

Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration



Christina Kargillis, *Treading the Rainbow*, 2010

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Acknowledgements

This thesis represents a three-year journey which began on a very different latitude to where it has concluded. Exploring the scope of the inquiry was a six month endeavour in itself and I need to thank Dr Kitty Te Riele with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for steering the path in helping me to define my research query through multi-dimensional topic unveiled in the following pages. I also thank my professional friends and academic peers whom I consulted within the first six months to help define the purpose of the research and my position within it.

As a cross-disciplinary topic, determining a suitable supervisor was a test however the extensive experience of Professor Diana Slade was invaluable in providing me with a structural framework for the efforts ahead while her extensive network of colleagues helped me in refining my approach. Diana's direction for me was clear and ambitious – she must have known I perform well under pressure! Essentially she defined the mechanics of the task and provided constructive feedback on my chapter development early into the thesis, setting the bar for the remainder of it. Following her departure for an international commitment I was met by Dr Tony Holland who steered the remainder of the course until Diana's return, when I was lucky to have both pairs of eyes over the final stages. Tony's expertise in educational theory and vocational paradigms provided a perfect counterpart to the work I had completed at this juncture. He was always supportive, interested and generous with his knowledge in helping me to develop a meaningful piece of research, and I owe a great debt to his engagement with the project from reviewing my work to introducing new theoretical concepts into the equation.

This thesis is a professional portfolio and represents a new approach for the doctorate within the faculty, engineered by Professor Alison Lee. Alison's guidance was therefore indispensable in helping me to devise a portfolio which satisfied the criteria while introducing exciting avenues for it, such as the direction that its key artefact, a book, has taken. Through my literature review I embarked upon other researchers who have nurtured kindred topics and I am grateful especially to Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr Nicholas Osbaldiston of the University of Melbourne who took the time to discuss concepts and literature around lifestyle migration. His thesis and journal articles have been an inspiration and have also played an important role in articulating the differences between our approaches towards the phenomenon.

As a remote student who has completed two previous degrees with UTS, my ability to work autonomously has been honed over the years, however I found the doctorate the most demanding of these and it is possibly the most anti-social thing I have ever done! Therefore communication with friends, participants and interested parties throughout the experience has enabled me to stay connected and to pretend that doctoral life was 'normal'. At this point I need to thank my adrenaline-charged Cattle dog whose inability to sit at my feet for more than four hours at a time ensured that my responsibilities to him were adhered to, saving my eyesight and my sanity in the process. His obtuse personality greatly provided relief from this hermitage where indeed, our daily walks rose from five to ten kilometres and lunch was often held in conjunction with a backyard frisbee session rather than at the computer.

As an empirical piece of research there would be nothing to explore without the engagement of the participants – 22 people who either volunteered to share their stories in response to an invitation from a stranger, or otherwise agreed to participate. These diverse individuals are connected not only by the participation criteria for the research, but by their interest and their generosity of time and spirit. Thank you. Each spent approximately two hours with me in person along with a stream of following communication to help me develop the concepts inside this book for the ultimate benefit of yet, other strangers. Fourteen participants have opted to be identified in the research while eight have chosen confidentiality. Those agreeing to be identified are as follows, with thanks:

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Person T:	Rhana Harrison, Proprietor, Anura Design
Person U:	Steve Lawrence, Director, Noosa Boardroom
Person V:	Dr Tamsin Kerr

Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text. I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student

Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication

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Abstract

This thesis explores the challenges and negotiations within the 'lifestyle migration' or sea/tree change of working people, to places rich in nature but 'lean' in industry. It examines how they overcome social, environmental and economic challenges in the process of negotiating a new life. The research is founded upon an empirical study in conjunction with relevant literature and theoretical analysis.

The inquiry stems from the need to address the growing popularity of the lifestyle migration phenomenon, where approximately two thirds of working aged migrants within the study site 'fail' within five years, and greater indications of 'failure' are found elsewhere in Australia.

In this research, lifestyle migration is positioned as a quest for self-actualisation where the contradiction exists of seeking a better life through a pathway of risk in unknown landscapes of apparently limited opportunities, often resulting in the experience of a somewhat more difficult life. In order to reach self-actualisation, lifestyle migrants must undergo the trials of changing environmental, social and economic paradigms in the process.

In exposing how the survivors have managed to survive, this study identifies the renegotiation of values with a particular emphasis towards control over one's own life. It is suggested that for many lifestyle migrants, living a life orchestrated by the power structures of social expectations has failed the individual, who in turn, seeks to empower themselves by choosing a different ideology. However, new measures of status become apparent through lifestyle migration, as found in the research. Control over one's own life and status issues are two of 30 themes explored in the narrative analysis of the study, where participants stemmed from diverse socio-economic positions and represented both the coastal and hinterland townships within the study site.

In order to understand how the survivors managed to survive, the research employs a unique approach in exploring the relationship between adult education perspectives focusing on reflexive identity and innovation theories, as well as educational perspectives of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence.

The findings suggest that lifestyle migrants need to be creative in order to survive through reflexivity with external factors, positioning the process of the relocation as a creative act.

The research argues that such a reflexive construction encourages a pioneering spirit among the survivors in displaying flexibility, accepting risk and adopting a self-reliant approach towards work and community involvement. These ‘small town pioneers’ embrace the wild frontier without the familiar structures of urban society, changing work and developing skill sets in order to survive. Creativity is crucial in such problem-solving, along with a reorchestration of values.

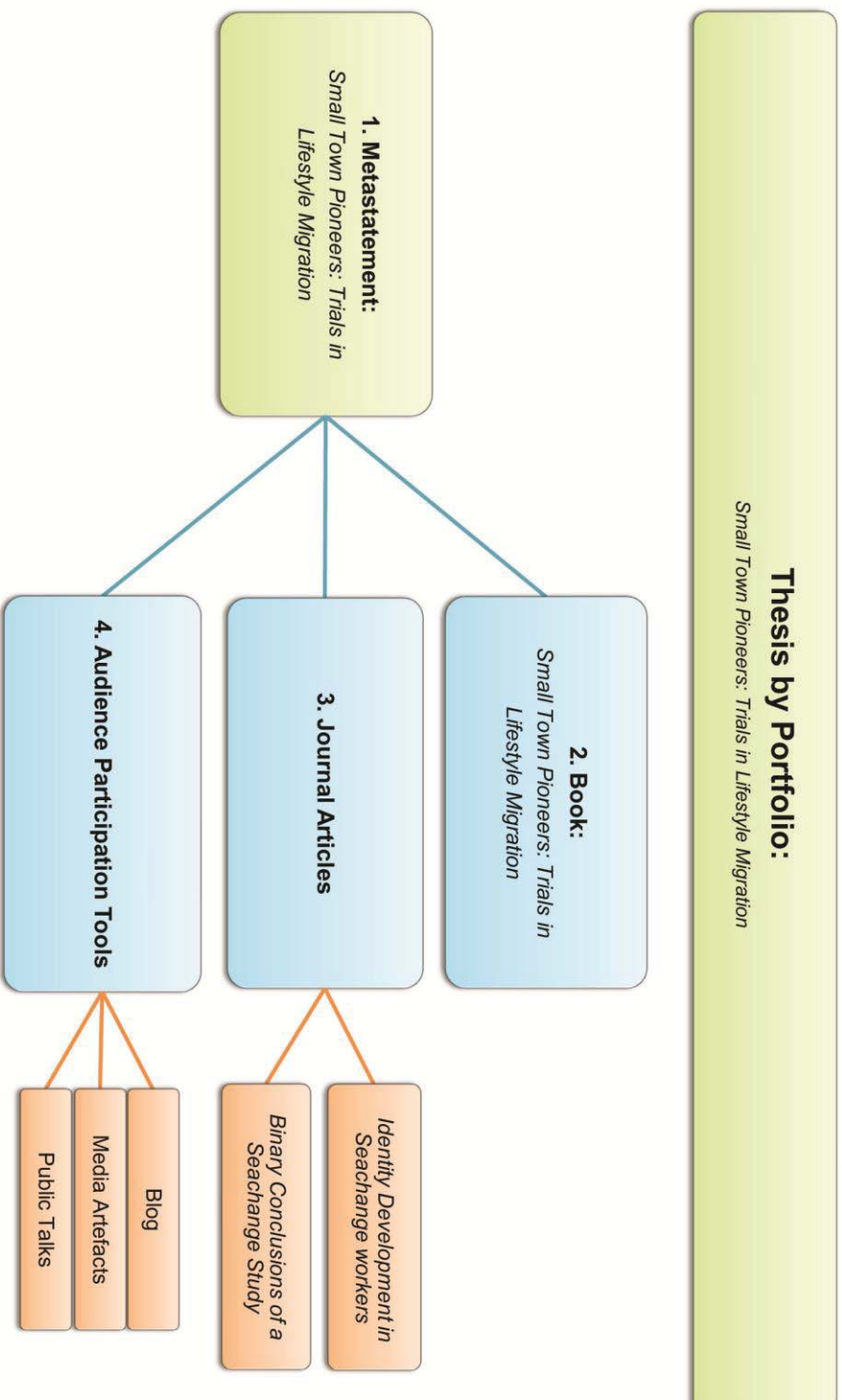
Cross-disciplinary fields involved in the exploration include studies in education in lifelong learning, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence; anthropology and sociology pertaining to lifestyle migration research; geography in explorations of transmigration and home; and philosophy in relation to status and the search for meaning.

Critically, this thesis considers existing lifestyle migration research where cultural implications pertaining to its country of origin are exposed, positioning the phenomenon as a non-homogenous entity on a global scale. Locally, the empirical work further supports a lack of homogeneity within the paradigm through a detailed exploration of interpretations within the findings. Such perceptions and their implications are previously unaddressed in academic discussion around the topic.

This thesis is a Doctor of Education by Portfolio, comprising four sets of components or artefacts – the thesis metastatement, a book, journal articles and audience participation tools – which contribute to both knowledge and to practice. Each of the portfolio’s artefacts hold specific aims, however the contribution of the thesis as a body of work is threefold:

- 1 Presenting findings which governing authorities may incorporate to inform their socio-cultural-economic decisions regarding non-urban migration;
- 2 Presenting an opportunity for transfer of learning for new and potential lifestyle migrants in exposing limiting and facilitating factors involved in the quest socially, culturally and economically;
- 3 Combining traditionally disparate concepts – creativity theory and identity theory – to understand the problem of the sustainability of lifestyle migration among working people.

Portfolio Components and Relationship



Index of Portfolio Components

This thesis, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration*, is a Doctor of Education by Portfolio. It contains the following components in order of inclusion:

1. Doctoral Metastatement

This metastatement explains the progression of the portfolio construction for the thesis, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration*, through discussion of the conceptual framework, contribution to professional practice and academia, theoretical basis, methodology and rationale of the portfolio artefacts. It outlines the contribution to knowledge and practice and demonstrates the 'doctoralness' of the portfolio as a thesis, further elaborated through its artefacts.

2. Book – Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration

This book is the key artefact of the portfolio containing the majority of the research within this thesis. It represents a comprehensive account of the theoretical arguments, methodological approach and relevant literature in addition to a detailed account of the findings and summaries of the narratives. It is targeted to the professional audience(s) in making a contribution to practice, and also to the academic audience, contributing to knowledge.

3. Journal Articles

Two academic journal articles are included. They contribute to knowledge through a cross-disciplinary approach which illuminates macro theories of creativity and identity, and educational perspectives, so that we may better understand and theorise upon the phenomenon of lifestyle migration among working people.

4. Audience Participation Tools

This artefact comprises a research blog (smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com), various media inclusions and public talks. Their doctoral value is situated in their public accessibility as devices which target new and potential lifestyle migrants where they engage a community of practice and contribute to the cultural development of the practice of lifestyle migration, through participation and dissemination.

1. Doctoral Metastatement – Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration

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Introduction

This metastatement explains the progression of the portfolio construction for the thesis, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration*, through discussion of the conceptual framework, contribution to professional and academic audiences, theoretical basis, methodology and rationale of the portfolio artefacts. It outlines the contribution to knowledge and practice and demonstrates the 'doctoralness' of the portfolio as a thesis, further elaborated through its artefacts. As such, some degree of repetition between the metastatement and its artefacts is unavoidable. The artefacts are explored at the end of this document.

The research was designed to determine the factors which facilitate and impede the sustainability of relocation among working people to places rich in nature but limited in industry, in their migration from urban environments, and considers identity development as integral to achieving this quest. It is empirical work and is approached through narrative methodology in addressing the question: How do lifestyle migrants reinvent themselves? and the sub question: What contributes to a sustainable relocation?

The study site of this research is the Noosa Biosphere, which contains the same boundary as the former Noosa Shire prior to its recent amalgamation. However the research is applicable to many 'lifestyle destinations' in Australia and potentially globally that are rich in natural beauty and lean on industry – the research is not Noosa-centric. The location was selected as it represents a highly transient destination and contains a broad socio-economic demographic between its hinterland and coastal communities. The site therefore presents a strong example of a non-homogenous paradigm where diverse experiences among lifestyle migrants only serve to emphasise the common factors contributing to sustainable or endured relocation among the survivors, whilst also revealing the complexities apparent in a non-homogenous community. The choice of site also considers the environmental features of the area, as a UNESCO listed biosphere, so that the research on this lifestyle destination may retain its relevance as the region expands.

This research on lifestyle migration is grounded in lifelong learning principles, in the context of broader social change, and sits within the field of the sociology of transition. The concept of self-actualisation (Rogers 1980) is interrelated with the lifestyle migration quest as it involves self-awareness, personal growth and the fulfilment of potential above concern for the opinions

of others among its actants. As such, the quest for self-actualisation forms the pinnacle of Maslow's famed theoretical pyramid in his Hierarchy of Needs (1962). However, where working lifestyle migrants take the risks to relocate to unknown landscapes of limited opportunities their search for a new and better life more often involves a plummeting to the base of that pyramid as they change environmental, social and economic paradigms in the process. In order to reach self-actualisation they must then ascend through the levels of physiological, safety, love and belonging and esteem needs, according to Maslow, before the peak of the pyramid can reveal itself. This quest is what the research explores.

In reflecting on Hoey's research around lifestyle migration: "The challenges these participants faced in transitioning from their old life to the new were overcome with the drive to establish greater purpose in life and determine their own self-worth, rather than having it determined through the structures that held them in place in the city" (Hoey2005:602-603). This resulted in self-employment for approximately 40 per cent of his participants as a way of taking control of their own destinies.

The need for the research is based upon the intense level of transience within lifestyle destinations in Australia (Ragusa 2010; ABSa, ABSb; Smith and Doherty 2006; Salt 2001, 2005; Gurran et al 2005) in tandem with a growing popularity of the phenomenon. The primary portfolio artefact of this thesis is a book also titled *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration* and the rationale for this research is embellished there. As part of the purpose of this metastatement to provide theoretical cohesion between portfolio components, I shall firstly contextualise the Doctoral work by providing a narrative account of its background, leading to my decision to explore the project. The conceptual framework is addressed in section 2 and a discussion of the methodological journey is addressed under section 3. Finally the portfolio artefacts are explored under section 4.

1. The Doctoral Journey: My Narrative

My 'call' to this inquiry stems from personal experience. Much like the diverse range of people I have interviewed for the research I experienced a need to escape the city for a chance at recreating my life and myself in an unknown landscape. That need permeated my emotional, physical and mental levels and what I sought was the simplicity and authenticity of nature, in contrast with the layers of social and political structures which dominate our urban lives.

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However I didn't know what I was looking for at that stage. As a Sydneysider I had always felt anonymous – despite strong career prospects and educational accomplishments I felt unsubstantiated due to the scale of the place and its emphasis on corporate culture, which was anathema to creativity and authenticity in my experience, but I had no understanding of an alternative.

I expressed my dissatisfaction with urban existence earlier as an art student with “inner-city syndrome”. I later returned to university and studied Communications/Journalism at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and worked mainly in corporate communications, publishing and public relations for several years afterwards.

Through the world of work I realised the scale of Sydney and its implications on the need to compartmentalise one's life between work and home and play, which impacts the way we engage with the world. A search for a more authentic and integrated existence led me to a Graduate Diploma in Adult Education and an ensuing Masters in the same field with UTS, where I focused on the way we learn and the way we can become empowered to change. This coincided with work in stakeholder engagement which fuelled my interest. I found the study profoundly creative as it addresses identity development at a fundamental level.

I started working for a company which provided innovation training and designed courses for further education. I also began teaching at TAFE NSW in communications and innovation. However I didn't value the corporate approach of encouraging senior executives to explore ‘play dough’ in order to inspire creativity and was more interested in uncovering and learning how to resolve mental blockages towards transformation and improved wellbeing, such as through autobiography and narrative.

Prior to this educational career focus I had found myself in an abusive work situation in the public sector. The work was exciting – it was my boss who was the problem – he had misconstrued idea of the term ‘public servant’ as it applied to his female staff and due to the political climate at the time I received no help from Human Resources, only a death threat from one of the managers after I demanded a transfer, should I discuss the matter. Later, I wrote a detailed paper on this scenario as ‘therapy’ in an attempt to reframe the story and recreate my position within it (Nelson, 1994; Czarniawska 2004; Schnee 2009). At the same time, my marriage was falling apart – my ex-husband was not the protective type and didn't

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seem concerned about the adrenal burnout I was suffering as a result of the obnoxious happenings between nine and five, despite the fact that I was noticeably unwell. The marriage had been failing for some years but its demise was accelerated by the work situation, which had continued for over a year, and six months later I was finished with Sydney and the marriage. I escaped.

What saved me was an offer to spend nine months at The Banff Centre in Canada's Rocky Mountains on a work/study scholarship. From the minute I stepped onto the plane I was cured. My sunken eyes sprung back to health, the stress lines vanished and I could breathe without constriction in my chest. Banff had an intensity with its rugged and truly awe inspiring mountainous scapes where the threat of encounters with cougars and grizzly bears kept me focused. The creatively potent environment of The Banff Centre and the excitement of the landscape combined to revive a long lost spark. Like Noosa, the site of my research, Banff is a UNESCO Biosphere, though I didn't know Banff was a biosphere until recently or that Noosa was a biosphere until I had moved to the area. Banff is also a National Park where Noosa is surrounded by National Park, so the transferable qualities between them are obvious.

In The Banff Centre I worked in the New Media Institute until my scholarship expired and I returned to Sydney to stay with my parents. I had sold the house whilst away and so I was homeless and soon to be divorced, and I had no expectations other than an ever increasing conviction to yet again escape Sydney as soon as possible. I was then offered a coveted job back at The Banff Centre. I sold most of my possessions and bought a ticket on the Consulate's advice, but was then told that I had to wait three months. There had been an administrative error by a junior in the office – this was three days before the plane was due to take off, and the Centre couldn't wait. I felt defeated, broke, homeless and alone and it was then that another distressing family situation with my sister developed which exacerbated my now desperate need to get away. At the same time my mother had a stroke and I had to delay my escape to take care of her until she recovered.

These challenges represent my critical incidents in pursuit of lifestyle migration. The seven months back in Sydney that followed were even worse than the years leading up to my departure, but where power abuse and personal power are central themes through work, family and marriage.

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It took me a while to find Noosa. I went to Brisbane for nine months and worked as a magazine editor in the public service but, although better than Sydney, it was yet another city as now I had Banff to compare it to. I explored the Sunshine Coast on weekends and loved the feeling I found there. It felt alive, organic and free, as if anything could happen. I was tired from the upheaval of splitting property and then living out of a suitcase for two years and although it was not an ideal time to buy a house, I have never regretted it. I regained my sense of gravity in the world, and it meant that I could get a dog. Although I love adventure, I am not a gypsy at heart but someone who requires structure so that I may fly around the inside of it, metaphorically speaking. It is when the opportunity for creativity is constricted, through mental conditioning, that I experience challenges. This understanding and transfer of creativity is an ongoing theme in my research and central in this thesis.

I was offered a job as Communications Manager with Noosa Council in the lead up to the Sunshine Coast councils' amalgamation. Noosa was a minor bureaucracy, but manageable and its culture was respectful of the environment and of its people. I detested the amalgamation process however because I knew what it meant – 'Sydneyitis'. The workplace environment went from humble and friendly to faceless and hostile, overnight. It was too familiar. Corporate culture was largely missing from the region until then. This theme is heavily addressed by participants in the book belonging to this thesis.

I left to work part time and commence a freelance career, and then I was accepted into university to begin this Doctorate as a way of analysing the transition that I had undergone so far, and how it had affected my sense of self, my values and my goals. As a result, if I were to answer some of the questions I put to my participants I would say that I have dramatically recreated myself since relocating. I chose the place because it is characterised by nature and the population is small, which encourages a feeling of freedom and authenticity. The translation between Banff and Noosa represented the symbolic value of the relocation for me, based upon some of the things I wanted to affirm in my life, which I discovered in Banff. Noosa is a place that allows one to become part of it where there is room and time for individuals so that they are not anonymous. Such places allow one to have a voice, as recognised through the narratives in this work. I knew that if I could hear my voice again the rest of my life would follow suit because values and goals would crystallise, away from stressors and distractions, and become more aligned with my 'true' direction. However that direction too is influenced by

the process of relocation, as is explored in the research, where 'true North' is an elusive and emerging concept.

Some of the values which stand strong through the migration include creativity over bureaucracy, community participation over suburban alienation, an absence of urban stress such as traffic, and a life that is less compartmentalised between home and work so that worlds not so much collide but combine, providing a *feeling* of authenticity – this *feeling* is highly important but theoretically debatable concept as argued in the research.

The concept of perpetual career development is something which intrigues me about living in a small, non-urban community due to the limited work opportunities, even though it creates stress for many people, myself included. They are often motivated to keep changing their occupations in order to survive, and this reflects who they become in an evolving story of identity development– these people are small town pioneers.

I consider myself, above all, a creative spirit and this Doctoral research is an extension of some of those creative ideas. In 2006 I held a photographic exhibition in Banff on the theme of the impact of place upon a personal change (some of those images appear in the book which forms part of this thesis). Then I made a lifestyle migration. Now it has grown into something multidimensional where passion is a driving force. That is what many participants discussed indirectly – for some it was about being within nature, away from the crowds and the environmental pollution, in a place where they can hear themselves think, but the search defies economic logic for most of them. Such passion is the rationale for the majority of lifestyle migrants in the research in fuelling reasons for relocation and for sustaining the move. The influence of passion cannot be understated as a prime motivator for innovation, risk management, and self change, as explored in this thesis.

This has been my narrative account of the background to the research. Now I shall proceed with the rest of the doctoral journey by exploring the concepts, theory and methodology of this thesis.

2. Conceptual Framework

This research explores the challenges of lifestyle migrants, how they were overcome and how the new environment – physically, economically and socially – impacts their self-reinvention from both an empirical and theoretical perspective. The research argues that such a reflexive construction encourages a pioneering spirit in taking risks and adopting a self-reliant approach towards work and community involvement. These small town pioneers embrace the wild frontier without the familiar structures of urban society, changing work and developing skills sets in order to survive. Creativity and innovation are crucial in this problem-solving.

Aspects of the research are relevant to regional Australia, whether they classify as ‘lifestyle destinations’ or otherwise in relation to remote working practices, financial insufficiency and social issues stemming from space/proximity. The research does not explore independently wealthy retirees but is firmly targeted towards the thousands of workers in Sydney, Melbourne and other cities who ask the question – How can I get out of here? While much research has been done on lifestyle migration, mostly it addresses the reasons why people leave the urban context and relocate. The literature review pertaining to this and related aspects such as simplicity lifestyle is explored in the book through Chapters 1, 2 and 3 and partially in the journal articles included in the portfolio. The following sub-sections represent a succinct overview of the key arguments within the inquiry from the literature review and the theory, before I address the contribution of the research. Each section below is further elaborated in the book and the journal articles.

2.1 The Paradigm of Work

As a professional doctorate, one of the functions of the portfolio is to address the relevant professional audience pertaining to the investigation. However, the paradigm of professionalism within the lifestyle migration context is itself an emergent phenomenon, representing a focal issue in the research. In lifestyle migration, work focus is more frequently characterised by the adaptability and/or multiplicity of skill and occupation than by cultural obedience to any one profession, as more often found in urban contexts. This is due to the limited employment opportunities and small population size of lifestyle migration destinations.

Where the term ‘professional’ in the urban context identifies a standard of work type, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics category of ‘professional services’ (as distinct from trades),

the lifestyle migration scenario houses those who multitask, change direction on a regular basis or pursue hobbies towards a business, as culturally dominant in the study site. These activities may sit within the professional services realm and/or elsewhere. Therefore the meaning of the word 'professional' changes with the transition of lifestyle migration as lifestyle migrants endeavour to survive in this new context of limited options, impacting upon their sense of identity.

Congruent with such a transition are themes of loss of status and the establishment of new parameters of status; anxiety and stress which accompany status issues and financial worries; innovation and creativity which develop to forge solutions towards such issues, at least in those who sustain their relocation; and cultural and social adjustments which align with a dominant theme of lifestyle and community over work and profession. Yet money, along with the changing value of money, is a central point of consideration in their daily lives.

It is the differences between lifestyle destinations and the functioning of urban centres, where the larger scale promotes categories of professions and markets, which helps to define the professional sphere in this research. The professional audience here is an emergent paradigm which spans a specific set of circumstances: from urbanites who are investigating the undertaking of a lifestyle migration, to ex-urbanites who have relocated from an urban cultural base within the past five years and are earning a living. In this Doctoral research, the professional sphere includes employees, self-employed, entrepreneurs, part-time and casual employed cross-industry, but contained within the parameters of the study site.

2.2 Identity and a Search for the Ideal

An exploration of reflexive identity theory (Chappell et al 2003) in the context of lifestyle migration is central to the inquiry. As such, notions of authenticity and the ideal self (Hoey 2005; Osbaldiston 2010) in pursuit of an ideal life are examined in relation to change, which occur in response to external factors. Relational identity is involved in this exploration as the fate of lifestyle migrants typically involves a change in status and work when relocating from an urban context to the lifestyle destination. Losing one's former reputation as a 'professional' through lack of opportunity is one example of this. Identifying as an employee in an urban environment and then entering a state of self-employment in the lifestyle destination is a variation on this.

The research explores literature on lifestyle migration and voluntary simplicity (Hoey 2005; Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Osbaldiston 2010; Ragusa 2010; Hamilton and Mail 2003; Chhetri et al 2009) to position relocation as intrinsically tied to identity development, reflexively through the ensuing challenges of the move, in comparison with the *symbolic* act of creating a new self, as argued by Benson and O'Reilly. It suggests that, while the symbolism of relocation to a place which represents values and ideals of authenticity (Hoey 2005) is often involved in the decision to make a lifestyle migration (as confirmed in this empirical research), indicating that a level of change has already taken place, it is the ensuing negotiation of social, cultural and economic challenges which result in change for the majority of lifestyle migrants in the research who survive their relocation for at least five years. Survivors of five years or more represent the minority of those who attempt the relocation to this study site.

The phenomenon of lifestyle migration and the search for the ideal is also compared on a cross-continental level between Australia, Britain and American where cultural disparities are revealed between the three. Post-industrial North American-derived culture promotes its corporate refugees as lifestyle migration candidates due to an increasing dissatisfaction with the world of work and its associated stress (Hoey 2006). British research reveals that it is the lower level workers in its post-industrial hierarchical culture, rather than the upper hierarchical position holders, that suffer greater stress and dissatisfaction (CCSU 2004). However other research describes British lifestyle migration as comprising relatively affluent individuals (Benson and O'Reilly 2009) and so the role of stress and escape may be less significant in the phenomenon there where potentially the 'stressed-out' lower levels endure the penalty of its endemic class-oriented culture. Australian research (Chhetri et al 2009) shows an almost even split between 'blue collar' and 'white collar' workers in the lifestyle migration scenario. These discrepancies imply the influence of culture upon stress, upon the desire to escape and upon the ability to break free of social expectations where anxiety associated with this disequilibrium with urban life is explored through contemporary philosophy (de Botton 2004), and forms a significant part of this empirical research. A fuller exploration of identity theory and the literature review is contained within the book and journal articles in this portfolio.

2.3 Creativity, Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence

The broad theoretical field of creativity is restricted and defined in the research to focus on the Deleuzian (1990) concept of creativity as a process of 'becoming' (see book for defining parametres), while innovation theory (ANTA 2001) is employed to illustrate processes within

this overarching process. The role of creativity and innovation in the lifestyle migration quest is central to the investigation and operates conjunctly with identity theory, as is demonstrated through the literature review and the empirical research in the portfolio.

In making the mechanical moves and experiments towards the ideal self in the lifestyle migration quest, participants are led to change perspectives, question the dominance of power structures and challenge assumptions (de Bono 1982, 1995), representing key aspects of innovation methodology, as they learn a new lifestyle and become someone new, whether ideal or otherwise. Deleuze's the nomadic thinker (1990) is explored in conjunction with this, free to create new connections in order to open up experience to new becomings. As such, the research positions lifestyle migration as a creative act of self-reinvention, imperative for sustaining relocation.

Georgsdottir and Getz (2004) describe the value of flexibility in the becoming process, where the ability to switch between conceptual frameworks demonstrates a capacity for innovation and in the context of this research, a capacity for creative problem solving. Mostert suggests that our everyday environment is held responsible for facilitating or blocking flexibility where the ability to perceive coincidence, for example, is a result of flexibility of mind (2007).

Moultrie et al (2007) support the notion that the organisational climate has a direct influence over a person's willingness to express their creativity through qualities of challenge, freedom, dynamism/liveliness, trust/openness, idea time, playfulness/humour, conflicts, idea support, debate and risk-taking and where the physical environment can also act as a catalyst for creativity via visual stimuli, social and cultural activity and branding. There is a rich correlation between these dimensions within study site's community where these themes are implicated, as explored in the portfolio.

The instability of society, particularly through the work force (Wren 2008), encourages innovation as a problem-solving endeavour, propelling the pursuit of lifestyle migration, or at least the belief that one can address the challenge. However, risk adversity is often the outcome when the challenges prove too great, as proclaimed by some participants and supported by the statistical data (see book). The equation of risk versus capacity introduces the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura 1977, 2006) and realistic self-assessment, along with emotional intelligence (Goleman 1998), which interact with the lifestyle migrant's ability to sustain their relocation. These educational perspectives are hinged upon the concept of

learning a new lifestyle where lifelong learning establishes the context through learning related to creativity, personal development and wellbeing (Delors 1996). It is within this context that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence is discussed in attempting to understand how individuals resolve the problems of uncertainty and insecurity through lifestyle migration.

Bandura explores perceived efficacy to influence the types of environments people choose and the direction of their personal development where “Social influences operating in selected environments continue to promote certain competencies, values and interests...” (2001:10). Therefore a breaking away of such aspects towards an ideal enables new aspirations to develop, playing an important role in identity development and becoming someone new. Development of self-efficacy was highly recognizable in the narratives of the majority of participants through the development of innovation and adaptation to a new social infrastructure, involving new ways of being and relating, particularly around sustainable employment.

Exploring Daniel Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence further reiterates the significance of self-efficacy where he defines self-awareness as involving realistic self-assessment which, along with self-regulation, is implicated in self-efficacy as discussed (Goleman et al 2006). Other elements of emotional intelligence which illuminate the lifestyle migration quest include openness to change, which belongs with self-regulation, and reflects the skill of flexibility, discussed previously, while motivation involves a passion for reasons that go beyond money or status as well as a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence (Goleman 1998) – such is the quest of lifestyle migration.

One could argue that lifestyle migrants are ubiquitously self-aware at the time of making their departure from the city, in reflecting on Goleman’s thoughts where a highly self-aware person will stay focused on their direction and so can refuse a tempting financial offer for instance that is not aligned with their principles or long-term goals. By contrast, a person lacking self-awareness will make decisions which create “inner turmoil by treading on buried values” (1998:96). In fact, the inner values of lifestyle migrants often bring external turmoil, heightening risk in the pursuit of a value driven agenda over a scenario of sameness, but where realistic self-assessment, as with self-efficacy, is the primary feature of self-awareness so that these people are less likely to fail. Potentially many ‘failed’ lifestyle migrants do not possess a developed self-awareness.

The theoretical argument in the research therefore positions lifestyle migration as a creative act of self-reinvention, through becoming, where innovation is integral to the transformation and promoted through actions in the renegotiation of sustaining the relocation. In line with this, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence are crucial in managing the challenges of the negotiation, where successfully pioneering the path in learning this new lifestyle occurs in tandem with the development of these two skills.

2.4 Contribution

The contribution of the research pertains to practice in the professional sphere; and to knowledge in the academic sphere.

Through my early consultation with the community in formulating the research, it had become clear that urban-based professionals considering lifestyle migration, along with recent working lifestyle migrants were the non-academic target group for this work, where it could prove a significant guide and opportunity for transfer of learning to benefit their decision making and planning. However, extending that purpose brought the realisation of another significant target group, the policy makers and influencers. Therefore the professional and academic audiences are defined as such:

Contribution to Tier 1 – Policy Makers and Influencers:

The research would greatly improve the policy and practice pertaining to the lifestyle migration phenomenon by enabling government organisations such as State and Regional Development; Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government; Department of Training, Employment and Workplace relations as well as quasi-government bodies such as The Australia Institute and The National Seachange Taskforce to make better informed decisions. Such organisations are positioned to apply the findings in this empirical research in assisting the phenomenon of lifestyle migration through the renegotiation of human, social and cultural capital (Bohm and Land 2007) for healthier and more creative communities, potentially assisting in the process of lifestyle migration through socio-educational programs pertaining to remote working practice, innovation and risk management, for example, and playing an instrumental role in helping to determine the capacity for creativity and suitability of potential lifestyle migrants. It is important to note that uninformed intervention by authorities could prove anathema to the values of the lifestyle migration quest, as determined through this research.

Contribution to Tier 2 – New and Potential Lifestyle Migrants

Through this research, new and potential lifestyle migrants have the opportunity to learn the challenges of lifestyle migration through transfer of learning, through the narrative explorations in the research. Such insights are to be found in the cultural ‘every man’ and ‘every woman’ who characterise these places, despite their backgrounds which vary considerably, along with those versed in its analysis, as reflected in the research.

The research shows that new and potential lifestyle migrants are varied across the socio-economic scale and type of employment with approximately half in the ‘blue collar’ and half in the ‘white collar’ categories, as explored in the book. Therefore it is difficult to define the Tier 2 audience through statistical data. Culturally however, I considered *The Australian* newspaper readership as a guide due to its focus on economic, social and political issues in conjunction with “... features in lifestyle, arts and sports to balance the read for the independent thinking and influential readership” (Mediaworks 2011). While the research is primarily social/educational, its implications extend to the political and economic.

The Australian readership profile includes an age group of 25 – 50+ comprising approximately 75 per cent employed readers, approximately half of whom are termed ‘Professionals/Managers’ (Source: Roy Morgan Research September 2010). Therefore, while less than half the readership is comprised of professionals/managers, its culture is dominated by this group. The same applies for the Tier 2 audience of this research. There are both categories present however the culture of the readership reflects the professional group.

My rationale for the positioning of this audience is derived from the narrative activity where I discovered those trained in former professional roles, such as those from ex-corporate careers, showed a strong capacity for analysing the research topic and an interest in its discussion. This was contrasted by those from the trades and retail sectors who generally showed less interest in the discussion, with some notable exceptions. While categorically less interested in participating in research, this group provided extensive insight through a sound understanding of the work paradigm and its implications within the study site because the culture of the study site reflects them, despite the broad spectrum of career histories present.

Contribution to Tier 3 – Academia

The contribution of the research to the academic community is significant through its innovative bridging of paradigms from creativity and identity theories, in relation to the

lifestyle migration phenomenon and as such greatly contributes a unique perspective on the discussion, debate and the body of knowledge already existing. As a cross-disciplinary topic the research speaks to the following disciplines in particular: education in lifelong learning, sociology of work and sociology of transition, human geography and philosophy. However, as an emergent paradigm primarily focused upon the socio-cultural-economic challenges and **opportunities** within lifestyle migration, as differentiated from a cultural-critical investigation of the phenomenon (Osbaldiston 2010, Benson and O'Reilly 2009), the research holds the exciting potential to open new avenues for exploration within these disciplines through the forging together of aspects of the epistemologies of each.

The academic tier comprises academics, academic institutions, academic associations such as the NCVER and Australian Sociology Association and academic publishers and their audiences including journals such as *Lifelong Learning in the Community*, *Journal of Sociology*, *Sociologica Rural* and *Space and Culture*. The work would also be of interest to the *Creativity and Innovation Management* journal and its audiences as this is the source of much of the literature I reviewed regarding innovation and creativity.

In summary, this research is therefore important on multiple levels:

- 4 Presenting findings which governing authorities may incorporate to inform their socio-cultural-economic decisions;
- 5 Presenting an opportunity for transfer of learning through narrative analysis in exposing limiting and facilitating factors involved in lifestyle migration on a personal and relational level – socially, culturally and economically;
- 6 Combining traditionally disparate concepts – creativity theory and identity theory – to understand the problem of the sustainability of lifestyle migration among working people.

3. How Theory and Methodology Infuse the Project

I had originally enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and intended to produce a university standard thesis as the assessable outcome. However I decided to transfer to the newly

introduced Doctor of Education (EdD) when I realised the suitability of the portfolio approach to my research.

The rationale behind this change of Doctoral format is based upon my experience as I commenced public consultation in my local regional area, the study site, in search of research participants. I was overwhelmed by the intensity and recognition in the community's responses in relation to the research problem, exploring identity development through social and particularly economic challenges. This was very much an exploration which involved participants and other lifestyle migrants as a community of interest where typical responses included, "It's the first thing people in the city ask you – how do you make a living up there?" and "Yeah, everyone talks about the difficulty in earning money, it's a daily conversation."

Participants represent the variety of small town pioneers to be found in the study site and other similar scenarios around Australia, from builders to tourism operators, graphic designers to internationally successful entrepreneurs and local councillors. Despite some positive media (see 4. Audience Participation Tools) I needed to include the building and construction sector, the largest sector in the study site, as they were not represented by those who volunteered. They had not been forthcoming although many had read the articles. These are the 'every man' and 'every woman' referred to previously who seemed culturally uninterested in discussing the topic in an academic setting but interested in discussing it in colloquial settings. I began social networking to secure these participants and eventually I did.

One of the most reaffirming discoveries of undertaking this research has been in relation to the relevance and understanding of theoretical concepts, as acknowledged by participants, despite their disinterest in academia, applicable to approximately a quarter of them. While creativity is a theoretical paradigm it is also a highly transferable one, and where participants did not generally consider themselves creative, they understood its relevance to their narratives, their transformation and their survival.

All participants demonstrated flexibility and innovation, and all but two demonstrated significant identity development in relation to it, where a majority of these recognized their own identity development. Part of the research therefore considers the motives for each participant's relocation as instrumental in developing an equation proposing a scale of change based upon the lifestyle migration experience, at least five years after the move. In the few

instances where my interpretation differs from the participant I have noted the contradiction. This scale of change is located in the conclusions of the book.

Initially I struggled to explain the purpose of the research as the academic context of research did not fit the cultural paradigm of many participants. However, through the narrative process and ensuing interviews I gained confirmation of the relevance of this project to these people, and others, as their responses strongly indicated understanding of the problem and their problem-solving of it. This is illustrated when auto specialist, Person M, suggests that he has applied transfer of learning to keep developing his business, for example. Some well-educated participants who fit the urban definition of 'professional' rather than the 'every man' and 'every woman' previously explored are incorporated here also and clearly articulate processes within innovation theory for example which relate to their experiences of survival and prosperity. Therefore, the framing of intellectual concepts is diverse in this research where narrative methodology and its theoretical principles have proven highly suitable to the investigation. This is best demonstrated in the book where I present extensive extracts of dialogue and my analysis and translation of their meanings into argument.

3.1 Narrative Methodology

The use of narrative allowed me to begin to understand the disequilibrium of participants, and their actions taken to establish equilibrium. According to MacIntyre, social life is a narrative and conceiving of it as an enacted narrative, where actions carry intention, provides insight (Czarniawska 2004:3). Furthermore, I believe narrative to be the most relevant methodology to the inquiry because of the manner in which my interest was sparked for this research, as explored under 1. Doctoral Journey. I identified with the following comment by Clandinin and Connelly as I addressed my own disequilibrium in living in an urban environment which had come to symbolise stress, and worked through a convoluted process, very conscious of my own story, to achieve equilibrium; "...formalists begin with inquiry in theory, whereas narrative inquirers tend to begin with experience as lived and told in stories..." (2000:128). Clandinin and Connelly support the use of narrative for research such as this that attempts to track personal change – "We take for granted that people, at any point in time, are in a process of personal change and that from an educational point of view, it is important to be able to narrate the person in terms of the process" (30).

Following the narrative account, questions were directed to participants to probe for information which would potentially concede with the theory that change and sustainability of relocation relied upon innovation through risk taking and flexibility (Georgsdottir and Getz 2004), which largely proved to be the case. The knowledge claim in this research is therefore socially constructed, coming from an interpretive/ constructivist position where its goal is to rely on the participants' views of the problem, through narrative, in collaboration with my interpretation. As subjective meanings are often negotiated socially and historically – formed through interaction between researcher and participant and through our historical and cultural positioning, I was mindful of my personal interests and ensuing risk of weighting of narrative data (Clandinin and Connelly 2000:122).

3.2 Theory and Practice – the Data Analysis

I analysed the data using Morse's Three Level Operation (Walker et al 2008), further explored in the Preface of the book, where I generated themes both within each narrative and across the narratives collectively in an aim to determine patterns of experience. I then refined these themes to establish a list of 30 key themes which represented primary areas for exploration.

I 'unpacked' these primary themes through exploring a range of perspectives which presented through the narratives, such as investigating how participants considered risk, as one example. From here I could draw conclusions. The descriptive titles below refer to documents I developed as part of this investigation:

1. Challenges, learning, themes
2. What themes support the relocation?
3. Reprioritised themes
4. How do small scale communities function?
5. Transience
6. Community narrative
7. Is risk attractive to lifestyle migrants?
8. Why do they take the risk?
9. Work style and correlation to identity
10. What is innovation?
11. How important is passion to relocation and lifestyle?
12. How does the natural environment act as a change agent?

13. How do relocation challenges compare with city stress?
14. How does simplicity impact sustainability of relocation?
15. Scale of Reinvention
16. Binaries

Several themes encountered through the theoretical investigation of the research translated to the experience of participants, as revealed in detail in the book. The priority theme discerned through the narratives was Control Over One's Own Life, which shares commonality with Chhertri et al's study of Downshifting in South East Queensland (2009). A full analysis of themes and values is revealed in the conclusions of the book.

However a host of contradicting participant experiences were also revealed through these themes and so the grand narrative of the study which I had intended to produce became an impossible task because such binary oppositions position meaning as defined against what it is not (Smith 1996 and Derrida 1967). To resolve this quandary, I employed Lyotard's localised narrative (1979) as crucially relevant to the research. Issues pertaining to community, the value of money, simplicity practice, power and authority, status, the environment in the context of extrinsic stimulation or lack thereof, and lifestyle each carried conflicting interpretations – this is one of the primary reasons for including the 22 narrative summaries in the book. These diverse views are fully explored in the book. The book also outlines 40 dominant themes that presented through the research within this divergent framework, again in lieu of a grand narrative.

3.3 Theory and Practice – the Findings

The findings are organised across three chapters in the book, in addition to the discussion on conflicting themes found in the conclusions. A brief outline of thematic discussions ensuing from the empirical work is presented here:

Socio-Cultural Transition

Socially, themes of status and community pose a diverse spectrum of challenges and change agents for newcomers. For example, status is fluid due to the unstable economy so one cannot judge others' status, according to several participants. The small population of this lifestyle migration destination has resounding implications upon status. One extreme reveals that the prevalence of small business in the study site counters paradigms of hierarchy, which

again is related to status, where for some participants, common values such as the natural environment help to dissolve status barriers as “next to the sea we are all the same” (Participant B). However other views revealed that the wealthy are highly visible creating angst within community. Mostly participants agreed that the diverse range of economic levels in the study site did not inhibit interaction and cohesion where comments such as, “I don’t know anywhere else where you’ve got billionaires drinking with cleaners,” were common.

Socio-Economic Context

The small population of the scenario also directly affects livelihoods where networking and reputation management were found to be crucial. This in turn impacts upon the reprioritisation of participants’ urban-culture-based values, where community spirit for example is heightened as a survival mechanism. Alongside the renegotiation of cultural values and behaviours is the development of innovation in the problem-solving of economic and other challenges.

As suggested, lifestyle migrants need to apply creativity in order to survive where integral to this survival is innovation and flexibility. Financial need, the absence of environmental stressors and the natural environment are some of the factors identified in the empirical work which promote these qualities. The enhancement of creativity and innovation were shown in both participants who were consumer-oriented and those for whom lifestyle migration has encouraged values of simplicity. This binary is explored in the book. In addition, a driving force of passion is identified as inherent in the culture that these small town pioneers have created which fuels initiative, in contrast to corporate culture where personal goals are often “kept secret”, as explored in the book.

The Physical Environment as a Change Agent

The impact of the physical environment upon identity, in relation to the search for meaning, was raised in the narratives where arguably, lifestyle migration is a response to a growing sense of anonymity within urban culture (Matchan 1999). Recognition of the collective cultural impact upon the landscape (Greider and Garkovich 1994) was expressed where the lifestyle migration community, despite an obvious lack of homogeneity, shared communal values which position the natural environment as a priority.

The impact of the beauty of the physical environment is theoretically explored in relation to creativity and innovation (Crawford et al 1992; Mitchell et al 2004; Kristensen 2004; Moultrie et al 2007) as well as empirically explored where the research positions the framing of the environment as integral to the development of creativity for the majority of participants. Further, the binary of consumerism/simplicity is explored in relation to the natural environment where money has become either less important due to the struggle for it and an increasing value on the environment; or where money has become more important due to difficulties. Following on from this, the level of stress and wellbeing are again explored theoretically and empirically in posing the question – How effective is the natural environment in abating financial worry? The answer again forms a binary, however, the fact that all participants are still present after at least five years indicates the outcome of that equation.

4. Rationalising the Portfolio

Each component in the portfolio listed below relates to a specific audience(s), previously defined, for its contribution to the academic and/or professional spheres. In this section I shall discuss the development of each artefact and its rationale in making its contribution.

Artefact	Audience
<p>1. The book, <i>Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration</i> Length – 75,000 words</p>	<p>Tier 1 Professional – Policy makers and Influencers Tier 2 Professional – New/potential lifestyle migrants (selective – tertiary educated) Tier 3 – Academics</p>
<p>2. Academic Journal Articles a. 8,600 words: <i>Identity Development in Small Town Pioneers</i>, International Journal of Arts and Sciences b. 13,000 words: <i>Binary Conclusions in Small Town Pioneers</i>, Humanities & Social Sciences Review</p>	<p>Academic audiences: The International Journal of Arts and Sciences and the forthcoming Humanities & Social Sciences Review are cross-disciplinary journals where the relevant fields to both papers include: sociology, education, human geography, creativity, philosophy.</p>

<p>3. Audience Participation Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Blog: smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com b. Local talks: Noosa Chamber of Commerce and Pecha Kucha, Noosa (a global presentation series) c. Media – local and state-wide press, newsletter and radio d. Posters – local display (to attract participants) e. Participants – viral information effect through word-of-mouth 	<p>Tier 2 Professional: New/potential lifestyle migrants (including the local community)</p> <p>Note: Post assessment I believe the blog will address the Tier 2 Professional audience. Prior to assessment its audience is confused and must also include academics.</p>
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4.1 Artefact 1: The Book

The content of the book is approximately 75,000 words. It is a development of my original intention to produce a standard thesis where certain changes needed to take place. Prior to transferring to the Professional Doctorate I had drafted the introduction, literature review and theoretical chapter – these now form Part 1 of the book.

As a book product which engages the Tier 1 professional audience of policy makers and influencers I decided to retain these chapters based upon my experience working in government where research needs to be validated academically and culturally. These professional experiences found me working with Richard Florida and his Creative Communities Leadership Program (2009) in relation to research developed for Noosa Council; as well as my involvement in research developed for the NSW Department of Commerce across a range of agendas, in my role there as Senior Research Officer. However, from these experiences I realised that the literature in the book would need to encompass contemporary cultural debate in addition to strong academic research so as to broaden its appeal to the target audiences, and so I have introduced content from columnists such as Australia’s Bernard Salt and New York’s Elizabeth Hawes in exploring demography and escape from urbanity. I have also used the philosophical musings of Alain de Botton in discussing anxiety (2004) in relation to lack of equality in urban contexts and I have developed arguments around the lifestyle migration phenomenon between such influences and academic research.

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As with Part 1, each of the chapters in Part 2 were revised, reorganised and renegotiated continuously as the findings formed. I reorganised the content between the chapters which contain the findings many times as the concepts are significantly interrelated, but I am confident that the cognitive process now follows a pattern that is logical to Tier 1 and selective Tier 2 audiences for transfer of learning. My difficulty in achieving this rearrangement of content however stems from the linear experience of the lifestyle migration quest where the experience is reframed before the move, early into the move and at least five years after the move and so framing the learning for the inexperienced reader proved an interesting challenge. I identified the stages of this learning through questioning during each narrative. The stages were further clarified contextually after reviewing the narratives holistically. Although I found transcribing the interviews tedious I am grateful that I undertook this task personally as it assisted my thought processes enormously.

The book is also written for a selective Tier 2 audience and the Tier 3 audience of academics. This Tier 2 readership refers to the professional audience of new and potential lifestyle migrants, however it is selective based upon the capacity and interest of the individual to digest complex material and so I refer to my previous comment that *The Australian* readership is a suitable sub-category to this particular artefact. However, I also suggest that the remaining Tier 2 audience, who would not be likely to read the book, may still be engaged in this purpose through a viral information effect, as explored in section 4.3 in reference to media interest on the research.

By way of further comparison between book and thesis, the literature review in the thesis would have been more extensive and conceivably its data analysis would have been reduced to ensure a suitable reading length. I believe both literature review and theory are crucial for the Tier 1 audience of policy makers and influencers and for some of the Tier 2 audience and are certainly relevant to the Tier 3 academic audience, as there is substantial academic debate. Certain academic references have been omitted however and reserved for the journal articles, to be explored further on.

The book also incorporates the narrative summaries as the central chapter, where in a thesis they would form an appendix. In the professional sphere, the narratives and their exploration provide a more utilitarian purpose for transfer of learning which carries higher relevance to the professional tiers of the target audience. A focus on the narratives introduces an

anthropomorphic element to the work which appeals to the emotional level as well as the intellectual. Related to this is tone where the book is written in a professional tone and this would have been altered as a thesis to incorporate more of the vernacular of academia, as with the journal articles. The book also contains atmospheric images, less suited to a thesis.

Contribution of the Book

As the initial artefact of this portfolio, the book explores and unravels the lifestyle migration quest of working people as a comprehensive, original and exciting product from where the other artefacts were derived. Its overall aim is to be of service. Therefore the challenges of writing for different audiences have been resolved through a commitment to the authenticity of the book as a product of relevance and pertinence in the contemporary Australian context. The contributions of the book are threefold:

1. To inform policy and the agendas of policy makers by contributing to the development and implications of policy concerned with sustainable lifestyle migration. Through heightened awareness and discussion stemming from this book, such policy makers may facilitate the experience appropriately, potentially via community education, without compromising aspects valued within the lifestyle migration paradigm, as found in the research. Such activity would support lifestyle migration and the Federal Government's agenda (www.regionalaustralia.gov.au/) towards improving the position of regional Australia in the areas of community/society, culture, employment, industry, environment and communications. This purpose relates to the Professional Tier 1 audience.
2. The rise of working people escaping the stress of city life, the discussion on work/life balance in the western world and the high failure rate of sustaining the move within the study site and elsewhere in Australia (see book), each position the book as relevant to Tier 2 audience. Further, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration* is unique in exploring how the survivors have survived through examining 22 narratives which serve as case studies. There is an enormous difference between exploring seachange/treechange theoretically or demographically or downshifting (and not physically moving anywhere) to understanding what the challenges were, how they were overcome and how the new environment – physically, economically

and socially – impacts self-reinvention. Despite the academic context of the EdD, the findings in the book are inspirational particularly with its focus on gaining control over one's own life – the dominant theme of the study – while clearly outlining the risks. The book provides the opportunity for transfer of learning to take place for new and potential lifestyle migrants and potentially informs this group of their suitability towards such an endeavour.

