Phenomenological Deconstruction, Slow Pedagogy, and the Corporeal Turn in Wild Environmental/Outdoor Education.

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Abstract

A "slow pedagogy of place" in (environmental/outdoor) education has been enacted by the two authors over the past three years in a third year undergraduate semester-long unit named Experiencing the Australian Landscape. An integrated practical and theoretical, de- and reconstruction of fast pedagogies is now needed, we believe, if education is to make a positive contribution to overcoming the ecologically problematic human condition. Experiencing the Australian Landscape fosters an embodied sensory-perceptual and conceptual-theoretical "sense" or "possibility" of place while assisting its participants to understand the relations of their body and nature, in time and space, as they are experienced phenomenologically. We hope the notion of a slow ecopedagogy prompts a reversal of the precarious prospects for experiential education in schooling and acts as a critique of the "take-away" pedagogies proliferating in education.

Résumé

Pendant les trois dernières années, dans le programme d'éducation écologique et de plein air, les deux auteurs ont déroulé une « pédagogie du lieu au rythme de la nature ». Le tout est survenu pendant la troisième année d'un module semestriel au niveau du baccalauréat et intitulé Experiencing the Australian Landscape. On doit maintenant, croit-on, déconstruire et reconstruire la pédagogie artificielle en intégrant la pratique et le théorique, si on veut que l'éducation contribue positivement à surmonter la condition humaine écologiquement problématique. Experiencing the Australian Landscape favorise un amalgame du « sens » ou du « potentiel » perceptuel-sensoriel et conceptuel-théorique du lieu en même temps qu'il aide ses participants à comprendre les rapports de leur corps et de la nature dans le temps et l'espace au fur et à mesure qu'ils les vivent phénoménologiquement. Nous souhaitons que la notion d'une éco-pédagogie au rythme de la nature provoque un revirement de la précarité perçue en éducation expérientielle et agisse comme une critique des pédagogies « amenuisantes » qui prolifèrent en éducation.

Keywords: body, time, phenomenology, place, wild, edge, ecopedagogy, experiential education

Looking Back to Edge Forward

Our "slow pedagogy of place" highlights the importance of the body in an education with various environments—as those bodies are lived in and over times in natural spaces. A slow pedagogy, or ecopedagogy, allows us to pause or dwell in spaces for more than a fleeting moment and, therefore, encourages us to attach and receive meaning from that place. This paper provides insights into how a slow pedagogy was developed by the two authors, and what slowing down a bit invites us to achieve in environmental education.

Our version of slow pedagogy emphasizes the role of the body(ies) in learning experiences and, therefore, takes seriously the corporeal and intercorporeal turns in philosophy and nature discourses (e.g., Grosz, 2004; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). That is, for any pedagogy claiming responsiveness to the ecologically problematic human condition, there needs to be a shift in emphasis from focusing primarily on the "learning mind" to re-engaging the active, perceiving, and sensuous corporeality of the body with other bodies (human and more-than-human) in making-meaning in, about, and for the various environments and places in which those bodies interact and relate to nature.

This pedagogical turn to an "ecocentric intercorporeality" remains on the margins in education—even in critical versions of environmental, outdoor, physical, health, and sustainable educations. For example, outdoor environmental education often seems to be trapped in a cultural logic of skilled activities and safe performance in the outdoors, where the depth of learning is too often assumed to correlate with the greater amount of distance traveled and elevation gained, or challenge manufactured and risk encountered. Put differently, the organic primitiveness of the body and its biological, circadian, and cosmological times of existence and experience (Archer, 2000; Melucci, 1996) are subordinated to a socially constructed, instrumentally quantified, and commodified notion and practice of Euclidean space—for example, the many kilometers to be covered in a successful bushwalk/backpack/tramp or overcoming the technical difficulty and subjective risk/challenge of the numerically graded climb, rapid, or slope (Payne, 2003a). Conventional forms of environmental education often suffer from similar time constructions, constraints, and demands. Field trips, for example, are difficult to undertake due to a wide variety of timetabling, financial, staffing, safety, and bureaucratic reasons. All too often, the alleged environmental or outdoor experience is squeezed in according to pre-determined learning objectives, and is unable to inform or reflect what occurs in the classroom, or school, or home, or in the everyday.

In the past, the sometimes self-proclaimed alternative or critical curriculum discourse of environmental education made serious claims about doing and learning through a rarely articulated idea of experience, and often it was hoped that such an experience would occur in a participatory fashion and interdisciplinary mode. More recently, this alternative discourse

has demonstrated its vulnerability to the fast, take-away, virtual, globalized, download/uptake versions of electronic pedagogy—in other words, it has been largely supplanted by approaches that promote a technology or technics of increasingly abstracted experience (Payne, 2003b/2006). We feel this "fast" trajectory in environmental education constitutes another means through which the prospects of experiential education are being diminished, via the disembodiment, displacement, disembedding, and decontextualizing of varied face-to-face interactions and relations with others, including "nature." Fast, techno, virtual, and abstract pedagogies in environmental education have been critiqued previously (Payne, 2003b, 2006), and in outdoor education (Wattchow, 2001), on the basis that they undermine earlier alternative calls for immersive experiences, authentic learning, ecological literacy, and reimagining our relationships with nature.

