

What has outdoor and environmental education research got to do with me?

Trying to work with posthumanist concepts on the ground.

Tblisi Declaration – Guiding Principles

Environmental education should

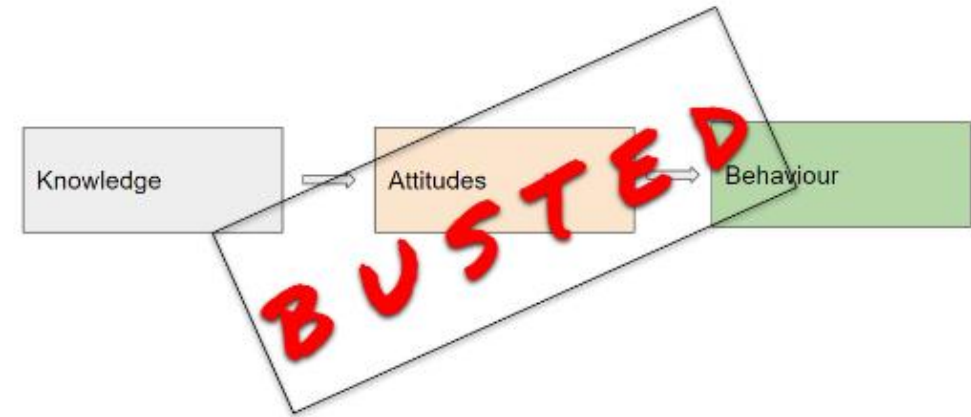
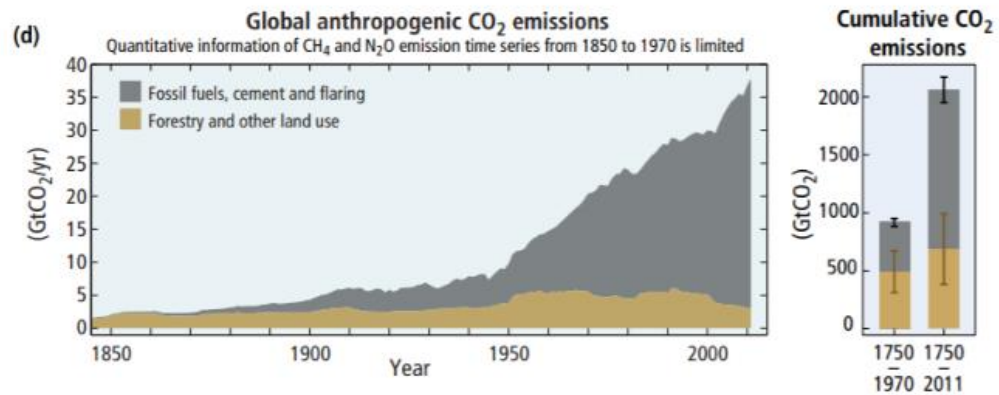
... be a continuous lifelong process, beginning at the preschool level and continuing through all formal and nonformal stages;

... utilize diverse learning environments and a broad array of educational approaches to teaching, learning about and from the environment with due stress on practical activities and first-hand experience.

...enable learners to have a role in planning their learning experiences and provide an opportunity for making decisions and accepting their consequences;

1977 – 47 YEARS AGO

Climate Change and Environmental Education



(IPCC, 2014, p. 3).

How is Environmental Education Evolving?

Education “in, about and for” the environment (Donaldson & Donaldson, 1958).

