PIMA BULLETIN NO 49

Special Issue - Climate Justice Education

November 2023

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Part 1: Introduction

A Pluriverse of Conversations

Here there are ve powerful articles that inspire visions of new possibilities. They unearth major systemic tensions and contradictions for institutions, people, and communities, who are responding to the climate crisis in earnest. They paint the big and small pictures, which manifest in practical tools and suggestions to help us make our way into new relational ways of being.

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Editorial

Shirley Walters and Astrid von Kotze

> I heard the forest whisper, 'All life is at a turning point - the future of human and more-than-human life is in question. Humans must be, do, live, learn, differently. In this spirit, invite your readers, before they engage the bulletin, to start by sitting quietly, focusing on their breath and observing where they are: what do they see, feel, hear, smell, observe? With whom are they in relation? Who has been in this spot before them? Learning to use senses differently is crucial in this time of the great turning'.
>
> And so, listening to the wisdom of the forest, we invite you to pause and embrace the invitation before proceeding!

In our present moment, the question Ghosh (2020) asks is particularly poignant: 'Who is a brute and who is fully human'? Describing how the 'brutes began to unbrute themselves' he notes how the now-unbruted mimicked the settler-colonial treatment of Indigenous peoples, forests, the earth, desecrating land and water and trashing rituals and beliefs. But increasingly, 'other beings and forces – bacteria, viruses, glaciers, forests, the jet stream – have also unmuted themselves and are now thrusting themselves so exigently on our attention that they can no longer be ignored or treated as elements of an inert Earth' (Ghosh, 2020:196-7).

Humans continue to consider Nature as a thing that is no more than a resource for their indulgences, at their own peril; the Earth will continue, even if humans perish. Njabulo Ngwazi, warned that 'The natural world is the elder – they have been kind to us humans, but now they are fed up – we must be like the natural world and do the right thing!''Our complicity — we're all complicit — isn't a sign of our moral failing. It's the result of a system in which we have little choice but to be part of until we've got the alternatives we're demanding', suggests Leonie Joubert in her article in Part 1. This bulletin intends to support the demand for alternative systems.

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The Bulletin grew out of the conversations within the PIMA Bulletin Number 48, January 2023 [January 2023 Bulletin TOC | PIMA Network] where we began to (re)envision relations between humans and the more-than-human world

from different vantage points. We noted that many adult educators, like us, have been brought up within the Western world view of hierarchical dualisms, where development is growth, and a serious imbalance between consumption and production further threatens particularly the majority world. We know from personal experience how hard it is to challenge some of the dualisms. It requires that we unpick false assumptions and belief systems that prop up the abusive relationship with social and ecological systems. We also know that other worldviews and knowledge systems have much to offer with regards to intersecting perspectives. We acknowledge that decolonising minds as much as land, values and resources draws on believing that a more just and equitable world for all its inhabitants is possible. For this, we need to take note, listen and question and then reimagine a new story, and re-learn new relationships, especially in a world where so many encounters have become 'virtual'.

Recognising the deep personal, political, and pedagogical work of unlearning and relearning, the editors convened a two-part series of Teach-ins, led by Elizabeth Lange, *Towards a pluriverse of possibilities: Unlearning separation,* relearning relationality. These encounters are described by Shauna Butterwick in the Teach-in Report.

This bulletin deliberately takes its title from *Pluriverse: A post-Development Dictionary* (Kothari et al, 2019). As the fear of an uncertain future grows, so must a sense of resistance against market values and increasing right-wing fundamentalisms. Challenging the modernist ontology of universalism, there is a need to build solidarity amongst humans with each other and the more-than-human world, while imagining a multiplicity of alternative possible worlds. From the notion of universe to pluriverse, the writers in this bulletin mostly ground their creativity and actions in the rhythms and different shapes of nature. They practice the Freirean idea of being both learners and educators, as they seek to learn with and from each other drawing on 'teachers' beyond humans.

The bulletin is divided into four parts, with eighteen articles by authors from Brazil, Canada, Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom and Australia. Each section opens a 'pluriverse of possibilities' with identification of key ideas, stories, and activities of climate justice education. A collection of internet sites suggests how new relationships with groups of individuals, organisations and networks can advance forging solidarity and support. Warm thanks to all the contributors.

Part 1: A pluriverse of conversations

Stories, old and new, frame this section. Elizabeth Lange argues that stories matter – big stories have powerful transformative capacity to shift consciousness and elevate humanity. It is the Western big story, shaped by science, that is now being transformed by science itself. All the authors, in various ways, are encouraging us to loosen the grip on the old story while stretching into various veins of new thinking, reimagining, re-embodying, towards the new story of Relationality, which was intuited by mystics over human history.

The bulletin begins with a focus on the two teach-ins. Elizabeth Lange succinctly points to key stories which carry our basic understandings and assumptions about reality. She digs at the roots of Modernity which is based on the values of separation and machine logic. The new story of Relationality leads away from individualism and 'personal' moral convictions. Shauna Butterwick captures well the engagements with Elizabeth Lange in the Teach-ins, which demonstrated embodied practices towards collective and kinship ways of being.

The review is followed by five articles which inspire visions of new possibilities. They unearth major systemic tensions and contradictions for institutions, people, and communities, who are responding to the climate crisis in earnest. They paint the big and small pictures, which manifest in practical tools and suggestions to help us make our way.

The ethic of caring and sharing, which infuses the story of Relationality, is demonstrated by Deborah Barndt introducing the Earth to Tables Legacies educational package. The project is portrayed through a flourishing website which brings stories to life through short videos, photo essays, and a basket of popular education tools – it educates on multiple levels, embodying the values of caring and sharing, a web of kinship relations. The main messages that the project amplifies are the importance of 'honoring all relations', 'pollinating relations' in order to 'rebuild relations based on respect and reciprocity with all things.' The project is a profound example of people across history, cultures, and borders, imagining and creating alternative ways of being and living.

In the next article, Denise Nadeau, a 'white settler', drawing on her own deep experience, addresses her challenge as an educator – 'how to educate and support settlers to develop a real sense of responsibility to the peoples and territories in which they live and hence to act in a reciprocal way with the land and all the relatives embodied in the land and water'. She identifies the greatest challenge as the ideology of white possessiveness rooted in private property. She argues that it is actions, not just beliefs, that will transform the separateness of humans from the more-than-human world. Denise's work challenges us to recognize the implications of what it means to unlearn separation, relearn relationality. Her book is reviewed in Part Three by Shauna Butterwick Unsettling Spirit book review.

From working in communities, the next three articles catapult us into the worlds of universities, the media, and the education system more broadly, particularly literacy. Sharon Stein and Jan Hare argue for the centering of indigenous rights to challenge climate colonialism. They point to the prevailing approaches to climate change at most colleges and universities which remain grounded in the assumption that we can and should simply make existing systems and institutions more sustainable, even though these are the same systems and institutions that led to a climate crisis in the first place.

They understand the concept of climate colonialism as the deepening of domination of less powerful countries and peoples through intensifying foreign exploitation of resources of poorer nations and undermining the sovereignty of native and Indigenous communities' responses to the climate crisis. They point to strategies to interrupt the reproduction of climate colonialism in higher education by centering the rights of indigenous people, and highlight a key paradox in doing this, between the urgency of climate change and the slow work of relationship building that is required to confront climate change in responsible ways that address its root causes. This paradox is also mirrored in Timothy Ireland's article, when he says, 'despite the urgency of the challenge it is necessary to go very slowly'. We can understand why, when reading Denise and Elizabeth's articles.

Timothy Ireland argues that the education system urgently needs a new story. He references significant global education initiatives, which register the impact of existential threats to humanity posed by climate change, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. Amid repositioning itself in relation to the 4th Industrial Revolution, half of the students globally are not finishing high school and 763 million youth and adults are 'illiterate'. There is urgency to elaborate a

new narrative for literacy, which incorporates pluriversal readings of reality in which humans and nature are not opposing forces and in which the planet is recognised as the common home of all forms of life. He proposes that Buen Vivir or 'Good living' and Popular Education offer alternative paradigms on which to build new narratives of education in which both humans and nature are co-protagonists.

Leonie Joubert, an award-winning journalist and science writer, laments:

> 'Climate stories are still mostly shoehorned into the environmental beat, a nice-to-have reporting extra that gets the newsroom leftovers once the apex beats — politics, business, health, even sport — have taken the lion's share of reporting resources. It's hard to muscle your way to the top of the prestige pile when your beat doesn't have cash or cachet'.

She asks, what do you do when, out of the blue, your small media collective is awarded a journalism prize in the features section, by Standard Bank? The problem is that Standard Bank around the same time forcibly ejected climate activists and a journalist from its Headquarters where an anti-fossil fuel protest was held. The hypocrisy of Standard Bank, who dressed itself up as standing for free press and a green future, was clear. This article is a real-life case of handling dilemmas that are thrown up when taking the climate crisis seriously. What to do? How to respond to the contradictions where moral failings, not the economic system, are seen as the problem?

Part 2: A pluriverse of personal stories

The five stories are deeply thoughtful reflections on personal experiences of unlearning, relearning, learning, for climate justice. Shirley Walters starts with a description of an immersion in a South African game reserve, where there was a conscious move from one world to the next where time and rhythms of life changed dramatically. The purpose of the 'self-wild trail' was to 'unlearn separation'. As her story reveals, without confronting capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and neo-colonialism, `unlearning separation` in the interests of socio-ecological justice is barely possible.

From immersion in the wilderness of South Africa, Nic Dickson is immersed in the peatlands of Scotland, where she experiences interdisciplinary exploration. Whilst walking through muddy marshes, with art historians, educators, archeologists, biologists and environmental scientists, the land meant different things through the eyes of different disciplines. The cross disciplinary encounters with the land enriched everyone's understanding of the value of peatlands and how actions can have huge impact on both the climate and climate change.

Small scale fishers on the impoverished coast of the Eastern Cape, South Africa, are of concern to Buhle Francis. She is a scholar-activist who works particularly with women fishers, whose lives are made ever more vulnerable through deteriorating ocean health. She tells of a sewing project that she and the women started. The sewing project is more than a livelihood; it's a way for coastal communities to adapt to the changing climate while also understanding and building community and solidarity in times of crises.

For Sharon Clancy, new forms of communication are needed to unlearn old ways and re-learn anew. Poetry, digging back into one's own history, narratives and hearing other people's stories are helpful - rather than the 'inarticulacy of

education and formal academic writing'.

Women's resourceful response to waste management in Nigeria is Bolatumi Oyegoke's concern. She explores the relationship between personal and social change that is needed to mobilise communities to tackle problems of waste at household and community levels.

Part 2, closes with a moving poem by Serap Asar Brown. She urges us to listen to the rain and the land, to stand up and resist, to 'find a way to keep life on earth alive in unity'.

Part 3: A pluriverse of Activities

There are two sections:

1. Firstly, a number of climate justice educational activities.
2. Secondly, a compilation of inspiring websites and links relating to climate justice action.

In the first activity, Katie Ross uses 'seeds as a connection, via self, to the universe'. She grabs our attention with beautiful illustrations as she invites readers to pause and embark on a meditative inquiry. This includes pondering how 'our relationships are grown and fostered in the liminal space between our own inter-steeping sources of knowing: our senses, our family histories, our societal structures, and our cultural and disciplinary perspectives.'

Maggie Mapondera from WoMin African Alliance describes the making and use of a collection of animated films which tell stories of rural, peasant and working- class women and their communities across the African continent. They serve as a testimony as well as a teaching tool, to inspire, provoke and generate conversations, analysis, ideas and action. The links are available to the short films.

A mystica is a short ritual to set the tone and get people ready to focus on Nature and the Earth. Developed by The African Biodiversity Network Barefoot Guide Writer's Collective, from different countries in Africa, the 'mystica' is taken from 'Restoring our Home in Nature'. The guide, which is freely available, was written to serve 'as a roadmap for all who seek transformative change in their own contexts, inspiring, informing, and igniting a collective commitment to the conservation of biodiversity and the well- being of all life on this magnificent continent.'

Language shapes the way we view the world, and proverbs, in particular, reflect a culture's values, norms, aspirations. This activity, drafted by Astrid von Kotze, engages with common proverbs to challenge the binary thinking underlying everyday sayings, and to question what values are being reinforced through their use.

The gut is home to infinite numbers of bacteria, fungi, viruses, yeasts etc, all working hard to digest the food we eat and extract and deliver nutrition to various parts of the body. They also fight off invaders, and sickness. This activity suggests that the gut is a micro-ecosystem and hence a good place for starting investigations about the entanglement between human and more-than-human life and is discussed in the article, The gut as an ecosystem.

A book review can be a useful starting point for dialogue - and Shauna Butterwick's review of Denise Nadeau's Unsettling Spirit – a Journey into Decolonization (2021) is just that. The book is a series of autobiographical stories that challenge readers to examine critically how they might unwillingly reproduce certain colonial attitudes and views. The review points out that for Denise "body, spirit, mind and emotions, [are all] necessary to engage in any process of decolonization" (p. 264). Her story helps illuminate how complex a process it is to 'unlearn separation and relearn relationality'.

The final section of Part 3 is a compilation of random (but selected!) websites and links to interesting and inspiring initiatives that challenge climate injustice. Ranging from storytelling, to dance, to clothing, food growing for food security, to policy initiatives, the websites truly suggest a pluriverse of ideas, actions and networks with whom to build solidarity towards just transitions and climate adaptation for those most at-risk.

Part 4, as part of PIMA Business, warmly welcomes 6 new PIMA members.

References

Ghosh, A. (2021). *The Nutmeg's Curse. Parables for a Planet in Crisis*. Penguin Random House.

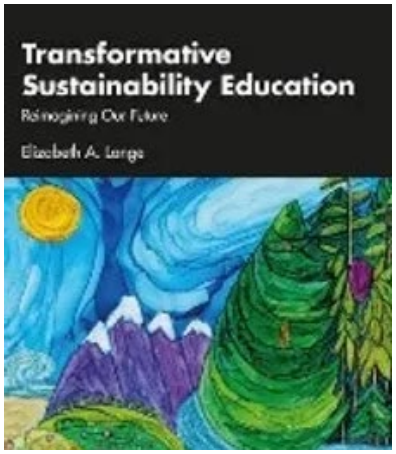
Ashish Kothari, Ariel Salleh, Arturo Escobar, Federico Demaria & Alberto Acosta, (2019). *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary*. Tulika Books. Via Researchgate, ebook for free (PDF). License: Creative Commons.

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part 1: A pluriverse of conversations

Unlearning Separation and Relearning Relationality with the Pluriverse. Report of PIMA Teach-Ins.

Shauna Butterwick

The Fall/Spring PIMA teach-ins led by Elizabeth Lange were based on her book ***Transformative sustainability education: Reimagining our future*** (2023, Routledge).



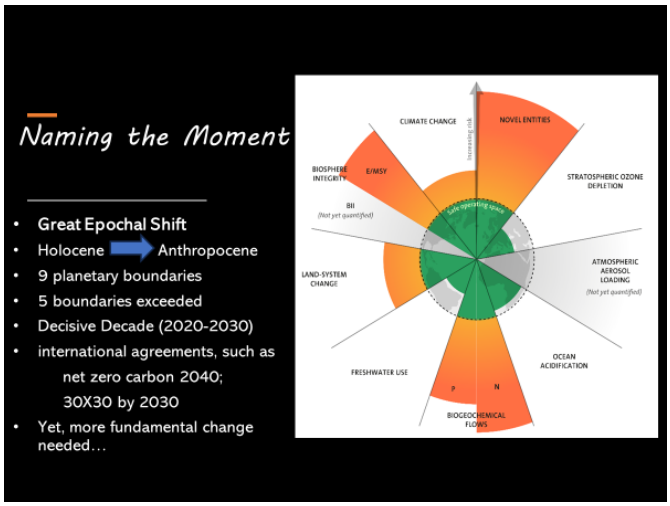
The first event held on September 14th 2023 was recorded – see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxuleUU1pD0. Elizabeth began by describing her daily gratitude practice, an earth greeting, and invited us all to sit quietly, light a candle, and acknowledge earth, water, air, and fire and how together each of these elements create life on the planet.

The Epochal Shift and the Old Story

Elizabeth then discussed how we are living in a great epochal shift--the dying days of modernity, some call the Anthropocene. The last several hundred years of human activity has pushed us to the edge of sustaining life. Climate change, biodiversity loss, land and fresh water use, waste control, biochemical flows, ocean acidification, aerosol particles, ozone depletion, and introduction of novel entities like plastic, all contribute to the crisis we face. The 2020 to 2030 decade is pivotal; changes to these key activities are crucial. Elizabeth recommended David Attenborough's Breaking Boundaries; The Science of our Planet (https://www.netflix.com/ca/title/81336476).

Modernity is based on the Latin word 'modo', referring to the view that the most important time is 'now'; no regard for the past, spirit world, or our ancestors. Modernity has brought patriarchy, imperialism, and use of force, replacing small agricultural activity and an honoring of female energy. The renaissance brought individualism and humanism, and new technologies, including

how we treat our bodies. The scientific revolution promoted a mechanistic view of the world; science was oriented to protecting us from nature. Colonial empires and the idea of 'civilizing' others expanded, destroying land and peoples. Property ownership, technology of efficiency, mobility of peoples, and no limits to progress, were ideas emerging from the French, American and Industrial revolutions.

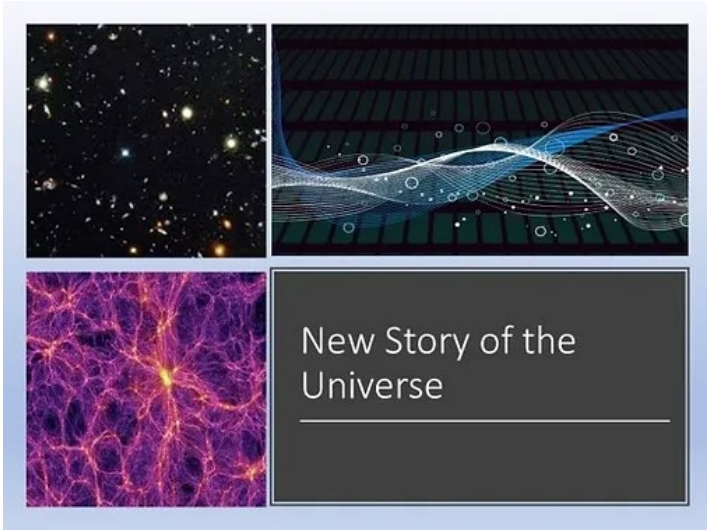


Late modernism saw the rise of nation states, human rights, the middle class, and the idea of human exceptionalism. Happiness was achieved by embracing progress, efficiency, power as control, individual autonomy, competition, order, and seeking comfort, affluence and fabulous wealth. The hidden violence of modernity feeds on our fear, greed, arrogance, individual entitlement, desire for power, and a fear of scarcity. World wars, recessions and depressions, environmental degradation, social justice and civil rights abuses are now constant; there is a growing 'revenge industry' of rage and hatred.

