

Public Pedagogies, Place and Identity:

An ethnographic study of an emerging postmodern community



A Dissertation submitted by

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Abstract

Community is one of those ‘slippery terms’, something that is ‘nice to have’ as Zygmunt Baumann (2001) notes, but something that we don’t often stop to think about- it is just *there*. The significance of community can’t be overstated however, and the ways that human interactions and connections to space are mediated have much to do with how we understand and interact with our communities. The project that underpinned this dissertation sought to explore how ideas of community were constructed, represented and consumed by residents of a new ‘edge city’ located in south- east Queensland, Australia. Applying a cultural studies approach and drawing on Anthony Cohen’s (2004) ideas of the *boundary* of community, this dissertation suggests that mediations of community in the late-capitalist, postmodern world have taken on new meanings resulting in a shift in the way that individuals experience each other and the places they inhabit. In particular, the operation of public pedagogies deployed in consumer oriented mass communication artefacts including billboards, sales brochures and magazines, carry significant influence in determining how community is expressed and lived. Following an exploration of how various image and text-rich public pedagogical artefacts deploy ideas of community and a survey of discussions with residents of this new urban space, ideas on what community means in the current era are proffered.

Certification of Dissertation

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature of Candidate

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor/s

Date

Acknowledgments

I warn the reader at the outset that what follows may sound like an Oscars acceptance speech. Here goes.

What a crazy thing to do. What an imposition this seemingly individualistic process turned out to be. Four years ago as I set out on this project, I had no idea how many people I would need to draw on in the production of this dissertation. But as with any significant work, this dissertation has a lot to do with a number of people around me.

Firstly, significant mention needs to go to my supervisors. The level of appreciation I have for their sagely advice, patience, considered responses to drafts and above all the taking of time to train me as a doctoral candidate, cannot pass without mention. Particularly in the case of my principal supervisor, the rigor with which he asked me to engage this research project has made me a confident and thoughtful researcher. I attribute my skills as a researcher to this advice and mentorship. Thank you Jon and Jerry.

To my informants who not once questioned what I was doing or balked at my using of their time to ask questions. Without your ideas about what Greater Springfield means to you, this project would have been impossible. In particular, Rebecca, my key informant, spent considerable amounts of her own time working through the ideas I was generating and provided me with an insider view of Greater Springfield that I would have been lost without.

My colleagues who did everything from look interested as I told them what I was doing through to sit and read drafts of my work. In particular, my colleague and friend Heather Sharp donated considerable amounts of her time to sit and actively listen as I reasoned through ideas- this was very much appreciated.

And most importantly- to my partner Shelly and my boys Dylan and Zac- it's done!! Your patience, interest and willingness to read my work when I know that it wasn't entirely clear what I was spending all this time on cannot be thanked enough. I no longer have any excuses to hide out at the computer, and promise to contribute more in keeping the house tidy. I love you very much.

A final, special note should go to my poor old Dell upon which this dissertation was tapped out. We regularly had tense moments and exchanged harsh words and runtime errors. I cracked as it crashed and decided to jettison the bulk of my NVivo coded data on two occasions. We sang together as I learnt to hum along with its ever-spinning hard drive (it seems we both went a bit mad as well). But all the while it managed to keep going, somehow. I have promised never to overburden it with so much data ever again.

Preface

This is the story of the development of a community. This development has taken place not just in terms of its physical-geographic reshaping of a pocket of remnant bushland in south –east Queensland Australia, but also at the level of the symbolic mediation of modes of living. Even if community could be defined in terms of physical locatedness alone (we often talk about going into *communities*, as if they are places to be entered), here was an example where community meant much more. The idea of community in this place cut far deeper and corresponded to entire patterns of life, attitudes and collective responses to the world, as much as it did about being somewhere. This is a story of both physicality and the shared meanings and symbolic relationships that occurred in this place as experienced by its inhabitants.

Greater Springfield is an anomalous place; a literally brand-new edge-city that was built on the site of indigenous tribal land that was later used for timber and logging industry, mining activity and pastoral use. In the early 1990's a little, multi-millionaire Malaysian with a 'vision' bought the land and set about turning this 'empty land', as he called, it into a 21st century master-planned community. The development now stands as an example of how contemporary urban design principles take account of things like community and the way people interact in urban spaces. But to do this, the development needed a clear conceptualization of what community meant.

Far from being a community that evolved organically and of its own accord through time, Greater Springfield developed a pre-fabricated idea of community that matched the instantaneousness of its physical spaces. Beamed from the fronts of 30ft tall billboards and distributed in glossy brochures and mail-outs to residents and intending residents, very clear ideas about what the place was and how it worked were presented. Implicitly suggested through the images of lifestyles and suggestions for collective interaction, and more explicitly exclaimed through the frequent deployment of the word 'community' to describe the place and its people, these mass-cultural artefacts contained a sort of guidebook for living in Greater Springfield that expressed how lifestyle and interaction *could* be lived in this ultra-contemporary development (indeed, these artefacts extended this logic to perhaps suggest how lifestyle *should* be lived within the structural constraints of Greater Springfield's physicality); in short, here were definitions of what community was and how it could be lived.

Incorporated within these intentions for what community came to mean in Greater Springfield were ideals that prescribed what sort of person would make Greater Springfield home. While never offering out-right statements on the types of identity characteristics that were preferred, Greater Springfield did things far more in keeping with late-capitalism's processes of selection- by connecting firstly with a specific demographic of buyers and secondly and more suggestively via appealing to a specific sense of style and distinction (by setting markers of economic and cultural capital that the residents of Greater Springfield needed to meet). There was a definite logic to Greater Springfield built on this definition of both the place and its people. Informed by its 'boundary' (Cohen 2004), that location of cultural production that defined the milieu of Greater Springfield, the place (like any cultural milieu) presented a sense of itself and informed me, the outsider, about what it was and who its people were.

But there was something new about the way this was done in Greater Springfield. The production of ideas of community via an organized mass-communication process departed from the sorts of organic formation that communities of the past established. The organization of community groups, the nature of available activities, the formation of sporting and leisure groups and the arrangement of public space merged with the advertised imagery that was initiated and maintained by the developers of Greater Springfield to inform what it was. This was the logic of this community; one informed by the mutual creation of an image and the formation of those real spaces, places and interactions people could have.

The purpose of this project was to uncover the way that ideals of community, mediated via artefacts such as billboards and brochures, made sense to people living in Greater Springfield and contributed to a larger aesthetic of living in this place. What follows is an exploration of how ideas of community were packaged and how the residents of Greater Springfield consumed, appropriated and resisted these ideals. This is the story of how community came to be defined in Greater Springfield and how its residents lived this aesthetic.

A Quick Note on Reading this Dissertation

This dissertation incorporates a large amount of visual evidence in the form of photographs and scans. Whilst these have been included in this document, both in-text where referred and in enlarged format for reference in associated appendices, it became apparent

during the reproduction and printing of these that some of the quality and sharpness of the images failed to translate effectively in print. As such, a ‘Flickr’ page containing the images utilized in Chapter 4 specifically has been constructed as a reference source. This page contains digital copies of those images used in Chapter 4, and should be referred to for crisp reproductions. This page can be located at http://www.flickr.com/photos/public_pedagogies/

A.H.

An Introduction to the Study

1.1 Urban (and) Community?

In January 2005 the Australian financial services group *Australian Unity* in conjunction with Deakin University's *Centre on Quality of Life* released the *Wellbeing Index: Report 12.1 Special Report on City and Country Living*. The report sought to identify '...how satisfied Australians are with their lives and life in Australia' by investigating '... satisfaction with economic, environmental and social conditions in Australia, as well as giving ongoing insights into our perceptions of individual wellbeing' (Australian Unity 2007: para 1). A large portion of this report examined the relationship of *place* to personal wellbeing and emphasised the role physical spaces play in the creation of feelings of happiness. Various urban and rural places were examined according to the feelings of connectedness individuals had in them, with *Chapter 4: Community*, dealing specifically with the function of community in the maintenance of personal wellbeing. Within this, community was understood as both a structure of feeling and a physical location. It was something that came to represent a point of interpersonal connectedness where satisfaction and wellbeing were intimately associated with physical spatiality and locatedness- a theme similarly picked up by Bauman (2001) when he suggests that '[i]t feels good... it is good to have a community, to be in a community' (1).

One of the outcomes of the report suggested that:

In terms of satisfaction with safety and community connection, the values for people living in cities is lower than for people living in all other locations. It is evident that high density living produces less interpersonal connection and a diminished sense of safety (Cummins, Davern, Okerstrom, Lo and Eckersley 2005: 2).

As the widely publicised¹ results of this report identify, city life in Australia doesn't yield connections to community, interpersonal bonds and senses of wellbeing that otherwise occur in less urbanised locations (Cummins, Davern, Okerstrom, Lo and Eckersley 2005). Whilst cities may provide the potential for access to services and complex social networks, they do (at least in the contemporary Australian context as the report notes), promote a sense of disconnection and impersonal ties between individuals.

These results are by no means unique to Australia, with recent studies from the United Kingdom² and United States³ identifying similar outcomes. Feelings of dissatisfaction with city life correlate with popular but largely romanticised ideas of urban decay and declining personal safety, with results of these feelings represented by trends such as the 'sea change'⁴ that escape from the urban maze in search of richer, therapeutic interpersonal associations in archetypal coastal and rural communities. Cities, in these manifestations of the public imagination, operate as locations of alienation and entities that are perceived as '... either dangerous and alien to the men and women who try to live there, or lacking in substance, paradoxical, and unbelievable' (Timms and Kelly 1985: 152). Addington (2002) continues these ideas by noting that he '...felt it somewhat paradoxical that one can get a feeling of isolation even when surrounded by people' (para 3).

The city becomes an 'unreal'⁵ location, in which 'bad' things happen. As a cultural benchmark against which problems of urban life have come to be measured, the reporting and media reconstruction (more so than the 'event' itself) of the murder of Kitty Genovese in New York's Kew Gardens in March 1964, symbolised for international audiences the

¹ This report has been widely discussed in the mass media, with a 23rd April 2006 'Sixty Minutes' report 'Happy Days' by Peter Harvey, Adele Horin's article 'State of Content' article in The Age (February 13, 2006) and Judith Ireland's 'Self-doubting Sydney versus self-satisfied Melbourne' article in the Sydney Morning Herald (January 26, 2005) as key examples of mainstream media applications of this Report's findings.

² See particularly Amanda Crook's 'Who says we're all miserable' article from the Manchester Evening News (15th March 2005) and Nilary Duncanson's 'Grin-it City' article from the Daily Record (28th April 2006) reporting on the YouGov liveable city poll.

³ See particularly Glasser and Shapiro's (2003) survey of urban living in the United States and their suggestion that '[a]lthough the negative impact of population density diminished slightly in the 1990s, there is no real evidence for a return to large, dense cities' (139). Lebo (2007) reports on the development of the 'Building Better Neighbourhoods' group that is interested in establishing a 'stronger sense of community' in urban spaces, whilst Talen (2003) reports on the destruction of community and public urban space by chain-store corporatism.

⁴ The idea of the sea (or 'tree') change has been popularised in recent years by television programmes (particularly the Australian Broadcasting Commission's 'SeaChange'), formal research (such as a report by the 'National Sea Change Taskforce') and an almost limitless number of web based guides, personal testimonials, periodicals and similar documentation that report on the relative merits of leaving behind high-stress work in crowded city spaces for a more relaxed, 'self' oriented lifestyle outside of the city. Implicit within these ideals are notions of personal fulfilment via a connection with others and community spaces that either can't or don't occur in cities.

⁵ As per T.S. Eliot's 'Unreal city- Under the brown fog of a winter dawn, A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many' (from 'The Waste Land')

seeming incompatibility of city and community and the social decay that occurred in the enclaves of large urban spaces like New York. As Rasenberger (2004) suggests, the murder of Genovese ‘... quickly expanded into an all-consuming metaphor for the ills of contemporary urban life’ (1), with one of the more troubling outcomes being, as reported in Martin Gansberg’s *New York Times* article two weeks after the event, the admission by one of the ‘thirty-eight’⁶ who witnessed the murder that he ‘didn’t want to get involved’ (Gansberg 1964). Whether due to personal fear, apathy or an assumption that someone else would do something, this event went on to raise questions about the involvement individuals have with each other in urban spaces⁷. The murder of Genovese entered the cultural psyche of the United States at the time and continues on as a key marker of the fears we have in urban spaces- as demonstrated by its recent mention in blogs (Cat 2007), reference in reports of other attacks in which witnesses failed to assist the victim (Associated Press 2008) and thematic appropriations in advertising⁸.

Popcorn (1992) suggests that due to fears held about urban spaces, the nature of contemporary consumer lifestyles and increasing individualism, the phenomenon of ‘cocooning’ features as an important aspect of collective life. For Popcorn, cocooning says much about the nature of urban space and the way that individuals conceptualise themselves and others within an environment that contains perceived dangers on every corner:

The daily news is worse today than a year ago. Headlines scream out tales of horror and violence. Home remains our only safe haven, our sane retreat from all this chaos. City streets are dim and dangerous, very ‘Clockwork Orange’- with wilding gangs of bandits and hordes of homeless and the mentally deranged (Popcorn 1992: 201).

The urban space according to these visions isn’t something to be engaged. Rather, it is something to be mistrusted, avoided, and as much as possible barricaded out. As Popcorn

⁶ Whilst Gansberg noted that ‘Thirty-Eight’ people witnessed the murder, police reports suggest it was more likely that 12 people were aware of the assault of Kitty Genovese (Rasenberger 2006: para 11).

⁷ It is interesting to note however, that in the same city that withdrew from assisting Kitty Genovese, a sense of patriotic nationalism and an identity affirming coming together emerged in opposition to a common ‘other’ post-September 11.

⁸ See the advertisement for the *Red Bull Energy Drink* in which an animated super-hero character hearing the screams of a woman from the street below his apartment is unable to run to her rescue due to his exhausted supply of the drink (Red Bull 2007). He subsequently shuts his window to block the disturbance and, picking up on the Genovese thematic, presumably fulfils the role of one of the apathetic ‘thirty eight’.

notes, it is only those ‘private’ locations such as home that are perceived as containing safety and normality. Urban space in these manifestations forms a backdrop and one end of a binary that frames the city as a negative against which the safety, sanctity, and connectedness of home is measured. It also forms a point of social organisation from which contemporary expressions of individualist consumption can flourish and be justified⁹.

The underlying theme in this view of cities and city life relates to the inability of community to function in urban spaces as a necessary component of human group interaction. Whilst cities are spaces of dense population and ‘busy’ individualism (at least in terms of ‘...our rapidly privatised and individualised, fast globalising world’ that Bauman notes (2001: 15)), communities operate as entities of ‘slower’ human interpersonal connections. This divide between the impersonality of the city and the close bonds of community is a feature theme in prominent sociologies of city and community¹⁰, and provides a dualism from which assumptions about human group organisation is articulated. Cities as built environments may well be entirely possible without a sense of community, but the belonging, interpersonal connections and sense of value provided by community promotes a viability of rich human interaction that cities are in seeming need of.

1.2 Some Working Definitions

Before explicating the rationale for my approach in this thesis, allow me to propose some working definitions for the term ‘community’ as will be applied throughout this thesis. Community is one of those slippery terms in social theory that stands for a number of things and has a variety of applications. I will variously deploy the following applications of the term ‘community’ in this thesis:

- Community as place or grouping: signified as a noun and describing a physical entity, I will refer regularly to ‘the community’ (as in the ‘Greater Springfield Community’) as the physically bounded entity that people identify as being part of.

⁹ Popcorn (1992) goes on to discuss how this new social dynamic can in fact be marketed to, and offers advice for translating the result of this inward turn away from the urban into corporate success. See particularly Parts 4 ‘Capitalizing on the trends and observations and applications’ and 5 ‘The new marketing frontier’ in ‘The Popcorn Report’ (1992) for Popcorn’s thoughts on dealing with a ‘dangerous’ urban space and the inward retreat to the home.

¹⁰ With Ferdinand Tonnies’ (1963) distinction between *Gesellschaft* (society) and *Gemeinschaft* (community) as a significant early appraisal of cities, and more recently David Harvey’s (1990) critique of the ‘atomisation’ of urban spaces and Delanty’s (2003) review of the fragmentation of urban community as key examples.

- Community as a feeling or experience: I refer to the experience of community as a process of collective interaction. Here I am referring to what it *means* to be part of community as a psycho-social process.
- Community as a process of collective action: this refers to the processes undertaken in community whereby groups of individuals, in recognising their collective nature, perform acts collectively as a ‘community’. This is expressed in such things as the coming together for ‘community events’.

Each of these applications is used regularly throughout this thesis. I haven’t applied any specific notation to indicate the variations of these uses of the term ‘community’, but suggest that the context in which the term is variously applied will suitably decode the intent of the specific application.

1.3 The Significance of Community in the Case Site: Greater Springfield

Community is an expansive term that comes to stand for a number of manifestations of human group interaction (Delanty 2003, Day 2006). This thesis is specifically interested in how community has come to be conceptualised and enacted as an expression of collective social interaction in Greater Springfield, a newly developed ‘edge city’ (Garreau 1991, Springfield Land Corporation 2005, 2004) located in south-east Queensland, Australia. Community features as a central theme in Greater Springfield’s identity, with frequent application of the term noted in public addresses by community leaders, marketing publications advertising the Greater Springfield lifestyle, articles in local newspapers, community information publications and more broadly within the physical space of the community itself¹¹. But while it appears that everyone seems to know what community means, with the term operating as a frequently applied foundational theme upon which the development is built, little reference is given to *how* it has come to mean what it does- community is just one of those concepts that simply *is*.

Of particular interest to this thesis is the way that the concept of community has come to be understood, enacted and lived in Greater Springfield. Within the recurring application

¹¹ Including billboards and other visual signifiers, the formation of various ‘Community Groups’ and community social functions such as sports and ‘fun’ days.

of ‘community’ in the public spaces of Greater Springfield specific ‘visions’ of what community comes to mean are clearly identifiable. None are perhaps more visible and dominant than those presented by the land and property developers of Greater Springfield- principally the Springfield Land Corporation. Within the design of the built environment, the layout of public space and construction of community oriented amenities is a crafted network of visual cues that variously remind and enforce in the imagination what Greater Springfield is. Articulating the vision, this network of images displays ‘branded’¹² snap shots of community life in Greater Springfield via thirty foot billboards, glossy brochures and in the transcribed accounts of Springfield life by real, bona-fide (but ‘selected’) residents featured in sales brochures. In these artefacts a clear and specific vision of what community means to Greater Springfield’s developers is present, carried by representational imagery that gives a clear impression of what Greater Springfield is intended to be.

As the agencies responsible for physically building Greater Springfield and having the means to articulate their vision via rented billboards, full-page newspaper advertisements and glossy mail-outs, the developers of Greater Springfield carry significant influence in determining the experience of community. It is within these ‘boundaries’ (Cohen 2004)- those edges of collective logic where the foundations of what the milieu ‘means’ are determined- that articulations of Greater Springfield’s interpretations of community are presented.

But offering a vision of community and actually living it are two different things, and it is from this perspective that this thesis will explore how individuals living and working within Greater Springfield interpret and apply ideas of community as a process of interaction and negotiation within prescribed visions. While images suggestive of larger, organised visions of community abound in Greater Springfield, accounts of ‘everyday’ experiences aren’t so visible and require explication. This, then, is a thesis interested in explicating discourses of community from two perspectives- that of the developers and that of those people who *choose* to live in Greater Springfield.

1.3.1 The Ipswich-Springfield Region: a short history

The traditional custodians of the land on which Greater Springfield is located are the Jagera¹³. The Jagera occupy the geographic space located to the south-west of the Brisbane

¹² Each of these visual cues features the branding of its parent corporation, primarily ‘Springfield Land Corporation’, or similar, as according to its location and ‘style’ of advertising in Greater Springfield.

¹³ Also known as *Jaggera*, *Jagerra* and *Yuggera*

River (*Maiwar* to the Jagera) encompassing the space on which Greater Springfield is currently being developed. Haberman (2003) notes that:

*[Jagera] territory, being the geographical area in which the language was spoken corresponded with the basins of the Brisbane and Caboolture Rivers. It was said that Esk was about the Northern boundary, the foot of the Great Dividing Range the western boundary and the Fassifern Valley the Southern most. Teviot Brook was [Jagera] territory with the Teviot Range marking the approximate eastern boundary with Yugumbir territory (para 6).*¹⁴

Whilst not dealing directly with the indigenous heritage of Greater Springfield, this project does recognise the original inhabitants of the area, with approval to undertake the study on Jagera country provided by a representative of the Jagera via telephone conversation (M. Williams, pers.comm. 31st Jan 2007).

Since white settlement, the Greater Springfield area has been utilised for various modes of rural production, particularly timber, cattle and later sugar and cotton¹⁵. It was primarily the development of the Redbank Plains area (immediately west of Greater Springfield) for sheep and cattle and timber-getting following the establishment of a government outstation in 1832 and the sale of land in 1842 that lead to the expansion of the newly opened Moreton settlement¹⁶. Pastoral work and timber-getting around the Limestone¹⁷ area gave way to mining after the discovery of coal along the Bremer River in

¹⁴ Haberman (2003) also suggests however that:

Owing to the dislocation of local customary law, indigenous history and culture, there is contention regarding the boundaries and origins of indigenous lands and language' (para 1).

Buchanan (1999) similarly notes the problems of identifying precise territorial boundaries between Jagera country and the eastern Turrbal and Yugambah. For the purposes of this thesis it is assumed that the location of Greater Springfield resides on Jagera country, with advice from a representative of the Jagera people (M. Williams, *Musgrave Park Cultural Centre*, Pers. comm. 31st Jan 2007) and reference sources (Tindale 1974, 1976) supporting this assumption.

¹⁵ 'Eden Station' in the Redbank Plains district and extending east to Oppossum creek, immediately south east of where Greater Springfield is now located, was purchased in 1859 by James Josey. This property was noted as producing timber 'considered to be of the best quality with native species such as Hoop Pine (*Araucaria Cunninghamii*), Red Cedar (*Toona Australis*), Black Bean (*Castanospermum Austalie*) and Bumpy Ash (*Flindersia Schottiana*) being logged' (Ipswich City Council 2006).

¹⁶ On February 11, 1842, when Sir George Gipps, Governor-in-Chief of the Territory of New South Wales declared that "The district of Moreton Bay was no longer to be considered as a penal settlement; and that from and after the date hereof, all settlers and other free persons shall be at liberty to proceed thither in like manner as to any other part of the colony."

¹⁷ Name changed later to Ipswich in 1843

1828, with full scale mining commencing in 1843 on the Brisbane River at Redbank (Whitmore, 1981). As Worrall, Neil, Grigg and Brereton (2004) note:

Land use was predominantly pastoral, but from the mid-19th and through to the mid-20th century, industrialised activities, particularly coal mining and rail-related activities, grew in importance, and were major employers in the area. In recent years these industrial activities have declined markedly, with the result that the area is now in a transitional phase (6).

This ‘transitional phase’, as identified by Worrall, Neil, Grigg and Brereton (2004), has evolved into the current development of Greater Springfield (and similar surrounding developments¹⁸) as ‘master planned’ residential communities. Greater Springfield is a significant hub in the south-east Queensland urban footprint, with its significance as a residential centre recognised by local and state governments and developers. Planning documents such as the *South-East Queensland Regional Plan* (State of Queensland, 2004), *South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program* (State of Queensland 2006b) and *Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation (No.1) 2005* (State of Queensland, 2005) identify Greater Springfield as a location of major urban growth, with the restriction of industrial and mining activities and increases in planned residential development occurring since the early 1990’s.

1.3.2 The Greater Springfield Development

In August 1992 the Springfield Land Corporation, a subsidiary of the MUR group¹⁹ commenced the development of the Greater Springfield project after earmarking ‘2860 hectares of bushland as the place where Australia’s largest master planned community would evolve’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2004: 4). The project would include the development of ‘residential estates such as Springfield Lakes, the Brookwater residential golf course, a

¹⁸ The region between Ipswich in the west and Brisbane to the east contains a number of new residential ‘master planned’ communities, including the Greater Springfield group of developments, along with adjoining Teviot Downs and Brentwood.

¹⁹ As noted on the Springfield Land Corporation (2006b) web site:

Established in Western Australia in 1976, MUR Group grew from residential developer to community creator with Greater Springfield™ in 1992. MUR Group practices all sectors of the property market: residential; commercial; industrial; retail; and tourism.

central business district and a major shopping centre’ as well as ‘a variety of educational facilities’ (Berry 2004: 25). As the marketing documentation notes, Greater Springfield is ‘the fastest growing and largest master planned community development under one ownership in Australia’ (Taylor 2006, para. 4), the ‘tenth largest master planned community in the world’ (Springfield Land Corporation, 2006d) and ‘is currently growing by 3.3 families a day’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2006, para 1).

Planned population growth for Greater Springfield is a central theme of the development, with the total development expected to contain upwards of 60,000 people by 2020 (Springfield Land Corporation, 2005: 1) and current population at 13, 574²⁰ (Springfield Land Corporation 2006 a). Central to the plan for Greater Springfield is the development of a ‘future proof city for 60,000 residents’ and the combining of ‘advanced business opportunities ...with all forms of education, retail and entertainment in one central location’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2005: 1). Effective urban planning and a focus on family and community ties are foundational aspects of Greater Springfield, with the four themes of *Learning*, *Enterprise*, *Infrastructure* and *Community* pervading much of Springfield Land Corporation’s marketing literature associated with the development²¹. As one of these documents notes:

As life for most people becomes more of a rush, with time spent away from the family, Greater Springfield emerges as a community focused on sustaining a healthy family environment, nestled alongside a growing business centre... planning the infrastructure to support their growth has been important in the overall planning of the community (Springfield Land Corporation 2004).

Apart from identifying the philosophical bases from which this development was motivated, the four themes also function to explain the various precincts contained within the Greater Springfield Development. The development is broadly divided into areas specialising in residential housing, education, business and light industrial manufacturing, with the entire development aiming to be largely self-contained in terms of employment, education opportunities and entertainment.

²⁰ As at 2nd February, 2007.

²¹ See particularly Springfield Land Corporation (2004, 2005a, 2005b)

A number of distinct residential communities are also contained within Greater Springfield; including *Early Springfield* (the original development, also known as *Springfield*), *Springfield Lakes*, *Brookwater*, *Augustine Heights*, and *Springview Estate*. As the Springfield Land Corporation (2006c) notes:

The first community of Greater Springfield was the suburb of Springfield developed by the Springfield Land Corporation in 1992, which now houses around 2,500 people. Springview Estate and Springfield Glades followed, now home to around 4,000 people. In 1999, Springfield Land Corporation signed a strategic alliance with Delfin (which became Delfin Lend Lease in 2003) for development of a 10,000 to 12,000 lot parcel of Greater Springfield. 'Springfield Lakes' commenced in 1999 and is already home to around 2,000 residents. It is expected to house approximately 30,000 people by 2020. In 2001, another Greater Springfield community commenced development: Brookwater... The Brookwater community currently houses around 110 families and will grow to approximately 7,000 people by 2020... Brookwater has established itself as among south-east Queensland's most prestigious golf course community addresses (para 1).

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 detail the locations of the key residential communities within Greater Springfield, with *Figure 1.3* detailing the location of Greater Springfield in relation to Brisbane and Ipswich in the south-east corner of Queensland:



Figure 1.1: Greater Springfield satellite image, showing location of Early Springfield (Springfield), Springfield Lakes, Augustine Heights and Brookwater. (Reproduced from Google Maps Australia, 2nd February 2007).

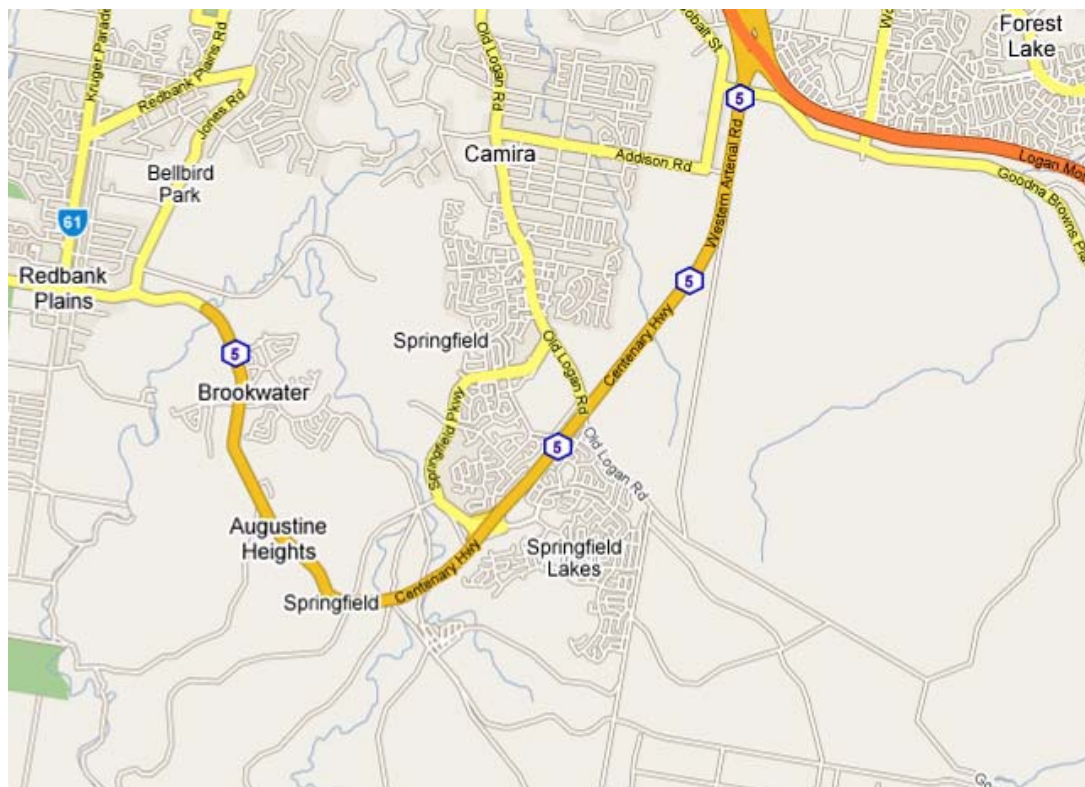


Figure 1.2: Greater Springfield street map, showing location of Early Springfield (Springfield), Springfield Lakes, Augustine Heights and Brookwater, and surrounding suburbs of Redbank Plains, Forest Lakes and Camira. (Reproduced from Google Maps Australia, 2nd February 2007).



Figure 1.3: Greater Springfield in relation to Ipswich and Brisbane in south-east Queensland. (Reproduced from Google Maps Australia, 2nd February 2007).

Adjoining these residential spaces are an education precinct, *Education City*, the *Parkside Business Address*²², a ‘digital edge city’ housing a ‘21st century business park’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2006e) and the *Orion Shopping and Entertainment Venue*, a major shopping centre and entertainment ‘destination’²³. *Figure 1.4* details the proximity of these precincts to the surrounding residential communities:

²² The *Parkside Business Address* was known as ‘The Nucleus’ until a change of name occurred in February 2007, and is listed in *Figure 1.4* as ‘The Nucleus’.

²³ As one marketing brochure suggests, Orion ‘will offer world class shopping and entertainment in a town square setting. Orion Springfield will be much more than a shopping centre, offering many of the features of a traditional town centre’ (Orion Springfield n.d.).



Figure 1.4: Education City, the Parkside Business Address (The Nucleus) and Orion Shopping and Entertainment Centre in relation to the surrounding residential communities of Springfield Lakes (east) and Augustine Heights (west) (Reproduced with permission by Springfield Land Corporation, 2007)

As the master plan suggests, the intention behind Greater Springfield is the development of a location in which residents can ‘live, work, learn, play and shop’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2005b). With the master plan focusing the development around the four themes *Learning, Enterprise, Infrastructure* and *Community* and manifesting physically in the centralised construction of the residential, education, business and entertainment precincts, Greater Springfield has been intentionally developed as a location that residents *don’t need to leave*- an idea that is explored in later Chapters of this thesis.

It is in this regard that Greater Springfield is different to many other developments. As a ‘*fully master planned city*’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2005b; emphasis added) Greater Springfield incorporates concerns for lifestyle as integral components of the development. This extends beyond amenities and the construction of the built environment alone to include a complete vision of the development and those people who will live there. The imagery that supports this vision is specifically framed and relayed via the four themes, to the point that concepts such as *family, choice, success, knowledge, connectedness* and *lifestyle*, amongst others, feature as ‘keywords’ that define the Greater Springfield experience; at least as it is envisaged by the developers.

Encompassing all of these ideals is an overarching desire for community by the developers of Greater Springfield. The way that the imagery of the Greater Springfield vision

functions as a representational mechanism suggests much about the manufacturing of ideas of community undertaken there. This pertains to the way the physical, built environment is designed and constructed, but also (and perhaps more importantly) to the conceptual, intended interpretations of collective, urban living deployed in Greater Springfield. What is occurring is more than the construction of a physical urban space- it is also the site of construction for a logic of community where the presentation of a vision of urban living is bounded by very clear and premeditated conceptual frameworks.

1.3.3 The Region

The *Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan* (2004) notes that:

South East Queensland has experienced high and sustained growth since the 1980's, growing at an average of 55,000 persons each year between 1986 and 2003. The estimated resident population of the region in 2004 is 2,654,000. Current projections for the region are 3,709,000 by 2026, an increase of around 1.05 million people, or almost 50,000 each year on average (6)²⁴

With these projections of population increase, a number of developments have occurred throughout the south-east Queensland urban footprint, with two alongside Greater Springfield. Adjoining Greater Springfield are the Teviot Downs²⁵ and Brentwood²⁶ developments, with each of these developments reflecting similar desires for connectedness and community as those in Greater Springfield.

In Teviot Downs themes of space and lifestyle are significant elements of the development's design:

Teviot Downs is about country style living with city convenience. It's a place to relax and unwind, a place designed with families in mind. A natural framework of bush land, lakes, lagoons, hiking tracks, BBQ's and

²⁴ South-East Queensland, as referred to in the *Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan*, constitutes the region covered by the following 18 local governments: Beaudesert Shire, Boonah Shire, Brisbane City, Caboolture Shire, Caloundra Shire, Esk Shire, Gatton Shire, Gold Coast City, Ipswich City, Kilcoy Shire, Laidley Shire, Logan City, Maroochy Shire, Noosa Shire, Pine Rivers Shire, Redcliffe City, Redland Shire, Toowoomba City (State of Queensland, 2004: 7).

²⁵ Teviot Downs is located directly south-east of Greater Springfield within the Greenbank area.

²⁶ Brentwood is located directly north-west of Greater Springfield and adjoins the St Augustine Heights and Brookwater developments.

picnic spots. It's about living life, the way you've always wanted to (Teviot Downs 2003: para 1).

Brentwood is the more similar of the two adjoining developments to Greater Springfield and includes a 'master plan' that:

... will be home to 1500 families. Almost one third of the site is dedicated to retained bushland reserves, green spaces, parks and playgrounds. The scope and natural diversity of the landscape means residents can choose from a range of home sites including: level or elevated, parkland or bush settings, large or small with prices to suit young families... (Investa 2006: para 1).

Whilst being a significantly smaller development than Greater Springfield²⁷, the residential themes of Brentwood mirror those of the residential communities of Greater Springfield (particularly Springfield Lakes and Brookwater), and identify concerns for community via such institutional mechanisms as the maintenance of family values, success (as measured in primarily economic terms) and affluent lifestyle.

The focus on community is significant across each of these developments and suggests a desire for engagement and connectedness within each of these developments. But as the most expansive and significant development in the region however, Greater Springfield is different in that it incorporates residential, commercial and community spaces within an overall master plan. As such, it features as one of the most significant developments currently undertaken in Australia, and was for this reason selected as the focus of this project.

1.4 Rationale for the Study

1.4.1 Community

In this current period of global uncertainty where notions of local and international security, social cohesion and individuality have become prominent themes amongst a backdrop of global 'terror', environmental shifts and the decay of local practices in an increasingly homogenized world system, it is the idea of community that has become symbolic of stability, order and an identifier of what we consider as our 'own'. Community signifies certain things about ways of life, the maintenance of standards and values and the

²⁷ The Brentwood development occupies 226ha whilst Greater Springfield occupies 2,860ha.

function of those locations we inhabit. It manifests as a ‘comfort zone’ of understanding, recognition and belonging- the connection point between groups of individuals and the locations (both physical and imagined) they inhabit. Community is what we know, where we live, who we associate with and perhaps most significantly how we come to recognize those individuals with whom we belong.

This thesis takes an approach that views community as both an explicit and variable demonstration of group interaction. In an era in which community is reported as being in decline, how residents within Greater Springfield understand mediations of community is of significance. Community comes to stand as a ‘human’ element in urban spaces- something that Cindi Katz (2001) laments in her critique of the gentrification of Grand Central Station, and that Suzanne Keller (2003) notes in her analysis of the destruction and subsequent decline of the Buffalo Creek community in the United States following a major flood. More recently and on a far more macabre level, the discovery of a corpse in a multi-story building in the German city of Essen, seven years after the man’s death (Daily Times, 2007), and a year earlier, the discovery of a body that had remained in a locked apartment six months after a tenant’s death in Sydney’s Northcott²⁸ building (El-Chami 2006) demonstrate what can occur when a sense of community and interpersonal connections in urban spaces are lacking.

Discussion about the effectiveness of communities and the value that individuals place on interpersonal connectedness are well reported in the media with a seeming rash of organisations and groups rushing to examine the nature of community at the current time²⁹. Similarly well represented are organisations who deal in the brokering of community links and strategies for the development of ‘healthy’ communities. But what is missing is a discussion on how community becomes constructed as a component of people’s understandings of collective living. This is particularly so in master-planned urban developments such as Greater Springfield where ideas of community are incorporated as part of the development itself.

²⁸ The Northcott building is a 17 story housing estate located in Sydney’s inner suburb of Surry Hills. The Northcott building is colloquially known by residents as ‘Suicide Towers’ due to the frequent suicides by people jumping from its upper stories.

²⁹ A search of the search engine Google using the terms ‘Community Engagement’ with the ‘Pages from Australia’ search delimiter set, revealed a virtually endless list of sites representing universities, research centres, local, state and federal government, private consultancies and many more groups dealing with community. A similarly extensive list of organisations interested in community building and the ‘health’ of communities was retrieved using the search terms ‘Healthy Community’.

1.4.2 Images of Community

Processes of community construction in the development of urban spaces feature as a central theme in this investigation. The images of community generated by the developers of Greater Springfield operate as *public pedagogies* and represent specific assumptions that both frame and disseminate the developers' views about Greater Springfield. I apply Henry Giroux's (2004) idea of public pedagogies to posit this analysis and suggest that the construction of ideas of community in Greater Springfield carries a pedagogical imperative that positions the developers' visions of the community as dominant representations against which the experience of living in the community is set. Presented variously via billboards, newspapers articles, newsletters, community presentations by representatives of the developers and in a range of other ways, not least the very experience of living and working within the physical environment of Greater Springfield, visions of community embedded there represent specific identity characteristics and formative markers from which the image of community is cast. As key agents within Greater Springfield, the developers inhabit a pre-eminent space from which to assert particular views of what the site will 'mean'. The implication here is for the formation of a community identity that is 'learnt' by residents and expressed as a foundational logic of the site in terms of the way that residents variously accept, appropriate, challenge or work around these images in their daily practices.

While clearly ideas of what Greater Springfield means will also emerge from various other, sometimes competing, locations and individuals within the site (the developers aren't the only people in Greater Springfield with a view about what it *is*), I argue that it is their view that forms an organised and largely dominant vision of Greater Springfield. After all, they are the developers, and although building a site that needs to appeal to a specific market to make it viable, it is they who have the agency to invest within it their own desires and visions of what it 'should' be. It is from this vision that specific images of community are displayed as an ideal within which the collective imagination finds its meaning- whether through agreement with or resistance against these images of community definition. What is at the centre of this process is the construction of the 'boundary' as Cohen (2004) identified it; that underpinning logic that indicates what Greater Springfield is and how it functions. As I have noted briefly above and will explore in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, the boundary in Greater Springfield is one that is identified through the conceptualisation of 'community' as a unifying but largely imagined construct. Community is part of the vision of Greater Springfield within which specific imagery is deployed to establish its place in the boundary as a fundamental element of what Greater Springfield *means*.

1.4.3 Deciphering the 'Vision'

From the analysis of the boundary markers of community in Greater Springfield comes an interrogation of the symbolic structures that uphold its meanings. It is the symbolic that mediates understandings of phenomena and where meanings are formulated as conceptual signposts that frame action. In this contemporary age of the visual, a significant point of manifestation of the symbolic is the image, mediated via attendant mechanisms of display. Hence the focus in this thesis on the representation of ideas of community from very visual forms of media aims to explore the operation of the 'boundary' as it is conceptualised and deployed by those who maintain its construction. I suggest that an understanding of the dynamics of a community can be read according to the visual signifiers it has presented within it, as these function as indicators of the symbolic cultural logic that frame the operation of community.

Baudrillard (1994) suggests we live in the age of the simulacrum, in which the image maintains currency over the real, and where experience is largely reduced to that of the 'simulation':

Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal (1).

Image becomes the experience, and from this basis, is implicated in the way we see, present and re-present the world. This is particularly pertinent in the age of the visual where images are everywhere, displaying hyperrealities of existence at (almost) every turn and from which the construction of experience is mediated.

Deciphering the image and the message it carries is therefore an important element of image construction, with the representational characteristics an image carries arbitrated by those who name it:

[N]aming is a powerful linguistic structuring device that mediates and reflects positions of power and authority in the world. What a particular thing is called will reflect the cognitive schema of the namer, but it will also carry a

subtext of the normative perspective of both the namer and the location of the thing named (Hickey and Austin 2006: 45-6).

Community is subject to this process of naming as much as any other social construct. How the imagery of representations of community is understood and lived is central to the experience of community in the contemporary; particularly in a location such as Greater Springfield, where concerted efforts at manufacturing what community is both physically and conceptually are underway.

1.4.4 Community Identity

Identity and the way the community comes to understand itself are also key features within this investigation. Whilst identity formation is an interplay between the socialising forces of the ‘structure’ and the will to power of ‘agency’ (in Anthony Giddens’ terms (1984)), the formative influence of the development on what the community *is* suggests much about who is desired as a resident within Greater Springfield; that is, who belongs there. These processes are intentional and manifest in the form of a *public pedagogy of the Greater Springfield identity*. This is presented via billboards, newspaper articles, community brochures and similar other media- including the new media (powered largely by the internet and global communication technologies) of global culture. Identity construction and ‘membership’ into the community appear to correspond to specific attributes presented through this public pedagogy with residents becoming implicated in the construction and maintenance of the community’s identity by simply being who they are, where they are. This is not to suggest that individuals are actively and explicitly refused entry into the community (as in, people aren’t turned away at the gates), or that the presentation of community maintained in Greater Springfield has a mind-melding influence (as in, being in Greater Springfield results in the lobotomy of free thought and the creation of a subservience to whatever the community wants), but that through processes of social and cultural capital, financial mobility and community ties, specific types of individuals are attracted to the community as desirable members of it. Perhaps more importantly, these same members start to fulfil the desires of the community and enact themselves as key features of the community’s identity.

Austin (2005) notes that ‘[t]here is perhaps no more frequently used word in the current literature... than ‘identity’’ (1) and moves on to suggest that:

The assumptive aspect of identity is important to note...the individual assumes an identity, claims it for her or himself based on a feeling or perception of commonality with others whose essential characteristics are able to be identified, named and compared, and ultimately accorded value. To a large degree, the assumption of aspects of identity is a largely unconscious process, something that is rarely articulated explicitly (10).

But as much as identity is assumed as a formation of an individual's self-realisation and connection to the world, it is simultaneously also conferred. In Greater Springfield, it is this dynamic of agentic identity formation and conferred identity assumption that is significant. The points at which the identity of community in Greater Springfield is both presented as a public pedagogy via the vision of its developers and the associated visual mechanisms that carry its meaning, and engaged and lived by residents of Greater Springfield stands as symbolic locations of the Greater Springfield experience.

1.4.5 Personal Affiliations with this Project

This project represents a significant personal milestone and the symbolic starting point for my academic career. Whilst I currently maintain a position as an academic due to my substantive position as a staff member within a University, this doctoral project represents a concrete expression of that title, and is something that has been a part of my experience in academia from its beginning (that is, I have been a doctoral student for as long as I have been an academic). In this way it is an artefact representing my own development and inclusion within the profession. It also represents what my supervisor calls 'a licence to practice' (Austin, pers.comm. 12th November 2005) as a 'bona fide' academic.

But why undertake this doctorate? My interest in what this thesis represents started as a child, with 'going to town' on Saturday mornings with my father a regular event. Between picking up the weekend newspaper, finding something at the bakery for morning tea and loading things from the hardware shop into the trailer for backyard building projects, being 'in town' amongst people and the urban experience represented something exciting, and as is still the case, something to be 'learnt'. Town had things I didn't see in my (what I now realise to be) working class, mostly white and (at least for all appearances) hetero suburban

neighbourhood³⁰. While I couldn't articulate it as clearly then as I perhaps can now, town contained things that I wanted to explore and understand, things I found interesting and unusual. Things were different 'there' than they were at 'home'.

From this, my entry into tertiary study, with a sociology major in a Bachelor of Arts degree, continued my interest in things urban and social. Research projects and my final dissertation for that degree focused on things like the application of ritual in urban spaces, the role of social institutions and the enactment of agency. About the same time (and not dissimilarly for many late teens) I began to look outside my own urban milieu and when I had the time and money would travel to meet up with friends who had moved to other urban spaces for their own study and work. Being in urban spaces was still as exciting and interesting as I had found it when I was a child- more so perhaps, because now I had (legal) access to those ritualised places like pubs that I didn't have when I was a child.

It was also at this time that I began to learn the discourses of social theory and became able to articulate my experiences according to and against what it was theorists in this area promulgated. In particular, I became interested in theories of marginalisation and the way individuals exert their will within social situations. Key questions for me revolved broadly around the dialectic Anthony Giddens constructed between agency and structure³¹. Sociological explorations of city life, with emphasis on the Chicago School sociologists³², offered an entry point into the study of 'space' and a window into urban locations I wasn't able to physically visit. It was the explanation of things I saw in urban spaces by the ideas of the theorists I read that cemented my interests in the urban. Phenomena such as 'gentrification' I saw around me- particularly when visiting family in places like Fortitude Valley in Brisbane and Surry Hills in Sydney. How these locations went from being the 'rough' neighbourhoods visited during my childhood to boutique, inner city 'residences' within the space of a generation amazed me, and it was the readings of theories of sociology and urban geography that provided me a chance to make sense of these urban spaces.

After my entry into the 'academy' I began teaching into areas of identity, representation and community. It is here that my interests found an avenue for explication,

³⁰ One of the most striking memories I carry from childhood is having seen, early one Saturday morning whilst in town with dad, two transvestites, seemingly making their way home from the previous night. While not entirely understanding their identity- I was only about 9 or 10- I knew that they were 'different' to the female identities I saw at 'home'- out on the suburban periphery of the urban space.

³¹ Initially as an undergraduate the ideas of Marx were a large influence, but I gradually moved into post-structuralist ideas of power and language, as presented by Foucault, Lyotard and Derrida primarily. From this I developed interests in the way that individuals express identity according to the structural constraints of social contexts, as discussed primarily by Giddens and Baudrillard.

³² Robert Park and William Foote-Whyte were particularly influential.

and my interest and knowledge a location to be tested and developed. My students and I engage in dialogues related to the way the arbitrating influences spaces (such as schools) exert, and the way that cultural mores are mediated, at least in part, by the simultaneously imagined and physical experiences of space. To be social means being aware of the physical locations in which we live. Community in this sense is the cultural recognition and response to the locations we as humans collectively operate within.

This thesis represents a continuation of these themes and a formal expression of those interests in people and urban spaces I developed as a child. It also represents a new starting point from which those new ideas and knowledges provoked as part of this project will be deployed back into my teaching and writings post-doctorate. What fascinates me most, as someone living in one of the most highly urbanised countries in the world, is how significant communities within urban spaces are (even though they sometimes don't function all that well) and the way that individuals connect with each other and moderate their identities according to where they are within these communities.

1.4.6 Aspects of the Theoretical Framework

This thesis draws upon three theoretical assertions. These theoretical bases form an epistemological frame and operate as the points of reference from which the themes generated in this thesis are presented.

Firstly, it is maintained throughout this thesis that the current epoch is postmodern and that a hallmark of this period is the potential for a range of alternative discourses from which possibilities for multiplicitous identity claims emerge. Whilst it is acknowledged that the realisation of alternative discourses doesn't necessarily translate into the equitable acceptance and recognition of all difference, this thesis takes the approach that within the cultural milieu of Greater Springfield difference (as the expression of identity and epistemological points of view) is multiple. As such, the visions of community reported on and taken from within Greater Springfield are held as being generated from multiplicitous cultural contexts that respond to the cultural locations of those individuals who hold them.

Michael Dear (2001) posits a typology of postmodernism that applies closely to the ideas used in this project. He suggests that:

The term postmodern is used promiscuously to refer to a multitude of ideas, but I believe that there are three principal references in postmodern thought:

(1) a series of distinctive cultural and stylistic practices that are in and of themselves intrinsically interesting; (2) the totality of such practices, viewed as a cultural ensemble characteristic of the contemporary epoch of capitalism...’ and (3) a philosophical and methodological discourse antagonistic to the precepts of Enlightenment thought, most especially the hegemony of any single intellectual persuasion (1).

It is primarily Dear’s third principal that applies here, with Malpas (2001) continuing these themes by suggesting that:

*...postmodernity marks the transformation that has taken place in society in the last few decades with the rise of new forms of capitalism, the development of communications technology such as the internet, the collapse of the Soviet Union which saw the end of the Cold War, **and the emergence of voices from different cultures to disrupt the traditional white, male, European ideas of a universal human nature referred to as mankind or simply ‘Man’** (3; emphasis added).*

It is from within this opportunity for alternatives and difference that the reading of Greater Springfield presented here is deployed. As no single point of Truth is possible, emphasis is given to the excavation of my idiosyncratic reading of the situation and the power relationships that arbitrate this in order to understand how the account of community in Greater Springfield detailed here is generated and represented.

Secondly, the idea of community is taken as a largely ‘imagined’ one. This follows from Benedict Anderson’s (1983) idea that communities operate as imagined entities in which community members broadly understand what it is their community is and does, even though these members might not have direct nor formally organised modes of interaction. It is the *idea* of community and the *spirit* of that community that individuals react with when identifying their own place within it. As such, those ideas of community that dominate within a community are therefore significant, and represent the operations of power and opportunities for agency members of a community have for activating their imaginings of the community structure. While alternative interpretations of what the community represents may

circulate, the ultimate formation of a community's identity and the underlying epistemological foundations this identity rests upon, will represent specific and intentional manifestations of an idea of community built for and reflecting the purposes of those arbitrating it. What community therefore comes to represent is intimately connected to who has the ability to moderate the identity of the community.

While Anderson (1983) provides a significant basis from which to launch an analysis of the conceptual and imagined elements of community, communities such as Greater Springfield also occupy very 'real' and demarcatable physical locations. It is from this that Edward Said's (1995) notion of 'imagined geographies' emerges as significant to this thesis. Drawn from his work examining the cultural politics of Orientalism, Said argues that the visions of the Orient developed in the West, and authorised via discourses such as oriental studies and travel writing, positioned images of the Orient within the imagined confines of the West's own conception of these locations. As such, an 'othering' process occurs whereby images of the other emerge as (axial or binary) oppositions to those of the 'centre'. Helene Cixous notes this when she recalls her experiences of French colonial Algeria:

I saw how the white (French), superior, plutocratic, civilised world founded its power on the repression of populations who had suddenly become 'invisible', like proletarians, immigrant workers, minorities who are not the right 'colour'. Women, Invisible as humans. But of course, perceived as tools- dirty, stupid, lazy, underhanded etc. Thanks to some annihilating dialectical magic, I saw the great, noble, 'advanced' countries establishing themselves by expelling what was 'strange', by excluding it but not to dismiss it; enslaving it. A commonplace gesture of History: there have to be two races- the masters and the slaves (Cixous and Clement 1986: 10).

Cixous highlights the construction of identities in terms of the imagined gaze thrust over them. Via the 'dialectical magic' that she notes, a whole representation is cast from which very real and lived outcomes emerge. On a more local front and of interest to this thesis will be the way that Greater Springfield, as an imagined community, operates as a location of imagined geography. It is the way that specific images of community and community identity are cast onto Greater Springfield and the effects these have on the real, lived experiences of those residents living within it that will be of specific interest.

This leads directly into the third theoretical base applied in this thesis. If images of community are indeed imagined, and if a sense of community is largely intangible but recognised and shared, then the processes for imagining community become implicated with pedagogical intentions. That is, the process of imagining and constructing representations of community identity is one that is produced and applied onto the public imagination with pedagogical intent. Henry Giroux's ideas of 'public pedagogies' is called upon here as a significant point of analysis for how notions of community are presented via such public pedagogical means in Greater Springfield.

Giroux (2004) suggests that this current era of neo-liberal politics, globalised economic regimes, mass media and borderless information flows asserts profound influences over how we engage as individuals with public life and community. From this analysis I suggest that community functions in terms of public pedagogical mediations that Giroux notes:

...are not restricted to schools, blackboards, and test taking ... Such sites operate within a wide variety of social institutions and format including sports and entertainment media, cable television networks, churches and channels of elite and popular culture, such as advertising. Profound transformations have taken place in the public space. (Giroux 2004:498)

Community operates as both active host of the artefacts of public pedagogies (the roadside billboard, newspaper article, experience of living in the late-capitalist world, etc) and as a pedagogical force of its own contextualisation. The expression of these public pedagogies requires a negotiation of those public (and for Giroux, increasingly private) spaces and the bombardment of information flows, discursive formations and identity forming mediations they present. Even within itself, the community locates us within the larger social milieu according to what it suggests about cultural practices and social mores drawn from the external influences communities take to define and demarcate themselves— an example being the way that larger images of Australian identity are imagined and become implicated in the production of community in Greater Springfield. We find community not as a neutral space of existence, but as an active mediator of identity and experience; a vibrant location of information flows and discursive practices that manifest as public pedagogies.

The application of these theoretical themes isn't performed linearly with individual sections of this project revealing particular emphasis on specific aspects of this theoretical framework. Rather the theoretical framework presented here is deployed as a theoretical

base-point from which the entire project is cast. That is, the separate aspects of the theoretical framework taken together form a single approach from which thinking about Greater Springfield is presented. As such, it is from this theoretical lens that ideas of community in Greater Springfield are described, theorised and critiqued.

1.5 Research Problem and Research Questions

This research project was centred on the following problem:

How is the idea of community utilised as a central aspect of a contemporary, urban master-planned development?

In order to investigate this problem, a series of focused research questions were established. These were:

1. In what ways do notions of community manifest and become articulated within Greater Springfield?
2. How do individuals perceive their connectedness to their community, and what senses of individual agency circulate as aspects of community formation within Greater Springfield?
3. In what ways does the performance of community in Greater Springfield correspond to Giroux's (2000, 2003, 2006) notion of Public Pedagogies?

These questions interrogated the interconnection of community, identity and agency in order to offer an understanding of how notions of community come to manifest according to the public pedagogies and constructedness of community identity in Greater Springfield. The questions were intentionally sequenced in order to investigate notions of community identity, individual identity and agency, and finally, notions of community as public pedagogy.

1.6 Design of the Project

The research project that informed this thesis was based on a multi-participant, particularistic ethnographic investigation of a single case site utilising an emergent design based in the following data collection techniques:

- Ethnographic observation
- Interview and Conversation
- Documentary analysis

These techniques were applied to the case site as a geographically bound entity, and offered a mechanism for investigating the nature and representations of community that existed within Greater Springfield. These data collection techniques were deployed during ethnographic fieldwork undertaken in the sole case site of Greater Springfield.

The case site was considered to be both a physical entity bound by its geographic markers, as well as a symbolic location that its residents and other individuals associated with it understood. This correlated with the identity of Greater Springfield and how its residents saw themselves and this place as distinct. This is what this project sought to uncover, and is where the analyses presented in subsequent chapters are focused. As an ethnographer, I set about forming a rich view of Greater Springfield by watching its processes and taking part in the interactions of those people who operated within it. This is the approach I took as the ‘professional stranger’ (Agar 1996) seeking a ‘thick description’ (Geertz 1973) to present my account of the case site as relayed here.

While I discuss the methodological processes utilised in detail in Chapter 3, the project drew heavily on an analysis of the visual references to community identity I encountered during my fieldwork. It also drew on evidence that emerged from just ‘being there’, engaging with its processes and the discussions (as interviews) I had with the range of people attached to it. In all, what this thesis draws on for its evidentiary base and presents as the culmination of this research project is an account of my ethnographic observations, infused with ideas that emerged from discussions with people in Greater Springfield and the experiences I had of being there, as these were gathered over the last four years.

1.7 Summary of Chapters

This thesis consists of six chapters that sequence my investigation of Greater Springfield. While each chapter contains a specific focus, these chapters progress linearly in developing a representation of Greater Springfield that is specific to the research question and the methodology applied in this study.

Chapter 1, *An Introduction to the Study*, establishes the significance of the study and provides an introduction to the concerns of the project that underpins this thesis.

Chapter 2, *Key Conceptual Literature*, provides a synopsis of the key literature associated with this project. This chapter is divided into sections dealing with literature on community, identity, post-modern geographies and urban space, image and representation and Henry Giroux's notion of Public Pedagogies. The theoretical concerns of each of these areas are presented and critiqued in terms of their connection to this thesis.

Chapter 3, *Methodology*, details the strategy deployed for locating, analysing and re-presenting evidence utilised in this study. Explication of the concerns of the ethnographic approach and the nature of the data collection techniques utilised are discussed and critiqued, with emphasis given to the particularistic ethnographic method applied and my role as researcher in this enterprise.

Chapter 4, *What the Signs Said*, presents an analysis of the images of community circulating in Greater Springfield. In this chapter, I present an overview of the themes and identity characteristics deployed in these images of community and posit an analysis of the nature of community these evidentiary sources mediate.

Chapter 5, *What the Residents Said*, presents an analysis of the ideas of community held by individuals living in Greater Springfield. This chapter explores the nature of community as understood by residents of the community and opens an investigation of the lived realities of community life in this urban space.

Chapter 6, *Bringing it all Together in Greater Springfield and the Implications for Community in Urban Spaces*, charts my final thoughts on the function of community as I saw it in Greater Springfield. This chapter begins to explore some conceptual implications ideas of community have in the contemporary and offers some insights into the function of urban space as extrapolated from the Greater Springfield experience.

Key Conceptual Literature

Not all social categories are so variable in meaning. But those whose meanings are the most elusive, the hardest to pin down, tend to be those hedged around by the most ambiguous symbolism...

(Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* 2004:15)

In short, 'community' stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess.

(Zygmunt Bauman, *Community* 2001:3)

2.1 The Purpose of this Review of the Literature

This chapter offers a review of the key literature pertaining to this thesis and charts a course through the conceptual material that I draw on in the later chapters to support my interpretations of Greater Springfield. Two purposes underpin this review of the literature;

- i. First, I identify conceptual material relevant to the research problem presented in Chapter 1 in order to provide a basis from which responses to the research problem and its associated questions might be framed, and;
- ii. Second, I provide a theoretical basis from which the analysis and findings dealt with in later chapters will be launched.

To achieve these ends, this chapter divides a survey of the relevant literature into four sections; *Community*, *Postmodernity*, *The City*, and, *Public Pedagogies*.

As this thesis is interested principally with the representation and understanding of community as it manifests in Greater Springfield, I open with a discussion of the ways that

community as an expression of human group organization has been conceptualized and how various ideas of community have been formed and fit with my thinking on Greater Springfield. An analysis of literature dealing with postmodernity as the social and cultural logic of the contemporary epoch follows, with specific attention given to the conditions of postmodernity and the implications these have for human interactions in contemporary settings. From here, I explore theorizations of the City as an entity in which urbanity and large scale human interactions occur. Within this I identify a view of the City that examines the nature of urban spaces as locations invested with meaning and within which human experiences are generated. Finally, Henry Giroux's (2004) idea of public pedagogies is discussed in terms of how identity comes to be understood as a process of image construction and a mediation of cultural signifiers in the contemporary.

In all, this chapter offers a survey of elements of the literature that correspond directly to ideas of community that motivated my exploration of Greater Springfield. As such, this review does contain omissions to related, but not directly significant, literature. For instance, discussion of areas dealing with community capacity building (see Atkinson and Willis 2005), postmodern aesthetics (see Manuel 1995, Lyotard 1992, 1984) and urban architecture (see Le Corbusier 1985, Holm, 2006, Roberts 2005) receive only passing reference. Similarly, work exploring notions of community renewal (see Queensland Government 2005, Reza 2005) and the maintenance of social capital in urban settings (see Woolcock, Renton and Cavaye 2004, Kenyon 2002, Rosenblatt n.d) are also given scant mention as the focus of this thesis is on the ways that community is represented in a contemporary master planned development. Of interest here is how images of community function in a contemporary urban space and the ways in which members of this community come to understand and interact with these ideas. In these terms, the four categories identified for this review of the literature provide conceptual scope for dealing with this concept of 'community' as it is presented as a fundamental element in the development of Greater Springfield.

2.2 Community

Community is *where we are and what we do*, conceptually, physically and collectively. Community is also what defines our interactions and the nature of the collective bonds we share with others. As such community involves everything from the way health services are targeted towards the needs of specific subsections of an urban centre to

describing the interpersonal relationships present in a small town. It is concerned with the way that particular interest groups are supported and represented and how individuals come to engage each other and their surroundings. Community is central to living collectively and represents something identifiable about human group interaction, particularly in this current era of rapid change and social fluidity.

Looking at community in terms of its evolution as a function of human social interaction, Grange (1999) notes that:

The experience of community has played a decisive role in both the survival and successful evolution of the human race. Without it, knowledge understood as habits of successful reaction to all sorts of environmental stress would not have been possible. What to do when the lion strikes or where to go when the water holes dry up would never have become part of the intelligent traditions of human groups. Somehow or other humans became acutely aware of the need to double their chances of survival by sharing information, habits of response, and intelligence in action. What community fundamentally means is caught in this picture of human beings at their most desperate. Community is the recognition of 'something in between' that bonds them into a whole greater than the sum of their individual existences (176).

For Grange, community operates as a focusing point for collective interaction- that 'something in between' that exists between the individual and the material realities of the world. It is where being part of a group is invested with meaning according to the shared acknowledgement of the group's existence and the conditions within which it functions. What this means is that we 'know' the patterns of learned behaviour that are acceptable in various situations according to the dynamic of the communities we operate in. It is community that provides us with the frame of reference we deploy to make sense of the social interactions and physical locations we confront. As Grange notes, community is the shared understanding of social and physical forms of the world, from which collective responses to challenges, threats and opportunities are mediated, made sense of and enacted.

But as much as community provides a locus for understanding the multiplicity of a group's present and its anticipated futures, ideas about community also prompt a nostalgic image of the social structures it mediates. Community, by its very nature, is built upon the

past and mobilized according to the challenges of the present, so that when a community responds to a crisis or a celebration it does so by drawing on its identity, with this identity built upon who and what the community is, what it has done and what it values. Those identifying features of the community- those shared points of recognition- are borne from where the community has developed from, and perhaps more importantly, how it remembers itself and constructs its own history and furthermore, develops its own identity (Hickey 2007). For a community to maintain a basis in the present the past operates as a fundamental reference point from which meaning and the nature of the community is established and recognized. From this logic, the identity of a community moves according to the continuum of the collective knowledge the community builds through time. In these terms, community as a structural function of human group organization operates as a framework for organizing collectives of individuals based in the shared traditions, interpretations and re-constructions of past experience transferred onto the requirements and contexts of the present (Arensberg and Kimball 1965; Kluckhohn 1962). In these views, community functions as an 'integrative' element of group organisation (Cohen 2004: 20) in that it is within community that a '...way of thinking, feeling, believing...' (Kluckhohn 1962: 25) is formed amongst its members according to the commonality, experience and pastness they share.

