From Cemeteries To Cyberspace:
Identity and a Globally Technologised Age

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Abstract

From the starting point of death, this paper considers contradictory aspects of identity in a globally technologised age. It opens up the terrain of knowledge through engaging a politics of experience in questions of death and identity. Closure is inevitably disrupted when the imminence of death is confronted. The project discusses the cemetery and cyberspace, with attention to Heidegger's notion of *dwelling*, Michel Foucault's *heterotopia* and a liberal version of *utopia*. A technologisation of knowledge is identified in the relationship between the epistemological framing of these spaces and the identification of the self. A critical reading of this terrain makes visible the assumptions about progress, unity, and identity that normalised discourses of culture and technology presuppose.

The limits of territoriality may be tested by the telemetrical in cyberspace, as the limits of freedom are questioned by the unrelenting presence of corporeality at the cemetery. Possibilities of de-limitation from boundaries are considered, as corporealities are confronted by the materiality of death at the cemetery and by the willing suspension of physicality in cyberspace. The project follows Foucault's procedure of the 'specific intellectual' in that it does not attempt to claim a masterful discourse of 'truth' in matters of technology and identity. The approach is rather one of strategised knowledge, a heuristic approach whereby the possibilities of theory open up in the exigencies of practice.

I will argue that in a globally technologised world technology itself poses urgent questions relating to the formations of knowledge and identity which demand consideration in other than excessively technologised terms. The sites of cemetery and cyberspace simultaneously locate and displace our notions of identity as technicity constructs the space of social relations. The idea of imagined and imaginary frontiers beyond physical reality is the site at which identity faces the unimaginable. The paper has an intensely personal reference to death and the imminence of knowledge.

Dedication

To Hugh and Campbell.

I dedicate this paper to my son Hugh Maxwell Grierson, mathematician and mountaineer, who died at the age of 33 on 12 January 2001 at 10.30 am, his body then laid to rest in the stony ground of Wanaka Cemetery at the foot of the Southern Alps, Aotearoa. We know the fact of physical cessation: we die. But an indeterminacy of time and space persists. We know not where and when. Precise knowledge of the context of that final act is beyond our grasp.

In December 2000 I spoke with Hugh about his work in the abstract realm of mathematics and applied inventions of computer codes. One of his first jobs in the working world of software programming was to map the horizontal and vertical placement of bodies in urban cemeteries with Geographic Information Systems (GIS). He organised that silent world in digital formation for easier information access, inventing structured grids, levels, locations for the naming and claiming of past identities. Space was networked, arranged, ordered, as sections were designated, numbered, processed. From moment to moment of precision, Grierson worked with the practical rationality of *technë* towards a conscious goal of spatial arrangement. Now it seems Hugh has materially joined the mapped inventions of his mind, leaving the social realm to face the radical cartography of absence.

Hugh was also a mountaineer, a man who climbed the lofty heights and contemplated the abyss. In the space of contemplation, access to his brother Campbell might have been possible. Who knows? The cartography was theirs. His brother faced that final act, falling into a yawning crevasse high on the East Ridge of *Aoraki,* in 1996. The legacy of my sons' lives and deaths may be summed up in a simple equation: $x = y + 1$, indeterminate, imminent, brief. How does the human subject confront and negotiate this brevity, the imminence of death, the indivisible moment which is absolutely final yet infinite in its translatability?

Narratives of Dwelling
'*The merely correct is not yet the true*' (Heidegger 1977: 6).
Contemporary cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard (1998: 182) claims that death is a narrative that has become discredited, undesirable, eliminated in the social etiquette of our global landscape. In a technologised world of global communications, image-saturation, and instant information transmission, there is no time between there and here, no space between then and now, no legitimate reservoir of 'dwelling', to use Heidegger's term. There is no time or space for death. How does one think in a way that might 'bring-forth' knowledge of being into presence without cluttering the space of that process is the dilemma of the hyper-technologised world? In Heideggerian terms, *poiesis* which locates the 'bringing-forth' into presence enables the 'disclosure into being' where 'dwelling' may not be cluttered. To apply hyper-technologised calculative thinking to life and death is to over-occupy the space of indeterminacy and to take away from the social relationships we might have with death in life. No over-occupation can legitimate the *aporia* of death; no technologisation of data can make visible the intricate contexts of meaning when the moment of death is made material; no digitalisation of information systems can illuminate the contradictory identifications of

'self' in the wake of death.