These values and ideas penetrate our minds and bodies, and how we think about and organize knowledge, our ways of being, our imagination, our behaviours. Modernity is about separation from our bodies, each other, community, from wisdom and from a creative and active cosmos.

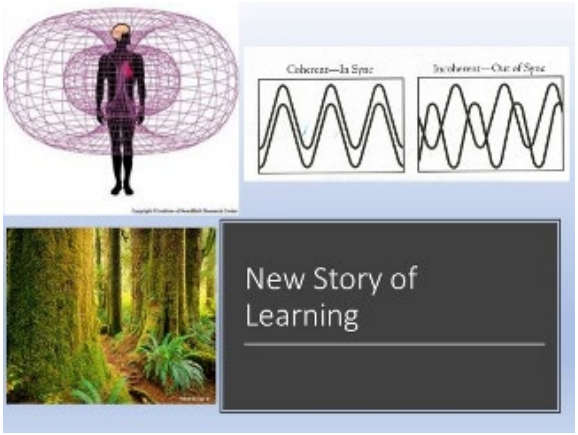
The New Story

However, these values are being questioned, energies redirected and repatterned, creating something new. We're between stories; the old one is dying, the new one not yet known or named.



New photos of space show the stars and the universe not as separate but connected, a dense pattern of energy, a highly sensitive pulsing and moving web of relationality. The earth is whole; the biosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and geosphere are a networked system of complex patterns. Human consciousness and bodies are also networked. We are made of stardust. Cognition is the process of life; every cell uses perception and cognition; forests are cognitive systems that respond to us.

A new idea of learning is emerging. Learning is responding to the intelligibility of the universe. We are tapping into our bodies' three major energy fields: the brain, the gut, and the heart. Our hearts have 40,000 neural cells, like our brains, receiving and processing information, sending more messages to the brain than the brain sends to our hearts and generating electric fields (both coherent and incoherent) around our bodies. Individuals and groups can direct their energies. Forests also have energy fields, each with different chemistry.



The state of our hearts affects all systems; practicing joy, compassion, and gratitude contribute to the new human story, as do the worlds' spiritual systems with their stories, teachings, and original instructions of the relationality of land, people and the spirit world. In the new story, wisdom is valued; art is an important source of knowing. Our work as educators is to connect to the fate of the human species and midwife the great transformation.

Breathwork and Relationality

Elizabeth then guided us through a breathwork activity, a form of micro activism, a step towards relationality. Breathing with our diaphragms and bellies creates spaciousness and slows things down. Five minutes a day can bring calm and focus, stills the mind so we become aware of the constant stream of emotions and thought.

> Breathwork helps learners become more receptive, supports natural curiosity, and awareness of other senses. Engaging our diaphragms may be uncomfortable at first. Sit with hands in our lap, or lie down, feel the earth underneath, take deep breaths, hands on our belly, feel the expansion. Breathe out comfortably, relax our bellies, breathe in, your belly rising like a balloon, deflating naturally, lungs and rib cage are quiet. Slowly come back, wiggle fingers and toes, open your eyes.

For Elizabeth, this body awareness through belly breathing moves us from a sense of separation to building relations, becoming re-enchanted with all that exists, engaging in an essential ritual of connecting to all things. Each breath includes molecules from the stars. Our need for oxygen is absolute; it enables life on earth. The forests breathe in the CO2s we expel.

Elizabeth then shared the Cree word for relationality: wâhkohtowin or all my relations.

Participants were asked to share similar words from their cultures. Here are some of them: "Buen vivir" or good living (Latin America); Ubuntu: a person is a person through other people and the spirit world (Africa); Gaia; Awi'nakola (Kwakwaka'wakw); (Nishnaabemwin language) maawnzondwak: be in a group, be a group that has been called together; Ayni, kichwa refers to the responsibility we have to all of our relations (similar to reciprocity); Heshook-ish Tsawalk (Nuu-chah-nulth word).

Elizabeth drew attention to verb-based Indigenous languages which illustrate how we are in relation to others, including the more than human world. Relationality involves a shift in language towards animacy. Kinship is not about having relations; we are in relations, born into relations, embedded in a web. The land and the earth gifts you every day with what you need. Our responsibility is to honour the relations.

Elizabeth's next exercise had us mapping our kinship relations, what it means to belong to the land, not the land belongs to us. She shared her map of where she was born in Edmonton, noting the rivers, mountains, animals, industries such as oil and beef and dairy farming, Indigenous peoples and so on.

> Using paper, pens, whatever you have, draw simple figures, adding some text, creating a map of where you were born or a place special to you, include key land forms, major water bodies and water sources, your homes and other major places, regional food stuffs, key industries, trees, plants and animals.

Elizabeth shared this image We Conjure Our Own Spirit created by Norival Morriseau (who saw art as both teaching and healing); it depicts Norival's view of identity as the vibrational field of kinships to all things human and natural, in constant relation.

[permission granted from Morriseau Estate]

Working in pairs or triads Elizabeth then invited us to introduce ourselves using the kinship map with three questions in mind:

1. does this foster a shift in perception?
2. how can you stay mindful of all our relations each day?
3. how does this activity move us towards a pluriverse where we recognize that each person carries a whole system of kin relations?

Participants then reported back, noting the diversity of places and some commonalities and differences. For some, nature was a significant part of their childhood, while others' childhood locations were devoid of nature. Childhood memories of water, plants and animals and smells were surprisingly strong. The source of water was at times quite visible, but mostly it was hidden. There was joy and difficulty with this different kind of introduction.

Kinship mapping is a powerful activity showing entanglements and influences, helping to build gratitude, making things more visible, opening possibilities for different conversations and understandings of where people are coming from. Participants noted that this mapping of kinship relations showed them how the more than human world had raised them, and how systems, like capitalism (not created by us), shape our social and economic relations, separating and exploiting the natural world. Some asked if this activity could help us take some control and change harmful relations, confront the discomfort of existing within these structures. One reported on a theory of change, where change occurs in the cracks.

This first teach-in concluded with Elizabeth inviting us, over the next few weeks, to notice and name modernity's myths of separation around us, how it manifests in our everyday, including how our bodies move. She then instructed us to undertake a second activity:

> Find a 'sit spot' in a natural or wild area, not too manicured, and sit for at least 20 minutes, a time when we begin to use our other senses. It's best to sit for 40 minutes as it takes that much time for the natural world to return to its natural activity. Let the area befriend and teach you. Keep your focus close to you or wider. Do this activity twice and come back to the second
> teach-in with some stories. This activity engages our senses differently and changes our neural patterning, how we perceive the world, and our belief systems.

Composting Modernity

On October 5th, the second PIMA teach-in, Elizabeth turned our attention to the idea of composting problematic ideas of modernity, key to unlearning separation and relearning relationality. She again grounded her presentation and guided us through her daily gratitude practice of lighting a candle and greeting the water, earth, and wind. Where she lives, the full moon was waning, a time of maturity and harvesting of food and ideas; these cycles guide her in her work. She reminded us of her settler and Germanic origins, of her living on Indigenous lands of the Plains Cree, and now on Coast Salish territory.

She shared a diagram from the first teach-in depicting the Anthropocene era where humans are changing the composition and functioning of the planet (see image #3 above). The Stockholm Resilience Centre (https://www.stockholmresilience.org/) has just released its new update showing human activities now pushing six, not just five, of the nine living systems outside of their safe and stable operating zone, with fresh water (both blue water and plants' green water) moving into a zone of risk. Ocean acidification is inching close to its boundary.

Our Work as Educators

We are engaged in the urgent work of educating others about these planetary boundaries and how the deadline for change is this decade. People must also meet their basic needs (see the sustainable development goals or SDGs from 2015-2030 https://sdgs.un.org/gsdr/gsdr2023).

Elizabeth responded to a query from the first teach-in about how to approach learners. She described how she rarely comes at it directly, as it can trigger backlash. She first conducts informal and formal surveys to find pedagogical entry points, noting how we often assume peoples' level of knowledge. She asks these six questions:

1. What are your key life challenges and concerns?
2. What do you most want for the future?
3. What is your biggest fear for the future?
4. What are your reasons for non-engagement?
5. What are your barriers and perhaps competing principles?
6. What is your knowledge and your attitude to climate change?

Responses help Elizabeth choose which aspects of sustainability and climate change content will be immediately relevant, showing how sustainability and climate change action will help address learners' more pressing challenges. In her municipality, a formal community survey as well as interviews were conducted; people wanted a slower, more balanced lifestyle. In response, municipal communications were geared toward illustrating how sustainability and reducing carbon footprint can create a higher quality of life. She recently heard a term for this approach, "coyote mentoring."

Elizabeth explained how naming the dying days of modernity is already breaking faith. We'll encounter some who resist, who still believe in and want access to modernity's promise, who see it as not yet fully evolved, only needing to be reformed or perhaps radically transformed. For others, it's time to leave it behind, to fully inhabit this in-between time, not knowing where we are.

Beth then shared some useful educational resources:

- Yale Program for Climate Change Communication (https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/)
- Systems View of Life with Fritjof Capra (https://greattransition.org/contributor/fritjof-capra)
- Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21St-Century Economist (Raworth, 2017, Chelsea Green Publishers)

Our work of exploring the beliefs and structures in which we live, involves both short term and long term thinking. Modernity has many phases: early, mid and late, with evolving beliefs of humanism, individualism, dualism, a clockwork universe, hierarchy, militarism and so forth, all with an underbelly of violence (slavery, the theft of resources, constant economic crisis, and genocide). She reinforced how modernity is about separation from our bodies, emotions, wisdom and creativity, and skills of being in community. We are separated from the creative and active cosmos, and other species.

In Newton and Galileo's clockwork universe, planets and humans floated in black empty space; atoms were the basic reality. In the new story, we are living in a highly sensitive cosmic web where energy fields transmit information and connect all galaxies and planets. Rather than seeing the earth composed of parts with different functions, we now see the earth as networks, self-organizing and self-regulating systems, not inert. These systems impact each other synergistically as depicted in the Stockholm Planetary Boundary model.

Learning is Process and Resonance
In the old story, only humans learn and we are self-contained in our bodies and minds. In the new story, cognition is the process of all life, all living systems in which we are embedded. All things have energy fields, including our bodies and our communities. The new model of learning is sometimes called a process approach; humans are nested communal individuals, profoundly related to all that is, made of the same elements as the whole of the universe, constantly resonating with all other things.

Rather than there being only one truth, the world's spiritualities are all simultaneously true, each with unique understandings of and instructions for the origin and role of the universe and humans. The mythic stories, including fairy tales, hold old wisdom, instructions for living. The human story is one of diversity and shared wisdom.

In order to understand the paradoxes of reality, scientists have turned to mytho-poetic language.

In this time, our great work is dedicating ourselves to what is required, connecting our education work to the story of the cosmos, the history and dynamics of the earth, the fate of all species and our own fate as humans. Educators can be midwives for this great transformation towards a relational and life-giving way of being. We will likely not see what is being born of our work.

All my relations` is a global concept. Kinship is not having relations, a transactional point of view, rather we understand ourselves as being relations. Elizabeth observed how creating our kinship maps already disrupted normalized ideas of identity, showing how this notion of identity decentres humans; rivers and the land become more central, fueling our desire to fiercely protect what's around us. Kinship maps can help us find commonality with and deeper understanding of others.

Our childhood memories are full of sensory experiences. Elizabeth wondered 'what happens when children no longer have this freedom of movement or experience?' Kinship maps shift us away from naming our status, titles, money and stuff, towards understanding identity as constellations of natural relations.

Elizabeth then guided us again through breathwork, a form of micro-activism and resistance to normative notions of time, an embodied practice of relationality, creating spaciousness, slowing time as we pause between in-breath and out-breath.

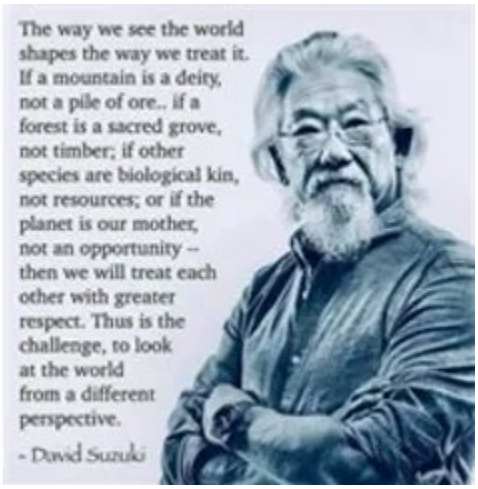
Working in pairs or triads we then met for 20 minutes to talk about our sit spot experiences, introducing ourselves through our kinship relations, sharing our inner observations, noting times of resistance, difficulties, feeling unsafe. We discussed our outer experiences of using all of our senses; what did we notice, experience. Elizabeth invited us to ponder three questions:

1. What can we say about the body and the mind's patterning of modernity from this experience?
2. What did you learn about separation and about relationality through this experience?
3. What can we say about the languages and intelligibility of the natural world?

Fall/Spring Teach-in Feedback
Elizabeth's teach-ins were powerful, insightful and transformative. Many experienced feeling less alone, more hopeful, and relieved to find others were feeling the same way about the importance of connecting to each other and our world in new ways. Participants noted how modernity is all about doing rather than being, how 'doing nothing' could be reframed as doing no-thing, not a passive state, rather an active engagement with being. Sharon Clancy came away 'with a profound feeling of hope in these darkest of times'.

The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature
by David George Haskell (2012, Viking) was recommended; the author spent one year observing one square meter of old growth forest. Participants reported on practices that help them feel connected: meditation, physical movement and somatic practices, verbal communication involving circling and authentic relating.

Thank you, Elizabeth, for sharing what's been your life's work for many years. This has been a very special, powerful and transformative, pedagogical moment.



PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part One: A pluriverse of conversations

Unearthing and Digging In: A Multimedia Food Sovereignty Project

Deborah Barndt

I: Unearthing Personal Roots of the Earth to Tables Legacies Project

Most political projects have very personal origin stories This is my take on the birthing of the Earth to Tables Legacies Project, an intergenerational and intercultural exchange of food sovereignty activists in the Americas. The hyperlinks will take you to the personal perspectives offered by each of the 17 project collaborators.

On the eve of my retirement from York University in 2014, I was approached by a filmmaker who hoped to produce a documentary on my collaborative research tracing the journey of a corporate tomato from a Mexican field to a Canadian fast food restaurant. There's enough critique of the industrial food system, I responded. What we need to highlight are the hopeful stories of resistance, resilience and regeneration of more equitable and ecological food practices by Indigenous and settler communities.

On a four-month road trip from Toronto to Panama in early 2015 with my new partner John Murtaugh, we shared great meals with family, friends, and co-workers in a growing global grass-roots food movement. We found his family friend Fernando Garcia teaching organic gardening in Guadalajara, Mexico, and my former colleague Gustavo Esteva, nurturing younger food sovereignty activists Valiana Aguilar and Ángel Kú at the Zapatista-inspired UniTierra in Oaxaca.

I had first first met Gustavo in 2003 while visiting Lauren Baker, who had collaborated on the tomato project, and was doing doctoral research on Mexican maize movements. Lauren brought her current own transnational work, through the Global Alliance for the Future of Food, and connected us with Fulvio Gioanetto. An ethnobotanist living with his partner, medicinal plant expert Maria Blas, in the P'urepecha community in Michoacán, Mexico, Fulvio had been sharing his unique agroecological experience with Canadian farmers and food activists.

Back in Canada, John introduced me to family friend Dianne Kretschmar, then a 70-year organic farmer in rural Ontario. John's late wife Elizabeth Harris had established the first organic farmers' market in a Toronto park to sell Dianne's produce. Their daughter Anna had met her husband Adam working on Dianne's farm, and they now fed their family from a farm in the Gaspé. Dianne was a mentor for many young farmers for over 30 years, including her own son Dan, Ryan DeCaire from the nearby Mohawk territory of Wahta, and Fernando Garcia who came all the way from Mexico to learn organic farming from Dianne. This curious and committed woman represented a constellation of intergenerational and intercultural exchange of food knowledges and practices. At the early stages of our exchange, these questions emerged:

What food legacies are being passed on from one generation to another? Across cultures and borders? Who will produce our food in the 21st century and how?

I invited Lauren as a younger food movement leader and Alexandra Gelis as a younger Colombian-Canadian multi-media artist and York PhD student researching human-plant relations to form an intergenerational research and production team. We began to document the process of visits to collaborators' fields and tables, using photos and video as arts-based participatory research tools.

While we had Indigenous partners in Mexico, we still wanted to connect with Indigenous food activists closer to home. Since 2015, we have found ourselves in the midst of a very powerful resurgence of Indigenous communities in so-called Canada, where a Truth and Reconciliation Commission unearthed testimonies of survivors of government and church-run residential schools, part of a broader cultural genocide. Indigenous leaders had also sparked the Idle No More Movement, pushed for the investigation of the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, initiated multiple land claims, and lead social and environmental struggles against extractive industries and pipelines, and for clean water and air.

During a visit to a food project in Six Nations (the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois Confederacy), we found community food leaders like Mohawk Chandra Maracle and Tuscarora Rick Hill recovering Haudenosaunee history and traditional foods, creating alternative schools with Mohawk values, and helping us all to reconnect more deeply with all our relations through food. Our questions broadened:

How do we open up a respectful conversation between settler and Indigenous food leaders on Turtle Island? What can we learn from a dialogue between food activists in the Global South and in the Global North?

