ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

**PLAYING IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE:
EXAMINING THE ROLE OF A CHURCH
COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR**

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin
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Anglia Ruskin University

Abstract

Faculty of Arts, Law and Social Sciences
Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology

Playing in the Public Square:
Examining the Role of a Church Communications Advisor

Jayson Rhodes
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This thesis explores a contemporary understanding of the concept of the public square. The genesis of this research is my professional practice as a church communications advisor for the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. An ongoing tension in my practice was the voice of the church being largely isolated from wider society. I sought a better understanding of 'the public square' as part of public theology.

The research methodology is qualitative. An ethnographic approach focuses on my experience and that of other academics and practitioners in the public square. There is critical engagement with my practice. The engagement includes data from a research diary, theoretical perspectives on the role of faith-based discourse in society, and interviews with practitioners, including New Zealand broadcaster Janet Wilson, and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

The thesis presents a progression of arguments for a changing and more complex public square in its organisation and modes of communication to which the Church has been slow to adapt. The public square is reconceptualised as the public square(s) that consist of multiple publics with blurred borders that overlap with each other through the use of negotiation.

The concepts of mediatisation and play are used to draw together threads from the findings of the thesis to explore new practices for a communications advisor. The concepts demonstrate renewed thinking by me as a practitioner through the evolution of my practice during the research. Playing in the public square suspends the reality of a focus on borders that can divide. It enables me to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

Key words: public theology, public square, multiple publics, church communications advisor, mediatisation

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Prologue
A bishop and a broadcaster

The bishop says:

> In the beginning was communication; God chose to communicate with us through his Son Jesus. He is God's plan for the spiritual evolution of the human race. God so loved the world that he was generous and communicated himself to us. If we are to hear the annunciations when they come then we must develop a depth of listening in step with our own greatly enhanced capacity to communicate (Chartres, 2013).

The broadcaster says:

> So, by showing humanity you can communicate. And by communicating honestly and decently with clarity and compassion and humour, we will find an audience wanting to engage and re-engage. And constant engagement means the formation of a relationship. And a relationship is the tie that bonds (Holmes, n.d.).

The two perspectives provide insights about the significance of communication. Richard Chartres, a former Bishop of London, expresses the significance of communication from a faith perspective. There is an enhanced ability to communicate in society. New Zealand broadcaster, the late Sir Paul Holmes, describes the significance of communication from a broadcasting perspective. Communication is at the heart of a public identity for both the bishop and the broadcaster. In my experience there were different understandings of communication in my church and broadcasting roles. I began to question what was required for faith-based communication in society which engaged with other approaches to communication.

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Chapter One
Introduction - Locating the Research

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Introduction

My practice as a church communications advisor (since 2010) began to feel more and more 'at odds' with what in my context was known as the public square. The tension in my practice was because faith-based discourse was largely sealed off from society in a social vacuum. This chapter outlines how I construct a cohesive argument for a new understanding of the public square as a church communications advisor. The research, and formation of the research question, emerged from an ongoing trend in my practice as a communications advisor for the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. It appeared to me that the institutional church had lost its voice in the public square; the public square I experienced was focused on borders that were about difference rather than communication. The identification of the trend prompted me to ask why this was happening and its significance for my practice as a church communications advisor.

This chapter presents the scope of the research and the formation of the research question. There is consideration of the genesis of the research, the relevant knowledge and methods needed to answer the research question, how that knowledge was gathered and analysed, and how the factual, interpretive, and conceptual conclusions were drawn. The thesis, by addressing the research question, contributes to knowledge, and contributes to both my practice and my professional community. In this thesis I use the word church to refer to an institution and organisation as part of a diocesan structure.

1.1 The Genesis of the Research

The starting point for this research was my experience as a communications practitioner. My personal narrative is, therefore, an important part of the research. I was a broadcaster, communications advisor, and priest – a unique position from which to conduct this research. In the news media I was a journalist, a newsreader on radio and television, and a national radio talkback host. I worked in communications for New Zealand Police, and I was a priest and communications advisor in the church. There was experience of communications in the global Anglican Communion.

In the role of communications advisor for the Anglican Church I managed enquiries from reporters. I advised leaders on possible responses and was a spokesperson for the Church. The role often required me to be a gatekeeper for the media which created a feeling of being 'at odds' with the public square. I questioned whether there were shortcomings in my

understanding and practice which led to the tension I experienced and which required further exploration.

I identified challenges for the Church in communicating in the public square. An obvious challenge was the Church showed a reluctance to communicate. I decided the research was to better understand the public square. The reason for that is that I see the missional role of the Church as being a given that required communication. An example of the tension and challenges I experienced is useful. When I was a reporter, and also a communications advisor, I experienced Church leaders refusing media interviews on topics such as shop trading hours. Such practices by the Church, with the media seen as the 'other' and social media as 'risky' effectively sealed off the voice of the Church as an organisation from society. There was a loss of voice rather than participation in public discourse. I call these 'border experiences' when referring to my experience in this thesis (see 3.2 for my understanding of borders). The border marks out territory where there are certain assumptions, expectations and practices. The border experiences in my practice confined faith largely to within the church walls.

My understanding and practice of the public square was focused on the concept of borders in terms of structures and relationships. There was a tension I sought to better understand between two cultures of communication. The communication-based culture of wider society with visible practices such as the use of digital technology, and the Church culture that was largely isolated from such practices. A second tension, for which I sought better understanding, was between the operant and espoused theology of the Church. The Anglican Communion described communication as being at the heart and identity of the calling of all Christians (Anglican Consultative Council, 2012). My experience was that the Church distanced itself from such a role. It had largely lost its voice.

Practical theology was used to form the research question. Veling (2005, p.25) describes practical theology as 'reading the signs of the times'. The writing of the Stage One papers in the professional doctorate, and attending conferences on practical theology, helped me form the research question. The Stage One papers focused on my experience of a border between the Church and the public square that led to what I called a separatist approach. I also used the writing of Tracy and Williams. My writing (Rhodes, 2015, p.17) suggested a border of confusion and miscommunication that I wanted to better understand. Practical theology provided pathways to better understand the presenting issues in my professional practice.

1.2 Two Contexts

Practice is at the heart of practical theology and because of this the context in which the practice occurs is significant. This thesis has two contexts because of my move to the United Kingdom in 2017. The primary context is Aotearoa New Zealand however, the conclusions should be understood in relation to both contexts. My practice and critical reflection, which led to the research, occurred in Aotearoa New Zealand. The gathering of data and one key interview was also completed there. Another key interview was from the United Kingdom. The research also refers to my current practice in the United Kingdom. Either context, because of technology and travel, is not isolated from the rest of the world. The two contexts provide a rich diversity of knowledge that I am able to draw on to contribute to knowledge and practice in both contexts.

1.3 The Research Question

The research question asks how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor. A fresh understanding of the concept of the public square is the backbone of this research. A working understanding of the public square will be developed in Chapter Four.

An important precursor to outlining the shape of the thesis is to describe what I initially understood by the phrase 'the public square'. My understanding was of a metaphorical space in which competing voices could speak in the mainstream media and social media about issues important to society. The understanding of the public square was task-focused to achieve visibility for the Church as an organisation in wider society. Such an understanding raises issues of clarity about the existence and nature of such a space, what is meant by public and private, how participation occurs, and the purpose of faith-based discourse in the public square.

I chose to better understand what the public square means for a church communications advisor for three reasons. First, the level of understanding of the concept of the public square by me and by church leaders needed to be explored further beyond the focus on borders. The 'border experiences' provided me with assumptions and some themes through which I could question my understanding and practice and that of the Church.

Second, the term 'the public square' appeared to be somewhat taken for granted in the everyday context of my practice in Aotearoa New Zealand and overseas. I used 'public square' as an umbrella term - others did as well - to refer to the context in which the Church could do public theology. There was a great deal of literature and a wide variation in

approaches but not a single definition or seminal text as is illustrated by these three writers. John Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* on democracy and communication was written in 1927. Dewey (2016, p.166) suggests 'the public' is constantly changing and has become diffused and scattered with no set patterns for what defines a public. Michael Warner (2002), in a critique of Habermas' conceptualisation of a single public sphere, claims there are counter-publics as social difference cannot be bracketed. Williams' (2012a) *Faith in the Public Square* suggests there is a role for faith in the public square. When I interviewed Williams (2016a, interview) for this thesis, he suggested there are multiple public squares. While not seeking a universal definition, I would argue that further understanding of the public square can enable good practice by a church communications officer.

Third, I worked in both the media and the Church at the same time. I initially experienced a border between them. The dual roles of being a communications advisor to the Church and a national talkback host on radio led to contradictory knowledge and experiences. I worked in two worlds that I describe as being separate: 'at arm's length' from each other. My experience of working in both contexts enriched my exploration of 'border experiences' and raised questions about the complexity of the public square.

The three reasons highlight possible shortcomings in my practice and the practice of the Church as well as my understanding, and that of the Church, of the public square. The construction of the research question illustrates how I sought to better understand the identified tensions in my practice. New knowledge from a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable new forms of practice which reflect renewed thinking from the findings of this research.

1.4 Addressing the Research Question

Chapter Two presents a framework of how the research will be conducted and analysed, the rationale for the chosen methodology, and the research design. A foundation to my argument in Chapter Two is my 'spiritual whakapapa'. The word 'whakapapa', from the Māori language of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, can be translated as genealogy. It is understood as the family background and story of an individual which shapes their being and is their history. Therefore, my understandings and approaches to life are shaped by factors such as culture, social conditioning, and personal history. That includes my role of working in communications with different cultures. There are many ways to interpret the world. Tracy (1987, p.9) says mine is one. My identity and practices, that are unique to me in Aotearoa New Zealand, include my interpretations of what is known as the public square. My 'spiritual whakapapa' is my faith story, that is unique to me. It shapes how

I understand the presence and reality of God, and my practices as a communications advisor and public theologian. My spiritual whakapapa explains my chosen ontological and epistemological approaches.

The chapter presents the research as a question for practical theology, locates it within a Christian worldview, and outlines the choice of an interpretivist approach to examine social processes in the public square and an epistemology of critical realism. The research design and methods state the parameters and focus of the study. Chapter Two justifies the chosen methods of interview, diary keeping, data gathering and analysis, and the process of coding. The design and methods evolved as I sought new knowledge and were adapted for unexpected changes while studying - including the move to the United Kingdom.

The first step to address the research question is through critical reflection on my own practice. This is found in Chapter Three. The second part of the process of drawing on my practice will be outlined in the description of Chapter Five. Both parts of the process are viewed by me as being data because of the critical way in which the data is gathered and presented. Chapter Three is largely autobiographical. There is a focus on my context and identity through an examination of my experience, practice, and context that contributes to knowledge. The chapter outlines my border experiences and identifies practices which reflect my initial understanding of the public square based on borders. The chapter includes a reflection on my move from Aotearoa New Zealand to Lincoln which was a crossing of borders. The move, which involved a change in ministry from one cathedral to another, is used as an analogy for the changing public squares in which I am a practitioner. The chapter also explores my primary context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The experience of other academics and practitioners balances my experience and brings rigour to the research.

Chapter Four presents the key theoretical perspectives. I use the writing of Jurgen Habermas, David Tracy, and Rowan Williams. The three, from different contexts, provide varied approaches to the understanding of public discourse and the role of faith-based discourse in society. Habermas is a German philosopher and sociologist born in 1929, Tracy is a United States Roman Catholic priest and academic born in 1939, and Williams, born in 1950, a British theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury. I examine each theorist's rationale for faith-based discourse in the public square and how the discourse can occur. Each of the theorists suggests that faith-based perspectives should contribute to public discourse. The discourse is formed through the use of language in a communicative act rather than the sheer existence of institutions. I argue that each of the theorists shows an acceptance of the concept of a changing public square.

Chapter Five contains the data from the interviews and the coding of the research diary. The two interviews build on the theoretical perspectives in Chapter Four. The interview with Rowan Williams provided additional material to his writings and builds the argument for multiple public squares. The second interview was Janet Wilson, a journalist and media commentator. She provides a view from my primary context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The second part of critical reflection on my practice is the gathering of data about my practice as a church communications advisor. The data, from a research diary, provides detailed information about my context and practice. The purpose of the data is to bring further clarity to my understanding of the public square that is explored more widely in Chapter Three. The data recorded my work as a church communications advisor in a diary for a month from November 26th 2016. The data was coded and themes were identified of multiple public squares, borders, negotiation, sanctuary/non-sanctuary, and a changing and more fluid public square as part of my practice. The themes are shaped into questions to be explored in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six combines a thread of arguments in the research to challenge my experience of a single homogenous public square in which faith-based discourse was largely sealed off from society (Chapter Three). The chapter questions what the themes of multiple public squares, borders, negotiation, sanctuary/non-sanctuary, and a changing and more fluid public square, can contribute to a contemporary understanding of the public square. An argument is built for a changing and more fluid public square and the existence of the public square(s) using the language of multiple publics and blurred borders. Rather than a single public square there is what Reader (2008, p.11) describes as a move from a 'monogamy of space' to a 'polygamy of space'. The 'polygamy of space' is about multiple options for communication.

Chapter Seven contains the conceptual findings in two sections. The chapter uses the concepts of mediatisation and playing to address the insights from my experience, the theoretical perspectives, and the gathered data. The first section considers two models of the public square from the conclusion to Chapter Six. The concept of mediatisation is used to further understand the change and difference between the two models of the public square. The concept of mediatisation explains processes whereby the media have a more prominent role in the daily life of society. Mediatisation is used to understand further the themes of multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation in the public square. Section Two draws on the work of practical theologian Courtney Goto (2016). I am interested in how the characteristics of play, suggested by Goto in her language of playing, can shape communication practices in the public square. I suggest that the practices are able to create

and work with multiple publics and blurred borders, and that they use negotiation. The section shows renewed thinking about my communications practice. The characteristics of play are used to review my past and present practice as a communications advisor to show that I am better able to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

Chapter Eight presents conclusions from the research by drawing together the findings and arguments of the thesis to answer the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor. The conclusion considers how the thesis is a contribution to knowledge, to my practice, to my professional community, and to my professional development. The Epilogue considers how my spiritual whakapapa has been developed by the doctoral research.

Chapter Two
Research Origins and Design

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to identify what shapes my worldview before a consideration of the methodological and epistemological assumptions that guide the research. I then consider the research design and the chosen methods that construct a framework to answer the research question; how a contemporary and critical understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the role of a church communications advisor.

This chapter consists of two sections and follows elements of the research design outlined in Bennett et al. (2018, p.140). The first section is the ontology that summarises my beliefs about reality through my spiritual whakapapa and worldview which has shaped my understanding of the presence and reality of God (section 1.4). The whakapapa of an individual is not a given. Rather, it details family and tribal history that shapes an individual and from which interpretations and understandings are made. My whakapapa includes being raised in a multicultural family, society, and church. My adopted father was part Māori which developed an awareness for me of multiple cultures from an early age. I worked across different cultures within the Māori and Polynesian cultures in the Church and engaged with their thinking and practices. An example is speakers on the Māori marae refer to the gods as part of how experiences in the world are understood and interpreted. There is a congruence between the world and the existence of a divine being(s) which in a Māori understanding is the existence of multiple gods. The gods are part of creation rather than being separate.

My spiritual whakapapa provides the background for why my epistemological and ontological positions are inextricably linked. Therefore, I seek a congruence between the ontology – of how things are, the epistemology – which is how the reality is known, and the chosen methodology and research methods. While my epistemic and ontological assumptions are separate identifiable concepts they are always woven together.

The second section locates the research within qualitative research and describes the research design and methods. It outlines my epistemologies and paradigms of interpretivism for knowledge of the phenomena of the public square and a position of critical realism in relation to theology and God.

2.1 My Spiritual Whakapapa

My spiritual whakapapa and worldview are important foundations to my ontological and epistemological approaches. For me, who I am, with a belief in the presence of God, and how that reality is known and experienced are inextricably linked. I cannot ignore the way in which what I interpret as truth is formed and known. My spiritual whakapapa is key to this.

Belief in a reality, and how that reality is known is important in my role as a researcher and practitioner and is not separate from my actions and practices – I am not a researcher detached from the object of my research. Wilson (1988, p.56) writes that if theories and ideas are not related to or exemplified by actual situations then 'theology may become a game people play'. An example is ministry to those who are grieving. There is the knowing of death through my experiences with others rather than simply reading about it as a medical certainty. My approach builds on the description by Bennett et al. (2018, pp12-13) of practical theology being about a living human document: 'Within every thesis or book in practical theology, there is a real person with commitments, passions, concerns, biases and values trying to get out'. The public square is a passion and concern for me as a public theologian. I come to it with beliefs and values that are identified in my spiritual whakapapa. I can express what is known and believed as an ordained priest and as a researcher. The two roles are not mutually exclusive and accommodate different interpretations from my experience which can add to knowledge. An awareness of what shapes me is knowledge and also can identify any 'blindspots' in my gathering of data and findings. My spiritual whakapapa is outlined in a narrative style to introduce and explain my ontological and epistemological approach.

I was adopted into a Roman Catholic family and attended church every Sunday. My adopted father was part Māori. I interacted with grandparents and other family members which developed an awareness of other cultures. In secondary school, and my first period of university study, my belief about God I would describe as being contained and prescribed. God, who was male, and in heaven, was vertically distant, rather than being grounded and part of everyday life. A recollection of church is of Jesus being carefully locked away in the tabernacle which had a gold door shrouded by cloth.

In my late teenage years, as an organist in a Roman Catholic cathedral, I learnt about liturgy and worship as an intellectual exercise. There was a belief in a distant God. The sermon gave time to retreat to an office behind the organ and chat with the choirmaster. In my early twenties some friends encouraged me to explore the presence of God through worship in the evangelical tradition. My faith journey took a change with the reality of God known in the

'here and now' rather than being at arm's length from the world. Roles in secular organisations including broadcasting and the New Zealand Police accommodated my belief about the existence of God. There were stories in broadcasting that reflected my belief, passions, and concerns. Three vignettes are useful to consider. As a television reporter in 2002 I reported on the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women as priests in Aotearoa New Zealand. I interviewed a woman about to be ordained priest and then talked to her over coffee about an 'ongoing nagging pull within me' to explore ordination. An interview for a secular programme ended up talking about a possible calling on my life. In another story, a teenager, who needed dialysis for failing kidneys, was facing death. She did not qualify for dialysis in the New Zealand public health system and was being deported to Polynesia where the treatment was not available. Through a national television news story, I advocated for her. Ronald McDonald Charities came forward with funding. She exclaimed, 'I can live'. There was joy with the possibility of new life which I knew and viewers commented about. In the New Zealand Police, I experienced murder scenes that felt desolate and houses left empty after a suicide. Later, I would be invited back to bless such scenes as a priest. My belief was of a God very much present whose healing and peace could be brought to those places.

The vignettes illustrate how I experienced the reality of God's presence. God was present – not at arm's length and vertically far off. The basis for this was my belief in a God who took on human form in Jesus Christ. My experience added to that knowledge. The mixing of what I understood as the sacred and secular worlds and of what I knew and how I experienced that was so vivid and could not be separated. There was the public space in which belief could be experienced and expressed across society and not contained to an hour on a Sunday for church.

My experiences also challenged me. After the death of a twin I left a home with a funeral director. He carried the body of the toddler while his parents were left holding the other twin at the door. The funeral director said to me, 'There is something so very wrong about this – what are we doing'. I have never forgotten those words. The twin had not been well since birth. Whilst there was a medical reason for his death such loss required a reliance by me on a God who was very much present in the world. My role was to tell of that God to others in a way which did not confront or confuse but provided comfort. This was part of my practice which did not tell of a far-off God but one that was present. In dealing with another death, I accompanied the body of a teenage girl back to Fiji after she drowned in a hotel pool in New Zealand. I was told on arrival in Fiji that God had called her to a better place. That was their belief and interpretation of God alongside mine. Through these experiences of life and death

I continue to further believe and interpret the reality and presence of God in a world which cannot be divided into secular and sacred. In the vignettes there were no boundaries around faith in my roles particularly in broadcasting and the police. However, I experienced borders in my role as a communications advisor.

For the Feast of St Michael and All Angels, in the Church of England, there is a reading from Genesis 28, verses 10-17. Jacob stops to sleep after fleeing his home. He dreams of angels ascending and descending on a ladder which connects heaven and earth. This is a useful image through which to explain the change in my belief of God. For Jacob there is an invitation to explore the God who is present with him. Jacob exclaims, 'Surely the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it' and 'This is the gate of heaven'. Like Jacob, I believe there is the chance to explore, metaphorically, the gate of heaven for glimpses of God in our earthly life. God is experienced because of a permeable 'border' between earth and heaven through which the angels can 'intrude' into human reality. In the New Testament, God is present through Jesus who took on human form. In the gospel reading for the Feast, John 1.47-51, there is the same idea of angels ascending and descending. The point of the ladder was that God was there with Jacob. Nathanael receives the same message when he is called by Jesus to be one of the disciples. This time it is not angels but the Son of God in human form as metaphorical 'borders' are crossed.

As a communications professional for the Anglican Church I experienced faith-based discourse being largely contained within church walls. The separation, because of borders, is illustrated by an experience at the conclusion of worship in Holy Trinity Cathedral Auckland. There were simultaneous sounds; the doors being unlocked and the hymn, '*Christ triumphant, ever reigning*'. As the doors were pushed back for the procession to leave the Cathedral I was left with the question, what is being released here of God that either can be experienced or is perceived to be seen and heard? There was a movement from the inside of the Cathedral to the outside forecourt. The procession, led by the choir and the clergy, was followed by the congregation. The voices of the choir and the clergy could be heard outside in prayer before they dispersed in different directions. I observed that what was visible and audible through worship inside the church was not so easy to see or hear outside the church and became largely invisible. Faith appeared to be contained rather than being able to cross borders into society.

2.2 My Worldview
The Cathedral context provided a second experience that illustrated my spiritual whakapapa and worldview – borders were being crossed and were about engagement. A new chapel

was built in 2017 as part of the cathedral completion project. I led various services in the chapel such as Holy Communion.

Figure 2.1

The photograph (Figure 2.1) shows how the Bishop Selwyn Chapel consists of glass walls and doors. The glass doors slide open and remove any sense of walls which could be perceived as borders. While presiding in services I experienced people walking past with their dogs and stopping to observe worship. The glass enabled the world to experience the church and the church to experience the world. There were porous borders which allowed visibility and that invited engagement. In comparison, the church alongside had solid wooden walls and high windows. Worship, and so faith, was not visible to the world.

Normal practice has a cross inside a chapel. Figure 2.1 shows the cross is outside the chapel. The placement is significant in explaining my worldview. The cross is visible to all both inside and outside the chapel. It tells of God's existence, and is a symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ in the world and for the world. It is not only used to interpret what happens within the church walls. The love of God for the world, is present for the whole of creation and not just a denomination or parts of society. An example of this comes from my spiritual whakapapa where there were passions and concerns for people that I highlighted through news stories.

The cross and the resurrection are partial knowledge of God's existence. I can do theology within and beyond the church based on that knowledge and know more of God through what I experience. The cross, a finite object, it tells of a belief that is beyond the finite nature of human beings.

Marcus Borg (2018), when talking about the encounter that two of the disciples have with Jesus on the Road to Emmaus, says the power of the story is not whether it happened or not. Rather, the power is in the meaning and truth of the story: the risen Christ journeys with us whether we are aware or not. There are moments of recognition that can happen again and again at any time or place. In my worldview the cross and resurrection, a factual and historical event, is there to be known anytime and anywhere through an encounter with the risen Christ. There is a link between what is known and how that reality is known.

An implication of my worldview is that the cross and resurrection are part of the public square. Richard Harries (2012, p.204), a retired Church of England bishop says the whole news environment is of concern to Christian theology: 'Because it is part of the world which God creates and redeems'. Faith is then part of the public square. Michael Wilson (1998, p.54) describes it this way: 'There is the activity of *theologizing life* in the light of our trust in God'. My worldview means this 'theologizing', just like the cross outside the chapel, is public in nature as part of God's creation and not contained within church walls (italics in the original).

The doors and the walls of the cathedral are both literal and metaphorical; they are a useful illustration to consider borders that can contain faith-based discourse or encourage engagement with society. My spiritual whakapapa did not have walls that prevented and contained the recognition of God. God was tangible and known in my understanding and interpretations within and beyond the church walls. My approach was challenged when my practice was largely dealing with faith-based discourse contained within the church walls. What was visible to me, through deeply held experiences and interpretations, was being largely deemed invisible in my practice as a church communications advisor.

2.3 A Question for Practical Theology

This thesis is for a doctorate in practical theology. It is important to consider why the research question - how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor - is a question for practical theology. I use the following definition of practical theology.

Practical theology is a place where religious belief, tradition, and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions, and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming.
Woodward and Pattison, 2000, p.7

Woodward and Pattison's description highlights that practical theology is about mutual dialogue between the Church and the contemporary experience which can transform practice. A definition from Swinton and Mowat is also focused on mutual action and transformation of practices but adds the recognition of the need for redemption. The practices of the Church and the world are both part of God's creation but only the Church sees the revelation of God in Jesus that it is required to make known through its presence in the world.

Practical theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world.
Swinton and Mowat, 2016, p.7

Swinton and Mowat's definition is focused on the contribution the Church can make to public life. There is a practical theological approach which can explore the relationship between a church communications advisor and the public square. Insights from my spiritual whakapapa show how God was visible in my interpretation of the world but that was challenged in my practice. Swinton and Mowat's approach, whereby God is made explicit, provides richer insights through which to explore the tension I experienced as a communications advisor. I see the explicit practices referred to by Swinton and Mowat as being able to contribute to the possible flourishing of the world rather than being about the redemption of a fallen world. In doing practical theology I place my experience in dialogue with other sources of knowledge.

Forrester (2000, p.9) warns that practical theology cannot focus solely on the activities of Christians or the Church: 'A theology of practice must first ask questions about God's activity and consider the practice of other agents within the horizon of the divine practice as actual or potential participation in God's activity'. For this research to only examine the practices of the Church would leave an incomplete picture and ignore half of the definition from Swinton and Mowat as well as my own experience and that of others in the media, such as journalists. To answer the question, I turn to other practitioners and theoretical perspectives. The framework of practical theology enables research with a focus on the practices of the public square. Swinton and Mowat (2016, p.xi) say the practical theologian asks a key

question; 'is what *appears* to be going on within this situation what is *actually* going on?' Bennett et al. (2018, pp.58-60) say practice is a place of 'questioning and theoretical contributions' that 'both perform and create worlds and worldviews'. The research based on this understanding enables me to analyse and critique what I am doing, what others do, and to possibly change my practice.

There is a further implication of practical theology which is about how the interaction of practices is achieved. In practical theology there is a focus on the 'doing' of theology - what Veling (2005, p.7) refers to as the 'weaving' of theology in society. Graham (2000, p.106) says practical theology functions so that faith communities can be enabled to practice what they preach. Cameron and Duce (2013, p.120) also point to the ability to be able to communicate effectively one's beliefs as part of practical theology: 'A key aim of practical theology is to see how God can be drawn into the conversation about the particular practice in a way that is appropriate and creative and doesn't patronise or baffle those involved'.

In answering the research question, the practices of the Church and of society are sources of knowledge. The practices have epistemological status and so I examine them in this study. Graham (2002, p.100) says practice can bring new knowledge about how communication occurs: 'Practice has the capacity to engender new realities as well as develop greater skill; and in turn, practice informed by new insights may transform subsequent experience'. Practical theology is then a framework through which new practices and norms may be introduced in what I argue is a changing and more fluid public square.

Reader (2008, p.7) identifies flexibility and an interdisciplinary approach as elements of practical theology which enable it to bring about change: 'In terms of method, practical theology is unsystematic because it is engaging with a fragmented and complex world which is in a state of constant flux'. Any findings which contribute to new knowledge can then offer fresh understanding and enable changed practice.

2.4 A Christian Perspective

My perspective is situated within a broader worldview of western Christianity. First, while I am an Anglican priest, it would be wrong to assume that I do not recognise there are other cultural and theoretical foundations for discussion and debate which contribute to knowledge. Second, there is a need to be specific about Christian belief due to the diversity across western Christianity about what it means to be Christian.

I describe myself as having a broadly liberal form of credal Christian orthodoxy which recognises there are other worldviews. My practices, such as teaching students for lay and ordained ministry and communications advice across a diocese, involves engagement with diverse theological positions and traditions. I have also worked with various ethnicities and cultures such as Māori and Fijian. My role as a bishop's chaplain in the Church of England works with an even wider breath of Church compared to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Section Two
2.5 Locating the Study within Qualitative Research
This study is within the field of qualitative research. I am seeking to understand the public square by exploring my practice and the meanings used by theorists and practitioners. The research does not test a hypothesis. Rather, understanding is sought through the gathering of data. I am using what Gray (2014, p.18) calls inductive reasoning. There is a progression in my understanding of the phenomena of the public square; I progress from fragmented details to the connection of patterns and themes rather than a deductive approach that starts from a universal theory.

There is no single definition of qualitative research (compare Gray, 2014, p.160; Silverman, 2005, p.15; Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.32). Gray identifies the need for a 'holistic view' of the research in a particular setting which recognises the role of the researcher and a specific context in any findings. Silverman says there are 'multiple competing models' of qualitative research which requires careful decisions about methodology. Braun and Clarke say qualitative research provides a framework but it is not identical across all research. Denzin and Lincoln's (2018, p.9) latest edition of *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* says the history of qualitative research is a complex mix of terms, concepts and assumptions. Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 20) say such a diversity enables qualitative research to capture everyday life: 'It records the messiness of real life, puts an organising framework around it and interprets it in some way'. The 'messiness' is what I need to capture and assess how it may contribute to the tension in my practice (Chapter One). Qualitative research enables me to evaluate my experience and the views of others in a structured but flexible way through the collection and interpretation of data.

Denzin and Lincoln (2018, p.10) identify the elements of qualitative enquiry that are important for this study: 'Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world'. The definition emphasises the construction and interpretation of meaning in referring to an observer that can also apply to

me as a practitioner. I recognise the possibility to research practices from a specific location to contribute to knowledge which can be transformative in the world.

An important element of the definition from Denzin and Lincoln is the capacity of practices to transform the world. This parallels the definitions for practical theology addressed earlier in the chapter. Transformation is at the heart of the professional doctorate and this occurred for me as a theologian during the research process. I began to adjust some practices in the public square which are reviewed in Chapter Seven. Bennett (2009, p.334) says the Professional Doctorate is action-oriented in its approach: 'The whole thrust of the professional doctorate is to examine values, practices and performance in order to yield better performances'.

While the primary context is Aotearoa New Zealand (see 1.2) I am also cognisant of the global nature of the public square. Because of this there is knowledge that is global rather than local in nature. An example is that the majority of literature about the public square originates from the United States and the United Kingdom. This shows a source of influence from other contexts. New Zealand theologian, Neil Darragh, warns about adopting a missionary legacy when doing contextual theology in Aotearoa New Zealand. He says this occurs when traditions from overseas origins are adopted rather than engaging with the local New Zealand context (2002, p.3). While the research is largely based on experience in Aotearoa New Zealand, the approach needs to recognise the global nature of the public square as a theological space (Reader, 2008, p.9), and incorporate that in the research design. While Darragh is not putting sharp boundaries round culture, it is necessary to note that globalisation has had an impact on the nature of practical theology since his writing in 2002 (Reader, 2008, p.8; Graham, 2013, p.11). This study fulfils Darragh's requirement to engage with the local context and practices but also engages with overseas experience. Williams' interview offers a critical perspective from elsewhere and thus strengthens the rigour of the findings.

2.6 Epistemological Assumptions – The Interpretivist Paradigm

The description from Denzin and Lincoln for qualitative enquiry implies a particular view of the world of how truth and knowledge are understood. Their view contrasts with the positivist approach associated with realism which uses deductive logic and the supposed existence of an objective truth. Such an approach assumes detachment from the subject and deductive logic. However, I am part of what I understand to be the public square. My identity, through my spiritual whakapapa and interpretations of the public square, are one of many interpretations. Chapter One outlined that I am working with my knowledge (practice,

experience and context in Chapter Three) as well as the knowledge of others (theoretical perspectives in Chapter Four and interviews in Chapter Five). There are different approaches to knowledge, such as the existence of God and the expression of faith, from Habermas and Williams (Chapter Four). I have chosen an interpretivist epistemology which assumes there are multiple interpretations of reality by individuals and communities of which mine is one. I am involved in the research as a 'participant' rather than objective observer.

Veling (2005, p.23) says we live as 'interpreters of the world'. We interpret ourselves and the world around us. It is useful to consider Tracy's (1987, p.9) view of interpretivism, given he contributes to my theoretical perspectives, whereby humans are skilled interpreters: 'Every time we act, deliberate, judge, understand, or even experience, we are interpreting'. This may be done consciously or unconsciously. Geertz (1973, p.311) sees culture as a 'series of webs'. Any analysis is an interpretive process that creates a 'thick description' of culture that does not equate to scientific methods such as mathematics. Rather, it is a series of constructions and interpretations. As I gather data that consists of my constructions of others' interpretation there is a process of observation, recording, and analysis. Through this process meaning emerges and good interpretations are made which can be defended.

An epistemology of interpretivism accommodates different interpretations of human experience. The contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and the United Kingdom have multiple worldviews and interpretations as do the particular contexts in which I practice (Chapter Three). The approach of interpretivism is appropriate for the way in which I examine different perspectives and narratives of the public square (Chapter Four) and use different disciplines in the interpretive and conceptual findings (Chapter Six and Chapter Seven – mediatisation and the characteristics of play). Such an approach, leaves the possibility of multiple perspectives from the interpretive findings to be explored further.

Swinton and Mowat (2016, p.72) say as a researcher I need to be aware that when working in an interpretivist paradigm some methods may not accommodate an acceptance of theological knowledge. My position is that there is knowledge through received revelation as part of the Christian tradition. I am seeking knowledge about how the Church, through its theological understanding of the world, can understand and so participate in the public square. This is distinctly different to knowledge about what is believed. Cameron and Duce (2013, p.44) say it is important in research to identify the theological question that is being asked and whether the practice is a bearer of theology. Forrester (1993, p.68) makes it clear the practice of 'theologising' is a bearer of theology and not something that is simply tagged on at the end. Theology is, therefore, not simply the packaging at the end of a decision-

making process but fundamental to it. I, therefore, need to work with an epistemology that can accommodate Christian belief. As part of doing this I take the position of critical realism.

2.7 Critical Realism

I am using the following understanding of critical realism: 'Critical realists hold that is possible for social science to refine and improve its knowledge about the real world over time, and to make claims about reality which are relatively justified, while still being historical, contingent, and changing,' (Archer, 2016). Braun and Clarke (2013, p.27) illustrate my approach. They suggest there is a continuum that moves from relativism, where reality depends on the ways we come to know it, to realism where there is one truth, known through research. They suggest there is an in-between position called the critical realist.

The position of critical realism can be explored further through Williams' argument of the acceptance of our human finitude as part of his argument for procedural secularism (2012a, 2014, 2018). Williams says that the visible, which we do know, can help us to know more about the invisible which we do not fully know. From what is observed and is finite we can learn more about what cannot be observed and is infinite. To accommodate the use of knowledge from both within and beyond the world, and so to hold together the finite and the infinite that is part of my ontological position, I use the position of critical realism.

Williams (2012a, pp.13-15) believes the use of religious perspectives and language can be part of the public square through an acceptance of a recognition of finitude and of the 'other', rather than a reliance on absolutist claims of dogmatism or what is seen as having a lack of clarity. The language of religion should, therefore, be part of public debate and dialogue in which it is understood as an expression of what is finite or what is infinite. Williams (2018, p.5) argument holds together the limited finite and the infinite and says this approach accommodates revelatory knowledge.

> And this recognition of duality in our apprehension of finite agency, seeing the finite as enacting the infinite without ceasing to be finite – and specifically seeing this at work in any finite agency that we identify as 'revealing' something of God not otherwise available to natural perception, holds the key to a range of theological puzzles.

These words invite the examination of everyday life, the finite that we may or may not see that is around us, to know more about the infinite. What I experience in a time and place can reveal more about God. An example of this is sitting with someone who is dying – by sitting

with that person, death is no longer an intellectual concept but rather I was involved as a person. The finite experience left me thinking about what this told me about the infinite. Critical realism, using an interpretivist paradigm, means the reality of God can be known and recognised. There is knowledge beyond the human world of time and place that cannot be verified and categorised. However, there is, in an experience such as death, a limited ability to know that reality.

2.8 Reflexivity

Two forms of reflexivity are relevant to this research (Gray, 2014, p.606). Epistemological reflexivity focuses on the methodology and assumptions that were made about the world and the nature of knowledge and any implications there may be for the research and the findings. Personal reflexivity is how my values, beliefs, and attitudes shaped the research.

In this research knowledge is sought through an interpretive process of dialogue. I am part of the field of enquiry with the ontological assumption that I, and others, are interpretive beings who seek to make meaning out of experience. Such a premise is why Braun and Clark (2013, p.36) say a robot would make a 'terrible researcher' in qualitative research as humanness and subjectivity are research tools. Bryman (2016, p.388) says reflexivity is an awareness of how my social location, methods, and decisions may contribute to the research. Swinton and Mowat (2016, p.56), stress the need for self-awareness of my contribution to knowledge as this opens up possibilities for learning and new practice. As a researcher I then shape the research. Swinton and Mowat (2016, p.57) say personal reflexivity indicates the autobiographical nature of all research. I have been conscious to articulate clearly the methodology I have chosen and the identified ontological and epistemological positions I have used regarding the nature of knowledge. My own perspective of Western Christianity was also identified as were any assumptions made as a result of that.

My experience has been important throughout the research. My practice in communications and networks were potential sources of knowledge and helped with the gathering of data and information. My humanness and subjectivity are the focus of the next chapter and so there is a recognition from the beginning that my story contributes to the conceptual framework. Personal reflexivity has contributed to the research with the use of a research diary that recorded my experiences, thoughts, and feelings which could then be used as a source of critical reflection. A research journal was also a way to record my decision-making about the research design and methods that helped me to answer the research question. An

important contribution to reflexive knowledge was my move from Aotearoa New Zealand to live in the United Kingdom. In that change of location there were new experiences that contributed to knowledge and the answering of the research question.

Reflexivity also shapes me. There is a reciprocal element to reflexivity (Gray, 2014, p.606; Swinton and Mowat, 2016, p.57). The reciprocity occurs when my practices, that are part of the research, are changed as new understandings and knowledge are drawn from the research. Renewed thinking and practice are demonstrated in Chapter Seven. The next section outlines the research design and methods that are congruent with the epistemological and philosophical assumptions I have described.

2.9 Research Design and Methods

This section outlines and justifies the decisions made in how to answer the research question. The gathering of knowledge includes my own experience and the experience of others using an ethnographic approach. I originally planned to gather the following knowledge and data. The plan required some change due to circumstances in my context.

- Knowledge of my practice, experience and context;
- theoretical perspectives from within and beyond Aotearoa New Zealand;
- two interviews, the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams as a practitioner in the public square and Janet Wilson, a journalist and media commentator in New Zealand;
- a journal from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, March 20-27th 2016, known as the Holy Week diary;
- a diary from November 27th to December 25th 2016 to record what is referred to as the 'Advent Intervention' using new social media and website technology and then analysis of the gathered data using social media and website engagement statistics.

The change in circumstances, outlined later in this section, meant a revision in how the diaries were used, (see diaries section below).

My role as a communications practitioner was the beginning of this research. I sought to understand why, from my experience, the public square was a difficult place to work as a communications advisor. Davidson and Tolich (2003, p.8) say research using social science methods seeks to make sense of what is occurring in everyday life. Bryman (2016, p.3) calls my circumstance the 'springboard' for social research. My professional role, the background

reading, and writing for the three Stage One papers influenced the development of the research question and design. The writing and reading are not data but they were important preparation through which to develop the research question and the research design. The process, which was the first building block of the conceptual framework, helped to argue the defensibility and rigour of the research.

The second building block is the theoretical perspectives from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams. Public discourse theory was introduced to further understand the public square. The third building block is data from practitioners through interviews, and from my practice using a research diary. The final part of the research design is the interpretive and conceptual findings. Figure 2.2 in the summary of this chapter outlines the research design.

The Stage One papers focused on my experience of the public square being characterised by borders in terms of its structure and relationships. My thinking changed in an interview with Rowan Williams (2016a, interview). We discussed the dramatic image of the partially collapsed walls of Christchurch Cathedral from an earthquake in 2011. I asked if the image was a reminder that the Church needs to speak beyond its walls that could otherwise be borders of division to the public square. With the walls partially down from the earthquake, what had been invisible was now visible from the street. Williams commented that the main issue was whether people were interested in what was occurring inside to start with. The height of the walls and their existence was irrelevant. He believed the deciding factor was whether a lively sense of invitation, which could draw people in, was being communicated. The interview led me to conclude that 'a lively sense of invitation' required effective communication practices from churches. However, my conclusion lacked the development of a more in-depth understanding of the public square for which I introduced the theoretical perspectives.

2.9.1 The Literature and Theoretical Perspectives

The choice of literature and theoretical perspectives sought to identify substantive works that had varied perspectives on the public square. The theoretical perspectives developed a working understanding of the public square and argued for the concept of a changing and more fluid public square. I consider Jurgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (translated to English in 1989) as a seminal work on public discourse from a sociological perspective. David Tracy, from the United States, is focused on methods for the publicness of theology, and Rowan Williams, as a former Archbishop of Canterbury, experienced leadership in the public square on which he has published extensive reflections. It is important to flag that there were no equivalent sources of literature in Aotearoa New

Zealand offering the same depth of analysis or experience. There are voices from Aotearoa New Zealand in the contextual section (Chapter Three) and one of the elite interviews (Chapter Five).

2.9.2 The Interviews

Two interviews provided data: one with Rowan Williams on the nature of the public square and his experience as Archbishop of Canterbury. The other interview with Janet Wilson, a media commentator, on her experience of, and her views on, the nature of the public square in Aotearoa New Zealand. The interviewees were chosen because of their vast experience as practitioners in the public square and the perspectives they would bring (see 5.1- 5.5). The interviews were used to gather knowledge, test out perspectives, and to supplement reading. I gathered personalised data, including experience and opinion, through the interviews in a focused way. The questions for the interviews are in Appendices I and J.

Gray (2014, p.382) says an interview is about the gathering of information: 'An interview is a verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to acquire information from and gain an understanding of another person, the interviewee'. Gray's approach is a somewhat clinical description of my aim which was a semi-structured conversation. There were some specific questions but also the chance to gain new information in a wide-ranging conversation that included interpretations of the public square not already in the public domain.

I transcribed each of the interviews which was a way to become familiar with the material. Each interview was read twice to identify the main issues without interpreting the data. Notes were made as to what was interesting and significant and could potentially challenge my research to that point. The next stage was what Gray (2014, p.604) calls 'focused reading' to identify key words and phrases. I looked for connections between the two interviews. Examples of the analysis of the interviews are in Appendices K and L. The analysis identified each interviewee's understanding about the public square, possible changes in the public square, the role and voice of the Church in the public square, points of tension in the public square, and comments about my experience. I did not code the interviews as I wanted to critically engage with my narrative and their narratives.

2.9.3 The Diaries

The launch of a new website in November 2016 for Holy Trinity Cathedral in Auckland was to be the focus of the research. The data from the launch would explore how the Church can communicate in society through a specific digital intervention. A delay of five months in

building the website meant it was not ready until 2017. In consultation with my supervisors, it was decided to compile a detailed research diary to better understand my practice during the same time period.

The first diary, from Holy Week 2016, became a pilot diary for the research. The Advent diary became a detailed recording of my practice from November 26th to December 25th 2016. This period, known as Advent in the Christian Church, remembers the first coming of Christ and looks forward to his second coming. The diary was a gathering of knowledge through a detailed description of my practice that included feelings and thoughts. The diaries provided a description and knowledge about my practice that I had not reflected on before. The detailed description added to the generalised description of my practice in Chapter Three. As an example, the entries for 27 November 2016 were two services of worship that involved the taking of photos for social media, and working with government stakeholders on a statement about Christchurch Cathedral. I also referred to my reactions and feelings with uncertainty about my diocesan communications role. For reasons of flexibility there was not a standard form for recording each day's activities but rather regular writing using an electronic diary. The diary recorded my role as a Communications Advisor for the Province, the Diocese, and as Priest Assistant at Holy Trinity Cathedral.

