

Lifeworld and textualism: reassembling the researcher/ed and ‘others’

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This response to McKenzie’s ‘post-post’ concerns about environmental education research draws upon empirical, conceptual, anecdotal, metaphorical, imaged and poetic means to help the researcher ‘reassemble’ the researcher/ed by attending to her/his relational body and embodiment of various, often hegemonic, socially constructed environmental relations. The purpose is to reconcile body/lifeworld experiences and their sources (socio-ecological ontology) with mind/text meaning-making and representational strategies (epistemology) in methodologically advancing the capacity and claims of researchers to legitimize and politicize the aims, methods and consequences of their research. The paper concludes with the contours of a ‘post-critical’ map for environmental education research.

The cartography

the map precedes the territory. (Cited in McKenzie, this issue)

it may be the nature of the map that we need to concern ourselves with.
(Hart, 2003, p. 248)

Marcia McKenzie’s ‘post-post’ linking of methodological issues about representation and legitimation to the political quest for greater coherence between the aims, methods (and consequences) of research in environmental education is important and timely. Her poststructural-inspired concern with the issue of representation and its alleged ‘crisis’ in the social sciences returns us, yet again, to that increasingly overshadowed question of ‘*what* is being represented?’ In discussing the ‘post-empirical’ problem of postmodernism and social research, Mats Alvesson (2002, p. 175) reminds researchers to ‘find out what he or she thinks she or he is up to.’ Alvesson challenges researchers to work in more reflexive and creative ways with the data they plan for, gather, interpret, record, theorize, and re-present to the reader. John Law (2004), in *After method*, asserts that the methods we use in social research to know the world (and help shape it) have created a ‘mess.’ Their practice and their politics need

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to be reinvented. He recommends a 'method assemblage' is needed in research to enable an 'ontological politics.' This politic, he argues, should be capable of revealing non-singular enactments of reality and, by implication, be able to challenge (or confirm) claims on 'truth' in order to 'slowly' deal with *what* it is in that mess that is 'presenced,' 'absenced' and 'othered.'

What are we '*up to*' in environmental education and its research? Have we created a bit of a mess? Will 'post-post' discussions reveal, contest and, even, tidy up some of the mess? I hope so. Some background might help the 'critical realist' position I adopt in extending McKenzie's useful contribution to a debate that has, perhaps, narrowed because of contemporary trends in the discourse of social inquiry. Many environmental educators have historically insisted on a different, albeit 'radical,' version of education which, amongst other things, privileged experience-based learning, participatory 'real world' inquiry and, therefore, interdisciplinary approaches to problem-solving and carefully considered, democratic decision-making and action. This historical commitment to experience-based education must also be viewed in the contexts of the contested ideological nature of environmental education curricula (Fien, 1993), earnest debates about its various research paradigms, postures and emerging genres (Robottom & Hart, 1993; Russell & Hart, 2003) and, more recently, metamorphosis into the messy notions of 'ecological literacy' (Orr, 1992), technologically driven 'sustainability' (McKeown & Hopkins, 2003; Payne, 2003b) and 'natural capital' (Reid, 2005). Notwithstanding these '(r)evolutions' in the discourse of environmental education, many in the field agree that where we should be 'up to,' following Alvesson, is interpreting and challenging the (socially constructed) 'nature' of the relations that exist between humans/learners *and* the social and physical environments/natures we dwell in, visit and use *and* the (ethico-political-ecological) meanings we attach, consequentially, to such relations.

Messy ground

However, this loose and, arguably, conservative consensus (re)solves little in terms of responding either pedagogically for teachers (and curriculum 'specialists') or strategically by researchers to those persistent questions about the circumstantial and contextual ingredients, or 'situated' and 'lived' sources, of environmental relations or, for that matter, their 'underlying' stucturations and means of 'bodily' enactments of such social constructions. For example, what social conditions and personal circumstances are needed to claim 'care' for the environment? What actions and interactions accompany the rhetoric of care for nature? Of real interest, therefore, to researchers in environmental education, and of considerable relevance to Law's (2004) views about ontological politics, should be the differential 'enactment' of both the *everyday* contexts of social experience and the *contrived* policy, curriculum and/or pedagogical interventions and productions of 'meaning,' 'value' and 'action' of various forms of environmental relationships. For example, how do educational experiences 'fit' the idea of caring for nature when such a 'teacher-owned' experience may or may not be supported socially by a learner's peers, or may or may not be consistent with the learners' family

context, or may or may not involve responsible action condoned by the school, which, in turn, may or may not be consistent with certain social duties or even legal obligations?

How then might researchers reflexively approach their inquiries into the *thing* named environmental relationships, accepting there are both overt and hidden dimensions of human action and interaction that exist before we researchers and teachers ascribe (relative) value to the nature of the relationship we seek to represent, legitimize and, possibly, politicize? How might we understand the underlying sources, structuring processes and sociocultural mediations of that potentially controversial but already enacted relational experience? How then might we creatively inquire into the self, other and ‘nature,’ *gather* insightful and edifying data, and *then* evocatively and empathically (re)present those *experiences* and environmental *relationships* to the public for discussion, debate and action?