3. Academically, the book is innovative and original in opening new avenues between sociology and education which connect traditionally disparate theoretical bodies from identity theory and creativity/ innovation theory and position lifestyle migration as a creative act of self-reinvention through the learning of a new lifestyle. This purpose relates to the Academic Tier 3 audience. Significantly, the contribution to the field of education is most relevant to the potential of this artefact to act as a source for transfer of learning and also social learning. Opportunities for transfer have been noted and are further explained within the theoretical chapter of the book. As a product fit for social learning, the book promotes social competence, personal experience and distinct modes of belonging (Wegner 2009). The development of social learning theory (Bandura 1977) involves learning through observation where positive mental states facilitate the learning in connecting information with cognitive development. The book artefact offers the attributes educationally deemed as necessary for a change of behaviour to result from this learning through:
 - Attention – via emotionally and intellectually engaging content
 - Retention – via its form as a book allowing repeated access to the information
 - Reproduction – via the experience of lifestyle migration for Tier 2 readers
 - Motivation – via awareness of risk and reward or punishment and reinforcement, illustrated in the book through narrative accounts.

Such an educational role of the book for the Tier 1 audience of policy makers and influencers is also apparent here where social learning is relevant to policy making:

“... we can define social learning as a deliberate attempt to adjust the goals or techniques of policy in response to past experience and new information. Learning is indicated when policy changes as the result of such a process” (Hall 1993).

The book also offers educational opportunities for a paradigm shift and as such contributes to the knowledge base of this emergent phenomenon within academia.

4.2 Artefact 2: Academic Journal Articles

I have submitted three journal articles to local and international academic publications, where two are included in this portfolio: *Pioneering Identities: Identity Development in Seachange Workers* and *Pioneering Identities: Binary Conclusions of a Seachange Study*. These two were written in conjunction with ensuing paper presentations at different international conferences, organised through the *International Journal of Arts and Sciences* (IJAS). The former has been accepted for publication through the double-blind peer reviewed *International Journal of Arts and Sciences* in late 2011 and the second has been accepted for publication in the double-blind peer reviewed *Humanities & Social Sciences Review* in early 2012.

My rationale for submitting through the same organising committee is based upon the opportunity to present the research in conjunction with Harvard University (June 1, 2011) in Cambridge and with the Anglo-American University (June 24, 2011) in Prague, in order to progress my professional development goals within academia. As an early career academic, international participation is highly regarded and as the conferences were three weeks apart I decided to remain overseas to include the second opportunity.

Each paper focuses on different aspects of the research. The papers were submitted in May 2011. As CD-Rom formatted journals, the articles did not carry a word limit and so I took the opportunity to thoroughly explore each focus.

Both papers were developed for international academic audiences in the cross-disciplinary Social Sciences and Humanities category. The conferences provided an excellent opportunity for me to converse with humanities researchers from across the globe as well as to receive feedback for my research. The presentations of the papers received interest from various parties, among them literature scholars, philosophers and sociologists who explored the same themes of identity development through their respective disciplines. The theme therefore formed the cohesive element rather than the discipline.

A third article for the *Journal of Sociology* was actually submitted first of the three, but I am yet to receive news of its acceptance. This article is essentially a condensed version of the Harvard

paper with less emphasis on the educational perspectives, positioning it more as a sociological piece. Due to the level of similarity I have omitted it from the portfolio.

Pioneering Identities: Identity Development in Seachange Workers

This paper, *Pioneering Identities: Identity Development in Seachange Workers* is approximately 8,600 words. The paper was largely derived from Chapter 3 of the book in focusing upon the theoretical approaches towards addressing the problem: How do lifestyle migrants reinvent themselves? However there is also some additional content which I had intended for the thesis and which I later removed from the book. This includes an extended discussion on the anthropological work of Brian Hoey in relation to authenticity in the context of identity development, as well as extended theoretical discussion on narrative.

This paper contextualises the research and so includes some of the literature review however it is largely a theoretical exploration. As such it would not be digested by the Tier 1 or 2 audiences.

Pioneering Identities: Binary Conclusions of a Seachange Study

This paper is approximately 13,000 words. Its substantial length is justified as an exploration of binary conclusions and dominant themes in place of a grand narrative, as previously discussed, where an analysis of empirical data in relation to the phenomenon of lifestyle migration is primary and theoretical discussion on the topic is secondary. The purpose of the work is to demonstrate the omissions of previous research on the topic which largely positions lifestyle migration as a homogenous phenomenon. This is demonstrated through the literature review in conjunction with empirical findings from the *Small Town Pioneers* research. As such the paper also focuses on the methodology of the research before addressing its binaries.

Contribution of the Journal Articles

The journal articles make a contribution to knowledge in the academic disciplines of sociology and education particularly, with the Harvard paper equally relevant and the Prague paper more sociologically oriented. Both papers are also relevant to the academic disciplines of philosophy and geography. Their contribution to knowledge is in line with the contribution of the book to the Tier 3 audience where academically, the book opens new avenues between multiple disciplines in connecting traditionally disparate theoretical bodies of knowledge to better understand and theorise upon the phenomenon of lifestyle migration.

4.3 Artefact 3: Audience Participation Tools

The Audience Participation Tools comprise a research blog, media and public talks. Their doctoral value is situated in their public accessibility as devices which target the Tier 2 audience of new and potential lifestyle migrants where they engage a community of practice and contribute to the cultural development of the practice of lifestyle migration, through participation and dissemination.

I initially sought participants for the research through the media and received reportage in the *Noosa Journal* on 11 February (Mikkelsen 2010) in response to a media release I distributed. I also developed a poster to attract participants and to send to the Noosa Chamber of Commerce in the hope they would print the information in their newsletter – they did, and invited me to speak at their breakfast meeting (23 February 2010). This escalated to several other instances of media and public speaking. This engagement with the Tier 2 audience and their social infrastructure, the media and organisations relevant to their lifestyle migration, further demonstrates the professional context of the research as integral to the social landscape.

The Blog

I developed a research blog, *Small Town Pioneers* (smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com), as another strategy to engage the community of interest, and to communicate my scholarly progress for my supervisors and to other scholars whom I had contacted in the development of my ideas. The first blog entry on was created on 3 March 2010. At that stage I felt the public interest in my research had been strong enough to warrant it and I was not considering its purpose as a future portfolio component as I was then enrolled in the PhD. The blog is an informal conversation about the research project. It is chronological and so information is only current at the time of writing and does not reflect the final analysis of the research, or changing perspectives. Further, it is colloquial in style.

The relationship of the blog to the research is elusive due to factors concerning audience and tone where there exists a split audience between the Professional Tier 2 audience and the academic role of the blog as part of the portfolio assessment, and as viewed and responded to by academics. This creates audience confusion. The limited detail revealed in the blog posts further creates misrepresentation of the research. As the researcher, I am mindful of what findings I reveal through the process as I cannot yet understand how these will be resolved through the research, at the time of posting. I am also mindful of issues of intellectual property

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where my lack of understanding in this arena creates a need for further caution. While I have posted some narrative excerpts and analysis, these have been scarce.

While the threat of breach of intellectual property is minimised through the posting of simplified research findings and discussion, the abovementioned restrictions decrease the value of the blog in comparison to the book. The book is a cohesive body of work comprising theory and empirical investigation and the blog merely isolates and simplifies aspects of that work as discussion topics. However it also carries additional content such as commentary and adaptations of research concepts such as with the post, *Yes, mechanics are creative too* (23 September 2010). As at 30 September 2011 there were 67 posts.

I anticipate that the blog will gain strength in purpose and as a relevant entity towards the research following assessment of the portfolio when the aforementioned limitations to its value will be resolved – the research findings will be concluded; the assessment will be concluded; and its audience will move towards the solely professional sphere. I intend to continue with the blog as part of a continuing research pathway.

After I began to investigate the EdD portfolio format as a potential direction I started making regular entries onto the blog and disseminating alerts via email of the posts to research participants and others who had expressed interest. This creates the blog's community of interest and invites them to metaphorically continue the research journey with me, albeit to a limited extent. I have also recently begun posting alerts on Facebook so that any of my contacts can participate in the conversation. The statistics available for the blog verify an audience every month, ranging from 104 views down to 6. My network is small and I have not attempted a marketing strategy for the blog at this stage because, as mentioned, I believe that its role will gain relevance as the research is finalised and enters the professional sphere in more tangible ways.

The role of the blog prior to assessment is therefore as an introduction of the topic to the target audience(s); as a journaling device for my research; and as a traceable form of communication regarding research progress. However the blog has been useful on some occasions in perpetuating public interest in the research. A prime example of this is the entry I made on 9 May 2011 titled, *Bursting the Bubble on the Sunday Mail*:

smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com/2011/05/09/bursting-the-bubble-on-'the-sunday-mail'/.

Metastatement

The post refers to a news article that the *Sunday Mail* published on my research (08 May 2011) which I participated in near an early draft stage of my book, after the findings and theoretical proposition had been largely resolved. The article sensationalised the research and framed it within the context of the negative plight of lifestyle migrants, dismissing some of its key and inspirational aspects and investigations. This post received 98 views on the day of posting. It was timely due to the State-wide media coverage it referred to as well as being socially relevant. As a directly responsive piece it was well suited as a blog post and also received some posted comments or replies from participants and academics. I received further communication via email from those not wishing to make public comment. The post read as follows:

I sit at my computer, still in my pyjamas as I round off a media release in response to yesterday's article in 'The Sunday Mail'...

Research through the University of Technology Sydney, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration*, explores the lifestyle migration of working urbanites to the study site of the Noosa Biosphere where only an estimated 37% of lifestyle migrants manage to stick it out for at least five years.

Far from a Doom's Day exposition, as recently published in *The Sunday Mail* (8 May 2011), 'Seachanger Bubble Bursts', the research explores how the survivors manage to survive in relocating to places rich in nature but 'lean' on industry, and problem-solve challenges through innovation, flexibility and passion in regards to work and cultural adaptation. In educational terms, the research provides what is referred to as 'transfer of learning' for new and potential 'lifestylers' to adapt this insight in a useful way. The research is in fact intended to inspire, not to defeat the quest of those wishing to flee the urban rut, as the *Mail* portrayed. Some of the key themes which emerged through the research involve:

- The small scale community where networking and reputation management are 'king' and which impact all facets of a person's life, in contrast to a city existence where life is more compartmentalised.
- Status and sense of community presented conflicting views where status is fluid due to the unstable economy so one cannot judge others while common values such as the natural environment help to dissolve barriers because "next to the sea, we are all the same". Alternatively, the wealthy are highly visible creating angst for others.
- A simpler life with less money was accepted by some but where there is an enormous difference between "less" and barely surviving, contrary to the article. In addition, money actually increased in value for others due to the fluctuating economy.

Contrary to the article again, no-one was happy to "barely make an existence" – this is a key point that prompts the strugglers to innovate and change in many instances.

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- Remote work styles were also explored in this context through emphasising misconceptions and solutions around it.
- Passion was a key feature where it is partly the culture of the place to promote passion as people move up with their dreams and discuss their plans, which doesn't usually happen in a corporate world where the culture suppresses people's dreams and encourage them to bury their innovative potential to some degree. Passion also thrives when people place it as a priority in accepting "less" money or rather, not having a career driving them.
- A focus of gaining control over one's own life was the dominant theme of the study, derived through many points including some of the above.

These are a few of many themes which arose and which I shall be discussing at two international conferences at Harvard University, Boston and at the Anglo-American University, Prague, as part of the completion of the Doctorate in the next few months. The project is founded upon a narrative study of 22 participants and does not include cashed up retirees but is firmly focused on all those office workers in Sydney, Melbourne and elsewhere who ask the eternal question – How do I get out of here?

I believe the research is applicable to 'lifestyle destinations' around Australia, rich in natural beauty and lean on industry, and is not Noosa-centric. Noosa contains hinterland and coastal townships and within the research distinctive aspects of each are included. The research blog is smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com I thank the *Sunday Mail* for providing a base for some good discussion around this complex topic.

Researcher

Christina Kargillis

Peregian Beach

The issue of audience replies is intriguing where, in an online educational study (Birch 2004), which translates to the blog forum to some degree, students were asked if they would participate in online discussions in courses where participation was not compulsory and where there was no assessment attached, as is the case with the blog. Approximately half indicated that they would participate due to benefits to learning and opportunities for interaction, and one third said they would not participate due to lack of time or because they did not feel that online discussions were useful.

In my experience in online education where I have developed courses and facilitated tutorials for FinSIA, along with my experience in social media, the audience is often reluctant to commit to posting replies or engaging publicly. The context of the *Small Town Pioneers* blog is even

less inviting because its audience is mixed and comprised of participants, the local community of interest and academics – these are the ones I am aware of. Some responses are intellectually pitched due to the context of the blog as a research artefact and so possibly inhibiting others from engaging. The tone of a blog and its specific audience is critical in its success as a forum for discussion. These are the reasons why, as stated, the blog will gain more relevance to Tier 2 audiences post assessment.

While the statistics provide reassurance as to the validity of the blog, should the publicly visible conversation thread among the professional target audiences of the research not develop within the next 12 months after the research is finalised I shall consider converting the content into a website without opportunity for comment.

Public Talks

The Chamber of Commerce talk I delivered (23 February 2010) was reported on in the *Noosa News* (Forre-Arnold 2010). I prepared discussion notes for the 30 attendees who represented the business community within the study site and therefore represented key sources of information towards this research. The question and answer session proved useful and further promoted the research objectives among the business community, which included the target audience of recent lifestyle migrants. The talk contained an overview of the research theory and objectives with a focus on small business and entrepreneurship which the attendees could identify with. Interestingly, there were no volunteers to participate in the research from this group despite the positive feedback I received from the Chair and attendees. There were no slides. Local ABC Radio also conducted an interview with me on the research around that time (03 February 2010).

A month later on 23 March I was invited to present at the Noosa Pecha Kucha event titled *Create/Sustain*. Pecha Kucha (pronounced pe-chak-cha) is a global phenomenon seen in over 280 cities (www.pecha-kucha.org). This renowned presentation format of 20 slides with 20 seconds per slide provides a relaxed forum for passionate people to showcase their work and ideas. My research satisfied the *Create/Sustain* theme well as creativity and social sustainability are central to the topic. From this I attracted further interest in the research and grew my participant list to include them. I also grew my blog audience through this presentation. The presentation can be found on the blog at:

<http://smalltownpioneers.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/pechakuha2.pdf> The feedback I

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received suggested that the presentation was clear and interesting despite time constraints. I also received requests for my blog address from interested parties who represented recent lifestyle migrants and this also confirmed the clarity of the presentation and its role in attracting a community of interest.

The research agenda was gaining awareness and discussion commenced within the community. This was verified by the feedback I received directly from many people and further proven by the interest I received from potential participants. Following the *Sunday Mail* article, Radio 4BL also phoned me for an interview also on 8 May 2011 and demonstrated strong interest in remote working practices, status issues and stress avoidance along with other specifics of the research. This was extremely valuable for me in revealing the most socially relevant aspects of this broad-ranging study.

The promotional activity which ensued from one poster and a media release to the *Sunday Mail* article, over a year later, again indicates that a 'viral' information effect was taking place in the small scale community of the study site, and beyond.

Portfolio components:

- Poster to attract research participants
- Media release I distributed
- Reportage by the *Noosa Journal*
- Reportage by the *Noosa News*
- Reportage by the *Sunday Mail*
- Handouts for the Noosa Chamber of Commerce talk
- Visual presentation for my participation at Pecha Kucha, available at:
<http://smalltownpioneers.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/pechakuha2.pdf>

(Unfortunately I have no record of the radio interviews with Local ABC or 4BL. Also the February 2010 Noosa Chamber of Commerce newsletter is unavailable, however the reportage consisted solely of an image of the poster, included here).

Conclusion

The portfolio presents a faithful translation of the research holistically, as a sum of all its parts where this metastatement has explained its translation into those parts. It has provided a rationale for the decision to undertake the Doctor of Education by portfolio in regards to its positioning to the professional and the academic audiences; a historical context of the work and its chronological progression; and the positioning of each artefact and their relationship to each other. This metastatement has also outlined the key conceptual elements of the research and has addressed its theoretical and methodological proposition, further developed in the book and journal articles. The contribution of the research has been identified to its various audiences as:

- 1 Presenting findings which governing authorities may incorporate to inform their socio-cultural-economic decisions;
- 2 Presenting an opportunity for transfer of learning through narrative analysis in exposing limiting and facilitating factors involved in lifestyle migration on a personal and relational level – socially, culturally and economically;
- 3 Combining traditionally disparate concepts – creativity theory and identity theory – to understand the problem of the sustainability of lifestyle migration among working people.

The artefacts belonging to this portfolio have been rationalised herein. As the context of the audience participation tools has been provided in this metastatement, please reflect on this when viewing the isolated components at the end of the portfolio.

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2. Book

Book

Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration



Christina Kargillis, *Treading the Rainbow*, 2010

Christina Kargillis

2011

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Preface

Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration is based upon doctoral research exploring sea change/tree change workers in the context of sustainability of location, as a consequence of conflicts and opportunities through work, the physical environment and community within the study site of the Noosa Biosphere, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia.

The Study Site

The Noosa Biosphere is representative of a 'lifestyle destination' which incorporates both coast and hinterland (Noosa Council 2002). While some may argue that Noosa is no longer a lifestyle destination (Osbaldiston 2010a) due to its popularisation and its amalgamation into the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area, the population cap of the former Noosa Shire, in place at the time of interviews through 2010, directly corresponds to the Noosa Biosphere and ensures that these qualities remain, at least at the time of writing. The research considers the entire biosphere domain and is not focused upon the glamour of Hastings Street, it's most popular tourism icon.

While there are many pockets on the Sunshine Coast, around Australia and internationally which would make suitable study sites for this topic, Noosa is a biosphere reserve under UNESCO criteria and so, in an era of rapid growth and development during the research process (Smith and Doherty 2006), Noosa's urban footprint is presumable less likely to expand to the point where it no longer satisfies as a lifestyle destination – a place where natural beauty integrates harmoniously with development, or your classic sea/tree change locale. By limiting the research site, the environmental features within the biosphere are emphasised and the role of place in attracting new residents is more visible and so in selecting this location, the relevance of the research may extend into the future (Noosa Council 2007; SCRC 2008, 2011).

Motivation for the Research

This research was inspired through a personal international experience. Upon returning to Australia from Banff where harsh challenges with work and family had punctuated my travels at each end, my need to escape the city of Sydney was overwhelming and the epiphany I had experienced overseas of the impact of place upon personal change was resounding (Schnee 2009). Despite the freezing winters, the reflection facilitated through travel and the quality of the natural environment, along with a focus on creativity allowed me the perspective to envision a new future. The symbolic value of place as a trigger to reinvent my life, understood through this experience, is a key point of interest which motivated me to research the topic of lifestyle migration. In the lifestyle migration quest, symbolic value is evident when people choose a destination based upon its perceived values that represent the person they believe they really are, their 'authentic self' (Hoey 2006; Osbaldiston 2010b) or the person they seek to become. In this sense, travel is physical and metaphorical.

Defining 'Sustainable' Relocation

This means that participants have managed to stay in the area for a certain amount of time, rather than having to leave or choosing to leave for any reason, be it financial issues, family ties, changing career prospects or other. I have chosen the time span of five years since relocation to indicate whether or not a lifestyle migrant has made it sustainable. The five year mark stems from initial background interviews which indicate the timeframe as a landmark for new residents to make a contribution to community, or alternatively a return to the city or onward search for a place to call home. There is also a study from Charles Sturt University in Australia (Brooks and Munro 2009) that uses the five year mark in its research on lifestyle migrants who move from Sydney to the 'bush'. Finally, available Census data also includes figures on internal migration within the five year mark.

Research Limits

It was beyond the scope of this research to address the impact of lifestyle migration and its urban footprint on the natural environment and how that growth may affect the value of the

study site; or to interview people who had moved to the study site from a city for lifestyle reasons, and left within the five year span.

Participant Involvement

Participants represent the variety of small town pioneers to be found in the study site and other similar scenarios around Australia, from builders to tourism operators, graphic designers to internationally successful entrepreneurs and local councillors. They represent a range of socio-economic dispositions, as later explored. I distributed a media release to attract these participants and despite the positive media I received, I still needed to include the building and construction sector, the largest sector in the study site, as they were not represented by those who volunteered. They had not been forthcoming although many had read the articles. I began social networking to secure these participants and eventually I did.

Participant Criteria

The research targets working people aged between 25-54 who moved from a city (globally) to the Sunshine Coast as an adult at least five years prior to interview, living in Noosa Biosphere at the time of interview. It is essential that participants chose to move to the area for lifestyle reasons. Each participant was either part-time/casual/contract or full-time which allowed for the possibility of dual careers, whether remunerated or not. This was deliberate in order to capture the erratic work patterns of the study site and to incorporate incidents of passion pursuits in conjunction with additional work and income.

Those not included in the study are retirees, who arguably have less at risk financially and therefore less requirement to change and adapt than working people. I have also excluded adults under 25 years of age based on the premise that participants must have had enough prior work experience to want to leave the city. Working people over the age of 54 were also excluded due to the difficulty in discerning working from non-working lifestyle migrants in that age group through the Census data.

A Narrative Approach

Small Town Pioneers belongs to the field of Sociology of Transition (University College Dublin 2011) and as a lived experience contingent on learning a new way of being and relating, requiring new skills, it is also well positioned within the educational framework of Lifelong Learning (Chappell et al 2003). The knowledge claim in the research behind this book is socially constructed, coming from an interpretive/ constructivist position in relying on participant stories through narrative inquiry, in collaboration with my own interpretation, as the researcher.

The study comprises a group of 22 participants, allowing me to conduct in-depth interviews, transcribe and then analyse the interviews without external assistance. Participants were asked to tell their story of moving to the study site from a city background. These stories revealed reams of insight that would not have been discovered through a question and answer format – such is the nature of narrative. I then asked a standard set of questions around the stories, explored further on. The questions were in part designed to probe participants in revealing a change process that relies on risk taking and flexibility through work, and its flow on effects into identity development in order to examine creativity as a key to sustainable relocation. This proved to be so for the majority.

The research was undertaken with full awareness that subjective meanings are often negotiated socially and historically, formed through interaction with others, between researcher and participant, and through historical and cultural practices that operate in individuals' lives (Clandinin and Connelly 2000:122). As such the interviews were objective where contentious subject matter such as amalgamation (noosa.com.au 2011) was not initiated but was responded to when raised. Personal interests were clearly separated from content expressed in participant narratives.

Transcripts

The nature of the narrative method in this small scale study required the justification of the study to be made within the study itself, through a comprehensive exploration as opposed to relying on comparative data (Yates 2003). Interviews of approximately two hour duration were

recorded and then fully transcribed by myself. Summaries of each narrative were produced along with a hierarchy of values and themes attributed by myself. Each participant was emailed their summary and a value hierarchy document for comment or changes. Follow up communication took place either in person or via email or telephone.

Critical Incident

I have incorporated Barbara Czarniawska's technique of the critical incident into the narrative analysis (2004:43) as an effective way of identifying an atypical event, in the sense of not happening regularly, that catalyses a need for change. It is important in the context of lifestyle migrants and their change processes where understanding critical incident assists in framing the context of the narratives in determining motivations for the relocation.

Morse's Three Level Operation

In analysing the narratives I also incorporated Morse's Three Level Operation (Walker et al 2008) which involves description; analysis between participants to generate themes; and findings:

Level 1: Description

1. Read the transcripts of each interview while referring to field notes taken during that interview. Identify relevant discourse from each participant's transcribed interview.
2. Summarize identified relevant discourse from each transcript to produce the core information of each interview. Present summary to participants to confirm that the essence of their experience has been conveyed properly.

Level 2: Analysis between participants to generate themes

3. Generate common themes via microanalysis:
 - a) Broad extraction of core information via a critical theory lens to include paraphrased bites of experience as well as the relationship with participants;
 - b) From broad extraction, generation of themes specific to topic;
 - c) Summary of themes generated.

4. Points of tension identified from common themes.

Level 3: Findings—Critical and cultural analysis

5. Label standard and divergent meanings using principles of reflection.
6. Explore the explicit and implicit meanings looking for connections to broader cultural, historical, and political influences.

Further to this, I undertook an analysis of binary findings which presented through the above steps and which revealed a diverse spectrum of contradictions around some very key points, adding further depth to the research.

Questions Asked at the Interview

After participants shared their stories, I asked a set of clarifying questions which included:

- 1 Describe your career and lifestyle in (city)
- 2 Can you describe your motive for wanting to relocate, and what led to it?
- 3 Was there any particular event that triggered your desire to move to Noosa – Describe?
- 4 Can you remember the time between deciding to relocate and making the move? How easy or difficult was it and what were your main challenges?
- 5 Describe your work and career in Noosa
- 6 Did you have a plan for making money in Noosa when you got here – please explain your approach.
- 7 Did you go into a similar line of work as in the city, or how was it different?
- 8 Did you anticipate the challenges you've had to take or were there risks you had to take?
- 9 How have you had to be innovative since your arrival in order to make a go of it?
- 10 Do other people think you have changed since moving here, and why do you think that is?
- 11 In your experience, what causes people new to the area, to leave?
- 12 How does the transience of residents in Noosa impact the area – is it a problem?
- 13 How would you describe your community in terms of its values?

- 14 Did you find that you fitted in to the community when you first arrived, or did you need to adapt – how?
- 15 Can you compare your sense of community here as opposed to (city)
- 16 Have your goals and values changed since moving to Noosa – How?
- 17 What have been your main challenges since relocating where you thought about having to return to the city, and is it that will make you stay?
- 18 Do you consider yourself a risk taker?
- 19 What do you imagine your goals and values would be now if you stayed in the city?
- 20 How innovative do you think businesses in Noosa are compared to the city – why?
- 21 Have you become more creative or entrepreneurial since living here?
- 22 Do you know many people like you who came here and returned to the city within 5 years – why do you think they returned?
- 23 What is it you like about living here?
- 24 How has moving here encouraged you to extend yourself?

Ethics

The ethical considerations involved in narrative inquiry largely revolve around participant confidentiality for several reasons. Friends and acquaintances are difficult to exclude in a small community; and anonymity is difficult to maintain as it may be the participant themselves who publicises their role in the research. However the majority of participants were attracted to the research via local radio and newspaper publicity (Mikkelsen 2010; Noosa Chamber of Commerce 2010; Pecha Kucha 2010; ABC Radio 2010) and word of mouth. I have provided the option for participants to be acknowledged and each has indicated their preference, as noted in the Acknowledgements.

The potential benefits of the research for participants stem from the discussion and exposition of the relocation scenario which can only inform and assist their reflexive understanding of the path they have taken, as was confirmed by several participants.

PART 1

1. Introduction



Figure 1 - Christina Kargillis, *Fecundity*, 2006

"Courage consists... in agreeing to flee rather than live tranquilly and hypocritically in false refuges. Values, morals, homelands, religions, and these private certitudes that our vanity and our complacency bestow generously on us, have many deceptive sojourns as the world arranges for those who think they are standing straight and at ease, among stable things."

— Gilles Deleuze in *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (341)

In this passage, the philosopher Deleuze makes a demand of those to whom life has been generous: he urges courage to address discontent with the gall to ask for something more, away from the complacency of social norms. Such an exodus from complacency is the subject of this book, *Small Town Pioneers: Trials in Lifestyle Migration (Small Town Pioneers)*, based upon Doctoral research through the University of Technology Sydney.

Lifestyle migration, otherwise referred to as sea change or tree change, sees many of us fleeing the 'urban rut' for a better life and leaves the rest of us perplexed as to where we would begin. However it is the challenges of *sustaining* a lifestyle migration through the paradigm shifts – environmental, social and economic – that this book explores, in tandem with the changes in personal identity which occur in the learning of a new lifestyle. While the scenario could be viewed as a problem for the privileged, those to whom Deleuze speaks, such paradigm shifts often bring loss and sometimes catastrophe whereby lifestyle migration creates misfortune for the unaware at a fundamental level of basic human requirement, instilling the need for action in order to survive. The search for a better life can indeed be tumultuous, as attested to through many of the narratives in this book.

Concepts around lifestyle migration have emerged through a range of disciplines including geography, anthropology and sociology, education, philosophy and the arts. Writing on the topic supports diverse agendas such as economic development, town planning, environmental responsibility and work life balance. The concepts relevant to this book comprise the renegotiation of human, social and cultural capital (Bohm and Land 2007) for healthier and more creative communities.

The pioneers who manage the lifestyle migration task answer the question heard from so many city dwellers exhausted by the weight of urban living – How do I get out of here and manage to survive? Unlike the urban narrative in Australia and elsewhere, these pioneers are not easily identified by their careers, often performing a variety of work and hobbies

simultaneously – builder/ take-away chicken shop owner, dog trainer/ pro surfer, or swim instructor/ TV producer, to name a few from the *Small Town Pioneers* research. The issue of personal identity and identity in relation to career becomes a central theme in this scenario.

An important shift has taken place between the individual and their community with an emphasis on self-fulfillment and initiative, according to Rose (in Chappell et al 2003:57-58), making citizenship active rather than passive and dependent and which could help to explain the rise of lifestyle migration and the pioneering spirit that fuels it. Edwards et al suggest such reflexivity is integral to the accumulation of skills as an adaptation to change and uncertainty (2002:525), where the need to belong to a community is a reaction against this change, fluidity and uncertainty, “as a defense mechanism by those most affected by the prevailing pre‘carite’” (526). However community themes featured in this research reveal contrasting experiences, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 8.

The book unravels the experiences of 22 participants through narrative in the context of having reinvented their lives and themselves through this lifestyle migration (Randall 1995), in light of the disenfranchised majority who flee this particular sojourn within five years of relocation. It is important to note that the research is relevant to other ‘lifestyle-destinations’ around Australia and globally, rich in nature and ‘lean’ in industry where in effect a focus on sustaining the natural amenity also presents a limitation to maintaining residents. Another important point of definition is that the term ‘lifestyle destination’ in this book is not restricted to tourism dominated communities, as defined by Gurran et al (2005) but may also include small and remote coastal communities. The research is set in the Noosa Biosphere, Queensland but is not Noosa-centric, while aspects of it also pertain to regional communities in general, pretty or not.

In the context of place specific research however, Noosa is regarded in Indigenous lore as a place of the creation spirit characterised by the Rainbow Serpent. The Noosa Hospital campus is the centre of the study site and home to a sacred Aboriginal site yielding ‘Serpent Stones’ which are still accessible (Noosa Hospital 2011). The symbolic value of the hospital site translates seamlessly to the orthodox global representation of medicine, the serpent, which forms part of the Serpens and Ophiuchus symbol. The Indigenous interpretation of Noosa makes it a perfect location for the research which explores self-reinvention and creativity among its key themes.

The research is based upon my previous experience living and working in a lifestyle destination in Canada's Rocky Mountains in Banff, a UNESCO Biosphere site, and my deliberate search for an equivalent destination in Australia resulting in my move to Noosa, subsequently also a UNESCO Biosphere site and part of the Sunshine Coast region. Although Banff is snow country and Noosa's icon is the beach, the transferable qualities between them include a predominance of natural environment, a close core community – albeit within a transient framework – and prime qualities of creativity. Banff hosts The Banff Centre for cross-disciplinary artistic education where I was working and Noosa houses a disparate creative community that features a spattering of cultural events, cottage industries, innovative produce and retail (Gibson and Klocker 2005:99).

Small Town Pioneers includes a mixed gender set of participants of self-employed or small business employers/ employee status across industry, plus individuals from larger organisations in the building and construction and the tourism sectors, representing the largest industries in the area (Burnley and Murphy 2004). Specifically, participants represented the following professions at the time of interview:

- Self-employed graphic designer
- Self-employed 3d architectural modeller
- Digital specialist
- Two tourism industry employees
- Independent tourism operator
- Self-employed television producer and swim instructor
- Two self employed builders
- Ceo of a building company and relentless businessman
- Academic/writer
- Medical writer and business owner
- Photographer/teacher
- Local politician
- Businesswoman and entrepreneur
- Manager/owner of a business bureau
- Car maintenance shop owner
- Self-employed handyman
- Environmental products entrepreneur

- Dog trainer and adventure operator
- Communications specialist
- Community consultant.

The remainder of this chapter introduces discussions to be addressed in further depth, in the mixing of literature with immediate research findings.

1.1 The Experiential Landscape of Lifestyle Migration

Census data indicates a strong movement among working people on the Sunshine Coast, compared to a cosmopolitan and transient city such as Sydney. Approximately only 37 per cent of lifestyle migrants aged 25-54 to the Sunshine Coast sustain their relocation within five years (see Appendices). Often involved in this challenge is the need to reprioritise their value system based upon their motivation for the move and upon the values of their new community, and to ensure a sustainable income. The limited employment opportunities in the study site impact changes in work style and approach, encouraging flexibility and creativity in parallel to a growing self-efficacy or realistic assessment of capacity for many of the lifestyle migrants in *Small Town Pioneers*. Layered upon this is the influence of the natural environment in its ability to facilitate reflection and change, as well as representing a key motive and value for the participants in their relocation.

Researching lifestyle migration needs to be a cross-disciplinary endeavour, as indicated by the situation of relevant literature:

- Education in lifelong learning studies, social learning, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence (Chappell et al 2003; Bandura 1977, 1980; Goleman 2001, 2006);
- Anthropological and sociological research pertaining to the phenomenon of lifestyle migration (Hoey 2005a; Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Hamilton 2003; Hamilton and Denniss 2005; Ragusa 2010; Osbaldiston 2010);
- Geography through studies in transmigration and home (Salt 2001; Tan 2004; Lucas and Purkayastha 2007; Wiles 2008);
- Philosophy in relation to status and meaning (de Botton 2004; Deleuze et al 1987)

This book suggests that lifestyle migration provokes the re-invention of oneself through reflexivity with external factors, which largely determines a sustainable relocation. The cross-

disciplinary approach illuminates macro theories of creativity and identity, employed in the argument, while educational perspectives support the claim and illustrate the process of change, as explored in Chapter 3.

1.2 Research Significance for Transitioners, Policymakers and Academia

Census reports (ABS 2006a-e, 2008) reveal a high level of transience within the study site and the broader Sunshine Coast among the working age bracket. Of the 71,975 working and non-working people aged between 25-54 living on the Sunshine Coast, 34,539 came to the region from other places in Australia and overseas within the previous five years. Of these, 12,954 had moved to the region within the previous 12 months. At 100 percent retention rate, there would be 64,770 newcomers within five years, however the retention rate of newcomers I estimate at only 37 per cent (see Appendices). A tree change from Sydney to rural NSW or northern Victoria is another example which promises lifestyle improvements for many but which also fails to sustain the majority of its lifestyle migrants where an alarming 90 per cent either plan to move on to another town, the coast, or return to the city within a five year time frame (Brooks and Munro 2009; Ragusa 2011). By comparison, the highly cosmopolitan and transient city of Sydney has a retention rate of approximately 60 per cent of newcomers.

Interest in lifestyle migration has increased in the western world over the past decade, since it gained popularity through a multitude of broadcast and literature sources (ABC 2000; Stimson and Minnery 1998; Hamilton and Mail 2003) and continues its momentum. The figures mentioned above indicate a strong instability with lifestyle migration and a need for clarity in decision making for potential lifestyle migrants through exploring factors that help and hinder relocation, particularly for working people who are at considerable financial risk. The subject is heavily under-researched socially in trying to understand what makes a move sustainable when the majority result in departure. While the above figures suggest cause for investigation, this research is qualitative and focuses on participant experiences in lifestyle migration, and the transition of moving, literally and metaphorically from one paradigm to another.

The value of this research is in its scope to assist people to better ascertain the challenges ahead and whether or not they are suited to such a move (Ferguson and Seddon 2007). As such it provides a tool for transfer of learning (Pugh and Bergin 2006; Schunk 2004) through its capacity for “explicit conscious formulation of abstraction in one situation that allows making a

connection to another” (Salomon and Perkins 1989:118) in relation to migration from urban centres to tree and sea change destinations. Educationally speaking, it addresses lifestyle migration as a mastery goal, where skills and competence development are central (Pugh and Bergin 2006:149) in exposing the learning of a new lifestyle through narrative accounts of participant experiences. Arguably, this book is a tool that equips potential migrants with stronger self-efficacy.

From a governmental position, *Small Town Pioneers* facilitates the understanding of factors that both help and hinder successful migration for ordinary people where “contemporary urban-social policy needs the kind of imagination that can understand something of the texture of... working-class lives as ordinary and extraordinary ways of being. Without such thinking, working class people and places can only ever be ‘less than’ those in whose image they are reconstructed” (Haylett 2003:70). The book explains how such a transition often relies upon and develops creativity and innovation where, “... you have to be creative in order to survive” (Person E), in contrast to notions of systematic creativity (Florida 2002; Creative Communities Leadership Program 2009). As Smith and Doherty suggest (2006), “the ability to withstand external impacts on a local economy, or to maintain and build social capital, requires a resilient community mix that is adaptive and sustaining” (2006:5). As such, authorities can be better informed through this research as to how to facilitate the lifestyle migration experience without bureaucratising it, potentially via community education, and without compromising the aspects valued within the lifestyle migration paradigm, as found in the research. Such activity would support lifestyle migration and the Federal Government’s agenda (regionalaustralia.gov.au) towards improving the position of regional communities in the areas of employment, industry, environment, community, communications and culture.

This research is therefore important on multiple levels:

- 1 Presenting an opportunity for transfer of learning through narrative analysis in exposing limiting and facilitating factors involved in lifestyle migration on a personal and relational level – socially, culturally and economically;
- 2 Presenting findings which governing authorities may incorporate to inform their socio-cultural-economic decisions;
- 3 Combining traditionally disparate concepts – creativity theory and identity theory – to understand the problem of the sustainability of lifestyle migration among working people.

1.3 Navigating the Book

Part 1 of this book explores the relationship of the research problem of how lifestyle migrants reinvent their lives and achieve sustainable relocation within the context of relevant research, literature and theoretical perspectives. Part 2 comprises Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 4 presents 22 summarised lifestyle migration narratives as case studies, providing context for the following analysis. Chapter 5 addresses the socio-cultural context of the topic and seeks to identify patterns which influence the sustainability or non-sustainability of lifestyle migrants through exploring reflexive response to economic and social challenges. Socially for instance themes of status and community in particular pose a diverse spectrum of change agents for newcomers and where the prevalence of small business in these areas counters hierarchy and professional status issues.

Small business requires innovation and flexibility as integral to survival and so lifestyle migrants need to apply creativity in order to survive, where Chapter 6 explores various factors which promote this quality. Chapter 6 is concentrated in the material context through which I explore the reprioritization of values, development of innovation and identification of challenges. The role of money along with the concept of working remotely and work style scenarios in relation to identity are explored, among other themes. Essentially these two chapters identify how the survivors manage to survive.

Chapter 7 also explores innovation but in the context of the natural environment in its role to facilitate reflection and change. The level of novelty available is discussed in context of the natural environment where findings revealed contradictory responses between cultural boredom and the richness of life, for example. Stress and wellbeing are explored here also in contrast to city stress (Mandal 2011), posing the question, how effective is the natural environment in abating material concerns? Finally the simplicity/consumerism theme is explored in relation to this.

Chapter 8 contains the conclusions to the research in the context of 30 themes relevant to the investigation. It also reveals the motive behind each relocation, which form part of the equation in proposing a scale of change, per participant, based upon sets of criteria. Importantly, this chapter reveals 13 categories of binary findings which demonstrate the breadth of experiences through lifestyle migration and outlines 40 dominant themes that presented through the research within this divergent framework.

2. Relevant Approaches to Lifestyle Migration



Figure 2 - Christina Kargillis, *Mythic Expedition*, 2007

Relevant research and perspectives around the topic of lifestyle migration are explored in this chapter. Commencing with its historical positioning, we then explore other research around the topic along with cross-disciplinary concepts influencing the phenomenon, including status and other lifestyle factors, both within Australia and globally, along with a search for meaning and explorations of identity.

Lifestyle migration was conceptually explored in the US as far back as 1954 when geographer Edward Ullman suggested that natural assets such as climate and the environment would generate population growth above earning potential, despite economic disadvantages. The 1960's proved this theory correct as urban to rural migration began there and in 1975, the term 'non-economic migration' was coined by demographer Calvin Beale as a way to distinguish this new breed of pioneers who broke away from the trend of migration for individual earning potential (Hoey 2005:590). Lifestyle migration also shares parallels with counterurbanism, according to Benson and O'Reilly (2009) in describing a move away from the city traditionally towards rural areas in order to provide "the antithesis of the lives that they are leaving behind."

Australian demographer Bernard Salt is reputed for his writing on lifestyle migration, citing the Gold Coast as a marked example where large-scale population growth has continued for more than 35 years representing a cultural shift, made famous in his book *The Big Shift* (2001), that starts with the bush, moves to the suburbs and then to the beach (2006:26). He describes "purist seachangers" as property buyers who purchase within "striking distance of the capital city" (2006a:24) and who often need to reorganise work commitments as they re-establish their lives around the beach.

As for treechangers on a lifestyle migration quest, the concept in Australia arose in around 2001 according to Salt (2006:24) and favours green hills over sand and surf. The main difference he sees between the two is that seachange communities have a property focus involving water views and beach access where treechange communities are located two or three hour drive of a capital city; enjoy aesthetic countryside as opposed to 'the sticks'; have a nearby town; nearby fishing or boating outlet and other recreation facilities; can access nearby wineries and gourmet food producers; have access to technology; enjoy trendy cafes that signify a familiar city culture; and consider potential heritage value. He gives NSW's Kangaroo Valley as a strong example.

A recent study at Charles Sturt University in Australia (Ragusa 2010) on lifestyle migrants who move from Sydney to the 'bush', finds that approximately 90 per cent are dissatisfied with their lifestyle migration and either plan to move on to another town, the coast, or return to the city, within five years. This study includes people aged 25-70, most of whom are described as "professionals with portable careers" (Beemster 2008). It focuses on aspects of social disjuncture as a primary cause for the unsustainable move. This is explored in Chapter 5 along with other elements that impact sustainable relocation (Lucas and Purkayastha 2007; Wiles 2008) where both sea and treechangers are incorporated due to the study site comprising coast and hinterland.

Contrary to the Charles Sturt study, the hinterland portion of the *Small Town Pioneers* research represents stability in comparison to the coastal component. Some of Salt's observations also prove contrary to this research. Salt argues that beachside communities offer an escape due to their transience, compared to towns in inland Australia:

"If your marriage has collapsed and you want to meet a suitor for a coffee, then you don't want your ex's cousin or sister to walk by at that particular moment. It's just easier for all concerned if there is distance between you, your ex and his orbit of influence" (2005b:101).

However despite the transience noted in this book, privacy is not at all assured in the coastal communities, as explored in Chapter 5. Salt also suggests the beach offers people the "opportunity to start afresh" or in the context of this research, to reinvent themselves (2005:101):

"No one knows your past in the new towns rising along the coast. Everyone comes from somewhere else. But more to the point, there is only one judgment that is made when stripped to your cossie on the beach: how you look, not what you were or how successful may have been your past relationships. In these circumstances the beach is a place... of forgiveness that offers absolution from past transgressions. The beach is a place that offers a new beginning."

Some interesting findings around this very scenario arose through *Small Town Pioneers* involving status and social orchestration, explored in Chapter 5.

2.1 In an Ideal World

Research at the University of Michigan in the US has articulated the trend of non-economic migration through the Center for the Ethnography of Everyday Life, where Brian Hoey

developed the term 'life-style migration.' He explores urban refugees relocating to places which resonate with the *ideal* of who they wish to become – their potential selves – where the symbolic value of place prompts lifestyle migrants to seek out certain types of places so that they can build their intended new life around this ideal of location where, "For life-style migrants, the choice made of where to live is consciously, intentionally also one about how to live" (2005:615). Benson and O'Reilly suggest lifestyle migration as a search rather than an act because of this pursuit of the ideal which primarily occurs through the interpretations and negotiated meanings of place, rather than the actual qualities of place.

Hoey's research incorporates moral theory from the philosophical discipline and draws upon the influence of humanist philosopher Charles Taylor in positioning the fundamental purpose of lifestyle migration as a facilitator of personal meaning, fulfilment, dignity and self-respect (2005:592). Taylor's interpretation of self-identity is defined by the commitments and identifications that create a context for people to determine what they support or oppose. This becomes their known landscape where they can express their beliefs (Rambo 1995). As such, Hoey's participants interact with places they believe will provide insight to an authentic self (Hoey 2005), "... commitment to a lifestyle believed to allow for these things and facilitated by relocation to a physical place believed to support this life-style is part of the personal negotiations between material and moral domains that shape a moral narrative of self" (2005:615).

The growing failure of the American dream to provide stable and rewarding work and the resulting search for meaning to pursue a different life in another place poses a critical point for US lifestyle migrants featured in Hoey's research (Crenson 2000), representing a directly transferable crisis to the Australian context and reflected by some participants in this book. The search for meaning away from the construct of social norms is supported by the philosophical writing of UK philosopher Alain de Botton in his book, *Status Anxiety* (2004) which outlines some of the fundamental issues that promote the desire for a lifestyle change, as discovered in Hoey's research and in this book to some degree. I explore participant motivations for the move in Chapter 8.

De Botton suggests that in modern society there is an *expectation* that we are equal, despite other indications, where equality has supposedly replaced the class system. Expectation creates an enormous anxiety between people at similar levels, he suggests, such as those who

went to the same school, when someone has something we don't, for example, a better car or job where de Botton believes that equality and envy go hand-in-hand. This forms much of the rationale of dissatisfaction with our conventional or expected path in society's eyes.

Such inequality is obvious through Britain's traditional class structure where the Whitehall 11 study (CCSU 2004) showed that stress and even early death were linked to those held under power within a British hierarchical system, as opposed to those in charge. Therefore, the image of the "corporate refugee" profiled in Hoey's work as the probable US lifestyle migrant, as opposed to lower status career holders, is culturally opposed by the Whitehall research. In Australia, Hamilton and Mail revealed that only 21 per cent of higher earners made the decision to downshift (2003:17) where the split between blue collar and white collar workers was approximately equal. This suggests that neither high nor low status were major contributors towards dissatisfaction with the urban lifestyle. Downshifting involves reducing work hours, often through changing work, and receiving less pay in exchange for more time but does not necessarily involve relocation. Findings regarding status and work styles from *Small Town Pioneers* are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

The UK's Benson and O'Reilly discuss lifestyle migration globally in terms of "relatively affluent individuals" which is not necessarily relevant to Australia as is demonstrated by some participants in this research along with the Hamilton and Mail data (2003; Hamilton 2003). However all three continental approaches relate the phenomenon of lifestyle migration to reflexivity with the contemporary world as a dominant driver rather than as an expression of increased levels of economic privilege. Reflexivity is explored theoretically in Chapter 3.

According to de Botton (2004), part of the way of ordinary life is to judge and comment on others, where we desire money for the status above any other motive in order to be treated well, with approval and with love. He further suggests that we buy objects to signal to the world that we are worthy of attention and love. As such, he positions self-esteem as the outcome of an equation of success and expectation where in order to enjoy self-esteem our choices are to either become more successful, or to lower our expectations in order to avoid personal uncertainty.

Hoey found that challenging the expectations of the American dream, built around success in material terms, produced a conflict in lifestyle migrants between the search for economic

fulfilment and the search for deeper human values where their economic commitments impeded upon other needs, such as suggested by de Botton and cited in the media (Hazard 2003). With the globalised economy making jobs precarious (Evans and Gibb, 2009) our productivity does not guarantee a desired outcome, and so our fate is not in our hands where it is this failing value system that catalyses some lifestyle migrants to seek out a new self with a new value system that is symbolized by a certain type of place, characterized by simplicity, as explored by Hoey:

“Mark is changing course as he seeks to find a sense to his life by finding a more personally meaningful orientation to the good as a means of measuring the worth of his life... This physical place, as yet unchosen, is one that they hope will better resonate with a *life-style commitment* to a “simpler”, more integrated and balanced life where family comes first” (2005:598-600).

De Botton emphasizes that values are not naturally true but are socially constructed to uphold vested interests, according to Marxist philosophy (2004), where such ideology is largely distributed by those in power so that the ideals of the day represent those in power. For lifestyle migrants in this and Hoey’s research, living a life orchestrated by the power of social expectations (Foucault et al 1983) has failed the individual, who in turn, seeks to empower themselves by choosing a different ideology and often, one that is more aligned with their personal integrity (Hoey 2006:356). People have chosen to stand outside the mainstream for centuries however there are still status anxieties present within such subcultures, reveals de Botton. The nudists in *Status Anxiety* commented that they noticed the difference in brands of caravan at a nudist camp for instance, while they disregard clothing labels. Benson and O’Reilly discuss the role of lifestyle choices to provide a *material* form of self-identity and suggest that status is no longer reflected in the lives of lifestyle migrants because relocation helps to define *who* they have decided to be. However, as de Botton suggests with his nudists, new measures of status become apparent through lifestyle migration. This book reveals an alternative set of status measures, discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Unlike the nudists who do not need to commit to a loss of personal coverage and who instead return to their everyday lives where once again they don their threads, lifestyle migrants often fail their quest for a new life and a new identity because they cannot let go of the values of their former city life. A complete value system restructure is required for working lifestyle migration to prove sustainable where such a departure from the old is often prompted through changes in the world of work, from where a new identity emerges. This research shows that a majority of participants (18 of 22) had entered into a new field of work and/or

dramatically new way of working such as self-employment since relocation. Hoey's research, which was a considerably larger scale, reveals:

"After their move, however, almost half were working in a field they themselves considered a *significant* departure from their previous record of employment or field of study.... I was not surprised to find that nearly 40% started their own small businesses" (2005:350).

Hoey's participants reveal that a loss of identity 'between lives' is what prevents many would-be lifestyle migrants from making the transition. His findings explain the difficulty: "For a while [after leaving a corporate job] you didn't have any sense of yourself – or *where* you are. For some people that's too great a void. That's why some people don't take that extra step" (2005:610). In contrast, *Small Town Pioneers* found the most prominent reason offered, as a third party report regarding others' unsustainable relocations, was lack of money where money enabled time for networking and other crucial activities towards a sustained relocation.

Hoey's participants discussed the challenge of making the transition through self-employment in relation to the enormous task of creating a business from its beginnings, and the threat it created towards their goal of achieving a balanced work and family life (Franklin 1997). They drew confidence however from the fact that their venture: "... embodies a guiding moral orientation in the form of their personal quest for greater meaning and purpose... What you need to do is reconnect with community, your family and get rid of this big company stress stuff" (2005:602-603).

Wren (2008) among others has written on the current cultural phenomenon of the workplace in Australia, particularly since the Global Financial Crisis, where we are consistently required to re-skill and re-educate or face redundancy. The ways in which the workplace is 'training' us to develop our pioneering spirits through a lack of security potentially contributes to the ability and growing interest in lifestyle migration for working people, as this paradigm for relational identity through profession breaks down. Hoey supports the concept in suggesting, "The world of work upon which it [the American dream] had been based appears unstable and unpredictable, more fluid and boundless. These are the very qualities that are valued in today's workers" (2005). While *Small Town Pioneers* incorporates both corporate and non-corporate urban escapees in contrast to Hoey's focus on corporate subjects, many parallels exist between the two studies. However this research shows how in sustaining a relocation, some of Hoey's rationales prompting the relocation are still relevant where a builder

embarking upon a business in a new territory for instance does not enjoy a nine to five existence (Participant S).

The requirement for the reorchestration of values among participants in *Small Town Pioneers* shares some similarity with de Botton's commentary on bohemia where for example, the question for all bohemians is: Who are we going to get to judge us? Being a bohemian isn't about having certain type of job or house, he explains, it's a way of looking at the world – a spirit of independence and freedom and a commitment to live by your own values. In this book, one participant puts it a different way, "Half the time I'll suck a beer on the way home and no-one bothers me, that's why I live here." However, while some participants relocated in respect to such value changes, many relocated simply on the understanding of lifestyle and to reduce stress. Indeed, recent medical research confirms that people either raised in cities and/or living in cities demonstrate higher stress processing brain activity (Mandal 2011). It follows that today's lifestyle migrants are more reactive in seeking a solution to various stressors along with the growing commitment to pursue a different life in another place.

De Botton comments that many things that bohemians fought for assisted society in the years to follow – they are the risk takers while the hordes of conservatives benefit from their creative edge and where Giddens suggests, risk is a core element of a dynamic economic and an innovative society (2001). Risk forms a significant part of this research in context of creativity and developing self-efficacy. While creative expression is not necessarily a trademark of lifestyle migrants, it is a creative process these pioneers undergo in making their exodus from the city and reinventing their lives and themselves. As with de Botton's bohemians, they too are risk takers or risk managers who often act against the grain of conventional career and economic 'progress'. However, unlike de Botton's bohemians, some of these participants have created lucrative careers through taking and managing such risks, discussed in Chapter 6.

Becoming self-reliant is a mechanism to address status anxiety in providing a greater sense of control over the circumstances of work and family life. This value of control over one's own life is a strong theme in Chhetri et al's research on Downshifting in South East Queensland, "In our study results show that a quarter of the downshifter's nominated seeking more control of their lives and personal fulfillment as the main drivers of lifestyle change..." (2009:352) and this value also features strongly in *Small Town Pioneers*.