I recorded my practice using a narrative approach of ethnography. Geertz (1973, pp.311-312) says this approach of gathering data builds knowledge. He says any such analysis of culture is interpretive in nature. Cameron and Duce (2013, p.xxix) describe ethnography as providing a 'thick description' of practice with periods of observation and participation in a community of practice which is what I was doing. My descriptions used writing and photos. I observed as much as I could in the context. Moschella (2014, p.226) notes that practical theologians work with fluidity and complexity. My narrative approach provided flexibility and a method to capture the complexity.

The changing nature of ethnography meant it was possible to accommodate the research in the workplace. Bryman (2016, p.462) says ethnographies are now shorter in nature rather than the result of prolonged participant observation. He suggests this could be due to time constraints on researchers in workplaces. Time constraints meant I could accommodate a month of recording in my workplace. Gray (2014, p.165) calls the approach 'micro-ethnography'. Observation is over weeks rather than a longer period of time. As an ethnographer I am what Bryman (2016, p.436) calls a 'partially participating observer'. I was recording my practice and also that of others and so was a partial participant. This occurred

in a number of contexts such as Auckland and also Christchurch as a media advisor. The recording of data from different perspectives contributes to the rigour of the findings.

2.9.4 Coding

The coding process began with reading and rereading the entries for the Advent diary. I developed an awareness of the nature of the data through the use of analytical notes. This captured what Saldana (2009, p.3) describes as the 'primary content' and 'essence of the data'. There was also consideration of other coding methods that could extract as much knowledge as possible from the diary.

An initial reading of the diary entries noted a wide mix of content. My practice included worship, media calls, social media posts, as well as emotions and reactions to experiences. The varied data suggested the possibility of multiple rounds of coding. A series of codings interrogated the data in what Saldana (2009, p.12) calls a movement from reality to the abstract as themes are developed.

The second step, after reading and making notes, was a decision about coding styles. I used descriptive coding, also called topic coding in some of the literature (Saldana, 2009, p.70). Descriptive coding takes a word or a short phrase from a paragraph about what is happening (p.70). Descriptive coding gave the flexibility to use what Saldana (p.19) calls 'lumpur coding'. The approach assists the researcher to identify what is important about each paragraph. In my case each diary entry. Descriptive coding enabled me to identify the basic topic and use an appropriate code. In this coding process, the topic was a task, an action, reactions, or emotions.

Each round of coding was a manual process with notations of codes in the margins of the diary. This required multiple copies of the diaries. The coding was what Saldana (2009, p.45) refers to as cyclical. There were multiple rounds of coding as I returned to parts of the data for a second and third time. In further rounds of coding I established sub codes that enabled me to interrogate the data further. An example is worship as a code which, in the second series of coding, had sub codes for my roles. These included face-to-face worship, social media posting about worship, and recording videos. I also used sub-codes to draw from the data reactions and feelings such as uncertainty and isolation. The sub codes enabled me to better ask the question of 'what was happening' in my practice.

The use of descriptive coding meant any patterns of similarity and difference, as well as causation and frequency, in the narrative could be identified. The process used codes to

interpret the reality, as recorded in the diary, that could lead to categories and concepts to consider in relation to the research question.

2.10 Ethical Issues

I addressed ethical issues for the research in relation to consent, confidentiality, and anonymity. I had trusted relationships in my workplace and in the news media in Aotearoa New Zealand. The relationships were key to being able to include narratives from both contexts and in securing the Williams and Wilson interviews. My role enabled the research that took place to be possible. This is an important factor in terms of access to knowledge.

Formal ethics approval was sought from the University (Appendix A) before I began the research. Ethical risks included working outside of England, managing the risks of two interviews, and getting permission to use a research diary in my places of work. There was also the requirement to ensure that such study was in line with accepted practice in New Zealand. Permission was sought from my employers. The use of research diaries required consent from the Diocese of the Auckland, the General Secretary of the Province of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, and the Principal of St John's College (see Appendices B-D). Each context required its own approval. There are steps to ensure no one is identified from the research diary data apart from facts already known in the public domain. To advise anyone I spoke with that I was recording my actions could have had an impact on the data being gathered. The focus of the research diary was my practice as a communications advisor rather than their roles as colleagues. The interviews for Williams and Wilson were not anonymous. Each of them agreed that the interview could be recorded, that their names could be used, and that quotes used in the thesis could be attributed to them.

2.11 Defensibility and Rigour

This section has outlined the use of recognised approaches from within the field of qualitative research through which to seek new knowledge and contribute to my field of practice. There is an acknowledgment of the limits of the study. The methodology provides a structure and flexibility through which to answer the research question. The methodology and the research design contribute to the defensibility and rigour of the research. There are different sources of information and data and the use of multiple methods through which to address the research question.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented my spiritual whakapapa and worldview, the epistemological assumptions, methodology, and research design. The chapter outlined the methods of data collection and analysis through which to generate defensible findings. The research methodology and design demonstrate an adaption for me as a practitioner and researcher to work with a changing context rather than a linear design. The design emerged gradually to best answer the research question. Gray (2014, p.168) describes research as 'emergent' in nature: 'Qualitative research design, then, should be seen less as a linear, sequential pathway, but rather as a series of iterations involving design, data collection, preliminary analysis and re-design'. I imagined the progression of the study as being quite linear with set sequential tasks. However, the process required flexibility to be able to gradually address the research question.

This diagram, adapted from Swinton and Mowat (2016, p.90), summarises the methodology and research design in which I create a critical space through the bringing together of different sources of knowledge to seek new knowledge and practice.
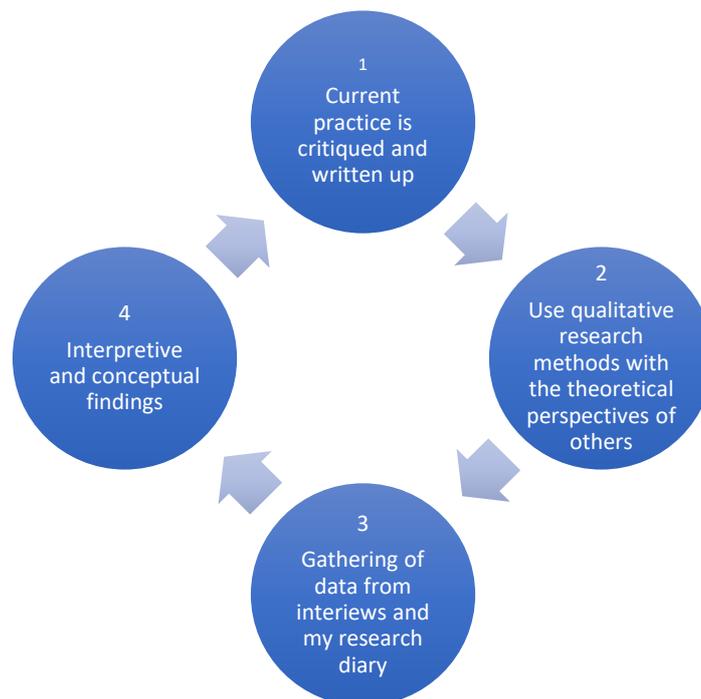
Figure 2.2 The research design

The thesis begins and ends with practice. As practical theology it aims to transform practice. Figure 2.2 summarises the research design outlined in this chapter. Step one, which is my practice, experience, and context is described in Chapter Three. Chapter Four is the theoretical perspectives of others and Chapter Five is the gathering of data from my context.

The data is analysed and explored further through the interpretive and conceptual findings that contribute to a new form of practice. There is an intention to extend knowledge and understanding in a documented way that can be defended with academic rigour and contribute to my professional community.

Chapter Three
The concrete and the local

Introduction

This chapter explores the combination of practice, experience, and context as the starting point to this thesis. Miller-McLemore (2014, p.7) calls these elements the 'concrete and the local'. The 'concrete and local' for me is my practice, my experience, and the context as well as that of other practitioners. Bennett et al. (2018, p.57) say practical theology and practical theology research begins, occurs, and ends in practice. Therefore, it is important to define practice, and to consider practice, experience and context from my perspectives and others to answer the research question; how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor.

The chapter consists of two sections. Section One is largely autobiographical. It enables me to explore the tension that was identified in my practice, experience, and context. Pattison (2007, p.13) says it is important to be mindful of what I bring as a researcher as there is never an 'essay without an author formed of dust and social forces'. Section One explores the 'dust' and the 'social forces'. It provides an explanation of how I am using the term borders, and describes what I call my 'border experiences'. In 2016, after two years of research, I began to question the significance and the nature of borders in my understanding of the organisation of the public square and my practice. I illustrate this with two examples; comparing my practice in two funerals as a communications advisor and my experience of working concurrently in the media and the Church. The two experiences, that occurred during the writing of the thesis, challenged my initial understanding of how the public square is organised and its modes of communication. The section concludes with a reflection on my move from Aotearoa New Zealand to the United Kingdom and its contribution to the research.

Section Two describes my primary context of Aotearoa New Zealand. There were identifiable trends of secularism, religious pluralism, and digital technology. The section also considers the changing nature and role of the Church in relation to the public square. There are also perspectives by practitioners and academics from academia and the Church about their experience and practice in the public square .

3.1 Defining Practice and Experience

Practice is an essential 'currency' for this study. A starting point to define practice is from Bennett et al. (2018, pp.59-61): 'Practices both perform and create worlds and world-views'.

Practices are a source of knowledge rather than being merely actions (Swinton and Mowat, 2016, p.20):

> Practices, then, contain values, beliefs, theologies and other assumptions which, for the most part, go unnoticed until they are complexified and brought to our notice through the process of theological reflection. Importantly practices are also the bearers of traditions and histories. They are not therefore simply individual actions.

An implication is that practices are a source of knowledge, meaning, and understanding about how the public square is organised, and its modes of communication. My practices as a church communications advisor can reflect a particular understanding of the public square.

I bring practices through experience as a communications advisor, a talkback host, newsreader, and journalist. There are also practices I bring as an ordained priest. Additionally, I observe the communication practices of others in the public square. Practice in this study has what Miller-McLemore (2012, p.108) calls 'epistemic weight'. There is a difference between practice and experience, although both can exist in the same context. Bennett (2013, p.41) writes about the tension for individuals in choosing between authoritative tradition and human experience. In this study, while there are authoritative sources of communal understanding and tradition such as scripture and tradition, there is also my own history which I view as experience. This experience shapes how I respond.

3.2 Borders

We live in what I understand to be a bordered world. Borders are used as a form of organisation in terms of space and also social practice. There are geographic, political, and economic borders. These exist at an international level, such as between the United States and Mexico. There are also borders at the local level, such as around properties, that determine access. Borders, which can be formal or informal, can be about power and social norms. A border can be about belonging and access to a shop but can also be about the restriction of access. Borders can also be abolished and changed.

These examples illustrate that borders can have contradictory roles. A diary entry I made from March 2016 illustrates the prevalence of borders in my experience and a sense of untidiness.

> This role of being priest is one in which I never anticipated being on a border. I left broadcasting to consider ministry and was a communications advisor in New Zealand

Police while I considered my next options. I felt this was about exploring a new place. What has become clear is that I have ended up even more on a border and seeing frustrations on both sides. It is not what I anticipated priesthood to be, I feel as though I am not actually working in the church and I find myself moving further and further away from what I anticipated priesthood to be but it is very much the world of a priest.

Rhodes, 2016b

Borders are not identical. Each person's experience of a border will not be the same. Arriving at the border in Aotearoa New Zealand is a different experience for me than arriving at the border in Los Angeles. The former is entry to my country of birth, to a place of familiarity. The latter is the experience of entering the United States of America as a visitor. In this thesis I use the image of a border that is between the domains of the Church and the public square. The perceived border marks a boundary between the domains of the Church and the public square. I locate myself on both sides of the border through experience in the media and in the Church. In answering the research question, I am seeking a better understanding of borders.

The Stage One writing explored the concept of a border or borders between the Church and the public square. The concept suggested the level of understanding by Church leaders of the public square, that was demonstrated through practice, could be questioned. When I ask, as a researcher in practical theology, 'what is happening?', Veling (2005, p.17) suggests vigilance is needed rather than assuming everything will be familiar and known. His insights prompted me to question my understanding of practices and the concept of borders. My practice includes a familiarity with the Church in both a professional and personal capacity. There is a similar level of familiarity with the public square as a reporter, newsreader, talkback host, and communications advisor. To answer the research question, I need to be able to critique my own practices and consider the possibility of new knowledge and new practices.

A perception of borders between nations is that life occurs within a contained place. Such a perception or understanding could hide what is actually occurring and so too could hide the nature of borders. There are questions about what is separate and contained, or should be separate, and what is not. Religion has crossed borders of nations for generations. Aotearoa New Zealand is an example of faith crossing borders after the arrival of the missionaries from the Church of England. A question for me as a practitioner and a researcher is whether faith-based discourse crosses borders or is expected to be contained within specific areas. If

borders are crossed then its relevance is contested.

3.3 Living within Borders

The Church as an institution, and a place of faith, was a significant part of my early life experiences and worldview. There were church schools, altar boy rosters, Sunday Mass, and choirs and music. While studying at university I was an organist in Roman Catholic cathedrals in Dunedin and Wellington. In 1991, I was appointed Director of Music at All Saints' Church in Palmerston North after the completion of my university studies. While the role was a change from Roman Catholic to the Anglican denomination, it was still within the church environment in terms of practice, context, and experience.

A move to broadcasting in 1993, and then to New Zealand Police as a Communications Manager in 2003, were both experiences of living within perceived borders. Broadcasting was a full-time job for ten years. I was an announcer on music radio stations, a newsreader and a reporter on television. The roles were 'isolating' because of shift work and extensive travel. My role in a very public industry also created a sense of needing borders to separate what was public and private when there were articles about me in magazines.

The role of Communications Manager for New Zealand Police (2003-2005) was a change from being a reporter to managing reporters. I managed media enquiries, was a spokesperson for police, and developed strategies for public engagement. The organisation's credibility and public image required careful management of media access to information. The relationship with the media was dominated by borders that were about control. A crime scene is a good example of the focus on borders in the role. There was control over where reporters could move at a crime scene and what pictures could be taken. The use of roadblocks and a closing of the airspace for media helicopters was common. I decided what information was shared with the media and what was withheld about a crime. The media were seen as 'the other' by police. The relationship was often tested due to media demands for information.

I began ordination training in the Anglican Church in 2005. I lived with other students in a theological college. Broadcasting and communications roles were largely put aside as I studied for an honours degree in theology. In the discernment process for ordination, I told the diocesan bishop that it was time to leave the world of communications and broadcasting for ministry. A consequence of living within borders meant there was also what felt like the crossing of borders. I moved from the world of the Church to the world of the public square

in broadcasting and then back to the Church. I lived within borders but also crossed borders.

3.4 Crossing Borders

The move from church music to a career in radio occurred in 1993. The move was like crossing a border to another world - from a workplace driven by faith to one dominated by the market and ratings. The vicar in the church, where I was Director of Music, questioned me as to whether I should work in broadcasting. He thought it did not reflect Church beliefs. The conversation reinforced the concept of borders that contain particular ways of life; the Church was one world and the media another.

In my experience of seeking comment from Church leaders, the media was not seen as a place of opportunity but rather something to be protected from. There was a focus on borders with a 'them' and 'us' mentality. While working at TV3 I sought a bishop's comment on an issue from the Anglican Church. I was told by the Church's media officer that no one was available. To me this was in effect a border that closed off the possibility of the Church commenting on an issue. However, I was able to locate a bishop willing to talk for that interview.

The move to ordained ministry (2005) was a change in roles; an experience of crossing borders. During the selection process for ordination the diocesan bishop said to me, 'Now it is my turn to ask the questions'. The conversation referred to when I asked him questions as a reporter. The roles were now reversed as the bishop sought information. A journalist who sought ordination in the Church of England had a similar experience. As a deacon, he was reminded of his background by a bishop: 'I have realised that there is little escape from trenchant attitudes about my former working life. Meet the poacher-turned-game keeper, as one bishop put it recently' (Landau, 2013). The moves I made from church music to broadcasting (1993), to police (2003), and then to ministry (2005) provided experiences for me of living within borders and crossing borders. The practices associated with priesthood and communications I saw as separate. Others shared the same view. My own perception was that I was moving between two worlds that required different understandings and practices. I had what Michael Nausner (2004, pp.119-132) calls a binary approach: polarisation between the environment of the Church and the environment of the public square. My practices and understanding of the public square focused on borders that contained faith-based discourse rather than reflecting my spiritual whakapapa and worldview that sought faith-based discourse to be part of the public square.

3.5 Living on an Untidy Border

Within a few months of ordination as a priest there was a conflation of what I saw as the world of Church and the world of communications. That prompted further questions about the nature and existence of borders in my understanding and practice. I was priested in November 2007 and two months later managed media for the State Funeral of Sir Edmund Hillary at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Auckland. Sir Edmund, and his climbing partner, were the first to climb Mt Everest. There was intense international interest.

Figure 3.1

The photograph (Figure 3.1) shows me being interviewed on the day of the State Funeral. The photograph is a rich source of reflection. I moved from media to ordained ministry for what was a mixing of two worlds that was yet to be fully discovered. In simple terms, I moved from the right to the left of the picture. From being the person holding the microphone to facing the microphone. I provided answers rather than asking questions. It was a case of 'poacher-turned-gamekeeper'. An added dimension to the encounter is that I was ordained and wore a clerical collar – what some describe as a uniform. The collar is a strong image. There are many interpretations and assumptions made about the collar in my experience both within, and beyond, the Church. From my perspective the role was part of managing a border between the Church and the media. I had to plan what the Church required to host a state funeral and what the media wanted, such as locations for cameras and what information was shared in interviews.

There was further communications work at a national level that was about managing borders. A National Memorial Service was held in November 2010 after an explosion in the Pike River Mine that killed 29 men. The Christchurch earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 was also a time the Church used my communication skills. There was a memorial service for the 189 people killed in the earthquake. I lived in Christchurch for four months and then commuted to provide communications assistance. An ongoing dispute developed as to whether Christchurch Cathedral, which was severely damaged in the earthquakes, would be restored or replaced with a contemporary building. These roles, as well as an international gathering of the Anglican Consultative Council in Auckland, and assistance with media for large funerals, meant time away from my parish commitments as Vicar of Takapuna. I was invited to leave parish ministry to concentrate on communications for the Church.

To address the research question, it is important to consider the nature of the role and practice of a communications advisor. I left parish ministry in January 2014 to be Communications Advisor for the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. I provided strategic communications advice to the archbishops, to dioceses, parishes, and organisations within the Church, such as trust boards. The role included maintaining relationships with the media, being a Church spokesperson, the writing and publication of media releases, and responding to national issues. There were some good achievements at a national level, such as when the Anglican Archbishop and Roman Catholic Cardinal together challenged the government to take more Syrian refugees and offered ways for the Churches to help. Comments from insiders indicated the opinions from the leaders were not appreciated by the Prime Minister. I also attended gatherings overseas including the Primates Meeting of the Anglican Church in 2016. My experience was not limited to Aotearoa New Zealand through work that provided perspectives on the global Anglican Communion.

The new role was progress in terms of a Church appointment. There was a recognition of the need to resource communications in the Church. However, there was uncertainty in the purpose of the role, the expectations others had of the role, and its long-term funding. Those factors had an impact on my practices. In considering the purpose and expectations of the role, an important question is whether I was a priest with communications expertise or a communications expert who was a priest. I was treated in both ways. The uncertainty highlighted whether communications was an administrative function or whether there was a desire to consider how communications advice could contribute to public theology.

I questioned how my role was understood in the Church institution. How others understood

my role was key to developing strategic communications for the Church. When there were significant events that the Church hosted or was involved in then communications advice would be sought and was appreciated. On a day-to-day basis though, unlike other entities, communication advice was not part of planning. The uncertainty about the nature of the role had an impact on my practice in the public square.

The role relied on annual funding from eight Church organisations and dioceses. My employment was effectively guaranteed for up to a year. This affected my practice and how I worked within the organisation. I worked as a priest on a stipend but also as a contractor. One contract offered me $22 an hour to be a communications advisor while priests alongside me were paid remuneration of double that. Another contract offered $75 an hour. The contracts for work ranged from a month to a year in duration. There was ongoing uncertainty about the funding and existence of the role and so too the importance of communications advice to the Church and of visibility in the public square.

The position of Communications Manager for the Diocese of Auckland was largely about administrative support. I was not part of any management or ministry groups. Communications was not part of strategic decisions. Parts of the diocese managed their own websites and social media. There was no overall strategy to enable the diocese to speak in the public square. Therefore, it was not possible to fulfil the job description as my practice was affected by the uncertainty of expectations from others about the nature of the role. In contrast, as Communications Manager for New Zealand Police, I attended weekly and monthly management meetings as part of the decision-making team.

In my Church role, communications advice was often not able to be given easily and in proactive ways. That suggested experience and knowledge of the public square was not considered important. Clergy and lay people with no experience in communications would often make decisions. An example was a billboard that advertised the Auckland Cathedral junior choir being part of a campaign to collect pyjamas for children for the season of winter. A second aim of the billboard was to recruit choir members. There was the required sign-off from the Cathedral as well as the parents of the children in the publicity. A senior priest criticised the billboard and it was taken down. In terms of process, a senior priest, with no communications experience, decided what happened in regard to a communications matter.

Roger Royle says communications is a complex world for which organised religion needs specialists.

The aggressive nature of today's 24-hour news gathering has to be understood and coped with. It is not a comfortable world to be part of, possibly it never was, but it can never have been so instant, so global and so cut-throat as it is today.
Royle, 2012, p.160

Royle's description suggests the public square is complex and requires specific practices. I experienced a lack of commitment, in terms of finance and organisational structure, to have a specialist role. My experience was that parts of the Church were willing to have the role but did not know where to place the specialist. Uncertainty about the nature and expectations of the role led to uncertainty in practice. It is important to note there was a dissimilar experience in Christchurch as a Communications Advisor. My role was to deal with media enquiries and communications after the series of earthquakes that hit the region and city. In this experience, I was at the 'board table' for all discussions with regular meetings and updates. My advice would be sought regularly in decision-making.

The communications role for the Church that began in 2014 ended after a year due to a lack of funding. There was also a part-time position available in the Diocese of Auckland as Communications Manager. I was made redundant from the diocesan position after two years for financial reasons. The Church established two roles in communications, one at a provincial level and one at diocesan level. Both were disestablished for budgetary reasons. By 2017, I had a day a week in communications with two part-time contracts and a part-time teaching role for employment. These positions were within the Church. This was a huge change from what started as a full-time communications role in 2014. By 2016 I was finding my own employment and looked at options outside of ministry as I continued the third year of study for the professional doctorate.

An untidy border that left me asking questions of my practice and the focus on borders in the public square can be demonstrated in two ways. My role as a communications advisor in the debate about Christchurch Cathedral, and the meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion in 2016.

An earthquake on 11 February 2011 caused extensive damage to Christchurch Cathedral. A section of the community wanted the Cathedral to be restored at a cost of about 120 million dollars. They took the Anglian Church to court and lost the case and then took it to the Appeal Court. The judges determined the Church Property Trustees were obligated to build 'a cathedral' on the site but were not required to restore 'the cathedral'. I would argue the issue, that was primarily about the design of a church and finance, developed a higher

profile because of the local media and online media. Individuals could take part in different ways. The internet meant there was accessibility to the issue at a local, national, and international level where legitimacy of opinion was debated and established. As a communications professional, I was aware that the church trustees, who owned the building, did not have control of the news story about their building. There were often front-page articles in the newspaper, and the media would organise polls on what should happen to the Cathedral. I was part of deciding what responses, if any, were made.

The experience felt to me as if it was about borders. There was a border between the Church and some parts of the media. Social processes were very much mediated and reliant on the mainstream media and social media. Such communication changed the nature of the debate with Church figures targeted. *The Press*, a daily newspaper in Christchurch, ran a letter to the editor that nominated me as non-communicator of the year in regard to the future of Christchurch Cathedral (*The Press*, 2016 – Figure 3.2).

Some real cathedral news would be good

The Press 13 Sep 2016

I would like to nominate the Rev Jayson Rhodes as "Non-Communicator of the Year".

On the one hand, his terse "any questions sit with the working group at this point" contribution to the front page of The Press: "Cathedral Restoration 'sole fo-cus'" (Sep 10). On the other, the July 7 "event" in Cathedral Square when he managed to get an expectant but ultimately disappointed bevy of media to witness the viewing by engineers of the seismic markers on adjacent stones on the south façade of the cathedral?

It would be very nice if Jayson Rhodes could just for once be a little more forthcoming. With permission granted by a higher Anglican authority, he might at least reveal a little of what they are thinking, after all this time.

Maybe perhaps there might even be a bit of enthusiasm? Ross Gray Bryndwr

Diocese more than just Chch

Some people and the media fail to understand the Christchurch Diocese covers all Canterbury, a large part of the West Coast and the Chatham Islands. The Christ Church Cathedral is the focus.

This means all Anglican parishes and co-operating parishes have a part to play in the future of the cathedral.

Bishop Victoria [Matthews] has received unfair negative attention over this and the unflattering photo in The Press (Sep 10) doesn't help. She is a special person, firm and fair as a good leader should be.

It's Jim Anderton's group that has held things up, not the Church Property Trustees.

The synod voted overwhelmingly two years ago for a new cathedral which would meet those things and more. Martin Mehrtens Waimate

The Press
13 Sep 2016 (A6)

Figure 3.2

The media also targeted the bishop. *The Press*, printed an advertisement that called for a 'demolition order' on the Bishop of Christchurch. The self-proclaimed Wizard of New Zealand advertised a rally to save the Cathedral at which the bishop would be deconstructed (Dally, 2012). A complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority was not upheld. The Authority ruled that the advertisement reflected the Wizard's style of rhetoric.

In an example from my experience in the wider Anglican Communion, there was five days of 'no comment' to the media from Church leaders. They talked with each other, but not the media. The result was untidy and confused borders between the Church and society. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, invited primates, the leaders of the provinces that make up the Anglican Communion, to pray and reflect on the future of the Communion.

A series of prayers were circulated worldwide by the Anglican Communion in advance of the meeting in January 2016. There was a reliance on technology to maximise awareness of the conference. The Church existed for generations with a slower form of communication. Letters were once sent from one Christian community to another. However, dialogue and debate are now instant. One part of the Anglican Communion can know immediately what is happening in another part due to instant communication. The technology that was used to circulate the prayers, was then ignored when the meeting took place at Canterbury Cathedral. The communications approach was to avoid a public space for discussion. The following are extracts from the prayers:

From media manipulation, misinformation and the abuse of privilege,
Good Lord deliver us.
From the distortion of facts and the desire to muzzle other voices with whom we disagree,
Good Lord, deliver us.
From the twisting of truths in order to present others' opinions as wrong,
Good Lord, deliver us.
Anglican Communion 2015

The prayers expressed hope for effective dialogue by all the participants but singled out the media in a distinct way which was surprising.

That this Communion may tell her own stories free from slanted and cynical reporting,
Hear us, Good Lord.
Anglican Communion 2015

My first reaction to these prayers, with words such as 'manipulation' and descriptions including 'slanted and cynical reporting,' was to see them expressing a distrust in the news media. Further reflection suggests there is a desire for dialogue and conversation with the hope that all voices are heard whether agreed with or not. However, the meeting deliberately excluded the media. Such a decision sees the media as a mediator of information that can

be used when required and also be kept at a distance. In attempting to keep the Church and the public spheres separate there was what I experienced as borders that led to confusion and miscommunication.

There was essentially a media blackout on information that included a refusal to acknowledge whether a leaked speech was the text given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The communications approach was designed to give the primates space for conversations behind closed doors. What happened in front of the doors, due to the lack of engagement, was a great deal of speculation and misinformation. False information included reports that the Archbishop of Canterbury had taken bishops' phones to prevent communication with the outside world (Archbishop of Canterbury, 2016).

The media were invited to a media conference at the conclusion of the meeting. The Church, through its practices, wanted to make announcements at the times that worked for them and to have control of the information. The lack of communication left a focus on borders and difference rather than engagement.

The Cathedral debate and Primates' meeting are examples of my practice, experience, and context in which there were borders characterised by polarisation and difference. The nature of the borders left me questioning their impact on my understanding of the public square and my practice. I began to question whether there were alternatives to practices that sealed off the Church from everyday life and that sought engagement.

A vignette that tells the communications approach to two funerals demonstrates changes to my practice that occurred during the research. One approach aimed to control the communication space. The second approach, shows me thinking about interaction and engagement with the media rather than borders that led to difference and polarisation.

There was intense news media interest for the funeral of Sir Edmund Hilary in Auckland's Holy Trinity Cathedral. Sir Edmund, and his climbing partner, were the first to climb Mt Everest. Media from across the world, about 100 in total, reported on the story in January 2008. Thousands of people filed past the casket of Sir Edmund Hilary as he lay in state for two days prior to the state funeral. As communications advisor for the Cathedral, I made efforts to be hospitable to the visiting news media. A room was set aside for the reporters to work in and remote cameras were placed at vantage points in the cathedral. While a roped-off area ensured reporters had a vantage point, it also kept them separate, and at a distance from the mourners. Reporters who wandered outside the space were asked to move back

behind the barrier. There was an ownership of the Church space and control of information that reflected an institutional and hierarchical approach of the Church deciding when and how it would interact with the media. As a practitioner I thought this was the best approach for the context at the time.

The funeral for Martin Crowe, in March 2016, had a different approach that shows changes already developing in my practice. This was evident from emails to reporters as well as actions on the day. Later, I shared my thoughts with the Archbishop of New Zealand who headed the Communications Commission, of which I was part, and reviewed my work which follows.

Crowe was a New Zealand cricketer and known as one of the world's best batsman. He died aged 53. He had worked with a number of media people during his years in sport. With the Dean of the Cathedral I assisted the family in preparation for media issues and ensured that the media were part of the day as much as possible with the family's permission. Preparations included this email to media:

> Dear all
> First of all, many of you have worked with Martin and shared many memories and moments. This Friday you are welcome to be in the Cathedral as someone who mourns - and also many of you will be working to tell the story of the funeral. In either role, you are welcome.
> Rhodes, 2016a

In the email, I acknowledged that many reporters had worked with Martin and so this would be a time of grief for them. The cathedral space was as much for them as for others. At the funeral, while there was an area from which reporters could film, there were no barriers to contain the media. Before the cathedral was opened, I invited the reporters to gather round Martin's casket for a time of silence and a prayer with me and the Dean. After that there was the chance for questions and to provide information.

For the purposes of this vignette it is not important to know the faith of the reporters. I observed that all the reporters came forward to stand at the casket and not all of them knew Crowe. The aim was to ensure the space was theirs as much as possible. This was a different communications practice for me, deliberately having shared space, rather than barriers and borders that highlighted difference. The media stood at the altar, a place that is culturally viewed as a sacred space in a Church. This physical act also illustrated a shared

space in terms of the sacred and the secular as an approach to communications. The media were part of a story they were being expected to report on rather than being kept at a distance. There was an opportunity, and a place, for dialogue and conversation.

The two funerals show different approaches to communications and understandings of borders. In the Hilary funeral, the media were kept at a distance from the family and the mourners. The media were not perceived as being part of the service but were there to mediate what occurred in a controlled way. This was a separatist approach through borders with themes of difference and polarisation. Whereas, for Crowe's funeral, the media were treated as being both mourners and professionals. I sought to engage with them rather than have borders that created division. Instead of being kept behind a barrier and separate, the news media, and how they work, were part of the communication practices of the Church and reflected the role of media in everyday life.

3.6 Working in the Media and Church

I began to question the significance of borders in my practice through a new experience of working concurrently for the media and the Church. I was a priest in the Church, and a talkback host on radio. The roles challenged my perception of borders about difference and polarisation.

I enquired about possible options in broadcasting in October 2016 and was employed to host nationwide talkback on Newstalk ZB. On Christmas Day 2016, I presided at the Eucharist in Holy Trinity Cathedral. That night, I worked my first shift as a talkback host. There was a story quoting the Dean of the Cathedral, Jo Kelly-Moore, about services for Christmas Day (Newstalk ZB, 2016). I had organised reporters to interview the Dean for the story as a church communications advisor. My colleague's voice was on the news while I was hosting talkback. I was further away than I ever thought I would be from a church altar, back in a studio, but it also felt comfortable. Two worlds blended together that I and others treated as being separate through the existence of borders. Parishioners would hear me as a talkback host on radio. Hours later I would greet them after leading a service in the Cathedral. An important consideration to explore further is why it felt comfortable after the living within borders, the crossing of borders and the experience of an untidy border. I recorded the experience of being back in the radio studio in my research diary. The experience led me to focus on my practices and to question further my understanding of the nature of the context I was working in as a church communications advisor.

Graham says practice is more than instinct and technical procedures. She says practice has

creative and epistemological status. 'Practice has the capacity to engender new realities as well as develop greater skill; and in turn, practice informed by new insights may transform subsequent experience' (2002, pp.99-100). Graham's description is what occurred to me as I stepped back into a broadcasting role. The new reality of being a talkback host, and its associated practices, brought a development of skills and new insights that were relevant to this research. This had an impact on my practice as a church communications advisor during the third year of research in 2017. I began to question the nature of the borders that I encountered where faith-based discourse was isolated from society. I asked why that occurred.

3.7 Cathedrals – Changing Borders

This section concludes using a reflection on my experience of moving from Aotearoa New Zealand to the United Kingdom and how it contributed to my practice, experience, and understanding of the public square. I moved in November 2017, the fourth year of this research, to be chaplain to the Bishop of Lincoln. The move to Lincoln highlighted the different ways that the public square can function, how the public square changes, and how that change is important to understand.

I expected the two contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand and the United Kingdom would have many similarities and a few differences. My discovery was the opposite. There were a few similarities and a number of differences. One of my first recollections is the mainstream media in Lincoln making requests for interviews on a weekly basis. I had not experienced that before. The Church was a great deal more visible than in Aotearoa New Zealand. On a Sunday morning a number of voices from the Church of England could be heard on the radio which surprised me.

My participation in the life of the Cathedral is a way in which to consider and reflect on the move to Lincoln. The change I experienced in moving from one cathedral to another is an analogy for the changing public square in which I am a practitioner. A great deal of my life is in the shadow of Lincoln Cathedral. I live on the road that encircles Lincoln Cathedral, it dominates the views from my windows, a visible structure and landmark for my physical location. The rhythm of the bells on the quarter hour from 7am to 10:45pm is a reminder of its presence. The Cathedral has dominated the city's landscape for almost a thousand years. My role involves being within, beyond, and on its borders. The Cathedral is a place I enter each day for Morning Prayer and Evensong.

I have always been conscious of the experience of entering a cathedral as a place of work and as a worshipper. A parallel consideration is how does one enter and participate in the public square. When I entered Auckland Cathedral I would often think to myself or comment to others 'it was a fairly good office space'. There was a large expanse of space and light. I was always mindful that from no place or space could I see all the parts of the cathedral. There were 'hidden spaces' that included side chapels and music rooms. The spaces were created at different times over about 200 years.

When I visited Lincoln Cathedral for the first time in 2017, I was on crutches. I stood at the back and so didn't see the quire or other parts of the cathedral such as the side chapels. I would discover those spaces overtime. In Lincoln Cathedral there are still new spaces and views to see each time. There are new shades of light to ponder and carvings in the stone that I notice as I walk by. Above the vaulted nave ceiling there are oak beams that support the roof. The space is not visible to worshippers but is amazing to see. The beams are there to be discovered and like many parts of the cathedral are an analogy for the public square - there is always something to discover and one needs to engage with the detail to see the full picture.

The move to Lincoln highlighted that cathedrals are not one shape or size and are continually changing. Auckland's Holy Trinity Cathedral could seat about 1200 worshippers whereas Lincoln Cathedral can accommodate about 3000 worshippers. Lincoln Cathedral began to emerge in 1066 as a place of power whereas Auckland Cathedral had its beginnings in 1843. As you walk through the cathedral you are mindful of the history and battles that Lincoln Cathedral has been part of since construction began in 1072. It has changed in its structure and during the reformation from being Roman Catholic to Church of England. As I sit in Lincoln Cathedral the light changes during a service. The colour of the stained-glass windows is thrown onto the stone pillars and floors that are hundreds of years old. A project to welcome visitors has been completed on the north side of the cathedral and so there is yet more change that incorporated other buildings into the cathedral complex. Auckland Cathedral has also changed and taken generations to complete. In 1843, the first Bishop of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn, purchased land for a cathedral in Auckland. The cathedral was not completed until 174 years later. It was consecrated in 2018 after the completion of a chapel that was envisaged in the original plans.

As I have reflected on ministry in a Cathedral there has also been clarity that it is a wide space that holds history as well as being a space for the current time. Across that history some borders have remained, others changed, and some have been abolished. In its history

Lincoln Cathedral was used to protect royalty and to welcome pilgrims within its borders. The borders are places of continual activity and change. A congregation is never the same. When leading a service of Holy Communion in Lincoln Cathedral on a Sunday the congregation changes during a service. Tourists will walk past a chapel or a shrine where a service is taking place and often stop. They will listen for a while and sometimes take photos or sit down and join in. I always try to acknowledge them. At the conclusion of a service worshippers and tourists will talk to you and sometimes they will ask for a photo of them with me. I did decline photos but a colleague suggested that I should welcome them as that was an individual's way to remember the cathedral visit.

The writing of John Millbank (2000, p.39) suggests the concept of change - a cathedral is constantly 'decaying and constantly being rebuilt'. Millbank says cathedrals are never completed: 'New spaces expressing new needs, new altars representing a multiplicity of concerns and commitments, new decorative details celebrating new ideas and discoveries, can go on being added'. Millbank talks about diversity and complexity in what is a 'complex space'. This concept of a cathedral from Millbank is one I have experienced particularly since moving to Lincoln. The purpose of this reflection was not to compare the two contexts as an end in itself but to highlight how the move contributed to the research. Before moving I did not see the same change, or consider the parallels as a way to understand the public square. The reflection, and Millbank's insights, leads me to better understand the changing nature of borders in the public square.

3.7.1 Section Summary

This section has described the importance of my experience, practice and context that contributed to knowledge and changes in my practice. An autobiographical approach outlined what I called 'border experiences' that were characterised by difference, polarisation, complexity, and uncertainty. The focus on borders provided a structure for how the public square was organised and its modes of communication. I began to question the nature of borders in my experience, practice, and context in four ways. There was the experience of the cathedral debate and the primates conference, my practices changing during the research, working in the media and the Church at the same time, and the understanding of borders through my move to the United Kingdom. There was the possibility of borders being about interaction and engagement rather than separation and isolation. In Chapter One (see 1.1) I outlined my experience and understanding of borders. This understanding began to change and required further exploration of the contradictory nature of borders. As a researcher, it was evident that I needed to question the institution I was part of and my own experience and assumptions as a practitioner and a researcher. Part of that

is further exploration of my context, drawing on the views of others, to better understand the public square.

Section Two

Section Two considers my primary context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Drawing on perspectives from other practitioners about their experience of the public square, I consider the history of the Church, a decrease in the levels of religious belief and affiliation in society, and an increased reliance in society on digital technology.

3.8 The context of Aotearoa New Zealand – Church

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia has undergone significant reshaping. It is important to consider the changes in relation to my practice and how such change to the organisational structure and culture of the Church could impact on its engagement with wider society.

The Church structure has three cultural strands, known as 'tikanga'. A 'tikanga' can be understood as being an established set of customs and traditions. In the structure of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, there is Tikanga Māori, Tikanga Pakeha, and Tikanga Pasefika. Māori are the indigenous people of New Zealand, Pakeha are the European settlers, and Pasefika are the South Pacific, including Fiji, Tonga, The Cook Islands, Samoa, and American Samoa. Each 'tikanga' orders their own affairs within their own cultural context under the authority of a senior bishop. The three senior bishops are the archbishops and primates of the Church. The different nations and voices indicate a multiplicity of contexts for communications.

The history of the Church is important to consider in relation to its structure. The Church Missionary Society arrived in 1814. Missionaries from England established the New Zealand Mission. Māori and Pakeha lived and worshipped together for the first time. These were steps towards nationhood and a form of governance. An agreement between Māori and Pakeha, called the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed in 1840. It outlined governance and property rights with a promise of relationship and unity between the two cultures. The Church was very much involved in the reaching of the agreement. The Treaty of Waitangi is a foundational document for the Church's constitution to live out the expected bicultural relationship between Māori and Pakeha. The Treaty, and its obligations to Māori, is an ongoing issue for debate within, and beyond, the Church. In 1990, while some Māori grievances regarding land had been settled, the then Bishop of Aotearoa, Te Whakahuihui Vercoe, in a speech at Waitangi in front of the Queen, said the work was not complete. He

spoke out, beyond the church walls, in a speech that Archbishop Brown Turei recalled 25 years later to acknowledge its significance.

> Some of us have come here to celebrate, some to commemorate, some to commiserate, but some to remember what happened on this sacred ground. But since the signing of that Treaty 150 years ago I want to remind our partners that you have marginalised us. You have not honoured the Treaty. We have not honoured each other in the promises we made on this sacred ground.
> Anglicantaonga, 2015

The disquiet was within, and beyond, the Church and required a rearrangement of Church structures, assets, and resources. An additional voice was added in 1992 that formed the three tikanga Church. Tikanga Pasefika was an associated missionary diocese but became an equal partner in the life of the Church. The multiplicity of voices was recognized in a new constitution and also in the name of the Church: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. On any issue there are three voices to be heard. The three archbishops are symbolic of the equal partnership. If all three tikanga do not agree on a particular issue then a proposal can fail.

The constitutional changes in the Church of 1992 are described by retired bishop John Bluck (2017) as 'changing the ground rules' that left the Church as 'stunned mullets'. Bluck says there was a hesitancy to let Māori lead Māori. The monocultural approach was 'dismantled' as a response to pressure both within, and beyond, the Church to honour the Treaty. Bluck says the Church that was envisaged and legislated for is still being achieved 25 years later. Change is ongoing. The new constitution, that sought inclusion, is still waiting to be realised. Bluck's comments indicate there is an ongoing dynamic of change in the Church. Such change impacts on the communication practices of the Church. The existence of three tikanga means any communication approaches or policies need to be negotiated within the three tikanga structure before speaking out in society.

The move to a new constitution prompted steps for a new prayer book. The Church developed its own prayer book after almost 200 years of using worship from the Church of England. The New Zealand Church inherited *The Book of Common Prayer* with the English settlers. There were experimental liturgies in New Zealand that led to a new prayer book published in 1989; *A New Zealand Prayer Book, He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*. The prayer book provided liturgies created in the context in which they were intended for rather than liturgies from the Northern Hemisphere. This was a step forward in terms of

communication. An aim of the prayer book was to close what was described as 'a gap' between the liturgical voice within the church walls and the voices heard in everyday culture (Church of the Province of New Zealand, 1989, p.xi). The prayer book was applauded for its content as a resource for Sunday worship and pastoral ministry, such as funerals. However, the book has largely stayed within church walls. This was not the answer to fill the gap between the Church and everyday culture. I think that piece of work still remains to be done and is reflective of what I identify as the border between the Church and society. The prayer book (updated in 2021) has enabled communication within the church walls and church community but not the public square.

It is significant that the Church in New Zealand, unlike the Church of England, has no formal link with the state. So, while most early settlers were Christian, and the whole society was largely Christian, the state has never been. A basic indicator of that is while there is The Church *of* England there is the Anglican Church *in* Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. Other examples are The Episcopal Church of the United States and the Church in Wales. The Church is heard on occasions in the public square of Aotearoa New Zealand whereas The Church of England has bishops within formal structures such as those who speak in the House of Lords.

3.9 The Context of Aotearoa New Zealand – Society

An awareness of changes in religious affiliation can enable a better understanding of the public square. This research is about the role of faith-based discourse in society rather than levels of belief; but three important factors to consider are a drop in religious affiliation, a rise in religious pluralism, and a reliance on new media technology. These can impact on the perceived relevance and authority of faith-based discourse in society.

