

ANDREW HICKEY AND ROBYN HENDERSON

## TESTIMONIO AND THE IDIOS KOSMOS OF THE CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC

*Charting the possibilities for pleasure in personal accounts from inside the  
academy*

### Introduction

*Jouissance is here not taken as in the sense of pain, but rather in the sense of  
an ejection of pleasure, where pain is overcome through the commitment to  
an act rather than the action itself.*

Daniel Hourigan (2015, p. 118)

This past decade has seen an increasing focus on the effects of academic bullying, workplace harassment, incivility and other disruptive workplace behaviours within the university (Fogg, 2008). Yet despite this growing awareness and charting of the costs of these behaviours—both to the individual and organisation—it remains that flawed and ineffective responses to incivility and the maintenance of organisational structures that encourage negative interpersonal behaviours, remain entrenched in the academy (Chatterjee & Maira, 2014; Giroux 2014). Within a dynamic of increasingly limited funding, public questioning of the role of higher education and epistemic changes to the shape and function of the university-as-institution, stark and unyielding shifts in the way academic work is practised have resulted in university workplaces that are increasingly interpersonally competitive and, consequently, prone to disruptive behaviours.

Indeed, the “highly performative ... competitive and corporatised” nature of the academy has been identified as having undesirable workplace effects on relationships and ways of working (Morley & Crossouard, 2016, p. 150). Preston (2016) provides a particularly alarming prediction that increasingly competitive academic environments will lead to decayed interpersonal relationships and the breakdown of meaningful collegiality within the university. Writing from the British context of tiered “Russell Group” and “new” universities, Preston notes:

I have heard of arrangements whereby new university teams have had to agree to disproportionate efforts in writing a joint bid with an elite university just so they could be included. My ... prediction is that lack of collegiality will accelerate as research funding becomes tighter. This will happen not only between institutions but also within them. People are being nastier to each other, not directly (that would not be protocol) but in a very English polite fashion. That makes it even more brutal. (p. 15)

Preston’s (2016) argument is important because it highlights the differential nature of the experience of higher education. His identification of the separation between the prestige—and agenda setting clout—of the Russell Group universities

and the rest also carries in terms of the prestige individual researchers yield upon meeting markers of approved performance; the receipt of major funding and publication in high ranking journals are predominant amongst these. What has developed is a climate of division and separation, where an academic's value is marked by the ability to mercenarily carve a place. This is ironic, given that academics are currently pushed heavily to (at least superficially) collaborate (albeit, perhaps, in an effort to prop-up university metrics).

The problem is a multi-dimensional one. The literature reports on the effects of this reformation of academic labour in terms of the breakdown of collegiality (Burns, Wend, & Todnem By, 2014; Damrosch, 1995; Preston, 2016), the discursive framing of "the ivory tower bully" (Nelson & Lambert, 2001, p. 83), the 'intimacy' of the workplace and the encroachment of work into personal and private aspects of life (Gregg & Seigworth, 2013), the relational dimensions of ineffective collaborations and the effects of exploitation (Bozeman, Youtie, Slade, & Gaughan, 2012), the nature of relationships of power and the uses of hierarchy as a bullying tool (Fox & Stallworth, 2009), and other similar areas of focus. Although the multi-perspectival and multi-dimensional nature of incivility and disruptive behaviour that this body of research reports on indicates something of the prevalence and scale of the issue in contemporary academic settings, our focus in this paper is on the personal and everyday effects of these changes in the university context. It also happens that these personalised accounts tend to be incomplete.

It is with this lacuna that this chapter will seek to provide a sense of how the landscape of higher education functions as one increasingly marked by fraught, and often problematic, interpersonal incivility. It is, we suggest, at the level of the personal that the effects of such incivility is felt, and we will set out a brief account of the nature of this dynamic. However we will also argue in light of these stark contextual features of the contemporary university, that collegiality and the confrontation of mercenary academic behaviours provide a space for pleasure, or as we characterise this here, *jouissance*. We do not seek to over-theorise the notion of *jouissance*, other than to suggest that there is a place for joyful enactment of academic work within the contemporary university and that through meaningful collegiality pleasure in academic work might be activated.

