combines ‘the co-existence of incidental realism with fabulation’ (Dickson 2013: 321). It provides ‘peep-holes’ to connect what Pink (2011) has described as ‘the porous places between past and present’ (119). The area represented in Shadbolt’s map thus manipulates conventional cartographic practice to figuratively move beyond the ‘grid’ and reconstruct place as a figurative, psychogeographical landscape of an ‘imagined’ city (Stickells 2009: para. 7).

Working within a similar vein, writer, artist and creative cartographer Vanessa Berry (2013) has produced a series of her own ‘memory maps’ of Sydney that link literal maps of place with her recollections of the buildings and activities that once occupied them (Figure 50).
Berry’s maps outline a geographical set of place-based signifiers in which to locate and fix her memories of personally significant places in specific points of time. Her maps are thematically organised in such a way that they function as a taxonomy of place (e.g. pubs and cafes in *King Street Newtown in the 1990s*, shops in *Penrith Arcade Project*, aqueducts and other architectural oddities in *Sydney Mystery Structures*). The selective nature of what Berry chooses (and doesn’t choose) to represent in her maps reflects Llalan Fowlers (2011) observation that:

> Each map is drawn with a specific audience in mind, be it the entire Western Hemisphere or the hikers of Wayne National Forest. Each map then has its own priorities; all legends are unique. As mapmakers, we determine how a place will be read. We write the bike lanes or the lines of elevation. We decide if the map will show the public restrooms, or if it will keep that a secret (para. 2).
The purpose of Berry’s work is to reclaim and preserve those urban environments (from pubs to arcades) that flourish, fade and ultimately disappear if weren’t for the way they are remembered through her cartographical practice. Berry’s particular brand of creative cartography combines history with personal and perceptual experiences to produce a rich inter-textual ‘palimpsest of previous inscriptions: of maps, journeys, stories, memories, official history’ (Ashcroft 2011: 36) on which she records her own narratives.

Cartoonist and illustrator Gregory Mackay (2014) invites his reader on a similar tour through history and personal observation in his graphic work *An architectural tour within the confines of Brunswick, Victoria* (Figure 51). Drawing on the medium of the graphic narrative, Mackay’s work is structured along a walk facilitated by a therianthropic (in this case, part dog, part human) guide.
An ARCHITECTURAL TOUR within the confines of BRUNSWICK Victoria.

These are the backs of some 'cottages' near my secret drawing studio. Note the use of mixed fencing.

This charming disused iron crane, harkens back to the olden days and is scheduled to be scrapped to make way for an apartment complex.

These are just some buildings.
This isn't architectural. It's the logo of the now defunct Brunswick Amateur Swimming Club.

The lifebuoy inspires confidence.

That's the old Ferry Pottery Office.

You can buy a passable coffee there now.

The back of the Railway Hotel looks like a mountain range to me. A weird, green, geometric mountain range.

I really like these old railway gate keeper cabins.
This is one of my favourite ugly buildings.

One of the few modern buildings I like around here. It uses the greatest building material of all: crinkle-cut iron.

Brunswick has a lot of nice architectural treasures. It has hotels and odd outbuildings and things with cluttered roofs. I hope we never lose the rusting stink pipes and falling wooden fences, the blue stone alleys and the creepy warehouses. If we do I fear we'll lose Brunswick's eccentric ugliness forever.

Figure 51: Gregory Mackay, ‘An architectural tour within the confines of Brunswick’ (2014).
Merging illustration and narrative, Mackay’s work artfully creates a sense of immediacy, a feeling of being transported to a particular time and place albeit a mediated and methodically curated one. Conversely, Mackay’s work conveys an inescapable nostalgia, a longing in the present for what is past or in the process of passing. Mackay’s work shows (as does McCabe’s, Santos Perez’s, Shadbolt’s and Berry’s) that ‘by recalling these memories, we add to our store of dreams; we are never real historians, but always near poets, and our emotion is perhaps nothing but an expression of a poetry that was lost’ (Turchi 2004: 156).