Food was an entry point, a catalyst for conversations across our very real differences: youth and elders, Indigenous and settler, Canadian and Mexican, rural and urban food activists. Our commitment to food justice and food sovereignty was a common passion, one way of speaking back to this moment.

Ultimately, both the main message of our project (honouring all our relations) and of our process (pollinating relationships) were the same: we need to rebuild relations based on respect and reciprocity with all living beings, human and more-than-human.

II: Digging in: Popular Education Tools

In 2020, we launched our multimedia website earthtotables.org (tour the website) just in time for teachers looking for online resources with the onslaught of the pandemic. In early 2023, we launched our companion book, Earth to Tables Legacies: Multimedia Food Conversations Across Generations and Cultures.

Both are meant as catalysts to encourage community groups and classes to apply the stories, ideas and practices to their own contexts. All ten videos and eleven photo essays have Facilitator guides with questions, hands on activities, individual and collective actions, and further resources. Built on the popular education theories and practices of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, the guides aim to challenge power relations, moving users from analysis to action.

Below are three activities that can generate participation around the deeper questions of food sovereignty.

(i) **Thanksgiving Address**

Watch the Thanksgiving Address video

When the Legacies collaborators gathered at Six Nations of the Grand River Territory in Oshweken, Ontario in July 2019, Mohawk community food leader Chandra Maracle engaged the group in making the connections between food and all of the elements acknowledged in the Thanksgiving Address: These include the earth, water, fish, plants, insects, berries, trees, birds, winds, the moon, the sun, the stars, and the creator.

She distributed the drawings of the different elements that you see in the video and asked us to consider: "How is this one thing related to food?"

Using the English translation provided of the Thanksgiving Address, ask each group member to select a picture of one of the elements and talk about how they see it connected to food. Or get them to draw the elements listed above, and write their thoughts on the back of the drawing.

Form a talking circle and invite everyone to share their interpretations with the group.

Discuss how the sharing of perspectives has broadened your understanding of food, indeed of all our relations.

(ii) **Food Icons**

Each collaborator in the Earth to Tables Legacies project has a unique story, sense of place, and connection to food sovereignty.

One way we chose to share our food stories was to identify a food-related icon (plant, animal, insect, container) that we connect with. For example, I chose a bee, because my name "Deborah" means "bee" in Hebrew, and I identify with bees as a pollinator of people and ideas. While Valiana, the youngest collaborator, chose corn, because Mayans consider themselves "Children of Corn."

Invite everyone in your group or class to choose and draw their own food icons.

Ask why they chose their specific food source, and encourage them to tell any stories connected with their icon.

Consider as a group what you have learned about each other, food and the interrelation between people and food sources: how people shape food, and food shapes people.

(iii) **Mapping migration stories**

Food sovereignty opens up questions about our relationship to the land. If we are settlers, for example, we need to acknowledge the Indigenous history of the land we are living on. Yet most of us, including our Indigenous collaborators, have migrated throughout our lives and have relationships with different lands. When it comes to food, we have learned from a diversity of contexts, continents, cultures, and culinary practices.

At our 2019 gathering, we shared our personal histories of migration, by mapping our movements on a global map. This activity connected us to the broader political, economic and cultural process of global migration – of both people and food.

Some of us have deep pre-contact ancestral roots in Turtle Island. Others have colonial histories in Europe and so have landed in North America (Turtle Island) as settlers (by choice or by force) on stolen land. Still others identify a mixture of Indigenous and European ancestry in their family histories. Our complex trajectories perhaps reflect the reality of this era, of uprooted populations disconnected from the land of their ancestors.

Using a drawing of a world map, ask each person to map their movements over their lifetime. Consider these questions:

What connection did you have to land in each place? Share stories of intimate experiences with the land, water, plants, and animals.

What do you know about the Indigenous history of your various homes?

What struggles for food sovereignty or food justice are you aware of in each context?

III: Nurturing Relationships

In May 2023, our Mayan partners Valiana Aguilar and Ángel Kú hosted a gathering in their Solar Maya in Sinanche, Yucatán. The younger BIPOC collaborators are deepening relationships and building new projects as the Legacies Project lives on.

About the Author

Deborah Barndt has struggled for over five decades to integrate her artist, activist and academic selves. The Earth to Tables Legacies Project builds on her activism in social justice movements, popular education in communities and universities, and arts-based participatory research, culminating in over forty photo exhibits, photo essays and videos, and ten books, including *Education and Social Change: A Photographic Study of Peru, To Change This House: Popular Education under the Sandinistas, Tangled Routes: Women, Work and Globalization on the Tomato Trail* and the edited volume *VIVA! Community Arts and Popular Education in the Americas*. db3347@gmail.com

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part 1: A pluriverse of conversations

Land-based de-colonisation: Embodying Reciprocity and Responsibility

Denise Nadeau

This is the keynote presentation I gave on May 25th, 2023, at the First Nations House of Learning at the University of British Columbia which is situated on Musqueam territory on the theme of Land-Based Decolonization. Alannah Young also presented at that event (https://lfs-iherg.sites.olt.ubc.ca/alannah-young-leon/)

I am a grandmother, educator, scholar, and activist working at the intersection of somatic therapy, spiritual practice, decolonization, and racial justice. My research is on how the body holds racist and colonial patterns of behavior. I am the author of *Unsettling Spirit: A Journey into Decolonization* (MQUP,2020). I'd first like to situate myself as to how I come to be here today on Musqueam territory. I am a settler of mixed European heritage from Quebec– French, Scottish, Irish and English- whose ancestors came here many generations ago, in particular my French ones. I grew up in a city Tiohtià:ke (Montreal), but visited my Dad's family every summer on the Gaspe coast - Gespege'wagi. My relationship to land was first as private property, my parents owned a house with a yard. Then I learned about land as a resource - my grandfather owned a sawmill in a small town on the ocean. I moved to B.C. for university, discovered "Beautiful BC". That was the beginning of a back – and - forth process where my relationship to land began to slowly change as I became an educator who first learned that people had the answers to their own problems (I first heard Paulo Freire when Paz Buttendahl brought him to UBC in 1984). I learned that there were entire knowledge systems – Indigenous Knowledge Systems and that these knowledges were based on and from the land. As well as being an educator, I have a training and background in the area of religious studies, which affects how I see and understand the world.

I want to use this talk to address my more recent challenge as an educator – how to educate and support settlers to develop a real sense of responsibility to the peoples and territories in which they live and hence to act in a reciprocal way with the land and all the relatives embodied in the land and water. I feel comfortable talking about how I haven't really solved this challenge and am more or less in process.

Somatic exercise

I'd like to start with a brief somatic exercise to give a break in our listening.

This is an orientation activity to locate ourselves in this space in present time. Just notice how you are feeling now in your body – comfortable? Uncomfortable? With your eyes and gently moving your neck if you are able, take in the environment around you, looking in all the directions and noticing things that look familiar or new, colours you enjoy, shapes, light, sounds, notice what comes up for you, memories, associations as you do that, then bring your attention back here – now notice your body. Once more look around, noting 5 things you see, four that you hear, 3 things that you connect to with touch, 2 smells and 1 taste. Notice how this feels in your body, what has changed, what has stayed the same.

When you move your eyes and neck you are activating your social engagement system. At a deeper level my colleague Alannah has given us some context to this room, the Sty Wet Tan Hall, on Musqueam territory but open to other nations. This room allows connections to the past and the future, to ancestors and those to come, and to building materials from lands both near and far away. We are in the midst of a web of relationships.

This is a brief example of how Alannah and I have worked together, combining a perspective from Indigenous knowledge systems with a somatic tool. We call our education method "Embodying Indigenous Resurgence: All Our Relations Pedagogy" and have written about it in: *Sharing Breath: Embodied Learning and Decolonization* (Leon & Nadeau, 2018).

I want to now jump off from where Alannah ended. We have done work together, especially with water, providing an embodied experience of how we are interrelated with the land. However, how that results in people actually living out their relational responsibilities is another matter.

Here's a quote from Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark (Ojibwe) and Gina Starblanket (Cree) who wrote "T*owards a Relational Paradigm –Four Points for Consideration: Knowledge, Gender, Land, and Modernity*" (2018). They point out that for feminist and Indigenous scholars, and I will add Buddhist and relational theologians, the concepts of interconnection and `we are all one` are now becoming more common. There is '...an important difference between understanding our place in the world as situated within relations of interdependence with all of creation and *living in a way that carries out our responsibilities with these relationships*.' (p.177, emphasis added).

How do we educate about living out kinship responsibilities?

It is actions, not just beliefs, that will transform the separateness of humans from the more-than-human world. And this is the challenge I face as an educator who works with mostly white settler populations. What are the obstacles to behaviour change? And how can working with the body and land undermine these obstacles, though maybe not totally overcome them because we are living in systems of racial capitalism and white supremacy?

My particular approach has been influenced by years of training in somatic therapies and expressive arts. I have always been interested in how the psyche is shaped by social, economic and cultural factors and how these are played out in the body. In my book, *Unsettling Spirit – A Journey into Decolonization* (2022), which is a form of autoethnography, I explored how hard it is/was for me to reciprocate in a deep way – I watched my own grasping, concluding that settler identity is constructed on what you have – e.g. possessions, titles, etc.. It is not who you are deep inside. I started to explore and continue to explore the larger structure of white possessiveness and private property that keeps many of us locked in non-relational ways of being.

The idea of the settler being caught in the dynamic of grasping as hunger and thirst I first heard from Nlaka'pamux lawyer Ardith Walkem (https://www.alternativesjournal.ca/sustainable-life/water-philosophy/).

'A Nlaka'pamux elder once told me that the problem with the newcomers was that they were famished. She explained that newcomers never stop eating away at the waters, at the land, at the trees, at the fish. Newcomers would log, mine, build subdivisions and highways, and fish to the point of extinction and *still never feel full or satisfied.*' (Ardith Walkem –Justice of the Supreme Court of BC – Dec 2020, emphasis added)

Recently I discovered the work of Dylan Roberston. His book *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (2022) has given me a few clues as to how to educate out of this morass – because I don't think you can change behavior with theory or thinking. He describes in his Halq'eméylem Upriver dialect, how the settler behavior as always hungry, thirsty.

(Welleentim) shxwlitemelh ("an adjective for settler or white person's methods/things"]) and xwelala:m ("the word for listening").

I suggest you find the Indigenous word for settler from your territory. Robertson talks about the white settler as "the extractive listener", wanting to consume the content and hence missing the rhythms, structures, cadences, repetitions that are part of both Indigenous music, songs, creation stories, dances, whose function is to transmit law and history. "To be starving is to lose the relationality and reflexivity in the desire to satisfy the hunger".

What I found helpful about Robertson's work is he also identified it as a playing out in perception, the inability to have a broad sensory engagement with not only Indigenous music, but with the land and place. It is perception that is goal oriented and looking for the use value of whatever is being perceived – a narrow focus.

He talks about an ethic of listening and how to listen, to place with the whole body and being aware that we are being listened to.

So how do we expand the sensory field?

That exercise we just did is an example which I have expanded in a 4 session course where I ask people to go out on the land and practice a multi-dimensional sensory engagement, including moving into an awareness of time and space. And added to that sensual perception, exploring time in a different way, thinking about ancestors, the ones to come, and spatial dimensions, both now in the present but in past and future, remembering that in Indigenous systems these can coexist at the same time.

Yet for me the greatest challenge is the ideology of white possessiveness rooted in private property. Aileen Moreton – Robertson, of the Quandamooka Nation in Queensland Australia, writes about this in *The White Possessive* (2015). Both settler and Black scholars have written about private property as the core problem (see Rinaldo Walcott's *On property: policing, prisons and the Call for Abolition* (2021) and settler scholar Eva Mackey's *Unsettled Expectations: Uncertainty, Land and Settler Decolonization* (2016). Private property is a place to guard and surveil; we put up alarms and light sensors. How do we move from that to Land Back as sharing. The importance of this is that it links Black and Indigenous struggles as the 3 P's: property, prisons and policing are all about protecting property. Private property is supposed to provide certainty and permanence – which for anyone involved in the deeper questions of religious meaning knows are delusions.

In my recent work on educating about Land Back (see https://davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/what-is-land-back/), I talk about the Vancouver Island Treaties and how the original signatories envisioned sharing the land with settlers, as they have always seen the land as shared - with the birds, the animals, the water mammals and fish.

We have to tackle property and unlearning private property if the settlers can develop a decolonized relationship with land and understand Land Back as sharing, and treaties as sharing. It is not easy to break out of the grip of white possessiveness when we are still caught in the systems of racial capitalism and white supremacy – probably impossible. But I look to Indigenous futurisms and revolutionary abolitionism and the work of those like Leanne Betasamoake Simpson and Robin Maynard who are thinking out and proposing how we can live together "in a good way." My work is giving people a bit of an embodied sense of another way of being in relation to land and all beings and, of course, working with Indigenous peoples who speak to a different way of being with the land.

I use a few art therapy exercises to get people out of their heads. For example, I've used scribble art after listening to a clip of Leann Betasamoake Simpson reading from her book *Rehearsal for Living* (2022) who spoke about an ethic of sharing. a vision of multiple sovereignties – sharing with consent how to live on common territories of the squirrels , the maple, the bear. After I ask people to scribble on a piece of paper to connect to the feelings and what was called up for them. We then can talk about the readings at a deeper level.

Recently I did a writing workshop with Liz Howard, Anishinaabe author of the *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent* (2015). It was about developing land consciousness - where you invite people to spend time learning the land-based oral histories of the nation on whose land they are visitors, whatever legitimate teachings they can find, and to research the local ecology, geology, and archeology of the land. Even to do field work, noting space and time – and trying on intergenerational perspectives on the land, those of ancestors and those to come, their relationships with the land. People can record their sensory experience embodied in the landscape, and explore Indigenous writers who see body as coextensive with the land rather than be landowners.

Finally, in my work of educating around Land Back I now believe that until people have the experience of ceremony with the land they will still be stuck in possessiveness. Land Back includes not just returning physical land, but also the return to ceremony, Indigenous kinship, language and governance structures as well as Indigenous legal orders. This means reciprocating and acknowledging our kinship relation with the land through ceremonies, songs and prayers. I find that these have helped move my own settler mind-body set. Water walks, first salmon ceremonies, offering tobacco to the water – they are all embodied practices which slowly can affect the grasping mind. As an Indigenous colleague once said to me "*Ceremony is the embodiment of our relationship with older relatives.*" We have to practice it, not just think it.

So I conclude with no easy answers – the perceptual body work shakes those who are willing to hear, as does something like art therapy, any modality that gets people out of their thinking brain. But we face a structure of white supremacy and possessiveness that will only fade when another structure grows and pushes back – as I discovered in my scribble art – spending all my time in critique of the system will not work unless we continue to work with the land, with ceremony and expanding the groupings of people open to and practicing an ethic of care and sharing.

Land Back is an Indigenous -led movement addressing how "systems of land governance under our current provincial and federal governments not only exclude Indigenous Peoples from decision-making tables where choices about land use are made, they also fail to set limits https://davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/what-is-land-back/ for industrial activities and development, driving wildlife decline and ecosystem degradation".

About the Author

Dr. Denise Nadeau is an educator, scholar, and activist Working at the intersection of somatic therapy, spiritual practice, decolonization, and racial justice. She is of mixed European heritage from Quebec and the author of the book Unsettling Spirit: A Journey into Decolonization, which is published by McGill-Queen's University Press and won the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion 2021 Prize. She currently resides as a visitor in the traditional homelands of the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich), Lkwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt) peoples on Vancouver Island.
Denise Nadeau – Writer, Educator, Somatic Practitioner

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PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part one: A pluriverse of conversations

Education needs a 'new story' urgently!

Timothy Ireland

This is an extract from the Keynote Speech, '*Promoting literacy for a world in transition: Building the foundation for sustainable and peaceful societies,'* delivered at the Conference to celebrate International Literacy Day, held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, on 8th September 2023, by Timothy Ireland.

The author begins:
"Decades ago, Ivan Illich argued that to change the existing understanding of education required elaborating a new narrative "a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story." (Springer, 2016, p.2) In a world in transition, the weaving of a new narrative for education and literacy is a fundamental part of the challenge. This challenge involves a process of learning – understanding the roots of the problem, learning to unlearn – long-established beliefs which are proven not to be valid, and relearning – recognising the existence of other epistemologies, other ways of knowing besides the dominant western epistemologies. Paulo Freire's seminal work, in Brazil, in the 1950s and 60s is an eloquent example of this search for a new narrative, in which literacy is part of a broad understanding of education and culture. Freire's intention was not to create a new literacy method but a new all-embracing epistemology.

Timothy then references significant global education initiatives, which register the impact of the awareness of existential threats to humanity posed by climate change, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. He notes that the UN Report Transforming Education: An urgent political imperative for our collective future states, "In a world that is experiencing a fourth industrial revolution, nearly half of all students do not complete secondary school and 763 million young people and adults are illiterate, the majority of whom are women" (UN, 2023 p.1.) The same report recognises that education remains in "deep crisis", a "crisis of equity, quality, and relevance" (UN, 2023, p. 3). In other words, it is not sufficient to propose more of the same.

The author identifies 5 characteristics for education which is moving from one reality to another:

1. From an anthropocentric vision of the world to a biocentric vision of the world. From a world in which humans are at the centre, to a holistic vision of the world in which humans and nature or more-than-humans, are embodied as part of an integrated and interdependent system.

2. From an education dominated by a humanitarian charter (notion of human exceptionalism) to one of ecological justice.

3. A shift from learning **about** the world to learning **with** the world

4. A re-dimensioning of what constitutes humanity in relation to more-than-humanity.

5. The transition from universality (one size fits all) to pluriversality - universalism more than any other tenet has been the cause of eliminating diversity, which constitutes the essence of life.

He identifies the parlous state of adult literacy due to the pandemic and underinvestment, with 763 million persons who do not know how to read and write. The large majority of these are poor, dispossessed, and oppressed living in the global South. He critiques the deficit model of literacy which defines people by what they lack not by the capabilities that they do have and know. He argues that consistent evidence exists to show the strong correlations between literacy and expressions of inequality and other forms of vulnerability and poverty. Illiteracy as an expression of inequality and poverty needs to be treated as part of a complex articulation of social policies related to health, housing, basic sanitation, work, and environment. Literacy as the foundation of education is integral to food security, health and well-being, gender equality, economic growth, etc.