My concern with ‘post-post’ inquiry is to prod the researcher’s interest in (or lack of), on one hand, the (embodied) perceptions, sensibilities, dispositions, actions and interactions of actors. These *in-here* and, therefore, ‘silent’ characteristics and qualities of human agency and enactment often ‘lie’ below one’s consciousness (Giddens, 1984; Johnson, 1999) or ‘voice.’ Social researchers and environmental educators, it seems to me, have a fundamental role in identifying and revealing these ‘othered’ but presenced embodied abilities, affordances and habits as they, too, ‘live’ in the lifeworld and underpin the environmental relations with which we are so collectively concerned. They, arguably, are the hidden ‘first’ sources (Sanders, 1999) of human experience and environmental relations. But these qualities and characteristics of *being*, *doing* and *becoming* a relational, social and ecological ‘self’ are also subjected to various, often constraining, social processes of ‘preferred’ cultural production, be it the hold of history, mediating technologies of experience, jargon of language, seduction of image or consuming of taste/desire. This overlay of the social on the biological might be referred to as a cultural process of ‘embodiment’ but, here, any sense of its total determinism of human agency must be vehemently rejected. On another well-worn hand in environmental education research, many pursue those all-too-easily identifiable (spoken) beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and values that are still presumed to ‘name’ and represent the so-called ‘authentic’ experience of the presumed-to-be ‘all-knowing’ actor. Too much quantitative, but increasingly qualitative, research has non-problematically pursued this discussive line of textual representation, truth and politics.

This messy flux of equating certain methodological approaches with representations of environmental relations clearly rests upon making some sense of the mix of human agency, cultural processes, bodily action and environmental consequences—all of which ‘lie’ in various layers between the *in-here* ‘pre-discursive’ organic, somatic, habitual, tacit and the *out-there* socially and discursively constructed (environmental) relations of embodied actors. This non-acknowledged flux in both inquiry and meaning-making is a major predicament and focus of this response to McKenzie’s ‘post-post’ concerns. This flux, I propose, is (re)constitutive of the ethical, ambivalent or unethical environmental relationships that many environmental educators and researchers express so much interest in. The ambivalence and instability of (environmental) relationships as they are lived somatically

and culturally read as texts, at the same time, demand constant reconsideration if the interrelated socio-ontological, epistemological and methodological question of 'What are we up to?' is to be (partially) resolved both before and during the task of representation.

Having delineated one radically 'other' possible response to the marginalized question of 'What are we up to?', many of us welcome McKenzie's abstract concerns about what is being represented, legitimized and politicized in research. For example, at a very practical level, *if* relationships between 'bodies' are central (and not just between a person and his/her environment!), I wonder why so much research in environmental education focusses only on the *contrived* school-based 'intervention.' It is unreasonable to conclude, as many have, that environmental education has 'failed' because learners' knowledge hasn't increased, or behaviours have not changed. Why? A preoccupation with research into the efficacy of school-based environmental education 'experiences' contrived (epistemologically, as pedagogy) by the school's/state's curriculum and enacted by teachers usually excludes the everyday experiential/existential 'baggage' those learners bring (socio-ontologically) from their 'being/doing/becoming' at home. If so, the internal interactions of both families and classrooms and the external relations between home and school have been 'misrepresented' and, respectively, 'delegitimized' and 'depoliticized,' as Michael Leunig (2005) so eloquently images (see Figure 1). It is a notoriously difficult task to answer

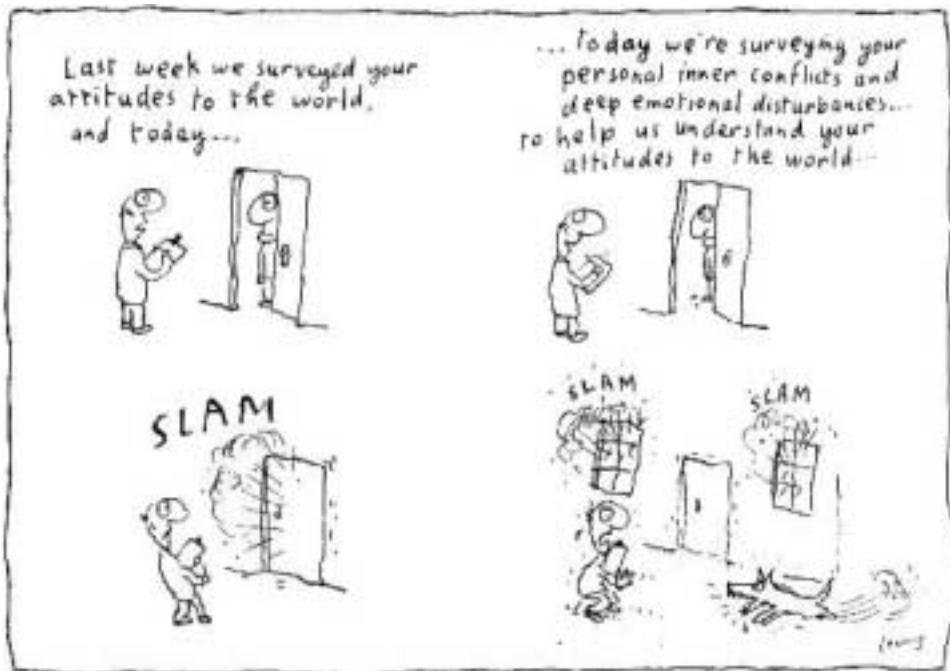


Figure 1. Worldviews (with permission from Michael Leunig)

any of the above concerns about: (i) the *primitive* and *relational* nature of various bodily and embodied *experiences*; (ii) the range of historical, material, social and environmental factors and time/place/space settings (re)constituting a self as well as the circumstances in which those embodied subjects find themselves; (iii) the subjectively *authentic* expressions of such socially constructed experiences as a product of the dynamic combination of physiological, psychological and cultural processes of embodiment; and (iv) their subsequent re-presentations by the researcher. All four concerns are muddled by the flux of somatic/bodily 'doing/knowing' and its cultural impregnations that often but not always is amenable to discursive productions (Payne, 2005). But, to simplify the impossible 'post-post' task for both the researcher and the researched, we might start by asking what 'post-critical' version of a self and his/her experience and her/his environmental relations are we *broadly* assuming, presupposing, privileging, predicting or positioning in our research efforts?