In the game of knowledge, death has no equivalence, no correspondence in life, in what knowledge orders for prosperity. Death is our dilemma, as Heidegger says, always 'too early or too late to grasp our existence as a whole' (Rée 1999: 37). Through death, technologisation of knowledge as a totalising force for prosperity is put into doubt. Yet the technologised life-world might claim a different view. Technology 'discloses' life as it makes this or that happen. But technology, as technological activity, consumes as it orders and constructs. Reading through Heidegger (1977), the word 'technology' derives from the Greek word *technë* which contained the notion of *poiesis*, something poetic. But in its contemporary spatialised mode and pace of disclosure, technology expands its unlimited and dominating capacity to fill the economic and social spaces of a technologised world. What is constructed, what obliterated in the process? The demands for input-output efficiencies are unrestrained and insatiable. Concomitant with the revolution in globalised communications and digitalised information systems, social relations are increasingly hyper-technologised as the circulation of information becomes an end in itself. But, I suggest, this arrives not without a series of losses, or at least a series of provocations whereby resistance may claim space in localised moments of engagement.

When formations of identity are constructed in over-occupied landscapes of technologisation, it seems the space for *poiesis* diminishes. And with that limitation a technology of power operates to obliterate the potential for 'dwelling' in the space of the unbounded. Relate this limitation to the *aporia* of death and the human subject is confounded. Questions on the possibility of my own death might well be asked, as Jacques Derrida poses in his text *Aporias* (1993). Here he exposes the problematic realisation that 'my death' can never be properly accounted for by me, as I will not be here to account for the experience of it. It will be forever foreign to me yet it will be properly *mine*. It is un-presentable even as it presents itself.

I pose here a discourse through which we might invoke death as the radical reminder of 'non-relational contingency' (Rée 1999: 39) in matters of identity and the construction of knowledge in the social and philosophical conditions of life's experiences. With the deaths of my sons, the Heideggerian notion of imminence makes visible 'the intricate contexts of meaning' in the 'world', the *Dasein* which 'is present at the origin of the becoming-present of beings in time' (Krell 1999: 19-20). As Heidegger posits, death is what individualises us most absolutely (Rée ibid: 38). Yet, that individualisation is immediately problematised at the borders of thought and action. 'What about borders with respect to death?' asks Derrida (1993: 3). Perhaps Derrida can best supply my procedure here when he answers, 'We are going to wander about in the neighbourhood of this question' (ibid.).

In the cartography of absence I have seen the over-occupation of presence. I have seen the paucity of knowledge when reason defies its own logic and when 'the poetic' is subjected to the technologisation of thought, of knowledge, of space. Then the over-occupation of space dominates the potential for *poiesis* and obliterates the remembrance of not-knowing. Heidegger comments on 'the radical failure of remembrance — characteristic of these times in which we hardly know what to think', as Krell (1999: 366) puts it in his introduction to Heidegger's writings. Such recognition may illuminate our path to moderate that righteous sense of rationalised knowing-ness that determines 'knowledge' as an unproblematic site when dominated by the over-use of technology. As educators, actors in a technologised global economy, perhaps death

might serve as a communal reminder to take nothing at face value, and to open our landscapes for debate around the problematic of meaning, in our sites of knowledge formation.

In the global information age, a *hyperreal* world of excessive consumption and technologised construction, identity has been shifted from the bounded formations of modernity by greater and pressing concerns of the politics of governmentality and the efficient management of social spaces. A critical reading of this technologised terrain makes visible the assumptions about progress, unity, and identity that are presupposed through normalised discourses of culture and technology.

Articles of Faith
'*I exist in cyberspace as an article of faith - a credo*' (Baddeley 1997: 79).
In historical and present time, utopian dreams have found diverse cultural expressions in the presupposition that something must exist, other than the technologised realm of physicality. In time, space and language, the soul and infinity, have been articulated, given form, credo, truth, as articles of faith which serve to locate corporeal identities in earthly or material space as the promise of immortality presages non-closure. Signs differ but signifiers of hope might translate into immaterial angels, souls, spirits, karmic reincarnations, dream-time formulations, and weightless beings that uplift the burdens and banalities of terrestrial life. For centuries the human mind has ordered up utopian possibilities of immateriality beyond the limitations of physicality. Utopian idealisms abound when the confines of corporeality are overcome, albeit through the willing suspension of disbelief. Utopia, a *no-place*, a space of possibility, deriving from *ou*, not + *topos*, place (Greek), a term first used by Sir Thomas More in 1516 as a Christianised concept in the book *Utopia*, an imagined place, a state of things where perfection may be possible. Utopia signifies hope in belief beyond the confines of physical place, its opposite dystopia, an imagined society or place whose imperfection is perfect or ideal (see Jordon 1999). Utopian idealisms suggest that through the passage of corporeality the human subject might attain a dimension beyond physical space in which a spiritual being could emanate. Through utopian principles subjective imaginings seek that hoped-for immortality, at the very least other life forms, salvation, or inter-dimensional incarnations, as enlightenment for the post-corporeal soul.