Typically, analyses of the dysfunction of academic labours at the interpersonal or 'collegial' level draw as their focus a whole-of-organisation view of bullying and incivility (Burns et al., 2014) or, alternatively, the effects that these behaviours have on morale, productivity and workplace capacity (Keashley & Neuman, 2010; Schwartz, 2014;). More broadly, the influence that these behaviours have on the organisational climate in the whole-of-organisation is also highlighted (Raineri, Frear, & Edmonds, 2011; Twale & DeLuca, 2008). Although crucial in offering a sense of the manifold perspectives from which these issues might be considered, and aside from some prominent explorations of the intrapersonal dimensions of bullying and incivility (Hil, 2012; Nocella, Best, & McLaren, 2010), to date only a smattering of recent discussions broach the personal and affective aspects of these antisocial behaviours (e.g., Beckman, Cannella, & Wantland, 2013; Frazier, 2011; Honan, Henderson, & Loch, 2015; Motin, 2009; Nelson & Lambert, 2001). A cohesive sense of how the negative aspects of academic life locate the problem at

the level of the personal has yet to find traction, as has any developed sense of the nature of the pleasure that might derive from meaningful collegiality as a counter to the more problematic aspects of the contemporary university.

We suggest that more attention should be given to the inter- and intra- personal dynamics of work in the contemporary university. In taking this approach we seek to focus on the ways that the academic workplace is constructed socio-cognitively by the individual academic in proximity with other academics-as-individuals, each carrying a variety of dispositional and epistemological points of reference for enacting work in the academy. More particularly, how certain behaviours come to be framed and given meaning interpersonally within the context of the university setting provides an opportunity to consider the influence exerted by the institution itself; that is, in terms of the very real effects the structural organisation of the university has on the people who work within it. It is through the exploration of the personal and the retelling of the experience of being an academic that we gain a sense of how meaning is constructed and—perhaps more importantly—how it is framed to configure certain practices and ways-of-being as normalised. From this approach to interrogating the personal, important insights can find a voice, by drawing attention to what is happening in contemporary university settings, and how the effects of incivility manifest at the level of the personal. This is a recording of the personal narrative of the university, a charting of the experiences that are a result of the configurations of the space of the university and the behaviours it supports. But importantly, we seek to go beyond this diagnosis of the problems of interpersonality within contemporary university settings to also chart an articulation of where *jouissance* in academic labours might be found.

We will suggest then—as something of a counter to the inherent despair that the incivility of the contemporary university experience provokes (e.g., Honan et al., 2015)—that the expression of *jouissance*—a state of pleasure or joy—remains as possible. We argue that, in the collegial encountering of incivility, scope for conceptualising what might indeed remain as productive and worthwhile in the university can be uncovered. While we are keen to highlight that there are very real issues with the ways that universities function and are funded, we are also keen to point out that which stands as positive.

*Jouissance*, experienced through collegial dialogue and reflection, we argue, provides a means for considering the pleasures of academic life, and accordingly we will move to suggest that it is within those ‘little’ moments—with colleagues and when engaged in work that is personally meaningful—that true joy can be experienced. While it appears that the changes that have befallen universities in recent times are primed to precisely confound any possibility for *jouissance* in the life of an academic, we will in the remainder of this chapter argue a case that identifies the possibilities for joyful collegiality and “the production of moments of pleasure” (Honan et al., 2015, p. 60.).

#### THE CONTEXTS OF THIS INQUIRY

Within this paper we chart a twofold argument. Firstly, it will be suggested that the profound changes in global economic systems witnessed over this past decade are noticeable in reframed expectations over what it is that universities deliver as

(primarily) public institutions, and that the subsumption and commodification of education within a privatised, neo-liberalist logic prime the university as a site for the sorts of negative behaviours the literature reports on (Chatterjee & Maira, 2014; Giroux 2014). Secondly, we suggest that new ways of capturing and accounting for the experience of these changes must be developed, if a cohesive sense of what these changes mean for academic life at the personal level is to gain any traction. But, equally, we argue that it is with collegiality and the joy of working interpersonally that space might be created to enable active responses to these negative aspects of academic labour.

Several assumptions drive this line of analysis. It is suggested that the restructuring of the university sector in many parts of the globe (particularly within Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom) over the last few decades has resulted in the creation of workplaces that not only accommodate, but implicitly reward, incivility and anti-collegial practices as intuitive behaviours linked to competitiveness and corporate acumen (Berryman-Fink, 1998). This shift also carries a reformation of how incivility is itself configured according to quite specific iterations of incivility unique to the university (Nelson & Lambert, 2001).