**Part two: Writing and the map**

The key to constructing a ‘good’ map (like good writing) is, according to Turchi (2004), about ‘taking us somewhere we’ve never been or, more often, showing us… familiar places in some new way’ (93). While traditional mapmakers work with pictorial representations of information, creative cartographers work in and between a range of interdisciplinary mediums to convey concepts, meanings and locally situated knowledges. As abstracted as these interdisciplinary maps might become, their common aim is to ‘transport… the reader from one location, one state of being, to another’ (Webb 2011: 10).

When it comes to art making as ‘an epistemology of creative practice qua research’, writing demands, in the words of Webb (2011), ‘fine skills in observation and recording, the capacity to recount in a way that makes sense’ (8). Webb argues for precision in artistic representation, especially when representing ‘vagueness’. Precision in art – as it is in cartography – is about the importance of the work saying exactly what it means to say. When it comes to writing the map, it is thus critical to produce ‘a precise representation, one in which others can invest, one which allows just such an alternative ‘take’ on the world’ (Webb 2011: 7). For Turchi (2004), ‘what is
important is the acuity of the artist’s vision and the degree of realisation of that vision, nothing more’ (75)

Specificity in maps like ‘fiction and poetry enable us to ‘see’ what is literally too large for our vision’ (Turchi 2004: 151). The role of the writer as creative cartographer is to determine how to most effectively work within the limitations of the two-dimensional page in order to best represent place and the multi-dimensionality of space and time within their chosen medium. How and by what means the writer responds to the task of representing place within a creative map thus becomes a process of selection and omission among competing possibilities which challenge the artist to take ‘a point of view’ (Wood 2010). The writer’s ‘accuracy’ in realising their vision, whatever it is, must then be judged against the work’s stated purpose ‘in light of its implicit intention’ (Turchi 2004: 91).

The stated purpose of Moreland: A poetic map is to represent place through alternative cartographic practice. While the primary medium of this work is poetry, it liberally draws upon visual referents including photography and other maps. The inclusion of these various artefacts are intended to complement the poetic work and expose the ‘constellation of processes’ (Pink 2012) that have influenced it. Hence, in Moreland: A poetic map, the bringing together of images, text and alternative textual cartographies foregrounds the writerly and constructed nature of place making within cartographic practice. The key technique I use to do this is ekphrasis.

In its strictest sense, ekphrasis is most commonly defined as the literary representation of visual art. As a literary practice, the interplay between text and image has inspired ‘theoretically oriented critics… to show that we can read a work of literature spatially, as we view a painting, or decode a painting semiotically as if it were a text, a web of verbal signs’ (Heffernan 2004: 1).
Taken from the Greek meaning to ‘out tell or speak’, ekphrasis began as the rhetorical representation of works of art. As a tradition, ekphrasis has most commonly been associated with the poetic interpretation of paintings, which became especially prevalent throughout the era of the Romantic poets. However, in its earliest forms, ekphrasis was a poetic practice used to described various object d’art such as shields (as Homer did in the Odyssey) and urns (of which John Keats’ Ode to a Grecian Urn is an example). In more recent times, ekphrasis has been more loosely understood as the practice of creating one work of art on the basis of another, usually, sister art. As Heffernan (2004) observes:

…the relation between arts in an ekphrastic work of literature is not impressionistic – not something conjured up by an act of juxtaposition and founded on a nebulous ‘sense’ of affinity. On the contrary, it is tangible and manifest, demonstrably declared by the very nature of the ekphrastic representation (1).

The role of ekphrasis in Moreland: A poetic map is to fill-in the gaps that characterise conventional modes of cartography. This does not mean that the representation of Moreland in Moreland: A poetic map is not selective, partial and incomplete. What it does suggest is that the visual components of Moreland: A poetic map enable the writer to more effectively leverage the poetic tool of ‘the associative leap’ (Turci 2004: 54) provided by a different aesthetic medium as a means of drawing attention to the potent voids that provoke imaginal adventure.