He reminds us that Paulo Freire constantly repeated his understanding that reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word implies continually reading the world. (Freire & Macedo, 1987) The challenge of learning to read is intricately embedded in our search to understand the reality in which we live. The challenges with which literacy was faced in the 1960s when Freire developed his praxis are qualitatively different from the challenges we face today - climate change, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity - but the need to read the world continues to be a priority. After centuries in which the enlighteners declared the absolute domination of nature as the main task of man, and scientists and engineers literally declared war on nature, we are now faced with a new challenge. James Lovelock (2016) describes earth as more than just a home; it's a living system and we are part of it. As Amitav Ghosh (2021) convincingly argues, the dynamics of climate change are rooted in a centuries-old geopolitical order constructed by Western colonialism.

The author then asks:
How then do we reconnect to nature and what is literacy's role in that process?

Firstly, we need to recognise that there are many ways, and not just one way, of knowing the world and that the predominant path we have chosen has led to a negation of an interdependent understanding of the planet as an integrated system. Amongst the alternative epistemological strategies, the concept of good living – 'buen vivir' in Spanish, provides a vital example. Secondly, this way of knowing the world has recently been integrated within the educational strategy in which Freire's approach to literacy was embedded, popular education.

It is only relatively recently that western science has recognised that Indigenous knowledges and other ancient place-based knowledge are something more than exotic practices to be studied by anthropologists. 'Good living' should not be reduced or confused with the western notion of well-being or even that of prosperity. As Hessel and Morin (2011, p.24) point out, the notion of well-being has dwindled in contemporary civilization to the strictly material sense that implies comfort, wealth, and ownership. Implicit in 'good living' is a different way of reading the world and one which seeks to redefine the relationship not only between humans and nature but how human beings relate amongst themselves. Humans are not the 'lords and masters of nature' nor is nature an externality to human history (Dávalos, 2008, np). The way in which knowledge was and is produced takes as its premise this relationship between humanity and nature, which represents two parts of the same unity.

‘Good living’, with its cosmological roots in the original peoples of the continent, has exercised a growing influence over the practice of Popular Education. For Freire, popular education is an antidote to oppression, “directed at the transformation of society, taking as its starting point the concrete/lived experience (...)” (Paludo, 2015, p.178). It constitutes an education, which defines the well-being and collective happiness of its subjects as the goal of education. Education is not limited to transmitting but, above all, to producing knowledge as a constituent element of the practice of liberty. Whilst intending to emancipate, education takes dialogue as its starting point and pedagogical instrument. Equally, education and learning are understood as processes, which are an integral part of our whole life span – life-wide and life-deep. Hence the pertinence of the concept of lifelong learning and education. In Freire’s words (2001, p. 52) “The world is not finished. It is always in the process of becoming”.

Faced by the recognition that, “We as human beings are making our very home uninhabitable” Fernandez concludes that Popular Education’s historical concern with transformation and social emancipation, can benefit greatly from incorporating ethical, aesthetic, political, pedagogical, and epistemological dimensions of ‘good living’ (...)” (2016, p.31). Just as popular education understands that human beings are the subjects and protagonists of their own education, so in the concept of ‘good living’ the natural environment becomes a subject with rights and not an object to be exploited for human ends.

The elaboration of a new narrative for literacy as part of the educational process requires an understanding of the root causes of the crisis. Hence, the relevance of Freire’s insistence that reading the world should precede reading the word. There exists a growing body of evidence to suggest that the divorce between humanity and nature plays a significant role in this process of climate change. Centuries of western domination has tended to impose a univocal epistemological understanding of the world and, thereby, ‘muting’ other forms of knowing the world. Thus, the urgency to elaborate a new narrative for literacy, which incorporates pluriversal readings of reality in which humans and nature are not opposing forces and in which the planet is recognised as the common home of all forms of life. In this context, literacy will be concerned with a re-reading of the human and more-than-human worlds, which will provide both the content and the grammar necessary for the new relationship. ‘Good living’ and Popular Education offer alternative paradigms on which to build new narratives of education in which both humans and nature are co-protagonists. Paul Bélanger’s alert at the end of CONFINTEA VI, in Belém, in 2009 that: “The planet will only survive if it becomes a learning planet” (UNESCO, 2010) is complemented by Latour’s warning that despite the urgency of the challenge it is necessary to go very slowly: ‘il faut aller très lentement, parce que le défi est très urgent’ (Wildermeersch, 2023).

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Centering Indigenous Rights to Challenge Climate Colonialism

Sharon Stein and Jan Hare

Higher education institutions have positioned themselves as leaders of climate action. Many colleges and universities have created sustainability offices, approved climate action strategies, and developed new funding streams for climate-related research, teaching, and community engagement. A subset of institutions, including our own, have gone further to declare a "climate emergency," often at the insistence of student activists. Yet the prevailing approach to climate change at most colleges and universities remains grounded in the assumption that we can and should simply make existing systems and institutions more sustainable, even though these are the same systems and institutions that led us to a climate crisis in the first place (Sumida Huaman & Walker, 2023). When calls for decarbonization are disconnected from calls for decolonization, we tend to see practices and policies that contribute to "business as usual, but greener."

We write this article as two education scholars from different backgrounds – Sharon is a US-born white settler and Jan is an Anishinaabe-kwe from M'Chigeeng First Nation – who share a concern that higher education will contribute to the reproduction of climate colonialism both within and beyond the walls of the institution (see Stein & Hare, 2023). Zografos and Robbins (2020) define climate colonialism as "the deepening or expanding of domination of less powerful countries and peoples through initiatives that intensify foreign exploitation of poorer nations' resources or undermine the sovereignty of native and Indigenous communities in the course of responding to the climate crisis" (p. 543). As Carmona and colleagues write (2023), "The legacy of colonialism has not only increased Indigenous Peoples' vulnerability to climate change, but also subjected them to climate policies that violate their individual and collective rights."

Higher education institutions have climate policies and practices that govern their campuses and shape their approaches to teaching, research, and community engagement. But they are also spaces in which climate policies and practices are incubated and translated to many other contexts and sectors of society. Thus, interrupting climate colonialism requires attending to accountabilities beyond campus grounds, in particular responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples.

We suggest that addressing the risk of climate colonialism in higher education requires two basic recognitions. The first recognition is that colonialism is a root cause and driver of climate change. This has long been recognized by Indigenous Peoples and was recently acknowledged by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 2022 report. The second recognition is that higher education has been and continues to be complicit in settler colonialism, including through the production and dissemination of colonial knowledge, the occupation and degradation of Indigenous lands, and complicity in educational assimilation.

In addition to these two basic recognitions, we have identified five common themes within Indigenous climate justice literature, as well as other de-/anti-colonial climate justice perspectives (e.g., Achiume, 2022; Carmona et al., 2023; Davis & Todd, 2017; Deivanayagam et al., 2022; Hernandez et al., 2022; Hickel, 2020; Indigenous Climate Action, 2021; McGregor et al., 2020; Redvers et al., 2023; Reed et al., 2021; Whyte, 2017, 2018). These themes are:

1. Whiter and wealthier communities are disproportionately responsible for carbon emissions, biodiversity loss, and other forms of ecological degradation through systems and infrastructures of extractivism, exploitation, and expropriation;
2. Climate change is disproportionately experienced by Indigenous communities, Black communities, other communities of colour, and communities in the Global South;
3. Indigenous communities and other communities on the frontline of climate change hold place-based knowledges and practices about their lands and territories that are routinely sidelined in climate action, but which should guide efforts to address climate change;
4. Indigenous communities have inherent rights to make decisions about their lands and their futures – rights which are often ignored in many mainstream climate solutions; and,
5. Non-Indigenous people have an obligation to interrupt and repair the effects of climate colonialism, which some people have described as climate or carbon reparations.

When these considerations are ignored in climate-related research, teaching, and community engagement, universities are likely to reproduce climate colonialism (Stein et al., 2023). This reproduction is often unintentional. For instance, the common tendency to seek technical and technocratic solutions to climate change is rarely grounded in an intention to harm Indigenous People and their territories, yet this is often the impact. Many "green energy" and carbon capture projects require access to vast swaths of land, often Indigenous land, and have devastating consequences for the social and ecological health of those territories (Hickel & Slamersak, 2022; Whyte, 2020; Zografos & Robbins, 2020). Indigenous leaders are often excluded from decisions about decarbonization projects that will affect their lands, and university climate action efforts generally fail to consider local Indigenous Nations and international Indigenous partners.

So, what might be done to interrupt the reproduction of climate colonialism in higher education? We suggest that one possible leverage point is to reflect on the implications of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) for climate action. UNDRIP was signed by the UN General Assembly in 2007. It outlines the minimum conditions for protecting the rights, dignity, and survival of Indigenous Peoples. Thus far, 148 countries have signed UNDRIP, yet it lacks any legally binding enforcement mechanism. Some countries, including Canada, have passed their own federal legislation to implement UNDRIP. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received royal assent in 2021. The Act pledges to ensure that Canadian laws align with UNDRIP, and to create an action plan to achieve this alignment. Alongside this federal law, the governments of British Columbia and the Northwest Territories have passed their own legislation that pledges to implement UNDRIP.

Implementation of UNDRIP has been slow, and there are varied perspectives about its implications in settler colonial states, particularly given its grounding in Western legal frameworks. For instance, McGregor observes that UNDRIP relies on the will of nation-states for its implementation, does not challenge the colonial sovereignty of those nation-states, and does not capture the epistemological and ontological dimensions of Indigenous law (McGregor, 2018; McGregor, Whitaker, & Sritharan, 2020). Despite these limitations, Indigenous scholars like McGregor have argued for the importance of ensuring that, at a minimum, climate action as well as efforts to address biodiversity loss respect the rights outlined in UNDRIP (Carmona et al., 2023; McGregor, 2018; McGregor, Whitaker, & Sritharan, 2020; Redvers et al., 2023).

In order to consider the implications of UNDRIP for higher education climate action, we reflected on our experiences as members of a working group on Indigenous engagement as part of the Climate Emergency Task Force at our own university. We approached our responsibilities as task force members with a keen recognition of the paradox between the urgency of climate change and

the slow work of relationship building that is required in order to confront climate change in responsible ways that address its root causes (rather than just its symptoms) and enable forms of coordinated action that protect the rights and well-being of all peoples and other-than-human beings (Simpson & Pizarro, 2023; Whyte, 2020). Ultimately, we determined that the time allotted to us for pursuing Indigenous engagement was insufficient and focused instead on outlining several guiding considerations for pursuing proper engagement.

One of our primary concerns as a working group was to map how UNDRIP might be applied to the draft Climate Emergency Task Force Report. We summarize our findings here:

1. Engaging with Indigenous People about institutional climate action requires more than just tokenistic dialogues – it requires respecting their sovereignty and ensuring their free, prior, and informed consent for any activities that will affect their communities and lands. Institutions must be transparent about how their Indigenous engagement efforts will meaningfully inform university decisions, policies, and practices.
2. Institutions have a responsibility to enact both material restitution and relational repair in order to redress the impacts of their historical and ongoing colonial actions. Climate action offers an important opportunity to enact redress for these systemic harms.
3. Indigenous Peoples have the right to protect and preserve their knowledge systems, cultures, and histories. Yet Indigenous knowledges and educational practices have long been sidelined in higher education. In both teaching and research, institutions should support Indigenous scholars and knowledge keepers in ways that respect their intellectual sovereignty and recognize their role as producers of climate knowledge.
4. Higher education's engagement with Indigenous communities is often oriented by institutional priorities, rather than community priorities. In the context of climate change, colleges and universities have an opportunity to challenge and reverse this colonial pattern by supporting Indigenous-led research, education, and community engagement efforts oriented by Indigenous self-determination.

Overall, we conclude that if colleges and universities in settler colonial contexts like Canada seek to interrupt rather than reproduce climate colonialism, they must substantively commit to ensuring that their climate actions respect Indigenous rights, knowledges, and sovereignty. This is no small task, given that colonialism has been baked into the DNA of these institutions, and these institutions continue to occupy Indigenous Peoples' territories without their consent. Yet the enormity of the challenges posed by climate destabilization and ecological breakdown demand that we rethink the inherited colonial practices that led to this crisis point.

We will need to challenge the illusion that humans are separate from nature, and that Western knowledge is superior to other ways of knowing, so that we can learn to develop relationships grounded in trust, respect, reciprocity, consent, and accountability. By doing so, we may be better prepared to coordinate justice-oriented responses that draw on the wisdom of multiple knowledge traditions and respect human rights, Indigenous rights, and the rights of nature (Whyte, 2020). This will not be easy, especially for white settlers who are accustomed to having their intellectual authority and moral benevolence affirmed. However, if we seek to uphold our responsibilities to past, current, and future generations of all species, we have no choice but to try.

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PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part one: A pluriverse of conversations

Thanks, but no thanks: Standard Bank can have its journalism award back

Leonie Joubert

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https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2023-09-21-thanks-but-no-thanks-standard-bank-can-have-its-journalism-award-back/

When writers and thinkers point out society's ills and call out those complicit in upholding them — these are never convenient truths to hear — there is always blowback. One playbook strategy is to shame these uppity types by showing their complicity in the system they're trying to tear down.

Abolitionists in the United States were dismissed as hypocrites because they wore clothes made from cotton that had been picked by slaves. School climate protesters today are scorned because they drive to demonstrations in petrol-driven cars. I bank with Standard Bank, even though I know it's considering financing an East African oil pipeline that's going to keep syphoning fossil fuels out of the ground, even though scientists say that's where they must stay if we're to slow the escalating violence of climate collapse.

Our complicity — we're all complicit — isn't a sign of our moral failing. It's the result of a system in which we have little choice but to be part of until we've got the alternatives we're demanding.

Slaves had to be freed and the cotton fields tended by wage-earning labour before the garment industry could take a step towards ethical clothing (it's still not there).

Until we have safe, affordable, greener public transport solutions, demonstrators have to travel to protests in fossil-fuelled cars.

And I'll switch banks when there's one out there that isn't in some way funding new fossil fuel extraction.
Until then, I'll have to accept my own hypocrisy.

What I won't do, though, is sit quietly by as Standard Bank dresses itself up as a supporter of a free press and a green future, given its handling of this week's climate protests at its Johannesburg office, where a journalist and several activists were manhandled from its premises, some injured in the melee.

Standard Bank-sponsored journalism award leaves a bitter taste

The climate reporting beat isn't a sexy one, and it seldom has a red-carpet moment at journalism award ceremonies. That's the stuff of investigative reporting in the corruption-busting hard news world.

When word came through one Saturday night in late June that the story "A Perfect Storm: Durban Floods, Climate Change, and Coastal Resilience" had bagged a prize in the features category at the Sikuvile Journalism Awards (a prize awarded jointly to the team behind this story, and to another at News24), I almost fell off my chair (except I was in bed because of load shedding, so I was already horizontal and audio-reading a novel in the dark).
This award is a big deal, both for a story of this nature and the team behind it.

Climate stories are still mostly shoehorned into the environmental beat, a nice-to-have reporting extra that gets the newsroom leftovers once the apex beats — politics, business, health, even sport — have taken the lion's share of reporting resources. It's hard to muscle your way to the top of the prestige pile when your beat doesn't have cash or cachet.

The award is even more significant, though, because it was given for a story produced by a tiny, independent media operation, the Media Hack Collective. This small stable was able to go head-to-head with the biggest players in the industry and share the feature award with one of the biggest media houses on the continent.

Following the devastating floods in Durban in April 2022, the Media Hack Collective saw an opportunity to use this as a case study to explore coastal city resilience in the context of climate collapse, but with a solutions journalism focus.
Getting to the bottom of what made Durban so vulnerable to a rain event of this nature — it was "extreme, but not unprecedented" — is no quick reporting gig.

The Media Hack Collective pulled together a team of highly skilled, niche journalists — me, as a long-form climate reporting specialist; others handled the data journalism side of things — an editor, a photographer and others, and published the story through *The Outlier,* after which it got picked up by *Daily Maverick* and a few international outlets.
It took months to conceptualise, fundraise, research, write, edit and publish this story, one which the Sikuvile Journalism Awards judges said was deserving because of the seamless weaving together of narrative and data journalism. Groundbreaking stuff, really.

A story as complex, intense and important as "*A Perfect Storm*" would not likely happen with most newsroom budgets or priorities. It took a small, visionary team like the Media Hack Collective to take on as ambitious a project as this.

For this team to receive as high-profile an award as a Sikuvile is significant because it shows the weighty contribution that such a barely visible independent media house can make to the public discourse.

Journalism taking a stand on the red carpet

The acid-reflux moment came a few weeks later, though, when Clean Creatives South Africa — a civil society movement aimed at getting the public relations and advertising world to distance itself from fossil fuel-aligned clients — put a provocation out on its socials.

Riffing off the news that a group of Australian cartoonists had recently announced their plan to boycott the prestigious Walkley Foundation journalism awards because it is sponsored by petroleum giant Ampol, Clean Creative's Stephen Horn wrote: "This conversation needs to happen in South Africa regarding Standard Bank's sponsorship of the Sikuvile Journalism Awards (the bank's involvement in the Eacop oil pipeline project is hugely problematic), and SANParks Kudu Awards being sponsored by TotalEnergies."

First, I winced — I had been asleep at the wheel. Why hadn't I made this connection myself? Then, I began mulling over what to do.

As an engaged citizen, and as an individual who has been writing about climate collapse for 20 years, the right thing to do is to distance myself from the award, as a small act of political protest to draw attention to the fact that one of our country's largest and most powerful financiers is complicit in fossil fuel extraction.

Can it be allowed to buy social cred by anointing some climate reporters with a journalism award? This is a nice bit of greenwashing, even as Standard Bank promises to stick to the Equator Principles and do all its due diligence before deciding whether or not to fund the Eacop pipeline.

But at the same time, this Sikuvile award for "*A Perfect Storm*" was given to a team, and each person on that team deserves the recognition they received on the night and the gravitas it gives to their portfolio and CV.

I can't remove my name from the list of people who, together, won the Sikuvile Journalism Award for the features category that night. I can't make a theatrical red-carpet gesture by handing back an award that isn't mine to give back. I can't scrub from the internet the many posts — some of which are my own — which crow about this achievement.