An example of this is found in the formation of a professional community of educators in a rural Queensland school, as reported by Andrews and Lewis (2002). In their work Andrews and Lewis noted that the first step in understanding the effectiveness of the professional community of teachers within the school required a shared reflection on 'the story so far' from which 'new professional understandings' and a sense of community were constructed to create a 'school for the twenty-first century' (241). An active reflection on the pastness of the professional community was fundamental to the formulation of an understanding of the community's nature in the present and how it might continue into the future. The emergent awareness of the identity of this community was grounded principally in the (re)consideration of the pastness of the school and the way it formulated responses to challenges that the school faced now. In this case the rigorous understanding of who and what the community *was* (and subsequently *is*) enabled the community to embed a shared sense of identity that functioned as a fundamental aspect of its nature, resulting in proactive responses to its current social and physical contexts. The outcomes identified by Andrews and Lewis (2002) included a heightened sense of engagement between the school, its educators and the town in which the school was located; a result that emphasized implicitly the role of community as a key symbolic element for interaction amongst its members and for

the collective understanding of shared pastness. Here, community was generated as the ‘experience’ of shared locatedness in a rural school undergoing transformation.

Whilst the experiences of this rural school demonstrated the value of mobilizing community as shared pastness, it is in this way that community has also become a rallying cry in a number of contemporary social contexts as something ideal, albeit as something requiring reconstruction, modification or even full reconceptualisation. Community is often posed as an ideal end-point from which good things for the collective of individuals involved will emerge. Mobilized as a reaction to a whole range of threats to social life in contemporary society, community is often deployed as a ‘cover-all’ term that conjures images of harmony, connectivity and social order; a utopian vision of ‘organic’ collective interaction. Although actual communities are regularly reported as having lost their place in the ‘real’ world of the contemporary (especially in urban contexts)³³, the *idea* of community itself is still regarded as an ideal worth pursuing. One example in particular highlights this.

In April 2006 the Tasmanian town of Beaconsfield became world news after a gold mine collapse trapped two miners and killed another. Apart from reporting on the significant efforts to release the miners, a large amount of media attention at the time was given to the well-being of the community³⁴. It quickly emerged that it would take the return of a ‘sense of community’ for Beaconsfield to preserve its essence and identity both during and post the mine rescue, with fears the town would decline if the community couldn’t maintain its identity, employment and economic stability. Amongst other formal and less formal strategies, the town engaged (of all things) the services of ‘Knitters [to] help rebuild community spirit’ in an attempt to regain community identity and interpersonal connections lost in the trauma of the disaster (“Knitters Help Rebuild Community Spirit”, 18th October 2006). Via the simple act of people co-operatively knitting for their community all would be well and social bonds would be maintained, if not strengthened. The intended outcome of this

³³ News reports such as ‘Report reveals loss of community spirit’ (The Guardian, 16th August 2006), and ‘Local heroes rewarded for efforts to improve community spirit’ (The Herald, 26th October 2006) that note the condition of communities and efforts to regain the order, values and sensibilities of the past highlight the perceived threat to community in contemporary social, and particularly urban contexts. As one of the reports identified, the aim of the community was to reinstall a ‘culture of respect and community spirit’ by campaigning ‘against disorder in the community’ (Donnelly 2006: para 1).

³⁴ See particularly ‘Allstate, Beaconsfield Gold to meet over mine's future’ (ABC News Online, 10th November 2006), Vowles’ ‘Close-knit community’ (Sunday Tasmanian, 5th November 2006), Nettlefold’s ‘Beaconsfield struggles after mine closure (7:30 Report, 30th October 2006) and ‘Russell, Webb want Beaconsfield mine reopened’ (ABC News Online, 30th October 2006).

project, a 925 metre long scarf signifying the depth at which the miners were trapped, had ‘contributions coming in daily’ and would eventually go on public display, with this artefact of community co-operation serving as a physical reminder of the disaster, community spirit and the nature of the community’s response to the event (“Knitters Help Rebuild Community Spirit”, 18th October 2006).

Keller’s (2003) suggestion that ‘for community to exist, individuals must not only be close to one another but moving toward collective goals as well’ fits the Beaconsfield example, to the extent that ‘to qualify for community, social categorization must be translated into a consciousness of kind, a sense of belonging, and a shared destiny, past or future’ (8). In the disaster at Beaconsfield (and similarly at countless traumatic events the world over) community manifested as the social bond that worked toward restoring order and a semblance of ‘what was’ before the event. It is the idea of community as *nostalgic* that emerges here, where community is necessarily grounded in its past as it attempts to rebuild in the image and ideal of what it was, however jaundiced or rose coloured this image of pastness appears. In the case of Beaconsfield, the disaster operated on one level as a direct threat to the economic and social stability of the community. But on another it provided an opportunity for reflection on the nature and identity of the community from which emerged a renewed sense of community spirit. Whether it was in the symbolic form of a 925m long scarf, collective pride, camaraderie or interpersonal ties, the basis of these actions was community.

But how resilient individual communities actually are in the face of disruptive events is an important question, as Keller (2003) notes:

One fact attested to over and over again is how fragile communities actually are and how easily they become undone. Calamities are thought to strengthen communities but the contrary is often the case (11).

As an example of a community decaying post-trauma, Keller (2003) cites the destruction of the Buffalo Creek community by flood following a dam collapse, as originally reported by Erikson (1976). Unlike Beaconsfield, social bonds and the sense of community didn’t prevail as individualism and a focus on personal advantage developed as hallmark characteristics of social relationships after the flood. Erikson (1976) noted how group affiliation prior to the flood in which ‘networks of understandings’ (189) stood as key structures of the group dynamic quickly deteriorated into individualistic clamouring for survival and personal gain. As Keller (2003) suggests:

Trauma does at times strengthen community, as shared pain mobilizes latent energies to repair the damaged texture of collective life. That did not happen in Buffalo Creek... there was no remnant intact or strong enough in which to rebuild and regenerate' (12).

Idealized images of communities as always having the correct responses to outside threats do not necessarily relate to actual communities being resilient enough to effectively overcome the challenges they may face in 'real' situations.

What emerges from these examples is that an awareness and 'sense' of community is indeed important. But away from the examples of Beaconsfield and Buffalo Creek, community is often overlooked or neglected in contemporary social contexts that have become increasingly individualistic. Putnam's (1995) *Bowling Alone*, Karp, Stone, Gregory and Yoels (1991) *Being Urban* and Taylor's (1982) *Community, Anarchy and Liberty* also present these themes and offer an examination of how community operates as something anathema to, but ultimately threatened by alienating and disintegrating social contexts. In response to these theorisations of community decline, notions of retrieving community as a necessary element of group interaction has become a significant theme in government policy and the work of a virtually endless list of organisations. Reports such as Community Service Volunteers' (CSV) *CSV Reports on Civil Renewal* (2004) and work in community capacity building by Stark and McCullough (2005), Roberts (2005), Parminter, Brock and Roth (2005), Rosenblatt (n.d.) and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) draw attention to what makes an effective community. The amount of work done in this area perhaps makes sense in terms of the significance the notion of community holds in our political and social networks, and when considered what it is communities actually do, it isn't surprising to note the variety of groups and organizations who utilize the idea of community in their activities.

2.2.1 Community Under Threat

'Threat' to community has emerged in recent times as a prominent theme in discussions about the role and purpose of community in contemporary and particularly urban locales. Roberts (2005) notes that:

Communities everywhere are grappling with external pressure to change. While some communities are faced with rapid growth and development

pressures, others are slowly declining. Local officials in these communities are called upon to “do something” and increasingly, residents expect the opportunity to become involved in such processes (para. 1).

In idealized visions of community that react against individualism and urbanism in particular³⁵, community is variously under threat from the ills of contemporary social structures and requires the extra efforts of its members and outsiders to reinstall the values and order previously *known* (as in collectively understood, but more likely collectively *imagined*).

These images of community as an entity lost to urban expansion and rising individualism point to a romanticised time prior to community's loss. Even though these images conjure a nostalgic remembrance of community that may actually never have been, community in these instances stands as an almost utopian vision of social organization, connectivity and collective strength, lost at some point in time to the expansion of cities and more 'mechanical' modes of living. In reality however, community is not so easily realised, and never has it been so homogenous, focused, local or collective as the myth of community might suggest.

Community under threat is a theme that engages a range of ideals and assumptions about 'nostalgic and romantic notions of a mythical past' (Pahl 1996: 68), and the construction of 'fictionalised memories' (Mayo 2000: 39) of the structure and operation of community as a homogenous entity. As Day (2006) notes:

All such uses of 'community' raise fundamental social questions about inclusion and exclusion, the privileging of some social relationships over others, and the formulation of particular as opposed to general interests (x-xi).

More often than not, calls for renewed emphasis on community have as their basis homogeneity (and subsequently a 'total' inclusivity resulting in limited diversity) and idealized images of social harmony (Yanqin, 2007; Guvenic 2007). In these images forgotten are the realities of many communities that deal with violence, disagreement and difference as

³⁵ See as one example, Bill Talen's campaigns for the maintenance of community space (2003) in New York.

fundamental aspects of their structure and definition (Cohen 2004: 20). These are ideals in which the past of community operates as the manifestation of a community structure that contains and excludes by its very nature. This is the sort of vision of community that surfaces in politics, for instance, when arguments for a renewed social order emerge as expressions of essentialised characteristics of the community that have since been corrupted or infiltrated- a return to 'community' where specific sets of values and social mores are said to exist, but in reality mean the privileging of a specific sub-group of individuals and their values (Taylor 1982)³⁶.

Although viewing community as under threat contains problems of remembering a nostalgic past, it is a view that holds significant influence in responses to the nature of contemporary life. There is no shortage of commissioned reports, conferences, organizations and political groups dealing variously with the health, configuration, identity and conceptualisation of communities in contemporary social contexts³⁷ and whilst these identify the importance of community, they also note the problems and relevance it has in the current era. Community might well exist, but according to the work of these organizations at the very least, it is either in serious trouble from various external and internal threats, requires active citizenship to be regained or needs to be reconfigured entirely in order to meet the needs of the contemporary social climate. In conjunction with these discussions of community, Parse (2003) also notes that '...the idea of community is emerging as a central concern in a variety of scholarly discourses' (1) after being given up for dead in the face of different forms of social organisation in industrialised urban space, as noted by Hamilton (1985: 7). Whether or not community is actually in decline, ideas and discussion about community have become a central concern of the contemporary social landscape, particularly in urban spaces where increasingly diverse groups of individuals negotiate increasingly limited physical space, each other and varied social contexts that hold unprecedented access to information and wealth³⁸ but also the potential for isolation and marginalization (Susser and Castells 2002; Castells 1996; Castells, Flecha, Freire, Giroux, Macedo and Willis 1999).

³⁶ See the example of the town of Tamworth's response to the settlement of Sudanese refugees in 2006. Various news reports, including Norrie's 'Tamworth's rejection of Sudanese families 'racist'' from *The Age*, 15th Decemder 2006 and the *Sydney Morning Herald's* 'Tamworth tainted by small minds' from 23rd December 2006 for examples of calls for community that conjure an image of an idealized past that is defined by its active exclusion of a particular group of people.

³⁷ Such as Community Service Volunteer's reports (2005, 2004, 2001), work by organizations such as the University of Queensland's Boilerhouse Community Engagement Centre, and documents such as *The Brisbane Declaration* (2005) which emerged from the *International Conference on Engaging Communities* as key examples.

³⁸ At the very least in Western contexts where individual wealth and access to information sources is unprecedented and a bi-product of an increasingly globalised world in the 'information age'.

But apart from these problems, Hamilton (1985) reminds us:

[f]or whilst the conceptual ashes of community were being offered to the wind by sociologists and anthropologists of a radical or structuralist disposition, people throughout the Western world in modern industrialised societies were aggressively asserting their locality and ethnicity, their membership of communities which were real enough for them if not for those who ought to be studying them (7).

Far from being an outmoded structure of social organisation, community is significant in the contemporary and as demonstrated by the work dealing with the role and function of community, is considered as fundamental to rich human interaction- particularly in urban spaces.

2.2.2 Community, Modernity and Urbanism

Perhaps more so in Western, capitalist contexts where individualism is central to the logic of competition-based social systems, community has been relegated to a secondary role in the social order. This is particularly the case if the ideas of community being suggested contradict opportunities for individualist gain and argue for the democratizing of social space from locations of power. Putnam's *'Bowling Alone'* (1995) follows this premise and suggests that increasing individualism, perceived dangers in public space and declining social capital (particularly in underprivileged areas) generate disconnection between individuals and their community networks. This disconnection leads to the isolation of certain groupings of individuals who are then at risk of becoming (further) marginalised and unable to connect to the opportunities collective participation brings. Keller (2003) notes a similar theme by suggesting that contemporary understandings of community reflect a 'deep conviction that modern life suffers from both excess and a deficiency: too much emphasis on 'the great big I... and too little on community' (xi). She continues by noting:

Modernity altered the basic conditions of life in the society-in-making along with extensive mobility, urbanization, and an accent on achievement and self-determination. The new society it seemed, had no need for community' (xi).

How we come to rebuild community in contemporary social contexts becomes a question of how we understand the larger political and social forces that underpin the logic of consumer capitalism, individualism and the construction of social life (Susser and Castells 2002, Giroux 2004, 1995; Gwyther 2005). Building on the works of classical sociologists such as Tonnies (1963) and Durkheim (1972), theorists of community including Zorbaugh (1929), Frankenberg (1966), Putnam (1995), Bauman (2001) and Keller (2003) argue that modernity, urbanization and its impending metropolitanism removes the value that communities as close knit groupings of individuals living collectively are more likely to share. As compared to the far more individualistic, urban societies of the present, community for these theorists suggests something almost antithetical to the logic of the individual. Keller (2003) in particular taps these ideas and posits the connection of individualism, late capitalism and the increased urbanization of social space as a cause for the diminution of community as a cohesive and recognizable social structure in contemporary contexts.

However, community has in recent times been utilized to operate hand in hand with modern urban lifestyle choice and an individualism that recognizes others- albeit *similar* others. The current trend in residential ‘planned communities’,³⁹ stresses the ideal of community as the point of differentiation in these developments to other urban spaces. Gwyther (2005) notes that the master planned community ‘is the latest manifestation of utopian place making’ (57) and surveys movements such as the ‘Garden City Movement’ of urban-rural integration in the urban developments of the late 19th century that moved to reduce perceived ills of high density urban space with the sense of connectedness and interaction a ‘village’ community provided (Howard 1946). These ideals are very much mirrored in the current development of Greater Springfield; as the website of Greater Springfield itself suggests, the ‘community enjoy events to bring the whole community together and celebrate this special place to live’ (Springfield Lakes, 2006). It is perhaps no surprise to note that Greater Springfield is presented as a showcase of the developer’s specialization in the construction of ‘residential lifestyle communities’ (Greater Springfield, 2006). Whether or not these new types of community are ‘destructive gemeinschaft’ (Sennett 1992) and represent an imposed *forced community* will be explored later in this thesis with reference to the various manifestations of community presented in Greater Springfield.

³⁹ Local examples include including Springfield Lakes in south-east Queensland and others such as Augustine Heights, Halpine Lakes and Teviot Downs. The planned community is a Western phenomena, with an emphasis on the image of community without a necessity for social involvement marketed in many of these developments.

Work in the area of master-planned communities by Walters (2005), Reza (2005) and Eltham, Woolcock, Rosenblatt and Walters (2005), reinforce these themes, with Walters (2005) noting that:

Master Planned Communities (MPCs) are a form of new residential development often marketed for their potential as a community of place, invoking the imagery of a 'return to the neighbourhood', the communitarian ideal also favoured by various policy makers and social commentators (1).

How this view of community compares to the ideas presented by protagonists of more traditional formations of community (such as Tonnies (1963)) becomes a key point in this era of late capital. But regardless of whether community is something organic or contrived, it remains that community as an ideal is something that is considered to be desirable in many contemporary social contexts. Community in this understanding broadly equates to quality of life, interpersonal connectedness and senses of belonging as extrapolated from the design principles of these master planned urban spaces.

2.2.3 Community as Shared

Underlying the intentions and conceptions of community is the notion that community is shared. We as human beings operate as 'social beings' in that we function collectively in groups, and as such require, physiologically, connection with others and the patterns of shared meaning making that allow us to engage and make sense of the physical world. We establish patterns of learned behaviour and decipher ways of viewing the social world via collective conceptualisations of what the world 'means'. Day (2006) notes that:

We would not be social beings if we did not feel some sense of identification and solidarity with the others around us and share in their experiences and expectations (2)

Above all else, community operates as a signifier of a collective entity, whether this is 'planned' and premeditated as with a planned community, or more organic in its construction. But with notions of collectivity come senses of identity, and subsequently the awareness of what is different. As Day (2006) notes:

Some of the most disturbing social confrontations occur across [community] boundaries, as the various groups struggle to expand or defend their territories. Almost always in the course of such events, questions will be raised about why people cannot get along better with one another, why they cannot show greater responsibility towards their neighbours, and what has become of the idea of community (x).

He continues by suggesting that ‘all such uses of community raises fundamental questions about inclusion and exclusion, the privileging of some social relationships over others, and the formulation of particular as opposed to general interests’ (x). How communities begin to position themselves as social structures is fundamental to how they respond to other groups of individuals. The overall success of a community in this sense is very much reliant on how a community operates contextually as part of a larger social formation; this identification of the *self*-ness of a community manifests according to understandings of the larger contexts in which the community operates and how it recognizes itself, others and the make-up of its own membership.

2.2.4 Community and Society

Community as a term that describes collective human interaction by its nature corresponds to a number of similar terms applied in social theory- primarily family, as the smallest unit of social organisation in a sociological sense to society as the expression of larger scale collectives. Society in particular is prominent in its connection (and distinction from) community, with significant attention to the differences each term represents featuring heavily in sociological considerations of the nature of human groupings. Raymond Williams’ (1976) exploration of society from his seminal ‘Keywords’ identifies that:

From C17 [17th Century] there are signs of the distinction which became especially important from C19 [19th Century], in which community was felt to be more immediate than society, although it must be remembered that society itself had this more immediate sense until C18 [18th Century], and civil society was, like society and community in these uses, originally an attempt to distinguish the body of direct relationships from the organized establishment of realm or state (75).

This follows a distinction that Tonnies (1963) made with his terms *Gemeinschaft* (Community) and *Gessellschaft* (Society). Here Tonnies identifies that:

The relationship itself, and also the resulting association, is conceived of either as real and organic life (community); or as imaginary and mechanical structure- this is the concept of Gessellschaft (society) (33).

It is important to note that Tonnies understood community and society to be interdependent; however, he does mark a clear distinction between the two. The key difference lay in the distinction between the 'organic' nature of community, as expressed in the bonds and ties of family units and 'natural' associations Tonnies saw occurring more prominently in rural settings, to the more formally structured organization of society he noted in urban space. As a point of explanation, *gemeinschaft* corresponds to what Tonnies saw as being a traditional and organic life in rural settings that lead to a strong sense of collective unity in which the community was of greater value than the single individual, whilst in the mechanical organization of urban space, interpersonal bonds were broken down to suit individualistic societal structures. It was the forced nature of interaction that Tonnies noted in urban spaces that he drew distinction with as compared to the organic arrangement of social bonds in rural settings. But again, while Tonnies identified a distinction between the modes of living each social grouping prescribed, he does note that 'the essence of both *Gemeinschaft* and *Gessellschaft* is found interwoven in all kinds of associations' (249).

A typology of social structures is present in classical sociological theory of group organisations, with Simmel (1997), Durkheim (1972) and Tonnies' (1963) work in particular presenting a distinction between the large scale, societal city-space and micro-social processes of village communities. This is a theme that is repeated by later social theorists, with Habermas' (1981; 1987) idea of the 'life-world' (the location of shared meanings and assumptions of the world taken 'intersubjectively' for granted as the logic of the world) and 'system world' (the systems that structure responses to the physical world and construct their own instrumental reason) corresponding broadly to the *gemeinschaft- gessellschaft* distinction, as does Nisbett's (1967: 56) analysis of sociological applications of *communitas* and *societas*.

What emerges from these theorists is that community is something different to society. Delanty (2003) further clarifies this distinction by suggesting:

Community is 'living', while society is mechanical. The former is more rooted in locality and is 'natural', while the latter is more a 'rational', 'mental' product and one that is sustained by relations of exchange (33).

It might be suggested that an individual *belongs* to a community, but *operates* as a part of society. The key here being the 'natural' connection to community that Delanty identifies, as opposed to the 'rational' location society arbitrates. Community isn't fully realized as the organization of the institutions and practices of society alone but is a concept that brings with it ideas of connectedness, interaction and a sense of spatial locatedness. It is a deeper more intrinsic term that describes the conceptual nature of our zone of living and that point 'in between' that moderates our social and physical connection to the world. As Delanty (2003) continues:

This view of community resists every attempt to pin it down in an institutional or spatial structure, since it is something that is only experienced. For this reason, too, community is 'inoperative'; it can never be instrumentalised or institutionalized. The point is that community is experienced in a communicative relationship and not in a common bond as such, since it does not take a concrete form (136-7).

Whilst the terms community and society are connected, and are used interchangeably in some analyses of social interaction, they do denote specific forms of social organization.

2.2.5 Definitions

Community, like many of the terms applied in social theory, is a 'slippery notion' (Hamilton 1985). It is a 'contested concept' as Mason (2000: 18) identifies- one that is applied regularly in terms of describing groups of individuals based on the unifying characteristics that are held as being descriptive markers of their identity. As Grange (1999) suggests, discussions about notions of community are:

...made difficult by the absence of real community as a widespread contemporary human experience, as well as by the tendency to invoke the term as a cure for any social problem (175).

For Grange, the contemporary period of postmodernity has shifted notions of what community comes to stand for- perhaps gone are traditional notions of community that see it as the manifestation of homogenous sets of values, behaviours and norms in a social group. Community represents in the contemporary era a number of things to a number of people, with varied definitions emerging according to the contexts to which ideas of community are applied. While it would be difficult to identify one single definition of community that covers all bases, 'community' might be seen variously as being:

- a) A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government.*
- b) The district or locality in which such a group lives.*
- c) A group of people having common interests: the “scientific community”; the “international business community”.*
- d) A group viewed as forming a distinct segment of society: the “gay community”; the “community of color”.*
- e) Similarity or identity: a community of interests.*
- f) Sharing, participation, and fellowship*
Society as a whole; the public (Edge Life, 2006).

Stressed here are notions of community as being a collection of individuals grouped together via some defining characteristic/s and who share an identity and sense of the community. An alternative definition of 'community' might suggest something more holistic about the nature of communities in general. For example:

*In biological terms, natural communities are formed based upon relationships. All living things are attracted to each other. More often than not, communities obey a built-in mandate to gather together. The rules of community that are found in nature have preserved life on this planet to this day and will most likely stay in place for some time to come. If the sense of community exists, both freedom and security exist as well. The Community then takes on a life of its own, as people become free enough to share and secure enough to get along. This is the **spirit** of community (Edge Life, 2006).*

This is paralleled by the suggestion that:

In sustainable communities people believe that the future of the community is in their hands. They seek out and use productively the expertise, resources, skills and finances available to the community to address the issues and problems that are important to its citizens (Kenyon 2002: checklist 8).

What is gathered from each of these definitions is that a community is a collective entity that manifests according to the connectedness its members share and the articulation of this collective nature via its recognisable characteristics. Aligned with this is Cohen's (2004) suggestion that a definition of community:

...would imply two related suggestions: that the members of a group of people (a) have something in common with each other, which (b) distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other putative groups. 'Community' thus seems to imply simultaneously both similarity and difference (12).

This is fundamental to any definition of community where community is distinct from other forms of social groupings. A community is a community because its members share an affiliation and the awareness of that affiliation.

Within this broad definitional characteristic of community form a number of types of community. These types are specific to the nature of the interactions its members share, the way connections to the physical world manifest and the identity characteristics members derive from being part of the community. While a number of contemporary articulations of community, particularly post-modern definitions, suggest that community isn't linked to specific spatial locations and can occur outside of physical and geographic boundaries, Keller (2003) challenges these assertions by arguing that '[t]he territorial connotation of community is surely the most familiar and... the most basic' (6). In this view of community, Keller ties the idea of community to a location, from which that location provides an impetus for identifying the community. As she continues:

[w]ith a few exceptions, community always denotes a there. The territory that encloses a community offers a proximity and density conducive to other kinds of closeness. No matter in which container- village, town, suburb- community as captured, delimited space shapes the scale of collective life and the patterns of life created therein (6).

This connects to a traditional view of community that sees community according to its physical locatedness. Such views position this physicality as the basis on which expressions of community identity is formed. Wilmott (1986) builds on this by distinguishing between three types of community- 'territorial' or 'place' based communities, communities of 'interest' and communities of 'attachment'- each of which are still broadly focused around a 'there' in Keller's sense.

In contrast to ideas of community that hold 'place' as their central point of commonality, Benedict Anderson (1983) developed the idea of the imagined community. Anderson was interested primarily in the way that nation states form and how notions of nationalism manifest within groups of individuals within and outside of the nation-state. For Anderson, it was this 'imagined' component of the nation-community that was important. The way that individuals both within and outside the community understood its nature and 'spirit' formed the foundation for the operation of nationalism and provided the reason for why individuals in large numbers could connect without requiring direct interpersonal contact. In this sense, an imagined community:

...is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion...Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.

(Anderson 1983; 6-7).

While this idea of community works on a large scale, the idea of community presented by Anderson is an important one for this thesis. His conceptualization of community stresses the idea of a spirit of community that binds people together by the *idea of community*. He uses examples of the expansion of European colonies in the late 1700's and early 1800's to demonstrate how ideas of European sensibility and community were formed in the antipodes, even though these recreations of European community were fundamentally 'imagined'. It is this conceptualisation of community that I will discuss in later chapters.

Recent advances in information and communications technologies- particularly the internet- have fundamentally altered the way that individuals interact and communicate. Due to the changes that rapid increases in the amount of information that can be delivered and shared via the web, theorists such as Castells (2004, 2001, 1996), Wellman (1999) and Negroponete (1995) have suggested that we are entering (in the Western world at least) a new period of human organisation. What Castells particularly has argued is that we are in the process of moving beyond economic systems based on industrial production to those oriented towards global information networks. Within these new structures, Castells argues, follows a new mode of human interaction. We now interact over large geographic spaces and utilise information technologies to share ideas and build relationships. Virtual communities are part of this, whereby communities and collectives of individuals form and interact without the necessity of physical contact. For Castells this is a hallmark feature of postmodernity and the shift to a post-industrial or 'information' economy. People can now build collective interests and networks without an attendant physicality. In many ways, these communities are imagined, but moving on from Anderson's idea of the imagined community built on the logic of the nation-state, aren't limited to large geographic (or 'physical') spaces. They are imagined and virtual- a community like no other at any previous point in history. Problems of identity, legitimacy of relationships and the nature of social bonds are central to discussions of these types of communities (Castells 2004; Calhoun 1998; Beusch 2005), but if the popularity of virtual worlds including *Second Life* and *Virtual Villagers* is anything to go by, this form of community is significant for many people (and in some cases *is* community, such as Veronica Brown (as reported by Fullerton (2007a; 2007b) who has merged her 'real' life completely into her 'second' life via the establishment of a virtual business, friendships and social contact).

Straddling place, the imagined and virtual are communities of practice. Interested in the idea of the way that learning occurs socially as part of group interaction, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) developed the idea of 'communities of practice' in terms of their theory of 'situated learning'. As Wenger (1998) notes:

Being alive as human beings means that we are constantly engaged in the pursuit of enterprises of all kinds, from ensuring our physical survival to seeking the most lofty pleasures. As we define these enterprises and engage in their pursuit together, we interact with each other and with the world and we tune our relations with each other and with the world

accordingly. In other words we learn... Over time, this collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore to call these kinds of communities 'communities of practice' (1998:45).

Wenger is clear in identifying that the distinguishing feature of a community of practice is the shared practice of those individuals within it, with much of his work examining the way that communities of practice form as formal and informal networks of people in workplace environments. But beyond this, communities of practice are diverse and operate at varying levels of structure. It is the awareness of shared affiliation- the collective interaction 'in the pursuit of enterprises' (Wenger 1998:45) that is central to the idea of community of practice.

Regardless of the specifics of these definitions, the unifying feature of all communities is *collectivity*. A community is a collective entity that manifests according to the connectedness its members share and the articulation of this collective nature via its recognisable characteristics. At the same time, community is centred on notions of context and the situatedness individuals have at given points in space and time. It is precisely these contexts- whether physical, imagined or virtual- that provide meaning to the shared understanding of what community is, how it functions and who its members are. The simultaneous locatedness members of communities share in spatial, temporal and conceptual positions define the community. But such locatedness within the community also arbitrates the social, agentic and cultural capacities of its members. A symbiosis between the individual and the requirements of the community form in a way similar to Giddens' (1985) exploration of agency and structure. We see this in each of the types of communities discussed here, and as will be explored later, in the communities of Greater Springfield.

2.2.6 Feeling a Sense of Community

Communities are built around people. Without people communities are just spaces. As human enterprises communities bring with them a range of feelings of connectedness and inclusion to the collective. Work by David McMillan and David Chavis in the 1970's explored the way that individuals connect to communities, with McMillan and Chavis developing a scale for measuring the 'sense' of community an individual feels. From this, they identified a number of 'elements' of a sense of community, with McMillan (1996) in particular later furthering this work; he lists the elements of a sense of community as being:

- Spirit: For McMillan spirit '...enhances a member's confidence' and '...creates in the member a sense of entitlement. Finally it serves to build up loyalty in the group' (315). There are resonances here with Anderson's idea of the 'imagined community' whereby a sense of loyalty and 'spirit' of commitment is given to the community by individual members.
- Emotional Safety: the community provides the individual member with 'the acceptance, empathy and support for members to speak the truth and be themselves' (316).
- Boundaries: the community identifies the boundaries or limits of acceptable behaviour and establishes codes of conduct for members of the community to follow.

McMillan goes on to suggest that things like 'trust' and 'acceptance' will carry once a sense of community is reached by its members. These ideas have been applied in the literature of community capacity building as demonstrated in the work of Roberts (2005), Kenyon (2002) and Atkinson and Willis (2005). It also has connection to the idea of the 'boundary' of community as noted by Cohen (2004).

For Cohen (2004) the 'boundary' '...encapsulates the identity of the community and, like the identity of an individual, is called into the being by the exigencies of social interaction' (12). He continues by suggesting that the boundary '...may be thought of... as existing in the minds of their beholders' (12) and in a manner not dissimilar to Bourdieu's *habitus* (in that it is the attitudinal disposition of a group) the boundary works to identify the nature of the community as it is understood by its members. While Cohen does note that boundaries can include 'national or administrative', 'physical', 'racial or linguistic or

religious' bases, he suggests that 'not *all* the components of *any* boundary are so objectively apparent' (12; emphases as in the original). For Cohen (2004), '[t]his is the *symbolic* aspect of community boundary and, in so far as we aspire to understand the importance of the community in people's experience, it is the most crucial' (12-13; emphasis as in the original). The implication as Cohen notes for ethnographers is that to genuinely understand a community, a superficial reading of a community (as he suggests is the case with some early Chicago School accounts of urban community) will miss the significant emic accounts of the social processes that occur 'inside' the community. The ethnographer's task is to fully account for the symbolic functions of community.

These ideas further the notion that communities operate as manifestations of social interactions. Communities, as collectives of people, function according to sanctions, patterns of behaviour and practices that are intimately linked to the contexts of the community. Again, community is that 'in between' as Grange (1999) notes- that thing that exists between the world and us. Communities therefore arbitrate certain behaviours and actions that are considered suitable/appropriate and provide a sense of belonging and mandate certain roles for members of the community. As Bauman (2001) notes:

[t]here is a price to be paid for the privilege of 'being in a community' ... The price is paid in the currency of freedom, variously called 'autonomy', 'right to self assertion', 'right to be yourself'. What ever you choose, you gain some and lose some (4).

Community in these terms is the social practice of collective action and connectedness to the physical world. It suggests a symbolic connection to personal interaction and physicality as well as the performance of specific and appropriate roles. Community in this regard has an identity and character, even though these elements of community may be difficult (if not impossible) to quantify completely.

2.2.7 Ideas of Community and this Thesis

Where does this leave understandings of community in contemporary contexts? Delanty (2003) suggests that in general '...the discourse of community has been dominated by a narrative of loss and recovery' (25) and moves to argue according to his extensive survey of the literature that '...the main conceptions of community as a normative idea... emerged in terms of three discourses' (19). Broadly he sees ideas of community fitting into:

- *Discourses of community as irretrievable*: here community is relegated to the past, where a golden era of community once existed but has since been eroded and unable to be restored due to current social organization that is anathema to the organic nature of community
- *Discourses of community as recoverable*: community may well be exhausted in contemporary contexts, but its intention remains and the nature of its essence can be retrieved providing the right shift in thinking and action within the social context where it is desired.
- *Discourses of community as yet to be achieved*: here community is yet to occur. This is a discourse of utopian ideals, whereby community operates as an evolutionary progress towards a teleological end point.

Examples of each of these themes are presented in Greater Springfield, and will be explored later in this thesis. The semi-rural outer suburban housing developments romanticising a recoverable and nostalgic ‘community’ based on the mythic Australian ideal of the ¼ acre block in Augustine Heights⁴⁰, the decayed and ‘lost’ communities of metropolitan Brisbane that you ‘escape’ to Greater Springfield to avoid and the teleological progression towards completion of the Greater Springfield development are all present.

The central theme of community for this thesis is that it is indeed possible to have community in an urban space, but the nature of that community and what it means to its members is of significance and requires explication. It is here that an exploration of the ‘boundary’(Cohen 2004) of community, that location of community in which shared local meanings manifest and a sense of the community is borne, will be performed in Greater Springfield. The way that meaning is generated and experienced by the members of the community against a pre-formed backdrop of visions of community will ground the analysis of community presented here.

⁴⁰ See in particular the ‘Augustine Heights’ development in south-east Queensland that emphasises ‘*Open space and room to move is what Augustine Heights is all about. We have developed generous size blocks ranging from 800m² to 1200m², allowing ample room for the home of your dreams. At Augustine Heights you’ll find a natural environment, large allotments and generous living domains which all achieve a beautiful sense of spaciousness*’ (2006).

2.3 Postmodernity

2.3.1 Locating the Postmodern

A number of central theoretical concerns moderate the cultural and social milieu of the contemporary. Whilst ideas related to postmodernism, postmodernity and *the* postmodern have engaged many theorists and theoretical perspectives, it is broadly contended that ‘the postmodern’ is the site of the *current* and the range of experiences and interactions that occur within it. The term signifies a location of culture in the contemporary and suggests a framework for the way social relationships are formulated, enacted and (perhaps most significantly) recognised. From this basis, conceptualisations of contemporary social contexts might suggest that:

[t]he postmodern is neither a contemporary fashion nor a unified movement. More than anything else, it is a space for debate. Whether they are for it or against it, so many of the different theories about meaning, identity and politics in today’s world revolve around the postmodern that it has become a site of intense and often heated discussion across the cultural spectrum
(Malpas 2001: 1).

This definition moves beyond conceptualisations of the ‘postmodern’ as simply a period of aesthetic dynamism in the arts, architecture and literature and engages a theoretical investigation of the nature and experience of social contexts within the period identified as postmodernity⁴¹.

Postmodernism is significantly more than a concern for shifts in aesthetic considerations of ‘style’. It also signifies a major shift in philosophical and methodological considerations of knowledge. Here the work of Jacques Derrida (1976), Michel Foucault (1972, 1979, 1980, 1994), Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984, 1988) and Jean Baudrillard (1983,

⁴¹ Interpretations of the postmodern grounded in aesthetic considerations alone frame it in terms of a ‘style’ signified by those things declared as being aesthetically ‘postmodern’, or, fashionably and radically ‘new’. This definition identifies the postmodern via its move away from and critique of a modernism that has ‘become entrenched and conventional and [is] no longer capable of spawning new forms of artistic or poetic expression’ (Drolet 2004: 2). Critics of postmodernity including Jurgen Habermas (2001) Alex Callinicos (1989), Frederic Jameson (1991, 2001) and Terry Eagleton (1996, 2001) have identified this as a central component of their arguments.

1995)⁴², as key representatives of French post-structuralism that emerged in the 1960's, identify this concern with new formations of thinking and conceptualising the social world. The ideas presented by these theorists centred on new understandings of the human subject, linguistic structure, agency, power and representation, and moved beyond existing theories that were grounded primarily in a faith of 'grand narratives':

History can no longer be presented as... a 'grand narrative', the narrative of some grand, collective destiny of mankind (of Humanity, of Liberty, etc.), a narrative that was grand because it was great because its ultimate destination was considered good (Nancy 1993).

It is the perceived failure of grand-narratives grounded in Enlightenment principles to realise their own teleological ends that prompts critique by postmodernism's theorists. Lyotard's (1984, 1988) 'incredulity towards metanarratives' followed by his investigation of Auschwitz and the possibilities for meaning in his critique of 'language games'; Foucault's (1979, 1980, 1994) analysis of the construction of madness and sexuality via discursive practices and 'disciplining' of bodies; and Derrida's (1976) linguistic 'violences' and notion of *differance* constructed via powered relationships of linguistic binaries develop at this time in reaction to the project of modernism⁴³.

Rather than a continued faith in all-encompassing 'grand' narratives, from postmodernism grows a recognition of the importance of diversity and the possibility for multiple 'voices' and locations of agency; a central feature of postmodernism revolves around notions of multiplicity and difference, a 'multiplexity' to borrow from Cohen (2004: 30). It is here that aspects of newer disciplines and branches of social theory, including feminisms, post-colonial theories and those dealing with notions of 'otherness', agency and subjugated voices, find articulation in the broader theoretical framework of postmodernity. It

⁴² While these theorists would challenge their inclusion as 'postmodern' theorists, it is broadly accepted that they identify in their work the fundamental concerns of postmodernism. Hassan (2001) offers an interesting and more complete listing of theorists he identifies as representing the themes of postmodernism, but regardless it is the work of Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and Baudrillard that are regularly referred to as representing the key theoretical foundations of postmodernism.

⁴³ The features of this reaction by postmodernism to modernism are problematic with discussion of these raised by Jurgen Habermas (2001), Frederic Jameson (2001), Terry Eagleton (1996), Alex Callinicos (1989) and others. Whether the postmodern represents a clear break with the concerns of modernity is challenged in these writings with trajectories and connections between the articulations of postmodernism and a late modernity most prominently argued by Habermas (2001) and Callinicos (1989).

is the possibility of ‘difference’⁴⁴ in the postmodern and the engagement of multiplicitous ‘truths’ that signals a hallmark of postmodernity:

...the disruption of the rules of narrative allows new possibilities to emerge that were hidden by traditional ways of explaining the world, and new voices to be heard that were silenced in the grand narratives of modernity (Malpas 2001: 10).

The emancipatory⁴⁵ possibilities of postmodernism provide a ‘way out’ of the binds of modernism’s construction of the grand narrative and subsequent disciplining of social contexts and actors. Here the foundations of the ‘metaphysics of presence’ (Derrida 1976) supporting grand narrative structures are challenged and open the possibility for ‘little narratives’ (Lyotard 1984). From this basis, postmodernism might be considered as a:

...specific reaction against the established forms of high modernism, against this or that dominant high modernism which conquered the university, the museum, the art gallery network, and the foundations (Jameson 2001: 22).

Postmodernism becomes concerned with overturning the hegemony of existing cultural structures- particularly those of the modernist philosophical project- by making ‘new’ the possibilities for agency and individual autonomy within existing language structures, social relationships and conceptualisations of cultural contexts.

It is from these perspectives that notions of postmodernism operate as a contextualising framework in this thesis. From the broad theoretical tradition that represents postmodern philosophy and criticism is derived a conceptual location from which ideas related to community, identity and public pedagogies are configured. But I also cast postmodernism and postmodernity (as a theoretical framework and period of history respectively) as being interested in the recognition of difference. It is via this emancipatory world view of postmodernism that I draw broadly on Rosenau’s (1992) notion of

⁴⁴ ‘Difference’ in this sense was deployed by Saussure and later taken up by Derrida in his notion of *differance*. It here signifies the possibility for ‘difference’ and the ‘deference’ of (for Derrida) linguistic structures of power.

⁴⁵ These possibilities are interestingly critiqued by some feminist and post-colonial theorists according to the actuality and possibility for ‘real’ emancipation. bell hooks (2001) and Edward Said (1991) in particular offer critiques of the ability for postmodernism to offer genuinely emancipatory outcomes, and suggest that the project of postmodernity is still bound significantly in a Western theoretical tradition.

‘affirmative’ postmodernism- a postmodernism that offers a ‘...more hopeful, optimistic view of the postmodern age’ in comparison to arguments of ‘...fragmentation, disintegration, malaise’ (15). Far from viewing postmodernity as an era of solipsism and relativism, I argue that power, as viewed in a Foucaultian (1980) sense, and notions of representation as suggested by Baudrillard (1994) are hallmarks of the contemporary and require explication and interrogation that cannot simply be reduced to readings based in economics, or sexuality, or class, or race solely. In the postmodern all of these features require excavation and investigation simultaneously. As such, this thesis takes the view that the contemporary period is a postmodern one and, by virtue of this, is one that sees demonstrations of power and representation as fundamental features of the current social logic. In a location such as Greater Springfield, this is specifically apparent.

2.3.2 Postmodern Communities

The idea of community has been picked up by a number of postmodern theorists (particularly Nancy 2000, 1991 and Lash 1994). Lash (1994) notes in terms of his idea of the ‘reflexive community’:

...first one is not born or “thrown”, but “throws oneself” into them, second, they may be widely stretched over “abstract” space, and also perhaps over time; third, they consciously pose themselves the problem of their own creation, and constant re-invention far more than do traditional communities; fourth, their “tools” and products tend not to be material but abstract and cultural (161).

What community means for Lash might be demonstrated in online chat rooms, whereby participants choose to be members of that community, but represent multiple identities and concerns. Community in this sense is indeed shared, but the unifying bonds that were central to communities of the past (such as common ties and geographic locatedness) are now removed to the point that a seemingly ‘groundless community’ (Delanty 2003: 139) exists.

This view of community is very much communicative, but is also imagined and symbolic. As such, postmodern theorists of community are primarily concerned with the nature of identity and the ways that individuals present images of themselves as part of the communities they are interacting with. As Beusch (2005) notes in his survey of online chat communities:

Cyberspace is much celebrated because it is viewed as a disembodied realm of social interaction. The identity adopted in a chat room or a message board need not bear any resemblance to the physical, corporeal and material body that is so important in face-to-face interactions. This is seen to confer a transgressive potential to the individual to explore aspects of the self, particularly with regards to sexualities and gender identities which may otherwise be liable to stigma. However, to conceptualise cyberspace as disembodied actually involves a very narrow construction of how we should conceive of this space and the activity that occurs within it. In fact, a central tenet of online interaction rituals is the transmission of the body. The popularity of chat programmes (such as Microsoft Messenger), chat rooms and online dating sites necessitates individuals to construct and transmit the self to others through text (para 1).

The possibility of reflexively constructing your membership and indeed identity in postmodern communities is central to their operation and a significant point of departure from more traditional applications of community where identity was viewed as a fixed, and for most purposes, constant entity.

Delanty (2003) notes that the 'postmodern age is also an insecure age' and that it has made 'the problem of belonging more and more acute' (132). What this results in for Day (2003) is the operation of community in postmodernity as a 'fractured community' in which its members are 'nomadic, highly mobile, emotional and communicative' (132). The postmodern individual may be a member of many communities simultaneously, and might demonstrate this membership variously through the sharing of text and chat room presence through to the very physical and spatial involvement in weekly meetings of a community group.

While there might be a temptation to see postmodern communities as being those which reside in the virtual alone (or is at least best described by online spaces) Maffesoli (1996) notes that postmodern community is built on the very real operation of consumption and friendship networks, to which Lash (1994) suggests that the possibilities for agency and freedom of fully realizing your own identity in the postmodern may be limited. For Lash (1994) perennial issues of power and agency emerge in the postmodern as significant features of community; one example of this perhaps being an individual's ability to become part of an

exclusive ‘gated community’ in a new urban space. Membership of this type of community, a feature of many contemporary urban spaces, will still carry with it very real economic determinates, not to mention the cultural capital associated with such locations. Certain things about your identity regardless of how you choose to demonstrate it will come to bear on your inclusion in many communities within the postmodern.

2.3.3 Ideas of Space and Place in the Postmodern

With the redefinition of social contexts established by postmodern theorists came the reconceptualisation of the way space and place came to be considered. In particular, Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space* (1994) offers a starting point for contemporary investigations of space. Here Bachelard locates the house, as a primary dwelling and context of individual meaning-construction as a central point for the investigation:

The house, quite obviously, is a privileged entity for a phenomenological study of the intimate values of inside space (3).

It is the awareness of space as *context* that has fundamental significance. Bachelard’s investigation grounds its analysis in the location within space, and just as with Cohen’s (2004) ideas about the boundary of community, the meanings that are constructed from this situatedness. It follows that:

... our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word (1994: 4).

The idea of space as context, whereby social constructions and the production of meaning are grounded, is significant to this thesis. It is precisely the way in which meanings and understandings of social processes are mediated by situatedness- a being in the world- that grounds the analysis of community presented in the later chapters of this thesis. Ideas of community and the feelings of connectedness individuals derive from this are intimately attached to the physicality of Greater Springfield.

Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) work is also significant and charts a course for considering the role of space as both conceptual (or ‘mental’) and physical (or ‘real’). Grounded heavily in a Marxist reading of capitalist appropriations of ‘space’ and modes of production that are centralised around physical and ideological spaces, a key element of Lefebvre’s work is the

way spaces come to be identified and deployed. Here, the idea of *detournement* (borrowed from the *Situationists*⁴⁶) is central and provides Lefebvre with a location from which to critique the use of space. *Detournement*⁴⁷ signifies the possibility for resistance via space:

An existing space may outlive its original purpose and the raison d'être which determines its forms, functions, and structures; it may thus in a sense become vacant, and susceptible of being diverted, reappropriated and put to a use quite different from its initial one (1991: 167).

It is the idea of appropriation that holds significance for Lefebvre. Appropriated spaces open opportunities for analysis of the production and utilisation of space, and hence, open opportunities for resistance and agency⁴⁸:

The diversion and reappropriation of space are of great significance, for they teach us much about the production of new spaces. During a period as difficult as the present one is for a (capitalist) mode of production which is threatened with extinction yet struggling to win a new lease on life (through reproduction of the means of production), it may even be that such techniques of diversion have greater import than attempts at creation (production). Be that as it may, one upshot of such tactics is that groups take up residence in spaces whose pre-existing form, having been designed for some other purpose, is inappropriate to the needs of their would be communal life (1991: 167-8).

Although written with a revolutionary zeal typical of a manifesto of change, the value of Lefebvre's ideas lay in his identification of the appropriation of space- the way space is 'produced' and invested with meaning. He offers an opportunity to conceptualise space outside of its 'geometrical meaning' (1991: 1), and opens the possibility of critiquing the

⁴⁶ The *Situationists* are largely known from the work of Guy Debord (specifically his *Society of the Spectacle* (1995)) and are recognised for their approach to social change via artistic practice. The *Situationists* have been accredited with having inspired the French student revolt of 1968.

⁴⁷ *Detournement* here equates broadly to 'diversion'. The significance of this word, taken in terms of its Situationist definition as applied by Lefebvre, lay in the possibilities it suggests for appropriation. It is the appropriation of space and opening of new meanings and definitions heralded by this that is central to his conceptualisation of space.

⁴⁸ Lefebvre demonstrates his foundations in Marxist theory with his concern for the production of space in capitalist contexts, and the opportunity for resistance and revolution via appropriation.

function of space and the implications of power relationships in this production of 'spatial practices' (1991: 8). In this way, Lefebvre precedes deCerteau's (1998) suggestions that:

...the analysis of the images broadcast by television...and the time spent watching television... should be complemented by a study of what the cultural consumer 'makes' or 'does' during this time and with these images. The same goes for the use of urban space, the products purchased in the supermarket, the stories and legends distributed by the newspapers and so on (484).

It is the use of cultural artefacts and their appropriation for specific means that is important. While their original intention and indeed use may indicate specific things about the logic of the social context in which they were created, it is how individuals come to apply these artefacts (in this instance, urban space) that denote indicators of power, agency and the nature of community identity.

Michel Foucault also offers insights into this idea of space and spatialised identities in a short article titled *Of Other Spaces* (1986). In this Foucault charts a history of the conceptualisation of space to suggest that '[t]he present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space' (22). Foucault centres understanding of the contemporary dispositif in relation to *sites*:

...we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be coloured with diverse shades of light; we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another (23).

It is here that Foucault introduces his idea of the heterotopia⁴⁹ to explain the central function of space and the relationship between individuals and spaces. In this regard Foucault's work

⁴⁹ Heterotopia is identified by Foucault as being *unreal* real spaces- '[p]laces of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality' (24). For Foucault, the mirror offers a metaphor for the heterotopia- '[t]he mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through virtual point which is over there' (24). City spaces include heterotopias in Foucault's reasoning. Spaces that are simultaneously physically located but cognitively and conceptually ephemeral.

offers a significant theoretical basis for the conceptualisation of space and the role of identity and agency within contemporary contexts- particularly urban city-spaces.

A number of theorists have since investigated the way spatial practices work to situate individuals in ‘real’ social contexts. Significant is the work of Stephen Haymes (1995) and his ethnographic survey of race, culture and the city, Chris Haylett’s (2003) investigation of class and urban spaces and Diane Reay’s (2004) analysis of class, race and the space of an inner city school. Each of these investigations situates space as central to the function of social structures and identifies the epistemological boundaries spaces apply to understanding and meaning construction. The importance of these works lay in the way space is attributed to physical experience, and the manifestation of ideological and discursive power structures within spaces.

While taking a different approach, Timothy Mitchell’s *Colonising Egypt* (1991) is an important investigation into the politics of space and representation taken from a post-colonial reading of English constructions of colonial Egypt. Here Mitchell investigates both the construction and representation of space in the public imagination. His survey of the representation of Egypt at various world fairs and exhibitions highlights the arbitrating power relationships and hegemonic and discursive practices that work to ‘colonise’ spaces. It is this inflated representation of essences that connects simultaneously to Said’s (1991) work in *Orientalism* on ‘imagined geographies’ and notions of the hyper-real as explored by Eco (1986) and Baudrillard (1988)⁵⁰. In these works it is the ‘violence’ that appropriations of meaning grounded in essentialised identities of space that are specifically critiqued. Here space takes on (or in the case of Mitchell and Said’s analyses, is ‘infused’ with) an *identity*. This notion is specifically important to this thesis, and it is the nature and function of spatial identities, and problems associated with power relationships, agency and individual autonomy within these constructed locations that is central to the analysis of Greater Springfield presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

⁵⁰ Also prominent here is connection to Anderson’s (1991) idea of the ‘imagined community’.

2.4 The City

To establish his idea of the *postmetropolis*, Edward Soja (2000) notes that:

In my view, there has been a significant transition if not transformation taking place in what we familiarly describe as the modern metropolis, as well as in the ways we understand, experience, and study cities (xii).

He notes that in recent times the change and transformation of cities has resulted in shifted conceptualisations of what cities are and how they function. As an urban space located on the edge of metropolitan Brisbane and Ipswich, Greater Springfield is very much one of these new urban locations, but it is also one that is identified as being 'different' to those within its proximity (this is indeed one of the defining characteristics of Greater Springfield). As such it represents a postmetropolis, a new formation of urban space that reconfigures ideas about the built environment and interactions people have.

Recent work on urban space and cities in academic and popular literature focuses variously on the 'experience' of city life (Bridge 2005; Parker 2004; Colombijn and Erdentug 2002; Merry 1981), the role of the city as a spatio-political location (Hall and Miles 2003; Tajbakhsh 2001; Soja 2000; Holston 1999; Davis 1999; Karp, Stone and Yoels 1991), the globalised nature of contemporary cities (Light 1983; Hamel, Lustiger-Thaler and Mayer 2000; Clark 2003) and the design and function of the urban space (Merry 1981; Rodruiguez 1999; Brower 1996). As Soja (2000) notes, this literature represents a shift in thinking about cities that '[p]erhaps more than ever before... is consciously aware of ourselves as intrinsically spatial beings' (6). Soja (2000) notes that '...for the most part even the field of urban studies has been underspatialised until recently' (7).

2.4.1 Postmodern Geographies

It has been primarily in the work of geographers that conceptualisation of the space and place of urban settings has developed. Building on the general themes emerging from postmodern critical theory that engage the emancipatory possibilities of postmodernism, postmodern geography marks a significant break with classical models of urban

organisation⁵¹. In these new terms, considerations of the urban space have been reconfigured so that:

the sprawling metropolis has become much less monocentric, less focused on a singular downtown; and is no longer as easily describable in terms of distinctively urban, suburban and nonurban ways of life (Minca 2001: 43).

It is this recognition of the diversity of the urban space that is the central tenet of postmodern geographies. Edward Soja calls these new spaces (and the shift in thinking that accompanies their conceptualisation) the ‘postmetropolis’ (2000) and the ‘exopolis’ (2001: 43). This connects with Garreau’s idea of ‘edge cities’ (1991) whereby the extent of urban sprawl characteristic of major cities the world over has expanded to include the construction of edge-cities within the larger geographical space of the existing city space. For Garreau the physical and conceptual locations these *spaces within spaces* inhabit come to replace traditional understandings of the city- ‘edge cities become the new hearths of our civilisation’ (3).

Soja’s investigation of new and evolving urban spaces is central to this thesis. Ideas including the notion of the ‘carceral city’ (2001: 44-5)⁵² and the ‘simcity’⁵³ (2000: xvi) offer a conceptual and theoretical basis for the investigation of Greater Springfield. Of particular significance is the way the urban space is ‘constructed’ (both physically and conceptually) and engaged by those individuals who reside within it. Here Soja’s (2000) idea of the city as thirdspace becomes significant. As he notes:

In this alternative or ‘third’ perspective, the spatial specificity of urbanism is investigated as fully lived space, a simultaneously real-and-imagined, actual-and-virtual, locus of structured individual and collective experience and agency (11).

This idea of viewing the spatialisation of urban space according to the lived experience and performativity of agents within it connects directly to Nold’s (2004) idea of mapping the emotionality of city space and to Cohen’s (2004) suggestions that urban ethnographers need

⁵¹ This ‘classical’ basis is largely attributed to the Chicago School of urban planning and architecture.

⁵² The ‘carceral city’ borrows from Foucault’s notions of surveillance and control and comes to represent ‘an intensification of social and spatial control [that] has marked the post-metropolitan transition’ (2001: 44).

⁵³ The ‘simcity’ is characteristic of Soja’s ‘post-metropolis’ and is represented as a significant ‘restructuring of the urban imaginary, our situated and city-centred consciousness, and how this ideological refabrication affects everyday life in the postmetropolis’ (2001: 45).

to look beyond superficial expressions of urban life to fully capture the symbolic experience of life as a meaningful phenomenological reaction to spatiality. This also taps into William Foote-Whyte's (1967) ideas about a thick description for urban sociology:

Through sight-seeing or statistics one may discover that bathtubs are rare, that children overrun the narrow and neglected streets, that the juvenile delinquency rate is high, that crime is prevalent among adults, and that a large proportion of the population was on home relief or W.P.A. during the depression... there is one thing wrong with such a picture: no human beings are in it (xv).

With these ideas in mind, how individuals come to configure notions of self and develop identities in terms of their contextual location within the urban city space is a central component of this thesis, and it is here that Soja's work in particular offers a theoretical basis from which the perceptions of individuals within city spaces might be considered and explored. Drawing on an exploration of *thirdspace* and ideas of the *postmetropolis*, a survey of Greater Springfield will be presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.4.2 Identity and Space

While ideas regarding the connection between space and identity are explored in Soja's conceptualisations of postmodern space (1989, 2000), this thesis also draws on a body of work dealing with identity more specifically. Zygmunt Bauman's *Identity* (2004) and *From Pilgrim to Tourist* (1996) offer recent articulations of identity formation, and work from a similar theoretical basis to Lawrence Grossberg's *Identity and Cultural Studies* (1996). From a basis grounded in sociology and cultural studies, Grossberg contends that identity is 'entirely an historical construction' but 'it involves taking literally the statement that people experience the world from a particular position— recognizing that such positions are in space rather than (or at least as much as in) time'(100). It is this recognition of *context* as both spatial and temporal that is of significance here.

Foucault (1980, 1990) similarly offers points of analysis in his determination of agency and the role of identity. While Foucaultian analyses of agency and identity formation might remove the possibility for agency from the *decentred* subject (whereby the 'subject is

dead')⁵⁴, it does provide a location from which a critique of social structures and the function of space might be launched. If individuals are bound by contextual social structures, identity will come to be mediated and arbitrated by these conditions. It follows then that space, at the least, is a significant factor in the determination and deployment of identity. Again, this echoes Soja (2000) and Cohen's (2004) suggestions that the lived experience and meaningful interaction individuals construct symbolically is central to understanding the role of space in social settings.

Of particular importance is the arbitration of the individual- the 'inscription' of identity- by space and the discursive functions inherent within spatial locations. As Soja (2000) notes:

Our "performance" as spatial beings takes place at many different scales, from the body or what poet Adrienne Rich once called "the geography closest in", to a whole series of more distant geographies ranging from rooms and buildings, homes and neighbourhoods, to cities and regions, states and nations, and ultimately the whole earth- the human geography furthest out. Although there is some 'distance decay' out from the body in the degree to which we individually influence and are influenced by these larger spaces, every one of them must be recognised as products of collective human action and intention (6-7).

Space functions as a human construction operating as a 'context of operation' (Hickey 2005) that simultaneously inscribes and is inscribed on/by the individuals within it. It is this duality, and the operation of individuals within space/s, and of space/s on individuals that will be a key aspect of the analysis of Greater Springfield presented in this thesis. In postmodern spaces, 'identity is not unitary or essential, it is fluid and shifting, fed by multiple sources and taking multiple forms' (Kumar 1997:98), whereby the relationships of power and formations of social contexts that this function of space suggests opens a location for the investigation of social networks in the contemporary milieu. In this thesis, Greater Springfield is considered in these terms, whereby the fluidity and change heralded by the current construction and transformation of this urban space is marked accordingly with multiple identities and identity

⁵⁴ Lash and Friedman's (1992) *Modernity and Identity*, offers a collection of essays exploring postmodernity as not the 'end of the subject' but the transformation and creation of new forms of subjectivity. These ideas build on and critique Foucault's pessimism for agency and the individual.

claims its residents assume. Far from being an homogenous location, an exploration of Greater Springfield's complexity, as per Grossberg (1996), Soja (2000) and Kumar's (1997) suggestions, will be launched in order to understand the ways that Greater Springfield both arbitrates and is informed by those individuals who live within it.

2.5 Public Pedagogies

This review of the literature has thus far analysed work relating to notions of community, urban space and the associated ideas of identity and agency as they are played out in postmodern contexts. A direct application of these concerns is deployed in the work of theorists dealing with the operation of education in postmodern contexts. In particular, sections of the field of critical pedagogy are concerned with the investigation of the contexts and locations of education as material determinants of the social dynamics individuals encounter in their day-to-day practices. Education from this perspective is considered as something larger than the formal processes of 'schooling' that most would attribute to places like schools, universities and colleges. In conjunction with these codified institutional locations, education also occurs in less formalised forms; locations that are more fluidly codified and pass mostly unnoticed as points of pedagogical influence. Everything from the street, shopping mall, hollywood blockbuster and magazine advertisement, to idle gossip, national myths and 'common sense' all exert a pedagogical influence and add to our collective knowledges of the world. This is particularly important in terms of the pedagogical influence urban space holds as both carrier and arbiter of public pedagogies in this increasingly globalised era, and is a central feature of my investigation of Greater Springfield.

2.5.1 The Logic of Public Pedagogies

Developed out of the concerns of critical pedagogy broadly is Henry Giroux's notion of 'public pedagogy' that situates pedagogical activity in cultural contexts that consist of more than just 'schooling'. For Giroux (2003), 'public discourses' operate in '...a sort of competition' (Lewis 2002: 17) with formal pedagogies, whereby public pedagogies presented primarily by mass media '...can be seen as objects that gain their relationship to other social

institutions, resources, and non-discursive practices' (Giroux 2003: 135) in an increasingly homogenised⁵⁵ cultural milieu.

In contrast to formal locations of education- such places as schools, universities and colleges- Giroux deconstructs the cultural implications of 'new sites of public pedagogy'⁵⁶ that 'have become the organising force for neo-liberal ideology [and] are not restricted to schools, blackboards and test-taking' (497-8). While the application of public pedagogies might seem to offer a potential for democratic and participatory social action as spaces for the enactment of civic values, for Giroux neo-liberalism, corporatism and the logic of late-capitalism combine to occupy public spaces that '...are replaced by commercial spheres as the substance of critical democracy is emptied out and replaced by a democracy of goods available to those with purchasing power' (497).

Central to this thesis will be the analysis of public pedagogies operating through Greater Springfield. While Giroux's critique is grounded heavily in the politics and poetics of neo-liberalism in a United States context, the recognition of pedagogical influences functioning as mediators of community in Greater Springfield is of significance. The values the public pedagogical ideals of community represent and signify socially are central to any analysis of the production and consumption of space and the definition and identity of residents in Greater Springfield. What I suggest in later chapters of this thesis is that the idea of community in Greater Springfield is variously constructed around specific markers of identity that display an idealisation of *the* community member of Greater Springfield as a public pedagogy. Presented via public pedagogical apparatus such as billboards, brochures and other signage these ideals are deployed in the interests of the developers of Greater Springfield and work to establish a logic of the site. The implications of this are discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

2.6.2 Education and Critical Pedagogies of Place

Following the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1972) that locates context and 'concrete historical fact' (1972: 28) as key functions of the social dynamic, Henry Giroux's

⁵⁵ Giroux (2004) is critical of a neo-liberalist capitalism that he sites as overpowering 'non-commodified public spheres' (497). The outcome for Giroux is an increasingly surveilled, commodified and compliant cultural social context where '[u]nder neo-liberalism, pedagogy has become thoroughly reactionary as it constructs knowledge, values and identities through a variety of educational sites and forms of pedagogical address that have largely become the handmaiden of corporate power' (497).

⁵⁶ These are primarily film and mass media in Giroux's work, and operate as representative of a larger canon of cultural productions brought about by late-capitalism.

(2000) conceptualisation of postmodernity and the functioning of a ‘postmodern education’ offers a way out of the binds of a ‘modernist’ education project that has, as he notes:

...long relied upon moral, political and social technologies that legitimate an abiding faith in the Cartesian tradition of rationality, progress, and history. The consequences are well known. Knowledge and authority in the school curricula are organised not to eliminate differences but to regulate them through cultural and social divisions of labour. Class, racial, and gender differences are either ignored in school curricula or are subordinated to the imperatives of a history and culture that is linear and uniform (73).

For Giroux this leads to a crisis point in education, whereby the contextual realities of the contemporary milieu are missed by an educational system ‘...that has increasingly come to rely on instrumental reason and the standardisation of curricula’ (74).

Here the acknowledgment of diversity in the postmodern is presented in terms of a pedagogy that incorporates the possibility of change. The pessimism of an approach such as Foucault’s (where the ‘subject is dead’) is replaced by a possibility for agency, and the connection of individuals to real social practice. For Smith (1994) this represents ‘the belief that people can take hold of their lives, can make changes, that they are not helpless in the face of structural forces’ (119).