The photographs that I’ve taken of Moreland as part of a creative writing practice have allowed me to concentrate on specific temporal moments and spatial configurations, and focus on the absences associated with traditional maps. As a durable record, photographs have allowed me to capture a particular spatial and temporal ‘moment’ and return to it through multiple historical, mathematical, sociological, political, theoretical and ethnographic lenses in order to write and re-
write different perspectives of Moreland. This method, applied as a writing practice, has allowed me to revisit, re-represent and ‘see’ those moments in a densely poetic and layered way that illustrates how the poetic ‘products of selection and intense compression, have something of the power of the fragment, making use as they do, of the evocative powers of allusion and elision’ (Turchi 2004: 63). The product of these practices goes some way in addressing how we might ‘transcribe what we see – and hear, touch, smell, and think – to the page’ (Turchi 2004: 186).

While the poems in *Moreland: A poetic map* are not literal translations of the ‘reality’, by embracing the interdisciplinary licence afforded to creative cartographic practice, they might be regarded as a more substantive form of storytelling, one which draws together the image as spatial ‘fact’ and writing as its imaginative interpretation.

It is precisely this interplay between image and word, fact and interpretation that comes to the fore in *Moreland: A poetic map*. As a technique for writing place, creative cartographic practice is particularly suited to the bringing together of the twin concerns of spatiality and temporality intrinsic to representations of place. Its ability to co-mingle facts with fictions, objectivity with subjectivity and local points of view with universal themes open up new possibilities for a writing of place that go beyond the merely textual or pictorial to enable deeper and more personal engagements with the rich, multifaceted possibilities that reside both beyond the page and the image. As Turchi (2004) writes: ‘… inevitably, these grand ambitions serve to make us newly aware of what is missing, of what we can’t contain’ (131).

**Conclusion**

In this creative practice-led thesis, the methods afforded by creative cartography have offered up a diverse set of creative and theoretical approaches to alternatively map the dynamic, nebulous assemblage of the ‘place’ that is Moreland. Regarded collectively, this range of strategies,
practices and encounters have informed and enabled a poetic and cartographic inspired ekphrastic writing practice that combines facts with fictions to represent place as a densely layered multi-storied construction. However, to finish any map including one of Moreland is ‘a goal which has proven to be compelling as it is elusive’ (Turchi 2004: 129). Hence, even as I record the outcomes of my research in this project, I become aware of new lines of theoretical enquiry, of gaps and absences that could not only be enriched with existing scholarship in any one of its interdisciplinary interests, but also of new investigations yet to be undertaken. This indicates that the study of place, especially that concentrated within a creative cartographical framework, presents a multitude of pathways for new creative and practice-led research discoveries to be made. However, rather than viewing this as a failure of my existing project, I regard this optimistically as the realisation that any place – whether it be ‘home’, Moreland or any other geospatial or psychographic location – is the site of inexhaustible possibility; that place is not fixed, discrete or static but a site of perennial potential open to being plotted and rendered in an infinite number of ways. As Wood (2010) notes, ‘we are always mapping the invisible or the unattainable… the future or the past’ (15), which is all part of journey surely worthy of further mapping; of a journey that we neither can nor want to …
List of images

All images are the work of the author unless otherwise stated.

Moreland: Representing place through alternative cartographic practice

Cover image: Moreland City Council community logo (banner version), reproduced with permission of the Moreland City Council.


Moreland: A poetic map

Section cover image: Moreland City Council community logo (grid version), reproduced with permission of Moreland City Council.

A1. Moreland: A snapshot

Image 1a: Linear grid juxtaposition one: Front-yard tomato trestle, Nicholson Street.

Image 1b: Linear grid juxtaposition two: Intersection at Lygon and Victoria Streets.

Image 1c: Organic non-linear juxtaposition one: Contrast in period architectures, Beith Street.
B1. Hoddle's grid: A master class in cartography

Image 2: Plan of the New Lands Estate (circa 1850-1870), reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

C1. A short stroll from Bourke Street: A toponymic history

Image 2a: Street sign, corner Sydney Road and Victoria Street.