One increasingly prominent version of the self we have recently 'come to know' and 'accept' is the *textualized self* (Csordas, 1999) and its postmodern elevation of what Archer (2000) refers to as a 'propositional culture.' Many researchers, McKenzie included, have deconstructively invested considerable representational authority in 'strong' textualizations of the self. This 'postmodern self,' literally subscribed to, can apparently be 'read' as a 'text' upon which various social realities, cultural fragments and dominant fictions are 'reduced,' written or inscribed, and can be appraised, deconstructed or (re)negotiated abstractly in the 'name' of *critical* scholarship. While organic (human) body(ies) and material culture might be mentioned in such texts, the sensing/acting body's presence and (partial) 'unknowingness' is rarely examined, but methodologically assumed to be accessible and textually representable via fairly conventional but increasingly versatile means (see, for example, Grbich, 2004, noting the far greater detail that theorists of social research like Giddens, 1984, and Archer, 2000, demand for researchers in specific relation to the primacies of practice and social action they call for in *interpreting* [embodied] human agency).

Despite the academic value (and popularity) of textualizing the self, serious questions also need to be asked about the privileged academic basis (and social/cultural conditions) from and through which such textualized selves (and others) are discursively rendered, (re)produced, 'manufactured' and represented. For researchers like myself who sense the self and nature are much more than text (be it literal, metaphorical, visual) and not totally determined by, or reflected in, discourse, numerous 'post-critical' questions abound.

Everything except language
knows the meaning of existence.
Trees, planets, rivers, time
know nothing else. They express it
moment by moment as the universe.
Even this fool of a body
lives it in part, and would
have full dignity within it
but for the ignorant freedom
of my talking mind. (Murray, 2002, p. 551)

Skeptics of the all-embracing ‘linguistic turn’ in philosophy and literary theory and critics of its almost hegemonic trickle-down to postmodern social research and educational inquiry might ask some questions. Has institutionalized speech/language and academic writing become too self-referential in its anthropocentric pursuit of communicative reason, rhetorical persuasion and, more recently, earnest construction of ambiguity and difference? Does a *textual* self/other invite literal ‘readings’ of that already *abstracted* self/other? Should the ‘crisis of representation’ or, perhaps, its mess, be reduced textually to an autonomous, disembodied and objectified form of social or curriculum/pedagogical commentary? Where does Les Murray’s ‘nature,’ the country, the ‘landscape’ and, for the doomsday realists, the consequences of human-induced climate change, stand or fall in relation to the text?

Judith Wright, another famous Australian poet like Murray, is helpful in regard to the above questions and concerns about the unbridled attempt to textualize the world:

The cold spring falls from the stone.
 I passed and heard
 the mountain, palm and fern
 spoken in one strange word.
 The gum-tree stands by the spring.
 I peeled its splitting bark
 and found the written track
 of a life I could not read. (Wright, 1971, p. 132)

As I have already suggested, and following Murray, Wright and Leunig, treating selves, others and nature in environmental education (research) primarily as voices, names and texts may, in fact, hamper efforts to understand, interpret and re-present an ‘other’ version of the self (re)gaining currency in the range of ‘post’ discourses. This ‘other’ is the *embodied self* where his/her/their experiences of the *lifeworld* become a central concern and ‘material’ site for the researcher to respond to the question of ‘what is to be represented’ *before* she/he/it is disembodied and (decon)textualized.

This response to McKenzie’s quest for coherence between the aims/purposes and methods in environmental education research ‘plays’ on her use of ‘post-post.’ My aim is to outline how the experiences and environmental relations of somatically ‘pre’ discursive body/ies enabled in and by the lifeworld might better be understood *before* and *during* attempts to represent them as and in *text*. I am *aiming* ‘post-critical’ inquiry at a partial reconciliation of bodily *lifeworld* and abstracted, mind/intellectual *reason* tendencies (for example, Dallmayr, 1991; Alvesson, 2002). Here, ontological and epistemological politics play off each other in making methodological choices and commitments (Payne, 2003a; Law, 2004).

Lost in (textual) space: a case study

McKenzie’s text, and my response, are examples of what I caution about above and to which I admit partial guilt, namely the *decontextualized* and *disembodied* nature of abstracted and technologically mediated intellectual exchange (Payne, 1997, 1999a,

2003b; Payne & Riddell, 1998). The problems I experienced (in the isolation of my office, facing a computer) in ‘making meaning’ of McKenzie’s text for what it, in itself, attempts to represent was quelled only by reliving the various conversations McKenzie and I, and others, recently had ‘face to face’ about ‘post-post’ research at a conference devoted to emerging genres of research in environmental education. The challenge of interpreting McKenzie’s written text, while reading its pages, was compounded by its lack of reference to the ‘others’ (subjects) of (her) research, their experiences and lifeworld contexts. That is, I found myself responding to a text about representation whose ‘non-present’ others had ‘gone missing.’ Their absence and the otherness of inquiry were lost.

Here, having already pleaded partially guilty to the charge of abstraction in this attempt to discursively extend McKenzie’s ‘post-post’ research into a ‘post-critical’ application, I make every effort in the following pages to ‘return’ the reader conceptually (at best) to the practices, ‘grounded’ and ‘embodied’ findings of useful and important research previously reported/represented in the environmental education literature. There are, already, many good signs for readers of this text.