We suspect the increasingly popular notion of place pedagogy is also vulnerable to the fast imperatives outlined above. For example, Ginsborg (2006) notes how localized civic action in the political "choices we make" must contend with the intimate links now established between the global and local. Likewise Bauman (2008) highlights the difficulties of an "ethics" in what he refers to as "liquid modernity." John Dewey (1938/1988) calls for an "intelligent theory…or philosophy of experience" (p. 31) to enable education to move beyond the "social control" of fashionable "intellectual breezes" that regularly pass through the academy. We worry that the power and promise of place pedagogies in environmental/outdoor and experiential education might be engulfed by the lure of the fast and, in turn, be systemically pressured to become an ambiguous or amorphous pedagogy of "(s)place." We use this unfortunate term advisedly, following Dewey, to negatively highlight the fashionable use of the term space in education discourses that, upon closer scrutiny, might well reconstitute the ideology of the fast because of our tendencies to move through space as distinct from pausing in or, even, dwelling for more than an accelerated period of time in potential places (Cresswell, 2004).

Edging into the Wild

However, given the inevitability of shifts and trends in intellectual thought, we also see the wild notion of (s)place in positive terms. The hybrid term "splace" might also make visible the concept of "edge"—that in-between and often unknown or othered zone of human experience in nature. A central theme in the slow pedagogy case study of Experiencing the Australian Landscape that we describe below, edge can act in a wild, untamed, and reconstructively other way. To be sure, our slow, edged, and splace pedagogy brought to our students' "lived experience" a different sense of "time." It was also practiced over an extended period of (experiential) time in ways where participants also

came to geographically and culturally embody the historical Anglo-Australian tension between the romanticized wild outback/inland/bush and, on the other hand, a recreational/colonizing use of the threatening seas and oceans, the coastal fringe/edge/margins of which the majority of Australians live on or near. Here, slow pedagogy acts as a form of phenomenological deconstruction at the personal, social, cultural, and ecological layers of experience. In this case, third year undergraduate students enrolled in the unit were able to excavate much of the cultural and identity baggage that they brought to their lived learning in and about human-nature conceptions, constructions, and practices.

Given the historical and central role of experiential education in environmental, outdoor, and now place pedagogies, and the nascent scholarly interest in the intercorporeal and ecocentric turns in various forms of contemporary theory, we feel it is timely for educators to return their pedagogical gazes to the "wild" primordiality of the body and how it is positioned and reflected in increasingly "cultured" versions of time, space, and nature. Bodies and nature are still other to knowledge, texts, and culture and have yet to be fully tamed (Griffiths, 2006). For the "wild, edged, and other" to occur, the time of the bodies of learners in experiential encounters in and with splaces must be attentive to, or inspired by, for example, notions like "the praise for slow" (Honore, 2006), the "secret pulse of time" (Klein, 2006), the "politics of silence" (Sim, 2007), and "time geographies" (Levine, 1997). Likewise, Elizabeth Grosz (2004) emphasizes the centrality of the ontology of time in questions of ethics and politics. There is a different level of inspiration, analysis, and critique in this paper that might inform equally pedagogy and research/inquiry innovation in the ethico-political dimensions of environmental education.

In the following account of a slow ecopedagogy of place, we outline how the intercorporeal and ecocentric turns, applied to experiential education, might more productively inform our curricula and research efforts to slowly introduce our students to a wilder, edgier sense of place and splace. Most importantly, we illustrate via the case study of slow pedagogy how an experiential education and phenomenological deconstruction of views of place and environmental education provides a serious alternative to the acceleration of fast pedagogies in education.

Experiencing the Australian Landscape—A Slow Pedagogy of Wild/Edgy Discovery

Experiencing the Australian Landscape is a third year undergraduate unit we have taught for the past three years. For simplicity sake, following Dewey's (1938/1988) call for an intelligent theory of experience and experiential education, we refer to two interrelated programs in Experiencing the Australian Landscape that make up the unit's social-ecology; namely an academic learning program and an experiential learning program. Their slow recyclical

conversation throughout the semester of 12 weeks constitutes our practical definition of experiential education. The unit's academic learning program slowness includes 6-7 somewhat irregular (or is it planned spontaneity?) half or day long indoor seminars devoted to theoretical and conceptual development, and associated readings and assignment work undertaken at home. These irregular but carefully sequenced blocks of time depart from the conventional timetabling practices regulated by our university, but retain face-to-face contact as distinct from the related pressure to upload units to flexible electronic means and related modes of allegedly efficient teaching. Activities in-between the academic and experiential learning program include group food planning and preparation for the two camps following Carlos Petrini's "slow food" principles, including the sourcing of produce (often organic) from within a 100 kilometre radius of the Peninsula campus.