Voluntary simplicity and consumerism are not new concepts (Frank 1999; Schor 1999; Iwata 2006; Hamilton and Dennis 2005) but are extremely relevant for some participants in this research. Simplicity as an ideal contributes towards an anti-status sentiment here and raises the value of control over one's own life, similarly with de Botton's bohemia which proclaimed a spiritual versus a material way of evaluating ourselves and others, which became more popular as Christianity declined in popularity (de Botton 2004). The University of Winnipeg's Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre (SPARC 2011) delivers courses in finding happiness through simple living and they define voluntary simplicity in terms of less and more and again incorporate the concept of control:

“...less stress, less debt, less pollution and noise, less waste, less violence toward nature and people, less hurry, less clutter, less corporate control over our lives, less obsession with money and what it can buy.

“But voluntary simplicity is also about more: more time, more leisure, more freedom, more well-being in healthy environments with family and community, more self-reliance in obtaining our livelihood, more control over our personal and collective destinies, more appropriate use of technologies that meet real human needs rather than simply generate profits, more care for future generations, and a more mindful, focused and appreciative approach to living.”

Financially, lifestyle change does not necessarily result in subsistence living where approximately half of the participants in *Small Town Pioneers* are satisfied with their earning. However the ideology in these lifestyle communities cannot promote material wealth as a culturally dominant value, despite its prevalence in pockets of the study site, because consumerism is anathema to the ideology that these communities are founded upon as places of escape from such value structures. Essentially, a focus on community and environment over work and wealth is what provides these places with the qualities to pose as attractors for lifestyle migrants and while some participants say the very wealthy 'own' the study site, 'excess' wealth was not a priority value among most participants, as outlined in Chapter 8. As Hoey suggests, “Migrants who choose place of residence on the basis of quality of life considerations are making a judgement regarding the status quo where your job typically dictates not only where you live but also the way that you live” (Hoey 2005:615-16). Simplicity in relation to consumerism is explored in Chapter 7.

2.2 Reinvent Yourself

The intention for change could conceivably take place within an urban environment, or “inside a cardboard box” as one *Small Town Pioneers* participant suggests, however the symbolic act of the move and the reflection afforded by a simpler life in a natural environment greatly facilitates the quest, according to this and Hoey’s research.

Hoey suggests place acts as a change agent to identity where, “The relocation narratives of these individuals and families show how they reoriented in a process of weighing, choosing a particular geographic place they felt would allow or even force a shift in priorities and better balance between work and family obligations” (2005:595). The physical act of relocation to spark change was discovered to be necessary where “perceived elements of neighbourliness, greater authenticity, and slower pace, is an indispensable part of the story for life-style migrants” (353). The duration of relocation for these lifestyle migrants is unknown while the lived experience in *Small Town Pioneers* is at least five years after relocation as a safeguard against a reality often resulting in an early departure for many. While Benson and O’Reilly acknowledge that the efforts required to achieve work-life balance are often understated, it is precisely these ‘understated efforts’ that *Small Town Pioneers* explores and which suggests that, contrary to their view, lifestyle migration is indeed an act through negotiation of a new existence rather than merely a search, as previously suggested.

Hoey also discovered that the physical layout of a small town community geographically focused with proximity of work, home, schools, recreation and social activities was a significant factor for lifestyle migrants in establishing a sense of community through greater integration of everyday activities, while a *Small Town Pioneers* participant put it this way:

“I’m here because I’ve travelled around the world and I really appreciate the feeling that this area gives me. That feeling is a general sense of content. I love living this close to the beach. I hate the fact that I have to buy a toaster every six months but in turn I spend my money at the local electric shop, which in turn pays for people to work there, which in turn pays for their electricity bill which in turn pays for the mortgage and that’s the flow on effect of living in a smaller community” (Participant C).

In Hoey’s research as with *Small Town Pioneers*, turning points in the lives of his participants that call for the individual to take a risk “which sparks a deep transformation of social, psychological and spiritual proportions” (Hoey 2005:615) stem from positive as well as negative events. These can include death, divorce, redundancy or alternatively the birth of a

child or a career promotion (363). Essentially the crisis, whether apparently positive or negative, triggers a deeper question pertaining to the personal value of the choice to be made or the actions that must follow. This pattern shares much in common with autobiography which places the actor in focus, where trouble leads to crisis and to transformation (Nelson 1994). These events serve as 'pain triggers' that spark reflection with an associated choice that needs to be made. The aspects explored in this book that create 'pain triggers' occur both prior to the relocation and throughout the period of re-establishment and relate to the worlds of work, family and social interactions that are integral to community life.

Hoey argues that authenticity forms the basis of making the decision to relocate. In the context of his research, authenticity refers to the phenomena of conversion in a psychological framework based on the work of Rambo (1995) and others, where physical and metaphorical travel enables a self-transformation towards an identity shift or a "second chance" in life:

"Conversion stories are a special form of autobiographical narrative in which a person distinguishes a "real self" from an inauthentic self. Self transformation in the process of conversion entails the creation of a new version of oneself when social roles and self presentations are challenged by changes in self-interpretation together with changing personal practices..." (Hoey 2006:348).

Small Town Pioneers too explores challenging social roles and self presentations but supports the definition of identity as a *continual* process of change through the experience, rather than approaching it as the singular state of authenticity. This book also argues that Benson and O'Reilly's notion of lifestyle migration as a search is imperative in negotiating these changes but that it is the search itself which equates to Hoey's notion of authenticity. However as suggested it is the 'understated efforts' in negotiating a sustainable relocation that position lifestyle migration as an act over and beyond this. *Small Town Pioneers* shows how the continuity present in small town community, where life is less compartmentalized, do support the *perception* of an integrated or authentic persona among some participants, such as suggested by Hoey, but evolving identity development rather than "a second chance" is a pertinent theoretical point of difference in considering the sustainability of the relocation. Theoretical discussion on identity development in conjunction with creativity are further explored in Chapter 3. Continuity is explored in Chapter 5 and creativity in practice is discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

2.3 Landscaping Change

Salt's research suggests that the key motive of population growth in lifestyle destinations in Australia and the US is environmentally based – the pursuit of lifestyle in a warm climate, where Australians typically choose the coast and Americans choose the desert (2005:26), while Osbaldiston (2010a) argues, in reference to George Simmel's *The Adventure*, that lifestyle migration in Australia and elsewhere is more than just a physical relocation, "it is one heavy with cultural symbolism." He illustrates the relationship between culture and landscape as steeped in "collective nostalgia" where the beach for instance evokes an emotional response contingent with casual and informal beach culture where one can break free from mainstream existence "like and 'island' in an ocean of mundane days."

This theme of physical space and specifically the control of space or 'my space' as significant in the context of happiness is discussed by Crawford et al (1992:40), however an oxymoron around this happiness must be noted in that a lifestyle migrant willingly undergoes the challenge of displacement, which often leads to unhappiness through its disruption of emotional attachments to specific geographic locations (Hoey:352) in order to find the level of happiness sought.

Greider and Garkovich (1994) discuss the role of place as a socially constructed representation for human values. They explore the adaptability of the destination, depending on the viewer where natural, beautiful places for instance, are harmonious with ideals of a simple life uncluttered and amenable for pioneering activity, without urban 'red tape':

"Why does a real estate developer look across an open field and see comfortable suburban ranch homes nestled in a quiet cul-de-sac, while a farmer envisions endless rows of waving wheat and a hunter sees a five-point buck cautiously grazing in preparation for the coming winter? The open field is the same physical thing, but it carries multiple symbolic meanings that emanate from the values by which people define themselves... and the physical entity of the open field – is transformed symbolically to reflect these self-definitions. Our understanding of nature and human relationships with the environment are really cultural expressions used to define who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be at this place and in this space..." (1994:1-2).

The writers discuss meanings that comprise landscapes as reflective of what people in cultural groups define to be proper and improper relationships among themselves and between themselves and the physical environment (2). Lifestyle migrants transform themselves to

adapt to the community and environment, which together reflect a cultural result of others who have come before which illustrates the creative process of becoming new, rather than achieving an authentic self and where individuals form part of a changing landscape.

How landscape retains its meaning in the face of change is a pertinent question. Benson and O'Reilly place certain forms of lifestyle migration in the context of 'residential tourism' and point out that the attraction of lifestyle destinations by city dwellers creates an overpopulation scenario that undermines the area as a place of escape, as was expressed in the *Small Town Pioneers* research and elsewhere (Smith and Doherty 2006). Greider and Garkovich argue from a sociological perspective that environmental change is not an environmental change per se, but that meanings are negotiated between the people of that environment, rather than pertaining to the place itself. That is, as the context changes – as new developments are built for example – there is no inherent meaning to the change "[it is] a reflection of their changing definition of themselves" (9). Former Head of Planning with the ACT Government Dr Tamsin Kerr acknowledges both sociological and geographic elements (2008, 2006) and suggests a mythic archaeology embodies "the heart of every geographic community" where we require an awareness of the impact of our lifestyle upon it (2008:5-6).

The need to redefine oneself due to increasing anonymity in urban life is potentially a uniting theme among lifestyle migrants. Linda Matchan discusses the growing sense of anonymity in the Canadian city of Winnipeg, partially created by the instability of current work trends and by the emphasis of technology over the physical landscape that has engendered a need for people to mark their domestic territories with name plaques, in order to feel a sense of connectivity and belonging. Matchan suggests the landscape many of us dwell in is the ephemeral land of cyberspace where, without the benefit of knowing their longitude, we lose our moorings: "We have no modern system of cartography to give us a sense of rootedness -- to our home, symbolically speaking" (1999:36). However, removing anonymity leaves accountability, and this is an interesting repercussion, also discussed in Chapter 5.

In answer to this urban anonymity, New York writer Elizabeth Hawes (1998) notes the learnings of her 15 year lifestyle migration and the ensuing displacement as she moves back to the city, in the context of identity. Moving to the country expanded her creative awareness and taught her to see with 'fresh eyes' and to appreciate the possibilities present in city life, essentially breaking the inertia of the 'rat race' that prompts so many lifestyle migrants to seek

a new place and a new life in the first instance. The reference to 'fresh eyes' is interesting in its relationship to innovation methodology involving the reframing of contexts towards creativity and change, as explored in Chapter 3. Hawes reflects that her out-of-town environment enabled a paradigm shift and demonstrates how her lifestyle migration, despite its apparent reversal, has impacted a lasting change upon her identity.

"I have hung an old barn door from the 18th-century farmhouse my husband and I inhabited until last winter in the pantry of our Upper West Side apartment. It came from the chicken coop where I kept a large flock of exotic hens, since parceled out among old friends and local farmers. After our 15 years of living outside of the city, the door represents a token of continuum... Upon our return to New York, I was a city person living in the country. Dutifully, despite a drastic change of life style, I had kept the faith. Now, however, I have been turned inside out. I take long walks along the Hudson, gulping in the salty air. I marvel at the many species of trees in the parks, the variety of volunteer vegetation, the proliferation of community gardens, even perennial borders, some astonishingly lush. I notice the moon and, faint above city lights, an occasional constellation" (13).

The impact of the physical beauty of the natural environment upon the reflective and creative process is also explored as relevant to personal change. Hoey touches on these issues in positioning place as a symbol of time off away from the stress of urban life – *my time* as opposed to the time *they* own. Centuries of artists and writers retreating to the countryside for creative inspiration support the hypothesis of natural environments facilitating reflection and creativity as cited in a Canadian study on visual artists and writers and their relocation to non-urban environments. Much like de Botton's bohemians, the study shows that participants sought quiet countryside locations where "freedom from convention" was possible (Mitchell et al 2004:152-167).

Among this group, place is suggested as a facilitator of the creative process. The study assessed the influence of environment on artistic activity and found that predominantly the natural environment provides both subject matter and inspirational setting for creative development where more than half of participants indicated that the natural landscape engenders "raw spiritual energy" that in turn inspires creativity.

"It is very evident from these quotations that the natural environment plays a vital role in the lives of some artists, through its provision of raw material but, perhaps even more importantly for some, through the raw energy it generates. For these artists, described by one interviewee as 'soul' artists, connecting with the natural environment is a crucial ingredient in the creative process..." (163).

While artists do not feature in this book, creativity as a transferable skill is discussed in Chapter 3 with relevant findings discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. Non-artists related the natural environment to clarity of mind which in turn produced creativity while others related creativity and good ideas to lack of stress, significantly promoted by the natural environment. An exploration of city stress in contrast with the stresses accrued through the lifestyle migration challenges is also discussed in Chapter 7.

The framing, or environment, supports certain thought patterns while restricting others, according to Kristensen (2004:89) who suggests the environment impacts emotions that either encourage or limit creativity, where physical space provides the context for “coherence and continuity”. This view positions the potential of place as influential to lifestyle migrants in their capacity to construct new lives as their well being is supported by the natural environment.

Through this chapter we have explored the topic of lifestyle migration through various disciplines, each contributing insights towards the exploration. Through Philosophy we have explored issues of status and the search for meaning and self-understanding which greatly impacts the imperative to relocate, as well as the resulting adjustment towards a new life, as shall be shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The field of Geography has provided a context for the phenomenon while Anthropological and Sociological research on the topic has yielded strong points of reference for ensuing arguments relating to identity and creativity theories, to be explored in Chapter 3, as well as stressing points of difference with the findings in this research. Educational perspectives shall also be addressed in Chapter 3 as sub-concepts to creativity and identity in supporting the theoretical claim that lifestyle migration involves a creative act of self-reinvention which largely determines the sustainability of relocation.

3. Identity, Creativity and Educational Perspectives



Figure 3 - Christina Kargillis, *The Three Wisdoms*, 2006

This chapter is dedicated to the theoretical position that lifestyle migration provokes self-reinvention and the development of creativity, which greatly impacts the sustainability of such a move. It links concepts from identity and creativity theories through a narrative approach, and through drawing on particular educational perspectives, in considering lifestyle migration as a trigger for identity construction through **learning a new lifestyle**.

While identity theory involves a complexity of philosophical discussion, it provides context for the position of *Small Town Pioneers* in contrast to the lifestyle migration research of Hoey and of Benson and O'Reilly. It is grounded in lifelong learning principles and explores identity development and personal change as linked to broader social change, involving reflexivity, reflection and narrative principles. Creativity theory is a broad field in itself and so I refer to the *Creativity and Innovation Management Journal* centred on challenging and facilitating creative potential and articulating creative processes. Creativity is defined in this book by French philosopher Gilles Deleuze as a process of becoming (1990a, 1990b; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 1994), which lies in opposition to the historical state of being, as discussed in the *Journal* in this capacity (Jeanes 2006). In *Small Town Pioneers*, innovation is explored within the context of such creativity.

In this chapter I shall first explore narrative inquiry in the context of the empirical research that this book is founded upon. I shall then discuss identity development in its relevance to the transformations which lifestyle migrants typically experience following relocation, before aligning these observations with creativity theory. Finally I apply an educational lens to the research in exploring the relationship between lifestyle migration and self-efficacy (Bandura 1980, 2001, 2006), in synergy with emotional intelligence (Goleman 1998, 2001, 2006). Theoretically, the book presents as a source for transfer of learning (Pugh and Bergin 2006) and social learning (Bandura 1977) for utilitarian purposes within the public sphere.

3.1 Who's Story Is It?

Narrative inquiry is the methodology adopted in *Small Town Pioneers*, largely for its relevance to the study of individuals and its intention to analyse and make sense of meanings that lifestyle migrants have of the world through reorganising and plotting their stories. This method allows us to begin to understand their disequilibrium, and the actions taken to establish equilibrium: "We take for granted that people, at any point in time, are in a process

of personal change and that from an educational point of view, it is important to be able to narrate the person in terms of the process” (Clandinin and Connelly 2000:30).

Understanding the properties and powers of narrative has been the focus of much philosophical debate. According to MacIntyre, social life *is* a narrative, an enacted narrative where actions carry intention (in Czarniawska 2004:3) while Dewey describes the impacts of such acts upon identity where “the self is not something ready-made, but something in continuous formation through choice of action” (Hansen 2006:181); and Ricoeur defines the role of narrative as existing in a “symbiotic relationship” with the individual who acts it out (in Chappell et al 2003:146). Lyotard implies that narratives supply people with resources by which to define themselves where, “even before he is born, if only by virtue of the name he is given, the human child is already positioned as the referent in the story recounted by those around him, in relation to which he will inevitably chart his course” (49).

Accountability is a keystone of identity and its corresponding narrative principles where in every conversation a positioning takes place which involves others’ views, and so one’s life is inevitably co-authored and subjected to power ratios (Czarniawska 2004:5). Accountability is identified by organisational narratologist Czarniawska as the main bond of human interaction (4) while Ricoeur too suggests “the fate of identity” involves two opposites comprising character and the ethical notion of self-constancy whereby others can count upon the person, and that they are accountable (Chappell et al 2003:165). Therefore, when our level of predictability changes through the challenges of lifestyle migration, our identity and accountability wanes. Czarniawska suggests that in order to understand their own lives, people put them into story format and they do the same when trying to make sense of other people’s lives, as this book reveals through the 22 narratives available in Chapter 4. This method also helps to justify such unpredictability in the light of transformation.

The story however may be reframed according to the current status of the person (Nelson 1994; Crawford et al 1992) and so we may ask, what is the value of narrative if it is so fickle?

“...what people present in interviews is but the results of their perception, their interpretation of the world, which is of extreme value to the researcher because one may assume that it is the same perception that informs their actions....” (Czarniawska 2004:49).

The value of exploring actions is well phrased by Ricoeur who suggests that “character gives us qualities but it is in our actions – what we do – that we are happy or the reverse” (152), where happiness is the ultimate quest of the lifestyle migration endeavour.

In the lifestyle migration experience, each story is influenced by the ones preceding it which allows new lifestyle migrants to learn to adapt to the community of other ‘ex-pats’ and where the intertwining of personal narratives potentially forms its grand narrative. The grand narrative traditionally contains a dominant plot, or what Boje calls ‘control narrative’ of coherence – “texts” that are supposed to “tax readers with ethical duties which increase in proportion to the measure with which they are taken up” (2009:175). In the case of lifestyle migrants, they are taxed with the value expectations of their new community where there is an onus to conform in order to prosper. *Small Town Pioneers* explore such values and dominant themes. Grand narratives allow inclusion and exclusion that enable them to retain their dominance (Chappell et al 2003:53) – such is the community and its dominant culture and therefore narratives do and do not permit or promote certain forms of identity (54). The stories in this book introduce a set of understandings and experiences, however their discourses reveal a great diversity of what was said, how it was said and what was left out from one to the next, impacting the grand narrative in positioning the ‘truth’ as somewhat elusive, explored in Chapter 8.

MacIntyre considers the narrative unity of life a condition for the “good life” (1981), where the narrative must be cohesively gathered so that it can be grasped as a singular story. However Chappell et al advise that this single story must be distinguished from identity and that indeed identity is multiple, consisting of different personas in reflexive response to different contexts (2003:18-19).

3.2 Becoming Someone New

This book is focused upon learning a new lifestyle, which involves divorcing oneself from a social structure and heading ‘into the void’ which must be pioneered. Therefore this research explores the notion of the ideal self, in pursuit of an ideal life and persona, which shares some commonality with Benson and O’Reilly’s (2009) earlier comment in Chapter 2 on lifestyle migrants as searchers on a quest.

Hoey and Benson and O'Reilly suggest that lifestyle migrants select a place for its symbolic values to facilitate change towards the person they truly are or wish to become. In line with this aspect of 'becoming' this book explores how, following arrival, lifestyle migrants discover the adjustments that need to be made for a relocation to endure, particularly in regards to work. While this research shows that in a minority of cases it is possible to coexist *alongside* community as some participants indicated, or to maintain a materially based lifestyle despite a dominant cultural focus on the natural environment for instance, there are key factors emphasized by lifestyle migration which promote or even force identity development for the majority because of the *desire* for change.

Aspirations of self-actualisation (Rogers 1980) inevitably come into play with such a quest, involving self-awareness, personal growth and the fulfilment of potential above concern for the opinions of others. Self-actualisation is also the pinnacle of Maslow's famed theoretical pyramid in his Hierarchy of Needs (1962). However, this search for a new and better self through lifestyle migration involves a sometimes shocking retrograde move to the base of that pyramid for working people as they change environmental, social and economic paradigms in the process. In order to reach self-actualisation they must then ascend through the levels of physiological, safety, love and belonging and esteem needs, according to Maslow, before the peak of the pyramid can reveal itself.

Reflexive identity, when viewed as a process of interaction with influencing factors such as these, can be defined as "sameness that is continually evolving and incomplete" (Chappell et al 2003:28) with symbolic boundaries that serve to differentiate the changeling from what surrounds it. Reflexivity is a critical element of identity development where, "... it is through self and social questioning (reflexivity) that people are able to engage with and (en)counter – affected by but also affect – contemporary uncertainties," (Edwards et al in Chappell et al 2003:4). Considering lifestyle migration is often fuelled by "contemporary uncertainties" as previously explored, this observation is particularly relevant.

Learning a new lifestyle requires the development of reflexivity to tackle unanticipated challenges in response to new circumstances, creating a push for change. According to Edwards et al (2002) identity development is encouraged through engagement with such change agents, "...a less passive notion of learning, one more consonant with the needs of civic participation and of agents capable of autonomously generating change for themselves,

requires the development of reflexivity” (527). The narratives in this book demonstrate participant abilities to be reflexive, positioned in time, as temporal beings with a future, past and present (Chappell et al 2003:49).

Identity is also relational where a person is identified by a social context or a particular way of being, such as a profession (Chappell et al 2003:49) and the changes which occur in the context of reputation and status has a strong impact on identity development and learning among participants in this research due to economic challenges particularly. Lifestyle migrants or small town pioneers often operate on simultaneous activities to earn money or pursue passions which may one day yield returns and create new pathways in the process – they are explorers. As such they hold multiple roles or personas. One such example is the bricklayer/artist who eventually entered local politics where his story is built upon a series of relational and reflexive responses, operating in relation to influences and fabricated from social and cultural definitions: “Hence, any individual identity always relates to forms of identity that predate it being narrated” (48). Therefore, as city slickers in particular where our roles are generally more defined, our sense of who we are is extremely reliant on our social infrastructure and when we abandon that to reconstruct it elsewhere, our sense of identity is at stake.

In this sense, the issue of personal identity and relational identity through work and social paradigms was revealed as a central issue in the research owing much to the high level of multi-tasking present among participants along with a prevalence of a succession of new ventures. The small scale community context further intensifies identity transition as social and working life is less categorized compared to the urban scenario, and so these multiple identities merge. According to some participants this promotes a more unified sense of self because accountability is emphasized by the small scale: “You turn around and your employee’s mother knows your bank manager. You can keep it separate in the city but you can’t in the country” (Person E). To others, this situation encourages “secret agendas” (Person F). However, this appearance of a unified identity within the lifestyle migration context exists within a constant tension to external and rather turbulent influences as discussed and so it is more a cultural characteristic of the small town pioneer experience. In this way it represents an adherence to social norms rather than the authentic self, previously referred to by Hoey.

Gergen and Kaye view the multi-dimensional self as a by-product of relationship where “each portrayal of self operates with the conventions of a particular relationship... that make up life” (in Chappell et al 2003:21). Chappell et al also expose the assumption that the self is a unified being that can discern between true and false consciousness, and thus free itself. They suggest two poles operate simultaneously – the individual and the society (2003:15) where reflexivity is inevitable. Where a person was said to be coherent or perhaps “authentic”, the authors rephrase the setting and place the person in a historical role of everyday life, suggesting s/he is “a position within a discourse” (15) where varying discourses produce varying versions of the self or “multiple-subjectivities”. This is illustrated by the multi-contextual existence of many lifestyle migrants as discussed. Similarly, Eeva-Liisa Kronqvist proposes that there is a gap between personal identity and relational identity and this gap leads to a constant quest to integrate these two poles in a meaningful way (1996). Lifestyle migrants cannot avoid this gap as they battle between paradigms with the introduction of the new and the ending of the old, and the alchemy of aspects required to make the move sustainable.

Lifestyle migration is a lived experience where it is the ideal that propels the quest and where following a dream is the key to change. In pursuing an ideal that destroys comfort zones, identity becomes fragmented in a variety of contexts where multiple selves are exposed. The catalytic affect of the pursuit is primarily why migrants who did not relocate for a better life (such as employment posts at the hospitals or university) were excluded from the research.

There is an important shift that has taken place between the individual and their community with an emphasis on self-fulfillment and initiative, according to Rose (in Chappell et al 2003:57-58), making citizenship active rather than passive and dependent and which could help to explain the rise of lifestyle migration and the pioneering spirit that fuels it. Edwards et al suggest reflexivity is integral to the accumulation of skills as an adaptation to change and uncertainty (2002:525) where the need to belong to a community is a reaction against this change, fluidity and uncertainty, “as a defense mechanism by those most affected by the prevailing pre‘carite” (526). Community themes feature in the research where dualities are reflected in the findings, discussed in Chapters 5 and 8.

Critical reflection is closely linked to reflexivity and for lifestyle migrants may involve learning from experience through discussion and analysis of those experiences individually or collectively, and finally acting upon the implications revealed. In this way, critical reflection is a

key to self-change (Chappell et al, 2003:16) and described as “the hunting of assumptions of power and hegemony” (Brookfield in Chappell et al 2003:18-19). Critical reflection alone leads to awareness but not necessarily action oriented change. Andersen and Goolishian (in Chappell et al: 22) discuss the role of critical reflection in change:

“... to relate what they imagine to be the experience of others close to them; to consider how they would experience their lives if they operated from different assumptions – how they might act, what resources they could call upon in different contexts; what new solutions might emerge; and to recall precepts once believed, but now jettisoned.”

This explanation parallels the fundamentals of de Bono’s famed six thinking hats technique of innovation theory (de Bono 1982, 1995), based upon changing perspectives where questioning the dominance of power structures or challenging assumptions is a key step in innovation for change in order to allow new ideas and possibilities to grow (McFadzean 2001). In making the mechanical moves and experiments towards the ideal self in the lifestyle migration quest, these concepts are realised.

3.3 Creativity

Creativity is a term that carries a myriad of theories however in this research, one of its theories is primary: the Deleuzian view of creativity as a process of ‘becoming’. Innovation theory is also employed but only to articulate key aspects of this process of becoming, and is not intended to be interpreted in the context of product output, for which it is best known (ANTA 2001 a, b, c). Creativity as a process of becoming parallels identity development and narrative inquiry to some degree, however it is the intentional pursuit of the ideal in tandem with the capacity for flexibility which warrants creativity as an important theoretical addition in this research, positioning lifestyle migration as a creative act of self-reinvention.

Deleuze considers becoming as independent to history where, “Becoming isn't part of history; history amounts only the set of preconditions, however recent, that one leaves behind in order to "become," that is, to create something new” (1990:170-171). He considers the exploration of possibilities as the core to becoming and introduces his nomadic thinker (1990:129), free to create new connections in order to open up experience to new becomings, such as in de Bono’s innovation teachings (1995) and in the metaphorical journey of the lifestyle migrant: “If

we've been so interested in nomads, it's because they're a becoming and aren't part of history; they're excluded from it, but they transmute and reappear in different, unexpected forms in the lines of flight of some social field" (1990:153).

He considers a form of 'virtual' thinking that houses the capacity to maximize the potential of life and as such reflects the quest of the small town pioneer as s/he pursues the dream, as critiqued by Jeanes (2006:128) where in becoming one: "...strives for 'production, creation and mutation... This process of 'becoming' – what might/could be – the creation of what is not yet, is achieved through thinking in new, perhaps previously unimagined, modes of thinking..."

He also discusses minority in relation to majority cultures and specifically referring to city dwellers in exploring the role of becoming in minorities and the state of conformity in majorities where, "unknown paths" in the passage following, represent the lifestyle migrant's quest (1990:173):

"The difference between minorities and majorities isn't their size. A minority may be bigger than a majority. What defines the majority is a model you have to conform to: the average European adult male city-dweller, for example. . . A minority, on the other hand, has no model, it's a becoming, a process. One might say the majority is nobody. Everybody's caught, one way or another, in a minority becoming that would lead them into unknown paths if they opted to follow it through."

This passage corresponds to Simmel's *The Stranger* (1971) to some extent which explores disassociation within community where the disassociated are the minority and 'the community' is the majority, as some participants in this book identified with.

Jeanes articulates destruction as the dark side to creativity, a necessary aspect of progress that is however not inevitable where: "... much of the explosion of 'creativity' is as a direct result of the conscious efforts of individuals... rather than an inevitable process. In reality, the change we experience is almost certainly a rather prosaic mixture of progress, in the positive sense of the word, and deterioration" (131). The critical incident(s) that spark the relocation in lifestyle migration narratives are aspects of this dark side to the creative process that brings loss in order to bring change. However, not all participants in this research experienced negative incidents or loss in deciding to migrate.

Participants know their relocation will be challenging, so why do they undertake this quest? Prince suggests the need to be meaningful as a survival activity, and relates meaning to reflexivity and narrative inquiry where as discussed previously, meaning relies on being recognisable and accountable and where “not meaning” equates to a loneliness that could “cause one to die” (2003:242-243). This poses lifestyle migrants in a contradictory position in relocating in pursuit of happiness, where they are caught between paradigms of identity and are temporarily unrecognizable and accountable in their search for meaning, during transition. Such a predicament was cited in Hoey’s research as a cause for early departures (2005:610).

This process of destruction of the old and creation of the new is ongoing – much like narrative it is never finished and cannot be completed, and as Jeanes suggests it stands in contrast to the popular view of creativity that leads to outcomes and products “...in which success is measured through the unit of capital... Creativity is the idea of working at a problem in the Deleuzian perspective and cannot be framed by alternative understandings as to what will achieve ‘real’ innovation” (Jeanes 2006:132-132). However, some techniques from the product-driven innovation approach do articulate certain change processes which lifestyle migrants experience within the context of becoming.

In developing his widely accepted innovation techniques, primarily in the field of business, Edward de Bono coined the term lateral thinking in 1967 to define conceptual pattern crossing: “The purpose of the brain is to establish and use routine patterns. That is why creativity is not a natural process in the brain...” (1995:14). The techniques de Bono developed to deliberately cut across these patterns involve provocation to take us out of our comfort zone; movement to transform one idea to a new idea; and random entry by introducing random ideas into the equation to forge a solution which incorporates that idea (17).

Although lifestyle migrants don’t generally set out to follow a course in innovation while they go about changing their lives, there are many similarities of what they typically undergo with the innovation process. Lifestyle migrants are essentially strays who have left the pack, or Deleuzian minorities, in terms of stepping out of their comfort zones, adapting their ideas reflexively towards new, workable ideas and again, reflexively, addressing random elements that force them to forge solutions.

Georgsdottir and Getz (2004) describe the value of flexibility in innovation and change, where the ability to switch between conceptual boundaries demonstrates a capacity for novelty and innovation (168) and in the context of this book, a capacity for creative problem solving towards learning a new lifestyle. Flexibility features as an element of innovation within this book and as a key component of the pioneering quality where Georgsdottir and Getz suggest:

“...flexibility as a personality trait refers to having a preference for change and novelty... Another trait potentially related to spontaneous flexibility is the trait of sensation-seeking – a preference for varied and novel sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take risks in order to have such experiences” (169).

Georgsdottir and Getz define another sign of flexibility on the personality level in the capacity to integrate conflicting personality traits (169). This book argues that the concept also applies to the ability to undertake conflicting roles, as with many of the participants who transformed their careers and fields of expertise. Some examples include bottle shop manager to photography teacher or corporate executive to self-employed marketing consultant for example, along with those who assume multiple roles simultaneously such as the tourism operator who is also an online retailer, shoe distributor and website designer, or sequentially in tackling a number of business projects, in order to survive. Innovation, risk and novelty in the context of this research are explored in Chapter 6.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the instability of society, particularly through the work force, helps to produce innovation as a problem-solving endeavour and in the context of this book, it helps to produce pioneers where:

“In today’s environment, the only certainty is change... To prosper, to use this turbulence as an opportunity and not as a threat, organisations need the capacity to adapt quickly to new conditions. Flexibility is an important dimension of this capacity, both for individual employees and for the organisation, because it allows a higher level of innovation, thus reducing their vulnerability and increasing their chances to grow and prosper” (Georgsdottir and Getz 2004:173).

These qualities of creativity and flexibility are facilitated by the values defined through the dominant narrative of the place, as the location is largely comprised of other lifestyle migrants: “... Evaluation of creativity takes place within a culturally defined domain, in which a particular

group of judges represents the audience of a new production and evaluates whether it is original and useful, that is, creative” (Georgsdottir and Getz 2004:170).

The impact of place and the environment upon reflection in an innovation and change context forms part of reflexive identity development in much research and such is the impact of the natural environment upon several participants in this book, while one specifically disagreed: “The environment does not impact on my creativity. My lifestyle will impact on it, if I have my eyes open. If I’m actively engaging then yeah, I’ll be impacted” (Person K). This observation relates to Mostert’s view that our everyday environment, what we engage with, is held responsible for facilitating or blocking flexibility and conceptual pattern crossing. Mostert suggest that the ability to perceive coincidence, for example, as a result of this conceptual pattern crossing is at stake where answers to problems surround us but it is the mind that is responsible for making the link between problem and solution. “...Almost all their participants get their best ideas outside working hours. This little exercise clearly shows that the office just doesn’t allow your brain the time to think, to step back from the problem...” (2007:99). The small regional community of *Small Town Pioneers* supports the perception of coincidence and problem solving as it creates an intensified networking that engenders continuity within community. This is explored in Chapter 5 and is also articulated by Kristensen: “Physical space affects the well-being of people, the channels of information, the availability of knowledge tools and sets the stage for coherence and continuity, which may contribute to competitive advantage” (2004:89).

For the majority of participants in the research who do engage with the natural environment, its impact to influence creativity and change due to enhanced well-being is also signified. Kristensen argues that: “Often, space developed for other purposes, eg. sacral space, seems to afford creativity. In such space, the religious activities are usually centred where the community can surround the rituals and share them” (93). While the national parks of the study site are not technically sacral in the contemporary culture, they do fit the “other purposes” category and are ritually experienced by community. Some participants provided specific examples of its ritual effects upon creativity, discussed in Chapter 7. Part of the previously discussed ideal which lifestyle migrants pursue relates to the natural environment in this research, which rated highly in their value statements. Kristensen demonstrates the symbolic value of place in relation to creativity which, in the context of this research, involves the natural environment:

“Physical space is the foundation of the perceived space that affords opportunities for our activities... Physical space is correlated with cognitive space. This is a metaphorical relation, where the physical space gives form to cognition...” (90-91).

Moultrie et al (2007) support this “metaphorical relation” in their study of organisational climate and its influence over a person’s willingness to express their creativity, where climactic dimensions include challenge, freedom, dynamism/liveliness, trust/openness, idea time, playfulness/humour, conflicts, idea support, debate and risk-taking and where the physical environment can also act as a catalyst for creativity via visual stimuli, social and cultural activity and the branding of the location (59). There is a rich correlation between these dimensions within the *Small Town Pioneers* community where these themes are implicated. The socio-economic and cultural climate encourages risk taking; the illusion of freedom, often in the form of self-employment; playfulness such as with natural amenity activities; the challenge of sustaining relocation in an economically limited region; qualities of trust and openness that are supported in a small community; a strong brand through tourism boasting the natural environment and potentially as the local stimuli and source of inspiration; and an environment that facilitates reflection and idea time. These themes are explored in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

My intension in paralleling writings on innovation theory with creativity has been to demonstrate its relevance towards the change process of lifestyle migrants within the Deleuzian perspective of creativity as a state of becoming. Innovation as an independent theory is not relevant to this study because its goal is product output which is anathema to the concept of creativity as an ongoing metamorphosis where, as Jeanes suggests, “to define [creativity] is to destroy it” (2006:133).

3.4 Education – Learning a New Lifestyle

In learning a new lifestyle, it is fundamental to explore the relevant educational approaches to lifestyle migration. As suggested, lifestyle migration is grounded in lifelong learning principles in the context of broader social change. Lifelong learning was defined theoretically by Delors (1996) under four pillars, later employed by the Canadian Council of Learning to apply this theory socially in measuring Canada’s performance via its world-first Composite Learning Index (CCL 2009 and 2011). Delors’ four pillars are Learning to Know that tracks development of skills

and knowledge including critical thinking; Learning to Do that tracks the application of applied skills such as on the job training; Learning to Live Together that tracks the development of social cohesion exploring attributes such as respect; and Learning to Be that tracks learning related to creativity, personal development and wellbeing. This is the lifelong learning pillar most relevant to *Small Town Pioneers*. It is within this context that we explore self-efficacy and emotional intelligence in attempting to understand how individuals resolve the problems of uncertainty and insecurity in 'pioneering the void'.

Self-efficacy is founded upon human agency, or the power to act towards a given purpose, specifically in regards to a person's belief in their capacity to exercise a level of control over their actions and effects (Bandura 2001). Godfather of self efficacy, Albert Bandura specifies that it differs from "other constructs such as *self-esteem*, *locus of control*, and *outcome expectancies*. Perceived self-efficacy is a judgment of capability; self-esteem is a judgment of self-worth" (Bandura 2006:309). Self-efficacy is a crucial element for the majority of participants in *Small Town Pioneers* in developing innovation and adapting to a new social infrastructure, involving new ways of being and relating, particularly around sustainable employment and the pursuit of non-financial ambitions/passions.

In the context of relocation, Bandura discusses perceived efficacy to influence the types of environments people choose and the direction of their personal development where:

"Social influences operating in selected environments continue to promote certain competencies, values and interests long after the decisional determinant has rendered its inaugurating effect. Thus by choosing and shaping their environments, people can have a hand at what they become" (2001:10-11).

"Economic conditions, socioeconomic status, and educational and family structures affect behavior largely through their impact on people's aspirations, sense of efficacy, personal standards, affective states, and other self-regulatory influences, rather than directly" (2001:15).

This breaking away from the competencies, values and interests of city life to an idealised lifestyle allows new aspirations to develop which impacts the pioneering of personal identity in becoming something new or in the learning of that new lifestyle.

On the community level where perceived values and local culture is created, Bandura introduces collective efficacy to address such qualities that are only possible through collaborative efforts where “people’s shared beliefs in their collective power to produce desired results is a key ingredient of collective agency” (2006:316). Rather than collective agency representing the sum of its parts, or individuals, Bandura suggests it is an “emergent group-level property” where people coordinate actions around a shared belief. This implies the importance of the ‘branding’ of community values in order to help perpetuate community’s collective efficacy and in turn, in the context of this book, attract lifestyle migrants. He cites the example of Ghandi who inspired a collective force that led to major socio-political change (2001:15).

Bandura suggests that perception of efficacy influences choices in behavior where people will undertake activities they judge themselves capable of managing and it also affects their level of persistence in the face of adversity (Bandura 1980:263). This reflects the scenario of the many lifestyle migrants who depart within the five-year timeframe where conceivably they feel out of their depth due to limited external opportunities and limited skills to create opportunities for themselves. These are discussed in relation to innovation, planning, risk and other elements regarding work as well as non-financial ambitions in Chapter 6. A low self-efficacy or the perception of being ineffective generates high emotional distress, according to Bandura, where problems are envisaged as larger than they are, undermining the effective use of skills that are present. Alternatively, overestimating one’s capacity leads to failure so that, “misjudgments of efficacy in either direction have consequences” (Bandura 1980:264). This is also pertinent in light of the many disenchanting lifestyle seekers who relocate, buy a restaurant as a source of income and realize they “have to chop carrots the whole day” according to Person O. It is also relevant to the discussion on risk, explored in Chapter 6, where risk management over risk taking support a sustained relocation and overestimating self-efficacy leads to failure, which leads to risk adversity, as suggested by some participants. Importantly, self-efficacy also impacts goals and the pursuit of the dream along with resilience to adversity (Bandura 2006:309) which is fundamental to lifestyle migration: “Moreover, turning visualized futurities into reality requires proximal or present-directed intentions that guide and keep one moving ahead,” suggests Bandura (2001:6).

Self-efficacy can be measured and scales have been developed for a range of activities from regulating exercise, eating habits, driving, problem-solving, pain management, teaching and more where it is shown that “the stronger the perceived self-efficacy the higher is the

likelihood that a particular task will be [successfully] executed” (Bandura 1980:265). Bandura suggests that self-efficacy measures link to specific domains such as those noted rather than value being found in all-purpose measures (2006). However, while these measures are domain-specific, he suggests that generic self-management strategies from one domain are applicable to others (2006:308) where self-regulation is important to maintain a level of performance over time. He suggests such strategies include “skills for diagnosing task demand, constructing and evaluating alternative courses of action, setting proximal goals to guide one’s efforts, and creating self-incentives to sustain engagement in taxing activities and to manage stress and debilitating intrusive thoughts” (2006:313). Self-regulation and self-management skills are especially relevant in negotiating a new existence and ‘pioneering the void’.

Many participants exhibited an improvement of self-efficacy in parallel with problem solving milestones, which is supported by Bandura’s earlier comment that people avoid tasks that are beyond their ability to cope, so as capacity is proven at one level, self-efficacy rises. For example, Person G demonstrated comparatively high level planning skills in making the relocation through his initial commuting to retain job security, renting, inviting his brother-in-law to move in with the family and share living expenses, securing local work in his field, buying property close to his job and spreading the mortgage again with his brother-in-law while progressively regaining job status and income. While personally he says, “I’ve always found it difficult to plan what I’m doing next month let alone in a year and five years time,” his career in tourism requires strong organizational skills and potentially these represent self-management skills which were abstracted and transferred through what is theoretically referred to as high road transfer of learning (Pugh and Bergin 2006). Person I also exhibited similar organizational skills in her professional background and in the process of relocation. She suggests her self-management skills positioned her for greater self-efficacy, “Tourism was new for me and I figured it out as I went, but I had really strong organization and administration skills and that definitely aided me.”

Person L moved to the study site and suffered depression for two years due to unemployment and low self-esteem and through meeting a series of small goals towards self-improvement, his capacity and self-esteem grew so that at the time of interview he had dramatically reconstructed his life on his own terms. He demonstrates what Bandura terms powerful mastery experiences, “that provide striking testimony to one’s capacity to effect personal changes [that] can produce a transformational restructuring of efficacy beliefs that is

manifested across diverse realms of functioning” (2006:308). While the achievement of mastery goals does not consistently guarantee knowledge transfer, self-efficacy beliefs have been shown to influence effective learning strategies, self-monitoring, self-evaluation (Zimmerman 2000) and persistence (Bandura 1980), essential in the lifestyle migration quest.

Alternatively to Person L, Person K was a highly successful international businessman who leapt off the corporate ladder for personal reasons and worked on a small local business, expecting that by doing so he would “get off the professional merry go round” and it would be difficult to climb back on. However his capacity in business was already proven and his self-efficacy was strong and at time of interview, his new venture was enjoying an international market:

“I took it from a very narrow base and started to create a business plan and create a momentum and as that developed the money came and as the money came I was able to go out and put the people in. If you know what your milestones are and you stick to those programs you can enjoy growing at a controlled pace and still enjoy exploiting the product.”

This demonstrates his capacity for transfer of learning founded upon strong self-efficacy. Participant experiences involving self-efficacy are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. Transfer increases when one is aware of what one does and does not know and when one is motivated, as cognitive engagement promotes factors needed for transfer (Pugh and Bergin 2006:148). Exploring such challenges in lifestyle migration may assist potential migrants for intentional transfer towards the explicit goal of learning a new lifestyle (Pugh and Bergin 2006:156; Martin 2010; Salopek 1998).

In Daniel Goleman’s study of effective leadership (Goleman et al 2001), he found that the most effective leaders share a high degree of emotional intelligence. This is relevant to *Small Town Pioneers* in light of Bandura’s comments, “Thus by choosing and shaping their environments, people can have a hand at what they become”, which positions lifestyle migrants as leaders over their own life where, as explored in Chapter 2, control over one’s own life proved a strong theme in Chhetri et al’s research on Downshifting in South East Queensland, and also in this research. Goleman proposes that emotional intelligence is twice as important in comparison to IQ and technical ability in regards to leadership (Goleman 1998:94). It comprises self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills and involves some corresponding elements with self-efficacy.

In particular, one of the hallmarks Goleman defines within self-awareness is realistic self-assessment which, along with self-regulation, is implicated in self-efficacy as discussed (Goleman et al 2006). Other elements pertaining to the study include openness to change which belongs with self-regulation and reflects the skill of flexibility, discussed under creativity theory, while motivation involves a passion for reasons that go beyond money or status as well as a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence (Goleman 1998:95) – such is the quest of lifestyle migration.

One could argue that lifestyle migrants are ubiquitously self-aware at the time of making their departure from the city in terms of Goleman's comment:

“Someone who is highly self-aware knows where he is headed and why, so for example he will be able to be firm in turning down a job offer that is tempting financially but does not fit with his principles or long-term goals. A person who lacks self-awareness is apt to make decisions that bring on inner turmoil by treading on buried values” (1998:96).

In fact, almost the reverse is true of lifestyle migrants where inner values bring external turmoil, as was indicated in discussion on the 'dark side' to creativity. This is extremely important in the state of departure that leads to relocation in terms of taking a risk to pursue a value driven agenda over a scenario of sameness. Goleman argues that self-aware people often enjoy work because the decisions they make mesh with their values, however realistic self-assessment, as with self-efficacy, is the primary feature of self-awareness so that these people are less likely to fail. Potentially many 'failed' lifestyle migrants do not possess a developed self-awareness and as one participant suggested when discussing business failures within the study site, “They think they can do it, you know, how hard can it be, and they're afraid to ask for help, and that's something I see every day. You can't expect to take on a new venture and know it all straight away and there's so much resource out there – there are other people in business who are prepared to share their knowledge.” Goleman specifically suggests self-aware people know when to ask for help (1998:96).

Goleman also suggests improving emotional intelligence relies on breaking old behavioural patterns and establishing new ones (1998:97), as with identity and creativity theory discussed, and as with the quest of the lifestyle migrant. Therefore ability for flexibility to create change in one's self and one's life not only facilitates a new lifestyle but also increases emotional intelligence.

In reference to Person L who experienced depression following the move because of lack of employment and low self-esteem, Goleman's description of self-regulation suggests that it frees us from being prisoners of our feelings and to even channel them in useful ways. Potentially Person L learnt to achieve this as he retreated from depression through exploring his creativity in photography and embarked upon a professional career through it. Goleman also suggests self-regulation is important in competition where those who can master their emotions flow with changes rather than panic. Two of the signs of self-regulation – reflection and comfort with ambiguity and change – are distinguishing features of the lifestyle migration context. Reflection as facilitated by the natural environment is explored in Chapter 7 while fluctuation through an unstable economy is explored in Chapters 5 and 6.

In his discussion on motivation, Goleman expresses leadership potential in the desire to achieve for the sake of achievement rather than for salary or status and suggests some ways to identify such people is that they seek out creative challenge, they love to learn and they possess passion. These are signature traits of the small town pioneers in this study. Empathy and social skills are also key in the lifestyle migration quest where the small community encourages networking interconnectedness, as is explored in Chapter 5 where Goleman's comments almost parallel Person S and several others. Goleman says, "They build bonds widely because they know that in these fluid times, they may need help some day from people they are just getting to know today," (1998:102) while person S says, "Well [networking] it'll get you through the rough times – if you look after everyone they sort of look after you, you know."

Emotional intelligence is not only integral to the identity development of lifestyle migrants in developing leadership through self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills but on a fundamental level of meeting goals. Similarly to self-efficacy, emotional intelligence is correlated with objective performance outcomes (Goleman 2006:241), which in this book is largely reliant on creating a sustainable income. Therefore, while emotional intelligence promotes the value driven agenda over a scenario of sameness, it also capacitates the individual to realize their dreams through meeting their goals.

In this chapter we explored reflexive identity development in harmony with the Deleuzian theory of creativity as a process of becoming. We have also drawn upon innovation theory to articulate the change process, within becoming, that lifestyle migrants experience in the quest of learning a new lifestyle in a new paradigm, and where the development of self-efficacy and

emotional intelligence are integral. This chapter concludes Part 1 of the book where we have expressed the aims of the underlying research, explored relevant research and concepts and made theoretical propositions regarding lifestyle migration. The observations made in this chapter, which tie the phenomenon to the concept of continuing change through a development of identity and creative capacity, carry through into Part 2, representing the findings and conclusions of the research. Firstly however I present a summary of the 22 narratives to follow in Chapter 4, providing context for the remainder of the book.

PART 2

4. Small Town Pioneers



Figure 4 - Christina Kargillis, *Trails*, 2006

This chapter presents 22 lifestyle migration narratives of working people, each summarised from a two hour long interview, due to constraints of space. As such they provide an array of case studies for potential urban refugees from all walks of life where entrepreneurship and creativity, flexibility, independence and risk management are among the uniting themes throughout the stories, along with the sometimes horrendous struggles which they have battled along the way.

There also exists between these stories a range of binary interpretations, offering divergent views on certain topics. The nature of binary opposition is that meaning is defined against what it is not (Smith 1996). Do participants experience a sense of community in their lifestyle migration relocation, for instance? Some yes, others no. Derrida's post-structural investigation into semiotic deconstruction (1967) suggests that meaning in the West is defined in terms of binary oppositions. However a detailed analysis of the binaries presented in participant stories is addressed in the conclusions.

The following narratives come from people working in small business, professional services, the trades, academia, design and media, politics, tourism, dog training and community consultation. Seventeen of these 22 pioneers are self-employed and seven are international migrants. Fourteen live in coastal communities and eight live in the hinterland. All have managed to 'stick it out' for *at least* five years. The following table provides a snapshot of their occupation and identification, or their de-identifiers:

Person A	Handyman	Andrew (De-identified)
Person B	Sustainability Industry	Alexander (Identified)
Person C	Carpenter	Angus (Identified)
Person D	TV Producer	Anita (Identified)
Person E	Businesswoman	Amanda (De-identified)
Person F	Digital Media	Adriane (De-Identified)
Person G	Tourism Industry Rep.	Brad (Identified)
Person H	Dog Trainer	Chris (Identified)

Book

Person I	Tourism Operator	Donna (Identified)
Person J	Architectural Modelling	Duncan (Identified)
Person K	CEO/Construction	Gayne (Identified)
Person L	Photographer	Geoff (Identified)
Person M	Auto Industry	John (De-identified)
Person N	Communications	Jasmine (De-identified)
Person O	Volunteer	Katrina (De-identified)
Person P	CEO/Medical Writing	Karen (Identified)
Person Q	Local Councillor	Lew (Identified)
Person R	Community Worker	Lisa (De-identified)
Person S	Builder	Murray (De-identified)
Person T	Graphic Designer	Rhana (Identified)
Person U	Serviced Offices	Steve (Identified)
Person V	Academic	Tamsin (Identified)

A majority of these participants were alerted to the research through local media, following a small public relations campaign designed to attract them, however I discovered a notable absence of people from the building and construction industry, the largest sector in the region. It was imperative that I secure this set and I did so through social networks.

Some words in the following narrative summaries have been altered where necessary to retain confidentiality and ethical standards, however the meanings have not been changed.

4.1 Person A/Andrew [Handyman]

Originally from large city in the UK, Andrew worked long hours in the construction industry. However unlike many lifestyle migrants he didn't feel a lack of personal time or that he was

caught in a rat race, but instead appreciated the income. He became disillusioned with his home when this changed – the cultural climate shifted both ethnically and economically and he began to feel devalued by his employer as pay rates fell and migrants got the jobs. He also suffered from Seasonally Affected Disorder in the winter.

In any case he'd wanted to come to Australia for 20 years, because of its climate and lifestyle as a better place to one day raise children. When his partner earned a qualification that allowed them to relocate, they did. They had their first child just before moving. He had no work organised and had never been to Noosa. They had some money, having sold the house back home, however he would need to join the workforce within 12 months.

They bought a house in the study site and Andrew started renovating. He tried to find work on building sites at the same time but felt a cultural misfit and believes that he was turned down because he's from the UK. He spent the first nine months raising their daughter while renovating and also found occasional work with a handyman, as his assistant. Seeing that he could do a better job than his boss, Andrew then started his own handyman business. He previously had his own photography business, before his career in construction, so he was prepared for the instability of self-employment, though he is satisfied with the 20 hours per week he averages.

Andrew's partner recently left him and now he has emotional and financial issues to manage because of the house, which is half renovated. Money has become more important to him because there's less of it however family breakdown has proven to be his greatest challenge and he says, unlike many other marriage failures which occur in the area among lifestyle migrants, money wasn't the issue in this case. He hasn't considered going back to the UK but did entertain the idea of moving to Brisbane for better money and an equally warm climate where he could start a courier service, however he says he probably won't because of the children. He did consider commuting but believes the driving stress would ultimately force him to relocate.