In these terms we will suggest that a method for uncovering the personal, everyday and often mundane or ‘ordinary’ experiences of the university—the normalised locations of practice—must be deployed in order to chart fully the experience of academic life. We suggest that *testimonio*—as a method of inquiry, critique and action—provides an opportunity to engage the experience of the contemporary university and, as such, offers a point from which the intrapersonal dimensions of incivility and similar other problematic behaviours might be engaged. Attention will be given to charting the use and usefulness of *testimonio* reflection as a possible method for recording accounts from everyday and personal encounters within the contemporary university.

*Testimonio* as a research method has been both celebrated—for the insights it provides into the personal—and critiqued heavily—for much the same reasons—on issues of validity and rigour (Albert & Couture, 2014; Beverley, 1991; Blackmer Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012; Yúdice, 1991). High-profile applications of *testimonio*, such as Menchú’s (1984) *I, Rigoberta Menchú* and its subsequent critiques (see particularly Stoll, 1999), highlight the tensions *testimonio* carries when considered within existing paradigms of research. How might the personal be gathered to provide a testimony of what *was*? How can personal narrative be used to provide insight into the experience of the moment?

In this chapter, however, a *testimonio* approach will be used as a method for recalling the authors’ own experiences as illustrative moments of the less-than-positive aspects of academic life, but also as a technique that itself provides an expression of collegiality. We weren’t interested in the retelling of the past as a truth to be uncovered, but used this form of narrative reflection, in conjunction with the act of writing through our experiences, as a means for exploration. In recalling how we came to experience the university, we sought not to tell the past as it was, but to reflect on the effects this left with us. Equally, it was from this critical accounting of the personal experiences of the university shared through

dialogue that a commonality was forged. We didn't always agree and often held differing views about moments of shared witness.

However, in recording these experiences and sharing these moments in considered reflection, accounts of both the university and the formation of a strong collegiality materialised. It was here that *jouissance* emerged and these expressions of our collegiality found meaning as joyous camaraderie and shared experience. These outcomes took us beyond the “writing, recording, crying, reading, viewing, and crying some more” that the university sector has induced in others, towards experiences that “open us to the productive possibilities of a strong commitment to pleasure” (Honan et al., 2015, pp. 60, 44).

At times our dialogues were irreverent. Sometimes, these were cathartic expressions that drew on exasperated critiques of what was witnessed. On other occasions, these dialogues caused deep empathy with colleagues or amazement over decisions made for the university. In this regard, our dialogues were *dangerous*. These dialogues opened a chance to speak freely—with *parrhesia*—to unburden frustration and anxieties through shared negotiation. *Testimonio* offered a chance to speak openly with candour and irreverence. In short, *testimonio* was deployed as a method of utility for excavating personal experiences of the university and to commence dialogue.

It is to this end that the title of this paper—and, more explicitly, its reference to the *idios kosmos*—finds application. *Testimonio* provides scope to chart the *idios kosmos* of personal experiences of the university, via accounts that record the affective, personal and *inner* reactions to contemporary academic labours. While we are cautious in taking the idea of the *idios kosmos*—what has been called the “unique private world” of the individual (Dick, 1975, p. 32)—too literally and prescriptively, we suggest that as a metaphor it opens for view the internal sense-making and emotional realisations personal experiences provoke. In drawing some form of definition to the term, we borrow from Dick who suggests that:

for each person there are two unique worlds, the *idios kosmos*, which is a unique private world, and the *koinos kosmos*, which literally means shared world (just as *idios* means private). No person can tell which part of his total worldview is *idios kosmos* and which is *koinos kosmos*, except by the achievement of a strong empathetic rapport with other people. (pp. 31-32)

Two aspects of this account are significant. Firstly, Dick (1975) highlights the inner ‘private world’ of personal sense-making drawn from experience and the shared accounting that this process of reflecting on and negotiating with the world that the individual engages. In our collaboration, this existential process of drawing into consciousness personal productions of meaning was created via *testimonio*, written through personal narrative as testimony (Park-Fuller, 2000). The process of bringing to consciousness the minutiae of experience and making sense of these experiences through writing—the production of narrative—provided the means for uncovering the *idios kosmos* of the authors.

Secondly, Dick’s (1975) assertion of the “strong empathetic rapport” (p. 32) was embraced via narrative. Through the act of writing and sharing with others the sense of the experiences encountered, a shared world (or *koinos kosmos*) of what these experiences meant was generated. Through the sharing and further dialogic co-construction of these narratives, a sense of what it meant to work within the

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contemporary university was uncovered. This realisation of how the experiences of the Self might also be shared by others through dialogue and narrative provided moments of empathetic rapport. This was central to the approach to *testimonio* detailed here and the opportunities this offered for irreverent *jouissance*.