What I can do, now, is use the small platform that I have — the writer's quill — to ink out my protestations.
Standard Bank: The protesters who were thrown off your premises this week were there because they're trying to tell you that the lives of your staff and your clients are at stake, as our climate becomes dangerously unstable.

The journalist who was manhandled, and whose photographs were deleted from her phone by your security officer, was at this protest because she is part of the Fourth Estate, a crucial part of any healthy democracy.

How can you claim to care about a liveable planet or that you support excellence in journalism if this is how you clamp down on a handful of benign and non-violent climate protesters, and the reporters whose responsibility it is to bring this story to the world?

If this were my award alone, I'd give it right back.

Since it isn't — it's the team's award — I'm distancing myself from it entirely.

Thanks, but no thanks. I don't want to be associated with it. **DM**

About the Author

Leonie Joubert is an independent science writer and contributor to Daily Maverick's Our Burning Planet climate desk. She was named as one of Rhodes University Journalism & Media Studies' 50 distinguished alumni as it celebrated half a century of journalism training.

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49

Special Issue - Climate Justice Education

November 2023

Part Two: Introduction

A Pluriverse of Personal Stories

The stories are thoughtful reflections on unlearning, relearning, learning, for climate justice. They illustrate how personal experiences can open pathways into the political; whilst the stories reflect descriptions and ponderings of individuals, they clearly point to the systemic contexts which shape them. Whether immersion into 'wild' Nature, engagement with fishers and land-restorers, or art and creative expressions, the engagement with Nature challenges the learnt separation and points into various directions for unlearning and forging new relationships.

We encourage readers to think about your own relationships with Nature and moments when you felt that contradictions could lead to both new insights, and action, towards alternative, reciprocal, respectful relations, forging new ways of being/acting together.

Listening to the Rain: The Truth of Land Speaks

Serap Asar Brown

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part two: A pluriverse of personal stories

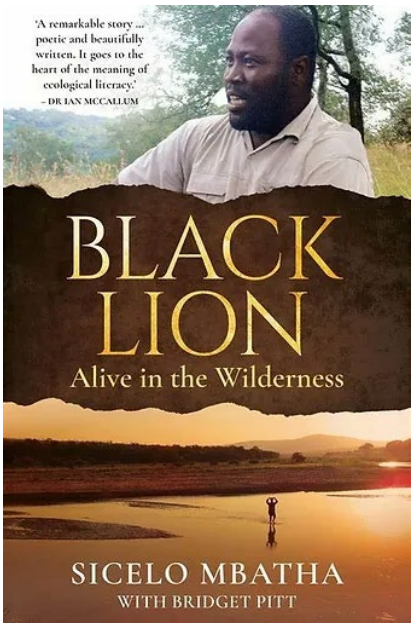
No time like the present!
Unlearning separation in the wilderness

Shirley Walters

In June 2023, I participated in an immersion in the Imfolozi Game Reserve in South Africa. The section we inhabited for 6 days is only accessible on foot. We walked along animal trails, carrying all provisions, sharing our experiences with magnificent life including elephants, rhinos, giraffes, trees, rivers, termites, and leopards.

At night we camped under the stars, cooking around the fire, taking turns to keep fire-watch. One of the nights I was on duty at around 3am, I heard a loud sawing noise...I heard it again, this time much louder. Immediately 3 of the wilderness guides were up, flashlights and rifles at the ready. A leopard was marking his territory on the other side of the river, 200 metres away. Baboons started barking, warning their family of the danger.

One of the purposes of the Wild Self Trail was to 'unlearn separation'. There was a conscious move from one world to another – on the first night we met at an environmental education centre outside the Reserve to become acquainted with one another and be briefed. When we finished the trail, we returned to the same accommodation to debrief – the process of transition is delicate – you feel torn between two worlds, and as wilderness guide, Sicelo Mbatha, advised, you can feel reentry depression. There were two process facilitators who worked with the group over the 7 days.



An important part of induction to the `other world` was to leave watches and phones behind so that 'we could respond to the calls, follow the flow of life, and go into the world of our ancestors, shaped by movement of sun and stars, awake to the present moment' (Nedel & Roth, 2023). We were reminded that it's only in the last three hundred years that Western knowledge has taught us separation from other life forms – digging into our own histories reveals this. Daily rituals included solo time and group circles to honour and deepen connection to ourselves, each other, and the land. Storytelling, deep listening, silence, paying attention to all around us, were part of the practice. There were thirteen of us in the group, ranging in age from 28 to 82 years old. Main

languages spoken were English, Zulu, German and French. There were 4 Zulu-speaking wilderness guides, who have deep ancestral roots to this land. The lead guide was Sicelo who disrupts the conventional approach to the natural world with an immersive, respectful, and transformative way of being in the wilderness. He showed us in practice that, 'Sharing spaces is only possible if the animals are relaxed, if they accept and trust us' and `if we trust them not to harm us.' (Mbatha, 2021, 103) For example, as Sicelo sensed a herd of buffalo, he communicated with them, so they were not surprised by our presence – we were visitors on their land. We were advised that there are two types of trailists, 'tourists' and 'explorers' – we were encouraged to be the latter, learning through all our senses, questioning, not leaving a trace, recognising that we are all interconnected beings; we are all Nature.

During the immersion, I was aware of major contradictions. In a general sense, colonialism and patriarchal, racial capitalism have been key to humans learning separation from all other life forms. The place our group went to `unlearn separation` is a Game Reserve which is built on Western conservation's colonial foundations. There are powerful critiques of Western forms of conservation. In the case of the Imfolozi, a visit to the Exhibition Hall graphically illustrates the colonial, capitalist, patriarchal and racist history.

On the border of the Imfolozi is a coal mine, where communities are resisting the destruction of their lives and livelihoods. So, while we experienced the tranquillity of the wilderness, we were aware of impoverished communities struggling to survive just over the hill. Also, as the wilderness guides mentioned, some of their own families, as black South Africans living under colonialism, experienced forced removal to make way for the Game Reserve in the 19th century. In general, black communities under colonialism and apartheid were brutally separated from the natural world through the oppressive system. Here we were mainly `white`, middle-class participants from South Africa and Europe, being taught by those who had been colonised and oppressed, to find our `wholeness`! What is very clear to me, without confronting capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and neo-colonialism, `unlearning separation` in the interests of socio-ecological justice is barely possible.

Another juxtaposition of different realities, came at a gut-wrenching moment finding a slaughtered rhino – it had been killed two days before – its horn, ears, genitalia, and tail had been removed. It was shocking. This led to deep conversations about rhino poaching carried out by unemployed, impoverished young men working on behalf of cartels which link through criminal networks to international trade. Some local communities are alienated from Imfolozi as they see no economic benefit, so they aid poachers. As Sicelo stated, 'White people are hungry in their souls, black people are hungry in their stomachs'.

As Lange (2023) argues, we have all known wholeness – for all our ancestors hundreds of years back, relationality, interconnectedness amongst all life forms, was the way of life. So, deep in our lineage we have known integrative ways of being. Digging deep to understand our historical connections to the land will be very different depending on who we are and where we stand. Being in the wilderness, walking with animals far larger and stronger than ourselves, we reconnect with the awe and wonder of not being the dominant species; we have no choice but to walk carefully, knowing we are slow and vulnerable amongst bigger, fiercer creatures. We tap into our most ancient instincts and are humbled by the great beauty. Specifically, the beauty of coexistence, remembering that our role in this circular natural world is to steward and tend it for all our sake – so all life can thrive. Deep respect for other life forms, self-reflexivity, humility, unknowingness, curiosity ...and more, are important ways of being to 'unlearn separation'.

Thinking pedagogically

The immersion into the other world required us to change our behaviour – to help us do this, essential technological props needed to be removed – our phones and watches – both entities focus our attention on efficiencies, on planning, on immediate communication, rather than on the spaciousness of being in the moment, going with the natural flows and rhythms. It took me 24 hours to stop looking for my watch, but after this I sank into other ways of being – I listened more to other life – when do the crickets and birds awake, when does the moon rise and set?
The experiential learning cycle - experiencing, reflecting, thinking, acting – was captured through daily practices. Talking around the fire, we were taught how to keep pots clean by covering the outside with mud; to clean our tin plate and cup, we used mud first before rinsing with water; to keep a fire going, Mandla Buthelezi inducted us into the notion of 'happy space', leaving room for wood to breath and oxygen to flow – the word 'tending' a fire took on deeper meaning. The regular circles provided space for storytelling, for new insights, for ideas to be debated, for people to speak from within, for self-reflection. Several of us, including myself, kept a daily diary. The wilderness guides were travelling teachers – teaching us as we walked, stopping at a termite mound, dissecting the skull of a giraffe or buffalo, showing us how to behave in the presence of a large rhino or herd of elephant, or describing the cultural significance of the buffalo thorn tree (*Ziziphus macronata*), or telling the history of King Shaka, known as the `first black conservationist`.

Deep respect for the 'other' whether human or more-than-human is required. As Bonnett, (2003) suggests, attitudes of mind that sanction the injustice of exploitation and oppression, be it towards humans or the natural world, are essentially the same. This infers that the same pedagogical strategies that have been crafted over years to challenge oppression of all kinds amongst humans, can be instructive in 'unlearning separation'.

Unearthing to `unlearn separation`

As the youngest of the wilderness guides, Njabulo Ngwazi, said, 'The natural world is the elder – they have been kind to us humans, but now they are fed up – we must be like the natural world and do the right thing!' So, unpicking false assumptions and unearthing the very roots of Western thinking and being, are part of what we as educators, both as citizens and in our professional capacities, are obliged to do to gain more profound understandings of the ecological crisis. Unlearning separation and relearning relationality - the interconnectedness amongst all life forms and integrative ways of being that our ancestors understood - are vital to our collective transformation towards a pluriverse of possibilities.

Note *- an adapted version of this article will appear in Clancy, S., James, N., Orr, K., (Eds.) The International handbook of teaching and research on adult learning and education, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, Spring 2024.*

About the Author

Shirley Walters lives on the foothills of Table Mountain in Cape Town. The mountain, the surrounding oceans, and the floral kingdom all infuse her understanding of the world. She is an African ecofeminist, educator, activist, scholar who continues to unlearn, relearn, learn how to live relationally towards a just planet. She is professor emerita of adult and continuing education at University of the Western Cape and PIMA president. ferris@iafrica.com

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PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part Two: A pluriverse of personal stories

Drawing attention to the value of Scotland's peat and wetlands

Nic Dickson

This year, after I completed my PhD in Education, I secured my first Research Associate post at the University of Glasgow. I joined a team of archaeologists, artists, art historians, educators, biologists and environmental scientists on an interdisciplinary project, designed to explore the scientific and cultural value of Scotland's peatlands. I brought my expertise as an adult educator and participatory arts-based researcher, but I knew nothing of the world of Peat Bogs. I was lucky enough to travel with this group and explore the muddy, yellowing landscape of Glencoe and Rannoch Moor (Figure 1) to seek to understand how our different perspectives might bring new insights into the protection and value of Scotland's peat and wetlands.

Amongst the collective, there was a shared understanding that the environment should be treasured, protected, and investigated. Whilst walking through muddy marshes, we considered the beauty, history, and importance of the wetlands: The art historians and educators shared artworks and artifacts created in response to the aesthetics of the landscape, spoke of artists' responses to bio-diversity and how the arts had been used to represent environmental impacts on the climate. The archeologists taught us to read the landscape and be curious about the things we could see, and that which we could not; together we imagined where the front doors of dwellings might have once been situated. The biologists and environmental scientists provided information about the natural minerals and value of the peatlands and the ways in which these could be preserved without huge effort, and how these actions could have a huge impact on both the climate and climate change.

Following the site visits, we came together and considered what the land meant to us in our different disciplines. As a graphic note taker, I responded to the discussion and sketched out the salient points from the conversations (See Figure 2). As I drew, I was struck by the layers of history and the complex relationships between humankind and the landscape. The concept of cultural heritage was made more real by listening and responding to the kaleidoscope of perspectives; the land was full of tangible artefacts, from outlines of buildings to fragments from history, and intangible aspects, such as stories, folklore and fable. Through this process, I understood the need to protect and cherish the land and to educate others of its value.

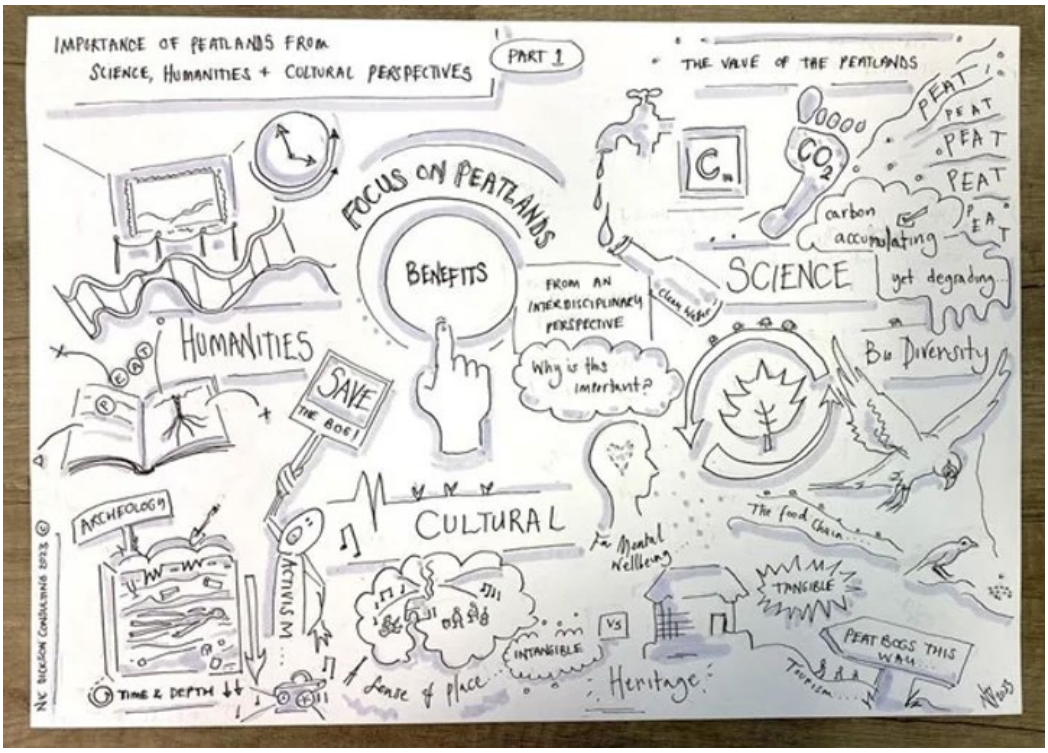

Figure 2: Importance of the Peatlands from Science, Humanities and Cultural Perspectives
Nic Dickson of Visual Inquiry (visualinquiry.co.uk)

About the Author

Dr. Nic Dickson is an adult educator, visual artist and participatory arts-based researcher. She recently completed her Ph.D where she conducted an arts-based research study with young women who had lived experienced of childhood sexual abuse and homelessness. The study explored the barriers and enablers to their involvement in non-formal adult arts education, and the factors which affected sustained engagement in learning, research and creative practice. She works at the University of Glasgow as a Research Associate, and since graduating has collaborated with colleagues from Education, Sociology, Criminology, Archeology, Modern Languages and General Practice. She currently has three active research roles at the University. She is contactable through *nic.dickson@glasgow.ac.uk* or through her visual arts and research company, Visual Inquiry: *Nic@visualinquiry.co.uk*

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part Two: A pluriverse of personal stories

Climate justice education: Stitching together hope and resilience

Buhle Francis

I am a scholar-activist based in South Africa, in a rural-town called Makhanda, where I work as a researcher at the Environmental Learning Research Centre, at Rhodes University. My work is funded through the One Ocean Hub (OOH) - a project led by Strathclyde University in the United Kingdom. I work with coastal communities across South Africa. In particular, I have built a close relationship with the Eastern Cape coastal communities, where I work with small-scale fishers, especially those who are members of fishing cooperatives that the government of South Africa brought into existence through the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. More generally, I also work with subsistence fishers, fisher leaders and the coastal women and shellfish harvesters.

My research focus is very much action-based, co-engaged and responsive to a range of injustices along the South African coastline. Through this action-based research, I specifically focus on gender and how it is linked to ocean governance, ocean livelihoods and livelihood diversification. Previously, my work has centred on livelihoods, natural resources governance, climate change, climate coping and climate adaptation with communities living adjacent to terrestrial protected natural areas. Currently, I am undertaking pioneering, collaborative research at the nexus of environmental justice, gender equality, ocean livelihoods, and inclusivity in ocean-related decision-making processes. My research demonstrates the Hub's support for developing relationships between academics and coastal communities in which value flows in both directions. What enables this work is a range of activities that fall into the realm of climate justice education. I have a passion for empowering the most vulnerable in our society to fight for a sustainable and just futures.

My story is one of dedication and resilience; one that harmonizes perfectly with the principles of climate justice education. To me, climate justice education is about addressing the profound inequalities that climate change exacerbates. It's about giving a voice to those most affected and empowering them to become the change-makers in their communities. My work with the fishers began in 2020 during South Africa's level-5 COVID lockdown when movement was completely restricted. Together with other researchers in the OOH, we started a WhatsApp group with funded data for fishers to learn what support they needed and to assist fishers to keep in touch with one another. The WhatsApp group gradually led to the emergence of a knowledge-solidarity network among small-scale fishers, researchers, and civil society called the Coastal Justice Network https://coastaljusticenetwork.co.za. Through the network, I spearheaded the establishment of a "sewing project" which the women requested, as part of their journey towards sustainable livelihoods. The sewing project, which uses recycled and reused fabric waste, embodies my vision for climate justice education.

With their reliance on coastal resources, I believe that the coastal communities are the ones most acutely impacted by climate change. Rising sea levels, unpredictable weather patterns, and dwindling fish stocks have shaken their foundations. In response, I have worked tirelessly to

provide not just a means of economic survival but a pathway to environmental consciousness. The sewing project is not just about stitching fabric - it's about stitching together hope and resilience. Through this project, women come together to learn and share skills; to support one another as they create sustainable, eco-friendly products, in line with their commitment to climate justice principles. They are not just tailors; they are advocates of change. The sewing project is more than a livelihood; it's a way for coastal communities to adapt to the changing climate while also understanding and building community and solidarity in times of crises. My story is a testament to the power of climate justice education and its capacity to transform communities. I am a dedicated scholar-activist who is trying to pave the way for coastal women to become leaders. Through my vision, the coastal women are not just sewing fabrics - they're stitching together a more equitable and sustainable future.