Clearly, I am concerned about the disembodied manner in which already de-centred selves are treated textually in many ‘post’ research efforts. In (re)searching for those disembodied and textually (re)presented ‘post selves’ and others, I am also concerned about the experience and representations of ‘nature’ and its numerous offshoots such as the trees, rivers, places, animals and environments with which educators are trying to build positive relationships and researchers are trying to better understand. In moving the reader to a more ecocentric posture for the inevitable ‘textualization of nature,’ David Abram (1996) states, ‘It is remarkable that none of the major twentieth-century scholars who have directed their attention to the changes wrought by literacy have seriously considered the impact of writing—and, in particular, phonetic writing—upon the human experience of the wider natural world’ (p. 123). His central problem, like mine, is that ‘in Western civilization language seems to deny or deaden that life, promoting a massive distrust of sensorial experience while valorizing an abstract realm of ideas hidden behind or beyond the sensory appearances’ (p. 71).

Thus, the problem wrestled with *reconstructively* in the remainder of this response to McKenzie’s ‘post-post’ concerns is to reconsider the ‘nature of the map’ mentioned by Hart at the outset of this article by identifying some of the terrain and subterrain for (re)searchers to ‘ecologically’ excavate, map and then re-present. The focus is the relational nature of an embodied, sensing, experiencing and discursively produced self, be it researcher/ed or others. The map I conclude with identifies some contours and coordinates necessary for finding those others who, too frequently, are going missing in disembodied, denatured, desocialized, abstracted and textualized space.

The terrain

Nicolas Rose’s (1996, p. 169) call to (re)‘assemble ourselves’ is thematically useful in responding to McKenzie’s political quest and deliberating about Alvesson’s question of ‘What is?’ So too is Law’s (2004) notion of ‘method assemblage,’ which is ‘the

process of enacting or *crafting* bundles of ramifying relations that *condense* presence and (therefore also) generate absence by shaping, mediating and separating these' (p. 122). Four markers identify the post-critical terrain navigated below in searching for and reassembling the experiences of the re-embodied and relational other outlined above.

First, McKenzie's researcher and researched are de-centred, multiple, polyvocal and complex. The constitutive nature of voice, text and discourse is stressed and, to some extent, qualified. But, if we accept the proposition that all selves are (only) textual fragments or figments, or mere consequences of discourses, as, for example, Marjorie O'Loughlin (1998) has argued against, then we immediately have a more than messy problem of talking/writing about any self presenced and absenced 'out there!'

Second, that reality, even circumstantial or situational (as is appropriately called for in inquiry by McKenzie), is coded by the word, its speech acts and language games, and is eventually represented objectively as texts is hard to argue against because of the sheer pervasiveness of 'voice' and need to represent its reality(ies). Speech, for Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 197), that great exponent of the phenomenology of perception and, later, the flesh, both of which I seek to retrieve, was viewed as 'the surplus of our existence over natural being.' We might ponder this 'surplus' for more than an anthropocentric/ethnocentric moment because of what it absences and others! According to Abram (1996, p. 265) this surplus of autonomy of mind/language/reason created the social abilities and cultural conditions for us 'to interact with our own signs in utter abstraction from our earthly surroundings' out there.

Third, nor in 'meaning-making' by the reader of such autonomous texts should we be overly accepting of some authors' efforts to dename/rename or mythologize the already textualized subject/object, as useful as those strategies might be in deconstructing the 'story,' or honing the 'posture,' of the researcher (Sauve & Berryman, 2003). For example, to 'de'-name 'kayaking' and 're'-name it as 'moving-water paddling' as has one claimant of 'critical' outdoor education (i.e. discursively constructing a practical environmental 'ethic') is sheer folly unless the bodily, material, social and symbolic conditions of the activity and its 'ordering' of experience are also changed (Payne, 2002, 2003a).

Fourth, Brian Fay (1987) makes a 'post-critical' plea for 'getting right' the ontological presuppositions upon which (critical, scientific, non-idealistic and practical) theory is epistemologically and methodologically built (see also Robottom & Hart, 1993). Without being slavish to a particular ontology (Alvesson, 2002; Archer, 2000; Law, 2004), there is a presumption here that the deeper exploration of the embodied nature of human experience will significantly influence the related concerns McKenzie raises about: (a) the legitimation and (b) the politics of environmental education research endeavours. That is, there are ontological, epistemological and methodological questions that cannot be easily separated off from each other if the field's 'emerging genres' are to avoid the messy mistakes of the past (Hart, 2000, 2003; Payne, 2003b). And their dynamic does ask the environmental education teacher and researcher to consider what initial 'entry point' or ontological presuppositions he/she is selecting,

knowingly or unknowingly, in 'getting to know' the subject's presences, absences and otherness (Payne, 2003a, pp. 184–187).

Here, I develop the socio-ontological entry point because of my interest in 'excavating' the messy mesh of visible and invisible (environmental) experiences of embodied subjects as they are formed, structured and 'lived' relationally through various underlying material, social, environmental and symbolic conditions.

The subterrain

The above addition of four markers strives conceptually to 'move' the 'post-post' discussion into a 'post-critical' methodological disposition toward the flux of ontological and epistemological issues now presented in the postmodern discourse of environmental education. At stake, practically and pedagogically, is the nature of the relationship between researcher and researched and, consequently, the production of meaning about human experience, in particular the embodied and socially constructed nature of environmental relations, be it researcher and/or researched.