In this regard, accounts from the *idios kosmos* point toward a view of the experience of the contemporary university currently missing in the literature. By framing *testimonio* as a useful methodological approach mobilised by a focus on the sense-making processes individuals engage in as part of the realisation of the *idios kosmos*, a powerful view of the effects (and *affects*) of the contemporary university emerges. Our interest was in charting what the experience of the contemporary university is *like*, and how this comes to be understood and reacted against according to how meanings of it are produced and rationalised through the Self and in empathetic rapport with Others (who are also experiencing these instances).

#### METHODS OF INQUIRY

We are two long-term academics with backgrounds in the disciplines of Cultural Studies and Education and interests in research that records the experiential, the phenomenological and affective aspects of being-in-the-world. These concerns are hopefully already apparent, but in placing emphasis on this approach to research we hope to demonstrate the usefulness of *testimonio* for *jouissance*.

Our specific approach drew on the capture of, and reflection on, what we came to refer to as *narrative artefacts* of our experiences of the university. These artefacts presented as *moments*—encounters, experiences, events—retold and narrativised as instances of experience. We recorded short narrative accounts in the form that Bleakley (2000) identifies, and upon working into narrative our personal experiences and reflections of these moments—all subjectively and idiosyncratically crafted from the point of view of the Self (our purpose here wasn't to attempt the recording of some form of an objective or immutable *Truth*)—we shared these narratives and opened what we had recorded for further discussion and reflection.

These reflective narratives had a multiple effect. At the superficial level, this retelling of experience brought to consciousness accounts of experience and moments that otherwise would have been lost in the busyness and turbulence of an *ordinary* work day. We shared between us illustrative but ultimately *everyday* examples of the ways that we felt the university was formulated as a site of incivility. These narrative artefacts did not necessarily detail explicitly (physically or symbolically) *extraordinary* moments, nor did they attempt to represent universal, generalisable accounts of the experience of the contemporary university shared by anyone else other than ourselves. But these narratives did draw important attention to the more benign and everyday instances of academic life *we* had each encountered.

The narratives that formed offered something of a *bildungsroman* of our experiences as academics. The stock of material that was captured via our *testimonio* narratives offered more than just accounts of the moments we noticed and reflected upon. As with any personal narrative, we too were written into these

accounts, with the narratives standing as indicative of *where we were* in relation to the university and what we were noticing. The accounts grew and merged as our reflections developed. These narratives came to represent what Linda Park-Fuller (2000) identifies as “autobiographical staged personal narratives in which the autobiographical material performed is not collected from others and embodied by the performer, but is, rather, the performer’s own story” (p. 21). These were our stories as much as they were accounts of discrete moments.

It soon emerged that as we drew attention to the sorts of everyday expressions of incivility and similar anti-social behaviours that further instances emerged. We were beginning to recognise and were becoming sensitive to the instances. It also occurred that many of these moments were experienced by each of us—in most cases with some nuance that reflected our relative positions, but nonetheless as moments that were mutually recognised as significant. We had found an approach that provided us the space to reflect on these seemingly benign expressions of life in the contemporary university. As these dialogues developed, we crafted an increasingly sophisticated approach for not only recognising moments that otherwise would have been accepted as ‘ordinary’ (and hence forgotten), but also for problematising that which was taken-for-granted in the interactions we were having. Ordinary moments turned out to be not so ordinary when considered against the growing stock of reportings we had developed.

We do not wish to suggest that what was at play here was some form of *false-consciousness*; something from which we had developed the critical keys to unlock an awareness of the full ‘horror’ of academic life. Indeed, what this approach to noticing the otherwise everyday and ordinary enabled was an awareness of the ways certain practices and actions came to be normalised. While we did notice and reflect on the multiple ways that positive interpersonal behaviours find activation in the contemporary university (such as the way very positive interpersonal relationships formed and prospered in response to some of the more problematic aspects of the university), our focus was primarily to chart the ways that those less-than-positive aspects of academic life materialised and became rationalised as *normal*.