From this basis, Haymes’ (1995) study of the experience of ‘black’, urban school students in the United States, Reay’s (2004) analysis of social class and schooling and more recently Anyon’s (2005) analysis of the effects of globalisation and macroeconomic policy on education⁵⁷ offer applications of a pedagogy that recognises and responds to spaces, identity and the operation of education between these. Within each of these works is the acknowledgment that context is central to the formation of experience- something Haymes identifies as a ‘pedagogy of place’ (1995: xiii).

David Gruenewald (2003) takes up these notions with his analysis of the idea of a ‘critical pedagogy of place’. Here Gruenewald suggests that:

⁵⁷ Jean Anyon’s (2005) *Radical Possibilities* offers a position for more critical analysis of educational reform within the current social milieu than do Haymes and Reay. Anyon is sceptical of the possibilities for ‘real’ change in a system that creates ‘...conditions in cities that no existing policy or urban school reform can transcend’ (2). Rather she argues for significant and radical structural change to solve problems that ‘education did not cause’ but equally ‘cannot solve’ (3). Even so, her reading is grounded in recognition of ‘space’ as the context in which social action occurs.

Place in other words, foregrounds a narrative of where people actually live, and that is connected to global development trends that impact local places. Articulating a critical pedagogy of place is thus a response against educational reform policies that disregard places and that leave assumptions about the relationship between education and the politics of economic development unexamined (3).

While connections to a larger concern with critical pedagogies (as identified by Giroux (2000)) are evident, the significance of Gruenewald's work is with its situating of spaces and places within a larger critical pedagogical framework. Here the work of critical pedagogy becomes more complete by acknowledging and critically interrogating the socio-political functions of the spaces in which education operates.

Space and pedagogy come together as mutual components of processes of education, so that education is bound by and made sense of in terms of the location of its deployment. As I noted above, we recognise some places- schools, universities, colleges etc- as being locations of education. These are places we readily recognise as being locations where education 'happens'. But other, more informal 'public' spaces including the streetscape (Hickey, 2006), billboard, film or wall of graffiti also exert a pedagogical influence. This is the view of public pedagogies deployed in this thesis; one that sees the urban space, as a symbolic and socially constructed entity, playing a mediating role in the experiences individuals have. Urban space, and more particularly as Giroux (2004) notes *public* urban space, increasingly exerts a pedagogical influence in the contemporary (an influence that in turn arbitrates the very logic upon which that space comes to be experienced).

In Giroux's (1995, 2004) terms, the major locations of public pedagogies are the products of contemporary hyper-culture; films, mass advertising and global popular culture more generally. For this thesis I extend this logic to suggest that the locations we inhabit in the contemporary- locations that also house the global popular culture that Giroux notes- are carriers of public pedagogies. Simply 'being' in a place opens exposure to the logic of that place. Exerted via its signage, attitudes, dispositions, language, styles, fashions, customs and beyond, places like Greater Springfield present their pedagogical imperatives as those 'boundary' markers that make it the place it is. I argue by drawing on Giroux (1995, 2004) again, that in this era of mass, neo-liberalist, global culture that the logic expressed by the boundary is one that is arbitrated for specific purposes and with specific interests in mind. The pedagogical projects deployed in public space are anything but neutral. It is the operation

of these public pedagogies specifically- those educative processes that operate away from formalised and recognised locations of education- that are central to this thesis. The way that the urban space manifests and incorporates images of community identity will be key elements of the analysis of Greater Springfield I present in later chapters.

2.5.3 Image and Real

In terms of the role of space as pedagogical location and the example that recent anti-globalisation campaigns in cities such as Seattle, Brussels and Quebec provide, Mitchell (2002) in his critique of globalisation and the increased role of capital in public space notes that:

...the geo-politic being learned on the streets- and enforced from behind the riot shields and fences- is one that operates from behind the control of extensive swaths of land (whole nations and continents) but also through the very careful control of the spaces of everyday life: streets and marketplaces, parks and playgrounds, schoolhouses and homes (147).

Far from being a new ‘borderless’ era, Mitchell uses his experiences of Seattle to suggest that space, particularly public space is a highly contested location that utilise law to mandate appropriate social behaviours:

Sold as laws to ‘reclaim’ the streets of the city from the homeless and to make them available once again to the consuming middle classes, Seattle’s quality of life laws represented a concerted effort to return Seattle to the ranks of ‘good places to live’ (as its city Attorney put it) and to attract and retain the corporate capital that would assure this status...if for nothing else than for the continued accumulation of capital (148).

Such repressive laws do not feature as part of the revanchist⁵⁸ landscape of Greater Springfield. However, building on Mitchell’s ideas on the manipulation of the apparatus of law to maintain a power dynamic situated (for Mitchell) in the ‘consuming middle classes’ (2002: 148), this thesis draws its attention not to the formal mediation of social roles via such

⁵⁸ As per Neil Smith’s (1996) idea of urban revanchism.

institutions as the law, but with the more informal aspects of social life that are mediated via the *sanctioning* effect public pedagogies provide. Sociologically speaking and in terms of this thesis, I suggest that sanctions involve those fluid and taken-for-granted knowledges that the context of the social dynamic presents to its members- a symbolic process as Cohen (2004) would note. Sanctions exert significant influence over the operations, agency and identity of members of any group, and are integral to the bonds individuals share in community.

It is in these terms that my interest in the (re)presentation of community is generated. I will argue in later chapters of this thesis that community and images of it manifest as a sanctioning regime that mediates the nature of the community. Here it is those implicit, contextual and 'local' mediations of the social dynamic in Greater Springfield that become significant for understanding its nature. As Cohen (2004) notes:

...every community generates multitudinous means of making evaluative distinctions among its members, means of differentiating among them which, although they may lurk beneath the structural surface, are powerful components in social life (34).

For Billingham (2000) it is within this 'dialectical matrix of narratives [that] a 'sense of the city' is exposed in which the politics of identity is inextricably interwoven with the politics of identity' (1). How we come to experience and be in certain locations is simultaneously an 'active, transitive and transformative' process for Billingham (2000; 4). What this alludes to is the pedagogical influence the social contexts we operate in transfer. Again, it is the public pedagogical effect that the visions and views of community expressed in Greater Springfield exert, and how these expressions sanction specific responses to its logic that is significant and provides an insight into the identity of the place.

In his study of popular television in Britain, Billingham (2000) notes that he:

...came to believe increasingly that television, as a medium of mass communication, is inextricably both part of that mapping phenomenon and also a prime initiator (5).

This is followed by Clarke's (1992) survey of police drama and his suggestion that:

The flood of police movies which came out of America in the late 1960's and early 1970's constructed a view of policing in which violence was represented as a way of life for the police in modern cities. This more explicit portrayal of the violence could be seen as completely gratuitous unless it gained a symbolic value as the necessary background to the war against crime, which the police was fighting (252).

This suggests a 'politics of representation' (Hickey and Austin 2006) in that 'the way certain characteristics are privileged and authorised whilst others are subjugated and made invisible is central to the construction of the representation, and central to how we come to *know*' (viii; emphasis added). This is a situation in which the image or representation, as a simulacra supported by its underlying mythologies (Barthes 1972), presents a specific and politically mediated world view. It is from this logic that this thesis contrasts the representational media of community against the lived experiences of its members in order to explore the role of representational signifiers, deployed as public pedagogies, present in Greater Springfield.

2.6 Final Points

This review of the literature has focused on ideas related to community, the city and public pedagogies. Consideration of each of these topics was given with reference to postmodernism and how the arbitrating forces and politics of this era play out in determining community identity. In the following Chapters I draw on the literature cited here to make sense of the analysis drawn from my investigation of Greater Springfield. Broadly I will present an analysis that frames my thinking about Greater Springfield in terms of the influences living within this new urban space exert as framed by what the literature leads us to know about communities, life in cities, and the postmodern. Surrounding this approach will be a concern with the arbitration of social contexts by representational images deployed as public pedagogies. In all, this thesis applies the conceptual-theoretical bases presented in this Chapter to theorise the nature of community identity in Greater Springfield.

What I see happening in Greater Springfield is framed by the following premises:

- Community in the current era is fluid and dynamic and contains a range of power dynamics that individuals living within community contexts understand innately as members of the community,
- Community in Greater Springfield is variously a community of place, contains communities of practice, is imagined, is symbolic and is recognised by the 'boundaries' (Cohen 2004) that individuals within it apply,
- Greater Springfield exists as an 'edge city' (Garreau 1991),
- Greater Springfield fits with Soja's (2000, 2001) ideas of the 'postmetropolis' and 'thirdspace' of urban development,
- The manufacturing of ideas of community as an integral component of the Greater Springfield development functions as a public pedagogical process (Giroux 2004),
- Individuals make communities, and it is the application of agency at various points in the social dynamic that suggest the nature and context of community (Cohen 2004).

What follows in subsequent Chapters is the analysis of Greater Springfield from the conceptual frame that the literature, as condensed into these points, provides. As such, the literature cited in this Chapter will be drawn on to inform the analysis I present and provide a space for theorising the findings I make.

I turn now to the next Chapter and present the methodological basis that was deployed in the study that informs this thesis.

Methodology

“We seek an understanding of [communities] by trying to capture some sense of their experience and of the meanings they attach to community... community as a phenomenon of culture... is meaningfully constructed by people through their symbolic prowess and resources”
(Anthony Cohen *The Symbolic Construction of Community* 2004:38).

“I don’t deduce; I observe”
(Roger Thornhill (Cary Grant), in *North by North-West* 1959).

3.1 Questions of Epistemology

The research project about which this thesis reports applied a single site, multi-participant ethnographic design utilising ethnographic fieldwork and observation, semi-structured interview and documentary analysis. The purpose of the study was to investigate the imagery of community and the public pedagogical expressions ‘community’ as a concept came to exert in Greater Springfield. But along with this explication of how ‘community’ was represented via the billboards, newspapers, brochures, sales pitch and various other public pedagogical artefacts of meaning production found in Greater Springfield, I also turned attention toward the perceptions and beliefs of individuals connected to the case site—primarily its ‘ordinary’ citizens as they went about their everyday business. The purpose was to juxtapose these two sources of community definition in order to get a sense of what community meant in this contemporary urban location.

What emerges from this study is a cultural studies critique of the ideas of community presented variously via public pedagogical artefacts and the stated beliefs of residents in Greater Springfield. This is a study in which the ‘cultural practices, praxis, social texts [and] subjectivities’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 24) present in Greater Springfield were viewed, recorded, theorised and (re)presented as the evidence base for the project. By applying a cultural studies lens to this study, a holistic approach to the total cultural milieu of Greater Springfield in which every aspect of ‘...its logic, its arrangements, its explicit and implicit rules’ (Miles and Huberman 1994: 6) was drawn into the set of evidence utilised to make the analysis presented in the following chapters.

Such a position meant that I maintained an approach to fieldwork and data collection that saw data as being potentially everywhere, and as potentially anything. Everything from the way that the urban space was designed and structured to how residents went about their daily activities constituted the ‘experience’ of Greater Springfield, and added contextually to my understanding of it. To this end, while culture may well be ordinary, to paraphrase Raymond Williams (1958), I would add that it is also *everywhere*. It was from this basis that being *in* the field required the recognition of the total cultural experience. The cultural milieu of Greater Springfield didn’t commence or end necessarily anywhere (in fact I recall being absorbed into the ‘field’ whilst back in Toowoomba (my home base, located approximately 100 klms away from the case site) one Saturday morning listening to radio advertisements selling land in Greater Springfield- this too constituted the Greater Springfield experience and extended the boundaries of the field for me as ethnographer). But it was within this fluid conceptual location, and not simply the geographic space, that ‘Greater Springfield’ as expressed through the multitude of artefacts that carried its meaning was presented to me and from which I deciphered through the selection, analysis and interpretation of key bits of evidence the Greater Springfield experience reported here.

3.2 Ethnography with a Cultural Studies Bent

While the method deployed in this project was ethnographic, the interpretive frame from which my analysis of Greater Springfield was constructed applied a cultural studies approach. As Saukko notes (2005):

The distinctive feature of cultural studies is the way in which it combines hermeneutic focus on lived realities, a (post)structuralist critical analysis of discourses that mediate our experiences and realities, and a contextualist/realist investigation of historical, social and political structures of power (343).

For Saukko, the underlying intent of cultural studies lies in the understanding of the relationships individuals share with each other and the institutions and social processes that bind them together. This is a question largely of power relationships and the manifestations

of power as a medium upon which ‘...interrelationships of individuals located within specific social contexts’ (Hickey and Austin 2006: 37) present.

I maintain a similar position to Saukko in this thesis, as it was the way that pre-cast images of community were presented to members of Greater Springfield and were exercised as pedagogical tools for the creation of a Greater Springfield identity that became core aspects of this study. This thesis is, in this regard, a report on the power relationships that exist between those individuals who live in Greater Springfield and the imagery of community that confronts them in their daily experiences, with the assumptions, attitudes and norms of the ways of life in Greater Springfield adding together to provide the basis from which the analyses presented in the subsequent chapters is made.

This thesis represents a study ‘...of all the relations between all the elements in a whole way of life’ (Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler 1992:14), with these relations mediated by ‘...the workings of social institutions that appear to be both neutral and independent’ (Foucault and Chomsky 1974: 187) but are in fact foundational to the entire logic of Greater Springfield. I suggest that in Greater Springfield, like anywhere in the social world, nothing is neutral and that the mediations of lived experience via the imagery of community carries with it expressions of power- some entirely positive and affirming whilst others support relationships of marginalisation. Hence, the application in this study of a cultural studies approach provided scope to explore the ‘shape’, ‘purposes’ and ‘meanings’ (Williams 2000) of Greater Springfield via the conversations, billboards, coffee-shop mutterings, art exhibitions, newspapers, corporate advertisements, web presence, personal experiences and those many other articulations of what it meant to be *in* Greater Springfield.

To paraphrase the approach taken in this project and to provide a definitional frame from which cultural studies was understood and applied, I saw cultural studies as being interested in:

- *The ‘whole way of life’ of a cultural milieu* (Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler 1992, Williams 1958). This was fundamental to this project, as any aspect of Greater Springfield at any time potentially carried significance for this project and the responses to those central research questions I wanted to answer. It also follows that there are undoubtedly specific instances, events and things I have missed by virtue of being only one person bound to the constraints of temporality and spatiality- I couldn’t be there to see literally everything all of the time. But from those events,

instances and experiences I did have exposure to and recorded during my four years in Greater Springfield, my analysis and representation of Greater Springfield was made with the assumption that everything from newspaper articles to meetings with executives constituted aspects of the *Greater Springfield Experience*, and it is this experience that I report here.

- *The workings of institutions and social structures that mediate the experiences of individuals* (Foucault 1994; 1995). Given that a large part of the focus of this project dealt with the investigation of the public pedagogical influence of the imagery of community, the operation of concepts such as ‘community’, ‘family’, ‘race’, ‘gender’, ‘affluence’ and ‘success’ became key to my analysis of Greater Springfield. These concepts reflected the institutional disposition of Greater Springfield as a social milieu, and formed a basis from which an understanding of the logic and structure of Greater Springfield could be extrapolated.
- *The relationships individuals share with each other and institutions and social process that bind them together* (Williams 1958). This was the core of this project—how did people interact with, mediate through, actively appropriate or simply reject the ideas of community represented in the public pedagogical artefacts of Greater Springfield?
- *The operation of power as the medium upon which social relationships are formed and operate* (Foucault 1995). Like any social context, the relationships people had with each other and the institutions and social structures within Greater Springfield were mediations of subjectivities. Power functioned as that binding agent between these and it was the operation of power that I became implicitly interested in when looking at how people came to live their ideas of community under the shadow of those presented in the public pedagogical artefacts.

It was from these perspectives that the epistemological position taken in this thesis was developed. By looking at the whole way of life in Greater Springfield, I developed a perspective from which I viewed those bits of evidence I gathered, analysed and present here as contextualised indicators and representative expressions of what community in Greater Springfield came to mean.

3.3 Method and Methodology

In this project, my actions for collecting data were broadly ethnographic (complete with the data collection techniques of fieldwork, observation, interview and documentary analysis) while my thought processes for conceptualising Greater Springfield were reflective of an interpretive cultural studies framework. In these terms, I applied a distinction between the *method* and *methodology* deployed in this project, as Gray (2003) notes:

It is important to understand what is meant by the terms method and methodology. These are terms that are often used interchangeably, but they refer to very different dimensions of research and scholarly inquiry. Putting it simply, method refers to those dimensions of research which any researcher employs in order to construct data and interrogate its sources, while methodology describes the overall epistemological approach adopted by the study (4).

My cultural studies approach became centrally important as it directly framed how I viewed Greater Springfield. It provided an epistemological lens from which everything from my ‘anticipatory’ (Miles and Huberman 1994: 10) and informal early stage analysis was constructed through to my final assumptions about the evidence I had collected throughout the project. As Hall notes, a study deploying such an approach:

*...begins with the discovery of patterns of a characteristic kind. One will discover them, not in the art, production, trading, politics, the raising of families, treated as separate activities, but through studying a general organisation in a particular example. Analytically, one must study the relationships between these patterns. **The purpose of the analysis is to grasp how the interactions between all these practices and patterns are lived and experienced as a whole, in any particular period.** This is its ‘structure of feeling’ (Hall 1980: 60; emphasis added).*

To understand ideas of community in Greater Springfield meant that I had to understand its *structure of feeling*. This is where the cultural studies approach provided a scope to interpret specific instances of evidence from the perspective of the total cultural milieu and allowed me to make sense of the evidentiary sources my ethnographic method provided after they were extracted from their cultural locations.

Within this split between method and methodology was a conceptual model for how the project came to be deployed. I approached the 'Field' from my location as 'Researcher' and developed my strategies for identifying the themes and evidentiary sources required to respond to the questions I had. The 'split' between the researcher and the field was central to this model. After all, one of the purposes of ethnography is to develop an understanding of a cultural location the researcher didn't have prior to entering the field. As such, the processes I went through in developing the design of this project recognised the two locations from which this study drew its interpretations- the epistemological location of the researcher who asks questions in order to learn something about the subject of the study and those evidentiary sources derived from the field that point towards its nature. Such a model is perhaps best demonstrated graphically, as in figure 3.1.

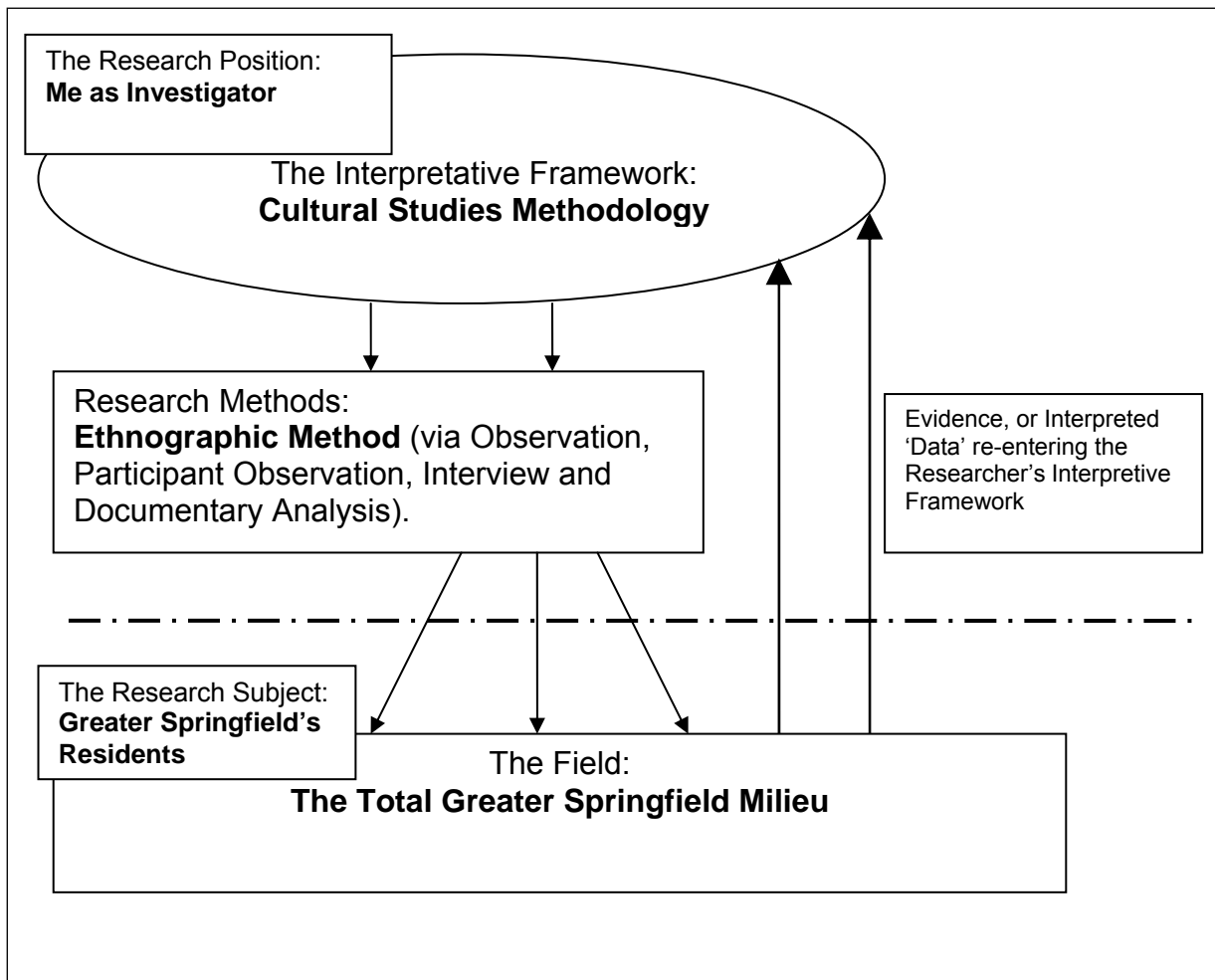


Figure 3.1: A diagrammatic expression of the research design deployed in this project

As evidence was derived inductively during this process, interpretations of collected data sources fed back into the process and informed my developing understanding of Greater Springfield throughout the project. A cyclical pattern developed in this approach whereby themes of analysis were couched in the growing understanding I had of Greater Springfield throughout the project's lifespan. An in-built check of my analysis and interpretation developed here, as the strength of any interpretation of evidentiary sources made throughout the project only held as the growing body of evidence supported the emergent themes my analysis presented. This operated as a contextualisation measure, whereby interpretations of specific data sources fed into the logic of the understandings I was making of Greater Springfield. I discuss this aspect of the study in more detail below.

3.4 Exorcising the Demons: where I'm coming from

Given that I, as researcher, formed the single point of analysis and interpretation in this project, I have to account for where I was coming from and what I wanted to achieve in this project. While Chapter 1 presents some comments on my interest in urban spaces and why I found myself drawn to undertaking this particular project, I also approached my analysis and interpretation of Greater Springfield from specific cultural-moral-political perspectives. In short, these include:

- *An active interest in social contexts that marginalise people through both organised, formal systemic and less formal, 'everyday' social processes.* I am particularly critical (if not outright sceptical) about expressions of power, particularly in terms of capitalist mechanisms for personal wealth creation and the nature of social categorisation via economic status and attendant issues attached to social and cultural capital. As a location of massive expansion and 'wealth creation' (Springfield Land Corporation 2005a), I had trouble with the underlying assumptions that the Greater Springfield development brought with it. I couldn't quite take seriously the regularly repeated suggestions from various sections of the Springfield Land Corporation and others in Greater Springfield that the expansion of the urban fringe in Greater Springfield was simply 'good'. I kept questioning what measure this success was applied against. Good for the economy, sure, I could handle that to an extent. But after all, this was a development that tapped into very specific middle-class ideals and ways of living that exerted a particular logic over the area about what urban living meant at the detriment (I felt, as explained later in this thesis) of genuine diversity and choice. A result of this middle class desire for this previously 'unwanted' space (Maha Sinnathamby, Speech delivered at the Education City Official Opening, 6th June 2006) was this homogenising view about what contemporary urban living meant. There were gaps in the Greater Springfield image that needed explication.
- *A concern for the way some of the last pockets of remnant bushland in south east Queensland and the natural environment have been reshaped to make way for the development.* What I found even more intriguing were the ways that ideas of

'lifestyle' presented in Greater Springfield were attached directly to the natural environment and desires the various developers had with being 'green'. My analysis in subsequent chapters picks this up further, but how could bulldozing down remanant bushland to replace it with carefully manicured gardens be considered 'environmentalist'?

- *Incredulity towards the metanarratives of 'success' and 'prosperity' presented in Greater Springfield.* This imagery connected directly to ideas of economic wealth and *who* the community consisted of. These themes also formed a large part of the Greater Springfield identity as expressed via the public pedagogical artefacts. This was very much a middle class dream being portrayed on the billboards, newsletters and other 'spin', with the parameters of 'success' and 'prosperity' being measured largely in terms of economic wealth and the commodified accoutrements that give credence to this status.
- *Incredulity towards the metanarratives of advertising and marketing.* Perhaps due to my being on the cusp of generations x and y⁵⁹, I have trouble accepting the promises of glossy advertisements, particularly the way in which various identities and understandings of community and self are cast and understood. This concern for the way people and places are represented stands as central to this entire project, as well as being an aspect of my professional work as an academic⁶⁰.
- *Concerns for the representations of diversity, particularly racial diversity.* I couldn't get past the absolute (as in total/complete) depiction of whiteness in Greater Springfield. I knew even before this project had formally commenced that Greater Springfield was home to people from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds, yet the billboards, newsletters and other imagery from Greater Springfield only contained 'white' (as in archetypal Anglo 'Australian') faces. Why didn't I see in this imagery the diversity I knew existed in Greater Springfield? On top of this, I also saw very specific gender roles deployed in Greater Springfield's advertising, as well as a very clearly demarcated class orientation grounded in ideals of leisure, prosperity and arrogance masqueraded as sophistication. These themes immediately struck me as interesting.

⁵⁹ See Ellen Neuborne's *BusinessWeek* report (July 1999) that suggests that a hallmark feature of Gen Y'ers is a cynicism towards marketing.

⁶⁰ Such as my teaching into areas dealing with semiotics, the politics of representation and cultural capital, and research publications dealing with representation and emancipatory practice.

These are the things that interest me and that I subsequently think are central to the human condition in Greater Springfield. I'm certainly not suggesting that my analyses are skewed or biased to present an over-inflated view of these concerns, or worse, that my analysis is an account of Greater Springfield that privileges only these issues. What is presented in this thesis is the result of a rigorous investigation of Greater Springfield based on 4 years of ethnographic fieldwork and from which my resultant analyses of these themes take a particular precedence according to how I saw them played out in the field.

It follows that there may be innumerable other concerns and points of interest that could have formed the basis of this project. For instance, I don't deal with the nature of the urban planning and design in Greater Springfield to any real extent, nor am I interested in presenting a reading of the State Government's plans for infrastructure in south-east Queensland and Greater Springfield more specifically, or with what frequency of the population drive privately owned cars as opposed to using public transport, as a couple of simple examples where other inquiries into Greater Springfield might delve.

What this project does is report specifically on those points listed above as they were framed originally by the research questions that guided this study, and more so, as they reflected the imperative I feel they hold in contemporary urban spaces. As I note above, this project was undertaken by me as *the* point of interpretation and analysis. It follows that the product of this project, this thesis, will reflect the epistemological position I come from and be reflective of those concerns I have. As Foley and Valenzuela (2005) note:

...ethnographers are mere culture-bound mortals speaking from very particular race, class, gender and sexual identity locations. Because all standpoints represent particular interests and positions in a hierarchical society, they are 'ideological' in the sense that they are partial (218).

The concerns listed above are indicative of where I'm coming from in my investigation of Greater Springfield, and as such form the basis of how I deployed my analysis of the site. Just as this thesis should be read from the perspective of its ethnographic, cultural studies approach, it should also be read from the perspective of the concerns that I have for Greater Springfield. It doesn't attempt to answer everything there is to know about Greater Springfield, but does attempt to offer a reading of what I saw as significant in Greater Springfield as captured according to the concerns of the research questions detailed in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

3.5 Undertaking the Research: doing the ethnography

Bishop (2005) identifies five ‘concerns’ for deploying ethnographic research, which I apply here to describe the approach taken in this project.

Initiation

Bishop (2005) notes that this concern ‘focuses on how the research process begins and whose concerns, interests and methods of approach determine/define the outcomes’ (112). My involvement in Greater Springfield began with my connection to the University of Southern Queensland’s Faculty of Education and the new USQ Greater Springfield campus, built in Education City during 2004-5. Due to my ancillary involvement in the original planning⁶¹ of the building in which the Faculty of Education was housed and later through my teaching at the Springfield campus, I was a regular visitor to Greater Springfield and it is from this contact with my case site that my doctorate developed.

Given that I knew the site (and more particularly some of its residents and the staff at the campus), I simply entered the site to undertake my doctoral work. I didn’t require special privileges, or go through any substantive initiation processes (apart from perhaps feeling like an outsider for at least the first few fieldtrips until I became familiar with where things were and how people operated and went about their business). The site was also culturally much like the one I came from, and I looked much like the people in Greater Springfield. In fact I noted whilst on one of my fieldtrips that I found it interesting that all the while that I was taking photographs in Greater Springfield and generally wandering around with my digital voice recorder, small notebook and camera that no-one ever stopped to ask me what I was doing, or more particularly, to explain why I was there. As a (while ‘in the field’) tie-wearing white male, I concluded that I probably just looked like a real-estate agent or someone attached to the various development companies who had long since ceased looking unusual to the residents of Greater Springfield. So this is how I began. I broadly knew the place, didn’t require an invitation to be there and went about my field work without challenge.

I began with ‘monological’ data collection, as detailed by Carspecken (1996). The first year of my fieldwork in Greater Springfield primarily consisted of simply *being there*; watching and getting to know how it worked. I attended specific events such as the openings

⁶¹ I was involved, as a representative of the Faculty of Education at USQ, in several meetings that worked through the design, layout and principles of the USQ buildings in Education City.

of new buildings⁶² and festivals in parks⁶³, as well as ‘everyday’ situations such as sitting in a coffee shop, walking through parks, and driving through suburban spaces. In line with Carspecken’s ideas, I also began to formulate some initial assumptions and simple analyses that I knew were incomplete, but from which some basic themes could emerge and develop as aspects of the study. This established the ‘inductive’ approach to my data collection with the attendant ‘...uncovering and explicating [being] typically based on successive observations and interviews, which [were] reviewed analytically to guide the next move in the field’ (Miles and Huberman 1994: 8). Part of this early stage of the research process involved the recording of an ethnographic diary. These were ‘scratch’ notes as Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) detail, and captured my un-tidied initial thoughts and perspectives and provided me with a record of those early trips and the conceptual frame I was developing. Appendix A lists an example of some of these ‘scratch notes’ and a typical section detailing the types of concerns they dealt with.

A day in the field in the early stages of this project generally commenced with a drive from my home in Toowoomba to Springfield. The hour and a half trip provided a good chance to focus my thoughts on recent reading, ideas that had emerged from the last field trip and other points of interest that occurred along the way. By the time I got to Springfield, I was ready to hit the ground running, with the early fieldtrips being devoted to uncovering more detail about specific locations⁶⁴, such as a shopping centre, park or business offices, as well as more generally getting to know my way around. These early trips laid the necessary groundwork for my understandings of Greater Springfield and its operations, as well as providing a monological point of reference from which the later, more intensive dialogic perspectives developed (Carspecken 1996).

Benefits

Bishop (2005) suggests that this concern asks ‘...who will directly gain from the research, and whether anyone will actually be disadvantaged’ (112). What did this study hope to achieve- what did it do? I knew that I had an impact on the case site by virtue of the fact that I was stopping people during their daily activities to talk with me in the interviews and discussions I had. I was drawing specific attention to both my presence as ethnographer in Greater Springfield and the concerns of the project as it related to *their* home. My presence in

⁶² Such as the opening of Education City by the Prime Minister and Orion Shopping Centre. My connections to USQ and status as both a researcher and staff member assisted my access to events such as this.

⁶³ Such as the “Jacaranda Festival” 2005.

⁶⁴ Appendix D lists fieldtrips to Greater Springfield and the focus of fieldwork during each visit.

Greater Springfield couldn't be dismissed, and it was through explicit requests for people's thoughts and ideas in the parks, shopping centres, streets and other spaces of Greater Springfield that I exerted a consciousness raising influence of sorts. By asking people to reflect on what Greater Springfield was, I was asking them to excavate their held beliefs and ideas.

This consciousness raising element of interviewing works two ways. While I was gaining an insight into my informants' ideas and thoughts, the interview process prompted my informants to actively consider their location in their community, and in some cases consider things they hadn't previously. This is the 'active' nature of interviews that Fontana and Frey (2005) discuss, where the interview is a 'mutually created story' (696). The act of talking with my informants provided a space for the appraisal and considered articulation of what Greater Springfield and community meant. This 'consequential presence' (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995:3)- that impact that I as researcher exerted on the field- was both acknowledged (I was in the field and subsequently became part of it) and (from the experiences I had with my informants) largely positive for my informants and me (I didn't have any 'difficult' interviews with annoyed informants; in fact, I was generally amazed at how happy people were to speak about their ideas and how freely they gave their time).

But what else did it do? This thesis was written and the project undertaken for a PhD doctoral award at the University of Southern Queensland, and this I can't ignore. This thesis and the accompanying project were bound by processes of doctoral study and related ethical and procedural concerns. The outcome of this means that I have produced a document that reports a study in a very prescribed 'academic' way. Apart from the benefit to me of being a submission for a doctoral award, this thesis (I suspect) will have limited value to those residents and the case site as it stands in this form. Perhaps it will have value in the development of policy, or will be taken up by the various developers and organisations responsible for the construction of Greater Springfield (I like to think it will have some lasting value), but for those people whose experiences of community inform its production, this thesis will most likely be largely inaccessible. It is in this regard that this project might be considered to be a somewhat selfish enterprise. One that takes what it needs (the views of informants and the collection of sources of evidence) and then leaves.

Ultimately, I'd like the outcomes presented here reported back to the people I worked with in Greater Springfield. Denzin (2003) discusses the issues involved in reporting back to those groups from which studies are extracted and suggests that traditional methods of reporting research (such as this thesis) don't quite fulfil the task. At the risk of becoming

unduly confessional about this project, I've only just come to realise that I perhaps haven't considered the full potential for 'writing back' to the community I spent the last few years investigating. While an 'audit' of the impact this project (if such a thing were possible) might reveal something about my presence in Greater Springfield and the consciousness raising effect interviewing exerted, how this project will be presented back to the community is something that I am yet to fully determine. It seems unlikely that presented in this format, as a thesis for a doctoral award, that it will have lasting influence to the informants who gave me their views.

As such, I am planning post-doctoral work that will synthesise the concerns of this thesis in order to continue a dialogue with individuals in Greater Springfield about the idea of community presented within it⁶⁵. I will continue to record the various expressions of community that are present after this thesis is complete. But apart from that, I'm not sure what other effects this work has had. I'm sure it has influenced and effected people further than I am aware- as an ethnographer entering the field and talking to people about their community, I have changed the field and perhaps prompted different ways of seeing Greater Springfield on the part of those people I worked with.

In many ways I have faced the same dilemma that William Foote-Whyte (1943) noted in *Street Corner Society* after talking with Chick, one of his informants:

As I was getting ready to leave, I asked Chick if he had anything more to say about the book. "Well, I wonder if you couldn't have been more constructive, Bill. You think publishing something like this really does any good?" (346).

What good was I doing? I was progressing towards a doctorate and enhancing *my* skills as an ethnographer, adding to *my* teaching and generally learning skills as a researcher, but what did I do for Greater Springfield. I continue to be able to work with people in Greater Springfield and will continue asking questions about what community means, with the intention of getting people thinking about what it means and hopefully more involved via critical interrogation in its development. But at this point I am, as Foley and Valenzuela (2005) note, a researcher who '...does academic 'cultural critiques' [but] struggles to be more collaborative and politically involved' (217), noting however that this isn't necessarily a

⁶⁵ I've maintained contact with several of my informants and want to continue dialogue after the thesis production stage of the project is complete.

problem- it is all still knowledge- with the knowledge presented here at this point being of interest primarily to an academic audience.

Representation

Within this concern Bishop (2005) asks ‘whose research constitutes an adequate depiction of social reality?’ (112). This thesis is by no means a definitive reading of Greater Springfield. It exists alongside, or ‘in the middle’ (Saukko 2005: 345) of multiple other readings and interpretations. What this thesis does present are my intentions for uncovering what community means and how it comes to be understood and applied in the way it is, with this view informed by evidentiary sources that were captured using a formalised ethnographic method that was interpreted via a cultural studies approach.

On this point Denzin and Lincoln (2005) ask:

What is represented in a text and how should it be judged? We have left the world of naïve realism, knowing now that a text does not mirror the world, it creates the world. Further there is no external world or final arbiter- lived experience for example- against which a text can be judged (xiv).

This suggestion carries with it a deeply political imperative. As one reading of Greater Springfield, this thesis presents a particular view of Greater Springfield that is legitimised via its very nature as an academic text carrying the (perhaps waning) authority these texts do. As I noted above, this is a view framed by the epistemological concerns of academic research and the conventions of presenting world views in the form of a thesis. While the view of Greater Springfield presented here is and can only ever be partial and connected to the spatial and temporal conditions I inhabit and encountered when gathering the evidence that informs it, it is a view that has been elicited via the specific processes and techniques documented in this chapter and elsewhere in this thesis. While I make no claims to a ‘Truth’, I also suggest that the representation of Greater Springfield presented here can be accounted for by the processes applied in its production. That is, it maintains legitimacy if read as an academic text and according to the methods of its generation.

Legitimacy

This concern relates to the authority with which claims are made about ethnographic subjects (Bishop 2005: 112). As noted above, this thesis presents one amongst many possible readings of Greater Springfield.

I approached this thesis with the intention of gathering and understanding two points of view about the idea of community in Greater Springfield; that primarily of the developers presented via public pedagogical artefacts and that of residents. My goal was to investigate how residents worked within and identified with the visions of community mediated by the developers. In this sense, part of this project required me to seek residents' views of community and open accounts of Greater Springfield from 'everyday' perspectives. But at the same time I didn't want to simply write a 'bottom-up, romantic/populist position [from] the margin' (Saukko 2005:344). What I was interested in understanding was the way that residents within Greater Springfield consume, react against and generally live with the pre-cast images of community that are prominently presented throughout the city.

The imagery of Greater Springfield presented in the public pedagogical artefacts displays very specific identities that contain, as detailed in Chapter 4, mostly unchallenged assumptions. These assumptions suggest things about the types of people and lifestyles that reside within Greater Springfield and it is from these images that a pedagogical implication is carried whereby a duality of identity is present in Greater Springfield- on the one side an ideal, romanticised identity crafted via the public pedagogical artefact and on the other, that of the 'everyday' experienced by the individuals who lived there. It is the description and analysis of these two sources of the Greater Springfield identity that I present in Chapters 4 and 5.

But just as this conceptualisation of Greater Springfield provided scope to investigate the way that community is presented by its developers and lived by its residents, it also drew up problems of essentialising the experiences of my informants. Some of the informants thought that the imagery conveyed by the public pedagogical artefacts captured the Springfield experience perfectly, whilst others were deeply concerned by the assumptions of wealth, class, gender and racial characteristics being suggested. The point of this study wasn't to identify and apply a simple contrast between the identities presented variously in the public pedagogical artefacts and the residents' experiences as if each of these things were homogenous categories and necessarily opposed. In simple terms, it wouldn't make sense for the developers of Greater Springfield to be presenting an image of the development that at least some people couldn't identify with- at the end of the day the economic imperatives of

the place required people to ‘choose’ to live there and subsequently spend money in the process. It similarly wouldn’t make sense for residents to buy into a place that affords them no freedoms to decide on how they wish to live.

What I did want to know was how the imagery of Greater Springfield informed these experiences of being there. It was beside the point in many senses whether people agreed or disagreed with the imagery. The point was in understanding how the imagery impacted on the type of lifestyles people *could* have. This is a deeply cultural question, as it tapped the logic of what it meant to be in Greater Springfield- what the Greater Springfield ‘culture’ was and how its identity, manifested as a sense of community, was aspired to by those people who resided there- whether they agreed with the dominant views or not.

As such, I intended in this thesis to present a number of case study explorations of the experiences of a few of Greater Springfield’s residents to give an indication of what the imagery meant to them. I wanted to understand the ‘situated knowledges’ (Harraway 1988) that people held from their ‘historically and culturally situated standpoint’ (Foley and Valenzuela 2005: 218). What I present in Chapter 5 is an in-depth analysis of the experiences of Greater Springfield from the perspective of my key informant, Rebecca⁶⁶, along with a montage of the experiences of some of the people I met, spoke with and had tell me their thoughts about the place and its identity.

But why should I believe that what my informants actually told me was genuine? Simply because I have no reason to believe that what was shared wasn’t what they thought, however partial these opinions may have been. Many of my informants were people I simply walked up to in shopping centres, parks and other public places to ask their opinions. Others, including representatives of the developers of Greater Springfield with whom pre-arranged appointments were made and whom I knew were providing me with largely ‘the company line’⁶⁷ still provided me with a view of what Greater Springfield was. Again, these were obviously partial, but they were still views about the place that suggested much about the underlying assumptions people held. My key informant, Rebecca, held very strong and passionate views about Greater Springfield and its people. Again, while these views were

⁶⁶ All names used in this thesis are pseudonyms to protect the identity of my informants and ensure confidentiality.

⁶⁷ It was interesting with a couple of these informants that I began, through exposure and a growing familiarity, to get a deeper, perhaps more ‘honest’ or personal account of what they thought. Interviews with representatives generally started as very formal and what I call ‘corporate’, where I was told things that were also printed on brochures and listed on the company website. But as a familiarity developed, a far more personalized, and from the point of view of the informant, opinionated (as in, they started to share what they felt and thought) view of the Greater Springfield emerged.

clearly partial, they still reflected how she came to understand and perhaps more importantly enact what it was to be in Greater Springfield. This was precisely the point of the project. I wasn't interested in capturing some essential vision of what it was to be a resident in Greater Springfield, if such an endeavour is even possible. What I wanted to understand was how the imagery of Greater Springfield was idiosyncratically consumed, appropriated, rejected and enacted. As such, the accounts from the informants I worked with and represent in Chapter 5 work toward presenting this process as it applied to my informants.

While I trusted that what my informants were telling me was the 'truth' (as in a genuine account of what they thought) I also triangulated my informants' reflections against the ever growing body of evidence I gathered as the project progressed. As Figure 3.1 above identifies, I kept feeding back into my conceptualisations of Greater Springfield what new evidence was telling me, and simultaneously verified the claims and accounts of my informants. Again, the cultural studies approach applied in this project is evidenced by the concern to '...map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint' (Cohen and Manion 1986; 254). As themes developed they were informed variously from my observations, the documentary evidence in the field and input from informants, so that a richness or depth of evidence supported each theme⁶⁸.

As O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) note, triangulation provides a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data" (78). I felt my approach for continually reviewing collected data against the growing body of evidence and my growing understanding of Greater Springfield provided veracity for the representations made in the subsequent chapters. The themes that I introduce and discuss in Chapters 4 and 5 emerged from this triangulation process and draw on a montage of the various sources of evidence I captured to present the view of Greater Springfield contained here.

Accountability

This concern for Bishop (2005) relates to '...questions of the researcher's accountability' (112). I discuss the procedural aspects of this project in detail later in this Chapter, but for now, the conventions applied to undertake this study drew on current practice in qualitative research design and method. As such, and as noted by Austin (2001)

⁶⁸ The type of triangulation applied in this project aligns with Denzin's (1978) definition of 'data triangulation' where data is compared and analysed across space, time and informants.

‘...it [is] no longer necessary to provide a justification for the conduct of a study within the (so-called) qualitative research paradigm’ (64) – that the ‘battles for legitimacy’ as he calls them have been won. I suggest that the accountability of this project can be established by stating that it is a *particularistic ethnographic study underpinned by a cultural studies methodology*. While the epistemological concerns of this project have been detailed above, indicating the method and methodology deployed as well as the nature of the design and the approach for verifying evidence and how my analysis of Greater Springfield developed, I would also suggest that this project and accompanying thesis demonstrate accountability grounded in the ‘epistemological framework of traditional research’ (Bishop 2005: 112). This is a thesis to be presented as a formal academic work, and as such follows the various and well-established conventions of this type of work.

After presenting and successfully defending the proposal for this project, I went about fulfilling those ‘ancillary’ aspects of getting the project launched. This included securing appropriate ethics clearance with the University of Southern Queensland’s *Office of Higher Degrees and Research* by demonstrating the approach I planned to take for the collection of data as well as regularly discussing in detail the methods of collecting evidence and actually ‘doing’ the project with my supervisors; my principal supervisor in particular being a seasoned qualitative researcher and someone who provided a critical point of reference for my application of the methods used in this project. I also discussed this project at length with people both in and out of the academy- a process I found particularly useful in honing my understanding of the design and application of the methods used⁶⁹.

Perhaps most significantly however, I regularly tested my ideas and assumptions with my key informant, Rebecca, in order to gain her thoughts as both a Springfield ‘local’ and someone familiar with my work. I wanted to tap into the intimate, insider view of the place, and while we disagreed about what some things meant (particularly later in the project as my understandings of Greater Springfield had formed), Rebecca nonetheless fulfilled a role as an important sounding board from which another perspective on what I was seeing could be gathered. As part of the triangulation process deployed in this project, whereby I fed data back through the evidence base of the project to fill in my growing understanding of the site, having access to my key informant for that ‘local angle’ was fundamental.

It is from this perspective that I suggest that the accountability of the views I present in this thesis can be affirmed via the design of the project, the application of the

⁶⁹ I found that once I could explain to people who were not familiar with ethnographic research what I was doing (and more importantly have them understand!), the project and its processes were clear in my own mind.

methodology, and the processes attached to the production of formal academic work such as this.

3.6 The Field

On initial consideration, the question of what constituted the field in this project was easy to answer. Very geographically, the field existed as that bounded place called 'Greater Springfield'. It could be seen on a map and driven around in a car. It was also a place that as an ethnographer I went to. A 'new' place; somewhere that whilst in many ways familiar to the cultural milieu that I travelled from, was due to its existence unique and required investigation to uncover its ways and identity. This was my *Malinowski experience*⁷⁰, as I called it, whereby I went to see the "natives" of Greater Springfield in their natural setting.

It was at this point that questions of the field could have stopped, but what the geographic nature of the field didn't answer were problems of context and the epistemological issues that any field presents. Carspecken (1996) talks about establishing an epistemological understanding of the field drawing on Giddens' (1984) idea of 'regionalised social action' to explain how modes of understanding and behaviour can be understood in terms of the contextual forces exerted by the conditions of specific fields. But this didn't assist significantly with the definition of my field in Greater Springfield, and I found myself without much supporting literature to define the field outside of its geographic markers. Stein (2006) notes this problem when suggesting that '[i]t is often the case that when methods texts consider fieldwork, more emphasis is given to the work than the field' (60) and continues by noting:

The place(s) where research is conducted inform the entire enterprise. Because humans take note of their surroundings, place may represent a critical dimension regardless of the method employed... For the ethnographer, consideration of place is paramount since research is conducted in settings natural to the behaviour being observed, and may in fact play a part in its

⁷⁰ This was my chance to go and perform my ethnographer status. Whilst seemingly not as exotic and (on the surface) *strange* as the settings Malinowski and the classical ethnographers/anthropologists of the past visited, it was still my field and validated my status as 'Ethnographer'.

determination. Thus the 'scene' becomes something more important than mere background (60).

I could see that while Greater Springfield didn't contain points of cultural difference to my own that were immense- I shared language, cultural practices and understood the processes of the cultural system as they were fundamentally similar to those in my own, roughly an hour and a half away in Toowoomba- it was still a field that contained its own epistemological and cultural logic that made sense of how and why things were done. In many ways the issue I faced as ethnographer in this familiar setting was not of understanding how and why things were done, but rather in making the 'familiar strange' (Shor 1980) with my intention being '...to take something that is so obvious that people don't give it credit, then alienize it enough so they can look at it with fresh eyes' (Cockburn 2006: para 4).

This was the approach that I took to my field- a field that was largely familiar to me, but one that required me to look at the 'everyday' and 'mundane' with fresh eyes to uncover the underlying cultural logic of Greater Springfield. Seemingly simple things- a roadside billboard, a resident walking instead of driving to the shops, an information board in a park- were deeply suggestive of how Greater Springfield worked and needed my attention if I were to understand the place. By 'picking up on things that would previously go unnoticed- those things encountered unthinkingly' (Austin, pers.com 7th February 2008) I gained access to a 'thick description' and became privy to 'ordinary' experience in and of Greater Springfield. Here the evidence wasn't the spectacular or out of the ordinary, but suggested the everyday, ordinary experience. This was the field of this study- a place that while epistemologically and culturally similar to the one I came from as ethnographer, was intentionally made *strange* in order to understand it as a 'phenomenon of culture...which is meaningfully constructed by people through their symbolic prowess and resources' (Cohen 2004: 38).

Entering the field also brought with it questions of authorial presence and the right to speak. As Saukko (2005) notes, 'the days are gone when social research could speak from the top down or ivory-tower position of autonomy and objectivism' (344) and continues by noting:

Research is viewed as being not above or below but in the middle, as one among many actors that forges connections between different institutions, people, and things, creating, fomenting, and halting social processes (345).

It follows that what is contained here is an account of Greater Springfield that doesn't claim to present "the truth" but to reveal some of the multiple truths apparent in others' lives' (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995: 3). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) similarly note that '[e]thnographies do not produce timeless truths' (16) and it is from this perspective that this thesis captures one specific view of Greater Springfield grounded in the research questions its accompanying project asked, the epistemological frame I applied to collect evidence and the interpretative lens from which findings are presented. As researcher I have '...no privileged voice in the interpretations that are written' here (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:17), and acknowledge that this thesis and the accompanying research project position me (as author) as the point of interpretation in this reading of Greater Springfield as captured over these past few years. This is a position that acknowledges multiple claims to reality- to interpretation- within which this thesis presents neither a neutral nor detached view of Greater Springfield, but one that has a specific intent and focus on extrapolating views about the nature of community within this particular field.

3.7 Qualitatively Working

This project employed a qualitative research method for two reasons:

- 1) *The Nature of the Research Topic and the Research Questions*: the research questions identified for this project (as noted in Chapter 1) asked questions of attitude and perception, as well as requiring the interpretation of beliefs and patterns of observed behaviour witnessed in the case site. Such questions offer little scope for anything other than qualitatively based investigation.
- 2) *The Type of Evidence required*: The interpretive nature of the topic and research questions required me to develop an analysis of the case site inductively. As Morse and Richards (2002) suggest:

If the purpose is to learn from the participants in a setting or process the way they experience it, the meanings they put on it, and how they interpret what they experience, you need methods that will allow you to discover and do justice to their perceptions and the complexity of their interpretations (28).

Qualitative research methodology provided this project scope to capture, record and make comment on the perceptions of community within Greater Springfield. Typical of qualitative research, this project developed analysis as a process of the project inductively. As such the research path for this project developed cyclically and reported on and theorised themes as they emerged throughout the project⁷¹.

3.7.1 Applying Ethnography to this Project

Denzin and Lincoln (2005), in discussing the nature of what they call ‘neomodern ethnographies’ suggest that ‘it is no longer possible to take for granted what is meant by ethnography’ (2). Gone are the days where ethnography stood for fieldwork alone or for the exploration of geographically and culturally distant peoples. Particularly in terms of the cultural studies approach utilised here, where cultural studies paradigms ‘use methods strategically- that is, as resources for understanding and for producing resistances to local structures of domination’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 25), the method applied ‘fitted’ the contextual requirements of the case site and the nature of the project. That is, combinations of techniques including fieldwork, observation, interview and documentary analysis were deployed at various stages of the project. Sandelowski (1994) also highlights this point by suggesting that:

It is a mistake to say you are doing ethnography and just do interviews. I think the idea is that it's a series of strategies, whatever gets you the information, such as census reports, or asking the postmistress, or what have you. But if anything, it must include participant observation in some way (Sandelowski in Morse 1994: 158).

For Agar (1996) ‘[t]he ethnographer’s purpose is to learn- to acquire some knowledge that he previously did not have’ (127), with the purpose of technique, tools and method being to frame and provide scope for the collection of suitable evidence. In this project ethnography provided a suitably ‘wide’ method for the exploration of the case site, in which evidence from diverse sections of the case site were collected and read as representing the field.

⁷¹ This may appear to follow a ‘Grounded Theory’ method as explained by Glaser and Strauss (1967). However, and while the utilisation of an emergent design provides opportunities to revisit analytical categories, this is also a feature of ethnography. In particular, Agar’s (1986: 16) analysis of emergent design in ethnography is a central example of this.

While ethnography is traditionally interested in the investigation of cultural groups⁷², the ethnography deployed in this project also provided a method able to contend with the particularistic nature of this project. Applications of ethnography by Haymes (1995), Davis (1992), Leininger (1985), and Wolcott (1973) operate in similarly particularistic ways, and demonstrate the deployment of ethnographic methods to situate the experiences of a group of individuals according to shared contextual features, even when these characteristics may not be recognised or acknowledged by the individuals studied⁷³. Here the role of ethnography is to explore the ‘cultural assumptions, beliefs, and behaviours [that] are embedded within a cultural group, [but] are not always evident to those who are part of the group’ (Morse and Richards 2002: 49). This project applied ethnography in this way, with the data collection techniques deployed to investigate the particularistic experience of community in Greater Springfield.

3.8 Data Collection Techniques and Sources of Evidence

Two phases of data collection were deployed in this project:

1. Collection of documentary sources of evidence drawn from various documents found in Greater Springfield. These sources of evidence included:

- Newspapers

Newspapers sourced included

- *The Springfield News* (published by the Quest Community Newspaper Group), a weekly tabloid size newspaper distributed throughout the Greater Springfield and Ipswich area, with ‘a circulation of 49,947’ (Springfield News, March 31, 2007),
- *The Satellite* (published by the Queensland Times Group), a weekly tabloid size newspaper distributed throughout Ipswich and Western Brisbane suburbs.

⁷² ‘Culture’ here stands for the ‘...the totality of equivalent and complementary learned meanings maintained by a human population, or by identifiable segments of a population, and transmitted from one generation to the next’ (Rohner in Early and Ang 2003: 63), with ethnography specifically interested in ‘...the study of the culture(s) a given group of people more or less share’ (Van Maanen 2001: 40).

⁷³ Boyle (1994) labels this form of ethnography ‘particularistic ethnography’, where the concern is to ‘apply the ethnographic, holistic approach to any social unit or isolatable human group’ (172).

- *The Greater Springfield Times* (published by Local News Publications), a monthly compact size independent news-magazine. This free newspaper was distributed 'free every month to the homes of Greater Springfield and surrounding areas' (The Greater Springfield Times, March 2007).
- *Defence News* (published by Strike Publications), a monthly compact size newspaper distributed in the region around the Amberley Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) base near Ipswich. This free newspaper was collected from stands in various Springfield shopping centres during fieldwork excursions.
- Other regional newspapers. Articles and editorials relevant to the study were also collected from state wide and national newspapers; *The Courier Mail*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*.

The newspapers were collected during the period from January 2005 to January 2008. Collection of specialist newspapers such as the *Defence News* was undertaken during fieldwork excursions, with articles from national and regional newspapers taken serendipitously as I happened to locate, or was informed by others of relevant articles. *The Satellite*, *The Greater Springfield Times* and *Springfield News*, the major sources of newspaper evidence drawn upon in this project, were collected and posted to me weekly via a key informant. This key informant was a Springfield resident and had regular and ongoing access to these newspapers throughout the project. She was also the person who suggested early on in the project that these newspapers would provide a solid evidence base for understanding Greater Springfield.

- Greater Springfield Promotional Material

A vast amount of promotional and community service materials produced primarily by the developers of Greater Springfield were available during the time that the project was conducted. Promotional material significant to this project included:

- *Springfield Lakes Community Update*, a glossy, A4 size, monthly community newsletter published by the Springfield Land Corporation. This newsletter is distributed by post to residents of Springfield Lakes and

surrounding areas in Greater Springfield and contains articles on key events in Springfield Lakes, contact details for community groups, advertorials on developments in Springfield Lakes and surrounding areas and other information associated with Delfin's involvement in the Springfield Lakes development.

- *The Big Picture*, a glossy A3 size quarterly newsletter published by the Springfield Land Corporation. Much like the *Springfield Lakes Community Update*, *The Big Picture* detailed developments in Greater Springfield and topical events associated with completions of stages of the built environment. Several of the issues were theme issues, with the 'Community', 'Education' and 'CBD' special issues of particular relevance to this project.
- One off, special promotional material. These sources included flyers and other one-off brochures collected during fieldtrips to Greater Springfield. These materials tended advertise services and organisations that fell outside of the control of the developers of Greater Springfield and included church and religious groups, small business enterprises (such as flyers for a car-wash business, local tradespeople, etc) and events (including such things as local fundraising events).

These sources were variously collected by me during fieldtrips or at interviews (for example, much of the Delfin material was collected from coffee tables in waiting rooms and reception areas as I waited for interview appointments), or posted to me by my informants.

- Associated Promotional Material

A large amount of promotional material was circulated throughout Greater Springfield by organisations associated with the development. These included sources from Delfin (primarily housing, lifestyle and corporate development advertising brochures and newsletters), the University of Southern Queensland (focusing on the Springfield campus of USQ and the 'Education City' development) and the Ipswich City Council (focusing on regional development associated with Greater Springfield in Ipswich City). These materials were collected during fieldtrips as I happened to come across them.

All hard-copy, documentary sources were stored on my 'Documentary Sources' bookshelf in my office in Toowoomba. These sources were organised into categories according to their type; for example, all copies of 'The Springfield Times' occupied a place on the shelf, 'Community Update' newsletters another place and so on for each source. The text from these sources was transcribed into Nvivo 7⁷⁴ with reference notes to accompanying images and contextual details included in the transcription (see the section below detailing the coding processes applied in this project for more on how these sources were recorded).

2. Fieldwork

Fieldwork constituted travelling to Greater Springfield from Toowoomba for weekly visits (and during intense periods of data collection, several times weekly) during the data collection stage of this project. Fieldtrips in the early stages of the project constituted leaving Toowoomba by 7:30am and arriving in Greater Springfield usually no later than 9am. People were at work, school and generally doing what they did by the time I got to Greater Springfield, so I found myself recording an image of Greater Springfield that represented a week day routine. Far less time was spent in Greater Springfield during evenings and weekends, with visits at these times being primarily for the purposes of meeting with informants for pre-arranged interviews. Little substantive fieldwork was done at these times, apart from the collection of rough notes about points of particular interest as I serendipitously happened to see them whilst in the field.

From my visits to Greater Springfield I collated notes focused on the physical layout and built environment, interactions between residents and others in these environments and the location of the various public pedagogical artefacts that presented images of community. Within these frames of thinking my fieldnotes invariably contained drawn sketches of the geography and physical layout of the built environment, cross reference notes to photographs taken and rough notes on ideas that were to be expanded when back in the office. I recorded all notes and sketches on an A4 size lined writing block, always in black pen with header noting the Fieldtrip number, date and general heading identifying the focus of the trip. A copy of the fieldnotes recorded from Fieldtrip #5 are contained in Appendix B as an example.

I tended not to re-draft my fieldnotes, apart from a review of the notes and addition of points of detail each evening after returning home from a day in the field, as I found my

⁷⁴ NVivo 7 was the coding and analysis software application used for this project. NVivo 7 is produced by QSR International (<http://www.qsrinternational.com/>).

method of shorthand recording and cross referencing to photographs provided clear and extensive enough notes for me to recall specific details after the fieldwork had been completed. I felt that these ‘rough notes’ also carried more authenticity than re-drafted and tidied notes, and provided me, symbolically at least, with a connection to the field when I was in the office⁷⁵. As Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) note, ‘only at some later point does the ethnographer turn to the task of recalling and examining her experiences in order to write them down’ (18). This naturally required me to capture enough detail to allow me to recall accurately what I had seen and intended in my initial ‘in-the-field’ analyses of my observations. I stand by the suggestion that ‘in immediately written fieldnotes, distinctive qualities and features are sharply drawn and will elicit vivid memories and images when the ethnographer rereads notes for coding and analysis’ (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995: 14), as this was certainly the case with my fieldnotes. In conjunction with the visual cues the photographs taken during fieldtrips provided, I quickly recalled specific instances and experiences from my fieldnotes during the analysis stages of this project.

In conjunction with my fieldnotes, I also utilised informal ‘scratch-notes’ (Emerson, Shaw and Fretz 1995: 19). These ‘not so thick’ (Carspecken 1996; 45) descriptions of incidental experiences from fieldtrips and pragmatic concerns about the construction of this thesis, cross-referenced ideas between sections of this thesis and general points for analysis. These scratch notes were utilised from virtually day one of this project commencing and remained a steady source of ideas throughout the project. Appendix A contains an example of one of these notes.

These scratch notes were recorded on a small blank note-book, with date and broad topic area listed as a title. Perhaps most importantly to this thesis, I used these notes to question assumptions about my work and as a space to record areas for critical interrogation of my own practice. The notes in entirety constitute an ethnographic diary from which the development of this project can also be noted. Appendix C contains a tidied up, amended and expanded reconstruction of these various scratch notes as an ethnographic diary of this project.

Overall, my fieldnotes and scratch-notes provided me with a context. These were physical manifestations of what I saw and thought when in the field and functioned not so much as ‘front-line’ data, but a contextual framework of evidentiary sources I drew on

⁷⁵ Having the original fieldnotes drafted out in my A4 writing block during the analysis and write-up stage of this project brought back memories of the various field-trips and provided me with an immediacy that I suspect tidied up notes would have lost.

(including photographs, interviews and documentary sources) to make sense of the site. These notes are the recording of what I saw, heard, felt and witnessed and as such stand as representative of the contextual understandings I took from my time in the field.

- Photographic Evidence

I relied heavily on a photographic record of my time in Greater Springfield to supplement and support the ideas I recorded in my field notes and to give a visual cue to the analytical themes that developed. A Kodak CX3400 digital camera was used to capture the photographs, with the context and location of each photograph recorded and documented against fieldnotes. Each photograph was catalogued with identifying numbers drawn from the fieldtrip number, date and number of the photograph. These were stored as .jpg files on my PC and backed up to CD. A log of the fieldtrip excursions and photograph sets attributed to these is included in Appendix D.

These photographs in particular documented those various billboards, signs and public artefacts that I couldn't collect and take with me. The photographs also gave a visual indication of the ideas of community circulating in Greater Springfield via the signage contained within it, and provided the next best thing to actually having the billboards and signs in front of me to work from. 'Contextual' photographs, particularly those capturing the location and physical layout of the signage I photographed were also taken to provide visual reference for my fieldnotes. These photographs identified the location of signage in relation to key landmarks.

I draw on this photographic evidence collected from fieldtrips in presenting my analysis of the public pedagogies of community in Chapter 4. I don't want to suggest that these photographs stand as 'truths' in and of themselves; that they are timeless and irrefutable extractions of a reality captured. I draw on Harper's (2006) suggestions that:

While the basis of the image is the reflection of light off surfaces of the world, human choices actually create the photo: framing, the creation of blur, color or lack thereof, depth of focus. Other humanly organised frames- taken for granted assumptions built into culture- define one aspect or another of these choices as meaningful (for example, a photograph of a certain gesture is only meaningful to the culture that defines the gesture). Thus a photograph is a

result of human actions and subjective interpretations; in cultural studies terminology, photographs are polysemic (213).

I actively selected, framed and drew my assumptions from very specific epistemological and pragmatic positions. Firstly, I had a set of research questions to respond to; these framed what I chose to capture from my observations of Greater Springfield. These questions led me to seek evidence of the way community identity is cast and presented by the developers of Greater Springfield, which led me to home in on expressions of identity and the characteristics of community present in the case site.