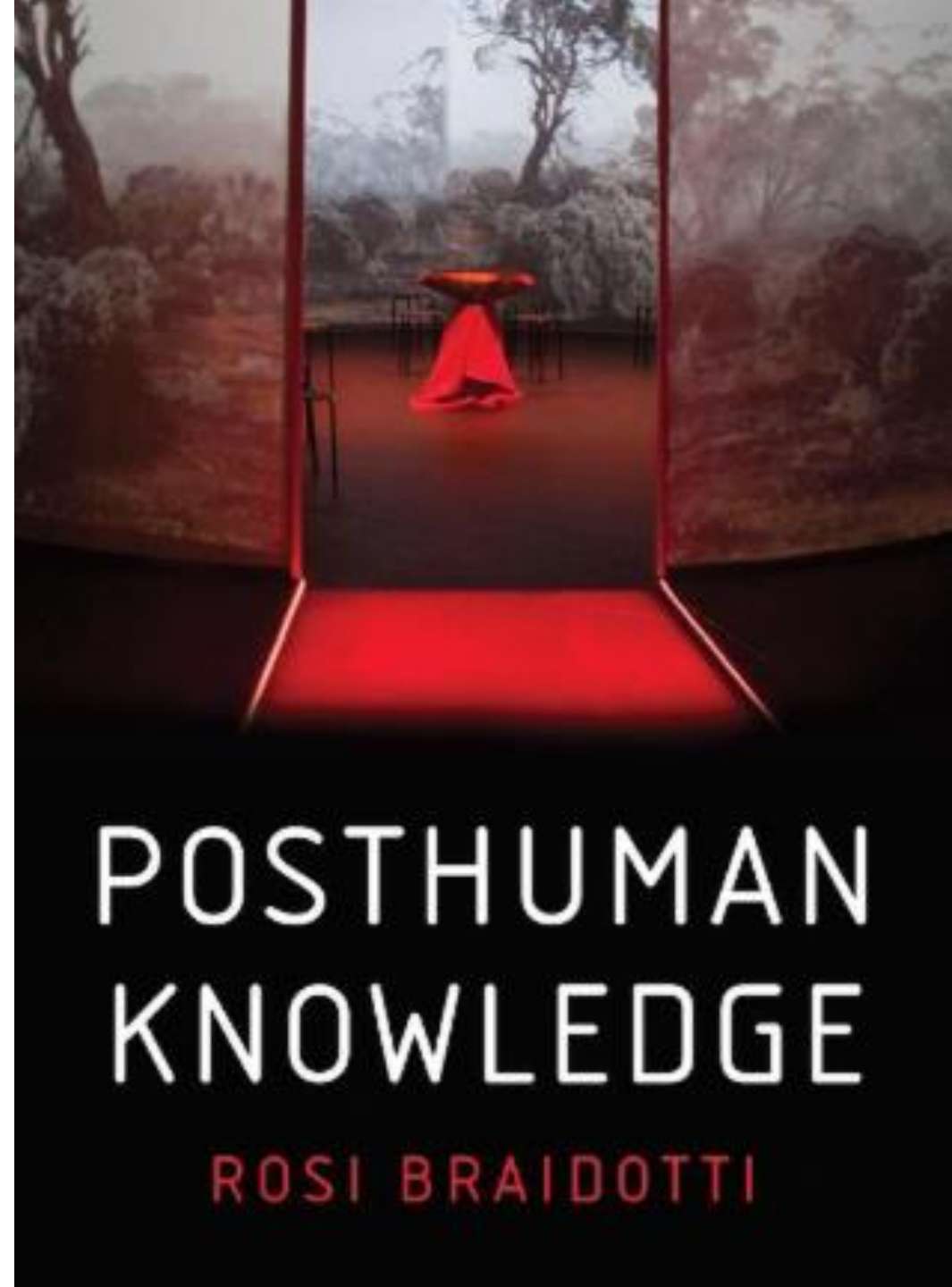
- Education ‘in’ the environment – EOTC, OE, Outdoor Learning?
- Education ‘for’ the environment – Education for Sustainability?
- Education ‘about’ the environment – Science?