About the Author

Buhle Francis, is a scholar activist-based in South Africa, Rhodes University, at the Environmental Learning Research Centre in the One Ocean Hub Project. Buhle has a different vision for what academic research can do, both for academia and for those who are `studied`. With women in small-scale fishing communities in the Eastern Cape, she is undertaking pioneering collaborative research at the nexus of environmental justice, gender equality, ocean livelihoods, and inclusivity in ocean-related decision-making processes. buhlefrancis00@gmail.com

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part Two: A pluriverse of personal stories

Stories matter - the past, kinship, and the cosmic web

Sharon Clancy

Over the summer Shirley Walters and I worked together to draft a dialogue paper for a new International Handbook on Adult Education which will come out in spring 2024. This process of conversation was a source of great learning for me as Shirley talked to me about her powerful and visceral experience of 'unlearning separation' and reclaiming relationality through an immersion on the Imfolozi Wilderness Wild Self Trail in June 2023. At the same time, I was wrestling with my own conception of kinship and my relationship with my own past which I was exploring chiefly through poetry writing, which seemed to reach a deep imaginative space in the "psychosocial, historical and educational imagination" (West, 2016, p.37) which other writing did not. I was drawn back in my writing into the childhood sensory, intuitive and fully open world, the world of myth and fairy tales, discomfiting, disruptive and profoundly alive.

I had become very struck by the inarticulacy of education and formal academic writing in helping us address these deeply felt matters and was looking for guidance. I had begun digging back through the layers of my own experience, of coming from a working-class mining community, and my understanding of the ways in which work – in this case the dark, complex and largely hidden world of mining - can both separate us from and connect us with the land and the natural world, that interconnected relationality between the human and more than human. This reflexivity has become an increasingly important area for me over recent years and I see narrative and hearing others' stories as being essential to the process of self-reflection, humility and curiosity that is necessary to our collective flourishing. But I was struggling for a space for this thinking, which seemed to me a spiral rather than a linear process, "being both lived and understood forwards and backwards in a 'spiral movement' of constant interpretation and reinterpretation" (Lawler, 2008, p.19), which can allow us to dig for and unearth hidden memories, kinships and connections.

Into this mix came the two PIMA workshops on September 14th and October 5th, facilitated by PIMA organisers and led by Dr Elizabeth Lange. It was a rare moment for me where I felt both part of, and as if I was experiencing, genuinely transformative education. Elizabeth talked about learning from old human wisdom, about the role of mytho-poetic language in countering and rethinking a deadening form of education which is arguably no longer fit for purpose, requiring a process of 'composting', along with other moribund ideas of modernity which have brought us to this space of climate collapse and disconnection. She reminded me that 'no person is self-contained but rather is embedded relationally from the first breath. This is our matrix of life. Even before we develop language or a separate sense of child self, our relations constitute who we are. I felt, at long last, the cosmic web reconnecting in my heart and my mind, a connection to a network of others seeking alternative possibilities and a profound feeling of hope in these darkest of times.

About the Author

Sharon Clancy is Assistant Professor in educational leadership at the University of Nottingham, specialising in post-16 and Further Education. Her writing focuses on adult education, class, culture and social justice issues. She convenes, with Iain Jones, the Research Circle on Fostering

Democracy, Debate and Dialogue which emerged from the Centenary Commission on Adult Education, on which she is also a commissioner. Her PhD, completed in 2017, was a socio-political case study of a historic short-term adult residential college. Sharon is currently Vice-Chair of the Raymond Williams Foundation, Communications Officer for SCUTREA and Co-editor of the Studies in the Education of Adults journal. Sharon.Clancy@nottingham.ac.uk

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Women, resilience, waste management, and technology

Bolatumi Oyegoke

Setting the scene

The formal sector in many of the cities in Nigeria has failed miserably hence the pile-up of debris, refuse, and assorted waste in the streets and at the roadsides along intercity roadways. Thirty years ago, roadside waste included metal, rubber, glass, plastic, and more, from abandoned motor vehicles wrecked in road accidents. The demand for metallic scrap by local processing factories and for exportation to recycling plants outside the country has changed the face and character of the roadside waste. As metallic waste is removed for sale as scrap the threat to the environment remains (Zhang & Wang, 2010).

Literally, tons of waste made up of debris, refuse and household rejects line up the streets and roadsides in the towns and cities with the potential to cause flooding by obstructing the torrents of water in heavy rainfall. Poor infrastructure and a general absence of public water supply has led to the sale of potable water in sachets labelled "pure water" since the 1990s. The sachets abandoned by the customers bought from "pure water" hawkers, constitute a new environmental threat. The empty sachets of water litter everywhere and are an eyesore. Some women entrepreneurs have innovative ideas for tackling this menace. They are producing tiles and bricks from this plastic waste (Oyegoke, 2022). The production of building materials in commercial quantities from discarded plastic material lessens the volume of atmospheric pollution through the burning of plastic waste. Like plastic waste, discarded old motor vehicle tires on the side of the road are being recycled or exported, so are no longer burnt in the open. More women are coming forward to build enterprises that source waste for raw materials in production plants to meet societal needs and clean up the environment.

Research study

My study of environmental awareness among working women in a southwestern location in Nigeria, regarding household waste, led to a few interesting findings. A central aspect of the research was to evaluate the connection between household practices and the impact on the environment, including climate change. I found out that the group selected for study represented women who were hard working, diligent, and dedicated. They worked as civil servants; they supplemented their income by keeping home gardens to grow food crops or rearing livestock; they were committed to the general upkeep of community and family welfare.

My question was - how might the existing resources in the community be galvanized to solve the problem of waste at the household and community levels? The model outlined in the I Community Resilience Manual (2000) has been used successfully in Canada over the years. Can it be adopted and adapted to the Nigerian terrain? The women in the study were willing to learn more about the environmental implications of their individual and collective decisions and household practices. So, how could the resilience model be used to disseminate knowledge more widely about the connection between waste and climate crises? The women in the study were strategically located as civil servants and had influence. The women were also active participants in community life through their involvement with church, mosque, the open market, and so on.

The Community Resilience Manual (2000) identified four core components of the community. These are: (i) people; (ii) organisations; (iii) resources; (iv) community process. The first three dimensions describe the nature and variety of resources available to the community for development. The fourth component

describes the approaches and structures available to a community for organizing and using these resources in a productive way.

The resources in Nigeria include the meeting places where traditional rulers communicate with the people. These embrace religious and social centers, marketplaces, etc. Resilience can be demonstrated at the level of leadership in various locations. For example, I witnessed leadership at the marketplace whilst growing up as I followed my mother to the open markets. She was one time the leader of kolanuts sellers in the community. I watched with keen interest how decisions on pricing a particular size basket full of kolanuts would sell on that day depending on the quantity of kolanuts available for sale that market day.

The same applies to other structures within communities. Community members are involved in decision making through the existing structures. These structures can be effectively used to engage people in participatory learning on the causes of climate change, how human practices can alter climatic patterns, the urgency of the situation, the danger and vulnerability, the options and mitigation strategies, how individual action adds to collective threats to humans and more-than-human life. Perceptions and attitudes are targeted at such levels as food preparation, waste management, farming, etc. If the people are well informed, mitigation and adaptation plans can also flow into the community structures.

It follows then that the general understanding is that climate action involves both personal and social change. Knowledge accruing from such community-based climate change education is likely to produce the right action for climate justice. The resilience model as described above seems capable of bridging the gap between positive attitude and action (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002).

About the Author

Dr Bolatumi Oyegoke is the Dean of Education at BAISAGO University, Gaborone, Botswana. She has lived and studied in three countries in Africa: Nigeria, her nationality, eSwatini and Botswana. Her research interests include: Community Development, Environmental Education, Eco-Feminism, Quality Assurance in Education, Teaching methodologies; Vocational Education and Training. Her educational background in the field of science is helpful in the field of Environmental Education where she has published a number of articles.

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Listening to the Rain: The Truth of Land Speaks

Serap Asar Brown

“Wake up! Listen!” says the rain
coming down in the midst of a dark night
with gloomy weather and strong presence of a rain cloud
hitting on the roof
following the window in a rush
to meet the ground

I sit in silence
soaked in the stories of rain
born from the land
I hear clean rivers
running through the old growth forests
welcoming salmon
swimming back home to lay her eggs
bears catching fish
carrying rich nutrition back to the land
wolves howling on giant rocks
once territories of an Indigenous Band
eagles flying and calling for life
as salmon come back home in unity

the rain brings me a message
from the members of that community:
“give life a chance, keep us alive so that we can sustain life on earth”
they all look at me,
standing upright, with the ancient green forest behind
I gently hold the images and sound
gifted by the rain on this very dark night

why do I feel so much grief
down at the deepest part of my heart?
is it because of the sentence given to the old forests:
“To be liquified!”
says the judge, allowing machines and men with gear on site
my heart starts pounding,
I must tell another story from the other side

colonization targets the land and water
that hold minerals and mines
“humans? no problem, they need development and look uncivilized”
in order to access the land, introduce trade
let locals buy and sell
then educate their children
erase the practices
voices and traditions
once introduce hegemony
call it ‘civilization’, bring new norms
norms devaluing the land
air and water for the sake of gold
“how much is it worth anyways, to bring water through the pipes?”
real estate values “view”
to increase the price of land of many types

learning to resist is necessary
for truth to be held and revealed
knowledge needs to be decolonized
bringing light as a new method
“Listen deeply”, says the rain
“and wash away what has accumulated”
my eyes become wide awake
to distinguish truth from what has been stated

I look right into the eyes of the members of the Land and Water Community
I stand up, promise to resist, find a way to keep life on earth alive in unity
November 21, 2018

About the author

Serap Asar Brown (D.M.D., B.A., M.Sc.) is a Ph.D. student in Adult Education and Leadership Studies at University of Victoria, Canada. She is a Water lover, arts-based adult educator and researcher, poet, filmmaker, and a long-distance bicyclist along rivers from source to sea. Serap believes in the power of stories and finds ways to bring values-based approach to our relations to Water. Her research focuses on remembering, reimagining, and re-storying relations to Water, referring to Indigenous methodologies and arts-based methods.

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49

Special Issue - Climate Justice Education

November 2023

Part Three: Introduction

A Pluriverse of Activities

While our hearts may be 'in the right place', we require more tangible action for transformation. As educators many of us often look out for ideas on how to kickstart action.

In Part 1, Deborah Barndt has included numerous activities - they are not repeated here, but please take a look and try them out!

In this section, there are a range of suggestions to create the impetus for becoming aware of and transgressing the separation between humans and other lifeforms. We encourage all educators to try out these ideas, give feedback, and share new and different ideas with the Bulletin Editors.

Seeds as a connection, via self, to the universe: a meditative inquiry
Katie Ross

Animating ecofeminism for just futures
Maggie Mapondera

Connecting: A mystica
Barefoot Guide 13 - Restoring our Home in Nature - the ABN Story

The gut as an ecosystem
Astrid von Kotze

Proverbs that reinforce separation
Astrid von Kotze

Resources: Websites and links

Book Review

Unsettling Spirit – a Journey into Decolonization (2021, University of McGill), by Denise Nadeau

Shauna Butterwick

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
Part Three: A pluriverse of activities

Seeds as a connection, via self, to the universe: A meditative inquiry

Katie Ross

Preface: Remembering our seeds

Seeds are perhaps nature's most incredible technology. Within these tiny little packets lie dormant, not only the potential for another life, but generations upon generations of life to emerge. All these incredible beings must do is lay in wait until the perfect set of conditions arise to coax, or spring, them into action.

Yet, all too often in the frenetic pace of today's world, it can be rare that we pause to take notice of, and honour the complex histories and wisdom embedded in these tiny packets of inconceivable simplicity and complexity, as well as our shared destiny.

But as Rowen White, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Diane Wilson, Martin Prechtel and many others remind us, our relationships with seeds transcend the practical (*where do I source them?*) and the logical (*how do I grow them?*).

Rather our relationships are grown and fostered in the liminal space between our own inter-steeping sources of knowing: our senses, our family histories, our societal structures, and our cultural and disciplinary perspectives.

What is offered below is a simple meditative self-inquiry - a moment to take pause and remember and honour the seeds that have sprouted and nourished our lives.

We know that attention and presence are fertile grounds for healing; and bringing these two gifts to seeds [our more-than-human co-creators filled with agency to provide life] is no exception.

For the inquiry, go to your cabinet, select one edible seed or nut, find a quiet space with just yourself, or with several others who want to share in the journey with you.

Take several deep, centring breaths, and begin.

The self-inquiry

Holding the seed in your hand –

Look at the seed with a beginner's mind.
That is, without any preconceived ideas, but rather with a present and open mind.

Become a curious and gentle observer of this seed in your hand.
Also become a curious and gentle observer of your internal self in this experience.

Now, exploring with your senses –

Close your eyes for a moment.
How does this seed feel?
What does the pressure feel like on your hand? Heavy, light?
Running your fingers over it, what are the textures? Smooth, rough?

Keeping your eyes closed, hold the seed up to your nose.
What does it smell like?
What does it smell differently if you inhale deeply?

Hold up to ear and roll it around.
Does it make any sound?
What if you flick it?
Or drop it from one hand to another?

Opening your eyes, at this new seed, what colours do you see?
How do those colours change and blend?

Does it have shadows? (*Who doesn't?*)

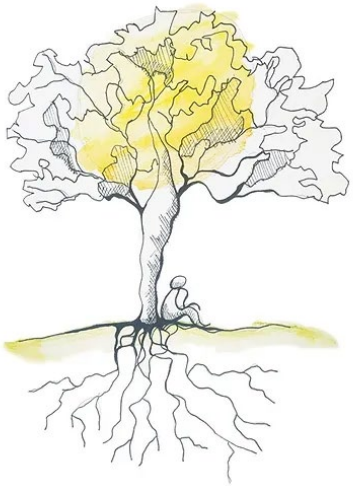
While looking intently at your seed, take the time to contemplate –

How much has nature given to provide this nut and seed?
How many times was its parent watered? What was the health of the water source?

How many days did the plant soak up the power of the sun?
How much carbon did the plant funnel down deep into the soil? (Plants grown in diverse paddocks have much greater root depth and carbon storage.)

What did the soil offer for essential nutrients and minerals? (Most of what we need comes from the soil.)

Were these diverse elements produced naturally by a healthy and fundamentally alive soil?
Or were only a few select nutrients available, made by heavy industry or mined overseas and shipped to the farm?



And as we move at the pace of breathing, for a moment, consider:

we breathe in from the plants, and the plants breathe in from us.

Taking an even longer view of history –

When did this plant first evolve?
Which indigenous communities co-evolved with these seeds?
Where on our earth were these seeds originally cultivated?
Which peoples did the seeds feed, and which peoples fed the seeds in mutual reciprocity?

How did this seed travel across the world over time, and into which cultures?
What cultural stories and histories are attached to this seed?
Are they histories of reciprocal exchange? Violent conquering?

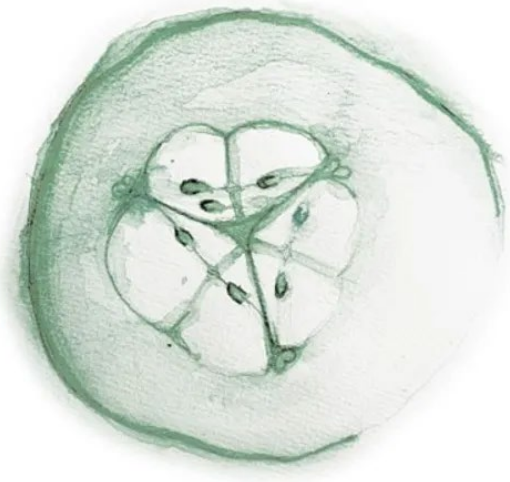
How many human generations have shepherded this lineage of seed to bring you the one you hold now?

And what about your families' history?

Where do your parents, grandparents, great grandparents, great great great great grandparents come from?

Was this lineage of seed or nut part of your families' stories and cultures?
What seeds played an important role in your family's deep time?

Which seeds were sewn into hemlines to travel with your distant relatives during times of migration, in the hope that these seeds would continue to offer life and connection to culture, ancestors, history - even in new places?



And now, perhaps imagine -

If you were able to visit the actual mother plant from which this seed came, what would it tell you?

Would it be found in a field in which pesticides killed the plants at the same time for efficient harvesting?

Is the plant tended with love and able to communicate scents and electrical impulses of gratitude?

Is it in regenerative fields where the false separation between agriculture and nature is utterly erased?

As you look at the seed, imagine how many hands it has passed through when

Planting
Watering
Tending
Harvesting
Preserving
Packaging
Transporting
Unloading
Shelfing
Stocking
Purchasing
Bringing home
To now sitting in your hand

Everything has a complex story.

Laying on the other side of complexity, what other simple pathways might be possible?

Pulling out our imaginative microscopes and time machines –

What is this seed made of?

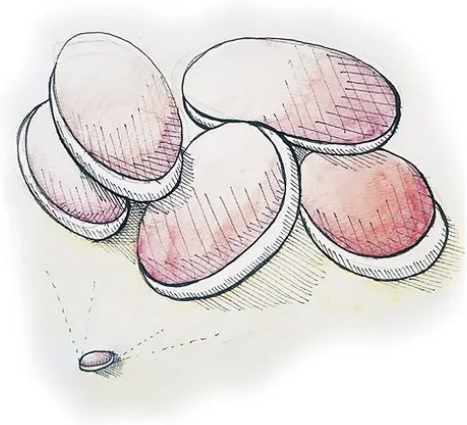
If you zoom in – you might see carbohydrates, sugars, proteins, minerals, micronutrients, phytochemicals.
If you zoom in more, you'd see space; lots and lots of space.

Consider for a moment, this nut or seed is more space than anything else.
And if you zoom in more, you might see atoms, electrons, neutrons, protons.

Where have these atoms been for the last 4 billion years?
What other living beings and ecosystems have they been a part of?

From a relational perspective, this seed is an electron/wave field of probabilities.

And it is just a probability that is manifesting coherently in this moment in your hand.