The experiential learning program component includes two 3-day coastal experiences at Bear Gully, a camping ground on the southern Victorian Coastal edge, fronting onto the wild waters of Bass Strait. The two experiential learning program experiences provide numerous opportunities for intensive bodily sensation and consciousness/perception "Discovery" (first experiential learning program) and six-weeks-later "Rediscovery" (second experiential learning program). Each is described separately below, although they overlap with each other and are recycled conversationally in the academic learning program seminar blocks. For some, the location of Bear Gully, like the Peninsula campus of Monash from where we work, might be a place worth pausing or dwelling in and developing a sense of connection or relation, for others this is a space that is to be passed or surfed through, hence our deliberately ambivalent and ambiguous use of splace. The blend of culture and nature at Bear Gully is evident, as it is at the Peninsula campus which lies in a densely populated urban environment and is only a few kilometers from beaches in Port Phillip Bay. Our largely mobile student population rarely visit the local bayside beaches, preferring the many exotic others further along the bay that are busy with recreational uses of sun, sand, and surf. Bear Gully is about a 2-hour drive from the Peninsula campus and attracts a mix of base camping families and plug in, or "motorized ant" (Leopold, 1966), recreational vehicle/caravan retiree campers.

The timing of the academic learning program seminars prior to the first Bear Gully Discovery experiential learning program is aimed at expanding and extending the temporal backgrounds and horizons of students. We want students to understand what they bring, assume, or presuppose about learning and, therefore, about their sense of self, or identity, including previous environmental experiences and encounters. To get at this historical/temporal baggage and the idea of ontologically "reassembling the self" (Rose, 1996), we focus slowly in the combination of seminars and required readings on reclaiming the past via some "memory-work" (Kaufman, Ewing, Hyle, Montgomery, & Self, 2001), where students reflect on their earlier childhood

(in)significant experiences of favourite places (e.g., Payne, 1999). Seminar content is devoted to examining some of the assumptions they have developed in the past, but that still affect their present, perhaps as socially and culturally constructed preconceptions about being-in-the-environment and nature, or in favourite places. Various readings assigned to students early in the semester act as probes for this environmental memory-work. Other readings lead into the first Bear Gully Experiencing the Australian Landscape focused on the coast as edge, on which we elaborate shortly. Our task in the early part of the unit is to assist students to a) excavate, identify, and describe and b) examine the ecological, cultural, social, and personal backgrounds each bring to their university learning and to the bush or the beach from the past, to the present and, as will be explained shortly, to the short-term future of the Rediscovery trip to Bear Gully. This indoor academic learning program pedagogy can be described as the discovery of various sediments of experiences and places in the body/mind, and at no time is slow pedagogy or time explicitly mentioned.

Experiental Learning Program 1—Coastal Discovery Experience

In early academic learning program seminars, students self-select into a number of groups with 8-13 students in each group. Each group is given a document that introduces the experiential learning possibilities posed in three localizing questions (Berry, 1987, p. 146), which are then used in the experiential learning program portions of the course:

- What is here?
- What will nature permit us to do here?
- What will nature help us do here?

The first three day Discovery experiential learning program occurs in late summer; the second is in early winter, so that seasonal variation in light, mood, weather, and temperature, and so on, can be known as a bodily perceptual/sensory response and experiential comparison. The timing of the experiential learning program components are planned to coincide with a full moon for a range of discovery reasons, including intrinsic/aesthetic ones. The full moon experience also allows students to understand high tidal contrasts, with a hope that "nature" might "guide" some of the experiences of (rock)pooling and beach-walking (Gatty, 1958).

The first experiential learning program is mainly teacher-driven, designed to introduce students to some different ways of being/knowing/researching. Nine separate experiential sessions of between 1.5 and 2.5 hours have been developed that focus on (rock)pooling, (beach)combing, snorkeling, gnome-tracking, dwelling, edging, history, inter-tidal zones, and attention to macro and micro. These experiences range across a number of disciplines and approach-

es to inquiry—from scientific to imaginary, historical to meditative, bizarre to standard, tamed to untamed. During this first Discovery experiential learning program, students explore, discover, and live, albeit only temporarily over three days and according to the structure and timing of the nine experiences, within the immediate "setting" known as Bear Gully. Some students might wander no more than 500 metres from the camp spot.

