

**Enigmatic Pearls: Authorship and Representation:
Competing Cultural Positions in *Pilbara Pearl*, *Nullarbor Pearl*
and *Shoalwater Pearl***

Written by Sarah Rossetti

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Additional Materials to Enigmatic Pearls

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Appendix A: *Pilbara Pearl* Script

Appendix B: *Nullarbor Pearl* Script

Appendix C: *Shoalwater Pearl* Script

Appendix D: *Pilbara Pearl* DVD

Declaration

This major creative work and thesis are submitted to fulfil the requirements for the degree of PhD in Media Studies at Murdoch University, Western Australia. I declare that it contains my own account of my research, and, as its main contents, work which has not previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

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Sarah Rossetti

Preface

This doctoral thesis is praxis driven, emerging out of an ethnographic, self reflexive perspective, coinciding with screenwriting praxis for fictional works, feeling its way through a matrix of interdisciplinary investigations to arrive at conclusions which are designed to inform and assist screenwriters, who may follow in my footsteps. The task has taken three years of full time research and scripting, proving that writing about what is psychologically unresolved garners the most intriguing results.

My thesis reveals how explorations into my psyche as a screenwriter motivated the articulation of the actions of my fictitious central character, Pearl, adhering me to Pearl's multiple narratives until some semblance of resolution had been arrived at in my life. I arrived at this resolution via writing the following film script/s: *Shoalwater Pearl*, which has emerged directly out of this research; *Pilbara Pearl* and *Nullarbor Pearl*, which also feature the same central character, leading me to entitle my doctoral thesis, *Enigmatic Pearls*. This title reflects the level of authorial intrigue I have with this fictional lead character, Pearl.

Through Pearl, I focus on issues of great significance to myself as a Caucasian, Australian, multicultural, female author, whose central character belatedly discovers her Aboriginality, leading me to closely examine how authorship, representation, identity and Aboriginality compete and coincide in my major creative work, *Shoalwater Pearl*, and in my other *Pearl* film scripts, as my thesis chapters reveal.

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Enigmatic Pearls: Identity and Representation: Competing Cultural Positions in *Pilbara Pearl*, *Nullarbor Pearl* and *Shoalwater Pearl*.

This thesis was supervised by Associate Professors, Jennifer de Reuck and Mick Broderick.

Abstract

This work is an inquiry into the creative pathways I have undertaken, as a screenplay author, when formulating a body of work, which interrogates issues of importance to me, as a Caucasian, Australian, multicultural, female author, writing within a fictional feature film script construct. It is an interdisciplinary investigation, punctuated by self consciousness. Mindful of my own subject position, I believe my negotiations through this, as reflected in the body of my past and present work, have created an original thesis which argues for the aesthetic, reconciliatory power of screenplays. In wishing to create a positive lead role for an Indigenous actress, I had to ultimately put aside reservations about my origins as a non-Indigenous screenwriter. As a screenplay author, I will demonstrate why I find it hard not to agree with Michel Foucault's supposition that: "it is not enough to repeat the empty affirmation that the author has disappeared" (Foucault 101).

The creative component of my thesis is a magic realist feature film script, entitled *Shoalwater Pearl*, written as a prequel to the two other enclosed film scripts largely written outside of this doctoral thesis, featuring the same lead character, Pearl. Pearl carries the weight of my self-consciousness, and through her, I reveal the creative pathways I simultaneously interrogate as I research theoretical issues of importance to me as a screenplay author.

Faris could not have more aptly put it, regarding the magic realist aim, which I have adapted to my representation of Pearl, as, “a disturbing element, a grain of sand in the oyster of [. . .] realism” (Faris 168).

The theoretical component of my thesis is interwoven with theories of Authorship and Representation including issues of Identity, Aboriginality, Multiculturalism and Gender to better document how my creative and theoretical pathways intertwine, followed by a short Conclusion, Bibliography and Filmography. The Chapter titles, ‘Authorship’ and ‘Representation’ are used advisedly, as it could be argued that they are controversial subjects. It will be revealed that none of these terms can be considered as stable or abiding. However, each chapter introduces its title as a methodological and normative term for a category or definition from which the chapter emerges.

As a result of my interdisciplinary approach, I have posited an original pathway for other screenplay authors, who, whilst remaining mindful of marketplace interests, may also enter into identity politics or study social movements in order to create screenplays representing contentious aspects of cultural change in contemporary Australia, whilst paying homage to their own unresolved issues or unique life narratives.

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Additional Included Materials to *Enigmatic Pearls* Thesis

Appendix A: *Pilbara Pearl* Film Script

Appendix B: *Nullarbor Pearl* Film Script

Appendix C: *Shoalwater Pearl* Film Script

Appendix D: *Pilbara Pearl* DVD

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