Andrew sees the rate of transience in the area through the school with new children coming and going but it's not a problem to him because there are enough stable families for his children to befriend. Socially, he found more continuity in his home city because of its prevalence of pub culture where, since relocation he's had to make arrangements to meet

with people. He also believes that having to drive everywhere interferes with the sense of connectedness in community.

He values the increase of space that he has now and the natural environment but knows people who've left because they became bored with the limited entertainment available. He however prefers the simple life "and the free parking", though he doesn't like having to drive distances to purchase specific goods.

He believes financial status works inversely in the area among tradesmen who don't want to be seen to be doing too well financially, so that it looks like they need the work but he doesn't find the place concerned with status in any case, especially compared with Sydney. Personally he would've reached managerial level at work by now had he stayed overseas, but he doesn't care about such things either.

Andrew doesn't believe that the challenging circumstances have encouraged innovation in him because he has always considered himself to be that way: "If things get bad I innovate, and I've always done that." He doesn't consider himself a risk taker either and isn't interested in self-reflection, describing himself as someone who always copes, no matter what.

4.2 Person B/Alexander [Sustainability Industry]

The exciting world of event management represents Alexander's background, in Germany. Though he was passionate about his work, he had hit a brick wall with his boss who wanted him to follow certain procedures which added no value to the outcome – his initiative was being blocked. Alexander had wanted to move to Australia since youth because of its wilderness and was attracted to the pioneering image of making one's way in uncharted territory, so he and his wife arrived in Melbourne and nine months later they moved to Caloundra, an hour from Noosa, to lower the risk should they need to drive to Brisbane for work. They soon moved to Noosa because they preferred it for its community values and smaller scale, despite the work factor.

He attempted three businesses until the third one worked, based upon his passion for sustainability. He first worked with a sustainability company as a systems consultant and marketing strategist. He then worked as a self-employed marketing strategist for natural

health practitioners but found that although they had the greatest need, they had the least interest in marketing. His third attempt was a success – a solar hot water business. He built the business up to employ 18 staff and then sold it to a corporate Brisbane-based company, but he's disappointed at the corporate approach of the new owner because its culture is anathema to the values he had instilled. He had created a community amongst his employees based on personal interaction, and there was very little left of that after the sale. He's now ready for the next business and is deciding on his direction.

Once in Noosa, the couple felt it was the right time to have children and family has become a key value. He sees no reason to leave: "It's my home here. It feels right and I've always wanted to be here," where the natural amenity and community make it somewhere he belongs to, rather than just lives in. He values the capacity for reflection that the study site affords due to the National Park and the beaches and deliberately uses these resources as part of a problem solving method. Back in Germany he yearned to escape the 'concrete jungle'.

He's learnt to be more easy-going and fits into the Australian culture better now, enjoying the flexibility of work styles compared to Germany where "everything is more structured". He says in Germany he wouldn't take the initiatives that he has in Noosa because the culture would've made him feel insecure. In contrast, he believes the lack of employment opportunities on the Sunshine Coast have pushed him to create his own career path and if he'd been offered one of the 50 jobs he applied for, it would only have delayed him in following his passion, strongly believing that if one follows their passion, things will eventuate.

He believes innovation is in the way people have to be flexible in the area because one literally can't afford to get stuck in an idea of career identity. He accepts the continual changes in career and work as part of the socioeconomic narrative of the area, but is currently exploring a new business with a continual income stream to help ease the flow. Alexander does not consider himself a risk taker but an attentive risk manager.

He had some money during the three years he spent establishing a successful business however his self-esteem did suffer during that time and he says it was his networks and friendships that encouraged him to regain confidence in himself. He found that project-based networking opportunities, particularly volunteering, helped him to connect with people and create opportunities for himself.

Alexander feels the community is very accepting where the natural environment is a key value, which is why status is not an issue in his view: "Next to the sea, we're all the same." His idea of success is based on who he is as a person rather than his business performance, pointing out that business is so cyclical in Noosa you can't really rely on career status.

4.3 Person C/Angus [Carpenter]

As a 24-year old, Angus moved to the area from Sydney after selling a successful business in building and property maintenance. Being self-directed has always been a strong motivation. He arrived with financial security and chose the area for its natural environment, sense of community and small population, initially working in the hospitality industry as a way of meeting people.

He loved the place but felt the drawbacks of a small town with a lack of infrastructure and access to commercial centres. At the same time, he knew that it was due to these drawbacks that the place provided a peace of mind compared with the fast pace of Sydney, despite the "parochial" culture of that was too intimate with, "everyone knowing how many eggs you ate for breakfast," but where the sense of community outweighed the anonymity of the city. He also saw that the drawbacks of underdevelopment would provide him with considerable work through the building and construction industry as the place began to grow, so he decided to retrain in carpentry to meet the challenge and grasp the opportunities.

Angus values proof of social responsibility and commends the risk takers who have opened businesses in the area, considering it a moral obligation of the community to demonstrate support in order to keep the community sustainable. He accepts the extra costs of local commodities as a fair trade-off for living in a nucleus community and comments that now that the infrastructure is largely in place, many people move to the area and don't rely on the local market for income or contribute to local business, and so lack this social responsibility.

He's experienced economic instability since living in the area through the boom and bust cycles of the trade. On one hand, he's tired of the financial instability it causes but then also enjoys the culture of innovation and flexibility that the risk creates, suggesting that city work life is a plateau that breeds complacency and it doesn't suit his personality. He considers

himself a risk-taker, commenting on the need to diversify and likens life in the study site to the business model of vertical integration where lifestyle migrants have to start again “from the ground up” because the economic support system of the city isn’t there.

As well as his ability to adapt to changing circumstances quickly, which he considers a necessity for any working person in the area, Angus believes that you need a financial buffer zone in order to survive. The risk in trusting non-locals in the building industry is high where many tradesmen have been exploited by undertaking work for “outsiders” who “skip town” before paying their debts where the flow on effects into the community are debilitating. This has been a repeated occurrence over the 15 years of Angus’s life in the area. As a builder employing numerous staff, he suffered a huge financial loss two weeks before his twins were born and points out that the building industry relies on outlaying large sums of money before one gets paid, and this is a vulnerable way to live.

He says he’s learned how the area operates and has to be reactive or face stagnation in which case, he wouldn’t last very long, where being acutely aware of changes in the economy is essential to survival. Angus recently undertook a two year retail venture by way of addressing work shortage due to the building slump. It went badly and he appreciates the challenges in that industry as well. He comments that many people are demonstrating innovation in running sideline businesses, such as dog washing, to manage in such times and believes that: “Money will always be a key value here.” Personally he has become more innovative since relocating as he’s had to extend himself physically, personally, emotionally and “almost spiritually because of the beautiful area”.

Despite the challenges, Angus rates the natural environment as a priority, commenting, “Of course it’s worth it”. He says that he’s here because he’s travelled the world and really appreciates the feeling that the area gives him.

4.4 Person D/Anita [TV Producer]

A successful television career in London preceded Anita’s arrival to the hinterland town of Kin Kin with her husband. Although she loved her job producing programs, she was in a rut working long hours without time for herself. She felt that her life lacked purpose. When she fell pregnant, the time seemed right to make the move back home to Australia.

They planned on retiring early and had bought investment properties in London as a means to achieve this, though she doesn't describe herself as materialistic and has always been a planner when it comes to savings. When spending money Anita says she'd splurge on travel and experiences rather than material items. The couple is still mindful of spending because they consider their investments for their children's prosperity, and limit eating out to every few months.

It's Anita's sense of flexibility that led her to make London her home for a decade when she'd only planned to visit for three months, after being offered some television work by the people she babysat for. While it's not unusual for a 23-year old as she was then, to make such decisions, it's more unusual for a pregnant woman in her mid-thirties with a husband who enjoyed an equally successful career, to relinquish the salary and the status of a coveted industry to move to a small country town.

When they arrived in Noosa they had money to buy a house and not to have to work initially, therefore the risk they faced mainly comprised identity dilemma of being caught between worlds. They sought the ideal home and decided they needed space and greenery, but relied largely on a feeling of the right place. When they drove through Kin Kin... "We just had this great vibe as we drove around. We both felt it and thought Oh my God this could be home".

The couple explored family life, personal time and home for the first three years. When the second baby arrived they needed additional income because at this stage they were eating into their savings, but decided to explore self-sufficiency instead, growing their own food rather than looking for work. They also started renovating the house themselves.

After baby number three the couple decided they needed a pool because it wasn't easy taking the children to swimming lessons, so they sold an investment property and installed a pool, which also relieved the financial pressure temporarily. The pool led to swimming classes being held in Anita's backyard for the Kin Kin community, which had social benefits for her too. After baby number four she took on part-time work as a swim instructor, in her own backyard. The money was only a humble sum but she was passionate about her service to the community. It was meaningful.

An old colleague then offered her a six week contract in television production, on a New York wage. Anita accepted and realized how much she missed the industry – now she was doing what she loved in a lifestyle that she loved. She always thought she'd resume television but not in the stressful manner she was accustomed to.

Anita commented on the career lifestyle she'd led, mentioning the stress of air conditioning and artificial lights as well as travel stress and she values the beauty of her home environment, grateful for living within nature. She comments that people who come to Kin Kin never leave to go back to the city and almost always stay in the area but believes that one needs to be proactive to extend oneself into the community in order to make networks and secure a sense of support.

She doesn't miss the pace of London and finds the level of entertainment in Noosa perfect for their needs. She speaks of innovative entrepreneurs in the Kin Kin community and believes that one needs to find a niche when moving to the area. In contrast, she comments on friends who are too afraid to take risks or to take control and who need density of population and binding structures in order to cope. She's not afraid of risks she says because she trusts her judgment and her feelings.

4.5 Person E/Amanda [Businesswoman]

With an early regional upbringing, Amanda demonstrated strong entrepreneurial skills she learnt from her father, while being painfully aware of his business failings. She was successful in her small town and it was in this setting where she also developed a passion for horses.

Following a family incident she decided to leave the town. She sacrificed her status, earnings and career to start fresh with a new partner in moving to Brisbane. After being accepted into a key role for a large multinational, the couple moved to Melbourne for two years where Amanda continued as the primary income earner. However, finding the climate intolerable she transferred to the Noosa region. At the same time she was offered a job in Brisbane but they chose Noosa because they felt the lifestyle would be a good change from city life while the country location also gave her the opportunity to reconnect with her passion for horses. Due to the regional location Amanda found herself on aeroplanes much of the time for work, however she enjoyed it: the upside of travel for her is that it gave her time to think and reflect.

While upholding her corporate career, she and her husband embarked upon a business and spent their savings from the previous sale of a house. She worked quickly via volunteering opportunities and her own personal networking to establish herself in the community as a business leader. Through her upbringing in a country town she knew that networking was essential to achieve success in business in the study site.

Suddenly, Amanda was faced with a redundancy where her safety net and role of being the primary earner was savagely compromised. Her sense of identity failed fast due to this drop in status and she suffered stress over the family's financial situation, now heavily in debt. She became medically depressed: "So I was looking at life insurance clauses and... I went on anti depressants, I was close to suicidal."

She started a consultancy with a business partner and comments that her efforts towards networking in the business community had also helped that business gain traction, acknowledging reputation management and credibility as key characteristics for success in a small town. She points out that others observe newcomers for a while before trusting and investing in them, due to the numbers of people who come and go.

A few years later and Amanda and her husband are earning almost equivalent to her former corporate wage through their venture, along with her consultancy practice, and considers the challenge equivalent to achieving success in the corporate world. Her attraction to power structures is satisfied in the study site through her involvement in company directorships and boards, and she has since completed relevant qualifications. Amanda values status highly and enjoys escalating financial security for its status as well as the lifestyle it affords. Regardless of this, she believes she'd "be a fish out of water" if she returned to the city and can't see herself playing "cut-throat games". She says she's changed as a person since moving to the area largely because of the loss in status she experienced after her corporate role fell through which also led to self-discovery in Amanda's role as a mother with a focus on community, which she hadn't focused on before.

She comments that you are networked into the community in a small town which prevents you from 'wearing different masks' because your employee's mother could well know your bank manager, for instance. But the good thing about the integrated life, she says, is that it's honest

and it means that you're not a different person when you go to work compared to home – you become true to yourself and who you are.

Amanda feels that the challenge of testing her flexibility through testing herself in different contexts defines her as a pioneer. She considers herself a calculated risk taker and agrees that the limited industry in the area poses challenges but her attitude is that you need to find a thread which you can then follow in order to create career opportunities for yourself.

4.6 Person F/Adriane [Digital Media]

Coming from a successful career in digital media in London, Adriane wanted to enjoy the support of extended family through her in-laws who lived in Noosa where the children could establish relationships with older people rather than just the nuclear, peer group of their parents. In addition, her motive was based on escaping the rat race and high pace of London so that she could enjoy more personal time. She thought that due to the climate and the space in Noosa she should be able to live a sustainable life – this was a major drawcard for her.

Growing up in a small European village, Adriane never thought she would've moved to London but enjoyed the sense of continuity within her neighbourhood there where she made good friends, while also feeling valued and rewarded for her work. Her ideal of living a sustainable lifestyle in London was supported in part through access to public transport or walking over car usage and a culturally interested community in regards to growing vegetables and herbs at home, while also enjoying a network of friends within walking distance.

However her assumption of sustainability in Noosa proved incorrect because she doesn't feel the culture supports the philosophy in mindset or in functionality, due to car dependence and poor transport infrastructure, which impacts the sense of community by keeping people separate. Adriane has also found this move a great challenge due to difficulties in establishing a financially rewarding career, mainly because her field of work is technologically advanced and the community is based on traditional industries, so there's little understanding of her value in the marketplace. She assumed that because of the Internet she'd be able to establish herself anywhere, but found the reality to be that she needed to work longer and harder to prove herself to remote clients, due to inability to be face-to-face where teleconferences for instance prove inefficient: "So I would have meetings where I'd really need to sell my approach

to the team... and I'd be on a conference call to see what he's got to say and the project manager would say, Oh he's just popped out to get a sandwich."

This career challenge prompted Adriane to become self-employed, which she hadn't particularly wanted because of the administrative side of the scenario and the solitary work style, and so then she formed a small company when she discovered other likeminded and like skilled locals. She attempted several forms of networking before finding other business partners and says that social networks were less effective, as were networking nights, because her skills were not well understood: "... even being in the pub [there's a connection] between socialising and people who swing the big jobs."

Her determination and hard work are slowly paying off and she believes that people need to see that you can deliver in order to gain respect for your opinion in a small community such as Noosa. She feels as though she and her team have now passed this hurdle after doing much extra and unpaid labour. Although Adriane says she doesn't consider herself a risk taker, she believes she has reinvented herself several times in the past through necessity and this move represents another change. She acknowledges that she's undergone much learning through this process and remains optimistic.

She values the climate in the area and the fact that her children can play on the street because of the clean environment, space, small population and lack of traffic. She has also made valuable friends here and her relationship with her in-laws is still good, despite the fact that she has separated from her children's father.

Apart from the work struggle and her disappointments with sustainable lifestyle awareness in the community, there are other aspects Adriane doesn't like about the place. She regards the professional culture dishonest in parts with "everyone having agendas", again as a small town community. She considers the obvious distinction between the wealthy and the others as unhealthy because of its flow-on effect on status and self-worth for the majority of 'have-nots', where the 'haves' largely comprise retirees and holidaymakers. She says the community is disjointed.

4.7 Person G/Brad [Tourism Industry Rep.]

A love of travel and adventure saw Brad's youth spent travelling, performing bar work and the like, eventually leading him into a career in tourism. He grew up in Brisbane but spent several years in Sydney at university and he says he hated the place, but later went back for a career opportunity and found that either it or he had changed, enjoying the vibrant nightlife, entertainment and proximity to the beach. He also really enjoyed his job there.

Because his life was punctuated with travel Brad says he never felt 'stuck' in Sydney. After meeting his wife they both did tire of its fast pace again within a couple of years and they moved to Brisbane. They soon embarked on a trip around Australia, but chose to return home early when the money ran out, rather than continue on: "... we're in our early 30s, we'd both had good careers, and... I didn't want to go and do bar work again, you know I had the capacity to go and do so much more."

Brad continued his career path in Brisbane and really enjoyed his life, friends and family there. There was no remarkable disappointment that led the couple to leave Brisbane, instead it was a case of both having a long term ideals of living away from the city in a community oriented environment, close to nature. When Brad's wife fell pregnant they planned the move.

They chose a location where he could commute to work, minimising risk, and invited the wife's brother to live with them and so further minimised financial risk while enhancing familial connections in the new place. Brad was soon offered a job in Noosa and his wife (Person T) started working from home. He understood that work in the Sunshine Coast paid less than the city and accepted the pay cut in exchange for the benefits.

The couple and the brother then bought a house together and they settled in the hinterland town of Pomona. They loved its "village energy", even though it wasn't on the ocean as Brad prefers. Pomona also had all the facilities they needed: "I know the neighbours all around me on both sides and across the road which I'd never done before... people of all different backgrounds and everyone is there for a similar reason. They want to live in a small community, a supportive community where you feel safe and your kids feel safe, where you don't have to watch your kids all the time, where they can maybe play outside and got to their friends' places, like I used to do when I was a kid, you know I guess that's maybe what we looked for".

Here, Brad discovered a passion for woodworking and building things, possibly as a result of less distraction and so more inner focus: “I probably could do it in Brisbane had I had the right environment, but it wasn’t a strong desire, there were always other things to do there like go to the pub with my mates or getting out of the city... a lot more distractions.”

He felt he fitted into the Pomona community straight away and doesn’t believe he’s changed much as a person since the move, despite the fact that it was important for him to maintain the professional type of work he was doing in the city. This importance on work status was not based around his social status or financial rewards but his need to fulfil his capability in an area where tourism is a key industry and matches his career background, so it made sense. Self-employment doesn’t appeal to Brad, possibly because his parents run a business and he’s witnessed their struggle since childhood.

He says if he were still in the city, he would be a senior manager on a high salary by now, commenting that ambition is certainly present, but it doesn’t drive him. Increasing personal time, access to nature, improving quality of life for his children and minimising environmental stress are key drivers in his staying in the area.

4.8 Person H/Chris [Dog Trainer]

Chris came to Noosa from Hawaii more than 20 years ago. He made a good financial decision in buying a waterfront block of land in the area which escalated rapidly by the time he emigrated, giving him a good financial start.

He’s operated a number of businesses: “When I was driving boats the ice cream truck kept driving by and then I bought the ice cream business at First Point – the best business I’ve ever had, ticked all the boxes, a good living and a good lifestyle...After that I was doing a lot of surfing and longboarding and I kept breaking my board and said, I’m going to open up a surf shop, and had the first longboard shop in Noosa, and had that for a number of years then sold out of that and got into kite surfing and opened a kite surfing shop.”

Now Chris operates a dog training business. He recognises his strengths and weaknesses and is employing administrative support, which he says has been a limitation in the past. He’s also

exploring intellectual property. There's simplicity with dog training which he values in comparison to retail of which he says personal time is short, overheads are high, economic patterns are unstable and the climate impacts business dramatically. He also looks forward to the freedom to take his business with him when he eventually leaves the area. He considers leaving because of two key reasons: The power balance between council and community voice has become "overbearing", limiting people from succeeding in small business; and the population is too density, which has introduced a city feel.

Chris views Noosa as his training ground for his sense of self-understanding. He has a strong affinity with the natural environment and attributes his sense of clarity, physical health and capacity to reflect and learn partly upon this element, stating that he's directly influenced by people and the environment around him where most mornings he goes for a paddle on the North Shore and takes his dogs for a run because it energises him: "In a city it's harder to find those spaces and there's more people around to influence you away from that 'zen' space." He's a firm believer in the need for creativity in small towns where competition is great mong business and believes many lifestyle changers who come to the area lack creativity and so their businesses fail, possibly because office environments don't teach these skills. Chris advises taking opportunities even when they don't represent the ideal because new opportunities flow from there: "When people decide to be more selective and get their dream job as soon as they get here, that's not gonna happen, or it's hard to happen." He believes it's better to look at the lifestyle first and create opportunities around that, according to supply and demand, as well as considering remote business options.

He describes authentic culture in the area as, "the man on the street," and discusses the changing demographics from those who have to live "way out of town" to the wealthy who live right in town, commenting that 20 years ago everyone who lived in the exclusive enclave of Noosa Sound was just a local. He's witnessed a big shift in financial status and its impact on the place where there are those with money who don't want to mix with others, creating the rise of establishments that serve to separate and acknowledges the portion of community who are from the city and have moved up for the lifestyle but, "they're real city people at heart" and aren't happy.

Chris has established a strong local reputation for himself through his string of businesses and understands the power of word-of-mouth in a small town along with the need for reflection:

“You can have 100 people say something good and one or two say something bad and you gotta look at why they’ve said that....” He describes himself as a calculated risk taker and is also impulsive, but he’s not afraid of risks because he trusts his judgment and instincts and considers mistakes as learning opportunities.

4.9 Person I/Donna [Tourism Operator]

New Zealander, Donna, was based in Brisbane for many years enjoying a lucrative career in mining before moving to Noosa. Her job was secure and she liked it, commenting that by now she could be working from Singapore on \$200k per annum, like her sister.

She’d been to Noosa in her youth and always wanted to return, but didn’t think she’d be able to afford to buy a house or support herself financially. Then, five years ago she came up to visit a friend and saw a house for auction. Donna thought about it for a couple of weeks and bought it, without a solid plan, intending to commute to work in Brisbane initially. She soon realized that commuting was highly stressful, especially as a dog owner, so she ended up keeping the rental flat in Brisbane as well as the mortgage on her Noosa home, which proved expensive. She’d taken the risk in buying the house because of her preference for lifestyle factors over money, and just had to make it work.

Donna started looking around for a business opportunity and discovered a tourism operator who was selling, so she rationalized the risk in quitting her day job so she could live in Noosa, full time: “I’m one of those people who gets into something and just gets straight onto it. I don’t want to have to sell the house but I could, and I know I’ve always got the mining industry to fall back on, and I’ve got friends in Brisbane I could stay with if I had to. It’s been a pretty rocky road.”

She bought the business in partnership with another and then borrowed money to buy the partner out, after she realized they couldn’t work together. Tourism was new to her and she taught herself everything as she went along, commenting: “Maybe it would’ve been easier for me to start one [a business] up but the skills I have now I wouldn’t have had then. I’m a lot more business savvy now.” However, Donna is looking to sell the business because the financial pressure has caused her too much stress. At the same time she’s suited to the work style and lifestyle that she considers is necessary to sustain her existence, having discovered

new interests that she considers entrepreneurial and is equally passionate to pursue. These include importing and selling shoes at the markets, web design, an online store selling clothes and painting pictures: “The answer for me is doing a lot of stuff and keeping on changing that and focusing on my creative stuff because that’s what I enjoy.”

Donna says the natural environment helps her creative processes and has experienced a connection between necessity, personal time and innovation, stating: “... since I haven’t had much money I’ve become more creative in the way that I do things – rather than going to buy it from the shop I’ll try and make it... I never got that stimulation with the mining industry. There was nothing to stop me from doing any of this in Brisbane but I didn’t need to extend myself because I was earning good money and because I was secure in that job ... If I went back I’d go to West End because it’s a creative part of Brisbane, but because you end up working long hours I probably wouldn’t maintain the creative interest I’ve developed since being here.”

Donna chose Noosa because she values the community and beach lifestyle. She also values personal time, the small scale of the place which limits traffic and pollution and she enjoys an increased feeling of relaxation. She would like more entertainment options but doesn’t see it as a major issue. Donna doesn’t see a class system operating in the area and finds that people of all ages mix well. People are passionate and have a voice in this community, rather than being apathetic, and she feels as though she belongs. She also finds the place a convenient where she can jump in the car and be somewhere on short notice and with little stress.

4.10 Person J/Duncan [Architectural Modelling]

Sydneysider, Duncan, and his wife came to Noosa eight years ago with the intention of enjoying a six month reprieve before moving to Brisbane. They weren’t thinking about risk because they had every intention of going back to a city. They had savings and planned to work on a show reel for the animation and graphics production work they were doing down south, choosing the area because they had some friends there. It was also cheaper to rent in Noosa than Sydney. The couple ended up extending their stay when work from existing clients started rolling in, via the Internet. Two years later they made the conscious decision to relocate.

Work from existing clients eventually dried up and the pair decided to retrain to suit the industry on the Sunshine Coast by adapting their graphics skills for the building industry,

attracting clients from the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and also Sydney. Several years passed and that work also started to dry up and now Duncan is retraining again to become a licensed building designer. Up until now his work was essentially improving the presentation of someone else's ideas. He enjoyed the money and the control he had in running his own business as well as the creative input, but he's since developed strong career goals and a passion to be able to work with clients in producing their homes and buildings. He believes this new direction will give him the opportunity for more meaning.

The idea of working for someone else in an internship no longer makes him feel powerless whereas in Sydney, he worked long hours and fought environmental stresses such as traffic, on a constant basis. When he'd arrive early and leave early to avoid traffic, it was frowned upon by the bosses – these are some of the reasons, as well as paying expensive rent, that it was important for Duncan to leave and escape the rat race. He agrees that the financial difficulties in the study site have encouraged him to grow in different directions professionally.

The pair has experienced “sway times”, as with before, and they've had to make sure they've had financial back up and be content to relax for a couple of months. There've been plenty of periods where they've discussed going back to Brisbane, however they bought a house in Noosa three years ago. They stay because of the peace and quiet, easy flowing traffic, the feel of the place and the people, which they find a lot friendlier than Sydney. Duncan feels there is a very passionate community in the area and supports and admires those who volunteer to enhance its natural amenity. Health-wise, the pollen there is actually worse for him and especially his wife compared to the smog of Sydney, so despite this the positive aspects pose a stronger plus over health and economic impacts.

Because they don't have children Duncan says the couple can live on less where not many people can, commenting on consumer behaviour in the cities: “In the city your time is just bloody shopping. You know you go to the shop and buy some piece of crap every week and throw it out six months later... especially at a beach suburb you don't need too much money living here.”

The lack of available cash has made Duncan keener for more money so that he and his wife can enjoy more activities, such as kayaking. Duncan's cultural background is very city oriented, playing in bands and living in Sydney's Newtown and he didn't feel he fitted in when he arrived

on the Sunshine Coast. He wasn't drawn to the beach culture then but now his desire for more material gains is to enjoy such things, as well as to be able to holiday.

When asked how important the landscape is to him, he said he's become a "more beachy and relaxed" person from living in the area. He says that he and his wife enjoy living the holiday and used to spend most mornings on the beach where there were only 10 or 20 other people, a vast contrast to Sydney's crowds. Since buying the house the couple don't access the beach as much due to the inconvenience of having to drive, but instead they now have a dog and a stronger sense of home.

4.11 Person K/Gayne [CEO/Construction]

As a high-flying international businessman with some of the world's biggest companies, Gayne moved to the area to focus on family and attempt to heal a marriage. He loved the place from cherished family visits, but now his ties to the area are largely based around his children and his brother's family.

He's considering leaving in the next few years because culturally he finds the area bland:

"When I first came up here in the early 80's from Melbourne it was a Wild West town, mainly ex Melbourne. People either came here because they had some money or they came here because they had to get out of Melbourne. It was a hidey hole that people could disappear to and people didn't necessarily know that Noosa existed."

A far stretch from those early days, Gayne finds that now a small core of wealthy power brokers in the community are making hypocritical decisions that affect the masses: "These are the ones who don't want to see Noosa change and yet they go elsewhere to get their cultural stimulus... Noosa is a middle to upper class ghetto." Despite this he says that anyone with something to offer can have an influence in the study site, whether short-lived or profound. However he comments on the transience and lack of local history: "A lot of people have been here for six to twelve months. Once you've been here for five years the transience is less... In business you don't like that to occur because it leads to too much of a rapid change and in communities you don't like it to occur for exactly the same reason. It's destructive in a business and it's destructive in a community."

Gayne appreciates the engagement spirit that he finds very strong in the area and believes it's due to the expansion of the Hinterland "country town" heritage. He finds it exciting that because the area is like a microcosm of a city with a broad range of people in a small geographic area, one is exposed to what they're doing in their businesses and what's happening in their market places. This contrasts to cities which are comparatively "disenfranchised" because networking tends to be internal through particular groups. Because of this he doesn't believe cities are necessarily expanding their horizons or level of expertise.

Personally, he's experienced more control over his life through the move by building an existing business in the construction field, outside of the corporate world, and making a great success of it and winning several awards. Gayne faced a huge risk in status in making the transition and says he was scared to jump off the professional merry-go-round for fear of not being able to get back on, despite the fact that he was tired of the lack of competition in corporate monopolies. His understanding of success has developed through his experience, describing it as an integrated journey rather than a focus on the bottom line. The business required Gayne to undertake most functions himself until he could expand it and believes that a good businessperson can make a success anywhere. His business approach is innovative in looking at "non-traditional areas" and "certainly not looking at the norm" in order to make significant inroads into large area construction.

One needs to be flexible in order to survive in the area according to Gayne, due to the dynamics in the social mix, from the very wealthy to the socio economic strugglers to the tourists, commenting: "...as soon as the floodgates for the tourists opens up the whole paradigm changes. You don't get to see that in a lot of other communities where it's full house for a couple of days and then empty." He believes that it's easier to survive in business there if it's outside the local economy and comments on the many lifestyle changers who become risk averse very quickly before going back to what they know or where they came from.

Gayne doesn't take advantage of the natural environment anymore because he's extremely work focused, yet it's one of the reasons he decided to move to the area. He enjoys novelty over nature for creative inspiration and says he's experimented with a more simplistic lifestyle but has found himself reliving old patterns, as many lifestyle changers do: "I thought my goals had changed since moving here but they haven't. I realized that when my garages filled up with boats and cars."

4.12 Person L/Geoff [Photographer]

Six and a half years ago, Geoff moved to Noosa with his family – it was more of an escape from Sydney. They didn't plan on settling in Noosa, rather it's a place they discovered that answered an internal search after an unsettling series of events. They chose it for its natural environment, scale, sense of space and visual appeal – it's what they had been looking for. Sydney was stressful environmentally and on other levels where Geoff felt unappreciated in his job, managing a bottle shop.

He came to the Sunshine Coast with his wife and two small children with no money, nowhere to live and no job. He didn't plan, he just needed to escape. After they found a place to rent he began working as a taxi driver, starting at the bottom because he says he lacked self-esteem, even though he'd done well at university through his writing degree. The job fell through after a year and he entered a two-year deep depression: "That was the hard time, a year in and I thought I'd really done the wrong thing moving here..." Geoff doesn't believe many people could handle his struggle and says he was good at living on nothing.

He enrolled in TAFE in Photography in an aim to gain some inspiration. After he completed the course he entered a government program to help him establish a business. Then that money ran out and he faced further challenges, but he now knew that the possibility of meaningful work existed for him. This was pronounced when... "I remember going to this [CentreLink] interview and had this girl suggesting I sell shoes. And that was enough for me to want to commit suicide..." He kept pursuing photography and has since reinvented his life: "I've turned it into something – a living, an income. I teach now in the same environment that I studied in so most of my income comes from that... It's all about contacts up here." He's discovered a passion for teaching which equals his passion for writing and photography. Through moving to the area and the ensuing financial issues and depression, Geoff has refocussed his life professionally: "That's the path I'm on now and it's on my own terms, that's why I can do it... to follow my passion."

He says he's never equated success with career or money, where success is just another word for happiness. He's always had to innovate by necessity rather than by nature and to keep changing –agreeing that perpetual change is a necessary approach for sustaining an existence in the area. He says that the lack of employment opportunities encouraged him to pursue

something he wanted because he couldn't get work and if he did find work, he would've fallen into the "wage trap" and wouldn't have been able to get out of it.

The main risk Geoff took was that his marriage could've ended due to the financial stress: "I am definitely a risk taker but my experience here has probably made me a little more risk averse because I nearly paid the biggest price for it and for my wife and family – it nearly went terribly wrong, as wrong as it could."

The key values that make it worthwhile for him to stay despite his continuing struggle with financial security are the natural environment and the possibility of enjoying quality of life: "...that's partially your environment and partially the way you choose your work life balance... You can also work 70 hours a week here and have a crap life. Some people don't even know the river exists. When the colour comes out and the sun's sparkling it's like paradise." Geoff misses access to cultural activities however and doesn't find a sense of community in the area, although he considers the environment as a strong common denominator between people. He also notices the financial differences: "...a club for wealthy people, the community part of it is for the wealthy... Not like Vaucluse in Sydney where there is an invisible gate around the suburb. We mingle here because everyone is together on the environment and someone has to clean the hotels so there has to be some socioeconomic difference." In contrast, he loved the local community living of Denmark which he experienced earlier through his wife's heritage, with its aesthetic quality and its bike paths where it was possible to live without a car. In Australia he says in general you have to drive everywhere.

4.13 Person M/John [Auto Industry]

Eighteen years ago as a young man, John moved to Noosa. He'd grown up in Brisbane and also lived in another regional town before but chose Noosa to be near a sick relative, and he chose it over neighbouring centres because he loved the natural environment, small population and sense of space. These qualities are the reason why John stays.

Another reason John chose the area was because he learned there was an opening for an auto workshop there. He'd operated very successful automotive workshops elsewhere and by the time he came to the area he had strong expertise and good business sense. With a feisty attitude, he calls himself pig-headed where business challenges and competitors only inspire

him to assert himself: “I actually approached the guy here, there were two shops in town... and two’s enough in a small town specifically back then and one of them was either gonna sell it to me at the right price or I was gonna open one up myself.” He doesn’t consider himself a risk taker because he says he has good planning skills, and he trusts his judgement.

Years later he changed from one specialty to another, purely because of a misunderstanding where someone gave him “a mouthful” and his reaction was to take on the challenge and “change track.” John’s early training as a fitter and turner allowed him to transfer his skills and specialise in different areas and he’s since changed direction again.

When asked if the small town is a limitation for business, John says: “No, not at all, it makes you build a business. You can run your business two ways ... You can try to run it on a per capita basis where you get five per cent of a big population or you can do a damned good job and get 75 per cent of a small population, and it’s easier because you’re not dealing with bullshit. Ninety-nine per cent of my customers know me... I just moved – this shop was up there for 20 years and I haven’t lost any trade. [Where in a city you would because of more choice?] Oh yeah.”

He learnt the business side by working it out as he went, and he says he’s still learning. Currently he’s looking to explore online sales, happy to learn from his son. He had a good mentor who he used to work for at the start of his career who introduced him to suppliers and ensured he got a fair deal where John would contact him regularly and wasn’t afraid to ask for advice. Reputation is very important to him and his passion for cars is what still drives him, especially because it’s his own business where there’s an overarching sense of personal control, on his own terms.

He loves the fact that he can walk down the street in his small town and see people he knows where he says doing business is very easy based on social networks: “It’s a little town you must get along with people and scratch each others’ backs. It’s easier like that.” He believes there are three things to running a business: attitude, the ability to do it, and some capital and a person can survive on any two. At the same time he comments on the many restaurant owners who don’t do their research before buying a business and so they fail.

When asked what he likes about the study site he says: “Oh it’s gorgeous, beautiful, it’s getting ruined now though, getting too busy. But it’s beautiful – we’re going jet skiing tomorrow. Last Saturday afternoon I went bike riding up in the Hinterland. We went to Ringtail where you can go bike riding, horse riding, walking but you know you can go up the North Shore here it’s awesome. Tonight I’m going to Cooroy with the boys for soccer – it’s a great place to live.” He also comments on the lack of crime in the area however he’s not happy with the council amalgamation which he believes has led to poor bureaucratic decisions that affect community life and access to the environment.

4.14 Person N/Jasmine [Communications]

A fresh start awaited Jasmine as she landed in Brisbane from Europe. She knew one person who she stayed with until finding a temporary job and then launched her own personal training business. After encountering a health issue she moved to Noosa, which she’d visited, and thought the tight knit community would help her in embarking on another venture, her own communication business. She was picking strawberries when she first arrived and says lifestyle migrants have to be prepared to step outside their comfort zones. Her flexibility, initiative and belief in her ability didn’t come without risk as she had little money upon arrival.

Jasmine accepted that she would earn less money on the Sunshine Coast compared to a city but was faced with incidents through her communications business that made her examine the value of money in reflecting her worth: “I’d quote the job and get comments like ‘Oh it’s quite exe’, and I knew it was at least half of what they would pay in the city... it was more the integrity of the service to be paid what I was worth.” The breaking point for Jasmine came when one of her clients offered to pay her in yoga clothes. “It was a lifestyle decision to move here, but I still wanted to be realistically paid for a good service, and I would work my quotes out not on the basis of greed but on the basis of what I needed to pay bills.”

She also took the opportunity to run an art gallery which she couldn’t afford to maintain but experienced many positive networking opportunities through: “Industries do intermingle a lot and it’s very much a ‘who you know’ here... It’s amazing the contacts I get now from people who were happy with the service I provided through the gallery back then.”

Next, Jasmine was offered a contract with a company where she could further her communications skills and she found this opportunity a relief. She was exhausted from the various business activities and the role allowed her to personalize her career, campaigning on the community's behalf which ignited a sense of passion, granting her professional status not reliant on salary, plus providing her with a sense of community. It also led her to rediscover her passion for writing. Jasmine says that if she'd stayed in the city, to make up for the desire to enjoy the environment and explore personal development she'd probably chase the only thing that was left which was career and money.

She believes most people come to the area to escape something and finds the community an interesting one where superficially it seems "a clean living utopia" but where there exists a lot of competition. This creates a split proposition between those who pursue a simplistic lifestyle and those who are obsessed with material status, considering it odd for such a small place. She also sees quite an "underbelly" particularly relevant to the wealthy sector, possibly she says because of the pressure of maintaining a reputation in a small town. Regardless of money, Jasmine considers the simplistic lifestylers as the dominant cultural group and believes newcomers should fit into this culture. She does get frustrated by the lack of stimulation and multi-culturalism in the area however.

Jasmine believes that creativity is strong because there is room for passion where by moving there one accepts they're going to earn less money, and so they concentrate more on their dream rather than the money. This gives them the ability to become more innovative: "Living here has encouraged me to take more chances, such as with the art gallery." She also says the natural environment plays a strong role in her ability to self-reflect and she values it highly where it provides a sense of more personal time, even if there is actually less of it. She comments that if you're feeling down in a city it's a lonely place but in Noosa you walk on the beach with your dog and before long people are talking to you, and you feel better.

4.15 Person O/Katrina [Volunteer]

As a European migrant, Katrina relocated 10 years ago after a stressful career in finance, in search for a more balanced life in a beautiful environment away from a city, for a warm climate and more personal time. She decided on Noosa. Through earlier travel in Asia she had learned the value of simplicity over materialism and witnessed the happiness that it can bring.

Katrina had a business visa and so needed to establish a business within four years. Within that time she scoped several opportunities but realised that the litigation system in Australia is far riskier than in Europe, and she was worried that in embarking on her own business she could run into “red tape”, not knowing the culture of work practice here. These factors created a sense of not being in control, and this lack of control was the main reason she left Europe.

Instead she met a partner and began working with him in his food business, adapting her skills to suit the industry. She had free time by day so decided to start volunteering in tourism. After all, it was travel that opened her eyes to the way people live simply and happily in other cultures. She loved the role and was offered a position after a year.

From a non-English speaking country, Katrina experienced cultural challenges but believes that one needs to adapt to the culture of the area one is entering. If she did leave it would be because of there not being enough entertainment. She also comments that people bring their cultures to the study site, rather than suggesting there is an ‘authentic’ culture prevailing: “Look at Zacharys on Hasting Street – very much a Sydney bar.”

Katrina believes her personality is naturally more in harmony with Noosa, despite her culture: “I had a friend visit and say, you fit in much better. You were saying hello to everyone on the walkway. You did that back home and it didn’t really suit there.” She reflects on her material life in Europe and on how it also prevented her from being herself “...when you’re 23 and have a flash car and it’s all fantastic, have a lot of money. I had everything at home but not enough time to play, and I saw these people [in Asia] were happy with nothing much.”

Her view on the value of materialism has changed: “Yes I would’ve stayed money focused if I didn’t leave home because you’re amongst it, keeping up with the Jones’s... And I still say, even though it’s only normal wages [current work in tourism], as long as I can afford to do this then it’s OK, as long as the job is fun.” She also acknowledges the lack of career opportunity as downside of the economy in Noosa and comments on well qualified people who are stacking shelves at Big W. Regarding those who run businesses in the study site, she says: “If you start a business here and you want to grow it to become a rat race again you’re better off staying in the city and make some real money.”

Katrina took her greatest risks on a personal level, saying that she only realised later how badly the move could've gone. She finds the transience both good and bad, commenting: "I build up friendships and then they move to wherever." However she's made efforts to meet new people through volunteering and urges that newcomers have to take the initiative. Her community spirit has made her more humanitarian and she reflects: "When you've got a career driving you, you don't think about volunteering because you're happy to be consumed."

Her key reasons for staying are: "The beach. Main Beach is super... You can see all that for free. I sit along the river in the middle of the night and there's about 100 cormorants diving in the water and that's a world experience to me... walking in the National Park and see birds that we thought were only in the Caribbean. The Biosphere, community and the environment – that's Noosa. I don't know what it will be like in the future but I hope it will stay like this."

4.16 Person P/Karen [CEO/Medical Writing]

From a stellar corporate career in Sydney, Karen moved to Noosa with her family 10 years ago: "We had all the trappings with the corner office, the cars, the latest laptops, the phones, the Qantas memberships." Just before making the move, she was faced with the proverbial fork in the road, having been offered an international opportunity introducing medicines into China. They chose Noosa to start their own business instead and to enjoy more family time and the natural environment.

An earlier family tragedy had taught them how precious life is, and this was the deciding factor between Noosa and China. She also thought that they could return to Sydney if things didn't eventuate, although now she says: "The thought of going back makes me physically ill. I just couldn't do it."

Karen and her husband are scientists and moved to the study site to start their medical writing business, considering themselves risk takers, "like any good scientist". The couple had money behind them but in terms of their reputation and status they took a huge risk. They did some business planning initially and even though things didn't follow a smooth course, it only took six months for a sense of promise to take root. Now the business is a world leader in its field.

Karen feels her sense of achievement far outweighs what they had in Sydney because she and her husband created it. She doubts she would've had the opportunity to contribute to the industry as a corporate player in the capacity she has now: "...somewhere along the road I've managed to get a recognition internationally that people think I can make a meaningful contribution and it comes then to the responsibility of making sure you live up to that..."

It was important for the couple to maintain a professional role in the study site, considering a variation away from their training as an insult to all those who invested in them. They learnt how to manage all functions of the business in contrast to their corporate lives where roles were specific. Early on they also learnt that location should not allowed to be an issue in business and the question of what one is prepared to do to ensure a flow of communication is crucial. Karen sees a strong link between innovation and personal time and considers the "group think" mentality of city life, where one tends to mix within ones circle, a limitation to creative thought. She also believes that the stress of traffic and other city characteristics pose a creative limitation.

The idea to start their own business came one night when she was editing some material she'd been emailed from the USA and thought, if we are better skilled than the writers we receive work from, why don't we become the writers and service US clients via email? When asked if she would've started her own business in Sydney, she says no because Sydney would've had all of the stress of starting a new business but none of the benefits. She comments on corporate life in its retention of staff through material rewards and contrasts it with the study site as a fertile ground for pursuing dreams.

Karen loves the small scale of the place and has discovered a community spirit she didn't know she had where in Sydney, she didn't know her neighbours. When she took her kids out of school for the anti-amalgamation march it occurred to her that she had changed. She comments that in Sydney the competition in corporate culture interfered with the development of meaningful friendships and where "... in Sydney if I went grocery shopping and I happened to run into someone it would be a shock but I love running into people here it's very social."

The beach as an equaliser according to Karen where everyone is half naked and status is not obvious and suggests relocation offers a chance to “drop that stuff” and connect with parts of yourself, “where you don’t have to pretend to be captain of industry.”

4.17 Person Q/Lew [Local Councillor]

Bricklayer and artist, Lew moved to the Noosa hinterland in 1978 with his wife to build a house and establish a life for themselves, while also enjoying the lifestyle benefits at a nearby family beach house. His artistic practice and bricklaying saw him working long, hard days in an industry where “debts were collected with baseball bats”. There was plenty of work then in a developing town but with no security, no unions, cash payments and no tax.

He points out the contradiction in the perception of treechange as well as its lessons: “... who said the lifestyle of the town in its embryonic stage was simple? We’ve already talked about having to have three jobs and running the local P&C and you’re building a house – there’s nothing simple about it but it’s rewarding because it focuses on a whole range of skills that aren’t available to people who don’t go through that process.”

His move into local politics 12 years ago came about through years of community involvement where the small scale and underdevelopment of the area encouraged a new direction for his creativity in developing innovative and tangible solutions for community needs. He created his career path through following his passion: “I wouldn’t have entered into these things if I’d stayed in Brisbane because I don’t think that the opportunity was there, ever, to feel that you needed to participate... In the hinterland the model is reversed. People do stuff until Council say you gotta stop it you’ve gone too far.”

As a local politician, Lew applied the things he unconsciously learnt from working with people to achieve results: “... and that’s what I see my role is in Council so I’ve learnt some great lessons from living in the hills.” Though one of the most influential people on the Sunshine Coast, he believes that status only interferes with getting results and is aware that because of status he now has become separate from the community that he loves, but at the same time feels he is only starting to make a contribution to the development of the region: “...the only way that’s ever come about is because of all those things we’ve discussed, that village life.”

Lew describes the study site as a place where only creative people survived through finding ways to make a living, "... you had to be comfortable waking up every morning and saying 'OK what'll I do to make a couple of dollars today', instead of clocking on and clocking off nine to five. It either attracts people because it's exciting or people choose to stay away." He sees a softening of that scenario now as the industry in the area grows but still considers it "more edgy" than the city.

Lew attributes much of the transience of the area to failing business where people spend all their money getting there, buy into something they're not passionate about or committed to and then treat it as a part-time job. Then they're forced to sell at a great loss, which leads to many marriage splits, recalling statistics where every four years, half the voting population of Noosa was new. In addition to this is the level of mistrust from locals towards newcomers in the building industry, who notoriously leave town without paying debts, where: "Are you from Queensland? is a big test."

Lew agrees that people need to reprioritize their values to create a sustainable lifestyle: "The hinterland version was always that you were more than happy in the weatherboard because you had 10 acres and a view and you could be left alone when you wanted... People shouldn't have overheads because that's what's going to kill them in the tough times...." He considers multitasking as a survival tactic of staying in the region and warns of making status assumptions where "clever people" may mow lawns, own shares in successful companies and own a catamaran but will: "roll up their sleeves because they know it will give them an in to the community... and cash to buy a beer at the end of the day... Here, you have to make life happen rather than expect it to happen."

4.18 Person R/Lisa [Community Worker]

Community consultant, Lisa, moved to Noosa from Brisbane as a young woman due to a career opportunity in government. She was reluctant only because the Sunshine Coast is where her family holidayed and she didn't want work to impact on her coastal getaway. However the lifestyle opportunity was too tempting and after six months she felt she made the right decision. After 20 years of relocation now she says she couldn't go back, even though she enjoyed city life. She initially rented a place near the beach and has stayed in the same town the whole time.

After a few years her government job ended. She was at a high level, with the car, laptops, mobiles, where now she is on less than a third of that salary. She partnered with someone and they decided to build and her payout disappeared: "...every little bit's got to go a bit further... but I don't mind, I either went back to Brisbane... or else I stay here and create a new world for myself, and I stayed here and created a new world."

While the study site is often criticised for being ethnically monocultural, Lisa considers it culturally diverse in other ways, once you dig a little: "... a lot of those people will tell you they've come from backgrounds so completely different. They've come here because they wanted to live by the beach.... we've had to capture all this diversity into one geographic location to help create the services and facilities needed." She rates the natural environment highly in its ability to inspire happiness and wellbeing and suggests the area has one of the strongest percentages of home-based businesses on the eastern beaches in Queensland, where the desire to be amongst the natural environment promotes innovation to generate income remotely while enjoying the lifestyle. Lisa says she's found her place and no longer needs a place to get away to, the reason she was reluctant to relocate initially. However she says the downside to small community is that your business is everybody's business and they often get the story wrong.

Lisa believes a successful community is one where people share, build networks and feel as though they belong. When she first moved to Noosa it took her two hours to walk down the street because she would meet people, watch the surf and the wildlife. She adores her community even though her consultancy sees her involved in some harsh issues. This is where her risk is greatest – in the potential to become alienated from the community through her work. However she accepts that she is a risk taker where every challenge has brought her closer to her values: "... and I've had people tell me that well you're like a respected elder in the community."

Soon after arriving in the area Lisa volunteered on a number of community organisations and made efforts to create networks where she says she knows others in the area who haven't and don't feel that sense of belonging. In contrast she says of Brisbane: "I just found that you're a bit swamped by everything that goes on – there's so much more variety in an urban environment and people, unless they have a reason, they don't seem to connect."

She accepts cultural change but is concerned that the new council may not understand the importance of “simple liberties” of a small scale community such as having a dog at a cafe, and hopes that it is managed well. In terms of integrating newcomers, Lisa suggests: “...to help someone connect with their community they’ve got to understand what motivates them. There’s no point throwing them into training programs. From there it’s almost like a service that helps them connect...”

She would be more materialistic had she stayed in Brisbane, where now it is easier to enjoy a feeling of being free despite the lower income, and she values lessons in simplicity and care of the environment. “...there is not a thing that goes through our house without the question, can you use it again? Who else can use it again?... Just everything, you learn to appreciate it, because you appreciate your environment.”

4.19 Person S/Murray [Builder]

For someone who was happy to stay in Brisbane for the rest of his life and was encouraged to move by his wife, after five years Murray says he would never go back now. The family moved for a better place to bring up children, a healthier lifestyle and more space.

Murray is a builder and at the time of the move the industry was still booming so he didn’t perceive it as a risk or consider himself a risk taker: “I didn’t think anything of it... We could’ve moved up here and rented the house out in Brisbane and head back down but if you sell everything, you gotta make it work.” He believes people need to be more flexible when they make such a move: “... you swallow your pride and whatever you can get your hands on... what it does is it leads you down another path you know so it gives you more opportunities.”

The building industry did slump but Murray never thought about going back to Brisbane because he sees networking, in a small town especially, as the key to survival. Networking links working life with social life in a way that can’t be separated in the study site, and that has positive and negative effects: “Well, it’s a small town and everyone knows everybody... well everyone knows who’s playing up or doing what and who you don’t wanna work for, who you do wanna work for... but it still takes a long time to find all that out so... it’ll get you through the rough times – if you look after everyone they sort of look after you, you know... Up here they’ve got nowhere to hide have they...”

This integration of work and social life is possibly why Murray is now determined to find a passion, because he says he needs to separate his work and home life while also spending more time with the kids. He describes himself as straight down the line while commenting on many of the women in social settings as bitchy, fitting the image of 'small town gossip.' This small town mentality also includes positive traits in his view such as community mindedness: "I think it's the population here makes it more community minded, it's got to do with the size of the population. Everyone sort of knows everybody." This exists despite the fact that everyone he knows, including through the kids' networks, have come from somewhere else and that there are probably "one or two locals" but that they "stick with each other".

In Brisbane, Murray was mainly working for architects whereas in the study site he says the sector is cliquey and he has reacted with a flexible attitude, diversifying his clients through government jobs among others. He hasn't forgotten the architectural sector and will start networking there again. Moving to the area encouraged Murray to extend his qualifications to maximise his potential for work after the Council amalgamation: "Well that's why I went for my third rise, my license, because I thought there'd be a market..." Murray likes his work and gets satisfaction from it.

With strong attention to detail on the job, needing his work to be as perfect as possible he has become very philosophical about stress. He reflects on his home town in Brisbane where people were too busy and stressed to say hello: "You see the thing about stress is you can't judge it. Stress is stress. It doesn't matter how big or large it is... no volume on stress I suppose, or gage of stress." He understands stress and manages it well, taking his time settling into the study site, spending the first two to three months working around the house, having "a bit of a holiday" until the money ran out, and then started networking.

Even though he says he has very little personal time since moving due to working long hours in order to re-establish himself, the lifestyle and proximity to the water provides a feeling of relaxation and poses a major attraction for him. He is aiming for better work/life balance so he can take better advantage of it.

4.20 Person T/Rhana [Designer]

Rhana moved to the Noosa hinterland from Brisbane with her family after her first child was born. They wanted to relocate earlier after returning from travelling, but then she fell pregnant. In addition, she was enrolled in a competitive design course at the time and didn't want to sabotage that. The family moved, planning to commute to Brisbane for work until her husband was offered a job in the study site. They chose the hinterland town of Pomona as a compromise between her husband's love of the surf and her love of the mountains, otherwise she would've been happy in an inland country town.