The *2018 Faith and Belief in New Zealand* report examined societal attitudes towards religion, spirituality, and Christianity in the nation. The country had become an increasingly secular nation, particularly in the past decade. The report found that 55% of New Zealanders did not identify with a main religion, 20% had spiritual beliefs, while 35% did not identify with religious or spiritual beliefs (McCrindle, 2018). One question asked where religion should be part of conversations. While 66% of respondents thought churches were very appropriate places for such discussions, only 13% saw both the mainstream media and social media as equally appropriate for such discussions. Fifty five percent were open to discussions about religion and spirituality in schools.

The report shows that some places in society are seen as more appropriate than others for

faith-based discussions. Faith is accepted in some places and not others. Theology does not have equal authority and relevance in all contexts. Another conclusion is that the stance by Christian Churches on homosexuality and on cases of sexual abuse was a major block to engagement with Churches.

Lineham (2017, p.21) says Church involvement has not been a high priority in Aotearoa New Zealand. He identifies a decline of people identifying as Christian in national census data since 1971 when the figure was more than 89%. The figure declined to 76% in 1981, to just over 60% in 1996, 52% in 2006, and down to 46% in 2013. In 2018, the figure dropped further to 36%. In the 2018 census just under half the population, 48% identified with no religion – that is higher than the 2018 report. The trend for Aotearoa New Zealand is a move away from religion to what I understand as a post-Christian era.

While the statistics for religious affiliation dropped during the end of the 20th Century, the Anglican Church in New Zealand, as it was known then, retained some influence. Guy (2011, pp.467-468) says the Church led debates with statements that opposed the free market and reduced welfare approach of successive governments in the 1980s and 1990s. The Anglican Bishop of Christchurch, David Coles summed up policies as 'economic surgery on society's weakest'. Guy (2011, p.482) says that in his experience, such a voice is now difficult to locate. The Church has lost any influence beyond that of being an interest group:

> More recently that voice has mattered less. The church is a much weaker influence in society. Should the church declare "game over" and retreat to its own private world, speaking only to its own devotees, much as aromatherapy and yoga classes do.

Andrew Bradstock, a theologian from the United Kingdom, working in Aotearoa New Zealand (2015, p.226) says the voice no longer has the same audience.

> Theology now needs to recognize that it no longer has a privileged position from which to disseminate (or even impose) its views, and will only be heard according to the merits of what it actually has to say – and thus will have to work hard before making any contribution to public discourse.

Bradstock notes that the Church can no longer disseminate or impose views. Its relevance in society is contested.

The second factor in relation to faith-based discourse is a rise in religious pluralism. There is an increasing diversity of faiths and also diversity within Christianity (Davis, 2019, p.10). This has implications for faith-based discourse in the public square with Christianity seen as being about mixed opinions. Guy (2011, p.236) says the diverse opinions can hamstring the Church when speaking in public: 'It is hard for churches to take a stand when there are divided views not only in society but also within the churches themselves'. An example of division was opposition from within some parts of churches to the 1981 Springbok tour of New Zealand. The opposition was a way to oppose and highlight South Africa's apartheid policy. Guy (2011, p.336) says the Church, through the anti-tour movement, may well have been 'sensitised' and so hesitant to speak out on controversial issues because of a fear of losing support at the parish level.

A third change is the modes of communication in the public square. In Aotearoa New Zealand, as in other contexts, there is an inevitability of media as part of everyday life. A report in 2016 described New Zealanders as more 'connected' than ever in an increasingly fragmented media market (Nielsen, 2016, p.3). In 2000, 32% of households had the internet at home and approximately 40% used a mobile phone. By 2015, 80% of households used a mobile phone, and 79% had internet at home. Smartphone usage from 2006 at 32% had doubled by 2015 (p.5).

Smartphones also became the preferred method to access the internet, rising from 38% in 2013 to 56% by 2015 (Nielsen, 2016, p.6). The survey also reported that 3.1 million New Zealanders aged 10 and over owned a mobile device from a total population of 4.6 million (p.4). Mobile devices can be used for social networking, for weather forecasts, communication such as messenger, banking, and for to access news. The number of households that rely on mobile phones and the internet as forms of communication has doubled in 16 years. Correspondingly the number of newspapers being read fell (p.10). The news content being read online rose from 25% of all people aged 10 and over to 60% (p.11). These figures show new technology as part of everyday life, as accepted forms of communication in society. There was access to technology and a dependence on the technology.

A useful source of comparison to the Church is to tell the narrative of how another institution responded to such a reliance on technology. The New Zealand Army is an institution that relies on the control of information and secrecy. Matt Boulton, Public Affairs Manager for the New Zealand Army, says social media had a slow start in the Army (Boulton, 2016). The decision to be part of a world with less control over information was difficult. It also meant

less reliance on traditional media to tell their stories: 'We recognised that the newsrooms no longer led the news – the world did – with an increasing number of people carrying a high definition camera, an editing studio, and a virtual printing press in their pocket'. Boulton (2016) says there was a realisation for the army: 'In real terms, our news no longer belonged to us, which made it even more important that, within the noise, our voice was being heard'. It is important to consider the perspective from the army that 'our news' no longer belonged to them. Rather, it was part of the world through new forms of communication. This narrative tells a willingness to give up some control of one's own story. The army was slow to change and so too was the Church. The culture in which the Church was embedded was changing but the Church was slow to respond.

3.10 The Context of Aotearoa New Zealand – Practitioners

This section considers the views from other practitioners in the public square in Aotearoa New Zealand, from a Church, an academic, and a media perspective. The practitioners enable me to question the nature of the public square beyond the above statistics to explore how faith-based discourse can occur. I am also able to reflect on their experience in relation to my own.

An important consideration is the suitability of the public square for faith-based discourse. Bradstock (2015, p.222) describes Aotearoa New Zealand as having a 'narrow public square'. He experienced the United Kingdom context and in Aotearoa New Zealand, by contrast, saw faith kept at a distance from public discourse. Bradstock (2012, p.2) attributes this to the media, but also to a culture that avoids conflict and disagreement. Religion is kept private: 'We prefer to change, rather than broach or discuss, the subject'. Bradstock says what occurs in public is reflected in the media. Engagement with faith-based discourse is avoided: 'Hence one finds in the media an attitude generally of indifference toward religion, with minimum space afforded to discussing either the merits or the merits of religious belief and practice'.

The indifference to religion raised by Bradstock leaves a challenge of what language might be relevant for the Church to contribute effectively to public discourse. Chris Marshall (2005, p.11) says the cultural move away from religion, and an increase in diversity between and within faiths (see 3.9) means there is a 'quandary' as to whether to use secular or faith-based language. The quandary, he says, is how to speak in a way that is faithful to what is believed that can also be relevant and understood in mainstream language. The choice reflects the secular nature of New Zealand. There is a dichotomy between state and Church illustrated by a secular political constitution. Marshall (2005, p.16) says people often hide

their religious identity. The Christian story is then not distinct. Christians, he says, need to speak the language of the political discourse but Marshall suggests a 'foreign accent is needed' to remain distinct: 'But they must never shrink from justifying and explaining their perspective in light of the faith-story to which they subscribe, a story which furnishes their first language, their heart language' (p.17).

Other academics writing on the public square in Aotearoa New Zealand also refer to a narrow public square and question its suitability for faith-based discourse. Wayne Hope (2015, p.2) recalls the emergence of a 'thriving public sphere' in the 1960s and 1970s. The New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation Act 1961 removed ministerial control of broadcasting. Governments were challenged by independent journalists not under state direction. There were guaranteed freedoms of association, expression and publication with independence from state, religion, and private interests. However, Hope (2015, p3) says the mediated public square was impoverished by deregulation. Transnational media communication conglomerates such as Sky 'colonised' the mediated public sphere with an aim to maintain ratings rather than a focus on public policy, economics and politics.

The argument of an impoverished public square is also explored by Sarah Barker. She says news and current affairs are more focused on entertainment than providing information. Baker examined news and current affairs programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand, Britain and the United States from 1984 to 2004. She says the focus changed because of three key drivers. These are legislation, globalization, and technological advances. Baker (2006, p.17) says the format of current affairs leaves the audience no better informed: 'Current affairs programmes in these countries are in crisis but arguably this is even more so in New Zealand'. Both Hope (2015, p.2) and Baker (2006, p.1) identify a changing media landscape in New Zealand and conclude the public is less informed despite technology. These insights highlight the concern that discussions about faith are being contained to the 'private square'.

Richard Randerson is a retired bishop in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. Like Bradstock, Baker, and Hope, he is concerned that the public square is not a place of informed discussion. Randerson, from his own experience, suggests the Church is silent in the public square, particularly on controversial matters, rather than risking its own institutional security. He was in ministry in New Zealand, Australia, England, and New York as a priest and bishop. Randerson felt pressure from the Church in Auckland not to engage in the public square as this would highlight difference in the Church on topics such as same-sex blessings and marriage.

It is in order for a bishop to have a view on controversial matters, although in the present climate there is pressure on bishops not to express a view in case it alienates one section of the Church or another.

Randerson 2015, p.172

Just before retiring as Dean of Auckland, Randerson wrote a letter to the editor of the *New Zealand Herald.* The letter supported a call from an Auckland academic for non-believers to receive more respect and less bad press. Randerson (2015, p.197) suggested that people should be defined by what they believe, with a word such as 'humanist', rather than a focus on what they do not believe.

I wrote that in my experience the 'god' atheists did not believe in was not one many Christians believed in either… I agreed with Dawkins that the existence of God cannot be proved by science, and said that if my faith in God was dependent on scientific proof I would have to declare myself an agnostic.

Randerson (2015, p.231) was heavily criticised within the Church and diocese but he did not see silence in the public square as an option: 'It is a defective theology that places the unity of the Church ahead of unity with the suffering of humankind'.

3.10.1 Section Summary

This section has described what I suggest is ongoing change within the structures of the Church and in society. The Church adapted to a new constitution and in society there was a decrease in religious affiliation and increased reliance on new technology for communication. Such change impacts on communication practices and the perceived authority and relevance of faith-based discourse in society. The descriptions of a 'narrow' and 'impoverished' public square suggest there are fewer voices to inform faith-based discourse in society. I suggest the changes can encourage or build borders that bring challenges to the Church communicating in society. Marshall (2005, p.13) does not say there are borders but does suggest there are challenges for both the Church and society with no welcome mat at the door for faith: 'Even if its rights of access to the public forum are protected by democratic principle, the church's voice today is more often tolerated than welcomed, and it is forced to operate under terms dictated by secular rationalism'.

Conclusion

The chapter considered my primary context from my perspective and from the perspectives of other academics and practitioners. My 'border experiences', which were focused on difference and polarisation, challenged my spiritual whakapapa. I wanted to explore other interpretations and experiences of the public square for a more critical understanding of my context.

The first section used an autobiographical approach to explore my practice, experience and context. I identified border experiences and began to question the focus on borders and its significance for my practice as a church communications advisor. The questioning led to me adapting my practices as illustrated by the account of the two funerals. I also began to question and reflect on my two contexts to better understand the public square.

The second section builds on the argument from Section One. I considered the wider context in which I made the observations of difference and polarisation through 'border experiences'. While the language of borders was not used by the practitioners from academia or the Church their insights provided further information about challenges to communication in the public square that can lead to the perception of borders. An argument was presented for a changing and more fluid public square. Secularism and a reliance on technology were two examples of the change. The academic practitioners questioned the suitability and relevance of the public square to be a place of informed discussion that could accommodate faith-based discussions.

The chapter has suggested a changing and more fluid public square that requires further understanding of the nature of borders and the role of the public square in faith-based discourse. The question to explore further in Chapter Four is how faith-based discourse is part of a wider understanding of the public square and the impact and nature of any borders in such discourse. I explore this through examining the theoretical perspectives on public discourse from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams.

Chapter Four
The Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

This chapter considers writing on public discourse and how faith-based discourse is part of the public square from German philosopher and sociologist Jurgen Habermas (b.1929), academic and Roman Catholic priest David Tracy (b.1939), and theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams (b.1950). They are used as critical friends to consider the trend I identified of borders in the public square. Chapter Three considered my experience of borders and what I know about borders. The next steps are to consider the significance for my practice, and what I may not know or wrongly assume about the public square. The exploration of the theoretical perspectives contributes to knowledge to answer the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the role of a church communications advisor.

While I am not seeking to compare and contrast the perspectives of the writers, I will address any significant connections between them in relation to faith-based discourse in the public square. I examine each theorist's rationale and methodology for faith-based discourse in the public square. Through the stated literature I will also build an argument for the concept of a changing and more fluid public square. A working understanding of the public square will be established from the work of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams.

I begin with the writing of Habermas for two reasons. First, Habermas, with his concept of the public sphere, and his Theory of Communicative Action, argues for an ethic of public communication through shared rational discourse to inform public policy. He identifies the importance of communication as a concept in society. There is an identified 'space' where discourse occurs. This space, that Habermas calls the public sphere (*Öffentlichkeit*), in which I understand my practice as a communications advisor to occur, is the focus of this thesis. Second, Habermas' initial writing precedes and is referenced by both Tracy and Williams. In section 4.1 I address Habermas' use of the term public sphere while in this study I use the term public square.

An underlying assumption in this thesis is that faith-based discussions have a role in a pluralist society as part of the mission of the Church. Habermas, Tracy, and Williams, each argue from a different perspective that faith can be part of public rather than private discussions. Habermas (2006a, pp.1-25) moves from a secularist approach to a later acceptance of a role for public faith-based discussions. For Tracy (1984, p.235) and Williams (2012a, p.35) there is a belief in God that is public rather than private. The event of

Jesus Christ is key to understanding what is believed about God by Christians. Tracy insists on the 'publicness of theology'. The 'publicness' is achieved through the structure of three publics, a process of specific mutually critical correlations, the religious classic, and the analogical imagination. Williams (2012a, p.27) says faith-based discourse avoids the ideology of a neutral public square which can lead to the 'degeneration' of society. The chapter concludes by interrogating the concept of borders from the theorists' perspectives (see 4.4).

4.1 Jurgen Habermas

My consideration of Habermas consists of three sections. The first section considers his concepts of the public sphere and communicative action. It is useful to outline communicative action here so I am able to refer to it as part of Habermas' conceptualisation of the public sphere. Habermas' (1992, p.442) focus on language and communication as part of a discourse theory of democracy led him to conclude there was a rationality in what he called communicative action: 'The theory of communicative action intends to bring into the open the rational potential intrinsic in everyday communicative practices'. Habermas (p.452) says communicative action can explore topics relevant to society through social engagement. An example of such rationality could be a debate to influence public opinion on funding the health system. Language then shapes the public sphere. The second section considers Habermas' use of metaphor to tell of his conceptualisation of the public sphere. I argue the use of metaphor highlights the importance of communicative action and language. The third section explores his rationale for faith-based discourse which is key in the development of my argument. Habermas (2006a, pp.6-10) changed his thinking and suggested that religion can make a positive contribution to society. The three sections suggest that Habermas accepts the concept of a changing and more fluid public sphere.

Translation is an important consideration. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was written in German in 1962. An English translation was completed in 1989. The term 'public sphere' is a translation of the German noun *Öffentlichkeit* that can be translated as 'the public', 'publicity', and the 'public sphere'. The latter is Habermas' (1989, p.xv) preferred option. Habermas (p.1) describes in the preface to the work that words including 'public', 'private', and 'public sphere' have multiple meanings rather than precise definitions because of the different ways in which they have been used across history in disciplines such as sociology. For Habermas (p.5) the 'public sphere' is a specific domain in which public opinion is created and held and is distinct to that which is private. It is important to note *Öffentlichkeit* as a German noun does not exist as a plural. For Habermas there is only one sphere rather than multiple spheres.

This chapter explores Habermas' term 'public sphere'. The context of my practice is about public spaces where communication occurs. Habermas' public sphere is about a public space for communication. The way in which I am using Habermas conceptualisation is focused on the nature of communication rather than a 'sphere' or 'square'. Therefore, I use Habermas' writing on the public sphere to better understand what is also a communicative space called the public square.

4.1.1 Locating Habermas

The context from which Habermas' writing emerged is important. His prolific writing and critique, from a wide range of disciplines, means he can be seen as a pioneer in his work on the concepts of the public sphere and communication theory. The concepts interested him across his life. Habermas (2015, pp.12-13) says this 'space of reasoned communicative exchanges' is an 'obsession' that dominated his work. In the past ten years Habermas explored the role of religion and multiculturalism. He also considered the configuration of the European Union and the reality of globalisation rather than his focus on a nation state.

As a critical theorist Habermas is a prominent member of the 'Frankfurt School' of philosophy. He is influenced by perspectives from writers such as Karl Marx (1818-1883), Max Weber (1864-1920), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), and Theodor Adorno (1903-1969). Habermas builds on their work and uses them as dialogue partners. The school advanced social theory, that became known as Critical Theory. The theory argued for emancipation from a system of welfare state capitalism that brought self- imposed alienation. The system and its power structures were believed to be oppressive. Habermas envisaged the public sphere, through a focus on communication, as bringing about a better world through deliberative democracy. Habermas challenged some of his contemporaries with a move away from orthodox Marxism and the idea of a classless society.

Habermas' concern for deliberative democracy is explored through *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* (1962). The concept of the public sphere emerged from a historical situation that Habermas (1989, p.58) calls the 'bourgeois public sphere'. It appeared in the 18th Century, initially across Britain, then France and Germany. Habermas critiqued its transformation as he sought a renewal in ways to promote deliberative democracy. In what Douglas Kellner (2014, p.19) calls a 'linguistic turn' Habermas moved from a focus on the structure of the public sphere to its language. The change is central to his works *Theory of Communicative Action* and *Between Facts and Norms.* In these works,

Habermas (1992, p.452) outlined his Theory of Communicative Action through which communication as a concept of rationality could contribute to deliberative democracy.

4.1.2 The Public Sphere

Habermas' (1964, p.49) early writing described the public sphere as, 'a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed'. The sphere is open to all citizens. It is formed from rational and reasoned conversations between private individuals with freedoms of assembly, association and expression. Further writing from Habermas (1996, pp.360-361) in *Between Facts and Norms* describes the public sphere as a 'social phenomenon', a 'shared space', and a 'linguistically constituted space' created by communicative action. This illustrates that Habermas developed his thinking from the concept of the public sphere to a concept of communicative action. Thus, acknowledging the importance of the role of language.

The public sphere for Habermas (1996, p.360) has no organisational structure or norms: 'The public sphere cannot be conceived as an institution and certainly not as an organisation'. In a 'linguistically created space' the space is formed by discourse and not a pre-existing list of members. The function of creating public opinion for Habermas (1989, p.27) relies on a separation of state and society as 'private people come together as a public' and claim the public sphere from the public authorities to debate how society is governed. The bourgeois public sphere, that largely consisted of books, journals, newspapers and coffee houses, salons and reading rooms in libraries, began to degenerate in the 20th Century (p.160). While never fully achieved, it was a standard from which Habermas could critique modern society. Habermas mapped out the sphere and then critiqued its transformation.

The concept of a changing public sphere is what I would call a driving factor in Habermas' writing. The title, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, indicates change – there is transformation. Part of Habermas' response to the change is to revisit his work and respond to critics. An ongoing question from Habermas (1989, pp.177-178), as he described the changing public sphere, was whether public debate was stifled by institutions that emerged from the private or public sphere. Such institutions sought to bypass public debate and work directly with the state. An example is the emergence of the mass media. Habermas (1992, 437-438) described it as being a change from 'culture debating to culture-consuming public'. He later decided that his assessment was too simplistic and pessimistic. In *Between Facts and Norms,* he describes further changes in the role of the media. Habermas (1996, p.361) says the public sphere is wider in its composition. It changes from a

face-to-face physical presence to one that is virtual with 'scattered readers, viewers and listeners' through the media. This can lead, he says, to less effective decision-making processes. Habermas (2009, p.164) made further adaptions to his description of the public sphere in an essay *Political Communication in Media Society*. The adaptions indicate change. He expanded the public sphere to include Church groups, the media, and lobbyists. The media, who were not part of the first public sphere, are described by Habermas as the 'infrastructure' of the public sphere (p.164). Habermas (p.173) concludes that the media can be part of the creation of public opinion as long as they do not seek to manage the public discussions and so subvert the role of public discourse.

4.1.3 Communicative Action

Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action* consists of two volumes. It was first published in Germany in 1981. The first volume was translated to English in 1984, the second volume in 1987. Habermas (1984 and 1987) examines how society can communicate in a way that can create, develop, and sustain relationships. The public sphere, which is shaped by language is about relationality and understanding rather than coercion. The theory is based on a two-tiered concept of society. There is the lifeworld which is society, and the system, which is the economy and state administration. The lifeworld is a source of democracy to prevent alienation and domination by the system:

> The goal is no longer to supersede an economic system having a capitalist life of its own and a system of domination having a bureaucratic life of its own but to erect a democratic dam against the colonialising *encroachment* of system imperatives on areas of the lifeworld.
> Habermas, 1992, p.444

The importance of the sphere and its anticipated power is highlighted by the reference to a 'democratic dam' that Habermas (1992, p.452) says can impact in a 'siege-like manner'. Communication in the lifeworld possesses a rationality through the use of language that does not govern or replace bureaucracy but it is a source of power that can influence the system. Claims of validity can be either accepted or challenged. Rationality for Habermas is not linked to individual philosophy but the public sphere:

> If we assume that the human species maintains itself through the socially coordinated activities of its members and that this coordination is established through communication – and in certain spheres of life, through communication aimed at

reaching agreement – then the reproduction of the species also requires satisfying the conditions of a rationality inherent in communicative action.
Habermas, 1984, p.397

Habermas (1992, p.451) sees his theory of communicative action as extending and pushing the boundaries of 'formally instituted processes of communication and decision making'. There is a flow of communication within a public sphere that is 'not geared toward decision making but toward discovery and problem resolution and that in this sense is *nonorganised*' (italics in the original). Habermas (p.451) says that decision-making needs to be '*permeable'* to the surrounding communication rather than being closed off to other contributions and so communication is 'cooperative' in nature. Habermas' descriptions of the nature of communicative action are important in relation to my experience. The descriptions offer a critique and alternative view to the more static, institutionally oriented, and hesitant approach to the use of new technology such as social media (see 3.9).

4.1.4 Critics of the Public Sphere

Challenges to Habermas' concept suggest there are potential borders as part of communication processes. Fraser (1992, pp 109-137), Susen (2011, p.52), and Kellner (2014, p.19) say Habermas' approach restricts dissenting voices and alternative histories as part of public discussions. They are less optimistic that the public sphere has the potential to be a place for egalitarian participation. Fraser (1992, p.112) says Habermas' concept has 'suspect' assumptions and is more about an emergent elite and a mistaken belief that status distinctions could be bracketed:

> There is a remarkable irony here, one that Habermas' account of the rise of the public sphere fails fully to appreciate. A discourse of publicity touting accessibility, rationality, and the suspension of hierarchies is itself deployed as a strategy of distinction.
> Fraser 1992, p.115

Fraser (1992, pp. 116-117) says the starting point is flawed. The claim to be 'the public' has to be disputed as it never was 'the public'. The approach is criticised further by Fraser as she says there is no consideration of the possibility of competing public spheres. Habermas (1996, p.374) insists there is one sphere (see 4.1 - *Öffentlichkeit* is a singular noun) at different levels of complexity from coffee houses, to theatre, rock concerts, and Church meetings. Perceived boundaries are permeable within one sphere. However, Fraser says that fails to recognise inequality and benefits the dominant group in society.

Counter-publics are identified by Fraser (1992, p.126) as able to challenge dominant social groups rather than the acceptance of one public sphere. Fraser (p.129) says issues, such as domestic violence, will remain off limits from public discussion unless a minority is heard through discourse: 'What will count as a matter of common concern will be decided precisely through discursive contestation'.

Susen (2011 pp.51-56) agrees with Fraser and says the public sphere has the same power relations that exist in society as a whole. It is dangerous to have an idealised picture based on a universalistic conception of public interest. Kellner (2014) says Habermas' public sphere is too prescriptive. He suggests Habermas, in his later writing, such as *Between Facts and Norms,* takes part in a 'romanticism of the lifeworld' as a place of consensus through communicative action. Kellner (2014) says Habermas does not consider how new technology means there are more methods and voices who can participate in democracy. Goode (2005, p.89) says Habermas has an 'implicit logocentrism lurking' in his theoretical framework through a hierarchy of speech and the printed word. These critiques of Habermas and the argument of counter publics, that I agree with, are important in my argument and understanding about multiple publics that I will draw on in Chapter Six (see 6.1).

4.1.5 The Language of the Public Sphere
Habermas' use of metaphor when writing on the concept of the public sphere illustrates the complex and fluid nature of the public sphere. The use of metaphor avoids language that is structural in nature or specific about time and place, and suggests a more fluid and changing public sphere.

When writing on communicative action in *Between Facts and Norms,* Habermas (1996, p.307) refers to 'currents of public communication' that are 'channelled' and 'flow'. These form 'a wild complex that resists organisation as a whole':

> The public sphere can be best described as a network for communicating information and points of view (i.e., opinions expressing affirmative or negative attitudes); the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified *public* opinions [italics in the original].

The use of metaphor by Habermas is important to consider for three reasons. First, the language highlights the interactive nature of communicative action across the lifeworld to

influence the system. There are the 'sluices' that communication passes through to 'penetrate' the political system (Habermas, 1996, p.327), the 'laundering of flows of political communication', and 'wild flows of messages' (Habermas 2006b, p.415). Deliberation operates 'as a cleansing mechanism that filters out the "muddy" elements from a discursively structured legitimation process' (p.416). Such a 'filtering function' operates in 'murky streams' (Habermas, 2009, p.160). Habermas (pp143-156) refers to the public sphere as a 'sounding board for problems' and 'a warning system with sensors'.

Second, the language emphasises that the communication process is not set in concrete and prescriptive. Rather, it is permeable and 'non-organised' to use Habermas' (1992, p.451) description. This, I suggest, widens the possibilities for communication characterised by disorder rather than order, communication that is less about institutions and more about the importance of communicative action and language. Habermas (2006b, p.417) says there is a 'confused din of voices' in the 'unruly life' of the public sphere particularly in the mass media. Habermas' language removes the idea of a structured definitive process for communication in certain places, such as the Church having a set location in which its services take place. Communication is determined by action, and not institution or location.

Third, the use of metaphor both highlights and accommodates the concept of a changing and more fluid public sphere that is understood as being less about structure and more about communicative action. Ilana Silber suggests that an increasing use of spatial metaphors in contemporary sociology reflects a desire to challenge what are seen as outdated theories.

> Situated somewhere between models imported from the scientific disciplines and everyday life and language, spatial metaphors appear to displace constructs and metaphors emblematic of positivist or systemic theoretical trends now considered obsolete, while also reflecting the prevalent distrust of any kind of encompassing, totalistic image or paradigm.
> Silber 1995, pp.330-331

Habermas relies on a spatial theory with the idea of the 'public sphere' and the use of metaphor to highlight processes of communication. Silber's (1995, p.331) argument provides further insights and suggests an effort by Habermas to use new language and alternative perceptions to stress that the public sphere is undergoing change in how discourse occurs. However, I observe that while the use of language can be described as using metaphors that suggest less structure, words such as 'filtering' can suggest ownership and dominance

rather than unrestricted dialogue. Both conclusions, either about less structure in communications, or ownership and dominance, support Habermas' conclusion of a public sphere that is complex and changing rather than understood as being prescriptive in its function and processes.

4.1.6 Habermas on Religion

Religion was initially a 'private affair' for Habermas (1964, p.51) rather than a matter for public discussions. This reflected the influence of Marx and Weber and some of the diverse views of the Frankfurt School. Calhoun (1992, p.35) says Habermas had a 'blind spot' for religion in his early writing about the public sphere. Some 40 years later Habermas (2009, p.65) described his understanding of the emergence of a post-secular society: 'In these societies religion retains a certain public influence and relevance, while the secularistic certainty that religion will disappear everywhere in the world as modernization accelerates is losing ground'. This change of heart by Habermas, for religion to be part of discourse in the public sphere, is reflected in the sub-title to *An Awareness of What is Missing - Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age.*

Habermas' (2002, p.70) engagement about religion with John Rawls indicates Habermas is seeking a public sphere that reflects a changing society. Therefore, he accepts the relevance of faith-based discourse as part of public deliberations. The concept of a changing public sphere is illustrated clearly by Habermas (2009, p.59) when he says a society must have been 'secular' before being 'post secular'. He refers to countries including New Zealand and Canada and describes them as still 'secular' in nature. Religious habits and convictions have not changed enough for them to be regarded as post secular. While Habermas excludes New Zealand from the 'post secular category' his change in approach to faith-based public discourse is important for a contemporary understanding of the public square. Habermas (2009, p.59) raises the question of how much religion has actually 'waned'. That leads him to consider the topic of religion across all societies whether 'secular' or 'post secular'. He says the accepted link between modernization and secularization can be challenged and the resurgence and complexity of religion, rather than decline, is at a worldwide level. While it occurred after Habermas' writing, the mosque shootings in Christchurch New Zealand (2019) are an example of the complexity and presence of religion in the public square.

Habermas (2009, p.63) says a post-secular society has a higher awareness of religion that is caused by three factors. First, because of media reports that give a perception of conflicts emerging from religious difference. Second, the influence of religion on a global and national

basis. Religious organisations are seen by Habermas (p.64) as able to influence societies split on values and so in need of political regulation. Third, because of the presence of immigrant workers and refugees in a society. Mendieta and Vanantwerpen (2011, p.4) say, because of global events on a contemporary scale, Habermas was pushed to rethink his approach to the existence of faith-based discourse in public - his existing theory was no longer applicable.

Habermas' engagement with the work of philosopher Rawls, contributed to the book *Between Naturalism and Religion.* Habermas (2006a, pp.4-6) says Rawls correctly identifies that religion still exists. However, he disagrees with Rawls' position whereby the democratic process is cleansed of religion in a society of religious and non-religious citizens. For Habermas, Rawls is too restrictive with the expectation that public reason is detached from doctrine for deliberative processes to be regarded as legitimate (2006a, p.3). Habermas (p.6) says the approach from Rawls is an 'overly narrow interpretation of the separation of state and church'. The response from Habermas to Rawls' stance is that people who have freedom of religious expression from the state cannot be expected to walk away from what they believe as part of communicative action. Habermas (p.7) says the state would require 'self-censorship' and so 'duties that are incompatible with pursuing a devout life'

Habermas (2009, p.168) identifies a role for Churches and religion to nurture solidarity and consensus.

> Their public influence is based instead on the 'social' or 'cultural' capital they have accumulated in the form of social connections, media visibility, renown, reputation, or 'moral status' (as in the case of churches, for example). Their power is not like economic power or media power.

The acceptance of religion is because Habermas (2006a, p.10) sees a solution through a diversity of voices that is not based on belief but rather a means to an end: 'For functional reasons, we should never over-hastily reduce the polyphonic complexity of public voices'. Habermas, (2010, p.19) says tradition and the history of faith should not be ignored. There is a necessity for secular subjects to have 'an awareness of what is missing, of what cries out to heaven'. Religious voices are to be heard rather than isolated.
However, faith-based discourse is restricted. Habermas (2006a, p.10) says 'filtering' occurs so that from the 'Babel of voices in the informal flows of public communication' only secular contributions can pass through. Faith-based discourse is part of informal processes but in the legislative arena the language must be understandable to citizens of both faith and no

faith. This means conviction-based language is restricted from formal decision-making arenas. There is more a toleration of faith-based discussions than true integration.

Habermas (2006c, pp.19-52) outlined his change of thinking in a dialogue with the then Cardinal Ratzinger in 2004. While the Cardinal, who was later to be Pope, saw faith-based discussions occurring because of a belief in God that was lived out in society, for Habermas there was no need to understand religion or believe. Rather, religion was present in the public sphere for functional reasons that avoided conflict through the possibility of religion being marginalised in society.

4.1.7 Habermas – Tracy and Williams

Before considering connections to other writers I will summarise Habermas' approach and the points for further exploration to answer the research question. For Habermas, communication through language is an act of rationality and reason. The public sphere is shaped and created by communicative action rather than by institutions. Habermas highlights the importance of communication that pushes boundaries for deliberative democracy. The style of communication is relational and cooperative in nature despite differences in views. The use of metaphor highlights the importance of communication that does not have prescribed processes and can be characterised by disorder rather than order that again can push boundaries. The inclusion of religion by Habermas shows a 'pushing of boundaries' that is important to explore further in relation to my own context and experience as a church communications advisor.

Habermas does not fix his understanding of the public sphere to one time period with a stop and start date that is fixed and final in nature. Rather, he comes back and revises his approach. This shows acceptance by him of the concept of a changing public sphere. There is not one key moment of change or a concept that comes from nothing but rather development and adaption as part of understanding public discourse. The fluidity and cooperative nature of the public sphere outlined by Habermas does not, however, guarantee equal participation. Any concept of public discourse can be challenged as to whether its existence reflects what it is claimed and what it is understood to be.

The themes in Habermas' writing cross over with material that is considered in the sections on the work of Tracy and Williams. Despite commonalities it is important to flag a major point of difference between the writers at this point. Habermas seeks consensus in society through communication. He has a functional and process approach in decision-making about faith-based discourse. Decisions about faith-based discussions are based on public

order and changes in society. Whereas, for Tracy and Williams, faith-based discourse occurs because of a belief in God that is lived out in society.

Tracy (1981, p.x) describes himself as a Christian theologian. Central to Tracy's belief is Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ - a revelation of God that theologians can use to interpret the contemporary situation. Habermas (2002, pp.71-72), sees Tracy's model (see 4.2) of three publics and of a correlational method as 'pushing' theology even further than he does into other disciplines, such as science and philosophy, to discover common ground. Habermas says there is a danger when determining common ground from such different perspectives that the distinctiveness of theological discourse can be lost. Habermas wants engagement but not at the loss of what makes faith-based discourse distinct from other disciplines.

For Williams, the living out of belief in God cannot be contained. That is his starting point on the first page of *Faith in the Public Square.* Williams (2012, p.1) says faith is not a private matter:

> If it is true that the world depends entirely on the free gift of God, and that the direct act and presence of God has uniquely appeared in history in the shape of a human life two millennia ago, this has implications for how we think about that world and about human life.

The approach by Habermas has Williams (2012a, pp.26-27) ready to argue that one can be left with a neutral public square if there is no commitment to 'proper exchange and mutuality'. Williams says religious convictions need a public hearing and he makes a distinction between 'procedural secularism' and 'programmatic secularism'. Programmatic secularism, in which beliefs and commitments are invisible or carefully controlled to avoid them 'taking over', leads, says Williams (p.27) to 'political bankruptcy' and an empty public square. For Williams (p.27) the impact of programmatic secularism is that 'reason's territory has shrunk' because there is more concern with public order and solidarity, that is reflective of Habermas, than negotiating and exploring difference in a self-critical society. Williams (p.26) says programmatic secularism risks a denial of the 'seriousness of difference' that exists because different beliefs are seen as individual preferences that may unsettle wider society and so are relegated to the private sphere. This means possible new understandings and matters of injustice are not addressed: 'Not to act in the public sphere in consequence of such new possibilities is to make an active choice for stagnation' (p.26). For Williams (p.26) the ongoing question that he raises in *Faith in the Public Square* is: 'How do we avoid

a prescriptive approach, an imposition of one version of what human integrity or flourishing means?' My interpretation of Habermas is that he sees permeable boundaries to the communication process that can be challenged, Williams challenges these more strongly and sees them as much more fluid which reflects the earlier concept from Fraser of counter-publics. Williams (p.27) says procedural secularism may be noisier but it allows space for public reason as otherwise 'there is nothing fundamental to argue about in public' with the risk of the Habermasian approach that functionalism silences difference. The views from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams illustrate the complexity and multiple ways to understand public discourse.

In the same way as Habermas used a concept of the past, being the creation of the bourgeois public sphere, to gain a better understanding of his context I have done the same. I have used his historical concept of the public sphere as a starting point to explore my practice.

4.2 David Tracy

Tracy's writing is explored to contribute to a working understanding of the public square. This is done in three sections. First, I examine his rationale for faith-based discussions in society. Second, there is consideration of his methodology of three distinct but related publics being society, the academy, and the Church. Tracy explores how theology can speak to and from the three publics that may hold similar or different perspectives on issues being discussed in society. Faith-based discourse can be part of the public square through Tracy's s concept of the 'classic' and the 'analogical imagination'. Third, I consider Tracy's approach in relation to the writing of Habermas and outline Tracy's acceptance of the concept of a changing public square.

I chose Tracy because of his insistence on the publicness of theology. For Tracy (1981, p.80), a theologian in a private theological conversation is 'theologically impossible' because of the need for correlation with the world. Tracy says any statement of theology demands publicness because of the claim to universality that is being made. The way in which I understand Tracy is that as journalists call public figures to account he says the Church needs to be called to account and so to defend its claims in public. Tracy insists on the publicness of theology to ensure that what he calls 'conversation' can occur (p.363). Chapter Three focused on my experience. Tracy (1981 p.49) says it is vital to consider our common human experience. His view is based on an understanding that the world is a theological reality and a locus for Christian understanding. My spiritual whakapapa and

worldview reflects the same understanding. I use Tracy to build on the first part of this chapter.

4.2.1 Locating Tracy

Tracy is an American Roman Catholic priest. He has loyalties to both the Church and to academia as a priest and professor. While committed to the Church, his writing questions decision-making based on dogmatism rather than public conversation and correlation. An illustration of this is that Tracy was one of 22 faculty members of the American Catholic University placed on trial in 1968 for dissent against the Roman Catholic teaching on artificial birth control (Kennedy, 1986). In this case, and in his writing, Tracy argues that theologians, as part of a public-facing Church, need to use strong and defendable methods of enquiry to interpret Christianity. He says that matters of political or cultural suffering have something to teach theology and theology can also contribute to such topics.

Public discourse is how Tracy (1981, p.363) expects theology to remain public in a complex pluralist culture and he puts it bluntly: 'Conversation is our hope'. Okey (2018, p.1) says Tracy's work follows the same conversational pattern. There is a conversation between the reader and the text. Tracy interacts with theorists including Lonergan, Gadamer, and Habermas on the use of language and the structural nature of conversations. Tracy shares with Habermas a concern about ensuring the emancipatory power of critical reason is retained through communication to oppose the state and alienation. In *The Analogical Imagination,* Tracy (1981, p.43) refers to the Church as a gift that mediates between humans and God. Tracy relies on the traditional definition of a sacrament. He sees the Church making visible through the publicness of theology that which is invisible to the world. Tracy (1981, p.43) describes the Church as the 'sacrament of Christ and eschatological sacrament of the world'. Between the first and second comings of Christ the Church has a public role.

Tracy's first publication, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan* (1970)*,* was about his mentor. It demonstrated Lonergan's influence on Tracy regarding the importance of theological method. Tracy describes how Lonergan focused on a method for theology that could be collaborative across theologians and allow for functional specialisation. A recurring theme across Tracy's work is to seek collaboration. Tracy presented his theological method in *Blessed Rage for Order* (1975). In a new preface (1996), Tracy (1975, p.xiii) says his writing since the original publication, while it developed and challenged some points, has continued the book's basic arguments about the importance of theology amidst growing pluralism. Tracy is concerned about how theology is able to demonstrate its relevance to the world when there is no homogenous world religion. He does not see pluralism as a reason to

remain silent in what Williams describes as programmatic secularism (4.1). Rather, Okey (2018, p.17) suggests that Tracy aims for the theologian to be persuasive in arguments through conversation. This implies a reliance on public conversation rather than dogmatism.

There are three themes to explore in Tracy's focus on conversation.

- The publicness of theology as a rationale for faith-based discussions.
- The existence of a pluralistic context with the three publics of Church, academy, and society.
- The religious classic and the analogical imagination.

4.2.2 The Publicness of Theology

Tracy (1981, pp.3-6) says all theology is public discourse and he outlines methods through which such publicness can be achieved. He says there is a risk of lazy pluralism that pushes religion into the private realm so the needs of society are passed by. Tracy's (p.ix) rationale for faith-based discussions in society is that theology, and so faith-based discussions, must be public for two reasons: the nature and reality of the claim to the universal character of God, and the questions that theology asks about the Church and the world. For Tracy (p.51) the universality that a tradition such as his claims of God is key to understanding its publicness.

> This insight into the universal character of the divine reality that is the always-present object of the Christian's trust and loyalty is what ultimately impels every theology to attempt publicness. For God as understood by the Jewish, Christian and Muslim believer is either universal in actuality or sheer delusion.

Tracy (1984, p.239) insists that theology must occur in public: 'Publicness is not a luxury for theology; it is intrinsic to the whole task'. Tracy (1981, pp.50-51) says there is no such thing as a private theologian in his context of the United States where it is important to remember there is a strong separation between Church and state: 'To speak of a theologian's private universality is, at best to perpetrate an oxymoron. At worst it is seriously to misunderstand the fundamental reality of God.' Tracy (1981, p.13) is concerned that religion, like art, has been privatised and isolated and seen as a product that 'some people seem to need'. By contrast he believes that God as a reality is universal in character, publicness is required, and the Church as a theological reality serves that purpose (1981, p.27).

For Tracy there is a need to recognise the width and complexity of the task of theology rather than 'one size fits all' in a context of sociological and theological pluralism. Tracy (1981, p.4) says the theologian addresses multiple audiences because of the emergence of historical consciousness and pluralism in contemporary theology. The emergence of historical consciousness and pluralism challenges the status of authority and tradition such as the role of scripture and the Church. Tracy (1981, p.29) says every theologian requires a methodology through which to critically reflect on claims and counterclaims that are made in each of the publics.

Tracy (1975, pp.32,.53) suggests a revisionist model of theology to respond to the complexity. He wants a theological method that critiques the wider secular culture but also critiques religious tradition. This means the critique of decisions of the past by the Church with new insights from contemporary thought. There is a process of correlation for which there are two sources of theology: common human experience and language, and Christian texts. The interpretations are critically correlated with each other. The process of critical correlation (p.79) is outlined in *Blessed Rage for Order*. Tracy then develops and renames it in *The Analogical Imagination* (1981, p.64) as a process of mutually critical correlations between specific interpretations. There is the possibility of correlation between the situation and also the tradition and so each party 'mutually' responds to the other. Tracy (1981, pp.62-64) also changed his language from a correlation between 'common human experience' and 'the Christian fact' to the 'contemporary situation' and 'Christian classics' as his methodology developed. The mutually critical correlations identify two sources of theology, the Church and the world. Therefore, the theologian and the Church cannot act unilaterally when answering questions about the nature of society on issues such as abortion and assisted dying. Rather, they engage with the three publics where there may be difference and competing claims.

The theological method of correlation shows the influence of Paul Tillich and Richard Niebuhr. Tracy (1975, p.46) goes one step further than Tillich in arguing that correlation is two-way and so answers come not only from the 'Christian message' but also the situation: 'For if the "situation" is to be taken with full seriousness then its answers to its own questions must also be investigated critically'. The Christian message is then up to being questioned with the possibility of fresh insights as is the contemporary situation.

4.2.3 Three Publics
Publicness is achieved through a methodology of three disciplines in theology that are 'distinct' but also related through being public in nature (Tracy, 1981, pp.55-59).

Fundamental theology relates to the public known as the academy with the role of providing arguments that may address truth claims. Systematic theology is primarily the public known as the Church. There is a focus on doctrine and how that may be reinterpreted for the current context. The third discipline is practical theology. This is related to the public of society that addresses concerns that may be social, political, or cultural.

The three publics are the building blocks of publicness through which theology is part of discussions (Tracy, 1981, pp.6-20). The public of society is one with three realms; technology that enables goods and services to be allocated, a process of government with a rule of law, and culture consisting chiefly of art and religion. The academy is for the scholarly study of theology as an academic discipline. The Church, in sociological terms, exists as a community for 'moral and religious discourse' and also as a voluntary association that mediates between individuals and society. It is important to note the work of the theologian, the task of public theology, requires a public-facing Church rather than one that is private. For Tracy any proper understanding of theology cannot confine it to the Church and the Church cannot ignore its responsibilities to the wider culture. Tracy (1984, p.230) says, 'The church when faithful to its own self-understanding is not a sect'. There are examples of some Churches being described as sects by the media and observers when the group appears to exist isolated from society.