For McKenzie, interrogating and representing the subjectivity of the researcher and, eventually, the researched are urgent tasks to be achieved reflexively through the co-production of narratives, the presumption of polyvocality, the acknowledgement of intertextual complexity and their inevitable surfacing of contradictions. McKenzie rightly acknowledges the limits of 'giving voice,' or accepting of it as a total 'truth.' She also questions the researcher's appropriating of the experience of the other(s). Possible solutions are floated. All point to the importance of text, narratives and chronicling. All seem to link the epistemologies of talk and writing to her methodological concern about representation and its crisis. McKenzie offers the usual disclaimers about the partiality, contingency and indeterminacy of what we can know and come to know and, therefore, re-present. Nonetheless, the marginalization of those embodied 'self/subjects/others' (despite calling for them), excessive claims of language and conflation of text 'corresponding/correlating' with unaccounted-for contexts need to be treated with the cautions already expressed above in identifying the muddy and messy terrain and subterrain of inquiry.

Even so, the astute reader of my text should rightly ask 'What, then, of writing?' as does Abram (1996, p. 273), be it to ecocentrically presence the subject/object as well as the absent other. Or who, like Murray and Wright, has the non-anthropocentric interest in the way nature is sensed, perceived and represented. We are on less stable ground here in trying to ecocentrically represent the otherness of 'nature' as a relational experience of embodied subjects. Max van Manen's (1990) 'hermeneutic phenomenology' of 'lived experience' is a valuable step in the right direction but is constrained here by its anthropocentric commitment to the power of language and exclusive focus on human 'subjects' 'lived experience.' Importantly, for action-sensitive research, van Manen notes a number of limitations of language and paradoxes of writing. For example, he rightly claims, 'writing abstracts our experience of the world,' but then boldly asserts 'it also concretises our understanding of the world' (p. 128). Van Manen's optimism is reassuring but his assumptions about the

author's 'thoughtful' worldview and commitment to its concretization through 'evocative' writing must always await the reader's judgement.

The critic of 'nature writing' (for example, Bowerbank, 1999) or, more generally, critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989) might wonder about what theory or version of power underlies van Manen's claim for the evocative power of language 'to concretise the world.' Abram's response to his own question simply states, 'patiently, carefully, writing language back into the land' (1996, p. 273). Alberto Melucci (1996, p. 131) recommends we must 'learn to move between body and...the different languages which we use to nominate our world.'

William Davies' (n.d.) 'romance' with nature is also a withering commentary on how the social construction of time deconstructs/reconstructs the experiential and sensory relations of people with their places and spaces, an enigmatic feature of post-modern *being* whose pathologies I have commented on elsewhere (Payne, 2003a).

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs,
And stare as long as sheep and cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they dance.

No time to wait 'till her mouth can
enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare. (Davies, n.d.,)

If the above terrain and subterrain usefully add to McKenzie's concerns, there are some 'grounds' and 'bodies' in the environmental education literature worthy of revisiting in reclaiming relational experiences in our research activities. Newbery (2003), Kaufman *et al.* (2001) and Bell (2003) are good examples of how lifeworld/embodied inquiry and its textualism can come together but, perhaps, not as ecocentrically as we might anticipate. They, and others such as Pivnick (2003) and Sammel (2003) are serious attempts at addressing McKenzie's quest for coherence in research—but in the socio-ontological/cultural phenomenological direction this author is persuaded by in reassembling and then representing the researcher, the researched and the other.

Liz Newbery's (2003) 'geography of the body' is not quite autobiographical. It is a narratively driven account of portaging a canoe (in 'adventure learning'). Newbery foregrounds the body as both site/object and tool/process of research. Her excavation of *doing* and carrying a heavy canoe and *being* and *becoming* a canoeist are phenomenologically and ontologically revealing. She concedes the limitations of narrative in presenting her self and the situational knowledge presented in/by portaging a canoe.

Newbery tries to account for the 'classed' and 'abled' body, an oversight in most other poststructural constructions in environmental education research.

Newbery's text about the ability of narrative to represent her subjectivities is interesting.

The limitation of accounts of experience is that they become a sort of fishbowl, from which an essential subject narrates a coherent story, unable to view the story from beyond the confines of the bowl. Experiences are never transparent, but are constructed, read, and understood through sets of social meanings. What we remember and what we tell has everything to do with a particular vision of the self and the world that we wish to put forward. (Newbery, 2003, p. 209)

Newbery acknowledges her narrative was 'unable to capture how painful, convoluted, and frustrating these struggles actually are/were, and what it felt like to have competing discourses wrestling for primacy of meaning within my own body' (p. 207). Perhaps Newbery is unduly critical of herself; I empathized with her 'imagery' (see later) of the physical, emotional, social and ideological struggle to carry the heavy, cumbersome canoe—it resonating with my own bodily (masculine?) experiences of canoeing. Unfortunately, we see/read/interpret less than was hoped for (critically) in linking canoeing with concerns about prevailing social conditions like class distinction (see Bourdieu, 1984) and with the (masculinist, rugged) patriarchal 'culture of adventure', in which canoeing and other outdoor/adventure pursuits are often/sometimes practised (Payne, 1994). And, there is an absence of ecocentricity in the text, following Abram, that connects her 'embodiment' to eco-ethical/ecopolitical relations with river and its space or place in socially constructed 'nature' (for example, Payne, 2002, 2003a). Nonetheless, Newbery, more than most, straddles the ontological/epistemological and lifeworld/text divides in ways that are made additional sense of in Kaufman *et al.*'s (2001) contribution to environmental education research.