Philosophically speaking, territoriality marks the intellect, the Cartesian thinking being, the objective measure of man, a mind-body dualism that phenomenologists have addressed and poststructuralist theorists deconstructed. In the nature of Platonic appearances, mortal lives may prefigure, reflect but a shadow of, or prepare for, the immaterial where a continuum of existence may be assured through resurrection, incarnation, or other idealist alternatives.

High on the list of highly civilised values for the humanist liberal notion of a utopian society, where 'man' is the measure of all things, has been the prioritisation of reason. With the rise of the techno-sciences from Renaissance through Modernity, the prioritisation of reason differentiates the material from immateriality, providing space for the self-reflective individualised practices of the rational subject. Such differentiation has not vanished in the advent or aftermath of postmodernity. In fact utopian notions of intellectual organisation and subjectivity have returned in full force with the rebirth of liberalism in the guise of global formations of the 'knowledge society' whereupon, as Giroux (2000: 3) puts it, 'utopian thinking has narrowed its focus and has become the driving force of neoliberalism'. Or to look at it another way, in the

globally technologised age, technology itself has become the utopian driving force of neo-liberal hope.

Spatiality and belief systems have been addressed by Margaret Wertheim in her book *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace* (2000). Wertheim posits that utopian beliefs are grounded in conceptual and material understandings of space, hence they change with cultural and time shifts. Through Western cultural formations of the Age of Enlightenment, the legacy of utopianism plays itself out in conceptualisations of space and identity formations. Utopian articulations of souls and spirits incarnate boundary-less space, frontier-less, colourless, formless, weightless, transcendentally global in the most universal of senses, connected to articulations of space, be they terrestrial or celestial. Such conceptualisations are frequently timeless and placeless, imbued with the promise of hope rewarded, suggesting ultimate freedom, and formalised through signifying systems of language. Similar language spills from the pages of Negroponte on digital space. He speaks of 'global movement of weightless bits at the speed of light' (1995: 12). He references digital bits having 'no color, size, or weight... the smallest atomic element in the DNA of information... a state of being, on or off, true or false, up or down in or out, black or white... ' (ibid.: 14), and finally, as with the Christian Resurrection, the 'ultimate triumph' (ibid.: 229). A heady utopianism abounds.

Wertheim considers the way our scientific and social formulations of space impinge on our understandings of identity. With newly defined possibilities of reidentifying matter and meaning through cyberspace, the utopian possibility of what has been called 'the cybernautic imagination' (Wertheim 2000: 21) redraws the boundaries of identity formation and opens wide the potential for 'cyber-religious dreaming' (ibid.: 22). She examines the contemporary cyber-world of MUDs (multiuser domains) and the utopian possibilities of cyber-dreaming. The ponderings of non-corporeal spatial dimensions may signify the eternal restlessness and questioning mind of the human subject in matters of identity. Or perhaps it is more reasonable to suppose that hyper-technologised subjectivities have no room for 'pondering' as digital technologies reinvent the notion of *technë* to obliterate *poiesis* in the heady call for technologised answers to technologised questions. Perhaps the globalised information race of digitalised technology offers a material field of entry to frontier-less space through which identities might be composted, however transgressive of physicality? There, in that zone of technologised space perhaps the endless construction and consumption of identity-on-line heralds over-occupation as the ultimate triumph over the terror of empty space, the *aporia* of death.

Heterotopia
'*What is interesting is always interconnection, not the primacy of this over that*' (Foucualt cited in Brooker 1999: v).
In the cemetery, as in cyberspace, the mirrored reflection of our subjective selves exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy, suggests Foucault (1986). The space that I occupy is both absolutely real, connected to all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal at the same time. 'I find myself absent from the place where I am, in that I see myself in there' (Foucault 1986: 24). Here Foucault speaks of the mirror as a *heterotopian* space where one's sense of space and place is in contention.