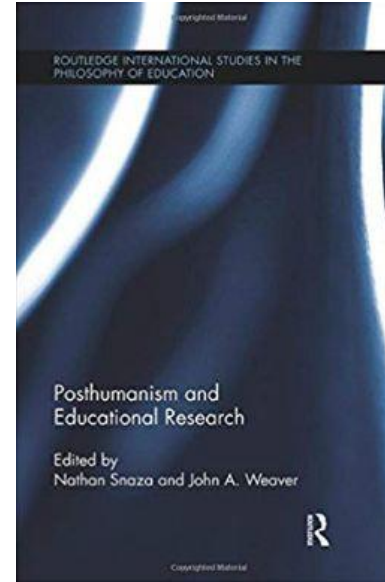
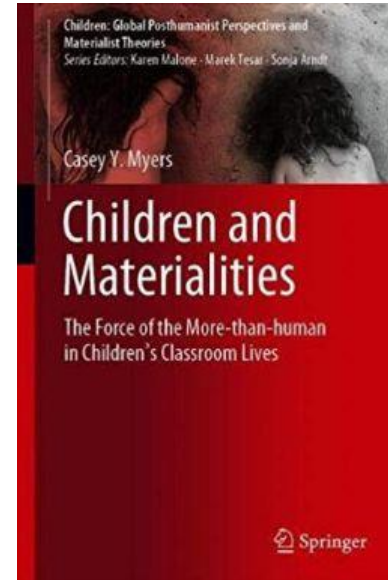
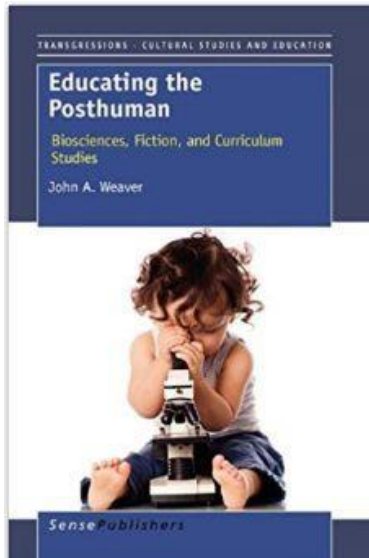
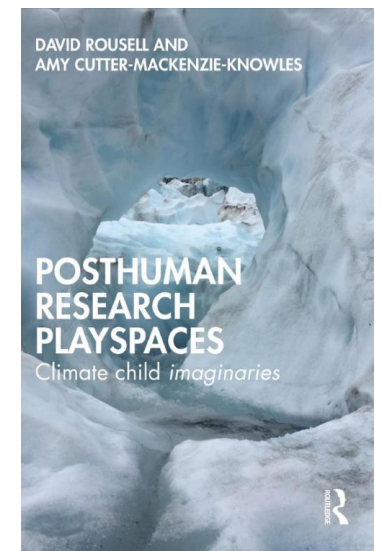
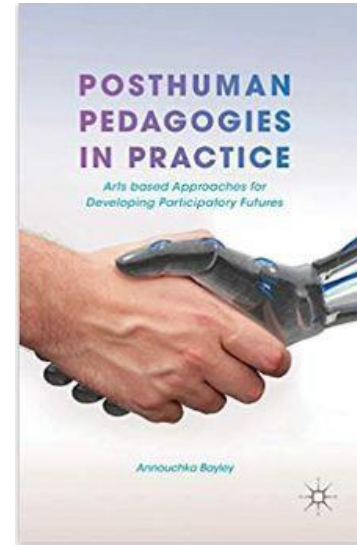
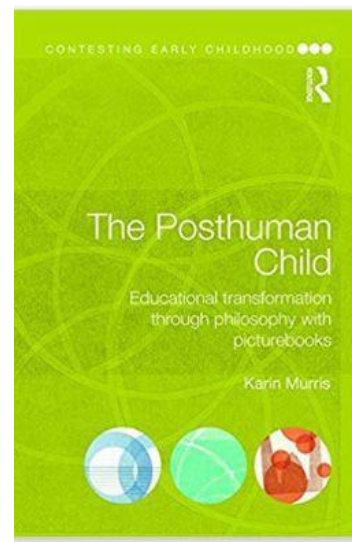
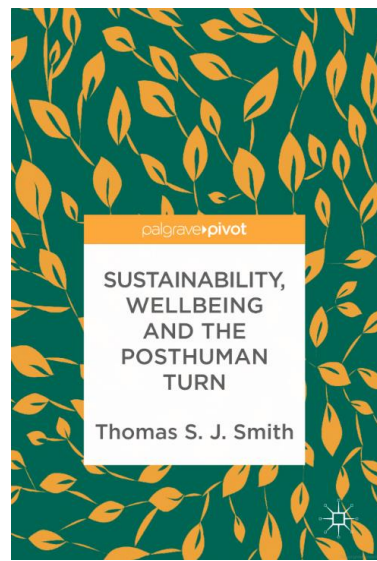
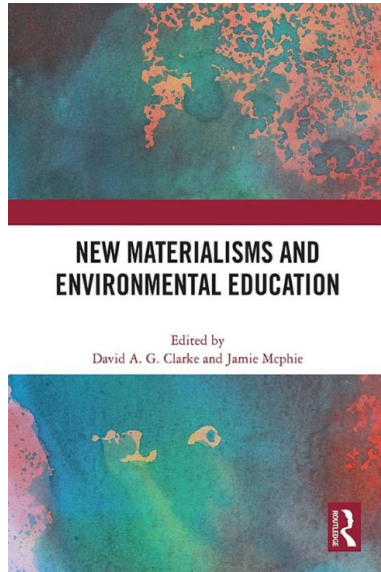
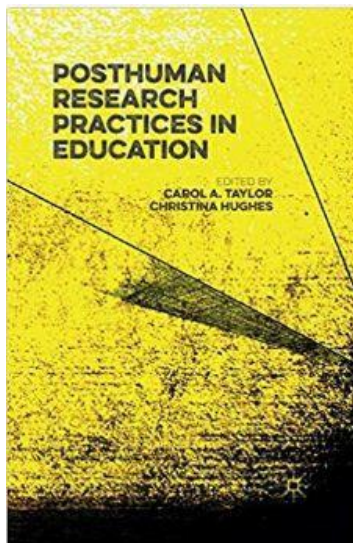
- Education *as* the environment

What is Posthumanism?

Philosophical project that is informed by poststructuralist thought, material feminism and science and technology studies.