We ask ourselves many questions in planning the overall experience. In the academic learning program seminars, and in other Discovery preparations (e.g., local food menu planning and provisioning), each group is encouraged to also consider the social nature of the experiential/academic learning program conversation. Which seven activities in the experiential learning program would they prefer? What experiencing in activities were they planning to do, but with an openness for spontaneity and sequencing? Will they need to work around the tides for activities like (rock)pooling and (beach)combing? When will they program more physical activities like exploring the underwater reefs via snorkeling, and more passive activities like reading a storybook? All of these decisions were made by the groups. Did they leave time and space for disappearances from their peers? How might in-between times be used? Implicit to the experiences each group planned was the need for an awareness of time and the timeframe of the course.

Other connections between the academic learning program and experiential learning program are deliberately structured in the unit's design and pedagogy. For example, in the on-campus academic learning program students are sometimes taken outside to rehearse for what they might discover more wildly at Bear Gully. Pairs practice mapping different natural and urban noises in a forested part of the campus. This can then be repeated at Bear Gully in a solo meditative/dwelling experience, where, for example, the politics of silence and stillness are experienced and, indeed, lived by many students (Sim, 2007). Space limitations prevent other descriptions, so we move to a thematic summary of practice where we focus on the conversation of an abiding and recurring theme in Australian history and, more recently, cultural studies, as each relates to the Experiencing the Australian Landscape possibility for students of the outcome of a sense of place, space, or splace.

Bear Gully and the Australian edge.

It is easy to underestimate the significance of the interaction between the students' freshly embodied encounters with Bear Gully and their preconceived, socially constructed baggage of ideas and ideals that each brings to the coast. Indeed, it is within the experiential recycling of bodily experience, and memoried and imagined ideas, that occurs repeatedly throughout the semester, and intensely so at Bear Gully, that we feel the most interesting learning, or *becoming*, occurs (Grosz, 2004).

The coast, or edge, is a powerful metaphor and reality in Anglo-Australian culture. This is true also for the majority of our students who have grown up

experiencing the coast primarily through recreational activities like swimming and surfing, holiday camping, fishing, and surf lifesaving. This anthropocentric logic of relating to nature only in the context of one's own leisure activities is reinforced elsewhere. The leisure and pleasure image is (re)presented in numerous media imageries in tourism marketing and popular television programs like "Sea Change" and "Home and Away" that have won international audiences. These taken-for-granted lifestyle qualities and characteristics of the beach are factors that (critically) attracted us to a coastal location like Bear Gully for Experiencing the Australian Landscape. Whilst the desert in Australia may have its correlate in "The North" in Canada (in the ways that it is remote, under-populated, and experienced more in the imagination than the body for the average citizen), coastal places in Australia have the quality of the everyday. Demographically (with major environmental implications), the vast majority of Australians live near the coastal fringe/edge. Human-induced climate change's rising sea-levels are suggesting the need for an imminent escape from the coast for many of those who escaped to the beach many years ago for lifestyle reasons!

Despite the deeply ingrained, popular, and romantic construction of life "on the beach," it has taken some time in Australia for the heroic image of "the outback" and the "bushman" to be replaced with more meaningful cultural symbols drawn from the coastal places where most people actually live. Ambivalence and ambiguity can be found in the cultural identity of many Anglo-Australians. Philip Drew (1994) argues that Australians are only just beginning to develop a significant responsiveness to the coastal edge:

> Whatever is meant by Australia as an idea, it is no longer centred in the interior empty heartland, rather, it is outside on the rind around the periphery of the continent. The persistent imagery of a dead centre will have to be replaced by the living edge if Australians are ever to come to terms with where they actually live. (p. 41)

Yet the Anglo-Australian experience of the coastal edge is a paradoxical one, as it increasingly is for our students whose everyday postmodern lives insist on the fast, the urban, the gadget, the choice-ridden take-away. Despite our maritime origins, at least for those settler Australians of mainly European and Asian heritage who traveled across various oceans to arrive and colonize various geographies or social ecologies, Australians are not a people of the sea. For example, travel by sea is now rare, while sailing, skin and SCUBA diving, and sea-kayaking are minor forms of modern recreation (Broeze, 1998). The far horizon and wide expanse of the sea represents, for most, the other and wild of the unknown, archetypal, empty space stretching all the way from the southern shore lines, where we discover and then rediscover Bear Gully for six days, to Antarctica.

As a coastal people, according to the Australian author Tim Winton (1993), "we are content on the edge of things" (p. 21). With the empty ocean

on one side and the vast desert on the other, we cling to the edge: "the essence of Australia is the open boundary. Loose and open" (Drew, 1994, p.122). This comfortable edge zone is dynamic physically (with its tides, currents, storms, and shifting vegetation), socially, and, evidently, culturally.