Image 2b: Street sign, corner Sydney Road and Albert Street.

D1. The kinematic equation \( v_f^2 = v_i^2 + 2a\Delta d \)

Image 4: Concrete with bird feet and other markers, Glenlyon Road.

E1. Mapping the geosynchronous orbits of Moreland

Image 5: Graffiti under the Separation Street Bridge at Merri Creek.

A2. Bourke Street, Brunswick: A residential portrait

Image 6: Copy of the author’s own property Certificate of Title, reproduced with the permission of the author.

B2. Half way down the street, the laneway

Image 7a: Bluestone laneway between Brett and Bourke Streets.

Image 7b: Bluestone laneway with shopping trolley off Benny Street.

Image 7c: Bluestone laneway with mattress off Bourke Street.

Image 7d: Bluestone laneway patched with concrete and asphalt, off Rosser Street.
C2. The spectre of old Randazzo or: Rendezvous with angry magpie

Image 8: Landscape, Randazzo Park off Albert Street.

D2. Araucario Heterophylla on Victoria Street

Image 9: Boyne Russell House with Norfolk Pine (featuring Trish on her break) on Victoria Street.

E2. Elegy for the everyday (discarded and forgotten)

Image 10: Used electrical appliances, industrial yard, Lobb Street.

A3. Greek tragedy in double-fronted brick veneer

Image 11a: Worker's cottage on Beith Street.

Image 11b: Jim’s house, Bourke Street.

B3. The old lady from Sparta with the clubfoot and cane,

Image 12: Found art near Fawkner Cemetery.

C3. Place and the forensics of self

Image 13: Stencilled street paste-up on factory wall along the Upfield bike path.

D3. Colonial subdivision and the infinite geometric series

Image 14: Section of Plan of part of portions 126 and 126 Brunswick, Parish of Jika Jika, 1880, reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

E3. Moreland: An etymological map

Image 15: Plan shewing [sic] subdivision of the Moreland Estate, the property of the late Dr Farquhar McCrae, 1858, reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.
A4. The twin lumbar spines of Sydney Road

Image 16: Railway crossing near Brunswick Station at Victoria Street.

B4. In coda: A truncated history of Moreland between

Image 17a: Plan of building allotments, opposite to the site of the late ‘Golden Fleece’ Hotel, Pentridge, 1861 or 1867, reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

Image 17b: Stencil of possum smoking a bong on fire hydrant west of Sydney Road.

C4. Pseudo-archaeologies and other mortal excavations

Image 18: Old shop front blocked up on Albion Street.

D4. WURUNDJERI

Image 19: Shadow of author photographing political graffiti on Victoria Street.

E4. Black sea and sails: A photo-poem

Image 20a: Shadow resembling ship mast on bricked driveway, Blyth Street.

Image 20b: Domestic fortress, Blyth Street.

Image 20c: Hellenic patriotism, end of Mark Street.

Image 20d: Are you dreaming?, Lygon Street.

Image 20e: Toscana Social Club, Victoria Street.

Image 20f: Manifesto, Upfield railway line.

Image 20g: Window repair and misspelt directive, Hope Street.
A5. \( E = A\cdot v\cdot t\cdot \rho \cdot \frac{1}{2}v^2 \)

Image 21: ‘The bird is free’ and other street media, next to Brunswick Station.

B5. Shared house, room for rent

Image 22a: Un-renovated house, Balmer Street.

Image 22b: Renovated house, Victoria Street.

Image 22c: Rental house, Victoria Street.

Image 22d: Rental house, Bourke Street.

C5. Meridian arcs, in cowboy boots,

Image 23: The Retreat Hotel, Sydney Road.

D5. Night on the bottle

Image 24: Bus stop in front of ‘Los Hermanos Mexican Taqueria’, Saturday morning, Victoria Street.

E5. Waste (redacted)

Image 25: Wheelie bins, collection day, Victoria Street.

