A journey in search of wholeness and meaning:
Investigating a harmonious ontology which could
facilitate the conditions for holistic, transformative
epistemologies within the structures of a community
with a view to creating a sustainable future for all
beings

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of New England.

December 2008

## Dedication and acknowledgements

#### **Dedication**

This document is dedicated to all of those individuals, groups, communities or societies world over who are marginalised by the perception that they are insignificant, inadequate or irrelevant to the dominant worldview. It is particularly dedicated to those who have been neglected by mainstream education and are then either simply ignored or, more likely, exploited for the benefit of dominant societies. Marginalisation can affect anyone, anywhere, at any time. It breaks down the relationships the individual has with themselves, with each other, with their environment, with their culture and with their world. It creates of self-encapsulated people rather than spiritually rich interconnected beings.

The human personality is inexhaustible; each may become a creator, leaving behind a trace upon the Earth. ... There should not be any nobodies-speck of dust cast upon the wind. Each one must shine, just as billions upon billions of galaxies shine in the heavens. (Sukhomlinsky, 1987, p. 116)

It is my hope that in some small way this work may help someone shine.

### Acknowledgements

I would particularly like to acknowledge the support of the following people to this work: Sarah Collister, Sam Crowell, Mary Gyemi, Tobin Hart, Bob London, Jack Miller, Edmund O'Sullivan and Marina Quattrocchi. I could not have done it without your clarity of thinking and unceasing encouragement. I would like to acknowledge all of those people who offered themselves in order that I might crystallise my thoughts for this and my preceding work through conversation with them. Those people are:

Damon Anderson, Michael and Judie Bopp, Gregory Cajete, Isabella Colalillo-Kates, Joan Connelly, Nancy Cooper, Sam Crowell, John Dirkx, Michael Doxtecter, Ian Falk, Griff Foley, Anne Goodman, Jerome Gumede, Tobin Hart, Kahn-Tineta Horn, Kahente Horn-Miller, David Jansen, Stephen Jeanetta, Bob London, Jack Miller, Yoshiharu Nakagawa, Christina Ngaloshe, Theo Nyawose, Edmund O'Sullivan, Sarres Padayachee, Dale Sheehan, Anne Soloman, Roger and Sue Stack, Bernie Tierney, Ruth Wallace, Clementine Yeni and Atsuhiko Yoshida.

Finally, I would also like to thank Ivan Thornton for his technical expertise and Brian Denman, Bert Jenkins, Sue Rutten, Sarah Stein, Trin Truscett and Gwenda Williams for their patient assistance.

Rupert Collister, 2008

#### **Abstract**

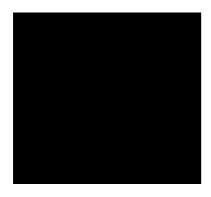
In framing this investigation I intuitively sought to minimise the mutual exclusivity which can occur in qualitative research by initially grounding it in my own social, cultural, vocational, educational and spiritual experiences. Throughout this investigation I sought to identify sources of wisdom, insight and praxis which may assist humanity to create a vision for its future which is sustainable, not only for humanity itself, but also for the Earth. In order to do this I utilised a mode of inquiry that is inductive, emergent, reflective and iterative. This mode of inquiry which could also be called *Creative Inquiry* "approaches the universe as itself a creative process" (Montuori, 2008, p. 19) anchored in "the desire to create one's own universe of meaning, personally defined" (Barron, 1995, p. 75). Through this process I explored a wide range of seemingly diverse meta-narratives by immersion in texts and through crystallisation by collaborative conversation. It allowed me to frame my investigation in the space of the sacred (Heron, 1998; Montuori, 2008) and this resultant document is reflective of the nexus between *Kosmos*, *Community*, *Cosmology* and *Consciousness*.

All over the world there are individuals, communities and organisations, what Petit et al. call 'Pioneer organisations' (2008), working to create a sustainable future for the Earth. I believe this document and the journey it represents can contribute to the overall effort being made by such pioneer organisations since it explores the interconnectedness and relationships which bind the Kosmos and the roles and relationships of humanity within that interconnected Kosmos. It also explores the relevance of my journey in search of wholeness and meaning to the understandings of community, adult learning, meaningful work and sustainability that emerged for me during this journey; relevance which is integral to the development of a sustainable future, not just for humanity but also for the Earth itself. Finally, I believe that in some small way this document can contribute to the dialectic which Oliver and Gershman (1989, p. 63) called for since it continually moves from the individual through the familial, communal and the societal, to the universal and spiritual and back again.

#### Certification

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.



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