The attention to the non-human aspects of the outdoors and the rejection of the centrality of 'man' (anthropocentrism) as the center of existence is attractive to our work in environmental education





Posthuman Thought

Deleuze and Guattari (2004)

Concerned how the social and natural sciences explored problems in terms of closed and hierarchical systems

Instead – they argued for open, rhizomatic systems and maps.

Concept creation and new thinking about problems are the goals

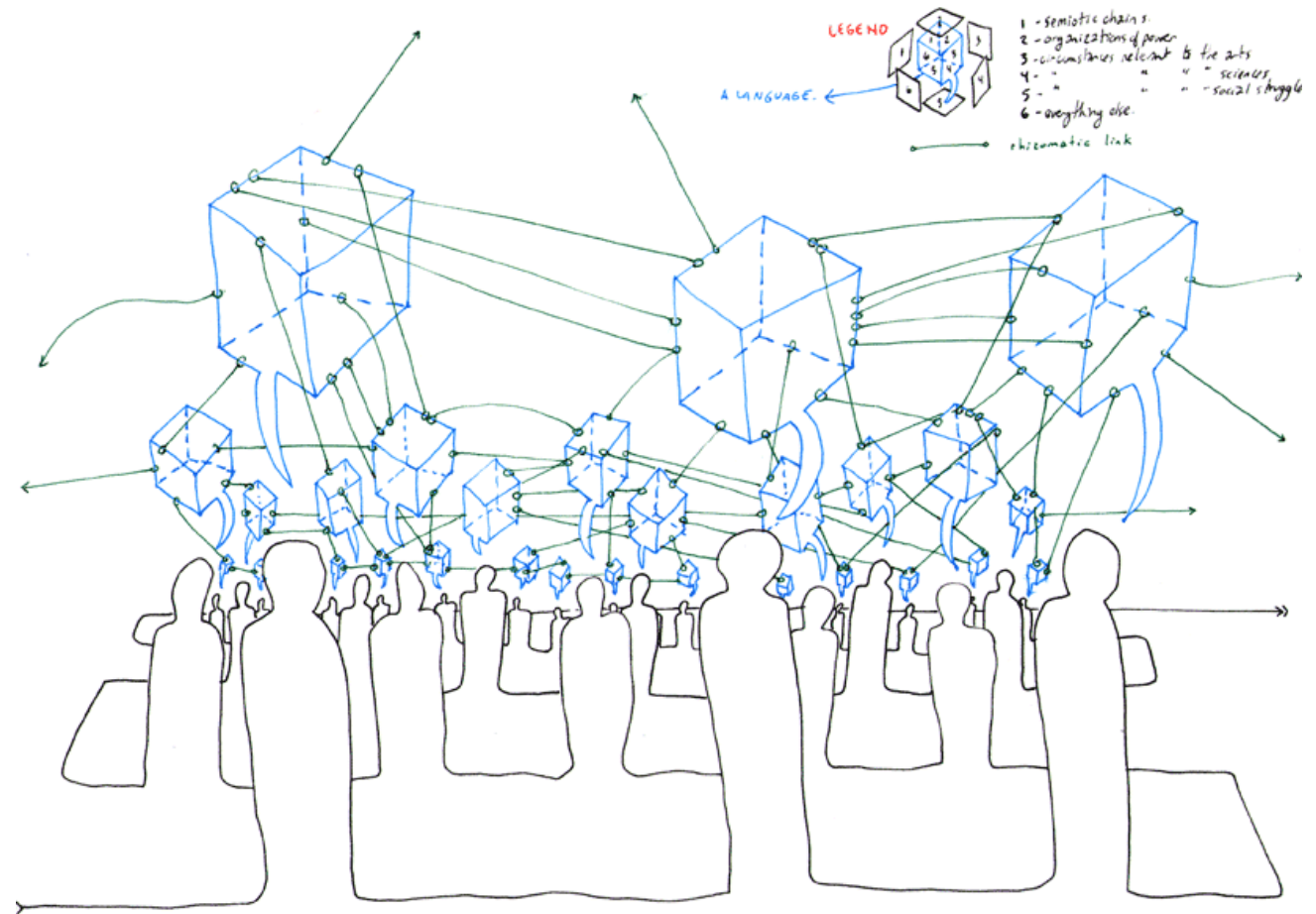


Illustration by [Marc Nui](#)

Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778)