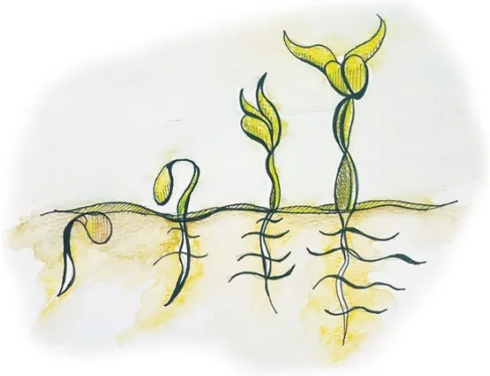
And yet –

And yet after a reductionist inquiry, there is still the mystery of life.

What if you put this seed in water?
Would it sprout and spring into life, as it should?
Does it still have the ability to give life?

Or has that ability been removed by man, compromised through industrial agriculture?

If this was your last seed, would you eat it, or grow it to bring more for yourself, your community and nature?



Now, again, with a present and beginner's mind, try taking a small bite of the seed -

Chew slowly and with open awareness.
What does it feel like?
What does it taste like?

Did you know, our bodies are able to taste the complex nutrient density of food, and tens of thousands of necessary phyto-chemicals, that science hasn't even quantified yet.

As you finish slowly eating this seed, contemplate -

What kinds of agency does this seed have over you?
How does it move you?

What does this seed offer you?
What energy will it bring when you eat it?
How are you reliant on this seed for nourishment?
What micronutrients is your body currently rushing to absorb?
To which parts of your body will these nutrients be ferried and how?

And how does your body know what to do? What type of intelligence is that in your body?

As this seed literally becomes part of you, what isotope markers will this food leave in you?

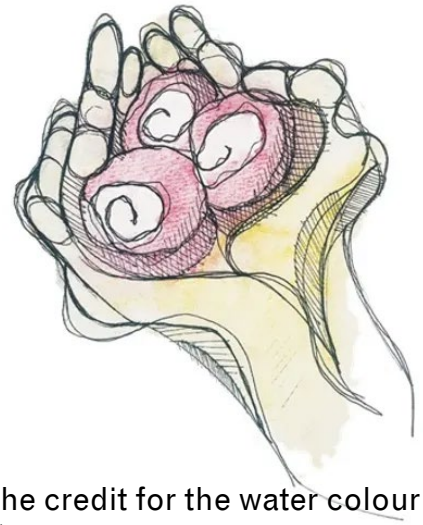
We are literal creations from the land from which we eat. As the land goes, so do we.

And finally, perhaps take a moment –

Take a moment of gratitude for the abundance offered to us by nature.

And perhaps give a nod of deep appreciation to the evolutionary co-dependency between seed, plant and animal health.

Recognising, we are completely dependent on the earth's continual gifting, and the question becomes, what are we gifting in return?



Note: Seth P Morrison gets the credit for the water colour drawings - a visionary architect in the USA (and my brother-in-law!).

About the Author

Katie Ross is curious about ways to facilitate change towards more beautiful, equitable futures. As a writer, researcher, and mentor, and Fellow at the University of Technology Sydney, she conscientiously tries to integrate transformative learning processes into her collaborations and life. Through linking farmers and consumers, she is currently supporting the regenerating agriculture movement, which she believes has great potential to decolonise the landscape, stabilise the climate (by re-building the water-carbon-soil sponge), and vitalise communities (with successful entrepreneurs and regionally nutritious food). katie.ross@gmail.com

Animating ecofeminism for just futures

Maggie Mapondera

I

In late 2020, WoMin African Alliance https://womin.africa embarked on a thrilling, creative journey to craft three animated films that would tell the stories of rural, peasant and working-class women and their communities across the African continent. Importantly, we use animation with no voice over narration in our popular education programmes, because we are a pan-African network working in multilingual contexts.

The goal, from the start, was to use images and visual storytelling to give as nuanced a picture as possible of the struggles and powerful resistance of African communities from the start of colonisation to the present-day global neoliberal capitalist order. Not a small undertaking by any means! Even more of a challenge was to minimise using anything that may alienate viewers, for example, use of specific languages when many of the women mostly speak indigenous languages. Some, not all, also speak colonial languages – English, French or Portuguese. Thus, early in the production, we made a political choice to eschew voice over narration or the extensive use of language/text outside of generally recognisable symbols or words where it was necessary.

The films are popular education tools, designed to create opportunities for a broad range of audiences to think through and discuss important political issues such as colonialism and neo-colonialism, the impacts of extractives-driven development on communities, and women, the different forms of violence that communities face due to this development model from displacement, conflict, and repression, for raising their voices and resisting. We envisioned that the films could be used in social movement spaces, community activist trainings and workshops, schools, and because of their brevity, they are ideal to be shared via social media and message apps.

Each film builds on the preceding one. The first one, Polluters & Plunderers: The Roots of Africa's Crises, tells the story of women and their communities' resistances to an economic system which steals their livelihoods, exploits their labour, destroys the ecosystems upon which Life depends, and is ultimately linked to planetary crises. In this resistance and defence of people and nature, women and communities are also putting forward different visions of Africa, so that we all can claim the Right to Say YES to life and a better world for us all.

This was followed by 2021's The Right to Say NO: Women Defend Africa's Wealth, which shows some ways in which rural, peasant and working-class women and communities across Africa resist the theft of our wealth – land, forests, water bodies and species – and assert our Right to Say NO.

The full series, entitled Pathways to a Just Future for Africa, was completed in June 2023 with the last film, African Sovereignty: Women live the alternatives. This third film expands on the alternatives which women and their communities are protecting and proposing in their organising and resistances. This is in opposition to a destructive development model. Women's proposition for just development lies in their resistance to the violent encroachments of mining, oil and gas extraction and large-scale infrastructure, including mega-energy projects to defend their seeds, their autonomy, their forms of production, their community relations, and very importantly, their interdependent relationships with Nature without which they would not survive. It shows how women are saying NO to the deeply destructive extractivist model of development, and YES to the real and living alternatives in the ways they produce food, conserve, and steward natural resources, and take care of their families and communities.

Viewed more than 9000 times so far on YouTube alone and distributed in low resolution via WhatsApp and other social media – the films represent a critical tool in creative ecofeminist praxis. The narratives of each film draw on WoMin's ten years of work in making more visible the impacts of destructive extractivist-driven development on African communities, particularly women, and creating space to build and craft pathways to just development futures for Africa and the planet, driven by voices from below. In this way they serve as a testimony as well as teaching tools to inspire, provoke and generate conversations and ideas.

About the Author

Maggie Mapondera is a feminist activist and communicator who has supported feminist movements across southern Africa for ten years by facilitating creative ways to document human experience and struggles for justice. She works for WoMin African Alliance, a Pan-African ecofeminist organisation. margaret.mapondera@womin.org.za

Connecting: A mystica

This is from: Barefoot Guide 13 - Restoring our Home in Nature - the ABN Story

Introduction

Dear friends, as you know, a mystica is a short ritual to set the tone for the day or a meeting. Mysticas shift us beyond our thinking brain and engage our heart and whole being, reminding us why we do what we do and giving deeper meaning to our work, purpose and shared identity.

This mystica is about the Four Elements and their connection to the Four Directions:

South is warm, energetic and directed. It brings creativity and passion and looks to the future. There is so much work that can be done. Its colour is red. It is related to the element of Fire.

Opposite is North, solid and grounded. It is quiet, thoughtful and reliable. It hankers after the past and sometimes feels overwhelmed by the future. It is compassionate and wise. Its colour is blue. It is related to the element of Earth.

East is light, joyful and embracing, with much movement, inspiration and possibility for change. Moments, activities and ideas are ever-changing. Its colour is yellow. It is related to the element of Air/Wind.

Opposite is West, cool and calming. It goes with the ow, contemplates, and connects. It lives in the present, steadily doing what needs to be done. Its colour is green. It is related to the element of Water.

Activity

This is what I would like to invite you to do: Now that you understand the Four Elements and Four Directions, I would like you to each turn towards the direction to which you feel most drawn and go on a 30-minute solo walk (15

minutes there and 15 minutes back) in that direction. Don't think too hard about where to go. Follow your instincts.

When you return, we will share our stories and insights.

PIMA BULLETIN NO 49
PartThree: A pluriverse of activities

The gut as an ecosystem

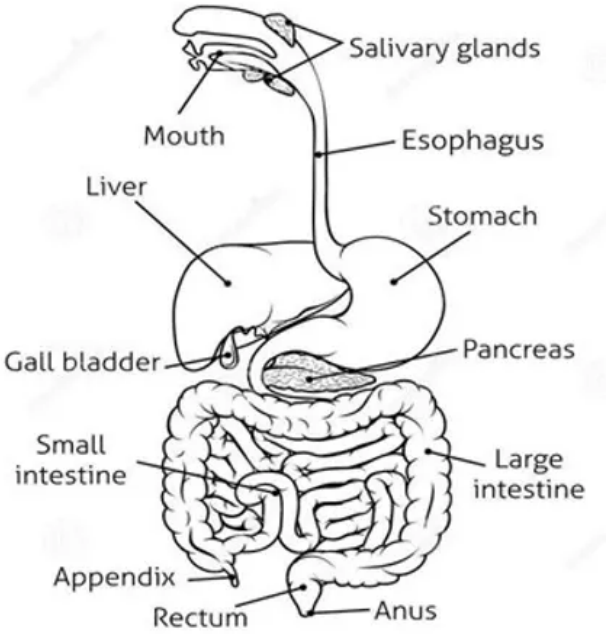
Astrid von Kotze

Introduction

The political economy of food is a fruitful catalyst for unsettling the understanding of Nature as an abstract "thing", to be used and exploited. Part of the economy are human consumers – in particular, that part of human bodies that processes food: the gut.

In 'polite' society we do not speak about our bowels – not the organ and its workings, and certainly not the product of busy bacteria breaking down food-stuffs into vitamins, toxins, spotting invaders, supplying energy, clearing away waste (euphemistically referred to as 'stool'). Yet the gut is arguably one of the most important organs in bodies, and it connects us directly to and within nature.

Our gut-system is a micro-ecosystem, where each element relates to and depends on the working of another. The gut determines our wellbeing – and yet, we generally only acknowledge its existence when it seems to malfunction: we have reflux, we complain of a sore tummy, we have 'the runs', we feel bloated, etc. Worse, the notion that the gut 'down there' should have a strong connection with the brain 'up there' seems ludicrous. There is a strict separation between the 'upstairs' and 'downstairs' of bodies. We don't consider the urgent message sent from the gut to the brain, that we 'have to go', dismissed by the brain as 'inappropriate, not now' when we are sitting in the lounge with auntie, eating cake, drinking tea and making polite conversation. When the brain sends a telegram to the second sphincter muscle (did you know you even have 2?) to close for the moment, we pretend nothing happened and continue to ignore the relationship.



In this activity, developed for working class women as part of a course on health, we offer human and more-than-human entanglements in the gut as a useful starting point for creating sensitivity about connectedness and relationality.

The activity begins with where people are: their own bodies, here and now. It explores how the minute microbes in different parts of the digestive system work systematically with each other in opposition. Finally, we raise a discussion about gut health in relation to race, class, gender and geography: how do socio-economic factors impact gut-health – and how does this relationship reflect broader human-earth relationships?

Activity

- Distribute raisins or small bits of fruit, like grapes.
- Ask participants to put the food into their mouth and, as they process it, trace the journey through the body.
- Name the body parts that the food goes through. Identify the functions of each part.
- Discuss: how do the various parts of the digestive process make up a system? Point out how each relates to the other: they are all interconnected and each part needs the other to function properly.
- Relate this process to the food system outside the body! Where does food come from, and what is the process from earth to table / mouth?

- Focus on the digestive system itself: The large and small intestines. The small intestine is 3-6 m long – how does it fit inside? It needs many folds to fit – but also to increase the surface area, which is covered by lots of protrusions – all with the job of digestion (breaking down the tiny particles of food into even tinier ones). The workers inside the intestines are microbiota – which means 'little life'. Our gastrointestinal tract is home to more than a thousand different species of bacteria—plus minority populations of viruses and yeasts, as well as fungi and various other single-celled organisms.
- Draw comparisons to the world outside the body: identify the many agents that care, protect, nurture, feed us.

- Add information: More than half the bacteria that grow in our digestive tract are so well adapted to living there that they could not survive outside the gut. Our gut is their world. It keeps them warm, moist, protected from oxygen and it keeps them fed. In exchange /return for us providing the bacteria with a warm place to live, they nourish us, protect us from invaders like harmful bacteria, viruses etc, transport particular nutrients to different parts of your body, make hormones, activate the defense system, and so on.
- Discuss: How do you feel about all that life inside you? What do you think about all the energy produced and consumed inside your body?
    - How does this remind you of the world you live in, where so much labour remains invisible and unpaid?
    - How does the separation into brain and gut functions reflect other separations?
    - which functions are valued more - and why?

Conclusion

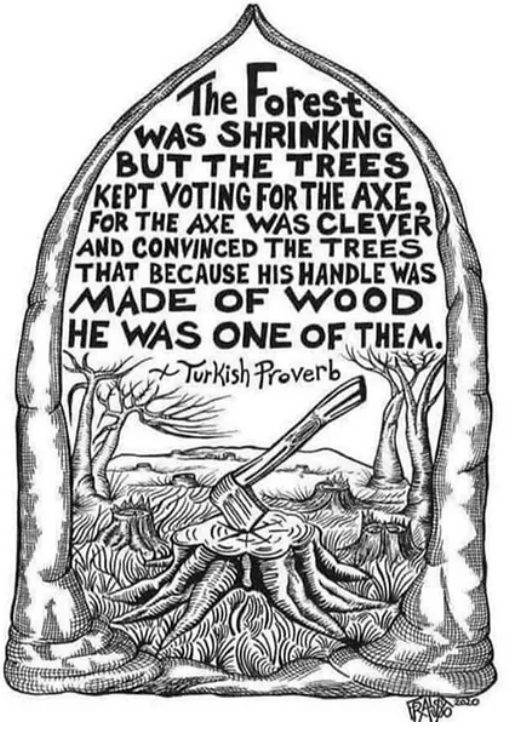
We are nature and nature is inside us. Why do we continue to separate humans from nature – and how does that impact how we relate to nature?

About the Author

Astrid von Kotze lives in Muizenberg, Cape Town, by the sea. She enjoys walking her dogs on the mountain and working with her hands. In the last few years, she has published variously on ecofeminism and popular theatre.

Proverbs that reinforce separation

Astrid von Kotze



Introduction

Donna Haraway (2007) has suggested that 'we must untie some of the old knots that tie us to beliefs and practices that are not necessarily in our long term best interests, and we must raise the most basic questions of who belongs where and what flourishing means for whom' (p.41). If we need to disrupt and unlearn old habits and beliefs, we should begin with language, as this is the tool for shaping our worldview and relations with other beings. Untying some knots contained in common, everyday proverbs revealed how they reflect a world and thinking that is rooted in a deeply divided binary worldview.

Activity

This activity engages with common proverbs to challenge the binary thinking underlying the saying, and encourage possibilities of more than one interpretation.

Steps

(1) Individually, participants can think of some common proverbs in their own language and culture.

In plenary, collect examples.

(2) In pairs, participants examine the examples in order to identify 'myths of separation'.

Feedback in plenary.

Here are some examples:

- The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

  There are 2 sides that are separated by a fence erected by people to create a border/boundary to the 'other' . The common sense is that it's always better where you are not. The underlying advice is that you must be happy with your lot. How do you interpret this proverb?

- A leopard doesn't change its spots

  You are what you are. That is the sense of 'human nature'. It is best to accept what is, as it cannot be changed. How do you interpret this proverb?

- Birds of a feather flock together

  It is said to be normal and natural for like to be with like; the 'same' kind rather than choosing difference or diversity. This myth reinforces the division into 'us' and 'them' by naturalising the rejection of the other in favour of the same. How do you interpret this proverb?

- Killing two birds with one stone

  Efficiency is valued more than life. How do you interpret this proverb? Why would we want to kill birds?

- Silence is golden

  There are 2 opposites: silence and noise. Maintaining silence implies harmony, balance, maintaining what is. The

proverb suggests that there is a choice to be made for either of the two, and remaining silent is better than causing dissonance!

1. What other proverbs are there, in other cultures, that suggest 'disruption' rather than reproduction of what is?

Some examples from Africa:

- If you can walk, you can dance. If you can speak, you can sing.
- A loose tooth will not rest until it's pulled out.
- A path is made by walking

These proverbs embrace process. A physical experience (a wiggly tooth, walking) is shown as impacting our mental, emotional state; body and mind are clearly connected, rather than separate. Proverbs here express embodied life and encourage agency, action for change, rather than reformist or passive responses.

About the Author

Astrid von Kotze lives in Muizenberg, Cape Town, by the sea. She enjoys walking her dogs on the mountain and working with her hands. In the last few years, she has published variously on ecofeminism and popular theatre.

Reference

Harraway, D. (2007). *When Species meet*. University of Minnesota Press.

Resources: Websites, Links, and More

There are an inordinate number of creative initiatives to arrest climate injustices whether in areas of arts and culture, economy, religion, women's struggles, food sovereignty and much more. Each of these links tells a new story. Astrid von Kotze shares a fairly random collection of inspiring ideas and websites/organisations which caught her attention. If you are looking for case studies or illustrations of specific initiatives, start here!

Please expand this list for sharing in future bulletins or on the PIMA website!

1. add other, similar stories of collective action for justice.
2. circulate other interesting sites and resources – widen the circle!

Preserving the right to protest and act for justice

https://civicus.contentfiles.net/media/assets/file/DefendersOfOurPlanet.pdf

Increasingly, governments are cracking down on protests and environmental and climate activists. A research brief from the CIVICUS Monitor (2021), entitled '*Defenders of our planet: resilience in the face of restrictions*' details bans, protests, responses, based on collaborative research information, generated by over 20 civil society and human rights organisations. It makes for chilling reading and stands as a warning about the importance of solidarity.

Imagination gone wild?

https://www.climateculture.earth/directory

Describing itself as a directory of climate justice organisations 'to suit everybody', this directory introduces art, media, music, dancing, films and festivals - initiatives that illustrate how climate justice activists are working to take back

their world! It's an inspiring collection, indeed!

