

Creative Thesis submitted for Doctor of Philosophy in Communication by Research  
246AA

by

Jordan Williams ©

**Unforeseeable sentences: body/mapping on Acton Peninsula**

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## **Abstract**

Acton Peninsula is located in the central area of Canberra, the national capital of Australia. Canberra is a planned city, its site chosen after the federation of territories occupying the land of many indigenous nations.

This research creatively explores the space between nation, urban planning and the individual body. It does so through a creative theoretical engagement with Acton Peninsula, an area within Australia's planned city and national capital, Canberra. It asks how the city on paper became a city in place, what part did the embodied human take at various phases in that process, and how does one live in a symbol-city. Using practice led research methodologies, it interrogates the function of literature, specifically new media poetry, in documenting and revealing the sociopolitical consciousness of places and people through time.

The research finds that the various official uses of the Acton site have been concerned with 'nation' and national identity, yet Australian national identity is an *aporia*; the nation was formed for largely practical reasons rather than patriotic fervour; the site itself was a not-sydney/not-Melbourne compromise. Yet the Acton site has been lived vibrantly by embodied citizens going about their business.

The research demonstrates that literary forms, and new media forms in particular, are ideally suited to studying and recording history using not only temporal but also spatial considerations.

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