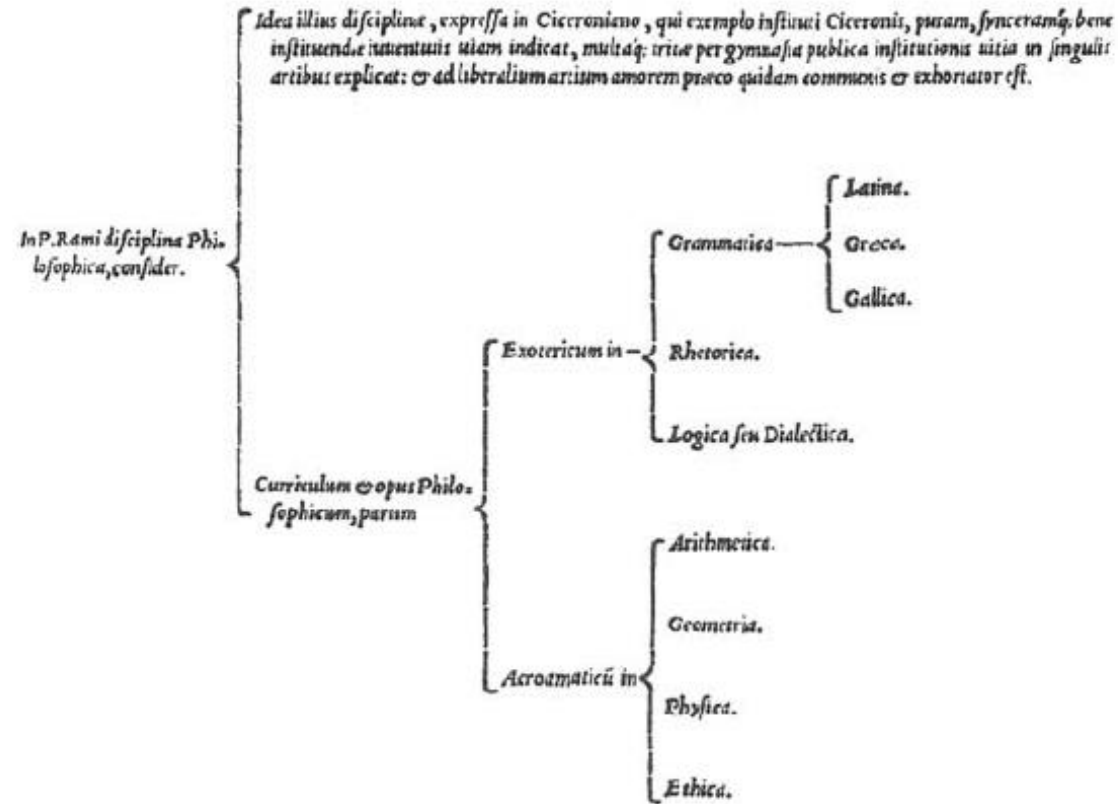
CAROLI LINNÆI			REGNUM ANIMALE								
I. QUADRUPELIA		II. AVES		III. AMPHIBIA		IV. PISCES		V. INSECTA		VI. VERMES	
Corpor bicipites. Pars quatuor. Finitur viviparæ, lactibus.		Corpor quadrupes. Alæ duæ. Pars duæ. Rostro alatum.		Corpor nudus, vel squamatus. Oves molares nulli. Rostro elongato. Pars triplex.		Corpor spinosum. Placis vasis intrinsecis, nudum, vel squamatum.		Corpor crassa cutis, non tunc testum. Corpora minima intrinsecis.		Corpora Mephalæ usque ad unum pedem solida ossifera.	
Humanus Homo s. homin. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Simia Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Prosimia Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Ursus Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Canis Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Felis Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Mustela Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Dubia Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Lama Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Ovis Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Capra Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.	Bovis Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica. Anatomia. Hæretica.
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PARADOXA

HERA a rebus antiquis, pulchra dicitur, collis ibi
 est, in ista regione, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est.
 HERA a rebus antiquis, pulchra dicitur, collis ibi
 est, in ista regione, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est.
 HERA a rebus antiquis, pulchra dicitur, collis ibi
 est, in ista regione, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est, ubi nunc est.

A Ramist Map⁹

TABVLA ARTIVM, QVAS IN hoc Volumine coniunximus.



Source: P. Ramus, *Professio regia*, Basle, 1576.