Rhana is a designer and describes herself in the city as a humble employee rather than a ladder climber. She says that when she lived and worked in Sydney she felt "burnt out" due to travelling to and from work either side of a long day: "You work long hours... but now I'm here I could never go back."

She's now self-employed and says the idea always scared her because she likes to know how much money is coming in, and doesn't describe herself as a risk taker: "I never wanted to be self-employed. [Up here] I suppose it's because I kinda had to. I had two kids at home... I couldn't go and get a job without putting them in care every day and for me that wasn't acceptable... I think if I had stayed in Brisbane or Sydney I would've just stayed an employee, definitely, it would've been safer, but now I love it."

Rhana feels she's ahead now in career having developed a broader skill range but it's not until she had a sense of home that she started to network for design jobs to establish herself on the Sunshine Coast. Until that time, she enjoyed some financial security from maternity leave through her Brisbane job, which she planned to return to, and her husband's job also helped. Initially money was tight as her husband had taken a pay cut and Rhana wasn't working, but it was worth it because of the family time they experienced where he was able to be home for dinner each night, unlike city jobs.

Rhana started with working remotely for her old Brisbane contacts, via the Internet. A lot of her clients now are local where she says although she can deliver online, the proximity is important. She tweaked her business image to attract clients and unlike those who accept lesser pay due to location, she matched her rates with city rates rather than reducing them.

While she doesn't know what the next financial year will bring, she would rather build her career than get a job at the supermarket for instance, and says her work is important to her sense of identity and that she could never go back to working for someone else now either. Rhana believes that there is actually more security for her in the study site: "I think in this community if you got into hard times people would support you more than in the city." She enjoys the sense of control that small town living affords where its simplicity has created a change in personal goals and where a humble life is socially acceptable over a career focus: "I suppose the long term goal is just to be happy." She adds that the natural environment makes her calmer, healthier and happier.

There's nothing about the city that a quick trip won't satisfy according to her and the community aspects of Pomona are extremely important in contrast: "The whole city thing of having to drop the kids off at school for protection. You know you can feel a little more relaxed here." Rhana's mother and brothers have moved up to join her where she says other friends come to visit and love the calm feeling of a humble home, without the "shiny car", but they don't have the courage to do it themselves.

4.21 Person U/Steve [Serviced Offices]

Steve moved to Noosa when his wife was offered a job there. They'd wanted the sea change since living in a cold climate and he was attracted to the open space, natural amenity and lifestyle of country living: "... you get 20 acres, the veggie garden, the chooks." At the time he was Mr Mum to a three year old and a new baby, so career was not influential in his decision.

He'd previously worked for bank and rose to middle management but chose to ladder climb to alleviate the stress he felt from the hierarchy of bosses above him, rather than because of ambition. He left to go travelling. When moving to Noosa he says despite the limited opportunities, he wasn't worried about getting a job because: "I was always confident I could get a job anywhere doing something, even if it was the bottom of the run..."

"Hitting 40", he wanted to upskill in accounting to prepare to re-enter the workforce. Instead, the couple found the opportunity to start a venture, managing serviced offices for start-up businesses and so they took a financial risk in setting it up: "Noosa is only 25 years old and we're the first serviced offices. It's great to be able to be first in a town." He was helped by

exposure in the community papers and also joined business and social groups. Steve's clients benefit from the interaction as well as the service, but at the same time many come and go either because they fail trying to transplant their city idea onto Noosa, or neglect planning, or happily they move onto bigger things.

He had no idea where to start or what to do at first and hadn't spoken to a professional in years, so it was personally confronting and challenging. He learnt through asking people but also did a business plan, reassured by the confidence of the local council and others: "I just kept telling myself I can do it, even though I wasn't sure I could". After working 70 hours a week for the first year he can now spend time with the kids and practicing music: "Even if I went back to a city I'd keep the same work/life balance because success is not about money, it's about being happy."

Steve believes flexibility is essential in pricing and services because it's harder to do business in a small place. The perception of success is misleading because of the unstable economic patterns of the place where, "if you've been around for a while people think you're making millions". He also comments that the small scale forces social and business worlds to collide: "My secret to staying afloat is don't burn bridges with anyone in town."

Socially, Steve will go out for a drink because he knows he'll recognise someone, where he wouldn't in the city: "I'm getting good friends now because I've been here five years... but you don't get to know someone before two years then four or five years all of a sudden that community word comes into play... the key to being accepted is time."

Newcomers who "big note themselves" don't understand that, "here you just gotta keep it simple otherwise you're not going to make it. If you can survive two years in Noosa and get through it everyone's on the same level. A successful business person is no different to the cleaner at the office." In Steve's view, the power base is with the older, wealthier generation with "too much time on their hands" who speak on behalf of community regarding amalgamation and the environment, where he favours amalgamation as a sign of progress and his friends either don't care or agree.

The environment is his key reason for staying but he agrees to sacrificing a few trees for housing and to build the economy. His second reason is that Noosa is a good place to raise

children with the nature activities available. He has a creative passion for developing business ideas and says if he did leave it would be because of the lack of viable opportunities present, compared to a city.

4.22 Person V/Tamsin [Academic]

From a high earning, high status environmental career in governments in Canberra, a change of government made Tamsin's senior role redundant. Her boss and mentor then killed herself. She went on sick leave due to repetitive strain injury: "... When I tried to go back there was nowhere to go back to – someone else sat at my desk, all my books and reports had been thrown away. It was very nasty and hard."

In addition she had a learning-disabled daughter who was being recommended for institutionalisation and Tamsin felt that her daughter had more opportunities to flourish away from the city, which proved to be the case. Her partner was also making furniture and needed space and so over a couple of years the family moved. They were guided by a strong emotional pull to a sustainably designed house and its landscape in the Noosa Hinterland which reflected their aspirations, and so didn't undertake their usual level of research in relocating.

The couple joined community groups upon arrival and Tamsin accepted a cultural planning job in a nearby centre. At the same time her household developed a vision for their town, and took it to the local council: "Really we were doing it to make it into a place where we wanted to live." As part of this self-directed extension into community, the couple began hosting concerts where hundreds came and where bread and champagne were donated by local businesses, with many more events, workshops, trainees and visitors to follow. Tamsin's life is governed by her philosophies rather than title or salary, and she has a respect for simplicity. "If we learn anything from living in Indigenous Australia, it's that spirit is more important than material wealth and we need to learn more about how we sustain our spirit in this process...." Tamsin says she's had such a vision all her life but found it less feasible in the city.

She's integrated her identity into her new environment: "I wrote myself into this place... I did my PhD about this place. I created a place for myself through that study, and it's ongoing in the writing I do for journals and my partner's design... we have become embedded now in this more-than-human place... I've had more opportunities to be creative here."

Money isn't as important to Tamsin as being valued, winning the Sunshine Coast Australia Day Creative Award in 2010 for the work that they've done, and often being featured in the local press. In contrast, she says it's rare to be thanked in a city job because you're being paid for that. She did however experience some financial panic after quitting her job, relying on PhD scholarships, and learning valuable lessons about simplicity: "We have no mortgage, we do grow some food and if it came down to it we could probably survive, just, and we buy everything second-hand, or we don't buy anything. Most of us buy something every day. I probably buy one thing a month... so you have to live differently."

After a few years they now rely upon the local economy of swaps, as well as making money for bills from the furniture and journal articles she writes. She did consider going back to the city for work but believes too much time has passed, having left 10 years ago, and she wouldn't want to give up now: "... it's really about trying to say there's this whole other notion of what might constitute richness and riches." She suggests one can be wild in the city and experience such connections but becomes pushed to the edges of society, with close neighbours who don't understand, "...whereas somewhere like out here everyone's far enough apart from each other to tolerate difference... in the country, you have bridging social capital...The human scale of the local place shapes your life." Tamsin is happier, more optimistic and wiser since moving to the area and she's earned social status where people ask her advice – locally, nationally and internationally – despite the absence of the career status of a city institution.

Several participants revealed the value of sharing their narratives in this research as a way of better defining their transition from 'city slicker' to lifestyle migrant, mapping their course in identity development and as such, the research created an opportunity for social learning (Bandura 1977) through the construction of this learning community (Kilpatrick et al 2003). Participants' stories show the diversity of experiences encountered in the endeavour, as integral to the discussions to follow in this book, where quotations from the full narratives are included to address specific aspects of lifestyle migration.

5. Learning a New Dance – Community and Social Orchestration



Figure 5 - Christina Kargillis, *Dance of the Wind*, 2006

“In order for music to free itself, it will have to pass over to the other side – there where the territories tremble, where the structures collapse, where the ethos get mixed up, where a powerful song of the earth is unleashed, the great ritornello that transmutes all the airs it carries away and makes return.”

Gilles Deleuze in *Essays Critical and Clinical* (104)

This chapter explores the functioning of community within the small population of small town living and outlines the lay of the social landscape in which lifestyle migrants need to orientate themselves and where, as will be shown, the social proposition heavily impacts the economic.

For some small town pioneers in this book, community is very much a hinterland/coast split while for others it is a township by township definition, and for others it represents a unified group within the boundary of the Noosa Biosphere study site. The geographic location of lifestyle migrants who share their views here include 14 from the coast and eight from the hinterland. As such, some common characteristics prevail between this research and a range of other lifestyle destinations around Australia.

The limited population impacts the ways community operates in comparison to a city and indicates some of the changes that new residents need to adapt to for a sustainable relocation. This adaptation was interpreted by some participants as a form of innovation. While Chapters 5 and 6 explore innovation in the context ideas generation in relation to money and the natural environment respectively, innovation through social engineering is also evident and is shown in this chapter, for example in discussions around culture. Scale affects governance, culture, economic patterns, networking systems, status, novelty or entertainment options, personal empowerment and a sense of having control over one’s own life, among other facets in the socio-cultural-economic mix, according to the narratives. Possibly the most interesting feature experienced in a small community is the continuity that it encourages.

Continuity is the rhythm of the community which threads through the various segments of a life – work, home, friends, leisure activities, shopping, schooling etcetera – where boundaries are sometimes invisible and worlds merge into each other, as Lew suggests, “I’ve weaved my way around family and work and personal development in a sort of casual way but they cross over so much it’s hard to separate.” In terms of identity, this continuity encourages the

perception of a unified sense of self. The cityscape by contrast offers a series of compartments through which to divide ourselves, and a range of relational identities for us to present to the world, or worlds, due to its large scale.

5.1 Scale – Where Size Does Matter

It's easy to walk past an acquaintance on a city street, but Donna discovered that there isn't the same protection of anonymity in her small town because of the continuity that is diametrically opposed to it: "I like walking down the street and seeing all these people that I know, though there have been times there's been two exes and a current all in the same place and I thought 'Oh my God', but you just have to deal with it." Amanda found that continuity has created an opportunity for social life: "If you see people in the city you recognise you don't have to say hello but here it's bloody obviously rude if you don't say hello. So then I'd put myself out there a bit. I'm actually a raging introvert sometimes when it comes to social stuff."

Amanda was fortunate enough to discover one of the key learning requirements and most potentially threatening outcomes of small town continuity from an earlier small town experience – reputation management:

"You can get away with shit in the city that you couldn't get away with here. It's your community, you're community networked. You turn around and your employee's mother knows your bank manager. You can keep it separate in the city but you can't in the country. Your friends are sometimes your business partners. But the good thing about it is that it is honest and it means that you are not a different person when you go to work compared to home and you become true and honest about yourself and who you are. You will make it work. If you're gonna start something you finish it or otherwise you're then seen as a flake, so you do it well."

Her comments clearly illustrate the impact of scale upon perception of a unified self, while John discusses reputation management in his very successful auto shop. When moving his business from one location to another within the area he managed to keep all of his clients, advising that in a small town: "You must get along with people and scratch each others' backs. It's easier like that." On the odd occasion where he has not achieved 100 per cent customer satisfaction, he suggests:

“The few time it’s happened you walk down the street and you see ‘em and say, what’s the matter with you? They might say ‘I wasn’t happy with that last job’. Well friggin’ did you ring me? No. Well bring it round I’ll do a free service or something. It’s simple”

Continuity in a small town can work for or against you, as suggest several narratives, and there is a clear precaution that must be taken in addition to the above advice, according to Steve: “Don’t burn bridges with anyone in town. The more popular you are in a small town the more naturally you will rise and people will use you and your services.” His prior experience stems from country South Australia and he suggests that the same rules apply in this scenario, because of size.

So how does community evaluate its newcomers before deciding to invest its friendship, money and good will? Amanda suggests she may have been quietly observed by her clients for two years before being approached for business, advising that, “You are always on show, your friends, behaviours everything and it affects your business relationships.”

Gaune values the organic nature of continuity, for the most part, where there exists a broad cross section of people that you meet “in the most unlikely places”:

“In the city when I’d catch up with people at sporting events you didn’t talk about business. Life is more categorized in the city and here it’s much more interspersed. It also has some negatives because there is no privacy.”

In Sydney if you go grocery shopping and you happened to run into someone you knew, it’s a shock to the system as Karen enjoys these small town encounters, “It’s very social,” where she suggests that another woman may not appreciate others looking inside her trolley: “You know it takes longer to do your shopping – you meet them in isle two then you meet them in isle three, but I like that. I like sitting with you here and waving to a couple of people.”

Continuity also engenders trust, possibly in part because “there’s nowhere to hide” as Murray suggests and community members are more visible and accountable than in a city. Rhana illustrates this point:

“I can be at the IGA and the butcher will walk past and I’ll say oh have you got any of your roast chicken and he’ll go yeah, I’ll put one aside for you as soon as I get back. Then I can be in Cooroy and running late and I can ring them and say I can’t pick it up, whatever and he’ll say it’s

OK I'll put it next door with Glynnis in the fruit shop and I'll pay her the cash and she'll give it to the butcher – you wouldn't get that in Brisbane.”

5.2 Size and Power

Size, power structures and personal power are strongly interrelated, as has been suggested in several narratives. John grew up in Brisbane and when he was 17 his suburb was “a good little country town.” He left in the early 1980's after it started to grow and the qualities that allowed him to enjoy a sense of control over his own life diminished. He recalls his escape:

“You knew everybody you know? You could do what you like. Even when I went to get my license there, the cop said ‘Oh no need to go for a license I know you can drive’. His name was Hank. You know it was a different community. Then it grew and I don't know if you've been there now but it's enormous. When I used to walk home from school there was six houses, now there's 6,000. In the early 80's it started going off, when they built ANZ Stadium for the Commonwealth Games and they put in all double lanes. Even probably before that because the freeway went in '77 and I remember sitting in my hospital bed looking out the window watching them build it. I thought ‘Eff this I'm not living here’, I like driving but not in city traffic. You just get in your car and drive where you like here. I can have three beers, half the time I'll suck a beer on the way home and no-one bothers me, that's why I live here, but I don't drive around drunk you know. I just don't need the bullshit.”

As Chris suggests, “rules are made for the minority” and another suggests that the area has a renegade influence in comparison to a city where “there is so much holding you down.” He says that in a small town it's what you can get away with in terms of ‘red tape’ because there is less policing and admits he breaks the rules for efficiency sake: “All the bureaucracy of a city makes people more compliant.” This is especially pertinent in emphasising one of the key themes of this research – the pioneering spirit – as compliance inhibits innovation to some degree, to be discussed in Chapter 6.

With small population scale comes responsibility, as previously implied with Rhana's quest for roast chicken. Jasmine has a good working relationship with the police and says it would be humiliating if she were stopped for speeding, drink driving or other irresponsible behavior, but believes there is a flip side to the responsible persona.

“On one hand living in a community like this makes people more accountable but on the other hand there's an undercurrent of seediness where people are getting away with all sorts of

things. But you are very much judges in a community like this and you do have to be seen to be doing the right thing.”

This sharply contradicts the concept of a unified identity. Jasmine’s work in communications finds her in the public eye where reputation management is essential. She believes: “In some ways it is easier to be a little fish in a big pond where you can more or less go along unnoticed whereas here I have to put myself out there which has been a challenge.” The scale creates a favourable power scenario in her campaigning work: “Community wins against the big bad government. I feel heart warmed by that and when I got into this career it’s because I wanted to make a difference, I found a way to be heard. Community feel they have a voice here, they believe in the power of the press.”

Several narratives referred to the biased role of community papers and some consider it a positive in reflecting an inclusive community, where even journalists are expected to express themselves as community members first. In an environment where facets of life merge together as previously discussed the personal/professional boundary is a difficult one to establish and maintain.

People power is also apparent in community groups lobbying council for better services. Local Councillor Lew’s experience reveals that community capacity comes from the community “barn raising” and ownership ensues from that, rather than relying on power structures to distribute funds and manage the process. Where the coastal community, as a prime tourism destination, has traditionally received more funding than the hinterland, he suggests that in the hinterland: “You were generally happy with your lot. People do stuff until council say you gotta stop it you’ve gone too far. They don’t respect the law, in the nicest possible way.” So within this lifestyle destination as would apply elsewhere, there are degrees of empowerment and autonomy partially dependent upon the area’s capacity to attract funding. Lisa is heavily involved in community consultation in a coastal township and suggests it’s difficult to make a comparison between city communities and townships in terms of achieving results for community. In Brisbane for example there is a range of diversity in communities that are defined more by culture than geography where, “here we’ve had to capture all of that diversity into one geographic location to help create the services and facilities that we need.”

Several narratives commented on the 'ownership' of the area by the minority group of wealthy residents. Gayne describes it as a "middle to upper-class ghetto" while Angus agrees and suggests: "Most of those people were part of the industry set up in the early days. This is like Canberra – built and developed on a map – this was developed in the minds of those few people. They're on all the boards and they speak on behalf of the whole community." Whether this power bias differs in a city scenario is a question this book does not attempt to address.

5.3 Work: Style, Status and Culture

Power issues in the work environment diverge from city existence where, here, it is culturally accepted that lifestyle ranks higher than work. The work culture of the place, as a lifestyle destination, is formed around an unstable economy (Smith and Doherty 2006) characterised by the construction sector and retail which includes tourism as its primary industries along with a strong presence of small business. What makes it so unstable is the inherent nature of these industries along with a 'boom and bust' cycle due to size, as Angus explains:

"In building you outlay all this money on the premise that you're going to get paid and that's a shit existence. If you go to a city it's much more plateaued in terms of work arrangement and work offering which is very important in terms of raising families, paying mortgages and the stability of the anticipated project which people grab with open arms, and that's what most of society does. I am absolutely sick to effing death of the roller coaster of the Sunshine Coast and I thought it would have plateaued a lot earlier than it has now."

He draws an analogy between the two dominant styles of business operation present in economic communities, vertical and horizontal integration, to regional and city work cultures. The region is characterised by vertical integration, such as cottage industries or self-employed where all facets are undertaken by an individual, couple or small collective; and where cities, by contrast, operate largely through horizontal integration where the focus is on expanding business to as many markets as possible (Vertical Integration 2011), and where different persons are responsible for each separate function in the operation. The relevance of this analogy pertains to its influence on community values as well as the way individuals adapt and change their identities in response, where potentially in learning how to 'live vertically', lifestyle migrants develop or access a pioneering quality that has proven a strong characteristic in sustaining their relocation (Hoey2005:608).

The region's construction industry has a history of exploitation by 'outsiders' that was mentioned several times and is still taking place in Angus's experience: "Two weeks before my twins were born I was doing a development. This guy was an absolute shonk and he ripped me off as the builder, and every person down the line from the sparkies to the landscapers. He owed me \$52K."

In retail it's a different type of cyclic adventure, as Donna discovered when she bought a tourism business and the cash flow problem caused her considerable stress. Interestingly the Sunshine Coast is reported to experience more regular tourism patterns compared to other sea change areas such as Albany (Tourism Research Australia 2004), however participant experiences such as hers indicate a cause for concern. As a result she is diversifying into a spectrum of unrelated businesses including online shops which she says represent extra income for not much work, distributing designer shoes and creating interior design objects, further explored in Chapter 6.

"I know someone who sells web design packages which are designed for anyone to follow. They wanted me to be a sales agent for them, but I'd rather do the design by undertaking the training myself. Eventually if I'm designing them then I'll be able to sell them as well. It'll be time consuming but it's something I can do at home in the evenings alongside my other business for the time being. [You do a number of things – do you think this is the way of the future that you'll be quite happy chopping and changing?] I think so yeah."

Entering into small business is a common solution in response to the lack of employment opportunities and presents a continually changing landscape where success one year doesn't necessarily follow the next, and this also impacts community perspectives on status. Alexander suggests, "It's really interesting that it's so cyclical so you can't really rely on career status," while Steve recalls, "I remember we had the first success here after a year or so and I started bragging a bit and telling people I could leave early and then it slumped for a while and I thought 'Oh God', but things got good again." Steve runs serviced offices and sees a continual flux of new and small businesses through the door:

"Noosa is very small. That's one of the reasons we set this up because we knew there was a market for small business because they often can't do it by themselves. We give them office space, secretarial services, showing them how to do mail merges and emails, that kind of stuff. A big comment is on the interaction, especially if they've been at home working by themselves, 'Oh it's so nice to be in an office environment'. You do get more business from being in here but 12 months would be the longest someone would stay. They either go broke or it's because

they try and move their city idea to the Noosa area and try and make it work but they can't, and they move on. Or they move onto bigger things and go to Hastings Street or Noosaville."

Several lifestyle migrants have experienced career success through the relocation, however the cultural differences between city and small town creates speculation regarding success as a notion, to be discussed in Chapter 6.

The natural environment and lifestyle as a priority over work is heralded as a status antagonist, where Alexander suggests, "Because next to the sea, we're all the same. It's valuing nature that brings people here." Karen confirmed this view when she says: "I think people are less snobby here than in Sydney or Melbourne. People here are in their shorts and no shoes and try to judge them on that and you make a fool of yourself you know. To me the beach is an equaliser because we all get half naked and you can't drive your Lamborghini onto the beach." She adds that relocation offers an opportunity to "drop that stuff" and connect with yourself in a way where "you don't have to pretend to be captain of industry. Do you want to be the person you were in Sydney or do you want to rediscover who you are?"

Others were very clear in the status division where interestingly, participants from both the salubrious coast and the humble hinterland each presented conflicting views, suggesting that, as a melting pot of lifestyle migrants from diverse histories, this is not a homogenous community. Jasmine believes there are two entities operating as the Sunshine Coast:

"The old coast is the surfers and the artists and the musos and the vegetarians and the new coast is perhaps the business people who have moved here from overseas or elsewhere in Australia and they've shaped the old Noosa with their expensive cars and houses and lifestyle, the need to have expensive restaurants and the fashion houses you find on Hastings Street. And I don't think they cross much, they are two very different populations and I think I float between the two. I think it's very interesting for such a small place. I don't think the money group is the dominant culture, I think the other group is, but quietly."

Geoff draws an illustrative comparison to Sydney, based on wealth via territorial divisions, "Not like Vaucluse in Sydney where there is an invisible gate around the suburb. We mingle here because everyone is together on the environment and someone has to clean the hotels and keep it all ticking along so there has to be some socioeconomic difference. If we got rid of those people we'd be in trouble." Gayne expands this concept of 'mingling' in relation to business, based upon notions of continuity: "In Sydney or Melbourne you have the socio-

economic divisions that are almost based on territorial boundaries so those established in business are aiming for a specific market and they know what they're up against. Up here we've got it all in a very small microcosm."

Tamsin discusses the hinterland status scenario by revealing a new world order:

"[You came from a high position in the city – did you feel valued there?] Oh no. I got paid lots of money but in the city the first question is always 'what do you do' so when I went onto compensation and I wasn't doing anything that was really hard. When they'd ask me what I do I'd say, 'Ah nothing', and then they'd walk away and not want to talk to me. When I used to say I was the Head of Planning I couldn't get rid of them. Up here they never ask. Here there is a judgement about private schools over public schools and then it's do you live in town or out of town and out of town would give you a bit more because town was a bit desperate at that stage, and then it comes down to how many acres you own but we've only got ten so the questions stop there."

In another hinterland scenario, Brad describes an onus on anti-status:

"[But it's not a community value as such with having a flash car or...] No and you'd probably be shunned if you were. If you look at the cars down the shops there's a lot of utes around and a lot of 4WDs, no flash cars driving around town. I haven't met anyone who really gives a shit about what sort of car you've got, how big their house is, you know, it's not part of it at all, very different to Brisbane."

Andrew lives on the coast and also expresses an anti-status sentiment among tradesmen across the study site, "People do care about money status here but in an inverse way, like a lot of people think I'm... my van's pretty flash so. A lot of trades people do that, they'll have the old ute for work so it looks like they need the money and keep the flash car for weekends."

Lisa defines community on the very local level of her coastal township in exploring status, suggesting that "passion" overrides status:

"They're not overt or come out and tell you I'm an ex executive of a top Australian company. They tend to be quite understated in their physical appearances and the way that they connect. But their strength and their ability to work in a network becomes unveiled when they find something that they really believe in, in the community."

While acknowledging socio-economic differences, several narratives discussed the size of place as a key anti-status catalyst with Donna suggesting, "I know some very wealthy people in Noosa and some not so wealthy and they all mix together. I don't think there is a class system

in Noosa. I've been welcomed with open arms ever since I've lived here." Steve agrees, "I don't know anywhere else you've got a small town with billionaires drinking with cleaners. They're friends you know because it's only a small town you gotta mix it in with everyone."

Work culture in relation to power issues was explored through the narratives where Rhana values the cultural difference in the area that allows her husband to be home for dinner each night and where she can leave her home office, guilt-free at 5PM. In her office environment in Brisbane, the family men who left first were criticised:

"They treated him like he was hen pecked which probably wasn't the case at all, he just wanted to be with his family. If you're on a salary in Brisbane there's no way you can walk out the door at 5 o'clock. Maybe 6 would be alright but everyone stays back. In fact every family I know in the cities, the mum has dinner with the kids and the dad comes home later. All of them."

Karen discussed the concept of human office furniture in city work culture or "presenteers" (Presenteeism, 2011), those who are present and not necessarily productive where she suggests the focus rests upon perception of hours spent in the office in order to demonstrate submission to the power structure while Duncan recalls, "I decided to get to work earlier in the morning to avoid traffic, leaving home at 6:15AM at one stage but when I asked to leave at 3.30PM, that didn't look good."

The corporate city culture provides the kind of power structure that the study site avoids due to its value hierarchy centred on lifestyle over work, to be further discussed in Chapter 6. In Tamsin's estimation through her executive years in Sydney and Canberra, the implications around work culture directly impact community approaches towards humanity:

"It's very rare to have someone in a city in a job say thank you to you because you're being paid for that. That's the difference between having that small level council to something bigger and more bureaucratic for example. In a word or two I'd say human scale is critical."

Alexander built a successful sustainability business since relocating and sold it to a large venture capital company. He commented on the cultural variance between the two sets of ownership where the regional set up reflects a more integrated and humanitarian approach:

"A really big part of my interest in building businesses is to build teams where the human interaction is a very important part of it, where it's not just the job you go to but a community where together you create something and we had gone a long way towards achieving that with

that company and now nine months later there is very little left of that. [Their] whole way of doing business is very city, corporate.”

Steve also reflects the regional approach when he says:

“In business sometimes I’m not as hard-nosed as I should be, and it’s also part of living in a small town not being hard-nosed. If people see that they’re put off, they’re scared or they won’t approach you. I’m easily approachable, and it’s all good business.”

As a highly successful corporate executive formerly based in Sydney, Karen discovered an internal yearning for something more, followed by the guilt, “What do you mean as good as it gets, this is the life – society was patting us on the back so much about how successful we’d become but you kind felt like it was a forbidding question to want something different.” While she values some of the attributes of corporate operations and has included “the best of corporate” into her business, she comments on another difference between corporate culture and regional culture, suggesting that employees need to hide their dreams in the city in case they are exposed and thus challenge the power structure: “But I think up here people are willing to have a go, they still come up here with their dreams and because they want to do something different and they talk to people about it so people are interested.” Passion is a vital element in the research and is explored in Chapter 6.

Culturally, multitasking is “a survival tactic of staying in this region”, according to Lew who has worked with economic sustainability and community development for many years. Here he defines the cultural context of small town living in regards to status and work styles:

“It was a free place to be and you had to be a certain type of person to want to live there – you had to have a respect for the carefree and an ability to survive in a community and an economy with less formal bounds. You had to be comfortable within that zone, and you had to be comfortable waking up every morning and saying ‘OK what’ll I do to make a couple of dollars today’, instead of clocking on and off 9-5. What you find is that a clear majority of the demographic is more comfortable in that less lawful less constructed social fabric, and that’s an interesting place to be. It either attracts people because it’s exciting or people choose to stay away because it’s too exciting for them. I think there’s a softening of that requirement now – we’re a far more formal place now than when I got here 35 years ago, but there is still that bit of edginess compared to the major cities.

“People turn up here with some sort of expectation about an ability to make a living, and that’s not here, it’s not available, you have to make that happen rather than expect it to

happen. You have to be very careful of assumptions because a lot of very clever people who know how to survive in one of those embryonic towns, they are mowing lawns, and they've also got a 40 foot catamaran on the river and an interest in a company in Sydney that's turning around \$1M per year and they're prepared to roll up their sleeves because they know it will give them an in to the community, it will give them enough cash to buy a beer at the end of the day and meet people."

Through his 20 years in the area, Chris has witnessed many lifestyle migrants arriving from the cities and he suggests how this cultural influx is changing the social landscape of the place:

"There are people coming up with money and who are comfortable with money and don't need to flaunt it but the average punter coming up since I've been here that has tens of millions of dollars has to let everybody know about it. They don't know how to mix it up with the guy on the street, which is Noosa, the guy on the street. So you get places where people with money mix with people without money but then there are still those others with money who don't want to mix. So then you start to get establishments where those people with money would want to meet and spend their monies like places in Sunshine Beach and they pay a lot of money to be seen to eat there."

5.4 Getting Together – Culture and Networking

Are you comfortable in a pair of shorts or gumboots, or walking around with beach hair?

Rather than merely a fashion statement, fitting in and not fitting in are strongly linked to sense of community and while all participants have survived their relocation for at least five years, many comments were made regarding cultural requirements and differences between the area and the cities.

Angus says he found it easy to make friends when he first arrived 15 years ago, "The people were so genuine. I think in part because of the consensus in the area which was back then a standardized procedure – let's go surfing." Chris, also from the coast, believes he can identify the people who are not enjoying their relocation:

"They've come up here for the lifestyle but they're real city people at heart and it's like that saying you can't take the country out of the country person, same thing goes. They're a little uptight and you can see they try to dress casually but they stick out like sore thumbs. They're not comfortable. They're pretending to be comfortable but it's those grey areas such as if they see my dog off the lead where it shouldn't be and they say, 'You can't have your dog off the lead!' It's different if the dog's doing the wrong thing in a public area. Those to me are people

who aren't comfortable with a relaxed lifestyle or comfortable within themselves. They need to jump in and say something."

As a single female who "always dressed so well," Lisa felt separate for this and other differences, "they thought I was a different breed of person," however she wasn't excluded or made to feel uncomfortable. She finds the town accepting and this was a comment made by several others from both the coast and the hinterland. Donna concedes, "A lot of people might look straight on the outside but they're actually quite quirky and have interesting lives. I've met all different types of people here and you end hanging out with all different age groups," while Steve, a 40 year old, also makes reference to age in a cultural context saying, "I hate going out in Noosa because you're always the youngest person." All participants were aged between 25 and 54 to capture the demographic in their working years, despite the strong posse of gray nomads and the older generation in the area.

Another element in the mix refers to the prevalence of therapists and personal development practitioners where Jasmine suggests you are more encouraged to find yourself and fix yourself. "There's more an expectance here of things like hypnotherapy and the number of spiritualists and mediums and people into Reiki and the like, it's almost seen as the norm whereas in the city it's more like 'Oh God, weirdo, hippy'." Her concerns rest with the newcomers who attempt to change the culture of the place and oppose dogs at cafes or impose live music restrictions for example, where "you expect to be able to enjoy those things here. Newcomers should fit in with the culture instead of trying to change it."

According to Tamsin, if you are not conservative in the city you are at risk of becoming "pathologised" and pushed to the edges of society, partly because of scale where you have close neighbours who don't understand or who disagree with you. "Whereas somewhere like out here everyone's a bit mad and they're all doing strange things and they're miles apart from each other so we can all tolerate that and we're very diverse. In fact the diversity here is much greater ironically than it is in the middle of a city where people tend to ghettoise and you tend to have social capital," she says. The scenario encourages negotiation and tolerance amongst that diverse group of people in developing solutions, "and that seems a much more powerful way of being."

Lisa also refers to diversity in a coastal scenario where houses are close together but where the community is also, together, despite the variance amongst its members:

“I think there’s a depth of field of talent that becomes unveiled with projects, and it takes projects to reveal them and find those people. A lot of those people will tell you they’ve come from backgrounds so completely different to living in a beachside community. They’ve come here because they wanted to live by the beach. You look at some of the people, if you don’t know what their background is, they blend in.”

Adriane interprets the diversity of community as “disjointed” and finds the culture nepotistic as a result of its small scale, “In fact, people are fearful and have agendas. It’s weird I feel the Jo Bjelke-Petersen era, I feel sometimes being left lingering, a kind of a stench. For example, one neighbour was a policeman and you’d say something and they’d say, ‘Oh yeah but they’re all mates and they helped me out’ – the undertone of police chummyship.” Jasmine supports this view in suggesting, “It’s also who you impress or who likes you. For a place that boasts a high level of well educated people, minor celebrities, that sort of area, it’s very parochial.”

A common complaint through the narratives regards the lack of novelty or entertainment available in the area, primarily because of its small population which limits organised activity, resulting in a community that strives to create its own fun. Katrina tried to establish European handball but found there weren’t enough people to create a sustainable activity for this specialist sport while Andrew and Adriane commented on the lack of public transport and limitation to having friends within walking distance because of the large dwelling sizes and the space, which implies inconvenience and reliance on the car, “I mean I’m about the only person I know who can actually walk to the pub, that was a criteria of buying the house” (Andrew). In contrast, Donna suggests the small population creates convenience despite the space and car reliance, “Someone can ring you up and I can be there in five minutes and that’s what I like, I like convenience. In Brisbane even though it was only a 10 minute car ride it would take me 40 minutes to get to work because of the bus and the traffic.”

Several narratives suggest the need for more activities to attract young people or “there’ll be no one left to service the mobility scooters” (Donna). While some highly successful activities exist, such as the regular free music event at Peregian Beach, the power of the minority to threaten it due to noise complaints was a concern to many, and Tamsin advises that concerts held in the hinterland were “killed off” in the early millennium due to council regulation that saw large amounts of money being charged for liability. Therefore, in contrast to the personal freedom encouraged in this setting, the availability and support for entertainment is compromised due to limited population and ensuing infrastructure and power relationships.

Tamsin's address to such regulations was to create her own events on private property where, in the hinterland, the acreage acts as a buffer for potentially disgruntled neighbours:

"We're not the only people who do it - there's a whole lot of little backyard places around here that hold concerts. The Queensland Philharmonic was being amalgamated with the Queensland Symphony into the Queensland Orchestra and so there was a lot of chaos and out of that came a really interesting group of musicians who were doing contemporary music and so we had a little concert of theirs here. David Williamson came along. Someone had given us champagne, someone else donated freshly baked bread and so we had food and alcohol and got our kids to serve it and 600 people turned up – they came all day from 10 in the morning, we had the concert at 11 but then people stayed. We had Rob who just paints things as they happen and he got people to fill in little pictures of themselves and it was a launch of Ross's furniture. It was wonderful, such a nice feeling. There were even people still there the next day. I think people look for self-entertainment here more compared to a city."

Organised volunteering opportunities are popular in the area and provide a consolidating function for community, possibly in lieu of socialising and employment options, where narratives expressed both positive and negative experiences. Alexander, Amanda, Adriane, Gayne, Katrina, Karen, Lew and Lisa have benefitted from the networking available through these activities, at least for a time. These voluntary roles mainly involve council organised initiatives and have enabled some participants to make contact with likeminded individuals. Adriane was able to launch her company after joining forces with others through volunteer work, but at the same time she comments on its functional flaws:

"Putting all these volunteer projects up and not actually giving them funding to pull this stuff off is a real issue. 'We haven't actually got the money but we want all this'. So we did a lot of free stuff which you would not do to your plumber – you would not say we want all this plumbing for free now in the small house and when I get the bigger house then I can pay you. And there's also a real protectionism where people are already in these positions of power, so I'm nearly spent on that stuff, but I do feel that I know a lot of people now."

Alexander's experience was positive and he commented on the opportunity that project-based voluntary work provides to "get to know the people on the personal level" as well as the confidence he gained from the support of a network which assisted the development of his own successful business. Networking is significant in that, due to limited population, it largely functions in an arbitrary and "ad-hoc way", according to Gayne and others, rather than through internal, industry-based groups and the effect of this impacts the opportunity for

innovation and entrepreneurship, to be discussed in Chapter 6. Rhana, as with many others, has benefitted financially from such an organic network, the small town 'grapevine':

"I had someone call me recently who's child went to school with another parent's child, who I had done their logo for, and they needed a logo so she put her onto me. It wasn't anything to do with the school, my kids weren't even there yet, but people just talk about other people."

Certainly if you do a good job for one person, you should expect a call from someone else, according to Jasmine where "word of mouth advertising works well here. It has repercussions. Now I'm working in communications it's amazing the contacts that I get from people who were happy with the service I provided with the gallery, back then." She suggests that having different businesses meant that they would all interlink, therefore notions of conflict of interest struggle to compete in this economic framework. Due to the level of continuity in the area, Amanda relied extensively on networking in establishing a business, especially through volunteering rather than advertising for instance, so as to be "seen as valued to the business community" and becoming known to the Chamber of Commerce, to "become known as a connector within the town." Socially as well she has made more friends here than before where she described herself as a loner, "... all my social connections were through work colleagues because of course you're in a hotel and you catch up for dinner and that's it."

5.5 Community Spirit

Volunteering is also prevalent through this research via unofficial activities where for builder, Murray, it's just part of community spirit encouraged by the small size where for most participants the networking agenda and genuine benevolence work together:

"If they wanted a hand at the kindergarted or something like that you'd give 'em a hand. [Do you think you've become more community minded since you've been here?] I think you gotta do your little bit. A lot of people are just too wrapped up in their own lives, you know you see those people because they're looking after themselves and they'll probably do better than I do because they focus on themselves. When you're community minded you spread yourself here and there. It's either in you or it's not in you. It's your upbringing I suppose. I think it's the population here makes it more community minded to be honest, I think it's got to do with the size of the population. Everyone sort of knows everybody."

At the same time he expresses the benefits of networking to greatly assist survival, "Money runs out eventually so um basically you just start putting the word out." For Lew, his benevolent involvements eventually created his career in local politics and as a bricklayer in his

former life, he held a similar approach to Murray in regards to literally lending a hand. His comments differentiate the city and the regional culture in respect to volunteering, "I wouldn't have entered into these things if I'd stayed in Brisbane because I don't think that the opportunity was there, ever, to feel that you needed to participate. It was always well, OK I might turn up to the P&C if I have to, which is the city attitude."

The dominant experience pertaining to sense of community is positive and many narratives draw comparisons not only with the city but with other areas within the region, due to population size, "Yes, a passionate community, and it really feels as though we're part of something. I think people who live in Maroochydore just live in Maroochydore but here we feel like we're part of something" (Alexander). Others provided insight into some of the ways that feeling is created:

"I make a concerted effort to buy my meat at the local butcher. I can go to Coles and buy a T Bone but I make a concerted effort to go to the butcher right next to Coles because I want them to succeed. I buy little things I don't need from the local shops and it might be five bucks or 100 bucks on a shirt or whatever but it's about people giving a shit about the local community which in turn is the same as Maroochydore and Sunshine Beach and all the rest of them, and if you link these up it's called the Sunshine Coast. If everyone had the same collective mentality then it works... You gotta have a shot at your community. At the end of the day it's a pretty simple methodology, if you support the crew who support you then everybody wins and there's a lot of people who don't do that, a lot" (Angus).

"In the country, you have bridging social capital. Here I have to get to know my gun-toting neighbour because I rely on them to a certain extent. In the country your neighbours will look out for you even if they detest your values. The human scale of the local place shapes your life. We've got a friend who lives next door to an old man who's about 90. Ten years ago he put his foot down on the accelerator and drove through his garage door and can't drive anymore so she makes sure he's looked after and fed. When he was trying to mow his lawn, she organised for her horses to take care of the grass," (Tamsin).

"You can't walk down the road without running into someone that you know. I actually like that. It's got a nice feel to it. You're not just completely anonymous, you're part of the community. So I know more people in a town than I've ever known in an area I've lived in before, and I don't know, people of all different backgrounds and everyone is there for a similar reason. They want to live in a small community, a supportive community where you feel safe and your kids feel safe, where you don't have to watch your kids all the time, where they can maybe play outside and got to their friends' places, like I used to do when I was a kid, you know I guess that's maybe what we looked for a bit" (Brad).

Many commented on the ability to provide a better lifestyle to raise children through lifestyle migration, such as Rhana: “We wouldn’t have stayed in the city with the kids. The whole city thing of having to drop your kids and no-one’s allowed to walk to school you have to drop the kids for protection. You know you can feel a little more relaxed here.” Social integration within the area was another key theme regarding community while there were some exceptions such as Geoff who says, “community sucks” because it exists for the wealthy or that it’s “bland”, according to Gayne or “disjointed” in Adriane’s experience. Others who find a strong sense of community also comment on the downside to that scenario – gossip and the reputation damage that can ensue, either through misbehaviour or misinformation. Lisa has experienced some serious misrepresentation through the grapevine in relation to her work and says, “Your business is everybody’s business, and they get it wrong. It’s amazing the things people conjure up when they don’t know the full facts.” Despite this she is passionate about her community and says she has always enjoyed living in the town, partly due to the community solidarity that the smaller scale encourages.

5.6 Transient Footprints

While Anita and Rhana of the hinterland discuss the reliability of community where newcomers tend to stay, the coast experiences a core of ‘stayers’, according to many, with a high level of transience around it. Karen of the coast illustrates one of the ways that this aspect plays out in society where the kids at school never want to make friends with the newcomers, because the new kids never stay. This scenario was also cited by Andrew and Geoff while Murray suggests, “Everyone we know including through the kids and that are all people who’ve come from somewhere else, there’s probably one or two locals but really I imagine the locals stick with the locals,” and Lew recalls:

“I saw some years ago that 50 per cent of the people turn over every election so every four years 50 per cent of the population of Noosa was new. There’s no community in that. We have to have some faith in that little scab of social cohesion in amongst all this movement, they are the stayers and I know who they are.”

This comment is in reference to the study site comprising both coast and hinterland. These figures are still in line with current ABS statistics (see Appendices) in relation to the 25-54 working demographic. Narratives explored the advent of newcomers leaving within the first year and Geoff reveals that this was the time he and his family almost left due to dire financial

circumstances. According to Gayne, newcomers have the opportunity to make a profound contribution to community because, as discussed earlier, they have a louder voice in a small town environment. The negative impacts around this relate to their leaving within a short timeframe and disturbing the continuity, thus denying community of a reference point for their contribution:

“A lot of that knowledge goes with those individuals. I just came back from Melbourne for a family weekend and caught up with people I haven’t seen for 25 years and we were talking about what happened to those people and those businesses and those things since then. It’s a grounding for me personally. I get a huge amount of satisfaction out of it because you can go ‘Oh now I understand it’. It’s a compass point and even though I’m not there to be part of it at least I know there are others there who are. Up here you don’t have that. I know maybe half a dozen people up here who have that perspective on things for maybe 30 years and I don’t necessarily think that’s a great thing. In business you don’t like that to occur because it leads to too much of a rapid change and in communities you don’t like it to occur for exactly the same reason. It’s destructive in a business and it’s destructive in a community.”

The instability of community, particularly on the coast, is further disturbed through the influx of tourism that the area experiences, where holiday season disenfranchises the locals through crowds and ensuing consequences. Gayne believes it affects family life where, “As soon as the floodgates for the tourists opens up the whole paradigm changes. You don’t get to see that in a lot of other communities where it’s full house for a couple of days and then empty,” and where during peak holiday periods children are denied access to the facilities they used to have: “If you were living in a suburb of Melbourne what you do on a Saturday happens pretty much every Saturday till the season changes whereas here you have these peaks and troughs that relate to holidays and other activities.” As Lisa suggests, the community has to “wear it” and it creates a degree of insulation. Working with community groups she says it was hard digging down through the layers to find out who the community was and also suggests that the transience disrupts the feeling of continuity in the area, which is possibly stronger in the hinterland as a result of less movement.

Steve illustrates some of the benefits of ‘sticking it out’ through his social life where he says he can visit the local club any night and meet up with people he knows, where in a city he wouldn’t do that because he would feel anonymous. In addition, “I’m getting good friends now because I’ve been here five years and I’ve had the same friends for four or five years. You go

through ups and downs with friends, but you don't get to know someone before two years then four or five years all of a sudden that community word comes into play.”

In this chapter we have explored the social landscape of the study site as a small town comprised of a non-homogenous community but where traditional small town values such as sense of community predominate, in the majority view. The lack of homogeneity however is evident through the diverse responses to some of the discussions, and these binaries are further explored in Chapter 8. We have seen how fundamental networking is within this context where accountability and identity are implicated, while also contrasting urban culture and power relationships with those experienced in the lifestyle migration context. The impact of the social landscape upon the economy and styles of work has also been discussed, leading us into Chapter 6 where we now explore the material equation in the framework of lifestyle migration among working people.

6. Pioneering the Material World



Figure 6 - Christina Kargillis, *Idea*, 2006

"The self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities"

Gilles Deleuze in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (249)

This chapter identifies change agents through the material world in relation to money, work and personal pursuits. It follows on from Chapter 5's focus on how the small town community functions. What has worked for people in their relocation and what hasn't? What are some of the economic and business challenges they've overcome? Here we discuss experiences which inspired change where concepts such as innovation, risk, remote work practice, success and passion are explored. This sits in contrast to Chapter 7 which explores emotional change and wellbeing, particularly in relation to the natural environment.

6.1 Money

Lack of employment stability is the key challenge for this working-demographic of lifestyle migrants, introducing the impact of money upon identity development and sustained relocation. Narratives addressed the value of money in divergent ways – less need compared to more need in relation to simplicity and consumerism, to be explored in Chapter 7– but most acknowledged the importance of relocating with a safety net. As Alexander suggests it “holds them over for a while so they're not too stressed out about having to make money and gives you a bit of time to settle in, network, build connections, and that's how you get the work.”

The narratives can be grouped into three categories which define levels of security that participants experienced before plunging into the depths of uncharted territory:

- Category 1: Financial safety net for at least 12 months, and/or an assumption of work
- Category 2: Financial safety net for at least 12 months, and no secured work
- Category 3: No financial safety net and no secured work

The 'assumption of work' refers to work with the same employer but the location has changed *or* there is an offer of full or part-time employment; where 'no secured work' refers to self-employment, non-regular employment, no employment; and 'financial safety net' refers to savings, despite home ownership status. The reference to 12 months is based on the timeframe given through ABS figures (2006d) where anecdotally 12,954 new residents 'hit' the study site each year. Changing the criteria to a six month safety net would find only two

participants left in Category 3. As a small study of 22 participants however, the value in identifying these parameters is not statistical but theoretical.

The most common scenario is shown in Category 2 comprising nine participants who took a calculated risk through relocation, having a safety net or assistance behind them and no secured work. It's important to note that this group contains lifestyle migrants who were wealthy upon arrival as well as others who had struggled considerably over the ensuing five years, and beyond. Category 1 assumes seven participants and Category 3 assumes six. Therefore, having a financial safety net, as was the case for 16 of 22 lifestyle migrants in this book, is a dominant theme among those who have managed to survive the pioneering quest.

The circumstances vary considerably between individual stories within these sub groups, as Category 3, no financial safety net and no secured work, shows:

1. Andrew cut ties back home and had the money from the sale of his house. However he purchased a home in Noosa upon arrival and would need to be working within 12 months. He found it challenging to find work on building sites and had to start his own business. It's been a struggle financially, now compounded by his marriage break up and half renovated house, and he's considered leaving because of the need for more money.
2. Adriane has a professional background in a 'portable career'. She misjudged the market for her skills locally and made the assumption that she could work remotely. She was essentially forced into self-employment because of the lack of work opportunities and struggled significantly. She took on voluntary work to make contacts and eventually joined forces with others to form a company. After a few more years of struggle they are making progress with the business. She doesn't believe the relocation is worth it but can't leave because of the children.
3. Geoff and his family arrived with no money and no job. He found work driving taxis which lasted under 12 months, after which time he became unemployed and suffered severe depression for the next two years. At the end of 12 months he says he felt he'd made a great mistake in relocating. Through addressing his depression by exploring his creative capacity and a growing self-worth he's

created a new life and is currently pursuing his professional potential. He's happy for the relocation.

4. Jasmine has a professional background and carries an expectation of success based upon a positive attitude and a solid skills set. She arrived with little money and initially accepted ad-hoc work, then exploring self-employment enterprises but struggling to meet her needs. Years later, she was offered a stable professional position appropriate for her experience. She has no desire to return to a city.
5. Lew worked in building and construction when he arrived 35 years ago, when the culture of the area was rough and renegade. He needed to be working, whatever he could find, and couldn't rely on savings. He was also building his house and developing his artistic practice at the same time. He says there was more work in the industry back then as the region was developing but it constantly kept him 'on his toes'. He has never regretted the move.
6. Murray is another family man, self-employed in building and construction. Like Andrew, he sold his house and purchased in Noosa and so his savings only lasted for the first six months during which time he renovated the new house until he needed income. He was in the position of having to make it work with 'no going back'. He established local contacts, taking on a variety of jobs that differed from his background, and which also showed him where he needed to focus his professional development. He has managed to sustain himself and his family but he works long hours in trying to re-establish himself. However, he says he would never go back now.

This outline shows six varying experiences with differing appraisals on relocation. There are also participants in the most secure Category 1 – financial safety net and assumption of work – who underwent high stress and financial struggle during the first 12 months. One such example is Donna, a single woman who commuted to and from an existing job in Brisbane for the first six months, paying a mortgage in the Noosa area and rent on a property in Brisbane. The financial and driving stress in this scenario prompted her to buy a tourism business and base herself solely in Noosa. At the 12 month mark she was struggling financially. She didn't

have prior experience in tourism or self-employment where the unstable economic patterns in the industry created grave hardship, as she pioneered her way forward.

Her financial trouble has inspired reflection and learning in regards to her values and she says: “I went through a lot of stress recently about thinking that I was going to have to leave Noosa, and that’s why I was scrambling at doing all of these other things. It’s like a survival instinct.” Where many of the working demographic of lifestyle migrants would (and do) leave in the face of financial hardship, according to participants, Donna experiences more stress from the thought of leaving. This is further pronounced considering her background in the rich industry of mining where she says she would be earning AU\$200K by now and where in addition, her family background urges caution:

“I don’t want to end up like my mum and my grandfather who went bankrupt. [So the financial thing is really strong for you and yet you chose to put yourself in this position where it’s harder to earn good money?] Yes but the need to have a balanced life is stronger. I worked really hard in the mining industry. I’d work 10 hour days and have one day off in four weeks. I never had holidays. I’ve lost a bit of money on the business so I regret that, but I don’t regret leaving the mining industry.”

Approximately half of the narratives indicated lack of money as a major problem, but almost all spoke of the economic instability where for some, when the economy is in a high there’s plenty of money and when it’s in a low there is a lull, which is a somewhat different story. Certainly it is not only the building and construction industry that suffers the fate of economic fluctuation as digital creatives, tourism operators and professional service operators in this book have indicated. In Duncan’s experience (Category 1: financial safety net with secured work) he talks about having to “armrest” from his 3D computer graphics work on a regular basis when things are slow. He believes he is well trained for this pattern through his life in Sydney, with the clear advantage now of not having the city’s consumer culture to add to the pressure: “When I was living in Sydney I was doing the band thing so I was quite used to living lean so when I came here I knew how to handle that, especially at a beach suburb you don’t need too much money living here whereas in the city your time is just bloody shopping.” Money has grown in significance however for Duncan with growing concerns regarding security for later life, along with a want to explore the natural environment more fully through boating, kyaking and the like.

While Duncan had secured work through existing contacts in the first 12 months, that ceased shortly afterward and he needed to pursue new directions in order to sustain the move. This option entailed twice redefining himself professionally where further study forms part of that transition. For others, as Adriane has noticed, “There’s a lot of anxiety though and people kind of bearing with it for the benefit of the children until it blows up – divorces and separation I’m talking about. There’s also a lot of the economic hardship and sticking with it because of the lack of options here.”