With the global effects of new technologies, the spatialisation of the world takes precedence over chronological orderings of time. In his paper 'Of Other Spaces' Foucault (1986) speaks of new emphases on

spatial orders and technologies, new arrangements of information in globalised formations of digitalised elements. As Foucault puts it, 'we are in the age of the simultaneous, of juxtapositions, the near and the far, the side by side and the scattered' (1986: 22). He speaks of counter-sites, of places which exist outside all other places, locatable, real, structured as 'other' (1986: 24) — the *heterotopia*, from *hetero, other* (Greek). These sites 'reflect and speak about' other places, other utopias. But their difference from other places is absolute. The cemetery, an *other place*, exists on the outskirts of town, a 'city of souls', an arrangement of carefully constructed containers where the reminders of corporeality are inscribed linguistically in stone. In his delineation of the cemetery as a *heterotopia*, Foucault points to the interconnectedness of this space with the society or village, yet its absolute difference from other cultural spaces. There the dead are given attention; there lies 'the only trace of our existence in the world and in language' (ibid.: 25); there in that 'other city' in the suburbs (its location from the nineteenth century), 'each family possesses its dark resting place' (ibid.).

A Cartesian spatial paradigm divides this from that, finite from infinite. Foucault directs his critical attention towards such procedures of classification when he defines the present epoch as 'above all the epoch of space', widening the definition to 'the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by side, of the dispersed' (1986: 22). Networks of shifting connections in flexible time and space are suggested by this description, a movement away from teleological progression of history and chronological arrangements of knowledge formations across a two dimensional plane which delineates point A to point B. Foucault's discourse displaces modernity's inscriptions of historical value, established and articulated through temporal chronology and material certitude. The human subject's experience of the present world with its global re-orderings of secularised knowledge displaces the grand trajectories and meta-certainties of knowledge inscribed through binary orders of thought and naturalised via disciplinary discourses of Western Enlightenment.

In his paper, Foucault outlines a brief history of space in the Western world, through attention to hierarchic ensembles of places in the Middle Ages. These ensembles constitute sacred and profane places, celestial and terrestrial places, protected and open places, urban and rural places, all of which inscribe social and spatial practices in terms of human subjectivity and communal identity. Knowledge was thus articulated and categorised a certain way, which Foucualt calls the way of 'emplacement'. Galileo's establishment that the earth revolved around the sun, 'an infinitely open space' altered the concept of 'thing' as a fixed entity in earth space. This was opposed to a celestial sphere where 'a thing's place was no longer anything but a point in its movement, just as the stability of a thing was only its movement indefinitely slowed down' (Foucualt 1986: 22). Emplacement was replaced by what Foucault calls 'extension'.

Today extension has been replaced by 'the site' (Foucault ibid.: 23) as a specific space where the question of arrangement takes precedence. Marked or coded elements of data now mark 'the site' through which knowledge of this epoch is formulated. Once a mechanistic universe was articulated through Newtonian physics, wherein the law of gravity settled the attraction between forces of physical matter. Today's data organisation and storage mark the sets of relations and informational spaces which constitute subjective time, and through which the subject attempts to stabilise, albeit temporarily, the displacements of bounded knowledge formulations. Foucault puts it this way: 'We live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another' (ibid.). The

heterotopia has one abiding trait: it has 'a function in relation to all the space that remains ... a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged, as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled' (ibid.: 27). Foucault calls this a *heterotopia* of compensation, conceptualised beyond the Cartesian division of space and materiality. Like the sailing ship or boat-city of colonial times, 'a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity...' (ibid.). Such a place suggests cyberspace as much as it does the cemetery.

Terminal Portals
Terminal: situated at an end, L terminus *end; Portal: entrance, gateway, L* porta *gate.*
The terminal portals of cemetery and cyberspace represent the site where the human subject is on the very brink of displacement, on the edge of deconstruction of the logic of identity, not quite here and not quite there. Where am I when I am in cyberspace or in the cemetery? I am here but not here, there but not there, confronting inevitable *aporia* which calls for reconstruction — and the normative rationality of a technologised social realm can provide the excuse, the reason, the logic, the systematised methodology to fill that space of doubt. Cemetery and cyberspace, two profane portals, constitute material constructions through which society orders and organises space. Each signifies a gateway to immaterial possibilities, yet each is networked inescapably to terrestrial or territorial space and to the logic of normativity. Of an-other space, not of this world yet sharply connected to it, a material cyberspatial moment is situated somewhere between 'inside' and 'outside', a cultural space of ambiguity which is both temporal and spatial. At the grave, as at the edge of infinite space, cyber and actual, the body as an embedded epistemological phenomenon disintegrates. I am, yet I am not.