A6. Serenity of rats

Image 26: Dead rat, Charles Street.

B6. 99%

Image 27: ‘FUCK AUSSIS’ [sic], footpath, Victoria Street.

C6. Displaced pide on Sunday
Image 28a: Anstey Station, Upfield railway line.

Image 28b: Resident’s protest against development, Charles Street.

D6. Fe₂O₃ · nH₂O and the rust–red melancholy

Image 29: Hills Hoist shadow on backyard paling fence, Elizabeth Street.

E6. Place and the space–time continuum or $s^2 = \Delta r^2 - c^2 \Delta t^2$

Image 30: ‘I believe… the future is coming’, chalkboard on factory wall, next to the Upfield railway line.

Moreland: An iterative, interdisciplinary practice

Section cover image: Moreland City Council community logo (scatter version), reproduced with permission of the Moreland City Council.
List of figures

All photographs and diagrams are the work of the author unless otherwise stated.

Part one
Moreland: A poetic map

Introduction

Figure A: ‘Ramshakle!’ [sic], hand-painted sign found on laneway gate off Holmes Street.

The application of cartographic concepts within the poetic map: A reader’s guide

Figure B: Grid of map coordinates.

Figure C: Map legend.

Glossary of cartographic concepts

Figure D: Equal area grid pattern, retrieved 15 December 2015, <http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/80100/80154/80154_grid_20_20.htm>.

Figure E: Unequal area graticular pattern, retrieved 15 December 2015, <http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/80100/80154/80154_grid_20_20.htm>.
Part two
Mapping the exegesis: An interdisciplinary approach

Mapping the exegesis: An interdisciplinary approach

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of the integration between the creative (Part 1 – Moreland: A poetic map) and exegetical (Part 2 – Mapping the more-ness of Moreland: An iterative and interdisciplinary approach) components of the project and how they might be read.

Mapping Moreland

Figure 2: Melway Moreland City Council Wall Map (2015). The land area of Moreland is represented in white while the surrounding locations are shaded yellow. Reproduced with permission of Ausway.

Figure 3: State electoral districts of Coburg and Brunswick West (1956). Reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

Figure 4: Census map, Cities of Brunswick and Coburg (1966). Reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

Figure 5: Travel Smart map depicting public transport routes, retrieved 20 December 2015, <http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/parking-roads/transport/travelsmart/>.

Figure 6: Urban Walkabout map featuring sites of commercial activity, retrieved 12 December 2015, <http://www.urbanwalkabout.com/melbourne/carlton-brunswick/>.

Figure 7: Example of a basic Cartesian plane, retrieved 12 December 2015, <http://www.ck12.org/algebra/Functions-on-a-Cartesian-Plane/lesson/user:cmFpbnN0YXlAeWFob28uY29t/Functions-on-a-Cartesian-Plane-Intermediate/>.
Figure 8: Example of narrative plot points within a basic three-act structure, retrieved 12 December 2015, <http://www.musik-therapie.at/PederHill/Structure&Plot.htm>.

Figure 9: Map of Port Phillip from the survey of Mr Wedge and others (1835). Reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

Figure 10: Detail of Wedge’s 1835 map showing the contrast between the accurate rendering of Port Phillip Bay and the sparsely chartered interior.

Figure 11: Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works plan, Brunswick (1933). Reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

Figure 12: Detail of Wedge’s 1835 map showing compass and scale (see Figure 11).

Figure 13: Map of Port Phillip from the survey of Mr Wedge and others (1836). Reproduced with the permission of State Library Victoria.

**Walking Moreland**

Figure 14: Shadow of author and her dog taken while walking Moreland.

Figure 15: Concrete shoe ‘sculpture’ next to street furniture on Victoria Street, Brunswick.

Figure 16: Couple using a Sydney Road pedestrian crossing.

Figure 17: An ostensibly ‘shared’ pathway along the Upfield railway, which, by design, practice and social convention, tends to favour the trajectories of bike riders over pedestrians.