I tried to contextualise this evidence as much as possible in my fieldnotes and against the other photographs that were taken alongside each image. Hence, my photographic evidence, like all sources of evidence in this project, was 'read' and analysed in terms of that evidence drawn from other documentary sources (newspapers and community newsletters primarily), my fieldwork and discussions with residents. I developed my analyses of the photographs by reading them according to the contextualised position they derived from and the way they applied to my fieldwork and observations as well as the various visions of community I saw expressed via other documentary sources.

The purpose of using photographic evidence in this project aligns with Alpers (1983) suggestions about art:

I mean not only to see art as a social manifestation but also to gain access to images through a consideration of their place, role and presence in the broader culture (xxiv).

These photographs, albeit as selected, framed, and representational images of the 'real' they stood for, provided me with an insight into the role and presence of the culture from which they were sourced. As Latham (in Knowles and Sweetman 2004) cogently notes:

...the use of photographs is particularly productive as they can convey a sense of the feel and texture of a place or moment with succinctness that words can rarely achieve. For all of photography's much discussed representational limitations, photographic imagery points the reader to the materiality of the world with a concreteness that is difficult to match (129).

In this sense, the photographs used in this thesis provide an invaluable visual insight into what I saw whilst in the field.

3.8.1 Reading the Documents and Images

The process applied for interpreting both documentary and photographic sources was an adaptation of Wodak's (2004) discourse-analytic approach. Whilst Wodak is specifically interested in understanding the way that racial-ethnic representations mask and maintain racist, nationalist and ethnicist discourses, I conflated her 'questions'⁷⁶ into three main points of analysis for this project:

1. *How are persons and locations identified and referred to?* My concern here related to the way that specific identity locations and lifestyle choices suggested a set of values for all people of Greater Springfield.
2. *What traits, characteristics and qualities are applied to them?* The characteristics the people depicted in the sources I analysed were largely homogenous. My concern was for the level of homogeneity presented by the images presented in these sources.
3. *What arguments and logic contextualise them?* It seemed that a very specific aesthetic bound the underpinning logic desired for in Greater Springfield. The sources I analysed presented a view of life that connected to a set of gender, class and racial/ethnic attributes that were repeated consistently across the sources I examined.

These questions were deployed as analytic prompts in my reading of the documents and images used in this project. The readings of the billboards and other artefacts utilised in Chapter 4 in particular highlights my application of these questions as they were utilised in this project. Together, these questions formed a useful launching point for deconstructing the documents and images utilised in this study and provided a consistent point of questioning underpinning the interpretations I made.

3.8.2 Interview

The interview techniques applied in this project followed the logic of an in-depth interview in its approach for gathering a thick description from informants, but remained

⁷⁶ Wodak (2004) originally identified five questions, from which I have derived three as they apply specifically to representations of community in this project. Given Wodak's study was interested in the maintenance of racial, ethnic and nationalist stereotypes, the five questions she identifies have conflated into three for this project.

broadly informal in order to provide space for the exploration of themes as they emerged during interviews. A ‘conversational’ approach was applied, with sets of broad thematic areas prepared and deployed as appropriate to the conversational manner of the interviews. Two ‘types’ of interview were utilised in this project:

- a) Targetted, pre-arranged interviews with known informants; and,
- b) Serendipitous, shorter-term interviews in the field with informants previously unknown to me.

These types were applied according to the interviews I was conducting- my interviews in the field were largely serendipitous and conducted with informants I happened to meet as part of the field work process, whilst my discussions with Rebecca (my key-informant) and representatives of the development companies were pre-arranged and targeted.

James Spradley’s (1979) notion of ‘the ethnographic interview’ defines the approach I applied. As Spradley (1979) suggests:

It is best to think of ethnographic interviews as a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants (58-9).

From this basis, he suggests that ethnographic interviews include the following elements, which I deployed in the interviews that were conducted for this project:

- *a specific request to hold the interview,*
- *ethnographic explanations, in which the interviewer explains the project,*
- *ethnographic questions, ie descriptive questions, structural questions and contrast questions (Spradley 1979: 59-60).*

The intention for holding the interviews in this project was to:

- elicit in-depth descriptive responses grounded from the emic perspective of the informant,
- provide a forum from which evidence from participants could be collected as part of the function of the social structure under investigation,
- provide a technique that is suitable to the requirements of ethnographic fieldwork; and

- provide a data collection technique that functioned appropriately in terms of the ‘cyclical’ nature of the project and allowed the revisiting of themes and concepts as they evolved throughout the project.

The interview technique described here, building on Spradley’s (1979) ethnographic interview provided a technique that allowed contextual features of the field to be considered (the interviews were all done in-situ, with many undertaken in the parks, shopping centres and other public spaces within Greater Springfield) as well as providing a flexible data collection technique that allowed for themes to emerge, evolve and be revisited as the data collection stages of the project progressed.

3.8.3 Style of Interviews

I applied different styles of interviewing throughout this project. These align broadly with the types of informant I had; primarily residents who I encountered as part of the fieldwork process, professionals who I encountered as part of formally arranged meetings and my key informant, Rebecca. While it is somewhat comforting to note Fontana and Frey’s (2005; 699) suggestion that ‘[t]he interview and the norms surrounding the enactment of the respondent and researcher roles have evolved to the point where they are institutionalised and no longer require extensive training’ (2005; 699), they move on to suggest that ‘[e]ach interview context is one of interaction and relation, and the result is as much a product of this social dynamic as it is a product of accurate accounts and replies’ (2005; 699). To illustrate the contextual conditions of each interview and perhaps shed light on the application of the interview method I deployed, *Table 3.1* details the approach I took with the different informants I encountered:

Informant	Location of Interview	Duration of Interview	Resources Applied	Nature of Interview	Number of Interviews

<p>Key Informant- "Rebecca"</p>	<p>Interviews were conducted at the workplace office of the Key Informant (with occasional follow-up phone calls and email correspondence to verify details from previous interviews). During the early stages of the project, these meetings were held weekly, and as the project developed, on an as required basis.</p>	<p>Generally long; upwards of several hours in some cases, and never less than one hour.</p>	<p>and other documentary data into the interview. I also presented themes from other interviews as appropriate into these interviews</p>	<p>themes that had emerged from other interviews and generally develop a feel for how a Springfield local felt about the themes I was uncovering.</p>	<p>15</p>
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<p>Residents</p>	<p>Impromptu and performed in-situ within the public spaces of Greater Springfield during fieldtrips. Undertaken in parks, shopping centres, coffee shops, walkways and streets.</p>	<p>Generally short; usually not longer than 45-50 minutes.</p>	<p>E) as an elicitation device to prompt reactions and analyses by the informants.</p>	<p>These interviews were a chance to capture the thoughts, feeling and reactions of 'everyday' residents. As such, the structure was loose, and while I had a series of questions to ask, themes were explored as they emerged and whilst I had contact with my informants.</p>	<p>22</p>
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Development Company Representatives	Pre-arranged and formally requested via appointment. Held in the workplace offices of the informants.	Usually 1 hour (none were any longer than 1.5 hours).	None.	held by the developers.	10
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Table 3.1: Interview style by informant type

It follows that just as the nature of the interview was altered to suit the informant and context in which the interview was taking place, my approach to interviewing also changed. With my key informant I tended to ask intricate questions and ‘test’ my analysis of themes. Particularly as our mutual familiarity developed, I felt more comfortable asking questions

felt more comfortable asking questions about the depth of her personally held opinions about various key actors in Greater Springfield. These interviews developed a conversational nature fairly quickly and moved beyond simple descriptions to what she felt. Hence these interviews provided me with a good source of ‘insider’ perspectives.

My encounters with residents were generally made in public spaces fairly haphazardly, trying intentionally not to think too much about a particular ‘type’ of person I needed to talk to. This approach worked well, with my only real failures being a Chinese man whose grasp of English was fairly poor while my grasp of Mandarin was non-existent, and a corporate looking, suited lady who by the pace at which she was walking was seemingly in a rush to be somewhere (I walked alongside her at a fairly brisk pace to asked if she ‘had a moment’. It should have been obvious from this that she didn’t). But other than that, literally everyone I approached gave me at least some of their time (some, considerable amounts of time), and more importantly, their views. With the only real issue of this style of interview being the relatively short time I was comfortable in keeping my informants from their activities and the inability to go back and recheck themes with them after the interview had concluded (I intentionally didn’t ask for names and personal details in an effort to allay any fears that I might just be a salesperson spruiking market research), this form of interview proved to be fruitful; albeit a little taxing on my memory in trying to keep questions and emergent themes flowing at a steady pace through what were fairly intense and ‘rich’ interviews.

These interviews generally started with me approaching my ‘target’ informant and asking if they ‘had a moment or two’ to share their thoughts on what they felt community meant in Springfield. While this was going on, I handed over a business card with my details and proceeded to introduce myself and explain that the interview was part of a research project run under the auspices of the University of Southern Queensland. From here I asked permission to record the interview and briefly detailed the ethical considerations of the project in line with the ethics requirements of the University.

The formally arranged interviews with various representatives of development companies in Greater Springfield were solicited via an initial telephone call requesting an appointment. I learnt early on that the people to talk to were the media/public relations staff, and even when I targeted other people in these organisations, was usually put through to the public relations section. This didn’t cause any real headaches, as it was the ‘public’ view of the companies that was being sought in these instances and not the specific ideas of individual staff.

I generally arrived at these appointments early so I could sit in various reception areas and waiting rooms, talk with the administration staff and get a feel for how the businesses presented their public face and how they formed part of Greater Springfield. I also collected newsletters and brochures on offer in these offices and undertook some impromptu pre-interview fieldwork during this time. This essentially involved chatting with reception staff and asking general questions about the development and how it was progressing, looking at displays and models of the development and making notes on any points of interest that stood out in the offices⁷⁷. Once in the interview, I went through the process of introducing myself and the nature of the project, asked permission to record the interview and detailed the ethics safeguards of the project. From there, the interview commenced, and I began with my standard and trusty initial question: ‘*so tell me, what does community mean here in Springfield?*’ From this the interview developed according to the themes that emerged and the specific questions I needed to ask.

From the relative ease with which the interview process generated data, I like to think that I applied the ‘higher-order’ skills that Gorden (1992) notes when discussing the ethnographic interview:

Interviewing skills are not simple motor skills like riding a bicycle, rather, they involve a high-order combination of observation, empathetic sensitivity, and intellectual judgement (1992: 7).

My interviews formed a core data base from which I formed a picture of what my informants thought about community in Greater Springfield. The interviews provided a basis from which the documentary data could be read and from which my fieldwork and observations could be contextualised, challenged and/or affirmed. Particularly in those interviews where I asked informants to offer their analyses of photographs of several billboards presenting views of Springfield community (see Appendix E), I had a chance to see if my analyses of these public pedagogical artefacts captured the concerns of residents.

3.8.4 Tools of the Interview

⁷⁷ As an example, when waiting to meet with a representative from a residential building company located in Greater Springfield, he and a representative of a neighbouring development had engaged in conversation about the logic of some billboards located on the periphery of Greater Springfield. This provided me with some unsolicited insight into what these representatives thought about these billboards.

I always carried into interviews my diary, my 'Doctoral Interview Notes' manila folder containing interview permission forms (see Appendix F), elicitation photographs (see Appendix E), business cards and A4 notepad, and my Olympus WS-100 digital voice recorder with spare batteries in my shirt pocket.

While I took brief notes through some of the interviews, I found a strategy of focusing on the interview and informant without the distraction of writing notes maintained a flow through the interviews. I had the audio from each interview captured on my digital recorder for later transcription, so copious note taking was in many cases unnecessary. What I did tend to note directly after interviews as I sat in my car, or on a bench in a park, were those various 'visual' and semiotic things that the recorder couldn't capture. Things including the ease with which my informants spoke about certain topics, the looks and facial expressions they gave, the nature of the surroundings in which the interview took place and my immediate reactions to the interview. Appendix G shows some notes from one of the interviews.

The other 'tool' of the interview process included my clothes. For interviews with representatives from the development companies I dressed 'corporately' - long sleeve business shirt, tie and tailored pants. For my field interviews in parks and shopping centres, I wore a 'casual' long sleeve shirt and jeans. I may have been making assumptions about how to look in various settings within the site, but I applied the suggestions of Fontana (1977) in dressing according to the setting. A formal corporate environment required the 'uniform' of the corporate world, while a park was far more casual. In any case, I didn't face any real difficulties in approaching and soliciting interviews, and assume from this that I 'looked the part' and fitted the context of the interviews suitably.

3.8.5 Recording and Transcription of Interviews

As soon after returning home from interviews as possible (generally the next day) I extracted the audio file from my digital recorder for storage on my PC and played through the interview audio file whilst looking over my notes. I generally drafted further 'scratch notes' at this stage on ideas or themes that were prompted from the interview in an effort to add any 'reinterpretation with [these] fresh readings' (Poland 1995; 292) of the interviews.

From this, transcription of the interviews occurred. Transcription was performed in line with Poland's (1995) protocols for error and I developed a standard for accounting for 'deliberate' and 'accidental alterations' in the transcriptions by applying Edwards (2001) conventions for transcription recording (these are detailed below). Taken in conjunction with Oliver, Serovich and Mason's (2005) delineation between 'naturalised' (transcription that

empirically attempts to recreate the interview via the recording of the interview complete with the inclusion of incidental, non-verbal and contextual inputs) and ‘de-naturalised’ (transcription that focuses on the intent of the content of the interview) transcription techniques, the approach taken in this project was to focus on the intent of the content of each interview, with less emphasis on attempting to recreate the interview context. As many of the interviews were conducted in public spaces with background noise as a feature of the interview locations, faithful ‘naturalised’ recreations of these interviews would have resulted in transcripts that became bogged down in the recording of ancillary (noise) inputs into the interview. The effect would have been that core detail in my respondent’s comments would have been lost in the transcription’s sheer scale. While transcription undertaken in a naturalised way intends to lessen misrepresentation ‘as one moves more closely to actually-existing speech’ (Oliver, Serovich and Mason 2005; 1275), Oliver, Serovich and Mason note that problems of intricacy and a focus on the method of transcription and not the content of the interview diminish the desirability of such an approach in qualitative applications. Instead they suggest that denaturalised transcription moves to frame the interview’s context as the point of the transcription and note that ‘[t]his approach has found particular relevance in ethnography’:

Denaturalized transcription grows out of an interest in the informational content of speech and dissatisfaction with the empiricism of naturalized work. A denaturalized approach to transcription also attempts a verbatim depiction of speech. Yet while still working for a “full and faithful transcription”, denaturalism has less to do with depicting accents or involuntary vocalization. Rather, accuracy concerns the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation (1276).

Transcriptions utilized in this project were prepared using such a denaturalized approach. While ‘faithful’ reproduction of the dialogue was captured via an application of Edwards’ conventions, it was the content of the interviews that was of interest. The method and approach to transcription deployed here captured the intent of my informant’s comments without becoming bogged down in the empirical recreation of the interview on paper (if such a task is even possible). Examples of transcribed interviews are included in Appendix H

3.8.6 Transcription Conventions

The conventions for transcription applied to all interviews for this project were derived from Edwards' (2001) *Stage 1* conventions:

- Orthography: transcriptions were written in Australian English, with limited use of "spoken forms" (as in 'unconventional' grammar; for instance, 'waz' transcribed as 'was'). These 'deliberate alterations' (Poland 1995: 296) were performed in order to maintain a consistency without having to establish an alternative vocabulary and syntax, as well as the minimal influence these changes would yield in interpretations of the interview content.

Given that all informants interviewed were fluent speakers of English, only a few cases of 'slang' or local vernacular stood out as unfamiliar to me, and were recorded 'verbatim' in an effort to retain the linguistic significance they carried.

All interviews were recorded using an Olympus WS-100 digital voice recorder. I considered the recording quality as good in terms of play back audibility and clarity.

- Speaker Identification: informants were identified by their pseudonyms, while my title was noted as 'Andrew' in all transcripts. A new line was used for all new entries by speakers in the transcript, with the transcript written in a standard linear format from top left of page to bottom right, with those events depicted in the transcript at the top-left occurring prior to those at the bottom-right (chronological linearity in the transcription layout).
- Time breaks: breaks in the conversational flow were indicated by ... in the transcription.
- Overlaps: overlaps in informant speech are indicated by the time break notation ... ending a speech event followed on the next line by the interjection from the relevant speaker.
- Fragments: speech fragments are indicated using a hyphen - notation at the point of the fragmented speech event.
- Nonverbal events: nonverbal events or inaudible speech events are indicated using square brackets [] containing an instruction (eg [muffled]).
- Pauses: pauses are indicated using the time break notation
- Uncertainty: uncertain transcription events are indicated using question marks inside round brackets (??).

To demonstrate the approach under which the interviews collected for this project were reproduced as ‘faithful reproductions of the aural record’ (Poland 1995: 291), an example transcript with application of Edwards’ conventions is included in Appendix H.

3.9 Analysis

The processes of analysing the evidence base of data sources in this project derived from a montage of the strategies noted variously by Dey (1993), Miles and Huberman (1994) and Seidel (1998). Where Dey (1993) identifies five stages in the analytic process:

1. Finding a focus
2. Managing data
3. Annotating data
4. Categorising data
5. Connecting categories,

Miles and Huberman (1994) alternatively suggest that ‘...analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity; data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing verification’ (10), whilst Seidel (1998) suggests ‘a process of *Noticing*, *Collecting* and *Thinking* about interesting things’ (E2) constitutes analysis. For this project I applied elements of each of these suggestions to arrive at an analytical process that provided scope to deal with the complexity and richness of my data and the evidence it yielded.

3.9.1 The Analytic Model

The analytical approach deployed in this project drew on a synthesis of Seidel’s (1998) process whilst incorporating important elements of Dey’s (1993) model. The significance of Seidel’s model lay in its recognition of the cyclical nature of the analytic process. There isn’t a necessary or linear flow through each stage, as Seidel (1998) notes when suggesting that:

...when you are thinking about things you also start noticing new things in the data. You then collect and think about these new things. In principle the process is an infinite spiral (E2).

This is the iterative nature of the analytic process for Seidel and identifies the fundamental element of this approach for looking at and grounding analysis in themes emerging from the data. A graphical depiction of this approach is detailed in figure 3.2.

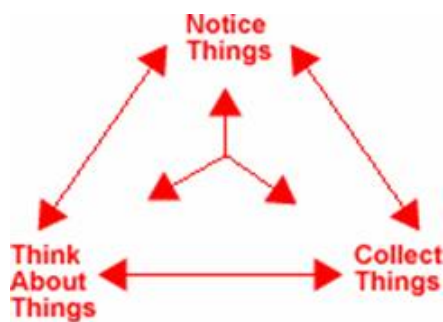


Figure 3.2: The Data Analysis Process (Seidel, 1998)

Noticing: for Seidel, noticing constitutes ‘going out into the world and noticing interesting things’ (3). In this project, the things being noticed related variously to:

- those concerns suggested by the research questions-namely the operation of community and the various perceptions of it that were present in Greater Springfield at the time of this project.
- Those themes that emerged after the project had commenced (particularly after fieldwork had started) as significant aspects of the cultural milieu of Greater Springfield and points from which the interpretation of its logic and operation could be presented.

This was the stage in the analysis in which ‘focus’ areas were identified, to apply Dey’s (1993) terms. It was a process of seeing what was happening, determining the significance of ‘interesting’ phenomena and setting about finding representations (in the form of interview transcripts, photographs of billboards, recollections from fieldtrips, etc) of these phenomena from which ‘thinking’ could commence. These focus areas, or themes as I refer to them, were

identified both as a priori concerns of the project (that is, as they were presented by the research questions for the project) or as inductively derived ‘interesting things’ emerging from the project.

By noticing these theme areas, I set about collecting evidence that told me something about them. I wasn’t attempting to ‘prove’ my themes by locating data that met the requirements of a specific hypothesis, but was developing an understanding of the operation of the phenomena in question via the collection of evidence that provided a representative basis from which my interpretations could be launched. A good example includes the emergence of the theme of ‘Affluence-Arrogance’ that drew from the differences in expressions of affluence I noticed between suburban Springfield Lakes and Brookwater. This theme developed as I noticed suggestions of affluence underpinning the represented identity of both suburbs as portrayed in various public pedagogical artefacts.

Collecting: this part of the process is about actually collecting data sources that formed part of the evidentiary base from which interpretations were made. In line with Seidel’s suggestions that the data analysis process is cyclical, with each stage interconnected with the other, collecting in this project became a process of ‘mining’ theme areas until a saturation of data became evident. It often occurred however that prior to saturating a theme with sources of evidence, related areas emerged, in which the ‘noticing’ of new sub-themes led to the subsequent ‘collection’ and ‘thinking’ about data in these new areas. This process was also reflected in the coding structures utilised in the project, specifically in the formation of ‘tree’ nodes that showed connections of themes and sub-themes.

Sorting also became a component of this stage of the analytic process. This occurred almost by default, in that, as I located data sources that connected to theme areas, a structure of organisation of data sources for analysis formed according to where each source best fit. I discuss this process of sorting below in terms of the coding processes applied in this project. The Sorting component of Seidel’s model reflects the concerns Dey (1993) has for ‘Managing Data’. In this Dey refers to how data are stored, organised and arranged. While questions about processes of storing and coding data come into this, this component of the analytic process also carries with it implications for how data sources are arranged and viewed by the researcher. Here is an instance where the researcher’s epistemologies and ways of viewing and arranging data are visible components of the analytic process.

Thinking: this part of the process involves investigating the connections the data sources as points of evidence connected to theme areas suggest. Seidel (1998) notes that at this stage:

Your goals are: 1) to make some type of sense out of each collection, 2) look for patterns and relationships both within a collection, and also across collections, and 3) to make general *discoveries* about the phenomena you are researching' (5)

This stage of the analytic process connects in part to Dey's 3rd, 4th and 5th stages- *Reading and Annotating, Categorising and Connecting Categories*.

Thinking was an ongoing part of the project, and hasn't yet stopped even though my time in the field has concluded. Thinking is where I applied my interpretative lens to the evidence I had gathered, made my assumptions about what I was looking at, and more problematically drew my epistemological concerns into the representation I was making of Greater Springfield. What are presented here are my analyses of those sources of evidence I collected, organised via coding and interpreted during the thinking stage.

While the epistemological implications of this process are discussed in previous sections of this chapter, the process of thinking about the case site led to connections between different sets of my data sources, which in turn led to further noticing, collecting and thinking. An example of this occurred after about a year in the field when it struck me that imagery of race and ethnicity in the public pedagogical artefacts were as significant (if not more significant) markers of Greater Springfield's identity as were those depicting class- a previously formulated theme. This led to the 'noticing' of imagery of race and ethnicity, the 'collecting' of evidence and 'thinking' about the connections my emergent interpretations of class had to other theme areas and the project whole.

Overall, Seidel's model for describing the analytic process in qualitative work provided a useful framework from which to deploy and describe the analytic process in this project, however, it did contain a couple of gaps which I describe in terms of the coding process utilised for this project.

3.10 Coding

All coding for this project was undertaken using QSR International's *Nvivo 7* qualitative data coding software. Within this, a coding structure built from 'free' and 'tree' nodes corresponding to theme areas was constructed with all data sources imported and coded within the application. All coding was performed manually (with no 'autocoding' utilised) at single line level, with all coded files and software located on my office PC in Toowoomba.

I found that Miles and Huberman's (1994) first two 'activities' for analysis, data reduction and data display, captured the intent of the coding process utilised in this project. As a process of selecting appropriate sources of evidence that derived from my data sources and presenting these according to the connections they had to each other and the project more broadly, a structure for organising themes as they corresponded to codes emerged. As Charmaz (1983) notes:

Codes serve to summarize, synthesize, and sort many observations made of the data....coding becomes the fundamental means of developing the analysis....Researchers use codes to pull together and categorize a series of otherwise discrete events, statements, and observations which they identify in the data (112).

The summarizing (data reduction) and categorization (data display) of data in this project were performed according to the creation of themes which in turn corresponded directly to the nodes created through *Nvivo 7*. This direct relationship between theme areas and nodes worked well, and provided a mechanism to effectively sort and locate data sources to support my interpretive analysis of themes.

The process of actually coding sources depended broadly on the nature of the source. Text-based, hard-copy documents were treated as 'externals' and involved me transcribing the text of the source into *Nvivo 7*, with descriptions of associated images and diagrams also included in the document. For the brochures, newsletters and other Springfield Land Corporation materials, this involved a 'complete' transcription of the text of the documents (including captions for images). For newspapers, transcription was limited to those relevant selected articles, and not the complete paper. References to images contained within these documents were recorded using a variety of in-text and 'See Also' notes, whilst 'Memos' were used to explain contextual details of these documents and connections to other data

sources and aspects of the study. All sources were identified and saved in Nvivo 7 according to their:

- Title: usually the title of the document, or in the case of the document not containing a title, the first line of text.
- Type: a standard descriptor of what the document was; for example “Springfield Times August 20th, 2006”.
- Location: all hard-copy documentary sources were stored on the ‘Documentary Sources’ bookshelf, held in my office in Toowoomba. This bookshelf was the single storage location for all hard-copy documentary sources. All photographs, interview transcripts were saved electronically on my office PC and were imported as ‘documents’ into Nvivo 7. All fieldnotes were transcribed as ‘documents’ directly into Nvivo 7.

An example ‘screen capture’ of a section of an interview coded using Nvivo 7 is included in Appendix H.

3.11 Rigor

This is a good point at which to describe the concerns for rigor within which this project was undertaken. Drawing on Creswell’s (1998) eight verification procedures to determine the ‘quality’ of qualitative research and Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) trustworthiness criteria, Agostinho (2005) provides a statement of quality criteria for establishing rigor in qualitative research. I adapted eight of Agostinho’s eleven criteria as they applied to the specific nature of this project:

1. *How was trustworthiness established?:* Trustworthiness with my informants was established via the process I deployed during the interviews. I introduced myself and detailed the nature of the project and handed over my business card detailing my name, qualifications and contact details prior to asking my informants questions. I also explained the purpose of the interview in relation to the project, and established the bona fides of this project as a formal, University authorised ethnographic study.

2. *Prolonged engagement with the research site*: As an ethnographic study conducted over 4 years, I maintained a prolonged connection with the case site that subsequently provided me with an understanding of how it ‘worked’.
3. *Persistent observation*: Fieldwork for this project was conducted throughout the 4 years of the project. This included my informal, monological observations from my very first exposure to the site as a staff member of the University of Southern Queensland, through to the more intense and formalised observation undertaken during field trips. As a structured component of this project, observation undertaken persistently throughout the project’s time span was fundamental to my work as ethnographer.
4. *Triangulation*: Utilising the methods described above, where data sources were read inductively against emergent interpretations of the site throughout the entire project, I triangulated via:
 - the application of multiple data sources in response to specific interpretative questions I had of the field,
 - revisited sources of data through time to account for changes in the sources and environmental conditions that may have influenced my interpretations,
 - the testing of my interpretations with my key informant for an emic, ‘insider’ perspective.
5. *Thick description*: As a prolonged ethnographic project, drawing on a wide range of data sources including documentary sources, ethnographic observation, interview and fieldwork, the analysis and description detailed in this thesis is considered as ‘thick’.
6. *Accessibility to an audit trail*: I have included as part of this thesis detail of the approach I took in the deployment of the project, including extracts of primary sources of evidence, sections of data and my own reflections of undertaking this project in order to provide an audit trail of the processes applied.
7. *Reflexive Journal*: An ethnographic diary, constituted as a series of ‘scratch notes’ (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995) was maintained throughout the entire project. This diary formed a space for the informal consideration of the project and shows a

chronological record of my thinking as the project progressed. This diary is contained in Appendix C.

8. *Facilitation of Authenticity*: This thesis represents an account of aspects of Greater Springfield that draws its legitimacy from the integrity of the method applied and the sources of data utilised as evidence. As such, this thesis claims an authenticity in the interpretations it presents as they are read in terms of the methodology deployed to gather data and the epistemological location from which I interpreted these sources.

3.12 Leaving the Field

As I suggested above, the field for this project constituted both the physical dimensions of Greater Springfield as a geographic 'location', and also a mental construct and something that has influenced me by virtue of the time I spent there. While it is perhaps the case that I will never fully leave the conceptual field of Greater Springfield (that it will always be with me particularly as it formed the basis of this thesis- a significant event in my life) the way I left the 'physical' field corresponded to Fielding's (2006) suggestions. He notes that:

The work that we and our participants do in these relationships is unlike any other relationship, while, in drawing on the negotiation of trust, it invokes some of humankind's most volatile qualities. Against the context of the intellectual and emotional ties discussed above, far from being graceful, exit may elicit feelings of betrayal. Unless one is both thick skinned and not planning to remain in the field of study, it is not sensible to indulge in kiss and tell sociology (287).

For me, leaving the field brought with it concerns about how I was going to represent the people I talked to and things I saw. At the end of the 4 years, all I really had were my interpretations formed from experiences of having been there and piles of data sources that had subsequently been sifted, selected, coded and interpreted. Was I doing justice to the field in the way I reported it? I can say that I have procedural rigor in terms of the way the study

was designed and conducted and evidence to support my claims. But this does seem a bit 'cold' and academic at the end of it all.

My topic didn't require me to delve into things of a traumatic nature with my informants. It similarly didn't result in 'heated' situations or require me to explore dense emotional responses to difficult topics. As such, I didn't need to form particularly intimate connections with my informants- I suspect to them I was just that 'young man from the University who asked some questions about what community is'. As such, leaving the field wasn't all that difficult in terms of those informants I met as part of my fieldwork. I didn't know the real names of most of the informants I had encountered in the parks and shopping centres of Greater Springfield, and our meetings were generally 'one-off' and didn't give much of an opportunity to form the sorts of close interpersonal connections I had with my key informant and those other informants I met with on repeated occasions. While I did form closer bonds with some informants than I did others ('Brett' at the music shop for instance- I sat and chatted with him for a long time about things other than 'what community meant'- we simply got along well) I was generally able to get up and go without the concern of an emotional attachment that left either me or my informants vulnerable.

My connection to my key informant was naturally more involved than the connection I had with the bulk of my informants, as we had spent considerable time discussing the implications of my work and formed a friendship from this. I am still in touch with Rebecca and expect this to remain the case. We've developed a friendship that resulted at least in part out of the contact we had as part of this project, and I'm looking forward to seeing her reactions to this finished report of my time in Greater Springfield.

But again, as I didn't have a topic that required significant emotional investment on behalf of my informants, I perhaps got off a little easy in terms of ending the fieldwork of this project. Debriefing my informants meant finishing the interview as it occurred in-situ throughout the fieldwork stage of the project- these were one-off meetings after all. Rebecca, due to her involvement in the project was generally aware of where I was at with the project at most points in its progression, and subsequently knew when the fieldwork was about to cease. As such, leaving didn't pose any real questions of 'betrayal' as Fielding (2006) notes, apart from some concerns I held as to whether I had enough data and was doing justice to my informants and the field.

My involvement with USQ and proximity to Greater Springfield, as well as my personal investment in and interest with Greater Springfield as a development means that I will most likely continue to work in the area and be interested in its development. In this

case, the fieldwork will continue, but perhaps a little less formally than in this project, and while this project might be complete, my connection to Greater Springfield is very much ongoing.

3.13 Limitations of this Study

This study is interested principally in uncovering the ways community was conceptualised and experienced during the time I spent in Greater Springfield. As such this project doesn't attempt to offer an interpretation of the totality of activities, pastimes, happenings and events that occurred in Greater Springfield, but focuses specifically on an investigation of notions of community as they emerged from the perspective of the developers and residents of Greater Springfield. Framed by the research problem and accompanying questions detailed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the focus of the study should be apparent. Perhaps not as apparent however are the limitations of this study.

The main limitations of this study are encapsulated broadly within the following points:

- This study is concentrated on uncovering the ways community is understood and experienced in Greater Springfield, and as such, doesn't investigate in detail aspects of the social milieu such as:
 - the socio-economic effects of urban development in south-east Queensland,
 - the gentrification of the Ipswich-Springfield region,
 - the environmental impacts of the development,
 - the corporatisation of urban developments
 - any of the other significant social issues currently being faced by Greater Springfield's residents, such as access to high speed internet, effective transport networks and access to services.

The focus of this project was singular, and while interconnections to issues such as those listed here are tangentially present in this study, it wasn't the purpose of this study to cover these issues in detail.

- This study follows a qualitative method and a design that wasn't interested in uncovering generalisations about ideas of community in Greater Springfield. What

this project presents are phenomenological findings drawn from several years of fieldwork, ethnographic observation and interviews with Greater Springfield residents. As such, this thesis doesn't attempt to present 'laws' that respond to set hypotheses, but rather captures a snapshot of life in Greater Springfield as I interpreted sources of evidence drawn from my time there and the insights my informants provided.

- This study draws on a specific set of data sources to make its claims. I worked primarily with data derived from documentary sources, observation and interview. Other data sources existed within Greater Springfield- including electronic sources such as the Springfield Land Corporation website- however these were considered to be either largely repeating the claims I saw in my principal sources, or largely tangential to the concerns of this project. Beyond this, many of these sources remained out of the public eye and weren't as prominent as those utilised. As such, this project draws on sources of evidence that respond directly to my research question and intention of this project to uncover how community was understood and deployed.
- Like any project in which people's beliefs and the conditions of a geographic space are captured as sources of evidence, this thesis represents a report from a moment in time in Greater Springfield. The claims I make and the interpretations of the data sources I collected represent the logic of Greater Springfield when these interpretations were made- that is, throughout the last 4 years. I suggest that, like any social milieu, Greater Springfield will evolve and change (if it perhaps hasn't already at the time of writing this thesis), which renders this thesis as an historical document reporting on the condition of Greater Springfield from the perspective of the period in which it was captured.

As with the notes I made above regarding the interpretive position of the findings of this thesis being mediated by my position as ethnographer and the cultural studies methodology deployed to uncover evidence, these limitations frame the nature of the findings I present in the following chapters.

3.14 Writing the Thesis

Writing this thesis as the report of my time in Greater Springfield began in mid 2007. I was still collecting data and was in the field at this point, but followed Wolcott's (1990) suggestion that I should 'just start'. I tend to find that writing tightens up my ideas and gives me a good focus, and that while I still had data to collect, preparing the introductory chapter for this thesis provided me a good opportunity to get down on paper the intent of the project and what it was I was doing. This assisted the final few months of data collection as I had a renewed clarity in what the project was trying to achieve.

From this the literature review and methodology chapters followed soon after. I knew what it was in the literature that gave basis to my ideas and how I was going to tackle the project at this point, so it again made sense to get these things written as the spark was there. From this, the analysis chapters followed after the compilation and review of the extant first 3 chapters was performed and the data collection had finished, and finally the tying together of my ideas and responses to the original research problem was presented in Chapter 6.

And that's pretty much how I performed this project.

What the Signs Said

Hehehehe, People will do anything a sign tells them.
(Homer Simpson, *Episode 312- Bart of War, Season 14* May 2003).

We will supply the vision and the design but it is the community that will make it a success (Maha Sinnathamby in *The Big Picture, Health Special* Nov-Dec 2006).

4.1 The Fifteen-Foot Tall Little Boy

Driving into Greater Springfield is in itself an experience. From the west (the direction from which I was always heading) the Western Arterial Road leads off from the Centenary Highway, cutting through remnant bushland to take the Springfield bound traveller over a small rise and into Springfield Lakes. And there it is. From the elevated position of the road a glimpse of the lakes and the seemingly abundant watercourses (a rare commodity in this decade of below average rainfall and drought in south-east Queensland) lined by parklands and landscaped open space offers a clear visual cue as to the aesthetic arrangement of this manufactured place. By this stage of the journey, a dozen or more roadside signs offering visual and textual insights into Greater Springfield life have been passed- some of these not even located within the boundary of Greater Springfield itself. These ever-present physical manifestations of the underlying marketing campaigns attached to Greater Springfield's development each signify the beauty, opportunity and lifestyle available in this place, all the while branding the development in specific ways.

Even those neighbouring (and significantly less affluent) suburbs that contained Greater Springfield billboards and related signage stood as signifiers in and of themselves. These socio-economically depressed older suburbs stood in stark contrast to the glossy imagery of Greater Springfield and offered a somewhat paradoxical experience where the carefully composed and selected *everyday* moments of Greater Springfield life captured by the billboards contrasted against a backdrop that was significantly different. But Greater

Springfield is after all an edge city, and this contrast of contexts is indeed a condition of the sort of development that is happening on the edges of south-east Queensland's urban sprawl.

Mention of Greater Springfield (particularly its two major sub-spaces, Brookwater and Springfield Lakes) is seemingly everywhere- or at least that's the impression the billboards provide. Perhaps it is due to the fanfare with which this new, technologically advanced edge city is met or the significant investment by its developers to make it a success that gives credence to the bombardment of the branding process. Or perhaps it is due to this location's edge city nature; a place built on the periphery of two other established cities that makes Greater Springfield an almost out-of-place place that exists largely because of the expansion of the urban fringe. A place thus requiring careful definition to demonstrate the uniqueness and identity it carries. In any case, the signs of Greater Springfield quickly emerged during my time there as being a prominent feature of the landscape; features that actively suggested much about what it was (intended to be).



Image 4.1



Image 4.2

It was the frequency and the type of suggestions made by the signs that particularly



Image 4.3

caught my attention. The images they captured and the ideas they carried shot up out of the ground on the fronts of towering billboards that any sighted person simply couldn't miss. The subjects caught casually posing within these information dissemination tools were particularly fascinating; a 15ft tall little boy who beamed at me as he emerged from a

swimming pool whilst advertising a 'cool change' at a revamped shopping centre; a 30-

something couple relaxing in their studio apartment, whiling away a Sunday morning scene of comfortable relaxation; a statement urging me to re-evaluate my current lot in life by considering property in Greater Springfield. These signs carried an explicit purpose. They were telling me much about the place, but more importantly they also began telling me about who I could be if I moved into the area.

These images and their attached messages also appeared in other forms- newsletters, 'Community Updates', glossy corporate brochures and newspaper features- all distributed variously to residents, visitors and corporate partners of the development. These



Image 4.4

provided yet more suggestion of the type of lifestyle Greater Springfield yielded. Read alongside the billboards, these inter-supporting artefacts represented what it meant to *be in* Greater Springfield and provided textual affirmations of what the place was intended to be (as seen through the eyes of the developers and their marketing departments). Taken together, I realised that all of these artefacts of Greater Springfield provided a symbolic cultural roadmap for how to live there and behave appropriately as a resident.

4.1.1 Building the Image- Format and Style

The general format of each of these artefacts, whether as a billboard, newsletter article or advertorial in a newspaper, included combinations of imagery (usually depicting the subject of the article) and sets of authorising words that provided context to the meanings associated with the image⁷⁸. The amount of words used and types of image deployed depended on the type of document- billboards tended to be dominated with imagery and little wording, whilst newspaper advertorials contained larger amounts of text and a lesser emphasis on images. But regardless of the style and formatting of these documents, they each presented a carefully crafted vision of what Greater Springfield was supposed to be and came together supporting each other with interrelated themes and ideals.

⁷⁸ Naturally, articles contained in newsletters had a larger frequency of authorising words to those appearing on Billboards- the type of media and conventions for these things broadly dictated the scope of words used and image placement etc. However, it occurred that on all sources gathered (or captured via photograph) for this project that combinations of words and imagery were used.

Early in this project, I focused primarily on the billboards of Greater Springfield. The various series' of billboards scattered throughout Greater Springfield and its geographic margins provided a principle source of evidence for explaining the logic of the place- the 'boundary' as Anthony Cohen (1994) would call it. They were prominent, difficult to miss and were available to everyone who entered Greater Springfield or passed by its periphery on its arterial road networks. Unlike the newsletters, 'community updates' and even newspapers that had a far more local and perhaps selected audience (you generally had to be a resident or had made direct enquiries with the development companies to be sent the various community newsletters and the like), the billboards were accessible to even the most transient of observers- they simply rose out of the ground to meet the gaze of the passer-by.

As such, what follows is an account of Greater Springfield presented via a focus on its billboards. In particular, I present an analysis of what it meant to be in Greater Springfield via sets of key themes drawn from various series' of billboards displayed during my time in the place. I then move on to look at how these themes are conflated, reinforced and sometimes contradicted in other sets of artefacts- primarily the brochures, community newsletters and newspapers connected to the place. Mixed implicitly within my interpretation of these artefacts are experiences, remembrances and accounts drawn from my fieldwork. These fieldwork-derived knowledges of Greater Springfield add depth to the interpretation of the artefacts and provide a basis to explain how and where I found them. So, from these three principle sources- billboards, artefacts and fieldwork- I present my interpretation of the represented identities of Greater Springfield.

While it was expected that comparative themes and representations would be present amongst the billboards and other artefacts (in the case of the community newsletters and billboards, they were largely all produced by the same development companies and their partners), the sheer dominance of these images and the frequency at which they appeared I considered to be noteworthy. While I also drew on more neutral sources (such as articles from independent newspapers), I suggest that the *authorised* corporate artefacts of Greater Springfield's developers exerted an almost total dominance over the landscape. There were no other organised attempts to define Greater Springfield than that presented by Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation. Even within the independent newspapers and other publicly disseminated sources, scant alternative views about community, lifestyle and identity were presented. A reading of what Greater Springfield is *intended to be* as a community thus required a look at these dominant sources. I will argue later in this thesis that

these themes operated as public pedagogies, suggesting certain things about living in Greater Springfield (namely, the types of resident and lifestyle desired by its developers).

4.1.2 Theme-ing Greater Springfield

A range of ideals was attached to Greater Springfield and were utilised in its marketing materials as branded attributes of the place. The overriding themes presented in the billboards derived broadly from the concept that Greater Springfield exists as a location in which residents can ‘live-work-learn-play-shop’ (Springfield Land Corporation 2005). This often quoted⁷⁹ Greater Springfield catch-phrase stands prominently as a manifestation of the logic Greater Springfield’s developers have given to the development’s image. Out of this concern for Greater Springfield to be a location that residents’ ‘don’t ever need to leave’ (Patterson 2007; Walker 2006) are presented specific ideals; such as a concern for lifestyle, the availability of choice, the presence of community connectedness, a sense of belonging, opportunities for success and the convenience of local services. It is these underlying themes, expressed explicitly via authorising words or more subtly via the suggestions of the imagery in the billboards and other artefacts that is important for understanding the logic of Greater Springfield’s identity creation.

It was precisely the dissemination of these highly conceptualised and philosophical statements on living presented via things as mundane as roadside billboards that I found fascinating- a sort of guidebook for living that you read as you drove past. It was even more intriguing to note that for all the lofty idealism suggested by these themes, it was humble media that carried them. While this perhaps says more about contemporary methods of advertising, or the poor quality of internet connectivity in Greater Springfield (Walker 2006) than it does anything else, the sublimely visual nature of these massive roadside information disseminators and the supporting flyers, brochures and magazines is hard to beat- particularly in terms of the romanticised images of suburban tranquillity and relaxed leisure these signs presented to anyone who happened to come into contact with them. All sorts of suggestions about identity, community and living were made within these static insights into Greater Springfield life.

Of course, the billboards I was reading as a primary source of evidence for this project formed an important element in the marketing campaign deployed by Delfin and Springfield Land Corporation. By their nature as objects of advertising, they were designed to present

⁷⁹ This phrase has recurred frequently in speeches by representatives of the developers and numerous promotional documents from the Springfield Land Corporation.

idealised views of what Greater Springfield *could* be; this I had to take account of. But the signs of Greater Springfield also did more than just display an idealised image of the place. They provided a basis upon which the boundary (Cohen 2004) was also set. Here were public pedagogical artefacts that taken together, suggested something not just about the way Greater Springfield had been conceptualised, but provided a set of identity characteristics for the people who would live there.

4.2 Case 1: Springfield Lakes- What a Refreshing Change

The first, and most significant set of signs displayed during my time in Greater Springfield were the Springfield Lakes specific ‘What a refreshing change’⁸⁰ series of light-pole banners. I first noticed these banners in late 2005 along Springfield Lakes Boulevard in the centre of the Springfield Lakes development. Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 detail the location of Springfield Lakes Boulevard and the location of the light-pole banners looking west (Figure 4.2) and looking east (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.1: Springfield Lakes Boulevard in central Springfield Lakes. (Reproduced from Google Maps Australia, 2nd February 2008).

⁸⁰ As per the recurring slogan ‘what a refreshing change’ that appeared on all banners from this series.



Figure 4.2: Looking west along Springfield Lakes Boulevard



Figure 4.3: Looking east along Springfield Lakes Boulevard. Springfield Lakes landmark, the Delfin building, is located directly left of shot. See inset.

These banners presented a set of ‘keywords’ - authorising words that themed each banner’s conceptual focus- with accompanying imagery and slogan containing a reference to the keyword and image and the generic ‘what a refreshing change’ catch phrase. This series included the following banners (in no particular order):

Community

Keyword: Community

Associated Slogan: Superb Settings. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Aerial view of a coffee shop gallery

Using imagery depicting a moment captured on the deck of a prominent local Springfield Lakes coffee-shop, this banner ties the idea of community with cosmopolitan consumerism and leisure which is further conflated by the slogan ‘*Superb settings*’. The image on this banner is interesting in that it shows a hint of the water of Springfield Lakes, as well as the leisurely but refined surrounds of the coffee shop deck. As a local landmark and popular location for socialising, the visual suggestion of the coffee-



Image 4.5

shop set floating above the water of the lakes stands as a signifier of the social heart of Springfield Lakes- this suggestion is not only given credence by the geographic location of the coffee shop in central Springfield Lakes, but also via the symbolic, centralised meeting point this space functions as for locals.

I take the banner keyword ‘community’ to here refer to a sociable collectivity. In this usage, community is about getting together with similar others (presumably other Springfield Lakes residents) to engage in relaxed conversation whilst admiring one of the ‘superb settings’ of the place (the lakes). When I first looked at this banner in detail, I wondered what the subjects of this image were discussing; could they be engaging in Springfield specific banter about shared points of interest of being *in* Springfield Lakes as per Grange’s (1999) suggestion that community is expressed as a shared response to the social world? Were stories of life in Springfield Lakes, or details about the latest addition to the garden shared, or the success of a child at one of the local schools mentioned with quiet pride?

Regardless of what the subjects were indeed discussing, this is an image that seemingly captures an everyday moment (like all the banners in this series do) of life in Greater Springfield. The point is of course, that this everyday moment is in fact a bit

spectacular; the fact that a seemingly everyday act as drinking coffee can occur in a ‘superb setting’ says something about this place and what it offers its residents. Here is a place where residents not only have time to sit leisurely sharing a sense of community with other like-minded folks, but can do this amidst a backdrop of stunning natural landscapes and an aesthetically pleasing built environment.

The aerial perspective of the image is also interesting, and perhaps suggests something voyeuristic about the banner’s viewer- here the viewer looks in on a seemingly typical moment of Springfield Lakes life. The viewer is presumably someone unfamiliar with the place (as the viewer needs to be told that this is in fact *community* in one of Springfield Lakes’ *superb settings*), but is someone who is looking in to understand its ways, perhaps with the intention of moving into Springfield Lakes (this is after all an advertisement designed to attract people to the development). It is from this perspective that a direct suggestion of desire permeates through the image- in this particular instance, a desire for relaxed sociability that residency in this Springfield Lakes ‘superb setting’ provides.

- **Conflating themes of Community in Springfield Lakes**

Community is a significant term in Greater Springfield. It refers not only to the way the area has been developed (that is, this location has been built as *the* community) but refers also to the type of interactions its residents have (that is, you become part of *a* community in which rich interpersonal relationships occur). A dual definition of community is expressed by this logic (particularly in Springfield Lakes and Brookwater), where community operates as an explicit keyword that signifies themes of interpersonal connectedness within the physical surrounds of the development.

Examples of this dual usage are expressed in the following:

1. Community as location:

Springfield Lakes is a fully master planned community, designed with you in mind. Every detail has been thoroughly planned to help you enjoy every aspect of your life (Delfin ‘Living options’ magazine ‘Green Issue’, n.d.)

Springfield Lakes is a magnificent community that offers you every reason to enjoy your life the way you want to... how refreshing (Delfin 'Living Options' magazine Green Issue, n.d.)

2. Community as interpersonal relationships:

We will supply the vision and the design but it is the community that will make it a success (Maha Sinnathamby in 'The Big Picture', *Health Special* Nov-Dec 2006).

What makes Springfield Lakes truly unique is the strong community spirit. There are over 40 community groups operating within Springfield Lakes as well as the Spring Lake Community Centre that assists in fostering a sense of belonging within the vibrant Springfield Lakes Community. (Paul Cochrane in 'Springfield Lakes the Place to be' - *Urban Development Review*, April 2007).

It is so wonderful that the community is getting behind our concert, it really is community helping the community (Angela Burdett, *The Satellite* Oct 10 2007)

Whilst community defined as personal interaction is an important element in the conceptualisation of Springfield Lakes, the conflation of community as an aspect of the built environment is also significant. In many ways, community occurs *because of* the built environment in these examples- community is hinged to the coffee shop overlooking the lakes in the banner imagery; it is built by the developers but 'made a success' when people move into it; it is in the 'superb settings' of Springfield Lakes that community occurs. What my readings of the application of the theme of Community in Greater Springfield suggest to me is that community is implicitly only possible due to the design and construction of the built environment, with the implication of this suggestion being that this place is special as a community due to the careful and considered planning that Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation have given to it. In this regard, community isn't an organically produced expression of human interaction alone, but is a direct result of the planning and design conventions utilised in Springfield Lakes by its developers.

This is in many ways a new definition of community (if the definitions discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis are an indication of the conceptualisations of community present in

the literature to date). The built environment in this usage is conceptualised as a conduit or catalytic shell from which human interactions flow. It might even be assumed that without this specific built environment and the considered planning undertaken by Delfin that community would in fact be impossible. This is a community *that is* because of the type of planning and design utilised in its physical environment.

In many ways, the human element and agency attributed to more traditional conceptualisations of community formation is removed in Springfield Lakes. This is a ‘test tube’ community of sorts- a framework of community manifesting as a master planned urban development onto which a fertilising spirit (its people) is woven. With this master-planned logic now spilling out of the physical construction of the place and into the social interactions of people within it, I can’t help but suggest that this is at best an engineered sense of community. The desire behind the master planned physicality of this manufactured space simultaneously functions as a cast from which community is formed, so that it is through this pre-formed physicality that selected and authorised expressions of community interaction in Springfield Lakes function (such as the more than 40 Springfield Land Corporation sponsored community groups). What I see being suggested to residents of Springfield Lakes is that everything is taken care of- everything from the construction of the built environment right down to the way community interaction will be prescribed in the types of special places available and the sorts of community groups that are sponsored.

Choice

Keyword: Choice.

Associated Slogan: Great land deals. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Middle-aged couple looking out over a balcony from a multi-story residential dwelling.



Image 4.6

This banner utilised imagery of a middle-aged couple looking out from a balcony of a multi-story house, with accompanying slogan ‘*Great Land Deals. What a Refreshing Change*’ ascribed on the side banner. Given that a representative of the marketing team of Springfield Land Corporation interviewed for this project mentioned that, where possible, subjects contained within publicity and

marketing materials were Springfield residents, I have taken that the subjects contained in this image are residents and the house is indeed located in Springfield:

They're actually Springfield Lakes residents that we use for all the commercials, all the advertising is all Springfield Lakes residents (Nicole 28th March 2007).

Apart from the bona fides of residency the subjects within the image may or may not claim, it is a theme of agency that carries through this banner. 'Choice', the underlying logic of this sign, is further conflated with suggestions of *value* ('Great land deals') and *opportunity* (in terms of finding a suitable, well priced home) in which happiness, leisure and relaxation are possible. This links closely to the 'refreshing change' motif that underlines the entire series of banners; here is a location that is refreshing not only because it is a place where community is present, but where the opportunity to live comfortably is also available.

What I find this banner suggesting is that, once you move to Springfield Lakes, you will have the choice of the home and lifestyle of your desire without spending every last dollar in the process, and will subsequently be able to enjoy life via such acts as leisurely looking out over your balcony. Presumably, from the age of the subjects shown in the image, Springfield Lakes may have been chosen to raise children, who outside the frame of the image, might be imagined to be playing across the road in one of the Springfield Lakes parks, over which mum and dad are looking from the balcony of the family home. With the themes 'Family', 'Belonging' and 'Learning' emerging from other banners in this series (as discussed below) an assumption that this is a place for families (perhaps even more specifically, young families) might be made⁸¹. This is certainly the suggestion presented in a Delfin produced 'Living Options' magazine distributed to residents of Springfield Lakes in 2005: *Imagine yourself living in a community focussed setting. Where people still smile at their neighbours and kids play safely in the park.* (Delfin Living Options 'Orange Issue', May 2005).

Apart from these suggestions, a restrained affluence is also presented as an expression of *Choice* in this banner. While great land deals will allow you to choose a large, comfortable and new house, there remains a corollary of modesty. Comfortable affluence, not opulence is the theme presented here, and by the brief snapshot of the house shown in the image, is

⁸¹ From what I saw during my fieldwork and was told in interviews with residents of Springfield Lakes- discussed further in the next chapter- this is very much a major segment of the Springfield Lakes population.

signified by the type of house it is; by Greater Springfield standards this house very much represents an average Springfield Lakes residence. By extension to this reasoning, an economically derived class motif joins the signifier of age (*young* family) to present ideas of restrained affluence as a ‘clever buy’. In this age of rising mortgages, the ‘housing affordability crisis’ (see, Bartlett 2006; Silberberg 2007), expensive household commodities and transportation costs, the lifestyle that Springfield Lakes offers is one where work, living, playing and shopping becomes attractive to young families looking for affordable but comfortable environs to raise families. Here we have ‘choice’ coming to represent a thematic in which young families live an archetypal Australian lifestyle involving comfortable middle-class affluence, space to express a suburban identity and a place to play-out the Australian dream (Bolton 1990).

- Conflating Themes of Choice in Springfield Lakes

The underlying thematic of ‘Choice’, represented broadly as a type of agency where residents are provided options of housing and lifestyle, was subsequently also deployed in various other artefacts disseminated throughout Greater Springfield. Most prominent amongst these were the brochures and various Delfin produced magazines that worked variously as carriers for lifestyle articles and property advertising. The articles in particular offered insights into the types of lifestyle one might lead in Springfield Lakes, as a suggestion in a ‘Delfin Living Options’ (‘Orange Issue’ May 2005) magazine notes:

*Springfield Lakes is all about offering you options on how you want to live.
From a huge range of housing choices through to choice of village addresses.
Whatever your lifestyle, at Springfield Lakes you’re sure to find the choice
that’s right for you.*

This is furthered by the suggestion that in Springfield Lakes you can ‘*take a piece of land in a stunning location and build a home that suits your lifestyle*’ (Delfin Living Options ‘Orange Issue’ May 2005).

The idea of choice also extends beyond housing options available to residents. It emerges in reference to such things as the availability of shopping centres and the provision of education. Here, choice equates as *variety* for consumers:

Orion- a new town centre.

Two shopping malls will be located in a beautifully landscaped setting, around a town square and a pedestrian-friendly main street. Offering many of the features of a traditional town centre, it will be a place to shop, eat out, meet friends, do business, and be entertained... (Education City News, n.d.)

Enabling students to enrol in Semester 2 [at USQ] means that they do not have to wait until 2008 to begin their tertiary education... For many programs we also offer three semesters, rather than two, giving students the added flexibility of finishing their programs sooner, or spreading out their normal workloads to accommodate for work or family commitments (Doug Fraser interviewed in the Springfield Lakes 'Catch Up' Magazine, Autumn 2007).

I found it interesting that Delfin's partners (including the University of Southern Queensland) also drew on thematics such as choice to make their claims in the development. It is in this sense that these keywords extended beyond being simple marketing tools to represent a core attribute of the total development. These keywords represented the underlying philosophies for the development; philosophies that were similarly taken on by service providers (like the shopping centres and university thin Greater Springfield) as much as they were by the developers themselves.

The ethic of choice presented in Springfield Lakes is perhaps summed up best by the following mission-statement like suggestion, sourced from a Delfin produced brochure:

*For Delfin, creating special places is not just a catchline- it's our lifeblood, our heritage and our vision. We're not in the business of building the ordinary. We change the face of the urban landscape, setting new standards in community development. **Creating special places where people can choose the way they live, the way they work, the way they learn and the way they play.** Springfield Lakes is a shining example (Delfin 'What a Refreshing Change' brochure Oct. 2006, emphasis added).*

With this central concern for choice pronounced by the principal developer of the place, it is perhaps not surprising that choice features as a key component of the representations of

Springfield Lakes. This ethic for choice might also be viewed against larger contextual features of the contemporary world; as a key component of market capitalism where consumer choice, espoused by processes of competition, stand as central to the logic of consumption, Springfield Lakes emerges in these marketed images as a place that is what you want it to be without costing you everything. Here you build your own place and engage in lifestyle choices catered for by the services available in Greater Springfield at reasonable prices⁸². As a thematic, choice operates as a point of distinction that defines Springfield Lakes according to what other urban developments don't (or can't) offer. Whether accurate or not, the suggestion is that Springfield Lakes provides choices for its residents to live-work-learn-play-shop as they see fit.

Belonging

Keyword: Belonging.

Associated Slogan: Heavenly Homes. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Mother, son and daughter laughing at a breakfast bar



Image 4.7



Image 4.8

Connecting directly to the ideas presented in the 'Community' banner, but taking the idea of collectivity into personal space (that is, inside of the home environment), the 'Belonging' banner shows imagery of a family- or part thereof- sharing a seemingly happy moment of domestic everyday-ness. Clearly displayed are a young man (the son?), a middle aged woman (the mother?) and less prominently, a young woman (the daughter?). Within this

⁸² This being of course, another aspect of middle class gentrification of the urban fringe.

scene of indoor Springfield Lakes life, we see the older woman preparing food over a plate, whilst the younger people look on with smiling faces suggestive of family union and shared happiness. Here is imagery that suggests the sort of family structure Springfield Lakes residents might form. Missing in this image is an older male subject- we might have assumed a traditional nuclear family structure if one had been present- so we are left to speculate whether the ‘dad’ subject is at work (leaving mum to take care of the ‘inside’ domestic tasks) or that this is a single parent family, with mum maintaining custody of the children (as is the case in the majority of single-parent families in Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics. Family characteristics April 1997. ABS, Canberra, April 1998, p 29,Cat 4442.0.).

The supporting slogan ‘*Heavenly homes*’ appears not to fit the image immediately, until consideration of the context in which this image of family happiness and belonging is set. The domestic satisfaction presented in the image is linked intrinsically to the home and more widely to the sense of satisfaction and belonging heavenly homes in Springfield Lakes bring. Just as with the Community banner in which community is only possible in the master planned environment of Springfield Lakes, it is implied that belonging is only possible due to the design and construction of Springfield Lakes houses. These are *houses that become homes* (to draw on a romantic populist aphorism) because of the planning and type of construction used in Springfield Lakes.



Image 4.9

This theme is further conflated with a second billboard depicting ‘Belonging’ that was located on the Western edge of Springfield Lakes along Springfield Parkway from late 2006. In this, the idea of



Image 4.10

belonging is drawn from an image of children sharing an iconic childhood moment dipping toes into the Lakes. This Tom Sawyer like image, where the childhood experience is symbolically expressed according to the water of the Lakes (for Tom Sawyer, this would be the Mississippi River) connects the built environment of Springfield Lakes to iconic experiences of childhood, and more particularly for the banner themes above, the belonging that occurs

due to the design and layout of the Springfield Lakes built environment. The lakes, it needs to be remembered however, are artificial, with the rough hewn sandstone edges of the lake displayed in the image being just as manufactured as the houses that fill the development; each of these ‘special places’ are just as manufactured as the other, with any nostalgia or feigned history of these structures suggesting a pastiche (Jameson 1991; de Botton 2006). Similar imagery is deployed on the cover of a ‘Good Life’ magazine where the connection of the childhood experience is made according to the water of the lakes. Just as belonging is integrally connected to the inside built environment, it is also connected to the design and construction of the larger outside space of the development. Springfield Lakes is, just like your own private home, a place in which you belong.

- **Conflating Themes of Belonging in Springfield Lakes**

The most striking theme that emerges from the various brochures and newsletters that were distributed during my time in Greater Springfield was the connection of the themes of Belonging and Community. In many ways this makes sense- being in a community means feeling connected and belonging to it. But what is significant here is the continuation of the connection between the way Greater Springfield has been designed and the possibility for belonging this prescribes:

Belonging. Have you ever been welcomed to a new community where you’re invited to join in and get to know the people and the places a little better? At Springfield Lakes, regular community events enable you to do just that. (Delfin What a Refreshing Change Brochure, n.d.)

Its easy to belong at Springfield Lakes. The best part is, there are so many other groups and clubs you can belong to at Springfield Lakes (Delfin What a Refreshing Change Brochure, n.d.)

It is again the underlying suggestion regarding the way that Springfield Lakes has been constructed that is significant. As with the themes emerging from the Community banner, where the built environment and the nature of its construction stands as a catalytic element underpinning the function of community, belonging too seems to be hinged on the way the development has been crafted. In Springfield Lakes, all residents need do is come and be

belonged. The physical environment upon which interpersonal human connections are placed is all set up and waiting for residents to feel part of it all.

A prime example of this pre-formed expression of belonging is suggested by an advertisement for the Orion Shopping and Entertainment Precinct. In a small cardboard brochure containing a magnetic strip on the back designed to be placed on a refrigerator in the home, the cover headline ran “Merry Christmas from Your Newest Neighbour” followed the line: “Orion Springfield... we look forward to seeing you at our place in the new year” listed inside the fold out (Orion Springfield Opening Brochure June 2007). Apart from the concerns one might have with the gesture of a shopping centre welcoming residents of Greater Springfield to its ‘place’ (in some attempt to make blatant consumerism homely), a key expression of how belonging is worked into (and in this case dependent upon) the built environment and its design is expressed here. Via this welcoming gesture by a shopping centre an authorisation of belonging is made to residents. Rather than being the home made cake brought over by the neighbours as the move into the new Springfield Lakes home occurs, belonging in this example is mediated by a consumerist logic, where corporations function as individuals in this master planned context (Harvey 2005:77). Under this logic, to belong to the community of Greater Springfield means having a connection to its institutions such as its shopping centres; the extension of this being that belonging means being welcomed into a consumerist logic, which suggests much about the type of living Springfield Lakes residents are required to lead.

Home

Keyword: Home

Associated Slogan: Easy Living. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Sunset view over Springfield Lakes foregrounded with a runner and cyclist.

Just as with the ‘Belonging’ banner, the imagery and keyword presented on the ‘Home’ banner don’t quite seem to correlate at first glance. However it is the juxtapositioning of the keyword ‘Home’ against an image depicting a sunrise on the Lakes that connects ideas of home to the larger



Image 4.11

community context of Springfield Lakes. Just as with the imagery contained in the 'Belonging' banner where ideas of belonging were located in a specific context of the social milieu (inside the family home), this banner identifies ideas of home as pertaining to the larger geographic space of Springfield Lakes. That is to say that while you may indeed own a house in Greater Springfield, it is in fact the whole place that is home. From this, a thematic correlation to the ideas presented in other banners emerges, in which ideas of personal safety, belonging, leisure, and a general sense of lifestyle are linked directly to the entire Springfield Lakes space. It is not just your own privately owned house and block that matter, but the suburb *en masse*.

Again, the landmark lakes and surrounding parkland function as a signifier of where home is in the image. As the spiritual and geographic centre of Springfield Lakes, the lakes present a space where 'easy living' might occur, as the slogan suggests. Here again, it is suggestions of leisure, relaxation and comfort that are presented- particularly in the form of the active and vibrant looking residents exercising in the foreground of the imagery.

- Conflating themes of Home in Springfield Lakes

Suggestions of home, when applied in the brochures and other artefacts, generally didn't apply this suburb-wide usage of the term. Invariably, home referred to privately owned residences:

Introducing the new Springfield Lakes Gallery Collection, architectural splendour providing huge street appeal. These chic new homes offer the ultimate in low maintenance lifestyle not to mention individuality. These freehold homes are located in prime positions to ensure you get the best proximity to everything at Springfield Lakes. Parks, ovals, lakes, hike and bike trails and facilities are at your doorstep making for a relaxed and easy lifestyle. (Delfin Gallery Collection Sales Brochure, n.d.)