We take the approach that Ira Shor (1987) advocates according to his critical pedagogical approach of *extraordinarily re-experiencing the ordinary*. The ordinary provided the terrain upon which the workings of the university could be examined, and from which the responses and reactions to the everyday engaged by each of us as academics could be explored and considered. The narrative artefacts we reflected on, recorded and shared between us offered an insight into the terrain of the university—one that is simultaneously intrasubjectively symbolic and reflective of the complex interpersonal relationships that shape contemporary academic life.

It was with this, however, that a major implication in this approach to using *testimonio* recordings of experience developed. In short, our narratives and the dialogues we shared were *fun*. While our subject matter dealt with often worrying observations of incivility, in sharing these accounts and charting our relative experience of the university we inhabited, a collegiality developed between us. While we had worked together previously, and shared friendship beyond our formal collegial connection, this process of writing offered a further insight into

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how we each encountered the university and undertook our practice. It was with this that the joy of shared experience emerged. Our narrativised reflections provided a chance for laughter, candid appraisal, irreverent critique and most of all, shared collegiality—an experience of emerging *jouissance*.

In detailing this approach, we seek to contribute to accounts of the university already present in the literature that draw variously on ethnographic (Fox & Stallworth, 2009), case study (Bozeman et al., 2012) and even statistical (Twale & DeLuca, 2008) methodologies and data sources to highlight that the contemporary university is in something of a crisis. As a site increasingly prone to incivility, we suggest that it is through the personal narratives that *testimonio* provides that an image of the personal terrain of the university might be cast into view, and from which some sense of the shared experience of the work lives and practices of academics might be understood.

#### MOMENTS FROM THE ORDINARY

As one expression of the approach detailed here, the following discussion is taken from one particular entry of the *Testimonio Log* we compiled. This entry wasn't selected for use in this chapter for any reason other than that it represents the sorts of discussions we had, and that it provides insight into how it is we came to think about and construct meaning from moments and experiences that were otherwise innocuous and *ordinary*. Although in the moment we felt something wasn't right with the experiences we came to recall later, it wasn't until we came to share our experiences in dialogue and commit these to writing that they took on their full meaning.

Email provided a useful method for recording our dialogues. This method of writing and transferring ideas was immediate, captured, easily appended and continuous. While we did on occasion share concerns that we were indeed figuratively using the master's tools to dismantle the master's house (to poorly paraphrase Audre Lorde's famous maxim, see Lorde, 1984), and that email like most other aspects of the contemporary university was monitored, it remained that email provided a mechanism to effectively capture and share our reflections.

Over the course of several months through 2014 and 2015, we set out our dialogue and our *testimonio*. The following entry, as one example from this log, was recorded in July-August 2014.

*Hi Robyn,*

*I had an interesting experience this afternoon in my [School's staff research forum] ... In short, we had an address from [a senior member of staff], and as part of the presentation (in which a vision for the Faculty and how this aligns with current funding climates, the University's strategic initiatives and so on was offered), discussion turned to the recent [University climate survey results].*

*This discussion was fascinating! It followed some perhaps 'usual' lines of inquiry (particularly around how reported issues of academic 'disgruntlement' has been pacified and massaged), but turned specifically to the growing divide between Academic staff and Professional staff of the University.*



*It was noted by one of my colleagues, who happens to hold a formal Administrative role as a School Coordinator, that she had recently witnessed during a significant University-level committee meeting an Academic staff member being spoken to 'like she was a recalcitrant preschooler'. She went on to highlight her concerns with anyone being spoken to - young or old, high rank or low rank - in this way, and conjured the imagery of having witnessed this colleague being 'barked at' by the Professional staff member for asking questions of a new teaching and learning policy that had been devised by a group of managers in the University; one it turns out that had received no input or advice from Academic staffers (the people who will now be obliged to follow this policy). Apparently the meeting then descended into something of a farce, whereby Academics generally were castigated and demonised by the majority Professional staff present at this meeting.*

*Andrew*

*Hi Andrew*

*I read your email with interest. The example you discuss seems to describe the everyday workplace practices that I am noticing as well. As an example, a recent email was sent by a member of the senior management .... That email was pleasant enough. It was addressed to 'Dear Colleagues' and invited academic staff to participate in a divisional initiative. A month later, a follow-up email was sent by a professional staff member. This time the message was simple:*