But beneath the cultural veneer of the convenience and comfort of the edge lurks a different sense and practice of what being on the edge really entails. For example, recent race riots on Sydney's beaches between nationals (those who saw themselves as new patriots for Australian values) and ethnics (newer migrants of middle eastern heritage) saw different territorial claims being made on the (beach)place. It was a stark reminder to the Australian population that big changes remain on the edge, be it in early settler and pioneering times or now in settled forms of social identification and environmental, or place, association.

The extended conversation, over time in different locations, of our academic learning program and experiential learning program course components brings these tensions to the surface and invites students to reconsider the significance of a coastal place such as Bear Gully. Typically, on the second academic learning program students investigate some of the competing cultural/economic and Indigenous histories of nearby Walkerville, a 2-hour coastal walk from Bear Gully. They do this by living the edge and embodying some of the tensions outlined above, and not by studying it only from the displaced comfort of a textual representation of Australian cultural studies.

At the more immediate level of a different way of being and knowing on the edge, a contrasting example is described below. What seems like a fairly straight-forward experience for students of (rock)pooling—patiently observing, musing, and learning about the ecology of a pool of water left on the reef between tides—is often initially resisted by some students, then leading to a twist in becoming. This twist is best illustrated below where we provide the reflective lyrics of a song called "toe dipping" written by a (very) doubting student about the experience of pooling.

Most students expect the coastal edge to be an anthropomorphized and anthropocentric place of recreational action in the surf and relaxation on the beach, not an ecocentric place of patient observation and slow (re)engagement with the spatially proximal and temporally immediate of nature's qualities and characteristics. Some delight in identifying the life forms they find in the littoral zone whilst (beach)combing, carefully sketching them, and annotating their sketches with useful information. At the end of the combing encounter, Brian turns it into a simple geology lesson, using a stick to sketch in the sand the region's geology, demonstrating how the Bear Gully reef was formed, and how it provides the structure—the "home"—for most of the life forms they have been observing. Experiences like "Macro-Micro" have students examine minute aspects of their immediate environment (such as a small patch of sand or a small coastal plant) and attempt to discover how it is connected to the surrounding landscape. A larger understanding of how Bear

Gully itself "lives" begins to emerge for the students through their own lived inquiries.

As another example of a "remarkable" way of doing/knowing/becoming (Payne, in press), we offer the below to illustrate the pedagogical possibilities of (re)imagining and practicing a sense of place in the experiential learning program at Bear Gully. Aldo Leopold (1966) made the call to outdoor recreators and educators to take on the task of encouraging receptivity into the still unlovely human mind. As an effort at this, as part of the experiential learning program component, Phil conducts a gnome-tracking experience for closed-minded skeptics (Payne, 2006). This experience includes on-site story telling with some reading of the voyage of discovery to the "unchosen land" (Australia) of Hairy Peruvian gnomes about 500 years ago (Ingpen, 1980; Ingpen with Mayor-Cox, 2004). This remarkable textual and corporeal experience leads into a more-than-human exploration of the immediate Bear Gully environment for evidence of gnome inhabitation, with an accompanying note that gnomes do not reveal themselves to skeptics—often adult disbelievers. This surreal gnome experience is aimed at complementing but disturbing the kind of scientific certainty and rationality about coasts and oceans provided in many educational settings. We consciously offer and model the latter in some of the other experiences where, for example, Brian paints a geological lesson of Bear Gully as a post-script to the pooling and combing encounters. As might be expected, students exhibit a wide variety of responses to these alternative remarkable, meditative/still and imaginary/wild experiences. Responses to the gnome tracking experience range from persistent skepticism, to cynicism, to amusement, to confusion, to mild acceptance, to sheer delight. Irrespective of the articulated response, the phenomenology of the experience carries with it a high degree of embodied dissonance—a key dimension of our phenomenological deconstruction.

Overall, most all of the students interpret the first experiential learning program at Bear Gully as a constrained and highly structured encounter. They return confused. Where they anticipated freedom and pleasure, instead they experienced a structured program of extended but still structured and constrained experiences, interdisciplinary inquiries, and multiple departures from the singular starting point: "What is here? What will nature permit us to do here? What will nature help us to do here?" (Berry, 1987, p. 146).

Experiential Learning Program 2—Coastal and Cultural Re-discovery Experience—A Conference by the Sea

In the academic learning program seminar between the two Bear Gully visits, we, as staff, loosen up the concepts of time, edge, and place and explore how different kinds of learners (such as artists, musicians, and creative writers) make forays into the outdoors and the kind of things they discover there. The combination of the structured introduction to Bear Gully on the first

experiential learning program and the license in the second to launch into speculative inquiries, seems to trigger a creative desire in the students during the return visit. Large parts of the planning and teaching of the program are devolved to students.