With the exception of a 'postcard' style advertising flyer that suggested that the 'Lakes Entrance' development 'is truly a place you can call home', mention of home referred invariably to private residences.

In some ways this still fits the definition of home laid out in the street banner. While we see a reference to home as the entire space of Springfield Lakes in the banner (a collective

home), it is the way that the space accommodates the privately owned house as home that is significant in other artefacts. While you may own a house in Springfield Lakes, it becomes a home due to its location within the wider Springfield Lakes community. Here home is a concept that connects directly with ideas of Community and Belonging, and carries underlying themes of lifestyle, choice and style.

The beauty of Springfield Lakes, as the advertising suggests, is that it allows you to live your life according to your style:

Aspect- Springfield Lakes Latest Address- Your Life, Your Home, Your Style.
Aspect at Springfield Lakes delivers a lifestyle offering to the discerning homebuyer, with a combination of natural surrounds in a convenient location.
(Delfin Living Options Magazine 'Green Issue', n.d.)

Ideas of the home directly correlate with the lifestyle you are able to lead. By this logic the house is an 'address' that is made a home according to the lifestyle you are provided with. It is within this suburb-wide home that a lifestyle is lived, with leisure, activity, style and a 'good life' available to all who choose one of the addresses within it:

*Lakeside- live the good life by the water. The Lakeside experience begins the moment you are greeted by the breathtaking sight of Spring Lake. It continues down leafy Springfield Lakes Boulevard, over the bridge and through the grand entrance that marks your arrival. **It's a magical welcome home that you could be experiencing everyday.*** (Delfin Living options Magazine 'Green Issue', n.d., emphasis added).

Choice features as an important sub-theme within these suggestions. In the preformed space of Springfield Lakes where specific types of home are accorded specific sections of the development, choice is ultimately limited, yet the idea of choosing a home that fits your lifestyle presents as a prominent ideal in the imagery. You may well have a choice between the 'Gallery Homes' of the 'Parkside' development or the 'high quality addresses at realistic prices' of Lakes Entrance, but ultimately choice is limited to a specific aesthetic and stylistic form of housing; the brick and tile/steel self-contained house. What happens in Springfield Lakes if your choice was to live in a communal long-house, or an open plan warehouse? It is unlikely that Springfield Lakes could accommodate these choices. It is perhaps even more

unlikely that prospective residents would even consider such choices when confronted with the brochures detailing what sorts of houses are available.

This usage of choice makes the suggestion about the ‘Aspect’ development all that more intriguing:



Image 4.12

Rather than reading ‘your life, your home, your style’, the slogan might more correctly read as ‘your life, your home, your style, *as long as your ideas of housing happen to fit with*

what we’ve built’. I argue that this example is a key expression of not only what types of home are considered appropriate in Springfield Lakes, but by extension, what type of people are expected to live here according to the options of style that are made available. It is indeed the built environment that influences the sorts of lifestyles that can be led against the versions of the suburban home that are provided. As a point at which choice manifests in a physical form, the homes of Springfield Lakes function in this regard as informal stylistic sorting devices for prospective residents. If your idea of suburban living is captured by the choice of houses made available, then Springfield Lakes is for you. If the choices don’t align with your ideas, move along.

Convenience

Keyword: Convenience.

Associated Slogan: Special Places. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Shoppers within a mall.

Of all the things that convenience could come to stand for in Springfield Lakes, in this banner it refers to expedient access to consumer items. The imagery, showing a couple strolling through Greater Springfield’s Orion Shopping and Entertainment Precinct, suggests a leisurely ability for Springfield residents to be immersed in ‘special places’. Here the special place is a shopping mall, but



Image 4.13

presumably Springfield Lakes' other 'special places' such as the lakes, parks and homes depicted in the other banners from this series also qualify.

Recurring again is the idea that life in Springfield Lakes is leisurely; that access to special places like shopping centres is different than in the rest of the world where people don't stroll casually in sparsely filled, light and airy open malls. This is a place where taking your time and casually looking around is a part of the lifestyle. Things here are convenient; particularly those pastimes that involve consuming, like shopping or drinking coffee on a deck overlooking a lake.

It is interesting however that whilst the lakes and parkland of Springfield Lakes are presented in previous banners as 'superb settings', it is a shopping mall- that key expression of late capitalist suburban consumerism (Jameson 1991)- that constitutes a *special place*. As somewhere that is invested with performative meaning (that is, the performance of shopping), this place has been used as a central expression of one of Springfield Lakes' virtues- convenience.



Image 4.14

In a second billboard depicting convenience, the idea of shopping re-appears. Here the lower halves of three women appear with filled shopping bags clearly visible against their leisurely but directed strides. Why couldn't convenience refer instead to access to

Springfield Lakes' schools, sporting facilities or community groups? It is in this regard remarkable that convenience equates to consumerism- and more specifically a leisurely, affluent consumerism.

- Conflating themes of Convenience in Springfield Lakes

Convenience stands for ease of living as it is applied in the artefacts of Springfield Lakes. In this usage, convenience means not having to spend hours commuting, having services readily available and ample leisure activities to choose from. These sentiments are expressed in a description of the 'Aspect' development in Springfield Lakes:

Aspect at Springfield Lakes delivers a unique lifestyle offering to the discerning homebuyer, promoting a combination of natural surrounds within a convenient

location. Surrounded on three sides by natural bushland, Aspect is a vibrant yet private environment right in the heart of Springfield Lakes. Within walking distance to the Spring Lake precinct, the future Springfield Central with Orion Shopping centre, USQ Springfield, ample parking and the future second and third lakes, Aspect is the perfect location for your next move (Delfin Good Life Magazine, n.d.).

It is convenience defined as access to services that stands out here. Whether in the form of places like Orion shopping centre or the University, Springfield Lakes via its design provides its residents with convenient access to the services that contribute to their lifestyles. This logic is further suggested in the following Living Options magazine article:

From Spring Lake Village offering you shopping convenience to the Spring Lake Community Centre, LaLuna Restaurant and Bar and Spotlight Gallery offering perfect places to catch up with friends. With life long learning from childcare to the University of Southern Queensland and the convenience of public transport at your door, Springfield Lakes is a magnificent community that offers you every reason to enjoy your life the way you want to... how refreshing (Delfin Living Options Magazine 'Green Issue', n.d.).

The connection of themes of lifestyle, choice and leisure to convenience provides a key indication as to what convenience means in Springfield Lakes. Building on the banner themes where convenience translates as expedient consumerism, the artefacts conflate this expression of convenience to include catching up with friends and leading a comfortable lifestyle. But as with the suggestions of 'Home', where home actually meant something quite specific in its Springfield Lakes incarnation, convenience is also bound by a specific logic; convenience may well be fine if you fit a certain demographic and enjoy certain pastimes (like wandering through the Orion Shopping Centre):

The Town Centre also offers the ultimate in convenience with Queensland's largest Big W as well as banks, a doctor, optometrist and physio. Shoppers will also find a wide range of sophisticated fashion and beauty outlets including Witchery, Portmans, Sportgirl, Roger David and Pumpkin Patch (Delfin Catch Up Magazine Autumn 2007).

Just like the other keywords in this series, Convenience stands as a cornerstone theme to the entire development of Springfield Lakes. It presents as a key expression of the type of lifestyle one can lead and refers primarily to an access to services:

Surrounded by cafes and restaurants, the town square features grassed areas, shade, seating and play equipment. A community room is available to groups for a minimal fee. (Catch Up Magazine Autumn 2007).

Whether it is indirectly via providing expedient access to shops and retail outlets, or more directly via a fee for access to a ‘community room’, Convenience in Springfield Lakes carries an economic imperative masked as leisurely consumerism.

Family

Keyword: Family.

Associated Slogan: Your Choices. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Man and Girl sitting in a park.



Image 4.15

The second banner to contain imagery of domestic connectivity, ‘Family’ utilises imagery of a man (a father?) and a young girl (a daughter?). But unlike the suggestions of the family unit deployed in the ‘Belonging’ banner, this version of family occurs outside. The suggestion here seems to be that the outside constitutes a male space- a theme that compliments the female inside space of the ‘Belonging’ banner.

The application of an outdoor setting in this banner also suggests themes of safety (the open parks are safe for a young family to casually play and bond), leisure (again, Springfield Lakes provides the right sort of spaces for relaxation and family connection) and special places (this is a scene depicting one of Springfield Lakes’ idyllic parklands- another landmark features of the area). What Springfield Lakes provides, as suggested by this banner, is a location where ‘choices’ are available- choices of how to live, how to spend leisure time and how to bond

with family and community. Add to this the determinant ‘your’ in the ‘your choices’ slogan, and a clear indication of personal agency is added to the mix. Springfield Lakes, as this banner suggests, is a place in which *you* can choose to do what *you* wish, and more importantly, has the resources and ‘special places’ to allow *you* to fulfil these activities (including such places as convenient shopping centres, family oriented parklands and community minded coffee shops).

- Conflating themes of Family in Springfield Lakes

Family constitutes a core component of the conceptualisation of Greater Springfield, and in Springfield Lakes specifically, signifies the basic unit of social organisation; it is *the* Family that re-occurs as a theme in Greater Springfield when collective union is noted in the various artefacts. Whilst mention of the individual is also frequent, the implicit suggestion is that these people reside with their families and live in Greater Springfield’s homes in this type of social grouping. This is a specific application of the term, as it isn’t used to describe larger networks- as in a *Springfield Lakes family* for instance. These sorts of collectives are signified by words like Community, or more vaguely via the themes suggested by the Belonging keyword. Family in the applications taken from the artefacts refers directly to a nuclear family of genealogically connected individuals; typically a very traditional Australian family network of ‘mum, dad and the kids’.

An example of this is seen in the way that Orion Shopping Centre identifies the family as one of its core demographics:

Your Town Centre has the family covered. At Orion Springfield we have a range of services to suit your family’s needs. (Springfield News April 18 2007).

This example also provides an expression of how community relates back to and is engaged by the family. We see services within the development mobilised in terms of family life, which subsequently positions the family centrally as the basic unit of social organisation:

Family ties are close to home. Three brothers and a sister are living the vision of Greater Springfield’s founder Maha Sinnathamby- to work, live and play in the area. Jo Ribes and her brothers Paul, Mark and Steve Hodgson love the convenience of working close to home. “I could have moved close to the city or

set up a business here and this is such a nice place to live that it makes more sense working close to home". While family ties play a role, the four also say living and working locally makes good business sense. (Springfield News April 18 2007).

Apart from the underlying economic themes ideas of family are infused with in this example (working locally also makes good business sense for this family) this application of Family and the Springfield Lakes experience draws on several underlying themes to make its case. Firstly, the 'Your choices' slogan noted on the banner suggests that ways of living, prosperity, convenience and belonging don't require distance from those closest to you; in Springfield Lakes, Family is in fact a core component of the entire logic of the place upon which leisure, special places, belonging and other keywords and slogans are premised. With the family operating as the conceptualisation of how people and the social landscape are structured, we see the mediation of the built environment, types of housing, range of services and amenities such as schools and parkland offered in Greater Springfield reflecting this type of social group. These themes certainly pervade the following section of a brochure advertising the entire Greater Springfield development:

Greater Springfield is a self-contained community unlike any other in south-east Queensland. The focus on maintaining a healthy lifestyle- which includes a careful balance between work and family- underlies the growing community. And it is this focus that has attracted families who place a strong emphasis on quality of life from school age to retirement. (Delfin 'Greater Springfield from Vision to Reality' brochure, n.d.).

Just as with the Choice banner, where choices of homes was shown as a hallmark feature of the development, but from which a very particular aesthetic and style of housing is actually offered, I can't help but wonder how the banner imagery and notions of Family suggested by it would cope with a non-traditional, or non-Western family structure. In any event, we simply don't see *those* sorts of families presented by the artefacts.

It is particularly the arrangement and style infused into the built environment of Greater Springfield that is significant for the types of ideas of Family that are presented in the banner. From the organisation of suburban developments to the focus the shopping centres give in their marketing, family represents a conceptualisation of how social structures are

organised at their core; it is a nuclear family that represents how people arrange themselves in Greater Springfield. It is then no surprise to see the types of houses that are built, the way that public space is configured and the nature of the pastimes and leisure pursuits provided in Greater Springfield; with the representation of the standard family unit being a nuclear family follows representations that support this, such as contemporary versions of the archetypal Australian brick veneer family home, parklands in which family picnic lunches and childhood experiences of the lakes might occur and shopping centres that provide for the procurement of family needs in our consumerist world.

Opportunity

Keyword: Opportunity

Associated Slogan: Living Dreams. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Middle-aged couple strolling through parkland.

Pictured in this banner are two middle-aged people (retirees?) strolling through gardened parkland admiring the landscaped recreation of natural bushland that features prominently throughout Springfield Lakes.

‘Opportunity’ as presented in this banner appears to be broadly defined as an ability to spend leisure time in special places to presumably, as the slogan suggests, ‘live dreams’. Connections to the other banners in this series and their associated themes are again noticeable here, particularly in the ideas of location, space and leisure that are suggested implicitly in this banner; Springfield Lakes, as this banner suggests, is a location that affords the opportunity to while away idle moments of leisure in special places.

The central theme of ‘Opportunity’ is connected to the outdoor contexts of Springfield Lakes. Here opportunity is about having the spaces to spend leisure time in; an opportunity to immerse oneself in pristine environments and live life as one chooses. While it could be seen that the subjects of this banner have in fact been the recipients of opportunity at some past point in their lives (that is, in order to have the time to while away leisure time wandering through parkland and be able to afford to live in Springfield Lakes to begin with suggests something about these people’s affluence and ‘opportunity’ to move here in the first place), Springfield Lakes is a place that provides for its residents. It gives what residents want



Image 4.16

and hence forms a context upon which opportunities might be grabbed- such as this everyday moment of people strolling through parkland, spending a moment to take in the scenery.

- Conflating themes of Opportunity in Springfield Lakes

It is Opportunity as the ability Springfield Lakes' residents have to live a lifestyle of their choosing that appears in the artefacts. In many ways, the keyword "Opportunity" joins with Choice to suggest something about the way-of-life in Springfield Lakes. Whilst residents are displayed as having choice (as per the Choice banner)- in everything from the villages they might choose to live in through to the education provider they might choose to lifelong learn with- they also have presented to them Opportunities to learn, shop, enjoy leisure time and bond with each other. Apart from suggesting something about the nature of life in Greater Springfield, both themes also suggest something specific about the people who live there.

There is an agentic capacity presented in the ideas of opportunity; while choices may be provided to residents in Springfield Lakes, it is up to the individual to grasp these opportunities and make something of them. Reminiscent here is Maha Sinnathamby's suggestion that it is the people who will make the place 'a success' (as noted on page 132 of this thesis). This underlying faith in Greater Springfield's people suggests much about the sort of character they are considered to possess and perhaps more explicitly, the sorts of people who are defined as Greater Springfield residents in the first place; this is a development of agentic go-getters and people who understand how to capitalise on opportunity.

This is particularly so whenever education and learning opportunities are discussed in the artefacts:

For Lindsay Dale, it's the chance of a lifetime- the opportunity to study at a well respected University right in his own backyard. "With the new Springfield campus close to home it will be much easier to balance family and study commitments" (USQ Phoenix Newsletter- Students to Commence Study at Springfield, Autumn 2006).

Education City was launched earlier this year and provides a range of educational opportunities from childcare, vocational education training, English

as a second language and USQ programs... (USQ Springfield Official Opening Opening Flyer, 19th April 2006)

In these instances, opportunities are shown to abound in Greater Springfield⁸³. But whilst these opportunities might be available, it is up to the resident to do something with them. I suggest that a form of cultural capital is implied here, whereby the underlying codes present in the social milieu of Greater Springfield such as ‘opportunity’, stand as measures against which ‘successful’ Greater Springfield residents will have the capacities to negotiate these to their own advantage.

As with several of the other banners discussed above, a range of underlying themes are conflated together to define Opportunity. Choice is clearly part of this, but in conjunction with this are expressions of Family and Home (having the USQ campus close to home, for instance, allows students to ‘balance family’ commitments). The application of Home in this instance is interesting- we see Home being conceptually defined as that broad suburban space of Springfield Lakes (again to use the example of USQ from Lindsay Dale’s experiences, we might say that having a university close to home means having a university locally in Springfield Lakes) but also in terms of its geographic distance to Home as private residences. Themes of convenience emerge from this reasoning also- having education providers located locally means that students don’t need to travel away from Greater Springfield to study; that is, away from family and home. All these opportunities are conveniently located at home in Greater Springfield.

Apart from these applications of Opportunity, another manifestation emerged in relation to advertisements for the Brookwater development:

Augusta Point really does represent golf course living at its best and offers a limited opportunity not to be missed (Brookwater News Jan-Feb 2007).

As well as living in an environment that exudes class, quality and privacy, you’ll be part of Brookwater’s prestigious community environment. An environment that will soon boast a vibrant urban village. Brookwater Rise is truly your stellar opportunity to live on top of it all (The Big Picture- Data Centre Special August 2007).

⁸³ Again it is the implicit suggestion that the built environment is the catalyst for the availability of these opportunities that permeates this theme.

From these applications opportunity refers to an ability to secure a particular lifestyle. Conflating the idea of choice further, opportunity here refers to an individual's ability to recognise the significance of these opportunities by snapping up the choices that have been made available. What I see these themes suggesting is an opportunity for the savvy investor to grasp a lifestyle in Greater Springfield's developments. Whilst suggesting that 'limited opportunities' are available is an age old line used by marketers to add a mystique or sense of urgency to the sale of an item, in Greater Springfield I see this also adding to the sense of lifestyle, choice and exclusivity (demonstrated as the opportunity potential investors have to be included in this 'special place' community) that defines the developments. As a theme, Opportunity perhaps isn't as blatant as some of the others, but it does provide significant meaning to the underlying themes that pervade this series of banners, and more particularly to the way that residents are considered by the developers. As noted above, a certain strain of cultural capital is implicated in the suggestions of opportunity that are deployed throughout Greater Springfield; it is those savvy investors (in property and lifestyle) who see the significance of these special places and understand how to take advantage of the opportunities who will prosper. This is as much a suggestion about the types of people who choose Greater Springfield as it is a suggestion about the sort of place it is.

Learning

Keyword: Learning.

Associated Slogan: A bright outlook. What a refreshing change.

Imagery: Primary aged students walking to school.



Image 4.17

With the Education City development and local schools and learning centres a major feature of the Greater Springfield master plan, learning and education present as integral themes in the development. This particular banner captures this concern, but also suggests much about what 'type' of education is considered important in Springfield Lakes. The type of education represented is very much 'formal' to borrow from Henry Giroux's (2004) distinction between formal and informal locations of education. In the banner we see imagery of a very

formalised and traditional education context- in this specific instance, a local private school in which learning relates to processes of schooling, with schooling represented in a traditional way via the signifiers of school uniforms and bags attached to young people.

Beyond this identification of the type of learning that occurs in Springfield Lakes is the aspirational nature of the accompanying slogan; 'A bright outlook'. Learning isn't deployed solely for the 'furnishing of the mind', but offers opportunity for success (perhaps the end point of successful learning in Greater Springfield is the leisurely retirement depicted in the 'Opportunity' banner). Here opportunity as a 'bright outlook' presumably refers to a successful education that translates into a good job, money and the ability to compete in a highly competitive capitalist world. The remarkable feature of this banner is the juxtapositioning of the young girls in the image and the extent to which their futures are mapped by the suggestions of the slogan. Learning and the girls' futures go hand in hand as concurrent concerns in Greater Springfield.

- Conflating themes of Learning in Greater Springfield

The investment and allocation of space to learning is a fundamentally important aspect of Greater Springfield's development. Maha Sinnathamby regularly identifies his philosophy for education via columns in the Springfield Times⁸⁴, various Delfin and Springfield Land Corporation newsletters and during a meeting with the then Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, that I was fortunate enough to be part of:

Mr Prime Minister, we are heavily committed to this project... and what this project is doing is uplifting the society very rapidly... one of the unique features of this development is that you have all forms of education, from early childhood to tertiary (Education City Opening, Meeting with Prime Minister Howard 19th April 2006).

Maha repeated similar themes in a speech delivered to invited guests at the official opening of the 'Education City' development in April 2006:

⁸⁴ Through 2005 and into early 2006 as the development in Springfield Lakes was taking shape, Maha Sinnathamby had a regular column in this newspaper discussing a variety of topics including the significance of family connectedness, sustainable urban planning and progress in the Greater Springfield developments, amongst other topics.

It is through education alone that we can uplift our society and challenge the fast growing world we are in. To educate everyone from infant to adulthood is the best gift one can give to an individual. From a commercial point it is the best investment a nation can make. (Education City Opening Speech, 19th April 2006).

The significance of education is also acknowledged by other significant people in the region, with the mayor of Ipswich also commenting on the value of education to Greater Springfield as integral to the future prosperity of the region and its people:

When you look around and see the important role that knowledge and the knowledge industry play in our community it makes you feel very proud because it means that our children and their children, and the residents of today are going to have a future here through education... we've embraced education as a vital component of everything we're trying to achieve (Paul Pisassale, Education City Opening 19th April 2006).

The logic underpinning each of these comments positions education as a tool to equip residents of the area for the future. Implicated within this are ideas of social capital that see prosperity and socio-economic development hinged on the knowledge generation that education provides. While I suggested above that education is implicated in the logic of the 'Opportunity' and 'Convenience' banners, where education is seen as an opportunity to study with conveniently located education providers, in these quotes the socially transformative potential of education carries a larger imperative. Education has gone from being almost a conveniently located leisure pursuit, to something that dictates the future success of the region.

While I agree with the social justice implications the suggestions by Maha Sinnathamby and Paul Pisassale above carry, the perceived outcomes of this education system are interesting. Particularly with Maha's suggestions, education functions as a good investment; one that ensures prosperity via the competitive edge educational opportunity in Greater Springfield provides. Education is far more than just a furnishing of the mind; a prestigious past-time for those with time and money to spend picking up tid-bits of interesting knowledge. Education is a necessity in a competitive, market driven knowledge society.

It is via this logic of education as a component of a market driven social context that an indication to how education is conceived. As is conveyed above, education is viewed primarily according to the type of learning (lifelong learning from ‘early childhood to tertiary’ as Maha Sinnathamby noted) that occurs in early learning centres, schools and universities. As such, I suggest that the brand of education presented in Greater Springfield is more correctly labelled ‘schooling’; it is that form of education and learning that occurs within prescribed institutional locations:

Educational facilities are state of the art. From childcare, private and public schools, through to the University of Southern Queensland’s Springfield Campus, every stage of learning is catered for at Springfield Lakes. What’s more, construction has also commenced on the new Springfield Lakes State School, due to open in 2007. (Delfin Living Options Magazine ‘Orange Issue’, n.d.).

What this vision of education doesn’t include are those informal processes of learning that occur organically in Greater Springfield- processes that are indeed the subject of this thesis. It might be assumed that education in the representations presented via the artefacts is about building social order via very formalised and prescribed mechanisms; little indication of education and learning pertaining to informal processes of peer mentoring, community networking, or the influence of signage are present. According to the imagery, education is synonymous with schooling and it is only within these formal locations of education that learning in Greater Springfield is understood to occur.

Perfect Packages

Keyword: No keyword.

Associated Slogan: Perfect Packages. What a Refreshing Change.

Imagery: No imagery

A single sided banner without imagery was used to advertise house and land packages for sale in Springfield Lakes. This banner bookended the others within the series and was located at the end of the row of banners on Springfield Lakes Boulevard.

The concept of perfection is notable here- it’s as if all of these banners, coming together as a



Image 4.18

conceptual amalgam of Springfield Lakes' attributes, culminate in this one suggestion. It might also be that these packages also contain the private-public dynamics of having 'packaged' shopping experiences on your doorstep, of having leisure activities as a central part of the Springfield Lakes experience and the ability to connect leisure, life, work and play in the one space. It remained that what Springfield Lakes was, as presented by its developers, was *perfection* divided up neatly into sets of 600m² blocks.

This is a somewhat pretentious statement to make- that social and architectural residential perfection is achieved in Springfield Lakes is a bold point to claim. But I argue that this claim also says something about the residents of the place. In many ways, if you aren't happy here, there must be something wrong with you, as the packages that you move into are indeed themselves perfect. Here is a suggestion about the nature of this place and the formative influence it exerts figuratively over its residents who fit into its neatly subdivided components.

- Conflating themes of Perfection in Greater Springfield

In the artefacts gathered during my time in Greater Springfield, the idea of perfection was largely conflated with themes of lifestyle. An inset quote in a full page photograph of a young woman arranging flowers taken from a Delfin sales brochure captures this intent:

We found our perfect lifestyle at Springfield Lakes (Delfin 'What a Refreshing Change' Brochure October 2006)



Image 4.19

Drawing on similar ideas, an advertisement for 'Aspect', one of the Springfield Lakes' signature developments suggested:

Aspect at Springfield Lakes is the perfect address to enjoy your life, your home, your style, your way (Delfin Good Life Magazine Spring 2006).

A suggestion of agency is raised in this example. Springfield Lakes works as a complementary location that supports 'your' way of living and provides a foundation upon

which lifestyles can be led. But given the pre-formed nature of the Greater Springfield development it could be assumed that the lifestyles that are indeed led, are similarly pre-formed and set within certain constraints. As such, the implicit suggestion of choice that underpins this thematic of perfection of lifestyle, really only applies to those who are happy to live a suburban, brick veneered residential lifestyle set on a 600m² block. An informal selection process of sorts is in operation here, with the suggestion of perfection applying equally to the sorts of people who will move here and fit in with the sorts of lifestyle and housing choices available. In these otherwise perfect places it becomes the responsibility of the resident to live up to these ideals of perfection and lead lifestyles that fit the logic of the surroundings. I can't help but read these suggestions of perfection on a couple of levels; firstly, in terms of the quality of the built environment and general aesthetic of Greater Springfield, and secondly, according to the demands it places on people who move into this *perfect* place.

The Series

I took this series to be largely representative of the underlying logic of Springfield Lakes as seen by its developers. These were after all marketing tools that encapsulated a particular and authorised view of the place. Within the suggestions of each keyword, the imagery and accompanying slogans sat a symbolic blueprint for what life *could* be like in Greater Springfield. But it was the way and what was (and wasn't as the case may be) included as expressive of life in Springfield Lakes that was of particular interest. The way that family units were visualised, the way that leisure activities were performed, the way that ideas of happiness and philosophies of living were presented suggested something more than just the dynamics of living in Greater Springfield. These blueprints for living in Greater Springfield tapped into a far deeper logic- one I suggest carries a logic of late-capitalist urban development, as presented in terms of a consumerist imperative witnessed explicitly in artefacts such as the Convenience banner and implicitly throughout the entire series in which contemporary lifestyles such as those lived in Greater Springfield mean assuming that mortgages, jobs, gaining an education for that competitive edge and shopping centres are unquestioned parts of the system. I found it particularly interesting that far from identifying anything alternative, these banners wholeheartedly maintained and presented as desirable lifestyles that fitted the logic of Western capitalism. Very 'standard' ways of living were depicted within these visions of Greater Springfield life. But again, I had to remind myself

that these artefacts were advertisements; advertisements that were designed from within the system they supported.

It was the integrated nature of this series of banners that was particularly significant. Not just in terms of the integration of ideas and themes between each of the banners in this series, but the connection they yielded to other artefacts presented in Greater Springfield. Here was a manufacturing of the boundary (Cohen 1994); an attempted construction of what the epistemology of this place was to be. So it went that the themes presented in the banners were redeployed in accompanying marketing materials, and vice versa, with the effect being a multi-media presentation of ideals which were hard to avoid- part of the marketing mix of media that contemporary advertisers' understand too well. From the visually dominant roadside reminders of what Springfield Lakes *is* grew further reinforcement of the same ideas in magazines, newspaper articles, flyers and other artefacts.

But to suggest that the themes from the artefacts were entirely homogenous is a mistake. A number of tensions in the images of Greater Springfield did emerge during my time there. One of these tensions implicated the theme of water, manifesting primarily in the form of the iconic Lakes, and its connection to safety. For a while in 2006, a seeming rash of articles and notices in newspapers, and more intriguingly Delfin and Springfield Land Corporation materials, identified the risk of drowning in the region's lakes and swimming pools. The juxtapositioning of these fears against the otherwise romanticised images of water-side living are expressed in the following excerpts:

If water is the source of all life then you'll enjoy everyday of yours at Springfield Lakes with a recreational lake, and billabongs. A system of hike and bike trails and natural bushland offer even more recreational choices. (Delfin 'Gallery Collection' Sales Brochure, n.d.).

Drowning spark action amid fears of lakeside living... Spring Lakes Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) will this weekend host a community education program to help prevent local children from drowning... "This event is important in raising awareness about how to prevent child drowning", Mr Fasala said last week. "These new areas such as Springfield have areas and large bodies of water around them and are young communities with young and growing families" (Springfield News 14th Nov 2007).

Water, in these instances, was simultaneously an iconic landmark (one of the ‘special places’ of Greater Springfield) and a potential threat to the safety of the region’s future generations.



Image 4.20

Water also posed an interesting contradiction in terms of the decade long drought south-east Queensland continues to endure. It seemed more than a little bit ironic that whilst water formed a major part of the Springfield Lakes identity, concern for water supply featured regularly in newspapers and other materials circulated (including a permanent link titled ‘Water Restrictions’ on the ‘Springfield Times’ website that listed current water use targets for the region distributed by the Queensland Water Commission) in the area. This irony was particularly poignant in terms of a full page colour Delfin advertisement containing mention of the ‘*Springfield Lakes. What Refreshing*

Change’ catch-phrase listed alongside an accompanying image of a boy playing under a water sprinkler- an iconic experience of youth in Queensland, but one that is now prohibited by law and local government restrictions due to the region’s lack of water.

Apart from contradictions such as those associated with the water theme of Greater Springfield, this series gave prominence to the ‘refreshing-ness’ of Greater Springfield by drawing close attention to its vitality as a new urban space. In the *What a Refreshing Change* series of banners and the associated artefacts I collected a symbolic suggestion of how the community works was presented. This is a place in which front doors of houses didnt form a border to collective life, where shopping malls were as important as a local coffee shop or parkland for spending time with family and friends and a pretence of choice featured as a marker of distinction and an expression of your lifestyle.

When I looked at the banners and the associated artefacts that conflated the themes presented in them, I noticed a couple of meta-themes emerge. Firstly, there was a type of agency manifesting as ‘choice’ that permeated the entire logic of Springfield Lakes and presented as an ability for residents to live as they wanted to. Next, leisure emerged as an ability to spend quality time with family and friends in the special places of Springfield Lakes. Happiness and fulfilment connected to this, but was distinguishable according to the belonging that community gave and the opportunity to learn, shop and enjoy the services that

were locally available. Finally, it emerged that the basic unit of social organisation in Springfield Lakes was the family, and it was from this that the design of its houses, parklands, shopping centres and education providers was derived. Under the logic presented by these meta-themes emerged the entire vision of Springfield Lakes. But again, I saw these attributes residing in the glossy brochures and towering billboards alone, and, as I explore in the subsequent chapters, realised that this was a place where you could only really be who you were if you fitted the image against which it was designed.

4.3 Case 2: Find Your Uplifting Place

This series of billboards were first displayed during late 2006 along Springfield Parkway, leading up a small rise to the ‘Escarpment’ development on the northern edge of Springfield Lakes. Apart from signifying the elevated position of the Escarpment and surrounding villages the signs led to, the idea of being ‘uplifted’ featured heavily in Greater Springfield during my time there. Apart from being deployed on a set of billboards located on a busy thoroughfare, the theme also featured explicitly in a range of other marketing artefacts (most prominently in the form of marketing flyers presented as community newsletters) and more implicitly in speeches and public announcements delivered by the development’s creator; Maha Sinnathamby. While I’m not suggesting that Maha Sinnathamby wasn’t actively supporting his own marketing machine by using the catch-phrases and slogans from the campaign in his own rhetoric, the smoothly embedded mention of Springfield Lakes as an ‘uplifted’ place cross-marketed this series of banners very effectively. One key example of this was witnessed in a speech delivered during the opening of Education City (an entity not directly connected to Springfield Lakes, but against which the idea of being uplifted featured):

*Mr Prime Minister, we are very heavily committed to this project... when this land was first offered to the marketplace, nobody wanted to buy it because it was in an area that was socially and economically very depressed, and what this project is doing is **uplifting** the society very rapidly... One of the unique features of this development is that you have all forms of education, from early childhood to tertiary. (Maha Sinnathamby, Speech delivered at the Education City Official Opening, 19th April 2006).*

Maha continued by connecting his personal philosophy of education to the ideals of upliftedness, suggesting that it was via the services provided in Greater Springfield (its education facilities in this instance) that residents could achieve success (a connection to themes extrapolated from the 'Learning' banner in the '*What a Refreshing Change*' series is hopefully clear). To be uplifted in Maha's ideal meant having a comfortable home, convenient places to shop, a choice of places to study and the opportunity to live a lifestyle in the carefully manufactured space of Greater Springfield. To come to Greater Springfield meant leaving behind something lesser to embrace a renewed, higher level of lifestyle.

Conflating the themes of the '*What a Refreshing Change*' series of banners even further, an indication as to what living in Greater Springfield meant was also delivered by this series. Whilst the Springfield local, or interested prospective resident, could see that life in Greater Springfield was convenient and enabled opportunity set amongst the special places and choice afforded in places like Springfield Lakes, this new series added a further definition to the lifestyles available. In this series it wasn't enough to be offered these choices; now these attributes were shown as being uplifting to residents. Something greater than that presumably available in other settings was presented in Springfield Lakes. Here was a significant indication as to the nature of this location. Almost therapeutically, residents of Springfield Lakes found themselves held in a stratification of urban locales in which Springfield Lakes provided an uplifting experience. What the marketers were trying to say of course is that Springfield Lakes was that little bit better than anything else around (particularly the competitor neighbouring developments of Augustine Heights and Brentwood).

The Billboards

The Billboards themselves were simple enough. As with the street banners in the '*What a Refreshing Change*' series, a combination of imagery and authorising words were deployed to present the meaning of the billboard. But unlike the former series, the authorising words weren't as prescriptive, with the imagery assuming a greater dominance to make the billboard's suggestions. A different level of interpretation to that applied with the street banners of the previous series was required by the viewer given the primarily visual nature of these billboards. Far more reading of the image was required- a more emotional connection was perhaps warranted than that required by the authorising word oriented banners.

The series opened with a generically sloganed '*Find Your Uplifting Place*' billboard with accompanying imagery of a young girl playing with bubbles set against a backdrop of

towering native gum trees (the same trees that were largely cleared to make way for the development, only to be regrown in the faux-natural watercourses and parklands).



Image 4.21

I read the key suggestion in this banner to be one of choice presented as a personal agency to identify and interact with places that are significant to the individual. The underlying suggestion here is that residents can find, and make meaningful, the special places of Springfield Lakes. Drawn into this thematic is a recognition that places are ‘spaces that are invested with meaning’ (Austin 2005: 12); locations that are transformed into something meaningful via phenomenological investment of personal ideals.

As with the ‘*What a Refreshing Change*’ series of banners, the implication of this meaning making process is the suggestion that the space of Springfield Lakes has been constructed as something significant by the developers. A suggestion of gentrification is presented here, where the land ‘that nobody wanted to buy’, as noted by Maha in his speech to the Prime Minister and guests at the launch of Education City, had been transformed into something that people might now find uplifting. As part of the marketing ‘spin’ that represents the transformative developmental work of the developers as something to be celebrated, the reconfiguration of this previously economically depressed region into a middle class aesthetic is seen as something natural and positive. Even the local newspaper- an entity not connected to the developers- celebrated this process of urban renewal:

Growth Corridor... The turning of empty land into the buildings blocks of Springfield under the visionary leadership of Maha Sinnathamby has been a singular success, with tens of thousands of people expected to move in over the next 20 years. (Springfield News 24th October 2007; emphasis added).

[The cynic in me reads this praise as being reminiscent of Maoist Chinese propaganda- *the 'visionary leadership' of Chairman Maha* (he is indeed the *Chairman* of the Springfield Land Corporation) is too easy a comparison to make!]

But who this transformation was uplifting for becomes an immediate question in terms of how this transformation has taken place. According to whose image and in whose interests has this previously 'economically very depressed' place been transformed? I suspect that it isn't those former residents whose socio-economic circumstance and the imposed middle class aesthetic of the development has meant that they are now locked out of the market (this is an expensive place to live after all, see Table 4.1).

Springfield		Region: ■ Brisbane West (data in blue)						
Houses	Home Price Guide®	6 mths to Sep 07		6 mths to Mar 08		% Change		
	Rating	\$'000 median		\$'000 median				
	Cold	Hot	Suburb	Region	Suburb	Region	Suburb	Region
\$ Median Price			\$340	\$365	\$374	\$390	10%	7%
Long term trend			-	-	-	-	10%	10.1%
			6 mths to Sep 07		6 mths to Mar 08		Current Month	
			Suburb	Region	Suburb	Region	Suburb	Region
Auction clearance rate (adjusted)			SNR	57%	75%	54%	SNR	SNR
Days on Market			63	64	68	57	-	-
Discounting			4%	5%	5%	5%	-	-

Table 4.1: Median House Prices in Springfield:

From: <http://www.homepriceguide.com.au/snapshot/index.cfm>
accessed 8th May 2008.

I similarly imagine that it isn't in the interests of the traditional custodians of the land,



Image 4.22

who in a somewhat strange irony were present at the various openings of buildings and sections of the development and provided a 'welcome to country' - their country (upon which was built this middle class dream, that, due to the legacy of colonial

oppression means that they will be unlikely to be residents of it). In this instance at least, I suggest that the marketing campaign moved beyond being simple advertising to become suggestive of something bigger. Here was the construction of a logic from within which

people identified themselves and from which their relative economic status provided a selection criterion from which the ‘choice’ to live here was made. This series of billboards, by this reasoning, said so much more than how nice Springfield Lakes was. Tied up within it was an entire logic of who could live here and how they would do it. This was an identity politics displayed 20 metres in the air.

It was from this perspective that I encountered the title billboards of this series perched overlooking the ‘Bridgewater Chase’ development of Springfield Lakes. I couldn’t help but think that the location of this billboard provided at least a key symbolic reminder of this process of identity maintenance as it perpetually beamed its message over residents’ houses (it was lit up at night to keep the message flowing). Here was a billboard that towered over peoples’ homes as if to remind them of who they were and how they should live as Greater Springfield residents.

But How to Become Uplifted?

The remaining billboards in this series suggested more specific attributes of Springfield Lakes. Suggested primarily by the imagery of each billboard, but contextualised by the accompanying text, suggestions of health and wellness, active lifestyle, choice, leisure, learning, comfort and convenience were presented. As I noted above, many of these themes connected with the earlier ‘*What a Refreshing Change*’ series; but here was something more specific.



Image 4.23

To ‘power up’ means to achieve physically within the beautiful natural surrounds of Greater Springfield where walking and bicycle tracks are available to stay fit and well. The celebratory pose of the subjects suggests something about a feat of accomplishment being achieved. It may even be that these subjects are competitive, over-achievers arrogantly thrusting their bicycles skyward as they ‘power up’ to celebrate this latest victory. These are

presumably people who would also achieve in other aspects of life (the ideal Springfield Lakes resident, perhaps).



Image 4.24

To 'grow up' refers to learning and uplifting oneself through educational success. Here, a sense of maturity is suggested via the furnishing of the mind that Greater Springfield's education facilities and Education City precinct provides.



Image 4.25

To 'catch up' refers to spending leisure time doing things with important people (as signified by the family dog- I can imagine that 'the kids' and possibly even the neighbours are just out of frame in this image, perhaps enjoying a barbeque in one of the parks of Greater Springfield on a Sunday afternoon).



Image 4.26

'Eat Up' carries connection to Greater Springfield's shopping centres and the availability of choice in selecting produce and products to match your lifestyle. Much like the convenience themed banners in the 'What a Refreshing Change' series, shopping is connected directly to the Springfield Lakes experience- this time referring to the gastronomic aspects of lifestyle.



Image 4.27

Finally, 'move up' carries themes of lifestyle, implicated by a suggestion of class-as-distinction. To move up in Springfield Lakes means having something a little more exclusive than the rest of the world- in this instance, time for relaxed leisure spent within a modern and expansive home set amongst a leafy backdrop.

- Conflating the Billboards of the 'Find Your Uplifting Place' Series

Given that this series appeared after the 'What a Refreshing Change' series, I have read it to respond to and fill in the images the banners provide. I saw a direct correlation between each series- the first signified a range of ideals that pertained to the place itself whilst the second referred more broadly to how residents might live there by representing

more personal attributes connected to lifestyle. This was a more confident, self assured series of billboards that moved attention away from the development itself to display the type of people who live in Springfield Lakes. While the attributes of the first series are always in the background, we don't see explicit mention of Greater Springfield's special places, or choice of housing or belonging to the community. Those things are specific to the development and are now presented as foundational characteristics to the more personal identity characteristics individuals in Greater Springfield possess. A turn away from describing the place to the description of its residents is in play in this series.

These themes are certainly conflated in the supporting artefacts that correspond to these billboards. Use of the thematics of these billboards was extended in much of the marketing material to present a more complete picture of what residents are in Springfield Lakes. A key example includes a Delfin Springfield Lakes 'Catch Up' Magazine from Autumn 2007:



Image 4.28

Using the imagery from the title billboard of the series (the young girl playing with bubbles), and the 'Catch Up' and 'Find Your Uplifting Place' slogans, this magazine functioned both as a community newsletter and sales brochure for houses in the area. The idea of 'catching up' takes on a slightly different meaning here, whereby it is the corporation catching up via the mechanism of a community newsletter that is significant. This is similar to the neighbourly feel the Orion Shopping Centre brochure suggested when it wished residents a 'Merry Christmas' from their 'newest neighbour'. Again, the idea of a corporation functioning as an individual (or at least assuming a friendly identity) and wanting to 'catch up' is interesting and suggests something about the intention the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin have to invest the development with a sense of interpersonal connectedness. As a brochure containing general interest articles about the latest stages of construction in the Springfield Lakes' development, and via labelling as the 'Catch Up', it almost substitutes for an informal morning tea between neighbours. Just as neighbours might get together and chat about points of interest that are common to their neighbourhood, I can imagine this brochure being read by a resident sitting back with coffee, catching up with what is going on. Here, the ever present Delfin and Springfield Land Corporations take on the role of being the invited guest into your home; in this case, they do it in the form of a brochure.

In many ways the brochures, flyers and other artefacts that drew on the imagery and thematics of the billboards added meaning that the billboards (due to their restrictions of text and time scale passing motorists had to absorb their message) couldn't carry alone. Just as the 'What a Refreshing Change' series of street banners were supported by flyers, magazines and brochures, artefacts such as the 'Catch Up' magazine and less prominently, the 'Delfin Living Options' series of brochures provided context to the 'Find Your Uplifting Place' series of billboards. Ultimately, a rich amalgam of meaning was generated through these inter-supporting artefacts.

4.4 Case 3: The Brookwater Development

I move now out of Springfield Lakes and into the Brookwater sub-development within Greater Springfield. Billed as an exclusive 'golf-course development' (Brookwater-the premier golf community (2008)), the three series of billboards attached to Brookwater immediately suggested ideas of *distinction* (as Bourdieu (1984) would see it) masqueraded as a prestige and desire for 'the best'. I saw this manifestation of distinction as an elitism that was grounded in very specific determinants; firstly, an economic determinant attached to house and land prices, and secondly via a concern for style.

If Compromise is Not in Your Nature

These billboards first appeared along Augusta Parkway in early 2006 as the Brookwater development materialised. As with the banners and signs of Springfield Lakes,



Image 4.29

the themes contained within these billboards were also utilised in other artefacts; primarily the 'Brookwater News' community newsletter. The two billboards of this series follow similar formatting conventions to those deployed in the 'What a Refreshing Change' series

from Springfield Lakes; dominant imagery with supporting authorising words set around the perimeter of the billboard to contextualise the image and conflate the intended meaning of the Brookwater development.

Two very different subjects are the focus of the images captured in the billboards. The first presents a jazz band fronted by a female singer, with the second showing an open plan living and dining space in one of Brookwater's 'gallery' homes. A suggestion of refined elegance is common to both- here the application of distinction as an 'aesthetic disposition' (Bourdieu 1984: 261) is ever present (the jazz band is dressed elegantly in tuxedos and exudes a reserved 'cool' whilst the open plan design and tasteful furnishings of the gallery home expresses a sophistication and refinement). In these images 'compromising' isn't an option; the Brookwater resident is someone who only settles for the best, a person who appreciates quality, style, sophistication and elegance, and it is those things displayed by the image that signify what the 'best' is.



Image 4.30

In terms of format, the viewer takes the position of outsider looking in- the view point is cast from outside the image into the physical spaces of Brookwater's homes and leisure venues. But unlike Springfield Lakes, the suggestion of the people of Brookwater is left vague; while we might make guesses at who lives in Brookwater based on how they've decorated the part of their vacant home viewed in the second billboard, or by their taste in music noted in the first, no representatives of Brookwater are presented to base our assumptions. There just aren't any people from Brookwater positioned within the billboards to give us a human connection to life in Brookwater (I've assumed of course that the jazz band members aren't residents but hired entertainers for the residents' amusement). This is a significant difference to Springfield Lakes where we see residents engaged in activities within its physical spaces to become prime components of the marketing of the space. In Brookwater, the viewer of the billboards is left to guess what sorts of people live here and how they go about leading their uncompromising lifestyles.

The thing that struck me with these billboards was precisely these features- the lack of people, and the suggestion of distinction. It is also these factors that make the Brookwater

experience as viewed in these billboards austere individualistic. Unlike the Springfield Lakes celebration of its residents and the relaxed, comfortable lifestyle these people are shown to lead, Brookwater is represented as being far more absent, detached and exacting. Are these absent residents too busy in their corporate lives to be at home whiling away hours of comfortable leisure? Or are they indeed playing golf on the neighbouring course from which the development gets its name and reputation? Either way, people are missing and this says something about this place, particularly when compared to the resident rich imagery of Springfield Lakes.

In terms of the jazz band billboard, I have imagined there to be a genteel cocktail party occurring outside of the framed boundaries of the image. This speculation might be furthered by suggesting that this is perhaps the sort of belonging and community that residents express in Brookwater. There isn't any need to overlook a park for the kids (you are, by virtue of the house



Image 4.31

prices, most likely a double income, no kids 'power couple') or to get the neighbours over for a barbeque (*a barbeque- how suburban!*). In Brookwater, getting together is altogether more formal, refined and sophisticated. It has jazz as entertainment, and locations like 'Armstrong's at Brookwater' for dining. It is about style and 'prestige addresses' that 'reflect the buyer's position in life' (The Big Picture- Health Special, Nov-Dec 2006). In this sense Brookwater represents *exclusivity*:

Brookwater launches its ultimate address.

Brookwater has officially launched its ultimate address, Augusta Point. With gated access and bounded by three fairways, Augusta Point is nothing short of being truly private and exclusive, with latest sales reaching \$525,000... Augusta Point will offer access control and no through traffic, making it one of the most anticipated prestige land releases in the region. Brookwater resident architect, Stephen Drake, said the large level home sites would be conducive to homes and gardens worthy of the address. (Big Picture- Health Special, Nov-Dec 2006).

As represented by Augusta Point (Brookwater's 'ultimate address'), residents don't need to worry about the riff-raff from neighbouring (and socio-economically depressed) suburbs

coming to vandalise property; this is a gated community with ‘access control’. Residents don’t simply ‘build’ a home in Brookwater; they choose from architecturally designed ‘addresses’. They similarly don’t have to put up with second best in the aesthetics of the peripherals of the home; the gardens and space to grow these are ‘worthy’.

It is exclusivity as a recurring keyword in many of the artefacts attached to Brookwater that specifically signifies the type of distinction present in Brookwater. Exclusivity carries with it the logic of the two determinants of distinction I noted above; exclusivity is cast in terms of the pre-requisite economic ‘position’ its residents require in order to be able to live here, but also reflects an ‘exclusive aesthetic’ that presents as a concern for and understanding of the style that living in such a surround requires. I argue that what is being suggested here is a *reserved privatism* that captures the concerns of a competitive consumerist logic and individualism all at once. To be in Brookwater means being ‘successful’ economically and understanding how economic systems operate. But it also requires an understanding of how this success should be expressed- primarily via the houses and lifestyle of places like Augusta Point. At the same time, this logic is conflated by a privatism that doesn’t give any indication as to the ‘inside’ world of residents. These are people who can command privacy and reservation. That only a glimpse of the inside life of a Brookwater home was offered in the second billboard says much on this- I almost had the feeling that this billboard provided permission for me to take a glimpse of what was on offer inside Brookwater (in some ways like a property inspection hosted by an estate agent). This privatism when contrasted against the celebration of residents in Springfield Lakes certainly said something about the private nature of inside life at Brookwater- it is far more exclusive in this regard.

Similarly, the collective concern for public space noted in Springfield Lakes just isn’t present in Brookwater. Space in Brookwater is privately owned, allowing the resident to construct their own sense of distinction and style, and hence making redundant collective (public) spaces. In fact, when people get together collectively in Brookwater they ‘glide down tree lined paths on their golf buggies as they make their way to the Clubhouse for a quiet afternoon drink with friends’ (Brookwater News Jan-Feb 2007). Privatism is further suggested when membership of the golf club is considered; a ‘second Membership release’ offered in early 2008 for those who missed out in the exclusive first offer will cost those interested \$13,200 for a transferable entry fee and \$2,535 annual fee (see Figure 4.4). You can’t be just anyone and hope to engage with life in Brookwater. Even collective spaces like the golf course represent locations of reserved privatism.

MEMBERSHIP FEE SCHEDULE

Residential Membership Fees			
	Individual	Family	Junior
Entry Fee – Transferable	\$13,200	\$19,800	–
– Non-Transferable	\$6,600	\$9,900	–
Annual Fee	\$2,535	\$4,310	\$1,775

Non-Residential Membership Fees			
	Individual	Family	Junior
Entry Fee – Transferable	\$13,200	\$19,800	–
– Non-Transferable	\$6,600	\$9,900	–
Annual Fee	\$2,725	\$4,630	\$1,775

Figure 4.4: Brookwater Golf Course Membership Fee Schedule

Because...



Image 4.32



Image 4.33

Mid-way through 2006 a second series of banners advertising Brookwater appeared. This series followed a similar logic to the ‘Compromise’ series (and explicitly utilised the ‘compromise’ theme in one of its billboards). Imagery in these billboards was less prominent with authorising words assuming a far greater significance than in any of the other billboards located in Greater Springfield at this time. Identified via the recurring ‘Because’ keyword, these banners suggested reasons for selecting Brookwater as a place to live, and offered prospective residents an idea about what to expect- primarily;

- i. inspiration from beauty in the form of a flower in bloom,

- ii. a lifestyle selected after a considered life change, and,
- iii. a discernment displayed as an unwillingness to compromise, visualised by a resident clipping a single out-of-place blade of grass with scissors.



Image 4.34

At the same time that personal agency is suggested by this series (principally via the ability prospective residents have to rethink their lives and move to Brookwater) a significant uniformity is visualised via the lone, renegade blade of grass being clipped back into uniformity.

Just as with the first series of Brookwater billboards, residents here don't compromise, they aspire to perfection represented by such things as uniformly manicured lawns, and the appreciation of aesthetic beauty in the form of Brookwater's gardens (as signified by the flower in the first billboard). This is a series of billboards that carries the sense of reserved privatism of the first, but fills in the picture a little more by giving an indication about how residents express this; namely via their uncompromising concern for uniformity. These are not so much billboards that advertise the Brookwater development, but suggest something to prospective residents about their status and eligibility to become part of the place.

The location of the Brookwater billboards was also remarkable. In particular the largest of the three noting the 'Because its time to rethink the way you live' slogan was displayed along the Western



Image 4.35

Arterial Road leading into Springfield Lakes from the Centenary Highway. This billboard was later (in late 2007) accompanied by two further billboards that expressed imagery and the short catch phrases 'Be Indulgent. Have Everything' (as viewed on the entry into Springfield Lakes) and 'Drive



Image 4.36

through beautiful countryside every weekend' (on the way from Springfield Lakes heading west towards the Centenary Highway).

I found it fascinating that these signs were located at a relative distance outside Brookwater (by comparison, the other billboards in these series were both located along Augusta Parkway in Brookwater). I suggest that these signs assumed two purposes; naturally they operated as marketing devices and suggested something about the development and its characteristics. But secondly, and due to their location, these billboards symbolically fulfilled the role of reminding users of the busy Western Arterial about Brookwater. These were signs that said something about residents of Brookwater to all who passed (it affirmed their unwillingness to accept compromise, assert their distinction and enjoy indulgence). These signs reminded other Greater Springfield residents that Brookwater was different. This was certainly the impression I developed as I drove into and out of Greater Springfield on fieldtrips and an idea that was supported unintentionally by a local councillor when he noted in a local newspaper that there was indeed a difference between Greater Springfield's suburbs after some confusion in the boundaries of each development arose in 2007:

Check your addresses. "There is a difference between Springfield, Springfield Lakes and Springfield Central, Spring Mountain, Augustine Heights and Bellbird Park" (The Satellite, 10th Oct 2007).

Added to this is the distinction as exclusivity that defines Brookwater. The billboards and their messages only confirmed the implicit ideas that this place was different; these towering signifiers told travellers of the Western Arterial something quite specific about what Brookwater was, even before they had entered the place.

Living Ideas Display Centre Billboards



Image 4.37

The last series of billboards displayed in Brookwater during my time in Greater Springfield appeared in late 2007. These replaced the earlier 'Compromise' billboards located along Augusta Parkway leading into the Brookwater development from Springfield

Lakes. This series of two billboards reverted back to the old format of dominant image and authorising words, by displaying a snapshot of Brookwater life surrounded by the catch-phrases ‘The Community Spirit is Fantastic’ and ‘It’s like driving into another world’. A representative of the development⁸⁵ noted that these phrases were listed by residents on a recent market research survey delivered to residents, but was unsure whether the images contained residents or models.

The striking feature of these billboards is that people are contained within them. From the vacant austerity of the original ‘Compromise’ billboards to the textually dominant ‘Because’ series, these billboards approach format and thematic conventions more like those displayed in Springfield Lakes. The logic of the billboard had also changed. Distinction as suggested by exclusivity was replaced by a concern for community spirit. Themes of unwillingness to compromise and indulgence transformed into suggestion that entering Brookwater was like ‘driving into another world’. But this wasn’t a world of exclusivity and reserved privatism; it was now Springfield Lakes-like in its transformation and presumably contained relaxed sociability and gentility shared amongst groups of residents. A far more human and inviting Brookwater was presented in these billboards. Gone was the blatant sense of exclusivity and pretension; although it is interesting to note that the residents enjoying each other’s company in the images are still sipping the ‘right’ sorts of beverages (wine as opposed to beer or spirits) and are engaged in dinner (not barbeque) conversation in the congenial inside (as in ‘safe’) surrounds of a Brookwater residence.

Representatives of the developers couldn’t (or, wouldn’t) definitively tell me why this change of theme had occurred in these banners apart from suggesting that these were the sorts of things Brookwater residents identified as being important in the place. But this series and the themes extending from it did stand in stark contrast to those of the earlier banners. Softened are the ideas of



Image 4.38

exclusivity and distinction celebrated in the ‘Compromise’ and ‘Because’ series’. Perhaps the

⁸⁵ I visited the Brookwater ‘Living Display Centre’ on the 12th November 2007 and had a brief conversation with the reception staff member. She noted that the catch-phrases were taken from residents and that a recent survey of residents revealed that these sentiments were largely typical of the general feeling in Brookwater.

ideals of exclusivity expressed in these earlier billboards weren't translating into actual property sales in a housing market that by 2007-8 was beginning to plateau. A more friendly, community oriented thematic was needed to demonstrate that collective life in Brookwater could occur in places other than the expensive golf course; in fact, and like in Springfield Lakes, it could occur in the previously austere, but now positively warm, homes of the development.

- Conflating the banners

Quite overt sanctions were deployed in the early billboards of Brookwater. Sheer economic determinants required to live here stood out specifically, but these combined with implicit suggestions of style and distinction to form a very specific rationale upon which residents were 'measured'. As with the suggestions deployed by the banners and artefacts of Springfield Lakes, living in Brookwater isn't simply about having enough money to buy a house. The suggestions drawn from the billboards also say much about how residents should lead their lives, and what sorts of 'style' they should follow. A very prescriptive mode of living is suggested; one that merges with wider themes of urban decay, the protection of private property and maintenance of personal safety to result in a development that is lauded in terms of its secure 'gated' nature, concern for the maintenance of aesthetics and 'private' space. This logic even extended in the early billboards to the space of the private home. In none of the imagery deployed in the various magazines, brochures and other artefacts advertising Brookwater did I see anyone other than the presumed owners of the residence being displayed (if indeed people were displayed at all- to even see the owners of the residence in advertisements was rare).



Image 4.39

the prize successful people who didn't compromise and expected the best were rewarded with in Brookwater. This subsequently resulted in an almost lonely looking individualism where people, gated securely in the enclave of their exclusive residences, indulged in life. Only in the final series of billboards displayed during my time in Greater Springfield did I see Brookwater

represented as anything other than individualistic and ‘private’. Again, I would suggest that the image of austerity and reserved privatism noted in the early billboards might not have captured intending residents’ imagination (resulting in plateauing sales); hence the change of theme in the later series.

As with Springfield Lakes, a range of glossy mail-out newsletters and pamphlets to residents was disseminated in Brookwater. Most prominent amongst these were the ‘Brookwater News’, a large glossy community newsletter distributed from early 2007 that contained general interest editorials about the development and house sales advertisements. While it followed many of the formatting principles as the Springfield Lakes Community Update (it was A3 sized, glossy, and contained a mixture of general interest editorials about the area and property advertisements), it utilised a more formally typeset banner. I read this as fitting with the far more austere nature of Brookwater as presented through its early billboards. While the script utilised in the Springfield Lakes Community Update suggested an informal, ‘carefree’ feel, the Brookwater News contrasted markedly:



Figure 4.5: Brookwater News Banner



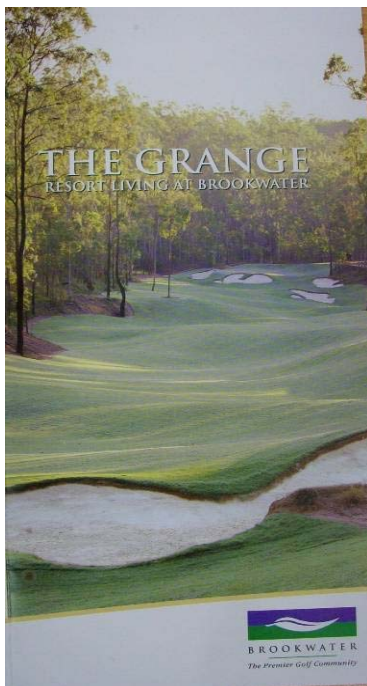
Figure 4.6: Springfield Lakes Community News Banner

The other feature of these semiotic characteristics is the differentiation in purpose for each artefact- in Brookwater residents are provided with ‘news’, whilst in Springfield Lakes an ‘update’ is what is disseminated. Again, this carries with it the logic of the billboards presented in each location- in Springfield a relaxed sense of belonging is suggested, whilst in Brookwater (in the early series of banners particularly) far more reserved austerity is presented.

Building on the theme of distinction that permeated the billboards of Brookwater, artefacts such as the Brookwater News and those various other brochures and flyers maintained the sense of exclusivity as a hallmark feature of Brookwater. A key example of this conflation of exclusivity across the various artefacts is demonstrated by a brochure advertising 'The Grange' - an 'exclusive gated precinct' located alongside the Brookwater Golf Course:

The combination of stunning architectural design, fine cuisine and the ambience of a members club provides the discerning diner an exceptional dining experience. (The Grange: Resort Living at Brookwater flyer, 2007).

This was followed by a suggestions about the exclusivity, prestige and lifestyle available in The Grange (and subsequently Brookwater):



The Grange is an exclusive gated precinct of just 50 luxury villas set discretely within the master planned community of prestigious Brookwater. Privacy and a sense of community are the key concepts at The Grange, with many villas enjoying views over Brookwater's magnificent golf course and the natural bushland setting. All aspects of a low maintenance, comfortable lifestyle have been considered in the design of The Grange, from the entry statement and manicured landscaping to the villa designs on individual lots. (The Grange: Resort Living at Brookwater flyer, 2007).

Figure 4.7: The Grange advertising flyer.

Similarly, the Brookwater website home page notes that Brookwater was about:

Exclusive prestige homes. Spectacular vistas. Glorious natural surrounds set around a destination that's designed to deliver the best in education, health, entertainment and shopping. All just 30 minutes from Brisbane's CBD.

Brookwater, the premier golf community is nestled in one of the most beautiful pockets of natural bushland in Australia. 45% of Brookwater is dedicated to open space - never to be built on.

Redefining the western suburbs, Brookwater will effortlessly surpass your every expectation.

So don't compromise, home in on beautiful Brookwater living today. (Brookwater, 2008).

Exclusivity as distinction manifested in the form of the finer aspects of lifestyle in Brookwater. Things such as the appointment of an executive Chef at the premier, fine-dining restaurant in the Brookwater Clubhouse and mention of the prestige of residences in Brookwater feature in the artefacts as descriptors of Brookwater's distinction:

Only twenty-one prestige residences will be part of Augusta Point, eighteen of which will offer stunning, uninterrupted views of the golf course; making it one of the most beautiful locations on offer in today's residential marketplace... This address is of a premium and will continue to be Brookwater's best for years to come. (Brookwater News Jan-Feb 2007, advertising the Augusta Point development).



Figure 4.8: Brookwater Open House Festival brochure

The artefacts I collected during my time in Greater Springfield suggested much about the desire the developers of Brookwater had to demarcate the development as exclusive. Exclusivity followed as a reserved privatism in the artefacts as it did in the billboards, where an individualistic sense of distinction defined against determinants of economic wealth and style mediated the identity characteristics residents were represented as having. But unlike the final series of Brookwater billboards, I didn't see a revision of this reserved privatism in the other artefacts I'd collected. The only evidence I could see in the

artefacts that suggested a 'softer' more community oriented thematic was a flyer advertising an 'Open House Festival' and accompanying map directing interested visitors to the selected open houses (this flyer was accompanied by street banners in the nominated streets of Brookwater that were open for inspection). But given that this flyer was primarily concerned with attracting potential buyers to inspect houses and not about engaging a sense of community via organic collectivity, I have concluded that the flyers, brochures and other artefacts attached to Brookwater only ever presented the theme of reserved privatism. I do have to acknowledge however that the 'Living Ideas' billboards expressing the turn to collectivity in Brookwater did appear late in my time in Greater Springfield; it may have been that the renewed image of the place was yet to filter through to the mass distributed, print based artefacts as I completed my fieldwork.



Image 4.40

4.5 Other Signs in Greater Springfield

Apart from the billboards and those brochures, flyers and other artefacts I collected during my time in Greater Springfield, the development also contained a range of signs that variously demarcated the physical boundaries of the space and gave an indication of phenomena such as pastiche and community decay. The various formal and informal, sanctioned and unsanctioned markings all added to the reading I made of Greater Springfield and what it meant. They were contextualising artefacts that tied my observations to the locations in which they were found, and provided a point from which my fieldwork could be contextualised in terms of the physicality of the spaces of Greater Springfield. As I developed my own sense of what each section of development meant, the signs that stood in each of these locations became symbolic markers of what each place was. These signs represented the places they stood in, and became significant reference points in my fieldwork in Greater Springfield.