Figure 1: A Ramist map



Core Posthumanism Concepts

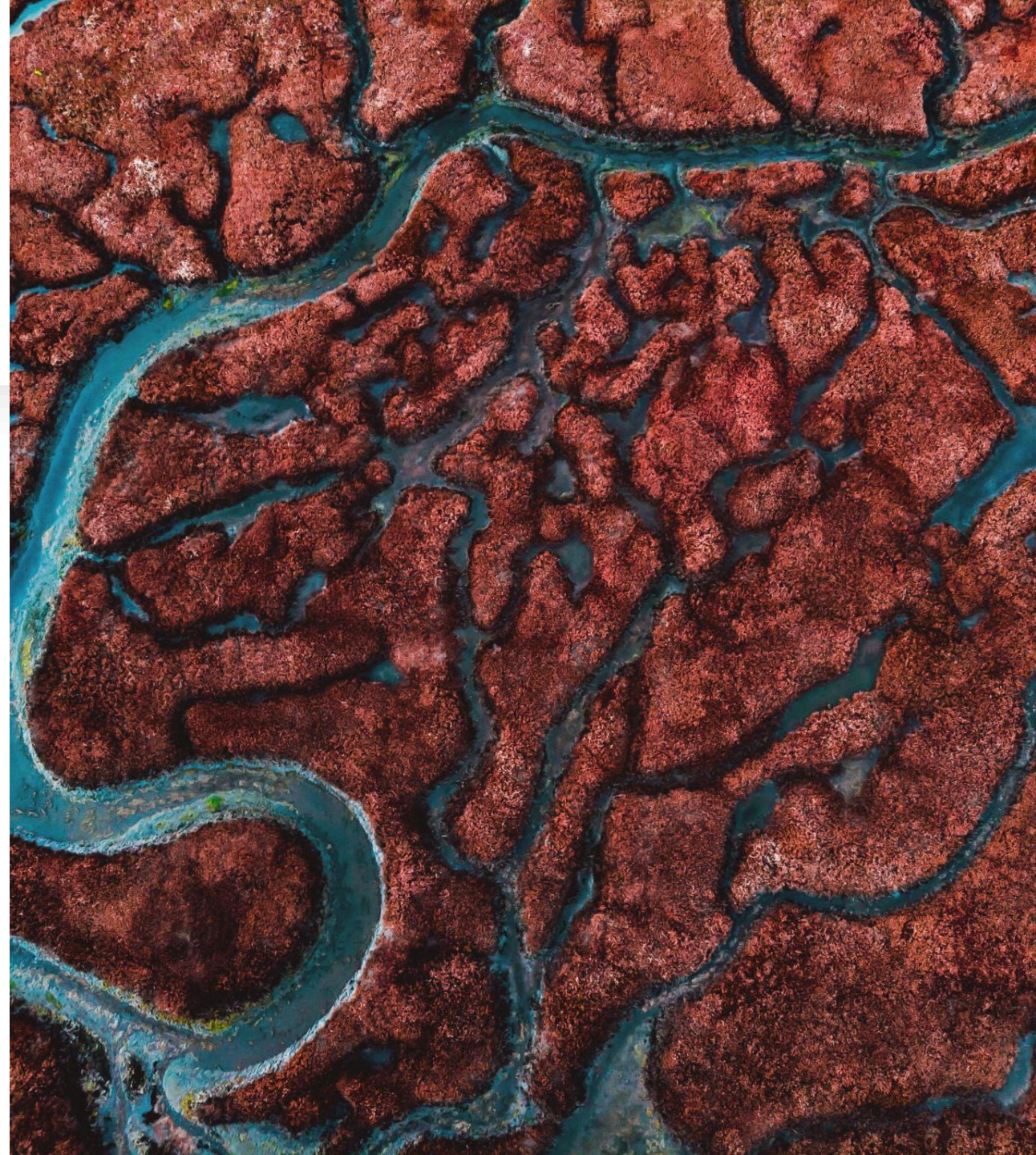
- Challenges a reliance on language and representation in the production of knowledge (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013).
- The human is decentred because it is constituted by many things (languages, bodies, desires, historical forces) (Colebrook, 2002, p. xiiii).
- Non-anthropocentric understandings of place – place includes the material, the non-human/more-than-human, affects, relations.
- Assemblages are useful ways to understand our collaborative ‘groupings’ – eg human, Smartphone, desires

Posthumanism and Education

- The educator is not the sole planner of any curricula
- curriculum “is not a static thing, but rather a dynamic event that *happens*. Curriculum is a constant becoming.” (Masny & Waterhouse, 2011, p. 287).
- Relations are what ‘pull and push’ us into contact with more-than-human elements in education. Relations are pedagogically powerful.

Posthumanism and Environmental Education

- 3 core ideas
 - We are never separated from nature; in fact, the term 'nature' re-enforces the dualism of nature vrs culture.
 - Rejecting human exceptionalism and opening our minds and dispositions to the more-than-human as co-ingredients in education.
 - Relations are more important than entities.



Example 1- Teaching in Nature



“One of our research questions asked: what forms of relationship have been important here among pupils, teachers, activities and environments? Closer examination has revealed that, in part, it was the combination of non-human and human elements that made the lived experience of the curriculum possible in these cases.” (Mannion et al, 2011, p.36)

Scottish Natural Heritage
Commissioned Report No. 476

Teaching in nature



Example 2 - Australia



Bushwalk in central Victoria

Tertiary students create a relational map collaboratively

Whilst walking, landscape was discussed as an assemblage of relations

Habitats, native species, water storage areas for the city, relics from mining, dumped rubbish etc.