This begins the process of preparing for the Rediscovery of Bear Gully "Conference by the Sea," keeping in mind that a major change in the weather/climate is guaranteed. This time, small groups of two to three students devise a series of 2-hour experiences that they will lead for their peers during the conference. Students individually select experiences prepared by their peers from a range of concurrent conference strands for the three days of the experiential learning program. These experiences are, in keeping with the conference theme, nested within a larger program of meal breaks, celebratory dinner, time out, and whole group discussions about events of general, conceptual, or thematic interest. This Rediscovery experiential learning program is almost totally student centred and driven. Prior to the Rediscovery experiential learning program the various self-forming groups of two to three students devise and submit an abstract for their experiential session. By necessity, these abstracts are sorted by Phil and Brian into the conference program that individual students sign up for upon return to Bear Gully.

One mandatory requirement of the Rediscovery experiential learning program is that, immediately upon arrival, students recycle to the same spot where they had felt and breathed the "stillness" experienced on the first Discovery. "Embodied-memory," as already indicated, is a vital dimension of the question of how time might pedagogically be understood, and ignored, in education. This is another key to the student deconstructive practice and idea of "slow." As they devise their experiential sessions, we indicate to students that the geographical and activity-basis boundaries from the first experiential learning program no longer apply. We suggest that the phenomenologically deconstructive experiences we model *might* be extended in different ways to include aspects of social and cultural history, Indigenous studies, and contemporary ethics/politics of the place, noting topical issues in the area include the development of wind power farms and the State government's proposal to build a massive water desalination plant nearby.

Over the three years of Experiencing the Australian Landscape, groups have devised numerous experiences. For example, in one year not long after the devastating tsunami in South East Asia, two students devised a lesson on how gnomes led the reconstruction of a coastal town that had been destroyed by tidal waves. A constant, presumably by word of mouth from one cohort to the next, is a beach-walk along the edge to a local heritage area at Walkerville, mentioned above. Often, the walk and its three student guides introduce peers to the European cultural history of the surrounding area. Constant over the three years is the student temporal/historical aim of revealing our settler/pioneering/colonizing past. Impossible to walk at high tide, students venture along the coast for approximately four kilometres south of

Bear Gully and explore the lime kilns around the Walkerville area, some of which are being restored by volunteers and local government. Spontaneous interviews with these workers have occurred, with students often inquiring about the coastal trade between Walkerville and Melbourne in the late 19th century. Restoration techniques used on the kilns are carefully examined by curious students. In some instances, student groups spend hours in a small, run down cemetery, now being restored, on the hill behind the lime kilns. They muse over the family tree indicated on the gravestones—where young and old are buried. They ponder and wonder. These historical experiences of place and contested territories and purposes provides yet again another dimension of slow in time, as cultural history and its forgetting, and, maybe, a different take on the sense of place.

Another popular experience run by students is found in object sculpture, triggered in Brian's seminar by the question of the "representation of place" through the viewing of some of the Scottish artist Andy Goldsworthy's works. Student's sculptures are often highly symbolic mosaics of shells, trails of coloured seaweeds, spirals of pebbles. They are a re-encountering of the kind of objects they studied on the first Bear Gully experiential learning program, but in an aesthetically different, non-scientific way (Payne, 2005a). At the end of the session, students often talk about the work of making the sculpture and its meaning, often struggling for the kind of language needed to articulate the experience of creativity.

Numerous other experiences are devised: Writing dreaming (creation) stories in the local Indigenous language, and role playing debates between tourism developers and preservationist campaigners, are further examples. The above sampling is suggestive only of how each experiential learning program occurs and how each sequentially relates to the academic learning program seminars. As might be expected, the change from late summer to early winter invokes numerous different/wild/other/edged sensory, perceptual, conceptual approaches and responses to the socio-ecological nature of the Bear Gully location and locale, or possible senses of place. To be sure, we concede the persistence in the overall program of linear, measurable time.

Re-presenting the Other of the Wild and Edged.

But, what about the meaning-making opportunities for participants? Again, there is far too much to describe here. We focus on one strategy only. We encourage students to subjectively capture embodied experiences as quickly as possible after each experience and before other social constructions or events wash-over the sensory, perceptual bases of the experience. We want to minimize the influences of peer/teacher "talk" in their conceptualization of the meanings of the experiences. Richard Shusterman's (2008) book, *Body Consciousness*, devotes a chapter to the idea of "redeeming somatic reflection," and uses John Dewey's account of the essential body-mind unity in

experiential inquiry, to demonstrate how such a unity might occur. Related to that, our assumption here is that talk can sometimes "get in the way" of how the body makes somatic, intuitive, emotional meaning of experiences before they can be conceptualized via language. Language can only ever be an approximation of experience where, indeed, what is "felt" and "voiced" or "written" sometimes correlates, and sometimes does not (Payne, 2005b). We note here the problem in much experiential education of the teacher-controlled "debrief" and potential for its colonization of the experience of the participant (Brown, 2004)

On both experiential learning programs, students make entries (written, illustrations, poems, samples, momentary insights) into a field journal (typically a blank art journal) that, as best as possible, represents experiential data (van Manen, 1997). This data is a source of somatic reflection, or somaesthetics (Shusterman, 2008) and, eventually, "memory-work" (Kaufman et al., 2001), and is used selectively by students in discussions during the experiential learning programs and, again as experiential theory, acts as a re-presentational bridge to later academic learning programs. We encourage students to revisit the experiential data and its theorization for the final reflective/memory assignment they are required to submit at semester's end. During experiential learning programs we recommend to students that any effort to represent the felt experience in written form should be a possible add-on only, and never should they be slaves to that process.