Some of the more significant signs displayed in Greater Springfield include the following:

- The Villages of Springfield Lakes



Image 4.41

The Springfield Lakes and Brookwater developments contained a number of sub-developments that were titled ‘villages’ by the developers. These villages each presented a specific style of housing, and, by adding to the gentrification of the area through the suggestion of a pastiche (Jameson 1994; de Botton 2006), or bland nostalgia as I called it, provided a sense of timeliness and community connection (as a village, a sense of spatial proximity and community connectedness was alluded to).

The naming of the villages was also interesting and suggested something about the aesthetic and architectural thematic of each. As noted in a Delfin brochure (Delfin *What a Refreshing Change Brochure*), the ‘addresses of Springfield Lakes’ included:

- 1 Bridgewater Chase
- 2 Clancy's Crossing
- 3 The Escarpment
- 4 Eden's Homestead
- 5 Lakeside
- 6 Olive Springs
- 7 Butterfly Green
- 8 The Promenade
- 9 The Summit
- 10 Aspect
- 11 Creekside
- 12 Lakes Entrance

The theming of Clancy's Crossing and Eden's Homestead to me suggested a connection to a pioneer pastiche. Given that this development was cut into remnant bushland, the pioneering theme might technically be correct, however, the suggestion of a 'colonial' pioneer experience only really conjured a bland nostalgia that was played out in the 'colonial' themed brick veneer houses, each with their own picketed verandah- a Queensland housing archetype. Bridgewater Chase, Lakeside, Olive Springs, Creekside and Lakes Entrance all contained a water theme symbolically manifesting in these suburbs' proximity to the lakes, while The Escarpment, The Summit and Aspect, each situated on high ground overlooking the lakes, signified their hill-top locations via their names. The Promenade, as a more expensive location seemed to draw on its name by suggesting regality and elegance, whereas Butterfly Green, situated on the south-eastern end of Olive Springs was the only suburb that didn't seem to have a name matching its location.

Apart from the types of housing available in each village signifying its style, the villages also contained a sign that identified the boundary of the suburb. Each of these signs worked from fundamentally the same principal of design and aesthetic; most had a blockwork base upon which a steel stencil, etched or screen-written name was applied. This was particularly the case with Bridgewater Chase, Clancy's Crossing, Olive Springs, Lakeside and The Escarpment.

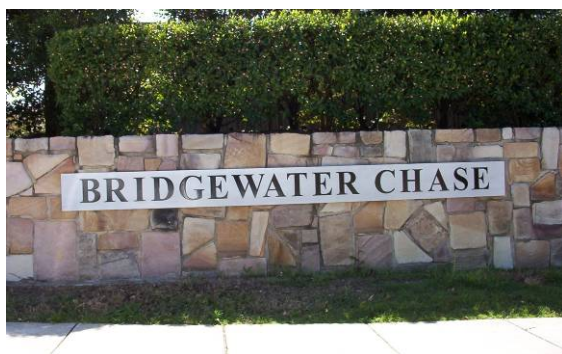


Image 4.42



Image 4.43



Image 4.44



Image 4.45



Image 4.46

These signs taken alone didn't signify much about the type of village that was being entered. Apart from the pastiche suggested by the name of the suburb, no real indication of the identity of the village was discernable from its sign. For instance, The Escarpment



Image 4.47

contained generally smaller, pre-fabricated 'studio homes' of one or two bedrooms (constructed primarily for rental to students of the University, TAFE college and Education City), while Lakeside generally contained larger, more expensive, multi-storey

houses. From the signs alone, no real indication as to what the suburb was could be determined without further indication from those other incidental signs that conflated the meaning of the village; block sizes, the style of landscaping and the houses themselves gave meaning and definition to what the signs came to stand for. These signs became representational devices that came to mean after I had established a sense of what the village *was*.

The Promenade contained the only sign that stood out as being different. Due to the aesthetics of this sign's design and its sculptured, modern appearance, I saw this sign suggesting something other than what the other villages' signs did. This village itself contained far more contemporary house designs (as far as contemporary in Springfield Lakes goes), with the sign suggesting to me something more dynamic and contemporary than the sandstone based signs of the other villages.

Taken in conjunction with the architecture of the houses that populated this



Image 4.48



Image 4.49

village, and the style of landscaping, public space and blocks sizes in which the houses stood, The Promenade suggested a sophisticated affluence that was somewhat restrained by the size of the blocks upon which the houses were built (these houses didn't afford very much open space when placed on their 600m² blocks). The sign mirrored this concern for refinement and sophistication in its laser cut metal, sculptured sign. The contemporary design presented by the sign was given meaning by the contemporary houses and neatly maintained yards of the development itself. Due to this, The Promenade was also the most easily identifiable village according to its sign- the style and aesthetic deployed in the sign was not only different to blockwork and stencil signage of the other villages, but also captured an aesthetic of architectural style in the development.

- Brookwater

The signs demarcating the suburban spaces were constructed in a similar manner to those in Springfield Lakes; blockwork base with stencilled lettering overlaid.

Also similar were the related themes used to name the suburbs. While Springfield Lakes contained themes drawn from a pioneer pastiche, and the physical geography of the

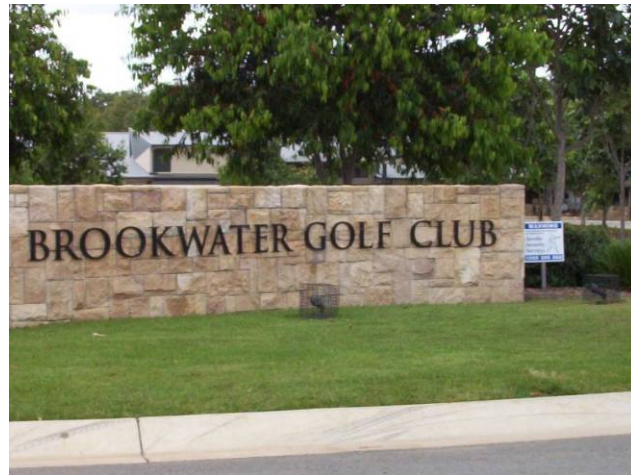


Image 4.50

landscape, Brookwater, not surprisingly, drew on golf and the aesthetic of beauty and prestige attached to the development to name its suburban spaces.

Golf clearly featured as the central theme of the Augusta Point development (most likely drawing inspiration from the 'Augusta' club in Georgia in the United States) and The Greens.



Image 4.51



Image 4.52

Bougainvillea Gardens and The Vista suggested something about the landscape (either in terms of its manicured gardens or mountain-side look-out vistas), whilst the gated community The Grange suggests a sense of distinction and exclusivity by drawing on a pastiche



Image 4.53



Image 4.54

connected to the application of the name to historic cities and sections of cities (such as The Grange in Edinburgh and Surrey and prominent houses bearing this name). But as in Springfield Lakes, apart from the connection to golf, the landscape and distinction suggested by the names on each sign, an understanding of what each suburb meant also required a look at its houses, layout and general aesthetic. Not much could be determined from the signs alone. The houses of each suburb, and their location generally within Brookwater suggested much more than the signs themselves, as it was the signs that were informed by the development (not the other way around- in this sense it was the suburb that was *the sign* for the sign).



Image 4.55

In all, the suburb and village signs of Brookwater and Springfield Lakes (and similarly the signs used to signify the Augustine Heights development located between the two), worked as signifiers of the division of space in Greater Springfield. But in a different way to the billboards that provided visions about how lifestyles could be lead in each of the developments, the signs marking the boundaries of each village signified how space in Greater Springfield had been demarcated. When ‘learnt’ and read in conjunction with the types of housing and aesthetics of the design and layout of each village, the signs operated as landmarks that provided a cue to the spatial configuration of Greater Springfield. It certainly didn’t take me long to see the sign for the The Escarpment, for instance, as a physical marker of the pre-fabricated, lower cost housing that was built behind it, whilst the signs in Brookwater came to stand for quite the opposite. While the signs themselves didn’t necessarily suggest as much as the other artefacts I investigated in this project, what they came to mean in the context of the villages and suburbs they represented was significant.

Here was the construction of meaning about space that manifested in the symbolic form of a sign.

The naming convention applied to the signs also had the effect of providing a sense of community (McMillan 1996) to each village. Just as these signs demarcated the physical boundaries, they also captured the spirit of the villages. Greater Springfield wasn't a large, singular entity, but was comprised of suburban sub-sections like Springfield Lakes and Brookwater that were further broken into their composite villages. Having a clearly identifiable space to which you belong, made assuming an identity about the sort of living and lifestyle you want all that more prescribed. While the price, style and space associated with the various housing options each village presented gave meaning to the type of village it became, the signs that signified these villages stood as symbolic manifestations that residents attached to. What living in, say, The Promenade meant, was captured symbolically (even totemically) by what its sign came to mean.

I asked a representative of the Springfield Land Corporation what the significance of each village and its sign was, and she mentioned that it was an attempt to give a 'localised' identity, from which a larger Springfield Lakes⁸⁶ identity could be projected (Nicole 28th March 2007). While this cascaded identity perspective represented a concern for interpersonal connectedness in the localised setting of the village, a larger symbolic or imagined community (Anderson 1991) connection with the space of Greater Springfield was also intended; connection to village also meant (but in a more 'imagined' way) connection to the larger development in which the village was located. While this was the intention behind the villages as viewed by the developers, it was something that I found by talking to residents and being in Greater Springfield didn't quite translate as being significant in their 'real' day to day lives- at least not to the extent that an intrinsic and observable village pride formed. But regardless, the signs demarcating each village within the larger space of the developments of Greater Springfield worked as symbolic touchstones and demarcation devices signifying where each village began and ended.

⁸⁶ And presumably also Brookwater; although the representative was speaking in terms of Springfield Lakes primarily, the same logic would seem to apply to the way that Brookwater has developed.

- Graffiti⁸⁷ and Informal Signs

Responsibility for the production of signs wasn't limited to the developers alone in Greater Springfield. A number of other authorised and not-so-authorised signs also appeared during my time there. Varying from flyers advertising church services in the auditorium of the University to brochures left under windscreen wipers of cars advertising a lawnmowing contractor, Greater Springfield was no different to any other social milieu in that it contained a plethora of signs signifying services, public announcements, advertisements and other information sources.

One source that I was particularly drawn to was the graffiti of Greater Springfield. Graffiti became noticeable largely due to its absence⁸⁸ in Springfield Lakes and Brookwater, and appeared primarily in 'old' Springfield; the original development of Greater Springfield located to the north of Springfield Lakes that commenced in 1992. The only evidence I had of graffiti in Springfield Lakes was some very basic scrawl



Image 4.56

overlaid on a sign describing the biodiversity of the artificial lakes of Springfield Lakes.

Apart from this, graffiti as a form of informal and potentially resistant communication largely resided in old Springfield. This isn't to suggest that the amount of graffiti was in any way prolific or its style elaborate or aesthetically sophisticated. In general, graffiti in Springfield consisted of basic 'tags' and other symbolic signifiers of the artist's identify and presence.

⁸⁷ I suggest that this form of signage was 'graffiti' as opposed to 'street art'. The definition I apply here sees street art as far more elaborate aesthetically and as a form of communication that contains an intentioned artistic characteristic. Graffiti, such as that seen in Springfield were basic scrawls and tags and didn't contain elaborate artistic intent. As such, I use the term graffiti to describe such signage.

⁸⁸ This is remarkable, as Brisbane and Ipswich have well known street art scenes. Stencil Revolution (2008) note a 2004 competition between Melbourne and Brisbane based street artists that identified a thriving street art sub-culture in Brisbane. This sub-culture as yet hasn't permeated Greater Springfield.



Image 4.57



Image 4.58



Image 4.59



Image 4.60

I suggest that the lack of graffiti in Springfield Lakes and Brookwater- the more contemporary and affluent ends of the Greater Springfield development was largely due to three causes:

- i. the newness and subsequent ‘protection’ of these areas by the developers through security services,
- ii. the privatised contract maintenance services that existed to keep the parks and public spaces looking pristine, and,
- iii. the general gentrification of these areas that meant that teenagers, as that demographic of people most closely attributed graffiti artists, don’t live within them (Springfield Lakes has a ‘young family’ demographic, whilst Brookwater tends to be populated with childless couples).

A local Police Constable suggested that graffiti was becoming an issue in Greater Springfield’s older sections; he had speculated that this was due to young people from the less affluent neighbouring suburbs of Camira, Inala and Goodna coming *into* (he certainly saw this as an outside threat) old Springfield at night to ‘vandalise property’ (Corey, 12th Nov 2007). This speculation about vandals from outside Springfield entering the area was also

repeated by several of my other informants, and added to a theme of self-identification in Greater Springfield; an ‘us’ constituted by residents of Greater Springfield and a ‘them’ constituted by people living in the less affluent surrounding suburbs.

But in all, the graffiti of Greater Springfield was, for a major urban space, minimal and didn’t signify to any real extent

the presence of organised groupings of people; that is, gangs of graffiti artists. It didn’t surprise me to see the most elaborate graffiti located on a skate-board park (the only public space that I could see was dedicated to teenagers in Greater Springfield) and a dimly lit billboard located in old Springfield (it was almost asking for trouble to place a billboard in a quiet, poorly lit end of town). But apart from this, graffiti didn’t maintain the significance as a form of unauthorised and resistant public signage that I expected Greater Springfield as a large urban space to contain. Again, I can only assume that those features I suggested above (the ‘newness’, security regime and gentrification of the area) has resulted in only those older and peripheral ‘outer’ edges of Greater Springfield being targeted.



Image 4.61

- The Decay of Old Springfield

My observation of graffiti in old Springfield led me to look a little more closely at the



Image 4.62

decay that had set in to the original Greater Springfield development. Driving out of Springfield Lakes, up Springfield Parkway and over the hill to old Springfield, I noticed a real sense of difference between the ‘feel’ of the two suburbs. It was almost as if the hill between the Lakes and old Springfield presented as a geographic boundary across which one travelled to see what Springfield Lakes *wasn’t*.

I noticed that the contract maintenance services didn't go into old Springfield⁸⁹ and that lawns were long, parks overgrown and that things just looked a bit 'old' by comparison. Symbolically, this was summed up for me by the state of ruin to which the landmark 'Springfield' sign had fallen by the time I completed my fieldwork in Greater Springfield. When I first arrived in 2005, the sign was largely in tact, albeit missing segments of lettering. By early 2006, the missing lettering had been repaired, but graffiti tags had also been added (I assume from different sign-writers). By early 2007, the western end of the sign had been pushed over; it remained this way up to the time I completed my fieldwork in early 2008 (and according to an informant, remains like this to date).

I found it entirely remarkable that this sign- this symbolic signifier of the pride that attached to the first development in Greater Springfield- could be left in such a state of disrepair. This was the sign I saw proudly displayed in marketing materials for the early Springfield development; a sign that stood for the freshness and dynamism of this development. But much like Shelley's Ozymandias, it now represented the decay of the older end of Greater Springfield. The Lakes now stood as the symbol of Greater Springfield's essence, and that's where the attentions of the developers had shifted.



Image 4.63



Image 4.64

⁸⁹ I saw this specifically on one fieldtrip where the contractors mowing the lawn stopped mowing literally on the edge of the rise that symbolically demarcated the end of the Lakes and the start of old Springfield. The short, manicured lawns of the Lakes and the long, overgrown lawns of old Springfield from that point on represented for me the nature of the difference between the two places.

4.6 What the Signs Said

The significance of signs in Greater Springfield cannot be overstated. Whether in the form of billboards or brochures, these composites of imagery and catch-phrase provided a prescribed image of what life in Greater Springfield could be. Naturally, these signs were deployed as marketing tools designed to be idealistic, but it was the broad parameters from which they presented their ideals that suggested something about what Greater Springfield not only *could* be, but in fact had turned out *to* be. This was the formation of the boundary, that location of collective epistemological creation upon which the logic of this place rested.

I focused heavily in this chapter on the signs of Springfield Lakes, Brookwater and to a lesser extent, (old) Springfield. There were other developments within Greater Springfield, such as Augustine Heights, and those such as Brentwood that existed alongside Greater Springfield that also deployed a range of signs explaining what they were. But it was the frequency and completeness of the suggestions presented by the signs in Springfield Lakes and Brookwater that stood out as significant in Greater Springfield⁹⁰. As much as these places were pre-formed and ready for residents, the suggestions of how to live presented by the signs were similarly ready for consumption. A guidebook on how to live was presented by the artefacts of Greater Springfield.

The importance of these signs was their everyday-ness. These mundane, ubiquitous objects of the development became significant indicators of the place for this reason. These things were everywhere, and while the suggestions for lifestyle that they carried were a bit spectacular, their ubiquity made them a largely accepted part of the landscape. No one I spoke with in Greater Springfield saw anything extraordinary about the presence of these signs. They were a part of Greater Springfield, but a part that carried significance as I saw it due to the ability they had to actively present certain views of living and lifestyle.

4.6.1 Making Sense of the Signs

To understand these signs, they needed to be read in context and according to the ancillary other signifiers that connected with them. Hence in this chapter I read the signs and provided my interpretation of them according to the understanding I developed of what I saw occurring in Greater Springfield while I was there; my experiences of the field. In the next

⁹⁰ This is perhaps not surprising, as both developments were *the* major developments of this space.

chapter I conflate this reading further by drawing in other people's views of the place. Via the discussions I had with my key informant, Rebecca, residents and representatives of the development companies I turn my attention from what the idealised images of Springfield life contained in the banners, brochures and other artefacts suggested, to asking what life in Greater Springfield was like from the perspective of those who lived there. Chapter 5 presents the ideas of those people attached to Greater Springfield and explores what this place meant to them.

4.6.2 Making Sense of the Image

To finish this chapter and to offer one last reading of the signs of Greater Springfield, I want to look at one last quote from a Delfin brochure distributed in Springfield Lakes during 2006:

At Delfin Living Options Springfield Lakes, there's something to suit every budget and lifestyle. (Delfin Summer Living Magazine Nov 2006)

The suggestion here is that there is something for everyone at Springfield Lakes. Of course, this is simply good marketing practice; by suggesting that a range of choice is available, a wider market of potential investors is opened. But it isn't all that accurate a suggestion. There isn't in fact a lot of actual choice available, and what is available is presented in terms of a couple of variations of brick-veneer detached housing, familiar styles of retail outlet and parkland that functions as parkland does in most other parts of Australia (albeit in a contemporary, landscaped with native flora, kind of way). While subtle differences in terms of an overriding 'philosophy' (expressed by a specific style of aesthetic and finish), the Greater Springfield developments are still just urban developments that in this case cater for an affluent middle class market. Very specific (and as I will suggest in Chapter 6, 'traditional') identity characteristics pertain to the desired inhabitants of Greater Springfield. There is nothing in the design and construction that suggests anything other than an archetypal Western, middle class existence.

And this is exactly the rub. There is no such thing as the 'archetypal Western, middle class existence' apart from that which exists in the idealised imagery of the billboards of places like Greater Springfield. This is the style of living that is created as much as it is catered for, and more significantly, where the image is maintained as a point of aspiration. To 'suit' you, as the Delfin brochure suggests, Greater Springfield has catered for every possible

need, price range and desire. But we know that this is in fact impossible- no development constructed from a single vision and philosophy could ever hope to achieve something for everyone. So what is left is the pretence of inclusion that in fact presents a desirable life ethic that by its very nature excludes everything that isn't presented in the image. Here is a place that exists because of its imagery and maintains its imagery via its physicality (I recall the point made earlier in this chapter that it is actual residents who are drawn on to feature in advertising for Springfield Lakes; the real maintains the image). This place is a simulacrum (Baudrillard 1994) that is modelled off the imagery of its own creation.

The idea of Community is strangely protected by this logic. As an expression of collective interaction and similarity (a shared sense of being in the world) community, as it is presented by the signs of Greater Springfield, translates an image of comfortable affluence, relaxed leisure, the enjoyment of open space, the belonging of family and friends and a sense of distinction. But this is a contrived sense of community; one that is mediated in the first instance by the desires of the developers and presented via the billboards and signs distributed in the place to appeal to people who find the place appealing and who will subsequently fit in with its pre-fabricated logic. This is not an organic community expressed as a mutually formed sense of collective interaction, but an amalgam of folks who have the money, sense of style and approach to lifestyle that fits with what the developments have become. This is a community of a sale demographic.

Now what do the residents have to say about this?

What the Residents Said

All of it's a myth. A lot of mythology surrounds what Springfield and Springfield Lakes are and often doesn't reflect the reality
(Rebecca, 29th March 2007).

I know what you mean when you say it is a strange place because it doesn't make sense. But a whole heap of people seem to think it must ... because they choose to live here
(Louise, 4th April 2007).

I was amazed with how the lofty idealism presented in the billboards, brochures and other artefacts of Greater Springfield compared to the everyday functions of living as I spent time in the place and spoke with its residents. It wasn't that the ideals presented by the billboards were wrong, or worse, intentionally misleading, but that they captured a very specific view of what life *could* be like, and not what life *was* like for everyone. This after all was a community of several thousand people, with perhaps as many interpretations of 'the vision' as there were people holding them. While the images and suggestions for living presented in the billboards and other artefacts of Greater Springfield represented an imagined (Anderson 1983) form of community connectedness and self-identification, the ideals the images contained were something that I found the residents didn't automatically accept in their 'real' day-to-day lives.

Naturally, the point of advertising media such as those billboards and brochures I looked at in Chapter 4 is to sell an image of what something could be- this is the 'desire' that Hebdidge (1988) notes in his application of Delueze and Guatari's idea of the 'desiring machine':

Advertising provides an endless succession of vacatable positions for the "desiring machines" (211).

The billboards and brochures showed what could be done- or perhaps more correctly, what *should* be done in Greater Springfield as intended by its developers. But living in Greater Springfield wasn't simply a process of residents seeing, wanting and becoming. The 'desiring machines' of Greater Springfield- its residents- had their own agency and ideas about what life should be like and didn't always fall for the imagery to blandly recreate what they saw. In fact, disregard and active criticism of the images was presented by several of my informants; one in particular noted that the idealism of the imagery was 'a load of rubbish, to be quite honest' (Jane, 12th November 2007).

What occurred to me was that the imagery of Greater Springfield didn't function along a basis of a simple dialectic; a dualism where the image sat in one corner, and the ideas of the residents in the other. The imagery did exert a certain influence. It did set a logic for the place. It did define the boundary and how things came to be known in Greater Springfield. But the residents also presented their own views- alternative views in many cases- and actively critiqued how ideals of community and collective living were premised in the imagery of the billboards and brochures distributed by the developers of Greater Springfield. While certain residents may have been critical of the idealistic imagery of the billboards and brochures, their criticisms were simultaneously bound by the very logic of the imagery itself. A complex relationship to the place emerged here, where Greater Springfieldians, whether for or against the Delfin and Springfield Land Corporation ideals came to see themselves *as* or *not as* 'the sort of person who lives in Greater Springfield' (Jane, 12th November 2007)⁹¹.

This was striking for me, because it suggested that my informants had a clear idea of what sort of person lived in Greater Springfield, and perhaps more implicitly, whether that was the sort of person they were. Jane in particular seemed to battle the most with this- she was deeply critical of what Greater Springfield had become, how Delfin had constructed the place as a contrived form of community. She became impassioned and angry as she told me these things whilst she overlooked her young son playing on swings in a park and noted how she felt isolated within this 'community' and had recently made the decision to move away:

Jane: ...I just don't like the whole community, kind of thing - imposed community. And I feel that it is an imposed community.

⁹¹ Several of my other informants (Mike, Pete and Maree) also alluded to there being such a thing as the 'Springfield Lakes person', as if some sort of archetypal Springfield resident did exist.

- Andrew: And you find that you feel pressured to be part of the community when you might just want to be on your own?
- Jane: Sometimes.... Where we're living at the moment, we're kind of all piled on top of one another. I'm not really a community... kind of person, really.
- Andrew: So who would it suit most here? Do you think there's a particular kind of person?
- Jane: I just think people that are really into socialising and like that kind of whole community thing.
- Andrew: So for folks who like their space a little more it's a bit too full on?
- Jane: ...being on top of people. I find because you're so close together you've got no choice but to feel involved with people, even if you don't necessarily want to be. You can't really keep yourselves to yourselves.
(Jane, 12th November 2007).

Jane was critical of the way that the ideals of Greater Springfield, presented via its public pedagogical artefacts such as billboards and brochures transcended the realm of the image alone to be representative of the underlying logic of the place. While she indeed expressed a desire to have 'space' (geographic primarily, but I also took this to refer to a conceptual space) to exert her agency and live how she desired, she noted that there was still a pressure- albeit perhaps as an implicitly self-assumed pressure- to be involved in something she didn't connect with. Ultimately, the ideals of life in Greater Springfield as expressed by the artefacts and witnessed by her experiences of life in Greater Springfield didn't meet her needs, and as such she had decided to leave.

My key informant Rebecca noted that while she could see what Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation were attempting to achieve with the imagery of life in Greater Springfield, she questioned the intent behind the application of it:

I think when Delfin discuss community it's certainly a marketing spin, absolutely. But then on the other hand they have put up community groups that don't make a profit for them- but I suppose the fringe benefit of that would be that it might attract people to move into the community and keep it vibrant and so forth. So yeah, I don't buy into their version of community whatsoever.

However, ... Springfield is a community – it's a community because people live there and people work there and play there and their children are there. So I think even despite some cheesy commercials and cheesy marketing, a community will develop anyway, yeah. Because people are people I think and they want to have interactions with other humans. (Rebecca 7th Nov 2007).

Talking in terms of the way that community manifested in Greater Springfield, Rebecca, a long term resident and local educator⁹² suggested that residents interacted regardless of the ideals presented by the developers of the place. Like anywhere, she argued, people would get together and do things as they needed and how they needed.

This was the nature of the views of Greater Springfield. While the imagery presented by the billboards and brochures suggested an idealised view of how life in Greater Springfield functioned, the residents exerted and lived their own views of things within the structural constraints of the development (such as its sheer physicality and 'logic'). The underpinning logic of the development as mediated by the developers' was ever-present; the way the built environment was structured, the nature of the type of housing available, the services provided and the expectations for maintaining the financial investment of owning a part of Greater Springfield were undeniable and suggested more than just the what physicality of the place superficially presented. But outside of the social expectations of these constraints and amongst the suggestions for living presented by the public pedagogical artefacts developed an agency from which residents appropriated what was pre-formed in the built environment to meet the demands of what they wanted.

But, as Schutzman (1999) suggests, the flow of advertising as information dissemination device presents a peculiar dilemma in the late-capitalist world:

We desiring machines roam haphazardly in ad-inspired fugue states, ever shopping, seeking self-improvement and satisfaction. When we fail, as we always do, we try again... But in our search for happiness, commodities deliver us to the pearly gates short-sighted and impotent. Our ephemeral dream were masterfully packaged in things that leave us only smoke and mirrors, just as the profiteers intended it. (Schutzman 1999: 118).

⁹² Rebecca had worked for several years as a teacher in one of the High Schools in Greater Springfield, and had more recently taken on contract work with the University in Education City.

In Jane's case, the 'self-improvement and satisfaction' presented by Greater Springfield didn't respond to her desire, to the point that she felt pathologised in the 'claustrophobic' and 'imposed community' (Jane, 12th November 2007) of Greater Springfield:

Andrew: So what is the moral of the story if you're moving to Springfield...

Jane: Don't move to a community if you don't want to be a community person. As much as they try to be inclusive, it can be exclusive. (Jane, 12th November 2007).

The glossy images of belonging, community, lifestyle and connectedness didn't quite translate for Jane. Greater Springfield for her had become a very isolating experience- an experience that fitted a certain type of person; as she noted, a 'community person'. While choices could be made within the preformed environments of Greater Springfield and appropriations of its logic deployed, it remained that a boundary of agency functioned to authorise specific identity claims and modes of living. As Rebecca noted, while it may well have been possible for residents to deride the imagery of Greater Springfield as marketing spin, it still did maintain a benchmark upon which modes of lifestyle were intended and upon which the entire physicality of Greater Springfield- its buildings, parklands and shopping centres- was constructed and from which its ensuing logic flowed. To live in Greater Springfield meant, at least in part, accepting a certain understanding about who you were as measured against who the ideal Greater Springfield resident was. The public pedagogical artefacts of Greater Springfield provided clear visual cues as to what this was. The built environment, configuration of public space and nature of the services available in the place further mediated the style of living and type of person the Greater Springfield resident could and should be.

5.1 Criticising the Image

One significant theme that emerged from talking to residents and by being in Greater Springfield was that while the imagery of Greater Springfield was widely criticised for its idealism (an idealism that lacks connection to the lived realities of many people living in the area), it was simultaneously considered to be the basis of what Greater Springfield was. My

informants derided the billboards and brochures at the same time they drew on the same themes suggested in them. They didn't do this directly- that is, by referring to a specific billboard image and saying 'there, that is what Greater Springfield is like'. But they did repeat the themes captured by the imagery and utilise specific terms like 'belonging', 'choice' and 'community' to describe the place as they spoke to me. I took this as being the expression of a language game (Lyotard 1984) that utilised as its meta-narrative the idealism of Greater Springfield's marketing imagery, and subsequently became the basis upon which the logic of Greater Springfield was formed.

As the arbiters of the imagery, Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation presented what they hoped Greater Springfield and its residents would be. These images formulated the basis of the marketing campaigns deployed by the developers to variously attract intending investors into Greater Springfield and affirm the identity of the place to those who had already made the step of purchasing their own piece of the place. But like any capitalist venture where the marketing is only as good as the sales it generates, the imagery deployed in Greater Springfield wasn't about ensuring the exclusive sanctity of the place and its current residents, but was about attracting more people into the development. However it was the *right sort of people* who were intended to spend their money and design their lives in Greater Springfield. This was exclusivity by design, where a market 'segment' determined to be profitable by demographic analysts and market researchers was tapped in order to produce desire in Greater Springfield and subsequently pre-form the type of people who would come to live in the pre-formed built environment.

Jane's suggestion that you had to be a certain type of person to reside in Greater Springfield stuck with me during my time in Greater Springfield. Rebecca as well, had inferred in several of the meetings I had with her that there were specific types of people encouraged in Greater Springfield, even though she suggested that *other* types of people lived and worked within it. Even my own observations showed that types of people I didn't see presented in the billboards and brochures lived there; alternatives were present in Greater Springfield when you actually spent time there and didn't rely on the artefacts alone.

Even segments of the same media sources that carried expressions of the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin vision offered an alternative perspective of what life in Greater Springfield was like. One striking example included John Walker's report from the Sunday Mail 'Q Weekend' supplement (Oct 7-8 2006):

I met 17-year-old mechanic Doug Wilson and his mates, Robbie Whittaker and Andrew Nelson, at the front of Wilson's home on Orchid Place. I asked Wilson what he thought of Sinnathamby's vision. "I don't know who you are talking about," he said. I explained: community, family, cradle-to-grave. Whittaker laughed out loud. Wilson laughed with him. "I'll be here for another four years, max, and I'll be gone," Wilson said. "There's nothing here" Whittaker said. "Nothing, it's a place for retirement". "At night it gets violent", Wilson said. Mother of five Deborah Van Bennekom has seen a "whole new generation of youth" emerge in Springfield. The children who came with their young parents in the mid-'90's are now teenagers. And they haven't it seems fitted snugly into the masterplan.

I went back to the creator. I asked him about the future for Springfield's youth. "My form of entertainment for children is to take part in study and take part in sport," said Sinnathamby..."Any entertainment, like a city life, we don't have that. Quite honestly, we are trying to create a society that is highly motivated, highly concerned about education and highly concerned about sport".

The vision is splendid. The reality, however, is clouded in dust.

"A builder mate of mine said they had to change the plan of the homes because you couldn't get the wheelie bin around the hot-water system to put it out front"

(21).

Alternative visions such as this stood in contrast to the carefully marketed imagery of the artefacts I explored in the previous Chapter. What emerged from the accounts I captured of the Greater Springfield experience was a binary that contained at its ends the 'image and the real' (Hickey and Austin 2006). In the case of Walker's story and the vision expressed in the artefacts explored in the previous chapter, some residents' *real* experiences stood as something other than those mediated experiences displayed in the imagery. The thing I wanted to know, was how different it was and how they felt about this. While some of the residents I spoke with weren't necessarily opposed to what the imagery suggested, it became apparent that many of the experiences of life in Greater Springfield relayed by my informants weren't captured in the imagery. In the efforts the developers made to market towards a specific demographic and market segment, what remained were alternative views about what Greater Springfield was that weren't being captured in the authorised and dominant visions produced by the developers of the place. Jane's experience in particular stood as a key

example of this- particularly as she now felt she could no longer stay in Greater Springfield because of it.

5.2 The Ideas of the Residents

My informants came from a range of backgrounds and walks of life. As detailed in Chapter 3 (see Table 3.1), my informants fitted into one of three categories: i. Rebecca my key informant, ii. representatives from The Springfield Land Corporation, Delfin and other development companies in Greater Springfield and, iii. residents and others associated with Greater Springfield. While many more interviews and discussions were conducted than could be reported here, what follows are the accounts from informants who articulated representative views about Greater Springfield.

I saw six major themes emerge from my discussions with my informants. Ideas about what the community is in Greater Springfield followed from questions I asked all my informants concerning what the nature and identity of community in Greater Springfield was like. This led into discussion about the nature of the Greater Springfield identity and who it was that called this place home. From these discussions some of my informants suggested that ideas of wealth, affluence and exclusivity stood as key markers of who people were in Greater Springfield. These themes suggested an awareness of the cultural capital in the development that was held by my informants as being central to how people come to live and express their lifestyles in Greater Springfield. From here, some informants suggested that the imagery of life in Greater Springfield suggested by the billboards and other artefacts distributed in the area produced a self-fulfilling logic- that intending residents became residents due to their willingness to accept what was offered and live their lives according to the types of lifestyle that could be afforded in Greater Springfield. This theme suggested the operation of a public pedagogy that asserted a set of identity characteristics over Greater Springfield and its residents. Finally, a phenomenon titled the 'Delfin Effect', as noted by two of my informants (Louise and Rebecca) emerged as a significant theme in my discussions. The Delfin Effect referred to an insularity these informants suggested had formed in Greater Springfield due to the well used slogan that Greater Springfield is a place 'where [residents] can work, live and play all within the one community' (Nicole, 28th March 2007).

I present my analysis of my informants' thoughts and ideas according to these six themes collated into the four sections that follow.

5.2.1 Community and the Greater Springfield Resident

The idea of community was an important one in the discussions I had with my informants. While I did ask my informants directly what they thought community meant in Greater Springfield, it regularly appeared as a key concept in the conceptualisations and description they offered of Greater Springfield. The complexity of the term and my informants' definitions meant that I captured a multi-faceted view of what community came to mean, and as such, various sub-themes emerged to fill in the idea of community as it was held by my informants. Here are their descriptions.

- What is Community?

I generally opened discussions with my informants by asking them what they thought community meant in Greater Springfield. Early on in the interview stage of this project, I had arranged to meet with Nicole and Debbie, two representatives of Delfin who worked in the marketing section of the company:

Andrew: In a nutshell could you tell me what community means to the place?

Debbie: Sense of belonging

Nicole: Yes that's it in a nutshell, yes.

Debbie: Sense of belonging.

Nicole: That says it all I think. Sense of belonging which is what our job is, is to try and foster within the community. So when people purchase in from a developers point of view when people purchase into our development that they're moving into somewhere where they can –
I know it sounds like a catch-phrase but where they can work, live and play all within the one community. And sort of help assist in the setup of social infrastructure within the community so that people feel like they actually belong here. (Nicole and Debbie 28th March 2007).

Being part of Greater Springfield was an important aspect of community for Nicole and Debbie, and as part of their job felt they had a key role in maintaining the connectedness of community. While I was sceptical early on in the interview that I was being fed the company line- that Nicole and Debbie were simply repeating what their marketing department required its staff to say about the development- I came to see their opinions as being largely genuine. I got a distinct impression that they were being honest with me and genuinely felt a desire to have the place develop into a community. They noted the involvement of Delfin and the Springfield Community Centre in the establishment of a 'Walking Bus' with a local school:

Nicole: It's yeah... so we're in the process of establishing a school walking bus. So people can – it's going to help address the obesity issue, it's getting the kids to school safely without having to worry about them because you've got a conductor and a driver; we just have to get the parents. That's the first hurdle is to get the support so we're looking at hoping to have that up and running by the first semester. So before Easter the principal wants to get the expressions of interest out before the school holidays. (Nicole and Debbie 28th March 2007)

Nicole went on to note that there were no extrinsic incentives for Delfin to be involved in this, apart from having something positive for the students to be involved in.

Regardless of whether I was being sold a line by Nicole and Debbie, the sorts of ideas about community they raised were echoed by some of my other informants. Corey, a local Police constable, noted that:

Corey: They [Springfield Community Centre and Delfin] organise a lot of community events. They make sure the community is all involved in there, and everything they do. It's very good.

Andrew: Does this help with Police work?

Corey: Sure. Makes a lot more community oriented around here... It's going well.

I'd say it's different to other areas. Like this place here is attached to Goodna, so it's all in the Goodna area. So in terms of the Goodna district, this would probably be the less troublesome place. (Corey 12th November 2007).

Corey intimated that community connection resulted in it being 'less troublesome', which I took to mean that there was less crime. He noted that the inter-connectedness people had in Greater Springfield distinguished it from other areas and meant that its residents got along better and looked out for each other.

This concern for personal safety emerged in discussions with several of my informants (these informants happened to be parents of young families). Maree in particular identified this concern for community as a mechanism for ensuring safety in her neighbourhood:

Maree: The other thing that I love is that my three boys are my eldest and then my three girls are my youngest. My boys are 11, 10 and 9, so they're old enough that here I trust that they can ride their bikes around and not be hit by a truck.

Andrew: So a sense of safety.

Maree: Yeah. I mean obviously I tell them they have to check in every half an hour, but they are allowed to ride with their friends, or ride up to their friend's house. And the fact that the school's here now, pretty much all their friends live within riding distance, which they love. It's good.
(Maree 21st Nov 2007).

Connectedness also featured as a significant aspect of Greater Springfield for Rebecca:

Rebecca: I like that in terms of where I live I like people to know each other.

Andrew: So is that sort of that stereotypical or archetypal perhaps sort of small town idea of community?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Where someone down the road knows you quite well; when you go to the shops you run into people from the neighbourhood...

Rebecca: But then I suppose if you don't like that kind of thing you don't have to participate. (Rebecca 25th Sept 2006)

While Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation involvement in the creation of community was considered to be a largely positive thing by many of my informants, Brett,

the attendant at a local music store had reservations. He suggested that the idea of community was a largely contrived one, and didn't represent an entirely democratic or participatory approach to community building:

Andrew: If you had to put a definition on what community means in Springfield what would it be?

Brett: I don't think it's a community for mutual benefit. I think it's more of a community of similarities in that people get along here because everyone is so similar. It's kind of attracted such a specific moving up demographic that you know people just get along... (Brett 12th November 2007)

He went on to suggest that community formation in Greater Springfield is largely about the organisation of people on a class basis, and the transformation of space in Greater Springfield to meet these ends. He noted the experiences he has had in his store with customers identifying a distinction between instruments:

Brett: As an example you see a lot of say people in their fifties walking to the shop and they walk in and they go straight over to the grand [Grand Piano]. They look at it and they sit at it.

Andrew: They bypass the Strats [Fender Stratocaster Electric Guitars] and go straight over there?

Brett: Oh yeah many of them go straight to that and they sit there and they look at it. So you know that's interesting. It's class.

Andrew: Sure, so the grand is something to fill the living room up with?

Brett: Well the fact that they actually have room to put a grand piano in is significant. And most of them don't even play the piano so it's decadence.

Andrew: So it's suggestive of class, an economic capital, all those sorts of things?

Brett: Yeah. (Brett 12th November 2007).

He also noted that artefacts viewed as being culturally exotic were big sale items for this group of customers. In particular he had noted a popularity for African drums:

Andrew: Do you reckon they'd be sort of icon type things purchased to fill up a quarter of a house, an empty corner?

Brett: Oh actually in saying that we do sell Djembe drums but they're to, I swear every time we sell one it's to a mum and it's because she's going to go home and put in the corner as decoration. Yeah it's not because they play the drums. (Brett 12th November 2007).

I discuss the idea of affluence and cultural capital later in this chapter, but it was interesting to hear Brett talk about the distinction residents of Greater Springfield had for musical instruments. According to Brett, while it appeared that at least some of his customers didn't actually intend to play the instruments they purchased, they knew what the instruments expressed as decorative home-wares. This furthered his suggestion that community in Greater Springfield was a contrived, artificial community, where people were brought together not through a shared spatialisation, but under an economic process that filtered people according to the material wealth they had to purchase property in Greater Springfield, and then express a certain cultural capital via artefacts such as Grand Pianos and Djembe drums that were never intended to be played after purchase.

- **Pre-Fabricated Community**

Following on from Brett's suggestions that there was an artificiality to community in Greater Springfield where community became more of an amalgam of people from similar economic positions, several of my informants extended this idea to suggest that the pre-fabricated nature of community in Greater Springfield was attributable to its physicality and form. Pete, a contract painter I met while he was taking a smoko break outside a shopping centre one morning suggested that he felt the physical design of the area added to what community meant:

Andrew: Is there a sense of community here?

Pete: I think there is. Better than everywhere else... It's pretty nice.

Andrew: What makes it?

Pete: I think it's just the park, the quality of houses and stuff.

Andrew: Do you think people who come here get into the whole vibe of community?

Pete: Yeah, they enjoy it. Obviously it's more wealthier than other areas.

Andrew: And that has an influence as well, you reckon?

Pete: Yeah, absolutely. (Pete 21st Nov 2007).

These ideas were echoed by Maree:

Andrew: Do you feel it's valuable, what Delfin and so on do?

Maree: Yes, I do. I think that what they do is lovely, and that they put it out there, because I'm sure there are some people who don't have the things going on that we have, that really appreciate it.

Andrew: And the physical layout, parks, and all these sorts of things.

Maree: That's lovely. (Maree 21st Nov 2007)

But not all of my informants were convinced that the pre-fabrication of community was such a valuable thing. The concern was that ideas of community, unlike a building development, couldn't be so easily contrived and needed time to organically develop. Sharma noted this:

Sharma: I haven't thought about this answer at all so it is really off the cuff. I think here is quite an unusual representation of community because it is a created community instead of a naturally created one.

I guess it seems to be where everything is in one location. There seems to be a sense of community and because it is in one location people do everything together. They educate their kids together, they socialise together and they go to church together. So it seems to be the fact that they're doing these things in the same place leads to that sense of community.... like can't they see what they've created is synthetic; it's not natural? (Sharma 4th April 2007).

Sharma's concern related to the way that specific groupings of people had been brought together. Much like Brett, she lamented the gentrification of the area and the economic variable that determined entry into the community. For her, this wasn't what community was about, and signified something 'synthetic' as she put it. Interestingly, she related the

experiences of her parents in a development⁹³ in North Queensland, where she suggested a similar level of synthetic community had initially developed, but later decayed after input from the developer was withdrawn. Her concern for Greater Springfield was that after the gloss had worn away, and the developers had moved on to the next project, that community may not be able to sustain the bonds that appeared to reside in the place currently. Rebecca also noted these concerns for the longevity of community and wondered what would happen after Delfin moved out. She cited an example of an earlier development in south-east Queensland that she felt had stagnated and had developed a reputation as being a 'bad' suburb. (Strangely enough, Nicole the Delfin representative who had until her time in Greater Springfield been working in this same development, suggested that it was an example of how well Delfin did things; she was talking about the heyday of the development however when Delfin were actively involved in showcasing its success as a master-planned community development).

In terms of the structure of the built environment, several of my informants noted that convenience was an important aspect of life in Greater Springfield. Maree relayed her experiences as a stay-at-home mum, and how she found access to shops and services easy:

Maree: ... because I'm a stay at home mother without the car - my husband uses the car for work - I think the community of, I need potatoes for example, which is why I'm here today, walking down to the shops, so I can pretty much do everything here. And if I need to take a bus over to Orion [Shopping Centre] I step out the front door and the bus is like three doors up. And everything's close, and I love the things they do here for Easter and all of that.

Andrew: The festivals and bits and pieces.

Maree: Yeah, that's wonderful. It's lovely.

Andrew: So centrality of services, access to services, you don't feel the need to leave the area for anything in particular?

Maree: If it's urgent I can walk down here and pay a bit extra at the Spar [grocery store] for it. It would help if the buses ran more than every hour, over to Orion - and everything else is over there, so it's good.
(Maree 21st November 2007)

⁹³ As it happened, this too was a Delfin development focussed towards young families and 'over 50's'.

John and Audrey, a couple I met while they waited for a taxi at the Orion Shopping Centre, suggested similar things:

Audrey: I think it will be good. It's better for me, bank-wise, than going to Browns Plains [a neighbouring suburb]. It's easier parking and the banks are all in one line.

Andrew: So there are a lot more resources and all the rest of it available here?

John: Yeah. All the banks are here. St George [bank], we'd have to go to Logan or Jimboomba [surrounding suburbs]. (John and Audrey 12th Oct 2007)

I couldn't help but think of the 'Convenience- what a refreshing change' street banner when I was talking to John and Audrey. While they appeared happy to talk to me, they didn't really have any opinions on what community was like in Greater Springfield other than that living here was convenient. This in some ways summed it up for me; the newness of this development and its array of shops and services had transformed this previously 'unwanted land' into something contemporary and fitted with the conveniences of a modern urban space. But at the same time that John and Audrey celebrated the fact that they had easy access to banks and shops, I realised that this place was only really built according to how contemporary lifestyles in a capitalist, Western country are lived (or more specifically, are *supposed* to be lived).

Community in Greater Springfield was manufactured and defined according to not only what its residents wanted, but also expected as people long socialised into the ways of contemporary lifestyles. It simultaneously responded to, but reinforced contemporary modes of living, with part of this being how we come to understand community. John and Audrey's suggestion that convenience was important not only tapped the underlying themes of the marketing campaign deployed in Springfield Lakes, but also gave a poignant indication of what they considered as important in this development. They were buying into the idea of this type of community as much as they represented the demographic of people who the marketers targeted in the first place, maintaining a self-fulfilling logic of the market. But for me, John and Audrey's experiences weren't simply a case of the market responding to their needs for convenience. John and Audrey were actors in a situation that required them to live a mode of life that is responsible for the problems (that is, contemporary urban space means

that access to services, particularly on the urban fringe are sometimes difficult to access) that it then sets out to solve (that is, the construction of an edge city like Greater Springfield that contains the services people like John and Audrey need). From within this logic, the perpetuation of set modes of living is guaranteed- no where did I see any real evidence of a call for a rethink on how urban space is arranged and lifestyles are led in Greater Springfield. It is, apart from its well publicised points of distinctiveness including its open parklands and lakes, newness and shopping centres, fundamentally like any other urban/suburban space in Australia.

- Rationalising the Artificiality of Community in Greater Springfield

The artificiality of the ideas of community presented in Greater Springfield was picked up specifically by Rebecca in several of our discussions. While she noted that she was very much attached to the place and felt a strong sense of connection and was initially sceptical of the way that a corporation was handling things like the development of community, her opinion began to change as we progressed through our discussions with each other:

Andrew: Is it interesting or peculiar to you do you think that Delfin is behind getting these clubs organized, and not say, the local council?

Rebecca: Yeah I think that is a peculiarity to Springfield because usually it would be the local council that would – you would assume that it's supporting those kind of – or a charity organization. But I suppose Delfin fill that void that would otherwise be here.

I suppose having some kind of community groups [those organised by Delfin and run from the Community Centre], especially for people who are home during the day such as stay at home mums or retirees enables them to feel a little bit less isolated because public transport is still a huge issue in this area or lack thereof.

Andrew: What would the place look like if it didn't have these community groups and the input from Delfin do you think?

Rebecca: I think people as individuals would probably feel very isolated because I have heard that comment a couple of years ago from retirees that they felt really isolated, that there was nothing for them to do around here and getting a bus to anywhere took hours and hours. So I think that for the

mental health of the community it's a really good idea. And also it gets people to know each other a little bit better and so I think they're trying to create and I think to a large extent it has been successful for whatever reason behind that, but successful in terms of encouraging community participation. (Rebecca 23rd Oct 2006)

She noted two days later when I revisited this theme with her:

Rebecca: I think it certainly means something. You know for all the cynicism you can have about a master-plan community it certainly – I would have – before I moved to Springfield I would certainly have been very cynical about this type of community and not really happy or pleased to live in the suburbs but you know economics meant that I had to live in the suburbs. However, since living in this community I've been very happy because Delfin do supply a lot of community-based activities that the local council would not ever supply. So if Delfin did not offer these activities there would be less and less and less. Now of course these activities – you can look behind what kind of activities are offered by Delfin but they still have opportunities for families, they have a lot of free concerts with really good kids programs... So in terms of what they offer to the community it can be really good. And I think – and I think based on the fact that they do have activities for people that live in the community I think that helps to foster a really good community spirit. (Rebecca 25th Oct 2006).

It was typically in a manner similar to this that many of my informants rationalised the involvement of Delfin in the construction of community in Greater Springfield. While Jane and Brett were most vocal in their criticisms, Pete, Maree and John and Audrey as key examples acknowledged that what they saw in Greater Springfield was something positive. Even Rebecca, with whom I spent considerable time talking (virtually the duration of the project) about the way community was formed, acknowledged after initial scepticism that what Delfin had done was at least supplied the infrastructure for community to operate. While my informants may have questioned the input of a corporation and its motives into the

development of community, they conceded that what was in Greater Springfield worked to mitigate the isolation the development had. Reflecting on her experiences of Greater Springfield, Rebecca summed up this position in the following statement:

Rebecca: But something occurred to me the other day, 'cause of course Springfield has got its problems or highlights and things like that and of course I'm very cynical anyway of master plan communities and I'm cynical of who determines what public spaces are considered important and so forth. But – and I have my reservations about a lot of things in Springfield I suppose, based on that.

But, why didn't – when someone the other day they criticised Springfield and they said some mean things about Springfield how – like they don't care about the environment, the master plan community and so forth and I found myself getting very defensive at the fact that someone would dare criticise my community. Even though I know that it's got a lot of problems and issues, just the thought that someone else would criticise it really upset me.

So I suppose the community that you live in despite its problems and I suppose it doesn't matter which community you're in, in Australia, whether it's in a remote community or the city or the fringe or the metropolitan, if you feel ownership over your community you have a certain sense of pride whether or not that pride is misplaced or not I suppose.

So the kinds of artificially created senses of community that are probably mocked by some people within this community, but other people I think really believe it. (Rebecca Nov 7 2007)

While she may not have agreed with everything that Delfin had done and the imposition by a corporation into ideas of community, it was still *her* community, and from that a very specific and acknowledged connectedness had formed. It was positions similar to this that I found most of the people I talked to in Greater Springfield held.

- A Sense of Community

It was evident from what my informants were telling me that a distinct sense of community, as McMilan and Chavis (1986) would define it was present in Greater Springfield. But just as Rebecca had noted that she felt sceptical about the corporate involvement in the development of community, when discussing how they actually enacted community, my informants generally didn't refer to the sorts of ideals presented by the billboards and brochures distributed by the developers of Greater Springfield. While Maree noted that having services available was useful, and Rebecca cited the community groups as a positive demonstration of collectivity, the general response to my questions about how people actually enacted community generally didn't feature Delfin and the Springfield Land Corporation. Mike identifies this cogently:

Mike: But we've got two young children just started at the new school here and that's helped I think; the new school.

Andrew: Yeah okay.

Mike: We'll be up the street and you know the little daughter will see all her friends and all that sort of stuff. It's a good street and we're all friends and we get out and have a beer or whatever.

Andrew: That's an important thing do you think?

Mike: Absolutely, yeah. (Mike 21st November 2007).

It became clear that two parallel ideals of community were expressed in Greater Springfield; that idealised in the imagery and that lived in an everyday, 'ordinary' way by residents who 'get out and have a beer'.

Occasionally these parallel ideas of community converged and the line between them blurred. One particularly significant demonstration of this was noted by Rebecca when she described the construction of a bridge over a small gully in Augustine Heights upon which residents could purchase a plaque commemorating their 'founding' of the area:

Rebecca: So they've got this little gully bridge and it's stone- it's near the Catherine Morgan Park- if you go there you see plaques with these people's names on it.

- Andrew: So the fact the bridge is made out of stone and you've got the plaques on there, what does that suggest? What does that signify?
- Rebecca: That's a country idyllic lifestyle, yeah, and that's peaceful that you've come away from the stressful life of your city job whatever and people actually bought those plaques and got their – and put their names on them.
- Andrew: I'm getting, and tell me if I'm wrong here, but I'm getting the imagery of sort of like a Lakes District, English village almost...
- Rebecca: Yeah, I suppose so.
- Andrew: Is it also that you've got your core people, your 'founding' core families there and you know who they are and those core families are central to the community as pillars of the community and the physical manifestations of this is that they're named?
- Rebecca: Yeah.
- Andrew: That – and in this...
- Rebecca: Yeah but then they paid for it.
- Andrew: In the Augustine Heights case because there is no real tradition there because it's a brand new place, this is a construction of tradition perhaps?
- Rebecca: It certainly is. (Rebecca 7th November 2007).

In this instance community as a desire of the developers met head on with those local people who were happy to pay to have their brand of community listed on the bridge. This was the sort of complexity that ideas of community threw up in Greater Springfield. As I noted above, it wasn't a simple dualism between residents' ideas of community versus the developers'. Residents were simultaneously sceptical and supportive of how community had been pre-formed in Greater Springfield. They also deployed their own interpretations of it in the form of neighbourhood gatherings as much as they did engage with community groups and purchase a plaque for a bridge. Community in Greater Springfield became a pastiche- an amalgam of what suited residents at given points in time. However, while this might appear to suggest an agency on behalf of residents and their ability to 'pick and mix' their ideals of community, it remained that what community was considered to be was still informed by the types of residents Greater Springfield attracted and how conceptualisations of what community should be in the contemporary world had socialised these people.

- **Community People: Being Old/Being Young**

After I began to get a sense of *what* community was in Greater Springfield, I turned my questions to *who* my informants thought it was for. It quickly emerged that my informants felt there were two groups of people Greater Springfield was targeted towards; young families and retirees. Nicole noted this when talking about this from recent experiences:

Nicole: I mean [Graham and Christina] are a perfect example. They were – actually these are a couple in the leisure group and a young family moved in beside them – they were the surrogate grandma, grandad for this family.

Andrew: Were both families away from their extended family?

Debbie: Mmm, yes.

Nicole: And it works well and it just makes them feel comfortable at home. And it's good for the senior peoples to know that somebody younger, if anything happens, I can call on them. And they can call on them can you watch the kids for me for half an hour I've got to take this one to the doctors. (Nicole and Debbie 28th March 2007)

The big problem with this conceptualisation of who the Greater Springfieldian is, was that it excluded anyone who wasn't old and wasn't in a young family. Teenagers in particular became a focus of this exclusion, and Rebecca noted this on a couple of occasions. On one of our first meetings she noted the popularity of the sole piece of public space in Greater Springfield intentioned for teenagers; the skateboard park:

Rebecca: See I think the one good thing about Springfield is the skateboard park. That's it to me. Yeah there is graffiti in the skateboard park because that's what – to me that's what a skateboard park is though. It's an opportunity for young people to have ownership over an area and to tag it in ways they see fit.

Andrew: To identify themselves and identify and mark the space.

Rebecca: They're not tagging trees or anything. Like they're just tagging the cement that they're skateboarding on but to me that's the one greatest

part of Springfield because that's – the current skate park is on a main road and it's well lit. It's next to Coles [supermarket] and next to take away shops and it's next to a big football oval.

I think that's – and there's always young kids around there and it's also often parents of the younger kids around there too and it just seems to me to be somewhere that young people really can go to chill out but in a safe area because they can be observed at all times so there's less opportunities for people with undesirable intentions to be there like drug pushers and things like that. Which isn't to say that that doesn't happen but... (Rebecca 23rd Oct 2006)

She then went on to note that, as she saw it, very little was done for young people:

Rebecca: I also think more needs to be done to encourage young people of the high school and just post high school age to have activities and things to do on weeknights and weekends because I think Springfield as a satellite suburb or satellite city that people are isolated.

If you don't have transport there's not very much that you can do in Springfield for that age group and I think it's inappropriate to say that young people can just stay at home studying or go to the library...

Andrew: So the suggestion is for young people to somehow occupy themselves with limited resources?

Rebecca: Or play sport and so forth because I think there's a lot more issues associated with – I think young people need a place to be able to hang out more. I wouldn't like to be a teenager in Springfield.

Andrew: Just that isolation factor again?

Rebecca: Yeah I think being a teenager in Springfield would probably suck.
(Rebecca 23rd Oct 2006)

She followed this up a couple of days later by noting:

Rebecca: So that young family idea that you mentioned as *the* Springfield family sort of taps into that marketing dynamic. But when, as you've just done, you survey a street it shows something a little bit different perhaps. And

look there are a lot of retired couples or a lot of semi-retired people and there are a lot of... community organisations within Delfin for those people. But say young people, people like myself may not have as many opportunities for entertainment; those outside things apart from school, work. Retirees? They sort of... there's things on for them? (Rebeca 25th Sep 2006).

It followed that just as there was a certain idea about what community was in Greater Springfield, that similarly specific ideas about who was in the community would also generate. My informants, particularly Rebecca, were quite specific about Greater Springfield being for young families and retirees and noted that other groups divided on lines of age weren't so well catered for. For me, the last word rests with Debbie, the representative from Delfin, when she noted that:

Debbie: Yeah I think it's a community hub and you know you're welcome when residents say we just feel like we're on holidays here every day; we love it; we love the lake; we love coming to the coffee shop...
(Nicole and Debbie 28th March 2007).

The question for me, and as it appeared for Rebecca also, was what happened if you don't love the lake, or going to the coffee shop; what if your interests due to your age demographic meant that other things were in your interests? It seemed that unless the skate park was your 'thing', there wasn't much else available for these 'alternative' Greater Springfieldians.

5.2.2 Wealth, Affluence and Cultural Capital

Furthering the suggestions that the typical Greater Springfieldian was either a retiree or member of a young family, my informants' noted that this was very much an affluent middle class location. Pete, the painter I met while he took his smoko break noted:

Pete: Yeah, well you've got to have the money. To afford live here you've got to have a fair bit of money behind you. Move up, find your uplifting place - same thing, isn't it? Get yourself into more debt I suppose. (Pete 21st November 2007)

The fact that he parodied the slogan from the billboard that towered over us on the roadside near where he was seated I took as being significant. He had read the sign as being specifically suggestive of the sort of attitude that worked through Greater Springfield. In particular, he saw it as being explicitly connected to wealth and the ability to finance the sort of lifestyle Greater Springfield offered. Natalie, a resident I met whilst she was shopping at Orion Shopping Centre also noted the level of affluence and class locatedness Greater Springfield suggested:

Natalie: Definitely. I mean people can pay the same amount for a house in Springfield that you could in inner city Brisbane so I just think – and the blocks of land are tiny but yet they – so they are obviously looking – whatever Springfield is offering, that is what they’re looking for because it is not cheap. It is not cheap to buy here. (Natalie 4th April 2007).

She went on to suggest that the newness and ‘community oriented planning’ which I took to mean the way that centralised public space was incorporated into the master plan, attracted people to the area, and alluded to the sense of community that seemed to exist within the area (although, when I asked her if she felt that the sense of community was an organic one, or one that residents had assumed from the suggestions given in public pedagogical artefacts deployed by the developers, she wasn’t sure). In any case, my informants generally agreed that this was an expensive place to live and represented a location of affluent middle class ideals.

But my informants also identified the stratification that existed within Greater Springfield as well; this was no homogenous place. Toula suggested that the different areas and sub-developments within Greater Springfield were targeted toward different groups of people according to the style and price of housing available:

Andrew: Do you find socio-economic subsets in the community?

Toula: Definitely and you’ve got a variety of housing here so you’ve got your Springfield Lakes, you’ve got your Brookwater which is the really expensive golf course. But you’ve also got quite a high proportion, I think, from what I can gather, of rental properties and that certainly – and of course we’re really close to Camira which has very cheap house prices and all that sort of stuff.

Andrew: Is there a divide there? Is there a cultural divide between the older and the new?

Toula: Oh definitely and the kids that come from there. They are probably the rental properties and all that sort of thing. I mean I find it bizarre that Brookwater is built right next to Goodna which is a really low socio economic and then you've got million dollar homes in Brookwater. I find that strange.

Andrew: It doesn't make sense at all does it?

Toula: But maybe that is just me because I don't understand the way that these things develop. I don't know but I just find – yeah there are huge disparities which are created by Delfin so you're going to have the same social problems aren't you? It is not going to clear things up automatically. (Toula 4th April 2007)

Several of the informants identified a distinction between Brookwater and the rest of Greater Springfield. It appeared that Brookwater was clearly identified as being exclusive by being a 'prestige' location as Barry and Jeff, representatives of a local construction company, noted:

Barry: So yeah the big thing I mean Brookwater started to market in the early stages. I mean that started six years ago I think. They started trying to market to the affluent sort of suburbs as in the western suburbs who had money. People thought yeah we'll pull them out of Brisbane. It's not too far it's probably 15 to 20 minutes. It just didn't work. They didn't get anywhere with it so they started marketing towards Ipswich and they pulled a lot of – I mean Ipswich didn't really have a suburb that was your upmarket, top of the hill.

Andrew: So Brookwater sort of filled that role?

Barry: I think so yeah. I always think that they've fulfilled the sort of prestige market at Ipswich which I don't know any other places that do it. I mean secondary to that would be obviously here and now, well I mean it's all brand new suburbs but out of these new suburbs of Springfield and us, Brookwater would be your sort of upmarket prestige area. (Barry and Jeff 12th Nov 2007)

Mike, a young dad I met while he was spending time with his children in a Springfield Lakes park, similarly identified the 'upmarket' nature of Brookwater, but also gave his thoughts on *who* the Brookwater resident was:

- Andrew: Brookwater- what do you reckon, what does that say to you?
- Mike: It says it's too expensive for me. It's a bit too ritzy for me. That's what it says.
- Andrew: Is there an age differential do you think?
- Mike: I think so. I think this is more you know, older professional type people.
- Andrew: Yep people looking to settle down or retire?
- Mike: I'd say you know a doctor or a lawyer lives there. Yeah so again, not typical of what you see and the folks you know in your street?
- Mike: No.
- Andrew: No?
- Mike: Absolutely not. (Mike 21st Nov 2007).

Rebecca went on to suggest that Brookwater is fundamentally different to the rest of Greater Springfield. She identified that the affluence, class location and expression of exclusivity that derived from it, made something different to the rest of Greater Springfield:

- Rebecca: And I don't – as a Springfield resident I don't see Brookwater as part of Springfield because of its exclusivity and its detachment from the main part of Springfield you actually have to more or less travel out of Springfield to get to Brookwater. I don't consider it to be part of Springfield although I know that some Brookwater residents may consider themselves to be part of Springfield.
- Andrew: Or vice-versa perhaps?
- Rebecca: Yeah but it – Brookwater seems like another – a different place.
- Andrew: Is there a connection do you think between each of these different locations? We've also got – what's the Investa [The Investa property development company] development further up the road heading towards...
- Rebecca: Brentwood.

Andrew: Yeah, so do these places need to work together do you think to set up an overall identity or can they have their own individual identities that may even be competing?

Rebecca: I think the idea – I mean Brentwood isn't in Springfield, it's in Bellbird Park so I think though that Brookwater just from its advertising and so forth wants to be separate from Springfield because it sets itself up very much to be like that way and I suppose Augustine Heights may as well separate itself from Springfield intentionally to have a different identity and to try and promote exclusivity or... a class-economic difference or something. (Rebecca 23rd Oct 2006).

What was emerging from these discussions was a clear identification by residents of Greater Springfield of a hierarchy of suburban locations within the larger development. Rebecca confirmed this a couple of days later when I revisited this theme of difference between the suburbs:

Rebecca: Yeah there's certainly different hierarchies associated I think in people's minds about depending on the part of Springfield they live in. So as you know like I've told you before when [my friend] asked me where I lived and I said Springfield and they said Springfield Lakes or Springfield?