The three publics present a wider role for faith-based discussions than envisaged by Habermas. An example is that religious language is not part of the parliamentary discourse for Habermas. Whereas, Tracy (1984, p.232) puts no borders or boundaries on theology – it is to address questions that are part of everyday life through the three publics and the two sources of theology: 'The demands of the human spirit will insist on asking these seemingly impossible questions. If the theologians will not ask them, then others surely will'. Tracy (p.231) calls these limit questions in which one is 'able to think of the whole, even when we cannot know the whole' and able to engage with the religious classics. An example of this, says Tracy (p.238), is when there is social or political suffering. Then theology can correlate the Christian call for liberation with political, social, and cultural liberation. Tracy (1975, p.13) places himself alongside Habermas saying they both seek the emancipatory power of human rationality through language.

4.2.4 The Religious Classic and the Analogical Imagination
A further way to maintain the publicness of theology is Tracy's (1981, p.31) use of the notion of the classic. It enables what he calls 'truth claims' to be made in public amidst growing pluralism. In *The Analogical Imagination* (1981) Tracy develops the concepts of the classic

and of the religious classic. Tracy, (pp.100-104) says every tradition has what he calls 'classics' that can be texts, events, images, persons, rituals, and symbols that disclose possibilities of meaning and truth across generations and cultures. Art, says Tracy (p.115) is a classic that can disclose truth as can facts in science: 'That the work of art discloses an event not merely of taste, genius or beauty, but truth – only a philistine, even an aesthetic one, will finally deny'. Tracy (p.115) says there is no obligation to enter into such conversations. However, a classic can 'challenge complacency' and 'break conventions' and 'lure us out of a privacy masked as autonomy into a public realm where what is important and essential is no longer denied'.

Religious traditions have classics that Tracy (1981, p.68) says tell of meaning and truth. Examples include classics for the Christian, the Jew, Muslim, and Hindu that the theologian can interpret from the tradition for the current context as part of a correlational method. Tracy (p.408) says the event of Jesus Christ is the classic for Christianity through which the whole of reality is interpreted. A key point is that the religious classics, like art, are also cultural classics and so available to anyone from any religious tradition. The classic can be accepted or rejected whether you have faith or not. I understand the idea of the classic as being part of traditions that we live in that form and shape us.

The concept of the analogical imagination relies on the argument of the classic. Tracy (1981, pp.450-454) developed it to enable truth claims to be made about what is believed. The analogical imagination enables the theologian to engage with a plurality of religious traditions and cultures. There is a holding together of similarity and difference in what Tracy calls 'messy pluralism': 'In our pluralistic, conflictual, near chaotic situation, conversation may assume the form of an analogical imagination'. Tracy acknowledges some people will retreat to a 'comfortable isolation' but says difference should not be a barrier to conversations.

For Tracy, the imagination is about how one takes what one may know or not know and can rethink that reality. The result is a better understanding. Tracy (1981, p.413) envisages imaginations created by what is seen that is similar but also importantly what is seen that is different. The analogical imagination uses the language of analogy that Tracy (1981, p.408) says is a language that highlights similarity and difference through the use of analogues. For the Christian, Christ is the primary analogue that is used to interpret reality. The language of analogy enables any claim of theology to be measured by how it relates to Christ as the primary analogue by considering elements of similarity and difference.

4.2.5 Habermas and Tracy

The publicness of theology through a public-facing Church is an organising principle for Tracy. The three publics, a model of correlation, the classic, and the analogical imagination, rely on language and communicative action. Habermas and Tracy focus on the importance of language and communication through which knowledge can emerge from public discourse. Tracy (1981, pp.73-74) and Habermas both identify the importance of the 'emancipatory power of critical reason' to challenge and transform the status quo through a move away from instrumental rationality. Habermas and Tracy share the same concerns about the importance of public discourse but from different worldviews.

Tracy presents a more detailed rationale and methodology for faith-based discourse in society and from a Christian worldview. Habermas was concerned about functionalism and the avoidance of conflict in the lifeworld. Whereas, Tracy (1981, p.49) insists that the theologian sometimes has a role to challenge society saying injustice in the academy and society cannot be ignored. Tracy goes one step further than Habermas through the role of the Church in the publicness of theology.

Tracy does not explicitly talk about the public square nor the existence of borders that is part of my experience (see 3.2- 3.6). However, his argument for the publicness of theology provides a better understanding of the public square from my perspective as a church communications advisor. Tracy's model was written in the 1970s and 1980s so does not address technology such as social media. However, the arguments about the publicness of theology and a public-facing Church can be applied to new technology. Tracy seeks to ensure that borders are about engagement and able to explore similarity and difference. His approach provides a progression to then consider the focus on the public square from Williams. Habermas identifies the space for communication, Tracy provides methodologies for the publicness of theology, and Williams is focused on how the public square can flourish through faith-based discourse.

4.3 Rowan Williams

The choice of Williams as a theorist was driven by his public roles and his book *Faith in the Public Square* (2012a). He worked in a Church context with communications staff. Such experience is important for the questions I want to explore about my practice as a communications advisor. The first page of the book *Faith in the Public Square* provides insights about speaking in the public square. There is the expectation for an archbishop to be 'some kind of commentator on the public issues of the day' and also 'doomed to fail in the eyes of most people'. The outcome is that 'archbishops grow resilient, and sometimes even

rebellious' (p.1). The introduction highlighted a tension for Williams of whether to speak out or not. His description echoed some of the tensions I experienced as a practitioner in the public square.

While not all Williams' writing refers directly to the public square there are themes that illustrate why he takes the stance of faith-based discourse being part of the public square. The subject matter varies and includes C.S. Lewis' Narnia, the Desert Fathers and Mothers, September 11th, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the use of language. For example, in the writings of the Desert Fathers, Williams focuses on what it means to live in community and to connect the neighbour with God. There is a tension to be explored between faith being lived out and the expectations of the public square which can be constructive in an environment of similarity and difference.

The writing of Williams is explored in three sections to provide further perspectives to those of Habermas and Tracy. First, I locate Williams in relation to the public square through reference to his former role as archbishop and through his writing. The second section examines his rationale for faith-based discourse in the public square. Faith according to Williams (2012a, p.1) can both challenge and contribute to the flourishing of society. Williams' (2020, p.97) rationale to speak out in the public square is the dignity of every human being who is loved by God. There is no single method provided by him to achieve this. Williams (p.99) says the question is how a policy makes it either harder or easier to see a human being as 'God's passion and delight'. Relying on this premise, Williams (2012a, p.1) says there is a requirement to situate Christianity within power structures as there is no reprieve or escape from pointing out how what is believed impacts on public life. Williams (2011) puts it simply:

> There ought to be a lie detector being implanted into the Christian citizen. The Christian citizen is somebody who ought to be critically aware of when it is that people in public are using rhetoric that demeans or diminishes human beings, when they are telling lies about what human beings are really like.

The approach means there are no borders to what Tracy calls the publicness of theology. Williams (2020, p.100) says belief is not contained by boundaries. He is adamant that faith-based discourse in the public square is a 'no-brainer' on topics about how humans are treated, such as penal policy.

The third section considers the methodology Williams uses to communicate the gospel and his writing on the use of language. Williams (2014, p.67) says language can make truth claims but is also unfinished in nature. When language is used it 'can enhance what we perceive' as the meaning of words can change with each use.

4.3.1 Locating Williams

Rowan Williams was the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012. Before focusing on that role it is important to consider his time in the Church of Wales. Williams was born in Swansea, in 1950, into a Welsh-speaking family. He was educated there before studying in England. Williams was appointed Bishop of Monmouth in 1992, and Archbishop of Wales in 2000. He was the first Archbishop of Canterbury since the English Reformation to be appointed to the role from outside the Church of England. The new role involved the crossing of a border from the Church in Wales to the Church of England. Williams was willing to do this. In a media statement Williams (2002c) described the change in role as a 'huge move' but that his primary job remained the same which was to point to God with the 'boundaries' set by the job. Williams, in taking on the role, was willing to work with difference.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is a focus of unity for the worldwide Anglican Communion and is the senior bishop in the Church of England. Williams, like others, worked with difference such as in culture and theology. As a bishop, academic, and theologian, Williams has a long-standing interest in social and political matters. His writing is prolific. I refer to books, academic papers, lectures, sermons, and addresses, selected for their relevance to the development of an understanding of the public square. The large number of references illustrates how the public square is part of his thinking and writing.

Williams has often been at the centre of public debate about the role of religion in a secular society. Topics range from sharia law to climate change and penal reform. Higton (2004, p.5) says Williams 'chases implications of the gospel' through society in great depth. The statement suggests to me a willingness to cross borders. The gospel, and its implications, is the reason to speak out when required. Boundaries are set by the gospel rather than society. Williams (2012a, p.35) rejects the idea of a neutral public square saying faith-based discourse can escape the 'conventional boundaries of public life' and bring more to a conversation than consumerism and self-interest:

> I am arguing that the sphere of public and political negotiation flourishes only in the context of larger commitments and visions, and that if this is forgotten or repressed

by a supposedly neutral ideology of the public sphere, immense danger is done to the moral energy of a liberal society.

Williams' thinking on the role of faith in society is evident through his engagement with theologians and philosophers across the centuries from Augustine of Hippo to Vladimir Lossky, Hegel, Bonhoeffer and Gillian Rose. Higton, as editor of a book by Williams (2007, p.xxii), describes Williams' engagement as being one of 'attentive negotiation' that can end in agreement or disagreement but not judgement as he seeks another point of view: 'Williams goes out from himself, and dwells for a while in foreign territory'. The way that Williams engages with other theologians is a model he seeks to replicate when working with other worldviews and beliefs in the public square.

There is an example of Williams' approach of negotiation in his reading of Augustine's *The City of God*. Williams (2016b, pp.107-129) explores the meaning of citizenship and the options for how citizens can live together in either love or chaos. He says the Church and state are not in competition with each other. Rather, politics alone can lead to an impoverished society and the Church makes a commitment to civic virtue. Bonhoeffer's influence is also evident in Williams thinking on the public life of the Church. Williams (2000, pp.40-41) refers to Bonhoeffer's insistence of knowing the centrality of God to be able to act in the world and that this is earned rather than relying on tradition and history.

Williams' (2002a, p.xv) frame of reference is the death and resurrection of Christ. It provides what he calls a 'seismic shift' in human speech and self-understanding. God acting through resurrection is the basis for belief being lived out in society – for the publicness of religion. In contrast, Habermas sees religion as having a contribution to make to the functioning of society. Tracy, while believing in resurrection, is focused on methodology to ensure public theology occurs.

Faith in the Public Square (2012a) is a primary text to understand how Williams describes the role of faith in society. The book is a collection of writings that illustrate why Higton (2004, p.10) describes Williams' work in the public square as continually 'crossing boundaries'. Williams rejects public atheism and argues for faith-based discussions on topics from economics to climate change. It is notable that while Williams puts forward an argument for faith-based discussions and negotiation to help society flourish, he struggled to hold diversity within the Anglican Communion. *Faith in the Public Square,* published at the end of his time as Archbishop, is silent on how the Anglican Communion, that was fractured on topics such as sexuality and the ordination of women, could contribute to a flourishing

public square when it was itself divided. While I suggest that Williams' own approach of 'attentive negotiation' is a model for faith-based discourse in society, the church is not provided as a model by Williams which is significant. In times of disorder and fragmentation he looked beyond Church structures and focused on the role of the Church.

> I had to remind myself all the time that the only thing that made sense of any of that was what it was for. What the Church existed for. What ministries in the Church existed for. And that was, really, to let the world know something. And if you didn't have friends and conversations which reminded what the world needed to know, then frankly the rest would just be insanity. It was fairly insane as it was.
> Williams, 2020, p.8

This stance from Williams on why the Church exists demonstrates the importance that he places on faith-based discourse in society. The Church in Williams' view does not fulfil its role in a vacuum.

4.3.2 The Public Square

There is a foundation to William's approach to the public square in other works such as his writing on the wisdom of the desert in *Silence and Honey Cakes* (2004). Williams (p.40) stresses the need to connect with the neighbour:

> The neighbour is our life: to bring connectedness with God to the neighbour is bound up with our own connection with God…it is as we connect the other with the source of life that we come to stand in the place of life, the place cleared and occupied for us by Christ.

The interaction with the neighbour, and knowing the neighbour, is what Williams anticipates in the public square - but it comes with a word of caution. Williams (2000, p.35) says caution is needed as to what we know about the public square and what we may think we know about it. He refers to Richard Neuhaus' claim regarding the 'naked public square' in the United States. Neuhaus (1997, p.80) says there is no such thing as a 'religious evacuation of the public square'. He says that while 'religion' may be excluded from the public square, questions of social order are now answered in a way that is not labelled as religion. Williams says the missionary role of the Church is not a reduction in participatory politics and 'latching on' to rampant consumerism because of what may appear to be a 'naked public square':

> Before the churches rush into it, they have to ask whether the space opened up is genuinely a *public* one, or is simply the void defined by a system that can carry on

perfectly well in the short term with this nakedness.
Williams 2000, pp.34-35

The quote highlights the importance of the concept of the public square and understanding its complexities. Williams does not provide a concise definition of the public square. However, *Faith in the Public Square* (2012a) illustrates what Williams understands as the public square and the role of faith-based discourse. The focus is on engagement and connection rather than perceived borders and boundaries. Williams is not willing to contain where faith can speak out and on what topic. Higton (2004, p.9) notes that in Williams writing style there is an ongoing mixing of theology, spirituality and politics and in doing so 'he refuses to acknowledge sharp boundaries between these areas of conversation: 'Another way of putting this is to say that you are seldom *safe* when reading Williams work' (italics in the original). Williams (2012a, pp.313-325) says theology needs to avoid the temptation of normative content and style that can be scientific in approach and rather be open to possibilities and learning from what is observed and then lived out. A consequence of this is that Williams style is not just writing but also protest in the public square. Williams has spoken out on topics and been at protests that have ranged from war to climate change. He led prayers and calls for action in March 2020 as the chair of Christian Aid expressing concern that the impact of climate change on the poorest nations drove instability, injustice, and conflict (Christian Today, 2020).

Williams engagement with the public square, while motivated by the gospel, is evaluated as being political. George Pitcher (2012) was press secretary for Williams and described it as a highly political job: 'Lambeth Palace is treated as another chamber of parliament on the south bank of the Thames'. Williams had a duty to participate in the upper chamber of the legislature and to also preach the gospel. There were borders to challenge. His own rationale for faith-based discourse being part of the public square suggests he would not be sealed off from political decisions. A BBC report titled *A tradition of Church v State* sums up the engagement (BBC, 2011). Williams entered the political arena on topics such as the economy and he opposed the war in Iraq in 2002. In 2004 he wrote to Prime Minister, Tony Blair, criticising the conduct of some troops on behalf of the Church of England bishops. He described the decision to go to war as 'flawed'. On his retirement as Archbishop, Helm and Coman (2012) in *The Guardian* reported he was not averse to giving out criticism on matters from the economy to foreign policy. They recalled Williams being asked on the Today programme if he saw the war in Iraq as immoral – there was a 12 second pause before he responded saying 'immoral was a short word for a very long discussion'.

4.3.3 Williams – Pushing Boundaries

Williams (2012a, p.1) says a belief in the actions and presence of God has implications for how a believer thinks about the world and about human life. For Williams (p.36) the living out of belief in the public square is part of being answerable to God. This provides a theological rationale for faith-based discourse that is public rather than private. In referring to the 'world' and 'human life', Williams (2000, p.xiv) suggests there are few fixed boundaries in living out what is believed:

> Theology seeks also to persuade or commend, to witness to the gospel's capacity for being at home in more than one cultural environment, and to display enough confidence to believe that this gospel can be rediscovered at the end of a long and exotic detour through strange idioms and structures of thought.

This quote indicates faith in the public square is not limited by location or method but rather is determined by the gospel. Faith-based discourse is relevant because of the belief that every human being is seen as made in the image of God. If there are real or perceived boundaries they can be crossed because of what is believed through persuasion, commendation and witness. Williams (2012b, p.2) says the central role of theology is because faith-based discourse has a vision for all human beings: 'It's connecting up the bits making sense, finding words for something that is going on…That's why theology is not just about theory, it is about what our humanity is and is becoming in the life of faith'. In reflecting on *Augustine's City of God,* Williams (2000, p.42) says there is an important role for faith to speak out to maintain the integrity of society: 'The centre may be localizable, but the boundaries are not clear'. This approach suggests the public square is a place to interpret the world through the life and death of Jesus that is not confined by dogmatic and devotional tradition nor by any boundaries set by society or the Church. This reflects Higton's (2004, p.10) comments that Williams' work crosses boundaries due to a confidence in a gospel of love that has already been there. Through the rationale of belief being lived out, Williams presents a concept of the public square that is shaped by the gospel rather than a focus on borders about difference and separation.

Williams (2011) says the Church has a right to be present because of the importance of its own debates and decisions about what it believes: 'The kind of argument the church should be having with itself about human dignity and human hope is the kind of argument any healthy society needs to make room for'. I see this as Williams saying the Church is committed to a role in the public square; there is a God given 'responsibility' rather than

'right'. The presence in the public square presupposes the Church doing what could be called the preparation work in having the conversations itself as well as in wider society.

Williams recognises the rationale has its challenges. In his enthronement sermon as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury in 2003, Williams (2003) described an 'authentic church' as having a 'difficult job' as what is believed is lived out in community. For him, the role of the Church of England, and the wider Anglican Communion, is to have a presence and stand alongside anyone from any group or nation, from any religion or culture, who may be young, old, unborn or disabled. Engagement is not about hiding behind an ecclesiastical boundary.

Williams (2012c) uses the language and events of the New Testament. He says the resurrection is an example of how boundaries are pushed further and challenged by a new frame of reference that can be applied to the lives of individuals and communities. Williams says any holding back in doing theology sees boundaries shrink. Less is said than is called for by the New Testament: 'Real heresy is saying less about God then God deserves' (p.1). Williams (2000, p.xv) says Tracy's methodology of publics highlights the central role of the theologian in being able to draw on her or his faith for the good of society.

There is a distinction in Williams' rationale between faith- based discourse and what I described as a rise in an interest in spirituality and so different borders are being explored that need to be understood (see 3.10 on the context of New Zealand). Williams (2008) says faith-based discourse and religious affiliation are more than a simple 'enhanced sense of the transcendent'. He compares the 'patron mentality' with a 'subscriber' saying there are now more patrons than subscribers (2012a, p.87). A patron remains in control of a relationship - their needs recognised and liberty retained, says Williams, while a subscriber makes a commitment to an organisation or vision.

Williams (2012a, p.87) says there are questions that religion is resourced to answer, but that spirituality is not, through the revealing of the life of Jesus. He says the Church needs a 'market mentality' to argue for its relevance in society alongside other worldviews: 'We have to learn how to make ourselves look credible and attractive, marketable.' Williams acknowledges that religion then uses the techniques of marketing for a non-market position that is not about commodities but rather faith-based discourse.

Being marketable is then not about popularity but about pushing boundaries. Faith-based discourse may challenge the traditional seeking of power by some institutions.

> To put it in severely condensed form, the Church is most credible when least
> preoccupied with its security and most engaged with the human health of its
> environment; and to say 'credible' here is not to say 'popular' since engagement with
> this human health may run sharply against a prevailing consensus.
> Williams, 2012a, p.308

Credibility is about a willingness to talk about difference due to what is believed and so to enter hard rather than easy conversations. Such conversations are not limited by boundaries. This shows the influence of Hegel and Rose on Williams. He seeks mutual dialogue that is not subject to any prejudice against the claims of the religious or the secular. If either is present then there is a retreat from what Rose (1992, p.xii) calls the 'broken middle' with an attempt to avoid difficult conversations. Rose rejects borders being established or attempts to avoid the middle from being seen as broken. Rather, there is the need to engage and recognise a reality of disconnection. Rose (p.285). is concerned by attempts to tidy up the broken middle with what is a 'holy middle' that she says corrupts. Williams (2000, p.xii) places the theologian amongst the conversation: 'I assume that the theologian *is* always beginning in the middle of things'. Being in the 'middle' is then a place from which to contribute and to participate in the public square through language rather than being confined by borders.

The rationale for faith-based discussions is very specific from Williams. Such a rationale has boundaries that are not set by society but by a belief in God that determines how faith-based discourse can contribute to the public square. Williams says he does not follow 'conventional boundaries' set by society.

4.3.4 Williams - The Methodology

In comparison to Habermas and Tracy, Williams presents what I would argue is a less prescriptive approach to public discourse. There are no categories such as three publics. Williams presents what I would argue is a noisier and untidier public arena. Habermas restricts faith-based discourse from being part of the legislative process and Tracy is more reliant on methodologies than Williams. Each chapter of *Faith in the Public Square* is an argument against a neutral public square with faith excluded from debate. Williams (2012a, p.79) describes such a position as another 'pseudo-religion'.

Williams' (2012a, p.26) methodology for communication is characterised by 'exchange and mutuality' rather than being about survival and competition. There are three related categories or patterns of theology, that Williams (2000, p.xiii) calls celebratory,

communicative and critical. Celebratory theology is through 'prayer and praise' that can bring new perspectives. Examples of this include hymnody, preaching, and worship. The second category grows out of celebration and is communication. Williams says this is about apologetics and thinking - defending the faith in public and connecting with others: 'Because the problem is often – as you know – not so much that non-Christians know what we are saying and reject it, but that they don't even know what we are saying' (Williams, 2012c, p.11). The next category that emerges from communication is critical. After the celebration and communication there is critique that consists of self-questioning and could be a time of silence. Williams says the 'not-saying moment' of silence takes you back to celebration:

> Because it is when you realise that all your words are not going to work, nothing you are going to say is going to be adequate or do justice to God, then mysteriously you come back to realising, 'My God, how great thou art'. You are right back at celebration
> Williams, 2012c, p.13

Williams (2012c, pp.11-13) says the theologian needs to be able to critique the language of celebration and communication. Each category is weakened if it is in isolation from the others or seen as the end goal of a process. There is celebration and communication because of what is believed. Communication comes from belief that is being celebrated in a particular way. Williams does not present one way of communication but rather a way to engage with the contemporary context through celebration, communication, and critique that leads to further engagement. There is a gospel celebrated in the context, communicated in the context, and critiqued.

Williams' rationale for faith-based discourse, and his methodology, both present the gospel and belief as part of understanding the organisation and nature of the public square. I suggest Williams' framing of the public square from a faith perspective contributes to an understanding of the organisation of the public square and its modes of communication.

4.3.5 Williams - Language
An important part of Williams' (2014, p.xi) understanding of the public square is his exploration of the use of language. The importance of language in public discourse is also argued for by Habermas and Tracy. I suggest that Williams (p.140) gives permission to experiment with language describing it as a 'tool of discovery'. Williams (p.x) says our language of God can help us to see new things about God:

Instead of moving calmly towards a maximally clear and economical depiction of the environment, our language produces wild and strange symbolisms, formal and ritual ways of talking (not just in religion), a passion for exploring new perspectives through metaphor and so on.

The language used in faith-based discourse can then become a place of discovery for the Church and society. An implication of this is that the public square can also be a place of discovery.

A key reference for Williams exploration of language is his book *The Edge of Words – God and the Habits of Language* (2014). The book reflects years of writing. It is the result of Williams presenting the Gifford Lectures in 2013 after his term as Archbishop of Canterbury. The writing reflects Williams as a linguist, theologian, and a poet. He engages with diverse thinkers, authors and poets including Augustine, Aquinas, Rorty, Hegel, and Rose. He also refers to Buddhist meditation practices and the writing of Shakespeare. Williams (2014, p.xi) says the more we reflect on the use of language, the more the universe is seen as a network of communication through which information comes to us.

Williams rejects a mode of natural theology whereby conclusions are made about the existence of God that are based solely on features of the world. Instead he suggests ordinary language can be used to speak about God which can include metaphor and paradox. Through each chapter Williams (2014, p.xii) demonstrates a strong emphasis on the need to be aware of what is happening when we 'talk about God':

The recognition that we may be telling the truth about our world through unusual habits of speech – metaphors, gestures, fictions, silences – is a recognition of the diversity of ways in which information comes to us and is absorbed and embodied afresh.

Language for Williams is not contained by time and can also include silence and gesture. It is not a one-off process. Williams (2014, p.86) says meaning can change. Rather than a 'last word' there is ongoing linguistic activity that is of an 'unfinished character'. Speaking is always temporal and seeking another perspective. Such use of language enables an ability to speak of something more in another dimension. There is an ability to speak by the use of language that is not determined by what is in front of us. Williams (p.146) suggests we 'approach the environment as in some sense pregnant with intelligence'. Williams (2012a,

p.69) says that language brings a freedom with 'more and more to be imagined and spoken' with a horizon that he refers to as 'intelligible abundance'.

I suggest that Williams (2014, pp.148-149) gives permission to experiment with language. He says that as with everyday language, so too with theology, there are words that can be 'carefully calculated shocks': 'Odd as it sounds our (quasi-) representing of God is least off the mark when we are furthest from anything that looks like a fully coherent schema'. Williams (p.149) says the extremities of language can be explored that 'pushes habitual or conventional speech out of shape' and does not need to imitate the divine. Examples include God as 'rock' and as 'fire' and the use of analogy in parables as Jesus states what God is 'like'.

A final consideration of how language is not final or fixed is Williams treatment of the public square in the book *Writing in the Dust – After September 11* (2002b). On that day, Williams was only a few blocks from the World Trade Centre. He talks about the diverse language of the public square. Williams highlights the difference between the messages that passengers sent to families in their last few minutes of life and the messages of the terrorists:

> The religious words are, in the cold light of day, the words that murderers are saying to themselves to make a martyr's drama out of crime. The non-religious words are testimony to what religious language is supposed to be about – the triumph of pointless, gratuitous love, the affirming of faithfulness even when there is nothing to be done or salvaged.
> Williams, 2002b, p.3

Williams highlights the breadth of faith-based language that can be part of the public square. The language from the passengers on the plane, says Williams, is from someone, who is about to die, making room for another. Williams explores in the book how people respond in a context. A person may choose violence and anger that matches what is being experienced. Other possibilities, including the imagination are not considered:

> That moment of 'making room' is what I as a religious person have to notice. It isn't pious, it isn't language about God; it's simply language that brings into the world something other than self-defensiveness. It's a breathing space in the asthmatic climate of self-concern and competition; a breathing space that religious language doesn't often manage to create by or for itself.
> Williams 2002b, pp.5-6

I have chosen these words to conclude the section on Williams as I think the idea of breathing space is important in any understanding of the public square. There is 'breathing space' that can enable celebration, communication, and critique in a context that is always changing rather than habitual and routine responses.

In the Epilogue, Williams (2002b, pp77-78) says that writing that is done in dust dissolves but it can help someone in the time it is visible. Williams refers to Chapter 8 in the Gospel of John. A woman is accused of adultery. Williams (p.87) says Jesus' response of writing in the dust is significant:

> He hesitates, he does not draw a line, fix an interpretation, tell the woman who she is and what her fate should be. He allows a moment, a longish moment, in which people are given time to see themselves differently precisely because he refuses to make the sense they want. When he lifts his head, there is both judgement and release.

Williams (2002b, p.78) says that Jesus 'holds the moment for a little longer, long enough for some of our demons to walk away'. Building on this insight I suggest that Williams does not put a line as to where the public square stops and starts. There is no boundary and no comprehensive definition. Rather, the public square is a place of discovery for the Church, and also for society, that occurs through acts of communication that are visible and audible for a time.

Williams provides a theological rationale for faith-based discussions and a methodology through which that can occur. He is mindful that there are tensions in the public square about the use of faith-based discourse. However, Williams is clear that his rationale for participation in the public square means that he does not follow the conventional boundaries of society. Rather, the boundaries are determined by what he believes of the reality of God that seeks the flourishing of every human being and of society. Williams, through the methodology of celebration, communication, and critique, presents the public square as a place of discovery, connection, experiment, and possibilities that is formed and changes through the use of language. The public square can be understood as being a breathing space in which multiple perspectives can be discovered. I suggest rather than providing a structure in which faith-based discussions can occur, which was the approach of Habermas and Tracy, Williams sees faith-based discussions being able to shape and contribute to the forming of the public square through the use of language.

4.4 Working Understanding of the Public Square

I consider what all three theorists can contribute to a working understanding of the public square. The writing of the theorists identifies the importance of public discourse in society. There is the potential for rationality and discovery in the language of everyday life that forms what I call in this study the public square. Habermas calls this communicative action. Calhoun (1992, p.1) says that Habermas identifies the public sphere as 'something' that is of 'continuing normative importance'. I would suggest that Tracy and Williams do the same in their writing but they push the boundaries further than Habermas by seeking discovery, negotiation, and imagination. They consider the necessity of faith-based discourse in the public square for the benefit of the Church and of society. Church and society are not isolated from each other. A way to summarise the theorists would be that Williams is unlikely to seek permission to speak out in public. Such an approach would be controlled by Habermas' model and reflective of a structure in Tracy's approach.

The theoretical perspectives provide new knowledge through which to consider the significance to my practice of the tensions that I outlined in Chapter Three (see 3.1-3.6). As a practitioner I considered the issues in front of me in relation to particular stories and was media focused – that was my basis of understanding the public square. The theorists' approach leads to a wider understanding of the public square in how it is formed through language and communicative action – about its organisation and modes of communication. There is consideration of engagement in the public square that includes faith-based discourse rather than borders about separation.

All three theorists place a focus on communicative action that includes faith-based discourse. Tracy and Williams introduce the central role of the theologian and of a public-facing Church. For Tracy (1989, p.235) and for Williams (2018, p.39) Christianity is a truth claim. They both describe faith-based discussions as being woven through society from which action develops and interpretation can occur to bring new perspectives. While they are both ordained clergy, and so part of the institutional Church, it is significant to note that there is no particular significance given to liturgical spaces and churches as a location for faith-based discourse to shape the public square. The public square and public discourse are considered in a wider context. A further step in the research is to examine what those practices might be for me as a communications advisor.

The theoretical perspectives also provide insights about the concept of a more fluid and changing public square. All three theorists work with the reality of a changing public square that is becoming more complex and more diverse. Habermas has the lifeworld and system

and critically engages with its development. Tracy develops the three publics, the religious classic, and the analogical imagination to hold together similarity and difference. Williams also highlights the changing nature of the public square through a focus on the use of language. He suggests that there is more than one way in which human flourishing and the common good can be understood using religious and non-religious language.

While there are similarities between the theoretical perspectives there are also differences. There are different rationales for what is discussed or not discussed in the public square that arise from different justifications and expectations of the public square. The difference in approaches has enabled a wider critical examination of the public square for which there is the following working understanding developed from the three theorists.

The public square is formed through language and communicative action. Its organisation and structure can be relational. Similarity and difference are held together through negotiation. There is the potential for rationality through discourse that can benefit society but it may not reflect all of society. With differing justifications, expectations, and realities of participation the public square is diverse and complex in its nature and is constantly undergoing change.

The working understanding of the public square includes key-points of language and communicative action, relationality, negotiation, diversity, and a changing public square.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the nature of the public square from the theoretical perspectives of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams. My practice, experience, and context focused on borders in regard to the organisation of the public square and its modes of communication. That practice has been challenged by the theoretical perspectives. The theorists' approach, rather than saying here is the public square that the Church should be part of, is to examine the wider context of what emerges through the use of language that forms the public sphere for Habermas and the public square for Tracy and Williams.

Consideration of the wider context has identified five key points of language and communicative action, relationality, negotiation, diversity, and a changing public square. The key points challenge my practice and perspectives of the public square. As a practitioner this is important knowledge to explore further. The use of the theoretical perspectives challenges the experience that I relied on to understand the public square. I was not aware of potential gaps in my knowledge. The challenge to my practice, experience, and context will be

explored further in Chapter Five. The exploration includes the data from two key interviews on the nature of the public square, and a detailed examination of my practice as a communications professional through the coding of a research diary.

Chapter Five
The Data

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research data. The data consists of two interviews and the coding of a research diary. Chapter Three outlined my practice, experience, context, and the tensions I experienced in my role. Chapter Four explored theoretical perspectives to develop a working understanding of the public square. This chapter uses data to explore further my practice. The key themes developed in this chapter, that build on the working understanding of the public square will be interpreted and explored in Chapter Six. This contributes to answering the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a communications advisor.

This chapter consists of two sections. Section One introduces the two interviewees, provides details about the interviews, and explains why each person was chosen. The process of questioning is explained and the main points from the two interviews summarised under key headings. Section Two outlines the process of gathering data for the research diary. The diary recorded my practice as a church communications advisor. The findings are presented from the coding of the diary.

5.1 The Interviews

Ethics approval was granted for the interviews from Anglia Ruskin University as part of the overall approval of the study. The interviews were semi-structured in nature to allow a free-flowing conversation. There was a list of questions and topics to discuss but also the opportunity to hear new perspectives that could contribute to the study. The duration for each interview was 90 minutes. Both interviewees signed a consent form and received a participant information sheet (Appendices E-H contains the information and consent forms for each interview). Each interviewee gave permission for their interview to be recorded for transcribing purposes and to be quoted using their name specifically in this thesis. The interview questions are in Appendices I-J.

The interview with Rowan Williams took place at Magdalene College Cambridge, England, on October 18, 2016. Williams' interview can be described as being an 'elite interview'. He was chosen because of his experience of the public square as the previous Archbishop of Canterbury and his extensive and well-regarded writing on the topic. Harvey (2011, p.433) says there is no 'clear-cut definition' of the term 'elite'. An 'elite' can change roles overtime

and may or may not have authority over others. Moyser (2006, p.2) describes elite interviews as 'first-hand inquiry' about the outlook of an individual who may have an 'insider' perspective about the research topic.

The interview with Janet Wilson was also an 'elite' interview. It took place in Auckland, New Zealand, at her home on 30 October 2017. Wilson was chosen because she has more than 30 years of experience in the media as a producer and presenter in print, radio, and television. Her experience is largely in Aotearoa New Zealand but also Australia and the United Kingdom. Wilson has a wide understanding of the public square at an international level. Since 2007 she has been a media commentator and media strategist in Aotearoa New Zealand. She advises prominent business leaders, government ministers, and Prime Ministers. Both interviewees can be seen as experts and insiders. They have rare experiences as insiders that qualify them to comment and provide interpretation that can lead to further consideration in the thesis.

The questions in the interviews were not identical. The interview with Williams aimed to supplement views from his book *Faith in the Public Square* (2012a) through my questions as a practitioner. The Wilson interview focused more on my then context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The content of the interviews was summarised in a process outlined in the methodology chapter (2.10). Appendices K and L demonstrate the process of highlighting material from the transcripts. Themes emerged for consideration in critical dialogue with my supervisors, under the following headings: the public square, how the public square is changing, the Church in the public square, and the media culture in the public square. In this chapter I differentiate between material from the Williams' interview and his writing by in-text referencing to the interview.

5.2 The Public Square

Williams and Wilson were asked for a definition of the public square. Neither answer relied on an accepted definition or formula. While engagement and communication were part of both answers, there were differences in their understandings of the public square.

The public square for Williams (2016a, interview), is where 'debates are conducted about priorities in society'. Williams understands the public square as diverse – it exists in different manifestations with varied participants and ways to communicate. There are, what he called in the interview, multiple public squares. He says the danger is that people in the Church still

think there is one public square from which to address the nation, such as in ancient Israel. He says mainstream media still assume the voice of the Church is 'someone in a funny hat' but he thinks that is shifting with faith voices participating in multiple public squares. He says a parish priest can chair a school body and also meet with the local council about road safety in Camberwell. A bishop speaking at the Cambridge Union is another manifestation of public squares.

The diversity of public squares is also explained by Williams (2016a, interview) in how he approached the writing of sermons. 'In a sense I suppose when Christmas and Easter came around in the old days I found myself writing a sermon for Canterbury Cathedral which would inevitably be picked up in some form by the media usually with miscommunication somewhere but they would be there with film on the 6 o'clock news'. Williams says a different approach was required for the local paper. An Easter sermon was also different for a working-class congregation in Dover Town.

Williams (2016a, interview) says a letter to *The Times* does not have 'encyclical status'. There is no homogenous public square because of new forms of digital media. He says the diversity of public squares opens up a theological question and a sociological question. The theological question is what theology is being done in public and what are the interventions that occur. The sociological question is the diversity of media through which to speak in public.

The multiple public squares are not reliant on the presence of the mainstream media for communication to occur. Williams (2016a, interview) says there are non-state actors such as Christian Aid that respond to issues such as the refugee crisis: 'There is a public square there very different but quite effective and largely unrecognised and uncelebrated in the mainstream media'. The acceptance of multiple public squares removes the focus on the role of the mainstream media for communication: 'The more one recognises the diversity of the public square the more one sees that it is not a matter of column inches in the paper that measures what we are doing'.

Wilson's definition of the public square is focused on who is present, the role of the media, and ongoing change. The response from Wilson (2017, interview) was: 'The public square has changed: the public square is now all of us in the world'. Wilson sees one public square, rather than multiple squares, that has 'fractured into a million pieces'. Changes include online technology. Wilson says people who only consumed news can now create news on social media. Individuals can respond to media enquiries and contribute photos and videos.

They are now participants in a larger public square. Wilson says information is now transmitted round the world in minutes rather than days because of technology. However, she says the public square is also smaller. There is a focus on certain stories and themes that did not occur 20 years ago, such as celebrity gossip.

The public square in Aotearoa New Zealand is described by Wilson (2017, interview) as small compared to the United Kingdom. It is 'all things to all people' rather than catering for niche markets. Wilson (interview) says there is a 'thinner population base and so media organisations are not able to find a niche'. The result is a public square that Wilson describes as being 'reactive'.

There are three key points from Williams and Wilson. First, the public square involves the exchange of communication. The communication, that can occur in either multiple public squares or one fragmented public square, exists in different ways. There is no homogenous public square. Neither Williams or Wilson list what makes up the public square but both focus on a sense of transaction occurring through rational public conversation.

The second key point is communication through the existence of multiple public squares some of which use new technology. There are new forms of participation whereby consumers of news can now be creators of information. The comment from Williams about 'multiple public squares' and not just columns in the newspaper was a significant moment of realisation for me. There was a wider and more diverse public square that I had not thought of and understood as a practitioner. I asked Wilson (2017, interview) whether she agreed with Williams that the public square is no longer about columns in the newspaper and she agreed: 'Yes totally, it's probably judged by the number of clicks you get if you are going to get yourself really depressed'. Wilson says the focus on online 'clicks' means the focus is on headlines that get attention. Williams does not see the media as a necessary component of the public square whereas this is central to Wilson's description of the public square.

The third key point is diversity because of multiple/fragmented public squares that create a more complex public square. That is recognised by Williams:

> As Archbishop you are always speaking to anybody and everybody but that means you are heard in so any ways. If you speak about Islamic law, as I did, you are heard by many different people and you learn something from that and it does make it untidier.
> 2016a, interview

5.3 How the Public Square is Changing

The answers from Williams and Wilson indicate that the concept of a changing public square is important in order to understand my context as a practitioner. Williams (2016a, interview) says the Church as an organisation did not understand the changing nature of the public square which was 'problematic'. He experienced the denial of change in the public square as Archbishop: 'I think I inherited a pattern where there was a media world out there, which was still 15 years ago homogenous, and a communications officer was to be the gatekeeper, that was what we did'. A 'gatekeeper' and phrases such as a 'media world out there' suggest borders about difference and separation between the Church and the public square. Williams (interview) says he did not keep up with the diversity of a changing public square:

> I never caught up with the online world, I never had a twitter account and was never too sorry about that as I do not think anything significant goes on there but I know the online world of blogs have millions of viewers, we did not crack that or try very hard, that was a world we did not get into.

Wilson (2017, interview) goes as far as to say there is 'a whole different public square'. In the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, Wilson (interview) says the Church does not realise the implications of ignoring such change: 'I don't think the church understands the changing nature of what is going on in terms of media'. Wilson says technology has resulted in a commodity-focused public square that is consumer driven. Individuals decide what is purchased and when. An example is that individuals choose what television network they subscribe to and a preferred source of news.

Religion in the age of digital media is now another commodity rather than having a relevance that all accept for the good of society. Wilson (2017, interview) says decisions about stories in the media are now based on how many times it is read with the number of 'clicks' rather than the role of religion in society:

> Just because you are the church does not give you an automatic right to be in the paper any longer, editorial standards have changed vastly and you could argue some of the rigour is lacking, it's not there, that's the problem.

Wilson (2017, interview) says rituals in society have been 'broken down' by changes in the public square such as digitalisation: 'I think there is a lack of understanding about this new modern media from certain quarters within the church who would not understand the pressure some of these guys are under'. The pressure indicates another change in the

public square which Wilson says is 'cuts and lay-offs' with pressure on media employees to do more tasks for the same money or less. Wilson (interview) says the business model is broken and it is very easy to 'slag off the dear old media but they are in a fight to the death for their own existence'.

A result of the business approach is that stories lack rigour because of less context and less understanding. Wilson (2017, interview) says there is a commodification of a product that used to be treated as very important that now passes through a fast news cycle often without considered investigation and debate. The change in the rigour of stories also impacts on the role and expectations of the public square. Wilson (interview) says the little questioning, and a lack of knowledge about religion, means the role of the public square is now found to be wanting. She says the idea of the media searching out stories in the public interest has also 'turned on its head' with little deduction and investigation occurring.

There are three key points from Williams and Wilson about how the public square is changing. First, there is change through technology and the online world that the Church denied and struggled to work with. Second, religion is being treated as a commodity in what is becoming a consumer driven world rather than being seen as a source of knowledge able to contribute to the good of society. Third, the public square has become more competitive and less about serving the public interest. The identification of a changing public square is held in common with Habermas and also Tracy as theorists in Chapter Four.

5.4 The Church in the Public Square

Williams (2016a, interview) describes the title of his book *Faith in the Public Square* (2012) as a slight 'default' that he tried to avoid. He sees the use of the word 'faith' as being a helpful ambiguity in the title:

> I was meaning to say I do have some trust in the public square - that it is possible to have rational public debate about the priorities of society and this is about whether religious voices find or fail to have a place in that debate.

Through the title and the play on words he indicates that he does have faith in the concept of the public square and that faith can have a presence there.

I asked Williams (2016a, interview) whether the Church has been slow to have such a presence in the public square. He replied that a perceived lack of a Church presence in the public square should not be equated to no activity. Williams suggests there is no shortage of

public interventions by the Church. However, its profile and the effect that is achieved he describes as 'wildly uneven'. Williams says the voice of the Church is more prominent when other voices are not - such as an effective opposition in Parliament. The Church is then part of political life and may speak up when others do not on points of discussion in the public square – from the economy to matters of justice

Williams (2016a, interview) says the mainstream media are not necessarily the way to maintain a presence in the public square. He says the Church is catching up 'rather slowly' with other options to maintain its visibility. An example of visibility was the day I was scheduled to interview Williams for this research. The day was changed so Williams could support children arriving in the United Kingdom from a refugee camp in Calais. Faith in the public square was being lived out through action. There was a physical visibility rather than visibility being dependent on the media. This approach by Williams helps me to understand faith in the public square being about a presence in society so there is a visible release of faith through action rather than a media release. Williams (interview) described his decision as an open question which shows the fluid and wide nature in which the Church can exist in the public square:

> Do you think you've really done anything by doing a speech in the House of Lords sometimes, that's an open question – whereas thinking what I was in the middle of yesterday with the refugee issue, is that more important to go and be with a group of arriving refugees as that is the public square in another sense where something is transacted and argued about, not just in establishment circles and discourse groups.

Williams says there are diverse conversations to be part of. He chose to be present for the arrival of the refugees rather than write a media release or ask a question in the House of Lords which were institutional options. The media presence increased his visibility but the first step was to engage in the public square by being there. Williams accused the British Government of 'foot-dragging' saying the safety of some 400 unaccompanied children was at risk because the camp in Calais was shut down by French authorities (O'Carroll and Fishwick, 2016). Williams also featured in social media with a tweet by Giles Fraser. *At church in Croydon awaiting the children from Calais. With Rowan Williams. Much excitement here* – Giles Fraser (@giles_fraser October 17, 2016). In this example the media attention on an issue, including photos, was an outcome of a presence in the community. There was communicative action through Williams' presence with other interested parties that the media decided to cover.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Wilson (2017, interview) says the Church has largely lost its voice in the public square through being lazy:

> The media are not looking for the church voice and not thinking about it as they do not see it as relevant…the church needs to define its own position and not wait for someone else to do it for them.