Ideas for alternatives

https://globaltapestryofalternatives.org/

There are radical alternatives to the dominant capitalist, patriarchal, racist, regime. This website illustrates how slowly, step by step, the network grows….as alternative initiatives learn from and with each other.

Food sovereignty, not industrial food

https://earthtotables.org/

The industrial food system makes both the Earth and us sick. If we regenerate the Earth, respecting her laws and limits, we can heal it - and us! *Earth to tables legacies* respond to deepening inequalities, taking growing food insecurity and legacies that encouraged local, collective food production and consumption as a starting point. The website is an extraordinary example of how radical popular education can work on-line. Deeply interactive, visually engaging, epistemologically challenging and creativity inspiring the site opens vista into many pluriverses. *'Earth to Tables Legacies* thinks and acts like an ecosystem.' Every part is connected to another, across time and spaces. Crucially, the Earth to tables legacies decolonise knowledge discourses: stories rooted in histories told by elders demonstrate how a wider ecological consciousness celebrates the reciprocal relationship with the living world and challenges us to think how we can reciprocate the generosity of an insect or a plant that contributes to food on the table. One way might be to communicate what we learn from other living beings and thereby increase peoples' awareness of the gifts we receive.

The metaphor of pollinating infuses relationships and demonstrates how everything is connected – if only we open our senses to the world around us. Language, histories, borders, rituals etc all express relationships – but they are all related, thus 'pollinating' each other. (See the article by Deborah Barndt in this bulletin)

Food sovereignty at Higher Education Institutions

www.safsc.org.za

In South Africa, at the *University of the Witwatersrand* (Wits), Johannesburg, staff and students responded to increasing food insecurity and hunger amongst students. They set up a student-led food sovereignty and climate justice forum with a food garden, co-organised a protest where they handed over a memorandum to the administration, demanding support for zero waste, zero hunger and zero carbon. This initiative eventually culminated in what has become the Food Sovereignty Centre at Wits. The centre comprises, firstly, a community engagement and eco-demonstration space that serves to advance education and learning about eco-centric living issues such as water harvesting, renewable energy, insulation, waste recycling and sustainable architectural design and building. Secondly, a space of dignity for food-stressed students includes a communal kitchen, culturally appropriate food and

eating spaces. This is linked to the harvested vegetables and fruit from the gardens. Chefs instruct in the preparation of nutritious foods as an alternative to the fast food sold on campus. Thirdly, the centre is a support space to advance food sovereignty in society. The centre is run by student organisations – with the support of academic/activists.

A similar attempt to respond to student hunger by creating food gardens and using those as a form of practical instruction in Agricultural Science faculty degree programmes was started at the University of Stellenbosch. Sustainable student support and bureaucratic hurdles remain ongoing challenges.

The Food Sovereignty campaign at the *University of the Free State* led to some victories such as a task team, the inclusion of food sovereignty into the university's integrated Transformation Plan, and resources for community activities towards addressing hunger. Again, sustainability remains a big challenge.

The African Biodiversity Network Barefoot Guide Writer's Collective (2023) *Restoring our home in nature: the story and practice of the African Biodiversity Network.*

https://www.barefootguide.org/barefoot-guide-13---restoring-our-home-in-nature---the-abn-story.html

Like previous issues, this 'barefoot guide' is informative, accessible, friendly, with wonderful illustrations, and a trove of stories that bring ideas and 'lessons' to life. The guide offers useful activities, based on story-telling and radical pedagogy inspired by Freire. It is freely downloadable.

Stories of struggle and resistance - WoMin African Alliance

https://womin.africa/

WoMin is an NGO that supports women's organising and building a movement across Africa, aimed at challenging the destructive large-scale extraction of natural resources. Their website opens a large collection of inspiring stories of women acting for justice and change. It has invaluable resources.

WoMin works to shape understanding of extractive industries and pan-African alternatives. Their movie 'Women hold up the sky' shows how women in mining communities in Africa learn, teach and struggle for change. (see the article by Maggie Mapondera in this bulletin)

Storytelling for climate justice

https://earthjustice.org/feature/climate-justice-collective-story

Earthjustice's new storytelling project, LIT: *Stories from the Frontlines of Climate Justice*, connects the dots between climate change, systemic racism, and extreme inequality. Take, for example, the story of an offshore windfarm: Working together and supported by Earthjustice, local groups, national advocacy organisations and on-the-ground organisers blocked the proposed gas plant in favour of building wind energy infrastructure. "With this victory, the

coalition is writing the playbook for other communities around the country that are tired of being told that there is no other way to power their economy without fossil fuels."

Delinking art from Fossil fuels

https://galleryclimatecoalition.org/

The Gallery Climate Coalition (GCC), an international community of arts organisations works to reduce the sectors' environmental impact. It seeks to educate and advise its members to avoid conventional offsets in favour of initiatives to decarbonize the art sector and directing support to groups working to keep fossil fuels in the ground, defend forests and shift the world towards sustainable agriculture. Queens, the fine art shipping company, has already taken GCC's advice, donating money to campaigning environmental lawyers ClientEarth instead of buying offsets. Many more in the art world are set to follow.

Dismantling the house of modernity

https://decolonialfutures.net

Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures (GTDF) is an arts/research collective that uses this website as a workspace for collaborations around different kinds of artistic, pedagogical, cartographic, and relational experiments. This open-access platform aims to identify and deactivate colonial habits of being, and to gesture towards the possibility of decolonial futures. Climate justice is one clear interconnected aspect of such a future.

Movement for EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility)

https://newint.org/features/2023/06/05/what-if-west-stopped-exporting-second-hand-clothing

If you think that wearing second-hand clothing is a good idea, Alice McCool is critical of second-hand markets in poorer countries. If people in poorer countries could produce their own material/ fabrics and clothes themselves, it would be far more ethical and beneficial. She argues for EPR (extended producer responsibility), an environmental policy which extends a producer's liability for a product to the disposal stage.(NI 4 August 2023)

Divestment campaigns

https://fossilfreesa.org.za/resources-2/planet-a-investment/

In South Africa, divestment was a central component of the anti-apartheid sanctions campaign and proved to be a hugely important tactic against the apartheid regime and those that supported it. The divestment movement gave citizens who might not otherwise get politically involved the opportunity to act on their opposition to unjust and oppressive systems.

One form of protest is by withdrawing investments from banks that invest in fossil fuels and extractive industries. Boycotts can be immensely successful – the pressures brought to bear on Shell illustrated how powerful consumers can be through small tactical acts of avoiding particular companies.

Mobilising faith leaders for climate justice

https://safcei.org/now-is-the-time-to-act-for-climate-justice/

SAFCEI (Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Initiative) believes that multi-faith dialogue based on equity, justice, and mutual respect for the Earth, is a way to build a sustainable future for all. SAFCEI actions and campaigns demonstrate how climate justice can be co-created more effectively when different faiths come together to address common problems.

The institute works through a range of energy and food programmes ranging from agroecology and animal justice, to vociferous opposition to nuclear energy and uranium mining and fracking. Education and training at the community level is an important component of their work in Southern Africa. Details about their campaigns and approaches can be found on their website.

Dance Exchange's Climate Initiative.

https://www.danceexchange.org/climate-initiative

Dance Exchange is a community of artists that cultivates creative opportunities across generations, cultural experiences, and disciplines to help shape a just and life-giving future in the face of the climate crisis. Activated by the urgency of the times, they are committed to institutional change while expanding partnerships locally, regionally, and internationally.

Dance Exchange recognizes that Black communities, Indigenous communities and communities of people who have been historically marginalized continue to be disproportionately affected by the climate crises globally. In light of these truths, Dance Exchange's Climate Initiative includes a strengthening and increase of commitments to racial justice and community healing both internally, and through partnerships and program activities.

Vancouver Writers Festival, *Not Too Late – The Climate Conversation.*

On the evening of October 22, 2023 Shauna attended the last event of the Vancouver Writers Festival, *Not Too Late – The Climate Conversation*. It was recorded and will be aired on the CBC sometime (https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent). Guided by CBC host Matt Galloway, the panel discussed important aspects of Elizabeth Lange's shift away from the old story of modernity to the new emerging story of relationality.

- Rebecca Solnit and Thelma Young Lutunatabua (2023, Haymarket Books) *Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility*

- Chris Turner's *How to be A Climate Optimist: Blueprints for a Better World* (2022, Penguin Random House)

- John Vailliant's *Fire Weather – The Making of a Beast* (2023, Penguin Random House) examined the fire that devastated Fort McMurray, a town in northern Alberta, and our rapidly changing relationship with fire.

A central theme of this panel was the existence of an alternative view to the doom narrative of the climate crisis, one of hope and optimism, based on current developments.

Book Review

Unsettling Spirit - A Journey into Decolonization

2021, University of McGill

by Denise Nadeau

Reviewed by: Shauna Butterwick

In this autobiographical narrative, Denise Nadeau explores her ongoing process of decolonization, particularly of the spirit, and how reconciliation is about decolonization and the development and sustaining of mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This requires unlearning dominant settler worldviews and values that obstruct these relations. Denise asks "what does it mean to be a settler on stolen lands?" (p. 5). There are 18 chapters and 5 sections. The endnotes include hundreds of references serving as a reading list on decolonization. With great humility, Denise's stories tell the reader about being in relation and listening with the heart.

Part One includes stories of Denise's journey of reconciling Christianity's complicity in the colonization of Indigenous peoples and her growing unease of her work with Catholic missions and Jesuit organizations and their approaches to working with Indigenous communities. She learns of the radical differences between Indigenous and Western systems of knowledge and notions of spirituality. Part Two continues her exploration of Indigenous knowledge and their understandings of land, health (problems are survival skills rather than symptoms), and trauma (colonization is experienced as an apocalypse). Denise points to the Great White Helper as a deeply problematic concept and how "whiteness constructs a false self by defining what self is in comparison to others" (p. 61).

In Part Three Denise travels to her birthplace of Port Daniel in Quebec, the land of M'igmaq peoples, exploring her heritage, her own white settler innocence, the problematic history and concept of blood quantum policies. She learns how settler maps erased M'igmaq peoples and their precise laws and travels and the significance of rivers for Indigenous peoples and how privatization of rivers interrupted Indigenous people's survival and ability to feed their communities. Indigenous activism is now restoring access to rivers.

In Part Four, Denise describes buying a pair of beautifully crafted and beaded Indigenous moccasins and learning about how the sale of Indigenous crafts and art was the only way for Indigenous communities to survive. Denise's growing personal relationships to Indigenous women helps her to appreciate how their central roles in Indigenous communities were strategically undermined through the Indian Act. She describes Walking with Our Sisters (WWOS), a campaign which involved the creation of 1800 individual vamps, the beautifully beaded tops of Moccasins, to honour and remember Indigenous Missing and Murdered Women (MMW). Denise learns about Indigenous water laws which are based on interconnection and interdependence between water, humans and the more than human world. In Part Four Denise explores the significance of ceremony and how many ceremonies are sacred and not shared beyond Indigenous communities. We learn about spiritual self-determination as a process of healing the break between self and the world, and how reciprocity is expressed in such practices as the Mohawk Thanksgiving Address, which teaches listeners about the interconnected world and their responsibilities to it. She shares her shifting understanding of treaties and how treaty making was an Indigenous practice which occurred long before European contact (Indigenous treaties were for the purpose of extending relations with allies).

Part Five includes stories of the Lejac Residential School, Indigenous Christianity, and a transformative encounter when Denise participated in a drumming ceremony. In her final chapter, Denise shares stories of working with settler participants and how she invites them to bear witness, to listen and feel, and not move into problem solving, a common colonial and settler response which bypasses opportunities to be in relation. Denise describes how body sovereignty and land sovereignty go together. She recounts her humble journey to understanding there are no English words that can do justice to the complexity of Indigenous concepts. Denise concludes her amazing journey noting that decolonization is different for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and how it is not about settlers adopting Indigenous frameworks. Rather, settlers must learn to "see, hear, and welcome other ways of being in the world and let go of the expectation of certainty and security" (p. 234). For Denise "body, spirit, mind and emotions, [are all] necessary to engage in any process of decolonization" (p. 264).

About the Author

Shauna Butterwick is a Professor Emeritus from the University of British Columbia. She conducts research into and teaches Adult Learning and Education bringing a feminist analysis to explorations of women's learning in diverse contexts and a commitment to arts and community-based learning and research. She has co-edited with Carole Roy *Working the Margins of Community-Based of Adult Learning: The Power of Arts-Making in Finding Voice and Creating*

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Special Issue - Climate Justice Education

November 2023

PIMA Business

We are at a time of crisis and transformation, dramatically illustrated by ongoing, devastating wars, which contribute to catastrophes for all life - human and more-than-human. We keep all those affected in our hearts as we work for greater peace and justice.

As we have noted before, during periods of crisis and uncertainty, there is a double move – one which is authoritarian and exploitative and the second which is relational, concerned with solidarity, seeking life affirming alternatives. This bulletin, and the teach-ins which are described in detail, make important contributions towards a new 'relational story', one which deepens understanding of what it means to move towards relational ways of being. Contributing to the writing of a new script for the world, towards a new story, can engender hope and a sense of agency – this is what PIMA seeks to achieve.

We thank Elizabeth Lange, who led the teach-ins, and all the 18 contributors to the Bulletin for their thoughtful contributions. We hope that these can be the basis for discussions, and actions, in classrooms, around kitchen tables, in corridors or on the streets while protesting! In addition, a big thanks to Leslie Cordie for her technical expertise and support both for the teach-ins and the bulletin.

Much to our delight, the teach-ins were again co-hosted with the adult education networks of the Canadian Association for Studies in Adult Education (CASAE), MOJA Africa, SCUTREA, and Adult Learning Australia (ALA). Climate justice education embraces all aspects and regions of the world, therefore respectful collaboration is the only way to make headway.

Welcome to new members.

It gives great pleasure to welcome six new PIMA members. In addition to short introductions, five of the new members have written articles for the bulletin. This immediately gives a richer idea of who they are and what they bring to the network.

Ivor Baatjes is Executive Director of Canon Collins Trust in South Africa. Prior to joining the Trust, Ivor served as director of the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET), Nelson Mandela University; co-host of the National Research Foundation SARChI Chair in Community Adult and Worker Education; board member of the National Institute for Human and Social Sciences (NIHSS); and Chair of the Education Policy Consortium (EPC). He has worked across all the subsectors of the post-school education and training sector and is a member of the current Ministerial Task Team on Community Education and Training. His research interests include the social and solidarity economy and its relationships with community-driven food, health, water, and energy systems; adult and community education; higher education; workers education; and learning in social movements.

Sharon Clancy is currently Associate Professor in educational leadership and adult education at the University of Nottingham. Her writing, teaching and research focuses on adult education, class, culture, and social justice issues and draws on her experience as a practitioner/activist in the community as well as her passion for shared stories and narrative based on lived experience. She completed her PhD in 2017, an in-depth case study of a historic short-term adult residential college. Her book on this study *Sir George Trevelyan, Residential Adult Education and the New Age - 'To Open the Immortal Eye'* is published by Palgrave. She is a trustee of the Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community sector (ARVAC), and a commissioner for the Centenary Commission on Adult Education. Within this role, since 2021 she has led the international Research Circle on Fostering Community democracy, debate and Dialogue with Dr Iain Jones. She is a poet, singer, painter, and yoga teacher. Stories Matter, this volume.

Nic Dickson is an adult educator, visual artist, and participatory arts-based researcher. She recently completed her Ph.D. with the School of Education at the University of Glasgow, where she conducted an arts-based research study with young women who had lived experienced of childhood sexual abuse and homelessness. The study explored the barriers and enablers to their involvement in non-formal adult arts education, and the factors which affected sustained engagement in learning, research, and creative practice. Nic continues to work with the charity where the research took place and has developed and delivered multiple visual arts-projects with the service users and staff. Since graduating Nic has worked at the University of Glasgow as a Research Associate, and has collaborated with colleagues from Education, Sociology, Criminology, Archeology, Modern Languages and General Practice. Drawing Attention, this volume.

Buhle Francis is a scholar activist-based in South Africa, at Rhodes University, at the Environmental Learning Research Centre in One Ocean Hub Project. Buhle has a different vision for what academic research can do, both for academia and for those who are the subject of study. With women in small-scale fishing communities in the Eastern Cape, she is undertaking collaborative research at the nexus of environmental justice, gender equality, ocean livelihoods, and inclusivity in ocean-related decision-making processes. She also teaches climate change in a Master of Disaster Management Program at the Institute of Development Studies at the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe. She is a recipient of 2023 Earth Scholarship which has climate emergency as the focus. Climate Justice Education, this volume.

Timothy Ireland has been working in the field of adult learning and education and popular education for the last fifty years in different roles – teacher/lecturer, researcher, extensionist, activist and administrator - both locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. In 2004 he was invited to take on the position of National Director for Adult Education in the Ministry of Education during the period from 2004-2007 with responsibility for adult education and literacy policy in Brazil. From there he moved to the UNESCO Brasília Office where he was the national focal point for the organization of CONFINTEA VI in Belém do Pará (Brazil) in 2009. He returned to the University in 2011 and remained there until retirement at the end of March this year. Over the last twenty years he has become increasingly interested and concerned with the relation between adult education, human rights, and the rights of nature as part of the drive towards ecological and epistemological justice. Education needs a "new story", this volume.

Bolatumi Oyegoke holds a PhD in Adult Education from the University of Botswana. Her thesis focused on community development, climate change, ecofeminism, and environmental education. She joined BAISAGO University as a lecturer in 2013, where she was Block Release Coordinator, Lecturer, Head of Department and Currently the Dean, Faculty of Education. She has lived and studied in three countries in Africa: Nigeria, her nationality, eSwatini and Botswana where she is currently resident. She believes that her educational background in the field of science, and the interdisciplinary nature of her educational background, is advantageous in environmental education and more broadly. Women, resilience, waste management, this volume.

We hope you enjoy this bulletin. Deep thanks to Astrid von Kotze and Shauna Butterwick for their co-editorship.
We look forward to working together to secure a just, liveable, and democratic future - together we can extend our reach!

For those who celebrate and plan holidays at the year end, we wish you deep interconnections with all around you.
With warm greetings.

Shirley Walters, PIMA President
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