As indicated earlier, we include, with permission of the student songwriter, extracts from the lyrics he wrote after his first Discovery experiential learning program to Bear Gully using the experiential data he jotted down about his profound (rock)pooling experience. He sung this as part of the entertainment after the "Conference Dinner" on the first night of the second Rediscovery experiential learning program. The song is called "Dip your feet in," and was written by a self-confessed initial critic of the experiential encounter of spending a few stationary hours patiently observing a rockpool. Apparently bored, the student took off his shoes and put his feet in the water to, we interpret, *become* other than bored with the time now available to him through this wild, edged experience.

So, go on and dip your feet in,
Who knows what might happen once you've been,
Give your life a miss now; you make your fate,
Don't sit around thinking then it was too late.

You have a chance, should you pass it up,
Push on through and treat it as half full cup,
There are positives here to what can be drawn,
Not necessarily a decision by dawn,
Go go go on, Dip your feet in,
Go go go on, Dip your feet in.

The combination of body consciousness, somatic reflection, experiential journal, and memory-work is, therefore, a crucial attempt to partially represent the corporeal engagement in time and space. Other parts of the experience are best left to silence (Sim, 2007). The combination encourages students to document the present and, throughout the semester, provides an embodied/memoried means to revisit/recall what has passed. We are utterly vigilant to the ways in which textual distraction might occur and the colonization and dispossession by us of the experiencer's experience.

Students' experiential journals typically show and tell, via different forms of representation, a highly personal but social and ecological meaning-making and learning journey that slowly unfolds over the extended academic time of the academic/experiential learning program conversation. We often read how the predictable, the unexpected, the visible and often previously invisible are discovered; while wild fragments of the otherwise banal other are recorded via a variety of representational means—words, sketches, and even a spontaneously constructed play.

The Intercorporeal/Ecocentric Turn, Phenomenology as Deconstructive Slow Experiential Education and Ecopedagogy

We recognize that, potentially and probably, we are still socially constructing place in *Experiencing the Australian Landscape*. However, hopefully, we are doing it through critical and reflexive means, both for ourselves and for participant learners. We acknowledge that students respond in different ways to *Experiencing the Australian Landscape's* "conversation" between the experiential learning program and academic learning program. Some won't ever believe in gnomes! But there is an additional clue in this slow recyclical phenomenological deconstruction that indicates some of our politics of ecopedagogy and reflexive approaches to inquiry into practice.

In the above descriptions of different components and characteristics of the semester-long *Experiencing the Australian Landscape* we have stressed how time works in different ways conceptually and experientially throughout the academic and experiential learning program conversation. Gnoming time is different to edging time and is different to placing or splacing time that, in turn, is different to the various ways block seminars were timetabled and conducted. Slow operates differently in each—longer conversational breaks over snacks in a block seminar—taking or making time to "dip your toe in"—but we feel slow is best presenced and understood in the recycling of all of the different parts of *Experiencing the Australian Landscape.* The sum is greater than the parts! Thus, their body-time-space or "social ecology" is fundamental to, in this instance, our quest for an intelligent theory *and* practice of experiential education. The slowness of this social ecology gestures, critically, to the ecocentric and embodied possibility of a place sensibility. *Slow*

pedagogy, therefore, is a carefully considered placing and practice of the sorts of phenomenologies of education that the reconstructive Dewey and perceptive Leopold might agree with.

But, in conclusion, we do wish to comment on the political nature of slow pedagogy that, in some respects, is consistent with the principles and practices of the slow food movement (Murdoch, 2006; Singer & Mason, 2006) and its ethical responses to the fast and global operations of contemporary food industries. There are lessons to be learned in education. Time, again, is at the heart of this ethico-political renewal of various practices, be it eating slow food or developing *Experiencing the Australian Landscape,* both of which aspire in different ways to a form of place/nature/cultural pedagogy. Grosz (2004) makes the case well, suggesting that time be central in our political efforts. Grosz's reminder to social, political, and cultural theorists, particularly those interested in feminism, antiracism, and the politics of globalization, to which we add ecological politics and place ethics, is that "they have forgotten a crucial dimension of research" (p. 2). Grosz notes, "We have forgotten the nature, the ontology of the body, the conditions under which bodies are enculturated, psychologized, given identity, historical location, and agency" (p. 2).