When asked about the Church having a presence in the public square Wilson says it needs to 'reach out over the heads of journalists rather than relying on others' perceptions of the church to have a public voice' (Wilson, 2017, interview). She says the reality is that only a few people in the media are interested in what the Church is doing: 'That number fills the palm of one hand…sorry if I sound cynical but that is the bald fact of the matter'. For Wilson (interview) the Church needs to be able to define its own relevance and not rely on the media and avoid the online world: 'I think they need to get a whole lot more savvy about how they tell their stories'. Wilson agrees with Williams' approach of being present with the arriving refugees – for the Church to manage its own position in the public square. Wilson (interview) says the Church can contribute to debates on assisted dying and the debate on same-sex marriage that was prevalent at the time.

In my context as a practitioner some of the walls of Christchurch Cathedral were taken down by earthquakes. I asked Williams whether that was a useful image as the walls that were like borders to the public square (see spiritual whakapapa 2.2) had come down. Williams (2016a, interview) says part of the issue is that people in the public square may not notice the walls have come down because there is no 'lively sense of invitation' to wider society. As an example, when looking through social media I may not even look at posts from a church or physically look in a door if there is no sense of invitation. Williams (interview) says there is a missed opportunity: 'In other words the church flings wide its doors and pulls down walls and says come and people say why bother, you carry on by all means'.

While Williams (2016a, interview) acknowledges that faith-based discourse may not always have a profile in the public square, he rejects my focus on borders as a way to understand the existence of the Church in the public square. Williams' rejection of the public square conceptualised as being organised by a concept of borders challenges my use of the concept in Chapter Three. It reflects the material in Chapter Four (see 4.3) where Higton (2004, p.10) describes Williams' work as continually 'crossing boundaries' to communicate the gospel. Williams (2016a, interview) focus is on the 'space' which can be offered by the Church particularly in its buildings as part of the public square: 'There are not borders but a

sense of space'. Williams says he is not sure how the space works but the church building is a public space that does not exist elsewhere as you can bring more into it than other places, particularly in times of trauma. An example of this after the interview was cathedrals in England being used as vaccination centres during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021. Williams (2016a, interview) suggests my role is to consider a wideness and diversity of public squares where the views of faith-based organisations can be heard with topics away from the headlines. He says the Church has too much reliance on the media instead of developing its own strategy for social debates such as on penal policies and prison conditions.

There are three key points from Williams and Wilson in relation to the Church and the public square. First, they both see a role for faith-based discourse in the public square. Second, they both see a need for the Church to lead and manage its own visibility - to be strategic in the public square rather than relying on the media for a public profile that is uneven and low. Third, neither Williams nor Wilson see the organisation of the public square and its modes of communication based on borders.

5.5 The Media Culture in the Public Square

Talking about the media culture in the public square, and the relationship with the Church, brought the most periods of silence and thinking in my interview of Williams. I asked him whether the Church treats the media as a 'neighbour' or 'the other'. The question arose after reading some of his writing about connecting with 'the neighbour'. The question left Williams in silence for some time before his response: 'That's a real point'. He responded that the relationship with the media needed to be managed and at times risked being collusive: 'I do not know what one does?'. Williams (2016a, interview) spoke about times he would work with the media but the difficulties that brought. I asked Williams if he described a 'weariness of the media' in writing *Faith in the Public Square* (2012): 'I'd like to think the answer is strategic, I'd like to think that but I am not quite sure I can persuade myself, that is certainly the excuse I used to give if I wasn't intervening in something' (interview).

Williams (2016a, interview) says there is an inescapable tension with the media culture of the public square – a desire for stories in a style that can be rapidly digested and compressed: 'You do your best with it but there are things with the media culture that is about nuggets of communication fired quite rapidly at you and maybe there are things that you cannot do like that'. Williams says the public square should not be reduced in style or in its role in a way that could exclude the long-term issues that are not vote winners or headlines that he refers to as 'slow burn unpopular subjects' including his concerns over prison conditions.

A second point of tension for Williams (2016a, interview) is that the media culture in the public square has 'different priorities' to the Church. Williams says this is evident in the reporting on Lambeth Conferences – the worldwide gathering of Anglican bishops every ten years. Williams (interview) says stories emerge from the media no matter what you do: 'You know in advance the stories they have ready to write and you say you must not be derailed by that agenda but certain stories are written anyway. I really think that is how it works'. Williams says what actually happens is not reported: 'You get these deeply frustrated journalists going around actively looking for something on which to hang the fairy tale'. Williams says bishops at the three Lambeth conferences he led remarked that the conference they were at was not the conference being reported in the media. He says the answer to the bishops is simple:

> Well – duh because they are not at the conference you are at – you are not reading about it. I know perfectly well why I, like everybody else, wanted to keep them at arm's length, it really is something to continually manage.

Williams (2016a, interview) says the disjunction occurs because journalists have a different agenda: 'That is what they are paid for, they are not bishops, their job is not to serve the kingdom of God, their job is to file stories and earn a living'.

Williams (2016a, interview) says the public square can exist without the mainstream media and that the media culture 'unsurprisingly finds it very difficult to recognise that fact'. An example from Williams of the public square without the mainstream media is the work of Citizens UK on refugees. There are groups such as London Citizens who have held pre-election events with candidates speaking and answering questions. Williams (Interview) says these public squares and their discourse 'do not break the surface in the mainstream media' but are vital in opening up perspectives and producing some kind of social change.

Wilson (2017, interview) describes the media culture in the public square of Aotearoa New Zealand from another viewpoint. She describes most newsrooms as 'secular beasts'. There is a loss of respect for the Church as well as other organisations:

> We've always been a secular country but there was a respect for the church and I am not sure that respect is still there, I would question it if you look at some of the stories that have come out of the New Zealand media in the past four to five years.

Wilson (2017, interview) says the media do not understand Church structures. She says journalists do not even ask simple questions of who and what. Wilson sees no appreciation of what she calls the spiritual and rather more of a suspicion with either a 'wilful lack of understanding or just ignorance'. To understand the difference between the media culture of Aotearoa New Zealand and the United Kingdom it is useful to consider a comment from Mark Thompson, former Director General of the BBC, about the relationship between the Church and the media in the United Kingdom:

> So who's in this fractious but ultimately worthwhile marriage? On one side of the bed, the UK's churches, church leaders and the leaders of Britain's faith communities. On the other side of the bed, well it's us: the Devil's party, or to give us our usual name, the UK's mass media.
> Thompson 2009, 10

I asked Wilson to comment on this in relation to Aotearoa New Zealand. She says any sense of marriage is over between the Church and the media in the public square:

> Divorce has occurred and the marriage has been annulled due to a complete lack of understanding on both parts, the church does not understand the changing nature of the media, and the media themselves do not wish to understand the church.
> Wilson, 2017, interview

Wilson says the relationship can be a two-way street but that has not occurred. She says many journalists have not stepped into a church and do not see its relevance to society so seek comment from elsewhere:

> The church was used as a natural advocate but that has now devolved to other commentators and advocates and voices in that sphere and what we are getting now is a complete lack of understanding of what it is all about.
> Wilson, 2017, interview

My experience of the media was largely positive but Chapter Three also outlined the points of tension that I raised in the interviews. An example, that Wilson followed, was the prolonged campaign for Christchurch Cathedral to be restored to its original state after the earthquakes (see 3.5). The campaign included an advertisement that called for a 'demolition order' on the Bishop of Christchurch that appeared in *The Press*, a local daily newspaper. When asked about the media coverage of the story Wilson says some of the media

treatment of the bishop was 'demonization that crossed a line editorially'. She says the nature of the coverage of the Cathedral story would never have happened 30 years ago.

> You would have had angry public meetings in the past, you would have had letters to the editor in the past, you would have had sound bites on radio and TV saying how upset people were, but you wouldn't have had the level of wholescale trolling on social media against the church and the bishop.
> Wilson, 2017, interview

The nature of the debate demonstrated the changing public square that Wilson says includes the media culture. Wilson says there is a need to engage with the media and the communication practices of the wider society. She says the Church has a worthy contribution to make to society and both parties need to be able to respond to each other.

The key point from Williams and Wilson is that there is tension between the Church and the media. The tension is expressed and evident through frustration, misunderstanding, and a lack of trust. These characteristics suggest borders and separation rather than engagement. Williams believes the public square can have rational discussions without the need for the media. He says the media's style of communication is not suitable for all discourses. These insights are explored further in chapters Six and Seven.

5.5.1 Interviews Summary:
The interview data suggests a complex public square that is formed through diverse forms of communication. Williams says there are multiple public squares that do not always involve or require the mainstream media. Wilson's conceptualisation is of one public square that she describes as fragmented. Williams and Wilson both identify a changing public square that the Church has been slow to respond to. The public square is changing through advances in the use of technology, and the treatment of religion as a commodity in a consumer-driven market. Williams and Wilson both see a role for faith-based discourse and that the Church needs to manage its own visibility in the public square. The Church is in charge of its own relevance and agency rather than a reliance on others. While Williams and Wilson do not find the concept of borders a useful way to characterise the relationship between the Church and wider society, they do acknowledge, and have both experienced tension in the public square.

The interviews challenge and widen my understanding of the public square and practice. My approach that was based on a single homogenous public square with a focus on borders in

its organisation and modes of communication needs to be questioned further. The acknowledgment that there is tension surrounding the Church and news media engagement in the public square is also important in relation to my experience as I questioned its significance in my practice. The interviews present three key points, the existence of multiple public squares, a public square changing in its organisation and modes of communication, and the impact on my practice of multiple public squares and change. These points in turn raise three questions.

- What could the idea of multiple public squares bring to a contemporary understanding of the public square?
- Does the Church need to change its patterns of communication with a more changing and diverse public square?
- What impact could the concept of multiple public squares have on my practice as a communications advisor?

These questions are finalised after considering the data from the research diaries in Section Two. The finalised questions will be explored further in the next chapter as part of the interpretive findings.

5.6 The Research Diary

The research diary consisted of daily entries to describe what occurred in my role as a church communications advisor for the period 26 November 2016 to 26 December 2016. The use of a diary earlier in the year in Holy Week was useful preparation in terms of how to write up the diary and the discipline of when to do it. For example, it was better to write the diary at the end of each day and to use fieldnotes during the day to remember details of experiences.

The purpose of the diary was to record tasks, reactions, and feelings in a brief narrative form. The aim was to provide a more detailed recording and observation of my practice than the wider perspectives provided in Chapter Three. The more detailed analysis of the tension in my practice deepens my thinking by recording what I did and provides further knowledge from which to develop an understanding of the public square.

A limitation of the data is that in each of the series of coding I am working with very small numbers through which to identify patterns and themes of practice. While numbers can show a picture, it is not a full picture, but can point to trends and themes that contribute to the wider thinking within the thesis. An important consideration is whether there are possible

omissions from the coding process that have been consciously or unconsciously overlooked through any bias that I may bring as a researcher. The limitation is best managed by considering the data as one part of the research alongside the interviews, my reflection on practice, and the theoretical and practical perspectives of others.

Descriptive coding interrogated the data to find out what might be plausible findings about what was happening in my practice (see 2.13). There were multiple readings of the diary with the use of analytical notes in the margins. Each round of coding was given a letter from 'A' to 'D'. Appendix M shows the reading process with notations from the first round of coding (Series A) on the right-hand side of the page. Notations from the second round of coding (Series B) on the left side of the page.

Series A used descriptive coding to identify activities in the diary. The diary for 26 November 2016 is shown in Table 5.1. There are 12 codes. Some codes such as media enquiry and phone call are repeated.

Task/Activity	Occurrence	Task/Activity	Occurrence
Ordination	1	Bishop	1
Auckland Diocese	1	Phone calls	8
Ordination Video	1	Diocesan website	3
Holy Trinity Cathedral	1	Facebook	1
Media enquiry	3	Minister's Office	2
Christchurch Cathedral	4	Debate	1

Table 5.1 Series A

The day was described by 27 codes. I decided codes such as 'phone call' and 'media enquiry' provided limited information about my practice. However, Series A did identify primary activities that could be used to allocate codes and sub-codes to diary entries.

5.6.1 Coding - Series B

The second round of coding, Series B, used the same method of descriptive coding. A re-reading of the diaries, and the work in Series A, developed a series of codes that were assigned to the diary entries. As an example, going back to the entry 'ordination' in Series A, it was possible to elicit further information from the diary. There was worship in the Cathedral at which photos and videos were taken that were later shown on social media and the website. Such detail was not evident in the Series A coding. For Series B, the ordination

service had a primary code of worship. There was further detail about my practice with sub-codes of 'face-to-face', website, Facebook, and video.

A series of primary codes were developed. The code 'cathedral website' was for the project to build a new website for Holy Trinity Cathedral. The project involved writing and gathering copy. The code 'media enquiries' recorded media enquiries such as a phone call with a question or a request for an interview. There was a sub-code of Christchurch Cathedral given its prominence in my role. The work with other institutions such as cabinet ministers and local government was summarised by the 'stakeholder' code. The code of 'role' emerged because of my uncertain future as a lecturer at St John's College and as Communications Manager for the Diocese of Auckland (see Chapter Three). My future role as a practitioner was not resolved during the period of the diary and so there was a sub-code of uncertainty. The sub-codes of frustration and isolation are important. Given the tensions that I identified in my experience and context (Chapter Three), it was important to be able to explore those reactions in the gathering of any data about my practice. There were reactions that could emerge about not being part of decision-making processes around communication. The code of Newstalk ZB, and sub code of talkback, was a new role I was exploring for employment that became part of my practice. The codes and recorded entries are shown in Table 5.2.

Code	Sub Code	Sub Code	Sub Code	Sub Code	Total
Worship	Face-to-Face – 12	Facebook 9	Video 4	Website 5	30
Cathedral Website	Build – 10				10
Media Enquiries	Christchurch Cathedral 24	Enquiries/Advice 14			38
Stakeholder	Relationship – 4				4
Role	Uncertainty – 7	Frustration – 3	Isolated 5		15
Newstalk ZB	Talkback – 5				5

Table 5.2 – Series B

Each primary code had sub-codes that were added up to find out more about my practice. The sub-codes showed in more detail the activities that were part of my role as a communications advisor and the contexts in which they occurred. The totals are in the right-hand column of Table 5.2. My practice was focused on worship within the Church structures such as services, and in wider society such as media enquiries. The codes of worship and

the cathedral website (which was content primarily about worship) were recorded 40 times. Media enquiries, stakeholder and Newstalk ZB codes, all activities that had engagement with wider society, were recorded 47 times. The primary code of role was about reactions rather than being task based and required further examination given its prevalence in the coding. The results of Series B can be seen as a word-map in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1

The word-map shows my practice dominated by activities related to worship and to the media. The numerical data and the word-map suggest that my practice occurs both within the sanctuary of the Church and beyond the sanctuary. I call this theme sanctuary/non-sanctuary. I use the terms sanctuary and non-sanctuary in the following ways. Practice within the church buildings and organisation, such as worship that can be face-to-face or uploaded on social media and websites, is sanctuary based. The non-sanctuary is understood as practices beyond the church building being the media, stakeholder engagement, and Newstalk ZB.

The theme cannot be treated as an answer to the 'border experiences' of separation described in Chapter Three. The purpose of this data is for deeper consideration and interpretation. The theme raises the question of whether the Church and its worship need to be understood as part of the public square or squares and what implications that has for my understanding of the public square and my practice. An important part of my practice to explore further was the data that was coded as 'role' in Series B.

5.6.2 Coding – Series C

The code of 'role' in Series B had sub-codes of uncertainty, frustration, and isolation. These experiences were grouped together and overshadowed by the focus on where

communication occurred. This is important data to explore further as responses and reactions in the role are also part of my practice to be considered as knowledge. I reread the diaries for what is called Series C. The working is shown in Appendix N. Codes were assigned to the diary entries using what Saldana (2009, p.19) calls the 'lumpur approach'. The researcher identifies what is important about each paragraph with one word and so in my case for each diary entry.

The result shows the benefits of rereading the data to consider what are plausible and defensible findings. There was a richer reading of the data through each round of coding. Table 5.3 illustrates how further codes emerged including achievement and negotiation as part of my practice.

Code	Occurrence
Negotiation	33
Uncertainty	25
Achievement	22
Confusion	7
Isolation	4
Frustration	4

Table 5.3 – Series C

Table 5.3 shows the nature of my interactions, reactions, and responses. The dominating codes are negotiation, uncertainty, and achievement. Negotiation could occur through how enquiries from reporters were managed. Uncertainty existed when dealing with Christchurch Cathedral as a story and regarding my future roles in communications. An example of achievement was proactive work with the media for a story on Christmas Day for the Dean of Auckland to be interviewed on the radio. The codes of confusion, isolation, and frustration reflected my reactions and the context I experienced as a practitioner. These echo the experience of tension outlined in Chapter Three (see 3.21–3.6).

A word-map (Figure 5.2) is an alternative way to present the themes. The words are clustered round the concept of negotiation - a useful image when considering the nature of my practice and the negotiation that may be required. There can be negotiation with a reporter that can involve uncertainty and which can end in being an achievement. The word map is also a useful perspective as it places the harder parts of the role, such as uncertainty, confusion, and isolation in proportion with other parts of my practice. As an

example, achievement appears more in the data than confusion. Such an observation questions the proportion of tension that I identified as a trend in my practice and whether the trend dominates my practice.

Figure 5.2

The coding outcomes suggest negotiation is a theme that needs further exploration. The theme of negotiation suggests the concept of borders in public discourse could be more complex than I considered initially. Further coding can show where practices such as negotiation, and reactions such as confusion occurred.

5.6.3 Coding - Series D

In this fourth series of coding I identified where the sub-codes from Series C, being negotiation, uncertainty, achievement, confusion, isolation, and frustration, occurred in my practice. The coding took the activities identified in Series B, such as worship and the media. I then correlated the codes from Series C to the activities. For this series I used simultaneous coding whereby there could be achievement and negotiation occurring at the same time in one diary entry. The results are shown in Table 5.4.

Sub-Codes	Worship	Social Media	Cathedral	Stakeholder	Media	Role	Talkback
Achievement	5	7			5		2
Uncertainty			13	8	5	15	
Negotiation	2		13	15	18	5	
Confusion						7	
Isolation						4	
Frustration						4	

Table 5.4 – Series D

I need to remain aware that the coding is from the limited perspective of my diary, however, it highlights possible points of tension in my practice. The sub-codes of uncertainty and negotiation become more prevalent when working beyond the Church structures such as with stakeholders and the media. There is a high degree of negotiation with the cathedral, stakeholders, and the media that is also characterised by uncertainty. In dealing with the media there is achievement, uncertainty, and negotiation.

Series D coding shows a pattern whereby negotiation occurs across my practice, more beyond than within the Church organisation. I see it as a second major theme in the data. The theme of negotiation raises a question for further discussion in regard to my practice and further understanding of the public square which is what is being negotiated. Secondly, what does it reveal about the nature of the public square. A further consideration is how the theme of negotiation may or may not intersect with the first theme of sanctuary and non-sanctuary.

5.6.4 Summary
The series of coding that I refer to as 'B', 'C', and 'D' identified two themes of negotiation and sanctuary/non-sanctuary and raised the following questions for further consideration.

- What can the themes of sanctuary/non-sanctuary and negotiation contribute to a contemporary understanding of the public square?
- Should the church, and so its worship, be understood as part of the public square or squares and what significance could this have for my practice as a communications advisor?
- How does my practice, as evidenced in the data, either challenge or strengthen my experience and concept of borders?

Conclusion
This chapter presented the data from two distinct pieces of research. The interviews of Williams and Wilson, and the coding of my research diary. As part of drawing a conclusion to this chapter, it is important to return to my initial understanding of the organisation of the public square and subsequent practices that were challenged by the theoretical perspectives. The concept of borders that leads to difference and polarisation is challenged by the theoretical perspectives from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams, and by the data from the interviews and coding. This requires further exploration as it highlights shortcomings in

my understanding and practice. It is important to review the questions that were raised from the interviews alongside the questions from the coding.

The interviews raised the following questions:
- What could the idea of multiple public squares bring to a contemporary understanding of the public square?
- Does the church need to change its patterns of communication with a more changing and diverse public square?
- What impact could the concept of public square(s) have on my practice as a communications advisor?

The coding raised the questions outlined above. Drawing these lines of enquiry together I consider that the data from both parts of the chapter raises the following questions to explore and interpret in Chapter Six.

- What can the concept of multiple public squares bring to an understanding of what is called the public square?
- What can the concept of borders contribute to an understanding of the public square?
- What can the theme of negotiation contribute to an understanding of the public square?
- What can the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary contribute to an understanding of the public square?
- How does the concept of a changing and more fluid public square impact on my understanding of the public square?

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore and interpret the themes and subsequent questions that emerged from the data in Chapter Five. To interpret the data, the questions are considered in interaction with the elements of the conceptual framework. Those elements are; my spiritual whakapapa (that which shapes me as an individual) (Chapter Two), my practice, experience, and context (Chapter Three), and the theoretical perspectives (Chapter Four). The interpretive process contributes to knowledge to answer the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a communications advisor.

There are five sections to the chapter. Each section contains a question to explore and interpret from the data in Chapter Five. The first section is foundational to the chapter. The section builds an argument for the existence of multiple public squares (see 5.2) and the significance of such an understanding for a church communications advisor. Rather than my understanding of a single homogenous public square that has uniform patterns of discourse, there are multiple public squares where public reasoning and knowledge can be formed in diverse ways. I explore and argue for the existence of multiple public squares using the language of 'multiple publics'. The second section builds on the argument of multiple public squares and suggests the existence of blurred borders. Borders that polarised and were about difference emerged from my experience (Chapter One and Chapter Three), clashed with my spiritual whakapapa (Chapter Two), and were challenged by the theoretical perspectives (Chapter Four) and the research data (Chapter Five). The third section suggests the theme of negotiation is a significant practice in the diversity and complexity of the public square. Negotiation emerged in the theoretical perspectives from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (Chapter Four). An example is Tracy using correlational methods to hold together similarity and difference. The fourth section considers how the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary (Chapter Five) can contribute to a contemporary understanding of the public square. The fifth section draws the material of the chapter together and considers how the concept of a more fluid and changing public square has had an impact on my understanding of the public square.

6.1 Multiple Publics

What can the concept of multiple public squares bring to an understanding of what is called the public square?

The concept of multiple public squares, rather than the public square, requires a significant change in my understanding. The degree of change can be demonstrated when I engage my initial understanding of a single homogenous public square (Chapter Three) with the theoretical perspectives (Chapter Four), and the data (Chapter Five) from which the understanding of multiple public squares emerged. While the concept of multiple public squares came from the interview with Williams (Chapter Five), I argue that there is a progression of ideas in the previous chapters that accommodates such a change. I then use the writing of John Dewey and Michael Warner, and the language of multiple publics, to explore further the existence of multiple public squares. I consider how through varied levels of visibility and diversity there is contemporary understanding of what is called the public square through the existence of multiple public squares.

The starting point for this thesis was my practice and understanding of the public square. The understanding focused on borders in terms of the structure of the public square and its modes of communication. While I acknowledged that borders can be contradictory in nature (see 3.2), these borders were binary in nature and about difference. The possibility for faith-based discourse to contribute to social change was characterised by tension (see 1.1). The isolation of the Church voice clashed with my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1-2.2). My worldview does not have a dividing line between the Church and society as to where God is, and is not, known and experienced. The whole world is a theological reality. This was illustrated by the cross placed beyond the walls of Auckland Cathedral. The clash with my ontology and epistemology created a tension in my practice.

Chapter Three outlined my contemporary experience, understanding, and expectations of a single homogenous public square in which I referred to border experiences (see 3.2-3.6). I had a certain understanding and expectation of the public square because of its common usage and it is important to question why. Stackhouse (2007, p.423) says such understandings and expectations emerge from the way in which religions are structured in terms of space and practice. That argument is exemplified in Webb (2003, p.49) who says the public square is a place in which Church, mosque, society, and academy all have addresses from which to speak and listen: 'The willingness to engage in dialogue will shape church and mosque themselves, affecting their place in the public square and the public square itself'. Webb describes the public square in terms of institutions that have a physical presence. There is also the understanding of a homogenous public square that has sociological differences. The differences are determined by location or forms of technology. O'Brien Steinfels (2016, p.416) says the public square exists in different forms from a physical space where people actually gather to a virtual form such as Facebook.

The working understanding of the public square demonstrates my understanding of the public square as a single phenomenon that is changing and more fluid (see 4.4). I suggest that together the theoretical perspectives (Chapter 4) and the gathered data (Chapter 5) challenge my understanding of a single homogenous public square. The theoretical perspectives progressed the argument to an understanding of the public square from theory rather than experience as a practitioner.

The theorists' approach is focused on the use of language and activity rather than ingrained patterns of communication and institutional structures. Habermas (1996, p.374) describes a single public sphere which has partial publics. The levels of communication include 'episodic publics' such as taverns and streets, 'occasional or arranged' publics and the 'abstract public sphere' being readers across the globe brought together through the mass media. Critics of Habermas suggest the creation of counter-publics. The concept of counter-publics can be developed further to the idea of multiple publics. For Fraser (1992, p.116) the public sphere was not 'the public' and rather there were competing publics that she calls a 'multiplicity of public arenas'.

Tracy has a methodology of three publics that moves my thinking closer to the idea of multiple publics than Habermas does. There are three publics that the theologian can address in which faith-based discourse can occur. Tracy relies on his methods of the religious classic and the analogical imagination to enable discourse between different worldviews.

The move away from a single public square is taken further by Williams when in the interview he suggested multiple public squares (see 5.2). Examples of multiple public squares that Williams (2016a, interview) suggested include the activity of school governors, preparing a sermon for Christmas Eve as Archbishop of Canterbury, and having a physical presence as child refugees arrived into the United Kingdom. These examples suggest that doing theology is not a case of speaking to a homogenous public square but rather to multiple and overlapping specific groups. The groups make up the multiple public squares. Williams (2016a) suggested diversity existed in the theology being done and sociologically through the different forms of communication being used.

A crucial consideration is what creates these multiple public squares. For Habermas language is the starting point. The Church, using that argument, is part of the public square through acts of communication rather than because of its existence. Communication forms multiple public squares. The 'series B' coding that was part of the research diary data (see

5.6), had conversations juxtaposed across society. The conversations involved the media, such as radio and television reporters, stakeholders, and the designers of the cathedral website. I understand the data as about my practice in multiple public squares. The interactions can be seen as examples of multiple public squares (Williams, 2016a, interview) but also as the fragmentation of one public square (Wilson, 2017, interview). The two options are explored in this section. My coding process used institutions such as the media and the church to detail my practices. That approach shows my original thinking as being institutionally-based. The perspective of multiple public squares formed by language would ask where conversations were occurring - that the Church may or may not be part of - to better understand and participate in the public square.

The progression from my understanding of a single homogenous public square to the possibility of multiple public squares was important to outline for two reasons. First, it highlights the growing complexity of the public square that requires further exploration. Second, it demonstrates how the concept of multiple public squares formed by language requires a substantial change in my understanding of the public square. I explore the growing complexity of the public square through the writing of Dewey and Warner on multiple publics and the writing of Brighenti and Jagessar in regard to the diversity of multiple publics. These writers suggest there is a diverse public square that I argue cannot be understood using the concept of a single or fragmented public square but can be understood using the concept of multiple public squares.

The writing by Dewey on multiple publics supports my argument of complexity in the public square and of multiple public squares. Dewey (1859-1952), an American political philosopher, wrote *The Public and its Problems* in 1927. He wrote about the impact on democracy by developments including mass media, government bureaucracy, and pluralism. Habermas has a similar focus in his writing on changes in democracy. The existence of a changing public square in this research means the same themes that Dewey explored about change, and its impact on discourse when writing in 1927, remain relevant today to understand the public square. Dewey (1927, p.166) suggests the single overarching public dissolved because of multiple publics that do not communicate with each other. The consequence is that there is no integrated whole as a concept of public to work with: 'There is too much public, a public too diffused and scattered and too intricate in composition'. Words such as diffused, scattered, and intricate suggest multiple public squares rather than a fragmented public square. There is also the possibility of tension for those seeking to communicate in the public square. Dewey (p.170) says the public has become 'shadowy and formless' and has lost its 'substance' and so is not able to be easily identified and operate

effectively in democratic decision-making. Dewey suggests publics do not have a unitary set structure or identifiable format. He and Warner both say there is further complexity as publics are very much part of our culture and hard to avoid.

Warner is an American writer in social theory and queer theory. In *Publics and Counterpublics* (2002) he refers to Habermas' writing and questions what is a public and studies how they impact on the shaping of a social world. Warner (2002, p.65) says it is difficult to describe 'a public': 'Publics have become an essential fact of the social landscape; yet it would tax our understanding to say exactly what they are'. Warner (p.8) goes as far as to say they are 'a kind of a fiction that has taken on life, and very potent life at that'. Warner acknowledges the importance of publics in society and also their complexity.

I described in Chapter One (see 1.3) that as a researcher I could not locate a recognised definition of the public square or a seminal text to refer to. Warner (2002, p.9) suggests there are multiple publics and that the 'publics among which we steer or surf, are potentially infinite in number'. He says that makes analysis harder but should not stop enquiry into the nature of publics and how they are formed and exist. There is also complexity using the terms 'a public' and 'the public'. Warner (pp.65-66) sees 'the public' as being a social totality of people while 'a public' might be a defined audience such as a theatre. He acknowledges the two terms are interchangeable and that can lead to confusion.

Warner enables me to explore the nature of multiple publics by listing their identifiable features. Warner (2002, pp.67-96) says that publics are self-organised and exist when there is engagement with texts (acts of communication). This can be between people who know each other or strangers. Publics use personal and impersonal speech and are formed through people paying attention to a social space in which communication occurs. The public exists as long as the communication continues and there is the possibility to project the path that the discourse might take. Warner (pp.72-74) says while addressees are real they are also essentially imaginary as the addressee is yet to be realised but is known such as 'the people', the 'nation', and the 'younger generation'. Warner's approach is the same as Habermas - a public is created through language and not an institution.

The theoretical perspectives from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams, when engaged critically with the writing of Dewey and Warner, identify a public square growing in complexity because of the multiple ways in which publics can be formed. From their insights I develop an understanding of multiple publics. The multiple publics are formed through language rather than institutions and have the potential to overlap with each other which is explored in

Section Two on borders. A further question to explore in 6.5 is whether, in a changing public square, the Church is considered a public. The possibility of multiple publics was highlighted in the past five years in the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States in 2016, his loss in the 2020 election, and the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom. Trump used Twitter to build agency and to follow his perspective of reality. In such cases society was divided rather than holding a shared truth which highlights the fragility and complexity of what are multiple publics and potential tensions in public discourse.

6.1.1 Multiple Visibility

The concept of multiple publics can be supported and further understood through exploring how public discourse can have differing levels of visibility for different publics. My practice had tension because of a lack of visibility for faith-based discourse in the public square (see 1.1 and 3.2-3.6). Visibility of the views of the public were important for Habermas. In his later writing Habermas (2009, p.168) decided the views of religion should be visible because of the 'social' and 'cultural capital' they held (see 4.1). Tracy (1984, p.239) was concerned about the publicness, and so the visibility of faith-based discourse (see 4.2). Williams in his writing (2012, p.43), and in the interview says the Christian community makes a claim for 'visibility' but he describes the coverage as 'uneven' (see 5.4).

Brighenti (2007, p.325) suggests visibility can be understood as a social process and category that has wide variations in society. I see the category of visibility as a way to explore the existence of multiple publics that have varied public exposure. The archbishops of Canterbury and York, in November 2020, wrote a letter about the Covid-19 pandemic. It was addressed 'to the nation' and started 'dear friends'. The style of address suggested it was for everyone and would have a wide readership. The letter gave assurances about the love of God for all during the Covid-19 pandemic. It stated that churches would pray for the nation each day at 6pm. Brighenti's argument suggests it would not be 'seen' by all in the same way. Some, such as the Church, would see it as more relevant than others. This is because, Brighenti (2007, p.325) says, there is no symmetry between seeing and being seen which impacts on levels of visibility in the public square. The archbishops saw the letter as important. Their judgement of its importance will not be reciprocated equally across the public square. An example of unequal reciprocity is that some diocesan bishops chose not to distribute the letter, preferring forms of local communication which had an impact on the visibility of the letter from the archbishops.

The letter is an example of moving thresholds of visibility (Brighenti, 2007, p.329). The moving thresholds means an organisation, such as the Church, cannot fully manage its own

visibility as it is also managed by other multiple publics. There are what Brighenti, (p330) calls 'distortions in visibility'. The Church may be in the headlines and attracting non-stop attention but then if there is a high volume of news, such as a pandemic, then it may be invisible. Visibility is then also determined by the existence of other publics in a system of multiple public squares rather than the presumption of borders in a single public square.

I suggest that Brighenti's approach helps to explain the varying levels of visibility in the public square for faith-based discourse. Stoddart (2011, p.145), when writing on surveillance in society, suggests Brighenti's work can be understood as a spectrum of (in)visibility to explain variations in visibility that are managed and negotiated. The use of brackets by Stoddart for '(in)' indicates the fluidity in how organisations and individuals are made, and make themselves, more and less visible. The spectrum of visibility supports the argument for the existence of multiple public squares. Tension can exist as (in)visibility is negotiated between multiple publics rather than the existence of a unitary border in a single homogenous public square.

6.1.2 Multiple cultures

The concept of multiple public squares can be further understood through the diversity of cultures that exist as publics. I suggest, drawing on the writing of Michael Jagessar (2015a), that the increasing diversity of cultures participating in society leads to multiple publics that overlap with each other rather than one public square.

Jagessar (2015, pp.12-13), a theologian who writes on inclusivity, says there is a need to recognise the diversity of society. I argue this can be understood through the concept of multiple public squares that can accommodate diversity rather than what Jagessar (pp.12-13), refers to as 'unhelpful polarisations, categories and restrictive habits'. Such an understanding requires a move away from the idea of fixed spaces, places and language in the public square that can 'fossilise and polarise identity'. In a paper on intercultural conversations Jagessar (2015a, p.258) says cultures are 'porous'. He says rather than exist in a pure form they are 'leaking' into each other. The tension exists because 'leakage' occurs while humans and institutions, such as the Church, often seek purity and uniformity.

The concept of multiple public squares moves away from the idea of 'the public square' as a structure in which to have a voice. There is no longer a public square to belong to and rely on. Rather, the Church is part of discussions that it, as one of multiple publics, begins or seeks out in society as outlined by Tracy and Williams (see 4.2 and 4.3) in their bid for the publicness of faith-based discourse. In critical reflection on my experience (see 3.5) I

described myself as being on an 'untidy border' as I negotiated roles between the Church and media. Jagessar (2015a, p.270) says that the present and the future are about 'multiple belongings' which I understand as belonging to multiple public squares. There is an 'untidiness' rather than uniformity. Habermas (2006b, p.417) refers to disorder and 'unruly' patterns of communication while Tracy (1981, pp.450-454) refers to as 'messy' and 'chaotic'. As a priest or as a broadcaster or a researcher I would then belong to different and overlapping publics. Jagessar (p.270) says such publics function alone but are considered together because of the porous connections between each public.

6.1.3 Multiple public squares or fragmentation

A final point to consider in this section is whether multiplicity or fragmentation is a more accurate process through which to understand the changed public square. 'The public square is now all of us in the world' was how Wilson (2017, interview) described the public square. She said it had 'fractured into a million pieces' because of advancements in technology such, as online communication and social media. Wilson is not alone in using language of fragmentation to understand the public square. Mathewes and Jones (2018) writing on multiple publics suggest that public discourse 'fractures into multiple mutually incommunicative sub-cultures' and connects through forms of conversation:

> There are multiple publics, and they possess different degrees of 'publicity', different forms of openness and availability, and different ways in which they can function as spaces of encounter. And there is no need for any policing of this pluralised and fractured public realm.

I suggest there is a stronger argument for multiple public squares than for fragmentation of the public square through the insights of the arguments on visibility and diversity of culture. The notion of multiple public squares suggests a structure and a framework through which to understand my professional context. The concept of a fragmented public square suggests that traditions of a single homogenous public square remain but to a lesser degree. Rather, accepting the idea of multiple public squares suggests there is an identified change in the public square.

6.1.4 Summary

This section has argued for the existence of multiple public squares building on the insights from my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1–2.2), my experience and initial shortcomings in understanding the public square (see 3.2 - 3.6), the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1–4.3), and the gathered data (see 5.2–5.6). The argument for multiple public

squares as a concept is congruent with my spiritual whakapapa and worldview. The tensions that I experienced in my practice are also better understood through the writing of Brighenti on visibility and Jagessar on the diversity of cultures. I have explored an understanding of multiple public squares that are formed through language rather than by the presence of institutions, a process of the linguistic creation of the public sphere delineated by Habermas (1996, p.360). An exploration of multiple publics highlights that there is not an abstract understanding of the public square that is timeless and universal. Rather publics are created and recreated through human action and have an epistemic role in society. The existence of multiple publics is demonstrated through different levels of visibility and diverse publics that reflect cultures in society. Warner (2002, p.65) stated that publics are difficult to define. However, the approach of multiple publics highlights the human factor of communication and deliberation rather than an 'institutional factor' through which multiple public squares are formed and can exist. The existence of multiple public squares impacts on the nature of borders and the nature of negotiation.

6.2 Borders

What can the concept of borders contribute to an understanding of the public square?

In this section I argue that the concept of blurred borders can contribute to a contemporary understanding of the public square. The section builds on the argument (see 6.1) for the existence of multiple public squares. The argument of multiple public squares leads to an argument of the existence of multiple borders that are permeable and shifting rather than being fixed and polarised in nature. There is an opportunity for the Church as an organisation to engage with such borders.

The concept of borders that were binary in nature and isolated faith-based discourse from society clashed with my spiritual whakapapa (see 2.1-2.2) and emerged from my border experiences (see 3.2–3.6). It is useful to explore why I see them as being binary as this contributed to my understanding of the public square. This section considers my border experiences and those of others and uses the writing of Michael Nausner (2004) and John Reader (2008) to suggest that borders are blurred rather than being binary in nature.

The Christchurch Cathedral debate was described in Chapter Three (see 3.5). It is useful to consider a further narrative from this experience that suggests borders were binary and about division rather than a relational shared space that was described by the theoretical perspectives from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (see 4.1–4.3). The local media were

welcomed by the Bishop of Christchurch to a service for the diocesan synod. Bishop Victoria Matthews commented on their reporting:

> Most of the media coverage the church receives these days is negative. The media is especially interested in reporting our disagreements. But that is neither our identity in Christ nor our calling which is to be communities of transformation and care. Matthews, sermon, 2017

The comments from the bishop about inaccurate reporting highlighted the separation and tension between the Church and the media. A further example was in my interview with Williams. He described journalists as having a job to file stories and not to serve the kingdom of God (2016a, interview). The comments suggest borders characterised by separation. Reporters were not seen as being part of the missional work of the Church. The comments are an example of the tension that I am exploring in my practice and the clash I experienced because of my spiritual whakapapa and worldview.

My experience of borders was also shared and reinforced by others. Christopher Landau followed the same progression as me from media to ministry. He was a reporter and then an ordained a priest in the Church of England. Landau (2013) was described by a bishop as a 'poacher turned gamekeeper' having crossed a border: 'In fact, in my experience, the worlds of religion and news broadcasting both contain saints and sinners – a blanket condemnation of one by the other is not going to help either cause'.

It is useful to consider the culture of the media to better understand borders. The gathering of news, as part of the public square, is a daily practice for the news media (Fowler, 1991, p.222; Singh, 2012, p.147; Mitchell, 2012, p.17). The 'news' is a product from an industry that is shaped by the context from which it emerges. Landau (2012, p.80) introduces an element of tension and also value to news for some. He defines news as, 'Something that somebody somewhere would rather was not made public knowledge'. So, for journalists, such information has value – the same information may challenge an institution such as the Church that would want more or less visibility on a particular issue. The mutual condemnations between the Church and the news media, (Thompson, 2009, p.10; Harries, 2012, pp.204-210; Woolley, 2012, p.62; Landau, 2012, p.80; Gledhill, 2012, p.94) some light-hearted, and others more direct, is very much evident in the literature and to me reflects borders about difference, separation, and isolation.

The focus on tension between the Church and the media in the literature provides possible insights about the isolation of faith-based discourse from society. Stephen Pattison (2007, p.212) argues that the discipline of theology has become isolated: 'Too much contemporary theology seems to be a kind of whispered conversation on matters esoteric conducted in a foreign language behind closed doors in a distant attic'. Pattison (2007, p.227) suggests there is a need for theology to cross borders. Theology may need to 'lose its life to save it' and so 'disappear into the world' amidst multiple discourses rather than create borders: 'Its supreme achievement has been to make even the idea of God seem boring' (p.213). Pattison's insights emphasise the way in which borders have been created and maintained but can also be challenged.

The references to boundaries, closed doors, and walls I see as an acceptance that borders exist. The former Bishop of Liverpool says the Church is called beyond its own walls. Bishop James Jones led a government appointed panel to investigate the 1989 Hillsborough disaster after 96 fans were crushed to death at Liverpool's FA Cup semi-final. Jones is clear it was the right job for him to do as a bishop. He sees a responsibility of care to the entire community, regardless of faith. 'The church sometimes colludes with a very parochial approach, that it should not stray outside it walls', says Jones. 'It takes us away from engagement with society which I believe is our calling. I absolutely believe the church should take an active role in helping to frame a just society' (Conn, 2010).

A further example of crossing borders and walls was the service to mark the beginning of the ministry of the new Archbishop of York. The service took place on 9th July 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is customary at a service of Enthronement for a new bishop to knock on the outside of the door three times with his or her crozier to request admission to the Cathedral. Stephen Cottrell, the new Archbishop, chose to knock three times on the *inside* of the West Door which was then opened to the world. Cottrell (Archbishop of York, 2020) explained his decision was about being 'sent out into the world' and 'to go out and see and be where God is already at work'. This motivation addresses the clash I experienced with my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1–2.2) as faith is not confined to within church walls. The approach also builds on deliberations described by Habermas, Tracy, and Williams in the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1–4.3) and the mix of conversations recorded in my research diary within and beyond Church structures. As a communications advisor I believe there is a danger that the action and talk about the Church 'going out into the world' can be miscommunicated and misunderstood as being about crossing borders. The 'going out' is not as simple as it can be portrayed in what is a complex network of multiple public

squares. There are varying levels of (in)visibility and diversity as outlined in Section One of this chapter rather than one homogenous world.

The validity of such binary borders needs to be explored further. Nausner's writing challenges my focus on borders that led to division. In assessing the political reaction to the September 11 attacks, Nausner (2004, pp.119-132) questions whether one can see polarising borders between what can be understood as a 'homeland', such as a church, and the 'foreign land' of others, such as the public square. I question, using Nausner's (2004, p.120) argument, practices that focus on a specific territory or space. The result is a conflation between religion, territory, and defined borders: 'The understanding of the 'land' as 'turf' which can be cut into neat squares, and of the faithful as belonging to a single square cut off from other squares witnesses to a dangerous simplification'. A border for Nausner (2004, p.123) would not mark a rigid dividing line where religion and culture can be separated. Rather, borders in the public square are places of encounter and negotiation rather than engagement being prevented by rigid lines of separation.

The complexity of borders is addressed in the concept of blurred borders from the writing of practical theologian, John Reader. The expression 'blurred borders' is used to understand a framework for the public square that is growing in complexity, cannot be neatly divided, and is changing and more fluid in nature. Reader (2008, p.17) says that because of globalisation, practical theology can never take the stance of it being business as usual. Rather, he says a new response is needed. A blurring of borders through globalisation challenges the practice of Christian ministry: 'Tried and tested means of structuring and organizing our lives are brought into question and it will not do simply to resort to traditional categories of thought and analysis as responses are formulated' (p.17). I apply this argument to the public square to suggest it is no longer possible to see it as one single homogenous public square. This does not mean a new beginning for the public square but what Reader (2008) sees as a combination of the 'old' and 'new' framework of the public square. As an example, Reader (p.10) says the borders of nations are crossed continually by activities such as global finance and the threat of terrorism. He says these new 'porous' borders exist alongside the old borders. The co-existence can lead to tension as people still desire a distinct identity that borders in the past have maintained: 'The more the boundaries become porous and blurred, the more people will feel the need to establish difference clearly and distinctly and yet the attempts to do so will meet with resistance'. I experienced resistance as the Church maintained strong borders to keep its identity in society (see 3.2–2.6).