Breaking the ‘logic of separation’ and building understanding of where we might start to act? (Jukes, 2023, p. 216)

Jukes, S. (2023). Responding to Climate Change Through Outdoor Environmental Education: Pedagogy for Confronting a Crisis. In *Learning to Confront Ecological Precarity: Engaging with More-than-human Worlds* (pp. 205-222). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

Example 3 - Canada



‘Photographic Encounters’ – activity for children to develop different ways of engaging with the land as co-ingredient in learning

“As I handed the children their disposable cameras, I watched them scurry about the wolf willow taking turns to capture their emotions in a photograph. Stumbling upon decaying animal bones and daisies in the grasses that represented both fear and joy to the children, I realised how incredibly insightful, perceptive, and creative they were.”

Disposable cameras had no option to view, retake or check/delete. Spontaneity and relationship (with land) building tool (Riley, 2023, p. 93).

Example 4 – Aotearoa NZ



I would say this wouldn't be a digital place. Because this is a this is a special hidey hole. Do you know what I mean?

And there are sometimes when you really want to take a photograph, but you just don't, because you just you just know that it's not the right time. Place." (Fig. 4)

Lynch, J. & Thomas. H. (in press). Digital Technology in Outdoor and Environmental Education: Affects, Assemblages and Curriculum-Making. *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*.

Video-making ruptures established ideas around place-responsive practice needing to be grounded in a physical place.

"The videos once made are not static.."

digital technology has potential to do work for us to link our practice to the wider world, but it is a complex web of relations that can be enabling and constraining.

Posthuman Concepts for Environmental Education

- 1 - Curriculum is not pre-made, it's assembled
- 2 - Relations rule
- 3 - Resist the logic of separation or anthropocentrism
- 4- Matter matters and it can have agency
- 5- Create new thinking and becoming's

Activities

- Postcard on when you were nature – [*Resist the logic of separation or anthropocentrism*]
- Relational walk and map-making – [*Relations Rule*]
- Video-making as affective pedagogy beyond a location [*Relations rule*]
- Curriculum-making boxes [*Matter matters*]

How are we assembling...how are we focussing on relations...how are we resisting the logic of separation?



Activities



Postcard – “when you were nature”



<https://unsplash.com/photos/assorted-painting-lot-r4ay3dMFz1o>

Take a ‘blank postcard’
Draw an image of a time you *were* nature.

Who might you send it to and what would the message be?

How might your learners respond to this activity?

What new ways of thinking about environmental education does it produce?

Resist the logic of separation/ anthropocentrism

Relational walk and Map making

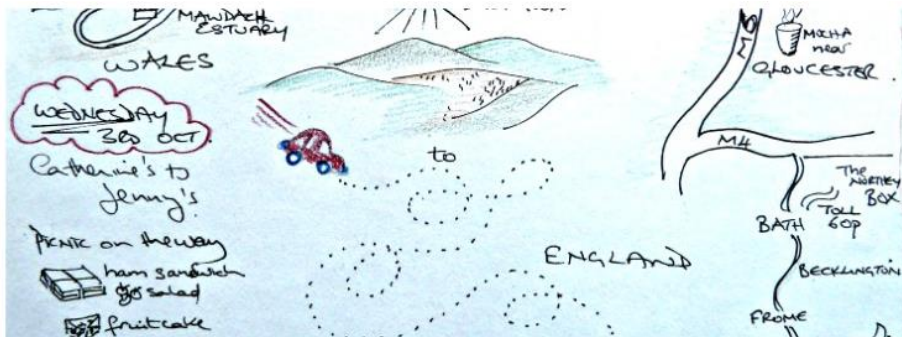


Image – [Journey Jottings](#)

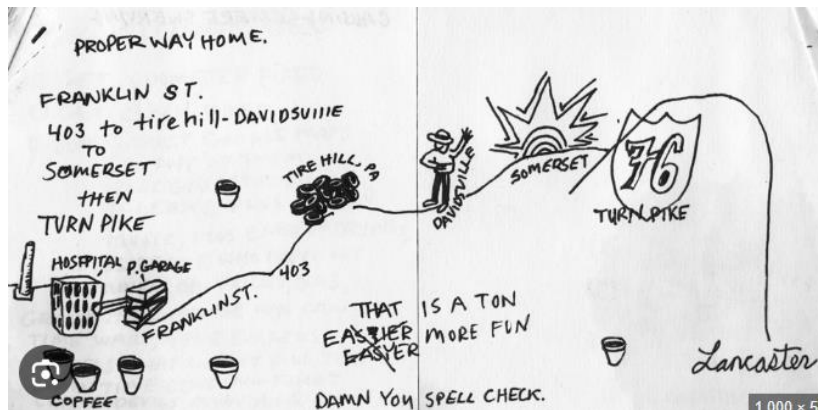
Go on a walk and focus on things you encounter and the relations between them, you, and the planet.