Upon relocating, Jasmine modified her financial expectations, placing lifestyle as a priority over money, but discovered that the value of money for her clients was elevated, “I found people’s attitudes surprising because generally [criticisms about cost] was from the people who were not short of money. Having said that what I’ve noticed up here is that people appear to be wealthy but actually aren’t.” This façade of wealth is possibly due to unstable economy where money can be plentiful and then suddenly scarce. Steve manages serviced offices and comments on this façade:

“You think someone’s business is going great and they’re only making \$40k a year. I’m sure people think the Boardroom is loaded but we’re just making enough to earn a decent living, nothing flash. The perception I think is that if you’ve got a business in Noosa and you’ve been here a while you’re making millions. If I was making millions I wouldn’t be working.”

Geoff’s narrative found him in a two-year state of depression, triggered by unemployment but centred more around a lack of self-esteem. His experience has led to valuable realisations about money, which have catalysed change within him.

“I’ve really seen the value of money since I’ve been here and I appreciate the value of what it buys – it buys you choice. Poverty and running away from career and all that stuff gives you a lack of choice. I suppose that’s one of my biggest changes since I’ve been here – I’m embracing money more.”

Similarly to Geoff, Amanda also encountered depression shortly after relocation. Significantly different to Geoff however, she places status as a key value and when her role as the primary income earner dissipated it catalysed a change that eventuated in her acceptance of different aspects of herself:

“But it wasn’t until I lost my job that I realised how much I was divorced from the children. I didn’t value myself as a mother. I over valued myself as a primary income earner and all of a sudden that gets taken out from underneath me and I took a hit emotionally and became quite depressed over it. So I had to then realign myself to the fact that yeah, I’m a mother too... At

first my sense of identity was damaged because I was really afraid I didn't have the status anymore, and I think that led to the depression as well."

Her depression was further fuelled by the debt of her self-employment venture:

"I had to take out a personal loan and draw down on two major credit cards. [So there was a bit of risk there?] Oh shit yeah. We've paid back most of our debt now. So the first three years was nose to the grindstone paying off debt – is this going to work is this going to work or are we going to have to shut down and lose all of our money."

The venture was successful however and I asked if self-employment was more of an achievement than the success she previously experienced where she replied, "No I think it's an equal achievement – it's pretty hard to make it in the corporate world."

On top of the instability and the lack of employment options, there's an expectation that people will earn less money for the same work compared to the city, because that's the sacrifice they make to live in a beautiful area where employment is low. Potentially this is a cultural aspect which supports the trade exchange or barter system operating in the area. Tamsin is one of four who discussed the scenario. She recalls that when she first arrived she was paying people to provide services where now:

"We all make no money, but it's also nice to be in the trade exchange because we've got into that very local economy. Our daughter's going to start ceramics classes with a good friend of ours and in exchange, Ross is going to build a beautiful kick wheel for them. Getting into that changes a lot, it doesn't exist so much in the city – it's more administratively organised I guess. So at about five years you start to get into the other economy."

As mentioned, Jasmine had reduced her professional freelance rate upon arrival and she comments on the futility of the trade system: "When it came to pay day she asked if I would accept a bag of yoga clothes and I had to explain that taking that bag to the bank to pay my mortgage may not actually work. She was probably the point at which I thought I don't want to do this anymore." Rhana does engage with the trade exchange when it's beneficial to her however she debates the assumption of having to accept less pay and has actually elevated her professional rate rather than lowering it:

"Initially I was putting it our cheaper I think because I thought I should, but a marketing company up here on the coast advised me that was a really bad idea because you gotta raise the bar, they said, or you cheapen everything else if you put yourself too cheap so I went OK, fine. So I put it up higher and I get probably more work. Although in saying that there have

been some people who have found my rate a bit high, so I just won't work for them. I've never considered lowering it for them."

6.2 I've Never Seen Anyone on the Beach With a Laptop

The notion of remote working practices is a beacon for some lifestyle migrants, offering a cure to the problem of financial sustainability. However *Small Town Pioneers* found that there are some limitations, with the image of the Richard Florida 'creative class' (2002) workers having instilled some unreliable assumptions for those relocating with portable careers. Working remotely requires reliable technology, excellent organisation skills and contacts aside from the ability to adopt a rather insular existence (Richardsdon and Bennetts 2010).

Certainly however several narratives promoted the benefits of remote work practices, which are undeniable in theory. Lisa positions the trend as "an extension of the innovation" where people no longer need to occupy buildings to generate money and instead they can create from different environments and places while enjoying the lifestyle and the diversity of the natural environment. Adriane however is one of eight who practices remote work practices in conjunction with having local clients, and discusses some of the difficulties which arise from it, ranging from the need to over-perform to miscommunication where:

"I would have meetings where I'd really need to sell my approach to the team – 'we're doing this because this and this and this', and I know that the designers produce something very off the plan so I need to see what they want to contribute or if they get what I'm trying to achieve. So, I'd be on a conference call to see what he thinks and the project manager would say, 'Oh he's just popped out to get a sandwich'."

She commented that she thought she could go anywhere with her skills and when asked if she anticipated the risk in establishing a remote business she said, "No I didn't... I thought surely I can make something, and that risk would have been totally minimised if I would have gone to Sydney or Melbourne where, because of my background, my value would've been acknowledged in the right circles." This comment also implies a lack of awareness of industry standards in the area as a place more concerned with lifestyle than money, as previously discussed. Risk is explored further on.

She also discusses the lack of satisfactory technology with clients and the need for quality videoconferencing equipment to achieve effective communication in such instances, adding,

“even then I’ve found it hard going. If you’re there you can pop into the office, you know.” She feels “outdone” by the competition of local providers which forces her to “do better and deliver more than the local, so again I find there’s quite a lot of stress.” Karen also raised this issue of extending oneself beyond the norm, likening remote working practices to “what women went through”.

Karen and her husband own an international medical writing company, highly esteemed on a world stage with the majority of their client base in the US. She suggests, “If you were good enough they would seek you out anywhere around the world.” However, this lack of proximity requires compensation: “And then what are you willing to do to rely on technology? Are you still willing to make in-person visits and hand shake you know. I think anyone who thinks that whole human contact is not important is really missing the whole idea.” For Karen, allowing location to become an issue is ill-advised and promoting her lifestyle change is viewed as “downright lazy” by Australians, suggesting that people overseas are generally only familiar with Sydney, through the Olympic Games, and this relative anonymity is beneficial: “The only time it’s come up is when they’ve booked international flights for us and they say we can’t find Noosa international airport. So they don’t care.”

She established a model for remote working to ensure that clients would receive the same service, “It’s not their issue, it’s my issue. If I have to pop on a plane to get to a meeting in Canberra, that’s my issue. You have to make it work. So I would go down for a monthly board meeting and work very hard to go above and beyond the call of duty – you have to over perform.” These measures also require financial provision, impacting the business plan and budget, as well as the additional stress discussed by Adriane. However Karen also suggests that when your worth is proven, clients become more accommodating, “They say well will it work better for you with this teleconference 7AM your time instead of 2AM your time? So I always say you have to prove yourself first – don’t be expecting any favours. I don’t think they’re ready to start the ‘remotism’ movement quite yet though.” Another reason for Karen’s success is the decision to specialise because on a global scale she cautions, you can’t be a global player in everything.

Rhana works from home as a graphic designer where all but one of her clients are local, despite her capacity to work globally. She found that, “... proximity is important in allowing clients to get to know me. And the networks are important too if someone has a job and my

husband might say, 'Oh she can do it'." Rhana was supplying old contacts initially and says that proximity is important in securing the work but not in generating the work or following it through. "It would be hard to find work from someone who's in Brisbane but if the person with the [job] contact is local, you're considered, or it doesn't matter that you're not living there..." At the time of interview she was pursuing a local contact with clients in New Zealand.

For self-employed participants, remote client arrangements outside the 'drive market,' is problematic and doesn't automatically deliver a solution. Fundamentally however the internet does enable one to work from any location and is advantageous in lifestyle migration. In John's auto shop, "You'd be surprised how many radiators I sell out of Noosa..." and his sentiments are shared by Donna who considers her forthcoming online shop as extra money for little effort where even her tourism business is now marketing internationally. Duncan attracts the majority of his clients through online advertising for his 3D digital imaging business, while retaining some contacts from his home town of Sydney. Anita has also retained contacts from her previous life in the television industry and was 'Facebooked' by a former colleague, asking if she wanted to work in the TV again, "... I said no. She asked me for my phone number and rang me up, offered me this New York wage in Kin Kin and I went, I can do that."

However the isolation faced by remote workers is also unanticipated by many. Amanda, businesswoman, highlights the lack of networking opportunities for internet based workers: "How do we further connect and promote cohesion for the knowledge workers because they're obviously missing out? They're sitting at home wondering who else is doing stuff on the coast while Jo Blogs is at the networking breakfast." Rhana says she needs to communicate with other professional people and has begun Skyping with one of her clients online, setting up chats, "... almost to the point of that kind of camaraderie you have in an office where they're sitting beside me. So it's almost like I don't feel as isolated as I did when I first started working, and I need that." Adriane decided to form a company with other likeminded colleagues after battling it alone and says that working in a team provides more joy, while Duncan suggests he and his wife have become more introverted since relocating compared to their life in Sydney where they were "out and about all the time" because now he meets less people. Steve, who runs serviced offices, notes that clients often comment on the interaction they experience by using his business, especially if they've been working from home, "Oh it's so nice to be in an office environment." Finally, Angus considers remote working conditions "a moral issue" when he suggests that:

“It’s the vertical integrators who employ people here because they own businesses and shops and there are those people who sit in front of a computer and that’s cool, and sit in Noosa Waters but they’re not really contributing to the community, just enjoying the lifestyle... If everyone had the same collective mentality then it works. But it doesn’t if you’ve got some freak sitting at a laptop buying and selling shares... you gotta have a shot at your community.”

A key skill which was common among lifestyle migrants working remotely was organisation. Donna suggests administrative ability developed through her former career enabled her to pioneer into the new territory of tourism, while Rhana discusses her home office space: “I wake up and am at work by 8:30 – the kids are gone the computer’s on and I will only enter the kitchen to get my lunch. But I’ve had to separate the office, not from the house but from the living part of the house – at one stage it was off the lounge room and it was really part of my life, my whole 24 hour life.”

6.3 The Miscalculation of Relocation

“There is a business here just reselling restaurants – they’re always available because people come thinking it’s a wonderful lifestyle choice to buy a restaurant, kick back and only work part-time,” says Local Councilor Lew who’s portfolio includes economic development. The restaurant business attracted many comments among participants which then, in most cases, led to study site specific joke – “You know how to make a million bucks in Noosa don’t you – bring two.” John, auto shop proprietor, has watched the scenario many times:

“These restaurants they’re at the whim of the landlords. They’re not doing their homework. What you do if you’re buying a restaurant is you go and see the person who owned it two times ago. Find out who the landlord is and if he’s a bastard. How many people have bought a friggin’ restaurant down here and gone broke within 12 months? If there’s been five people go broke within the last 10 years, well you wouldn’t buy that restaurant. It took me probably six years to get these shops. I was lookin lookin because I knew what I was gonna pay for it on a square metre basis.”

Lew warns that any business requires commitment, professional management, good staff, good product and service, adding that along with the high rents, it’s “... a hard business to succeed at.” His comments also touch on some of the principles of simplicity where enjoying the lifestyle needs to be balanced with economy and innovation:

“Their house should be inexpensive, they shouldn’t have overheads because that’s what’s going to kill them in the tough times and... you don’t go to a restaurant three nights a week. They

turn up here with some sort of expectation about an ability to make a living, and that's not here, it's not available, you have to make that happen rather than expect it to happen... They don't get the fact that you've gotta have three jobs and one of them might be washing dishes, the other one might be cleaning windows and the other one might be you've just put a whole lot of energy into a crazy scheme that will either make you rich or broke."

He has experienced the dynamics around this miscalculation of work expectations among his friends, witnessing many marriages dissolve in response. In addition, he cites the working holiday makers who "... undercut and create a level of competition that's hard to identify and hard to fight against because they don't have the overheads, particularly in the trades." This adds to the instability of the economy and the rates of transience.

Brad works in tourism administration and says he sees those with long-term intentions come and fail "all the time", often buying management rights or a tour operator business which they're unfamiliar with, much like the novice restaurateurs, and realizing, "You've got to be receptionist, marketing person, the grounds person, finance manager – you've got to wear all these different hats and people really struggle with it and all of a sudden it's not the lifestyle decision that they thought it was going to be. They're working seven days a week, they're on call 24 hours a day – it's a sink or swim scenario." He suggests one of the major causes of business failure is that newcomers don't ask for advice. They can't be expected to understand the best way to operate without experience and according to him there's much wisdom in the community with people willing share their knowledge, starting with tourism organisations such as his. If the budget allows, he also urges contracting services such as marketing which he says, everyone *thinks* they can do, or accounting.

"You gotta research the area that you're in thoroughly and understand how your business fits into the community, whether there's a demand and need for it. You gotta do a business plan you gotta do a marketing plan, you gotta do due diligence and that's what I think people don't do – they make emotional decisions not practical decisions, and you gotta think whether it's right for you I mean you know, small business is hard work. My parents have a small business and I can see it consumes their life, and my brother works in the business now and it consumes his life – it's all they talk about, they have nothing else outside of that business and that's the same with a lot of people.

"The smart ones are that ones who can manage the business to the level of getting some good people in to run the business so that they can start working more on the business than in the business. Ninety per cent of people you talk to spend a majority of time working in the

business. They say that they don't have time to do their marketing plans or to think about how their customer acquisition is working or their customer management program."

Sometimes the failures are due to a misreading of the market. Steve deals with new small businesses to the area and explains that many fail because they assume that offerings which proved successful in the city context will translate to a region, when often they don't, while Chris comments on newcomers who buy themselves a business and can kill it by funding the wrong aspects of it, "You gotta start of small and let the business tell you what's going on. I've seen people buy businesses and do renovations and change the whole feel of the business and the first thing that happens is that they lose all the regular customers and the good will that was there." Chris believes that many lifestyle migrants from an office background who relocate to the study site and buy a business don't understand how to be creative, "That's the problem right there. That's a big thing. Maybe somebody needs to start consulting to these people. But it's hard to teach that. You gotta experience it... and you need street smarts."

Due to limited work opportunities, a self-employment and/or multi-tasking approach is adopted by many lifestyle migrants in order to sustain their relocation. This scenario reflects Angus's earlier comments on the correlation between vertical integration and the self-sufficient pioneering spirit, as explored in Chapter 5. Sixteen of 22 participants in this book had come from the co-dependent environment inherent in a 'horizontal existence', characterized by the employer/ employee relationship that dominates urban centres, or suggest that even where they were on contract that is how they felt, whereas small towns is largely characterized by small business.

Alexander applied for 50 jobs upon arrival and only received only one reply. This is potentially because word-of-mouth is so powerful in the region, as previously discussed, where opportunities bypass conventional channels. Certainly, a few years later in his successful sustainability business, he says approximately half of his employees came through word-of-mouth rather than advertising. Reflecting on his unsuccessful applications he says, "The message was very strong about doing your own thing. A lot of the jobs I applied for are not what I wanted – it was more for the security, so I'm not sure what I would've done had I gotten any of those jobs."

He attempted three different businesses and the third was successful. When asked if he had anticipated the challenges he says, "No not at all. I thought it's going to be really easy, I'll

invest the money in a company and help them to grow and it would be a breeze. I thought that I was so smart and I had a bit of money so I thought it should be easy.” He cites the cause of his earlier failures as related to marketing, which supports Brad’s comment that everyone *thinks* they can do marketing: “So in my learning I went from focus on the customer’s needs to the customer’s wants, and that’s what made this last business really work.”

Gayne moved to the area from an international career and transformed a building and construction company with four employees and five graduates to a business that employs 188 people with multiple manufacturing locations and an overseas focus, where his actions have been modeled financially and business-wise. He successfully recontextualised his previous experience in business for this role:

“A lot of ideas I had when I was in the big end of town, I’ve been able to bring them back into a small business environment and plant those to grow the organization. It’s very rare that you get the opportunity to grow ideas that were created in a big business environment and watch how that business will evolve as a result of that. I started off consulting and then... it doesn’t matter what the product is, doesn’t matter what the market is, doesn’t matter who the people are, business is a vehicle. It’s a way of exploiting the elements that are available to you. I don’t see banking business as any different to manufacturing business the principles are the same.”

He relocated with no business expectations aside from the intention to manage the work he would take on to a position where he was comfortable, by connecting the inputs and outputs of prior business practices and principles. Recalling Brad’s comments on having to wear multiple “hats”, Gayne was initially consulting to the business and undertook manufacturing, accounts, research and development and sales. He created a plan to build the business from a narrow base and when it began to gain momentum he was able to populate the positions. He also grew the salaries to match executive rates that city employees could expect:

“If you know what your milestones are and you stick to those programs you can enjoy growing at a controlled pace and still enjoy exploiting the product. There really hasn’t been any stumbling in this process at all because I spent so much time analyzing it. Everyone’s saying to me now in business – you walk in and it’s like a black cloud. Why is that given that you’re so successful right now? The answer is that if you’re looking at the moment you’re not looking at the outcome, the outcome. You can’t have another moment like this without looking at the manufacturing concern, without changing the manufacturing processes, without looking ahead. So if you’re not working 18-24 months out you’re not running the business.”

Gayne warns that business is complex now compared to his father's generation where carpenters for example need a solid commercial business understanding in order to prosper, along with being able to anticipate changes and pitfalls. He believes that part of the reason that 70 per cent of small businesses fail in the first 12 months in a city or a region is due to miscalculated business plans or financial expectations, or else personal expectations:

“A lot of people who come up here think that they have the skills set but don't have the skills set – perception and reality. The reality is that working in a medium to large organization means that you can provide for your wife and kids and starting a small business doesn't necessarily translate into that. A lot of people don't try to recalibrate their lifestyle back so they come from a middle management to senior management position earning \$150-200k per year, company car, large house, out to dinner three or four times per week, a couple of holidays then they come up here and they're lucky profit wise \$50K.”

Karen and her husband have operated their self-funded medical writing business for 10 years and she says they've taken the best of corporate to include staff training, professional development programs, standard operating procedures and professional leaderships, with staff paid against industry world-best benchmarks: “It's not a flaky decision, in fact our desire to be professional is even stronger than when we were sitting in the professional world.”

They felt at risk financially for the first six months until there was money in the bank but only suffered three nights in their history, worrying about what the wage bill amounted to and where the work would be found. “In the last five years even with the GFC it hasn't been like that. Ninety per cent of businesses that last 10 years survive pretty much as long as you decide.” In the first year Karen recalls they were overextending themselves on occasion too by accepting work that they struggled to deliver on. The original business plan she and her husband created was “naive” because she acknowledged that they knew nothing about marketing, IT or human resources, among other aspects but they enjoyed the “adrenaline kick you get,” which promoted learning in their pioneering forward: “There's no one to say what do we do here – you look at yourself and say what do I need to do here.”

Employing staff also creates an inherent responsibility for their welfare and that of their families, as earlier highlighted by Angus in the construction business, which adds to the onus of attending to strategy and raising standards, in Karen's experience: “I think you have to be good enough that people will follow you. It also means that your networking needs to be more strategic, your willingness to travel is important – you're not travelling every day.” She believes

a strong work ethic and pride in the work is essential particularly in the knowledge economy business where her delivery is pitted against the best in the world, warning that: "It's not going to happen if you come up here and think 'Oh yeah, I'll get around to it'." Karen's company is now raising the profiles of its staff where she's determined to keep the structure small enough to allow this as a strategy to build the business profile further, while she also makes a point of procuring local service providers such as printers and says even her graphic designers have had their work praised by businesses on Madison Avenue, New York.

6.4 Understanding Innovation, Risk and Success

The discussion on the miscalculation of relocation begs the question – at what point do pioneers become deserters? Risk taking is a characteristic of the study site that all participants acknowledged and many identified with, while some stipulated their skills in the risk *management* of challenges (Risk Management 2010). In addition to this and common to all participants is the ability to learn and evolve through the challenges that allows progressive self-efficacy to develop and where for example 18 of 22 of the people profiled in this book had entered into a new field of work and/or dramatically new way of working such as self-employment since relocation. This problem-solving aspect introduces innovation into the equation, along with a new found understanding of success in many cases where for some, the lack of money promoted innovation and creative problem-solving in the pursuit of more while for others it encouraged a satisfying pursuit of simplicity lifestyle. However, innovation was apparent in both groups.

In order to understand the influence of innovation upon the lifestyle migration experience it's important to define the term: Innovation is the process of coming up with new ideas or new uses for old ideas. To be innovative the ideas must add value (ANTA 2001b). Therefore in the context of how the survivors manage to survive, innovation is explored in relation to problem-solving challenges and in addition to the creation of 'value-adding' ideas and strategies, and it's discussed in line with risk assessment and notions of success where relevant.

All narratives indicated innovation to varying degrees as a requirement for sustaining the relocation, recalling Lew's earlier comments, "What you find is that a clear majority of the demographic is more comfortable in that less lawful less constructed social fabric, and that's an interesting place to be. It either attracts people because it's exciting or people choose to

stay away because it's too exciting for them." Some acknowledged their innovation, which is also termed creativity throughout the narratives, as an emerging skill through the lifestyle migration quest while others advise it was already present.

Gayne suggests some of the mechanisms which promote the development of, or reinforce the existence of innovation where the condensation of a broad range of people in a small geographic area allows more exposure to influences in other businesses and market places:

"Then you have to overlay that against the net where it acts as an accelerator – you have access to information literally as you walk out the door and as you enter an environment and digest that group of people with a broad spectrum background and get their feedback – wow, that's fantastic..." He suggests his creativity stems from a variety of different stimuli which don't relate to the move, unlike the majority of participants, with his most creative times being in the shower in the morning or straight after a migraine: "I thrive creatively on stimulus and if I don't have the right stimuli I will create it, I've been known to create arguments to divert latent energy that I've got sitting there into something that will burn and the outcome of that is more clear thought. Any Greek or Italian and most French would understand it." Innovation can be seen in his business strategy:

"We struck a deal with areas across the world that Australia and western countries find difficult to work with. Saudi Arabia is one of the most difficult markets but it's also potentially one of the most lucrative. The Saudis dominate business right through the top end of Africa. For us to make any significant inroads into large area construction which is essentially where our products lie, we have to work in non-traditional areas and the whole philosophy of this business is certainly not looking at the norm."

While he says he hasn't changed through his relocation, rather that his business has changed to reflect him, his understanding of success has changed through managing the business on his own terms rather than for a large corporation, which *is* contingent on the small town context:

"If I were still in the international market in Asia my goals would be almost the same, though I'm more focused now on doing things from my perspective and I now know that I don't need the corporate dollar to become successful. I always thought that money breeds money but all it does is it reduces the time frame of development. So from a very fundamental base of cash I can still feel a success, I just have to recalibrate the timeframe... Success at one stage was about the bottom line and then it became very much about the journey with the team of how the team evolved through step changes and now and I get more satisfaction out of seeing the team evolve than the bottom line. The bottom line is an outcome of the process. I was nominated for a national management award and one of the questions related to revenue and

profitability against your budgets for that year and I said you can't talk about it in isolation, it's a ridiculous proposition because it's part of the journey. We invested a lot during that year in readiness for the coming year. I've seen managers who've slaughtered businesses because they've managed to the bottom line... last year was a great success because I ploughed the field, reaped the crop from the preceding year and I fertilized other aspects of the business.

"I've changed my perspective on success because I've been the architect, I've taken control from inception so I've been able to apply my collective knowledge of different parts of businesses I've worked on and modify them based on a business that's evolving, yet the principles are very similar. The application of those principles need to be tempered or accelerated or heightened dependent on where you are in the process and it's been really enlightening to me to be able to know the facts of that data. To take the outcomes of that and turn it into a business model which we're now licensing, that beckons to me an indication of success in terms of being able to copy the process. So now they're not only licensing our IP, our product, they're licensing our systems. Personally and professionally that's probably been one of my greatest box ticks that I've put down. It's been about living and growing a business from its inception... I went into the business with the expectation that it had the ability of growth and therefore the opportunity to be successful. If it had a limited horizon it wouldn't appeal to me because I'll get to that horizon and be dissatisfied with the outcome."

Philanthropically, Gayne's changing understanding of success has led him to charitable work where he's exploring indigenous housing in the Northern Territory with the intention of leaving a legacy, "... training indigenous community how to maintain their own homes, even design and build their own homes. I'm also working on the proposition that doing good business is also about engagement with community and leaving something there." As a 'high flyer' his greatest risk in leaving "the big end of town" was personal reputation where he was:

"...scared I would get off the professional merry go round. Everyone said once you reach CEO, MD status you're at the pinnacle of you career – you fall off that ladder and it's very difficult to climb back up, and they said once you reach 35 you're obsolete. I was coming up to 40 and I was just paranoid. I'm gonna end up packing boxes or shelves for the rest of my life, because that was everything that had been told to me from professional circles."

In Donna's experience innovation is strongly linked to simplicity lifestyle where creativity is developed through necessity: "I've definitely become more creative since moving here. Since I haven't had much money I've become more creative in the way that I do things... it's actually very therapeutic to step back and say, I made that. This wouldn't have happened in Brisbane because I'd get caught up in my own world I don't know, I seem to have more time here..."

Essentially Donna has been forced to create opportunities for herself through struggling with a cash flow problem since purchasing a tourism business shortly after her move, “It’s like a survival instinct. [Was that instinct just as strong in you in the city environment?] No, it’s something I’ve discovered about myself.”

Her solution was to develop career goals around a range of businesses that hold personal interest for her, represents a strong example of the multi-tasking referred to in this book. She says she’s always been a risk taker: “I bought the house and decided now I have to make it work,” and at the time of interview, she mentioned six business activities that she was either currently undertaking or preparing for: “I have an ideas book that I keep jotting down ideas in or else I forget. I have so many ideas since I’ve been here, from business to design...” I asked her if this chopping and changing of business interests was the way of the future and she confirmed, suggesting she was satisfied with the situation, however she also has a backup plan through contacts at her old job in Brisbane should things prove unmanageable. Alexander also identified with the continual changing and reassessing of his business due to relocation however he says: “One of my goals for the next business is to not sell but to keep it and make it generate a continuous cash flow so that leads to security in some way. [But to get there you have to be very flexible.] Yeah and I’m really happy to create it myself. I don’t want to be employed at all.”

Andrew is one participant who acknowledges his existing capacity for innovation, rather than suggesting that relocation challenges inspires its development: “Well you arrive, things get difficult and you innovate. I’ve always done that. I’ve always chopped and changed [with work] so it doesn’t really phase me...” His story however reveals an acknowledgment of a growing capacity, or self-efficacy, in entering into his own business after encountering obstacles to finding work. Through short-term employment with a handyman, he learnt how to apply his skills to a new context: “He was so bad at it I thought I can do better than this. [Is that something that you’d always done around the house?] Pretty much yeah.”

In an attempt to formulate innovation from his narrative: Innovation involves flexibility with skills and the self-efficacy to develop and pursue goals in changing contexts. This appraisal is derived from his whole narrative rather than only the excerpt shown above. The same approach follows for a selection of other participants, in no particular order, however it is important to note that flexibility was relevant to each of the 22 participants.

Alexander was inspired to start a business after numerous unanswered and unsuccessful job applications, eventually finding success after his learning curve in marketing. He was fuelled by his passion for the sustainability industry:

“I followed my passion even in Germany, so that hasn’t changed. The lack of opportunity here just pushed me along to make it happen... I would never have done that in Germany and I don’t really know what’s different but the feeling is different. Here it’s OK and it felt safe to do that but in Germany everything is more structured and you wouldn’t just take a job when it comes in.”

He’s been flexible in adapting to the culture of the place and accepting unstable work patterns. On a community level, Alexander believes “... innovation is in the way they have to be flexible because you can get stubborn in saying ‘I am’ a whatever they used to be ‘and that’s what I want to be here’, and they can’t let go of that, so they either have to leave or go to Brisbane for work...”

His approach to risk is calculated: “I consider myself a risk manager. I’m really really conscious of risk and try to manage it in the best way. For example setting up this business I put very little money into it and the way I developed the business system it was always really low risk with regards to the money and the cash flow. So it’s managing risk.” He also cites intentional use of the natural environment for gaining clarity – this is explored further in Chapter 7. From his narrative, innovation is shown through following his passion, made possible in the absence of power structures, where flexibility and self-efficacy support the development of goals, along with reflection time to assess ideas through the natural environment.

Angus has experienced losses primarily through the building industry and has learnt that when taking a risk, it should be taken in the high cycle of the economy and never in the low:

“There’s an element of intrigue with the area in that you can’t be complacent here. But I don’t think anyone wants to take unnecessary risk – I enjoy risk but not unnecessary risk. In essence the uncertainty inhibits risk rather than encourages it. But the people who are here are risk takers because those who came here with money pumped money into the society on the premise that they were going to make something back. They’re the people who we buy stuff from at the shops.”

He believes the cultural context of small town living is one of economic risk, comparatively to a city, where the concept of risk is supported on a community level. His decision to venture away from his building career and into retail was a short-term response to the continual problems of

financial instability, "... just to take a leap outside the square and try something different." Angus does believe he's become more innovative since relocating and says it's evident in him physically, emotionally, and "almost spiritually" because, "I have become, I suppose, reactive to my environment." His flexibility and growing self-efficacy allowed him to take risks in response to changing environments, tempered through reflection in the natural environment.

Anita started a swim school in the hinterland, which grew to a part-time business. It was born from a position of economic problem-solving:

"So then I was working out how much it would cost to get a swimming instructor to come to our house... Of course the neighbours found out and their kids came and their friends came and the Kin Kin play group found out and they came and it ended up being 15 kids that she taught on one afternoon... Then the rest of the hinterland towns found out about my swimming lessons and I got all these phone calls and so I spoke to the instructor about doing two days per week and so that was good and then one day she was sick and I thought 'Oh my God who can I get to do this?' So I thought I'd better go and do the course, even though I was pregnant with baby number four, so after he was born I did the course and the instructor taught me everything I know so it was perfect. We're now three days a week and we have 80 students. It's not a huge income. It's more satisfying."

She also discusses innovation in the context of having pioneered a new lifestyle, coming from a fast-paced television career in London, and identifies structure or more specifically, fear of lack of structure, as inhibitory to innovation, preventing her friends from following suit. Her story maps growing self-efficacy and demonstrates flexibility towards innovation.

"We get lots of our English friends and family coming over to stay. They've all realized... when we first came out they thought why are they doing this, they both had great jobs in London and they came all the way out here. When they visit us they say 'Oh now I can see why you did this, this is amazing'. We say 'you can do it too' and they say 'no we couldn't do that'. I think they won't let themselves because they need to feel people on top of them and around them yet they love it when they come out to see us. But I think it freaks them out because of the lack of structure. We've created our own structure and that's made us more independent and more pioneering."

In terms of risk, Anita believes her friends feel they need to follow the norm where she went against the norm. "I guess they work to create a sense of identity whereas we, I don't know, we, I guess we're doing everything for our kids and for ourselves." She says she and her husband enjoy control over their lives now compared to their London life and much of that is due to living in a natural environment and to risk management:

“I’m not scared of risk – I see something I go for it, as long as I’m not spending a fortune in taking the risk. If it works I’m happy and that’s nine times out of 10... I don’t know why they’re scared, what can go wrong? The worst thing is that you run out of money. So what just come back home and get a job... We live on cash. If we don’t have the money we don’t spend it. I think people are afraid of going broke, of lack of security.”

Her capacity to innovate involves reflection facilitated by the natural environment where her self-efficacy and flexibility promote the development of goals towards innovative solutions, in response to need.

Chris allows his problem solving along with his passion for the water to lead his business innovations, from his first ice cream van along the river to his dog training, which includes stand up paddle boarding lessons for pooches:

“Certainly surf and lifestyle and beach and my hobbies and my pleasures turn into business... When I was driving boats the ice cream truck kept driving by and then I bought the ice cream business at First Point – the best business I’ve ever had, ticked all the boxes, a good living and a good lifestyle... and then I had a kebab one day and ran the kebab business, got it up and running and sold it a year later. After that I was doing a lot of surfing and long boarding and I kept breaking my board and said I’m going to open up a surf shop and had the first long board shop in Noosa and had that for a number of years then sold out of that and got into kite surfing and opened a kite surfing shop... I’ve been pretty lucky that the things I’ve tried over the years have been pretty successful and I guess the people in town over the past 20 years have seen that.”

He is a calculated risk taker and seeks the risk versus reward within that equation, admitting that it doesn’t always ‘add up’ however, he views losses as learning opportunities: “When people are doing business here and it doesn’t work they gotta find out why it didn’t work. It’s by asking those questions that’s gonna make it more successful if they decide to come back here. Some people might come back for a second try.” The flexibility to react to competition creates opportunity for him, where passion and self-efficacy are prime motivators. He supports Lew’s comments that lifestyle migrants need to create opportunities for themselves because of the competition and lack of opportunities existing. He values “gut instincts” and observation in place of hefty consultancy fees in business venture assessment.

This self-reliant approach is also reflected in John’s narrative and propels his innovation. He calls himself “pig headed” and has established highly successful businesses through “gut instinct”, potentially involving a strong capacity for risk assessment and self-efficacy along with

an ability to plan and develop goals. In addition, his flexibility is shown in the way he re-contextualises skills:

“If I decide I’m gonna do something I do it. I’m usually very comfortable with what I decide to do... [So there’s a lesson there about having confidence in your own judgement too] that’s right, gut feelings... As a builder you learn how to build shit you realise there’s a sequence of events, so you can take that level that might have nothing to do with building and go into something else. [Yes, transferable skills] Yeah. A lot of people don’t understand that, they don’t.”

This focus on transfer of skills is also reminiscent of Gayne’s previous comments on rebuilding a business based upon his experiences in the “big end of town”.

Duncan innovated through difficulty in securing a regular income stream and looked to retraining in response. He relocated as a computer animator with existing clients until the work slowed down and then retrained in adapting his 3D animation skills to fit the largest industry sector in the area, the building and construction industry. That also started to dissipate and he’s now training in building design.

“[Do you think it’s an indication of your creativity to work your way around it?] It could just be stupidity – yeah I guess it’s a little to do with being creative, when I was trying to find a way to make it work... [So would you say it’s fair to say the difficulties up here have encouraged you to grow in different directions?] Oh yeah, absolutely... well we still had a bit of money behind us and we decided to stay here and to change our field because there’s really nothing for animation up here... We decided we had to do something else that still involved our skill...”

He also discussed the distraction of consumer culture and finds more mental clarity since his move, therefore Duncan’s approach to innovation comprises flexibility in problem solving, where his self-efficacy nurtures the development of goals and where reflection is promoted through limited novelty or distractions.

Retraining has also reshaped Geoff, dramatically. When he befell his nightmare scenario through unemployment and ensuing depression in his first years, he pursued creative yearnings in photography, away from his background in liquor retail and taxi driving because: “I always wanted to do it and I suppose I figured that life couldn’t get much worse.” He has remodelled his life:

“I am definitely a risk taker but my experience here has probably made me a little more risk averse because I nearly paid the biggest price for it and for my wife and family – it nearly went terribly wrong, as wrong as it could. I suppose on the other side I’ve turned my life into

something new. So my world grew incredibly small here and then I had to expand again and so now I'm on this course of really extending myself professionally. That's the path I'm on now and it's on my own terms that's why I can do it."

Risk aversion was also discussed by Gayne who believes people are invariably security conscious, "... so when you put yourself out, unless you are particularly risk conscious, you become risk averse very quickly and you go back to what you know." Geoff couldn't have anticipated that one day he'd be teaching photography and echoes Alexander's earlier comment in saying:

"Certainly up here you can't set your mind on, I want to do one thing, you have to keep doing things until you work out what's going to succeed, so being stubborn about it is probably not the right attitude. Being stubborn certainly hasn't helped me – I've always had to innovate by necessity rather than by nature maybe, I don't know. But I've had to roll with the flow and keep changing."

This excerpt demonstrates his flexibility. He also says he feels more creative when he's pushed, under pressure, but not stressed and he has never equated success with career or money:

"I've really crystallised that in the last few years – success is just another word for happiness. I don't care how poor I am if I'm happy about life I'm successful. I've really tried to simplify that concept of success. I'm not that ambitious, I don't want much. You need what you need to be able to give yourself that space to be happy. There's so much stress in life."

This sentiment is echoed by Anita, Brad, Donna, Jasmine, Katrina, Lisa, Rhana, Steve and Tamsin, while some didn't discuss success. Such perspectives of success also influence a tendency towards simplicity lifestyle, as shall be explored in Chapter 7, however for Geoff, innovation occurs through flexibility towards problem solving in absence of external stressors, where his self-efficacy nurtures the development of goals.

Conversely, for businesswoman Amanda, success is "... not so much control... so success in the eyes of my boss, the glowing praise, or success in the eyes of the business community." Rather than seeking this status through employment as with her former life in corporate executive positions, she's, "replaced the corporate ladder with the aspirations to being a board member and being progressively appointed to more important boards." Despite this continuing pursuit of success she acknowledges that relocation has changed her: "I think I'd be a fish out of water. I don't think I could go back to a big city. I don't know... I've grown to like the

characteristics of the country community and I don't think I'd be able to be as cut throat and or cold. I'd be lost in a big city now."

Karen's view on success stems from a former stellar corporate career and her own successful business which ensued. She says that she was nervous when she first arrived in the area and was careful not to "big note" herself, commenting on a prevalence of boasting among newcomers, or as Jasmine would suggest, "...big fish little sea." Karen believes: "But you can be a bit of a tosser in corporate and you can believe that you are more important than you are so when I came here I didn't really have to change but I found it a relief that you didn't have to be Miss Corporate anymore." I asked how she compares her status and self-esteem now over her very professional career in Sydney, and her answer was centred on the theme of having control over her own life:

"Oh much more, much higher because we created it ourselves. For our industry probably one of the highest recognitions you could get is for the American Medical Writers' Association that has been going for 70 years. They've never had a non-US person invited to give their keynote address and I was invited to do that which I don't think I'd ever had the profile within corporate of doing that whereas in my own company I can stick my head up and say here are my views on the industry, here's some research that our company has funded, and all of a sudden people go 'Oh, who's that. And so in terms of self-esteem, to be invited and to meet the leaders of these organisations and invited to join their Boards is amazing to me. So somewhere along the road I've managed to get to a point or a recognition internationally that people think I can make a meaningful contribution and it comes then to the responsibility making sure that you live up to that and it's not just from your personal perspective or the company, but now you're representing Australia – then the Asia pacific Region – then every non-US based person."

An epiphany to start her own company came through a late night working back, editing material that'd been emailed from the other side of the world, for her corporate employer:

"I just don't know why we outsource this to the other side of the world when we can do a better job ourselves, and then the penny just dropped. Hang on a minute, we're using the internet to send this to the other side of the world and yet they do a worse job than us and we pay them twice as much – can't we just reverse that."

I asked if she considered herself a risk taker and she suggested: "The best scientists have creative minds who ask the questions that nobody else is asking." She believes that being away from "group think" encourages creativity and innovation and says it's not hard to be creative when you're out of that 'rat race', checking emails in your car, sitting in traffic.

“That whole group think, stress, inhibits creative thinking. To be innovative I think you have to have reflection time and you have to be away from the group think so if you’re away from group think you’re mind is either blank or it comes up with something different. And it’s nice for it to be blank for a little while, but then in that reflection period when it is blank some other little things start popping into your head and then it’s, ‘Oh I wonder if...’ and it’s asking that question that’s important. Sometimes it’s not going to work but you have to have confidence behind the ideas because sometimes your innovation is going to achieve the goals far better than the current norm.”

Similarly to Brad’s earlier comments, she suggests that lifestyle migrants need to become more creative in how they market their business because they can’t rely on passing traffic. Similarly to Gayne, she discusses the influence of the broad cross-section of people in the area who provide an opportunity for generating new ideas through reframing contexts. Innovation for Karen comes through flexibility to re-contextualise concepts, away from stressors and power structures, where reflection is enhanced by the natural environment, along with the self-efficacy to develop goals. She has transformed as a person on several levels and cites a community spirit which was never visible in Sydney and which prompted her to ask: “When did this happen to me?” The impact of the natural environment upon her development is explored in Chapter 7.

Conversely, Steve has made dramatic professional changes but his personal values haven’t changed, having initially relocated as ‘Mr Mum’ with his family while his wife pursued an executive career as well as working on their business. His professional transformation from part-time retail to managing services office suites came through an ‘aha moment’ that his wife experienced during a work meeting. The couple grasped the opportunity after much planning and investigation and were eagerly encouraged to pursue the concept by the local council who said: “Please do this, we need this.” Steve suggests he was never concerned about finding work because of his broad experience in retail, banking and hospitality and he wasn’t concerned about career status where, “... if I were tempted to go back to a city I’d still keep the same work/life balance because success is not about money to me it’s about being happy.” However he says he never dreamed he’d be doing something like this. For Steve, relocation resulted in professional development rather than limitation largely because, as with several other scenarios in the research, the couple had to metaphorically pioneer the territory rather than ‘fitting in’ to an established structure – and created something new.

Personally, he was daunted by the task of starting his business: "I had no idea where to start, what to do, I hadn't spoken to a professional in seven years so I was out of the loop big time." This personal uncertainty represents one of the risk factors in the scenario, however as they'd done due diligence on the business concept, it instead allowed for the development of self-efficacy in addressing the challenge: "I just kept telling myself I can do it I can do it, even though I wasn't sure I could. And we set it up to make money because we had our rent to pay. I knew after the first year the pressure would be less, that's when we started to get staff on."

The business was well marketed, following Karen's comments on the need for creative marketing due to a lack of passing traffic where Steve's wife used her corporate position and volunteering opportunities to network, ensuring the enterprise would be viewed as a hub for businesses and of value to the business community. She established a meeting group for knowledge economy workers, which received interest from State Government where by association, this roundtable discussion group helped to position their business as a connector within the town.

While Steve says that living in the area hasn't changed him, his business has and arguably his business developed through lack of options available, as his wife's career ran its course and the couple needed to find an alternative path. He discusses some of the personal retraining he underwent:

"So I moved to Noosa and became more of a businessman. You need to be organised up here. I set the boardroom up and after six months realised that I was spending 70 hours a week here which wasn't right, so what am I doing wrong? I read this book 'Getting Things Done' and thought I'm going to change the whole system, and got onto it, and that changed my whole life as a human being I was more organised, not losing those good ideas anymore and having constant lists of things to do, so that changed me."

He acknowledges that it's a challenge to carve out a niche in a place that is characterised by real estate and tourism. Financially as well as personally the enterprise represented an enormous risk where he was "terrified, no one's gonna use us!" but suggests that people can't make a living in the area without taking risks unless they are happy to work in retail or similar: "But you can't earn enough to support a family without taking risks... That's the biggest risk, survival. Then you get egg on your face if you can't survive and have to leave." He also discussed making specific use of nature for developing ideas and so for Steve, innovation is seen through his capacity for flexibility and self-efficacy to respond to necessity and to

increase opportunity via the development of goals, enhanced through reflection afforded by the natural environment.

Lew, Lisa and Tamsin each created a place-related career for themselves through their relocation. Lisa relocated as a government employee and then several years later received a redundancy and commenced consulting. She was then asked by her key client to write herself a job description and so created apposition for herself, but has since moved back to consulting. She has built a reputation for taking on the tough jobs in community consultation where her status, though in a different guise to that of her government career, has earned her remarks such as: "I've had people tell me that well you're like a respected elder in the community." She says she's changed in reaction to her work, which is intrinsically tied with her community, where for Lew and Tamsin, their careers grew from the seeds of their new lifestyles.

Lew was "having a full life" as a young bricklayer who relocated with his wife when "a lot people turned up coincidentally at around the same age at the same time [and] there were no services, there was nothing. There was a hall." The situation required community input, where Lew began to demonstrate leadership through the P&C, the swim club, barn raising events for a community house and a number of other examples:

"It was tough times because everybody was unsure of how to manage a community house – the footy club, the old ladies circle and everybody wanted ownership of it and that was a great education for me. Some of those concepts and ideas I've been asked to present to community engagement courses and things like that. They still stand out examples and they can be translated into bigger picture models but the principles apply. This passion became my work... When I was elected [to council] I thought what do you do? And I worked out it was up to me so I then applied all those things I unconsciously learnt from being part of all those associations and working with great people to make stuff happen, and that's what I see my role is in council so I've learnt some great lessons from living in the hills. I've weaved my way around family and work and personal development in a sort of casual way but they cross over so much it's hard to separate them."

For Lew, innovation has developed through his flexibility and self-efficacy to re-contextualise concepts and utilize resources in response to necessity and passionate pursuits.

Finally, Tamsin says she wrote herself into the place, "After I finished working at Maroochy Council I started the PhD about place, having come from being a real city girl. So I really wrote myself into Noosa and created a place for myself through that study, and it's ongoing in the

writing I do for journals and in Ross's design." Her innovation in developing cultural interaction is outlined in Chapter 5. She and her partner also actively pursued community development projects in an attempt to shape the place they inhabit which was suffering from industry closures at the time, and in so doing 'add value'. She has experienced cash-flow difficulties since relocating and discussed the risk of becoming unemployable should she ever consider moving back to the city: "I've been here for 10 years. I think if you go back within five years you've probably still got enough of the acculturation to be able to pick it up again and also, a woman over 50 is incredibly scary."

Reputation is significant to Tamsin in exchange for the career status she left behind where efforts with community and cultural development are a response to this, in conjunction with a strong passion for place: "We wanted to get ourselves known for being people who change agents... We won the Australia Day Award this year for the work that we've done, so there's been a lot of recognition but no actual money attached to it." Her approach to innovation is similar to that of Lew, through the flexibility and self-efficacy to respond to necessity and engage passionate pursuits, while extending boundaries towards the development of goals.

The explorations and creative responses to the limited economy of the area shown in this section is one of the hallmarks of the pioneering spirit. The narratives reveal that the meaning of success is more aligned to a development of capacity as participants pioneer their way through challenges, rather than primarily aligning with financial gain, even among the most financially successful. Therefore the learning that takes place largely regards the development of economic and social survival skills with corresponding self-efficacy.

Concurrently for employees, there's more opportunity to extend skills based upon flexibility within businesses, compared to a city (Lucas 2010). This scenario was raised by Brad in his recollection of being able to advance his already professional skills into new arenas due to the small size of the company he worked for, where job descriptions were flexible and where he could literally carve out a position for himself, therefore demonstrating innovation within an organisational structure.

6.5 Passion

“Philosophy is not mere passion but a passion that would exhibit itself as a reasonable persuasion.”

John Dewey in *Philosophy and Democracy* (46)

While the oxymoron of passion as a rationale is noted, it stands true for the majority of lifestyle migrants in this book, both in fuelling causes for relocation and in sustaining the move. The influence of passion cannot be understated as a prime motivator for innovation, risk and self-change.

Goleman’s work on emotional intelligence positions passion as a catalyst for attainment over any skill or body of knowledge where “That initial passion can be the seed of high level of attainment...” (1996:94-95). In the context of this book, passion can potentially catalyse lifestyle migration ‘success’. Through the 22 narratives, 11 people used the word ‘passion’. Primarily it was used to describe the community within the area and/or then to describe themselves and/or then to define lack of passion as the problem of lifestyle migrants who fail to cement their relocation. In addition to these, there were seven further participants who explored passion as a key theme in their narratives, without using the actual word. The following discussion explores the value of passion to the lifestyle migration quest.

For Alexander, passion drives his career goals and innovation as he meets progressive challenges – it is physically connected to the natural environment and emotionally connected to having control over his life. He says he’s always followed his passion and has “... a strong trust in life that if you know what you want, you keep true to it.” His relocation occurred in stages, the first move being an emigration from Germany to Melbourne. In coming to Australia: “It was the wilderness that still exists here, that we didn’t have in Germany or that I didn’t find, and I really love that expansiveness of the outback and I love the ocean, so it’s all here...” From there his passion for sustainability led him to Noosa, “... wanting to get some outcomes for the world not just for personal gain.” While he portrays clear logic in his risk management of the move, his decisions are motivated by passion.

Angus’s decision for relocation was also a passionate pursuit. Passion for him is a key driver and determined his choice of place based on a physical connection to the coastal town culture

and again an emotional connection to gaining a sense of control over his life: “I’m here because I’ve travelled around the world and I really appreciate the feeling that this area gives me.” Anita followed suit, although her passion led her to the hinterland: “We looked at 30 houses and bought the first one that we saw. I knew that was the one. I walked in being heavily pregnant and just cried saying this is it, my family home and my husband said ‘shut up you just cost me \$10K’...” It also led her into starting a swim school as well as re-entering the world of television, on her own terms, describing herself as someone who needs a project with a purpose. Passion led her to the pursuit of innovative career goals while it fuelled the development of her self-efficacy through exploring new abilities and directions – it is also emotionally linked to having a sense of control over her life and is inspired by the natural environment.

Passion to Adriane extends Dewey’s comment above, where passion and philosophy are strongly tied and ‘cause oriented,’ as a significant expression of her identity: “For me it’s the space and the lure of a sustainable lifestyle where I can have my veggie patch...” Passion is similarly inspired for Tamsin where the symbolic value of place is integral – it is linked to the natural environment, community and creative expression. This ideology is articulated in reference to the place when:

“We drove along this road and there was a sign that said ‘earth covered alternative home for sale’ and I said ‘Oh let’s go and have a look’. It was designed by the Baggs and the owners had the plans and we sat down for the afternoon and chatted, and you had this lovely view of the mountain and then we went on our merry way and about a week later I said to Ross, I can’t get that house out of my mind and we thought well, we could buy it...”

She is passionate about how communities can create a better world through “... connecting with the mythology of our places and building up the sort of mythic archaeology of the community,” where the celebration of life is key:

“We’re both getting a reputation for that internationally so I wouldn’t mind occasionally having international gigs but rather than blow in and blow out, to actually go and stay in a place for a while to understand it and to link to it, to try and model how we keep that diversity alive as well but how we do it in a positive way. And I can imagine that we might have slightly more refugees from cities coming here and being continually open to whoever comes and to sharing what we have and to celebrate a work together to try and make more. I’ve had this goal all my life but didn’t think it was a reality in the city. We’ve been doing most of those things all our lives in the city too but here there’s more opportunity and more space. [It sounds like it’s a growing passion for the place and the lifestyle here that has made you sustainable because it

means that you're prepared to undergo more challenges that you would otherwise be prepared to put up with] or very different ones."

Lisa has found: "It's quite an extraordinary place and I think that's what makes it – the people diversity and the passion that's here. They will fight for what they believe in. Maybe if we were a larger community you'd lose the ability to get the message out of the township..." Her identity development is firmly tied to passion and personal commitment towards community where, for her passion is also cause-oriented and guides her growing commitment to values:

"Every experience builds your level of commitment to something and helps give you direction about what's important to you and how it connects with your values. [So it's helped form your values as you go?] Oh yes I think so, more aware of my values. I suppose a huge thing for me has been rediscovering my street community because that's brought out a side to me that doesn't have to be as structured and it's a lot freer and it helps teach you a greater level of tolerance because you're coming up against people and realise that they are all different."

Passion is strengthened by the limited distraction of the area for Brad, and is linked to the instigation and creation of tangible outcomes, particularly regarding the home where control over his life is more attainable. While the concept of passion leading personal change arose in many narratives, it is well articulated here:

"I love doing work around the garden and building stuff and doing a bit of woodworking, you know. People who knew me ten years ago would never have seen that... And now in my spare time when I can I build a bit of furniture out of bits of timber and I love seeing scrappy old bits of timber turn into something that looks, not beautiful but it's a feeling of, I've done that – I love gardening and landscaping as well... I didn't feel that I could do that in the city. For one you've gotta have the space to work, you gotta have a workshop and I've never had that before so now I guess I now live in an area in a house with a place where I can do that. I probably could do it in Brisbane had I have had the right environment, but it wasn't a strong desire, there were always other things to do there like go to the pub with my mates or getting out of the city. That's the thing about living in the city, you spend a lot of time trying to get out of it – a lot more distractions..."

Brad's background in travel and tourism contextualises his views on passion within the community. He suggests:

"There's a lot of passion in the community there's a lot of engagement and strong views and there's a lot of different groups that wanna be heard. A lot of soap boxes for people to get up on and you know the community here is, I would hazard a guess at saying a lot more passionate

than other regional communities around the country, I don't know. People come here from so many different walks of life it's just yeah, some very passionate people."

Chris is strongly led by his passion in business, impacting his decision making and development of career goals. He's one of three who cites the lack of passion among new lifestyle migrants as a pitfall towards material survival:

"[So the ones who start a business and leave with their tails between their legs, what are they doing wrong?] They're not listening. They probably come from an infrastructure where they're not used to having to be creative and they're not enjoying it, there's no passion about what they do. It's like they're just going through the motion just to do it.... People who are jealous need to be more creative. Maybe they're in the wrong business, maybe they're not passionate about what they've gotten into."