The concept of 'porous borders' is useful for my understanding of the changing sociological nature of communications. Borders are not static. An example is the change between what is deemed by society to be private and public on social media because of easier access to photos. Another example is that during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 people worked from home. They attended meetings on Zoom and other communication platforms. The private space of home became more public. The border between public and private was blurred. Some users had functions online to 'blur out' their home background. Consumers of news can also create news such as on social media and so the border is blurred between the consumer and creator of information. Reader (2008, p.11) uses what I find a startling term to mark the change in space for discourse. There is a move from a 'monogamy of space' to a 'polygamy of space'. Rather than simply face-to-face contact there is now social media and virtual meetings. Communication has brought complexity and fluidity to the public square.

The 'polygamy of space' can be demonstrated by the multiple ways in which communication can occur in the public square through blurred borders. In Aotearoa New Zealand there is no longer one evening news bulletin on television that everyone watches. A church can have its own video channel. People decide when and where to get their news, and social media has its own comments about religion. There are many sources of news and ways to tell of news. A hierarchy and institution of the public square that determines the rituals and boundaries of how information is known no longer exists.

The concept from Reader suggests that my border experiences (see 3.2-3.6) can now be interpreted as being about moving between multiple public squares that have blurred borders. The public square is then not neatly divided into the secular and the sacred. Rather, there is a plurality of beliefs and conversations in multiple public squares that results in multiple borders that are blurred in nature. I do not abandon the concept and language of the public square but rather have an understanding of multiple public squares with blurred borders. This way of seeing borders is important for me as a communications advisor. I can see the potential for engagement and communication through a blurred border where similarity and difference can be negotiated (see 4.2-4.3 Tracy and Williams on negotiation). The concept of blurred borders throws fresh light on Jagessar's (2015a, p.258) argument. He suggested that cultures are porous rather than existing in a pure form and do 'leak' into each other. I suggest the same applies to the existence of multiple public squares – they are porous and 'leak' into each other. The blurred borders allow the potential for interaction where similarity and difference can be negotiated and explored.

The writing of Nausner and Reader is a useful way to consider the theoretical perspectives and data as to how borders can be about connection or separation. Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (see 4.1-4.3) all recognise the importance of deliberation and communication. Their theories are compatible with blurred borders. There is the 'linguistically created' public sphere for Habermas (1989, p.27) that has partial publics and porous boundaries in the creation of public opinion. For Tracy (1984, p.234) there is a publicness of theology that requires a public facing Church. The publicness is an organising principle that has mutually critical correlations where theology addresses a public or a public addresses theology. Practices are then based on encounter and negotiation rather than division. Williams crosses boundaries and seeks connection with the other. Higton (2004, p.10) notes that Williams crosses boundaries because of an identity and vision in Christ that he believes can have a visible effect in the world.

The data from Chapter Five in Series B suggests there are multiple borders. The data indicates my practice across society included worship and media enquiries. The multiple conversations suggest there were multiple borders. The coding records experiences of uncertainty, frustration, and isolation as part of my practice. These examples suggest my practice involved tension at borders. An example of the tension was the Church Property Trustees wanting to maintain identity and ownership in deciding the future of Christchurch Cathedral while other publics, such as the media, had contrasting views. The concept of blurred borders suggests a new way to understand these encounters which could suggest new forms of practice. This was explored further in Series C coding (see 6.3).

6.2.1 Summary
In this section I have used the concept of blurred borders to further understand my experiences in the public square and those of others, the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1-4.3), and the data (see 5.2-5.6). The suggestion of blurred borders builds on the previous section by suggesting multiple public squares that have blurred borders. The argument for the existence of multiple public squares and blurred borders suggests a new framework to understand the organisation of the public square that can lead to encounter and engagement rather than separation. A key part of working with such borders is the nature of the interaction which is addressed in the next section using the theme of negotiation.

6.3 Negotiation

What can the theme of negotiation contribute to an understanding of the public square?

This section considers the theme of negotiation and what it can contribute to my understanding of the public square. The theme emerged in my practice and then through the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1-4.3) and the gathered data (see 5.1-5.6). I suggest that negotiation reflects an understanding of the public square that builds on the concepts of multiple public squares and blurred borders. Such concepts increase the potential and significance of negotiation in public discourse in comparison to the conceptualisation of a single homogenous public square.

The theme of negotiation emerged from the coding process. Negotiation was also referred to earlier in the thesis as part of my practice, experience, and context (see 3.1-3.6). I described a 'negotiation' of borders as I lived within borders and crossed borders. This was through roles in church music, then broadcasting, police, and ministry. There was negotiation of relationships as a reporter with the Church and when I managed media for the Church. I negotiated what I experienced as borders characterised by difference and separation.

My spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1-2.2) prompted me as a practitioner to use negotiation rather than see faith-based discourse isolated from parts of society. An example was being asked to take the funeral for a teenager who died in a car crash. The funeral was at his school in the assembly hall. My spiritual whakapapa and worldview were that God can be known in all parts of the world – the whole world is a theological reality. I needed to be careful with the language that was used. There was negotiation to use the right language for his family and for the school, neither of which had religious affiliation. In another example, there was also negotiation to ensure bishops used language that could be widely understood when being interviewed by the media. Words that the Church takes for granted such as liturgy and altar were not understood by reporters and so needed to be explained or substituted with other words.

The negotiation did on occasion turn into debate and argument for which the word conflict could be used. It is useful to revisit the Christchurch Cathedral story where there was conflict between the media and the Church. In one example Bishop Victoria Matthews was pushed by an interviewer about whether the Anglican Church had the right to decide what would happen to the Cathedral after it was severely damaged by a series of earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, (NewstalkZB, 2012). The bishop argued it was the right of the Diocese to make the decision. The interviewer suggested the bishop did not have the public's support to make

such a decision. He asked Bishop Victoria if she had the public's confidence and she responded, 'I actually answer to my God, my Standing Committee, I answer to Church Property Trustees and I answer to the people of the Diocese'. She went on to say, 'I don't actually get up in the morning and wonder what the public opinion is. For example, I live my life committed to the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and I don't wonder whether that meets with the majority of public opinion'.

Bishop Victoria described the role of the bishop in her answer. The comment could also be interpreted, as it was by the radio host, that the voices of the wider public were not relevant to the bishop. She could have answered the question in a way that suggested negotiation and accounted for multiple publics and opinions. However, negotiation requires the willingness of both parties and it was not the role of the bishop to negotiate the cathedral outcome. Interactions such as this meant that Church leaders would sometimes be hesitant to agree to interviews. There was nothing to negotiate with the radio station after that interview. There was an erosion of trust because of the nature of the interview. The theme of negotiation can be considered as a way to bring about dialogue at borders rather than argument and debate that leads to separatism.

The theme of negotiation can be further interpreted through the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1- 4.3) and the data (see 5.1- 5.6). Habermas suggests that through discourse and deliberation there is negotiation in a linguistically created space. Negotiation is then part of public reasoning and rationality. Habermas (1996, p.322) refers to discourse where validity claims are settled through the integration of views to a mutual understanding which can include bargaining and a process of argumentation. This integration occurs through everyday language. Habermas (p.352) says it must not be bypassed in a paternalistic way or by a closed system such as the mass media that stops such interaction.

The public square is then a place for varied claims of validity to use the approach of Habermas. The following vignettes are examples of how I see negotiation being part of the public square as claims of validity are made. A global climate protest on September 20th 2019 attracted millions of participants including school children who led school strikes in 2018. Politicians, singers, trade union representatives, doctors and nurses, and employees from Amazon and Google joined the action. The strikes took place on every continent, in cities and in towns from Fiji to London and Antarctica. There was a large social media component. The protest was ahead of the United Nations General Assembly and the Climate Action Summit. World leaders were told they were not doing enough to protect the world for future generations. *The Guardian* newspaper said it would no longer use the

phrase 'climate change' but rather 'climate emergency', 'crisis' or 'breakdown' and 'global heating' rather than 'global warming' (Zeldin-O'Neill, 2019) In this example *The Guardian* newspaper gave its own perspective and acknowledged the negotiation about language in society.

A second example was when the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, wrote in *The New York Times* about work with social media giants to reduce the levels of violent online material. There was subsequent reporting in mainstream media and social media. This was after a gunman broadcast live on social media his March 2019 attack on two mosques in Christchurch. In the attacks 50 people were killed and another 39 injured (Ardern, 2019).

> Social media connects people. And so, we must ensure that in our attempts to prevent harm that we do not compromise the integral pillar of society that is freedom of expression. But that right does not include the freedom to broadcast mass murder.

These two vignettes show negotiation in the public square through the existence of multiple overlapping publics. In the first vignette there is the claim of a climate crisis. This is done on the streets across the world by overlapping publics from schools and corporates. Alongside the street protest there is also the coverage on mainstream media and social media that is creating a public challenge to the world leaders at the United Nations. The leaders at the UN are another public part of the negotiation of views. In the second vignette, the Prime Minister of New Zealand used the power of the mainstream media and social media in an effort to reduce the levels of violent online material. Ardern was making a validity claim about the lifeworld, to use the language of Habermas (1992, p.444), in a prominent daily newspaper. This was a conversation with various publics from world leaders to the social media corporations that drew in further participants. Rather than binary borders, Ardern was seeking mutual understanding and negotiation to reduce online violence. The street protest and the written protest I see as forms of negotiation between what can be understood as counter-publics (see 4.1).

For public theology on topics such as social media and climate change, Tracy (1975, p.79) suggests methods that negotiate similarity and difference. There is a correlational method through interpretation of the Christian tradition and the contemporary experience. Tracy also finds ways for negotiation in discourse through his methods of the religious classic and the analogical imagination.

Williams (2012, p.35) sees negotiation as a way to include faith-based discourse in wider society. He says such conversations can escape the 'conventional boundaries of public life' and bring more than consumerism and self-interest:

> I am arguing that the sphere of public and political negotiation flourishes only in the context of larger commitments and visions, and that if this is forgotten or repressed by a supposedly neutral ideology of the public sphere, immense danger is done to the moral energy of a liberal society.

Williams' writing on various topics suggests negotiation. His style of dialogue with other theologians and philosophers is described by Higton as being one of 'attentive negotiation'. (Williams, 2007, p.xxii)

The process of coding my research diary (see 5.6) in Series C focused on reactions and experiences I had as part of my practice as a communications advisor. The reactions and experiences were an important part of my practice in seeking to further understand the public square. These were coded as achievement, uncertainty, negotiation, confusion, isolation, and frustration. While there was limited data, negotiation was the predominant theme across my practice both with media and stakeholder groups. This suggests it is important for understanding the public square. As I interpreted the data from the coding process, I recorded negotiation more than any other experience or reaction.

6.3.1 Summary

This section has considered how negotiation was a theme in my own practice and experience, the theoretical perspectives, and the coding of my research diary. My initial understanding of negotiation outlined in Chapter Three (see 3.1-3.6) has changed as I have interpreted the data. That is because of the two ways in which the theme of negotiation can contribute to my understanding of the public square. First, negotiation is a way to understand the public square in which there are perspectives to consider from multiple publics across blurred borders. In the protests about the climate crisis and violence on social media there are different voices and points of view that make up the public square. These are heard by negotiation through different publics and blurred borders. The second way that negotiation is a strong theme is that it is a skill that is required to work with multiple public squares and blurred borders. Negotiation was a skill I was already using before this research but is now better understood. I suggest that multiple publics and blurred borders can be impeded and unrecognised by hierarchy or a deference to authority but bring about communication through the negotiation and deliberation of different points of view. An example is that

climate change as a topic existed in what could be called a counter-public and was not initially recognised by those in authority and world leadership. That situation has changed. There are now global summits as world leaders negotiate climate change initiatives.

6.4 Sanctuary/Non-sanctuary

What can the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary contribute to an understanding of the public square?

This section will outline how the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary emerged in the research and consider what sanctuary means as a word. The section will then consider how the theme relates to my spiritual whakapapa, worldview (see 2.1- 2.2), and the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1- 4.3). The section argues that the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary is an over simplification of a public square that is growing in complexity through multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation. The theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary is a stage of thinking in my practice to be recognised rather than being about new theory and practice.

The theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary emerged from the Series B coding of my research diary (see 5.6). The coding indicated that my practice was both within the Church and outside the Church. I summarised this as sanctuary/non-sanctuary. The practices included: worship, the cathedral website, handling media enquiries, maintaining stakeholder relationships, and work as a talkback host on radio Newstalk ZB. As I look back on the summary of the data it is significant that I chose a binary description to suggest borders. The description reflects my earlier practice and experience (see 3.2- 3.4) which is now challenged by the argument of the thesis.

An initial consideration is how the word sanctuary is used and understood. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, 2005, p.1462) defines the sanctuary as the part of the church containing the altar. The altar is where I am involved in worship as an ordained priest. The dictionary refers to it being the area of the church that is reserved for the clergy. This area I refer to as the sanctuary. A way to understand the meaning of sanctuary is to consider the role of the temple in the Old and New Testament. The temple was very much part of the religious, political, and social settings of Jesus' ministry. Before the temple in Jerusalem, that houses the Ark of the Covenant, there were a number of places of prayer for the tribes of Israel that were known as sanctuaries. The temple was set apart as a place of prayer and only Jewish men could enter the sanctuary. The holiness of the temple space can be understood through the narrative of the cleansing of the temple that features in all four canonical gospels. There is an idea of the sanctuary being set apart in the church as a

place that is reserved and seen as holy and not for everyday activities. In scripture there are many references to the sanctuary as the place where God dwelt with the Hebrew people. They are asked in Exodus 25:8 to make a sanctuary for God which was the portable tabernacle that was used in the wilderness.

The theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary can suggest the idea that my practice, both within and beyond the Church, is based in the belief that is articulated in the sanctuary. I see some potential for all communications to start with what is believed. The sanctuary is a place where belief is communicated through word and action. However, that is a matter of practice rather than an understanding of the public square - a simple approach to understand a complex public square. I suggest that while the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary may record where practice occurs, in a way that provides some learnings, it does not contribute to an understanding of the public square. The theme oversimplifies in three ways: the concept of borders, the theoretical perspectives, and the other gathered data and arguments being developed in this chapter.

The theme suggests either one binary border or no border rather than multiple publics and blurred borders that require negotiation. The idea of a place that is set apart can suggest God is more present in the sanctuary than the non-sanctuary, which clashes with my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1- 2.2). While I saw the narrative of the cross and resurrection as being for the whole world, the communications practice tended to only tell the narrative within the church walls. I recognise a sanctuary can be set apart but it should not be sealed off. Martyn Percy (2017), an English practical theologian, when speaking about consecrated space, said it was important to remember that Jesus' ministry was rarely in religious buildings. He encouraged the insiders to look outward: 'Jesus rarely ministered or healed in religious buildings. He was not a synagogue planter or grower of churches'. Rather, Percy suggests that Jesus communicated in public spaces. The writing of Nausner and Reader on blurred borders suggested that faith is not lived out in a defined space or marked out territory. The interactions are not as simple as a binary border that is suggested by the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary.

Second, the theme also suggests that the sanctuary is part of the framework and understanding of the public square in a way that is oversimplified. This occurs at a time when religious affiliation to the Church as an institution is declining (see 3.9). The theme would not be an accurate understanding of the pluralistic context in which I practice in either Aotearoa New Zealand or the United Kingdom. The statistics from 2018 show that in Aotearoa New Zealand just under half the population identified with a religion. To

understand the sanctuary as part of the framework of the public square would not reflect the reality of the context. The risk of simplification is also highlighted by Gordon Lynch (2012, pp.2-4) who suggests that what he calls the 'sacred' is woven through everyday life which is beyond the boundaries of religious institutions. The sacred are known through new forms of religious identity and affiliation. A further complication suggests Lynch (p.9), is that the sacred is not a synonym for religion. There are many forms of the sacred and religion through which meaning is made. The phrase 'sanctuary/non-sanctuary' refers to the rituals of a specific form of belief such as in Judaism and Christianity. There are other forms of the sacred and these need to be specifically recognised rather than being described as if they were part of one homogenous faith tradition.

My experience as a teaching assistant in an undergraduate course on the 'Bible in Popular Culture' at Auckland University from 2007-2010 is that there is no defined dividing line or border between the sanctuary and the wider world. The Bible is used in worship that occurs in the sanctuary but also for private devotion beyond the sanctuary. Popular culture intersects with the Bible in multiple forms from television series to comics that have multiple interpretations. My experience was of a border that had different perspectives and levels of agreement as to how the Bible was part of popular culture. One example was how same-sex relationships would be part of a narrative in a fictional series. The local minister would refer to the Bible and say the relationship was not recognised by the Church. Graham (2013, p.3). describes the intersection between religion and popular culture as being complicated. She sees boundaries in society as moving between belief and non-belief with 'simultaneous religious decline, mutation and resurgence' which I suggest cannot be understood through the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary. Rather there are borders that are blurred and changing, which require careful understanding.

Third, the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1- 4.3) focus on flows of communication rather than a border. Habermas (2006b, p.417) describes the public sphere as a shared space of communication that is created by language and is 'non-organised' and 'unruly'. Tracy (1981, pp.450-454) insists on the publicness of theology in 'messy pluralism' and Williams (2012, p.35) sees faith-based discussions as escaping the 'conventional boundaries of public life'. These descriptions about faith-based conversations do not suggest a simple binary border of sanctuary/non-sanctuary whereby faith and everyday life intersect with each other. Rather there is a complex public square.

The complexity of interactions between the Church and wider society has been considered in terms of borders using the writing from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams. It is also important

to refer to expectations from the media and others about whether the Church is part of the public square. On occasions a voice from the sanctuary is expected as part of public discourse but on other occasions it is not. The media often expects a bishop to be the spokesperson when there are many other voices that make up the Church. An example of varied expectations of the Christian Church was a headline on *The Guardian* website on 25th November 2020. It read, 'Dear Archbishop, now is not the time to take a sabbatical' (Armstrong, 2020). The opinion piece argued that it was inappropriate for the Archbishop of Canterbury to take a sabbatical for spiritual renewal during a pandemic and economic crisis. The presence of the Archbishop was seen as part of the job of religion. The story is an example of where the view from the sanctuary is expected, but it is not always the case that the media will search out the views of Church leaders. The expectations on bishops for comment is greater in the case of an established Church, such as the Church of England, where bishops sit in the House of Lords. In Aotearoa New Zealand there is not the same expectation for, or visibility of, bishops to be leaders in society.

Such a conclusion about my use of the term sanctuary/non-sanctuary raises the question of the place of the Church in my understanding of the public square. The Church could be considered as on the outside of the public square, as I did in Chapter Three, or could also be seen as a public. Given my role as a communications advisor for the Church this is an important consideration. While I am not answering the question of whether the Church is a public or not, it is relevant to my understanding of the public square.

Warner (2002, p.88) suggests a Church is not a public unless it is engaged in human action and activity. Therefore, membership and the existence of a Church alone does not bring the status of being a public. This reflects the reliance on a linguistically created space from Habermas (1989, p.27). The characteristics of a public that were considered in Section One included being self-organised, the involvement of both people who were strangers and those who were familiar, and the use of speech that attracted the attention of others. These characteristics suggest that when the Church is not engaged in dialogue then it is not seen as a public. The theoretical perspectives (see 4.1-4.3) and the research data (see 5.2-5.6) all suggest that faith-based organisations can be part of the public square, which I understand as the Church negotiating blurred borders in a context of multiple public squares.

6.4.1 Summary
The theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary arose from an analysis of my practice. I have concluded that it does not make an effective contribution to an understanding of the public square. When I consider the theme and engage with arguments from previous chapters and

this chapter, the theme is a simplification of a complex public square. While the argument does work in parts; it has residual value because of the binary way in which it considers how the Church interacts with the public square and so provides a foil to a more complex analysis. The theme also suggests the Church as a permanent part of the public square when this section has suggested that dialogue determines the structure of the public square.

While the theme does not make an effective contribution to my understanding of the public square it is important to recognise that it has emerged from my practice and raises three points for further consideration. First, the theme highlights that the practice of a communication advisor can exist beyond the walls of the Church and leaves open further exploration of what this practice can involve. Second, the theme helps me to understand that my practice and my understanding of the public square was based on a deficient understanding of the reality in which I was a practitioner. A third consideration is that the theme of sanctuary/non-sanctuary is a way of thinking about communication in some parts of the Church and this needs to be recognised.

6.5 Changing Public Square

How does the concept of a changing and more fluid public square impact on my understanding of the public square?

This section brings together the material from the previous four sections and summarises the chapter. Each of the sections considered themes that emerged from the data (see 5.1-5.6). These were placed in dialogue with my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1-2.2), my experience and practice (see 3.1- 3.6), and the theoretical perspectives (see 4.1-4.3). The sections in this chapter were carefully ordered to be able to build on the argument from the previous section where it was required – from multiple public squares, to blurred borders. This section first summarises the themes from the chapter and how the themes impact on my understanding of the public square. Second, there is consideration of the use of language and how a new understanding of the public square requires new language to reflect what is understood.

The thesis, and the subsequent research, emerged from questioning the significance of growing tension in my practice as a church communications advisor (see 1.1). My experience and understanding of the public square, and that of others, was largely based on a single homogenous public square. The conclusion to Chapter Three questioned whether the theme of borders, that were binary in nature and about difference, that led to the isolation of faith-based discourse, and subsequent understandings of the public square,

needed to be reconceived. The reconceiving of the public square drew on the theoretical perspectives, the research data, and the interpretation of the data in this chapter.

Each section in this chapter outlined a changing public square and an argument that progresses from a single public square to multiple public squares. I have developed new language for my understanding of the public square. The language is multiple public squares (see 6.1) that have a spectrum of (in)visibility and diversity. Following on from an acceptance of the multiple publics squares there are also blurred borders (see 6.2). Negotiation (see 6.3) as a theme enables me as a practitioner to understand and work with the multiple publics and blurred borders.

6.5.1 The Chapter

My role was about finding opportunities for the Church to have a presence in what I called the 'structure' of the public square. I sought to communicate in a pre-existing structure. Language and communication fitted into the structure. I have come to realise that my practice was based on a deficient understanding of the public square. The suggestion of a changing public square that I have explored and argued for in this research means the act of communication, that uses language, forms the public square. Language comes first. In each interaction the public square is formed by language and each time the language and participants are different. This radically changes my understanding of the public square.

The writing of Habermas (1989, p.27) was crucial for this change in understanding. He identified a 'linguistically created space' he called the public sphere. The language formed a place of reasoning and rationality for society through which citizens could speak about public matters such as religion. Publics are created and recreated through changing human action and have an epistemic role in society. Tracy (1981, pp..6-20) in his writing identified three publics in which discourse occurred using correlational methods that recognised a diversity of opinions. Williams (2016a, interview) suggested there are multiple public squares that are created through language. Habermas, Tracy, and Williams all accepted the concept of a changing public square that occurred because of pluralism and technology.

Each of the sections in this chapter progressed an argument for multiple public squares that are less about institutions and more about discourse. While not contributing to an understanding of the public square, the previous section (see 6.4, sanctuary/non-sanctuary) suggested the importance of an accurate understanding of the context in which a practitioner is seeking to communicate.

6.5.2 Language

In adopting a new understanding of the public square an important consideration is the use of language that reflects a changing public square and multiple public squares. While my understanding through this research is multiple public squares, I refer to the singular by using 'the public square'. The tension that existed in my experience, and was explored in this thesis, is demonstrated by the tension in the language between whether there is a singular public square or multiple public squares. The term public square, as already discussed in the thesis is commonly used in my own practice and in the literature. I am not throwing away the concept of the public square but rather changing my understanding of the public square. For that reason, and as a way to use language that can reflect my understanding and practice, I intend to use the term public square(s). This is an adaption of the approach used by Stoddart (2011, p.145). He described visibility as being on a spectrum between invisibility and visibility which he summed up using the term (in)visibility. The use of the (s) by me indicates the changing and fluid existence of the public square(s). The term acknowledges the concept of the public square but also reflects that it is continually changing because of the existence of overlapping multiple publics. An understanding of public square(s) accommodates the idea of multiple borders and places of negotiation that in my experience is not compatible with the single public square. To talk about public square(s) reflects the understanding that I have come to in this thesis.

The understanding and language of public square(s) is a recognition that communication in society does not follow one pattern. There are multiple possibilities. This was described in the writing of Habermas (2006b, p.415) who referred to 'flows' of communication. The writing of Dewey (1927) and Warner (2002) on publics suggests there are 'infinite' public squares. These insights are reflected in the use of the term public square(s).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented a new understanding of the public square through an exploration and interpretation of the data from Chapter Five. I have developed a new language for my new understanding of the public square. As a researcher I have two understandings of the public square. The first understanding, that I recognise as being deficient, is of a single homogenous public square based on a concept of borders in terms of structures and relationships. The second understanding is of public square(s). The public square(s) have blurred borders that overlap with each other through negotiation. I suggest that the Church has held onto a more traditional mode of communication associated with the term public square. This has produced a lag effect. Communication in society has changed through globalisation, technology, and pluralism but the Church has lagged behind, using a fixed

understanding of the public square. This leads to tension. The lag effect means that the Church risks spending its time looking for opportunities in the public square when the territory has changed to public square(s). This means the publics referred to by Dewey (1927) and Warner (2002) in this chapter may not be seen or heard by the Church and the Church may also not be seen or heard as a public. The Church then risks losing its own voice in society through an outdated understanding of the public square that is based on structures from which human engagement is expected rather than human engagement and language being how the public square is formed.

The next chapter suggests an understanding of public square(s) requires new practices. Chapter Seven explores how my practice can reflect such a changed understanding of the public square through the concept of mediatisation and the importance of the imagination using the concept of play.

Chapter Seven
Relearning the public square(s)

Introduction

This chapter uses two concepts to develop understanding and methods of practice in the public square(s). The concepts explore a new understanding of the public square from Chapter Six that I called the public square(s). The new understanding of public square(s) I refer to as model B (in contrast to model A – my original understanding of the public square). The concept of mediatisation is used to draw together threads from the arguments made in the thesis and leads to a contribution to knowledge. The concept of play also draws together arguments made in the thesis. The concept is used to explore new possibilities for the practice of a church communications advisor and leads to a contribution to my practice. The chapter integrates themes from the thesis to answer the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square enables good practice in the work of a church communications advisor.

The chapter is called 'Relearning the public square(s)'. There is relearning for me as a researcher and practitioner of what I called the public square. Relearning is about new understanding and insight that enables contributions to knowledge, to my practice, and to my professional community. The relearning involves self-reflexivity as I replace practices that are not sustained by knowledge and build on practices that remain viable. The concepts of mediatisation and play contribute to the processes of relearning. The chapter is in two sections.

Section One considers the two models of the public square from the conclusion to Chapter Six. The concept of mediatisation is used to further explore the change from the single homogenous public square (model A see 3.2-3.6) to the public square(s), (model B see 6.5). Mediatisation as a concept examines changes in the modes of communication and in the development of a mediatised society. The developments in technology become a 'moulding force' (Hepp, 2012, p.14) on communicative action (see 4.1 – Habermas). The section defines the concept of mediatisation and uses it to provide further understanding and development of the themes of multiple public squares, blurred borders and negotiation from the interpretation of the data from Chapter Six. There is consideration of my border experiences (see 3.2- 3.6) and the tension between a mediatised society and an un-mediatised Church.

Section Two draws on the work of practical theologian Courtney Goto (2016). I am interested in how the characteristics of play, suggested by Goto in her language of playing,

can shape communication practices in the public square(s). Goto's writing provides a creative approach to the conceptual findings that complements the analytical nature of the concept of mediatisation. Section Two builds an argument that the characteristics of play enable practices that are able to create and work with multiple publics, blurred borders and accommodate negotiation. The section demonstrates renewed thinking about my communications practice. The characteristics of play are used to review my past and present practice as a communications advisor. This demonstrates that my practice is better able to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

7.1 Two Understandings of the Public Square

The thesis builds an argument that the public square(s) is continually changing in its organisation and modes of communication. The two understandings of the public square (see 6.5), and the difference between them, demonstrate the concept of a changing and more fluid public square(s) and ideas about it that are widely held. The understandings also illustrate a change in my initial understanding of the public square as a researcher and practitioner.

My initial understanding (model A) was outlined in Chapters One and Three (see 3.2-3.6). A single homogenous public square with a focus on borders in its organisation and modes of communication. Model A was challenged by my spiritual whakapapa and worldview (see 2.1- 2.2). Faith and the reality of God are not sealed off from society and contained within Church structures. Rather the whole world is a theological reality. Chapter Two outlined my worldview, and ontological and epistemological approach to this study. It used Geertz' (1973, p.311) writing about a 'thick description of culture' and 'webs of significance' through which God's existence could be known and experienced across society. Model A was also challenged by the theoretical perspectives of Chapter Four (see 4.1- 4.3). Habermas, Tracy, and Williams identified a role for faith-based discourse in wider society where difference in faith was explored through language rather than such discourse being avoided. The raw data (see 5.2-5.5) from the interviews with Williams and Wilson also suggests difference in the public square rather than a homogenous public square. The interpretation of the data (see 6.1- 6.5), that led to the concept of model B, also challenges the understanding and practice of faith-based discussions being separate from society. Model B is the negotiation of blurred borders in the context of multiple public square(s) that are formed through language and communicative action (see Habermas 4.1).

Model A of the single homogenous public square suggests a structure into which I sought for the Church as an institution to have a voice, largely through the media. Model B, through the

argument built up in Chapters Four to Six, turns this upside down. The public square(s) is self-creating through language rather than through the existence of institutions such as the Church. Model B suggests that if the Church does not contribute to public discourse then it is not part of the public square(s). The concept of mediatisation is a way to explore the difference between the two models.

7.2 Mediatisation

The concept of mediatisation as a social and cultural process was developed by researchers in sociology in the late 20th Century. Mainstream theorists in media studies (Schulz, 2004; Couldry, 2012; Hepp, 2013; Jansson, 2018) reflect a general understanding of mediatisation as being focused on the role and influence of the media in culture and society. There is a moulding and shaping of communicative action across society. This occurs through the amalgamation of media technology in non-media contexts such as the government, sport, and education. A structural transformation occurs in institutions because of altered forms of mediation. Marshall McLuhan (1964, pp.3-7) says the 'medium is the message' in positive and negative ways as enhanced options for communication are appropriated in society. McLuhan (p.57) says media have the 'power' to 'reshape lives'.

While the media is not the focus of this thesis, there is a need to recognise that through mediatisation the media have a more prominent role as part of society through which faith-based discourse can occur. The term 'media' in this chapter refers to processes through which content is made and distributed that includes mainstream media to mobile phones. Digital media is the latest form of technology that can influence daily lives, such as apps on phones (Couldry, 2012, p.2; Mitchell, 2007, p.44). An important distinction exists between mediatisation and mediation. The two terms are used interchangeably to describe the presence of media in society. Hjarvard (2013, p.19) says mediation is about communication using certain media in a specific context. Mediatisation is a more long-term process whereby modes of communication change because of the media's influence. The change in the modes of communication means society is mediatised.

Mediatisation is not a new concept. I suggest that it is a key concept in the understanding and practices of a church communications advisor. The developing role of the media was noted by Hoover (1998, p.26) more than 20 years ago. Hoover says that while the media and religion are separate spheres, the Church cannot see the role of the media as optional – rather interaction is essential:

Instead, we need know to recognise that the media sphere is itself a place where the once-separate domains of 'religion' and 'media' now meet and in which new senses, symbols, practices, and meanings of 'religion' and 'the religious' are constituted and generated.

Hoover 2016, p.16

The Covid-19 pandemic, that began in January 2020, highlights the rapid mediatisation of societal discourse from platforms for business meetings to church worship on zoom. Stig Hjarvard (2013, p.17), a Danish researcher in media studies, provides the following definition of mediatisation:

By the mediatisation of culture and society we understand the process whereby culture and society to an increasing degree become dependent on the media and their logic. This process is characterised by a *duality*, in that the media have become *integrated* into the operations of other social institutions and cultural spheres, while also acquiring the status of social institutions *in their own right* [Italics in original].

Hepp (2013, p.45), a German academic in media and communication theory, rejects Hjarvard's formal recognition of the media as a 'specifically institutionalised social system'. He says Hjarvard's approach would require all institutions to follow the media as a recognised institution. This is important, as my experience (Chapter Three) indicates the Church was hesitant to 'follow the media' and adapt to new media forms of communication. Hepp (p.50) takes a social constructionist approach. He suggests mediatisation is a concept that presents a 'particular panorama of the world'. Hepp (p.54) says mediatisation accounts for the 'moulding forces of the media' through the expansion of media cultures.

The 'moulding force' of media is an important factor in the difference between the two models of the public square. A change in the modes of communication and a mediatised society suggests there are potentially new forms of communications practice. In model B, the media 'mould' how communication occurs. Mobile phones can become part of how families communicate during the day. A phone app during the Covid-19 pandemic can tell you of possible contact with a person who has the virus. The media are part of communication through processes of mediatisation in model B that are not part of model A.

Two perspectives on mediatisation have consolidated in recent years. The institutional perspective, from Hjarvard (2013, pp.2-3) concentrates on how institutions adapt to the influence of the media. There is a focus on news media and commercial broadcasters. The

social constructivist approach, Hepp (2013) and Jansson (2018, p.31), focuses on how media are part of the construction of social worlds. A difference between the two approaches is the concept of 'media logic.' While central to Hjarvard's writing, it is rejected by the social constructivist approach. The concept emerged in 1979 from American sociologists, David Altheide and Robert Snow (Altheide, 1989, p.417). They proposed that everyday life experiences, were informed by, and reflected, the mediums through which they existed. They called this media logic (p.417). Media logic recognises that the media have their own formats and procedures through which information is selected and presented in any cultural context that is not context specific.

Swedish researcher Andre Jansson (2018, p.3) says there is a lack of critical perspectives on the ambiguous nature of mediatisation in everyday life. He says while mediatisation liberates through instant communication there is also a loss of control through a reliance on the media. Jansson (2018, p.7) says there is 'a state of growing contradiction' between autonomy and dependence. The work of Hjarvard, and criticism by Hepp and Jansson, provides a wider framework to understand the concept of a changing public square.

In considering the change from model A to model B there are four key themes of mediatisation that I argue indicate the concept of changing public square(s) in organisation and modes of communication. First is Hjarvard's (2013, p.17) institutional approach to mediatisation while Hepp (2013, p.54) and Jansson (2018, p.5) have a social constructivist approach that is less prescriptive. I find the approach from Hepp (2013, p.50) useful as a 'particular panorama of the world' means there is recognition of the 'moulding force' of the media. The second is, Hjarvard's (2013, p.17) concept of media logic. The third is a shared communications space that Hjarvard (2013, p.21) calls a 'commons'. The fourth is Jansson's (2018, p.3) identification of the ambiguity of mediatisation between autonomy and dependence. These themes are considered in relation to multiple squares, blurred borders, and negotiation.

Table 7.1 is from the work of Hjarvard. I have adapted it to refer to the development of media in Aotearoa New Zealand. The columns illustrate the role of the media as part of the processes of mediatisation.

Dominant Period	A Institutional Character	B Dominant Logic	C Media System	D Purposes/Objectives
Up to 1920	The media instruments of other institutions with urbanised economic growth	Steered by particular interests	Party press, scientific journals, religious publications, arts magazines, etc.	Persuasion and agitation for a specific interest in an institution
1920-1980	Media as cultural institution with national identity challenged from 1960s	Public steering through a national broadcasting service with media an arm of govt but independence growing from 1960s with the NZBC	Public service radio from 1923 and a television monopoly from 1960, corporate press ownership from 1960s and a semi- independent broadcasting system	Representation of society's common interests in a public arena with some government censorship
1980 onwards	Semi-independent media institution and integrated into other institutions with a reliance on technology	Media professionalism and audience/user involvement	Commercial and competitive media, satellite media, internet, mobile and interactive and social media with a decline in newspapers	Servicing of audiences, sales to target groups in a differentiated media system

Table 7.1

7.2.1 Mediatisation – Multiple Public Squares

Table 7.1 shows the concept of a changing public square in its organisation and modes of communication. In the columns marked A to D, through the 20th Century the media become more of a 'moulding force' in how communication occurs in society. There is a trend from direct communication, such as printed material, to selected audiences, to communication directed at multiple audiences such as through radio and television. The media then become more involved in communicative action, such as through social media. Audiences are invited to provide information and comments on stories. An example is to move down Column C from science journals to public service radio and then to social media. There is an increase in the options through which communication can occur in society from print to social media. This expansion, and growing complexity of the public square, demonstrates the move from a

single homogenous public square to multiple public square(s) that are formed by language. There is a change in mediums as noted by McLuhan (1964, p.7) that brings a change to society.

The table reflects the concept of changing public square(s) in relation to the use of technology in Aotearoa New Zealand (see 3.9). An example is that the number of households that rely on the mobile phone and the internet as forms of communication doubled from 2000 to 2016. The trends outlined in the table are what Hepp (2013, p.50) calls a 'particular panorama of the world' and what Hjarvard (2013, p.17) calls media logic. There is a shared communications space across multiple publics (Hjarvard, 2013, p.21) with a greater reliance on technology (Jansson, 2018, p.3). The acceptance of both media logic and a particular panorama of the world helps to understand the concept of multiple public square(s) that change in terms of organisation and modes of communication. As media is amalgamed into society, and society is mediatised, the potential for multiple publics increases. As an example, the multiple options of social media replace the homogenous option of print.

The change and progression outlined in Table 7.1 illustrates the growing diversity and complexity of the public square(s) through the existence of multiple publics. These are formed by communicative action (see 4.1). Habermas recognised some plurality in options for communication with partial publics and Tracy (1981, pp.6-20). identified three specific publics in which communication occurred. The growing complexity of the public square(s) is in the number of conversations that are occurring at once on topics from climate change to housing using multiple modes of communication. The complexity is also reflected in Jansson's argument concerning the ambiguity of liberation but also a dependence on technology and so less autonomy.

7.2.3 Mediatisation – Blurred Borders
The progression of mediatisation, and the existence of multiple public square(s), can be understood further through the theme of blurred borders. Column C in the table 7.1 shows a blurring of borders as the forms of media become increasingly part of daily life. The media expands from having a public service role of information to social media being used by individuals. Media reshapes daily life. There is blurring of borders between the media and non-media parts of society. A family gathering will use media technology and distribute photos on social media and the Church can use Facebook to livestream its services. A second blurring of borders occurs between those who create news and those who consume news because of the process of mediatisation. An individual can read news about a protest

or an earthquake on mainstream news but also contribute to the discourse by telling of his or her experience and sharing photos on social media. Consumers can also choose how to obtain their news. The role of social media as a mode of communication for news was highlighted in February 2021 when Facebook withdrew news feeds from Australian users. The news was seen as an important part of public information that was suddenly removed by the social media giant and later restored.

The theoretical perspectives of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams, provide insights about how to work with borders about difference. I understand this as the blurring of borders rather than maintaining borders. Habermas (1992, p.444), describes the role of the public sphere as one in which to hear different 'validity claims'. Williams (2012, p.35) does not follow what he calls 'conventional boundaries' in society but rather the boundaries determined by his belief in God as the rationale for faith-based discourse in society. Communication is determined by an acceptance of human finitude and the known reality of an infinite being.

The process of mediatisation has blurred borders that used to be more defined. There is a new 'logic' and 'panorama of the world' that expects people to have Instagram or a Zoom account to participate in a shared communications space. There is an accepted dependence on media. The 'logic' of such blurred borders was not accepted by the Church, such as the initial use of social media, and is an example of Hepp's (2013, p.45) suggestion that media practices will not be adopted by all institutions. The maintaining of borders and keeping distance from the media and journalists was an option used by Williams during the Lambeth conferences (2016a, interview) and at the Primates Conference (see 3.5). Williams (2016a) described journalists as having a clear role and set of priorities for which they are paid. This was a clear border which I would argue is maintained in model A of the public square but blurred through mediatisation in model B of the public square(s).

7.2.4 Mediatisation - Negotiation

The existence of multiple public squares and blurred borders as illustrated by Table 7.1 creates more possibilities for negotiation than exist in model A in a single homogenous public square. The 'media logic' (Hjarvard, 2013, p.17) and 'panorama of the world' (Hepp, 2013, p.50) that is used to define mediatisation both invites and requires negotiation. The existence of a 'shared communications space' (Hjarvard, 2013, p.21) also invites the use of negotiation to decide what is communicated and the modes of communication to be used that is not evident in model A. A mediatised society increases the options for how communication can occur. The importance of negotiation builds on the argument of blurred borders that can accommodate negotiation rather than borders that are binary in nature. I

argue that the Church maintained a border with the media that was about division (model A) while mediatisation created the opportunity to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

The table enabled an exploration of the process of mediatisation and the themes from the interpreted data. Mediatisation as a concept provides a deeper understanding of model B of the public square(s) through the themes of multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation. Mediatisation also explains how the themes are linked together. A wider use of technology for communication means more opportunities for blurred borders that require negotiation. There is a new understanding of the role of the media and its changed role in society. Indeed, there is a clear shaping of how the media are part of a culture it partly shaped that the Church did not embrace.

7.2.5 Resistance to Mediatisation

Mediatisation was not part of my initial understanding of the public square (model A and Chapter Three). There was no awareness of such theory or any substantive amalgamation of the media into the everyday life of the Church. Therefore, I need to be careful in suggesting there was resistance to what was an unknown.

I recognise that not all parts of society respond to the processes of mediatisation in the same way. The media, and what Hjarvard (2013, p.17) describes as its logic, is not accepted by all. In my experience the Church resisted embracing or understanding such change and so avoided a 'dependence on media' (Jansson 2018, p.3). The avoidance of mediatisation created a tension with media amalgamated into the life of society but not the life of the Church. There was a focus on borders that divided (model A) while the public square(s) were more about multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation that are characteristic of model B. The Church, in its approach to communications, wanted to choose when it was part of the public square and when it was not, through its institutional existence. In doing so it avoided the fluidity of the public square(s) that is part of mediatisation. I have experienced resistance to what I now know as mediatisation since the early 2000s.

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the wider Anglican Communion, in my experience were largely unwilling to adopt a mediatised view of the world and practices that reflect such processes. The ruling body of the Anglican Communion, the Anglican Consultative Council, now recognises its 'circle of influence' is limitless because of the digital age. However, the Communion was slow to make this realisation. The Communion, in one of its own reports, recognised it missed opportunities (Anglican Consultative Council, 2012,

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p.105). There was a lack of strategic communication advice. Communication was a support function rather than being part of its mission. The report (p.105) notes that many in the Church have a 'flight, fright or fight' response to the media. The Church remains stuck in a 'decades old paradigm of communications' that includes sermons and newsletters. This suggests a rejection of changes in modes of communication that created a lag in communications practice. It is important to note the change in Church practices since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. However, before then some parts of the Church were hesitant, in my experience, to interact and depend on media technology.

Simon Barrow (2012, p.175) writes on religion in public life in the United Kingdom. He says parts of the Church 'hold onto a past where their voices were heard more prominently with less questioning' than what occurs now. Barrow and Hoover (2016, p.16) say it is necessary to think about media, religion, and authority in new ways. Together, they illustrate the issue of the Church lagging behind rather than participating in a mediatised society. The framework for communications in society is mediatised but the Church has resisted. Hoover says the Church was mistaken to think people would follow its lead and avoid the changes of mediatisation:

> Religious authority has thus tended to place itself in conflict with one of the important realities of contemporary Western life: the inevitability of media. It simply makes no sense any longer to treat media as though its practice were entirely volitional.
> Hoover, 2016, p.24

The Church is not the only organisation not to accept the processes of mediatisation but I would argue it has been slow to respond to the inevitability of a shared communications space. That highlights borders about difference rather than borders that are blurred and about negotiation.