Kaufman *et al.*'s 'Women and nature' is an account of how five women academics investigated their own socialization as scientists by collectively examining their childhood relationships with nature. Borrowing from Frigga Haug and others' 'memory-work' methodology, Kaufman *et al.*'s (2001, p. 360) inquiries focussed upon 'the roots of our immersion' and aimed to 'contribute to our understanding of how we are taught to perceive ourselves as separate from the natural world,' 'pry open dominant methodologies,' transform 'hegemonic ways of seeing and knowing the world' and 'generate theories of socialization.' Kaufman *et al.* reexamined their experiences of trees, earth, air, fire and water so as to better understand how their embodied relations with nature were socially (re)constructed over time. Researchers were researched and reassembled; lifeworld experience was understood as theory.

According to Kaufman *et al.*, the methodology of memory-work works on the memory of a discrete moment in time, is cued only by a single word or idea devised by the researcher(s), whose event/episode is descriptively engaged in itself rather than interpreted causally in relation to a present view of the self. This 'objectivity' about one's subjectivity is eventually written in the third person so as to avoid autobiographical technique that, like Newbery, sets up and justifies the fishbowl need to produce a coherent, overarching self-narrative.

Despite Kaufman *et al.*'s focus only on the lives of the five researchers, numerous lessons can be learned (about representation, legitimation and politics) from their respective and collective excavations of their enculturation in and against nature. First, unlike Newbery's individualized work, theirs was an intercorporeal and intersubjective process of collective engagement. Their embodied and embedded pasts were stressed in ways that related to everyday times, places and events; they being returned to the present by 'memory-work,' but viewed as being not necessarily causal to the currency of the temporary self. Their discussions of memories focussed on the development of social meaning. Language was treated with considerable caution; its limits appreciated and understood. Writing was selectively used to record social meaning and its (re)theorization. Second, Kaufman *et al.* see their process as one of social and political action rather than as a form of therapy. They claim a praxis in the form of change, reconstruction and reassembling of their relationships with themselves, to others and the natural world. They propose that memory-work can be adapted by different selves and collectives in different circumstances for a range of purposes.

Anne Bell (2003) valued her 72-day ethnographic and phenomenological type study of a 'school-based restoration' effort because it created a 'sense of continuity and embodied intimacy' with the focus/substance of inquiry. Her choice of approach and method confronted the self-imposed question of 'How does language capture, construct and otherwise mediate their experiences?' (p. 96). Bell's (p. 108) 'story telling' approach to narrative inquiry is described as 'idiosyncratic' because of an evolving 'dynamic interplay' of 'research questions, theory, experience, conversation and reflection.' She identifies a number of strategies useful to 'storying' the experiences of the others, namely the attention to setting, storyline, perspective, diction, motif and theme (p. 105). She conceives the act of interpretation in the 'write up' of her research as an ontological condition (p. 96) thus bringing into productive tension the matching of methodological assumptions to the ontological and epistemological assumptions she was prepared as researcher/writer to make about the nature of others' reality and knowledge.

Bell, with Newbery, Kaufman *et al.*, Pivnick (2003) and Sammel (2003), all acknowledge the 'layers' of a self. Like Giddens (1984), Archer (2000) and Law (2004) in social theory and, for example, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) in cognitive science/philosophy, these important contributions to the environmental education literature acknowledge the pre-reflective/consciousness (as a form of somatic, habitual, tacit or embodied knowing/intelligence) and a conceptual/reasoned or rational/discursive level of consciousness. At a more 'practical' recommendation for critically reflexive inquiries, Payne's (1997, 1999a) 'humanly-constructive' approach targets a notion of 'for-being-for-the-environment.' This 'curriculum of the self,' like Kaufman *et al.*'s 'experience as theory,' invited undergraduate pre-service teachers of outdoor/environmental education to 'self-interrogate' and 'excavate' their collective embodiments of environmentally problematic 'cultural' circumstances. Ingestion, hygiene and protection were focal points. These pre-service teachers came to understand how even the most simple of activities like eating an apple or cleaning teeth or

using sun-tanning lotion is, in reality, a multilayered sociocultural experience ‘in’ and ‘out’ of their *doing*.

Like Newbery and Bell, Payne’s emphasis on inquiries *for being for the environment* was located in the currency of the everyday and the ‘primacy of practise’ (Archer, 2000), and not as a work of memory (like Kaufman). Payne’s curriculum provided time for the subjects of his research to become the researcher and researched of their own layered, sedimented and percolated ‘environmental experiences’ of culture and relations with nature. Moreover, his ‘findings’ highlight the ‘situated knowledge’ McKenzie and a host of others now call for. And they are highly responsive to questions concerning, for example, desiring identities or subjects’ corporeal, material and symbolic performativity. Kaufman *et al.*, and Payne’s findings point to the emergence of a personal or life politic, admittedly an uneven one along the lines of ‘incoherence’ critiqued in Newbery’s ‘fishbowl’ analogy and by Kaufman *et al.*’s questioning of narrative causality.

What ‘ontologically’ underpins the interrelated issues of representation, legitimation and politics in the above weave of conceptual–empirical markers is each researcher/author’s unequivocal insertion of the body and its ‘embodiment’ in *being doing* and *becoming* into making meaning about the situated nature of human experience and, subsequently, generation of ‘knowledge.’ Importantly, the notion of subjectivity is problematized; its equation with talk and text is challenged; its valorization is restrained; its material/organic/physiological conditions of conception and construction are considered. Yet, despite these promising developments in the literature, there is not a textualized sense of any of them being ‘strongly’ ecocentric.