In a globally technologised age the social templates of the past are altered and shaped into a new present. Lived experience is now constructed and framed by mass media and communications technologies, and the identity of the technologised subject is displaced by the very technologies through which it is constructed. Seeking release from the maintenance of order, how far will the technologised subject go in the quest for spatial release from bonds of corporeal presence? All the way, according to William Gibson whose 'cyberspace' (1984) was coined as a dimension of disembodied consciousness, a space or non-space of 'unthinkable complexity' whereby 'consensual hallucination [is] experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators' (Gibson 1984: 67). Gibson's vision includes cranial implants to allow physical connection between computer and person to enable data transference and human movement through that data in the non-space entity of cyberspace. Such is the urge for freedom from corporeal restraints. To Gibson, as Jordan (1999: 26) points out, cyberspace has some key elements that include bodiless consciousness and the attainment of possible immortality. 'Being in cyberspace is... a continuous, never-ending grid on which different constructions emerge', with each construction signifying a data centre. Gibson even links one of the data centres to 'a "pirate's paradise" on the jumbled border of a low-security academic grid' (Gibson 1984: 101, cited in Jordan 1999: 27).

At the end of his paper Foucault writes somewhat enigmatically, 'In civilisations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates' (1986: 27). Could it be that cyberspace offers a renewed 'pirate's paradise' through the ultimate in technologised dreaming? At the material portals of cemetery and cyberspace identity faces the imminence of knowledge in the potential for freedom from constraint. Yet at that very moment of possible freedom the terrain is governed, managed,

technologised. Only those fulfilling certain preliminary requirements are permitted access to these heterotopic spaces.

Identity in Contingency
Identity, from L idem, *the same; the relationship between an object and itself (logic).*
A critical reading of globalised processes is demanded as cyberspace expands exponentially with 40,000 new customers a day signing up with an internet cellphone in Japan. As well, internet users are multiplying by the million with each new estimate since the world's first long-distance computer network, the US Department of Defence's ARPANET in 1969 (see Hafner and Lyon 1996: 151-155). Technological promise surges through the veins of global consumerism. Our social practices are conditioned, as never before, by technologised and electronically mediated imprints for social identity and action. Rejection of the idea of unoccupied space marks the lineaments of technological expansion. Cyber identities may or may not be counter-posed to the 'real'.

In cyberspace it is not only a search for the potency of agency in the performative inventions of difference that might grab the imagination of millions of cyber-users daily, but also a desire for communal agreement in imaginative fulfillment of immaterial possibilities, or material impossibilities. Such discursive events, networked in connective moments and spaces, are like a secular spirituality of gargantuan proportions offering utopian passages of networked hope in a virtual world of increasing performativity and decreasing communal responsibilities. Vast informational networks, which carry new cultural expressions involving the eclipse of territorial matter by telemetrical data (see Negroponte 1995; Luke 1998), suggest new forms of knowledge in the digital domain equating to new expressions of freedom in the social domain. Wendy Hesford (1999) posits that identities are formed in the contingency of experience, which is no more stable and fixed that any other social or cultural condition and provides the narrative encounters through which subjectivity is constituted. Ideas about the logic of identity are thus re-identified in digital formations through contingent practices of imagined and imaginary frontiers of experience whereby technological processes mediate subjective encounters, and human subjectivity may avoid or deny the burdens of interface communication. Complex chains and loose networks mark digital reference points as new contacts evoke ever-increasing possibilities of virtual relations.

Foucault writes about social spaces in the physical world where networked sites may be delineated as maps, transportation systems, or clustered social spaces (see Foucault's description of trains, 1986). As sets of relations they mark places where people gather, through which they move, or in which they relax in private or public. But in the heady realm of cyberspace there is 'the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralise, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect' (Foucault ibid.: 24). In the virtual world, such inversions may replicate the properties of civic communities and social groupings whereby shared practices or formal rights and moral obligations may be imagined in newly coded environments. Cyberspace communities may redefine the nature of physical communities as they reinvent the dream of plenitude through virtual networks and re-imagined frontiers. Seemingly like-minded souls may group together in virtual networks, or 'web-rings', linked affinity groups, countless thousands of them awaiting access and further networking. As John Naughton writes in *The Observer Review* (1998: 6), 'Each site in a WebRing contains links to five other members of the ring. Some also offer a "random" link that picks a site out of a virtual hat and takes