Andrew: Right, so there's a distinction between *Old* Springfield and Springfield Lakes?

Rebecca: And when I said Springfield they told me that I was pov [poor]. So I didn't – I then told them that they didn't even own a house, that they rented [laughs].

Andrew: Which is just plain nasty!

Rebecca: [Laughs] But they said how I was pov for where I lived and so I suppose...

Andrew: So it's definitely a mindset that people have?

Rebecca: I think it could be a mindset that some people have definitely. But whereas some who live in Springfield will not live in Springfield Lakes because of how the land has been developed in terms of the disturbance of the soil and the associated risk factors of building a house... Yeah so you've got Springfield, then Springfield Lakes and I suppose Augustine

Heights and then Brookwater. That's probably how it goes on the hierarchy. (Rebecca 25th Oct 2006).

There was certainly an implicit understanding amongst those people I spoke with that each of the different suburbs within Greater Springfield had its own place in the 'hierarchy' (as Rebecca noted). It went without saying that ownership in a certain location carried cultural significance and said something about who you were- primarily how much money you had.

But just as with the ideas that were captured in the billboards and brochures that accompanied the different developments, ideas of style and distinction were seen by my informants to be carried through the property ownership decisions people had made in Greater Springfield. As an example, while Mike may have been condescending in his accounts of a Brookwater lifestyle and his summation that it was 'doctors and lawyers' who lived there, he still attributed a certain identity to the place and its residents, and by extension identified his neighbourhood in Springfield Lakes as being something different. Regardless of how accurate this attribution was, in his mind, and that of most of my informants as it turned out, specific types of people lived in each of the suburban spaces of Greater Springfield. This clear understanding by my informants of who lived where followed much the same logic as the artefacts I explored in the previous chapter; the brochures and other public pedagogical artefacts carried implicit suggestions of lifestyle choice that were echoed by the residents who knew the *codes* of Greater Springfield ownership choices. It seemed that here was a case where the ideals of each suburb- Brookwater and Springfield Lakes in particular- were captured by the artefacts and relayed by the residents in almost identical fashion.

- **Distinction and Cultural Capital**

According to my informants, it emerged that being in Greater Springfield was different to being in those economically depressed areas that surrounded it. But just as importantly, certain areas within Greater Springfield also suggested certain things about the residents that occupied these spaces. Rebecca identified these assumptions when she noted:

Rebecca: But I don't know anyone that refers to themselves as living in Ipswich because there's – because people that live in Springfield, if you want to be stereotypical, are aspirational so perhaps there's a – and there is a

negative social connotation of saying that you live in Ipswich. In fact we – I used to teach in a local high school and one of the students was bagging out people that live in Ipswich so I decided to remind the class that they live in Ipswich.

I had some very upset students; very upset students and one student yelled at me and told me that they don't live in Ipswich, what do I know? I said oh maybe you don't live in Ipswich. Who lives in Carole Park? So one person put up their hand and I said well you live in Brisbane. Who else lives in Carole Park? No one else put up their hand.

Who lives in Springfield? You live in Ipswich. And they were quite shocked about the fact that they actually lived in Ipswich and they had no idea even though their parents get... the city council rates, the signs on the streets have Ipswich City Council on it... they think Springfield is its own city. (Rebecca 7th November 2007).

Rebecca suggested that this process of self-identification is largely attributable to the marketing of the place and the way that the development of Greater Springfield has been celebrated almost in isolation to those surrounding areas. She identified an insularity that pervades Greater Springfield, and titled this phenomenon the 'Delfin Effect', which I'll explore later in this chapter.

My informants were broadly referring to a sense of distinction that resided in Greater Springfield. This connected to ideas of style and taste, and through my own experiences of the place I suggest that residents identified against a cultural capital that was presented as a sense of distinction. What this meant was that to be in Greater Springfield carried certain emphases on affluence, wealth and sophistication. Brett's experiences in the music store when non-musicians came in to size up the Grand Piano and Djembe drums for the spare room stood as a clear expression of this. While these people weren't musicians, they attributed a cultural significance to these things and understood them to carry a sense of style or sophistication that an electric guitar, or something 'lesser' couldn't. However arbitrarily these conventions of style were attributed to artefacts like Grand Pianos, my informants noted that Greater Springfield contained within it a clear sense of what was significant as its cultural capital.

In trying to explain the origins of the cultural capital presented in Greater Springfield, Louise, a young woman I met in a Springfield Lakes park noted that:

Louise: There are certainly similar tensions that I guess you would see in any area such as tensions of class and how those different groups interact within the community. So what seems to dominate their behaviour is more to do with the class and socio cultural background than the actual location. The fact that they're in Springfield doesn't seem to change... (Louise 4th April 2007).

Rebecca and several of my other informants mentioned similar things to Louise, and identified the contrived nature of the community and the way that specific demographic segments of people had been targeted for Greater Springfield resulted in a concentration of specific values. Rather than being something that was already there, my informants suggested that the sense of distinction and style permeating Greater Springfield came with its residents. The shock with which Rebecca's students recoiled when it was suggested that they resided within the boundaries of the city of Ipswich stands as a key example. Ipswich, in terms of style and sophistication was something other than what Greater Springfield represented in the minds of its residents, regardless of how the geographic delineations of space had organised them. To me, this was a clear expression of the self-consciousness of the area; Greater Springfield expressed a thoroughly middle-class aesthetic that Ipswich as a traditional archetypal working class 'mining town' couldn't accommodate. For Greater Springfieldians, Ipswich was the poor cousin they tried to distance themselves from.

5.2.3 The Public Pedagogies of Greater Springfield

The way that the residents of Greater Springfield came to understand their community's identity drew on a number of sources. While Louise suggested that a middle class aesthetic that presented ideals of style, distinction and affluence as key indicators, came into Greater Springfield with its residents, it remained that there was a concerted effort on behalf of the developers and their marketing agencies to attract this demographic segment in the first place. I explored some of the themes the developers used to attract this middle class set in the previous chapter.

What I was interested in was how the residents viewed this process of class concentration. When I met with Nicole and Debbie, two people actively involved in developing the identity of Greater Springfield through their work with Delfin, they noted that what they were trying to do was connect 'likeminded people'. Particularly in their role as

community liaisons, Nicole and Debbie were actively involved in supporting and providing assistance for the various community groups that operated in Greater Springfield. As they noted, their role was to assist in getting these groups off the ground:

Nicole: So that's the first thing and then from there it is a matter of sort of through our job is trying to establish more community groups and trying to connect likeminded people for the social side of things or for the educational side of things. So it's all within the – in the hub. (Nicole and Debbie 27th March 2007).

While it made perfect sense to get similar people involved in activities and community events, it also suggested to me that this sort of involvement by the developers in crafting social networks could potentially result in the creation of insularity that Rebecca had noted, or the outright isolation that Jane mentioned. It seemed to me that it all hinged on what sort of groups and activities the developers were happy to support, as this would give an indication of what types of people they considered to be Greater Springfieldians. While Nicole and Debbie both suggested that, on a couple of occasions during our meetings, they would be happy to support any group that residents suggested would be useful, I asked them whether an Islamic Literature Reading Group would be possible to form. The response was that they suspected there wouldn't be enough interest to sustain such a group, which left me to conclude that between the middle class aesthetic that residents brought with them into the area and the initial marketing towards a specific demographic of people by the developers, a very clear sense of what was 'normal' was established in Greater Springfield. If you didn't fit this set of identity characteristics, as Jane had found, the experience of Greater Springfield could become a very isolated one.

The role of the public pedagogical artefacts as I've referred to them previously cannot be understated here. Via the sorts of images, text and implicit themes I identified in the previous chapter, were presented the types of lifestyle and people Greater Springfield celebrated. I asked my informants what they thought about this process, and whether or not they felt the billboards, brochures and other artefacts exerted a pressure on the identity of Greater Springfield and its people. Brett felt that the way Greater Springfield was advertised exerted a direct influence over what it was:

- Brett: I think when people come to Springfield they're buying into the idea of the community.
- Andrew: You mentioned advertising; do you think it's solely advertising that's doing this? That perhaps it's advertising that's constructed an image that people have seen and said; 'yes that's me'?
- Brett: I think the advertising attracts the type of people who want to be in a part of a community so it perpetuates a community because you're attracting people who want to participate in the community. (Brett 12th Nov 2007).

Building on this theme suggested by Brett where the marketing attracts the residents who end up perpetuating the myths implicit in the marketing, Rebecca suggested that the way the billboards and brochures came to present actual residents was a significant extension of this intra-supporting logic of the public pedagogical artefacts and lived experience of actual residents:

- Andrew: [Nicole and Debbie] mentioned that the people represented in the ads are actual residents of the lakes?
- Rebecca: Yes, that's true. Yeah definitely because you see them around – I mean you see them walking around or might know them because you've taught their kids or whatever. But yeah they are definitely residents of the lakes but they're carefully selected.
- Andrew: OK, so how are they selected?
- Rebecca: You know like they know – they're selected because they know someone at Delfin by and large. Like I've never seen an ad in the paper that says we're trying out for a – auditioning for a commercial; they know the people. (Rebecca 29th March 2007).

Rebecca was sceptical of the hand-selected nature deployed in these artefacts. These 'real people' as Nicole and Debbie labelled them, may well have been residents, but for Rebecca the hand-selected nature of their inclusion said something about the desire the developers had to show a certain type of individual as resident in Greater Springfield. For Rebecca, the very white, middle class, traditional heterosexuality and nuclear family arrangement displayed in the billboards and brochures didn't capture a genuine image of what her Greater Springfield was. As she noted:

- Rebecca: I mean on the ads it's really promoted – I have never seen anyone except for a white person who looks like they ascribe to middle class values. I mean just looking at my own street that I live in, I live in a small cul-de-sac, there's probably about 10 houses in my whole street.
- So we've got a retired couple, we've got a mixed family – mixed by I mean step family like mum and dad have remarried but have combined their children. There's an old couple and a young couple as well. There's another young family. There's a Samoan family that live on the end of our street. Then there's another family with two kids and then there's another couple with a dog. A family from New Zealand.
- Andrew: Well that's an interesting mix isn't it? It doesn't necessarily add up with what the advertising image says.
- Rebecca: No it doesn't, no. (Rebecca 25th Sept 2006).

While a concerted effort appears to have been made by the developers to present 'real people', for Rebecca those real people only represented a small sub-set of the people who lived in Greater Springfield. As I saw it during my time in Greater Springfield, this was a clear expression of the privileging of certain identity characteristics. More so, what the public pedagogical artefacts were doing included not only selling an image, but more explicitly suggesting that the image being sold was in fact 'real'. And to a certain extent it was; but after looking closely, it was apparent that it was real for only a small sub-set of those people who called Greater Springfield home. This was a privileging of a specific lifestyle and identity; one that people like Jane and Brett couldn't relate to, and in the case of Jane specifically, felt isolated because of.

5.2.4 The 'Delfin Effect'

Just as isolation from the community was felt by Jane, my informants also noted that there existed an insularity amongst those residents who were included. Rebecca and Louise in particular identified a phenomenon they titled the 'Delfin Effect'. Labelled the Delfin Effect because of the perceived insulation Delfin developments were attributed with, as viewed by my informants, Rebecca and Louise suggested that it was those very factors that Delfin promoted in the development that led to the rise of the effect. Louise suggested that the way Greater Springfield had been presented as a place 'you never need to leave' resulted in

people's attitudes to the world being somewhat 'naïve and ill-formed'. Rebecca explained the Delfin Effect in the following:

Rebecca: The Delfin effect is a catch phrase that has been applied to some of the students who live in a Delfin community and also attend Delfin community school because one of the highlights of living in Delfin community as portrayed in advertisements is that you never have to leave the community; everything is within this community.

Andrew: That's seen as being a very positive thing in the advertisements as well.

Rebecca: Yeah it is; like everything is within – all the shopping that you need, all the cultural activities you need, all the schools you know from birth to university is within a community. It's really set up as a satellite city within a larger metropolitan area. So from this I have noticed in some students that they – in the local high schools that they don't have an awareness of the world around them and seem to only exist within the world they have immediate contact with.

So as a result they have a ... social literacy deficit in that they don't understand the surrounding city or the surrounding state or the surrounding nation that they live in and this has detriments on their education but this – and whilst you might find this in a lot of areas that student may not know so much about the world around them in the broader context.

The difference that some teachers have noticed with students in the local area is that they seem to be proud of this fact and that it's not a cause for embarrassment or a cause for wanting to learn more. It is actually seen as almost a badge of honour that they know so little about the world around them. (Rebecca 25th Sept 2006).

She continued in a later interview by suggesting:

Rebecca: I think when big business says you never have to leave the community that we have created I think it encourages ignorance and encourages people to think oh at a subconscious level perhaps I don't need to know

anything else because I know all I need to know to live and operate in my small world.

Andrew: So there might be a danger then in having a community that does offer everything you need?

Rebecca: Yeah I – and I say often that whenever I hear the Delfin ad of oh you never have to leave Springfield Lakes I think well that's more reason to leave Springfield Lakes so that you do have an understanding of the world around you and have an understanding of difference and what goes on outside your small suburb (Rebecca 25th Sept 2007).

Rebecca put the operation of the Delfin Effect down to the geographic isolation of Greater Springfield and the concerted effort the developers had made to present it as a place that contained everything. In two separate discussions, she noted the following:

Rebecca: At the moment if a young person wants to go into Brisbane city they would have to walk to the bus stop which might take five minutes, then catch the bus say to the Coles at Springfield down to Goodna which would take 20 minutes, 20 minutes to half an hour. Then they would – and if they live in Springfield Lakes certainly it'd take the full 30 minutes there. Then they would have to catch the train to Goodna to the city and that would take 35 minutes.

So just to get that far is over an hour and that – the bus service is not – it operates a few times per day so maybe once an hour or once every hour and a half. So I think young people are really isolated culturally. I would like to see more cultural activities offered to young people to encourage their participation. Goodna does have some so that's good but it's also difficult to get to Goodna at times for some people. (Rebecca 25th Sept 2007).

Rebecca: I look at those ads that talk about community – and there are residents that they do say things like – oh I don't ever need to leave Springfield. I look at those with disdain and I think they're a shock – they're terrible ads because you do have to leave Springfield, but even if you don't need to leave a city or a town or whatever else, because they've got all the services there- well that doesn't mean that you don't leave and probably

gives more reason to actually get out and broaden your horizons a little bit more. (Rebecca 7th Nov 2007).

For Rebecca and Louise, the Delfin Effect worked hand-in-hand with the public pedagogical artefacts that actively promoted Greater Springfield as a self-sufficient and self-sustaining hub. This became apparent to me when I looked around the place, looked at its billboards and signage and read newspaper articles such as Figure 5.1⁹⁴:



Figure 5.1: Article from the Springfield Times, April 18 2007, page 20.

Far from being something shameful and to be embarrassed about, insularity in Greater Springfield, as Rebecca noted was something to be proud of. It signified a type of loyalty to community and suggested that all that needed to be known was in Greater Springfield. I couldn't help but think that it was all a bit too 'Stepford Wives-ish' for my liking - particularly as I looked at its billboards and spoke to residents who told me that it was fantastic and that they were indeed 'afraid of travelling outside of Greater Springfield' (Maree 21st Nov 2007) due to traffic and the fast pace of Brisbane.

The significant theme that emerged from the discussions I had with Rebecca and Louise about the Delfin Effect was the influence they felt the billboards, brochures and

⁹⁴ This article explains how 4 siblings have established businesses in Greater Springfield and noted how they have found dealing with each other and other local businesses solely has led to a sense of community. These siblings, almost in a 'sea-change' kind of way, also noted that they have all decided to move into Greater Springfield with their families due to the 'work, live and play' philosophy.

advertising of Greater Springfield had. In this sense, these were very much public pedagogical artefacts that exerted as much of a celebration of insularity in Greater Springfield as they did ideals for the identity of the community and the types of people who reside within it. I kept coming back to the point that Louise made when she suggested that this was a 'strange' place. Indeed it was; to me and people like Jane and a lesser extent Rebecca, Brett and Louise. But it seemed that the insularity and specific identity characteristics that were celebrated in Greater Springfield did make sense to a lot of people. The fact that Nicole and Debbie saw the billboards and other ads as successful aspects of the marketing campaign by suggested that at least a few residents saw something in them and what Greater Springfield came to represent. But again, it all came back to the logic of the public pedagogical artefacts and the influence they exerted over the demographic attracted to the development; those same people who then went on to fulfil its promises.

Conclusion: bringing it all together in Greater Springfield and the implications for community in urban spaces

An enquiry into the inner meaning of specifically modern life and its products, into the soul of the cultural body, so to speak, must seek to solve the equation which structures like the metropolis set up between the individual and the supra-individual contents of life.

(Georg Simmel, *The Metropolis and Mental Life* 1997:174).

So where does all this leave Greater Springfield? I presented in previous chapters an analysis of how ideas of community came to be represented in Greater Springfield via everyday things like billboards and brochures, and juxtaposed these ideals against various residents' experiences of the place. I suggested that selected expressions of community were privileged due to their dominance and authorized presence on the landscape and furthered this premise by arguing that the expressions of community these artefacts exerted fulfilled a public pedagogical role. That is, these ideas about community not only functioned as collectively recognized points of meaning, but were also central in the process of informing the very logic of the cultural milieu of Greater Springfield. Deployed on host billboards, brochures, newspaper advertisements and other media, the ideals being presented suggested consistently specific images of a lifestyle and type of person that was characterized as archetypally Greater Springfield. I argued that these artefacts moved beyond being simple marketing tools to become iconic and formative statements about life in Greater Springfield as a whole.

These artefacts became expressions of the logic of the boundary (Cohen 2004) of Greater Springfield- that location of symbolic meaning construction signified by the way elements of the physical environment become configured to mean. The formulation of the boundary in Greater Springfield is, like many of the locations of late-capitalism, mediated heavily by the mass culture-economic complex of the contemporary, globalised world, with the ubiquity and everydayness of things like billboards and brochures going some way to

mask the corporate intentions underpinning their very reason for being. Whilst ordinary, these artefacts of our contemporary lives aren't often subjected to scrutiny and critique as carriers of ideology (Harper 2006: 215). We simply see them as part of our landscape, and rarely stop to question the corporatising influence they are designed to exert.

A blurring of the lines between out-right marketing tool and social networking device occurred with many of the artefacts I looked at. This was particularly noticeable with the 'Community Update' brochures, in which community information and advertising of Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin events and products were intertwined as roughly one and the same thing. Even the billboards, those image-rich, but text-poor mass communication devices deployed throughout Greater Springfield contained more than just advertising. Philosophical statements on how to live were suggested in their calls to 'move up' and challenges to 'compromise', albeit with the ever-present implication that to do these things meant succumbing to their intentions by purchasing property in this place.

Yet deciphering these things wasn't simply a case of working out what was advertising and what was philosophical statement. They were both at once, and contained views about the place at the same time as they sold it to residents and intending-residents. Advertising became information and information became advertising in this nexus of corporatized communitarianism present in Greater Springfield. This was the state of the boundary in Greater Springfield, and while these things presented as important community information disseminators, they were also *just* marketing tools. While they contained various lifestyle suggestions implied in ideals of choice and belonging, leisure and relaxation, affluence and comfortable living, their reason for being was to present particular images of the place that sold property. This was after all the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin's development, and it was they who gave the suggestions of what it was to be via the marketing campaigns they deployed. At best these expressions of an infotainment-like blurring of actual public interest information and blatant advertising, carried simple public awareness messages (such as water safety messages in several Springfield Lakes Community Updates), but more often than not were deployed as components of a discursive apparatus that had a very clear marketing imperative underpinning it.

As part of the landscape of Greater Springfield I saw these artefacts actively mediating how the development would function. With the expressions of lifestyle, affluence and leisure expressed via the imagery and text embedded within each artefact, the logic of the boundary of Greater Springfield was cast and presented ready for consumption. These artefacts naturally worked hand in hand with the underlying intentions for the development

(they provided the mechanism through which the developers' intentions for the development were communicated) by affirming the types of lifestyles and people Greater Springfield would support. From the consistently framed visions presented on the artefacts, ideas about the physical environment, the nature of community and its people were established in the public imagination of Greater Springfield.

6.1 The Pedagogy of the Public in Greater Springfield

I argued that these expressions of contemporary mass-culture became pedagogical via their intent to present a specific set of identity characteristics and suggestions of what life *could* be like in Greater Springfield. It was via these expressions of life that characteristic features of who the Greater Springfieldian is, and how that archetype goes about living were presented to the world. I found there to be a largely consistent view of what the Greater Springfield lifestyle consisted of. My analysis of the lifestyle behaviours, attitudinal dispositions and identity locations expressed in the artefacts identified a clear sense of who the *right sort of person* for the place was, with the options available for this archetypal Greater Springfieldian being mostly limited to a specific set of racial/ethnic, class and gender/sexuality attributes.

The ideals underpinning the archetypal Greater Springfieldian weren't suggested forcibly- there weren't any check-boxes to tick that affirmed whether you were in or out- and I'm not trying to suggest that the billboards and brochures of Greater Springfield exerted an automatically attitude-altering influence over the people who viewed them. Nothing in culture is that easily transferable and to suggest that it is would be to deny any ability for individuals to accept, alter or resist the meanings being suggested according to their own interpretative agency. But via processes of what I call 'passive selection' (namely, the largely accepted and rarely challenged economically derived selection process that authorizes entry into or exclusion from the markets of consumer capitalism- including that of home ownership) that mediate the relative ability intending residents have to not only purchase property but to also define where they purchase it, clear indicators of the type of person welcome in Greater Springfield were applied initially on economic lines. You had to be the sort of person with the right amount of income to purchase into the Greater Springfield vision; it wasn't a place for just anyone to come in willy-nilly. Combined with these economic tropes extended identity locations related to race/ethnicity, gender and class that

were largely consistent with an affluent middle class-ness (as I noted in previous chapters). It was a very white, affluent and heterosexual world suggested by the artefacts, with limited possibilities for anything outside of this presented. But this wasn't the only mechanism deployed to identify the right type of person for Greater Springfield.

While economic determinants, extended by identity locations archetypally associated with affluent middle class-ness, figured heavily in identifying the types of individual Greater Springfield became an investment option for, so too did the sense of style and distinction presented by the place. While the cultural capital of Greater Springfield varied in each subsection within it (it became clear from looking around and talking to my informants that Brookwater was different to The Escarpment, for instance), broadly speaking this was a place that contained an aesthetic that complemented the economic determinant. The way leisure came to be identified through coffee-shop chic, the expression of cultural pursuits such as having a grand piano in the sitting room of a multi-story home and concern for 'success' as an outcome of financial wealth defined the logic of this aesthetic. As I noted in Chapter 4, the billboards and brochures displayed throughout Greater Springfield captured this intent, and taken together, fulfilled a pedagogical role to express specific ideals as being attributable to this place. My subsequent discussions with informants like Brett, Jane and Rebecca told me that 'real' expressions of this middle class aesthetic were lived by at least some of Greater Springfield's residents and corresponded to a sense of distinction that pervaded the sorts of lifestyle led in the place.

The down side of this of course is that if you didn't fit this aesthetic you simply couldn't belong. Aside from the processes of urban development that transformed this place that 'nobody wanted' into an expression of the 600m² middle class dream, isolation and exclusion could still occur even if you did have the money to buy in. Jane stood as a key example of this- she didn't see herself expressed in the billboards and brochures and found the reality of Greater Springfield to be oppressive. Brett also expressed his concern for the way a sense of arrogance circulated through the place and referred to the cultural capital as a sense of distinction that operated in the place. Rebecca and Louise gave me an insight into the phenomenon of the 'Delfin Effect', as they had titled it, and noted how Greater Springfield's geographic and conceptual isolation from the outside world resulted in a celebration of the insularity and values that were held in it; these values all leading toward a self-formed Greater Springfield sense of distinction.

Greater Springfield was a place, according to these informants, that had a clear sense of itself and who its residents could be. But this sense of self was informed heavily by the

ideals of the developers and the subsequent ordering and spatialisation of the built environment. Along with what I had seen through my own observations, Rebecca noted that, as one example, Greater Springfield was a very isolating place for teenagers and young adults and went on to suggest that unless you were either a young family or retiree, Greater Springfield couldn't effectively cater for you; it simply wasn't built for groups of people like teenagers. This was a place that via its physicality and the sorts of actions and behaviours (lifestyle choices) that were promoted within it, set about identifying a type of individual according to the sort of space it was. This was the boundary in action. This boundary logic established who and what the place was and subsequently who and what its people could be.

Part way through my time in Greater Springfield, I thought to myself that alternative visions of Greater Springfield would have had a hard time competing with the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin visions, if they had indeed existed. The dominance that the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin exerted as the developers of the space meant that a monological expression of what community meant was displayed as *the* expression of Greater Springfield. With the vision of what Greater Springfield was beamed in idealized gloss from billboards and brochures, and mediated via the sheer scale and physicality of the development's design, it emerged that the modes of living available to residents were largely pre-fabricated according to the lifestyle choices the 'vision' suggested. While representatives of the development companies did their best to convince me that there was something to cater for almost everyone in Greater Springfield it remained that a certain type of person, living a certain type of lifestyle was the target for this place. The types of community groups, the available social activities, the configuration of public space, the style of housing, the emphasis on affluent consumerism, the shopping centres, the types of sport grounds and more told me that there was a 'typical Greater Springfieldian' envisaged for this place, and if this style of life didn't suit you, (like it didn't for Jane, Brett and teenagers) there wasn't going to be much for you.

6.2 The People of Greater Springfield

- Similarity Attraction Theory: being an image

What about the people of Greater Springfield- what was their role? It's not enough to suggest, as I alluded above, to say that its residents automatically assumed these images of

Greater Springfield life. As Certeau (1984) reminds us, we must look beyond the cultural product and ask questions about the purposes to which it is applied. For me, the genuinely intriguing thing was how comfortably the imagery of Greater Springfield was absorbed and accepted by the majority of people in Greater Springfield. Most of my informants felt that the way the community had been conceptualized and configured was fantastic- Maree stood as a key example of this, particularly when explaining how safe she felt and how convenient the services were.

But while expressions of difference were voiced by informants like Jane and Brett as two examples, what I couldn't understand is why difference of opinion about Greater Springfield wasn't more widely held. The singular views expressed by the Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin appeared as the only perspectives on what Greater Springfield meant. Where was the deliberate appropriation of these models for personal application? Where was the detournement (Lefebvre 1991) of the public spaces to represent difference? Where was the challenge to the all-encompassing views of community and lifestyle? Or did everyone (other than Jane and Brett) roughly agree with Maree in thinking that this place was fantastic? There simply wasn't any real sense of challenge to the image⁹⁵, and where expression of alternative opinion did surface, such as with Jane's thoughts about the place, they became pathologised to the point that even the person holding those views felt that they were the problem (as Jane noted, she blamed herself because she wasn't a 'community type of person'). In this instance, it wasn't the way the community was developed that was the problem; it was those people who didn't fit. There was nothing in terms of an organized, alternative view of what community was in Greater Springfield, and where elements of difference did occur, they were pathologised as negative and anti-community.

I argue that the image-machine deployed in the development of Greater Springfield affected such a good job that only those people intended for Greater Springfield moved into it. As I noted above, a specific demographic of residents were intended for Greater Springfield- namely an affluent middle class. This economic determinant was then compounded with the expressions of style required in the place via distinction embedded in expressions of cultural capital. With the type of person identified and beamed back via billboards and brochures, Greater Springfield became a place of largely homogenous views about lifestyle; in short, it became an enclave of largely similar people.

⁹⁵ Even that key expression of urban resistance, graffiti, was limited to mostly random tags and base vandalism.

I argue that a ‘similarity-attraction’ (Chatman and O’Reilly 2004) process was in operation here. The process of developing Greater Springfield led to the formation of a middle class aesthetic that attached to the middle class attributes of the built environment under construction. Via the imagery and themes presented by the billboards, brochures and other public pedagogical artefacts deployed concurrently with the construction of the development, a clear sense of who the Greater Springfieldian *is* was developed and extended beyond economic-demographic categories alone (that is, beyond the idealised and largely held view that Greater Springfield was a place for affluent middle class young families and retirees), to also inform the expressions of themes of leisure, lifestyle and affluence that the modes of living available in Greater Springfield afforded. Chatman and O’Reilly (2004) note that ‘people are attracted to and prefer to spend time with others who hold attitudes that are similar to their own’ (193); in Greater Springfield the mechanisms for attracting people to the area, forming the built environment and maintaining a sense of connectedness and community for residents of the development was captured by the logic of affluent middle-classness presented via a concern for leisure, belonging, family, consumerism and those other themes displayed on the billboards and brochures of the place. A similarity attraction process that saw the Greater Springfieldian as the sort of person the billboards depicted, living the sort of life and engaging in the sort of pursuits presented by these artefacts mediated what the place was and who called it home.

Naturally, the marketers of Greater Springfield knew to market towards key demographics- in this case an affluent middle class against which ideas of comfortable lifestyle, space and modern conveniences were symbolic reminders of who this group was. The attraction of people fitting this identity then went to reinforce the idea that this is what the development was about. Here was a self-fulfilling logic- a language game of community that residents fell into via a set of discernible identity characteristics that happened to fit what Greater Springfield was intended to be. I can’t get past the reference that Nicole, the development company representative, made when I spoke with her early on in this project; she noted that the people featured in the billboards and brochures were indeed Springfield residents (albeit carefully selected ones as Rebecca later told me). Here were residents who became what they saw themselves as being. The reinforcement of the values underpinning these identities manifested as archetypes on towering billboards and ubiquitous community newsletters and fulfilled the logic of Greater Springfield by perpetuating the myth of the Greater Springfieldian; that same person who simultaneously looked on at these billboards as they appeared in them.

- Living Greater Springfield

Apart from what was displayed by the artefacts and people of Greater Springfield, it was the identity characteristics I didn't see represented that became significant indicators of what Greater Springfield was. Why was it that I didn't see anything other than white faces on the billboards and brochures?⁹⁶ Why did a middle class aesthetic of comfortable affluence pervade these images when the development was set amongst other socially and economically deflated neighbouring suburbs? Why were gender traits only deployed in very stereotypical heterosexualised ways? Where were the teenagers and age groups that weren't associated with young families and retirees? People who occupied identity locations away from those presented in the billboards did exist in Greater Springfield- I had seen them and spoken with them. My informants had also identified diversity in the area; Rebecca had identified a rich diversity of age, ethnic and sexuality locations in her own street and neighbourhood. The lack of representation of diversity of identities represented on the artefacts stood as significant.

At the same time that very specific identity locations were presented by the artefacts, there seemed to be an automatic assumption that inclusivity was important in Greater Springfield. What I mean by this is expressed in the following excerpt from a community newsletter:

Springfield Lakes is a fully master planned community, designed with you in mind. Every detail has been thoughtfully planned to help you enjoy every aspect of your life. From the natural bushlands and stunning parklands to the hike and bike trails and sporting fields, from the curling creeklines and billabongs to three magnificent lakes (Big Picture, 'Community Edition', n.d.).

As I noted in Chapter 4, according to suggestions like this, Greater Springfield contained what you wanted it to. But who the 'you' is- who the subject of this intended lifestyle is- is left vague until the image of the Greater Springfieldian, built from the amalgam of selected

⁹⁶ The only non-white faces I noted, were those of the jazz musicians in the Brookwater 'Compromise' billboard, as discussed in Chapter 4. But again, these musicians, by the logic of the billboard, weren't residents but were the hired entertainment, maintaining the suggestion that Brookwater, at least was a 'white' development.

residents, and other middle-class, white and heterosexual archetypes is added to the mix. Other 'types' of people may well have lived in Greater Springfield, and the brochures might have suggested a sort of inclusivity, but in reality, the idea of the Greater Springfieldian was very specific and was mediated very carefully and resulted in an image of the place that neglected the experiences and identity locations of anyone who didn't fit the archetype.

While I'm not suggesting that Greater Springfield needs to be *the* place for 'others', it didn't do much of a job of challenging stereotypes of 'normal' when I was there. And this, in a development whose Chairman is an expatriate (with a noticeably different accent and skin colour to the dominant ethnic location of the subjects in the artefacts) Malaysian. Again, this is the operation of the boundary, where the logic of Greater Springfield is expressed and maintained via such things as its signs, and from which wider cultural influences (such as the sorts of lifestyles, leisure pursuits and family structures) are taken from these cultural cues. This isn't a place of choices at all, but a place that maintains a very specific set of identity characteristics for its intended residents even though it suggests a pretence of choice. To be in Greater Springfield, according to the artefacts, meant inhabiting a very specific identity location. This largely homogenous view of this contemporary expression of urban living exerted a specific logic over the place that ignored any sense of difference and diversity but fitted with a specific market segment of idealized investors/residents.

6.3 What Community Means

Just as the artefacts contained expressions of an idealized type of person suggested for Greater Springfield, clear indications of what community meant was also displayed. I broadly saw community in Greater Springfield operating according to the following themes:

- i. Community as Imagined Ideal: picking up on Anderson's (1983) idea of the imagined community, I saw Greater Springfield functioning largely as an idealized place, with suggestions of this idealization beamed from its artefacts. This was a place that saw itself presented back from the fronts of these artefacts and drew its logic from the idealized, romanticized and largely homogenous themes of lifestyle that were presented in them. Communities aren't ever so homogenous in their views however, and the lack of difference in these imagined ideals suggested that they were derived from a singular, monological 'vision'; that is, the vision of the

Springfield Land Corporation and Delfin. This was a highly conceptualized, imagined vision of what community meant.

- ii. Community as a reaction to individualism: picking upon Popcorn's (1992) idea of 'cocooning', in which a retreat into private spaces marks a key expression of contemporary social contexts, I saw community coming to represent a reaction to the mass urbanism (said to be) experienced in the spaces surrounding Greater Springfield. As an 'edge city' (Garraeu 1991) located literally on the boundaries of two major, and established urban centres in south-east Queensland, Greater Springfield was actively promoted as unique and 'different' to older, cramped and individualistic urban spaces. In this regard, a 'cocooning' was suggested on a development-wide level, where a retreat into the safe, welcoming and familiar landscape of Greater Springfield provided sanctuary from the ravages of the outside world.

This was the 'Delfin Effect' as my informants noted it. While a comfortable familiarity with the 'inside' space may have offered security and comfort, getting into this place was a selective process achievable only by the 'right' sort of people. Once in, my informants told me that the exclusion of the outside world and focus on Greater Springfield as being the only place worth knowing opened a potential for insularity. This was community that defined itself against its difference to the outside world, but which internally contained only homogenous monocentric views of lifestyle. This was a community of exclusion and oppositional definition.

- iii. Community as constructed, shared pastness: I saw several suggestions throughout Greater Springfield that there was a sense of shared pastness. Community in this sense came to mean a common and shared connectedness and history; comments referring to *your* community and *your* place appeared frequently in the billboards and brochures. Most demonstrative of this concern for shared pastness was the community traffic bridge in Augustine Heights that residents could sponsor by purchasing small plaques that identified their family as being a 'founding family' of the area. These plaques were fixed to the bridge rails and stood as ever-present reminders of who was here first and who the community was pioneered by.

This was entirely fascinating in a place that had a history of only a few years⁹⁷. The ‘founding family’ idea, combined with the pastiche of the colonial style housing in the area, presented a ‘pioneering’ spirit and worked to identify the elders of the development. This was a construction of community in which some people- those originals- seemed to have a greater claim on the cultural ownership of the place than more recent arrivals.

In this regard being in Greater Springfield meant having an investment in the place. This was demonstrated when calling the place *yours*, or naming a bridge, or more directly by owning a piece of it. It suggested a connectedness individuals had with the place, but shared with other similar people. Community in this sense meant connectedness to space and people.

Community in Greater Springfield always contained a pre-fabricated quality. It wasn’t a community that formed organically and of its own design. It was pre-determined and written in as a key component of the development’s mission. It was a sim-city (Pahl 1996) that was simulated from the suggested ideals beamed from billboards and brochures, and was lived according to the manufactured physicality of the development’s design and the demographic of resident who came to buy into it. This wasn’t a place of divergent interest or vastly different views about life. While it suggested choice was available, from what I saw choice was limited to the selection of a style of housing from a set of pre-packaged options, and the membership of different types of much the same sorts of community groups. For those people who called this community home and fitted its logic, it was great. But for those who didn’t feel it included them, it wasn’t. This is what community came to mean in Greater Springfield; a pre-packaged, singular and exclusive collectivity that celebrated itself against perceived and highly marketable differences to other urban spaces.

6.4 Answering the Questions of Public Pedagogical Interpretations of Community in the contemporary: some final thoughts

I started this thesis by posing a central research problem:

⁹⁷ Augustine Heights was one of the most recent developments in the area, and had just commenced as I entered Greater Springfield for this project in early 2005.

How is the idea of community utilised as a central aspect of a contemporary, urban master-planned development?

The short answer is that community in the contemporary has been called upon to act as a sort of fix-all to problems of urbanism. It is something that is largely seen as 'good' but which is difficult to achieve in existing urban spaces; as such it features as a central component of new urban developments like Greater Springfield. In this regard community is that something 'in between' (Grange 1999) that is 'nice to have' (Bauman 2001: 1), but is something that many urban spaces due to the legacies of their sprawling growth and the 'rapidly privatized and individualised' (Bauman 2001:15) lifestyles they yield, cannot offer. In response to this, community emerges as a key theme in many contemporary developments as a valuable and differentiating attribute. But unlike the romanticized 'organic' communities of the past, in which human organization was mustered as a collective response to shared spatialisation, community in places like Greater Springfield attaches to premiums of lifestyle. It is now a commodified aspect of collective living that only those economically capable might have access to (Bauman 2001, Keller 2003, Putnam 2000).

This was a concern I had when looking at Greater Springfield. Community built along lines of selection and economic determinants didn't fit with the typology of organic community that emerged from the literature presented earlier. In Greater Springfield, community was presented as groups of people living pre-packaged and idealized lifestyles of middle class affluence. It wasn't necessarily about developing a collective response to shared situatedness and the creation of strength through numbers. Community as an ideal had been watered down to represent a location in which similar people with similar values could live in fundamentally similar ways in the one place. Community stood as an attribute of lifestyle in the middle class enclave that Greater Springfield became.

Selling this idea and conceptualization of community was the job of the developers who presented their views of community on the various artefacts I examined in the earlier chapters of this thesis. In the absence of any shared and organized alternative views of community, these authorized, monological expressions of community became the logic of Greater Springfield. But for all the gloss and romanticised idealism of the image presented in these artefacts, it was far from ideal for at least a few of the actual people who lived there. A sort of binary established between the image and the real where 'an interplay between the lived experiences of those individuals ... and the images we see presented broadly in popular

culture' affect the logic of the social milieu (Austin and Hickey 2006: 72). Greater Springfield became a realm of representations. These images of idealised lifestyles and attitudes to living functioned public pedagogically as a sort of 'living suggestion' that defined community in terms of the structuring of the built environment and the sense of distinction that the development carried. It was a community that residents moved into and assumed; not one that they defined.

The question for Greater Springfield is now whether community will continue this way. Is it destined to remain as an idealized series of images, or will organic expressions of it begin to peek through the heavily authorized façade of organised community groups, selected leisure pursuits and pre-fabricated settings? I intend to revisit Greater Springfield in time to look at what its people are doing and what community means as the development ages and gains more of a sense of itself through time. But at the moment, I don't see any grass-roots alternatives to the brand of community currently displayed.

In terms of what my experiences in Greater Springfield have taught me about the nature of community in contemporary urban settings, I found the blatant corporatization of community fascinating but at the same time difficult to grapple with. While I've long been interested in the way that public space comes to be used to present the ideas of private concerns, I was amazed at how dominantly signage in public space was deployed in Greater Springfield. Equally amazing was the frequency and 'gloss' of the various newsletters and brochures that were distributed in the place. The marketing machine deployed in Greater Springfield was an effective one, and for me, this was an indication of how processes of 'branding' have come to be an almost standard element in the construction of things like housing developments in the contemporary. The world is an increasingly marketed and marketable commodity, to the point that even our experiences of those spaces closest in (our houses and those activities that occur within and around them) fall prey to marketing imagery. In Greater Springfield the experience of community was especially open to the spin of idealized representation.

But it was where and how I gained access to these expressions of Greater Springfield that has held the most significance for me. As an ethnographer, I simply just had to be there to gain a clear insight into what the space meant publicly. It was in the zone of the street-scape in particular that I gathered a rich understanding of collective life that set the context for the bulk of my work. As such the street-scape of Greater Springfield functioned as a transitory location in which I saw the ebb and flow of cultural processes. It was also a space

that inculcated me as a flaneur; an observer who looked around as I walked through the street space and took in what Greater Springfield meant.

This was the essence of the street-scape in Greater Springfield. Outside of its basic utilitarian purpose of being a part of a transport network, it also operated as a major location of culture. The street, that place from which I looked at Greater Springfield and located my discussions with its residents, was a proximal 'outside' zone that I initially (at the commencement of this project) didn't fully appreciate the significance of. The street is the teacher we don't even realise is there; sending out imagery and signage at every turn, requiring mediated behaviours as we negotiate the people and places it leads to, and drawing on accumulated knowledge (our 'street smarts') to safely arrive at the destinations we set out for. The everyday-ness of the street masks their influence; the mundanity of the street as a product of urbanised landscapes sees us encountering these spaces regularly but unquestioningly. It is the influence these spaces exert that matters; the mediations the street exercise offer an insight into the way we live as 'rapidly privatized and individualised' (Bauman 2001:15) members of the contemporary, globalised world.

We become flaneurs in these information rich streetscapes. For the flaneur, that street walker and social critic originally of *fin de siecle* Paris, the street offered a key location to watch and be consumed by the play of the social:

The Flaneur lives his life as a succession of absolute beginnings. From the past, there is an easy exit; the present is just a gateway; the future is not yet, and what is not yet cannot bind. (Bauman 1994:139)

It is the flaneur that:

...is like a detective seeking clues who reads people's characters not only from the physiognomy of their faces but via a social physiognomy of the street. (Shields 1994:63).

From his (as the original flaneur was only ever a man) reading of the street – from this detective like gathering of information *on* the street – the flaneur operates as a fixed point on the temporal continuum of the street. It is he who stops to exert his reading, his observation of the streetscape in order to fix it in a point in time and space. But to say that the flaneur is dead, gone with the arcades of 1890's Paris, denies that we are all, as street-users, implicated

in a flanerie of necessity in this period of late capitalism. We find ourselves exposed to a range of message systems in the streetscape – information networks that represent the global village in our very own local thoroughfares. It is the street that exposes us, in our corner of the world to the multiple discourses of the urban environment. The street is an open location away from our comfort points in the home, shopping mall or school. A space that is inhabited, common, invested with multiple meanings and ownerships simultaneously. It is a site a site for the operation of public pedagogies.

As such, we need to be critical in our contemporary flaneurist pursuits. The street isn't a neutral space, but one contested with claims and power-plays. Like in Greater Springfield, where significant agency to determine what the space meant was held by the developers' of the place, the street is a location of specific interests and appropriations; this is the nature of our neo-liberal, globalised and late-capitalist world, in which informal, public pedagogical activity occurs increasingly in public spaces. As Giroux (2004) reminds us, 'profound transformations have taken place in the public space' (498), with the street functioning as both active host of artefacts of public pedagogical production (such as the roadside billboard) and as a pedagogical force of its own contextualisation. As urban flaneurs we negotiate our streetscapes whilst being bombarded with information flows, each drawing their own discursive formations and identity forming practices.

And it is this that incorporates us as unwitting flaneurs. We absorb the flows and constructions of the street and its streetscape and interact as individuals contextualised by the urban environment. We read our way through our urban habitus with the street guiding our path to those key points of destination. We perform meaning construction acts as we pass through and as it responds to us, sending us images and representations of our global, urban space. The street as both a physical entity and imagined space is implicit in the construction of meaning via this public pedagogical capacity. The street warrants more serious attention from us; as a location of the construction of the social and a location in which discursive formations find meaning and information flows present representations of our world, we as unwitting flaneurs should enter it with a critical capacity to determine and deconstruct the messages it beams to us. That, for me, has been the lesson of this project. The street is no neutral place. As a key location within the urban environs we inhabit, the street is that intermediary from which we learn and find out about our selves. But who it is that arbitrates what we see in this ever-corporatised public space and how we come to consume these images is the point of significance here.

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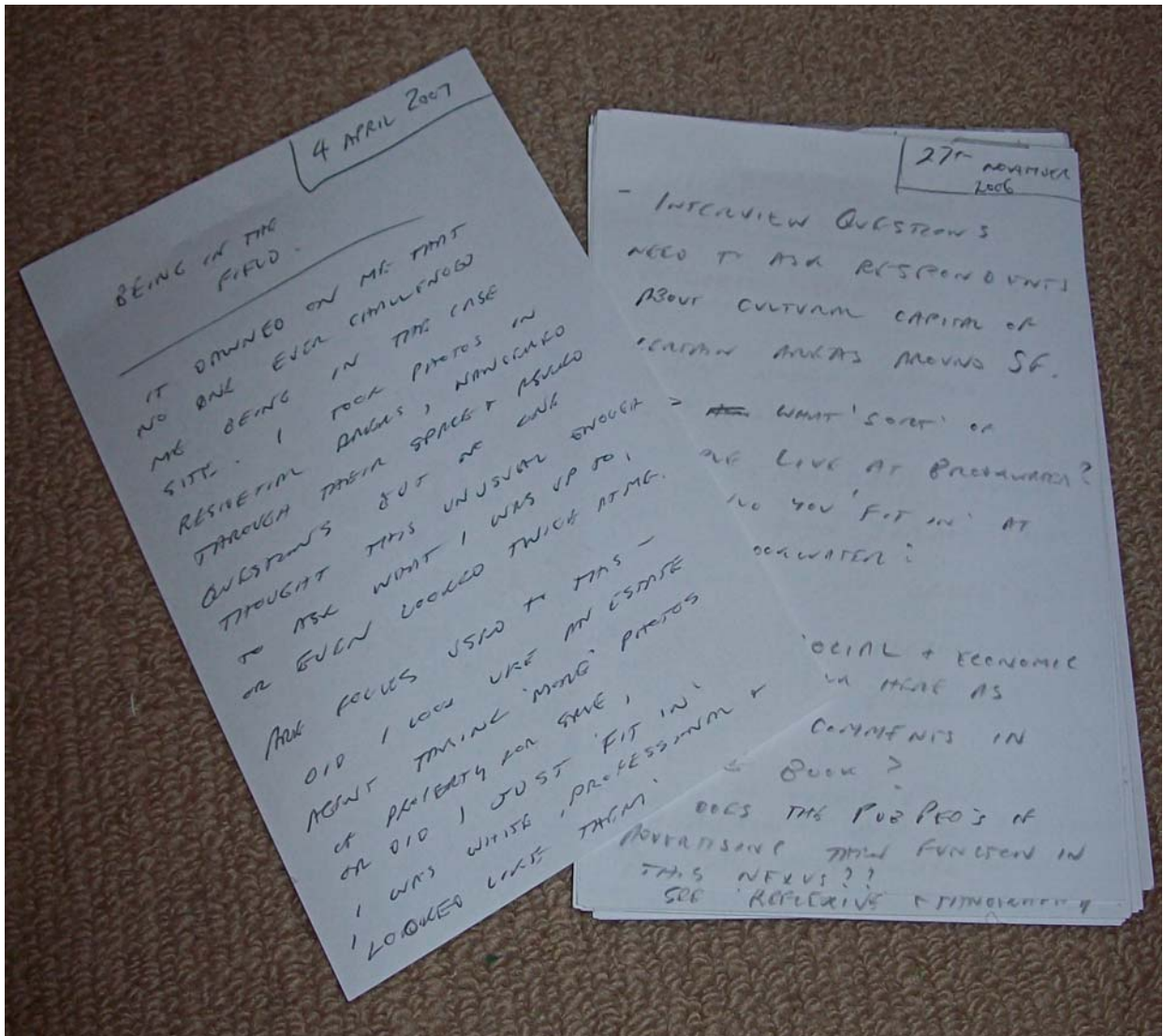
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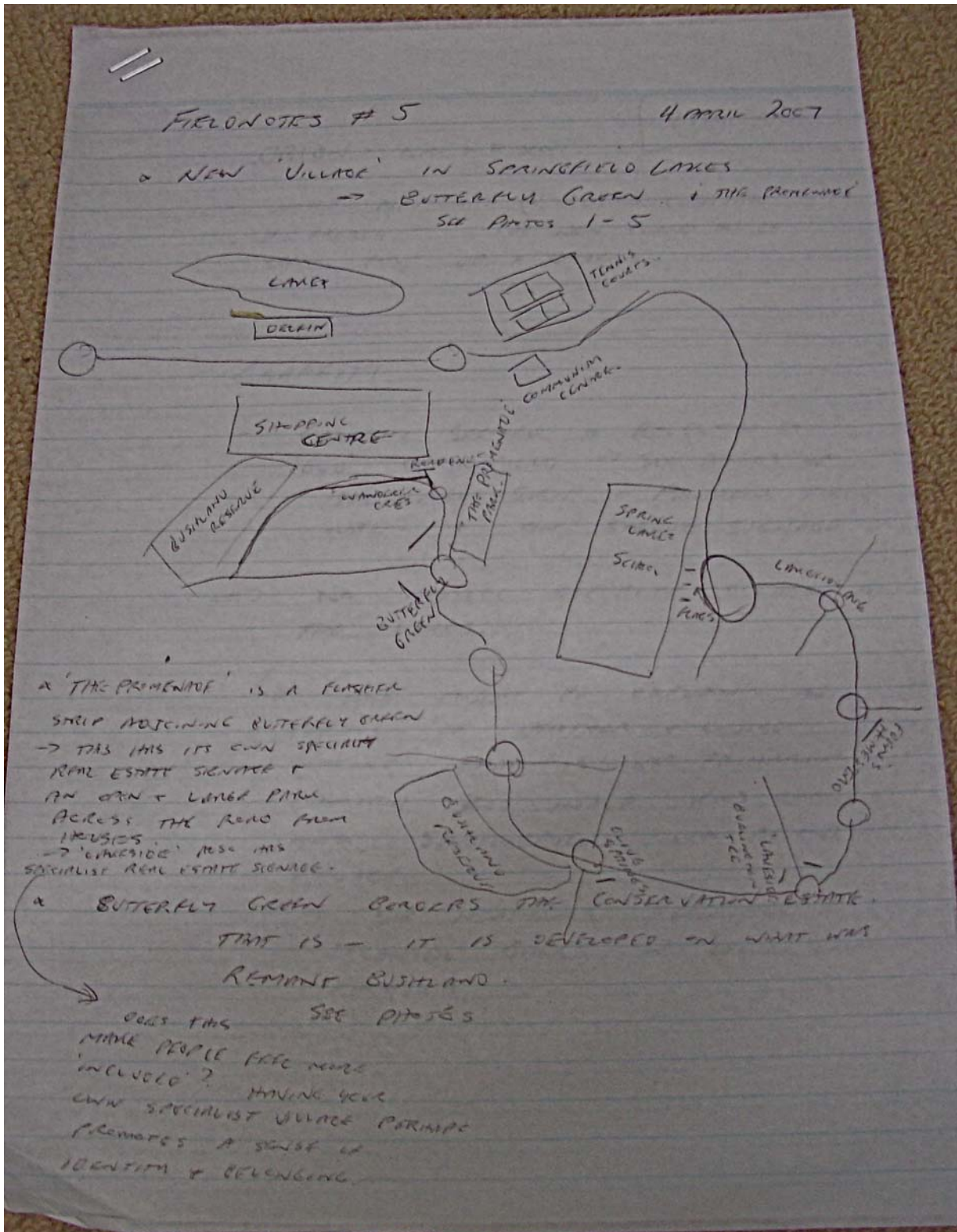
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Appendix C: Ethnographic Diary

The following Ethnographic Diary charts the development of the ideas that underpinned this thesis, and highlights key instances in its production. It is a highly personalised series of 'notes to self' containing ideas and references that broadly translate as a chronological record of significant events that contributed to this project and an indicator of the development of my thinking.

Project Commencement : January- February 2005.

I originally had ideas of undertaking a study that investigated the way that public applications information literacy were deployed in community settings. The project would look at how individuals come together in collective units to share and exchange information and knowledge. I had thought about using Greater Springfield as a case site, given that I had a connection with the area through my work at USQ and that the site was highly publicised as being 'black cable' high speed internet connected (which, too this day, hasnt fully materialised and is the cause of significant community criticism towards the developers and telecommunications providers involved). A fair amount of publicity about Greater Springfield being a 'learning community' circulated in conjunction with the suggestions of its internet connectivity, and it seemed a good idea to explore how people come to terms with this and collectively learn. After thinking about the topic a bit further, and discovering that work by another Doctoral student at another university was dealing with a related topic (the development of an online learning community), I found myself drawn more to the way that ideas about the community were presented in the public spaces of the development. The more time I spent in the site the more I came to realise that this was a site of learning where the 'public pedagogical artefacts' (as I came to call them) that dominated the landscape, exerted very specific ideas about what living in Greater Springfield meant. This was to be the focus of my thesis, and from this I went about altering the original plans focusing on information literacies in community settings to investigating the way that public pedagogical artefacts go about informing collective understandings of community. After identifying and confirming supervisors, I applied, and on the 28th February 2005, I was accepted by the University as a Doctoral student on a Australian Government sponsored Research Training Scheme (RTS) scholarship.

Starting the Project : February 2005-Febrary 2006

The first thing I did after being accepted was to set about reading. My plan was to prepare as complete a literature review as possible for the Project Proposal, which I planned to present and defend in April 2006. I started by organising categories of literature and worked through lists of readings I compiled from library and database searches, and a scour through my own bookshelves. The concerns of critical pedagogy, specifically Giroux's work on Public Pedagogy, was where I started, with this moving into work on Postmodern Geography and Urban Sociology. In between this, I was writing a chapter exploring sociological understandings of Community for an edited book, with some of this feeding nicely into my doctoral work. By September 2005, I had a reasonable focus on where things were going and what the literature was telling me. At this point, I started thinking about the method I might deploy, and having had a background in ethnography, decided that this was going to provide me with scope to complete the project. I started reading literature on methodology, purchased a copy of Denzin and Lincoln's Handbook (The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research, 3rd ed) and started putting together a design for the project. By November 2005, just as my non-teaching semester was about to commence at USQ, I was in a good position to commence writing the proposal for the project. I set about focusing on a review of the literature and project design, and built the proposal around these elements in accordance with University requirements. At the end of Sem 3 2005-6 I had a mostly complete proposal, and booked in for my Proposal Defence Presentation for April. As the proposal was being developed, my supervisors and I established a process for reviewing and amending drafts. This essentially involved my principal supervisor providing input on the content and method, with my associate supervisor checking grammatical and technical aspects of the document. After an initial document that was prepared in mid-2005 for the purpose of focusing ideas and to simply 'get writing', further drafts of the proposal followed in December 2005 and the final submitted draft in March 2006.

Project Proposal Submission and Defence: April 2006.

After submitting my proposal to a review panel, I prepared for the defence. Set for April 11 2006, I prepared an accompanying powerpoint presentation, and in front of a group of 10 or so colleagues, defended my proposal. Feedback arrived a week later, and to my relief, the proposal was accepted with only minor typographical amendments required. I was now a candidate.

Ethics Clearance : April 2006.

Following the successful defence of my proposal, I set about applying for Ethics Clearance for the project. Having completed applications for ethics clearance for research projects prior to this, I was familiar with the process, and lodged the application. This was approved in June 2006. It also marked the end of an intensive period of form filling and administrivia with the project ; I was now through the bulk of this and could now focus on the actual project and commence fieldwork.

Entering the Field : June 2006

Although I had been informally visiting the field for monological observations to get my bearings since late 2005, I could now start talking to people and commence more intensive fieldwork in the site.

- Making Connections

One of the first things I needed to do after getting a sense of the physical environment and layout of Greater Springfield, was to make connections with people in the area. I attended all sorts of functions, meetings and gatherings, including being invited to the Christmas Party of Springfield Land Corporation (8th November 2005) and the official launch of Education City (20th April 2006). I spoke to leaders of education institutions in the area (for example, I spoke with Mike Hennessy from St. Peters Lutheran College, Indooroopilly, after the school was going through the process of establishing a branch campus in Greater Springfield), architects and engineers (for example, I met Laurence Taylor, an associate of PDT Architects, one of the firms engaged in designing Greater Springfield's buildings, and discussed the nature of contemporary urban design at a cocktail party for the Springfield Land Corporation) and representatives of the developers of Greater Springfield (in particular, 'Nicole', a marketing and public relations representative of Springfield Land Corporation). I also met with doctoral students and researchers from other universities who were exploring other elements of Greater Springfield's development (including Ashley Jones, a doctoral student from the University of Queensland, who was undertaking research in the way that online communities were in operation in the development). But most significantly, I made contact with my key informant 'Rebecca'. Rebecca was a long term resident of Greater Springfield, and was heavily involved in community groups and activities. I met her through my work at

the Springfield campus of the University of Southern Queensland, and simply got talking to her about my project one afternoon early on in the piece. We continued the conversations about the project over coming weeks, and after it became obvious that she was interested in the project and clearly knowledgeable about Greater Springfield, I asked her if she would be happy to continue talking with me about the place. While I stressed that I would be back to bother her pretty much weekly for at least a couple of years, she graciously accepted and we began our collaboration. From day one of the discussions we had about Greater Springfield, Rebecca became an invaluable source of insider knowledge.

After making contact with Rebecca and continuing serendipitous meetings with others involved in the development, I was on my way. I now had a basis from which to ground my analyses and ideas.

From this, my meetings with residents proceeded. I initially had plans of contacting residents with a mail-out, but found that I was having success directly approaching people in the parks and shopping centres of Greater Springfield. My first contact with the residents of Greater Springfield started in mid 2006 and intensified from April 2007 as my ideas about the place started to solidify (at this stage, the interview format changed slightly and now included the application of 'prompt' photographs of key billboards, from which I asked informants to critique and analyse).

- Ideas and Revelations

I found myself preparing scratch notes throughout the life of the project, with these scribbles containing almost anything from reflections on fieldwork to ideas to investigate for sections of the thesis. The following draws from these scratch notes and provides an indication to the sorts of ideas I was grappling with at key points through the project.

Dec 12 2005 : Questions from the literature :

From reading the selection I had compiled on critical pedagogy I had the following questions :

How is it a community comes to learn informally ? How do informal pedagogical artefacts such as the billboards in Greater Springfield go about exerting a pedagogical influence ?

The development of community intellectualism must be connected to this pedagogical context. The operation of resistance to the imagery presented by these artefacts will be read in terms of the boundary logic they establish ; that is, a challenge to these ideas is presented in terms of the logic of the billboards themselves.

Gruenewald's ideas on Place Based Pedagogy taps into this logic- here space and spacialisation connect intimately as foundational to the epistemology of locational understanding.

Dec 13 2005 : Liberation Vs Emancipation

I'm developing a lexicon of terms with liberation and emancipation coming to refer to the following :

Liberation : suggests a cooperative (Freirean) working of oppressive bounds.

Emancipation : carries an individualist connotation of *being* emancipated.

Dec 14 2005 :

The literature I'm working through is combining into set categories built around notions of emancipatory and liberatory social action, founded on my readings of Habermas and Freire. Building from this is a basis for the project that sees participatory social action formed in community intellectualism, and place based pedagogies that take account of the boundary logic of the site.

Dec 14 2005 :

Review of the Literature preliminary structure :

Community

Community Planning/Planned Community

Understandings Place and Space

Critical Readings of Place and Space

 Postmodern Geography

 Community

Public Intellectualism

Community Learning Environments

It has also occurred to me that the project is working from two locations- that of the public pedagogical artefact and that of the resident. Two distinct viewpoints are contained here and will require equally distinct methodological approaches to capture the intent of each.

Dec 15 2005 :

Preliminary Timeline for Project :

Sem 1 2005 : Exploratory Reading

Sem 2 2005 : Identify research problem and design

Sem 3 2005 : Proposal preparation

Sem 1 2006 : Proposal Defence

Sem 2 2006 : Commence fieldwork

Sem 3 2006 : Fieldwork

Sem 1- Sem 3 2007 : Fieldwork

Sem 1 2008 : Analysis

Sem 2- Sem 3 2008 : Analysis and initial writing

Sem 1 2009: Writing and Submission.

Dec 15 2005 :

Establish a clear indication of the nature of Springfield in first chapter. Definition and description of the case site is fundamental.

Dec 17 2005 :

Note the development of a Lyotardian interview method, whereby an approach toward the differend encountered by the interrogation of the language games of interviewer and informant might mitigate the consequential presence of the interviewer in field. See the concerns for 8th and 9th moment research by Denzin and Lincoln.

Jan 12 2006 : Doctoral Structure :

The Case Site :

The Nature of the Case Site

Literature of Urban Space

Data and Methodology

Public Pedagogies

Community Analysis

How do individual notions of agency contrast with those presented publicly ? How do they combine with those identities that are applied in locations of power ? How do public pedagogies influence agency and desire ?

The Identity of the City

Locating the Axes of Identity

Race and Racial Zones in the City

Class and economics of urbanity

Gender and sites of gender

Jan 22 2006 : Met with Ashley Jones at Springfield Campus, USQ.

I struck on an idea during the conversation with Ashley regarding the application of some earlier work on representation. How does the representation of community in Springfield relate to the politics of representation in operation. What is the logic of the image being presented and how does the process of representing conflate with lived experience. There is a question of individual agency in operation here, whereby the operation of the boundary logic that defines the Springfield imaginary comes into contact with actual experiences that inform it and become represented via the imagery of the artefacts of Springfield.

Jan 24 2006 :

I've been thinking about the idea of applying individual case studies of informants to illustrate the ideas that are coming from the site. The idea is that microscopic analyses of several parts taken together will provide a view of the site whilst also charting the experiences of individuals in the site.

Feb 5 2006 :

Questions that will require answering, coming from the last few days of work :

- How did I come to identify this study and the case site ? See William Foote-Whyte's ideas p282 Street Corner Society.
- What assumptions did I bring as to what I would find in Springfield ?
- After looking at the project design and what I knew, it emerged that I was looking at notions of 'agency' in a contemporary urban context. This is the point of differentiation with other work being done in this site. This project is about understanding agency in the context of a highly conceptualised and marketed planned community.
- What 'spurred me on' to undertake this study : why this methodology ? why this content ? why communities ?
- How did I know I was getting into the case as I commenced my fieldwork ? When did the actual study begin ?
- How was my data appropriate and legitimate ?
- What was the purpose of this study- what did I want to achieve ?
- How will I account for my own consequential presence in this study- how did I relate and react to the field ?
- How will I maintain a balance of familiarity with, but also maintain a suitable distance from the case site ? How will I be the 'professional stranger' that Agar notes.
- How will I leave the case site ?

- Will it be necessary to anonymise the case site- is this possible ?
(I later decided that it wouldnt be necessary to anonymise the case site, but I would ensure confidentiality and anonymity of all informants).

Feb 19 2006 :

I was going to have to apply a certain level of distance to the case site to keep its practices and the goings on that occurred within it as unique and special. This was a process of making exotic the ordinary. This was the ethnographers purpose- to go into the unknown and report.

Sept 7 2006 :

I realised that simply being in the field opened avenues for investigation. I didnt need to know who I was going to talk to prior to entering. Things could happen serendipitously and in most cases so far these are the better instances of data collection. I'm getting rich views of the place but just talking to people in parks and shopping centres.

Sept 21 2006 : Nvivo Install

Finally, Nvivo has been installed. My PC had troubles with its memory and I needed to have an upgrade done prior to Nvivo going on. Graeme came over today to install and it seems to work.

Sept 22 2006 :

Informants mention the 'Delfin Effect'. This is a major theme- see transcript with Rebecca. The Delfin Effect responds to a comfort factor and insularity in Springfield whereby people become closed off to the world outside of Springfield.