Topography

There are numerous other conceptual and theoretical frames related to ‘the body’ and ‘embodiment’ that can be considered in methodologically advancing McKenzie’s quest for greater coherence between the aims and methods (and outcomes) of research. Feminist discourses have been particularly useful, as indicated in the reference lists of Newbery, Kaufman *et al.* and Bell. So too are some ecofeminist discourses (Hay, 2002). Helpful are recent ‘border crossing’ exercises in philosophical postphenomenology (Ihde, 1993), cultural psychology (Melucci, 1996) and anthropology (Csordas, 1999). These ‘cultural phenomenologies’ converge with the compelling re-spatialization of social theory (Foucault, 1980; Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1984; Soja, 1987; Macnaghten, 2003) and the rise of geographies of human agency and identity differences (Harvey, 1996; Aitchison, 1999; Mendieta, 2001; Sundstrom, 2003). They converge with the renewed attention cognitive scientists are devoting to the phenomenology of lived experience and the interfaces of bodily experience, mind and metaphor. These efforts culminate in persuasive and empirical deconstructions of certain (Cartesian, positivist, dualistic) assumptions about the western philosophical tradition (Varela *et al.*, 1991; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Petitot *et al.*, 1999; Weiss & Haber, 1999) whose ‘disciplining’ of contemporary social science efforts is (rightly) criticized by McKenzie and other postmodern critics of social science.

Two important clues for research development in environmental education are extracted from this 'high' theoretical/philosophical topography. Again, I connect it to current research practices in environmental education. First, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Johnson (1999) make the case for an empirically responsible philosophy of 'embodied mind, realism and reason.' They do so via the unlikely alliance of cognitive science and linguistics and the phenomenological philosophy of Merleau-Ponty, like Abram (1996) does, and John Dewey, both of whom are credited with seeing that 'bodily experience is the primal basis for everything we can mean, think, know, and communicate' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. xi). For Lakoff and Johnson, the use of primary metaphors like 'time *flies*' or 'I'm at the *crossroads*' is a key to linking subjective experiences and judgements about them to their embodied sourcing in sensorimotor experience. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 128) most conventional, folk and even 'dead' metaphors were once an 'everyday metaphysics' of the unconscious and the 'automatic.' This genre of metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson argue, supplies the logic, imagery and qualitative feel of experience that underpins the use of abstract concepts and modes of thought. Here, according to Lakoff and Johnson, there is a bodily basis to conception, as distinct from or in opposition to the analytic tradition of Anglo-American philosophy, where certain philosophical concepts have been analysed and objectified as 'truths' in language and as text.

The work of Lakoff and Johnson, in particular the centrality of metaphor, is evident in Bell's (2003) 'storying' of students' restoration efforts in a school-based program. Although Lakoff and Johnson are most concerned with the connection of 'embodied reason' and the use of primary metaphor, Bell felt the need to convert the 'key expressions' of 'restoration' and 'naturalization' to metaphors of her 'own,' given her feeling of the historical confusion surrounding the meanings of those key expressions in environmental discourses (see also the Special Edition of *EER* 7(2) devoted to The Language of Sustainability). Bell (2003, p. 99) sought to 'undermine their literalness and to evoke their power to mediate our sense of reality rather than simply label phenomena.' Like the use of one-word probes in Kaufman *et al.*'s version of Haug's memory-work, Bell explains, 'Each expression filters, transforms, and brings forward particular aspects of experience, inviting a movement of interpretation.' For Bell's 'making the metaphor mine,' the meaning of the metaphor depends crucially upon the context in which it is used.

Second, Thomas Csordas' (1999) approach to anthropology as a form of cultural phenomenology acknowledges the 'complementarity' between textuality and embodiment. Csordas is critical of that line of inquiry in ethnography that he calls 'culture from the neck up.' He acknowledges the significant contribution of Lakoff and Johnson's notion of 'embodied mind' but views its 'body in the mind' characterization as one requiring inversion to 'the mind in the body.' For Csordas (p. 151), the 'body in the mind' 'allows the body to remain merely a source, the objective raw material of representations.' Csordas argues that metaphors abstracted from their bodily origins and transported to the representational structures of the mind is an important advance. But, inverting the metaphor to 'mind in the body' establishes the acting body and its embodiment as the proper 'seat of subjectivity and grounds for

intersubjectivity' that underpin the 'phenomena of intelligent and intelligible bodies that animate lived experience' (p. 151). Csordas, therefore, implies a notion of intercorporeality that extends and amplifies the intersubjectivity (of minds) encouraged by a number of those cited above.

On this point, Csordas (1999) addresses several constructs he believes 'flesh out' the complementarities of textuality and embodiment, and representation of being-in-the-world. The first is 'somatic modes of attention,' which he defines as 'culturally elaborated ways of attending to and with one's body in surroundings that include the presence of others'. Pivnick's (2003) account of 'opening and listening' (p. 148) and 'reading the signs' (p. 150) in her ecological approach to research, like Abram's (1996, p. 57) notion of 'perception as participation,' are useful demonstrations. Csordas' second construct is 'embodied imagery.' Cautious of the potential of this notion to slide into mental imagery, Csordas explains that imagery occurs in *all* sensory modalities. Recall, for example, the gnawing 'churning' of your stomach when it 'cries out' for food; the chaotic 'abandonment' when 'wetly' dumped by a two-metre wave. So, for example, Newbery's (2003) pain and struggle in portaging the heavy cumbersome canoe is partially but evocatively imaged in her text. So too is Payne's (2003a) more ecocentric 'clumsy language' description of 'other' sensory modalities such as the 'coldness-of-water' on the skin while kayaking and the kayaker's bodily 'down-the-river' positioning, visioning and exertion of propulsion/locomotion.

So, with Hart's concern about the 'nature' of the map brought into sharper relief and Alvesson's question of '*What* are we doing?,' some contours, bearings and coordinates of a fleshed-out version of McKenzie's map for (re)searching are now offered as an aid to navigating the largely uncharted absenced and othered territory outlined above.