The passion in the community is a change agent for Donna. Subjectively, passion is nurtured through more personal time and is closely linked with innovation and a growing capacity of her creative expression, while reflected in her community spirit:

"My friends and family see someone who's become more creative and more involved in the community, because it's a small community and people get very passionate here, even though it's a bit biased. I feel as though I have a voice here where in the city people are a bit more apathetic... people get more involved and more worked up about things and are prepared to actually do something about issues whereas in the city it's more well whatever."

Duncan has always expressed his creative passions, from "doing the band thing" in Sydney to working in animation and now retraining in building design. However, passion has influenced him in a profound way since relocation where his professional identity and status has transformed, despite the limited opportunities that can cause so many career dilemmas. His problem-solving attempts with career since arrival has allowed for passion to grow, and again to grow his capacity:

"I was always more on the bohemian side of life... but now I more want to be in environments where I'm discussing designs with people and talking to colleagues and associates and stuff where you can discuss more ideas. I mean that's half the reason I want to do the design thing is to be involved in the design process. At the moment it's more to do with pick up someone's design and just make it look pretty. At the beginning I didn't care too much about architecture, it was just something where we could bring in some dosh, and now I like the architect side I want to get into the design I want to talk to other designers about their stuff..."

Unlike Duncan, Murray has always known his passion and has built successful businesses around it:

“I’ve really stuck to what I do – I like working on cars. That’s what I wanted to do when I was about three years of age... I come to work because I like it. Yeah I like it. I’ve done the same thing for 30 odd years and I actually quite like it... And I can do what I like, that’s the best part.”

Passion is a strong motivator for his decision making and complements his sense of control in leading his career directions, resulting in ‘success’ – job stability and satisfaction.

Jasmine says she works harder now for less money “but it’s almost a pleasure” because she feels as though she’s making a difference in campaigning on someone’s behalf, “... community wins against the big bad government.” She believes the community is more passionate in the area and cites the fact that Noosa has a biosphere along with charity organizations such as Frangipani Dreams, “... because one woman had an idea.” She believes there’s room for passion in the small town lifestyle and by relocating to be part of it “... you accept you’re going to earn less money so perhaps you concentrate more on the dream you had rather than the money. That gives people the ability to become more innovative...”

She says that if she’d stayed in the city she’d have been more money oriented to compensate for the desire to enjoy the environment: “I have recreated myself since moving here, I am quite a different person. I’ve become more confident in my career because I feel as though I am making a difference and I’m enjoying what I’m doing...” For Jasmine, passion is enhanced through a softening of the financial imperative along with the presence of strong self-efficacy but it is also impacted by external influences – it requires support to grow, as provided through the community spirit she speaks of.

The natural environment also inspires passion for many other participants where for Katrina:

“For nothing you can see all that... I sit on the river in the middle of the night and there’s about 100 calmarins diving in the water and that’s a world experience to me. You can’t see that anywhere... maybe that would never happen before.”

Her involvement in volunteering is also an expression of her passion for community and the area, which represents a diverse direction away from her finance background: “When you’ve got a career driving you, you don’t think about volunteering because you’re happy to be consumed...” Passion leads her career and

allows her non-career goals to be realised – it's a community characteristic and one 'belongs' to a passionate community where the natural environment is key.

Lew says of his early community involvement that led to his position on council, "... I wouldn't have entered into these things if I'd stayed in Brisbane because I don't think that the opportunity was there, ever, to feel that you needed to participate." Karen reflects this view and also offers a cultural insight towards the aspirational limitations imposed by cities:

"In corporate, if somebody has a dream it's very hidden in case somebody finds out about it and yet there are 'be innovative and creative' posters on the wall. But I think up here people are willing to have a go, they still come up here with their dreams and because they want to do something different and they talk to people about it so people are interested."

Geoff's transformation from unemployment and depression through to photography and teaching was realized by following his passion to have, "... turned my life into something new". Innovation and passion and meaning are intertwined in his narrative where now, teaching has provided him with a sense of value and expertise, referring to it as "... an incredible feeling and that's the reason why I did this in the first place – to follow my passion so that I felt like I was doing something worthwhile...".

For many, the adventure itself is the passion where for Steve passion fuels happiness, which as previously noted, defines his understanding of success.

"I went to Cooroy to visit friends out there and thought this is great. This is a place for horses and stuff, so we really got the sea change to move from multicultural Melbourne up to here. Yeah I was so keen, I wasn't working so the attraction was you get 20 acres, the veggie garden, the chooks... We lived out of town so we'd have to go and get supplies and be self-sufficient – that was very attractive."

Through these discussions we can see that passion is implicated with a number of other themes, particularly risk and innovation and that despite the contradiction of passion as reason, it poses a strong rationale in lifestyle migration. Passion is potentially the most significant theme in the sustainability of a lifestyle migrant's relocation as it propels them forward in pursuit of a dream and so is instrumental in promoting innovation to problem-solve emerging challenges.

This chapter has explored the role of the material life, professional and non-career goals of lifestyle migrants in sustaining their relocation. We have indicated the necessity of risk

management through finance and business preparation while exploring the positioning of money in the lifestyle migration context. Contingencies around remote work practice and lifestyle expectations were also addressed. Finally, innovation, success and passion were explored where all participants demonstrated innovation as a common feature through varying degrees, in navigating the challenges of the relocation. For some, the meaning of success has also been altered through this experience, impacting their sense of control over their own lives, and the development of passionate pursuits is shown to be significant in facilitating the transition. In the next chapter we carry some of these concepts forward in focusing on the natural environment. Innovation shall again be explored in this context, as is simplicity lifestyle in relation to the material world, where themes of health and wellbeing are integral to the lifestyle migration proposition.

7. The Natural Environment as a Change Agent



Figure 7 - Christina Kargillis, *Illuminated*, 2006

"We're tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They've made us suffer too much. All of arborescent culture is founded on them, from biology to linguistics. Nothing is beautiful or loving or political aside from underground stems and aerial root, adventitious growths and rhizomes."

Gilles Deleuze in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (15)

This chapter explores wellbeing in the context of lifestyle migration and looks particularly to the influence of the natural environment as a change agent in enhancing wellbeing and transforming sense of self. Primarily this change involves themes of reflection, personal time, novelty, stress avoidance and health, control over one's own life, simplicity and happiness. The change process and debate here sits in relation to the natural environment and its impact on self actualisation (Maslow 1968) or "What a man [person] can be, he [they] must be," as Maslow believes.

As a key value among lifestyle migrants in this book, the natural environment has both a direct and indirect role. Directly, some participants suggest the natural environment reduces stress, provides novelty and enhances health while indirectly it encourages reflection which catalyses change through facilitating clarity and innovative thinking. It also promotes the simple life away from material pursuits as a key focus from where stress reduction, control over one's own life and happiness may develop. In analyzing the narratives, Control Over One's Own Life was the priority value among the lifestyle migrants in this book, where natural environment was referenced more frequently but not as crucially. A full list of themes employed in the analysis of the narratives and their weighting is outlined in Chapter 8. The stresses and challenges discussed in the previous chapters naturally oppose these healing effects in certain cases whilst in others they may exist simultaneously, as suggested by Donna: "Lifestyle [here] is easier, apart from the financial problems. When you're in a city you may have financial issues but you've also got all the other stuff, all the rushing around..."

7.1 Treading the Rainbow

The role of the natural environment as a change agent based upon its symbolic value in representing the *ideal* of a life and a new self, characterised by authenticity (Hoey 2005), was considered in connection to each narrative. The critical incident(s) which led to relocation

indicated that 14 of 22 lifestyle migrants left the cities on the *premise* that they could reinvent themselves through the act of moving. However this does not reflect the changes which actually occurred through the renegotiation of their lives, following relocation.

Reasons for relocation and intention to change	
Person A: NA	Came mainly for climate
Person B:	Natural environment suited his passion, he could develop here
Person C:	Hated Sydney and could revive here while developing professionally
Person D:	To enjoy control over her own life as dominant value
Person E: NA	Relocated for career/experienced an early country life
Person F:	Ideal of the area for a sustainable lifestyle
Person G:	Had wanted to relocate for years, now he could become his true self
Person H:	Was too expensive to get ahead there while here he could begin
Person I:	Anticipated difficulties but followed the rainbow for a new life/self
Person J:	The stress-free environment would enable personal goals to be realised
Person K: NA	Had no expectations – relocated to focus on his marriage
Person L:	Seeking somewhere non-stressful and beautiful to allow development
Person M: NA	Relocated to <i>retain</i> a small scale as Brisbane grew too large
Person N:	A move to a better happier, healthier place
Person O:	Relocation represents qualities of lifestyle, culture and lessons in simplicity
Person P:	Intended attaining control over her own life through the move
Person Q:	A blank canvas on which to create a life/a tough place in which to pioneer
Person R: NA	Relocated intentionally for work
Person S: NA	Relocated for more space for the kids but would've happily stayed in city
Person T: NA	Relocated for smaller community but would've happily stayed in city
Person U: NA	Relocated for adventure but already had 'small town values'
Person V:	Place represented values/ideals sorely missing in the city

While eight participants initially had no intention of reinventing themselves through the move, only two of these indicated an absence of any notable identity development through their narratives, as explored further in Chapter 8.

Possibly the best articulated understanding of place as a symbolic entity is presented by Tamsin as she discusses a symbiotic relationship with place, any place, where the ideology of place rather than location is the driving force:

“A few years ago there was a lot of consultation on what needed to happen in this area and a whole lot of people went on about how the good thing about this area is that it’s pristine – the conservative solution, in both senses of the word, is the one that gets offered. Of course this anything but pristine – it’s one of the most well-trodden places because if you go back for centuries there’s been huge numbers of interventions here. It’s been the centre for Bunya Festivals and all sorts of things happening and to suggest that it’s somehow pure nature is an insane response... Acknowledging the spirit of place is critical... You don’t have to do the sea change to get here. If you’ve got a more imaginative soul or a more intelligent mind you can probably stay just where you are wherever it is and get to the same point. [What about the distractions and the rat race?] Yes well you’ve got to be of firmer nature than I was I think, but I do know people who can do it. They often get categorised as slightly mad – perhaps we should listen to those edge voices more as a society.”

Her decision to relocate was based upon exploring a new way of life, away from an executive career characterised by simplicity in which to carve out a more ‘authentic’ life (Hoey 2006). Brad also explores the natural environment culturally in representing his true self as it is in his “nature to want to be somewhere like this,” and Alexander suggests: “It’s valuing nature that brings people here. The reason why I wanted to come here was because I always had values like that already and here I can express them.” This value of nature in the area is well supported by Amanda who observes: “You’ll be walking along toward the art gallery and you’ve got little old ladies pulling out weeds, commenting how terrible the weeds are this time of year, and she’s doing it on public land.”

Karen was seeking a place where her values could be affirmed: “What happened when our daughter died is there was a tragic wake-up call and those values that were being suppressed just couldn’t be suppressed anymore. I don’t care if we turn our back on what society says it means to be successful because it’s not true to our value system...” For her and for the majority, lifestyle means more than the surf or mountains. Karen was on a quest for the whole package, a shift away from corporate culture and an escape from limiting power structures towards a focus on family and natural environment, where a sense of control over her life is synonymous with the word, ‘lifestyle’.

Conversely to Tamsin who suggested location was not significant, Anita calculated her lifestyle equation where the choice of place was well scoped in actively searching for the ideal destination through which to fulfil lifestyle aims and allow change to occur. Natural environment, scale, space, novelty, stress avoidance and personal time are the key themes implied here and where control over her own life is the 'mother' value.

"So we travelled around Australia to find the perfect place, starting at Port Douglas and moving our way down – I didn't want to be cold anymore. I'd had ten winters in England and froze my butt off and had enough of that. We originally wanted to live in Noosa, right in Noosa Heads but we realized that is actually quite frantic and we wouldn't be able to chill out, so we travelled around to find the ideal beach destination and realized we don't want a beach destination because you end up living with houses right next to you and our plan was to live in a nice place and not have neighbours right there.

"You can go to the beach and almost have the beach to yourself and that's what I love about it – half an hour drive. You can have the best of both worlds in Noosa – you've got the beach, beautiful walks through the National Park and then go to a nice restaurant and be waited on by best customer service and best food and feel like a millionaire, then I go back to the hills and chill out."

Angus is another who described such a search, starting with Cable Beach in Western Australia because it shares the same latitude and eventually traversing the continent towards Noosa where his search was inspired by the surf along with the "... feeling [of general content] this place gives me." Donna also suggests the area has a "beautiful, good vibe feeling" compared to her home town in New Zealand which she describes as having a "low socio-economic vibe," and surmises that the number of holiday makers in the study site increases the happiness index of place. This observation reflects survey results, comprising more than 45,000 people Australia-wide, by APN News and Media (2009) claiming the study site's salubrious Noosaville is the happiest place in Australia (Courier Mail). However happiness is not restricted to the wealthy hubs of the area, and vice versa, as shall be shown.

Others are inspired more by the ideal of a sustainable existence where Steve suggests: "It's nice to get out and go to Brisbane every now and then to get some stuff. I like that mental thing, the idea of living in the country." Among others, Katrina discusses the value of limited infrastructure such as roundabouts, minimal traffic lights and limited building height in influencing the ideal of place. Lisa initially resisted moving to the area for a government post because the destination had long represented her family getaway, or ideal, and she feared

losing the opportunity of a place of respite: “[Do you have a place to get away now?] No. [You don’t need one now?] No. I think it’s because I found my place.”

7.2 Natural Environment

The theme of the small town as a source of novelty and liberation was common among participants and yet heavily countered by the lack of organised entertainment in the area, as explored in Chapter 5. Brad was one of the majority who expressed the natural environment as a key value in affording an “escape from civilisation”, contingent on a combination of space, activity and low population where: “I mean I couldn’t just live in a regional area that wasn’t aesthetically beautiful.” He infers the importance of low population and natural environment in using natural amenities as a source of novelty when he says: “I would have never have bought a kayak in Brisbane to go paddling around the Brisbane River.”

Duncan is also inspired to extend himself in better utilizing the environment and suggests he needs more money to achieve this: “We’re trying to get less debt and paddleboard and do all that kinda stuff. So it’s gotta take the backburner until we take care of the finances and debt. [So your drive to make more money is growing because there’s more things you want to do that fit into the culture up here?] Yeah definitely.”

This is contrasted by Katrina who suggests, “... for nothing you can see all of this” and also by Lew who comments on the material versus lifestyle benefits scenario, which largely involve natural environment and the space afforded by it:

“The hinterland version was always that you were more than happy in the weatherboard because you had 10 acres and a view and you could be left alone when you wanted to be alone, or you had a shed out the back where you could make furniture, or some horses or whatever.”

Adriane says she can “take it or leave it” regarding the ocean but the space is precious: “I don’t know, the space they’ve got here, the children are thriving, they’re doing really well.” However in regards to physical exercise, her reliance on the car as a result of this space means that: “I’m getting decrepit... when I go for a walk I feel my muscles the next day.”

Rhana raised an intriguing point in reference to the liberation of natural places in comparison to the power relationships experienced in urban environments. Her view is based upon a sense of space and within that, personal space: “Not being watched and just having your own space

is what I have here.” This is interesting as it inverts the urban design concept of ‘eyes on the street’ (Jacobs 1961), incorporated into schemes to provide safety for individuals against crime through better lighting and design, by exposing public spaces rather than cloistering. Rhana, along with the majority of participants, experiences a sense of safety in the study site with no need for protection against ‘others’ and in fact she experiences a loss of power in the watched, urban scenario:

“I climb it [Mount Pomona] every day. I don’t go to the top every day but I go for an hour walk. For me being in Pomona as well, just being able to walk out my door and there’s no cars driving past my house and walking to the end of the street... So I can I walk in the middle of the road with my dog and we are straight in the bush... That is a big difference here, in the city I hated walking with cars besides me so a couple of times when I went walking in small little suburbs I would go walking in the mornings but I never really enjoyed it so I never persisted. In Sydney I did the same, I stopped where now I think I’ve been doing it for a year.

“But compared to say Bondi where you want to get your exercise and you go along that walkway on the ocean and you go past hundreds of people, and you’re dodging people on roller blades you know what I mean. Here it’s so lonely but in a way I love that, I love the solitude of getting up at 5:30, going up the mountain, coming back down and back home and the kids go mum this and mum that, my head’s ready for that. If I just woke up and got into that, I wouldn’t be ready.”

John echoes this impact of the natural environment in relation to personal power, liberation and low population: “I go bike riding this afternoon, I can get my trail bike out of the shed and head 10km out of town. We went out last Saturday for about four hours within a 10km radius of my home and never saw one other person for three hours...”

7.3 Health and Stress

The impact of the natural environment upon identity development is evident through its role in stress management and health promotion, which results in a cultural shift for some lifestyle migrants while for others it facilitates change through its ability to act as a buffer against external interference, along with its power as a healing agent.

“You see the thing about stress is you can’t judge it. Stress is stress. It doesn’t matter how big or large it is, stress is stress. So you can’t you can’t ever sort of judge stress. It’s a funny thing. You can stress about your kids, or stress about something else. It doesn’t matter there’s no volume on stress I suppose, or gage of stress.”

These words from Murray are in response to his Brisbane background where he noticed that people in his street didn't have the time to say hello, describing it as a very "professional area" compared his new home environment where: "... everyone's more healthy and less stressed out. They don't have the traffic, and probably the debt to be honest." Murray is a builder who works long days in trying to re-establish himself and complains of lack of personal time, and so his words are not advocating 'time off' but refer more to a culture of stress that characterises city life. Tamsin understands this culture well, formerly living the professional lifestyle that Murray described. She recalls:

"Then there was a double change of government so both the ACT Government and the Federal Government went liberal and they pulled our funding and we went from having 12 staff to one and a half staff which was somewhat depressing, and my boss killed herself, which was pretty full on. I remember thinking maybe there's something else I can do with my life... I got really sick."

The absence of humanity implied in this experience is institutionally based through urban culture and extends to her experience with her daughter's schooling, where there was questioning about the child's ability and where institutionalisation was advised. Tamsin and her partner felt that if they remained in the city, life would be difficult for the child and if they moved away from this culture of institutionalisation, it wouldn't be. Lack of humanity as a characteristic of city culture is also a theme raised by Rhana when she said: "You know what I found in Sydney? You'd get on the escalators and unless you kept walking you were knocked over. If you want to stand and not walk you had to get on the left..."

According to Jasmine: "Cities are, by their very nature quite depressing and lonely, especially if you're going through a rough patch. They can be stimulating but not if you're going through a depression, then they are the loneliest places." She contrasts that environment with the small town and suggests that if she's feeling depressed she can take a walk on the beach with her dog and people will talk to her, "... and before you know it you are less depressed." While this could relate to the beneficial role of animals in mental health for which much research has been done (Guéguen and Ciccotti 2008), she also describes the study site as a "healing place" where you are encouraged to "find yourself, fix yourself." She believes lifestyle migrants in the area have relocated in order to escape, as she did: "I escaped from a career that no longer satisfied me, from a relationship, family demons that were chasing me." Place has made a cultural impact upon her identity through stress removal where she says those who knew her when she was donning suits would be amazed now to see her go to work wearing jeans and

without makeup: "It's got to be healthier for me than the panic to get up, get your hair done regularly, polish your shoes."

Andrew introduces the topic of space in the context of depression where he infers that space has a healing influence: "I'm not so depressed that I can't get out of bed, only recently. But yeah I'm working out past Cooroy at the moment and it's a nice drive. [Does it help clear your head?] It needed clearing this morning. I definitely feel like I've got more space than in a two bedroom terrace in the UK."

Geoff is one of two in the book who experienced clinical depression in relation to the economic negotiation for a sustainable relocation. Contrary to Jasmine and others, he believes the value of the natural environment lies with the capacity it affords to avoid stress rather than healing being intrinsically related to place:

"The nature, the environment, there's little things that count towards quality of life from no traffic lights, and lack of visual pollution – that's a big impact on me... There's been a massive amount of growth for me personally by coming here but it's probably the challenges that have been thrown at me much more than anything to do with the environment..."

"I feel like I've been over extended ever since I came here. And I suppose that's one definition of depression when you just can't cope and you pull right back. Instead of extending you bring your world down to this monitor in front of you and everything goes black behind you and you limit yourself to one thing because you can't cope. So my world grew incredibly small here and then I had to expand again and so now I'm on this course of really extending myself professionally... but yet it soothes me and it's the main reason why I stay. Maybe I'm not so much here because of the environment but I'm not there because of the environment. So this could be the bush or anywhere else that's nice but I can't face that city modern life thing. I go down to Sydney and I fry after two days. I just go hyper. This keeps me sane."

Lisa ties together both views of a lifestyle destination as a healing source and as a place of stress avoidance in suggesting that when someone "has issues" they will carry them regardless of location: "Maybe you need a place to that helps you shed the issues and maybe this was my place to shed my issues," where shedding issues is a healing process and certain places, "my place", facilitate it.

Rather than merely an alternative to city life, an active aversion to it was described by the majority of participants due to the stress factor with Brad replying that he hates visiting

Brisbane even though he wants to see his parents: “I just keep putting it off because it’s such an ordeal in the traffic, and it’s getting worse, Brisbane is no longer the small, quiet sleepy city,” while Karen says the thought of moving back to her corporate life in Sydney makes her physically ill:

“Then there was this internal, is this as good as it gets? ...We knew what the Sydney life was like and perhaps being put on this earth you do have to work that hard and you do have to travel and you just do the best that you can, or you can come up here and see if there’s something better and being up here there certainly has been.”

When asked if she would have started her own company in Sydney she says: “No. Sydney would’ve had all of the stress of starting a new business but none of the benefits, living in this beautiful part of the world and being with family. I don’t think I would’ve done it.” Donna also experiences stress at the idea of having to return to a city, which she says is constant because of her financial situation: “That makes me realise that when I’m experiencing stress, the stress is because I don’t want to leave.” Therefore her financial and emotional stressors are still outweighed by the small community and the role of the natural environment, as two of her key values. These views stand in contrast to Adriane who cites the stress created by the socio-economic divide outweighs the equation: “That brings a whole lot of other issues in, self-worth. How much of a grinning companion are you if your self-worth is in the dumps, in a partnership.”

Angus describes the slower pace of the small town as an opportunity for healing: “This is a very laid back community and it gives you the opportunity to take a deep breath...” As with Donna, he rationalizes the stressors within the place, particularly in reference to economic concerns, with the environmental quality of the place as a stress antagonist:

“Through those peaks and troughs the thought to move somewhere else has crossed my mind but not often because I wake up in the morning and look out onto the water and my dog is down there before I am and I’m not going to die waiting for the world to come to me. I’m at the world right now... The difference is massive and the people who are here are here for a reason – it’s clinical – black and white. Some people sacrifice their whole existence to have the opportunity to live here and effing why wouldn’t you. Of course it’s worth it. The bits and pieces that go with living here are just part and parcel of the whole economy.”

Physical fitness and the natural environment also received attention through the narratives:

“You look around here you hardly ever see any fat kids. The girls here for instance have beautiful legs and beautiful skin. The kids are all outside on their skateboards having fun, on the beach, surfing. Being near the water and in the water has other healing properties” (Donna).

“Then you walk along the river in the evening with the dog and running in the morning – other people are out exercising and you see people two decades older than yourself who have bigger guns than you do, it changes your whole perspective on what healthy living is” (Karen).

However, there were contradictions to this aspect with Adriane’s earlier comments on car reliance encouraging a lack of fitness, while Duncan’s experience of city versus country revealed the following:

“[So you really wanted to prioritise a healthier base, less noise pollution, less pollution in the air?] Yeah, even though it’s harder for us to breathe because we both have a lot of allergies and there’s a lot of stuff in the air here. At least with the smog it’s better than pollen but still, what is here is enough to keep us here.”

Personal time is a crucial value for sustaining relocation as it affords the opportunity to pursue more meaningful and personally rewarding activities, which support the overriding theme of having control over one’s own life. Some who attain the goal of more personal time include Brad who’s background in corporate roles connects him to friends in the city who are earning three times his salary but whose careers impinge upon personal time: “They leave home at six-thirty, seven in the morning, not home till seven, seven-thirty at night, sometimes working on weekends whereas you know I have a pretty good lifestyle really.”

Rhana rationalises the economic equation with personal time regarding the pay cut her husband accepted to secure work in the region and values the family time they enjoy: “From my point of view it’s worth it”, contrasting city culture with that of the small town where in her office environment in Brisbane, working back was ‘mandatory’ and the family men who left first were treated as if they were “hen-pecked”, as explored in Chapter 5.

However for the self-employed and small business operators who characterise the study site, as previously demonstrated by Murray, there’s often less personal time where Jasmine raises the suggestion of an *illusion* of personal time that is afforded by the natural environment, “... because you can go for a walk on the beach first [before work] or stop at a beach cafe.” Self-employed Duncan supports the concept and suggests he has time to think things through since relocating where this sense of time is enhanced by “... less of a feeling of interference from people out there. In Sydney there’s always everybody else doing their things and you know. So if you’re more happy you’ve got more time to think about stuff.” Certainly Anita has worked 14-hour days from home while producing television programs and yet she says she enjoys a

sense of personal time because of the natural environment and because of a lack of environmental stressors:

“I’d lock myself in my office downstairs while the kids were running around upstairs with my husband. I’d start at 6AM and finish at seven at night and I’d come upstairs and instantly feel, ‘Oh my God, thank God I live here’. In London when I was doing the same things I was in an office with air conditioning, which I hate, with artificial lights and loads of people – they were in a rush and I was in a rush. There was no purpose. I was just in this rut, work work work, not thinking about anything else.”

7.4 Inspiration

The current television advertisement and website for the University of the Sunshine Coast promotes the natural environment as a facilitator for ideas production with the words “*A great place to live – The best environment to think*” imposed on an image of a waterfall in a natural landscape (usc.edu.au 2011).

In this chapter, innovation/creativity is addressed in specific reference to the influence of the natural environment where in Chapter 6 it was implicated with necessity, however the overlap is impossible to separate in many cases. Extensive overlap also exists between innovation/creativity and stress management. Karen is familiar with innovation methodology through her corporate background but ironically those environments do not support innovation according to her and where, reflective of the University of the Sunshine Coast campaign, the natural environment does:

“It’s two things being away from group think and reflection time and it might not be a sea change it might be a tree change or whatever type of change but you’re away from group think and you’re in an environment that calls to you – for me it’s surfing out at Little Cove, that’s precious time, or walking along the river... There’s nowhere in that business plan, how does surfing impact on our professional development, but there should be.”

Alexander intentionally uses the natural environment for reflection and change:

“I walk through the National Park [So the natural environment has a strong bearing on your clarity of mind?] Yes. [Creativity as well or mainly clarity?] Everything. Actually I don’t think there’s a great difference between creativity and clarity of mind. If you paint that’s probably a very different creativity. I research a lot, take a lot of information and then I go into nature and process all that. Then I get really certain that this is the way to go. So I let the information settle. At the moment I feel uncertain and it has been like that where I take in the information

and feel really overwhelmed, then somehow everything falls into place, but now I'm still in the overwhelmed state. [Did you do that before you came here?] Yes that's where I decided to leave the company, so I've been doing that for quite a while. Back then it just happened where now I consciously do that because I know that it will work."

Following suit, Steve also utilises the natural environment for ideas creation and has learnt to organise these opportunities: "The business forced me to be more organised and so I've organised all aspects of my life and that includes not letting the good ideas slip by... When I am out kayaking I always take a notepad and pen because I'll have some brilliant idea or... [Were you like that in the city?] No that started up here."

Ideas flow also for Anita whose home environment, set upon a hill overlooking the Kin Kin Valley, transforms her mentally: "... and you just go outside with your cup of tea and go into another plain, and then ideas start flowing and you go, 'Oh my God I've got to do this'," where in London she says there was never that opportunity, "... now I wake up in the morning and I'm thinking."

Alternatively, and similarly to Gayne's creative process outlined in Chapter 6, Geoff produces more creative responses when he's under pressure, however he differentiates pressure from stress because, "... stress is not good for creativity," and says when he's feeling "laid back" nothing happens but when pressure exists it forces him to seek solutions. This confirms innovation as a response to challenges, explored in Chapter 6, however he also specifies that the role of the natural environment is crucial in the process for instilling a sense of calm and control: "It's more the city and the stress that wipes me out creatively. Then if I'm pushed it's just stress, there's no resources there. Then if you've got this and you're under pressure you can handle it."

Potentially Chris's use of the natural environment is one that combines this pressure with relaxation as he'll, "... let things go through [his] head when [he's] surfing and [he's] assessing the risk." In addition, he specifically refers to place as a change agent:

"[Do you think you would be mentally clear and creative if you were living in a city?] No, because you get influenced by people and the environment will change you. For example most mornings I'll go for a paddle on the North Shore and take my dogs for a run and without sounding like a greenie or a guru it does energise you because it's just a peaceful place to put yourself. So when you're working out or going for a run it's a healthy body a healthy mind. It is a lifestyle you get there and it regenerates you. In a city it's harder to find those spaces and

there's more people around to influence you away from that Zen space, so again that's why people come to Noosa."

There is a bounty of additional data regarding the connection between the natural environment and creativity, tying reflection time with stress removal and creative stimulation, contraindicated only by Gayne and Amanda. As a corporate executive in her former life, Amanda found she "... had the time to be [more] self-reflective when [she] was travelling... I'm a solitary creature and when I'm travelling, in the car, the Qantas Club lounge, airport time... stuff that was more about me and exploring me and being more introspective, I just haven't got the time for now."

7.5 Simplicity

"It is even more remarkable that almost half (46 per cent) of the richest 20 per cent of households in Australia – the richest people in one of the world's richest countries – say that they cannot afford to buy everything that they really need."

Hamilton and Denniss, *Affluenza: When too much is never enough* (59)

Discussion on the pursuit of the simple life involves an integrated web of themes where personal fulfilment overrides financial attainment, in contrast to the consumer culture of the city. Differing degrees of living the simple life are apparent through this research however the principle of lifestyle over money as a dominant theme impacts the lifestyle expectation and the various points of negotiation in relocation. Content relating to simplicity has been discussed in previous sections therefore only key additions to the theme are explored here.

Voluntary simplicity, discussed in Chapter 2, was significant to nine lifestyle migrants in this research while others demonstrated a strong awareness of the phenomenon and its role in subjugating status issues. Those who proclaimed simplicity ideology as a way of life comprised some who have relinquished opportunities to earn more money since relocating, as well as some who were struggling to earn enough money, creating doubt as to how many actually practice *voluntary* simplicity. Adriane has had significant financial challenges, while being dedicated to social and environmental sustainability, however some contradiction appeared regarding the simple life: "There's still a lot of greed and consumer culture – I sometimes see myself being on a huge super tanker that goes into oblivion and I hold onto the railings and I yell, 'No. No, this way,' but I'm just hanging on and I'm not shifting anything at all," while later

suggesting: “A lot of people are anti-population because they want to protect their own patch – well I’d like to have that quality or whatever but I haven’t.”

Her position as a financial struggler in the context of the more privileged coastal town she inhabits represents part of that intermingling of high and low socioeconomic levels, referred to in Chapter 5, in an area which combines a range of towns, from the flash to the most humble. For Adriane, simplicity is an ideal in terms of a sustainable lifestyle but contrary to its egalitarian ethos, this ideal is hampered by the culture of her town which she suggests is dominated by financial security and status. Despite the fact that her view on status divisions was in the minority, as previously explored, this disparity again suggests an absence of homogeneity within community, as Adriane herself has noted elsewhere.

Rhana resides in a humble hinterland town and for her, money comes second to family, community and environmental aspects and she says initially it was tough without a surplus for extras such as a bottle of wine. However, she proposes that if she were offered a large job where she’d be working nights or weekends she would turn it down because “... it wouldn’t be worth it for me.” Her value system is clear in that balance is what she strives for. As with a majority of people featured in this book she had a financial safety net in relocation, and she also purchased property. Regardless of Rhana’s initial financial challenges, her security, along with the culture of her hinterland community, represent crucial differences in contrast to Adriane for example who would “like to have that quality” of life but hasn’t, and who would potentially feel less displaced in a hinterland community.

Rhana is one of five participants who feel they enjoy a balance between the material and the simple life. They represent the point in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs when necessities are accounted for and they can now focus on more rewarding aspects of life. Rhana compares city culture with her lifestyle choice in regards to materialism and goals:

“I know a lot of people who come to visit me, friends, who were in London, Melbourne, Sydney, who have come and just loved being in our place and loved the fact that we were happy to have a humble home and not worry about the flashy house and the shiny car to show that we got the shiny car. They loved it. They felt so happy and calm here but they didn’t have the courage to do it themselves. They are focused on achievement, career achievement whereas for me that doesn’t matter.

“I suppose the long term goal is just to be happy. I’ve certainly become happier because you’re not trying to fill the hole. You’re not looking for stuff to fill this hole which I think is very much the phenomenon of city life – you’re looking for comforts and that Pandora bracelet all that stuff that’s supposedly going to fix me and make me feel better. I don’t do that anymore because I don’t need to. We were talking about lotto recently and I was daydreaming that I had won, and I didn’t know what to do with it, I didn’t want to sell my house so I was thinking of things I could do such as buy a house for my mum and perhaps putting a deck on my house and maybe a pool. I wanted to keep how we were living. I didn’t want to leave Pomona. I didn’t want to get a mansion in Noosa or anything – I wanted to live in that house in Pomona and I thought hey, I must be happy.”

Simplicity promotes a sense of control over her life through a focus on family and the natural environment where consumerism is implicated with stress, emptiness and unhappiness. Anita shares these feelings of happiness contingent on simplicity and when money was short and the couple considered undertaking additional work, their decision against it was based around their value of sharing more time as a family and gaining a sense of personal control: “We still had some rental coming in from England and we thought, ‘Oh no, we’ll just grow a veggie patch and become a bit self-sufficient and worked out how we could cut down on our bills’.”

Katrina has a successful background in the finance industry where long before relocating she began to value the non-material lifestyle above money, however she found city culture of her former life prevented her from affecting change in this respect, highlighting the significance of making the physical move as opposed to downshifting within the city. She emphasizes the role of the natural environment in creating happiness through simplicity, in contrast to consumerism which deters happiness:

“[So if you’d stayed do you think you would’ve kept being very money focused?] Yes because you’re amongst it, keeping up with the Jones’. It would’ve been a struggle because I didn’t want to be like that. I liked these people in Thailand who were happy with a very simple life... And I still say, even though it’s only normal wages [the work I do], as long as I can afford to do this and that it’s OK, because it’s fun in that job.”

Tamsin is struggling financially however she is modelling a philosophy of lifestyle based upon the ‘less is more’ principle and the richness of a less material life. Her words below link innovation with necessity through a focus on environmental philosophy. Her words explain how simplicity practice supports innovation and the sustainability of her relocation and how it

allows a sense of control over her life through non-reliance on consumerism and engagement and harmony with the natural environment:

“I just finished reading this article about how most of us buy something every day and this woman has written about everything she bought over 365 days. I probably buy one thing a month, so you have to live differently. In the city we were both full-time workers so you work all day and you dream about it at night because we were professionals and we were paying people to live our life. We were paying people to look after our children, we were paying people to do our garden we were paying people to clean our house. We were buying things every day...

“I mean it’s really about trying to model an alternative for a future which isn’t so consumed by material goods and by the notion of success as being financial. It’s really about trying to say there’s this whole other notion of what might constitute richness and riches and to give in at this point when it starts to get hard is to say I live in a material world and the only way is to go back to it. The thing I’m interested in is local – how the land itself has an active force in our lives, that each land holds a whole lot of memories of place, not just of people but of the whole animate of place.

“I actually think we are far too rich and it’s created all these huge problems because we’re not frugal, we don’t come up with inventiveness, we don’t value repair – we are so rich as a society we just throw everything away and replace it. We don’t think about where our food comes from so much, if we feel like strawberries in winter we go to the gourmet store and buy them and they might be a bit bitter but we don’t care... Living within the seasons of where we are and the produce that’s available in the seasons and becoming more frugal and more caring about the resources we use would make a huge difference, so yes I think there’s a lot of learning from poverty. Everything has a one year warranty on it from the shops and that creates mountains of horrible stuff when you compare it to Africa, they take every computer and take them apart and reuse every single bit that they can because they’re in a much more poverty stricken process, and we’ll be there again. There’s no doubt, whether it’s in the next 10 or 100 years they’re all skills we’re going to have to re-learn.”

Lisa says she didn’t realise she was budding ‘greenie’ before her relocation and suggests that if she’d stayed in the city she may have become embroiled in more materialistic pursuits, as a lover of designer clothes and other urban cultural trademarks. Her comments demonstrate the significance of the natural environment upon her developing value of simplicity through a focus on the natural environment, community and resource economy:

“All of a sudden we realised that this green space that we had, even though it looked a bit scruffy, meant so much to us and even just going on that journey, helping to support other

people to appreciate their environment so they're less likely to damage it. Even in our house, there is not a thing that goes through our house without the question, can you use it again? Who else can use it again? Where else can I dispose of it so someone else can make some use of it? Then if it doesn't pass that test, that's the only time it goes in the bin. I've never been an energy Nazi before in my life but I am now. Just everything, you learn to appreciate it, because you appreciate your environment."

The anti-status sentiment of Brad's hinterland community discussed in Chapter 5 supports simplicity as a cultural characteristic in proposing that financial status is socially unacceptable and where control over his life is emphasised through the simple life. By contrast, Karen inhabits a coastal community and experiences opportunities for health, community and self-efficacy through a focus on the natural environment rather than materialism, despite her business success. She regards consumerism as a tool for manipulation of personal values and also in corporate culture where she says it's used to retain staff – this view supports the 'corporate refugee' premise of Hoey's research (2006), discussed in Chapter 2.

Conversely, Angus and Gayne both expressed an appreciation of material goals. While a key reason for Angus to stay in the area is due to the natural environment, he does not believe simplicity is a feature of the culture of the place because of the challenges of its economic patterns which position money as more important. Gayne, also in construction, does consider simplicity a theme of the culture however but his personal values are consumer oriented and tied to notions of success, and so override the culture:

"I thought my goals had changed since moving here but they haven't. I realized that when my garages filled up with boats and cars. I might make excuses that I'm trying to live a more simplistic life but then I surround myself with eight cars, three motorbikes and boats. If I were still in the international market in Asia my goals would be almost the same..."

For those who did not discuss simplicity or consumerism in a personal context, some of its principles were still present such as the conscious rejection of greed, as relevant to Jasmine: "It was a lifestyle decision to move here, but I still wanted to be realistically paid for a good service, and I would work my quotes out not on the basis of greed but on the basis of what I needed to pay bills."

Others, such as Murray who was working long hours in his own building business, have little personal time where 'More Time with Family' was the key motive for downshifting in an

Australian survey (Hamilton and Denniss 2005), representing a form of simplicity lifestyle. However, defining personal time is an interesting proposition in the lifestyle migration quest, considering the role of passion where Chris for example does not experience financial problems but he is focused on businesses which stem from his passions and are strongly linked to the natural environment. While consuming his time, these interests simultaneously reinforce his values of simplicity, through the natural environment. Donna is another such case where, while struggling with money and juggling six business activities at the time of interview, she is focusing on passionate pursuits within that mix which are synonymous with business. Lew also commented that a lifestyle migrant may be washing windows, mowing lawns and putting all their extra time and energy into a scheme which will either make them rich or send them broke. Therefore, the research argues that simplicity lifestyle does not necessarily comprise personal time, away from business interests as indicated by the downshifting research, but proposes instead the relevance of passion and control over one's own life above financially-led decision making, as more vital characteristics.

Chapter 7 has explored the lifestyle migration quest in the context of pursuing an ideal before exploring the value of the natural environment on multiple levels as a change agent, as opposed to this ideal. We have revisited the topic of money where debates arose in relation to the need for more or less money due to the novelty afforded by the natural environment, as well as illustrating the personal power afforded by it compared to urban contexts. Also in comparison, health and stress were contextualised in urban culture and alleviated by the natural environment, with some notable contraindications. Innovation was discussed as inspired by the natural environment and simplicity lifestyle was explored in relation to it and to themes of financial security, personal time and happiness. As the book concludes in Chapter 8, the points of dissent in this and previous chapters shall now be discussed in an attempt to determine homogeneity within the findings.

8. Conclusions



Figure 8 - Christina Kargillis, *Perspective*, 2006

This chapter summarises the findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, and expands upon the techniques, outlined in the Preface, in detailing some of the mechanisms used in evaluating each of the stories. I then explore the binary meanings which emerged through the narratives, positioning lifestyle migration as a multi-dimensional entity, lacking homogeneity, and leading to a discussion on the grand narrative of the phenomenon. Firstly however we reveal the themes employed in the research before suggesting a scale of change through participant experiences in the context of identity development, based upon their motive for making a lifestyle migration and their ensuing actions and reactions through relocation.

8.1 Key Themes

In *Small Town Pioneers*, exploring the negotiation of values and therefore identity development following relocation was formed around an analysis of 30 themes which emerged through the narratives. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are written around these themes. In some instances the themes are not indicative in reflecting what incites change or makes the move sustainable, but purely represent a value statement of what's important where for instance, Financial Security as a theme features significantly but in some cases it's due to a notable lack of money. In other cases the label is a clear indicator of a value which contributes towards change and/or sustainable relocation, such as with the theme Control Over Own Life, which may comprise a host of sub themes, and Natural Amenity. These were two of the strongest values/themes in participant experiences.

In developing the list of themes I interpreted the narratives and consolidated meanings where for instance, applying the theme Control Over Own Life may have been determined through comments such as, "... It's my home here. It *feels* right and I've always *wanted* to be here," where a sense of independence and doing what one wants is evident and primary. Other examples include, "... Even if you're not being paid the biggest amount of money you want to feel valued. They gave me menial things to do despite me shoving resumes under their noses, just kept down, controlled," where being controlled is anathema to personal control. In the case of, "... I'm not a person driven by ambition and am not someone who wants to climb the corporate ladder... I was prepared to accept that [pay] cut because it was eventually going to lead us to the lifestyle that we have," the term 'lifestyle' relates to a host of themes elsewhere defined in that narrative such as Natural Amenity but where Control Over Own Life is the key message behind this excerpt. The label Control Over Own Life, for example, may have only

appeared three times in a 120 minute interview but where sub themes which contribute towards the context of personal control emphasised it as the ‘mother’ label of many passages. As can be seen from the list of themes, each of the above quotes carry several thematic labels and this multi-dimensional connotation was the pattern of each story. The 30 themes are categorised as follows:

<p>Place</p>	<p>Economic</p>
<p>1. Sense of Space 2. Scale of Place 3. Climate 4. Natural Amenity</p>	<p>16. Financial Security (levels of) 17. Economic Patterns 18. Consumerism/Simplicity 19. Status (\$/reputation) 20. Success</p>
<p>Work</p>	<p>Mental /Emotional</p>
<p>5. Career Goals 6. Work Styles 7. Risk (\$, social, personal) 8. Flexibility 9. Innovation/Creativity</p>	<p>21. Personal Time 22. Stress/Non-stress 23. Health 24. Reflection/ Learning 25. Self-Efficacy/ Attitude 26. Planning/ Determination 27. Passions/Interests 28. Happiness/ Purpose 29. Control Over Own Life 30. Emotional Pull Towards Place</p>
<p>Community</p>	
<p>10. Culture 11. Sense of community/Exclusion 12. Family 13. Networks (social/work) 14. Power 15. Novelty/Extrinsic Stimulation</p>	

Priority Values

In *Small Town Pioneers*, Control Over Own Life was the most important value to lifestyle migrants and contributes to their sustained relocation, among other factors to be discussed. The Chhertri, Stimson and Western study (2009) concluded similarly in their exploration of downshifting, however they use the label ‘More control and personal fulfilment’ whereas I have also included labels such as Happiness/Purpose so that Control Over Own Life specifically focuses on taking ownership of life and fulfilment is implicated within that, but also identified separately where relevant.

Priority values were attributed to each narrative and in collaboration with each person. They are shown in the following scale. It’s interesting to note that attributes which characterise the lifestyle destination, such as Natural Amenity, rate significantly lower as the single primary value yet through the narratives, it is considered essential in supporting the a sense of control and family, as the two highest rating values:

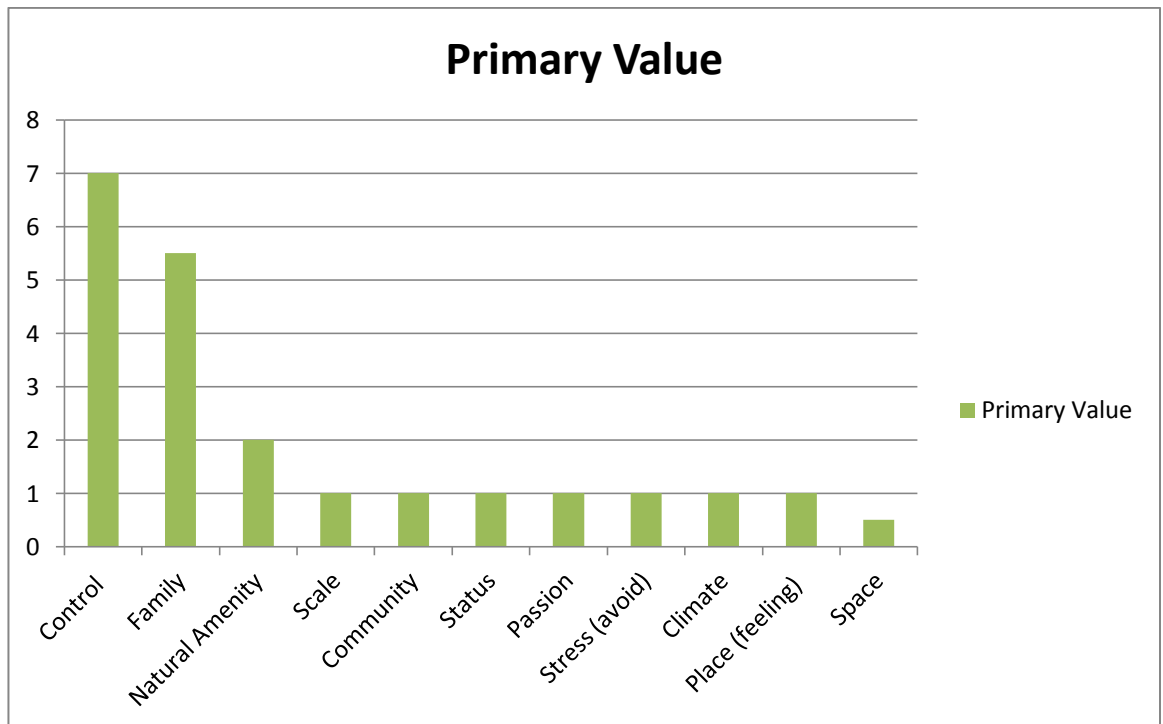


Figure 9

Note: Half-measures indicate a split priority

Therefore, a clearer indication of the role of the actual amenity is shown below where, of the above primary values, 5.5 are specifically Place related, so a simplified scale may read:

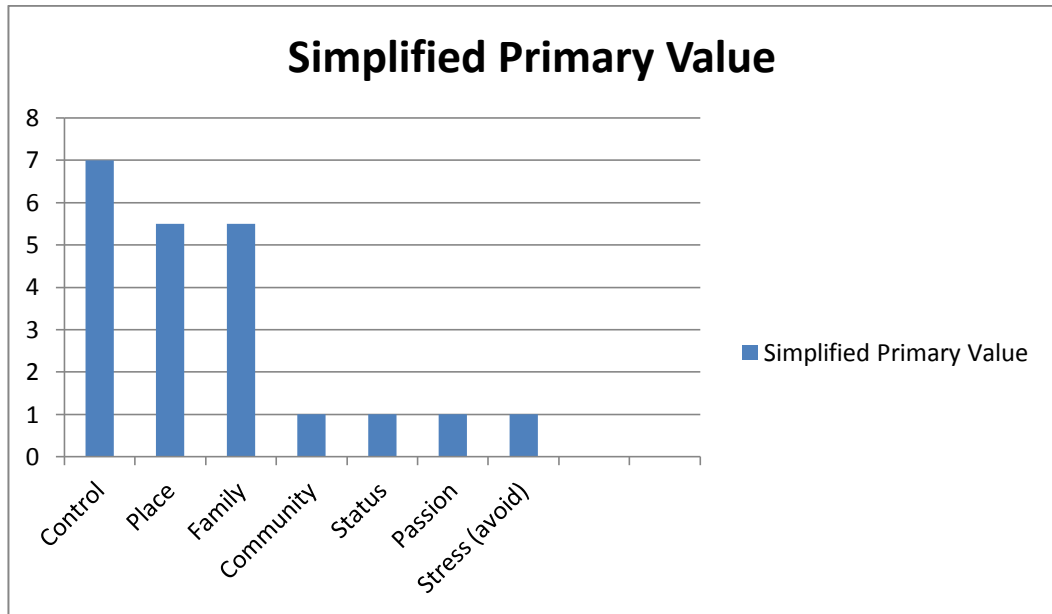


Figure 10

Note: Half-measures indicate a split priority

Recurrent Themes

Typically, narratives revealed between 5-10 key values/themes each, in addition to others which were not so pronounced. These values are now aggregated across the 22 lifestyle migration experiences to demonstrate themes of recurrent significance, however they do not indicate weighting of values as do the above scales:

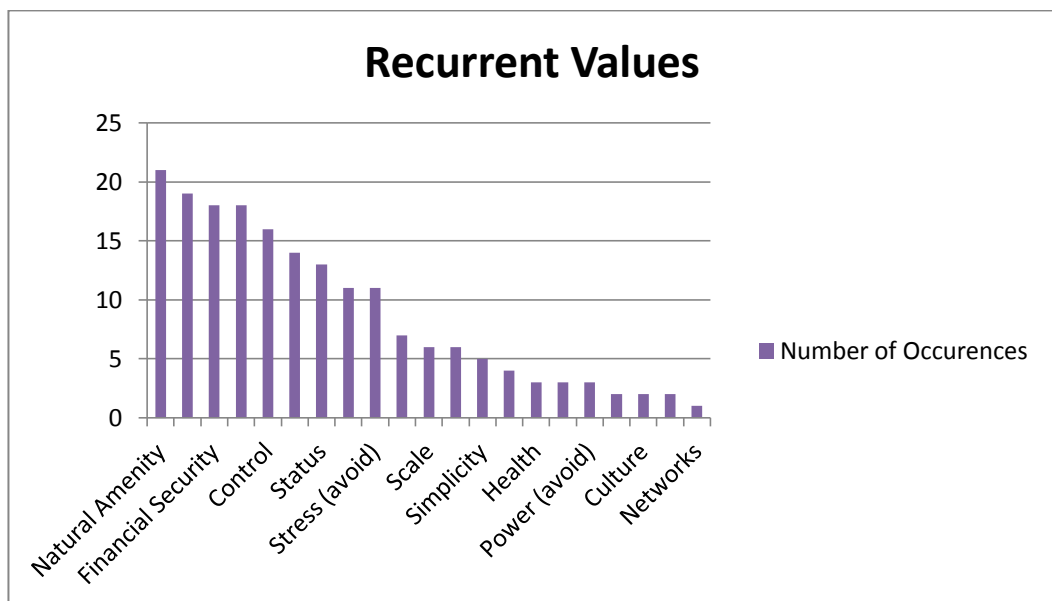


Figure 11

The 30 themes provided a good foundation for exploring participant experiences and identifying the values in preceding chapters which both led to learning and change, and contributed towards sustainable relocation.

8.2 Scale of Change

In making the decision to relocate, participant motives were in alignment with other studies in simplicity and downshifting (Hamilton and Mail 2003, Tan 2004), from a desire to escape stress and enjoy more personal time, to the location specific goal of living in a more natural place. The critical incidents leading to the relocation of the lifestyle migrants in *Small Town Pioneers* were briefly captured in Chapter 7, in relation to the *intention* to change through relocation, where here they are further explored in the context of progressive change through relocation. A scale reflecting the degree of identity development is suggested. This scale is derived from the interpretive position of narrative analysis (Cohen and Manion 1989) in considering the motive for relocation, the key challenges overcome and the reprioritisation of values, per person. The précis below can be elaborated through accessing the narrative summaries in Chapter 4.