7.2.6 My Experience
A review of my practices as a communications advisor for the New Zealand Police, and for the Church, suggests a resistance to what Hjarvard (2013, p.2) calls a culture permeated by the media. My practice as a communications practitioner was largely about the management of borders and keeping distance from the media: to avoid media logic (Hjarvard, 2013, p.17) and maintain 'model A' that I call the public square. I was a gatekeeper to the culture of mediatisation. The practices led to polarisation and difference rather than a shared communication space (p.21).

The concept of mediatisation is useful in considering my experience in the debate about whether Christchurch Cathedral should be restored (see 3.5). Four themes of mediatisation can be identified in the debate. There are also multiple public squares and blurred borders.

Hjarvard's (2013, p.17) institutional approach to media explains how the Cathedral debate was constantly in the headlines through mainstream media, social media, and billboards. It was in multiple public squares within and beyond the Church which challenged the Church as an institution. The debate was very much reliant on the process of mediatisation with shared spaces (p.21) for debate, such as social media. The internet meant there was accessibility to the issue for individuals at a local, national, and international level. People did not have to be in the same place at the same time to be part of the conversations. There was a blurring of borders through the use of 'media logic' that brought together multiple publics. There were heritage campaigners, national political figures, civic leaders, lawyers, historians, and some Church members part of the communicative action. There was also a blurring of borders for what was primarily an issue to be decided by the Church that suddenly was a topic for the city. The wide expanse of the conversations was in part because of the wide coverage across the media between multiple public squares.

The debate also changed in how it was conducted. Borders of what I would call social norms were crossed. Jansson (2018, p.3) refers to the 'normalisation of mediated communication' affecting all aspects of life. What became clear was that social processes were inseparable from, and dependent on, the resources of technological mediation. That altered the flavour of the debate with people such as the bishop being targeted. Hjarvard (2013, p.32) says when interactions occur via the media there is a restructuring of social norms. Behaviour, such as ridicule, gossip, and scolding that would not occur in a face-to-face encounter can occur in mediated action. There were several examples of this (see 3.5).

In an experience from the wider Anglican Communion, what I now know as mediatisation was treated as an optional consideration. The experience was detailed in Chapter Three (see 3.5) and it is useful to revisit it with the understanding of mediatisation. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, invited primates, the leaders of the provinces that make up the Anglican Communion, to pray and reflect on the future of the Communion. A series of prayers were circulated worldwide by the Anglican Communion in advance of the meeting at Canterbury in January 2016. It is important to note that the Anglican Communion relied on the institutional nature of mediatisation, as identified by Hjarvard (2013, p.17) to maximise awareness of the conference through social media. Model B of the public square(s) was used. However, the Church had a media blackout during the meeting. There was a move

from using model B as an understanding of the public square to model A. In attempting to decide where faith was discussed, and where it was not, there was unknowingly a rejection of Hjarvard's (p.17) institutional approach to mediatisation and the social constructivist approach of Hepp (2013, p.5). There was an avoidance of media logic (Hjarvard, 2013, p.17) and its influence over culture and society (p.21). The Church wanted to control all information and avoid possible publicity about debate within the Church and a rumoured 'walkout' by some primates.

The two narratives demonstrate that while the Church worked with an understanding of the public square largely using model A, that was focused on borders that divide and polarise, the debate was mediatised and characteristic of model B with multiple public squares, blurred borders and the possibility of negotiation. The model A approach avoided a dependence on the media and wanted to maintain control and decide when information was known. My experiences of borders that divide and polarise reflect assumptions that are challenged by Habermas, Tracy, and Williams with their focus on the diversity of opinions that exist across publics. Two examples are Tracy's three publics, and Williams' argument for procedural secularism. Tracy's (1981, pp.6-20) correlational method expects views from society and the Church to be correlated and explored and ask questions of each other. Williams' (2012, p.27) stance on procedural secularism expects difference to be explored and expressed in public. There is engagement with society in both examples. Forrester (1993, p.70) warns of the dangers of suppressing diversity:

> Authentic dialogue is impossible if it is assumed that one side has both truth and power in its hands, is the giver, the authority, the possessor of truth, and the other side is simply the passive recipient of the communication of the truth.

The practices of a church communications advisor are importantly not only to consider the views of the church but also of others in the public square(s) through the negotiation of blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

7.2.7 Summary

This section has used the concept of mediatisation to explore the understanding of public square(s). Mediatisation enables me to see the difference between the two models of the public square. The concept, in which the practices of the media are amalgamated into the daily life of society (Hjarvard, 2013, p.3; Hepp, 2013, p.40, Jansson, 2018, p.41), has enabled me to better understand the organisation of the public square, its modes of communication, and the importance of multiple publics, blurred borders and negotiation. The

four themes of mediatisation in relation to my experience and the interpreted data have brought new insights and understandings that can be used when considering the practices of a church communications advisor.

The first insight in understanding the public square(s) is that as a practitioner I worked without a theory and an awareness of the processes of mediatisation that through communicative action can create the public square(s). I knew media was essential to my practice, and was becoming more diverse, but I did not think of it conceptually. Mediatisation as a concept helps me to understand further the existence and importance of multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation in understanding the structures of the public square(s) and the modes of communication.

A second insight is that the themes of mediatisation provide knowledge about the inevitability of changing and more fluid public square(s). This is illustrated by the change between model A and model B and the understanding of multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation. The inevitability of change was not recognised by the church. The result was that the Church lagged behind patterns of communication in a mediatised society. It worked with practices associated with what I call model A, while model B was the reality.

The concept of mediatisation highlights the diversity of voices a communications advisor can seek out or anticipate in more fluid public square(s). Such voices can form multiple publics alongside those of the Church in public discourse. The processes of mediatisation accommodate diverse practices through the use of media to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares. Part B considers forms of practice that can engage with such opportunities to enable the work of a church communications advisor.

Section Two
7.3 – Play

The insights gathered from the concept of mediatisation are a basis from which to explore practices that can negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares. I do this by exploring the use of the characteristics of play from the work of practical theologian Courtney Goto. This section builds an argument for Goto's work to address insights from the research to inform my practices as a church communication advisor. Goto's writing enables me to engage with my experience and practice, the theoretical perspectives, the interpreted data, and mediatisation. The critical engagement is a basis from which to develop creative forms of practice based on my research findings.

Goto (2016, p.9) seeks a robust practical theology of play that enables it to be a source of revelatory experiencing about faith. Understanding and learning occur as the language of playing enables what Goto (p.3) calls 'revelatory experiences' that brings new information and perspectives about the living out of faith. For this research I argue the characteristics of play bring a sharper focus and awareness of context and the possibility of new communication practices. The new practices challenge the practices that I associated with model A characterised by difference and polarisation.

In this section Goto is located as a practical theologian and definitions of relevant terms are outlined. I then list the characteristics of play that she uses to tell what playing is about. I argue the characteristics of play can enable me to put into practice the insights of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams. The characteristics can inform my work as a communications advisor in order to better negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares and mediatisation. The section concludes with two examples from my past and present practice. I argue the examples use the characteristics of play and demonstrate renewed thinking about my past and present practice from the conclusions of this research. In the examples there is the creation of faith-based discourse in new ways. There is a juxtaposition of that which may be perceived as 'the holy' and 'the unholy'. One example from my previous practice uses three billboards from an Auckland city church in my primary context of Aotearoa New Zealand. I suggest the billboards demonstrate characteristics of play and are also provocative. The second example is a climate change conference from my current practice as a communications advisor. The conference brought together science and faith in dialogue round one table. Multiple publics were formed for discourse about the urgency of climate change. The aim was to build practices from new knowledge.

7.3.1 Locating Goto

Goto is a third-generation Japanese American practical theologian. A discussion with her at a British Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT) conference in 2019 enabled me to see the potential of her work on play in the development of my thesis. Her publication *The Grace of Playing* (2016) focuses on the intersection of culture and faith. Goto says there are new possibilities that may not have been anticipated other than by entering a fictive world through the language of playing. When using play, Goto (p.3) says there is a learning process of 'decentering' and 'recentering': 'It makes a person sit up and take notice because habitual patterns of thinking, feeling, and doing have been suddenly jostled'. The result is that fictive thinking enables new ways to see and interact with reality. I suggest this can inform the practices of a communications advisor by being focused on the potential voices that make up the public square.

Goto's wider work challenges the discipline of practical theology as to how it understands and engages with its own contexts. There is a parallel between Goto's work and mine as I challenge how the Church understands and engages with the public square(s). Goto is the author of *Taking on Practical Theology - The Idolization of Context and the Hope of Community* (2018). She argues that practical theology as a discipline lacks critical reflection in its practices about context. That leads to 'blind spots' and a loss of perspective with oppression in the production of knowledge. Goto (2018, xvii) says her work responds to Bonnie Miller McLemore's insight that academics can examine habits and behaviours of implicit power dynamics everywhere but their 'own backyard'. The power inequalities occur, according to Goto (p.53), while theologians seek to transform communities: 'We often lose perspective when it comes to ourselves, especially when it involves grasping how we make decisions about what counts as knowledge and whose knowledge counts'. The public square should then not be taken for granted but rather explored for potential knowledge and new communication practices.

The writings of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams all argue there is a growing diversity of voices in public discourse (see 4.1- 4.3). From their insights I conclude that possible understandings of the public square and its diversity in everyday life have 'masked' the possibilities in regards to the practices that could be developed for faith-based discourse in wider society. Goto challenges the normativity of understandings of practical theology (Goto, 2018, p.xv). I challenge the normativity of understandings of the public square in the Church that do not recognise the reality of mediatisation and a public square that is more fluid and changing in its organisation and modes of communication.

7.3.2 Concept and Definitions
Play is used by Goto (2016, p.2) to enable what she calls 'revelatory experiences' in the context of religious education. It is important to define what Goto (p.3) calls 'revelatory experiencing' in relation to education: 'Revelatory experiences causes in learners a destabilising and re-orienting shift in awareness or feeling that allows them to encounter divine mystery, themselves, and others in new, life giving ways'. In stages of teaching and learning Goto (p.1-3) says there can be shifts in awareness that bring about new perceptions and insights that were previously not seen. This is 'breakthrough learning' that leads to more 'abundant living'. While revelation is focused on God's salvific action, revelatory experiencing is a human experience.

The shift, that is described by Goto as 'destabilising' and 're-orienting', is important for me as a researcher and practitioner. In this research there is disorientation in my understanding of the public square from model A of the public square to model B of public square(s). Model B as an understanding of the public square(s) requires a process of reorientation in terms of practices to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares that shows renewed thinking and practice from the research conclusions.

Play, as a concept in Goto's work, is not easy to define but important to do so in order to avoid associations of escapism and fun. I use the following description: 'To play is to experience losing and finding oneself in engaging reality and one another "as if" exploring freely a world of possibilities bounded by structure that facilitates relationship' (Goto, 2016, p.15). When one emerges from playing, during which time ways of the world are effectively suspended, there are new ways to engage with reality. The important words in this description to understand play are 'as if': 'Acting or believing "as if" entails setting aside enough disbelief, appearances, or literal ways of thinking to shift temporarily into another way of engaging reality and one another' (p.16). The notion of 'as if' was proposed by Hans Vaihinger in *The Philosophy of 'As If'* (1911) and Goto builds on this work. Using the notion of 'as if' there is a building of knowledge and the consideration of new possibilities for practice in a context that were previously not recognised.

7.3.4 Characteristics of Play
The characteristics of play listed by Goto (2016, p.18) are;
- 'losing oneself', entering a 'world of possibilities', and acting 'as if'
- creativity through the use of the imagination to add to what is already known in 'arresting ways' to see things anew
- using the structures of playing as agreed by the players themselves including where one world, or another, begins and ends, what is true and what is not, and who is playing and who is not
- being relational through engagement with others that builds communities in each interaction
- being open to cause surprise and wonder as a form of learning and creativity with unpredictable moves that may develop curiosity, disturb and disorient, and change or end the playing.

I will use these characteristics of play to address the themes which have emerged in my research, of multiple publics formed by language, blurred borders, and the importance of negotiation.

I am using the characteristics of play to inform practice for two reasons:

- it offers a methodology to form and shape practice
- for the creative possibilities it brings to form communication practices that can challenge ingrained routines and habits

7.3.5 Methodological

Practical theology enables communities to 'organise their ways of being in the world' of 'relating to one another in community' (Graham, 2000, pp.104-117). I see the characteristics of play, from a practical theological perspective, as a way to organise and form communication practices in the public square(s). Thus, offering a methodology through which to address insights from previous chapters, and to consider new forms of practice within my chosen epistemological and ontological approaches. The characteristics of play, particularly the characteristics of a 'world of possibilities' and acting 'as if', are compatible with an epistemology of interpretivism by being able to accommodate a range of voices in the diverse public square(s).

7.3.6 Creative Possibilities

I see the language of playing as a creative way to explore new forms of practice in the changing public square(s). In this thesis I have built an argument about the changing nature of the public square through my experience, through the theoretical perspectives of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (Chapter Four), through the interpreted data (Chapter Six), and by using the concept of mediatisation (Chapter Seven). My experience (Chapter Three) and consideration of the theoretical perspectives and interpreted data suggests there are some ingrained institutional habits of communication in the life of the Church that can be strongly challenged. Pattison (2007, p.222) suggests there is a need for imagination by the Church and theology to connect with people's lives for them to understand systems of faith. The ways to connect can be 'playful, imaginative and porous', rather than being 'a closed domain of orthodoxy and conformity'. Pattison's use of the words playful, imaginative, and porous suggests practices of engagement and interaction across multiple publics and blurred borders that are part of my conclusions in this research. The following sections shows how Goto's work enables me to address insights from previous chapters and put these into practice. Play is able to take down borders, rethink reality (Tracy, 1981, p.413), and can be what Tracy (pp.450-454) calls 'conflictual', 'messy', and 'chaotic'.

7.3.7 My Experience

Chapter Three outlined my experience and understanding at the beginning of this research of a single homogenous public square that was focused on borders. Goto's characteristics of play can suspend the reality of a focus on borders and help me put into practice the insights

from the research. Each of the insights already achieved are considered in relation to the characteristics of play. The separate insights may reflect all or some of the characteristics of play. I consider how each of the insights can be addressed through practices formed by the characteristics of play.

7.3.8 Multiple Public Squares

Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (see 4.1-4.3), argue for the publicness of faith-based discourse. The three theorists suggest the organisation and modes of communication in the public square are changing and becoming more complex. Habermas (1996, p.374) says public discourse has developed to include theatres, rock concerts, taverns, and individuals across the globe who are joined together through technology. I see Habermas as exploring the boundaries as to what is considered part of public discourse. The question for me as a practitioner is how to do this.

Practical theologian Stephen Roberts (2017, p.186) argues that the change in the public sphere identified by Habermas cannot be ignored and requires an imaginative response: 'Theological readings of popular music, whilst critical, should not be neat, fixed and stable, but playful, heuristic, and open ended'. Building on my research so far, and Roberts' argument, I suggest the characteristics of play put forward by Goto can be used to put the insights of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (see 4.1-4.3) into practice to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares.

Through the use of metaphorical language Habermas (see 4.1) invites the imagination to consider where and how language can be used to form what I see as multiple publics in society. The use of metaphor means Habermas avoids language that is structural in nature or specific about time or place. Habermas' (2006b, p.417) use of metaphor such as the suggestion of the 'unruly' and 'non-organised' public sphere invites the characteristics of play. There is communication that is unorganised and creative in which participants can 'enter a world of possibilities', 'act as if', and build relationships and community that may develop curiosity, disturb and disorient, and cause surprise and wonder. An example of this could be a community being invited to discuss its views on assisted dying with debates and discussion through which new perceptions are heard and developed in the public square(s).

Tracy's three publics, his methodologies of specific correlations, the analogical imagination, and religious classic all work in a context of multiple publics including different faiths and disciplines (see 4.2). Tracy uses the analogical imagination to rethink reality for a better understanding of the Church and of society that opens up possibilities for conversation. The methodologies aim for a public-facing Church - what Williams (2000, p.xiv) describes as the

theologian 'beginning in the middle of things'. In his previous role as Archbishop of Canterbury, Williams worked with multiple worldviews. His writing still engages with poets, artists, and other theologians. Williams (2012, p.27) advocates for procedural secularism that is open to confessional arguments and considerations of religious convictions. Faith-based discourse is part of society where multiple viewpoints, including religious views are heard, rather than being excluded from public discussion. I suggest that the publicness of faith-based discourse sought by Tracy and Williams that invites fresh understanding and discovery in the public square can use practices informed by the characteristics of play. The characteristics that could inform such practices include presenting 'a world of possibilities', 'acting as if', using creativity, and building community. As an example, a public-facing Church could argue from a theological perspective and provide practical options for a country to take refugees. A Church is not able to undertake such practices, that could be creative and relational, if it is isolated from society and doing theology at arm's length.

I suggest Williams' insights about the use of language can be addressed through the characteristics of play. Williams (2014, p.140) describes language as a 'tool of discovery' that can reveal new perspectives about God through a reliance on the imagination. He suggests language about the finite can be used to tell of the infinite. Williams (2014, p.149) says we use 'dramatic metaphor' to represent or imitate God. In language God is described 'as a rock' and 'as a fire'. There is also language about what God is like - 'The kingdom of god is like treasure'. Williams says language uses the imagination to make a claim of truth. Williams' use of language suggests practices using the characteristics of play that include 'entering a world of possibilities' acting 'as if' and practices that are creative and use the imagination within and between multiple publics.

The insights from Habermas, Tracy, and Williams provide a framework in which communication practices that use the characteristics of play can be developed. There is a locus for the practices. Multiple publics, that are formed by language are the starting point The multiple publics exist through language and not by the existence of an institution and so practices need to be congruent with the changing and more fluid public square.

Practical theologian Stephen Roberts says the nature of the changing public square, for which he cites popular culture as an example, requires responses that are imaginative. Building on his argument, I suggest the public square is able to accommodate practices formed by the characteristics of play, such as creativity and the use of the imagination, that can cause surprise and wonder. Such practices challenge the idea of faith-based discourse being isolated by borders in society. Roberts (2017, p.163) gives the example of singer Lady

Gaga as being part of a 'rich vein' of theology that is part of popular culture. Roberts argues that while Lady Gaga may not be seen as a 'classic' in Tracy's terms she is a public theologian with texts to be interpreted alongside the more traditional classics: 'Public theology must do its work in dialogue with the wild texts of wild publics. And they don't come much wilder than Lady Gaga' (p.187). Roberts argument is that popular culture is a territory where faith-based discussions occur that cannot be ignored. The multiple publics, including popular culture, provide a locus from which the Church can engage and build relationships by being 'in the middle of things' that can occur through the negotiation of blurred borders with new forms of culture.

7.3.9 Blurred Borders

My 'border experiences' (see 3.2- 3.6) identified faith-based discussions isolated from wider society. The thesis, by using the writing of Reader and Nausner (see 6.2) builds the argument that there is the potential for borders to be understood as being less divisive and more blurred and porous in nature. The argument from Reader reflects the emergence of popular culture addressed above by Roberts. The question for me as a researcher and practitioner is how to recognise this change in the nature of borders and reflect this in practice. This section builds on the existence of multiple public squares. It suggests the characteristics of play can work with and create blurred borders and so develop insights already gained in this research. The blurred borders are a way to enter a world of possibilities and act 'as if' in ways that are creative, that are relational, and can change thinking.

Nausner and Reader (see 6.2), in their discussion of blurred borders, reject the idea that a public square can be neatly divided into sections that discuss faith, and sections that do not. Reader says traditional categories of structure and organisation are now challenged through processes such as globalisation. The insights from Nausner and Reader can be explored further through the characteristics of play.

Williams' insights contribute to the argument about blurred borders by suggesting that the theme of charity is a way to connect multiple publics in society. He suggests the reality of the market driven world needs to be suspended and replaced with a focus on charity. Williams draws on the writing of John Bossy's *Christianity in the West* for an approach that suspends the reality of a competitive market about goods and services to aid the social good. For Williams (2000, p.58), 'sensible conversation' results in a social bond and mutual recognition rather than the competitive structures of the world that are about the securing of goods: 'There is such a thing as a social good, (a social miracle), accessible only by the suspension

of rivalry and the equalising of honour or status'. Williams (p.58) says there is a 'condition of play' that is about recognition and acknowledgement with status assumed rather than competed for. There is listening and speaking as equals through exchanges based in charity that can be relational and creative. Borders than become places of learning for Williams (p.93) rather than being divisive as there is engagement that moves beyond one's own interest: 'I have learned from others how to think and speak my desires; I need to be heard – but that means I must speak into, not across, the flow of another's thought and speech'.

These insights can be explored using Goto's characteristics of play by acting 'as if' people are equals in communication processes. Such an approach brings about relationship rather than competition and can lead to creativity and rethinking. Borders are then about worlds of possibilities that bring new knowledge rather than division.

The 'as if' of blurred borders means there is a way to engage with multiple publics that can exist within and beyond the Christian Church. The Church of England in 2020 launched a series of resources on Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage. The series is called *Living in Love and Faith* (House of Bishops, 2020)*. The resources acknowledge extreme harm and damage has been caused by the Church regarding questions of sexual identity and behaviour, that has led to division. The aim of the discussions is to put power and hierarchy to one side and to imagine new possibilities and conversations with borders that encourage learning and new points of view rather than division. Borders about engagement and learning invite practices that are characteristic of playing. Examples of this in the *Living in Love and Faith* resources include creativity in the online resources, an aim for relationality in building up the Church community, and an acknowledgement that the resources may cause surprise and curiosity through material that is described as possibly being 'uncomfortable' (pp.vii- x).

The *Living in Love and Faith* programme recognises the existence of multiple publics and difference that led to marginalisation. Goto (2018, p.53) says the language of play recognises new opportunities and sources of learning: 'Unfortunately, if you are a member of multiple dominant groups, realising the extent of your complicity with the paradigm may be more difficult than for those who are constantly made aware of its adverse effects'. The *Living in Love and Faith* programme is an example of where borders that divide can be borders that bring relationality and new knowledge through using an agreed structure that creates a space for communication and re-learning.

A related issue that arose from Goto's work, for me, is whether the Church can contribute to the marginalisation and the oppression of people through not participating more fully in the public square(s) on issues such as the economy and poverty. The issue is whether the Christian Church, through its understanding of the public square and communication practices, has not responded to borders that sustain marginalisation and oppression in society. A question is whether there was 'due regard' by the Church for what was happening either in its 'own backyard' or society on matters such as race, class, and sexuality. I understand 'due regard' as a cogent reason and duty to act based on its own beliefs rather than an obligation because of legislation. Goto suggested that I think of this issue through the use of paradigms when I contacted her in January 2021 (Rhodes, 2021).

There is the argument that the Church as one paradigm can live out some of the same biases and views of the larger paradigm of society rather than challenging them in the public square(s) and within its own structures. A lack of communication in the public square can leave unchallenged behaviours that marginalise individuals or groups in society. A relevant example is the survivors of Church abuse in the Christian tradition who claimed sexual, emotional, physical, and spiritual abuse. The Church had its own narrative about abuse and borders that avoided learning were maintained. That has somewhat changed through the Church engaging with survivors. The Church, which was a dominant voice, could not maintain borders that separated out how it managed claims of abuse. Jayne Ozanne (2019, pp.106-109) describes herself as a survivor of abuse. She says the Church cannot ignore its history but needs to be able to listen to, and to learn from, those who were often marginalised and treated as 'spiritual lepers' and 'untouchables'. What were borders marked by silence are now borders about learning and communication.

Goto (2018, p.59) says minority voices and the marginalised can challenge what are seen as dominant voices – while this is not new it is largely unrecognised:

> I would argue that even if one has not inherited a minoritized perspective by birth, *one can make an ethical choice to stand in the blurred boundaries of being an insider and an outsider to multiple groups in order to challenge oppression* [italics in original].

This speaks in two ways to my exploration of practices. The Church can recognise multiple public squares and the marginalised social location of its voice and of others. Through that recognition the Church can act 'as if' in ways that are creative and can build relationships across society.

In summary the insights of blurred borders can be addressed through using the characteristics of play across multiple publics. Such practices provide the chance to consider new possibilities through acting 'as if' which can build new relationships in creative ways, and replace practices that marginalise and oppress through new knowledge both within and beyond the Church.

7.3.10 Negotiation

The importance of negotiation in relation to the characteristics of play builds on the arguments already made in this chapter. The existence of multiple public squares and blurred borders presents opportunities for negotiation that were not part of the understanding of a single homogenous public square (see 3.2- 3.6). The characteristics of play are able to inform practices that reflect the understanding of the importance of negotiation. Before providing examples of these, it is important to summarise earlier arguments that indicate the importance of negotiation.

The writing of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams gave insights about the importance of negotiation (see 4.1- 4.3). Habermas' (2006a, p.10) use of metaphor about communication processes refers to a 'filtering' and 'flows' of communication that suggests negotiation with characteristics of play including creativity, imagination, and acting 'as if'. Tracy introduces methodologies to negotiate difference to ensure the publicness of theology. The concept of the analogical imagination is built on his argument that every tradition has what Tracy calls 'classics' that discloses possibilities of meaning and truth across generations. The classic according to Tracy (1981, p.108) is the disclosure of a reality containing truth that is able to provoke, challenge, and transform what may be seen as conventional options in everyday life. Habermas and Tracy suggest a reliance on the imagination as a way in which to negotiate similarity and difference as does Williams' use of language in the section on multiple publics.

Tracy (2020, p.179) describes the imagination as being an additional capability to the traditional five senses: 'When one imagines creatively, especially when Christians imagine the reality inspired and nourished by the gift of faith in God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, one re-describes the creative possibilities and actualities of *all* reality'. Goto's characteristics of play can address Tracy's reliance on the imagination as a way to explore and negotiate difference. Communication practices can present a world of possibilities through acting 'as if' to negotiate similarity and difference in creative ways. The use of negotiation can then open

up possibilities for faith to engage with everyday life that is not within the walls of the Church or restricted to religious texts.

The characteristics of play can inform practice that enables negotiation to occur. The characteristics of 'entering a world of possibilities', of acting 'as if', of being creative and building communities, recognise the importance of negotiation and are about negotiation. Negotiation occurs through practices that put reality aside and consider other possibilities. An example of this are comments from the Archbishop of Canterbury about climate change. He was speaking to faith leaders in preparation for the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow in November 2021. Justin Welby (Archbishop of Canterbury, 2021) commented that the Covid-19 pandemic had brought uncertainty to the world but also highlighted the capacity of humanity to change how they live. He said the same ability to adapt was needed to envisage a world of possibilities through science and faith working together to halt the exploitation of the environment.

7.3.11 Mediatisation

The reality of a mediatised society, because of an amalgamation of digital modes of communication in everyday life, was explored earlier in the chapter. The concept of mediatisation provides an understanding of the modes of communication used between, and within, multiple publics, at blurred borders, and in negotiation. I suggest the insights of mediatisation can be addressed and put into practice through the characteristics of play. The Covid-19 pandemic began in January 2020 during the writing up of this research. The pandemic accelerated the mediatisation of society. The Church, which this research suggests was slow to respond to mediatisation, developed a reliance on media and digital technology because face-to-face worship was not possible.

In the Covid-19 pandemic, more and more of life is shaped and influenced by the use of media-based modes of communication. Dennis Nguyen (2021, pp.210-211), writing on mediatisation in the pandemic, says societal discourses and social interaction were subject to 'rapid mediatisation and digitalisation' in the pandemic. The news media and social media have information about the pandemic and there are media technologies with online curriculums, video platforms for work and socialisation, and online shopping. An example of mediatisation is the National Health Service Covid App. The phone technology is aimed to shape public behaviour and reduce the levels of infection. In December 2020 I could check the app to see what tier I was living in for lockdown guidance. Media technology was part of everyday life. The prevalence of media and technology in society, and the closure of places of worship, to some degree forced the mediatisation of the liturgy across different faiths. I

suggest the characteristics of play are reflected in some of the communication practices of the pandemic. It is important to remember, as is my experience in rural Lincolnshire, that not everyone has reliable access to broadband which can exclude some people from participating in activities such as meetings and online training.

There was some public face-to-face worship for Ash Wednesday 2021 in the Church of England but most worshippers were encouraged to observe the beginning of the season of Lent online. An option from the Church of England kept the tradition of ashes being imposed on the head by the use of digital technology. There was a filter on Instagram that virtually imposed ashes on the foreheads of people in pictures or videos. This is an example of the mediatisation of the liturgy where it is possible to use characteristics of play through which faith can be expressed and explored.

In this thesis I identified a border of division between the Church and the media. I suggest that practices in a mediatised world that reflect the characteristics of play can lead to engagement at borders that are 'blurred' rather than divisive. The virtual ash on foreheads blurred the borders between the Church and technology with faith expressed in multiple public squares, such as social media. The virtual ash used the characteristics of play that included acting 'as if' people were joining together, and creativity that worked within the liturgical structures of the Church to establish communities to mark the beginning of Lent.

I have argued that Goto's characteristics of play offer a way to address the insights already reached in this research on multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation. Characteristics such as exploring a world of possibilities, acting 'as if', and creativity, are able to negotiate and create multiple publics and blurred borders in a mediatised world. There is an approach to communications through mediatisation and the listed characteristics of play. While it is not a blue-print for communications in each scenario, it provides options for the church communications advisor that maintains distinct voices but also blends voices through communicative action. The church communications advisor accommodates the Church voice but also other voices in the creation and interaction of the public square(s).

7.4 Reflecting on Practice

This section considers two examples, one from my past practice, and one from my present practice as a communications advisor. The examples demonstrate renewed thinking as a practitioner using the characteristics of play. I can demonstrate that my work as a communications advisor is enhanced when I use the characteristics of play to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares. The examples show what practices

of play look like in specific contexts that are part of my practice and can benefit from such practices.

Before considering the two examples I want to refer to the helter-skelter of Norwich Cathedral and the mini-golf course in Rochester Cathedral. Both initiatives created headlines in the United Kingdom and beyond in 2019. The two initiatives are a way to introduce what play can look like. There is a juxtaposition of what is expected and what is not expected – there is a blurring and negotiation of borders. The sacred space of two medieval cathedrals was juxtaposed with what would normally be found at a fair ground or fun-park. The juxtaposition received media attention and the resulting discourse had both cathedrals active in the public square(s).

A mini golf course was built in Rochester Cathedral and a 55ft helter-skelter was installed in the nave of Norwich Cathedral during the summer of 2019. The headlines about the cathedrals ranged from 'Fairway to Heaven' to visitor numbers doubling and the helter-skelter being a mistake. The cathedrals featured in the New York Times with the headline 'God Save the Cathedral? In England some offer Mini-Golf or a Giant Slide' (*The New York Times*, 2019). The helter-skelter offered new views of Norwich Cathedral including the roof bosses that contain biblical stories. This was a creative way through which to tell the biblical stories. At Rochester Cathedral the intention was for people to think about their own lives as they played a golf course themed on bridges. The Revd Rachel Phillips, a canon of the cathedral, told the BBC: 'We hope that, while playing adventure golf, visitors will reflect on the bridges that need to be built in their own lives and in our world today' (BBC News 2019). The cathedrals could be described, using the language of Goto (2016, p.9), as 'messing with what was holy'. While the 'messing with the holy' did provoke criticism it should not be seen in a negative sense. Rather, there was a mixing of the world beyond the cathedral walls inside the cathedral space. The cathedrals were actively part of the public square(s). Through that the borders were blurred. The 'blurring' occurred as the cathedrals appeared less formal and more inviting through a juxtaposition of the holy and the fairground. That to me is what play looks like where what is expected to be kept separate and divided, such as a church and a golf course, are put together. In Chapter Six, Jagessar (2015a, p.258) described how cultures did not exist in a pure form but were rather 'leaking' into each other. This challenged those seeking purity and uniformity. The same process occurred here. The characteristics of play in this example include people 'entering a different world to explore faith' that was creative. There was an opportunity to learn and be curious about their faith and to be surprised.

7.5 Billboards in Auckland

The first example reviews my former practice in Aotearoa New Zealand as a communications advisor. A series of billboards outside a church in Auckland questioned how Mary became pregnant, whether Jesus was born gay, and suggested the Church didn't care 'who was on top' in a marriage. The billboards were provocative. I suggest the billboards were also about play through the practices that were used. Like the examples from Rochester and Norwich cathedrals, there was the juxtaposition of the sacred and unexpected. The season of the birth of Christ, seen by some as a sacred time, with unexpected questions about how Jesus was conceived. The second example is from my current practice as a communications advisor in the United Kingdom. My practice brought scientists and theologians together as a community to act 'as if' and explore creative ways to address the issue of climate change.

The parish of St Matthews-in-the-City in Auckland used billboards to highlight topical issues in society, and for seasons such as Christmas and Easter. I was communications manager for the Diocese of Auckland so answered the media enquiries about the billboards. The practice I wish to highlight was my understanding of the billboards and subsequent responses. I am choosing to review my practice and using the billboards as an example of how my thinking has developed and changed using Goto's characteristics of play.

The billboards attracted significant news media attention because of their content, style, and placement outside the central city church. There was further interest when the billboards were vandalised. Calls were made for the bishops to have the billboards removed. My practice was to try and 'shut down' the coverage by declining interviews and further coverage in the news.

The content of the billboards was not expected from a church and so caused surprise which is a characteristic of playing. There were other characteristics. The billboards suggested a 'world of possibilities' in which people could act 'as if'. The invitation was for people to 'lose themselves' and consider new possibilities. Alternative realities could be accepted or rejected by a suspension of the traditional interpretations of the Church. A key consideration is whether people decided to 'play' and interact with the billboards or 'not play'. The media engaged with the billboards as did social media. The billboards created new discourse in the public square(s). Others chose not to play and did not engage with the discourse that was part of multiple publics within and beyond the Church.

Fig 7.1

The first billboard (Figure 7.1) was in December 2009. The picture of Mary and Joseph in bed suggested Mary was not happy. The billboard read, 'Poor Joseph. God was a hard act to follow'. An unexpected way to mark the expected season of Christmas. Opponents suggested it challenged the doctrine of the virgin birth and provided alternative explanations of how Jesus was conceived. The alternative explanations were not explored in public forums. They included the suggestion that Mary's sexual relationship with Joseph was being compared to how she conceived Jesus with God.

The Bishop of Auckland was quoted as being 'disappointed in the billboard' (Scoop, 2009). Bishop Paterson said there were a number of issues for a city to focus on at Christmas time rather than a billboard:

> 'Discussion of theological perspectives and diversity is encouraged in a respectful way, but this approach is insensitive to communities across the Anglican Church as well as other denominations,' says Bishop Paterson.

Fig 7.2

A Christmas billboard in 2012 (Figure 7.2), suggested that Jesus could be gay. There was an alternative narrative to the expected story of the birth of Jesus. The story reached the United Kingdom media (MailOnline, 2012). The vicar of St Matthew's explained that the billboard highlighted the humanity of Jesus and wanted to question whether Jesus would be more or less revered by the Church if he was gay.

The Christmas billboards, through characteristics of play, brought alternative ideas that were juxtaposed with the traditional story of Christmas. A billboard with the traditional stable scene would not have brought the same reaction as the characteristics of play that suggested rethinking what Christmas was about.

Figure 7.3

In 2012 a billboard (Figure 7.3), showed two women kissing on top of a wedding cake. The billboard reflected the progressive theology of the parish and was put up as the wider Church debated same sex relationships. The parish supported the Marriage Equality Act and believed gender should not prevent two people who loved each other being married in a

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church. The billboard juxtaposed an alternative view of marriage outside a building where such a marriage could not take place. It invited people to imagine and act 'as if' this could occur. The creativity challenged thinking and the status quo. The reaction from the bishops of the diocese to the billboard (Figure 7.3) is interesting to consider. The bishops said the billboard was about clichés rather than what was believed. Their response did in some ways 'play' by using clichés from the billboard about 'who is on top'. I issued a media release after working with the bishops on its content (Scoop, 2012).

> The Anglican Bishops of the Diocese of Auckland believe the St Matthew-in-the-City billboard about gay marriage leaves a confusing message and does not effectively communicate what good relationships are about. The Bishops say the Anglican Church cares about good relationships and so does care about 'who is on top' in a relationship.
>
> Bishop Ross Bay says he is disappointed by the billboard but says he is not surprised as St Matthew's stance on the issue is well known. He says it adds nothing new to a good understanding of the issue. 'This is a time for listening to one another and for careful conversations about a sensitive issue. Those conversations are getting underway in Parliament and wider society and in the church,' says Bishop Ross Bay

The three billboards take me back to the approach of the English cathedrals (see 7.2). The golf course and the helter-skelter combined the so-called purity of the medieval cathedrals with the attractions of amusement parks. The billboards, while different and provocative, took the same approach of mixing views and perspectives. There was the potential for the culture of the Church and the culture of society to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple publics.

The three billboards are examples of the characteristics of play. There is the invitation to lose oneself, to enter a world of possibilities, and to act 'as if' with a reliance on the imagination. There is a juxtaposition of the expected and the unexpected. There was acting 'as if' by suggesting what could be authentic, such as a gay marriage by inviting people to set tradition aside and engage with reality in a new way. The billboards were creative in what Goto (2016, p.18) describes as 'arresting ways'. People were invited to use their imagination and consider alternative points of view as a way to explore their faith. Reality was in effect suspended with the challenge to Christian doctrine on the conception of Jesus, his sexuality, and a gay marriage occurring in an Anglican church. Goto (p.16) puts it this way: 'Alternative

realities can be inhabited, explored, and abandoned'. The billboards were also about surprise and wonder by being unpredictable in their style and content that could both invite curiosity but also disturb and disorient.

The characteristics of play that I have identified I now consider in relation to my findings in Chapter Six of multiple public squares, the blurring of borders, and the importance of negotiation to understand the public square(s).

7.5.1 Multiple Public Squares

The billboards use the characteristics of play to create and to work with multiple public squares formed by language. Faith-based discourse occurred both within and beyond the Church. The billboards had a presence on the street and featured in the news media and social media. There were multiple public squares of discourse from those who agreed and disagreed with the billboards. Faith-based discourse was not isolated to within the Church but rather engaged with a diversity of opinions through which to seek knowledge as part of a more fluid and changing public square(s).

7.5.2 Blurred Borders

The billboards, by using the characteristics of play, enabled a blurring of borders in two ways. First, the juxtaposition of the traditional story of Christmas with the alternative reality suggested by the billboard blurred the borders of sacred and non-sacred. Communicative practices suggested alternative realities in a provocative way that society was not accustomed to. Second, there was a blurring of borders as to where faith-based discourse could take place. The billboards sought to engage with people of faith, and no faith, outside the church walls rather than within the walls.

7.5.3 Negotiation

The multiple public squares and blurred borders that were created through the characteristics of play provided a context in which negotiation could occur as views were heard from a diverse society. At the same time the multiple public squares and blurred borders created through the billboards were avoided by the Church. The bishops saw the billboards as not contributing anything new to public discourse. The approach reminded me of my experience, discussed in Chapter Three, of divisive binary borders (see 3.2-3.6). The approach did not recognise the possibility of multiple public squares and unstructured flows of communication (see 4.1 - Habermas) with which the Church could engage. There was a shared space created by communicative action (see 4.1 - Habermas) that the Church as an institution largely avoided.

As I reflect on my practices, the more the parish adopted new communication practices through the billboards, the more resistance there was from the institutional Church to such communicative action and so to the existence of public square(s). The billboards were part of the communications strategy of the parish. There is a section on its website that shows all the billboards. My response back then I now see as trying to manage and in effect 'shut down' activity that was part of the public square(s). By reviewing my practice, I have demonstrated that the billboards were examples of the characteristics of play that shows renewed thinking to be better able to negotiate blurred borders in a context of multiple public squares.

7.6 Climate Change Conference in Lincoln

In my role as bishop's chaplain I led the organising committee and communications planning for a conference on climate change in Lincoln. The conference, *Moana – Water of Life: Navigating Climate Change for Planetary Health,* was in August 2019. The purpose of the conference was to explore what a collaboration of science and faith could contribute to knowledge and action on climate change. The aim was that the disciplines of science and theology could be leaders in caring for the planet and in measuring the effectiveness of the actions taken. My practice in this conference was influenced by this research. There are examples of the characteristics of play being used to work with, and create, multiple public squares, blurred borders and negotiation.

The conference used the characteristics of play that encouraged participants to 'enter a world of possibilities' and to act 'as if'. Participants could engage with climate change in a new way as they responded to the urgency of the issue in the context of Lincoln. A creative way to illustrate climate change and rising temperatures was a globe of the world made from ice that gradually melted during the conference. The globe was displayed at lectures, gatherings, and the worship in the cathedral, to emphasise the focus of the conference and the reality that needed to be addressed. Figure 7.4 shows Bishop David Court with the creator of the exhibit, the Revd Rachel Revely in Lincoln Cathedral.

Fig 7.4

In order to enter a world of possibilities and act 'as if' the organising committee maximised the disciplinary and geographical diversity of perspectives on climate change. Invitations were sent to speakers including scientists, theologians, educators, students, and activists from the United Kingdom, Aotearoa New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, and the United States. The diversity of disciplines and contexts reflected a world of porous borders to be explored. In Chapter Six (see 6.1) I referred to Jagessar's (2015a, p.258) concept of 'leakage' between cultures and people rather than separation and purity. The conference organisation used creativity to reflect its purpose, including how the catering was done. There was a specially designed low carbon footprint dinner and the planting of trees to offset carbon emissions from conference participants who flew to the United Kingdom.

There was creativity in the methods of conference presentation. An invitation was extended by the Bishop of Lincoln for a delegation to attend the conference from Fiji and Tonga. They represented the Diocese of Polynesia. The diocese already lived with the effects of climate change with an increase in violent tropical storms. They were invited to tell their story to encourage people to engage with the reality of climate change in Lincoln and beyond.

Fig 7.5

Fig 7.6

Figures 7.5 and 7.6 show the participants from Polynesia telling their story of climate change in a lecture and sharing their culture of singing. The delegation told their story of rising waters in the South Pacific and how they had prepared communities for cyclones and cared for creation. The aim was for the diocese of Lincoln to engage with the reality of its context in a new way – to set aside current practices and to consider alternative realities and imagine what could happen through the notion of 'as if'. The conference was designed so that the diocese of Lincoln, that had been slow to take up the urgency of climate change, could imagine itself as a leader on climate change in its understanding and practice.

The conference was also creative in the variety of lectures, social gatherings, and worship to engage with the topic of climate change. The melting ice globe (Fig 7.4) is an example of that, as was the way that the culture of the Polynesia was used to tell the effects of climate change (Figures 7.5 and 7.6). The Polynesian delegation visited schools and used talks and dance to discuss climate change and were also part of the worship in Lincoln Cathedral (Figure 7.7) and Canterbury Cathedral. The conference, through its participants, provided a creative platform for the diocese to reflect on how to respond through faith to the climate crisis.

Fig 7.7

The characteristics of play included using the structures of the Church and the University of Lincoln to imagine new ways of living with climate change. In the Cathedral worship, the Archbishop of Polynesia stressed there was a need to 'wake up' to climate change across the world. In lectures, Professor Elizabeth Holland said that every year there was a delay in climate change action mattered and that time had run out. The conference used structures to build knowledge that could be turned into action by working with other agencies such as a horticultural business in Lincolnshire and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. The partnerships brought new perspectives and built new communities through which to address climate change. The conference aimed to develop practices that combined perspectives from different contexts and academic disciplines to challenge the diocese about the issue of climate change. Having identified the characteristics of play, I will now identify how they worked with, and created, multiple public squares, blurred borders and negotiation through the use of language.

7.6.1 Multiple Public Squares

The conference, through communication practices that are characteristic of play, created and worked with multiple public squares within and beyond science and theology. The conference was part of the discourse in academia and Church groups from the participating countries, there was extensive social media coverage, news media coverage, and opportunities for the community to participate and watch lectures online. There were lectures, social gatherings, and a market square at the conference with different groups involved in climate change in the United Kingdom.

The conference led to further discussion about climate change in the diocese and contributed to a decision by the diocesan synod to develop a policy for zero carbon emissions by 2030. There was further public discourse through a publication, *Science, Faith and the Climate Crisis* (2020) that included presentations from the conference. The conference prompted training days for churches to consider their carbon footprint as well as outdoor worship to emphasise the need to care for the environment.