For example, if you notice a tree, sit under it and think about the relations around the tree, those underground, with other species, other human's past and present

Take A3 paper with you and markers/pens. Stop in places and draw these relations, use postit notes maybe to mark were these relations become entwined?

Make a Map...

Relations rule



Video-making



Create a 30sec video outside:

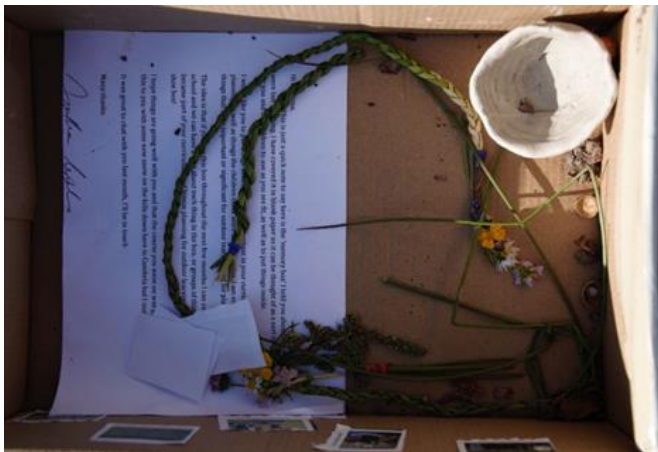
1. Find something outside where you can conceptualise multiple relations coming together. For example, litter/waste that links plastics with food production with capitalism ...
2. Make a 30 sec video about these relations
3. How might it be educationally useful? How can you harness the power of the network to find out more, communicate the problem to others, or advertise for collective action?

Relations rule

Matter matters



Explore outside and collect some material things that could be ‘starting points’ for an environmental education curriculum? Or a teaching moment? A class project...?



Matter matters

New thinking and becoming's ...

- How did it feel working with these activities?
- In what ways did they encourage you to think about environmental education in new ways?
- In what ways did you find them difficult to engage with or to be productive?
- Have these activities produced any new thinking in you?
- How might these activities be useful to our work as environmental educators?
- What ideas for teaching and learning have they produced?
- What aspects of your work have they resonated with?
- What 'blank spots' have they illuminated or created?

References

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Slides to print as provocations to
sit on the desk

Ecology Without Nature

In order to activate ecological awareness fully, we must drop the concept Nature, which I capitalize in order to emphasize how it is not “natural,” but rather an artificial construct. Nature is nowhere given to me in my phenomenal experience. I see rabbits, I see thunderstorms, I hear the mewing of cats. But I fail to see or otherwise sense Nature. Perhaps then Nature is the totality of a certain set of things. I go about constructing this set: birds, fish, mammals ... Yet by definition the set always excludes something. Let us add nonliving forms such as iron deposits and chalkhills, which are made of lifeforms - as are most of the top levels of Earth’s crust. This set excludes what lies below the crust and, say, the electromagnetic shield around Earth that protects it from solar rays, and so enables life to evolve. So let us now include nonlife in our set. I must then include the Sun, without which the chemical soup could not have developed into strands of complex proteins. And there is no way to stop the inclusion arbitrarily at the Solar System, since comets containing organic chemicals and the sheer fact that stars are made of all kinds of other materials prevents the set from being closed. Yet once Nature covers absolutely everything, it also includes spoons, computer software and traffic cones.

Sustainability [without posthumanism]

“modelled as it is on the logic of intergenerational inheriting, such a notion of sustainability is limited in its ability to help think through the entangled, multi-species temporality in which responsibility for the past, present, and future converge. While it favours a rather bourgeois understanding of the future of our children, seen as extensions of ourselves and heirs—as an investment—it runs the risk of implicitly devaluing communities and kinships that are not typically perceived as our own.”

<https://criticalposthumanism.net/sustainability/>

Curriculum Planning with the More-than-human

Accounting for more-than-human agencies means that we have to begin to consider how nonhuman actors directly participate in educational encounters. Such “objects” as chairs, textbooks, classroom spaces, chalk, iPads, pencils, worksheets, security cameras, and science laboratory equipment all *participate* in education: they are not mealy inert stuff that forms the background for a more important “human” learning experience.” (Snaza et al., 2016, p.xx).