The scale of change from 1-4 is founded upon the following criteria:

- 1 = **minimal** acknowledgement of change due to circumstances of relocation
- 2 = relocation **introduces** change by allowing ‘breathing space’ for **self-directed** change
- 3 = relocation **introduces** change through **reaction to external** influences
- 4 = relocation **introduces** change through **reaction to dramatic external** influences

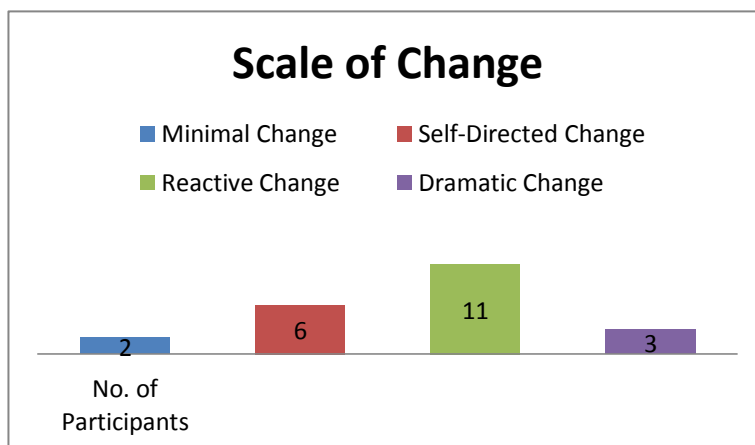


Figure 12

Critical incident Andrew

A changing cultural climate in Europe and a feeling of being devalued by his workplace, along with experiencing Seasonally Affected Disorder in the winter contributed to his relocation. He didn't want to live in a big city anymore and previous trips to Australia encouraged him to want to immigrate. The birth of his first child set the timing as he believed Australia is a better place to raise children.

Scale – 1

He says he has always been innovative and so this doesn't represent a development, and on a cultural level he hasn't adjusted. His challenges have been largely relationship based however exist separately to the economic landscape of his relocation: "I'm still the same person I was 10 years ago."

Critical incident Alexander

In Germany he'd progressed as far as he could at work and felt "blocked" by his boss's attitude. He always planned on returning to Australia because of the wilderness that still exists here, that he didn't have in Germany. After he produced an event on sustainable development, it became his career/passion to work in this area where the culture of the study site suited his new direction.

Scale of Change – 3

He followed his passion which incited change and also underwent significant learning regarding career, becoming successfully self-employed: "The lack of opportunity here just pushed me along to make it happen."

Critical incident Angus

He detested living in Sydney for its lack of natural environment and its urban pollution and experienced an emotional pull towards the study site, led to relocate by his passion. He also saw opportunity to make money in the developing region.

Scale of Change – 3

He's lived in the area since age 23 so his growing maturity merges with his reactive development. However, he works in the most cyclic business of construction and acknowledges change: "I've had to extend myself physically, personally, emotionally, and almost spiritually because of the beautiful area. I've had to extend myself to adapt to the area because if I didn't adapt I'd go stagnant and if I go stagnant I'm not going to last very long at all

so I have become, I suppose, reactive to my environment.” He’s made adjustments to culture and economic patterns.

Critical incident Anita

She learnt from her parents the mistake of working too hard. She wanted to enjoy life more. When she fell pregnant it marked the time to make those changes.

Scale of Change – 2

Her deliberate shedding of city stress and focus on family led to new ideas and activities based around community involvement, such as starting a swim school and becoming more self-sufficient while also re-entering her TV career on a freelance basis, but on her own terms. She says she faced no significant challenges and the relocation experience was more, “Oh my God, our plan worked!”

Critical incident Amanda

A job opportunity provided the opening for her relocation as well as a lifestyle change where her passion for the country could be satisfied.

Scale of Change – 3

While still a driven career woman, as before, notable career and financial challenges due to limited opportunities created a strong identity crisis for Amanda and brought with it serious depression. The challenges revealed the significance of the role of motherhood and social networks (friendships) which she’d previously undervalued, while career issues were slowly resolved: “I don’t think I could go back to a big city. I don’t know... I’ve grown to like the characteristics of the country community and I don’t think I’d be able to be as cut throat and or cold. I’d be lost in a big city now. [So you’ve really changed] Yeah, or it was always there but I’ve discovered it.”

Critical incident Adriane

She had ambitions for the children to experience extended family and older generations so she moved near to their grandparents. The climate and space would enable a sustainable lifestyle – this was a lure and a passion for her.

Scale of Change – 3

The study site is a disappointment for her because it doesn’t fulfil her sustainability ideals: “Sometimes I wonder, if I go to a place where I feel people get it more [sustainability], is that where I want to be?” While her ideals are not met and don’t change in line with the offerings

of the place, she confirms that she's reinvented herself in adapting socially and professionally in reaction to circumstances of relocation, through collaborating with others and embarking upon self-employment as a way of problem-solving financial challenges.

Critical incident Brad

He experienced an epiphany about why he'd never wanted to live in a city and also started thinking about having children. When his wife fell pregnant it marked the time to relocate.

Scale of Change – 2

He says he never defined himself by his work however it was important for him to maintain the professional level of work he was doing prior to the move. He also suggests the move reflected him rather than incited change: "Yeah I guess it's because it's always been in my nature to want to be somewhere like this." However he does demonstrate self-directed change due to circumstances of relocation: "So I suppose it's extended myself into those areas of my life that I always thought I want to do a bit more of that and I haven't felt I could or hadn't had the opportunity or made the opportunity."

Critical incident Chris

He moved away from the culture of crime and misguided youth, should he one day have children he didn't want them growing up in that environment. His home city was too busy for him and the study site was perfect – small scale, low population and perfect for a surfer.

Scale of Change – 3

He considers the study site as his "training ground" not only for his current business but also for his sense of self-understanding. He relocated age 24 so his growing maturity merges with his reactive changes. He is very self-reflective and extremely self-motivated and has learnt much about business in reacting to the environment, where location – the environment and small population – has facilitated change: "[Do you think you would be mentally clear and creative if you were living in a city?] No, because you get influenced by people and the environment will change you."

Critical incident Donna

Her move wasn't based on leaving anything behind but rather pursuing a dream as she always wanted to return to the area. She also experienced much stress in the city and wanted to be near the sea for its healing quality.

Scale of Change – 4

She changed her lifestyle and work completely, from secure, well-paid employee to self-employed, juggling various projects and taking one risk after another to make a living and cover her mortgage. She took a staged approach at first commuting until she bought a business, not knowing how it would go, and also developed her artistic talent. “It’s been a pretty rocky road.”

Critical incident Duncan

There was a need to escape the ‘rat race’ and a feeling of not being in control of his life. He took a six month reprieve in the study site to attend to his own creative project in a relaxing environment. The decision to remain in the area followed.

Scale of Change – 3

He has adapted culturally from an inner-city muso to a more relaxed, “beachy” guy. He has adapted career wise to self-employed, changing his field twice to adapt to the economy and ensure his survival. Through these challenges he’s developed a stronger sense of self-efficacy in his ability to lead and collaborate with people creatively – his status and sense of personal direction has increased, however socially he feels slightly isolated.

Critical incident Gayne

He was disheartened with corporate business due to monopoly type environments and he had a marital issue where the study site offered the opportunity to focus on family.

Scale of Change – 2 (contraindicated)

He says he hasn’t changed due to the move, however the limited opportunities available for an International level CEO have introduced a new meaning of success for him because his business is self-directed, on his own terms. He argues that it’s his jumping off the professional merry go round that has allowed this – would he have jumped if he’d remained in the city?

Critical incident Geoff

He was “just fried” in the city and couldn’t stand the traffic. He also felt used and exploited by his employer – after he built the business for them, they sold it.

Scale of Change – 4

He has completely reinvented himself through the struggle of dramatic circumstances based upon unemployment and financial trouble leading to clinical depression. This sequence of events evolved partly through lack of planning but more significantly a lack of confidence. To

dig his way out of depression, he enrolled in a photography course which would build his self-worth, which had long been an issue despite earlier academic success. His capacity and self-efficacy rose in conjunction. Now he's teaching as well as practicing, "It nearly went terribly wrong, as wrong as it could..."

Critical incident John

When Brisbane began to grow into a city he moved to retain a small scale environment. He couldn't tolerate the traffic and noise of the growing city and wanted access to the natural environment, which was fast disappearing.

Scale of Change – 1

He always valued the smaller scale and left Brisbane when it grew too big. He's always followed his passion, working with cars. Through career challenges he's learnt to trust his own decisions and works autonomously, and he is very successful.

Critical incident Jasmine

She worked in Europe in a high pressured job that affected her mental and physical health. She relocated to escape from career, from a relationship, and from family issues. She loved the natural environment of the study site.

Scale of Change – 3

Her former high-profile career had only brought her misery and made her feel devalued as a person, though well remunerated. Challenges of self-employment since relocating encouraged a growing self-worth regarding fee for service, and her self-efficacy developed in response. She was prepared to step outside her comfort zone initially and to take business risks which provided her with new opportunities for change, but when she was eventually offered a suitable contract it was a relief. Her career change is circular, her internal change increasingly positive: "Certainly when I arrived I was still searching for something – business wise, career wise, self-growth wise which I feel I have found up here."

Critical incident Katrina

She was drawn to the natural beauty of the study site and valued the lifestyle without the pressure of career. She had endured enough career stress and wanted more free time to enjoy life and have fun.

Scale of Change – 2

While the culture is diverse compared to her European base, her personality is more in harmony with the study site. Her background was in finance and was exceedingly materialistic but prior travel to Asia taught her the values of simplicity and happiness and her move to the study site was to confirm that in seeking a simpler life. She is happy with less. She values the climate/ natural environment. Relocation has allowed her to become more humanitarian: “When you’ve got a career driving you, you don’t think about volunteering because you’re happy to be consumed.”

Critical incident Karen

She was faced with a choice between a stellar international career opportunity and relocation for better family life, following a stressful and successful career in Sydney. The family decided they wanted to be closer and immersed in the natural environment.

Scale of Change – 3

While formerly very successful professionally and strongly aware of the importance of family, she has discovered a community spirit where in Sydney, she didn’t even know her neighbours. She has also gained a new level of status through the relocation in starting her own company, “I don’t think I’d ever had the profile within corporate...” She says she’s become more creative since relocating and that the thought of going back makes her physically ill.

Critical incident Lew

He was seeking an opportunity to establish and grow a life/lifestyle on his own terms as a young married man. Family connections offered the ideal opportunity in the study site as he loved the environment.

Scale of Change – 4

He moved to the area as a young man so his growing maturity merges with reactive change. He was a labourer and an artist and became involved in physically and metaphorically building a community in the hinterland. He then started leading community groups ‘from the ground up’. These involvements shaped his life where he essentially recreated himself and transformed his career into local politics where he’s been very successful: “When I was elected I thought ‘what do you do’? I then applied all those things I unconsciously learnt from being part of all those associations... so I’ve learnt some great lessons from living in the hills.”

Critical incident Lisa

She was offered a government job in the study site, still close enough to Brisbane to retain her connections, but knew and loved the area so much she was reluctant to move there in case it ruined her opportunity for a 'getaway' location.

Scale of Change – 3

After her government jobs ceased she commenced self-employment, which brought financial difficulties, encouraging her passion for recycling and other environmental issues. She worked with community on some tough issues and has realised her values more clearly through these challenges. This has shaped her identity to a great extent. This work also brought her a new level of social status. She's found her place now and says she no longer needs a getaway.

Critical incident Murray

The family needed more space for the kids in the Brisbane home but they decided to move rather than renovation/rebuild, to prevent stress. He experienced traffic stress to and from work in the city and decided the study site would provide the space and natural environment for a healthier and better way of life for the children.

Scale of Change – 2

Through challenges, the relocation has introduced new avenues for work in construction and encouraged further study in order for him to take advantage of new directions in the new location. For someone who was happy to stay in Brisbane for the rest of his life and was encouraged to move by his wife, after five years he now says he would never go back, even though the work has been unstable and there has been financial struggle. He says relocating has broadened his horizons.

Critical incident Rhana

Having children prompted the relocation, to live in a smaller community. She was actually happy in Brisbane working for a company but her husband wanted to be near the sea.

Scale of Change – 2

The move coincided with motherhood which was her key priority, so she believes change is mostly due to that, however she has discovered control over her own life through the move – her narrative shows mostly self-directed change through an absence of external pressure to change, even though lack of opportunity encouraged self-employment: "I would've just stayed an employee, it would've been safer, but now I love it."

Critical incident Steve

The weather was terrible in Melbourne and his wife had the opportunity to relocate for work. He loved the idea of living in the country and was ready for an adventure.

Scale of Change – 3 (contraindicated)

From unskilled at nearly 40 to running successful serviced offices with his partner, he transformed his habits with techniques to ensure he captures creative ideas and maximises his time efficiently. He's learnt a gamut of new skills and has transformed into a 'professional' through the move, but already had a strong sense of identity, which was independent of status. He doesn't believe he's changed due to location however his reaction to the limited opportunities of the study site have prompted these significant changes.

Critical incident Tamsin

She accepted a redundancy because she felt undervalued and became sick as a result of stress. She wanted to be able to explore ideas and creative practice outside the limits of institutions and mainstream thinking.

Scale of Change – 3

Her desire to change was prompted prior to relocation and she's faced financial challenges since the move, coming from senior professional roles in government and now relying largely on sales from her husband's furniture and her journal articles. She's learnt much about simplicity since the move: "... so you have to live differently." The career status she lost has been recouped through community endeavours. Her ideals around community, nature and environment have grown to form a manifesto for living, "... the notion of what might constitute richness and riches."

While the scale of change is interpretive and therefore arguable as to whether Tamsin for instance should be a 3 or a 4, or whether Steve should be a 3 since he says he hasn't changed, or where Adriane sits since she would rather leave due to the challenges but stays because of the children, the analysis was made by focusing on reactive change – the more reactive the higher the rating. Therefore, even though change can happen inside a cardboard box, according to Gayne, this book explores identity development through lifestyle migration based upon reflexive identity development, in *response* to external influencers. This point was critical in exploring the above scale. It is important to note that only two participants demonstrated no notable transformation, where Andrew, while his innovation and flexibility are strong, experienced a lack of a sense of community and was considering leaving while John migrated

with the necessary survival skills 'intact' on all key community, economic and social levels where change was not necessary to sustain his relocation.

8.3 Binary Findings

Layers of binary meanings emerged through the narratives, adding complexity to the research which needs to be addressed in considering the relevance of a grand narrative or metanarrative for the phenomenon of lifestyle migration, as would be expected in a conclusion on narrative research. These binaries pertain to participant responses through the process of negotiating the impacts of the social, economic and environment following relocation, where challenges and opportunities represent change agents. The dramatic variance in responses which create the binary is potentially due to the diversity among lifestyle migrants where "everyone is from somewhere else" (Lisa). Such diversity is one of the unique characteristics of the lifestyle migration experience and encourages themes such as innovation and flexibility, previously explored.

There were 13 key binaries identified in relation to topics of community, personal time, power, simplicity, novelty, lifestyle ambitions, money, status and the pursuit of the ideal. Many of these binaries are interrelated and the diversity of responses around them have been identified in previous chapters to some degree. Here I recontextualise the findings of previous chapters in conclusion, positioning lifestyle migration as a non-homogenous phenomenon, a far cry from the days when one traveled to explore exotic places, an alien amongst the tribe.

1. Community/Communities

The community/communities binary primarily indicates contradictions around perspectives and definitions of what constitutes a small town in the context of lifestyle migration. I suggest that it's the cultural diversity within a limited, regional population that creates confusion around the study site as a single or multiple community, and an agreement about its size. The cultural history of place is essentially the issue in the following interpretations, rather than actual size: "There's a separation for me between this coastal community and the hinterland community – that hinterland community is the core of the meaning of community" (Lew), while a participant from the a coastal town suggests Noosa is one community and due to growth it is becoming ghettoised: "I said so how do you find it now to be based in Noosa? He said 'Oh I'm not based in Noosa I'm in Peregian'. That's like saying I'm from Bondi or I'm from

Manly” (Chris). Yet another participant from the coast suggests the opposite, where Noosa was always a series of individual townships and due to growth it is merging into one: “But back then it was very much Noosaville was Noosaville, Noosa Heads was Noosa Heads, Tewantin was Tewantin and now it’s all sort of merged together” (Gayne). This disparity is potentially explained by levels of engagement with place where newcomers for instance experience place as a foreign entity until they become interrelated within it, after which it assumes more complexity. When Gayne discusses the way Noosa used to be, as separate towns, he is recalling a memory from holiday visits rather than a long lived experience, and when Chris refers to it as now forming sub-centres, he does so as he plans to leave the area and so disengages himself from it.

Scale of population is connected to this binary where John suggests, “... We went out last Saturday for about four hours within a 10km radius of my home and never saw one other person for three hours,” as did Katrina, “... I tried to set up a new recreational activity here but the population is too small to start something really new and get momentum happening.” Andrew differed in his view of size, classing the study site as a small city, possible because his experience has excluded a sense of community unlike the majority of participants, where potentially a feeling of belonging impacts a cohesive perspective on not only a holistic or disparate community but also on size, and where a feeling of isolation reflects the anonymity of larger places.

2. Community – inclusion/exclusion

While a sense of community and belonging is a dominant theme among lifestyle migrants in this research, some offered contradictory experiences, creating an inclusion/exclusion binary. Andrew suggests: “I just felt that Australians weren’t interested in talking to me because I’m English, or employing me because I was English. In the UK if I wanted to contact my friends I’d just walk down the pub. That doesn’t happen anymore because nobody goes to the pub here. You have to organise BBQs and go to other people’s BBQs and look at your email and things like that.” Geoff says: “I think the community sucks. I don’t think there is a community. I’ve been looking for community ever since I got here and I just can’t seem to find it. It’s like a club for wealthy people – the community part of it is for the wealthy,” while Duncan says, “Ah I guess not we’re still trying to fit in. We’re still trying to find that nice place and group of friends where we can hang out together all the time like we did in Sydney.” The majority found a

strong community where some referred to it on a township level and others referred to it on its broader scale, encompassing the whole Noosa Biosphere area.

3. Community – continuity/transience and social anchoring

The concept of community belonging feeds into the continuity/transience binary where, in lifestyle destinations particularly there is a holiday season that brings thousands of visitors in a short space of time and as Lisa suggests, it makes people more insular. This further impacts the disenfranchised participants with a feeling of exclusion. Within the study site there are also thousands of new residents who come and go each year.

Diametrically opposed to the transience is the duality of the core of residents who experience a high level of continuity in the area due to its small scale and interconnectedness, explored in Chapter 5. Anita says, "... In Kin Kin people tend to move here and stay, or if they move they go somewhere more isolated. Noone I know has ever moved back to the city. I think there's something very special about Kin Kin though – everyone is like minded." Amanda's views regarding continuity in encouraging a unified identity are contradicted by Jasmine who believes the integrated identity is a farce for many of the more successful members of community, according to her contacts in the police force, and believes secret agendas and subversive behaviour exist to counter the onus on living a transparent life. Adriane supports this undercurrent of hidden agendas with her experience in community action groups.

4. Community – safety/ vulnerability

Tamsin had an executive background in government before relocating and has undergone notable transition in order to adapt to living local and coming to terms with snakes and spiders for example that are now friendly relations in her house on one level, as well as adjusting to the social integration that her country existence offers. She supports the study site as a safe haven.

The sense of safety is a dominant theme among this collection of lifestyle migrants where all but one share this experience. Therefore the binary arises mainly from the not-so-reliable metanarrative of country areas as places where anything could happen and no one would find out, as Tamsin recalls: "I feared that it would be like the English murder mysteries where everyone knows each other's business they're all full of gossip and you're exposed entirely as the other. I was so pleasantly surprised." Rhana also responds to the metanarrative of being

alone in a remote area, away from the imagined support systems of a city when asked if she felt at risk: "I think that people would support you more than in the city. In the city people are very tunnel vision focused on themselves." Andrew from Europe had a specific contrary experience to the position of safety over vulnerability when he says: "I've only been mugged twice in my life and both time were in Australia and once was in Noosa."

5. Community – gossip/concern

In a town, as opposed to a city, participants say that news travels fast and whether this is destructive gossip or community concern is another binary, as explored in Chapter 5 where comments such as, "... You know like you go to a party and someone walks past and they start bitching and I think Jesus what do they say when I walk off!" (Murray), contrast with notions of reputation management where continuity implies that one is "on show" all of the time and "if you are dirty rotten scoundrel you'll be found out" (Amanda).

Steve explores this binary in the socio political context in suggesting: "There are a couple of people with very loud voices. So the media just jump on it because there's such little news coming out. I know how easy it is to get into the paper." This comment introduces the concept of power hierarchies within the area where a minority assume ownership of community views. Lew, politician, supports the reference where such "voices" are "in the paper every week" in discussing the cultural context of the study site (conceptually relevant in any town): "There was a massive split around 1997 when the planning scheme was adopted for Noosa and the people in the hills have not forgotten. It was an ego trip for a bunch of people down here [on the coast] who believed they had control of the Noosa Shire and they created books and videos on how they saved Noosa. I'll give you a copy, I use it for a doorstop."

6. Personal Time – my time/their time

The binary of more or less personal time is interesting in that the pursuit of personal time is one of the key reasons city dwellers make a lifestyle change, and certainly in *Small Town Pioneers* a third of participants had this theme attributed to their key values. Murray suggests: "The hardest thing is trying to re-establish yourself, you're doing long hours. It's not as though you're doing the 9-5 job when you're self-employed." Conversely, Steve has self-trained in time management since launching his business in order to disarm this typical scenario because for him, lifestyle has always come first. Finally, the *illusion* of more time due to engagement with the natural environment was introduced by Jasmine, as explored in Chapter 7.

7. Power – bureaucracy/freedom

Cities are characterised by structure where 'lifestyle destinations' are characterised by the natural environment – that is part of their metanarrative, if you like. Power structures within lifestyle destinations present an interesting binary. The study site has an agreed cultural history of 'lawlessness' among participants who have known the area long-term, as Lew outlined in Chapter 5. Jasmine agrees there is "... less regulation in terms of dress codes and things like that." She introduces the element of social power which demonstrates the presence but also the limitations of power authorities in the area through her ability to affect outcomes via her role in communications: "I probably work harder now for less money but it's almost a pleasure with some of the jobs where you feel like you're actually making a difference, when you campaign on someone's behalf and they win."

The council amalgamation which involved the study site posed a major threat for several participants while some expressed it as a positive and where others made no comment. For those opposed, the issue of powerlessness over authoritative decisions which affect lifestyle values such as the natural environment was a strong feeling and relates to natural justice and sustainability requiring stakeholder engagement in decision-making (Morrison-Sanders 2007). Culturally as well, these political changes warranted responses where Tamsin for instance bridges city culture with the advent of the larger local authority in explaining: "It's very rare to have someone in a city in a job say thank you to you because you're being paid for that. That's the difference between having that small level council to something bigger and more bureaucratic. In a word or two I'd say human scale is critical."

Other power scenarios relate to the wealthy within the community, where the study site was considered to have been, "... developed in the minds of those few people," according to Angus. This is supported by Gayne, "We start to create plans and sanction activities and a minority will stand up will override it so the intentions and the good will disappear and people go, well that was waste of time. There's a lot of money in town and that money talks."

While the above comments sit within a historical context, Alexander has a contrary experience which is contextualized by his European background and illustrates the comparative lack of power structures in the study site as key in encouraging his entrepreneurial activities:

"I think it's really easy to play by the rules here so there's not much need to make your own rules... the feeling is different. In Germany everything is more structured and you wouldn't just take a job when it comes in. [You'd be wanting to know how many hours a week you'd be

working and how much money is coming in?] Yes. It's a strong feeling that everything was more difficult and harder and rigid [in Germany] whereas here it's simple. You do one thing, it doesn't work, so you do another thing."

An Australian-born participant confirms this view: "Noosa has a renegade influence more so than the city where there is so much holding you down. In a small town it's what you can get away with. I'm not talking so much about ethics but red tape." Yet another put it this way: "Half the time I'll suck a beer on the way home and no-one bothers me, that's why I live here." A further power scenario was introduced by Rhana in Chapter 7 who suggests the absence of viewers or observation in the place engenders personal empowerment. These cultural, economic and environmental implications of power are potent change agents in the negotiation for personal empowerment and change (Houghton and Yoho 2005).

8. Simplicity – self-sufficiency/unsustainable

The metanarrative of the regional community as a destination for the simple life presents another binary. The eco-friendly image is a reality for some and a disappointment for others. Alexander receives positive social interest for his environmental sustainability business, which would imply a value of simplicity lifestyle (SPARC 2011; Hamilton and Denniss 2005) among community, as reflected in Anita's comments, "Oh no, we'll just grow a veggie patch and become a bit self-sufficient, and... cut down on our bills."

However, Andrew and Adriane reveal the difficulties in attaining this ideal. Both are from Europe and comment on the car reliance in the study site as a major infringement towards the sustainability goal where in the mega-city of London, for instance, a sustainable lifestyle was possible within the boundaries of walking distance for social interaction, combined with reliable public transport for other business. Adriane suggests: "For me it's the space and the lure of a sustainable lifestyle where I can have my veggie patch. I've tried to garden since I came here and it's a total disaster with sandy soils and so on and the heat, but going just a little bit into the hinterland people are growing stuff. Apart from the heating issue, [London] was probably more sustainable. I had my compost heap, I had my garden you know, so my expectations here now I really had to modify."

Others are more inspired by the image of a sustainable existence rather than the activity, where Steve suggests: "It's nice to get out and go to Brisbane every now and then to get some stuff. I like that mental thing, the idea of living in the country," while Katrina and Geoff among

others discuss the limited infrastructure that promote the environmentally-friendly lifestyle. All commented on the natural environment as a key value.

9. Novelty – richness of lifestyle/sparseness of lifestyle

Participants reveal that some lifestyle migrants leave the area because there's not enough to do, there aren't enough resources or structures to engage them while alternatively, for the majority of the lifestyle migrants featured here, 'less is more'. However even among these there exists some duality. This binary is interrelated with several concepts such as lifestyle, money, natural environment and discussions on community as it explores the value proposition of a place characterised by the natural environment and limited 'distraction'.

Angus, despite his financial stress, makes a value statement positioning the 'less' as the 'more' in the relocation scenario claiming, "Of course it's worth it," while Anita expresses the same evaluation and compares herself to her urban friends: "I think it freaks them out because of the lack of structure. We've created our own structure and that's made us more independent and more pioneering." Rhana made comment on the value of renegotiating her existence in living a simpler life while Tamsin is modelling a philosophy of lifestyle based upon the less is more principle in the richness of a less material life.

Brad expresses the richness of the area and expresses how it inspires him to better explore and utilise the environment which suggests that for him there is more to do rather than less, while he also says city life repels him and equates to stress. Steve also equates the study site to containing more novelty than a city and claims: "There's more distractions." The absence of traffic lights and high-rises was a popular comment among participants as key attributes of the 'lesser' existence, which provide so much more, and the mention of traffic and pollution in the cities was also a common theme defining the 'more' as less quality of life.

Geoff believes that the study site keeps him "sane" in regards to stress avoidance but as an artistic individual he also comments on its lesser cultural virtues. Adriane's dissatisfaction with the cultural landscape along with her disillusionment regarding an environmentally sustainable lifestyle place this value proposition in the negative. Many participants who were satisfied with the relocation commented on the lack of cultural activity particularly for younger people, noting that the study site contains a large proportion of retirees.

10. Lifestyle factors – living the dream/dreaming the life

Related to environmental values but more specifically about understanding the term, lifestyle, is another binary. For some it means climate, for others time or the natural environment, and for many it comprises a range of themes. I was interested to discover a pattern among International migrants who valued climate as more important than natural amenity at least initially, due to their origins in colder climates. All Australian-born participants place natural environment as a key priority rather than or as well as climate. *Small Town Pioneers* comprised seven International migrants of whom two say they could happily relocate to another warm climate, away from the area, including one who would relocate to a city. The remainder are township oriented where coast and climate (rather than hinterland and climate) are both important.

The lifestyle factor presents a contrary set of views in terms of its achievability, similarly with the simplicity binary, where some participants engage lifestyle changes while others experience limits to enjoying the lifestyle, a key reason for the relocation. Angus expressed his rationale for relocation based upon climactic conditions and the surf. Anita also illustrates her search for the ideal hinterland destination in which to fulfil personal goals and achieve wellbeing.

Karen articulated 'lifestyle' as synonymous with the key value Control Over Own Life. For those who experience lifestyle limits it was partly due to financial reasons such as the need/decision to work longer hours, however more commonly noted was the inability to allow their lifestyle values to influence their actual lifestyle, as Gayne explains: "... they come up for the first six or eight months and they engage in community and environment and after that they start to move back into their patterns."

11. Money – more need/less need

The issue of money creates a binary where the circumstances which create lack have encouraged simplicity practices and ideals among some participants, and a pursuit for more money among others. It is therefore a powerful change agent in influencing the sustainability of relocation. In participants who either need or want more money, the path to negotiation has involved a machination of steps involving additional themes, such as Learning or Innovation, in problem-solving a solution. Angus says he "went back to basics" upon arrival: "I was a business manager, not a carpenter at that stage but I had done a trade in structural landscaping and horticulture in Sydney," where for Geoff, money has been "... one of my

biggest changes since I've been here – I'm embracing money more." The economic variance within the area has allowed him to understand the value of money and appreciate its worth in contrast to his background where he "... never really had a good relationship with money." Jasmine suggests: "also you question yourself when you find yourself in a beautiful environment not earning much money and you ask if it's the right place to be. The value of money changes." Money here is transformational and represents a trigger for change through flexibility, innovation, passion and other themes previously explored.

However, a further binary involving innovation is implicated here with pressure/relaxation as both are shown to stimulate creative responses in addressing money shortage among participants, as discussed in Chapter 6 – pressure through reacting to necessity and relaxation in allowing reflection to stimulate ideas towards problem-solving. Several participants acknowledged that if they had stayed in the city they would have remained focused upon maintaining an income rather than creating one and such changes would not have occurred.

12. Status – equality/hierarchy

Status issues were possibly the most contradictory binary in *Small Town Pioneers*. Some participants, despite their socio-economic positions, were strongly at odds with the concept of a class system. Alexander for example claims that the focus on the natural environment dissipates hierarchy. The alternative view is one of a divided community based upon financial status where Gayne for example puts it bluntly: "Its rubbish that there's no class system in Noosa. Just go to Hastings Street on a Friday night. You could throw a net over Sunshine Beach and Noosa Hill – Noosa is a middle to upper class ghetto."

Due to the economic instability, reputation possibly serves as a better definition of the term, status, than does financial position where comments such as "like a respected elder" refer to credibility, as does the following: "Lots of people come to me to ask advice now and that's locally, nationally and internationally." These are but two of such experiences which demonstrate the influence of networking where developing self-efficacy has promoted self-reinvention, assisted by the context of community and small scale.

Possibly the greatest difficulty is separating status from other facets of participants' lives where Alexander reminds us that work is "... so cyclical so you can't really rely on career status." Learning this factor has a profound influence upon self identity as previously shown.

While acknowledging socio-economic differences, several participants discussed the scale of place as the key anti-status catalyst, where Councillor Lew reminds us: “You have to be very careful of assumptions.”

13. Dreams – a place for dreams/ or nightmares

Some participants suggest a pattern of people moving to the study site in pursuit of their passion, where accepting less money for work encourages a stronger focus on interests and infers passion as a change agent in encouraging development and self-actualisation (Maslow 1962). However, passion too holds a binary meaning where lifestyle expectations of ‘living the dream’ often result in failure due to an underestimation of spend versus income while the need to create one’s own opportunities is also apparent. However, dreams do come true for some. The fact that all participants are still present at the time of interview may not imply that they are living the dream but if they were living the nightmare on a consistent basis they would not still be present, *at least* five years later.

8.4 The Metanarrative of Small Town Pioneers

The story about the story or the metanarrative of lifestyle migration in *Small Town Pioneers* needs to be broad in order to include the variety of experiences revealed through the analysis. As John Stephens explains, a metanarrative is a “global or totalizing cultural narrative schema which orders and explains knowledge and experience” (Stephens and McCallum 1998). In this metanarrative we can only say that participants are working people who moved to the Sunshine Coast from a city background at least five years prior because they felt they would experience a better lifestyle, partly due to the predominance of natural environment, and at the time of interview, they were all living within the study site of the Noosa Biosphere.

We cannot say that all participants experience financial struggle or that they all discovered an entrepreneurial streak since relocation, or that they were all stressed by city life before they moved, or that they have all found happiness since relocating, although certainly these themes presented strongly through the analysis. We cannot say that they have all experienced a degree of transformation due to relocation since the move, although the research indicates a majority have, or that they are all planning on staying for the foreseeable future, though most do anticipate this scenario. There are no absolutes on a grand narrative scale. There are however sets of stories based upon some fundamental data, as explored in previous chapters.

The PR of Lifestyle Migration

Lifestyle migration among working people, to places rich in natural beauty but low in industry are pitched as a “dropping out” of mainstream society, leaving the “rat race” and heading out for a simpler more natural life. At this point the picture becomes a little blurred depending on the cultural base. Are they the tradesman who likes the beach and is sick to death of city traffic? Are they a new millennium hippie in search of communal existence? Are they an ex-corporate executive seeking work/life balance? Are they a professional with a ‘portable career’ who craves clean air? Are they cashed up and still young and want to arm rest for a while, perhaps to pursue a hobby? Are they a family looking for a small and safe community in which to raise their children? These are some of the scenarios encountered in *Small Town Pioneers* and so dropping out from the rat race holds numerous interpretations.

The metanarrative has been criticised academically for this reason of generalising content and reducing its meaning in research, particularly by theorist Lyotard (1979) who refers to it as the postmodern condition for which he holds increasing scepticism. He rejects the totalizing nature of metanarratives or grand narratives that propose a kind of universal truth and believes, along with other poststructuralist thinkers, that metanarratives attempt to form grand theories while dismissing the chaos and disorder of the universe. A literal example of this could be that the study site has beautiful beaches, however in recent history, extreme climatic conditions have ravaged its beaches increasingly where it has taken more than 12 months for the beach to resemble its former glory after some assaults. Metanarratives are also criticized for being positioned by power structures and therefore they represent a biased view. For example, in a small place such as the study site where the community press is more powerful than in metropolitan areas according to participants, metanarratives are often espoused by those with the loudest voices or strongest political ties in assuming the role of community representatives, despite the range of views existing in the community. In terms of this book, a metanarrative would dismiss the variety of experiences, as illustrated in the previous discussions. Particularly in a lifestyle destination, this and others (Ragusa 2010, Salt 2005) where homogeneity is not a characteristic, it is my view that the value of narrative research is in the detail and the differences, rather than generalisations.

On a broader scale, the cultural disparities of lifestyle migration discussed in Chapter 2 between Australia, the US and the UK render the metanarrative of lifestyle migration as inconclusive, despite the growth of lifestyle migration across the West in general. In other

words, lifestyle migration is a popular pursuit among working people but identifying them and understanding their stories is not only contingent on culture, but a host of collaborative factors where creating metanarratives is largely futile.

A metanarrative provides a convenient descriptor, a symbol for implied content, and excludes variations which may in some instances prove significant, such as the metanarrative of the portable career, discussed in Chapter 6, where limitations were exposed. In addition, the existence of some notable binaries in participant experiences explored in this chapter are so significant as to dislodge some of the foundations of the most common reasons for relocation – ‘sense of community/what community’ or ‘my time/their time’ are prime examples of this. Therefore, having expressed criticisms of metanarratives this book can only offer dominant themes that were revealed through the research. These are not exclusive but simply represent strong views from 22 participants.

Dominant Themes of Small Town Pioneers

In conclusion, *Small Town Pioneers* presents some dominant themes developed through the findings, discussed through preceding chapters, coming from economic, place related, community and mental/emotional arenas. These include:

1. Lifestyle migrants need *enough* financial security to sustain them while they establish themselves in the area, in order to make the move sustainable;
2. Multi-tasking and/or flexibility are necessary survival skills;
3. There are a diverse range of professional and vocational skills in a small population and area;
4. Innovation is encouraged because of the variety of work activities and knowledge within a small population that inspire cross-fertilisation and transfer of ideas;
5. Innovation is developed because of the need to be flexible in problem-solving economic solutions (this does not necessarily result in *more* innovative ideas);
6. Innovation is supported because of the comparative absence of governing power structures that would otherwise limit personal empowerment;
7. The natural environment facilitates reflection through its pacifying influence and this clarity assists with innovation in some individuals;
8. Lifestyle migrants need to establish their own careers/source of income rather than expecting an appropriate job opportunity to be offered;

9. Remote working arrangements still require interpersonal contact, reliable technology and budgetary allowances in order to be viable;
10. Remote workers run the risk of isolation if they are not proactive in creating networks within the community;
11. Remote working practice presents a moral issue regarding economic engagement with the local community;
12. Lifestyle migrants need to accept work below their skill level at least initially to make connections and encounter better opportunities;
13. The economy is unstable in a small town;
14. Status is fluid due to the unstable economy so one can never take success or position for granted, or judge others' status;
15. Financial difficulties are the key reason many lifestyle migrants leave in the first five years;
16. Risk taking is a reality for many lifestyle migrants where good risk management skills are important for sustaining the relocation;
17. The meaning of success is more closely related to growing self-efficacy rather than money, due to the fluid and unstable economy;
18. The learning that takes place largely regards the development of economic and social survival skills with corresponding self-efficacy;
19. The natural environment is a key value;
20. A simple life away from material pursuits is richer than a life based on consumerism;
21. A simple life away from distractions does not necessarily exclude valuing, needing or wanting money;
22. A focus away from material pursuits does not necessarily grant more personal time away from business;
23. Passions can be explored more easily when money is not the primary aim and in an environment where people readily discuss their aspirations;
24. Gaining a feeling of control over one's life is a key value of the area and this is rarely focused on money;
25. The power of the press is socially stronger in a small community than a city;
26. Lifestyle migrants need to be proactive in making connections and friendships within the community;
27. Many new residents embark on voluntary work to make social connections;

28. Community creates its own fun in a place where there is more privately owned space and less administered entertainment;
29. Aspects of life such as work, hobbies and home are intensely interconnected creating a strong sense of continuity in a small town, compared to a city where life is compartmentalised;
30. Continuity within a small scale community supports the impression of a more unified relational identity compared to a city where multiple identities are required for separate factions of life;
31. It's not what you know, it's who you know and sustaining a relocation relies heavily upon networking;
32. News travels fast in a small town and there's nowhere to hide;
33. People are friendlier in a small town because everyone knows everyone;
34. Reputation management is essential in a small town;
35. It's easy to be misrepresented in a small town;
36. People look out for you in a small town, whether they like you or not;
37. There are a diverse range of socio economic levels within sea/tree change places;
38. The wealthy are visible against the 'others' in sea/tree change places, creating status issues;
39. The wealthy and the 'others' intermix more than they would in the city due to small scale and inter-reliance, breaking down status barriers;
40. Community integration and a feeling of belonging, influenced by a sense of continuity, is more likely to help lifestyle migrants stay in the area.

Lyotard and others suggest replacing the metanarrative with small, local narratives in order to avoid the process of manipulating a single 'truth' from the array of versions of it. In the context of this book, which presents numerous motives, experiences and findings within an unstable economy where power and status are often fluid, the localised narrative, unlike the metanarrative, is a reasonable approach.

Localised narratives are especially local in this book due to the small size of the study site and the great breadth of individual stories within that. Summaries of the 22 narratives in Chapter 4 offer an alternative solution to the metanarrative through illustrating a range of experiences

on lifestyle migration and as such, along with the analysis of those stories, provide an opportunity for communities and potential escapees to learn from others' experiences.

Part 2 of this book has identified factors which have facilitated the transition of lifestyle migrants from city to country and have supported sustained relocation, in light of the prevalence of transience experienced in the scenario. The findings and discussions embedded here promote the development of certain qualities and values and the reframing of urban paradigms as part of the identity transition which ultimately determines successful migration.

This book essentially articulates the processes lifestyle migrants have pioneered in order to survive the quest of learning a new lifestyle. Feedback from participants, academics, media and social networks positions this research as necessary and important where, on a local regional level, discussion on the limitations of survival is commonplace and where the process of survival is heavily under-researched educationally and sociologically.

To understand such a negotiation is crucial in order to:

- Assist potential lifestyle migrants in their decision making regarding relocation;
- Provide useful information for policy makers and governing authorities to utilise in their planning towards happier and more creative communities; and
- To develop the contribution to knowledge on this emergent paradigm within the academic sphere.

The complexity of the scenario can be seen through the binaries which reveal the state of non-homogeneity within the emergent paradigm where urban values clash, but must yield in order to allow the ideal to dominate and thus foster the pursuit of happiness.

Appendix 1

Statistical Notes: Some Facts

In 2006 there were 66,767 working people aged between 25-54 living on the Sunshine Coast, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006):

Census Tables – *Usual Place of Residence (for the Sunshine Coast) 1 year ago*

1. Add the number of people aged 25-54 who are listed as having a 'Different usual address 1 year ago' from a 'Different SLA (Statistical Local Area)'
2. Include 'Overseas' figures and 'Other Territories'
3. In 2006 this was **12,954**

Theoretically, if we multiply this by five we get the 100 per cent retention figure of people who would have come to the Sunshine Coast Region from another region in the said age group – this would be **64,770**

Census Tables – *Usual Place of Residence (for the Sunshine Coast) 5 years ago*

1. Add the number of people aged 25-54 who are listed as having a 'Different usual address 5 years ago' from a 'Different SLA (Statistical Local Area)'
2. Include 'Overseas' figures and 'Other Territories'
3. In 2006 this was **34,539**

Those in the age range at the 'Same usual address five years ago' is **32,007**

Newcomers of up to 5 years ago comprise 48 per cent of that age bracket of the total population. This shows the demographic breakup of the age range of newcomers to long-termers, it doesn't show how many newcomers attempted and failed/attempted and survived. At five years long-termers made up 44 per cent and newcomers made up 48 per cent and at one year long-termers made up 76 per cent and newcomers made up 17 per cent (the rest unaccounted for)

Assumptions and Calculation

To determine the percentage of those who sustain their relocation, we need to make assumptions because the figures do not exist. Therefore these calculations are anecdotal.

Take the newcomers within the age bracket on a yearly basis (12,954) and multiply x 5 to determine 5 years' accumulation of newcomers at 100% retention rate = **64,770**.

Those who have stayed for a fifth year join the long-termers, or the pool of **32,007**.

Subtract year 5 of the annual influx of 12,954 newcomers from the core of long-termers 32,007 = **19,053**. This figure represents the number of long-termers (newcomers who will become long-termers) over 4 years. The annual figure is $19,053/4 = 4,763$.

Divide the number of those who attempt relocation (12,954) pa by those who anecdotally achieve it (4,763) pa and that figure is **37%**.

The same percentage is also achieved via the following:

Take the anecdotal per annum number of sustainable movers (newcomers who become long-termers) and multiply it by 5 years so $4,763 \times 5 = 23,815$. This shows the five-year accumulation of sustainable relocations. Then divide the sustainable movers over the number of those who attempt it: $23815/64770 = 37\%$.

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4BC Radio interview on lifestyle migration research, broadcast live on 8 May 2011

3. Journal Articles

The following Journal articles have been removed due to copyright restrictions:

Kargillis, C. (2011) Identity Development in Small Town Pioneers in 'International Journal of Arts and Sciences', Vol. 4 (13), US

Kargillis, C. (2012) Binary Conclusions in Small Town Pioneers in 'Humanities & Social Sciences Review' Vol 1, No. 2, US

4. Audience Participation Tools

The Blog:

See smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com

Please peruse the blog posts under the headers on the right hand side bar: My Activities, Narratives, Research Revelations and Study Details.

In reference to discussions in the Metastatement, please go to:

Bursting the Bubble on the Sunday Mail:

smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com/2011/05/09/bursting-the-bubble-on-'the-sunday-mail'/.

Yes, Mechanics Are Creative Too:

smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com/2010/09/23/yes-mechanics-are-creative-too/

In reference to my presentation at Pecha Kucha, *Create/Sustain*, referred to in the Metastatement under Public Talks, please go to:

smalltownpioneers.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/pechakucha2.pdf

(Note: This is a large file and will take a minute or so to download)

Tell your story

Did you move to the Sunshine Coast for a better life?

[Detailed information is available at smalltownpioneers.wordpress.com]

An exciting study for the University of Technology, Sydney is underway in Noosa, and the search is on for people to tell their stories of 'lifestyle migration' - moving away from a city to a sea change/ tree change destination for a better life.

The study is being undertaken by Peregrine Beach resident, Christina Kargillis and focuses on working people who moved to the Sunshine Coast from a city base (anywhere in the world), often turning to self-employment or to a new field, as a way of taking control over their destinies.

Places of strong environmental beauty/ limited industry encourage people to discover their 'inner pioneer' because they are required to take risks and become more flexible if they are going to survive, where only around one third who attempt it on the Coast last five years.

Do you have a story?

Take part and share your story if you are:

- Working full-time or part-time, self-employed or an employee;
- Aged between 25-54;
- Currently living in the former Noosa Shire but have lived on the Sunshine Coast for at least 5 years;
- Moved to the Sunshine Coast as an adult from a city base.

It would be good to hear from people from all fields - hospitality and retail, trades, creative industries, professionals - who have really pioneered themselves a whole new lifestyle in tough economic conditions, and to hear about how they changed as people in the process.

How much time will it take?

There are two rounds of interviews: 2 hours first up and 2 hours again in around 3 months time. You can either be anonymous or fully credited.

Contact Christina if you would like to take part: Christina.Kargillis@student.uts.edu.au

Mob: 0432 095 752

For immediate release

25 January 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

Sign up and tell your story

An exciting research project is underway in Noosa, exploring 'lifestyle migration' and its impact on working people. Peregian Beach resident Christina Kargillis was awarded a Doctoral Scholarship last year when she commenced her research degree through the University of Technology Sydney.

"I'm interested in the way that places of natural beauty and limited industry encourage people to reinvent themselves, often developing their entrepreneurial skills, because they are required to change, take risks and become more flexible if they are going to survive," she said. "A lot of people have dual career paths up here, like plumber/bodybuilder or small tourism operator/ fashion designer compared to a city like Sydney, and so it's much harder for people to judge others by what they do, which is refreshing. I believe these are some of the reasons that contribute to that organic and creative feeling that characterises places like Peregian, Maleny or Eumundi, just to name a few. It's also my suspicion that the people who come here and leave within five years (around 66%) don't have the risk taking and flexibility needed to survive.

"My aim is to show how people go about following their dreams and chasing freedom through lifestyle migration, how they change in adapting to place, and what makes their move sustainable, in light of those who high tail it back home," she said.

A recent US study on lifestyle migration found that the main reason working people move away from the city to regional or lifestyle areas is prompted by a critical incident, often associated with employment issues such as retrenchment. This failure of the American Dream to sustain them economically is directly transferable to the Australian scenario. While Christina's research will also explore the motives why working people take the career and financial risks that they do in relocating to places like Noosa, she is primarily interested in how people transform in adjusting to new conditions.

"There seems to be a real focus on discovering your 'inner pioneer' for working people who make this sort of shift where the risk factor is actually a lure. Many lifestyle migrants look to self-employment or end up working in a field very different to their background as a way of gaining control over their destinies.

“A US study suggested that the people who didn’t last five years in their new location often returned because they couldn’t handle being caught between worlds - they may have been a corporate manager in the city and after the move they couldn’t accept the shift in hierarchy, dropping from being ‘somebody’ to ‘nobody’. That’s where flexibility and risk-taking are so important, and the ability to reinvent yourself.

“The natural environment is the other key attraction where place becomes a very symbolic thing and represents unchartered territory for people to pioneer - **where** to live equals **how** to live,” she said.

Christina has lived on the Sunshine Coast for more than two years and was inspired to research the topic since 2005, after working in The Banff Centre for the Arts in the Rocky Mountains of Canada - a hive of creativity set in a National Park, with a high tourism component and a small population base. “Noosa *is* Banff except of course that I’ve swapped the snow for the beach. Living in Banff for a year really motivated me to finally get out of Sydney when I returned to Australia,” she said.

Have you got a story to tell?

Christina is looking for a range people working in different fields - retail and hospitality, trades, creative businesses, professionals - who would like to share their stories of lifestyle migration to be included in her research. All interviews will be confidential and identities kept anonymous, unless participants choose otherwise.

- Contact Christina if you are interested in taking part in this research and are:
- Working full-time or part-time, self-employed or an employee
- Aged between 25-54
- Currently living in the former Noosa Shire but have lived on the Sunshine Coast for at least five years; and
- Moved to the Sunshine Coast as an adult from a city base.

“I’m really keen to talk to people about their lifestyle shift to Noosa. Only around a third of working people who attempt it actually last the five year mark and in my experience there are some inspiring stories out there that would make great material for this type of research.”

You can contact Christina by phoning 0432 095 752 or by email on Christina.Kargillis@student.uts.edu.au

The Following articles have been removed due to copyright restrictions

Mikkelsen, S. (2010) Calling the modern pioneers of Noosa. `The Noosa Journal' 16 Feb
Donaghey, K (2011) Simpler life too hard for most: Seachanger bubble bursts. `The Sunday Mail (Qld)' 08 May

Pioneering Identities – invitation to participate

What is the research about?

- 'Lifestyle migration' – defies economic logic (in most cases)
- Why do lifestyle migrants take the economic and career risks that they do in relocating to places of limited industry?
- What factors contribute towards a sustainable relocation?
- People come to reinvent themselves through adapting to new conditions and values
- Exploring external factors that influence this 'reinvention':
 - Focus on sense of **community**: social/familial
 - Reorganising work/ career: to gain **control** over destiny
 - Concept of small town pioneers: small economy = **\$ risk**
 - Understanding success: reprioritising **value** system often involving **status** sacrifice
 - Place: **environment** as change agent

“For life-style migrants, the choice made of where to live is consciously, intentionally also one about how to live,” Brian Hoey, University of Michigan

Inspiration for the research

- Search for *parallel* lifestyle in Australia to my experience in Canada, resulting in my relocation from Sydney to Noosa. The comparisons I drew are:
 - Banff - ski/ Noosa – beach (obvious climatic difference but environmental focus).
 - Both – Creative spirit: Banff - artistic hub/ Noosa - entrepreneurial
 - Both - Natural amenity: National Park/ Biosphere Reserve
 - Both - Small core of residents with population cap
 - Both – high International tourism providing external input
- } Transferable
Qualities

Business approaches

- *“Small economy poses a risk for individuals moving from the city, but at the same token that is why they choose these places”*, Local Councillor, Sunshine Coast
- Limited employment opportunities create a **multi-tasking, risk taking** approach, adopted by many who sustain their relocation vs a more dedicated role in the city.
- **Vertical integration** - Self-employed/small business = In charge of own destiny
- **Horizontal integration**- Employed – dedicated role = Security
- **Learning to live vertically**: develops **flexibility and risk** that define creativity (*according to some sources*), and that support **pioneering** approach
 - 66,767 workers **aged 25-54** on Sunshine Coast* (ABS).
 - More than **1/4** of these *self-employed** (ABS).
 - Small businesses employing *up to four people* = **conceivably 43%** of the 25-54 range* (not qualified if **all** 43% of small business fit into this age bracket).

Why is the research important?

- Within a 5 year span, the retention rate of newcomers aged 25-54 to the Sunshine Coast is only c. **37%**, indicating tremendous instability* (ABS).
- Lifestyle migration is on the rise in the western world over the past decade
- Need for clarity in decision making for lifestyle migrants through an exploration of factors that determine sustainability of relocation, when **majority result in departure**.

Relevant theories

- **Creativity** and entrepreneurship/ **identity** development and specifically how people learn how to live according to a vertical business model/ and **narrative** exploration – story analysis + *making sense of meanings* that participants have of the world through looking for key **themes** and corresponding themes between stories.
- **Methodology is qualitative/ narrative** where the goal of the research is to rely on the participants' personal motivations/ critical incident/ and *understanding of their own journey*, in conjunction with post-analysis.

Just some questions will include

- Motivation for the move/ preconceived plans for making money/ anticipated risks/ timeframe of lifestyle change from decision to relocation etc

Interested to find out

- Assumed risk vs actual risk- both financial and in integrating into a new community
- Looking to see how many participants will have transitioned to self-emp/ small business.
- Third party stories of those who didn't last the five years

Interview structure

- Interviews audio recorded + transcribed - 2 hrs each + 2 hr interview at 3 months later to confirm accuracy of analysis + collaboratively review topic categories.
- Confidentiality assured of fully credited – participant's choice

Focus on Noosa

- Selected as study site due to **UNESCO** criteria of the Biosphere that promotes the safeguard of its environmental qualities, in a period of rapid growth

If you are interested in being part of this research and are:

- Working - self-employed/ small business across industry, part-time/ casual/ contract or full-time employee
- Moved **from a city** (globally) to the Sunshine Coast as an adult at least **5 years** ago
- Currently living in **Noosa Biosphere parametres**.
- **Aged 25-54**

Please contact Christina on **0432 095 752**