Sept 29 2006 :

Jon noted keeping my data sources seperated- collect interview and public pedagogical sources seperately to maintain a distance between each. The idea here is to keep the analysis somewhat partial and unique to each data set. I've decided to work through the public pedagogical artefacts first and establish an analysis of these, from which my questions of residents will be framed and deployed. The trick will be in accounting for my preconceived ideas of the place built in my analysis of viewing the artefacts when it comes time to talk to residents.

Sept 30 2006 : Charting a Politics of Representation

We culturally require the creation of certain archetypes that are constructed according to social mores and make sense according to the boundary logic. How do Springfield's public pedagogies operate in this way ?

Oct 3 2006 :

Springfield community as spatial and imagined. How does the Springfield community work as an entity according to Delanty's ideas ?

Oct 4 2006 :

'The Map is not the territory' Alfred Korzybsky. Note the representational logic of this and the construction of an imagined geography of Greater Springfield.

Oct 5 2006 :

Data was everywhere and it depended on how I looked at various artefacts. I as researcher needed to remain open and look at ordinary things differently.

Oct 17 2006 : Key Terms

Detournement, Heterotopia, Imagined Community, Imagined Geography, Postmetropolis, Carceral City, Thirdspace, Revanchism, Symbolic Community, Agency.

Nov 13 2006 :

Had trouble getting momentum with doctorate due to staggered and interrupted progress. Work has been getting in the way considerably. The doctorate has really become the '2nd project'.

Nov 15 2006 :

Note the AV Jennings 'Halpine' development. Similarly to Springfield it uses water and lakes as a centralising theme.

Nov 27 2006 :

Interview Questions need to ask respondents about the cultural capital of the different parts of Greater Springfield. What 'sort' of people live in Brookwater/Springfield Lakes/Augustine Heights ?
How does social and economic capital work here ?

Nov 9 2006 :

Springfield as SimCity- built upon the nostalgia of the past,
Springfield functions as a simcity according to Pahl's ideas- see Day pg
14.

Dec 19 2006 : Nvivo Training

I attended a session run by QSR on Nvivo 7 today. The training was
excellent, and it seems that Nvivo will work with my project and the
data I have. My only concern is the application of visual data sources-
apparently version 8 will have extended capabilities for visual data
sources.

Jan 24 2007 :

Did my observation of Springfield actually follow the logic of a 'quick'
ethnographic technique for establishing initial concerns ? Work through
Cunningham and Jones' ideas (2005 pg 2)

Jan 29 2007 :

Trying to contact relevant people to ask permission to enter Jaggera
country is difficult. Contacted people in three locations- none had
authority. Got a lead on M. Williams from Yugambah Cultural Centre.

Feb 13 2007 :

Spoke with David Henry's PA re permission to use map in thesis. She
noted that the 'Nucleus' had been changed to 'Parkside Business
Address'. She also spoke about the history of the development and its
roots in the 'Reston' development from the US.

Feb 15 2007 :

Are notions of an 'edge city community' like a professional community
present in SF ? That is, do individuals feel that they are part of
something special and connected to others across space and time in an
imagined way here ?

Feb 22 2007 :

Note the ABC documentary on the Northcott building and the BighArt
project.

Jun 10 2007 :

Springfield via its imagery presents a 'celebration of the average'. That is, via public pedagogies of lifestyle it maintains a status quo.

March 21 2007 : Interview Pragmatics

It quickly emerged that informants drawn from the 'community update' newsletter would come from a similar perspective- these were folks who bought into the Springfield Vision by virtue of being incorporated into the groups. This confirmed my approach of simply talking to 'everyday' folks in the streets and parks.

My approach for identifying informants worked from one of three ways :

- via Rebecca my key informant
- via documentation and positional authority- eg development company reps
- by simply approaching people in person in the public spaces of Springfield

I've developed a good list of contacts from those formally pre-organised interviews and am working through them .

March 22 2007 :

Spoke with 'Louise' about her interview with me. We had a good chat and it seems that she's looking forward to talking with me. I'm going to meet her at school. She mentioned the Delfin Effect on the phone, so I should be able to build on the stuff Rebecca noted.

March 27 2007 :

Travelling to the case site gave me a good chance to develop my interview questions and reflect on what it was I needed to do. This gave me a good opportunity to focus my days work.

March 28 2007 :

Met today with Nicole and Debbie- very good interview. Initially started very formally, but they soon relaxed and started telling me much about the place and the philosophy behind the development. Very useful for setting the basis for the project.

March 31 2007 :

Include in Chapter 3 : Methodology a section on fieldwork as per application of Hobbes' ideas and Emerson, Fretz and Shaw. Talk about application of scratch notes and fieldnotes in this process. These are the 'backstage scribblings' Emerson Fretz and Shaw discuss.

My fieldnotes essentially consisted of formal fieldnotes mostly written in-situ, basic scratch notes of ideas and the research diary. See Sanjeck (1990) ideas on fieldnotes in cultural anthropology.

April 1 2007 : Processes for Writing Fieldnotes.

I followed Emerson, Fretz and Shaw's ideas on writing fieldnotes. Typically fieldnotes were written as close to the event as possible- generally in the car after I finished an interview event. I later sometimes added to these in a tidied up form when back at the office.

The other thing I had to take account of was my consequential presence : How did I account for my presence in the case site ? As my setting was fundamentally like the one I came from and I was 'like' the people I was reporting on, I looked the same, I spoke the same, I understood the cultural dynamic, knew the cultural cues and mores of the setting. Basically, I fitted in and hence took my consequential presence to be minimal- I didnt cause a stir being there, apart from perhaps raising consciousness about the things I asked my informants about. 'The ethnographer cannot be a fly on the wall' (Emerson Fretz and Shaw pg 3).

April 1 2007 : Is this project Ethnographic ?

I keep coming across references to ethnography being about being in exotic case sites. These are 'exotic, distant ethnographies'. My ethnography wasnt distant and involved me making exotic the seemingly ordinary. Given that my case site was like the one I came from, I was still applying the method of ethnography and realising its concerns for description of a cultural milieu. A reflexivity is required here to make the ordinary unusual in order to study it and investigate those assumptions I carry. There is an autoethnographic element here whereby I am actively assessing my own assumptions as much as anything else.

April 4 2007 :

It dawned on me that no one ever challenged me about being in the field. I took photos in parks, wandered through neighbourhoods and asked questions of residents, but no one ever questioned me, or thought that this was unusual enough to ask what I was up to, or even looked twice at me.

Are people in Greater Springfield used to this sort of thing ? Did I look like one of the many estate agents or development company reps who worked in the public space of Springfield taking photos and talking to people like I did (but for different purposes) ? Or did I just fit in- I was a white professional and looked like them.

April 13 2007 :

Springfield is a very conventional city. It isnt particularly radical architecturally- brick veneer standard. Its just done with a few added extras- lakes, community centre, centralised planning. Not radical to other planned communities like the Venus Project.

April 15 2007 :

Photographs as fieldnotes : It occurred that photographs are a good record of fieldwork. They are immediate and contain (visual) detail that no written fieldnote could transfer. However they are framed and need 'authorising words' to carry meaning. As a major aspect of my fieldnotes, visual sources such as photogrphs provide me with a solid contextual record of the things I saw.

August 10 2007 : The Representational Field in Springfield

It emerged that my reporting of SF was performed according to multiple representations (See Denzin and Lincoln). Firstly the representation by Springfield Land Corp. Next the representations by those residents I spoke with. Then there were my representations.

Oct 22 2007 : Analysis

Perform analysis from cultural studies perspective as per Denzin and Lincoln. See three validities : hermeneutic, poststructuralist and contextual.

Nov 6 2007 :

Note as epigraph : 'Hehehhehe... people will do anything a sign tells them'. Homer Simpson Bart of War episode.

Dec 5 2007 : Photograph Naming Convention

Categories of photographs : Signs, Schools, Old Springfield, Graffiti, Gated Community, Villages, Parks, Buildings.

Dec 12 2007 : Code Conventions

Nodes drawn from data and applied in Nvivo:

Environment, Convenience, Belonging/Community,
Arrogance/Affluence/Class, Race/Ethnicity, Health and Wellness,
Lifestyle, Information Dissmeination, The Delfin Effect, Education and
Learning.

Feb 26 2008 : Themes emergent for Chapter 1

- The literature shows that ideas of community and city are held as being incompatible
- Popcorn's idea of 'cocooning' as a hallmark of the contemporary social landscape
- Springfield is a location residents 'dont have to leave'
- Springfield as an 'imagined geography'
- Springfield and the logic of the garden city movement of the 1940's
- Springfield as organised around a boundary logic of community
- Springfield as a location of destructive gemeinschaft

March 20 2008 : Themes emergent for Chapter 2 :

- Community as an imagined ideal
- Community as shared pastness
- Springfield as Edge City, Carceral City and Thirdspace

April 19 2008 :

Add more depth to the description of Springfield in Chapter 1. Use photos to describe.

April 20 2008 : Springfield as Pastiche

Note the idea of pastiche and the bland nostalgia in operation through Springfield.

April 24 2008 :

Choice Theme for Chapter 4 : Agency as choice and the availability to select what is wanted. Value comes into this scope of choice. 'Value' and 'Opportunity' as themes merge in the suggestions within the billboards where Springfield Lakes provides a place to find what you want. Underpinning this theme is the idea that Springfield provides for its residents.

May 28 2008 :

Note the work of the Stencil Revolution- urban street artists.

May 9 2008 :

Note Henri Lefebvre's ideas about detournement and the appropriation of urban space. How does detournement operate in relation to the function of public pedagogies in SF ? What resistance is available here ?

July 10 2008 :

Its getting there. I'm progressing nicely through the drafts and have a mostly complete manuscript. Chapter 6 is going slowly- I'm a bit over the whole thing and need a bit of space. I've decided to work through my supervisor's comments from the first 3 chapter and get these sections sorted. I'll then come back to Chapter 6 with some distance and some focus to finish off the thesis.

August 6 2008 :

Virtually there. The manuscript is sorted and with my supervisors for comment. What I've already received back from Jon suggests that it looks good to him, with the changes suggested being mostly straightforward stylistic changes.

Appendix D: Fieldtrip excursion log and photograph log

Sept- Oct 2005 : I visited the case site on three occasions during this time as part of involvement with the University of Southern Queensland and new Springfield Campus of the University. In particular I spent time in 'Education City' looking at the development of the USQ campus buildings. I also travelled around the site getting to know the physical layout of Greater Springfield, particularly Old Springfield, Springfield Lakes and Brookwater. Fieldtrips during this initial stage of the project focused on monological observations of the site in order to understand its layout and design. I typically drove around the place, and spent time walking through parks and shopping centres in order to get a feel for the site. Photographs were taken during these trips, but were later discarded in place of more focused photographs of topical locations relevant to the emerging project. These initial photographs did provide a basis upon which my initial understandings of the site developed.

Mar 15- Jun 16 2006 : As part of my involvement in teaching courses at the Springfield Campus of the University, I visited the site weekly (Tuesdays). After teaching at the campus through the mornings, I spent afternoons in the field developing my understanding of the site. I typically took photographs of key locations in each of the suburban spaces of Greater Springfield and spent the bulk of my time understanding the layout and design of the development. No formal fieldnotes were recorded at this stage, however 'scratch notes' recording ideas and emergent themes for investigation were produced. This stage of the fieldwork was solely monological and provided me with time to develop an understanding of the site.

March 13 2006 : Photograph Log 1 :

Old Springfield (primarily from Nev Smith Drive West), and Springfield Lakes.

(At this stage of the project, I developed a regimen of fieldwork that focused on distinct areas within Greater Springfield. This first set worked west from Old Springfield to Springfield Lakes).

April 19 2006 : Photograph Log 2.

Education City.

August 21 2006 : Photograph Log 3. Fieldnotes 1.

Springfield Lakes, including suburban developments (Lakeside, Olive Springs, The Promenade, Lakes Entrance) and some of Old Springfield connection to Springfield Lakes.

The first formal fieldnotes for the project were recorded during this fieldtrip. These recorded the location on a hand sketched map of key building and landmarks in Springfield Lakes, and the relative location of each suburban development. Initial impromptu interviews were conducted during this time with people encountered whilst in the parks of Springfield Lakes.

Sep 22 2006 :

Special interview with Rebecca.

Sep 25 2006 : Photograph Log 4. Fieldnotes 2.

Old Springfield, specifically Springfield Fair Shopping Centre, College Grove, and Woodcrest.

Accompanying fieldnotes record hand sketched location of key landmarks (Bridgewater Chase, Springfield Lakes Boulevard, Old Springfield, Springfield Fair) and record key themes emerging from impromptu interviews with residents.

Oct 23 2006 : Photograph Log 5. Fieldnotes 3.

Brookwater, Augustine Heights and Brentwood.

Accompanying fieldnotes record hand sketched location of key landmarks, and record themes emergent from impromptu interviews with residents and representatives of the Brookwater Sales Office.

Oct 25 2006 :

Follow-up interviews with informants from Oct 23 2006 visit.

November 14-28 2006 :

Old Springfield and Springfield Lakes.

I visited the site each Tuesday over these three weeks to review the notes I had made during previous trips. I continued with impromptu interviews with residents encountered serendipitously during the visit.

February 8 2007 : Photograph Log 6. Fieldnotes 4.

Springfield Lakes (Springfield Lakes Boulevard and Delfin Building).

Accompanying fieldnotes recorded themes emergent from impromptu interviews held with residents in Springfield Lakes Park.

March 22 2007 :

Interviews with informants.

March 28 2007 : Photograph Log 7. Fieldnotes 5.

Springfield Lakes, The Metro, The Escarpment and Orion.

Accompanying fieldnotes record hand sketched location of The Escarpment and notes from impromptu interviews held at Orion and The Metro.

March 29 2007 :

Follow up interviews from March 28 2007.

April 4 2007 : Photograph Log 8. Fieldnotes 6 .

Old Springfield and Springfield Lakes (Nev Smith Drive west to Springfield Lakes, from Springfield Lakes park to Lakeside and Promenade).

Accompanying fieldnotes record location of 'villages' in Springfield Lakes and the connection between Springfield Lakes and Old Springfield, and themes emerging from interviews with residents.

May 22- 30 2007 :

I visited the site on these days to review the notes I had made during previous trips. At this stage of the project, initial analysis was underway, with the purpose of these trips being to revisit the locations I drew notes and photographs from in order to confirm the ideas I had developed during previous fieldtrips.

October 12 2007 :

Interviews with residents.

November 7 2007 :

Interviews with residents.

November 9 2007 : Fieldnotes 7.

Notes recorded contacts in Springfield Lakes for interview, and detailed themes emerging from impromptu discussions with residents.

November 12 2007 : Photograph Log 9. Fieldnotes 8.

The Promenade and Springfield Primary.

Accompanying notes record themes emergent from housing style present in The Promenade and upper Lakes, and interviews with residents.

November 21 2007 : Photograph Log 10. Fieldnotes 9.

Old Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Parkside, Orion.

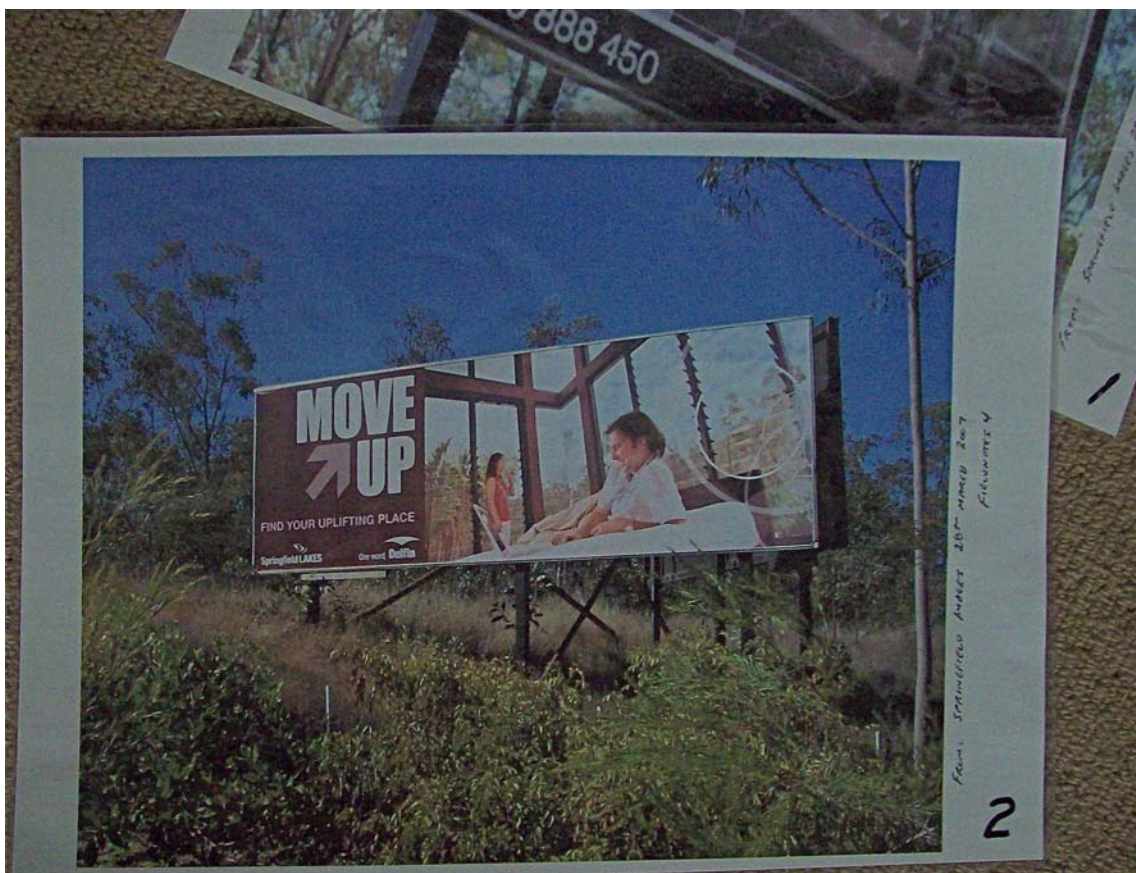
Accompanying notes recorded location of photographs and location of community noticeboards in Old Springfield, and themes from interviews with residents.

Feb 12 2008 : Photograph Log 11. Fieldnotes 10.


Springfield Arterial Road, Augustine Heights, Brookwater, Springfield Lakes.

Accompanying notes tied together loose ends from questions arising from a review of previous two fieldtrips. This was the final visit for this project.


Appendix E : Elicitation photographs



University of Southern Queensland



ANDREW HICKEY
BA, MA (Hons), Graduate Diploma, MEd (Ed) (LHM)
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Invitation to participate in research project exploring the perceptions and opinions of your Community:

Public Pedagogies, Place and Identity: An ethnographic study of an emerging postmodern community

A Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) Project

Andrew Hickey,
Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland

Dear Resident,

A research project is currently underway exploring the perceptions and opinions of residents of the Greater Springfield community. This project forms part of a part of the research base for a Doctoral thesis and an ongoing study of the Greater Springfield community undertaken by the Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland.

Your input to this project is highly valuable and has been sought to provide a perspective on the Greater Springfield community from the position of residents in the area. This study will involve discussions with you regarding your opinions and perceptions of the Greater Springfield community, with all responses and your identity remaining anonymous. If you provide your permission by signing this document, any published results including the completed doctoral manuscript and journal papers that result from this research will be presented in such a way that you will not be able to be identified.

Following this research project you will be contacted by the principal researcher with a summary detailing the outcomes and findings from the research. It is expected that this project will provide an insight into the perceptions of the community and lead to the future planning and development of the Greater Springfield community.

Your decision to be part of this project will not jeopardise any future relations you may have with the University of Southern Queensland. If you decide to be part of this project you are free to withdraw your consent at any stage.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. For further advice or complaint on the conduct of this research, please contact the Postgraduate and Ethics Officer, Office of Research and Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba 4350 AUSTRALIA (email: bartlett@usq.edu.au).

You will be given a copy of this form.

RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM

Public Pedagogies, Place and Identity: An ethnographic study of an emerging postmodern community

A Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) Project

Andrew Hickey,

You are making a decision as to whether or not you will participate in this project. Your signature indicates that, having read the Respondent Information Statement above, you **have decided** to participate.

.....
Signature

.....
Print Name

.....
Date

.....
Contact email

REVOCATION OF CONSENT

Public Pedagogies, Place and Identity: An ethnographic study of an emerging postmodern community

A Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) Project

Andrew Hickey,

I hereby wish to withdraw my consent to participate in this project and understand that my decision to withdraw **WILL NOT** jeopardise and involvement I will have with the University of Southern Queensland and the researcher of this project.

.....
Signature

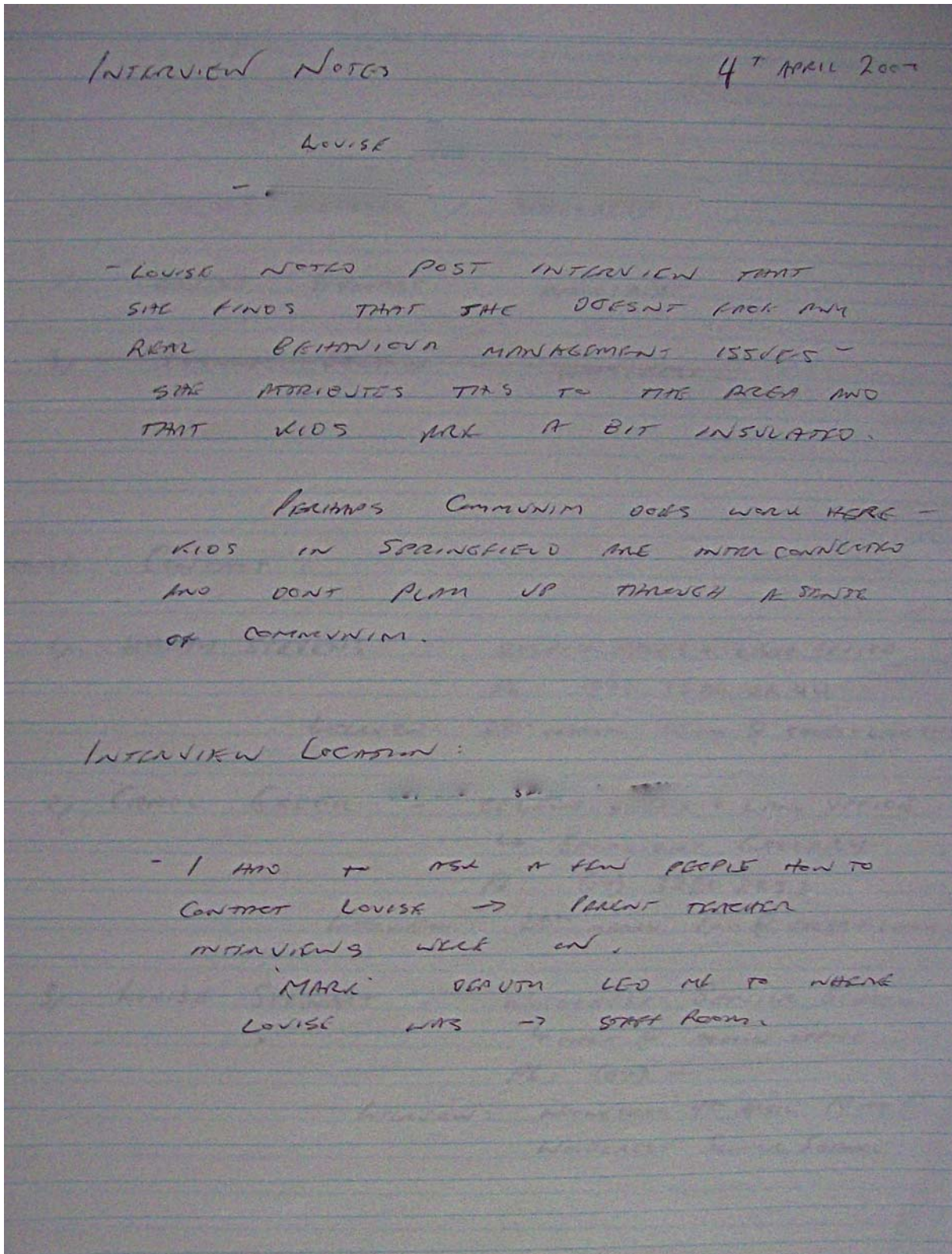
.....
Print Name

.....
Date

For Further Information:

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University of Southern Queensland
TOOWOOMBA 4350, AUSTRALIA

email: hickeya@usq.edu.au
phone: (07) 46 31 2337



- Note : Identifying features of respondent obscured in image

FILE DETAILS

Audio Length: 49 minutes

Audio Quality: Good; Interview recorded using Olympus WS-100 Digital Voice Recorder.

Other Comments: Interview conducted in 'Rebecca's' office: Springfield Lakes, 9th November 2007: 1:15pm. Interview #12.

START OF TRANSCRIPT

Andrew: Thank you Rebecca for agreeing to this recording and interview as per all the other ones we've done. Tell me, as someone leaving Springfield, what does that mean?

Rebecca: Well, it's pretty sad to leave Springfield I suppose. But something occurred to me the other day, 'cause of course Springfield has got its problems or highlights and things like that and of course I'm very cynical anyway of master plan communities and I'm cynical of who determines what public spaces are considered important and so forth. But – and I have my reservations about a lot of things in Springfield I suppose, based on that.
But, why didn't – when someone the other day they criticised Springfield and they said some mean things about Springfield how – like they don't care about the environment, the master plan community and so forth and I found myself getting very defensive at the fact that someone would dare criticise my community. Even though I know that it's got a lot of problems and issues, just the thought that someone else would criticise it really upset me.
So I suppose the community that you live in despite its problems and I suppose it doesn't matter which community you're in, in Australia, whether it's in a remote community or the city or the fringe or the metropolitan, if you feel ownership over your community you have a certain sense of pride whether or not that pride is misplaced or not I suppose.

Andrew: Yeah sure, yeah. Well, [unclear] private, that interests me a little bit and it's something that I've certainly seen over the last couple of years when I've done my field work and trips down to Springfield, is that connectedness – that while and exactly what you said – while people might not agree with how it's been put together there's still that idea and connectedness in community in Springfield.

How would that, do you think, form organically if the Greater Springfield development and Springfield Land Corp, Delfin and those

people responsible for that development didn't go ahead in the way that it has – if Springfield was just left to happen on its own – do you think that pride and sense of community would be there anyway?

Rebecca: Well, I don't think Springfield would be there if it wasn't for the Springfield Land Corporation at all.

Andrew: Sure, yep.

Rebecca: It wouldn't have developed at all because it wasn't land available for residential use originally. But if the question's more like about, like a community grown organically, I think that the sense of pride would be there as well. I don't think Springfield is anything special in that regard but it kind of surprised me a little bit where my feelings about it I suppose, because it is a site constructed in every sense of the word community. So I think that sense of community happens whether it's a master planned or an organic community or whatever.

Andrew: Yeah, okay yeah. Do you think the impetus behind the construction of community as the central tenant of the development, has that enhanced the feeling of community there do you think – hard to say?

Rebecca: Oh. I think that's hard to say, especially I'm just one person. I look at those ads that talk about community about – and repeat them and they are residents and that they do say things like – oh I need, have to leave Springfield. I look at those with disdain and I think they're a shock – they're terrible ads because you do have to leave Springfield anyway, but even if you don't need to leave a city or a town or whatever else, because they've got all the services there. Well that doesn't mean that you don't leave and probably gives more reason to actually get out and broaden your horizons a little bit more. So those kinds of artificially created senses of community are probably mocked by some people within the community, but other people I think really believe it. But those people that are on the ad saying oh, you'll never have to leave Springfield to get anywhere, it's a great community – they do leave Springfield. 'Cause if you want to go watch the movies, you've got to leave. If you want to do a lot of things, you have to actually leave Springfield itself to do those things.

Andrew: Yeah. That's something that a few function time at the same time as that. It's this insular or potential for insularity in Springfield is an issue and you've raised that performance [over speaking]...

Rebecca: Yeah, absolutely.

Andrew: And the Delfin effect and all those sorts of issues that have been brought up. Do you think though that, and you've mentioned before – it's something I've certainly noticed when I've spoken to people and just sort of wandered through Springfield, Greater Springfield – is this almost polarised view of things and some people think it's yeah, it's really cheesy and it's corny, but still all don't mind the idea of community, but perhaps don't agree with the Delfin view of it, or the Springfield Land Corp view of it.

But the other thing – and some people like the community groups for instance – just embrace it, think it's fantastic and see it as a lifeline. Is it a – what's your spin on that? Is it a corporate desire entirely to actually get people to move to this place and we'll put community in, that'll

attract them in? Is it just a marketing spin or is there something genuine behind it, do you think?

Rebecca: I think when Delfin discuss community it's certainly a marketing spin, absolutely. But then on the other hand they have put up community groups which don't make a profit for them but I suppose the fringe benefit of that would be that it might attract people to move into the community and keep it vibrant and so forth. So yeah, I don't buy into their version of community whatsoever.

However, because Springfield is a community because – it's a community because people live there and people work there and play there and their children are there. So I think even despite some cheesy commercials and cheesy marketing, a community will develop anyway, yeah. Because people are people I think and they want to have interactions with other humans.

I suppose in many ways Springfield's been isolated from both Ipswich, which is the city it falls within, and Brisbane. In the past due to lack of public transport and lack of facilities and so forth, it really was probably out in the middle of nowhere for a long time. I think that kind of not isolation as in rural and remote isolation, but that kind of isolation within a metropolitan area creates a sense of community and maybe even identity for people, especially long time residents that live there.

Andrew: Yeah sure, okay. So perhaps the lessons of developments of Western Sydney, like Mount Druitt, Rooty Hill, all those sorts of places from the '70s have been learned by Delfin that to keep people happy, connected, all the rest of it and subsequently land prices up, you need to have these other bits and pieces in.

Rebecca: I'm not that familiar with Mount Druitt and Rooty Hill although I would say that Delfin would be up in arms if it be compared to Rooty Hill...

Andrew: Yes, western Sydney. Yeah.

Rebecca: ...or Mount Druitt.

Andrew: Sure. Yeah. 'Cause [unclear] as you know are – yeah sure. But do you think then that the way that community is being presented, 'cause this is obviously the centre of my research here is looking at the way that community's presented by Delfin primarily or Springfield Land Corp we could probably more technically say.

This image and idealising – romanticised image of community – is that do you think in your experience of being someone fairly central to the community and involved in the community and involved in the community in other ways, is that simply consumed by people or is that used and reappropriated and reformed in terms of what people actually need community to be? What do you think it is? If it is just sort of reappropriated by residents of Greater Springfield, is that a problem then do you think for Delfin and Greater Springfield, the Springfield Land Corp?

Rebecca: I think in like what you were saying before about some people really embracing it and some people being cynical of it is – I don't think you can say like just one, there's one perspective of that in Springfield. So I think people do yeah, use those – yeah that kind of marketing to suit their own purposes as well and to make them feel certain ways about the community they live in.

Andrew: Yeah. So is that a – would that be an active thing do you think by people or do people just sort of say okay, Delfin's telling us this about the community but I'm going to go and actually apply it for my purposes this way. Is it just a sort of a natural thing that happens or do people actively realise hang on, no, I'm not going to buy into this image, I'm going to actually make community my way?

Rebecca: I think it's probably more subconscious, like more jeering or at particular commercials and so forth. But the thing is, everyone that lives in Springfield has moved into Springfield as a result of the Springfield Land Corporation or Delfin or Brookwater, Augustine or Stocklands land developments. So in a way you can't really say too much about it because you have made the choice...

Andrew: Decision to...

Rebecca: ...to live there.

Andrew: So actively buying into it would then suggest a sort of a – an agreeance with...

Rebecca: Yeah, that's right. Yeah absolutely.

Andrew: Sure. So this sense of community then that – and I think it is very strong – like you've said just as someone coming in from outside and seeing it around the place and just seeing the connectedness that it's a city at the end of the day and cities in South East Queensland work fundamentally the same. They have the same underlying logic, this is Australia, after all. That culture milieu isn't radically different to sort of suggest that this is like a totally uncommon thing. But within that though, you've got a sense of this is Springfield, this is who we are, that identity is really strong. As someone then who's imminently about to leave the area, what does that mean for you relocating to another I guess you'd probably say more established area than what Springfield is?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Somewhere that has a hell of a lot more history and tradition attached to it which might be hard to break into. What does that mean?

Rebecca: I know. Well it's a bit sad to leave Springfield really because you do have like, it's sad but it's sad whenever you leave a community that you're involved in, so it's not sad because it's Springfield sad, 'cause it's a community I suppose. But yeah, moving into a bigger community is probably pretty freaky because I lived in Springfield for such a long time and I know my way around it and I know a lot of – most people in Springfield because I've taught them or been down to the shops for the past seven years and so forth. So it's a bit sad, like I don't know that I'll be part of the community like I was in Springfield because Springfield's young I think is the reason why.

Andrew: Yeah. Well, what about the support networks that are in Springfield that might not be in your new place? Is that going to be an issue do you think? How would community do you think, having not gotten to your new place of course, is community going to be a similar thing to what it is in Greater Springfield?

Rebecca: Well I think if you want to be part of the community wherever you live you can be. Like that's a really, just a strong philosophy of mine – or

not a philosophy but a belief that I have – that if you want to be part of a strong local community you can bend and you find that local community.

So even if you live in a big city like even if it was Sydney or Melbourne or Brisbane, there's still communities within that big city judged by – it could be by a lot of things including geographical boundaries. But it – there's other types of community as well that's important to people. So I don't think that there's a lot of community special in Springfield. It's just that I feel good in it 'cause I was there from the beginning. So I know everyone.

Andrew: So those support networks at Delfin, Springfield Land Corp, all that sort of stuff, do you think they – now given that they won't be – obviously Delfin and Springfield Land Corp won't be in your new place...

Rebecca: Well I didn't – I don't really access the support networks offered by Delfin I suppose, really. The types of community groups they have don't suit me at all. So I'm not, they have a lot of young mums' groups and retiree groups so I never really fit into that part of it anyway, so that doesn't – that's okay. But certainly even though I'm part of Springfield, Springfield is in the city of Ipswich and certainly the support mechanisms within Ipswich are really strong, like supporting groups that I participate in and so forth.

Andrew: Yeah, well council's pretty active and different bits and pieces too. Yeah, okay. Righteo.

So you've suggested there that look they're groups in – or community in Springfield, who is it for in terms of community groups? So young mums?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Any other groups of people do you think?

Rebecca: Young children as well and the over 55s leisure groups as in – they have a garden group, they have a reading group, a very strong religious groups in Springfield, very strong. So, there's about – although there's no church buildings, there's like – designated for church goers, I think there's eight or ten different religious groups in Springfield. So that's good for them.

Andrew: Yeah, sure. If you are – now that you're leaving Springfield, you've known Springfield from the start – well yeah, you're connected to the community there. If you are new and if you're reversing the situation, you're coming from down south where a lot of the population of Springfield, new population of Springfield is coming from, coming into the place. What would you think about, what would your impressions be do you think, to – yeah so if you were coming into Springfield area as someone totally foreign, you didn't have any support networks, no family, no friends, all that sort of stuff, what would you do, do you think? How would you...?

Rebecca: Oh well I suppose that when you put it like that actually I'm seeing the Delfin groups a little bit in a different light now. I suppose you would see that it, in terms of the community that yeah that would be good actually, even if you didn't participate in them. It'd be good to know that there's something available that someone does care about the community.

But I would probably look at it as in any other suburb that you might or mightn't move into – into a big city. I think Springfield looks pretty good. It's got a nice shopping centre, parks are nice. So I'd probably be – if I didn't live there – if I had to live in the suburbs it'd probably be somewhere though I'd consider.

Andrew: Sure, yeah. Okay. Now I want to get your impression of a couple of images I've taken from Springfield, particularly these ones. Now not specifically this particular image but the flags which you would know that are down, Springfield – is it Springfield Boulevard?

Rebecca: Oh yeah.

Andrew: Down – or Lakes Boulevard or whatever it is...

Rebecca: Yeah I know what you mean, yeah.

Andrew: ...outside Delfin. So the flags that line, you've got one that says home, one says community, one says family, one says success, all those sorts of things. There's a series of them and in the – well the other side here obviously – easy living, what a refreshing change. What do you make of that?

Rebecca: I think it's amusing, like I think those kinds of advertisements are amusing. I don't – but I think people actually do believe that stuff so I actually think people would see that and think oh what a nice community to live in. I find it amusing because oh, I'm just a little bit cynical about that. Like easy living said who?

Andrew: Yeah okay, yeah.

Rebecca: What's your version of easy living, like having a mortgage is not easy living.

Andrew: Yeah. So do you think that's well – look these things are advertising, aren't they? That's what they're doing. But what's the nature of the idealised image there? Do you think it connects to the experience of actual people? Or is it just that romantic ideal that people like...

Rebecca: I think it's a romantic ideal and the picture of the lake is, well that's true, there is a lake. It does look beautiful and people, whenever you go for a walk out the lake in the evening time there's always a lot of residents there and they're always with their dog or their kids or whatever, playing and so forth. So that's a – I suppose it's a factual image and that's what it does look like at that time of the day.

Andrew: Yeah. Is there something outside of that image that isn't necessarily contained within it, but that suggests something about...?

Rebecca: I think it suggests a really – a very monoculture within Springfield. It's a very white bread world I think that is suggesting, that this is it and you want to fit into this white bread image. So...

Andrew: Yeah. I was going to ask you is Springfield or Greater Springfield on the whole including Augustine Heights and Brookwater and all those extra little sub areas and things, is it an inclusive place, do you think?

Rebecca: Well, the local high school which has got 2,200 students goes from P to year 12, has got the highest proportion of Pacific Islander kids in the state. So that would indicate that the community's not all the same as well. It would really strongly indicate that there's a really huge multicultural presence within Springfield. So I don't think that image necessarily suits everybody or connects with everybody, which would probably even demonstrate that people don't always look at the

advertising of a place. They'll look at house affordability and things like that I think more so.

Andrew: Yeah, okay yeah. So the advertising, while it's there and while it suggests the romanticised views of the place, if you're going to actually make the decision to move there, other external factors like house affordability and all that sort of stuff will be more influential?

Rebecca: I think so, yeah. The fact is for a long time Springfield and Springfield Lakes, but especially Springfield was really affordable compared to other places 'cause it is in the western corridor so it is in Ipswich and even though Springfield Land Corporation advertising from the year 2000 indicates that it's part of Brisbane, it's always been the Ipswich City Council. So it has been really affordable I suppose in that way, but...

Andrew: Has that changed do you think, now that the area's grown?

Rebecca: Yeah, there's pockets of Springfield that are becoming less affordable I think, as the population's changing. I suppose it's becoming like a city in the – of itself in the way that there are some areas that are more affordable than other areas.

Andrew: Yeah. Would that then suggest and tell me if I'm wrong here of course, that would that suggest that there's a growing exclusivity around the area? So while, when the development was new, set in the early '90s, mid to mid '90s – I think the original Springfield development started around '92 I think, didn't it?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: So it's got a few years behind it now. But now that it's starting to grow, a bit of notoriety around the place, we're starting to get the development of Education City and the Nucleus and Orion and all those sorts of bits and pieces. Are things starting to close a little bit in terms of what the Springfield identity is, or the Springfielder's identity?

Rebecca: I suppose so. Like the, it – exclusivity – I remember a few years ago when I worked in the school, the residents had been there for a long time, like since the school began and since before the school began, like to fight for the school to get set up before Springfield had a school, they have a feeling of exclusivity because of their, the time that they've been a resident in Springfield and they like to say that as like a badge of honour. So that's really interesting.

But yeah people in Springfield do have certain, I think some people in Springfield Lakes might have certain views about themselves living in – the ones that buy into this kind of advertising may have certain views about what it is to live in a master plan community and they might have certain feelings of exclusivity around that. Whereas I on the other hand feel that people within a master plan community do so for affordability, which is certainly the reason why we initially...

Andrew: Very pragmatic reasons.

Rebecca: ...bought into the community, because of housing affordability, not because we thought it was exclusive living.

Andrew: There's other white middle class folk like you there. Yeah. That's a – or upper class folk as the case may be – and I don't want to go ... you too.

Rebecca: Exactly.

Andrew: But well I'll just flick to another image if I've got it here, actually it's not on that one – okay, these ones here. So we've got more of those flags and flyers and things. The one that is of particular interest is the – oh there it is. This one here, now it's a similar idea that those street flag things that are down the main boulevard and this one says 'belonging', obviously and the image portrays a – what looks like a breakfast situation in an average home.

Is there anything peculiar about that image with the caption down the bottom of them, saying yes of course for the recording Rebecca, not to read to you what you can read yourself, but – or judging at all your reading abilities [laughter] – but the book – the caption down the bottom is *belonging*, that key word belonging and I think it's a classic. But is there anything peculiar about that image?

Rebecca: I think if you look at these banners in isolation you can be a little bit, you can make broad sweeping statements about them. But I think if you look at these banners as in terms of a whole marketing campaign and you see them all together. You see the belonging community home and whatever else they say, altogether – I think then you can get a more accurate picture of what's being marketed.

I think that this is a – an accurate snapshot though of that broader marketing campaign. I think that the values that are espoused are like certainly what you might call white middle class values, whether or not people fit within that is another story 'cause there's a lot of stories of families in Springfield Lakes of – who had issues within their family that wouldn't reflect that – what – in any way, shape or form. In fact there's some quite horrible things happening in Springfield Lakes in some family homes. So I don't think that accurately reflections of all the families.

But this marketing is certainly a reflection of their broader campaign of saying that if you want to live in – people that live in this community are happy and they're happy in their homes and everyone gets along in the home and everyone has an orange juice for breakfast and has fresh fruit and the mum has time to cut the fresh fruit and there's a dad around and there's two kids and they're happy. I think it really creates this sense of a romanticised version of what family is really reflecting back to those dominant views of what family was in 1950s.

Andrew: It's a very traditional view of family?

Rebecca: Yeah, I think an exceptionally traditional view of family in the marketing...

Andrew: Very retro, male, female...

Rebecca: Absolutely and very white. I haven't seen – like I said before that the Samoan, oh not Samoan, Pacific Islander population in Woodcrest was huge and indeed it is. But I never see any Samoans represented in ads. I don't see many Asian – well we have a large Chinese population actually in Springfield and Vietnamese – oh particularly Vietnamese actually, and that we never see any Vietnamese people and there's a few Thai families around. I've never seen a Thai family on a banner.

It's always these same kind of clean, healthy looking, dressed in certain way people.

Andrew: Yeah okay. I was talking to some representatives from Delfin a few months back and they made the point very dominantly in the interview and it really struck with me that the people they use for their ad campaigns are residents of Greater Springfield...

Rebecca: Yeah, absolutely.

Andrew: And they've made a big – they were very proud of that fact and they wanted to suggest and articulate it directly that the suggestion was that by using people from the community that then sort of had a sense of reality behind it about what the living experience is. What's your comment to that?

Rebecca: They are indeed members of the local community. That's true, absolutely. I know some people that have been on the ads myself, on TV ads and on the picture, the banner ads and so forth. So they are people from the local community. But there are people from the local community who (a) they're handpicked because they are prominent in the community and (b) they've been set up into being in a certain environment for the photo shoot. So it's yep it's true that they are local people and I think that's a great touch, personally I think that's really cool that you live in a community and you can promote it in that way. I'm probably jealous that I never got asked. So I think it's really good.

Andrew: I think they – you were too busy with your other publications, Rebecca. They couldn't get you at the time.

Rebecca: So I would – even though I'm more cynical of this stuff, I reckon if they had have asked me, I would have done that. Yeah I would do it because I've got a big ego. So, but I think it's – this is a set up, like yeah that – I don't know these people in this banner ad but they could very well be residents but I doubt that that is their breakfast table and I doubt that's how their breakfast is every day – really highly doubt – I think the context is different from the actual people that live there.

Andrew: Yeah and to take a wander through Springfield, Greater Springfield, as a whole, particularly somewhere like Orion, which I think is a great microcosm of and suggestive of the larger Greater Springfield area, it's not all white middle class folks there.

Rebecca: No, certainly not. I think Orion, if you just sit down for a day and have a look around Orion, I think that is a more accurate portrayal of who's living in the community and the types of issues that are facing in the community as well.

Andrew: Yeah okay, yeah. So race has emerged as a significant identity axis here.

Rebecca: Yeah, I think it's unbelievable actually that they would have banners and I've not – I mean I could be mistaken – I'm sure you might find one that – prove me wrong but I've never seen anyone other than a white, well a white looking family...

Andrew: No. Yeah, well over the last three years worth of field work they haven't shown any white people. I have never seen it.

Rebecca: Yeah. It's like a Myer, bloody – you know those big Myer brochures they used to have at Christmas time. It's like that and it just...

Andrew: Apart from you've mentioned before – the race angle here and that it – look this sort of taps into a very traditional 1950s view of family life. So there's mum, dad, kids. Mum's doing very traditional things like preparing breakfast and all that sort of stuff and presumably staying at

home. If she is working, she's still got the job of doing family things. Dad presumably is sitting there ready to go to work and the son in this particular case is that the belonging picture looks, I think – he's got a school uniform in or the...

- Rebecca: Is that a boy?
Andrew: I thought it was a boy, yeah.
Rebecca: Yeah, whatever.
Andrew: Yeah, bit of a blurry picture. But I'd say would be preparing to go to school or at least that's the assumption you make, that that's what a, you would imagine a white family to be doing of the morning and that might be a very 1950s view of things as well. But what do you – where do these come from? I guess the question I'm getting to here is that why do we – and we are both I guess you could say middle class white folk, due to our current positions and...
- Rebecca: Certainly not.
Andrew: How do you class you – upper class, then?
Rebecca: Certainly not. I wouldn't – I'm certainly not middle class.
Andrew: You don't think due to your position as a lecturer in the university?
Rebecca: Certainly not.
Andrew: Okay.
Rebecca: Absolutely not. No. I have, I'm insulted that you would think that I would be middle class.
Andrew: Sure, yeah. Obviously I would say that off wage earning, race, any other attributes that would probably be classed by ABS and other...
Rebecca: No. I'm certainly not middle class, certainly not.
Andrew: Okay, sure. Yeah.
Rebecca: I hold no middle class values.
Andrew: Sure, okay. In terms of value approach you wouldn't see yourself being ranked in a middle class bracket of earning?
Rebecca: Certainly not. Perhaps my earnings are now at this point of time in my life.
Andrew: Yeah. I guess that's what I'm getting to here, but yeah.
Rebecca: But that's it. That's the only thing middle class about me. Absolutely not.
Andrew: Yeah. But from the perspective here what do you see...
Rebecca: My husband's not even an officer...
Andrew: Oh, here you go.
Rebecca: See.
Andrew: Would you, what would you attach to the context of that particular image?
Rebecca: In terms of what, sorry 'cause I've got a bit on the [inaudible] couldn't see it?
Andrew: Sorry, the context of that particular image, what would you attach to it?
Rebecca: Middle class values, do you mean?
Andrew: Yeah.
Rebecca: Or what are those values?
Andrew: Yeah what would ... they are?
Rebecca: Oh, the values are that the family only needs to have one wage earner or salary earner, sorry, to have material wealth and that the mother holds the family together 'cause even though the mother's not in the centre of

the picture there your eye is drawn to her because she's the one doing the activity. So the mother is the one that holds the household together.

Andrew: Yep, good.

Rebecca: ...is what I would draw from that.

Andrew: Yeah. Is there's an affluence suggested there, do you think?

Rebecca: Absolute material wealth, yeah, and that's what I meant. Like, I don't think the mum is getting ready for work. She's there preparing the food for the kids or a nice little brekkie.

Andrew: Yeah, the fact that there's a bowl in front of her, she looks like she's preparing a meal, does she?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah. If that wasn't there, perhaps if a notebook computer or a briefcase or something, would that change the image?

Rebecca: Yeah, probably. Especially when you've got belonging underneath 'cause belonging also indicates that you not only belong to Springfield Lakes but you belong in your home as well and that your mum – the mum orchestrates that belonging – so as to make everyone feel that way with her cheery face.

Andrew: Yeah okay. Yeah, which again is a feminine trait isn't it, in Australian conservative idealising of what family and home are. The mum is the core of that keeps it all together. Dad goes out and does stuff but when you're at home it's mum who is the centre of stuff, sure.

Rebecca: Yes.

Andrew: If for instance we changed that image and we did put, we took away the suggestions there of meal preparation, we took away that bowl, we took away the glass or we perhaps took away the apple or nectarine or whatever it is that the son has got there and we put in place a briefcase or a notebook computer and it wasn't dad or wasn't the son working on that, it was the mum working on that, would that make sense do you think if we then put that image up in Greater Springfield? Would people stop and think hang on a minute, what's happened here?

Rebecca: Probably. Like if you had the mum in the lounge room with a laptop, that'd be a different story 'cause the mum sitting in the lounge chair with a laptop indicates that she's got time to go and surf the net, to do some leisurely activities.

Andrew: Yeah okay, so it'd be like buying something on eBay or whatever else. It wouldn't be work related things, do you think?

Rebecca: No, you wouldn't get that impression.

Andrew: Yeah, sure.

Rebecca: Just from looking at all the other advertisements within Springfield, if you look at them as collectively rather than just taking one.

Andrew: Yeah, okay?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Yes.

Rebecca: My ears popped.

Andrew: I know.

Rebecca: Sorry.

Andrew: But – so then if we – what if we inverted that picture there on the gender line and we had dad who is obscured, you can see we only see certainly a

profile of the half of dad and well who we – the person who we assumed is dad, which is...

Rebecca: Yeah, well we can assume that is the case because of the broader Delfin advertising.

Andrew: Yep. If dad was the person in mum's place there preparing the meal...

Rebecca: It's not Mum's boyfriend.

Andrew: Yeah, okay. Yeah. That's a good point. If it was dad preparing the meals and things would that sort of similarly make sense and go down well do you think in Springfield?

Rebecca: Well that's a lie, isn't it?

Andrew: Yep. Wouldn't happen? It just doesn't happen?

Rebecca: Well you know what?

Andrew: Dad would be doing...

Rebecca: It would 'cause – is it okay yes – if the dad was preparing the meal, dad would be outside on the veranda on the barbeque. That's how that would be pictured in a Delfin ad. 'Cause that's what Dad does 'cause that's a man's job to do the barbeque. The mum buys the meat though, prepares the meat, cuts the salad up.

Andrew: And does the hunter gatherer thing outside and all the rest of it when that's appropriate.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah, okay. Righteo. Excellent. There's a – I think I've mentioned this to you in the past but I remember one Saturday morning driving into town here into [unclear] hearing an ad for – it was actually the [unclear] and the on Petrus Road I'm leaving – my way down and I realise he had the ... walks that in the Australia ad, it was just a remarkable ad and obviously looks on tying up with this project if it – drew it – I drew attention to it and it made sense to me.

But there was this background music – I'll explain the ad to you – background soundtrack that had birds cheeping and a very sort of woodlands outlook – not the wilderness per se but in a rural romantically countryed area and all I could imagine was like a sort of – the hint of smoke from a chimney, from a fire type thing. But otherwise there's a bit of a plain and the wooden backdrop and birds flying through and it's lovely and here's this quarter acre block I'm living in.

Then the voice over started for this ad and suggested are you sick of inner city hustle and bustle and having to travel three hours to work each day and da da da when you could move to somewhere and have the experience of the great Aussie quarter acre block.

Rebecca: Yes. I remember those ads I think.

Andrew: You know those ads, do you?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: You know how they go then there was the sound of like a cricket going on. This was a radio ad obviously so we don't need visual cues but you could hear like you've got kids playing and the smack of a cricket ball and kids cheering and all the rest of it. Then there was the sizzle of a barbeque going on, all that sort of stuff.

Tell me about that. What imagery have we got suggested here?

Rebecca: Well, it suggests that it's a nice place to live in and that it's peaceful and that the whole neighbourhood gets along together. Yeah, that's what that suggests.

Andrew: Yeah. Is there any particular senses that are portrayed here? Any particular identity characteristics that are portrayed?

Rebecca: The same kinds as Delfin portray, I think. Like, it's the same, the whole Greater Springfield is the same that do the advertising, whether it's the Brookwater advertising, the Stocklands advertising or Delfin advertising. It's a common theme and indicates that it's a certain exclusive environment to live in.

Andrew: Yeah. And who are these people? Are they Philippino immigrants? Are they gay men who ride scooters?

Rebecca: They're probably gay because they can bloody afford to live there 'cause they don't have kids do they?

Andrew: That's it.

Rebecca: You can edit that out.

Andrew: Yeah. [Laughter] I'll scratch that from the theme script. But sure. Is that the paradox then? So obviously I guess, what you're intimating here is these are various iconic Australian hippies...

Rebecca: Yeah they are. They're trying – yeah they're trying to reach back into this time – this mythical time 'cause it's not necessarily true or accurate anyway. Though families probably weren't like that in the 1950s but it's how it's portrayed, that everyone gets along, everyone's happy and everyone plays cricket in the backyard or in the street and this wonderful sense of community is just created in that way. I've – I moved to Augustine Heights despite the advertising. Yeah. The advertising put me off...

Andrew: Did it? Right, okay.

Rebecca: ...moving to Augustine Heights, in a big way.

Andrew: Yeah, you've mentioned in passing that you've had some issues moving there that it's not your ideal location.

Rebecca: No.

Andrew: Yeah and it's due to that sort of imagery, that romanticised view of the place, yeah that...

Rebecca: Yeah but people who live Augustine Heights believe it.

Andrew: Yeah, okay.

Rebecca: They believe advertising 'cause I can remember the first – oh no I had oh yeah I think I'd moved, I'd been there for one week and got invited to a Tupperware party and I went along and all the...

Andrew: For the recording, Rebecca's rolling her eyes.

Rebecca: ...and all the women that lived in another street for probably three or four months so they're old timers now in Augustine Heights – I'm only a newcomer. So they were saying about oh how great it is and they really bought into this advertising and one person – they had these things in Stocklands where if you were one of the first people living in that community you could buy a plaque and get your name on it, your family name and stick it on like the bridge, like it's not a real bridge, it's just a bridge over a gully and...

Andrew: Yeah. That's the one as you're driving you get the roundabout, turn right to Brookwater, turn left in to Augustine Heights. Is that that bridge that is going over there?

Rebecca: No. The second roundabout, oh the third roundabout, yeah. So they've got this little gully bridge and it's stone all they've got is stuff and it's near the Catherine Morgan Park and that they say if you go there you see plaques with these people's names on it.

Andrew: So the fact the bridge is made out of stone and you've got the plaques on there, what does that suggest? What does that signify?

Rebecca: That's a country idyllic lifestyle, yeah, and that's peaceful that you've come away from the stressful life of your city job whatever and people actually bought those plaques and got their – and put their names on them.

Andrew: Yeah okay. Yeah. Is that sort of like – I'm getting and tell me if I'm wrong here but I'm getting the imagery of sort of like a lakes district, English village almost...

Rebecca: Yeah, I suppose so.

Andrew: In that you've got your core people, your core families there and you know who they are and those core families are central to the community as pillars of the community and the physical manifestations of this are that they're named.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: That – and in this...

Rebecca: Yeah but then they paid for it.

Andrew: In the Augustine Heights case because there is no real tradition there because it's a brand new place, this is a construction of tradition perhaps?

Rebecca: It certainly is. That's a good one. Yeah it is.

Andrew: There's also perhaps the suggestion of a history there given that the bridge is made out of stone...

Rebecca: Yeah that's right, yeah.

Andrew: ...and those sort of things, yeah. Fascinating. That is – I hadn't noticed the plaques. I'll have to go and have a look at it, yeah.

Rebecca: You go to walk past it 'cause and you can't from the road.

Andrew: Yeah. They're on the sides of the bridge?

Rebecca: They're on like the top of the bridge road kind of thing.

Andrew: Oh okay. Righteo. Yeah, I'll get some photos of those I think. That's mad, yeah.

Rebecca: And actually someone that my husband works with who lives in Augustine Heights was really proud of this. They thought it was the ants' pants that they could have their name on a plaque. It was quite and – I couldn't – yeah...

Andrew: So what would – so Stocklands are responsible for this particular development?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: What's their motivation here, do you think? What's this about? Is it similar to the belonging flags?

Rebecca: Oh absolutely, yeah, and it's money making. They probably paid for half their bridge by these people who paid for a plaque.

Andrew: Yeah, bottom of the idea. Yeah, okay.

Rebecca: Yeah. So I think they're trying to do a job of creating a community but I don't think they do anywhere near a good a job as Delfin, Delfin – Delfin ... They don't offer anything near that Delfin offers as in terms of community groups or support and so forth and I mean – at all.

Andrew: Yeah. There's just these very public but superficial things like the plaques on the bridge?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Sure, okay. Yeah. Trying to – and if you, if it's possible, if you could put your cynicism aside for a second and...

Rebecca: I'm only cynical about the advertising that tries to create an artificial environment because I believe the community will be created anyway. That's how I'm cynical. But, yeah.

Andrew: Yeah. Interesting point that bridge, yeah it's a really interesting point actually that the fact that community is perhaps an organic thing for one...

Rebecca: Yeah I believe it is. If left alone it would still develop. Absolutely.

Andrew: But fiddled with via corporate interest in this case and we'd just be honest here that Springfield Land Corp and Delfin and Stocklands, they're making money here. This is a land development. They're not doing this for charity by any real means. So that sort of – does that tarnish the view of community, do you think? Does that...?

Rebecca: For me it does but for other people it might not. I think it might suit their need to live a constructed environment and then be told it's a community.

Andrew: Yeah. So perhaps these folks might not be able to find community elsewhere, on their own?

Rebecca: Yeah, perhaps. But I think they would because I think community is organic so I think they would, they might not feel that they would.

Andrew: Yeah. So there is I guess to – I know I'm probably simplifying these things in an unrealistic way but to sort of suggest whether community is good or bad in this formation of community in Augustine Heights, Greater Springfield, Springfield Lakes and so on, that while it is and has got corporate interests underpinning a lot of the motivation behind how community is being cast and presented, it still has its benefits.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: It's still a positive thing for a lot of folks.

Rebecca: Yes absolutely.

Andrew: Sure, okay. Just quickly – I've got to head off and before you have to scoot soon as well – but we've known that is race is a big signifier or the lack of race perhaps, lack of ethnicity and race and that all you really see and my field trips have told me that all you do see is white faces being beamed at you. Is there a paradox here that given that Maha Sinnathamby is actually Indian very noticeably, not white, or Sri Lankan I think?

Rebecca: Malaysian.

Andrew: Malaysian?

Rebecca: Yep.

Andrew: Is that a paradox there, do you think?

Rebecca: In a way, like I think if you were – 'cause he has got a new land development in India, in fact. I think if you went and saw the Delfin

equivalent in India, in his master plan community there, I think you would see a type of Indian middle class face that is valued in India. Not really dark, because that's not valued for whatever reason.

Andrew: Yeah, the Raj type of Indian, yes.

Rebecca: Yeah. I think you would see that in their, in the advertisements. I think he taps into the dominant culture and he really – well I've heard him speaking and so forth. He really taps into what he sees as being the dominant culture to be portrayed through his advertising and yeah...

Andrew: So is someone in this particular location then who doesn't represent someone from the dominant culture, in fact I'd argue that in the past he'd be someone who'd be actively marginalised due to his skin colour and his ethnic background – the fact that he's able to come in and use those romanticised traditional notions of the dominant culture for his own purposes.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: Does that suggest something to you about the way that we understand race ethnicity in this country and this particular area?

Rebecca: Yes, I suppose it shows that he's got good advertising executives working with him there. But he's someone that would look – that strives to be part of the dominant culture in – or tries to be accepted by the powerful. You know, the way he speaks to the Prime Minister and addresses the Mayor and so forth really indicates this kind of neo colonial attitude towards being accepted or not – or just being part of – I suppose.

I don't know if I would be as well accepted actually. But he doesn't live in Springfield either.

Andrew: His hair's fascinating, isn't it, in itself?

Rebecca: He lives in Brisbane.

Andrew: Yeah.

Rebecca: 'Cause Springfield is in Ipswich, he lives firmly in a very affluent community in Brisbane.

Andrew: So do you still, underpinning all of this, the western Brisbane or western corridor location, that physical geography and all the stigma that's attached to that still pervades through – still there?

Rebecca: Well, Springfield's lucky a bit because I suppose if you want to – in having – if you want to call it that living in Ipswich is a stigma, I suppose Springfield escapes that somehow because it is new. People don't see it as being part of Ipswich. People, either they see it as part of Brisbane or they see it as just being its own entity. So in that way it's like – I think it's more stigmatised by the fact that it is a master plan community.

So you'd have – you've got Forest Lake, being in Springfield and people that – well certainly when I, before I moved to Springfield, like people were really cynical about those kinds of developments, the people that I had spoke to. So I think it's got more stigma associated with being a master plan community than with being in with Ipswich because – this probably goes back to the Delfin effect.

But I remember when I was teaching we had a, well not an argument but I suppose you could discuss it with our students who refused to accept they lived in Ipswich and we said to them yeah this is part of Ipswich

City Council, they argued with us, with the teacher – a couple of those teachers about it, saying we don't live in Ipswich. But where do you live? Springfield. Yeah Springfield is a suburb in Ipswich. Nuh, would not believe it and we said well where do your parents' rates notices come from? It comes from Ipswich City Council. Yeah, some people thought it was part of Brisbane. So...

- Andrew: So the underlying assumption here by these students is that Ipswich is something not as sophisticated or classy or whatever...
- Rebecca: That yeah. Yeah, that's right. Yeah.
- Andrew: ...but ... capital again I guess...
- Rebecca: Absolutely, yeah.
- Andrew: ...that being in Springfield signified them as being something totally different from...
- Rebecca: Yeah and these kids have got no reason to think they've got a lot of culture capital I suppose either – who feel a lot of stereotypes of living in the western suburbs area, so...
- Andrew: So we see very clearly in the advertising material from Springfield Land Corp particularly that gender is an issue here, that we've got a very clear gender lines. Class comes through as well in that this suggested affluence, a very middle class ethic approach to these things. Certainly values of middle classedness.
- But then also race, in that we see only white faces and so on, but your experience of the actual, of being a resident of this location suggests well hang on, the imagery is just that and that imagery taps into perhaps a larger cultural and dominant views of what these things are supposed to be when in fact they're not actually.
- Rebecca: Yeah.
- Andrew: Okay.
- Rebecca: I think so and just on that gender or not – sexuality viewpoint, I think the reality whatever it is, is very different from the – from their – Woodcrest College was the only school I've ever either worked at, attended or been involved with that has ever had young men declare that their sexuality is not heterosexual and be accepted.
- Andrew: Yeah, okay.
- Rebecca: Like fully accepted. There's no, there was never any bullying or like retribution from heterosexual males for the young men that declared themselves as being...
- Andrew: ...homosexual.
- Rebecca: Yeah. Never.
- Andrew: Well see that's fascinating because again we don't see that from the marketing.
- Rebecca: No.
- Andrew: This image that's been built then obviously – the core of this project is to look at the way the marketing and then the living experiences of people juxtaposed in some of them. But yeah the – if we were to walk into Springfield and someone totally remote you would look around and try and get a vision of what community is just via what we see. We – I'd certainly pick up and as has been the case with this project – very white, very hetero and very middle class apart from a number of other characteristics as well but again the lived experience in terms of this

particular vinier here of the openly homosexual teenage men being accepted and all the rest of it.

That's – that is not a small thing, particularly given the concerns of teenage maleness and performance of masculinity as problematic as it is, but yeah in this particular location it suggests something quite...

Rebecca: It amazed me. As a teacher it amazed me.

Andrew: Rebecca, I am aware that you have to go. I thank you again. I'm particularly sad this is probably your last occasion to talk about these sorts of things and at least in person to person.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Andrew: I'll probably continue to bother you via email.

Rebecca: Alright.

Andrew: But thank you very much.

Rebecca: That's okay, no problem.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