A map

The following map's 'contours' are limited to the features identified in the above weave of conceptual, empirical, anecdotal, metaphorical and poetic markers. The aim of this map-making exercise was, at a general level, to explore the conceptual relations between *embodied* and *textual selves*. The partial reconciliation of these two versions of the self, be it researcher and/or researched, is desirable if post-empirical and critical inquiry is to be advanced into the socio-environmental nature of embodied and constructed relationships.

Some cautions. The map appears as a linear text, unlike those colourful topographical maps whose contours, shadings and 'bird's eye view' of the landscape invite the possibility of discovery and exploration. For (re)searchers with a liking for the 'high moral ground,' ethical and political type 'bearings' and 'coordinates' are not offered here. They require far more attention than what reasonably can be plotted here (Hay, 2002). Nonetheless, the basic research objective of describing what 'is' the case of 'experience' is inherently normative when such phenomenological/ontologically focussed description of environmentally 'related' bodies is 'tested' against those propositional 'oughts' that textually/conceptually dominate in the discourse of

environmental education (see, Payne, 2002, 2003a). Hopefully, issues pertaining to the legitimation and politics of environmental education research, and its focus on experience and learning, become much, much clearer.

This map is offered as a sensitizer, not a replacement orthodoxy, for a more reflexive and creative approach to inquiry and research development, particularly for those researchers who appreciate the messy need to ‘get at’ the culturally sedimented and socially constructed layers of situated human experience as they relate to: (a) ongoing issues about the integrity of the environment and the lifeworld; and (b) the methodological need to reconcile body and mind, lifeworld and text, practice and theory, ontology and epistemology.

For a ‘post-empirical’ qualification of this map plus advocacy, in this instance, for matching experience-based learning with an experience-driven and action-sensitive methodology, consistent with McKenzie’s call for greater coherence between the aims, methods and outcomes of research, see Payne (2005).

- Re-search is ethnographic in approach and conduct; empathic participant/observer and conversationalist in method so as to *reveal* the overarching contexts and (dis)continuities of various human experiences of various environments in which ‘relations’ are lived, structured and socially reconstructed.
- Include a ‘post-phenomenological’ account of the luminous moments, persistent routines, significant episodes or mundane conventions of actors’ embodied environmental relations so as to *disclose* and *highlight* the specific place/time/space positionings and mediations of human–environment agency/praxis, potentially as ‘case studies’ (see *EER* 10[1]) of the key circumstances/situations underlying ‘significant, insignificant and problematic experiences’ (Payne, 1999b, p. 367).
- These twin aims require rich/thick descriptions/imaging of various layers of human action and socio-environmental interactions that, ultimately, permit interpretations of human agency and its lifeworld/environmental consequences (Giddens, 1984).
- Layered experiences, and the pre and discursive consciousnesses of them, should be understood as enigmatic and mobile (Payne, 2003a), that are mediated in different material, social and symbolic ways (by physiology/biology, by psychology, by history, by language, by social arrangements, by technics and so on) (Payne, 2003b).
- Layered experience acknowledges actors (researched and researcher) have perceptual (pre)conceptions, (pre)constructions, (in)actions which are enacted via the different habitats/social conditions they inhabit (geographically/culturally). There are different levels of subjective ‘knowing’ and ‘unknowing’ about them. Memory-work, in-depth interviewing and ‘saturated’ observation may permit such sedimented and invisible experiences and their sources and structurations to become accessible and visible to the researched/er.
- Understanding the body as site, tool and memory of experience invokes for inquiry the recognition of links between the intercorporeal and intersubjective. In so doing, the disclosure of embodied environmental relations of researched (and researcher) and other may be advanced. Strategies like somatic attention, imaging and understanding of primordial and ecological experience (of the topic/problem in

question) might inductively assist the ‘artistic’ (Gough & Reid, 2000) interpretation of *embodied selves* from which the ‘crafted’ (Law, 2004) representation and, probably, *textualization and imaging* of those corporeal, physical and material selves, subjectivities and identities can proceed conceptually with a greater degree of experientially ‘theoretical’ legitimacy.

- The researcher and researched should, where possible, have a ‘common interest’ and ‘shared experiential backgrounds’ in the topic/problem of inquiry so that there is an embodied/intercorporeal ‘empathic rapport’ that assists the intersubjective/co-production of socio-environmental meanings in the name of re-search.
- Such an ‘ecological corporeality and subjectivity’ should be viewed interpretively as ‘generative’ of description/understanding and meaning-making by the researcher whose best efforts to non-anthropocentrically represent the ‘environmental experiences’ in question/focus to various audiences should creatively (and ecocentrically) pursue those forms/mediums most indigenous to that experience—be it description, metaphor, allegory, mimetics, storying, imaging, crafting, poetry, illustration, performances or so on.
- The limits of talk, language, code, texts and discourses, alongside the limits of rationality and reason, should always be acknowledged in ways that open up and invite meaning-making about the contingencies of human activity/agency and environmental relations (and time/space/place consequences) in posing and ‘resolving’ questions about the representation and legitimation of approaches to inquiry, research findings and claims on ‘truth.’
- Concerns about legitimation and politics of ‘knowing’ and ‘knowledge,’ as potential claims on truth, and a dialogue of what phenomenologically ‘is’ the case (for the experiencer/knower of the lifeworld) and what it ‘ought’ or ‘should’ be (according to our negotiations of what is ‘right’ or ‘caring’) may then be supported more formally by critical ‘layers’ of interpretation or explanation depending upon the objectives of the research and the declared ‘interests’ of the researcher.

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