you to it'. We may interface simultaneously with many different people in many different locales, providing endless global fulfillment. Taking it to its logical conclusion, as Mark Slouka (1995: 19) suggests, 'Physical presence would become optional; in time, an affectation. And having marginalised the physical self, we would marginalise community (in the old sense of the word) as well'. Beyond the physical our minds may be grafted to the heady technological potential of cyberspace and we may attain a freedom unavailable in the physical universe. Such a state of freedom suggests the realisation of *utopia* in the humanist, liberal sense of the word. Such a *utopia* represents the type of utopian thinking that has paved the golden path to enlightenment as evidenced by institutional legacies of disciplinary practices which have been dominated by desires for progress, autonomy and individual betterment for the human spirit.

Foucault focuses his attention to the spatial notion of utopia as a site with no real place which maintains 'a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society' (1986: 24). Cyberspace links and mirrors society, with all its alter-egos and hidden desires, although it is a placeless place, a virtual site holding up a mirror to physical reality where subjective presence is delineated in imaginary absence. Foucault speaks of the mirror where 'I see myself where I am not, in an unreal virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not... where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror' (ibid.). Such is the utopia of cyber-connectivity where I can and cannot be present simultaneously, where I may or may not be gendered, old or young, of any physical shape or colouring at the exercise of my will. In utopian terms the hyperreal evokes a sense of 'perfect democracy' or 'true freedom' while I still occupy my corporeal state at a terminal, flexing my digital muscles as the void displaces the materiality of the moment. Such apparent freedom from the Aristotelian *horror vacui*, and departure from the measurable, mechanistic, relativistic or quantum laws of physics, places me thus in an idealised placeless space. This space is beyond the known equations, locatable only in the digits *zero* and *one*, global in potential, immaterial in quality, and interdimensional in the release of finite epistemological and corporeal bonds.

While institutions of society may speak of increased efficiencies and productivity through vast informational and communicational global networks, it is the ubiquitous and imaginative release of territoriality that captivates so many cyberspace devotees and, as Negroponte (1995: 4) observed, 'The change from atoms to bits is irrevocable and unstoppable'. The collective imagination expands exponentially in 'the virtual imaginary' (Jordan 1999: 179) of cyberspace as immateriality opens its infinite frontiers to call heavenly cyberhosts into the global domain of telemetrical data. The desire for reframed epistemological transactions suggests that the politics of identity are reformulated by the signifiers of hope as territoriality is dislocated by the telemetricality of cyberspace, and the space of atomless freedom displaces the *aporia* of death.

Conclusion
At the grave we weep. At this spatial frontier we confront the infinitely finite, the imminence of death as the ultimate displacement of knowledge. There the historical shaping of epistemological foundations of Western philosophy are implicated as the immaterial mind confronts the enfleshings of the material body. Once rid of the appendage, the utopian principles of faith in an immaterial hereafter might be exercised. But the appendage remains as the eternal reminder of indeterminacy and imminence.

From cemeteries to cyberspace a conceptual key might offer 'freedom' from worldly networks through a

supposed shift from material/territorial to immaterial/telemetrical. But as Derrida reminds us, 'the call of or for the question, and the request that echoes through it, takes us further than the response' (1995: 115). Through technologised over-occupation of space, conceptual and material, the death of *poiesis* restricts the potential of *technë*, cluttering the space of 'dwelling'.

Each site, cemetery and cyberspace tests the limits of knowledge and the limits of hope. Codes, data networks, digital bits and bytes map the cyber-terrain as spatial formations outstrip the tests of reality and the question of 'where am I when I am on-line?' cannot be answered fully in physical terms (Wertheim 2000: 41). With the removal of physical restriction, the idea of utopian hope reinvents its discourse of freedom. Yet, it is true that each site relies upon strongly individualised notions of selection and regulated knowledge formations for exit and entry, so utopian hope must, as Giroux (2000) says, be an educated one.

At Wanaka in January I walked away from the Foucauldian heterotopia, the networked city on the outskirts of town. The cemetery ground contained my son, yet it did not. There, like cyberspace, it seems the mythologies may grow as we bear witness to our inauthentic fictions. In that spaceless place lay the idea of imagined and imaginary frontiers as the site at which identity faces the unimaginable.

And there in that space of indeterminacy lay the limits of my narrative.

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