Figure 18: Horse trams; corner Sydney Road and Bell Street (1910). Flood Charity Trust. Reprinted with the permission of State Library Victoria.
Figure 19: Corner of Sydney Road and Victoria Street looking north towards Coburg in 2015.

Figure 20: Sign controlling pedestrian access to the C3 building development on Victoria Street.

Figure 21: Barriers and signs re-routing pedestrians from a public footpath during the construction of a private apartment development on Victoria Street.

Figure 22: Fleming Park, Brunswick East.

Figure 23: Two footprints pointing in different directions imprinted in concrete on the Victoria Street footpath between Brett Street and Nash Streets.

Figures 24a and 24b: Examples of occupational movement mapped against the author’s own trajectories.

Figure 25: Example of habitational movement mapped against the author's own trajectories.

**Seeing Moreland**

Figure 26: Landscape panorama of Bourke Street, Brunswick.

Figure 27.1: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.

Figure 27.2: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.

Figure 27.3: Time-lapse view of Bourke Street within a single hour.

Figure 28: An informal ethnographic encounter on Blythe Street.

Figure 29: Backyard ambient portrait, Bourke Street.
Figure 30: Old stable laneway off Sydney Road.

Figure 31.1: Concrete lifting to reveal the bluestones and earth lying beneath.

Figure 31.2: Exposed layers of paint, render and brick.

Figure 31.3: The semi-permanence of concrete revealed in broken layers.

Figure 32.1: Poster layers.

Figure 32.2: Painted layers.

Figure 32.3: Render and graffiti layers.

Figure 33: Gleaned objects re-contextualised in new assemblages to create found-art forms along the Upfield rail line.

Figure 34: Two empty bottles sit companionably on a bench as if waiting for a bus. Removed from their familiar contexts, everyday objects can take on a range of new semantic possibilities.

Figure 35: Photographic ‘map’ of backyard, Bourke Street.

**Knowing Moreland**

Figure 36: Hard rubbish and other abandoned household items on Howarth Street, Brunswick.

Figure 37: Found couch on the corner of Thomas and Albert Streets, Brunswick.

Figure 38: A coterie of chairs found behind an artist’s squat near the Upfield railway line.

Figure 39: Bluestone pitches grazed by the trajectory of cartwheels in laneway running between Aberdeen and Collace Streets, Brunswick.
Figure 40: Contents of the author’s refrigerator.

Figure 41: Example of an exploded view diagram that demonstrates how visual ontography functions as a tool for ‘un-packing’ the constituents of place, retrieved 12 December 2015, <http://www.searspartsdirect.com/model-number/rf266abpxaa/1482/0161000.html>.

**Writing Moreland**

Figure 42: Real estate ‘map’ for Moorabinda Estate, Brunswick (1888). Reproduced with permission of State Library Victoria.

Figure 43: Detail from Olaus Magnus’s ‘Carta Marina’ (1572) depicting a sea monster attacking a ship off the coast of Norway.

Figure 44: Locality map reproduced from the first edition of ‘Treasure Island’ by Robert Louis Stevenson (1883).


Figure 46: Nancy McCabe, ‘Chartis Grahpein’ (2011), 20’ x 29’, letter-pressed typographic world map.

Figure 47: Map from Craig Santos Perez’s ‘from unincorporated territory’ (2008: 85).

Figure 48: Map from Craig Santos Perez’s ‘from unincorporated territory’ (2008: 29).

Figure 49: Jane Shadbolt, ‘Map 9 K11’ (2009), 70cm X 100 cm, Green and Black on 200gsm acid-free card. From the ‘Mapping Sydney: Experimental Cartography and the Imagined City’ exhibition curated by Naomi Stead.
Figure 50: Vanessa Berry, ‘King Street Newtown in the 1990s’ (2013). Reproduced with permission of the artist.

Figure 51: Gregory Mackay, ‘An architectural tour within the confines of Brunswick’ (2014). Reproduced with permission of the artist.


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