**REMINDER Deadline for submissions is 5pm, Monday 28 June**

*Although the words seem innocuous, it was the presentation of the message that shocked me. It appeared in red lettering in a font twice the size of the font of the original email and the message was in bold. What was the over-riding message here? One reading, of course, is that the professional staff member was sending a timely and supportive reminder to academics so that they wouldn't miss the deadline. However, on the other hand, intertextuality comes into play. Capital letters are recognised widely in netiquette rules as yelling or being angry, and bold, larger font suggests the same. Traditionally in schools, the red pen was used as the pen of judgement - the red pen of judgement. So another reading is that the reminder is an imperative, a directive - meet the deadline! There have been other emails too that have used similar emphasis techniques - yelling in a sense - and have seemed more explicit in their message - public displays of professional staff directing academic staff. In one example, the techniques described earlier (large size, red, bold font), along with three asterisks at the beginning and another three at the end seemed to 'bark' an order to academics:*

**\*\*\*All course examiners are required to check the draft ... timetable and forward any changes to ... by ...\*\*\***

*The remainder of the email contained a conglomeration of bold, underlining and italic font for emphasis, with a set of rules. For example:*

**Any requests for specific times/days will be disregarded unless there are extenuating circumstances and will require the approval of the Head of School; Requests to change the timetable after enrolments open will not be considered unless there are unforeseen circumstances.**

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*Interestingly, “please” had been added to a number of these ‘rules’, but there is something contradictory about adding please to an imperative: for example:*

**Please do not assume or expect it to remain the same;** Please notify ...

Please inform ...

*Perhaps I’m overly sensitive, but these did not seem like friendly instructions to me. Am I being oversensitive?*

*robyn*

We do not wish to suggest that our dialogue, as reported here, stood for anything more than the reactions we each had to this specific moment. Our point was not to vilify colleagues—professional colleagues especially—nor identify for scrutiny any specific section within the university for any particular reason. What we sought to do was to share our frustrations, and how these were provoked in these moments, and to share commonality of experience. This had several effects.

Firstly, it offered a chance to unburden these frustrations and to excise the angst of the situation. It also offered a chance to take stock of our own situatedness within the university and to consider how things were and how we were perceived. In relaying these accounts of how others engaged with us (albeit often negatively), we took time to take stock of our place in the university and how it was that the university positioned our work and place as academics. But perhaps most significantly, this recording of narrative also offered the chance for collegiality—to trade notes and share experiences. We realised that the experiences we each had weren’t so unique and there was, within this, a comfort of knowing that there was something bigger at play than just the encounters we had each had. It was with this that *jouissance* emerged; the relief of knowing we weren’t alone in these experiences and that the joy of finding collegiality in shared experience was always present.

#### FINAL NOTES

A critique of the approach detailed in this chapter might suggest some “so what?” questions: Why does this matter, and how does the sharing of experience via *testimonio* result in anything other than indulgent self-realisation, let alone meaningful change?

We do not wish to claim that, through *testimonio* and shared narrative, structural change of the university will result. To argue accordingly would be to extend the effects of dialogue and shared narrative too far. But when considered in terms of the isolation many academics feel—and the alienation from the work environments of the university that life in the academy provokes—a comfort is borne from knowing that the experiences of the Self are not singular or idiosyncratic and that other colleagues too might be experiencing similar things.

It has become something of a taboo to acknowledge doubt or anything other than total confidence in one’s abilities in academia. In a world of stark competition for positions, funding and resources, to declare vulnerability is a sign of weakness. This is a great shame, and when considered in terms of the problems of toxic academic environments (including growing mental health issues as Wilcox, 2014 highlights), finding opportunities for collegiality and shared experience is

important. This is not a therapy, but something more profoundly human. The dialogues that we each shared moved us to realise that we weren't alone in our experiences and that problematic changes to the landscape of the university were experienced in ordinary, everyday ways. Although structural responses to these changes still require enactment, as a first step at least, collegiality was found. It was also the case too that *jouissance* borne from this collegiality was generated.

For Hourigan (2015), *jouissance* stands as “the pleasure taken from suffering and most often this suffering is the result of some symbolic limit ... that prohibits or entices certain actions on the part of the subject” (p. 125). Our articulation here differs slightly from Hourigan's in that our pain wasn't inflicted purposefully, but it was witnessed in that occurring around us. The manifestation of incivility in the practices of the university provoked this inquiry and the recording of the personal experiences that provided impetus for our *testimonio*. From this, the joy of collegiality emerged, with *jouissance* materialising when the “pain is overcome through the commitment to the act” (Hourigan, 2015, p. 118) of writing through and engaging dialogue of our experience.

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