An example of this forgetting about our *becoming* in postmodernity, Alberto Melucci (1996) points to the pathological consequences for physical and mental health of the phenomenon he refers to as "time dissonance." Today's selves simultaneously have to live the premodern cyclical rhythms of natural bodily and cosmological time, as well as modern and postmodern orientations to time. The natural rhythms have been pressed by modernity's preoccupation with measurable, linear time, and in turn by the concentrated instantaneity of postmodernity's digital, dot/blip, immediate/nano time (Griffiths, 2004). All of us can easily relate to the competing rhythms, measures, and concentrations of these three broad types or genres of "lived time" and the implications they carry in a wide range of harried human endeavours, including education and pedagogy, eating, working, parenting, and study. Recognizing this time dissonance and famine, we believe, helps us to work towards some sort of a reconciliation of inner, social, and outer "natures." Time poorness, with all its consequences for the well-being of the body, in space, and nature is an enemy that can be de- and reconstructed in some educational spaces through and by the enactment, or praxis, of an intelligent ecocentric, intercorporeal theory of pedagogical experience.

Grosz (2004) adds that in forgetting where we have come from, we need to "return to" or "invent anew the concepts of nature, matter and life if we are to develop alternative models to those inscriptive and constructivist discourses that currently dominate" (p. 2). Likewise Margaret Archer's (2000) critical realist notion of the "primacy of practice" alerts us to some of the limitations in postmodern thinking and theory that environmental educators might grapple with more earnestly and reflexively, in devising and designing a practically-driven slow pedagogy within the constraints of the university setting and its associated demands. Grosz suggests that theoretical models of subject

inscription, production, or constitution lack material force and everyday relevance. They paradoxically lack the corporeality that many of us working in and around critical versions of postmodern thinking, research, and pedagogy advocate in experiential approaches to environmental, outdoor, physical, and health educations.

Grosz (2004) confesses that the elaboration of a theory of time is no easy matter. Nor is, as we have found, conceiving and practicing a semester-long unit on *Experiencing the Australian Landscape.* It isn't easy to develop a Deweyan-inspired intelligent educational practice for experiencers, meaning-makers, and learners who might slowly access, following Grosz and others, the ontologies of the body, time, and space. Coupled with Leopold's call for building perception and receptivity into the still unlovely human mind, the ecocentric possibility of the intercorporeal turn is not only conceptually and theoretically possible, but also practically plausible in curricula and pedagogical reconstruction. Of course, we still have much to do, including redeveloping a unit in the preceding semester called "Experiential Education" that can convert slow into a year-long study.

Slow pedagogy is, we feel, a candidate for a radically different approach to, and lived form of, educational practice, or ecopedagogy. It encourages meaning-makers to experientially and reflectively access and address their corporeality, intercorporeality, sensations, and perceptions of time, space, and, perhaps, the place of, for example, Bear Gully. Over the three years of *Experiencing the Australian Landscape*, we are confident that many students have emerged from the program with a better sense of the "place" and of their still untamed, wild bodies in and against increasingly intensified and fast pedagogical times and cultural-ecological baggages. If so, those student meaning-makers have accessed some corporeal consciousness, embodied understanding, and somaesthetic or intercorporeal ecological subjectivity and sociability. Herein lies the promise of a phenomenological deconstruction of much of what now passes under the slogan of "critical" in environmental education. Phenomenology's subterranean partner in this notion of a critical praxis is the offering up of, we hope, an intelligent ecocentric theory of embodied experiential education that a reconstructive Dewey might smile upon.

Moreover, our slow pedagogy works to displace numerous dualisms and disconnections that still abound in environmental education: the body and mind; I, we, and world; self and other; ontology and epistemology; and as a result, potentially offers some partial reconciliation of inner, social, and outer natures; theory and practice; indoor/class and outdoor/field; epistemology and ontology. Our intercorporeal/ecocentric inspired "turn" via experiential education in a "social ecology of environmental education" reflects a shift we think can expand the depth and value of educational discourse.

Finally, if we do position our selves reflexively (Archer, 2007) and somaesthetically (Shusterman, 2008) in education, as in *Experiencing the Australian Landscape,* as an agential form of *becoming,* then (other) formations of slow and ecopedagogy also signal a shift that might be needed more generally in edu-

cation. There are the traditional/dominant epistemic and anthropocentric metaphors of learning, teaching, thinking, and knowing, most of which reconstitute the authority of the mind and the sovereignty of the "I." We offer some "post-traditional" or alternative eco/ontic metaphors for education of intercorporeal and ethico-political versions of *doing, meaning,* and *becoming*.

Notes on Contributors

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