7.6.2 Blurred Borders

The conference was public discourse between science and faith and so a blurring of borders. Each discipline was encouraged to speak with its own voice. The juxtaposition of science and faith brought creativity and sparked discussion through the combination of views and opinions. I designed the conference so each keynote speaker from science would engage with a keynote speaker from the faith perspective. This often involved a negotiation of views to see what each offered. Science and faith were in the same lecture theatre and in the same cathedral and so the blurring of borders led to the creation of multiple public squares formed by the communicative action. This was the first time such a conference had been held that brought together the different views of science and faith from the United Kingdom and the South Pacific.

7.6.3 Negotiation

Participants from the disciplines of science and faith planned the conference together which was a process that blurred borders and invited negotiation. There was a willingness to recognise what each discipline could contribute to new knowledge. The coming together of cultures from across the globe, each with their own expectations, also required negotiation and provided opportunities for new knowledge.

7.6.4 Section Summary

This section has presented an argument for communication practices that is based on the

characteristics of play. I outlined the characteristics of play and then explained how these were able to be identified in my previous and current practice. The two examples, the billboards and the climate change conference, were very different which is a useful contrast. The examples demonstrate a response that recognises a more fluid and changing public square(s). The public square(s) are not about purity and uniformity through separation but rather blurred borders and negotiation. The examples demonstrate renewed thinking about my past and present practice from the findings of this research that enable me to better negotiate blurred borders in a context of multiple public squares.

Conclusion

This chapter is called 'A relearning of the public square(s)'. The process of relearning is not simply knowledge that the public square(s) is changing in its organisation and modes of communication but that there is renewed thinking in my practice. This chapter explored insights from my findings about multiple public squares, blurred borders and negotiation using the concepts of mediatisation and play.

The concepts of mediatisation and play, which have built on my findings so far, have highlighted that the public square(s) is not just words, a metaphorical space, or a term that can be taken for granted (Chapter One). The public square(s) is a great deal more. The public square(s) is a way of being and engaging with the world through language that can work with and create multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation.

The next chapter presents the conclusions I have reached in answering the research question. I refer to the chapters of this research that explored my experience, the theoretical perspectives and the interpreted data. This is done under four headings: contribution to knowledge, contribution to my practice, contribution to my professional community, and significance to my learning and development.

Chapter Eight
Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions from the research by drawing together the findings and arguments of the thesis to answer the research question of how a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor. The chapter considers the origins and purpose of the research, the answering of the research question, the contribution to knowledge, and the contributions to my practice, my professional community, and my professional development.

The findings suggest a contemporary understanding of the public square(s) that enables me to negotiate blurred borders in a context of multiple public squares. Such an understanding of the public square'(s) organisation and modes of communication is a basis from which to develop practices for the role of a church communications advisor.

8.1 The Origins and Purpose of Research

The professional context of this research is my role as a church communications advisor. I described in Chapter One (see 1.2) the identification of a trend. Faith-based discourse was largely sealed off from society which led to a tension in my practice. The tension resonated more and more through my experience of borders. The identification of the trend prompted me to question through a professional doctorate why this was happening and its significance for my practice as a church communications advisor.

My practice, experience, and context were a source of knowledge to explore further the tension in my practice. Despite extensive searches for additional knowledge, I could not locate substantive literature or research on the role of a church communications advisor that related directly to the emerging trend in my practice and context. The research process began with extensive reading and the three Stage One Papers. The papers provided a way to write about my experience and make observations and claims that required further evidence and argument. Paper One explored the experience of borders in my practice and the experiences of other practitioners. Paper Two considered the expectation of the publicness of theology from Tracy. This was a useful form of introduction to Tracy that was developed further in the theoretical perspectives. Paper Three outlined the research design. The Stage One papers and reading led to the development of the conceptual framework that was outlined in Chapter One.

My experience, practice, context, and a consideration of the theoretical perspectives that would be used later in the thesis, contributed to the formulation of the research question and the research design (Chapters One and Two). The research question asks: *How a contemporary understanding of the public square can enable good practice in the work of a church communications advisor?*

The purpose of the research was to generate new understanding of, and insight into, the public square that could be reflected in the practice of a church communications advisor. As an exercise in practical theology the thesis provides knowledge for me as a practitioner, and for others, to participate in the public square(s) in public theology. My practice as a public theologian can participate in, and create multiple publics, through the use of blurred borders and negotiation.

8.2 Answering the Research Question

To answer the research question, I brought together different components of knowledge that have not been previously combined. There was experience, theoretical perspectives, gathered data, and insights of multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation. These were explored further through the concepts of mediatisation and play. The research process brought insights from theology, sociology, media studies, education, and understandings of public discourse into critical dialogue with the analysis of gathered data and my own practice to generate new knowledge about the public square(s). The approach recognised there was more than one narrative and experience of the public square. The research relied on my descriptions and those of others using an interpretivist approach to knowledge. An ethnographic approach focused on my experience and considered that of others to answer the research question.

The narratives used in the thesis illustrated that faith-based discussions were often not part of public discourse. There was a lack of clarity from my experience about the role of a church communications advisor in the public square. The task was to have 'a voice in the public square' but the task required further knowledge and practice in a changing public square. The study showed the need to develop an understanding of the public square rather than simply allowing it to be an umbrella term for a public context in which the Church sought to participate.

The research identified the public square as a phenomenon that is continually changing in its organisation and modes of communication. Habermas, Tracy, and Williams described a changing public square (see 4.1- 4.3). Such an understanding is an important red flag to the

Church that communication practices and understandings cannot remain static. The research finds there are multiple public squares (see 4.3). Wilson (2017, interview) said the Church did not realise the implications of ignoring such change. There is a need to adapt practices for a more fluid and changing public square that I explored through the themes of multiple public squares, blurred borders, negotiation, and sanctuary/non-sanctuary (see 6.1-6.5). The conclusion to Chapter Six was that two models existed of the public square. This demonstrated the public square continually changing in its organisation and modes of communication. The concept of the mediatisation of modes of communication and a mediatised society enabled me to further explore and understand the two models of the public square (see 7.2). The use of Goto's work on play enabled new forms of practice to be considered (see 7.3).

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The starting point for this research was my practice as a church communications advisor (see 1.2). There was no hypothesis to test but rather the use of inductive reasoning to explore patterns and themes in public discourse which was outlined in the research design and methods methodology (see 2.9). My spiritual whakapapa (how I am formed as a person) was used to explore what I bring as a person to my practice as a church communications advisor. I had not previously considered this factor as part of my practice. I outlined my spiritual whakapapa and worldview which is focused on the known presence of God in the world (see 2.1-2.2). A tension existed for me as that known presence, through which the entire world is a theological reality, was not able to be articulated in the public square in my role as a communications advisor. Faith was effectively sealed off from daily life in a social vacuum. My communication roles in the police and Church were at stages being a gatekeeper rather than one that encouraged engagement and interaction There was a theology of gatekeeping rather than engagement and communication. I questioned whether there were shortcomings in my understanding and practice as a communications practitioner that required further exploration as a contribution to knowledge.

It is important to return to that theology that I struggled to have as part of my practice. Belief in a reality, and how that reality is known is important in my role as a researcher and practitioner and is not separate from my actions and practices. In this research I have strengthened and developed my spiritual whakapapa through the arguments made in the thesis. There is a theology for me as a communications advisor developed through the findings of multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation. The concepts of mediatisation and play have developed knowledge and forms of practice whereby theology is not constrained by borders but rather can be integrated across the public square. Multiple

publics, blurred borders, and negotiation provide ways for faith-based discourse to be part of the webs of significance (Geertz, 1973, p.11) across all of culture rather than being largely sealed off from parts of society.

The development of my spiritual whakapapa through the research is able to guide practice that now reflects the glass walls of the chapel in Auckland's Anglican Cathedral. The glass walls of the chapel were porous in nature and an analogy for my worldview. The glass enabled faith to be visible to society rather than be contained by church walls and sealed off from society. The interpretivist paradigm and critical realism enabled an exploration of blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares. Chapter Three focused on my experience, practice, and context. Other academics and practitioners also experienced challenges to faith-based discourse in the public square. Those insights provided further questions about the nature of borders and the role of the public square in faith-based discourse.

The theoretical perspectives in Chapter Four challenged my understanding of the public square. Habermas, Tracy, and Williams (see 4.1- 4.3), argue for the publicness of faith-based discourse in a changing public square. I brought the questions about borders from Chapter Three into critical dialogue with the theoretical perspectives. Each theorist provided a rationale for faith-based discourse as part of society and a methodology of how that occurred. Habermas initially treated faith as a 'private affair' but decided in a changing public square that religion held social and political capital. Tracy and Williams both argue for the publicness of theology and faith-based discourse. The three theorists differ in how belief is lived out and communicated.

Habermas, (see 4.1) through his concept of the public sphere and theory of communicative action, described the public sphere as being shaped by language. The public sphere illustrated an ethic of communicative action that Habermas saw as being deliberative democracy with a rationality that could lead to public policy. Tracy and Williams have the same focus on language. Tracy (see 4.2) rejects lazy pluralism through which religion can be isolated from society. His methodologies of mutually critical correlations between specific interpretations, the analogical imagination, and the religious classic, all use language. Williams (see 4.3) says language can push boundaries in society which avoids a neutral public square. Difference is addressed through conversations rather than borders that prevent dialogue. The theoretical perspectives on public discourse gave new knowledge. There was a 'linguistic turn' for the thesis that identified communicative action as creating the public square(s) rather than the existence of institutions and the mainstream media.

Faith-based discourse was part of society through the use of language. Chapter Four (see 4.4) presented my working understanding of the public square which I have developed further in subsequent chapters:

> The public square(s) can be understood as existing where there is communicative action through which knowledge can emerge by the use of every-day language which can contribute to the nature of society. With differing justifications, expectations, and realities of participation, the public square(s) is complex and is constantly undergoing change and so its existence is fluid and permeable rather than being fixed in nature.

The working definition identified the importance of language and challenged my experience of borders characterised by difference and isolation. The chapter introduced a new way to consider the public square by first identifying the communicative action that was occurring that formed the public square.

The challenge to my practice and experience was explored further in Chapter Five through the gathering of raw data. The interviews with Williams and Wilson, and the coding of my research diary, raised questions for further exploration about what the concepts of multiple public squares and borders, and the themes of negotiation and sanctuary/non-sanctuary could contribute to an understanding of the public square.

The interpretation of the gathered data (Chapters Six) identified three themes to contribute to knowledge to enable a contemporary understanding of the public square(s): multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation. The themes were explored further through writing on diverse cultures and publics, and a proposed spectrum of (in)visibility that led to further knowledge of the public square(s).

The exploration of the themes identified three central propositions about the public square(s).

- It is necessary to conceptualise the 'public square' as multiple and pluralistic and to use the concept of 'public square(s)' to reflect the understanding and awareness of multiple publics.
- It is important to see borders as blurred and not binary.
- Within the above understanding, negotiation becomes an essential commitment.

The propositions are central to a new understanding of the public square(s) and a contribution to knowledge. There is a complete change from the nature of the public square described from my experience in Chapters One to Three. As a practitioner I looked for opportunities to speak in a structured public square which had borders. The propositions provide an understanding of the public square(s) being formed by language that builds on the challenge to my initial understanding from the writing of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams.

The conclusion to Chapter Six was two versions of the public square. One version, (presented in Chapters One to Three) that I called model A, was about borders that divide and leave the Church in a vacuum from the world. Such a conceptualisation is opposed by the theoretical perspectives of Habermas, Tracy, and Williams who supported the publicness of faith-based discourse. The second model, that I called model B, is characterised by multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation. Mediatisation as a concept helped me to understand further the existence and importance of multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation in understanding the structures of the public square(s) and its modes of communication. There are further options for participation in the public square(s) by negotiating blurred borders in the context of multiple public square(s). However, the Church was slow to adapt to the new technology and lagged behind what became a mediatised society. That has rapidly changed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The concept of mediatisation, in which the practices of the media are amalgamated into the daily life of society has enabled a further contribution to knowledge.

8.4 Contribution to My Practice
In this thesis I used Goto's work on play to explore new forms of practice. The process is part of the requirement of a professional doctorate to contribute to my practice and the practice of others. The ethos of a professional doctorate is to move from practice to theory and back to practice to enable a contribution to knowledge and to practice (Bennett and Lyall, 2014, p.191). Browning (1996, p.7) says theology moves 'from present theory-laden practice to a retrieval of normative theory-laden practice to the creation of a more critically held theory-laden practice'.

The research and the analysis enabled me to critique and to develop my practice. This was possible because of new understandings about the public square(s) brought about by new knowledge. Goto's writing provided a way to reflect on my experience and practice, the theoretical perspectives, the interpreted data, and mediatisation – and from this to develop creative forms of practice using the characteristics of play. The characteristics of play included 'losing oneself', entering a 'world of possibilities', acting 'as if', use of the

imagination, using structures that include where worlds begin and end, building relationships, and being open to cause surprise and wonder. Chapter Seven argued that through the characteristics of play my practice was better informed to be able to negotiate blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares. My change in practice, through renewed thinking, was demonstrated in two ways. I reflected on my former practice using the billboards, and on my current practice using the planning of the climate change conference in Lincoln. My practice now, demonstrated by the climate change conference, seeks out other voices to engage with in society through blurred borders and negotiation to build and participate in public square(s).

The practices that I am now using are about interaction rather than separation. The propositions on public square(s), blurred borders, and negotiation underpin practices through which to tell the narrative of the Christian Church in a public square with diverse worldviews. The practices resolved the contradictions and tensions of the public square I described in Chapters One and Three. While the Church struggled to engage with the public square, I was able to minister as a priest in the cathedral and be a host on radio for national talkback. My practices were already negotiating blurred borders in the context of multiple public squares during the research.

My current practice aims to demonstrate the significance of the public square across the life of the Church. The clarity about what the term public square(s) can mean from my research encourages the further building of, and participation in, public square(s). In my current practice I see the importance of communication within the Church which can then be reflected in how the Church interacts with wider society. I next consider the significance of the research to my professional community.

8.5 Contribution to my Professional Community
A contribution to knowledge and to my own practice has the potential to enhance the ability of the Church to communicate in society. The contribution to my professional community are practices of multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation that can both challenge and affirm society: 'The role of faith communities should be to bless the society in which they live, not to circle the wagons and seek to retain purity through separation' (Welby, 2018, p.267). The quote from the Archbishop of Canterbury indicates the avoidance of purity and isolation of faith-based discourse in society. Rather, the role of the Church is to preserve and develop society through incarnational activity based on the nature of God. Communication is how such activity occurs. Multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation are active practices that can avoid 'purity through separation'. Instead there is leakage as suggested

by Jagessar (2015a, p.258). The research invites the Church as an organisation, and communications advisors in particular, to negotiate blurred borders with multiple publics.

I have contributed to my professional community in Aotearoa New Zealand and the United Kingdom in the following ways: to the institutional Church as a communications advisor and bishop's chaplain, in theological education as a lecturer and module/course coordinator, and in practical theology through involvement with the British Irish Association for Practical Theology. My contributions to my professional community have sought to develop communication skills and practices.

As bishop's chaplain in Lincoln I manage communications for the bishop's office that includes dealing with the media and other stakeholders. My research influenced projects such as working with other churches in the county for an online commemoration service for those who had died during the Covid-19 pandemic. The local churches had not previously used mediatised modes of communication such as online worship. I made suggestions for the service to work with multiple publics and blurred borders to engage with other stories in the community about the pandemic. As a result, the online service included participation from NHS staff, emergency workers, and the media. There were developments in practice and learning for the churches of how to engage with a mediatised society and build relationships across public square(s).

My research also contributed to interactions with other stakeholders. I was a member of the 'Mortality Cell' for the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. The forum managed the response to the increase in deaths in Lincolnshire during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Projects for the forum included how to communicate the opening of a temporary mortuary to house 500 bodies in the county. Part of the planning was the bishop blessing the mortuary. My research about multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation provided ways for the forum to engage with faith groups. The research also developed practices for the Church to engage with local government. The climate change conference also reflected my growing understanding of communication. The Church engaged in creative ways on an important issue for society. There were learnings about the use of mediatised forms of communication as well as negotiating multiple public squares through blurring the borders between science and faith.

My work as a communications advisor in Aotearoa New Zealand was outlined in Chapter Three. I was a member of the Communications Commission for General Synod in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the role I was able to contribute my growing knowledge and understanding

of practices to the wider Church. An example was setting up social media for Church leaders. There was ongoing advice that enabled the Church to focus on the importance of communication and develop the use of technology. Examples of this included the design of new websites and social media channels for Holy Trinity Cathedral and St John's Theological College.

8.5.1 Education

My research brought a focus on communication as part of theological study in educational institutions in which I worked. I initiated new curriculum material for students training for lay and ordained ministry in both Aotearoa New Zealand and the Church of England. The material provided an awareness of basic communication practices for ministry roles. There was the introduction of a communications paper that I taught as part of ministry formation at St John's Theological College from 2014 to 2017. The paper was a new resource for the college. The objective was for students to learn about the call to communicate in the public square. Lincoln School of Theology also incorporated my previous teaching and research into its courses. In 2021 I was the module convenor for a level four paper called Pastoral Care, Ethics, and Ministry. The course was taught as part of the Durham Common Awards programme for students in lay and ordained ministry. My research provided a lens of the public square through which to consider pastoral care, ethics, and ministry. In the contribution to theological education the practices of multiple public squares, blurred borders, and negotiation introduced ways to approach ethical issues such as the debate on assisted dying and how the Church might express its view in society.

8.5.2 Practical Theology:

The practices of multiple publics and blurred borders have introduced a focus on new forms of communication for the British Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT). The Association seconded me onto its management committee to provide communications advice in 2019. I also presented this research as a work in progress at a BIAPT conference in 2017. The workshop session on borders provided useful feedback. BIAPT has developed its use of social media as a way to communicate with its members and wider society. Social media, such as Twitter enabled the organisation to engage with topics in society such as during the Black Lives Matter protests. BIAPT was able to engage with multiple publics through the use of social media and blur the borders between society and academic research.

8.6 Significance to my own Learning and Development

When I began this research study I had a great deal of experience of the public square. I was in a unique position as a broadcaster, communications advisor, and a priest to contribute to knowledge, my own practice, and to my professional community. The research training and guidance from the professional doctorate has developed my knowledge and practice as a researcher. The role of researcher has developed how I ask questions and the way in which answers are developed. The research has enabled me to learn skills that are used across ministry from preaching to deciding the content on a website page. By working with my own story, the theoretical perspectives, the gathering and processing of data, and doing interviews, I have developed skills that I can continue to apply as a public theologian.

The focus of my learning has been the significance of the public square(s) in the role of a church communications advisor. The research has contributed to my learning and development as a broadcaster, communications advisor, and priest. In one interview for a communications role, I was asked whether I was a priest or a communications advisor. My learning and development confirm that I can be both. Priests, communications advisors, and broadcasters all work with multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation in the public square(s).

8.7 Limitations of the Research and Further Possibilities

The research provided a substantial and unexpected body of material to consider about the public square. There was nothing I could locate at the time that addressed practices in the public square for a church communications advisor that was based on public discourse theory as a way to develop practice. The material that did exist enabled an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives about the public square. The research, from a necessarily selective consideration, contains my narrative and views from theorists and other practitioners about a growing and more complex public square.

While there is a limitation in the small number of contexts considered, nevertheless the propositions can be tested in a wider variety of contexts. This research can be read alongside other data, both quantitative and qualitative, and so contribute to knowledge and practice within, and beyond, the life of the Church. There are also possible ways in which the research could be developed further with the public square recognised as a place of theological integrity and professional integrity in which the Church can take part in public theology.

Further options that can build on the findings from this study include the following:

- An analysis of the impact that the covid-19 pandemic has on how the Church engages with society.
- The development of further training in communications and an understanding of the public square for lay and ordained leaders in leadership roles within and beyond the Church of England and the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Further exploration of how the Christian faith communicates with other belief systems.
- Further exploration of the nature of conflict in the public square.

This chapter has presented conclusions from the research. The final part of the thesis is the Epilogue which reflects on how my spiritual whakapapa has developed through the research.

Epilogue

Rowan Williams reflects on the religious life in *Faith in the Public Square* (2012a, p.313). Belief for Williams is not simply a 'mental event' but includes gestures, habits, and speech – some of the ways in which faith is communicated. My faith and spiritual whakapapa consist of inherited and learnt responses – there are also responses that draw on deeper personal experiences and discoveries. These are expressed through gestures, habits and speech. While this thesis was an academic exercise about practice - there is also a contribution to my deeper personal discoveries and experiences that is shared with others.

A part of this thesis is my story – what has shaped me, including my spiritual whakapapa. My spiritual whakapapa has been further shaped and nurtured through my engagement in the thesis - through the narratives of others, and my own narrative. An analogy is useful. In Māori culture an individual or community does not own a river. Rather, people are entrusted to care for the river – to ensure, and understand how it brings life to others and the community. It is the same for the public square and my spiritual whakapapa. I do not own the public square, nor what has shaped me in my spiritual whakapapa, but I am able to engage with it and deepen my understanding. As a priest and a communications advisor, I bring a deeper understanding of the public square(s) to the next chapter of my story and practice through blurred borders and negotiation in the context of multiple publics.

In embarking on this research, I took the mission of the Church to communicate as being a given and so sought to further understand the public square. That understanding and knowledge is now part of my passion and commitment to the public square as a public theologian. There are new practices that are a source of new knowledge to share with others. The knowledge and understanding are now part of my spiritual whakapapa which shapes and moulds me as a public theologian. I have a way of being that is not simply about how information is told but more about how God is communicated and experienced as a reality in the public square(s). Multiple publics, blurred borders, and negotiation, while being new knowledge, are also about gestures, habits and speech. I am very much aware that this new knowledge does not remove elements of confusion, tension, and possibly conflict in the public square but does provide new ways through which to respond.

The title of this thesis: *Playing in the Public Square* is not about playing as such, but playing through the negotiation of blurred borders in a context of multiple publics. Playing is a way to communicate and build relationship with others – it is an attitude to always rethink what is happening. For me as a practitioner there is the chance to 'think outside the square' in order

to be part of the 'public square'. Thinking and playing 'outside the square' opens up worlds of possibilities as borders are negotiated in a context of multiple squares. The concept of play can bring down borders and rethink reality. The theorists have encouraged play. Habermas' use of metaphor suggested the use of the imagination in communicative processes. Tracy's method, called the analogical imagination, encouraged use of the imagination to rethink reality. Williams encouraged language to be used to push boundaries - as a tool that both unlocks and uses the imagination. All three theorists presented ways to think outside the square in order to participate in the square. Playing in the public square adds another chapter to my spiritual whakapapa that shapes who I am and adds knowledge and practice to my role as a communications advisor.

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APPENDICES

Anglia Ruskin University

Cambridge & Chelmsford

Cambridge Campus
East Road
Cambridge
CB1 1PT

T: 0845 271 3333
Int: +44 (0)1223 363271
www.anglia.ac.uk

28 November 2016

Dear Jason

Principal Investigator: Jason Rhodes
Project title: Moving from Sanctuary to Public Squares

I am pleased to inform you that your ethics application has been approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Panel (FREP) under the terms of Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy (Dated 23/6/14, Version 1).

Ethical approval is given for a period of one year from 28 November 2016.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy and the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University, including the following.

- The procedure for submitting substantial amendments to the committee, should there be any changes to your research. You cannot implement these amendments until you have received approval from DREP for them.
- The procedure for reporting adverse events and incidents.
- The Data Protection Act (1998) and any other legislation relevant to your research. You must also ensure that you are aware of any emerging legislation relating to your research and make any changes to your study (which you will need to obtain ethical approval for) to comply with this.
- Obtaining any further ethical approval required from the organisation or country (if not carrying out research in the UK) where you will be carrying the research out. Please ensure that you send the DREP copies of this documentation if required, prior to starting your research.
- Any laws of the country where you are carrying the research and obtaining any other approvals or permissions that are required.
- Any professional codes of conduct relating to research or requirements from your funding body (please note that for externally funded research, a Project Risk Assessment must have been carried out prior to starting the research).
- Completing a Risk Assessment (Health and Safety) if required and updating this annually or if any aspects of your study change which affect this.
- Notifying the DREP Secretary when your study has ended.

Please also note that your research may be subject to random monitoring.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me. May I wish you the best of luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

PP Zoë Bennett
FREP Chair

Stonewall
DIVERSITY CHAMPION

INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

POSITIVE ABOUT
DISABLED PEOPLE

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE
UK
The Government Standard

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
Te Hāhi Mihinare ki Aotearoa ki Niu Tireni, Ki Ngā Moutere o te Moana Nui a Kiwa

7 March 2016

Anglia Ruskin University - Cambridge
Attention: Dr Zoe Bennett

Dear Dr Bennett

REVEREND JAYSON RHODES

I am writing to confirm that the office of the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, in which the Rev'd Jayson Rhodes is contracted as an advisor in communications is aware of, and gives permission for him to keep, a journal of his role as a Communications Advisor and Lecturer.

I understand that the journal is part of his study for the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology, in which a requirement is for his studies to contribute to his work context. I understand that the recording of the journal in his work place will provide detail of his activities but will not name people, nor record personal or confidential information. The journal is being used to plan a larger component of planned research later in the year.

Kind regards

Michael Hughes (Rev'd)
GENERAL SECRETARY

https://synod365.sharepoint.com/Shared Documents /General Synod/CORRESPONDENCE 2015/2016-03-07 Letter for J Rhodes.docx

Reverend Michael Hughes, General Secretary at TUIA - Office of the General Synod
200 St Johns Rd, Meadowbank, Auckland 1072   PO Box 87188 Meadowbank, Auckland 1742, New Zealand
Ph: 649 521 4439   Fx: 649 521 4490   Email: gensec@ang.org.nz   Web: www.anglican.org.nz

Anglican DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

11 March 2016   C.336

Anglia Ruskin University - Cambridge
East Road, Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
CB1 1PT

Attention: Dr Zoe Bennett

Dear Dr Bennett,

Re: Acknowledgement of Journal of the Rev'd Jayson Rhodes

I am writing to confirm that the Diocese of Auckland, in which the Rev'd Jayson Rhodes is an employee and priest, is aware of, and gives permission for him to keep a journal in his role as a priest and as the Communications Manager.

The journal is part of his study for the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology in which a requirement is for his studies to contribute to his work context. I understand that the recording of the journal in his work place will provide detail of his activities but will not name people, nor record personal or confidential information. The journal is being used to plan a larger component of research later in the year.

Yours sincerely,

Sonia Maugham
Acting Diocesan Manager

The College of
St John the Evangelist
Hoani Tapu te Kaikauwhau i te Rongopai

Anglia Ruskin University - Cambridge

Attain: Dr Zoe Bennett

March 8 2016

Dear Dr Bennett

I am writing to confirm that St John's Theological College, at which the Rev'd Jayson Rhodes is an employee, is aware of, and gives permission for him to keep a journal in his role as a Communications' Lecturer.

The journal is part of his study for the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology in which a requirement is for his studies to contribute to his work context. I understand that the recording of the journal in his work place will provide detail of his activities, but will not name people, nor record personal or confidential information. The journal is being used to plan a larger component of research later in the year.

Yours sincerely
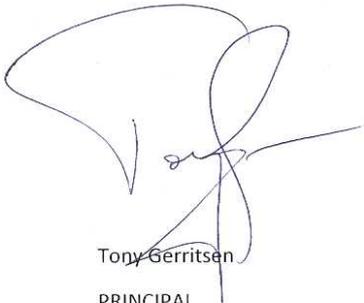
Tony Gerritsen

PRINCIPAL

APPENDIX E

Redacted in this version

Participant Information Sheet (Version 1 October 10)
Dr Rowan Williams

1.	**Title of thesis: Moving from Sanctuary to Public Squares**

2.	**Brief summary of research:**
This research questions how the Anglican Church in New Zealand, and the wider Anglican Communion, communicates in what are now multiple public squares. The 'squares' can be understood as places of dialogue. The research identifies current practice through the lens of implicit theology and suggests what could be best practice for the church to engage with society that avoids the church seeing the media as the 'other'.

3.	**Purpose of the study:**
The award being sought is the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology through Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. The research will be disseminated as part of a thesis.
.
4.	**Name of your Supervisor: Dr Zoe Bennett**

5.	**Why have I been asked to participate?**
A part of this research has been to hear from voices that have experienced the church and media relationship. The thesis expands the role and place of faith in the public squares in regards to communication strategies and how that can be done with a 'market mentality.' Your voice would be from a perspective of the church alongside a New Zealand voice, Janet Wilson, a journalist and communications specialist in my context.

6.	**Participation: I am seeking a recorded interview at Magdalene College when we meet on Monday 17th October 2016. The interview may be used for some verbatim quotes with your approval after being shown a written script. The recording of the interview as whole would remain private and only used for study purposes. It is unlikely there will be any direct benefits to being interviewed in this research but a clear requirement of the Professional**

Doctorate is for the thesis to make a contribution to my professional community, which in this case is the Anglican Church. Interview participants can withdraw at any stage.

7. **Ethical Approval: The study has to comply with the Ethical Guidelines of Anglia Ruskin University and is approved by an Ethics Committee. Permission has also been granted for research elements occurring in New Zealand from The Diocese of Auckland, The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and St John's Theological College.**

8. **Contact details:**
   Jayson Rhodes
   Supervisor; Dr Zoe Bennett

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM

APPENDIX G

Redacted in this version

Participant Information Sheet (Version 1 October 10)
Janet Wilson

8.   **Title of thesis: Moving from Sanctuary to Public Squares**

9.   **Brief summary of research:**
This research questions how the Anglican Church in New Zealand, and the wider Anglican Communion, communicates in what are now multiple public squares. The 'squares' can be understood as places of dialogue. The research identifies current practice through the lens of implicit theology and suggests what could be best practice for the church to engage with society that avoids the church seeing the media as the 'other'.

10.   **Purpose of the study:**
The award being sought is the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology through Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. The research will be disseminated as part of a thesis.
.
11.   **Name of your Supervisor: Dr Zoe Bennett**

12.   **Why have I been asked to participate?**
A part of this research has been to hear from voices that have experienced the church and media relationship. Dr Rowan Williams provides a voice from the church and your voice would be from the perspective of being a journalist and communications specialist in my context, which is New Zealand.

13.   **Participation: I am seeking a recorded interview in New Zealand at a time to be confirmed. The interview may be used for some verbatim quotes with your approval after being shown a written script. The recording of the interview as whole would remain private and only used for study purposes. It is unlikely there will be any direct benefit to being interviewed in this research but a clear requirement of the Professional Doctorate is for the thesis to make a contribution to my professional community, which in this case is the Anglican Church. Interview participants can withdraw at any stage.**

14. **Ethical Approval: The study has to comply with the Ethical Guidelines of Anglia Ruskin University and is approved by an Ethics Committee. Permission has also been granted for research elements occurring in New Zealand from The Diocese of Auckland, The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and St John's Theological College.**

8. **Contact details:**
   Jayson Rhodes
   Supervisor; Dr Zoe Bennett   The Bounds, Westminster College
Lady Margaret Road,
]

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM

Appendix I – Interview Questions Rowan Williams

Public Square

- How do you define the public square?
- Is it a mistake to think the public square is something out there, not us - does it surround us, is it our neighbour?
- How valuable is the public square, do we under value it or just not know our way round it and the use of language?
- Is faith in public square untidy, do we seek to sanitize it or border it off, or not sure what to do?
- Have we taken it for granted - was 'who is my neighbour'
- Is it a place we take people to, did Jesus show true public square, share their pain and joy – use Christchurch sermon
- Is there a right to be in the public square there for the church - journalist Julian Coman says no automatic right to give lectures in the public square?
- Book title, an ambiguity is it 'faith' in the square or existence of faith, was it your choice, does faith have a role/right to there
- Is there a weariness about the public square it, is it a safe place to speak?
- Is the church's understanding of the public square outdated?

Church Voice in the Public Square
- Does such a voice exist?
- Have we learnt the necessary language (are we aware of its potential)?
- Do media define the church voice at stages
- Is it wise to do the theology but then rely on media to package it

Market Mentality
- Refer to Williams writing on charities: market methods/mentality to take up a non-market mind, you say the church needs to be committed to living with a market mentality, to look credible, attractive and marketable (what does that look like?)
- Does a market mentality address isolation of the church voice?

Primates
- The distribution of prayers for the Primates' gathering. Does such an approach treat the media as the other?

Church and Media

- Were prophets the first journalists (King David certainly reported on)
- I observed borders – is borders a useful word?
- Is it a case of borders or a case of misunderstanding?
- Did you have suspicion of the media, a them and us situation?
- I conclude there are confused borders but is borders a useful analogy?

Appendix J Interview Questions Janet Wilson

How would you best describe your role for the interview and to appear in the thesis?

Public Square

- How would you define the public square?
- Is the concept the same in New Zealand? (Bradstock says narrow and hard to locate)
- Doe the public square operate differently – consumers able to report news?
- Rowan Williams says the public square is no longer judged by columns in a newspaper but having a presence - your reaction?
- Are there now multiple public spaces – a polygamy of spaces rather than a more monogamous nature of relationship with media?
- Should theology and matters of faith be in the public square?
- Is the church in the public square or out of it in terms of possibilities and chances, should it see itself as separate or part of wider society

Church Voice in the Public Square

- Has a church voice existed in NZ from your perspective, has it disappeared or is it there when people say it is not?
- What have you observed over the years with the voice of the church in society?

Church and Media

- What have you observed in the relationship between the church and the media in NZ?
- Has there been a church media relationship or lack of relationship different to any other organisation?
- Literature – Paul Thompson talks about a fractious but worthwhile marriage – is that a useful summation?
- Rowan Williams says they do different jobs and so clergy should not be surprised if they are not reporting how the clergy see it, how different are they, have group like churches realised that?
- Primates distribute prayers seeking to be free from media manipulation and from slanted and cynical reporting – your reaction?
- Has church been hard to report on?

- How much does the church need to be in the communication business, same as any other contributor to wider society?
- Is the church facing any different question to other voices in the public square?
- Church leaders criticise the media for coverage – what effect does that have on having a voice?
- There is the suggestion from some writers that reporters should be better trained in religion and church?
- Is it a two-way street as one commentator says, media need to be better trained and church more responsive?

Journalism
- Has there been a change in media – how would you describe that change? (talk about mediatisation)
- How would you define news, is it well understood what it is, is it valuable information, is it a product?
- Have organisations embraced technology – examples?
- Paul Thompson Radio NZ – consumer driven market forced media to up their game – your reaction?
- New Zealanders more connected – how does the church need to respond to such a change in context?

Church
- How important is language, talk about the profane and hallowed space and sacred
- Is what was often in private now public right across society – has church been slow to catch up

for the press and here is a draft you might like to adapt – I sent it back and said that's a perfectly fair statement of where we are and why we doing it but it unfortunately connects to nothing in the news cycle and that means unfortunately it's going to be idle in that context, it doesn't ask people to do anything, it doesn't give a perspective on a specific current issue and in that forum it's meaningless. In another one it might be fine. If you want to send it to address a large scale ecumenical meeting about why international development is a proper Christian priority fine but that's not your audience there. So that's one of the other strategic things, if you want to be non-strategic then you better be strategic about it – you see what I mean

12:18 JR Because that whole definition round the public square you know liturgically where the point of engagement is, Mathewes talks about the liturgy of the people – there is a part of me that wonders that we can't truly define what the public square is, even though it has those parts you mentioned, it almost seems it has become greyer ?(yes) is it a place – you did a sermon in Chch where you talked about Jesus was saying let me go with you to the place that hurts most (oh yes) I thought is that the public square, so does Christ show us the public square or does the market show us??

13:20 RW Yes so this is the diversity of public squares – that I think has to relate to a theological question at one end and a sociological one at the other end doesn't it. The theological one is am I or are we as church being seduced by a model of public discourse that is actually detached – corrupted and isolated from real issues – that is do you think you've really done anything by doing a speech in the House of Lords sometimes, that's an open question– whereas thinking of what I was in the middle of yesterday with the refugee issue, is it that more important to go and be with a group of arriving refugees, because that is the public square in another sense, that is something to do with what is being transacted and argued about not just in establishment circles and discourse groups but argued about in general and the intervention you might want o make is not a speech, article or pronouncement but the intervention is where people are and so the first people on hand as volunteers to welcome refugees were Anglican Baptist and catholic in Croydon seemed to me to an intervention in the public square of an interesting kind. So that is theological end of it where the Christological comes in – in some sense articulating in Christ like idiom. 15:39 The sociological end is to do with diversity of the media and there is not a hegemonic public communication sphere where a letter to the times automatically has encyclical status so people of my generation and my technical incompetence the question of the electronic is more complex and I have not caught up with it and I can see for some people that is where their energy has to go

1645 There are certainly multiple squares so what passes for the public square in Cambridge and Camberwell are certainly different. I think there are many contexts where the involvement of a parish priest who is chair of his or her school body arguing in a meeting for the local council about speed bumps that is the public square in camberwell and very different from a visiting bishop giving a talk at the Cambridge union which is another kind of public square and again

Appendix L– Example of transcript from Wilson interview

Janet Wilson interview

Is the public square a useful term around the world, is it still a useful term, how do you define it and do you define it. How do you define it, is it a useful term.

0:26 The public square has changed. The public square is now all of us in the world. The speed at which that information is transmitted around the world is now recorded in minutes, not hours or days and we all have a chance through the digitalisation process of being in that public square. So you get stories in NZ that will travel within an hour to the UK and you get stories in the UK that will travel all around the world to New Zealand and be on the front pages of our digital media sites within an hour.
1:11 So there is the public square but it has got bigger and smaller at the same time because media now are emphasising without context, so there are certain things that drive media now that have changed inextricably in the last twenty years. You still get stories like this.
1:34 There are themes and stories that occur now that would never have happened 20 or 30 years ago and there is a variety of reasons for that.
1:44 Would Weinstein be an example of it? 1:52 That is an interesting example because what that has done, it was the use of social media that helped drive that as well, some of those more than 30 women got onto social when the story started breaking, they broke in two major mainstream media organisations, first of all New York Times and then the New Yorker, so the double-tranch – the pince of those landed a knockout blow, but it was aided and abetted as well by some of those protagonists going on twitter and other social media chnnels and advocating and telling women to stand up and talk, and to making it allowable and then to have some men in Hollywood stand up and say we all knew about it and did nothing.
2:52 What did the public square used to be then if it has changed?
I think it was a lot more constrained, the fourth estate had a much more formality and influence about it. For a start, you didn't have a 24/7 news cycle, you had identifiable deadlines, you had journalists who were largely trained either through those media organisations or at university and trained in terms of general knowledge.
3:30 When I was a young journalist I was trained in expressions to use with members of the defence force for instance and what the order of rankings were and I was also taught about the orders of ranking within the church and what that meant. 3:48 Because your general knowledge needs to be very wide and not necessarily hugely deep but deep enough so that you can feel comfortable approaching people and talking with them, I'm not sure that happens now.

3:59 I think what we are getting because it is the 24-hour news cycle which has changed everything, there is that whole idea of churnalism that Nick Davies from the Guardian coined in one of his books several years ago back in in 06/07, the young journalist sitting at their desk strapped to their desk all day, churning out those stories without the chance to fact check or look into really what's happening and to put one side of the story out and then to go to the protagonist on their other side to get their view, and that whole idea of the 24 hour commercial radio idea of fairness and balance, as long as you can get fairness and balance across 24 hours you're doing your job, it doesn't necessarily have to be in the same story. So that is the difference, that is the huge difference.

②

(1)
Basic Topics

SATURDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 12:00 PM

cathedral
worship – face to face
cathedral
worship – video
worship – cathedral facebook
worship " website

Ordination Service
The Ordination Service for the Diocese was to ordain three priests
and four deacons and I decide the best way to cover this was a
video that could be taken on the day with images from the service as
well as an introduction from the bishops preferably at the Cathedral.
The recording went well with Melinda, the Communications Assistant
doing a recording that she could then edit during the following
week. I also organised for photos to be available to use on Facebook
that day.

ordination, diocese

video
Cathedral

facebook

radio
– papr, television
Media inq – Chch Cathdl

there have been ongoing inquiries in regard to ChristChurch
Cathedral and the report of the Cathedral Working Group which was
established to bring the church and those asking for restoration to
the same table and see if there was a way to bring six years of
ongoing debate to an end and begin a new cathedral

media inquiries
Christchurch Cathedral
Cathedral wrkg grp

debate

Media inq – surprise
Surprise – media inquiry

Stakeholder Relp – clarity
Govt stakeholder relationship

Stakeholder relp
(media + government)

There were calls when I finished the ordination service as to
comment regarding the process for Christchurch Cathedral. The
Christchurch Press was running a statement from the Diocese which I
was not aware had been put up and neither was the minister's office.
there were a number of calls to work through with the MInister's
Office not happy but the Bishop saying the statement was intended
to go out. The Minister' office decided the statement was issued in
error and said that to media. There was a flurry of phone calls but it
was not a major issue and did not really add much to what had
already been in the media. The Minister's office asked that the
statement come down and so it as remove from the Diocesan
website and so that would occur on Monday once diocesan staff
were available. This in effect meant a two day delay until the website
could be changed which not ideal in a news world that is measured
by minutes rather than hours and days. What did need to be
considered was that the website does not attract high traffic

media inquiries
Chch Cathedral
Diocese – Chch
minister's office

Bishop
minister's office
phone calls

media, Minister's office
diocesan website

website
news

website

SUNDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 12:00 PM

uncertainty
"unknown"

College – role end
uncertainty

'uncertainty'

This diary has a focus on my role in communications for the Anglican
Church. At this point my future in regard to communications and
roles in the Anglican Church are unknown.

My role at St John's Theological College was two years and that
ends on December 31st. The role, two days a week includes being a
lecturer in communications and pastoral papers as well as
communications to tell what is happening at the College. A separate
role is Communications Manager for the Diocese of Auckland. There
was an indication of uncertainty in August as to whether the half time
role would continue in 2017 due to financial constraints on the
Diocese. On November 15th I received a letter outlining that the

future
roles unknown
role
St John's Theol Collg
role ends
role lecturer

role communications in
Diocese of Auckland
uncertainty role
redundancy process

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position would be disestablished and I was invited to give feedback and a meeting was set up for Tuesday 22nd November with the Diocesan Bishop. I prepared feedback today in written form to email tomorrow to question the process that had decided on disestablishment and also what thought had been given to a person with experience still being available to the diocese to maintain media relationships and oversight of the quarterly magazine given the current other staff consisted of a junior communications officer and a contractor for the magazine. Also the Cathedral would be consecrated run 2017 with a number of internal and external communications roles and who would direct this at a diocesan and city level. I also pointed out that after two years in the job I was not part of any management or leadership group and so not 'at any tablet's be able to coordinate communications across the Diocese or even be aware of what was occurring in mission and ministry projects

Today marked the beginning of Advent and the Journey to Consecration for the Cathedral. The day was very much symbolic in terms of the liturgical calendar of the church and also the end of waiting for the Cathedral with consecration about to be a reality after the vision was had in 1842 with the purchase of the land by Bishop Welwyn.

Holy Trinity Cathedral

The Choral Eucharist morning had some extra elements with the Archdeacon being present to mark the beginning of the Journey to Consecration. The new Cathedral Precentor was also presented with his licence and Matt Griffiths, who had been a parishioner had been ordained Dean the previous day so read the gospel in the Service. I had a photo taken at the end of the service to record the clergy team present and place on Facebook immediately which could also mention the Advent Carol Service that night. I was conscious the previous day had posts on the Cathedral Facebook and the Diocesan Facebook site from the ordination service but both were significant days and events in the life of the Diocese and the Cathedral

In the evening there was the Advent Carol Service. I was part of the liturgical party but was able to take photos at times that we were behind the congregation or at the high altar and out of sight. Those photos were able to be on the Cathedral Facebook page that night that showed the movement of the Advent Procession as it made its way through the Cathedral.

Media:
Yesterday and today there have been ongoing inquiries in regard to ChristChurch Cathedral.A report is due from the Cathedral Working Group ,which was established by the Government, to try and bring resolution to an ongoing stalemate regarding what should happen to the earthquake damaged building. Some people want restoration

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